

Christopher Marlowe's Faustus as a Supreme Archetype of Renaissance Man

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ABSTRACT

The paper assumes that the character of Christopher Marlowe's Doctor Faustus represents most of the characteristics of the Renaissance. After a short introduction, the paper starts reviewing some features of the Renaissance which are applicable to the character of Doctor Faustus, just like the revolt against religion and medieval standards; then, the researcher shifts to other essential features of Renaissance which are: spirit of adventure, geographical exploration and colonialism. Later, he continues exploring other properties of the Renaissance man which can be applied to the character of Faustus such as the lust for knowledge, the interest of Classic culture and the appearance of the earlier thoughts of nationalism and individualism.

1. Introduction

The Tragic History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus, which is commonly known as *Doctor Faustus* is one of the classics of English literature. It was written at the end of the sixteenth century, precisely between 1589 and 1592 by The English leading dramatist and poet Christopher Marlowe. Marlowe is regarded as one of the prominent figures of the Renaissance and the Elizabethan era in particular, he is one of Shakespeare's predecessors, since he was a member of The University Wits¹ who paved the way for William Shakespeare. Hudson describes the wits "...each contributed something to the evolution of the drama into the forms in which Shakespeare was to take it up" (Hudson, 2011, 57).

This paper is an attempt to read this play from a new historicist point of view. Unlike the traditional and religious reception of the play, I am going to trace the aspects of the Renaissance to the character of Doctor Faustus. Since, the paper supposes that Marlowe's Doctor Faustus is a typical Renaissance man. Hence, by applying the characteristics of the Renaissance to our character we will try to affirm the paper's statement in the rest of the paper. Anwar (n.d.) comments on the historical importance of Christopher Marlowe's works "His works show the richness of the history of its time, the social and political conditions, the religious revolution, the scientific discoveries and the popular culture of witchcraft, superstition and magic." (p. 12)

1. Revolt Against Religion and Medieval Standards

Religion was one of the most important characteristics of Middle Ages, Christianity spread in Europe, especially when the Germanic Tribes converted to Christianity, which would lead to the emergence of the Roman Holy Empire, where church and Popes had a supreme authority in religion and politics. The Middle Ages are also called The Dark Ages, as Europe was drowned in illiteracy, poverty, famines and

pandemics. Most people were illiterate and suffer poverty. As a result of population growth and cities' lack of sanitation, diseases and plagues spread just like the Black Death, which killed about one third of people in Europe in 1300s (Wikibooks, 2013, p. 20).

One more significant phenomenon of the Middle Ages is the Crusades which lasted for about two centuries. These wars were fed by religious sentiment of European peasants. In addition to that, hard situations and economic causes would be indirect reasons behind the Crusades. Instead of that they didn't succeed, but it was a chance for Europeans to interact with the civilised East and borrow new ideas and goods which would pave the way for the Renaissance later.

The Europeans had a bad experience with religion, the authority of the church lasted for centuries. During this period, people witnessed the corruption of church and clergymen, many bad practices happened just like the Inquisition, Indulgence, and religious struggle. Religious struggle, for instance, was a reaction against the corruption of church, as Martin Luther, a German priest tried to reform the church, which will lead to the appearance of Protestantism, one of the leading aspects of the Renaissance. However, the Reformation would be a reason behind bloody struggles which would continue in the sixteenth and seventeenth century.

