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Faustian Foibles:

An Examination of Faust and The Feminine

BY

Małgorzata Halina Możdżeńska

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Faustian Foibles: An Examination of Faust and the Feminine" submitted by Malgorzata Halina Możdżenska in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Comparative Literature.

M.V. Dimić

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Dedicated to
Genowefa Mo[illegible]
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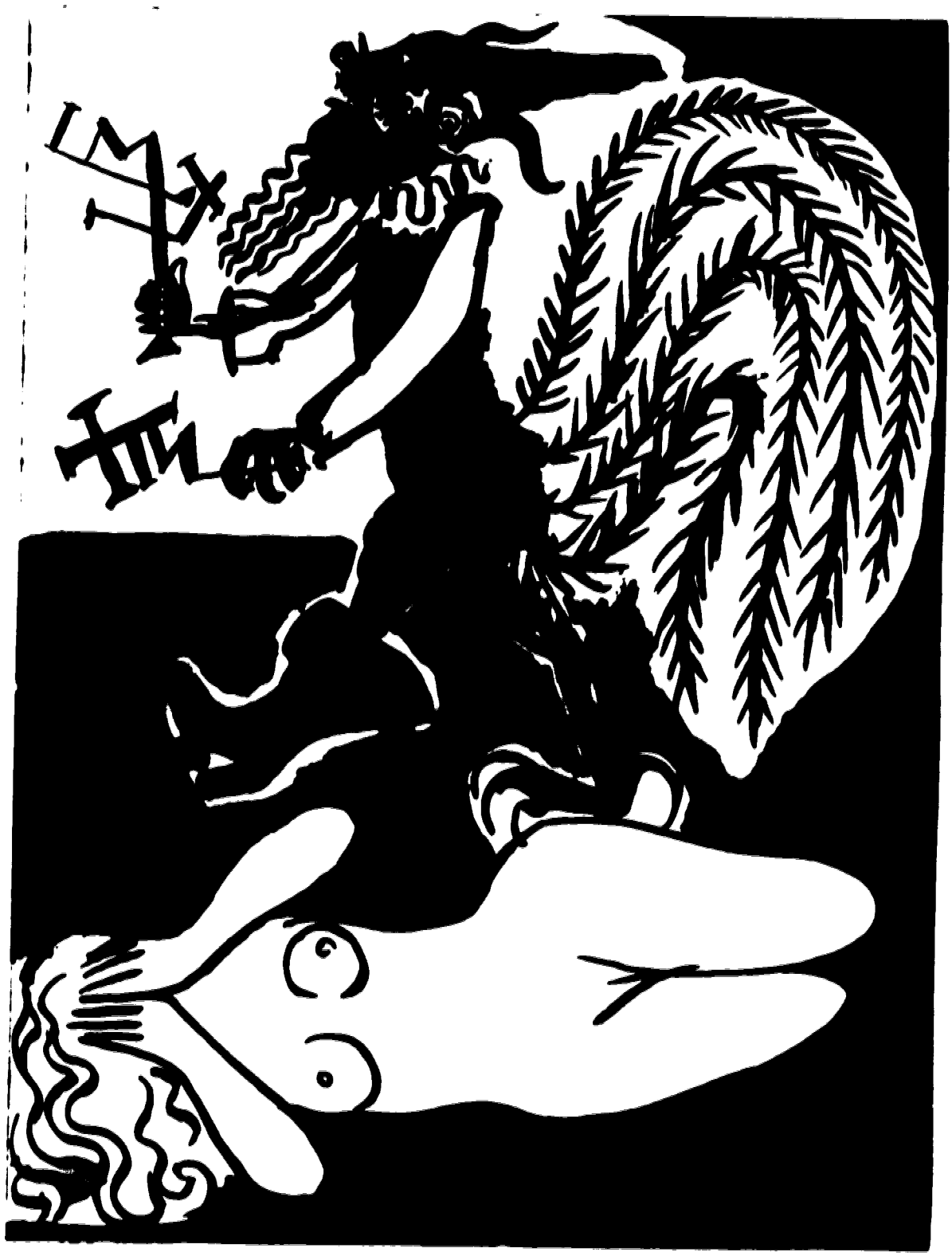
Beloved [illegible]
for all th[illegible]

and to
Hanna [illegible]
Warsaw Insurrection Survivor
Beloved [illegible]
for all the [illegible]



Darek Moździerski

Abstract

El sueño de la Razon produce monstruos.

Faust dreams the Renaissance dream of reason. One day he wakes up only to discover himself surrounded by the monsters that his dream has spawned.

In our culture the Renaissance is posited as a positive value, associated with ascent and development, while the era preceding it is posited as a negative value. But we should perhaps not be too hasty to champion the one, while calumniating the other, for the former could also be seen in terms of descent and devolution. Perhaps what the Renaissance gained in letters, it lost in grace.

The subject of this thesis is Faust, brilliant scholar, accomplished doctor, paradigm of Renaissance man, as represented in three major dramatic works: Marlowe's Dr. Faustus, Goethe's Faust and Valéry's "Mon Faust". The Faust of these texts is a personage who follows his fetish, his cerebralness to its limit, or surfeit. But instead of finding nourishment, meaning or enrichment in his pursuits, he discovers a void, an impoverishment, or a hunger. As he is climbing the pinnacle of his ever more separated and refined ego, he distances himself not only from human society in general and women specifically, but also from the feminine side of

himself, his anima. All persons/things feminine become increasingly foreign, bizarre and suspect. The exception is the feminine as idealized beauty and/or goodness, which unfortunately is accompanied by a loss of humanity. Of course, Faust is not unique in his proclivities. His attitudes and actions are only symptomatic of his times. It is important to remember that Faust (as a literary work) is a product of the Protestant imagination; and that an important directive of the Protestant project was to totally eradicate and annihilate Mariology. Thus "as above, so below." Protestants claimed that there was no biblical basis for Mariology, that Mariology was a reprehensible hangover from a "heathen" past; all the while blind to the fact that the need to adore or supplicate the divine feminine might arise from a quintessential human urge. What does an icon or image of the Madonna and child mean to us? The viewer identifies with the little human child, while the Madonna represents the divine source. In the most successful icons/paintings (e.g. Our Lady of Vladimir, Theotokos) one discovers a serene tenderness, a beautiful conjunctio between the mother and the child. This suggests a link or bond between the human and the divine realm; an exquisite expression of connection, support and love. This is what Protestantism sought to destroy and replace with a cold, distant, and punitive judge, God the Father, e.g. Pantocrator (dome mosaic) Church of the Dormition, Daphi, Greece (clutching the law).

I am grateful to Professor Milan Dimić
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Michael Możdżeński
Danek Możdżeński
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for always being there for me

and Nathan LaRoi
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Introduction

The thesis that follows seeks to apply a feminine, if not quite feminist, critique to a select number of texts containing the figure of Faust. The literature under consideration will include: The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus by Christopher Marlowe, Faust by Johann Wolfgang Goethe and "Mon Faust" by Paul Valéry. I intend to proceed chronologically in order to demonstrate the construction and development of a paradigm and later to explore a shift in that model. With Marlowe the literary figure of Faust is first adumbrated. Later Goethe renders it full colouration. In Valéry the figure is reworked; the paradigm undergoes a change and from a certain perspective this change renders it obsolete. The authors of the texts in question are men; a good deal of the criticism on this topic has been written by men as well. The subject matter of this literature is not of a light or frivolous kind; momentous questions are raised within each discourse. In trying to address these specific issues, it appears that the individual authors attempt to speak on behalf of humanity. Yet many women readers, writers, or critics would not feel that these authors speak for, or about, women in an authentic manner. Instead, and especially in the first two works under consideration, the feminine is misrepresented, excluded, and/or destroyed.

My plan is to scrutinize the female characters within each discourse. Equally important is the epistemology embodied within each play; it is

always male in nature and exclusionary towards the feminine. For the first two authors, at least, the Faustian principle seems to coincide with a particular male, extroverted, and conquering Western attitude. The following endeavour is, of course, not an extensive study. It will include only three texts. The works in question are chosen from three different periods: Elizabethan, Romantic and Modern; however, they all belong to the same genre: dramatic composition. The first two are tragedies, while the third is a comedy. All are written by prominent male authors and from a masculist position.

I am aware that there have been very numerous and various other treatments of the Faust theme. Thomas Mann and Mikhail Bulgakov wrote important novels, Doctor Faustus and The Master and Margarita. Swinburne wrote "Faustine." H.D. wrote "Helene in Egypt." Berlioz and Gounod composed operas. Murnau made a silent film in 1926. There have been a myriad other lesser works, as well as some more recent writings by women. Within these various discourses, the balance between the male and female characters does not always remain static. At times it alternates. In the novel by Mikhail Bulgakov, for instance, it is Margarita who embodies the greater part of the classical Faustian characteristics.

As previously mentioned, the critique leveled at the texts in question does not draw on the work of one specific feminist critic, nor even on any specific school of feminism. In the following analysis I am writing in a very

general sense as a woman, trying to give a feminist colouration to my endeavour. I am attempting a close reading, albeit without exhaustive analysis or extensive study of the vast critical literature. The thesis, therefore, will not include an encylopedic knowledge of Faustian criticism.

I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each.
I do not think that they will sing to me.

- T.S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"

I WAKE AND FEEL THE FELL OF DARK

I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day.
What hours, O what black hours
        we have spent
This night! what sights you, heart, saw;
        ways you went!
And more must, in yet longer light's delay.
        With witness I speak this. But where I say
Hours I mean years, mean life.
        And my lament
Is cries countless, cries like dead letters sent
To dearest him that lives alas! away.

        I am gall, I am heartburn. God's most
                deep decree
Bitter would have me taste; my taste was me;
Bones built in me, flesh filled,
        blood brimmed the curse.
        Selfyeast of spirit a dull dough sours. I see
The lost are like this, and their scourge to be
As I am mine, their sweating selves;
        but worse.

- Gerald Manley Hopkins

Chapter I: Marlowe

When we encounter Marlowe's Faustus in his study (1832) it is apparent that the claims made for him by the chorus are true: he is a scholar well acquainted with Latin, Greek, and the Ancients. He has a great breadth of knowledge and a dialectical mind. The venerable Doctor has not uttered a dozen words before he is quoting Aristotle, "Bene disserere est finis logicis -- Is to dispute well logic's chiefest end?" (1832) he queries, and in this query one senses his dissatisfaction. Aristotle's contention is somehow too facile -- too sophistic. There is a suggestion that the end of logic ought to be more sublime; that logic ought to be a means of discovering greater meaning, or truth. Thus, consigning logic to this end is to trivialize it and if in fact, this is the *raison d'être* of logic, then Faustus believes that he has already mastered this and consequently, wants to move on.

We soon discover that his promptings are not modest in their scope. It is his very humanity that circumvents his yearnings. He bemoans his fate, "Yet art thou still but Faustus, and a man" (1832). He aspires to move beyond human limitations, "Couldst thou make men to live eternally/ Or, being dead, raise them to life again" (1832). Faustus perceives himself to be a prisoner of the human condition. Even the highest achievements of man fail to satisfy him.

We are confronted with an unusually brilliant, perspicacious individual whose forte is his intellect. At the same time, the Doctor is lucid enough to realize that the intellect has its limits, and despite this intellectual superiority, he does harbour less noble desires and aspirations. We can deduce this from the quote, "Be a physician, Faustus, and heap up gold/ And be eternalized for some wondrous cure" (1832). From the first part of the sentence, one could be misled to believe that he has philanthropic ideals, but from the second part, it becomes apparent that Faustus is guilty of cupidity and an ignoble desire for fame.

Returning to the subject of his intellectual pursuits, Faustus seems aware of the shortcomings of them all. For instance, he denounces the regulations that formulate the law as "Paltry legacies" (1833) disclaiming the study as one that "fits a mercenary drudge, Who aims at nothing but external trash, Too servile and illiberal for me" (1833). When he says, "mercenary drudge," it appears that money alone does not captivate him. When he says "external trash" we assume that he, himself, privileges an inner world, that he needs to have an inner life. By using the phrase "too servile" it seems that he is disinclined to be a follower; he needs to lead, to be his own man.

Doctor Faustus flits from one intellectual pursuit to the next, denigrating each in its turn, and finally arriving at theology. He pauses and claims "divinity is best" (1833). With this claim he reveals a love for the metaphysical. A few moments later, however, he repudiates divinity. We

can see that Faustus is a searching soul, one who needs and hungers for something that is eluding him.

The fragment from divinity that he focuses on concerns itself with ethics, and this proves to be a rather interesting episode. It is here that Faustus begins to disdain various religious doctrines. Throughout the text he satirizes and denigrates Catholicism and Puritanism. One senses that he barely restrains himself from going further. Faustus claims that he does not believe in hell or afterlife, "I think that hell is a fable" (1845), yet the reader perceives a thousand years of medieval Christianity looming over his shoulder, an influence he cannot quite shake off. This brings to mind the contention that there is no such thing as a former Catholic, there are only lapsed Catholics. In this case, Faustus is a sort of lapsed Christian; it is as if Faustus has discarded religion, however, it has not yet discarded him. For one, the guilt is still there. We see evidence of this when he quotes scripture, "Stipendium peccati mors est" (1833) and adds, "The reward of sin is death. That's hard" (1833). He interprets this in the harshest and most fatalistic fashion -- from an Old Testament or Protestant perspective -- definitely not from an ideology that emphasizes love, mercy, or forgiveness. He muses, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and there's no truth in us. Why then belike, we must sin and so consequently die" (1833). Faustus seems repelled by these ideas of predestination, but simultaneously resigns himself to them, "Che sera, sera" (1833). Thus when Faustus looks inward, he becomes dismayed to discover that part of him is mired in his

conventionally medieval upbringing. (This medieval ethos, together with the plot, Marlowe gleaned from an English translation of the German Volksbuch. We will discover that when Marlowe's Faustus reaches beyond the medievel horizon, towards the Renaissance rebellion of the questing individual, then he moves beyond the Volksbuch.)

Returning to the text, one observes that Faustus betrays a hunger for the metaphysical, while simultaneously repudiating Christianity. If he were fictionalized today it might be Zen Buddhism, Taoism or Neo-Paganism that he would pursue. One of the problems for Faustus, or for Marlowe as his creator, is that neither has access to any acceptable alternative paradigms, as will the writers or protagonists who will come after. Faustus yearns to experience something, not to read about it. He needs to bypass the sterility of dogma and the triteness of ethics. Unfortunately, he is too caught up in his head. Faustus desires the ultimate, but somehow gets short-circuited; he settles for paltry surrogates. The proof of this is found in the next four lines when he declares "necromantic books are heavenly/ ... Aye these are those that Faustus most desires. O what a world of profit and delight,/ Of power, of honor, of omnipotence" (1833). A few lines earlier, Faustus denigrates the "mercenary drudge" and "external trash." Suddenly he is privileging profit and valorizing all manner of worldly concerns: power, honor, and omnipotence.

Next he asserts that "a sound magician is a demi-god" (1833). We deduce that Faustus desires that which belongs to the gods, i.e., forbidden fruit or the forbidden flame. He reminds us of Prometheus. Marlowe expands on this idea in the next passage with the two angels. The bad angel attempts to inveigle Faustus, "Be thou on earth as Jove is in the sky,/ Lord and commander of these elements" (1834). This is reminiscent of the passage in Genesis wherein the Serpent is tempting Eve, "For God doeth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:5). Dante touches on the same idea, but from the "correct" religious stance in Canto 27:

> I mourned among those rocks and I mourn again when memory returns to what I saw; and more than usually I curb the strain of my genius lest it stray from Virtue's course, so if some star, or a better thing, grant me merit may I not find the gift cause for remorse (Dante, 1251). [emphasis mine]

Faustus will come to find the gift cause for remorse.

In the next lines we witness Faustus' ignoble desires overwhelm him. He appears mesmerized by power, wealth, exquisite objects and gourmet foods. "Shall I make spirits fetch me what I please .../ to India for gold,/ Ransack ocean for orient pearl ... / Pleasant fruits and princely delicates" (1834). Despite this penchant for sensual indulgence Faustus maintains his intellectual curiosity, "I'll have them read me strange philosophy" (1834).

The last important speech in this scene is found in the following quotation: "Philosophy is odious and obscure,/ Both law and physic are for

petty wits/ Divinity is basest of the three/ Unpleasant, harsh, contemptible and vile/ Tis magic, magic that has ravished me" (1835) [emphasis mine]. From these lines we deduce that Faustus perceives the limitations of the intellect. Here is the Renaissance man, whose wit is sated with knowledge, yet he yearns for more. It is as if he knows that Mystery exists, or that a noumenal world exists, but he cannot accept the Christian definition of it. Thus we discover such paradoxical statements as "Divinity is best .... Divinity is basest" (1833, 1835). Certainly he seems to suffer when spirituality is reduced to ethics. Moreover, his sixth sense tells him that the word, instead of illuminating, obfuscates. It is like the Zen Buddhist saying, "The mind is the great Slayer of the Real." Faustus sees that divinity/theology offer words, not experience, and words, as Hamlet will bitterly discern later on, fall short. When Faustus reveals, "Tis magic, magic that has ravished me" (1835) he indicates that he is desperate to be ravished, i.e., to be transported, to know ecstasy -- the sort of ecstasy that St. Teresa and San Juan de la Cruz are familiar with, but which for him at this point appear to reside in black magic. Faustus too wants to transcend, to be "slain in the spirit."

From Faustus' point of view his damnation, or perdition, is a foregone conclusion, pretty well from the beginning. However, he does waver in his allegiance to the devil. This wavering is the mark of an unsettled mind, one that vacillates between polar opposites. We hear him saying, "Why waverest? Something soundeth in mine ears,/ Abjure this magic, turn to God

again... To God? He loves thee not" (1842) [emphasis mine]. This last is a very curious statement. It is as if he is acknowledging that God exists, or that a transcendental signified exists, but that he does not feel God's love. It is as if Being exists for Faustus, yet he knows only the absence of Being, not the presence of Being. Faustus is locked up within the geometry of his logocentric mind. It is like a trap, a labyrinth with no possible exit (Hius Clos). He cannot discover the right mantra, or koan, to escape the hell of ego, as Gerald Manley Hopkins so aptly put it, "The lost are like this, and their scourge to be/ As I am mine, their sweating selves; but worse" (Hopkins, "I Wake and Feel the Fell of Dark").

Intrinsically Faust is fragmented, not whole. We have evidence of this fragmentation when we witness his blood conspiring against him, when it congeals and writing appears on his arm, "Homo, fuge" (1843). He is transgressing his inner self. He is not being true to himself, or to his inner instincts.

Faustus signs the pact and declares "Consummatum est" (1843). This declaration evokes several responses. To begin with it is a parody or denigration of Christianity; it profanes that which is most sacred within the context of that religion. Yet once again we witness a configuration that dominates Faustus' mind: conjunctio or consummation. On the level of the drama only a sham consummation takes place. There is no real consummation, such as the one that takes place in marriage between a man

and a woman, and there is no spiritual consummation, as the one that takes place between a person and godhead. According to the Latin Vulgate version of St. John, "Consummation est" are the last two words Christ uttered before he died, and, as such, they signify the death of the body, the ego, Jesus of Nazareth, in order that a greater reality, or a higher level of existence could be attained. It is this consummation, or communion that Faustus has on his mind and that does not happen for him. The tragedy is that he does not have this experience with God, nor with a real, flesh and blood woman.

It is not surprising that the first thing that the Doctor demands, after the pact is concluded, is knowledge -- knowledge about afterlife, hell -- the spiritual universe in general. He questions Mephistophilis about hell, and Mephistophilis informs him that hell is all around them and that all that is not heaven is hell. But since Faustus has not tasted heaven, nor experienced God's love, that which the devil says is meaningless. Faustus appears to be rejecting religious teaching, or perhaps even religion itself, but not spirituality. He definitely rejects the institutional phenomena called Churchianity.

The Doctor confides that he does not believe in hell, "Thinkest thou that Faustus is so fond to imagine/ That after this life there is any pain?" (1845). Mephistophilis responds, "For I tell thee I am damned and now in hell" (1845). Faustus' retort to this is, "If this is hell I'll willingly be

damned" (1845). This reveals two important things; one, that he has a profound love of the phenomenal world, and, two, that he has not tasted the elixirs of the noumenal world. For him God remains an idea, not an experience.

