

DOCTOR FAUSTUS

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE



EDITED BY DAVID SCOTT KASTAN

A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION

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Christopher Marlowe
DOCTOR FAUSTUS



A TWO-TEXT EDITION
(A-TEXT, 1604; B-TEXT, 1616)
CONTEXTS AND SOURCES
CRITICISM

Edited by
DAVID SCOTT KASTAN
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

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Introduction

In 1675, Edward Phillips in his *Theatrum Poetarum Anglicanorum* called Christopher Marlowe “a kind of second Shakspeare.” High praise indeed; but, at the time of Marlowe’s death in 1593, Shakespeare might well have been in fairness thought a kind of second Marlowe. Both were born in 1564, but by 1593 Shakespeare’s hand could be seen on stage in only *The Comedy of Errors*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, the *Henry VI* plays, and possibly *The Taming of the Shrew*. Marlowe had written *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, *The Massacre at Paris*, *The Jew of Malta*, the two parts of *Tamburlaine*, *Edward II*, and, of course, *Doctor Faustus*. In 1593, pride of place belonged to Marlowe, and the vector of influence seems clearly to move from him to Shakespeare rather than the other way round. Marlowe’s imagination is certainly the more remarkable and daring, and in many ways, *Doctor Faustus* seems the most remarkable and daring manifestation of it at work—a tragedy that explores the very limits of human ambition.

It is difficult, however, to characterize the play’s achievement, not least because of its complex textual history.¹ *Doctor Faustus* exists in two distinct editions. Written probably about 1590, it was not printed until 1604. In that year Thomas Bushell published what is now known to scholars as the A-text, a 1,517-line version of the play apparently printed from Marlowe’s own drafts. Twelve years later John Wright (who had acquired the rights to the play in 1610) published a second edition of *Doctor Faustus* (unsurprisingly known as the B-text), this some 600 lines longer than the first. Adding to the complication is a note in Philip Henslowe’s *Diary* dated November 22, 1602, about the payment of £4 to two playwrights, William Bird and Samuel Rowley, for “additions” to the play. We do not know whether these were the *only* additions made to the play between Marlowe’s death and its appearances in print, but clearly additions were made. Seemingly, the 1616 B-text reflects the Bird and Rowley additions and possibly other new mate-

1. For the clearest and most compelling rethinking of the complex textual history of the play, see Eric Rasmussen’s *A Textual Companion to Doctor Faustus* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1993). For the relevant contemporary documents, see pp. 141–42 herein.

rial, including some expurgation of the text in accordance with the 1606 Act of Abuses, which prohibited references to God on the stage. The B-text, then, represents the play more or less as it came to be performed later in its stage history.

Nonetheless, the differences in the two texts do not reflect only the distinction between a largely “authorial” text and a “theatrical” one—that is, between the play as its author may have imagined it and the work as it survived and inevitably mutated in the theater. Much of that difference is indeed evident in the two texts (and as such, arguably is justification enough for insisting on a two-text edition of the play). But, even more, the two versions of the play in fact trace significantly different tragic trajectories, the B-text externalizing and theatricalizing what the A-text makes a matter of private conscience and conviction.² In both, Faustus suffers a terrifying damnation for daring “to practice more than heavenly power permits” (A- and B-text; Epilogue, line 8). But in the A-text, the choices Faustus makes are his own, and his suffering is largely psychological. In the B-text, he exists in a world where he is (mis)led by malign supernatural forces and his suffering is physical. In A, the Old Man exits, “fearing the ruin of [Faustus’s] hapless soul” (5.1.61); in B, the Old Man quite differently fears “the enemy of thy hapless soul” (5.1.63). The A-text ends with Faustus alone, and only at the very end is he led off by devils. In B, there is another scene in which the scholars enter to find Faustus’s dismembered body, torn by “the devils whom Faustus served” (5.3.8).

The psychological and theological differences between the two versions are indeed significant enough to make talking about *Doctor Faustus* almost meaningless without specifying which version of the play one is talking about. This Norton Critical Edition of *Doctor Faustus* is, therefore, a two-text version. The A-text and the B-text are each here, available to be read independently. Full notes are offered for each (even at the cost of the inevitable duplication) to facilitate the reading. It is not a parallel-text edition, however, which would highlight the differences between the texts but also would make those discontinuous differences the focus of the edition rather than the different experience of reading each play.

