

## Thrilling to Nothing: Abjection in Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights, Gertrude Stein's.

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**Abstract.** *This research illustrates two plays about the character of Doctor Faustus, the first was written by Christopher Marlowe in the 16th century, and the second play was written by Gertrude Stein in the 20th century, where she modified the original play. It is clear from the beginning that the main character, Dr. Faustus, symbolizes two characteristics; on one hand, the pride in the personality of Doctor Faustus and on the other hand deals with greed and selfishness that Doctor Faustus has. Because of these two characteristics, Dr. Faustus is ultimately destructive. The knowledge possessed by the physician far exceeded the knowledge of many men, and yet it was the desire for power and knowledge that could not have been attained by a mortal, which caused him to sacrifice his soul for Lucifer and curse himself. In the two plays, he sells himself, in the first play he sells himself to obtain supernatural powers, and in the second play he sells himself in order to obtain light. This research has three chapters, Chapter one investigated the life of the two authors Christopher Marlowe and Gertrude Stein. Then point of view of the original play THE TRAGIC HISTORY OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS. In addition, chapter two about Thrilling to nothing. Finally, chapter three about Gertrude Stein's light the lights.*

**Key words:** *Gertrude Stein, Tragic, Thrilling, Abjection, Dr. Faustus.*

### **Chapter one**

#### **Short Biography**

#### **"Christopher Marlowe" & "Gertrude Stein"**

##### **1.1 Christopher Marlowe**

Christopher Marlowe is the most famous Elizabethan author, writer, and playwright. He was born in Canterbury, England, to shoemaker John Marlowe and his wife Catherine. His actual birth date is uncertain, however he was christened on February 26, 1564. He attended King's School in Canterbury and Corpus Christi College in Cambridge. In 1584, he received his Bachelor of Arts degree; initially, the university was hesitant to award him the master's arts degree due to rumors that he had converted to Roman Catholicism; however, this rumor was dispelled when the privy council sent a letter declaring that he had been employed on issues pertaining to the benefit of his country. He was the leader of the group known as the university wits, which is made up of writers who have produced a wealth of literature for Elizabethan society over the course of the sixteenth century. According to some critics, Christopher Marlowe is the real originator of English tragedies. Christopher Marlowe passed away in 1593 at the age of 29, and it is said that his cause of death is unknown. He has made a significant contribution to English literature in his brief lifetime.

**The most important literary works play of Christopher Marlowe are:**

1. Tamburlaine The Great (1587)
2. Dr. Faustus (1589-1592)
3. The Jew of Malta (1589-1590)
4. The Massacre at Paris (1572)
5. Edward II (1592)

**While his works of poetical included:**

1. The passionate shepherd of his Love (1599)
2. Hero and Leander (1598)

***1.2 Gertrude Stein***

Gertrude Stein lived from (1874 to 1946), Novelist, poet, playwright, and art collector. She was born in Allegheny; she was the youngest daughter of a wealthy Jewish family that had its roots in Germany. She spent her early childhood in Europe, she traveled in Paris, Italy, and then Oakland, California. She studied psychology at Radcliffe College and was a student of the psychologist William James. Here she did experiments on normal motor automation related to stream-of-consciousness. She studied at Jones Hopkins Medical school from 1897 to 1902 and did not complete the course. Started writing but couldn't publish easily.

She wrote novels of an avant-garde kind. Also, she wrote parole poetry. She is a very important figure in modernism. She collected modernist art along with her brother, and she also became a patron of the patroness of modernist artists. She was an American Modernist but she lived most of her active career life in Paris. She was greatly impacted by the World War as her friends were also impacted late. She hosted a famous salon in her home that included expatriate writers Ernest Hemingway, Sherwood Anderson, Pablo Picasso, F. Scott, Zelda Fitzgerald, James Joyce, Henri Matisse, and Ezra Pound, we're only a few of the many geniuses that came seeking Stein's Advice and critique. She lived through the Second World War, this was also the time of Avant-grade art movements such as Formalism formalist art. Formalism is a critical movement in literary criticism, but the Formalism art movement was there which means an art movement that gave importance to form rather than content. Later in life, Stein remained active and prolific till the end, she died of stomach cancer in July 1946.