It is interesting that Faustus abruptly changes course in the middle of the conversation when he demands of the devil a wife. Mephistophilis makes light of his request and instead conjures up a devil disguised as a whore, thus dissuading Faustus from his fantasy. Obviously, entering upon the state of matrimony would require the sacrament of marriage, an event which would destroy the devil's hold over him. Nonetheless, this desire for a spouse reveals a perception of a lack, and at the same time a desire for that connection that just does not take place. Instead of granting him a wife, Mephistophilis bestows a book on him. Rather than a connection with a human being, conjunctio, Faustus receives a book, a text (black on blank), words -- knowledge but not wisdom. As it turns out it is a book on necromancy, one which promises him wealth and the power to manipulate nature and men. "Hold, take this book, peruse it thoroughly,/ The iterating of these lines brings gold./ The framing of this circle on the ground/ Brings whirlwinds, tempests, thunder, and lightning;/ Pronounce this thrice devoutly to thyself/ And men in harness shall appear to Thee,/ Ready to execute what thou desirest" (1845). One could say that this will become the reigning design of Western man for centuries to come, or put another way, the

ultimate male dream to dominate the world; not to co-exist, not to respect, not to perceive, but instead to dominate, disregard and command.

Subsequent to all this, Mephistophilis takes Faustus out into the wide world that has so eluded him until now. First of all, Faustus is granted a cursory glance at the known universe: a sort of abridged grand tour. In order to be able to execute this tour, Mephistophilis provides Faustus with a bright chariot which is harnessed to a couple of dragons. It is these beasts which pull the scholar and his diabolical escort through the heavens above the earth.

This is the first time in the three Faustian texts we are concerned with that we are introduced to the idea and to the image of flight. This will remain a very important concept from this point onwards. One of the things that flight suggests is a desire to arrive at some height, or point, or destination with greater speed than humanly possible. In the human context, flight is like a psychedelic experience: one has not really earned the place where one has gotten to; therefore, one is not allowed to keep it. This is reminiscent of the yogi's parable: There are two ways for the novice to reach the mountain top. S/he may take a plane, but when s/he attains that exquisite pinnacle, it is impossible to land. S/he can only circle round and round. Or s/he may start at the bottom and make the arduous climb. This takes a long time. There are many hardships on the way and many moments of disinclination and doubt. But when s/he attains the top, it is really hers or

his. S/he has earned it and s/he may stay as long as s/he likes. Of course, it is lovely beyond her/his imagination. One thing that flight suggests is getting something for nothing. And ultimately there is no getting something for nothing. No short cuts to Nirvana.

The first place that the devil and his protégé decide to descend to and explore turns out to be Rome, the city which, but for a brief hiatus, was the spiritual center of Christendom for centuries. In Faustus' eyes, however, the Catholic church is no real spiritual center; it has become a debased institution, a false bride of Christ. Obviously, the learned scholar from the Protestant part of Germany (expressing in this also the official policies of Elizabethan England) holds little but the utmost contempt for its head whom he regards as ignoble and pernicious, or for the Pope's coterie, whom he depicts as sycophantic minions. The Pope is no surrogate of Christ on earth. Rome is a mock center, a kingdom of iniquity whose inhabitants have forsaken the Lord. Exposed to Rome, one supposes that Faustus formulates, at least to himself, the same question that appears in Isaiah 1, 21: "How is the faithful city become a harlot?"

The Doctor appears not to harbour any illusions. None of this seems to come as a surprise to him. Thus instead of discovering a Mecca, an oasis, a source of inspiration, cleansing, or redemption, Faustus discovers at the city and church's heart a very secular personage, involved in very secular

pursuits, beating and humiliating his rival, feasting, wining and dining, ordering people around.

Mephistophilis allows Doctor Faustus to exercise his recently acquired power. The scholar's overriding desire is to undermine the dignity of the Pope; to expose his baseness. His most daring coup, I suppose, is tricking the Pope into releasing Bruno, the German pretender to the papal throne. Outside of this feat, Faustus' transgressions amount to little more than teasing; he steals the pope's meats, then his wine, and finally delivers him a cuff on the ear: somewhat puerile, in summary, hardly deeply malevolent. After indulging himself in these little pranks, Faustus is ready to move on.

Faustus voyages here and there, encounters various personages and explores new places. The chorus informs us that he "had with pleasure ta'en the view/ Of rarest thing and royal courts of kings" (1861). The Doctor then returns home where he is able to show off the knowledge he has acquired by travelling in foreign lands and learning about astrology. His reputation grows in leaps and bounds. He is acclaimed for his greatness. Once again he travels, on occasion indulging the fantasies of his hosts and hostesses; on other occasions playing little tricks on those eager to trip him up, or cheat him out of something. One may claim that his alliance with the devil causes him to sin. However, taken all in all these sins are but venial in dimension; none are mortal in status or size -- with the exception of the very first one, the pact with the demon.

As Faustus travels here and there, plays his part in this and that marvel or scam, that is, as the main action of the piece unfolds, it finds its compliment in the parallel (subsidiary) comic scenes. Now it is not altogether certain that it was in fact Marlowe who penned these scenes or whether they were annexed later on by some other playwright. But it is not the task of this thesis to examine that controversy and regardless of the authorship, we should address the function of these scenes. First of all, it is obvious that they caricature and exaggerate the main plot. But why? Obviously part of the answer is comic relief. No matter how brilliant, a play which is too dark and unremittingly morbid will appeal to a very small audience. This drama ends badly for the protagonist and hence it is a good idea to counterbalance this bad ending with some humorous scenes. So on one level, the comic elements give the play a much wider appeal. On another level, the comedy provides a sort of parody of the tragedy. The comedy undermines the plot and distracts the viewer/reader/auditor from the profound questions that are posed within the context of the play. It is a sort of subterfuge on the part of the playwright, an attempt to somehow protect himself from being censured or protect the play from being destroyed. These comic scenes make the work seem less an attack on dogma or religious authority (which in part it in fact is) but rather an entertainment, a play, a sport "un jeu" and they sort of deconstruct its construction as it is being constructed. The comic scenes mock and trivialize the subject matter and characters, and thus serve to emphasize the function of the text as play.

These comic aspects undermine and thus safeguard the serious questioning and the serious accusations that the play makes.

If we take a look at the first comic scene we will observe that it functions as a chorus. This is the one where Wagner is approached by the two scholars. Here he decides to mimic his master, albeit in a rather hyperbolic fashion. He plays at being a scholar, all the while being very clever and duplicitous with words. Then from the fashion in which the scholars respond to him, we are given a politically correct way of seeing things, a sort of official response. There is a condemnation of Faustus and with this the playwright is able to cover his tracks and distance himself from his protagonist. When we examine the comic scenes, we discover that there is a considerable amount of language-play. This play subverts the gravity of language and ridicules its pomposity. Stock phrases, high-brow clichés and Latin terms are all mocked. This activity tends to expose the duplicity of words and undermines their serious intentions.

In Act I, Scene 4, in the comic scene following Faustus' first encounter with Mephistophilis, we discover a lowbrow parody of the main action; a debased version. The conjuring that Wagner proposes to do is stupid and petty. It is a sort of carnivalesque scene where Wagner, the servant insists on playing the Master. He intimidates the clown to serve him. We realize that Wagner too, has mastered a certain amount of magic, but

what he does with it is quite silly. This cannot help but reflect on Faustus who has also misused his powers for fatuous ends.

Time elapses and Faustus finds himself in his final days. Although he vacillates in his belief in the impending demise, in some ways he prepares for it. In drawing up a last testament, he bequeaths his worldly goods to his manservant. Drawing ever closer to his appointed rendezvous with Lucifer, he throws a lush banquet for his friends, for the moment displaying a sort of insouciance towards his fate. It is a sort of debased last supper, where there is no holy communion, no sacrament for Faustus to be remembered by, no conjunctio. The Doctor's colleagues make a request. They press him to conjure up an apparition of Helen of Troy. Believing that they have experienced an unsurpassable moment in their lives, they leave soon after the mirage dissipates. In actuality, this is all rather a pathetic moment. It is a last supper where there is no sense of the sacred, no sense of rapture. They get to observe, but not participate. Moreover, this Helen is not a speaking subject: conversation is impossible. Worst of all she is actually only a hallucination, not even a real woman in the drama.

Next an old man enters upon the scene. We are not informed of the identity of this elderly personage. That which is apparent is that he is a person solicitous of Faustus' welfare or personal redemption. He begs Faustus to abandon "this damned art," "this magic that will charm thy soul to hell/ And quite bereave thee of salvation" (1877). Faustus is extraordinarily

moved by the elder gent's exhortation, which makes it seem that it is not too late to repent. He experiences a moment of truth, "Where are thou, Faustus? Wretch, what has thou done?" (1877). This is a good question, for when one considers Faustus' behavior, it is for the most part nothing so heinous, with the exception of the original transgression, i.e. the signing of the pact with Mephistophilis. Faustus remains rather ruthless with himself, "Damned art thou, Faustus damned! Despair and die!" (1877).

In scene 1 of Act I, soon after Mephistophilis presents Faustus with a whore in lieu of a wife, we witness the doctor becoming quite melancholic. He becomes cognizant of the fact that he is somehow missing the mark; that Mephistophilis' bounties are for the most part tinselly gewgaws, passing pleasures, or cheap thrills. He admits, "When I behold the heavens then I repent/ And curse thee, wicked Mephistophilis,/ Because thou hast deprived me of those joys" (1846). This last phrase is important because it reveals that in spite of his empowerment, Faustus knows that something is missing; he feels deprived. More specifically, it is joy that eludes him. He appears sated with Mephistophilis' sophistries several lines down, exclaiming, "If heaven was made for man 'twas made for me/ I will renounce this magic and repent" (1846). Hard on the heels of making this resolve, the good and bad angels appear once more. The poor man is left confounded, but it appears that the bad angel's declamation that "Faustus will never repent" (1846) is the last word. Faustus becomes obdurate, "My heart is hardened; I cannot repent" (1846). At this point he proceeds to reveal that the very moment

that his mind lingers on thoughts of "salvation, faith or heaven" (1846) the devil speaks and surrounds him with tools of self-destruction. The beleaguered scholar admits, "And long ere this I should have done the deed/ Had not sweet pleasure conquered deep despair" (1847). This last line contains two important ideas. The first idea is the one of pleasure; this is a notion that can be aptly pitted against the one mentioned a few lines up: joy. Faustus admits that there is a lacuna, a lack in his life where joy ought to be. This lack has led him to the brink of suicide. The one thing that has made him able to continue is pleasure; a diabolical inversion, some would contend. The second idea is one we have encountered before and it is the one of despair, of profound despair, in fact. Faustus then proceeds to define that that which has given him this pleasure, that keeps this despair at bay, is not repulsive or odious, but rather poignant. It was having Homer sing him songs about the adventures of ancient heroes. Musing over this happiness, he asks himself, "Why should I die then or basely despair?" (1847).

Despair is mentioned again in Act IV, scene 5 after his fatuous shenanigans with the horse courser. Left alone, Faustus begins to soliloquize,

> What art thou, Faustus, but a man condemned to die?
> Thy fatal time draws to a final end;
> Despair doth drive distrust into my thoughts.
> Confound these passions with a quiet sleep.
> Tush, Christ did call the thief upon the cross;
> Then rest thee, Faustus, quiet in conceit.
> (1870) [emphasis mine]

We see that Faustus begins these musings on a very anxious note, he ends by trying to buoy himself up, and while earlier on in the drama he is full of scepsis towards his religious inculcations, he appears to re-embrace them as his destiny looms ever closer.

Of all the "sins" that Faustus has committed the one that should be considered most grievous from a traditional Christian position is the one of despair. Accordingly, this is a great offense against God. Orthodoxy maintains that there are three theological virtues: faith, hope, and charity. Despair, a sin against hope, is an offense which demonstrates a lack of belief in God's all bountiful mercy, His love and His capacity to forgive. Despair is the theologically incorrect response to trial and tribulation. From an orthodox point of view, earthly existence must be beset with difficulties. In this world, one should expect to be tested for one's mettle. Witness Job, who undergoes the ultimate trial, yet never gives up on God. In the second epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, it is written "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in <u>despair</u>; Persecuted but not forsaken; cast down but not destroyed" (Corinthians 4:8) [emphasis mine]. One could claim then that Faustus' response is perhaps more Protestant, even Calvinist, than Catholic, for the Catholic faith always stresses that the greatest of sinners will someday see the face of God, if s/he is repentant, truly repentant, in the last minute, or even the last second of his or her life. Protestantism posits a much harsher view, when it suggests that God chooses his elect and reprobate well before each individual birth. It is a

much more fatalistic doctrine and one that appears to hold Faustus in its grip. Faustus has forgotten or chosen to ignore Christ's words as they are recorded in the testament of the apostle Luke, "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance" (Luke 15:7). The old man begs Faustus to repent, insisting that even though the penultimate hour has arrived, it is not too late.

> O stay, good Faustus, stay thy desperate steps
> I see an angel hovers o'er thy head
> And with a vial full of precious grace
> Offers to pour the same into thy soul:
> Then call for mercy and avoid despair.
> (1877) [emphasis mine]

Grace appears near at hand. Faustus asks the old man to leave, in order to be able to ponder on his sins in solitude. But when the elderly man leaves, Faustus loses the strength that the other inspired in him.

> Accursed Faust, where is mercy now?
> I do repent and yet I do despair:
> Hell strives with grace for conquest in my breast.
> What shall I do to shun the snares of death?
> (1877) [emphasis mine]

Faustus barely finishes uttering these words when Mephistophilis quickly appears to maintain his guard on his promised one. With Mephistophilis' arrival Faustus' allegiance seems to return to Lucifer. He submits to all of Mephistophilis' threats and conforms to all of his exigencies. In recompense for this loyalty, Faustus asks Mephistophilis for Helen. He yearns to "glut the longing of my heart's desire" (1878) and believes that only Helen's "sweet embracings may extinguish clear/ These thoughts that do dissuade me

from my vow" (1878). For Faustus, physical union with Helen is the closest thing to heaven; it is a surrogate for conjunctio with God. We witness this when Faustus supplicates Helen to make him "immortal with a kiss" (1978).

In this scene we discover Faustus confronted with the Christian conundrum, or paradox, where flesh is evil, yet seems heavenly. From the traditional Christian view, sex is evil and woman is evil, because she makes men love the Body too much, thus leading him to perdition. Thus, first of all, her mouth, or her body seems to promise immortality/heaven. Then her flesh becomes infernal, "Her lips suck forth my soul" (1878) like a succubus, which in the play she is. However, this realization or thought passes and Faustus returns to his initial response. "Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again./ Here will I dwell, for heaven is in these lips/ And all is dross that is not Helena" (1878). This last line is especially interesting in that it seems to echo an important line we have heard much earlier. "All places shall be hell that is not heaven" (1845). Thus Faustus commits another sin, for he makes a goddess out of Helena, by literally idolizing her and this is a sin against the first commandment. Later on in the same soliloquy he does the same thing using different words,

> O thou art fairer than the evening air
> Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars!
> Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter,
> When he appeared to hapless Semele,
> More lovely than the monarch of the sky
> In wanton Arethusa's azured arms,
> And none but thou shalt be my paramour.
> (1878-1879) [emphasis mine]

Perhaps Faustus' last really important speech takes place a few pages before the end of the drama, when his scholar friends come over on the evening which is to be his ultimate. They notice that the poor man seems to be going out of his wits. They press him for explanations and he confesses the dilemma to them. It is at this time that he once more claims that his offense is unpardonable. "The Serpent that tempted Eve may be saved, but not Faustus" (1880). Interestingly enough at this penultimate moment he does not see himself as a "Master" of anything, instead he views himself as merely a novice, in training, so to speak, not having yet arrived, "Though my heart pants and quivers to remember that I have been a student here these thirty years" (1880) [emphasis mine]. He wildly regrets the university town as well as his education, "O would I had never seen Wittenberg, never read book!" and finally he realizes that he has gained the world, but lost his soul, "And what wonders have I done all Germany can witness, yea all the world, for which Faustus has lost both Germany and the world, yea heaven itself -- heaven the seat of God, the throne of the blessed, the kingdom of joy, and must remain in hell forever, hell, ah hell, forever!" (1880) [emphasis mine]. He seems truly penitent. One wonders why he is not forgiven. Is it that he is too haughty, too proud to beg? Is his repentance not ardent, or steadfast enough? Finally Faustus realizes the price that he has paid and just what his reward has been, "Ah gentlemen, I gave them my soul for my cunning" (1881) [emphasis mine]. In the end, it is only this -- not wisdom, the sublime, that comes from Hagia Sophia, but instead, a sort of debased animal shrewdness.

And so the question comes around to Faustus' destiny. Why then is Faustus damned? Does the answer lie in the individual author, or his time, or yet something else -- for Faustus' transgressions are mere peccadilloes, school boy antics, and his rewards are paltry surrogates, inconsequential baubles. Is it that his society holds such communal values that it is impossible to be a free thinker and disavow the dominant ideology without suffering the most dire consequences? Or is it Marlowe's tormented psyche that seems to have written this drama in the very midst of a crisis of faith, a loss of faith, when a person has one foot in the world that he has been inculcated into and another foot in a new uncertain world?

Another way of looking at it would be to say that Faustus is damned because he has come to love no human being. There is no Beatrice, Laura or Gretchen to intercede on his behalf, to fight for his salvation, i.e., there is no eternal woman. (Helen of Troy does appear in the text but she is a mirage, not flesh and blood. Besides, she has no voice.) Faustus is fascinated by surface; there is no true penetration or interpenetration. As there is no external woman, neither is there an internal woman, no development of anima, or receptivity to the right side of the brain. There is no recognition of the intuitive; instead we witness the privileging of *plaisir* which manifests ignorance of *jouissance*. Hélèn Cixous states "In Plato, Hegel, Nietzsche, the same process goes on -- repression, exclusion, distancing of woman" (Cixous, p. 293). In my understanding, this process refers not only to the repression, exclusion and distancing of the real woman

in the world, but also to the woman inside the male psyche, that man has tried to ignore and destroy, i.e., the nurturing self, the bonding self, the loving self. The point is not that Faustus is condemned to hell after he dies, but that he is in hell while he is alive. This is especially evident in his penultimate hours. Instead of making an Act of Contrition, i.e., making peace with himself and his God, Faustus displays his fatalism, loses his nerve and becomes wildly hysterical. In his soliloquy, he also unmasks his, as well as the Occident's obsession with fleeting time,

> *O lente lente currite noctis equi*
> The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike,
> The devil will come, and Faustus must be damned.
> O, I'll leap up to my God! Who pulls me down?
> See, see, where Christ's blood streams in the firmament! -
> One drop would save my soul - half a drop! ah, my Christ!
> Rend not my heart for naming of my Christ;
> Yet will I call on him - O spare me Lucifer!
> Where is it now? 'Tis gone; and see where God
> Stretched out his arm and bends his ireful brows.
> Mountains and hills, come, come and fall on me.
> And hide me from the heavy wrath of God ....
> O God, ...
> Let Faustus live in hell a thousand years,
> A hundred thousand, and at last be saved! (1883)

He is a paradigm of western man who despite his cerebral virtuosity, or perhaps because of it, is disconnected, fragmented, alone and alienated, from the sensual and the spiritual, from the larger Body of life that abounds all around him.

From this vantage point then one could easily assert that the tragical history of Doctor Faustus is an exclusionary masculist discourse, or a closed white male text. It renders up a decidedly non-feminine view of the world.

Is it correct to go so far as to call it -- sexist or mysogynistic? Probably. We observe that the main character is male. The chief opponent, Mephistophilis is male, as well. In fact the remaining devils, the servant, the scholars, the clowns, the cardinals, the archbishop and the pope are all men. Tradition insists that angels are non-gender specific, i.e., sexless, despite the fact that the angels dear to Judeo-Christianity sport male names and seem masculine. In not dissimilar fashion, Marlowe's angels are not genderized; nonetheless, they are definitely not female.

However, despite the fact that all the major characters and most of the minor characters in this drama are male, Marlowe did not think it expedient to exclude women entirely from the text. One does discover a few female characters skulking about therein. Six in a manner of speaking. They are the hostess, the duchess, Lechery, Helen, Alexander's consort and the 'hot whore' (a devil dressed as a woman). To her dismay the female reader soon discovers that all of these woman characters are trivialized, marginalized, demonized and/or silenced. It is the latter three that have suffered a fate not dissimilar to that of Philomela: they appear bereft of their tongues. Nor are the three that remain exactly what one would call loquacious. Moreover, out of the six 'female' characters, only two are human. The remaining four are phantoms, hallucinations or succubae. All this seems to suggest that Marlowe had a hard time accepting the physical reality/tangibility of women; it is as if he doubts their ontological actuality/status. They are rather oneric ephemera; definitely not flesh and blood, thinking and feeling beings.