Reducing the role of the church and the gradual separation of religion from politics is one of the aspects of the Renaissance. People turned to knowledge and philosophy instead of Christianity. In his works, Marlowe attacks religions directly and indirectly, in *Tamburlaine the Great*, he attacks Islam, in *The Jew of Malta*, he insults Judaism, while in *Doctor Faustus*, he scorns Catholicism directly and Christian believe in general. The play has autobiographical significance as its main character Doctor Faustus corresponds its author Christopher Marlowe in many sides. Marlowe had anti-religion thoughts, and he was accused of heresy and atheism. Moreover, he was accused of homosexuality too. Lall (2010) comments on this issue: "Marlow, during his life-time, had the reputation of being an atheist and epicure and a mocker of religion" (p. 6). Religious skepticism, which will lead after two and a half centuries to the emergence of Darwinism that presents a scientific version of atheism. Therefore, one more feature of Doctor Faustus is atheism. It is one of the first atheistic works in English literature or it may be even the first one. In act II, scene I, Faustus tells Mephistophilis:

"Come, I think hell's a fable" (Marlowe, 2010, p. 122)

Then he adds:

That, after this life, there is any pain?

Tush, these are trifles and mere old wives' tales" (Marlowe, 2010, p. 124)

Poole (2006) comments on believes and ideologies of Elizabethan age:

... to many Elizabethan spectators, would have been the most important and troubling issues raised by the play: where will you go when you die? And what will determine how you get there? Rather than simply telling us to stay away from dangerous books, Doctor Faustus dramatizes some of the pressing theological issues of the day. (p. 97)

Then on page 106, she comments on people's attitudes towards religion during that time: "Marlowe and his Doctor Faustus were not alone in their conflicted relationships to free will, predestination, and, ultimately, God—they shared these feelings of confusion and frustration with many in the audience" (p. 106). Unlike the Medieval scholar who should be devoted to the Christian teachings and believes, Doctor Faustus revolts against medieval norms and standards. "Doctor Faustus is called essentially a Christian play by virtue of its medieval form. On the other hand; it is called inevitably a Renaissance play, for the aspirations of Doctor Faustus are those of the Renaissance" (IGNOU, 2017, 40). Faustus who once was a clergyman, but now is disbeliever and rebellious against religion. During the Renaissance, people turned out gradually to the pleasures of life and neglected the hereafter. Faustus in his turn leaves religion and Bible and becomes blasphemous and maybe atheist. He comments on the teachings of the Bible and expresses his dissatisfaction while reading it:

The reward of sin is death: that's hard.

.....

If we say that we have no sins, we deceive ourselves,

And there is no truth in us.

Why, then, belike we must sin, and so consequently die: (Marlowe, 2010, 98)

In addition to that, Faustus tries to belittle the religion and clergymen especially when he orders the devil to disguise as a monk:

I charge thee to return, and change thy shape;

...

Go, and return an old Franciscan friar; (Marlowe, 2010, p. 108)

One more distinctive feature of Doctor Faustus is pride. While pride is regarded as a sin in Christian teachings and ethics, but it is one of the features of Doctor Faustus. Marlowe referred to it in act II, scene II when the Seven Deadly Sins appeared, the first one that appeared to Faustus was Pride. The Renaissance European man was also proud of himself, his abilities and achievements. After turning to reason and logic, there were a lot of inventions and discoveries, which gave people a dose of self-confidence and proud. While the discovery of the Americas, gave Europeans a chance to go outside, be proud and opened new horizons for them.

The European man starts leaving faith in God and paradise as a reaction against corruption of church, he started seeking for an earthly paradise, especially after the discovery of the Americas in 1492. The New World stood for a new beginning and new birth. America became as an earthly paradise for a lot of people who were fascinated by the American dream in its earlier image.

On the other hand, highlighting the role of the devil may refer to the man's internal conflict to choose between good and evil, i.e., God and Satan, which also connotes his weak faith. In addition to Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, we are going to see the appearance of the devil as a prominent competitive power against religion and God in John Milton's *Paradise Lost* especially in the first two books.

2. The Spirit of Adventure, Geographical Exploration and Colonialism

Through the character of Doctor Faustus, we can survey the thoughts, concepts and doctrines that dominated his age. Hence *Doctor Faustus* should not be read away from the historical context of that age. When the play was written, the Europeans had started migration and settlement in the New World. On the other hand, the Anglo-Spanish War (1585-1604) was still taking place, which went back to religious and commercial reasons, especially in relation to controlling commercial routes in the Atlantic.