Doctor Faustus has long been recognized as one of the towering achievements of the Renaissance imagination, even if critics have not always been able to agree about its meaning. If it is a tragedy that clearly shows the Reformation sense of human depravity overwhelming the Renaissance dream of human perfectibility, much about its Reformation context remains at once uncertain and un-

2. See Michael Warren (pp. 142–52 herein), Leah Marcus (pp. 153–70), and Rasmussen (pp. 171–78).

settling. Is it finally an orthodox play, powerfully testifying to the inevitable and appropriate destruction of one who dares to challenge the enduring moral laws of the universe, or is it a far more disturbing drama, in which those laws are themselves revealed as oppressive? Is grace indeed always available to Faustus, as the Good Angel insists, or is Faustus damned from the first, predestined to reject what is seemingly offered? As Alan Sinfield asks, are we not forced at least to "entertain the thought that Faustus is not damned because he is wicked, but wicked because he is damned?"³

That unnerving thought engages the very premise of a moral universe and a benign God, a thought that is perhaps reinforced by the fact that only one supernatural agent of good ever appears (and even that Good Angel disappears as the clock strikes eleven) but that many devils appear to Faustus (and to us). Is the play, then, a challenge not only to Renaissance confidence in the human intellect but also to Reformation comfort with the divine will? Is Marlowe's own contemporary reputation as an atheist justified and relevant to our sense of the play?⁴ Is its final line (if indeed the line does belong to the play proper)—*Terminat hora diem; terminat Author opus* (The hour ends the day; the author ends the work)—perhaps the playwright's acknowledgment of his link to his transgressive hero? None of these questions is easily answered, and indeed *Doctor Faustus*, in both its versions, is a play that everywhere and energetically resists easy answers—resists, perhaps, any answers at all. As its riddling textual history uncannily replicates, it is in fact a play more about ignorance than knowledge, more about doubt than understanding; and it is in its dramatizations of that provocative uncertainty that *Doctor Faustus* achieves its greatness.

In the preparation of any edition, enormous and unrepayable debts are incurred, not least to the efforts of the editors who have come before. My major debts here are to W. W. Greg and his magisterial parallel-text edition of 1950 and to David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen's remarkable rethinking of the textual problems in their two-text Revels edition of 1993. Other debts are perhaps less obvious in the final result but no less significant. If these, like the first two, also are hardly repaid with mere mention, they also at least must be recorded. Julie Crawford, Margreta de Grazia, Jonathan Hope, András Kiséry, Laurie Maguire, Claire McEachern, Gordon McMullan, Stephen Orgel, Richard Proudfoot, Jim Shapiro, Peter Stallybrass, Tiffany Stern, Keith Walker, and David Yerkes are

3. Sinfield, *Literature in Protestant England, 1550–1650* (London: Croom Helm, 1983), p. 14.

4. See pp. 127–30 herein.

among the numerous friends, colleagues, and students (the categories are not mutually exclusive) that over the years have discussed aspects of *Doctor Faustus* with me and ensured that my interest in the play has only grown. And then there are JE, AL, and, of course, MK—to them and all the rest, thank you.

Editorial Procedures

This two-text edition of *Doctor Faustus* is based on the 1604 and 1616 quartos. All substantive changes from those texts are recorded in the textual notes below. The texts presented here modernize the spelling and punctuation of the originals. Old *forms* of words are retained; old *spellings* are modernized (thus “professe” in 1.1.2 becomes “profess,” but “fitteth” in line 11 is retained)—though the distinction often blurs (e.g., is “holla” a variant form or a variant spelling of “holler”?). Proper names are given in their usual modern forms, even when this may affect the meter. The flexibility of pronunciation and stress in early modern English permits various ways of understanding the metrical principles of particular lines, and little seems to be gained by retaining an idiosyncratic form of an otherwise recognizable name to preserve an uncertain metrical scheme. Punctuation is brought into line with modern practice, which, instead of the largely rhythmical punctuation of the early seventeenth century, attempts to clarify the logical relations between grammatical units. The Latin that is spoken by characters has been corrected, except when it is clear the errors are intentional. The argument that errors are deliberate and designed to be comic depends on subtle differences being heard on stage, and in general this seems to me unlikely.

The aim of this edition is to permit the two early texts of *Doctor Faustus* to be read easily and independently, and so I have been conservative in emending either text. The only major changes involve the repositioning of two comic scenes from the A-text (1604), which there are collapsed and appear between the Chorus and the action in the court of Charles V that the Chorus introduces. It is hard to see any way in which this order was either intended by the playwright or intelligible on stage. Here, following Bevington and Rasmussen (1993), they are relocated to 2.2 and 3.2, respectively. In the B-text, Wagner’s Chorus appears between 2.1 and 2.2, and then an expanded version reappears again (seemingly in its correct place) at the beginning of Act 3. This edition omits the earlier version. The B-text attempts to fix the misplaced comic scenes of A, but, while correctly locating the second, places the first after 2.3 instead of before, where it apparently belongs.