The first female character appears when Faust begs Mephistophilis for a wife. It is difficult to decide whether or not this character really qualifies as a woman, because she/it is in fact a devil. At any rate she/it is not endowed with a name. Nor does she/it have anything to say. Apparently her appearance is enough to put Faustus off of the idea of marriage. We are not really let in on what it is about her appearance that dissuades Faustus. Instead we are simply given his exclamation, "Here's a hot whore indeed!" (1845). While it is difficult to know exactly what to make of this, it seems at least to suggest a woman who has already discovered her sexuality; not only that but also one who luxuriates in her knowledge. Obviously in Faustus' fictional universe one does not take as wife a woman who flaunts her sexual knowledge or power. One wonders if at the same time it is not an admonishment against marriage and wives? Is there a suggestion that wives might in fact be devils and whores?

The next "female character" we encounter in the story is the personification of the sin of Lechery. This occurs in a scene where each of the Seven Deadly Sins has been manifested in the shape of a speaking being, human or human-like we presume. Lechery is the last sin to present itself and significantly unlike the previous six, a female. In this role she is addressed as Mistress Minx. She is not given a lot to say. After posing a very brief query, she utters one statement, "I am one that loves an inch of raw mutton better than an all of fried stockfish, and the first letter of my name begins with Lechery" (1850). There is a footnote appended to this

statement whereby the reader is informed that "the inch of raw mutton" is a metaphor for the penis. In other words, Mistress Minx enjoys her sex, a heinous propensity, I daresay, within the value system of Marlowe's universe. All of the other Deadly Sins are personified as male, but this one is specifically personified as female. This is not surprising when one considers how misogynistic the discourse of the Christian churches (and especially certain types of Protestantism) was and how this discourse attributed to women (with reference to Lilith and Eve) an innate propensity for the "weakness" of the flesh. Perhaps one should not find it curious then to discover the manner in which each sin chooses to define himself. Each little dialogue begins with the respective sin discussing his parentage or lack thereof. Thus we have, "I am Envy begotten of a chimney-sweeper and an oyster wife" or "I was begotten on a sunny bank" or "I disdain to have any parents" (1850) etc. Sin is not defined in and of itself; of foremost importance are its progenitors. Out of the six remaining sins three are begotten (the second it seems thanks to the sin of Onin) while the remaining three claim to have no parents, nonetheless addressing this issue. Put another way, it may be said that each sin (save the one) is conceived in an act of sexual intercourse. Once again sex, sin and evil are conjoined. That is to say, sin is constructed as being begotten, while this notion is not at all necessary. Sin could be for example autogenous. Evil could theoretically predate the human universe, as it could also predate the angelic hordes and Lucifer's so-called 'fall.'

The next female character to make an appearance on Marlowe's stage is Alexander's consort, another no-name mute apparition who is repeatedly referred to as "his paramour" or "his beautous paramour." Whoever she is, we take it she is not her own person. Instead she is simply "his," a possession and necessarily his beautiful possession and decidedly not his wife! For some reason or another, much is made of a little wart or mole on her neck. We cannot really be sure why this element is brought in. Is it simply to display how cunning Faustus' conjuring powers are, or is it a little reminder that in the human universe perfection is always a little suspect, always flawed, soiled or stained? It is always a matter of a little wart, or a little mole, or a little sin. Perhaps this beautiful paramour is a prefiguration of Helen, and at the same time an oblique reference to original sin and Eve who lost it all for 'Man.'

The next female character we encounter is the hostess in the inn where the fellows go to take a beer. This is the first real human female character and she is allotted a couple of lines. We discover that Robin, one of the fellows, has run up a tab with her. He is not anxious to pay back what he owes; instead he appears eager to see how much farther he can go without paying. The purpose of a woman in this scene is to serve a bunch of rowdy men and to be taken advantage of, if at all possible. Upon making a boisterous entrance into the drinking hall, one of the lowlifes, the carter to be exact, calls out, "What ho, Hostess! -- Where be these whores?" (1871). There is a footnote attached to this line in my book which seeks to explain

this terminology. It claims that "whores" denotes the "hostess and maids of the inn" (1871). When the hostess arrives on the scene, she in no wise appears to be a whore; in fact, she seems rather polite and very hospitable. She does not demand the money owed her, nor does she refuse the client service. Her station in life may not be high, but why must it be lowered or denigrated? Why must she undergo a character assassination of sorts? In Marlowe's lexicon, whore often appears to be a synonym for woman. A rather small amount of print in this text is devoted to the female, yet the configuration of whore is returned to time and again.

Then we come around to the duchess. We are momentarily elated to find not only a real woman who has a few lines to speak, but also one who has some social position. However, the moment of elation quickly passes at how she is described and what she has to say registers. The scene in which we are introduced to this fatuous and vacuous, little-but-big personage, opens upon a company of people enjoying the sight of an enchanted castle in the air. The duke appears very pleased with this vision, but Faustus frets that his machinations have not tickled the fancy of his duchess. The Doctor proceeds to put his powers utterly at her disposal. Her wish is to be his command. The Doctor ends his proposition to the duchess with the remark, "I have heard that great-bellied women do long for things that are rare and dainty" (1873). Her response is, "True, master Doctor, and since I find you so kind..." Thus, with the one utterance, one discovers that the duchess is an obese, self-indulgent gourmand (barring the possibility of pregnancy). To

this reader it seems that Faustus insults the duchess to her face; however, in the text she does not take the remark as an insult. Conversely, to our stupefaction, she calls the doctor "kind." Hence, we conclude that the Doctor's observation is astute: the enchanted castle in the air has indeed not sparked her interest. Apparently, neither art nor architecture captivate her. She appears to be a limited, primitive sort of woman. Her great belly makes her culpable of the sin of gluttony -- one of the aforementioned Seven Deadly Sins. Here is a person who is in the position to ask for anything; yet she does not ask for anything sublime, or even remotely interesting. She does not ask for an Ancient Poet to sing or recite verses. She does not ask for a vision of beauty, nor does she make an altruistic request. Her desire is ignoble, base. Her utterance is banal. Hence the reader finds the Duchess of Vanholt neither interesting nor memorable. This is especially disquieting as we know that many upper class women in Marlowe's time were educated. Elizabeth the First herself was known to pen a few lines. The Duchess of Vanholt could have been constructed with greater dimension, all the while staying true to life.

The last female character we encounter in Marlowe's play is Helen, one more vaporous being who has no tongue, and who ends up as a sort of exchange commodity between Mephistophilis and Faustus. From a male point of view she is the perfect woman, exquisitely beautiful and with no will of her own. Thus she is forced to parade around in front of a group of scholars, in an almost voyeuristic sort of scene. From a female point of

view, her story has been taken away from her. She has been silenced. What is more, she is an object, never a subject. One leaves Marlowe's text with the distinct impression that women are unimportant and peripheral, better seen than heard. They are made to seem less than human, personae-non-grata. Their chief value is either their servitude or their beauty and sexuality. At the same time their beauty and sexuality are pernicious and lethal. In Marlowe's text women seem stupid, impotent, and manipulable. It is curious that these witless creatures who have no desire of their own to speak of are saddled with the blame for this fallen world. The onus is on Woman or Helen. First of all she is blamed for the ruination of the Greeks, "Was this the face that launched a thousand ships" (1878). Even this (rather famous) line, objectifies her -- she is a "face" for the male gaze. Then she is blamed for the ruination of the Trojans, "And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?" (1878) Finally she is blamed for the damnation of Faustus, for she takes up the last remaining time allotted to him, the last precious moments in which Faustus can beg God for forgiveness. The action is staged so as to seem that if it were not for Helen, Faustus would make his peace with God. Hence, Helen is a sort of Eve-figure, that first unfortunate female to blame in one of the original patriarchal texts, in a particularly nasty case of finger-pointing or blame making.

Faustus (or Marlowe) could be accused of having a blind spot and that blind spot is the feminine. For Marlowe the feminine appears to be the Dark Continent, terra incognita. Of course, he does not realize this as he

unwittingly builds the Master's House, performs his bit in the Master's Discourse. He does not realize that he is falsifying a woman's reality and that this sort of sexism dehumanized men. In conclusion one can only say that Faustus goes on an argosy, but he never retrieves his Golden Fleece.

BLACK ROOK IN RAINY WEATHER

On the stiff twig up there
Hunches a wet black rook
Arranging and rearranging its feathers in the rain.
I do not expect miracle
Or an accident

To set the sight on fire
In my eye, nor seek
Any more in the desultory weather some design,
But let spotted leaves fall as they fall,
Without ceremony, or portent.

Although, I admit, I desire,
Occasionally, some backtalk
From the mute sky, I can't honestly complain:
A certain minor light may still
Leap incandescent

Out of kitchen table or chair
As if a celestial burning took
Possession of the most obtuse objects now and then --
Thus hallowing an interval
Otherwise inconsequent

By bestowing largesse, honour,
One might say love. At any rate, I now walk
Wary (for it could happen
Even in this dull, ruinous landscape); sceptical,
Yet politic; ignorant

Of whatever angel may choose to flare
Suddenly at my elbow. I only know that a rook
Ordering its black feathers so can shine
As to seize my senses, haul
My eyelids up, and grant

A brief respite from fear
Of total neutrality. With luck,
Trekking stubborn through this season
Of fatigue, I shall
Patch together a content

Of sorts. Miracles occur,
If you care to call those spasmodic
Tricks of radiance miracles. The wait's begun again,
The long wait for the angel,
For that rare, random descent.

- Sylvia Plath

Chapter II: Goethe

The second Faust that will be discussed in these pages was written by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. This dramatic work which Goethe subtitled "A Tragedy" consists of two parts. The German writer brooded over this diptych and spent sixty years writing it. The poet's final version of the first part was published in 1808, while the final version of the second was published in 1833. It is curious that while the consequences of the actions of this Faust are, in human terms, more momentous and heinous than those of the previous one, he is rewarded with a destiny opposite to Marlowe's Faust. At the end of his tragic story, Faust is redeemed.

Some readers and critics may find it rather heterodox on the part of Goethe to designate a dramatic work with a felicitous ending as a tragedy. Obviously the German writer was going against the usual understanding of what normally constitutes a tragedy. He was perhaps inspired by some works of Euripides (Medea for one) where the protagonist does not die at the end but is saved by a "deus ex machina" device. While Goethe does appear to be infinitely interested in Antiquity and well acquainted with it, simultaneously he seems to believe that the past is past and that the modern age must and will give birth to a new art and new artistic demands and stipulations. This belief is manifested a number of times in the play. Once when Faust asserts to Helena, "Let all the past be put behind and gone" (Goethe/Arndt, 242) in Part II, Act III, and later in the same act where

ancient Greek music is juxtaposed with symphonic music from Goethe's own day. This is what is remarked about it.

> Listen strings in sweet collusions
> Quick be rid of fable play
> Ancient deities' confusion
> Put to rest, it had its day.
>
> Rest old tales, for none will miss you
> We demand a higher art
> From the living heart must issue
> What would work upon the heart.
> (246)[1] [my emphasis]

One could extrapolate from this that Goethe must not feel the weight of the past; no anxiety of influence here. He means to construct his own unique and German "higher art" and write his own rules in the process. This means that he will break all the old rules that he wants, when he wants. Thus the tragedy he writes will contain that felicitous ending. It is obvious then that for Goethe the tragedy lies in Faust's "greatness." The protagonist has a tragic destiny, a tragic flaw and fails repeatedly during his terrestial existence.

Like Marlowe's Faustus, intellectually he has ranged far and wide. Also like his prototype, he stands apart from society. He finds himself at a point where he realizes that he is clever, but not profound; knowledgeable, but not wise. While Goethe might have felt that his protagonist had been

1 - Quotes from Goethe, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from Arndt's translation. Those taken from MacNeice's translation will be indicated as such.

duped by scholasticism and by Cartesian logic, today one might contend that Faust perceives the bankruptcy of logocentrism. Although he has dedicated his life to knowledge, Faust now admits, "there is nothing we can know" (10). Faust is disappointed by the futility of his pursuits, but nonetheless, he remains hungry for something, or for some Other (Lacan would call this the other self, or the unconscious). Faust realizes that he must pursue a different route. To begin with, he tells himself that he must "quit (his) verbiage mongering" (10) and turn to Magic, since his life is joyless, "all delight for (him) is shattered" (10). Similar to his predecessor, Faust has not known rapture, ecstasy or "light," as Dante knew it at the apogee of his journey. Ecstasy, both sensual and spiritual have eluded him.

Faust seems to have some indication in which direction to move. He wants to "perceive" (10) [this is a very important distinction] "the inmost force/ That bonds the very universe" (10). It is not knowledge that he is after, but something more profound, more elementary, more sublime. Some call it epinoia, others gnosis.

In the next few lines he apostrophizes the moon. This is significant in that it is not the sun, i.e., Apollo, the intellect, the male principle that he is addressing, but the moon, i.e., the female principle, intuition, the subconscious, yin. In this speech we learn that he has been aware of the moon (beauty and nature), but has always kept her at bay.

> Oh full moon radiant, world that you
> Who many a midnight vigil through

Have found me wakeful in this chair,
Might look your last on my despair!
As over books I used to bend,
You would appear to me, sad friend.
Ah, would that on high mountain ways
I wandered by your lovely rays,
Might haunt with sprites a cavern rift,
On meadows in your twilight drift,
And rid of learning's fetid fume.
Bathe whole my spirit in your spume!
Woe! stuck within this dungeon yet?
Curse this dank frowsty cabinet,...
(11) [emphasis mine]

In this speech we witness Faust denigrating intellectuality -- "learning's fetid fume," (11) utilizing the word "fetid," as if learning or, specifically, intellectualizing, is not a life process, but instead a putrescent process. From this perspective, it could be said that intellectualizing leads only to death because it locks the subject within the prison-house of his skull/ego. When Faust speaks of the "dungeon," and the "dank frowsty cabinet," it is also his intellect that he is speaking about.

In the following stanza Faust experiences misery, realizing how penurious his life has been and wonders what caused it to become so sequestered from the opulence of the natural world:

And still you wonder what constrained
Your thwarted spirit's anxious surge,
Still ask what torment unexplained
Will cramp your every vital urge?
Shut out from Nature's teeming throng,
Which God made man to dwell among. (11)

He condemns this life, wherein he feels himself surrounded by death:

You skulk in reek and mold alone
'Mid ribs of beast and human bone.[2] (11)

Dispirited by these intuitions, Faust ventures to open a book by Nostradamus. This text appears to have an extraordinary uplifting effect on the aging, browbeaten scholar. The sign of the Macrocosm seems to work like a mandala on Faust, causing a shift in consciousness and bringing in its train new insights. Faust does not seem quite as stuck within his ego boundaries as before. His seventh chakra seems to be opening up a peep:

Ah - what enchantment at the sight of this
Suffuses every sense, what lovely verve!
I feel new-burgeoning life, with sacred bliss
Reincandescent, course through vein and nerve.
Was it God that fashioned this design
Which calms the tumult in my breast,
Floods my poor heart with happiness,
And with a secret thrust divine
Wake's Nature's powers about me manifest? (12)

At last he seems to be experiencing an illuminating moment; like the Pythia he senses the God entering him:

Am I a god? I feel such light in me!
Within these tracings pure and whole.
There lies creative Nature open to my soul. (12)

2 -In his editorial footnotes in regard to the two passages above, Hamlin (Arndt translation, same page number) comments that in these lines Goethe imitates the language of the sentimental sublime from eighteenth-century nature poetry, especially from the Songs of Ossian in the 1760's.]

For the moment at least, he comprehends that the divine is all around him. All he has to do is access it:

> At last I comprehend the sage's plea
> "The world of spirits is not barred,
> Your sense is shut, your heart is dead!" (12)

MacNeice translates the same idea into these words:

> The spiritual world is always open
> Your mind is closed, your heart is dead. (MacNeice, 287)

Faust has a cognition that until this moment his sense was shut, his mind was closed and his heart was dead. Pondering over the great scheme a while longer, Faust begins to perceive the true Ecology of the Universe, the interconnectedness of all life:

> How all one common weft contrives,
> Each in the other works and thrives!
> How heavenly forces rising and descending
> Pass golden ewers in exchange unending,
> On wings with blessing fragrant
> From heaven the earth pervading,
> Fill all the world with harmonies vagrant! (12) [3]

Perhaps MacNeice's transposition is somewhat more lucid for an English reader:

3 - Hamlin believes these lines derive from the works of Emmanuel von Swedenborg (1688-1722) and especially his theosophical treatise <u>*Arcana Coelestia*</u> *(1749).*

Into one Whole how all things blend,
Function and live within each other!
Passing gold buckets to each other
How heavenly powers ascend, descend!
The odour of grace upon their wings,
They thrust from heaven through earthly things
And as all sing so the All sings! (MacNeice, 287)

Yet despite this momentary perspicacity, Faust recognizes his isolation and alienation from this Gestalt-like vision of life. He knows that he is but an observer, not a participant. He longs to join in, to make love to Nature; he yearns for conjunctio, but he cannot seem to achieve it. Like Moses he has been wandering in the desert for a long time, and like Moses, he can only look upon the Promised Land. It is not his to enter:

What glorious show! Yet but a show alas!
How, boundless Nature, seize you in my clasp?
Your breasts where, all life's sources twain,
Both heaven and earth are pressed,
Where thrusts itself my shrivelled breasts,
You brim, you quench, yet I must thirst in vain? (12)

He then moves on to examine the sign of the Earth Spirit, eventually becoming extremely agitated, wildly desiring to break through the established barriers of consciousness:

I feel my very soul is yours to take!
You must! You must! And were my life at stake! (13)

In response to this extreme agitation, a spirit appears to Faust, but it is not a vision that is easy to bear. In fact, Faust cowers before it; it is almost unsupportable. Faust finally manages to rally his forces in order to be able to confront it as an equal:

You who bestride the world from end to end
Spirit of deeds, how close I feel to thee. (14)

But Faust still has lessons to learn, for in fact, the Spirit spurns him:

Close to the wraith you comprehend
Not me! (14)

And with this the Spirit vanishes.

A knock on the door ushers in an unwelcome intruder. It is Wagner, Faust's academic assistant, a person circumscribed by a rather mediocre mind, who enters the study and starts to converse with his disappointed Master. He manages to render a pithy little description of a scholar's beggared lifestyle. He then ends his little speech with a query directed to Faust:

Thus pent up within one's study walls
Seeing the world on holiday at best
By spyglass from afar on occasion
How can I influence it by persuasion? (14)

Faust takes up this query and goes on to attempt to explain to the incomparably lesser mind his notions, wherein he champions the cult of feeling/perceiving. True knowledge/gnosis does not come from without; it can only come from within:

What you don't feel, you won't hunt down by art.
Unless it wells from your own inward source
And with contentment's elemental force
Takes sway of every hearer's heart.
Just sit there, pasting joints to members,
Concoct from others' feasts your hash,
And blow a puny glow of embers
Up from your little heap of ash!

From minds of babes and apes you may be coining
Tribute of awe, if this be what you seek;
But never heart to heart will you be joining
Unless you let your own heart speak.
(14) [emphasis mine]

Sensing that Wagner is not sufficiently perspicacious, Faust tries to elaborate on these sentiments, attempting to warn his assistant of the pernicious charm of the word and its very dubious rewards:

For solid reason and good sense
With little art commend themselves.
If you're in earnest to be heard
Should there be need to chase the word?
That edge of rhetoric that glints and cleaves
By which you curl the shavings of mankind
Is idle as the fog-wind to my mind
That rustles through the dry autumnal leaves
(15) [emphasis mine]

Faust once more attempts to articulate himself, emphasizing that the source of fulfilment can come from within oneself and can not be squeezed out of a printed page:

Of parchment then is made the sacred spring,
A draught of which forever slakes all thirst?
From naught can you refreshment wring
Unless from your own inmost soul burst.
(15) [emphasis mine]

It is significant that the action at the beginning of the play takes place right before Easter, just as in the Divine Comedy. It is obvious that Faust, like Dante, finds himself in a dark wood, figuratively speaking, and also like Dante, needs to be reborn. His life, in a manner of speaking, has been a lent, a fast, a winter. Faust needs to awaken from the death that has been his life. For us now living in the twentieth century it is revelational that the

English word, Easter, comes from the Old High German (word) Eostre. Eostre is one of the pre-Christian goddesses whose festival (a celebration of fertility) was celebrated in the spring (Concise Oxford Dictionary, Fifth Edition). Although it is doubtful that Goethe knew any of this, it could be argued that besides Faust desiring the Dantesque experience of Easter -- ecstatic union with Light/Godhead, the co-mingling of the human with the divine, he also longs for Eostre, Astarte, Ishtar, the feminine principle of nature which can open up another way of knowing, or learning. In Gnosticism this would be called Sophia.