One of the consequences of the Renaissance and intellectual movements in Europe just like Humanism, Rationalism and Enlightenment is the rebellion against medieval standards, styles and ethics. People are no more persuaded of old-fashioned concepts. They become ambitious and fond of earthly pleasures which contradict the medieval standards where clergymen invite people to be satisfied and ascetic.

In *Doctor Faustus*, Excessive ambition is Doctor Faustus's tragic flaw which would lead to his tragic end, as he is not satisfied with his knowledge and status, he tends to have power, fame and eternal knowledge. Suhadi (2019) describes Faustus's excessive ambition, "He wishes more and more. He is like a drinker of sea water. The more he drinks the thirstier he is..." (p. 7) On the other hand, we can regard that the Good Angel represents medieval standards, society norms and consciousness, unlike the Evil Angel that stands for ambition, pride and Renaissance spirit. While the play is considered as a typical morality play, and viewed from a traditional medieval point of view, Doctor Faustus can be regarded as a victim as he exceeded his age; since he belonged to the Renaissance's spirit although he was living in a Middle Age environment.

Geographical exploration and spirit of adventure are other aspects of the Renaissance, when people were fascinated by adventure and risk in addition to the willingness to travel, discover and colonize new lands. During the Tudor period (1485-1603) a lot of literary works appeared that deal with adventures and maritime stories, which depict stories of adventurers, descriptions of far territories and accounts of unimaginable wealth (Ashok, 2011, p. 40). Literature and books had an intense influence to the people at that time, since there were no other mediums. Subsequently they inspired young people to travel, explore and colonize. The European states started a competitive rally to discover new lands and routes just like the discovery of Americas, Australia, the Cape of Good Hope, ...etc. Such events would lead to Colonialism, which would be a leading phenomenon in the coming centuries.

The colonial discourse is apparent in many events along the play. Which connotes the conscious and unconscious desire to control the world and rule the others. At the very beginning of the play, precisely in act I, scene I, Faustus speaks to himself while he is sitting in his study:

All things that move between the quiet poles
Shall be at my command: emperors and kings
Are but obey'd i' their sev'ral provinces, (Marlowe, 2010, p. 100)

While in the same scene, Valdes tells Faustus:

Faustus, these books, thy wit, and our experience,
Shall make all nations to canonize us.
As Indian Moors² obey their Spanish lords, (Marlowe, 2010, p. 102)

While Al-Khawaldeh (2010) in her turn describes this play as:

...one of the earliest English literary works that reveal the actual imperialist, colonialist tendencies at their dawn. Doctor Faustus incorporates multiple degrees of domination of the other that include geographical exploration which facilitates the acquisition of knowledge - intentional knowledge which ultimately leads to colonization... (p. 29)

One of the consequences of geographical discoveries is the global view. Unlike medieval standards and view of life, which was local and restricted in Europe and Old World, during the Renaissance, people became open-minded and started to think globally. In addition to that, the Renaissance man regarded himself as the axis or centre of the universe. Faustus, in his turn, has excessive ambition, international view and thinks worldly. Unlike the Medieval typical view, he is eager to go around the world and rule it. In act I, scene I, he addresses Good and Evil Angels:

I 'll have them fly to India for gold,
Ransack the ocean for orient pearl,
And search all corners of the new-found world
For pleasant fruits and princely delicates; (Marlowe, 2010, p. 100)

Such trends of that age are clear when Faustus addresses Mephistophilis:

By him I 'll be great emperor of the world,
And make a bridge thorough the moving air,
To pass the ocean with a band of men;

² Indian moors: he refers to Red Indians the indigenous of the Americas before its discovery by Christopher Columbus in 1592. They were ruled by the Spaniards before English settlement in Northern America later. They are called Moors because of their skins which is somewhat similar to the Moors who live in Northern West of Africa.