*Notable Works*

- The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas (1933).
- Three Lives (1909).
- The Making of Americans (1925).
- Tender Buttons (1914).
- Everybody's Autobiography (1937).
- How to Write (1931).
- Paris France (1940).
- The world is Round (1939).
- Geography and plays (1922).
- Wars I Have Seen (1945).
- Lectures in America (1935).
- The Geographical History of America (1936).

- Ida: A Novel (1941).
- Blood on the Dining Room Floor (1933).
- Stanzas in Meditation.
- Brewsie and Willie (1946).
- Writings (1932-1946).
- Pablo Picasso.
- Four Saints in Three Acts.
- The Mother of Us All.

### ***1.3 Point of View***

**Doctor Faustus** is a tragedy play written by Christopher Marlowe published in 1604. The complete name of the play is:

#### **(The Tragic History of Life and Death of Doctor Faustus)**

It is about a German writer and scholar who is extremely ambitious in his pursuit of knowledge. **Dr. Faustus** is a well-respected German scholar, a brilliant theologian from the university in Vinton burg, Germany who has studied medicine, law, logic, philosophy, and theology that is about religion, but he is still dissatisfied with the limits of human knowledge. **Dr. Faustus** believes that he knows everything about philosophy so he won't read it anymore because it isn't something new.

He believes that physics is unnecessary if it cannot allow people to live forever or bring the dead back to life. Additionally, he believes that the law is absurd and full of garbage, and that its only purpose is to benefit him. He also disbelieves in divinity because all people are sinners and that sin brings about death. If we claim that we are not sinners, we are lying to ourselves and are not being honest. He makes the decision to learn black magic and asks his two friends Cornelius and Valdes to instruct him in the practice. They gave him support and instructed him in some basic magic principles. Dr. Faustus starts his new career as a magician one night by using black spirit to summon Mephistopheles, the devil. After the devil appeared, Dr. Faustus declared his intention to learn black magic from the devil and asked him to be his slave. Dr. Faustus was told by the devil that he could be his devil for only 24 years.

Then the devil disappears and goes to the master of devils that is **Lucifer** and undergoes its formation. Then he again reappears to **Dr. Faustus**, he informs him he can be his slave for 24 years with the agreement of surrendering his soul and requests him to sign in the agreement with the blood, **Dr. Faustus** agrees. Before signing in that agreement the good angel requested **Dr. Faustus** to avoid it and informed him to come to Gad's path and ask for repentance the angel told him the name of God will save him.

The good angel reads out some lines from the Bible and tells **Faustus** to abandon the idea of learning black magic. He wants him don't go to the black magic. The bad angel appears also and encourages him to land the bad black magic and tells him if he learns the black magic he can become very famous and achieve whatever he deserves and can be very happy through these 24 years. However, Mephistopheles encourages him to sign the pact and he does so with his blood. As soon as he signs it, the words "homo fuge" — which means "human life" — gets imprinted on his arm, and at that moment, Dr. Faustus thinks that perhaps it is a sign from God. However, Mephistopheles diverts him by giving him many gifts, including a gift that is imprinted with the words "human life." After signing, Dr. Faustus requests that Mephistopheles appear in good form. He then begins to interrogate Mephistopheles, particularly about hell and heaven. Mephistopheles responded that hell is merely absent from God's presence.

For the second time, Mephistopheles speaks of hell. He claims that there are no boundaries to it and that it can exist anywhere that God is absent. Hell is also being denied everlasting bliss. In other words, heaven is receiving entrance into God's presence. Then Mephistopheles tells the tale of Lucifer, who was once God's favorite angel but who later rebelled and was exiled to hell as a result of his actions.

Since Mephistopheles and other evil angels are forbidden from mentioning the name of the universe's creator, god, in their answers, Faustus once more begins to question Mephistopheles' actions. Lucifer then appears to dissuade Faustus from continuing to harbor doubts. The seven deadly sins are summoned by Lucifer, who instructs them to amuse Faustus, who is now content with his newfound abilities and Mephistopheles' assistance.

Dr. Faustus senses his strength. As part of his quest to see the world, Faustus travels with Mephistopheles to Rome and Germany. While there, they attend the pope's ceremony and engage in a number of mysterious, invisible activities, including eating the pope's food and punching the pope in the feet. The pope applied holy water to them after realizing that there was an invisible presence there. After learning about these mysterious activities, they later fled to Europe.

Dr. Faustus gained widespread notoriety, especially when Charles V, the German king, invited him to stay in his palace.