Faust realizes that, thanks to his thralldom to logocentrism, his life has been one of privation. He now feels the smallness of his (man's) estate. This sentiment is revealed in the words, "my dwarfish kind," (16) or "I felt myself so small," (16) and "not like the Gods am I," (17), and once again "I am of the earthworms's dust engendered brood" (17). Confronted with his misspent life, Faust wants to terminate his torment and commit suicide, but just as he lifts a chalice with a poisonous concoction to his lips, he is interrupted by the sounds and songs of Easter being celebrated.

A little while later, Faust is out taking a stroll and conversing with Wagner. It is during this conversation that Faust starts to expound on the subject of flight -- an activity in polar opposition to the one that he has practised all of his life. Envious of the birds' ability to fly, he exclaims, "O, that I have no buoyant wings to flourish,/ To strive and follow on and on!"

(17). Flight is that which Faust has denied himself all of his life. It is an idea which has both sexual and spiritual connotations. As an example, one need only think of "Noche Oscura" by San Juan de la Cruz. Here it can be separated into two ideas. First of all, the idea of exquisite sensation, and secondly, the idea of striving. It is this striving that Faust emphasizes. This is a word which in English is derived from the old French *estriver*, which is related to *estrif*, strife. Strive is defined not only to "make efforts" but also to "struggle," and strive together (or with each other). It also means quarrel, dispute (all according to the Oxford English Dictionary). Therefore, the word "striving" has connotations such as acquisition and manipulation. (Goethe's own German word "streben," which appears almost as a leitmotiv for Faust [Goethe, vv. 317, 697, 767, 1075, 1676, 1742, 7291, and especially 11936, where it is emphasized by the poet himself], is derived from the same sounding word in Old High German which means "to move strenuously" and "to fight or struggle" [Duden. Das grosse Worterbuch der deutschen Sprache in 6 Bäuden]) [4] Or put another way this represents a privileging of the Becoming over Being (reverse Platonic) and Becoming is, as Jonathan Culler puts it, marked by the term conflict (Norris and Benjamin, 34). When Faust is ultimately redeemed at the end of Part II, is it because Goethe and his society privilege conflict?

4 - The material in round brackets was provided by Professor Dimić

Shortly afterwards, Faust elaborates on his two souls. "Two souls, alas, are dwelling in my breast/ And either would be severed from its brother" (27) or "Two souls, alas cohabit in my breast/ A contract one of them desires to sever" (MacNeice, 302). Curiously, he defines one of these souls as loving the physical, phenomenal world around him, "The one holds fast with joyous earthy lust/ Onto the world of man with organs clinging" (27) or, "The one like a rough lover clings/ To the world with the tentacles of its senses" (MacNeice, 302). Here he expresses a sentiment similar to the one that Marlowe's Faustus entertains. Yet, this contradicts everything he had told us about himself so far, i.e., about his life lived in the dank, frowsty cabinet. We know that he has been aware of Nature, but she has been very peripheral in his life, more of an idea than an experience. It seems more than hyperbolic on his part to claim "joyous earthy lust" and "organs clinging." Certainly until this point in his life, he seems rather non-visceral. The other soul, "soars impassioned from the dust/ To realms of lofty forebears winging" (27). The other soul is supposedly drawn towards, or has an urge for some world, or plane, other than the natural, material, phenomenal one.

In the next few lines we see that what Faust yearns for is similar to that which Faustus yearned for. Faust wants to see and experience that which he has not seen nor experienced, "... spirits ... To new and changeful living lead me over!/ Why, if a magic cape were only mine/ And were to bear me over alien borders," (28) or "spirits in the air ... carry me off to a

new and colorful life./ Aye if only I had a magic mantle/ On which I could fly abroad, a voyaging" (MacNeice, 302). Thus Faust voices a desire to see, experience or explore the unknown, the mysterious, the Other.

A little while after this excursion Faust returns to his study and we arrive at one of the most important passages in the drama. He has left the natural world behind once more, "I have forsaken field and meadow" (28) to return to his mind. "Then reason reasserts its forces" (28) or "Reason once more begins to speak" (MacNeice, 304) [emphasis mine]. Faust wants to touch life's essence. He feels hopeful momentarily, but then lapses into despondency, "for all my good intentions, I feel contentment ebbing away in my breast/ Why must the stream so soon run dry/ And we be left once more athirst?" (MacNeice, 304). We see that reason itself seems inadequate to sustain hope; in fact, it appears to bring despair in its train. Faust longs for something else, "The supernatural we learn to treasure/ We come to long for revelation" (30). Thus he opens the New Testament to the gospel according to St. John and reads "In the beginning was the Word" (St. John 1:1). At this point in his life he seems ready to challenge this statement, yet according to what he has told us about himself, for all of his life, until this moment, he has privileged Logos. It could be said that Goethe sees Faust as having been dominated by a Cartesian ethos, although at this point in his life Faust starts to divine that there is more to life. One could say that Goethe here might be considering Pascal's adage "Le coeur a ses raisons" (Pascal, 277) or putting

it another way, he has Faust realizing that there is another way of learning/knowing other than *cognito ergo sum*, thinking or reasoning.

He is discontented with, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," or God = Logos. Faust is splitting this equation, ripping asunder this ancient marriage. It is not unlike a Saussurian rupture or even a Derridian *différance*; a declaration that an object, an idea, or an essence is not its name and that there are endless ways to substitute one word for another. Naming is severed from meaning. He starts to grope for another word/idea to fill in the gaping lacuna. He tries, "In the beginning was the 'Mind'" (MacNeice, 304) ['Sense'] (30) and again "In the beginning was the 'Power'" (MacNeice, 305) ['Force'] (30). Finally he settles on Deed. This idea of Deed seems to complement the ideas of Becoming and Conflict.

There are various ways of looking at this brooding about. One would be to valorize the act, as one with great potential for liberation. Catholics might be tempted to conclude that this is the nefarious legacy of Luther. But Faust has gone much further than Luther, for his reasoning could be construed as a dangerous and heretical act. Hard on the heels of this word-play appears Mephistopheles. It is as if Faust has split an atom -- unleashing great power. That this act is significant is underscored by Mephistopheles' immediate reference to it. Faust asks of the devil his name. Mephistopheles snidely responds, "For one so down on the word" (32) or "For one who

holds the Word in such low repute..." (MacNeice, 307). It is only at this point in Faust's life that this has come to be so. Mephistopheles continues, "so remote from everything external/ Past all appearance seeks the inmost kernel" (35) or "Who for withdrawn from all mere surface/ Aims only at the Essential Root" (MacNeice, 307).

This is a curious characterization of Faust that this reader finds paradoxical. To begin with, the devil claims that Faust is so remote from everything external, meaning by this, life outside of his study and his books. Yet by privileging Logos or Reason, Faust's life has been, in a deeper sense, the vary paragon of exteriority. What is reason if not surface-play, or appearance? While perhaps it is true that Faust sought the "inmost kernel" or the "essential root," it is only now that he awakens to the fact that he has gone about it all wrong. One may make the assertion that Faust has always worshipped the spirit which eternally denies while pretending to himself to be always procuring good.

Faust finally and profoundly realizes just how narrowly circumscribed his epistemology has been. He longs to remove himself permanently from his former life and his previous agenda. He experiences a need to condemn it, "All knowledge long turned dust and ashes" (42) or "I have long loathed knowledge in all its fashions" (MacNeice, 317). Yet it seems that for some reason, Faust is incapable of forging a new life on his own. There is in him some sort of impotence or inertia. This is quite ironical considering that

shortly before Faust was adamantly insisting on the importance of turning inward to oneself. Some interpreters consider that Faust finds Mephistopheles in himself, i.e. that Mephistopheles is another side of Faust. Nonetheless, it must be that Faust is seduced by the "quick fix" proposition, that he receives from Mephistopheles. The devil promises to be his companion and serve him in all things, "I'll give you what no man has seen before" (40) [emphasis mine].

Yet Faust is not stupid, nor gullible. He is never completely duped by Mephistopheles; instead he remains aloof and disdainful of the diabolical fiend. In fact, he knows very well that the devil is not capable of really bestowing anything on anybody. Faust realizes that Mephistopheles cannot know, understand or touch the essence of what is best/highest/most valuable within the human being, and in this he differs from Marlowe's Faustus who always seems to believe in Mephistopheles' hidden wisdom and who always seems to be waiting for Mephistopheles to reveal it. Goethe's Faust snidely addresses the fiend thus:

> What is, poor devil, in your giving?
> Has ever human mind in its high striving
> Been comprehended by the likes of you?
> What's yours but food unsating, the red hue
> Of gold which, shifting and untrue
> Quicksilverlike will through the fingers run,
> A game which always stays unwon.
> A girl who at my very breast
> Trades winks already with another's eyes,
> But honor's fair and godly zest
> Which like a meteor flares and dies?
> (40) [emphasis mine]

Nonetheless, Faust agrees to take Mephistopheles up on his proposal. He is the one to define the terms of their pact and it is in these conditions that he demonstrates the unfortunate nature of his pathology. Faust stipulates that he will render himself up to the devil, or that the devil may claim Faust as his own, the moment that Faust is satisfied:

> Should I ever take ease upon a bed of leisure,
> May that same moment mark my end!
> When just by flattery you lull me.
> Into a smug complacency.
> When with indulgence you can gull me
> Let that day be the last for me!
> This is my wager! (40, 41)

He continues:

> And beat for beat!
> If the swift moment I entreat:
> Tarry a while! You are so fair!
> Then forge the shackles to my feet,
> Then I will gladly perish there!
> Then let them toll the passing bell
> Then of your servitude be free,
> The clock may stop, its hands fall still,
> And time be over then for me! (41)

Once more, a few lines down, "Once come to rest, I am enslaved --" (41). In other words, Faust claims that he is insatiable, that nothing in the world is capable of gratifying/satisfying/pleasing him ultimately. Faust believes that he will never attain his crescendo, his jouissance, no matter how wonderful/beautiful, pleasing the person, the object, the situation is. Thus he defines his own fate; he must perforce be always on the move, on the run forever, seeking the new, the unknown and nobody, or nothing will ever truly please, or hold him back. It is the definition of a lifestyle opposite to

that of the contemplative. He chooses himself to become the accursed hunter.

And so, as the story goes, Faust blasphemes the trinity and puts away his books. Enticed by the vision of female beauty, he goes along with the devil on his promise of magical rejuvenation. Here his behavior becomes unconscionable; where once he was a fool, now he becomes a rogue with Don Juan like traits. He proceeds to meet and seduce Gretchen (that wholly good and lovely child), fatally drugs her mother, stabs her brother in a duel and (indirectly) kills his own child. Then on top of this, he causes Gretchen to lose her reputation, her sanity and finally her life. I suppose that it could be argued that he does much of this inadvertently, but nevertheless, all this great human misery is a consequence of his actions.

In Part II of Goethe's drama, Faust carries on in much the same vein. Mephistopheles endows him with the power to move around in space. Faust takes advantage of this to travel back and forth, in order to satisfy his curiosity and to have adventures. Needless to say, he causes havoc wherever he goes. He travels to the court of the Holy Roman Emperor, where he messes with the royal exchequer, creating counterfeit wealth in order to sustain the Emperor (a commentary on the world of economics and capitalism), gets involved with warring factions (a commentary on the military world), everywhere fooling, shocking and manipulating people. After a series of adventures, the fiend procures Helen of Troy for him (who

on another level symbolizes the ancient world of Antiquity; their marriage symbolizing a union of Antiquity and medieval feudalism, or Greece and Germany). She and Faust are endowed with what seems to be an instant, prepubescent wunderkind, the beloved Euphorion. There seems to be a sort of parallelism involved here with Part I. There it is Faust, who abandons Gretchen and his child, while in Part II, it is Faust's beautiful and brilliant boy who dies and Helen abandons Faust in order to be able to rejoin her son in the underworld. It is as if Goethe wants to grant Faust expiation for his miscreant behavior in Part I. However, the text does not really examine Faust's reactions to these losses, nor can it be said that they curb Faust from indulging his mania for meddling and manipulation.

The drama moves on to where Faust decides to construct his own personal fiefdom. With a certain amount of intervention, he wrestles a generous portion of land away from the sea. In the middle of this property, he has a palace built for himself. It is, one supposes, his little piece of paradise on earth, a utopia of sorts. But upon closer examination, we discover that there is more than just a little trouble in paradise. First of all, the whole enterprise is financed, or supplemented with ill-gotten goods. Mephistopheles leads a few men across the seas and brings back plunder from whence he can. Second of all, much of the construction is exacted from forced labour. Although Faust lives in what appears to be a sumptuous palace and appears to own much land, he is not satisfied. He covets and exacts more. He goes so far as to extort the modest property upon which an

elerly couple are living, adjacent to his own vast holdings. These good and innocuous people, as well as their unsuspecting guest, end up losing their lives, thanks to Faust's unscrupulous henchmen. It is a little microcosm of capitalism, which demonstrates the evils of that exploitive system.

The scene that follows this one involves four crones who appear at the palace portals at midnight. They are the spectral personifications of Want, Debt, Care and Need. (It is curious and significant that Goethe chose to incorporate these abstract notions into the bodies of not only women, but also old women. In the value system of a patriarchy old women are least valuable/most expendable.) They try to gain entry into Faust's stronghold, but for three of them, it is too well fortified. Only one is able to penetrate and that one is Care. This elderly woman attempts to assail Faust's conscience. She points out his lack of altruism. She indicates that he has turned his back on the needy. But Faust refuses to respond to her accusations. He is unrepentant. In fact, he tries to cast Care away. In her turn, she curses him for his lack of understanding/perception/insight. The malediction strikes Faust blind. But in this case blindness does not effect a miracle. There is no Oedipus Rex here, nor Tiresias either. Faust is not transformed into a blind seer. It is just that finally the outer is made to match the inner. Finally we arrive at a *quid pro quo*.

This new state of being does not seem to really affect or change Faust. Instead he seems to rush headlong into more activity, demanding more

digging, more building, more expansion, once more championing imperialistic and capitalistic values. He works himself into a frenzy, and seems to find in this state his ultimate satisfaction. Wittingly, or unwittingly, he utters the words that Mephistopheles has always longed to hear. "I might entreat the fleeting minute/ O tarry yet, thou art so fair" (294). With this utterance Faust falls over dead. His soul, however, seems rather phlegmatic in making its exit out of his body. There then follows a *deus ex machina* scenario, whereby angels descend on the scene and manage to snatch Faust's soul away from Mephistopheles. We are to understand that it has been stipulated by high decree that Faust is to be redeemed. As they float upwards, through the stratosphere, bearing Faust's immortal essence with them, the angels cast some light on the situation:

> "Whoever strives in ceaseless toil,
> Him we may grant redemption.
> And when on high, transfigured love
> Has added intercession,
> The blest will throng to him above
> With welcoming compassion.
> (303) [emphasis mine]

Obviously then, two factors come into play in his salvation. The second one is transfigured love, that is, Gretchen's intercession. The first factor is his striving in ceaseless toil.

This manifests or champions a draconian Protestant, Calvinistic work ethic. Inherent in this ideology is that certain ruthlessness that one associates with Western imperialism, that mastery over people and nature. We discover this characteristic very early on in Faust, starting with perhaps his attitude

towards Gretchen. He does not want to court her like a normal man. Instead he wants to seize her, grab her or buy her (with jewels that do not belong to him). But after his conquest, he is not interested any more. He is ready to discard her like a piece of detritus and move on, strive on. Where does this philosophy ultimately lead if not to all those lagers with Arbeit Macht Frei emblazoned over their gates? In any case, when Oswald Spengler in his famous The Decline of the West (Der Untergang des Abendlandes) equated the essence of Western culture with the Faustian striving, Nazi ideologues felt that this was an interpretation quite acceptable to them. It is a very pernicious paradigm that is championed here and a rather facile "opera-like" ending which appears tacked on. More importantly however, one can question the value of "toiling" or "striving." Is this a value which is to be elevated in and of itself? Is it not equally important to ask what the striving is for and in what spirit? Where one's heart is amidst this striving/toiling? Obviously it is possible to strive for questionable or ignoble ends. And perhaps striving, in itself, is meaningless or in vain if one is not pure of heart, or if one has not cultivated zen-mind. Striving in itself is not necessarily an activity which ought to be privileged as the foremost activity a human could engage in. Besides, if striving is so elevated, what is the value of contemplation or a contemplative lifestyle? Martin Buber puts it succinctly, "The life of a human being does not exist merely in the sphere of goal-directed verbs. It does not consist merely of activities that have something for their object." (Buber, 54)

Why then is Faust redeemed? Once again we can ask ourselves, does the answer lie in the author, his society and times, or something else? Probably, much of the answer lies with Goethe. We know now that his attacks against Christianity and even against the person of Christ were sometimes extreme (Dimič, 12), so it is not surprising that he would champion a person who rebels against Christianity and its dictums. Goethe is very careful, however; he knows how to protect himself. He employs framing devices which are reminiscent of the ones used in Don Quixote, the Story of Job, and Kalidassa's Shakuntala. Cervantes' protagonist utters and enacts, but most important of all, suggests very dangerous things, things for which the Inquisition would have had Cervantes' head, had he been more explicit. Cervantes was wary enough to put Don Quixote at many removes from himself. The conclusion of the novel then seems a great lark, because after asking momentous questions, Don Quixote puts them away, regains his sanity, re-embraces his religion and dies; thus, for all but the most perspicacious, the status quo is reestablished, and everything is fine.

With the story of Job, it is much the same, the frames do not quite match the picture. Job loses everything, his suffering is inordinate, he undergoes great existential anguish. He poses momentous questions. Then suddenly, everything is fine; he regains great material wealth and gets a new family -- as if that was all that was at stake, as if human beings are replaceable. The conclusion of the story does not solve the problems, or answer his questions. The frame seems too facile, and indeed, there have

been scholars who claim that the frame is a later addition, penned by a different author. It puts a gloss on things that does not really work. But even before the prologue in heaven, Goethe constructs two preliminary frames. The first one is found in the Dedication in which one discovers a superlative example of the Sublime Ego, that is, the romanticized "I." Here the poet posits himself as the transcendental signifier of his text. The second frame is found in the Prelude to the Theatre. Here three men, i.e. the director, the dramatic poet and a merry person discuss that which is about to be performed. Together with the ensuing scene, that is, the one with God and the devil in heaven, one discovers a trinity of sorts, i.e., three masculist frames. There can be no question through which gender's eyes Goethe wishes the reader/viewer/auditor to see in the subsequent scenes.

In Goethe's drama the prologue in heaven and the redemption at the end seem somehow unauthentic, somehow facetious. Certainly the God in the story proper seems very different -- much more abstract -- than the ludicrous cardboard God in his rococo drawing room heaven that one encounters in the prologue. Since we know that a Christian understanding of the universe is probably inconsequential to Goethe, what exactly does Faust's redemption signify? Is this a judgement on the part of Goethe of his own life, a sort of hubris? Perhaps, but also it seems an oblique valorization of a scoundrel, of a ruthless hedonist, an exploiter, an incipient Nazi. It seems to be tied in with the rise of capitalism, the industrial age and colonialism; the unscrupulous exploitation of earth and her people. Faust is perhaps correct

in disavowing intellectualism and Christianity; if he was anything initially, then he was a terribly imbalanced man. But what does he become? What is his new religion? It appears that he has replaced one evil with another.

From the very inception of the text Faust admits that he has spent his previous life indentured to Apollo. In this area he has had his achievements. However, as Freud contends, the Apollonian must be purchased at a price. That price has been ignorance of all the other worlds that exist. When he tries to enter these other worlds, there is a certain ineptitude and brutality he manifests in all of his dealings. Faust seems to share these flaws with his author/creator, whom as we remember, previously posited himself in the Dedication as the transcendental signifier of the text. Part of how Faust maligns the world is how he maligns the feminine. His attitudes appear to be an echo of the attitudes of his creator, who seems to have had difficulty in dealing with women, both in life and often in print. The second half of this chapter will seek to examine how the feminine is constructed and how it is treated. Needless to say, readers will discover that Goethe seems to manifest a marked antipathy towards that other gender.