I'll join the hills that bind the Afric shore,
And make that country continent to Spain,
And both contributory to my crown (Marlowe, 2010, p. 112)

On the other hand, company trading overseas and across the world is another aspect of the Renaissance period. Ashok (2011) writes: "The wonderful voyages of oceanic discovery in the sixteenth century are a mark of the cleavage between medieval and modern times." (p. 39) Unlike the strict and closed overview of the medieval man, he adds "All over Europe, adventurous men, inspired by the Renaissance, set out across the wide oceans in search of wealth or liberty." (p. 39)

In fact, one of the reasons behind Colonialism is looking for wealth and gold. During the sixteenth and seventeenth century, the European nations started invading other nations and continents, just like the Spaniards and Portuguese who had colonies in different parts of Africa, Asia and the Americas. Many purposes pushed them to conquer new lands just like social, economic and religious reasons. However, the economic factor was apparent, as they aimed to look for wealth and cities of gold. Especially for the Spaniards who were infatuated by the myth of El Dorado, the city of gold. They hold a lot of expeditions to discover it, but they find nothing. Then other European nations followed the Spaniards and Portuguese and started their own campaigns to discover and invade new territories like the British, French, Dutch and Belgian.

In the opening scene of the play, Cornelius tells Faustus:
The spirits tell me they can dry the sea
And fetch the treasure of all foreign wrecks. (Marlowe, 2010, p. 104)

According to Cornelius, the spirits have informed him that they have the power to dry up the sea to get the treasure of shipwrecks. Here we have another evidence of love of wealth and treasure at that age. While money and gold were unwanted in medieval Christian standards, but soon they will be one of the aims during the Renaissance, especially during exploration expeditions which started in the 15th century.

In act I, scene IV, the dialogue between Wagner, Faustus's servant and the clown reveals that Wagner is affected by Faustus, his master, so he tries to imitate him, as he threatens the clown by summoning two devils. We can also interpret this incident from a postcolonial view as colonizers and imperialists used to exploit their knowledge and power to torture and harm the weaker people:

Well, I will cause two devils presently to fetch thee away-Balion and Belcher!

Clown: But, do your hear? If I should serve you, would you teach me to raise up Banios and Belcheos?

Wagner: I will teach thee to turn thyself to anything, to a dog, or a cat, or a rat, or anything.
(Marlowe, 2010, p. 114)

We can apply this incident to the small countries and nations, especially the European ones who used to imitate the stronger countries at that time like Spain and Britain. Wagner uses the "carrot and stick" approach to persuade the clown. Hence, the clown at last undergoes Wagner. The character of the clown here may also represent the colonized people who sometimes try to imitate the colonizer, that is what Homi Bhabha³ calls Mimicry!

3. Thirsty for Knowledge

Another distinctive feature of the Renaissance is longing for knowledge. Scholars went back to the non-religious sciences of Classic Age; they revived and developed these sciences. In addition to that, many

³ Homi K. Bhabha (born in 1949) is an Indian English scholar and critical theorist. He is the Anne F. Rothenberg Professor of the Humanities at Harvard University. He is one of the most important figures in contemporary postcolonial studies, and has developed a number of the field's neologisms and key concepts, such as hybridity, mimicry, difference, and ambivalence. (Wikipedia, 2022)

important inventions appeared during that age as printing and development of other fields like geography, navigation, math, medicine, physics, military science and humanities as well. Thirsty for knowledge is clear in literature, as there are some literary works that deal with such topics just Ben Jonson's play *The Alchemist* and Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*.