**Dr. Faustus** to do some tricks to show the image of great Alexander who born in Macedonia and lived in the fourth century and his lover china, **Dr. Faustus**, using the black magic and make the great Alexander and showed it to King Charles V. The German Emperor became very impressed. A knight in this palace makes fun of **Faustus's** magical powers and Faustus makes horns stopped on his head. Next **Faustus** goes to England. There he sells the horse to a hot seller that turns into a heap of straw when it reaches the river. **Dr. Faustus** starts to fear his own impending death.

He conjures the spirit of Helen of tory, the most beautiful woman on the planet he kissed her and felt happiness. The scholars visiting him and the old man tells Faustus to repent but Faustus drives him away before falseness is dead. Through these 24 years, Dr. Faustus enjoyed a lot with his slave Mephistopheles. After these 24 years, **Dr. Faustus** has arrived at the end of the concert, the good angel and bad angel visited him again. The good angel shows him that he could have been built if he hadn't sold his soul to **Lucifer**. The bad angel shows **Faustus** a glimpse of hell and eternal torture. at night at 12 o'clock, he realized his mistake as he shouldn't take black magic for his studies. He tried to ask repentance to God, but it was too late to ask him. He remembered the good angel who warned early him to say the name of God at least once, but he refused. At the time he tried to pray that all the demons would come and return his body to hell. In the morning the scholar finds Faustus's body torn to pieces These kinds of over-ambition and wrong decisions made **Dr. Faustus'** life a tragic one.

## *Chapter two*

### *" Thrilling to Nothing"*

#### *"The Abjection in Doctor Faustus"*

##### *2.1 Thrilling to Nothing*

In the play, a brilliant researcher by the name of Doctor Faustus experiences a significant change in his psychological state. He was a subject matter authority in many fields of knowledge and science. "Faustus," who attained the pinnacle of genius, had the capacity to combine various fields of knowledge. He has doctorates in medicine, law, and theology in addition to logic. But even with all of this information, he was unable to fully address many of the issues that trouble people's minds. He once believed that all of the earlier sciences were sufficient for him, but he now seeks out new knowledge. He was fed up with his monotonous life as a lecturer at the university of religious sciences, that his repetition of the same lectures on traditional sciences completely different from medical sciences, led him to the decision to revolt against his boring reality.

In order to survive, Doctor Faustus studied magic and disobeyed the known laws of nature. Faustus was enthusiastic and eager to learn this kind of magic because he believed it would allow him to enter a world through which he could escape from societal constraints. He did this in order to acquire absolute power and ability. He had spent a lot of time sitting and reading about meeting the Devil. This is what happened, leading the meeting to sign a joint contract between the two. Faustus researched the laws of mathematics and statistics to reveal the extent of the benefits that he reaps upon his agreement with the Devil. He who sells himself to Devil is trading in more than his body, he is trading in the sacred gift, which is the soul.

He consequently lost his mind and body as a result of his enthusiasm and eagerness. He turned his back on the divine will. But all he receives is the total loss of his human self. Faustus was discovered to be the Devil's total slave. Devil made a promise to serve Faustus (Devil is a servant of Faustus), but instead, he rose to the position of master commanding master, with Faustus serving as his executor slave. Devil promised Faustus to bring him whatever he wanted, but he only brought him a curse. Therefore, the superhuman is still far from the Current existence. Faustus tried to become a superhero, but his attempt failed. The nature of human creation is based on the rejection of absolute power because any human being is unable to break away from divine laws and regulations. Therefore, Faustus's enthusiasm for magic ended, for he lost the world and the hereafter.

## ***2.2 The Abjection in Doctor Faustus***

During the sixteenth century, England flitted alternately between protestants and catholic doctrine through the reform period. Protestants rejected what is called magic items of the faith of Catholicism by Robert Scribner, which was deleted by Protestantism. By the time Protestantism was criticizing magic in England, the audience in the Elizabethan age was attending drama that includes religious and magic personalities. Christopher Marlowe Used some magic in his work as a firework in the theatre of his play Doctor Faustus which raised religious discussions through this period and drive the audience to cast doubt about the world that they live in. In the play Doctor John Faustus which completed most of science, then he became bored of them, so he decided to enter the magical world. During the play, Doctor Faustus was experiencing a religious conflict to continue or leave magic but in the end, he returns to the practice of magic.