Let us start with the witch's kitchen. But before considering this scene the reader should be reminded that Goethe could be strongly critical towards Christianity and simultaneously was very knowledgeable about Antiquity. Perusing Goethe's work, one is able to discern that Goethe was cognizant of the fact that at one time women had been priestesses, or sibyls and also that

deity had been imagined in female terms. In Goethe's writings one will discover intelligent and powerful women. It is just that Goethe often betrays a fear of these women and goes to great lengths to vilify them. In his hands, they are often odious, repugnant, ugly and/or pernicious.

A perfect instance of this is found in the person of the witch. With the witch and the witch's kitchen we discover a scene or a frame which yields a structure parallel to the one with God in Heaven. However, while the sky-god is firmly ensconced on his throne, in his luminescent drawing room, attended by effulgent hordes of beauteous castratoes, the ancient earth goddess has been reduced to a witch in a kitchen (traditional servants' quarters) attended by lower primates, i.e., monkeys, with the attendant innuendo that she is a lower primate herself. In some nebulous upper region two powerful male figures, i.e., the sky-god and the god of the underworld hold a discussion on Faust, upon whom they are about to perform certain experiments. On earth, in a debased female zone, the witch's kitchen, two powerful male figures, this time Faust and the devil, look upon an unwary beauty in a mirror. Now Mephistopheles and Faust enter the witch's space while the witch herself is not yet present. But before we meet her and judge her on her speech and behavior, we receive Faust's prejudicial perception of her. More than once Faust feels a need to calumniate her, despite the fact that he has never seen, or met her before. He calls her a skirted quack, an old bat, a crone and a hag. Hag, in my Concise Oxford Dictionary, is defined as an ugly old woman, a witch, the male equivalent of which is

perhaps the colloquial geezer, except that geezer is defined only as an old man and not an ugly old man (emphasis mine). Now the text lets us know in no uncertain terms, that Faust, himself, is old and somewhat decrepid, a prisoner of his own dusty and cluttered study. In Murnau's film and in Gounod's opera, Faust, before imbibing his rejuvenating potion, is popularly portrayed as rather hirsute, hoary and infirm. In fact, Faust is the male equivalent of a hag, except that neither the author nor anyone else in the text makes that assertion, nor does he envision himself in those terms. Thus, Goethe constructs a privileged male zone and a corresponding debased female zone and the hierarchy and the hegemony that is acknowledged/perpetrated is obvious. It is important to realize that while Goethe does not personally subscribe to the metaphysical apparatus as it is conventionally conceived, he does subscribe to androcentrism and patriarchy. In this, he employs convenient Christian and folkloric constructs.

The unprepared reader may be puzzled that Faust's immediate reaction to the witch's kitchen is a strong repulsion, "I never saw such an outré sight/ I find it nauseating, this crazy witchcraft" (MacNeice, 320). Puzzled because Faust does not really differ significantly from the witch. She is old, as is he. She is ugly, while he is not exactly attractive himself. She has knowledge and power, as does he. Nor is her kitchen that much different from his high-vaulted Gothic room. His chambers are also filled with weird paraphernalia: magic books, alchemical or pseudo-scientific instruments, canisters, a chalice, a skull, a skeleton and so on. Moreover, this much

maligned female zone is associated by Faust with madness or insanity: "this crazy witchcraft" (MacNeice, 320) and this "cesspit of insanity" (MacNeice, 321). But what is madness or insanity in the mind of a misogynist? Is it perhaps woman's arcana that he is not privy to? That which is obvious is that Faust is extraordinarily threatened by non-patriarchal space. Why? Because it houses a knowledgeable, powerful and independent woman who has harnessed some sort of preternatural power? Yet he is doing the same. Why does he condone that prerogative for himself, but condemn it for his female counterpart? With Faust there is never any real reciprocity between the sexes, no gender symmetry. He proceeds to demand angrily of Mephistopheles, "Do I need advice from an old hag?" (MacNeice, 321). What exactly is the problem here? Is it that Faust is loathe to acknowledge that a woman is capable of having something over him, might have knowledge, or wisdom that he, himself, has not? The witch seems in some ways to correspond to Faust. She is perhaps the one that Faust ought to really be romancing: his true mate, his equal. However, Faust does not compete on a level playing field. Instead, he chooses to exploit and victimize a child ("Yet she's fourteen if she's an hour" [MacNeice, 325]) who has none of his social, educational or other advantages.

The reader will discover another illuminating example of how Goethe imagines/constructs the female supernatural in the scene which contains the Walpurgis Night revelries. First of all, Goethe chooses a locus far from the bastions of male power/"civilization." Hence the women's Bacchanal takes

place in the remote Harz mountains. But the mountains are not conceived as a beautiful and natural habitat. There is something forbidding and menacing there. They are presented as architectural structures erected by Mammon. As Faust and Mephistopheles ascend towards their destination, they are assailed by a Wind Hag, whose intentions are purportedly malevolent and homicidal. Goethe does not render an image of a gorgeous, youthful and virile Aeolus, or his female counterpart. Again, it is an ugly old woman who is the personification of this natural force.

Then there is the Bacchanal itself, which is rife with female kind. Associated with the festivity are a number of certain animals, but they prove to be creatures not drawn from a regal, or heraldic bestiary. Instead, they are all less appreciated animals borrowed perhaps from Hieronymus Bosch's triptych, the Garden of Delights, or its source, medieval folklore. They include lizards, a stinking goat, a mother sow, a snail, and mice. These symbolize women's connection with the natural world and its processes, all of which fits into a certain space within a male hierarchy. Here the whole mess of nature is given a certain unsavory connotation.

Goethe, like many others, cannot conceptualize a large body of women capable of self-government. In this case, they are lorded over by a devil named Urian. It seems impossible to conceive that women could exist in a zone outside of patriarchy and not be associated with evil, whereas in fact, witches and witches' texts often claim to disdain a binary vision of the

universe. The action perhaps reaches its apogee when Faust acquiesces to dance. His dancing partner must perforce be young and beautiful, although she is too sexually forward for Faust's taste. When a red mouse springs out of the maiden's mouth, Faust loses his sexual appetite. Perhaps the most important point to be made here lies in how Goethe juxtaposes the world of "our" male magic against "their" female magic. Needless to say, male magic is somehow sanctioned and privileged, while female magic is always heterdox, always vilified.

Soon after entering into the terrifying and loathsome female territory/laboratory/herland/queendom, Faust gazes into a mirror. Normally a mirror is supposed to reflect back an image of oneself; now this one does and does not perform this function. In the mirror Faust catches a glimpse of a lovely woman. But one must ask oneself, does Faust truly see this person? He sees her, but only in the way that he sees Gretchen, in his own terms, in his own image, his own teleos, never respecting her personhood. It is the male Gaze which will prove to be so ruinous for the guileless girl in the next scene. This makes one think of Virginia Woolf when she contends, "Women have served all these centuries as looking-glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size" (Woolf, 35). One could claim that this is exactly what is happening in this scene. A sort of distortion. There is a looking glass where in the place of an image of himself, there is an image of a woman/child. Yet he sees not

her in her reality but himself, his desire, his libidinal economy, himself twice his size.

In this story Gretchen is the Other, but in a manner of speaking Faust cannot see/does not perceive the Other; he only sees the Selfsame. Gretchen is valuable not in herself, or for herself, but only insofar as what she can do for Faust, for the pleasure she can give him. Gretchen is allowed no project, no agenda of her own. Instead she is Faust's project. Or perhaps it is more correct to say that she galvanizes him into his project. She is the instrument which initiates him into the world he has not known. On one level the two of them could be said to construe the binary couple, Culture/Nature, where Faust, the male, is equated to Culture and Gretchen, the female, is equated to Nature. When speaking of binary couples Hélène Cixous claims, "Death is always at work" (Cixous, 288). And in fact, in Goethe's discourse, Gretchen is the expendable one. She dies so that Faust can live, can go and discover his self-in-the-world. She is only collateral damage. Her self-in-the-world is of no consequence here. Her value lies in that she provides a background against which Faust is foregrounded. Evidence of the transformation that Gretchen has wrought upon Faust can be found in the Forest and Cavern scene. Faust prays:

> Exalted Spirit, you gave me, gave me all
> I prayed for. Aye, and it is not in vain
> That you have turned your face in fire upon me.
> You gave me glorious Nature for my kingdom
> With power to feel her and enjoy her. Nor
> Is it a mere cold wondering glance you grant me

But allow me to gaze into her depths
Even as into the bosom of a friend.
(MacNiece, 341) [emphasis mine]

If we think back to the beginning of the drama we will recall that Faust looks on nature as an outsider; he realizes that there is a universe of sensations, experiences, and wisdom to be gleaned there, but somehow he cannot penetrate it, access it. He is exiled from that universe. He is unable to open the "doors of perception" or to "break on through to the other side." But after his desire is consummated with Gretchen, it appears that the doors of that world start to swing open to him. Through her, he discovers the mechanism inside of himself, which propels him out of himself, galvanizes him to make forays into the world that has hitherto been unknown to him.

Faust is a story about a young man's initiation into the world; a sort of Bildungsroman or a Bildungs-drama? Obviously, Faust is not really a young man. However, he is provided with a young man's body and face. This is apt in the sense that he is not a real man, or a real adult. He has never been fully human. Sexuality seems a stranger to him. With his initiation into sexuality, he becomes empowered and starts to live.

Gretchen, too, undergoes sexual initiation. Unfortunately, no empowering takes place here. Sexual initiation for a girl outside of patriarchal marriage within a patriarchal society can only spell disaster, if not death. Once more we discover that there is no gender mutuality within the Faust text. Faust comes to a point in his life where he feels imprisoned,

trapped, enclosed, a feeling which Goethe, as we know from his biography, could easily empathize with. To escape enclosure he goes on a Quest. Within patriarchal discourse Quest appears to be reserved for men. Women are not envisioned as being able to go out into the wide world. If Quest is reserved for the male, is woman's only recourse Flight? Overwhelmed by Faust's amorous assertions in Martha's garden, Gretchen does flee to the summer house in a half-hearted manner. Faust responds in a typically obtuse male fashion. He construes the flight as flirtation, coquetry, blurting out, "You rogue. Teasing me so. I've caught you" (MacNeice, 340). Obviously misconstruing his intentions, Gretchen has not run far, or fast enough. Faust has just confessed, in a rather cowardly, oblique manner to loving her. In the daisy-picking scene, Faust blathers, "He loves you! Do you know the meaning of that? He loves you!" (MacNeice, 339). Who exactly "he" is is anyone's guess. Faust is not man enough to utter "I." At any rate he distances himself from the subject of that emotion. Ultimately, the only person he truly loves is himself. Real love, obviously, should be more than a feeling. It should entail a concern for the loved one's well-being. With Faust that comes too little, too late. It is love, one supposes, as Faust claims, but unfortunately it is of the dwarf variety. Moreover, what does Faust's love ultimately mean for Gretchen, if not simply and straighforwardly, death?

Having taken note of how Goethe constructs the female in the supernatural realm, one wonders how the German writer will perform in the

ordinary realm of the everyday. It is not surprising to discover that he performs in much the same virulent manner. There is the morally reprehensible Frau Martha, who does indeed act as a sort of procuress. Gretchen is a young girl with no father to protect her. Her only brother is away from home fulfilling his military service. Frau Martha is well acquainted with how Faust's gift was received by Gretchen's mother. When Gretchen receives a second gift of jewels, Frau Martha advises Gretchen to keep it. She proves to be avaricious, immoral and irresponsible. The older woman displays the moral fiber she is made of, when moments after receiving news of her husband's death, she begins to flirt outrageously with the fiend. Later she allows her home to be a site for illicit assignations. As a mature woman, she ought to realize the sort of dangers that are inherent in this sort of situation for a very young girl. There is the gaping class difference. But perhaps most obvious is the fact that a man who has honorable intentions towards a girl will attempt to make acquaintance with the family of that girl.

To round up our discussion of Gretchen it must be mentioned that we will meet her once again very briefly in heaven in the last few moments of the drama. There she will prove to be formed of a different mettle than Dido. She will not turn away seemingly unmoved and silent. Instead, she will play her requisite part of intermediatory to the ultimate intermediatory, the Virgin Mary. Here in heaven, Gretchen no longer plays puella simplex. She is stylized out of recognition. She has lost her unique human and

feminine syntax. She does not resemble herself. She resembles Beatrice and like Beatrice she is not allowed to rest in heaven. She must continue to play ancillary to Faust. Here she must let him know that she holds no grudge against him. His sins are exonerated. She is part of the redeeming process: "The early-cherished/ No longer blemished/ Returns to bliss" (307). Her role, as it turns out is to lead him on to higher spheres. A strange but familiar asymmetry again emerges. Here is a man, who on earth led a woman-child to the lowest level of human despair and anguish. In her turn, this woman leads the man to the highest level of bliss in heaven. Who pleaded on her behalf? Who hastened to offer her a hand to help her negotiate unknown terrain? These questions will remain unanswered.

The last female character we will discuss from Part One is Lieschen. This is an acquaintance of Gretchen's whom the latter bumps into at the village well. As well as being cruel and vindictive, Lieschen is a teller of tales. She ridicules and seems to take pleasure in the plight of Barbara, another girl they both know. Barbara has purportedly become pregnant out of wedlock. Lieschen appears to lay the entire onus of Barbara's predicament on Barbara's shoulders. The former appears totally inculcated into patriarchal values. She has no sympathy for her own kind, no caritas for the fallen girl. Hers is a double standard. There is no question of the decency, or morality, or culpability of the man responsible. He is not to be held accountable for his part of the dilemma.

Part Two will also prove to provide the reader with more instances of Goethe's negative portrayals of female characters. Due to the greater fantastical quality of this section, most of these are supernatural. Nevertheless, a few are human.

As the most significant lead in Part 1 is played by Gretchen, in Part 2 that privilege is given over to Helena. Perhaps the chief distinction between the two heroines lies in the manner in which they are treated. At first glance there appears to be a deep cleavage between the two. Faust behaves perfectly towards Helena; sharing his best with her. He treats her like a queen, which is in fact what she is. Obviously there is more to it than that, for Helena stands for the superlative in the world, in space, as well as in time. She is supposed to be the most beautiful woman in the world ever. Faust is able to give to her that which he was never able to give Gretchen, namely himself. Why is it that he is able to do this for Helena and not for Gretchen? What does Helena have that Gretchen does not? It is status, power, class. Helen is born to the upper class. She is the daughter of King Tyndarus (or Zeus in alternate versions). She has had great wealth. She is important. Unlike Gretchen, she is not a force of nature. She does not provide Faust with the ground of being. She is herself culture, the apogee of civilization.

There are many admirable things about how Goethe and Faust treat Helena. Goethe distinguishes himself from Marlowe when he gives Helena a

voice. Not only that, he also allows her to tell her own story. When she tells us that story, she relates just how much she has been a plaything, a coveted objet d'art in the hands of men, a commodity within patriarchy. She mentions being abducted by Theseus as a child. She goes on to reveal that while Patroclus was her favorite suitor, her father's will decreed she marry Menelaus. She calls Paris the Phrygian pirate, implying abduction once more. While Goethe attaches a great importance to Helena's beauty, it is also exceedingly admirable that he allows that there is more to Helena than that. She is put to the test in the scene with Lynceus, the Warden of the Tower, who has been remiss in the execution of his duties. She is put in the place of a judge and granted power over Lynceus' life and death. She displays admirable judgement and clemency when she grants him pardon. Obviously, her beauty has not gone excessively to her head. There is intelligence there, too, as well as a sense of justice.

However, despite this unexpected generosity on the part of Goethe in gr anting Helena a modicum of personhood, she is still caught in the patriarchal machinations of a patriarchal text. First of all she is a prize, the ultimate prize, the finest of women handed over to whom Goethe believes is the finest of men. Then, in order that symmetry exist between Part One and Part Two of the tragedy, she is removed from Faust. This loss, one deems, is supposed to be a form of chastisement, a kind of penance. By leaving Faust, Helena is also an agent of his salvation; an instrument of Karma. Through her intervention, he will be granted absolution and thereby gain

Paradise. In the text, Helena also has no project or agenda of her own. She is brought into the drama for and because of Faust. There is no question of her redemption and in fact, she is absent from heaven.

Early on in Part II, one encounters a mother and daugher duo, who enter upon the carnival scene. They flash on and by very quickly, just long enough for the mother to demonstrate what insidious and odious creatures women are. It becomes apparent that the mother has always treated her daughter as a potential exchange commodity, hoping to trade her daughter's attractive looks for marriage to a wealthy man. There is a suggestion that though the daughter attracts suitors, she is not able to sustain their interest; as if there is nothing there besides her looks. Her mother is shrewd enough to realize that a carnival may provide the girl with an opportunity to meet men. She urges the daughter to do her utmost to lay a marriage trap for some poor, unsuspecting wight. Goethe may find these strategies heinous, but he does not question the structures of a society where it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, for a woman to earn her bread honestly; i.e., he does not question why women are forced to develop underhanded strategies.

Perhaps the most congenial female character in Part Two is Baucis, whom we encounter in one of the penultimate scenes of the play. Baucis is a sweet little old lady who is married to an equally endearing old man. It seems that the two of them have spent a lifetime together. They are renowned for their kindness and generosity. A stranger comes to visit them.

He thanks them for having saved his life and for having displayed great hospitality to him, once, a long time before. Baucis is remarkable not only for the largess of her spirit, but also for her perceptivity. She knows that the prodigious development that has taken place adjacent to her property has come about with the help of a diabolical agency. She and her husband, Philemon, form a tiny microcosm of humanity, perhaps the only true Utopia in the text. Unfortunately, their presence in the play is very short-lived. Faust cannot help but covet their lilliputian holdings and subsequently orders Mephistopheles and his henchmen to procure it for him. These thugs end up by taking three innocent lives, although that is not what Faust wanted and it is not exactly deliberate. The odd time that Goethe does not create an unsavory female character, he gets rid of her rather quickly. There is no room for decency or generosity in the fictional universe of Goethe's text.

When Goethe decides to try to incorporate Helena into his text he is faced with the problem of how to wield her away from Menelaus and introduce her to Faust. For this purpose he brings in Phorcyas whom Helena encounters sitting on the ground by the fireplace in her erstwhile palace. Phorcyas is supposed to be powerful and supernatural, an uncannily wise woman who has psychic abilities; one of the Phorcyads or Graiae. This seeress/pythia has a good deal of knowledge and insight into Helena's life and tribulations. Eventually she supposedly saves Helena's, as well as Helena's servants' lives. There is a great emphasis in the text on Phorcyas' physical loathsomeness. Once more Goethe makes his point that gifted

women are ugly. Subsequently we learn that this Phorcyas is in fact Mephistopheles. Goethe thus takes his equation one step further; women who are privy to arcane knowledge are physically repellant and the source of their power is diabolical.

The rest of the important female characters in the tragedy are also supernatural. First, there are the Great Mothers. These appear to be a mixture of chthonic deities and sybils, or at least, ancient pre-patriarchal, pre-historic, powerful female forces. It is interesting that Mephistopheles affirms their existence, at the same time revealing that Faust's contemporaries have forgotten and are ignorant of these realities, "Goddesses undivined/ By mortals" (156). The revelation of the existence of these deities elicit in Faust a reaction of great horror, fear and loathing (a commonplace patriarchal reaction). But Faust will not hesitate to use the Great Mothers, if it will further his ends.

Then there are the Lamiae. These are spectres who are vampiric in nature. They long for human flesh and blood. In order to achieve their ends, they incorporate themselves into the shapes of lovely human girls in order to entrap men. They tease and cavort around with Mephistopheles considerably. With the exception of Empusa, they appear enticing. They try very hard to inveigle the devil, strongly urging him to choose from among them. But each time he chooses one, she changes shape on him, often metamorphizing into some object, much to his dismay. Thus, the hapless

fiend is made a fool of. There is some sort of accusation in this scene, leveled at women being masters, or perhaps mistresses is a more apt word, of deception. Women's paint pots and corsets are criticized as being instruments of female duplicity. The scene evokes a disgruntled customer in a whorehouse, who in the bright and sober light of morning realizes that all is not what it appeared to be, in the dim lights of the night before.

A page or two before the end of the play, as Faust's soul is wafting its way upwards, through the heavens, one encounters the chorus of Penitent Women. These address Mater Gloriosa, begging her for mercy in the case of Faust's soul. It is obvious that Faust himself is not reduced to begging for his own soul or salvation. He never has to experience opprobrium of any sort. It is also curious that it is not a Chorus of Penitent Men. Is begging for mercy too unmanly an occupation for a group of men? Apparently so.