The character of Faustus itself symbolizes the lust for knowledge, the character of Doctor Faustus became a symbol for the man who is eager to know the secrets of universe, and get the eternal knowledge. That led him to sell his soul to the devil. (Badran, 2019, p. 71) He is described as the scholar who has obtained most of the sciences of his time like theology, math, logic, philosophy, ... etc. However, he is no longer interested in these sciences. For example, he expresses his opinion about medicine as he has no more goals to achieve in that field especially since he has saved whole cities from the plague by his prescriptions:

The end of physic is our body's health.
Why, Faustus, has thou not attain'd that end?
Is not thy common talk sound aphorisms?
Are not thy bills hung up as monuments,
Whereby whole cities have escap'd the plague,
And thousand desperate maladies been eas'd? (Marlowe, 2010, p. 98)

Suhadi (2019) explains Faustus's relation with knowledge where God's worship is replaced by knowledge and logic "With his rejection of God's authority and his thirst for knowledge and control over nature, Faustus embodies the more secular spirit of the modern era where technology becomes an idol..." (p. 587). Science, discoveries and love of knowledge are frequent in the play, for instance, in act 5, scene 1, Faustus tries to explain a geographical phenomenon: "... the year is divided into two circles over the whole world, that, when it is here winter with us, in the contrary circle it is summer with them, as in India, Saba, and further countries in the east..." (Marlowe, 2010, 164) Here Faustus uses reason and the science language to explain this fact to the duke of Vanholt. Degenhardt (2015) comments on this incident: "if Faustus's spirit transgresses the laws of nature, it also relies on a kind of scientific knowledge and technology to ascertain where grapes naturally grows in January" (p. 402)

On the other hand, magic and witchcraft were common during Elizabethan age, may be there is a connection between Renaissance's spirit of adventure and practice of magic, as people may tend to them to fulfil their curiosity. In addition to that, people were no more afraid of religion and God. Anwar (n.d.) explains how the Elizabethans were interesting in magic and witchcraft as it is mirrored in the Elizabethan classics just like the use of ghost in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, witches in *Macbeth*, monster and fairies in *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest*. This fact explains how people believed in superstitions which also go back to their weak faith in God and religion (p. 18)

In the play, Doctor Faustus is not satisfied with his knowledge, so, he turns to necromancy and black magic to achieve his goals and ambitions. He expresses his opinion and interest concerning magic:

Lines, circles, scenes letters, and characters;
Ay, these are those that Faustus most desires.
O, what a world of profit and delight,
Of power, of honour, of omnipotence.
Is promis'd to the studious aritizan ! (Marlowe, 2010, p. 100)

Moreover, he prefers magic books upon the religious ones:

These metaphysics of magicians,
And necromantic books are heavenly; (p. 98)

Poole comments on Faustus' tendency to black art:

...his descent into the black arts at first seems to be the product of his intellectual ennui, as he searches for new challenges and intellectual heights. His summoning of the devils is driven in part by his burning desire for more knowledge ... (Poole, 2006, p. 102)

Necromancy is forbidden in Christianity; however, Faustus decides to violate the medieval barriers by committing such sin, just like the Renaissance man who was self-confident and eager to do new or forbidden deeds. At that time, people began to read dangerous books like Black Art books. Gibbon describes Faustus as:

He is less an individual than the epitome of Renaissance aspirations. He has all the divine discontent, the unwearied and unsatisfied striving after knowledge that marked the age in which Marlowe wrote. An age of exploration, its adventurers were not only the merchants and seamen who sailed the world, but also the scientists, astronomers who surveyed the heaven with their 'optic Glass (Gippon, 1996, as cited in Al- Khawaldeh, 2010).

4. Nationalism and Individualism

The emersion of the earlier form of nationalism and patriotism is another feature of the Renaissance. In the Middle Ages, there were no such ideas; Europe was going around religion, as most kings used to follow the Pope in Rome. The Catholic-Protestant struggle is one of the important events in the Renaissance. Protestantism appeared firstly in Germany in 1516 by Martin Luther as a reaction against the Pope's supremacy and the corruption of church. Then it spread in England and other parts of Europe. Nevertheless, after Reformation and split of England from the Pope's authority, the notion of nationalism spread, especially in England, which become politically and religiously independent as it followed the Anglican Church headed by the king himself. Hudson (2011) comments on the spirit of patriotism in England "An intense patriotism thus became one of the outstanding features of the age, and showed itself in many ways-in a keen interest in England's past, pride in England's greatness, hatred of England's enemies..." (p. 47) Hence, England's break with Rome and turning to Protestantism is one of the reasons which might pave the way to the appearance of nationalism, especially in England. According to Britannica (2022):