Textual Notes

A-Text (1604)

The lists that follow record all substantive departures in this edition of the A-text (1604) and the B-text (1616). They do not record modernizations of spelling and punctuation, regularization of names, expansions of abbreviations, corrections of obvious typographical errors, or adjustments of lineation. The adopted reading in this edition is given first in boldface followed by the original reading of the relevant text (e.g., **Roda** Rhodes). When the reading adopted here in either the A- or the B-text comes from the other, that fact is indicated parenthetically. Editorial stage directions are not collated but are placed within brackets in the text. The act and scene divisions are editorial, not appearing in either the A- or the B-text. For a full amount of the editorial assumptions and practices of this edition, see "Editorial Procedures," p. xiii herein.

PROLOGUE

- 1 **SH CHORUS** not in A-text
12 **Roda** Rhodes

I.I

- 6 **analytics** Anulatikes
7 **logices** logicis
12 **On kai me on** Oncaymaeon
28 **legatur** legatus
31 **Exhaereditare** Ex haereditari
36 **Too servile** (B-text) The deuill
90 **silk** skill
112 **concise syllogisms** Consissylogismes
129 **in the** in their
130 **From** (B-text) For
130 **drag** dregge
139 **seen in** seen

1.3

- 9 **anagrammatized** (B-text) Agramithist
 17 *aquatici* Aquatani
 19 *appareat* (B-text) apariat
 19 *Quid tu moraris* quod tumeraris
 22 *dicatus* dicaetis
 34 *redis* regis
 46 *accidens* accident

1.4

- 11 **By'r Lady** burladie
 72-3 *vestigiis nostris* vestigias nostras

2.1

- 18 **illusions, fruits** illusious fruites
 147 **no** (B-text) not in A-text

2.2

The A-text places this scene after the Chorus that in this edition, as in most other modern editions, introduces Act 4. In the A-text, this scene is followed immediately by a second comic scene, which in this edition, as in the B-text and most modern editions, is located at 3.2.

2.3

- 19 **thunder** thunders
 55 *intelligentia* Intelligentij

3.1

- 34-5 **Over . . . Rome** (B-text) not in A-text
 36 **Ponte** Ponto
 70 **ha't** hate

3.2

See note on 2.2

4. CHORUS

- SH CHORUS** not in A-text

4.1

- 127 **goodbye** god buy
 150 **hey-pass** hey, passe
 174 **hostry** Oastrie

EPILOGUE

SH CHORUS not in A-text

B-Text (1616)

THE TRAGEDY OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS

The title page of the B-text (1616) calls the play "The Tragicall History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus," but the first page of the text identifies it as "The Tragedie of Doctor Faustus." To help differentiate the two texts, I have adopted that title for the B-text.

PROLOGUE

- 1 SH CHORUS not in B-text
 12 **Roda** Rhodes

1.1

- 7 **logices** Logicis
 26 **legatur** legatus
 29 **Exhaereditare** Exhereditari
 80 **India** (A-text) Indian
 88 **silk** skill
 108 **Swarm** (A-text) Sworne
 119 **Lapland** Lopland

1.3

- 16 **dei** dii
 17 **aquatici** Aquatani
 19–20 **Quid tu moraris** quod tumeris
 22 **dicatus** dicatis
 22 SD **Dragon** "Mephistiphilis Dragon" at 19 in B-text
 44 **accidens** accident

1.4

47 *vestigis nostris* vestigias nostras

2.1

14 SH BAD ANGEL Euill An

2.2

2.2. This scene is printed after the material that is 2.3 in the B-text. Following 2.1, the B-text prints a speech by Wagner that is substantially the same as the A-text's Act 3 Chorus and is apparently revised and expanded (and correctly located) as 3. Chorus below.

2.3

17 SH BAD ANGEL Euill An

42 **erring** (A-text) euening

3. CHORUS

1 SH CHORUS not in B-text

7 **tropics** Tropick

20 **coasts** costs

3.1

6 **coasting** costing

38 **Ponte** Ponto

42 **match** (A-text) watch

76, 80 **cunning** comming

149 **rights** rites

3.2

99 **on** (A-text) not in B-text

4.1

71 **like a** like

135 **is** not in B-text

4.2

27 **heart's** heart

70 **Ay, all** I call

4.5

3 **guests** Guesse

4.6

118 **guests** guesse

5.2

72 **'tis** (A-text) 'ts98 **must** most119 **boil** broyle

EPILOGUE

1 **SH CHORUS** not in B-text

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The Texts of
DOCTOR FAUSTUS