At this moment, when the Penitent Women and Gretchen plead for Faust, it would perhaps behoove us to discuss that phenomena, or personage, to whom Gretchen is in fact leading Faust, i.e., the Eternal Feminine/Mater Gloriosa. This valorization, or apotheosis of the feminine comes as rather a surprise to the unwary reader. In Goethe's own time some critics felt that this whole passage was rather too operatic and too Catholic for their Protestant taste. It appears to be a sort of afterthought, a superfluity, a championing of woman that is not borne out in the text. On one level the

female reader is flattered. A number of times in the second part of his drama, Goethe seems to be striving to create balance or harmony with the first part; to rectify matters. He attempts to undo some of the harm he has done, or that Faust has done in Part I. Goethe frames the drama on both sides with a metaphysical construct -- the aforementioned Christian heaven. The frontispiece is comprised entirely of male characters and there seems to be quite a facetious tone to it. The tailpiece, conversely, seems to teem with all manner of female kind and the overt facetiousness seems to be gone. Neither God the Father, nor his illustrious son step onto this tableau. We only get as far as the Virgin Mary/Mater Gloriosa. From one perspective the whole notion of caritas that is evoked here is very moving and beautiful. One is reminded of The Tempest when another aged artist wishes to make his peace with the world. There is that same sense of forgiveness. But on the other hand there is something which is disturbing in this final scene. There is something in it of a non sequitur. Both Part One and Part Two of the tragedy are filled with suspect, underhanded and malevolent women. Now suddenly woman attains a very high status. She is the repository of caritas. (Of course, this paradox is not unique to Goethe's discourse. Goethe only echoes medieval Christian, especially Catholic positions.) The Eternal Feminine then demonstrates her caritas to a wayward lamb, a wolf in sheep's clothing, some would contend. Is caritas the exclusive possession of woman? Is it simply a man's world where men are allowed to live their lives as scoundrels and bank on women's caritas in the end? Who demonstrates caritas to the wayward woman? Who is to be the

intermediatory for her? All of this brings to mind more of Virginia Woolf's musings:

> A very queer composite being thus emerges. Imaginatively she is of the highest importance; practically, she is completely insignificant. She pervades poetry from cover to cover; she is all but absent from history. She dominates the lives of kings and conquerors in fiction; in fact she was the slave of any boy whose parents forced a ring upon her finger. Some of the most inspired words, some of the most profound thoughts in literature fall from her lips; in real life she could hardly read, could scarcely spell, and was the property of her husband.
>
> It was certainly an odd monster that one made up by reading the historians first and the poets afterwards -- a worm winged like an eagle; the spirit of life and beauty in a kitchen chopping up suet. (Woolf, 43)

After a fashion, a woman reader might be charmed that the action leads to, and stops at Mater Gloriosa. But in fact, Mater Gloriosa in her short little *énoncé* reveals that she is not telos, she is just a station on the way, "Come, soar to higher spheres, precede him,/ He will divine and follow thee" [emphasis mine] (307).

God is alive. Magic is afoot. God is alive. Magic is afoot. God is afoot. Magic is alive. Alive is afoot. Magic never died. God never sickened. Many poor men lied. Many sick men lied. Magic never weakened. Magic never hid. Magic always ruled. God is afoot. God never died. God was ruler though his funeral lengthened. Though his mourners thickened. Magic never fled. Though his shrouds were hoisted the naked God did live. Though his words were twisted the naked Magic thrived. Though his death wa published round and round the world the heart did not believe. Many hurt men wondered. Many struck men bled. Magic never faltered. Magic always led. Many stones were rolled but God would not lie down. Many wild men lied. Many fat men listened. Though they offered stones Magic still was fed. Though they locked their coffers Magic still was fed. Though they locked their coffers God was always served. Magic is afoot. God rules. Alive is afoot. Alive is in command. Many weak men hungered. Many strong men thrived. Though they boasted solitude God was at their side. Nor the dreamer in his cell, nor the captain on the hill. Magic is alive. Though his death was pardoned round and round the world the heart would not believe. Though laws were carved in marble they could not shelter men. Though alters built in parliaments they could not order men. Police arrested Magic and Magic went with them for Magic loves the hungry. But Magic would not tarry. It moves from arm to arm. It would not stay with them. Magic is afoot. It cannot come to harm. It rests in an empty palm. It spawns in an empty mind. But magic is no instrument. Magic is the end. Many men drove Magic but Magic stayed behind. Many strong men lied. They only passed through Magic and out the other side. Many weak men lied. They came to God in secret and though they left him nourished they would not tell who healed. Though mountains danced before them they said that God was dead. Though his shrouds were hoisted the naked God did live. This I mean to whisper to my mind. This I mean to laugh with in my mind. This I mean my mind to serve till service is but Magic moving through the world, and mind itself is Magic coursing through the flesh, and flesh itself is Magic dancing on a clock, and time itself the Magic Length of God.

- Leonard Cohen, Beautiful Losers

Chapter III: Valéry

The third and final Faust text to be discussed was written by Paul Valéry towards the end of his life. This dramatic work, which is aptly titled "Mon Faust," was penned and published in fragmentary form in the 1940's. Following in the footsteps of Marlowe and Goethe, Valéry incorporates the name Faust into the title of his work. However, he qualifies this name by placing the personal adjective "Mon" in front of it and puts quotation marks around both words. These little additions manifest some sort of apprehension. It is as if he foresees that the reader might find the construction highly idiosyncratic. Valéry betrays a hesitancy or fear in doing this. It is as if he acknowledges that this Faust is perhaps more "his" than "yours" or "theirs." The French author exposes a consciousness of his literary predecessors. There is some anxiety of influence here. Valéry seems to be thinking back through his fathers. Indeed, we shall discover that Valéry's personal vision has taken unprecedented liberties with the redoubtable paradigm. This shall prove to be the least Faustian of all the Fausts we have hitherto encountered.

Just underneath the title "Mon Faust," one discovers a subtitle in brackets (Ébauches). Obviously Valéry does not consider the contents of the book as polished and complete. The text, in fact, contains two distinct and seemingly unrelated pieces. The first entry is entitled "Lust" and carries the subtitle "La Demoiselle de Cristal." Beneath these words one discovers the

genre that it is to be classified under, "Comédie." The second entry is entitled "Le Solitaire." It, too, carries a subtitle, "Les Malédictions d'Univers" and also a classification, albeit a highly unusual one, "Féerie dramatique." It will be "Lust," the first entry, that will be the subject of our further investigations; the second entry, "Le Solitaire," contains fewer of the classical Faustian trappings that one has become accustomed to and the text seems to be more tentative than that of the "Comedy." Also, the devil is in attendance only during the first two pages of the "Féerie" and moreover, there is no preeminent female character comparable to Helen, Gretchen, Bulgakov's Margarita, etc. Hence, "Lust" serves as a more fit companion piece to Marlowe's and Goethe's dramatic work.

At first glance Valéry's Faust seems to be cast of the same mould as his predecessors. He is still hovering about in a study and still in possession of a voluminous library and a laboratory. He is scholarly, egotistical, dictatorial, supercilious, ruthless, exclusive and libidinous. Our man is still cleverly manipulating words and dissecting experience. Perhaps Mephistopheles is able to describe him best, maintaining that Faust has a head that is "si abstruse, si compliquée, si brouillée de connaissances bizarres, si pénétrée d'analyses extrêmes, pétrie de tant de contradictions, à la fois super-délirante et extralucide" (40). Elsewhere, Mephistopheles admits that Faust "m'intrigue parfois, comme parfois me déconcertent, l'extrême intelligence et la lucidité excessive de Faust" (147). Pressing on, the reader uncovers a plethora of descriptions. Faust is variously described

as "grand," (173) as "triste et détaché," (173) "une forte tête," (166) "un monstre," (193) "cet avare," (174), one who "s'amuse avec ce qu' il y a dans la cervelle," (157) "domine l'esprit par l'esprit," (186) and "un vrai Prince des Idées" (26). Thus for the most part Act I puts forth nothing startling new. This will come later.

At the beginning of Act II Faust is accosted by a young man, a student who is somewhat of a sycophant. He calls Faust "Maître" (72) and defines for us the man that Faust has been. According to the boy, Faust could not possibly be "un homme" (72). He reveals that le Maître has achieved much, made many discoveries, written prolifically. He says to Faust, "Vous êtes ici entre votre grand génie qui creé, et toute votre gloire qui vous revient du large de l'univers pensant" (73). The two engage in conversation for some while and it slowly dawns upon the reader that this particular Faust is different from his predecessors. Perhaps, it is simply that he is older and wiser. But yet it is much more than just that. One of the salient characteristics of the classical Faust is his over-reach, his powerful urge to travel, to see and acquire, his fetishization of "voler" (Cixous and Clement, 96) an expression which Helen Cixous defines as containing two of its meanings simultaneously; i.e., to fly and to steal, and which curiously resonates with another French word "violer." Valéry's Faust is different. He has become wary of striving and of seeking; it seems that he has started to divine what Trinh T. Minh-ha eloquently articulates, "It is probably difficult for a normal probing mind to recognize that to seek is to lose, for

seeking presupposes a separation between the seeker and the sought, the continuing me and the change it undergoes" (Minh-ha, 95).

In fact, one may propose that Faust has two selves in this play. (Why not? After all Goethe's Faust has two souls vying with each other in his breast.) The second self is born out of the "*moment d'extase*" that takes place towards the end of Act II. Most of what we learn about this new self can be found in the rough sketches for Act IV that Valéry left behind. The first self has been evolving, undergoing a metamorphosis for a long time. Originally this self was the striver, the exploiter, the colonizer, the imperialist, the fascist, the rapist. When we encounter Faust in the opening pages of Valéry's play, these excesses have all but disappeared. The philanderer, "le salaud," is perhaps the last to go. The "*moment d'extase*" seems to bring about his death. But this does not mean that Faust is repudiating women, or Lust, or even love-making. It is just that he has a new attitude towards them.

In conversation with the student, Faust reveals that while he has voyaged around the world, at this point in his life he can forego travel. He has no more illusions about travelling. "Je voudrais bien faire un voyage qui m'assurât, moi aussi, de mon existence" (73). He has realized that one cannot escape oneself. "J'en ai fait quelques autres, qui m'ont finalement ramené sur ce banc, et qui m'ont appris ... diverses choses" (73). He has become cognizant that the inner journey, the inner quest, is the most

important of all. "Mais rien sur moi-même que je n'eusse trouvé d'abord dans ma chambre ou dans ce jardin" (73). He has grasped that going inward can be as rewarding, if not more so, than going-travelling-outward. Many readers, French educated particularly, would also perceive, in this respect, a sly, ironic intertexuality with Voltaire's Candide and the protagonist's travels and tribulations, which end with the famous dictum "il faut cultiver son jardin."

One could claim that the classical Faustian story, as defined by Marlowe and Goethe, is a story about desire in its excessive form, lust in the worst sense of the word. Some might call it simply the male libidinal economy. It is an urge to enter a space which is not rightly one's own, ravish it and discard it, and thus go on and on; entering, ravishing, discarding. In this story, it is the young devotee who feels that he has been the victim of this sort of treatment. In a conversation with Lust, he claims, "ce regard me changeait en chose, me réduisait à l'état de spécimen sans valeur d'humanité quelconque, un animal parlant ... Moi, qui lui apportais mon coeur..." (191). And elsewhere, "Ce Faust qui m'a déçu, blessé, remis à rien..." (198). This sort of economy reveals a lack of respect, a lack of understanding of what Martin Buber calls the I-Thou relationship, the perceiving of myself in you. It is an attempt to grab or steal experience, or an urge to accumulate experiences without truly perceiving the subtleties of one, without savouring the multitudinous flavours of one of them.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing we discover about this Faust is that he repudiates desire. The young man, who has travelled from the other side of the globe, has sought Faust out looking for advice. The advice that Faust has to offer this loquacious acolyte is formulated in a short, albeit pithy statement, "Prenez garde à l'Amour." It is not normal love, or affection, that Faust has on his mind, but specifically passion, that insalubrious urge to grab and possess. Upon perusing this text, one observes that it is redolent with Eastern philosophical/spiritual themes. Now perhaps one of the commonplace interdictions found in Eastern discourse (but also found in the West, as in Schopenhauer) is the one aimed against desire. The thinking is simple: the human subject suffers. How can one eradicate suffering? Only by eliminating desire. One suffers because one cannot obtain that which one desires. Rid oneself of desire and suffering shall vanish. The point is to be desire-free.

Valéry here is thinking specifically of suffering in relation to women. It seems that he is suggesting that one ought to eliminate "Love," i.e., passion, passionate love, and in this way one may avoid suffering. (It is important to remember that Faust nonetheless valourizes affection "*la tendresse*.") It is interesting that this idea is taken up once more towards the end of Act III. This time it emerges in a dialogue between Faust's amanuensis and her would-be young lover. He makes advances towards her, which she in turn discourages. "Prenez garde à l'amour," (199) she warns. But he is still innocent of the world, somewhat puerile and of course, an

incipient Faust. "Non. Je n'y prends pas garde et je me laisse aimer, vous aimer..." (199) he rejoins. Lust changes her tune somewhat. "Prenons garde à l'amour" (199). She proceeds to elaborate. "Oui, prenons garde ... Je sais trop ce qu'il est l'amour. C'est un bien qui fait mal ... Très mal." (199)

Valéry has taken up an idea from Goethe's drama, where in Part I Faust and Mephistopheles have just made each other's acquaintance. The former tries to discover the name of the latter. In that particular situation Mephistopheles prevaricates, makes a number of innuendos, while basically leaving the reader in the dark. Valéry chooses to give us a precise definition. However, in Goethe, it is a question of evil which always procures good, with Valéry, it is good which does evil and that good is love, or passion, i.e., excessive desire.

Valéry seems to be incorporating this idea into his admonition directed to his devotee. "Beware of Love," he admonishes. It seems that this reproof is not a Pauline misogyny, not a monastic urging to forego the presence of women. Nor is Faust proposing a lack of affection for women. It is quite the opposite. In the best of all possible worlds, Faust envisions himself in a relationship with a woman. He feels a need to have a woman in his household, working for him. And ideally he imagines there to be an affection, better than that, a mutual tenderness between them. Faust seems to have finally learnt his lesson. This becomes manifest in a conversation

with Mephistopheles. Faust insists, "Il ne s'agit pas du tout d'effeuiller une nouvelle Marguerite" (37) and a few passages later, "Je te répète qu'il ne s'agit d'une nouvelle affair Marguerite" (39). Faust is quite adamant, "L'amour est hors de question" (40). He expounds, "Peux-tu concevoir que j'aie besoin d'un aimable dévouement auprès de moi, une présence douce et complaisante, et tout près d'être tendre? Et même ... assez tendre. Oui, la tendresse, tout court." (41) And finally, "Point d'amour: je sais trop qu'il s'achève en ruine, en dégoût, en désastres: c'est le froid, c'est la haine, ou la qui termine ces jeux de la chair ou du coeur, et qui règle leur compte aux délices! Mais, je te le redis, je ne veux qu' une présence douce auprès de ma pensée, une assistance sensible et effective." (41). Hence, one may extrapolate that *la tendresse* is being privileged over *l'amour*.

This is how the old Faust intellectualizes his relations with the opposite sex, but in the scene subsequent to the one with the student, we shall see a Faust who is not quite so steadfast in his convictions. Alone, in the garden, on a temperate summer eve with a beautiful, charming and not unintelligent woman, Faust is sorely tempted to succumb to her charms. He is not in need of Mephistopheles' intervention. In fact, he does not even have to play the role of seducer. Lust is the one to make the first physical/sexual overture. Although the temptation is great, Faust finally triumphs. However, he is not rejecting her, or discarding her. Conversely, he has become cognizant of the fact that he shall be able to keep her, only if he lets her go. Perhaps Faust has finally learned how to master himself and within

the context of this discourse, this means to abandon lasciviousness, forfeit passion. All this seems to suggest a sort of Buddhist Middle Way, which begs for a harmonious middle ground, not self-indulgence, but not renunciation either; not a passionate love affair with Lust, but not a rejection of her either. It is suggested that ideally for Faust, Lust would remain by his side, lovely to gaze upon, assiduous in the execution of her duties, and replete with a profound tenderness -- not passion! -- towards her Master.

In his Commentaire sur "Mon Faust" de Paul Valéry Erich von Richthofen contends that Faust's dilemma in the garden is not at all sexual in its nature, "Il ne s'agit d' un amour voluptueux" (Richthofen, 7). He is wrong however. It is sexual. The difficulty here is that there are two kinds of sexuality to be found in the play. The first sexuality is what Mephistopheles understands of "*l'amour*" that fits very well into the schematics of Judeo-Christianity, and is tied in with the old Faust, the one who rapes Gretchen. This is what is meant by "*la convulsion grossière*." This is the sexuality that Faust wishes to exorcise out of himself. However, this still leaves *tendresse* and the second kind of sexuality that is only hinted at within the three acts that constitute the published play. More is to be found in the fragments that were to constitute Act IV. There Valéry is thinking about a kind of mystical union, *hieros gamos*, whereby sexuality is linked to spirituality. Where the lover seeks to discover the divine in the Other: "un chiasme de deux destinées," "une métathèse" (Richthofen, 95). It is a Tantric notion whereby sexuality is a gateway to spirituality. All of this

appears to be somewhat confusing for Richthofen. Nonetheless, he perceives that Valéry refuses to reject the Body and the senses. He proceeds to quote from the Cahiers: "Retirer les corps d'une liason entre individus', c'est retirer la poésie, et le mysticisme -- c'est en ôter l'obscur, et ce qui s'accomode aux clairs de lune, et ce qui attend avec angoisse, et ce qui rend ivre d'incertitude infinie. Alors il n'y a plus de trouble. Mais peut-on s'aimer clairement? S'il n'y a que les corps, les choses sont trop claires. S'il n'y sont point, il n'y a plus d'ineffable ni d'infinis." (Valéry, Cahiers, VIII, 777) It seems obvious that in these lines Valéry rejects what one could call the Hindu vilification of the senses or the Christian calumniation of the body. The French writer's scheme of things is more holistic. He is not a transcendentalist. But he does appear to be acquainted with Eastern thought, with Kundalini Yoga, or perhaps Tantra. One surmises that he would be in agreement with D.T. Suzuki, when the latter declares, "The Absolute is in no way distinct from the world of discrimination ... The Absolute is in the world of opposites and not apart from it" (Suzuki, 9).

Certainly the notion of Eros Energoumenos is neither a Faustian, nor a Mephistophelian, nor finally a Valérian invention. It is a notion that is well defined, albeit not well explained in the text, "Érôs en tant que source d'extrême énergie" (Richthofen, 21). Richthofen picks up on this idea and proceeds to totally misinterpret it, giving it a conventionally virulent Christian interpretation, "Énergumène est dérivé du grec energoumenos et signifie 'possédé par le démon,' au sens figuré 'exalté, exprimant ses

passions par des gestes (violents)'" (Richthofen, 21). But this interpretation does not really help us in unravelling the meaning of our text. Instead it manifests a belief in binary opposition, or a dualistic universe; a universe which has started to be inconsequential for Faust. In conversation with Mephistopheles, he iterates, "Tu ne te doutes même pas qu' il y a bien autre chose dans le monde que du Bien et du Mal" (46). One of the basic objectives in yoga is to identify energy centres in the body and to learn to channel this energy. Sexual energy is supposedly located in the energy centres, or chakras, in the lowest part of the spine. The yoga practitioner is taught to channel this energy to the brain. Tantra, the religion based on the sexual act, goes even further. Bernard Soulié explains it thus:

> Intercourse may last hours once the Tantrika has mastered the ejaculation of his sperm. The shakti then experiences repeated orgasms and pleasure which is made steadily more acute by the retention of the seed. As for the male, he advances slowly in a delirium which, though initially sexual, later becomes a divine ecstasy when the Kundalini Serpent reaches the final phase, by arousing him to a dazzling cosmic understanding. Yet the fire which consumes the Tantrika is not merely an image. Anyone who ignites this flame within himself cannot, without serious physical and psychic risks, avoid its higher aim: the penetration of the mystery of Creation, whose seed each and every man carries in his sexual organs, a microcosm of the androgynous couple, Shiva-Shakti. (Soulié, 36)

This is very prosaic in comparison with Ibn al-Farid who expresses the same idea thus:

> My dawn shone forth
> In splendour; all my darkness fled away
> Here I attained a height the intellect
> Recoils before, and she was my junction
> And my union with myself.
> I beamed with joy (for I had reached myself) (al-Farid, 120)

In the text, Faust does not have to practice yoga. It seems that Lust's presence arouses him, but then in the garden scene Faust rechannels that sexual energy. One could claim that there is a parallel here to Goethe's text. In the German tragedy, Faust uses Gretchen to discover physical ecstasy, while in the French comedy Faust uses Lust in order [illegible] into spiritual ecstasy. (In this conception Valéry could also [illegible] Freud and his contention that art and culture are sublim[illegible] libido.)