The first full manifestation of modern nationalism occurred in 17th-century England, in the Puritan revolution. England had become the leading nation in scientific spirit, in commercial enterprise, and in political thought and activity. Swelled by an immense confidence in the new age, the English people felt upon their shoulders the mission of history, a sense that they were at a great turning point from which a new true reformation and a new liberty would start.

Nationalism is apparent in the play, for instance, when Faustus tries to ridicule the Pope and the Catholic Church in the Pope's chamber scene and at the European court according to the Quarto text 1616. While Bezio (2017) comments on this issue:

Anti-Catholicism formed a significant part of the Elizabethan government's religious policy in the latter half of the sixteenth century, and frequently appeared in sermons, pamphlets, and plays throughout the 1580s and 1590s. Christopher Marlowe's drama— especially *Doctor Faustus* and *Massacre at Paris*—participates in this anti-Catholic tradition. (p. 135)

On another occasion Faustus says: "And chase the Prince of Parma from our land" (Marlowe, 2010, p. 102). Degenhardt (2015) refers to the historical background of this line:

A grandson of Charles V ,who served as Spanish governor of the Netherlands during 1578–92. In England he was a reviled Catholic enemy of the Reformation, both for his role in the Netherlands and for his foiled attempt to lead a land invasion of England following the attack of the Armada (p. 407).

On the other hand, the end of Feudal System in Europe was a significant factor for the end of religious state and beginning of national state. In addition to that, its end contributed the appearance of individual

spirit. Feudalism received blows, first of all during the Crusades when a large number of knights and noblemen were killed. Then the Black Death pandemic in the mid of the 14th century which killed millions of people in Europe, so it strengthened the peasants and rose their wages which subsequently led to the end of Feudalism. Vanishing of Feudalism will be one of the reasons which paved the way to the beginning of the Renaissance. Poole (2006) writes about the disappearance of feudal system in relation to the character of Doctor Faustus:

Hence a new social system is going to appear instead of the strict and unfair feudal system that focuses on the individual's origin, regardless of his talents and abilities. This concept can be seen in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* as Faustus here represents the Renaissance spirit "Faustus, however, hardly represents the medieval Everyone: instead, he is the epitome of the Renaissance man. This figure is often self-made (having raised himself from lower social origins)" (p. 102)

Subsequently, Individualism is one more aspect of modern Western civilization. Unlike the traditional Catholic Middle Age norms, the Protestant ideology focuses on the man himself and gives him a more important role. Southgate (1957) writes:

With the passing of the Middle Ages, this communal spirit gave place to individualism... Protestantism challenged the authority of the church. Men learned to think and act for themselves... The claims of self-interest were being asserted (p. 60).

While Pool (2006) comments on the nature of the Reformation "The theology of the Reformation marked a radical departure from this medieval system, in which the afterlife was subject to human agency and will" (p. 98). which led to the appearance of individualism and modern ideas of liberty and free will. While Ashok (2011) concentrates on the importance of translating the Bible into English "... an English Bible was introduced which paved the way for individual interpretation" (p. 26-27).

During the Renaissance, man became the centre of the world. Reformation in its turn contributed in liberating man from the authority of the church, which used to play as a mediator between people and God:

If the Renaissance posited man at the center of a secular world, the religious movement of the Reformation posited man in a direct relation with God bypassing the institutional authority of the church and its liturgical practices (IGNOU, 2017, p. 45).