It is in the first part of Act II that it becomes perceptible that Faust is not quite the same attractive malefactor he was [illegible] Marlow[illegible] and Goethe, but it will be only in the second part of Act II, wher[illegible] Lust in the garden, that it will become fully apparent just how much [illegible] metamorphosis he has undergone. Their coming together begins with Faust handing a rose to Lust. Does this signify that he is about to give his heart to Lust? But the rose is also a symbol of the mystic centre and is associated with the symbols of the circle and the sun. Has Faust finally discovered his mystic center? Perhaps, just perhaps.

At the moment when the reader starts to believe that the rose might signify something romantic, s/he witnesses Faust returning to his old logocentric and dictatorial self. He betrays an occidental concern with time when he urges Lust, "Mais prenez vite de quoi écrire ... Je vais dicter ici ... Les idées viennent en foule" (88). When Lust momentarily indulges herself with the pleasures of her rose, Faust harasses her, "Mais les idées

n'attendant pas. Etes-vous prête? Posez là cette fleur" (89). In this mode of being, he reveals how shallow he can be, "Les idées ne coûtent rien ... c'est la forme" (89). Obviously, not substance.

But suddenly, inexplicably, there is a shift in his consciousness. He loses his perception of time. He perceives the exquisiteness of the evening. Not only has he entered the garden, but now the garden has entered him, "Il fait divin, ce soir..." (89). He is moving out of the intellectualizing part of his mind. "Mais non ... Je ne dicte pas ... J'existe" (90). He has sat down and it seems that he could not be more content. In fact, and as I believe the subsequent passages shall demonstrate, Faust has found himself on that bed of ease, that he spoke about in Goethe's drama while making the wager with Mephistopheles. A bed of ease which meant to signify ultimate satisfaction and a rejection of striving; a sort of Nirvana or Satori. It appears that in this impending "*moment d'extase*," that ultimate intoxication that the whirling dervish seeks, Faust has discovered a response to the query that Rilke poses in one of the poems in Sonnets to Orpheus: "Ein Gott vermags. Wie aber, sag mir, soll ein Mann ihm folgen durch die schmale Leier" (Rilke, 6). He seems to have achieved everything that Marlowe's and Goethe's protagonists were incapable of: being fully present in the moment. It appears that he has released himself from the occidental affliction of postponed gratification; the dupery of believing that satisfaction/happiness/Utopia is somewhere out there, far away in space and a nebulous later in time. "Ce moment est d'un si grand prix ... Il me possède comme ces accords de sons qui vont plus loin

que la limite du désir de l'ouïe, et qui font tout l'être se fondre, se rendre à je ne sais quelle naissance de confusion bienheureuse de ses forces et de ses faiblesses. Toutes choses qui nous entourent chantent" (91). Lust herself is able to sense Faust's moment of rapture, experience of the divine in all things. "Vous paraissez un dieu, ce soir ... vous faites plus que vivre ... vous semblez être vous-même un de ces moments merveilleusement plein de toutes les puissances qui s'opposent à la mort. Votre visage, à cette heure, est le plus beau de vos visages. Il propose à la riche lumière du couchant ce qu' elle peut éclairer de plus spirituel et de plus noble" (91).

Towards the end of this speech, Lust makes some keen observations, "Vos yeux semblent contempler l'univers au moyen de ce petit jardin qu' ils considèrent, et qui leur est comme le petit caillou qu'un savant ramasse, et qui, dans le creux de sa main, lui parle d' une époque du monde" (91). These last lines evoke the work of the English poet/visionary/mystic, William Blake, and specifically the opening lines of his poem, "Auguries of Innocence."

> To see a World in a Grain of Sand,
> And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,
> Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
> And Eternity in an hour. (Blake, 28)

Both passages speak of the experience of the manifestation of the divine in the phenomenal world, the breath of the Great Spirit in all things. Faust has to await the twentieth century to attain an illuminating experience of self-realization. The experience that Joyce calls an epiphany and that T.S. Eliot

calls the still turning point of the turning world and describes thus in "Burnt Norton."

> At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless;
> Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is,
> But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity,
> Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from nor towards,
> Neither ascent nor decline. Except for the point, the still point.
> There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.
> I can only say, there we have been: but I cannot say where.
> And I cannot say, how long, for that is to place it in time.
> The inner freedom from the practical desire,
> The release from action and suffering, release from the inner
> And the outer compulsion, yet surrounded
> By a grace of sense, a white light still and moving. (Eliot, 91)

Faust's response to Lust's observations is quite curious, "L'univers ne m'importe pas, et je ne pense à rien" (92). The first part of this compound statement reveals that Faust has attained, at least momentarily, that lack of attachment to the world so encouraged by mystics from the occidental, as well as the oriental traditions. We need only think of Christ's urging us to be in the world but not of it. The second part of the statement fascinates for it reveals Faust moving away from that over-estimated and fetishized activity so privileged in the occident: thinking. For despite the fact that Faust is not thinking, he is coming to knowledge, "Je vous dis que je ne pense à rien ... Mais ici, doit se décider quelque chose, et je le sais précisément par ceci, que je ne pense à rien" (92).

In the next passages, Faust contemplates his life and realizes that he has reached an apogee or found his *raison d'être*. It could be said that the grail is at his lips; he can hear the mermaids singing; he has discovered the

centre of the labyrinth, or that he has made it to the lighthouse. The pearl of great price is, at long last, his. He ruminates, realizing the quest is completed, "Et maintenant, voici que je suis ce que je suis, et que ne crois pas être autre chose. Il fallut tant d'espoirs et de désepoirs, de triomphes et de désastres pour en venir là ... Mais j'y suis..." (94-95) At this moment he seems to slip away from Lust and delve into the depths of his experience.

> Serais-je au comble de mon art? Je vis. Et je ne fais que vivre. Voilà une oeuvre ... Enfin ce que je fus a fini par construire ce que je suis. Je n'ai plus aucune autre importance. Me voici le présent même. Ma personne épouse exactement ma présence, en échange parfait avec quoi qu'il arrive. Point de reste. Il n'y a plus de profondeur. L'infini est défini. Ce qui n'existe pas n'existe plus. Si la connaissance est ce qu'il faut produire par l'esprit pour que SOIT ce qui EST, te voici, FAUST, connaissance pleine et pure, plénitude, accomplissement. Je suis celui que je suis. Je suis au comble de mon art, à la période classique de l'art de vivre. Voilà mon oeuvre: vivre. N'est-ce pas tout? Mais il faut le savoir ... Il ne s'agit pas de se trouver sur ce haut plateau d'existence, sans le savoir. Que d'aventures, de raisons, de songes, et de fautes pour gagner la liberté d'être ce que l'on est, rien que ce que l'on est! Qu'est-ce que la perfection, sinon la suppression de tout ce qui nous manque? Ce qui manque est toujours de trop ... Mais, à présent, le moindre regard, la moindre sensation, les moindres actes et fonctions de la vie me deviennent de la même dignité que les desseins et les voix intérieures de ma pensée ... C'est un état suprême, où tout se résume en vivre, et qui refuse d'un sourire qui me vient, toutes les questions et toutes les résponses ... VIVRE! .. JE RESPIRE. N'est-ce pas tout? JE RESPIRE ... J'ouvre profondément chaque fois, toujours pour la première fois, ces ailes intérieures qui battent le temps vrai. Elles portent celui qui est, de celui qui fut à celui qui va être ... JE SUIS, n'est-ce pas extraordinaire? Se soutenir au-dessus de la mort comme une pierre se soutiendrait dans l'espace? Cela est incroyable ... JE RESPIRE, et rien de plus. Le parfum impérieux de mes fleurs veut que je respire et l'odeur de la terre fraîche vient en moi surgir, toujours plus désirée, toujours plus désirable, sur les puissances de mon souffle. JE RESPIRE; et rien de plus, car il n'y a rien de plus. JE RESPIRE et JE VOIS." (95-97)

Within this poignant soliloquy, we observe Faust's final abandonment of the Cartesian principle "Je pense donc je suis" (cogito ergo sum). Then

we discover Valéry returning once more to classical Faustian concerns -- the condemnation of a flawed epistemological system. First there is the critique of science, coupled with a critique of the mania of naming, which can be construed as one of the primary mandates of science. This occurs when he observes the tree. "Qu' importe ce qu'on voit? VOIR suffit, et savoir que l'on voit ... c'est là toute une science. Je vois ce pin. Qu' importe ce pin lui-même? Ce pourrait être un chêne, là. Je le verrais." (97) Rilke formulates the same thought in these words, "Wagt zu sagen, was ihr Apfel nennt" (Rilke, 26)

This critique will be picked up and expounded on in the library in the dialogue between the student and Mephistopheles. "Un tas de sciences. Je m'y noie ... Géo ceci, géo cela, et des métries, des nomies, des logies, des graphies, et des stiques ... Bref, de quoi nommer toutes les plantes, toutes les bêtes, les coquilles, les pierres, les astres, de quoi fabriquer des infinis et des espaces à volonté, compter les gouttes de la mer, prévoir qu' une pomme qui tombe ne reviendra jamais toute seule sur l'arbre et démontrer que si un serpent peut être le grand-père d'une poule, la procession inverse n'est pas raisonnable du tout..." (181-182) Thus Valéry denigrates and ridicules this occidental proclivity. Simultaneously, he does not hesitate to attack another system which also strives for knowledge: renunciation, ascetism, and their draconian ilk. "Qu'est-ce que donc que les visions exceptionnelles que les ascètes sollicitent, auprès de ce prodige qui est de voir quoi que ce soit? L'âme est une pauvresse. Si je ferme les yeux, et si je me concentre, me

voici entre l'espirit et l'âme ... Quelle misère! Où sont les formes précises, les nuances, la perspective que le moindre mouvement transforme? De quel prix de fatigue dois-je payer à présent, sous mes paupières, la durée, la netteté et l'éclat des objets que j'essaie de me former? Et quelle foi intense, quelles macérations obstinées, quelle oraison excessive pourrait se créer un soleil comme celui-ci qui luit et verse si généreusement son sang de pourpre, pour tout le monde?" (96-97) Once more it appears that Faust is privileging immanence over transcendence. It seems that André Dabezies is of the same opinion. When he exclaims, "Voilà qui sonne comme un écho des paroles mystérieuses du buisson ardent et qui semblerait égaler Faust au divin!" (Dabezies, 337) he does not appear to understand Faust's experience. But then it seems his intuitions become more correct. "Mais 'ce que je suis' refuse délibérément toute résonance métaphysisique et transcendante, la conscience suprême de soi reste au niveau des cinq sens et le monologue se développe résolument dans l'instant au niveau d'une perception sensualiste" (Dabezies, 337).

Although Lust either does not hear Faust, or cannot comprehend his words, she, too, appears to be in some sort of transport. She confesses, "Je ne puis demeurer si loin. Ce serait comme demeurer loin de moi-même..." (98) Ego boundaries seem to be vanishing. Lust seems to be straying into Martin Buber territory, where the "I" and "Thou" are inextricably linked. Buber defines it this way: "The concentration and fusion into a whole being

can never be accomplished by me, can never be accomplished without me. I require a You to become; becoming I, I say You/Thou" (Buber, 62).

Coming out of his trance-like state Faust ponders on the nature of reality. "JE RESPIRE et JE VOIS ... Mais ce qu'il y a peut-être de plus présent dans la présence, c'est ceci: JE TOUCHE ... Et d'un seule coup, je trouve et je crée le réel ... Ma main se sent touchée aussi bien qu'elle touche. Réel veut dire cela. Et rien de plus." (98) Interestingly enough, from this passage one can extrapolate a condemnation of the Christian/occidental privileging of the sense of seeing and simultaneously, an elevation of the sense of touch. Saint-Exupéry also criticizes the valorization of seeing over perceiving and leaves us with his two lovely and evocative lines: "On ne voit bien qu'avec le coeur. L'essentiel est invisible pour les yeux" (Saint-Exupéry, 72). Now touching is linked with the body and in the West, the two have suffered a wholly undeserved nefarious reputation since Plato and the advent of Christianity. Faust seems to be rejecting the binary notion of the mind/body split and once more we catch a suggestion that immanence is a more valid notion than transcendence. The noumenal and the phenomenal are inextricably bound.

Perhaps it is in the ensuing scene that the Master makes his final break from the old Faustian mould. It seems that until this moment he himself has not been quite sure about what he was going to do with Lust. He earlier delineates his intentions to Mephistopheles. He knows intellectually how the

relationship should proceed. He wants an employer/employee, Master/servant relationship. He wants to maintain the hierarchical upper-hand/the vertical distribution. Faust wants/needs her tenderness, but claims not to want her passion. Yet initially, in the garden, we witness that "*son coeur a ses raisons*," that in his heart of hearts, he is not entirely convinced of his previously outlined plans. He is extremely attracted to Lust. He comes closer and closer to taking that plunge; to redefining their relationship, reinstating it as an intimate relationship. Sorely tempted, Faust literally asks for Lust's hand. About to draw her down to him, suddenly he changes his mind and pushes her hand away. It seems that the decision which he has been waiting for to be decided is finally decided. It appears that at the moment of greatest temptation, the moment ripest for seduction, he has triumphed. He has finally freed himself from playing the seducer, the Don Juan. Finally, he is able to get off the merry-go-round, remove himself from the great cycle of repetition. One cannot refrain from wondering just how many Lusts, Gretchens, Margarethas and Helenas there have been.

He also seems to have been completely jarred out of his illuminated moment, his ecstatic trance state. He returns to his old bossy self. He wants to dictate once again, to return to work. But more than that, it appears that he wishes to estrange Lust from his old self, to make her aware that there have been other women. Faust seems to be deliberately trying to push Lust away; to get her to stop falling in love with him by relating various details about a previous romantic engagement. It works very well

indeed. Lust becomes distraught and in fact, begins to cry. At any rate, they leave their bench and definitely the mood is broken. This proves to be Faust's last actual appearance in the unfinished play; we will not see Faust again.

Now that we have somewhat of a character sketch of Faust, let us move on to the question of how all this relates to this particular Faust's destiny. Does it differ from his predecessors and how so? On one level, a claim could be substantiated that Valéry does not reveal Faust's destiny. The fourth and final act is missing. There is no real conclusion to the drama. It simply leaves off after Act III. A simple inscription on the last page informs the reader of the absence of that ultimate chapter. However, despite this fact, some direction is given as to how Valéry ultimately wished the action and dialogue to culminate. It is to be "une comédie." Now if Valéry takes his Aristotelian dictums to heart, his comedy will end felicitously. However, he might mimic Goethe, who whimsically confounded his audience's expectations. For if Goethe takes the prerogative to end "Eine Tragödie" happily, who is to say that Valéry will not end his comedy tragically, or at least less than happily?

With Marlowe and Goethe, the play's ending is tied in with the protagonist's death and subsequent judgement: redemption or damnation. But in Valéry's play, the protagonist we are told, has already died, perhaps several times and has already been in heaven as well as hell; in fact,

rejecting both loci. It does not seem likely that Valéry's ending would entail death, or heaven, or hell. Normally comedy entails a happy ending; often a happy ending spells marriage. Does Valéry envision Faust and Lust entering connubial bliss, or something akin to that? According to the sketches left for posterity, there is a discussion about Faust and Lust becoming lovers and experiencing that state beyond mere physical ecstasy, that cosmic rapture, where métathèse takes place. Faust and Lust experience the divine sublime in each other, the ineffable, "dans l'échange inoui, muet de ce que je ne sais pas en moi, ni de moi, contre ce que je ne sais pas en toi, ni de toi" (Fragment, 240d), but then comes "Lebwohl" which is, as Richthofen informs us, "une expression allemande signifiant un adieu" (Richthofen, 98). One of the problems that Valéry leaves us with, as Richthofen points out, is that the love act is written in the conditional mode, i.e., it never, in fact, takes place. "Nous serions comme des Dieux" (Fragment, 242), "nos esprits feraient l'amour l'un avec l'autre comme des corps peuvent le faire. Cet accord serait plus qu'un accord de pensée" (Fragment, 242). We cannot ever ascertain exactly why this love act never takes place but perhaps the answer lies in Valéry's own admission, "Il y a quelque chose en moi qui m'est obscur et que rien, rien d'humain ne pourrait satisfaire" (Valéry, Oeuvres, II, 378) and "L'expérience m'a montré que ce que j'ai le plus désiré ne se trouve pas dans l'autrui -- et ne peut trouver l'autre capable de tenter sans réserve l'essai d'aller jusqu'au bout dans la volonté de porter l'amour où il n'a jamais été" (Valéry, Cahiers, XXXIX, 804).

In the preceding two Faustian texts, Faust's destiny is revealed only at the very end, in the last few passages. Apparently the protagonist dies to the world and is then removed to another realm by supernatural forces. In Valéry's text, this does not happen. Faust does not die, nor is he removed to heaven, hell or limbo. However, one discovers a number of references in the text that Faust has been to, or has been sent to "heaven" and "hell," but that somehow, in a manner which is not elaborated on, he escaped or eluded those destinies. At the beginning of Act III, three devils are in conversation with one another. They are discussing Mephistopheles, when one says to the other, "Tu sais qu'il a eu jadis des ennuis avec l'Homme d'ici. Il l'a manqué, sais-tu?" (128) Belial queries, "Pense-tu qu'il ait trouvé plus malin que lui?" (129) And Ashtaroth replies, "Chut ... Pourquoi pas?" (129) In Act I, Faust and Mephistopheles seemed to be reunited after a long hiatus, when Mephistopheles remarks, "Mais toi, tu m'intéresses. Ton cas -- peut-être -- est-il tout à fait particulier..." (48). Faust responds, "Je respire" (48). With which Mephistopheles observes, "Oui. Ni le Ciel ni l'Enfer n'ont pu te retenir. On dirait que tu as vomi indistinctement le miel de leurs promesses comme le fiel de leurs menaces. C'est par quoi il est possible que tu m'étonnes, chose très étonnante." (48) This is interesting and heroic on Faust's part. In some inexplicable manner he has eluded death, while proving himself to be beyond the categories of elect and reprobate. Valéry probably means he escapes because of his legend, the persistence of new versions to his tale, he lives again with every new version of his story. In

"Mon Faust" the protagonist has championed the human realm; chosen the human universe. There is a beauty to this.

But it is also possible to look at the issue of salvation and damnation from a different perspective. From the occidental, or let us say, specifically, Christian point of view, salvation and damnation occur when a person dies, at the moment of his, or her death, or on Judgement Day. But let us examine this concept from a different angle. It has already been said that this text seems to be redolent with non-occidental notions; how might a Buddhist view salvation and damnation? To begin let us claim that salvation and damnation are phenomena that occur during a person's lifetime. Whereas for the Christian, salvation might be defined as entering into God's presence after death, from another perspective, salvation might be defined as entering into God's presence/into grace/into the illuminated state/rapture/ephiphany, in the present moment. Salvation could be redefined as discovering the ability to perceive the full depth of a moment, its gravity, beauty, joy, now. Salvation could be understood as not beyond us in space and time, but here and immediately available to those who have removed the blinkers from their vision. Otherwise it is as William Blake describes in "Auguries of Innocence."

> We are led to Believe a Lie
> When we see not Thro' the Eye (Blake, 26)

From the Zen Buddhist, or mystical point of view, salvation could not take place later in the future, because later, or the future do not exist. Only

the eternal present exists. From this perspective, damnation could be defined as the inability to perceive the divine in the mundane, or infinity in the finite. It would be the incapacity of realizing that the noumenal and the phenomenal are inextricably linked.

A similar perception could be applied to the notion of heaven as place; the occidental idea of heaven being "out there," "beyond," "in the sky," i.e., removed from us. The Zen mind might posit that heaven is here and now, and available to anyone who has accessed the third eye. In Valéry's drama heaven manifests itself in Faust's garden. It is not a place on the other side of the globe; nor is it a place one enters upon death. It is right there adjacent to the house and accessible to all of its sundry occupants. One can enter the garden at will. Of course, the garden is not really an external place, as much as it is an ability to enter a perception; the garden in actuality is a place within oneself, a source of exquisiteness and joy. One need only learn how to access it. On the other hand, sometimes it accesses you. In Valéry's work, the reader is introduced to the garden at the very inception. First, there is Lust, who is caught up in a paroxysm of laughter in the scholar's study. Faust however does not understand the humour and instead tries to contain Lust's merriment, displaying his dictatorial and peremptory ways. He blurbs out, "Ici l'on ne rit pas!" (13) And indeed the frowsty cabinet of patriarchal space has not traditionally been a place for laughter. Exasperated with his inability to control Lust, he tries to momentarily banish her. "Assez! C'est insupportable. Ou bien allez rire au jardin..." (13) The

garden is the space where laughter or joy belongs. It is the place to laugh at ideas. When a person is inside the garden, or when the garden is inside a person, then one may discover what ideas really are: paltry substitutes for wisdom, fragmented metaphors that attempt to rend asunder wholeness, or Joy, or the Garden. Ideas usher in their wake notions of duality. They are the fruits of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil; the deformed minions of Plato, Kant, Hegel and their ilk. In Holy the Firm, Annie Dillard cites Dionysus instructing his disciples, "Abandon everything. God hates ideas" (Dillard, 42). Thus when Faust truly enters the garden, he slips away from the realm of ideas and enters into the space where logocentrism has banished laughter to.

It appears then that the Faust who exits in the play is not identical to the Faust one encounters in the opening pages of the play. The initial Faust is an unenlightened man, an unredeemed man, who is not privy to the sacred mysteries. He has not been initiated into Dionysian raptures. In his limited understanding, he dictates ludicrous notions to his amanuensis. He is wary of and disdains laughter. He claims that it is "un refus de penser" (14) and this is considered a pernicious denial instead of a path to another form of consciousness. For the unenlightened man, laughter is considered base, gross and even bestial. But in fact, animals cannot laugh; they know nothing of laughter. Contrary to that which Baudelaire proposes, laughter is divine, it is a gift from the gods; without laughter we could not survive. There is something in the text that suggests that the answer to the conundrum of

existence is not occidental angst, but the laughter of the gods. It cannot be explained in mere words. Mephistopheles puts it concisely, "Tout ce qu'on peut écrire est niaiserie. Ce qui n'est pas ineffable n'a aucune importance..." (137-138). The Orient leaves us with the image of the rotund laughing Buddha.

Considering all this, I propose then that Faust is redeemed, albeit not in our traditional Christian way of thinking, but perhaps in a more authentic manner. He has discovered the keys to the kingdom. The Doors of Perception are open. He has accessed his Other. Jouissance, the cerebral orgasm is his. And this is the true meaning of Eros Energoumenos, Eros as the source of the highest energy, which of course is the modus vivendi of the Tantric Arts. Valéry's inclusion of this term in the text once again indicates a rejection of the Christian hatred and mistrust of the body, its position that the body is base because it is matter. Tantra, diametrically opposite to Christianity, celebrates the body and teaches that body, mind and spirit are inextricably linked. In this fashion Valéry once more champions immanence.

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One is quite impressed with the progressive mind set Valéry displays with his construction of a female character. The French auteur allows for much greater gender symmetry than his literary predecessors. The comedy actually opens up onto the traditionally sacrosanct patriarchal space -- Faust's

study -- with a woman by the infamous rogue's side. It is his secretary, Lust, whom he has recently employed. The two of them are actually working together, reading and writing, co-operating on a project. We witness a much more egalitarian relationship between the sexes than in Marlowe's or Goethe's text.

To begin with, we ought to consider the secretary's name. Why might Valéry choose to give his heroine the particular appellation of Lust? For an English reader the immediate association is with concupiscence, lasciviousness, i.e., a superfluity of desire, or perhaps a malevolance of desire. In his monograph, Richthofen rejects this suggestion maintaining that it is "une dénomination allemande ambigue correspondant souvent à 'delice,' qui est un des mots-clef les plus important dans les oeuvres poétiques de Valéry" (Richthofen, 11). The German critic continues, "Ce terme ne doit pas nécessairement être traduit par 'volupté,' interprétation proposée par quelques critiques, l'instinct sensuel n'étant pas un des thèmes principaux de Mon Faust où le personnage central affirme: il ne s'agit pas du tout d'effeuiller une nouvelle Marguerite" (Richthofen, 11). Further on Richthofen conjectures that Valéry had perhaps borrowed Lust's name from the writings of his friend Rainer Maria Rilke who in his poem "Imaginarer Lebenslauf" used this word in relation to childhood: "O unbewusste Lust" which translates into French as "a délice inconscient" (Richthofen, 12).

In any case, it would be erroneous to equate Lust with lasciviousness, pure and simple. The young woman neither emanates unmitigated wantoness nor elicits it. It would be reductive to claim otherwise. But on the other hand, the classical Faust story is a tale about Desire; a discourse about Seeking, as well as Absence and Lack. It seems that Valéry is playing with all these notions in his text. He fools with the ideas of good and bad desire, as well as, desire and renunciation. He seems to question where desire ends and concupiscence begins. In the play Lust is not lust in the negative sense, but she is desire, i.e., she desires and is desirable. Contrary to the traditional Christian dictums, Valéry seems to slough off negative connotations of desire. Lust is, as also desire can be, "*un délice*," i.e., delight or extreme pleasure. In this there appears to be a critique levelled at the Christian (and especially Catholic) Church's complete rejection of the Dionysian component of ritual. From one perspective, Faust seems to have rid himself of his lust, that is to say his excessive desire. He lives in a "médiocre maison" (71) on a little bit of land ("ce peu de terre" [71]). Apparently he has not sallied out in the world very much for a long time. He does not covet a palace, or need to mix with high society (or require precious stones). In the second act, he seems to repudiate himself as Don Juan. Yet, there is a suggestion at the end of Act II, that he is not quite finished with Lust. The new Faust, the one who has had an illuminating experience, bites into the peach that Lust offers him and the two of them do go off together into the tangled and tenebrous garden.

Returning to the text we discover that Lust is in an incomparably better position than her literary precursors/foremothers. She comes from a much more empowered situation. Not only is she given a voice, she is given "character." There is no shrinking violet here. She is feisty and somewhat recalcitrant. She is not only lettered, but educated to some extent as well. Moreover, she is gainfully employed and in this filling Simone De Beauvoir's prescription for woman's liberation. Lust is not incarcerated within the family or within domesticity, like Gretchen. She is nobody's exchange commodity and furthermore enjoys a certain autonomy. She belongs to neither father nor husband; instead she appears to belong to herself. Most amazing, perhaps, is the fact that Valéry allows her desire. Some feminist literary critics maintain that there is only one desire in patriarchal discourse and that it is male. This contention proves not to be the case in this text, where Lust is allowed to be a sexual subject and not only a sexual object. Valéry demonstrates that desire is not exclusive male territory.

However, Valéry has his limits too. Faust is, after all, the Master, the employer, while Lust is the scribe, the employee. He owns the property, she does not. Faust gives the orders and while Lust may object, play coy, give him a hard time, in the end she must acquiesce to his will. It is Faust who holds the power. It remains his space and he is the boss or patriarch. His is the final decision. This is evident in the garden scene. Lust is the

one who makes the first physical contact. After a moment's hesitation, or consideration, Faust decides not to act on the invitation.

It is still Faust's story, Faust's project, Faust's Quest, Faust's epiphany. It cannot really be said that Lust has a project -- except for the traditional girl's project as men imagine it -- marriage, or at least, a man's heart. Even though Lust is granted a certain amount of what used to be called modern emancipation, i.e., education, profession and autonomy, she still has to be young, beautiful and sexually desirable. And even though Valéry acknowledges that women are sexual and do experience desire, Lust has to be a virgin. Even though her sexuality is acknowledged, at the same time it is sullied, as, for example, in the scene where the devils are discussing her, "Vierge? Oui, Vierge au regard des tiers ... Mais la tête est putain" (128). This is reminiscient of the scene in Goethe's play where Gretchen is accused of being a whore by her brother; a whore for making love with the one man she is in love with. In patriarchy, it seems that a woman only need acknowledge or express desire (as Lust) or make love with one man to be considered a whore, or prostitute. Obviously, men hold a different standard for themselves.

Then there is the scene where Lust makes her initial acquaintance with the devil. She lets him know that he does not strike her as particularly formidable; that, in fact, he seems rather ordinary. To revenge himself, the devil decides to humiliate her in front of her employer. Mephistopheles is

quite explicit, though never outrightly vulgar. He reenacts the events of the night before. Simply put, he reveals that Lust has erotic dreams and touches herself. Lust becomes extremely distraught in this scene, cries and runs out. At any rate, it is undeniable that her sexuality is sullied. Progressive as the text seems to be in many ways towards women, it still carries in it the traditional French Catholic unease with the Body. There is still something dirty or bad about sex.

To fit into Faust's, or Valéry's scheme of things Lust must be a little smart, but being too smart could prove to be an impediment. Faust tells Lust ouright, "Vous n'êtes pas ici pour comprende, mon enfant" (17). She is there in order to fulfil his needs in a very specific fashion. Her needs are not of prime importance. It is not her project Valéry is concerned with. When Faust calls Lust "mon enfant" he makes less of her than she really is. Yet she reveals she is old enough to have been already married five years. Since Faust does not want to put pen to hand, he needs to employ a secretary. But the secretary he requires must be more than just adept at secretarial skills. Of utmost importance is her appearance. "Vous y êtes pour écrire sous ma dictée, me relire ce que je vous ai dicté, et en outre, en outre, pour n'être pas désagréable à regarder sans réflexion" (17). He proceeds to elaborate on his needs, "Comprenez ce que je vous dis, et ne vous mêlez pas de comprende ce que je vous dicte. C'est clair? Ou faut-il vous expliquer ceci: je vous dicte ce que je pense. Pendant que je pense, pendant que j'attends ma pensée ... ou quelque mot plus heureux que le plus

heureux déjà venu, il convient que mes yeux s'occuppent sur un objet particulièrement favorable, auquel ils se prennent, et dont ils s'amusent innocemment, comme la main distraite flatte et caresse, au lointain de l'esprit, quelque chose, un bibelot, un ivoire familier..." (18) [emphasis mine].

He admits that part of his need is for a woman as an objet d'art, some exquisitely wrought little thing, also some familiar thing which is pleasant to touch. There is some sort of reification taking place here with this bibelot business. Faust then proceeds to bring in the tactile and thus seems to be making a sexual innuendo. Lust, for her part, does not appear insulted by this job description. On the contrary, she manifests a great sense of humour and irony in her flippant and teasing retorts. "C'est moi qui suis flattée, Maître, de jouer ce rôle honorable et modeste de l'object particulièrement favorable au discret adoucissement de la machine de vos pensées" (18). She picks up on his sexual innuendo and rejoins with one of her own, "Mais, pour la main distraite, ne croyez-vous pas qu'une belle chatte bien douce, bien tiède, serait vraiment plus agréable à caresser qu'un ivoire, qui est chose dure et froide?" (18).

From all of this emanates some sort of unsavory suggestion. It is as if Faust is proposing a sexual relationship, but one strictly on his own terms. It is a relationship where the prime concerns would be how his needs would be met. He does not want any trouble. It is as if he wants a woman to

make love to, when he wants to make love, but he does not want her to have anything to say, to impose her needs on him, or trouble him with her agenda. There would be no compromise whatsoever. Everything would be negotiated on his terms. This makes the reader think of Valéry's own La Soirée avec M. Teste as well as the short story by Tommaso Landolfi, "Gogol's Wife." In the story Gogol has a wife who is, in fact, an inflatable doll. This doll-like wife actually speaks, albeit very little. Gogol inflates and deflates her, as the whim moves him. Faust seems to be suggesting something along the same lines; a relationship with someone who is somehow less than human.

But Faust is not the only one to harbour ulterior motives. As soon as the devil makes his appearance on the scene and catches a glimpse of Lust, he grasps her exploitive potential. First of all the reader must recognize that the august doctor has been losing his quintessential Faustness for some time. It has been a while since the fiend and Faust have been in contact. When they meet up on this occasion Mephistopheles demands of him, "Que me veux-tu? Qu' est-ce que je fais ici? Tu n'es plus une operation pour moi; nos comptes sont reglés" (42). However, it appears that the devil does not wish their accounts to be clear; Mephistopheles would like to inveigle Faust back into his web. In Goethe's tragedy, in the witch's kitchen, when Faust hesitates and equivocates, Mephistopheles spurs him on with the image of the lovely woman in the mirror. Later, the encounter with Gretchen does the rest. In Valéry's play, the devil is highly desirous that the relationship

between Lust and Faust becomes sexual. Mephistopheles must entertain the hope this would galvanize Faust into a new round of misadventures. At this time however, Faust appears rather impervious to the devil's promptings. When Mephistopheles becomes cognizant of that fact, he seizes on the disciple. For if Faustianism is in its death throes in Faust, it could perchance be nascent in the young man. Hence, the devil assails him and essays to make a pact. To improve his chances of success, he manipulates Lust into the imbroglio; hoping that if she proves useless in making of Faust a recidivist, then she might prove useful in drawing the student into a life of crime.

There are perhaps two perspectives from which one may look at the end of the play. The first may be called the Lust or lust perspective. This perspective entails taking the play as it is published; as a three act play with no complete Act IV. From this perspective one may assert that Faust's dilemma is solved. The dilemma could be defined as what to do about Lust or lust. Faust must decide what to do with his Don Juaness, about the possibility of having a conventional folie à deux with Lust. He ends up by deciding against it (or perhaps it is more apt to say that it is decided for him). Lust has a dilemma as well. Her dilemma is what to do about her attraction to Faust and her desire for "normal" love. This dilemma is not resolved. The second perspective could be called the Demoiselle de Crystal perspective. In this version Lust would no longer be lust; instead she would become transformed into a crystal girl. Like a crystal she would become

illuminated with light and love. Then the chiasmus or the metathesis would take place. Here each person within the couple would experience conjunctio with the Sublime and subsequently or simultaneously conjunctio with each other. Unfortunately all this remains hypothetical, conditional. Whether or not Valéry was stymied because of the difficulties of trying to incorporate these notions into a dramatic form, or whether he deliberately held back because of personal bitterness we will never know.

NOCHE OBSCURA

On a dark secret night,
starving for love and deep in flame,
O happy lucky flight!
unseen I slipped away,
my house at last was calm and safe.

Blackly free from light,
disguised and down a secret way,
O happy lucky flight!
in darkness I escaped,
my house at last was calm and safe.

On that happy night--in
secret; no one saw me though the dark--
and I saw nothing then,
no other light to mark
the way but fire pounding my heart.

That flaming guided me
more firmly than the noonday sun,
and waiting there was he
I knew so well--who shone
where nobody appeared to come.

O night that was my guide,
O night more friendly than the dawn!
O tender night that tied
lover and loved one,
loved one in the lover fused as one!

On my flowering breasts,
which I had saved for him alone,
he slept and I caressed
and fondled him with love,
and cedars fanned the air above.

Wind from the castle wall,
while my fingers played in his hair
its hands serenely fell
wounding my neck, and there
my senses vanished in the air.

I lay. Forgot my being,
and on my love I leaned my face,
All ceased. I left my being,
leaving my cares to fade
among the lilies far away.

- San Juan de la Cruz

Conclusion

Although Faust exemplifies the Renaissance man par excellence, his roots are in the so-called Dark Ages. He rises up from the Medieval world torn from the breast of Mother Nature and severed from a spontaneous relation with Magic. He has lost his sense of the sacredness of life. Faust is a man who has undergone a process of alienation. He has become more and more disconnected; first from the God/dess, then from the world, later from nature, then from people, his body and finally from facets of himself. All that remains is his cogito or ratiocination. This he fetishises. He cannot identify with other people, let alone other forms of sentient life. His ego boundaries have progressively become narrower. He believes that the world is divided into living and non-living objects. Nature is mere matter. Earth is only dirt. The Scientific Method becomes his Liturgy. As he becomes more cerebral, he loses his sense of the numinous; he no longer has special access to the mana aspect of this world. Nor is any manna bestowed upon him. As he constructs a clear boundary between his human mind and its environment, he loses his sense of ecology. He steps out of the Sacred Circle. He is out of sync from his indigenous self, that self that felt no "sharp boundary between the spiritual and the natural world and thus between the human mind or ego and the surrounding world" (Funk & Wagnalls Encyclopedia, 7505-7506). The French thinker Lucian Lévy-Brühl named this absence of boundary "participation mystique" denoting a

"sense of fusion between the human organism and its environment" (Funk & Wagnalls Encyclopedia, 7506).

Thus Faust struts out onto the Renaissance stage where humanism is purportedly championed. To the naive, this might seem a great, progressive or evolutionary movement, but the wary reader might raise objection, for if the human is privileged, then all other life, both sentient and non-sentient is devalourized/demoted. Humanism for whom, one may ask? This is a notion which seems to incorporate within itself, in the "great age of exploration," a remarkable inhumanity towards most humans, not to mention beasts and plants.

At any rate, the literary Faust is, from one perspective, that "great" man who has "mastered" so many faculties. But why is he so hungry? Why is he a locus for Lack and Absence? Why is he mad with Desire? He has become the Accursed Hunter damned to travel all the paths and byways of the world searching for the ever elusive Hart/Heart.

Faust spends the whole first part of his life a little like the young Marlowe -- cloistered with the boys in Cambridge, where no girl could possibly be enroled. It is hardly surprising that in this repressive situation Woman became more and less than she really is; at one and the same time desirable, but nonetheless less than human and highly suspect.

It seems hardly coincidental then that with the valorization of man (so called humanism or the Renaissance) came the devalorization of women (the Witchhunt or Inquisition) which by the time it had run its course, victimized an estimated nine million people, eighty five per cent of whom were women.

In the texts we have examined, the fashion in which the male and female characters have been constructed reflect these attitudes. In Marlowe's tragedy Faustus is defined as a man whom Aristotle fails to satisfy, a man who wants to step out of the Christian syntax, but finds himself too inculcated, too immured in dualistic notions or binary thinking. If he rejects Christianity, then it is the devil he must embrace. He could theoretically step out of the binary equation, as Hélène Cixous encourages us to do. However this does not happen. Faustus seems so alone and so lonely. He does not connect with another human being, nor does he love.

The women in the play seem distant; they do not really penetrate the text. They merely skim over its surface. Moreover, they seem so much less materially dense than men; their corporality is always tenuous. They are more oneric, more ephemeral and so taciturn that they seem hardly present. The great paradox of the piece is that connection or conjunctio is the configuration that dominates Faust's mind. There must be some kind of memory of bonding; perhaps a memory of the Mother or the Mother's body. Or perhaps it is that deeper ancestral memory -- that medieval bond with the earth or the forest; a Druidic recognition of the spirit in the tree. Faust is a

man who has lost his religio, his ability to link back. There is great pathos in this.

Goethe's Faust, on the other hand, does not elicit pathos. On the contrary, there is something despicable about Goethe's protagonist. This Faust finds himself in a play with a plethora of female characters. These women are much more physically present and they have more to say. However, there appears to be a lot of hatred invested in the creation of many of these. So many are malefic. Two women who are not that are Gretchen and Helen. As these are women that Faust must make love to, they must perforce be exquisite in appearance and benign in nature. Faust uses Gretchen as an entrance to the world of nature; a rite of passage, who is subsequently discarded. (The doctor has no sense of gyn-ecology). Goethe uses Helen as a metaphor for Antiquity which must be absorbed into Germanica but then also released, since Antiquity must be dialectically superceded. Faust seems to loathe women in general, but he is always ready to exploit them, if need be. Thus he exploits the witch, Frau Martha, Gretchen, the Great Mothers, the Penitent Women, etc.

Valéry's play is closer to modernity: the woman character is part of the title and she is more developed and more autonomous. She seems to be a free agent. Lust is educated, employed and even saucy. Furthermore, Valéry recognizes that she has a libido. Nonetheless, she must serve Faust as his amanuensis; an intermediary between his mind and paper. This one,

too, must be delectable in her appearance. Later on in the play she seems necessary to galvanize him into his *moment d'extase*, nudge him up his Jacob's ladder. Finally (as the sketches for Act IV reveal) Faust wished Lust to join with him to make a Tantric couple -- without considering her needs or her agenda.

In conclusion we can safely assert that both Faust's character itself and the role that women play -- according to the three texts -- favour a masculine perspective and seem to valorize, especially in Marlowe and Goethe, an action-dominated, striving, driven, "imperialist" (conquering) outlook on life.

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