5. Back to Classicism

After the Fall of Constantinople, many Byzantine intellectuals and scholars migrated to the Italian city-states. They carried with them old Greek manuscripts and books, where they spread Greek culture and philosophy. So, people started reviving Classic culture that would subsequently lead to the Renaissance, or at least would be one of the reasons of the Renaissance. The word Renaissance itself in French means rebirth, which refers to the rebirth of Classic culture, i.e., Greek and Roman heritage. So, it is a non-Christian movement, as it neglects medieval and Christian norms to go back to pagan heritage. The Europeans were fascinated by the Classic civilization especially during the Renaissance. Christopher Marlowe himself was interested in Classic literature as he read a lot of legendary Classical literature. (Anwar, n.d., p. 11)

In the play, there are many references to Classic culture and figures. For example, when Doctor Faustus meets the German Emperor, Charles V, in act 4, scene 3 the emperor asks him to see Alexander the Great, the famous ancient Greek leader. Faustus, in his turn conjures up his image which astonishes the emperor. One more incident in the play which is related to Classicism is Mephistophilis's calling up of Helen of Troy, who is considered according to the Greek legend as the most beautiful woman in Greece. Another reference to the interest in Classicisms is Faustus's speech in the opening scene of act I which refers to the scholars' interesting in classic knowledge and culture:

And live and die in Aristotle's works

Sweet Analytics, 'tis thou hast ravish'd me! (Marlowe, 2010, p. 96)

On the other hand, Faustus's blasphemy in God and Christianity and turning to heathenism is a crucial point in the play which may connote people's turn from Middle Age's Christianity to Classic's paganism. In act III, scene I, Faustus says:

Wherein is fix'd the love of Belzebub:
To him I'll build an altar and a church,
And offer lukewarm blood of new-born babes. (Marlowe, 2010, p. 16)

Conclusion

Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, is one of the best examples of Renaissance literature. Through a new historicist reading of the play we can detect a lot of elements and aspects that characterize the Renaissance period. Although the traditional medieval reception of the play as a morality play, the play can, on the other hand be read as a Renaissance play. To summarize, most features of the Renaissance man are embodied in the character of Doctor Faustus that represents the earlier spirit of Renaissance that breaks the traditional norms and barriers of the Middle Ages. So, he could be regarded as a supreme archetype of the Renaissance man. To start with religion, Faustus revolts against Christian beliefs, which constitutes one of the leading features of Renaissance, especially during the Reformation that was led by Martin Luther, a German scholar from Wittenberg, just like Doctor Faustus. In addition to that, he practices magic, a serious sin in Christianity. His turn to black magic can be interpreted as a kind of curiosity, in order to fulfil his inquisitiveness. While his pride and excessive ambition violate the traditional Christian norms during the Middle Ages, as pride itself was regarded one of the seven sins. The Protestant-Catholic struggle which was a result of Reformation is one more aspect of the Renaissance which can be seen clearly in the play. Precisely in the Rome scene when he insults the Pope and the Catholic church, however there are some other hints to this issue in the play. Curiosity, excessive ambition and spirit of adventure are regarded other features of Renaissance. Faustus in his turn, has excessive ambition, he is no longer pleased with his traditional knowledge, although he was a doctor who gained wide knowledge in medicine, maths, theology and philosophy. He became eager to get the eternal knowledge which will enable him to be powerful, wealthy and famous. On the other hand, navigation, geographical exploration and colonialism are considered basic pillars of that age. They also can be traced along the whole play, just like referring to some far places and new discovered lands just like the Americas. At the same time, there are some references in the play to the intention of colonisation and control of the world especially when it refers to India's treasure, Indians Moors, Saba and when he meets the German Emperor and the Duke of Vanholt. National spirit and individualism are also manifest in the play. Although nationalism had appeared as a clear secular doctrine in the nineteenth century. However, its earlier form appeared many decades before. In other words, nationalism in *Doctor Faustus* is mixed with Protestant element, especially when he insults the Pope as we already mentioned above. He also refers to the Spanish Prince of Parma when the Spanish were still controlling some parts of the Netherlands at that time.

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