Faustus shows unrespect to the religious ceremony and their beliefs as well as aggression on the pope and monks. This sort of attack against the Christian faith and beliefs is hard for a lot of people in the sixteenth century. Marlowe used these magic elements to give the sense of life particularly fireworks. The use of magic was too risky as use magic imaginary to evoke demons and spirits which violate the belief of religion in the Elizabethan age, but Christopher Marlowe justified the devil could be something imaginary. However, Protestants and catholic considered some acts in the Bible as a kind of miracle, not really magic.

At a time when positions were strongly held for magic and superpowers especially in the play of Doctor Faustus when appeared some of these magic reflected a public attitude. By refusing or accepting that kind of magic because sorcery and superstition were there in Elizabethan society but at the same time many people rejected any kind of magic.

They considered it unacceptable evil. But magic attracted a lot of audiences. The spirits, the demons, and hell are elements that Christian believe in, but magic has reached its peak when the real division appears between protestants and Catholics

## ***Chapter three***

### ***Gertrude Stein's Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights***

#### ***3.1 Gertrude Stein's Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights***

Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights (1938), by Gertrude Stein, combines her distinctive attitude toward language and structure with Global Topics, which for her includes the women's movement, making



it more imaginative and approachable than much of her early work. The play demonstrated a change in

Stein's style between the two periods that Donald Sutherland has recognized: "The Play as Movement and Landscape 1922–1932" and "The Melodic Drama, Melodrama and Opera, 1932–1946."

In *Doctor Faustus* Stein uses distinguishable characters and features distinct conversations with them, but the language displays all the peculiarities of her earlier work—lack of punctuation, various individuality for main characters, and Voices without a body. Amusing, not sequential, and repetition. As Michael Hoffman writes, Stein's "language now focuses on something other than its structure; she shifts from [chat] concern to such traditional literary problems as those of moral value and human identity, but she still maintains throughout the playstyle readily identifiable as her own." Although several articles on Stein's drama in general and *Doctor Faustus* in particular have been published, there have been few attempts to connect her plays with other postmodern works of the era.

Apart from its formal resemblances to the European avant-garde—in particular to the Dadaist and Surrealist drama being drafted and produced in early twentieth-century Paris—and that Avant-garde's much smaller dramatic branch in the United States—*Doctor Faustus* is significant for its contraventions of the three basic principles of conventional drama, as expressed in the introduction to this collection: psychology, causality, and morality or providentially.

Stein disrupts this triad even more than either E. E. Cummings in *Him* (1927) or Thornton Wilder in his purportedly avant-garde *Our Town*, going beyond merely copying the Dadaists' or Surrealists' methods (1938).

Consequently, to establish herself as one of the top playwrights of the early American avant-garde. In *Doctor Faustus* Stein not only replaces religious doubt about God's existence with the secular immorality of contemporary technology, but she also replaces it with a pseudoscientific certainty about the personality that is unified yet developing with humanity's inability to comprehend or advance. In this play, every character is diminished to Sam's defeating helplessness to understand or interact with the world.

Marguerite Ida-Helena Annabel, the play's central female character, is unable to fight off the man from across the sea; the devil is unable to subdue *Doctor Faustus* (even long enough to convince him that he has a soul); *Faustus* is unable to control the lights once they have been created; and at the play's conclusion, he is unable to convince Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel to accompany him to hell. Both the boy and the dog are under Faust's control and are ultimately put to death by him; neither has any control over his own life.

*Doctor Faustus* explores the advancement of technology and the place of God in modern life, similar to Wilder's *Our Town*. The isolation and isolationism in a sleepy New Hampshire town at the turn of the century, however, did not offer romantic longing or spiritual salvation to a Depression-weary and war-weary American public; rather, Stein described the significance of people without God, without morals, and without a true understanding of themselves. Certainly, Stein's characters take pleasure in their irritability and insensibility in an almost absurdist manner.

The play neatly returns to its theological question—does *Doctor Faustus* have a soul? when *Faustus*' frustration with the world results in his intention to "go to hell." Mephistopheles informs *Faustus* that he cannot enter hell without a soul, and *Faustus* has sold him his soul, in a manner that may seem absurd or contradictory. Given Stein's liberation of traditional Judeo-Christian belief and dramatic suspense, it shouldn't come as a surprise that she begins her play after the primary religious crisis—*Faustus*' choice to sell his soul to the devil in exchange for knowledge, which was regarded as the pivotal moment in Goethe's or Marlowe's dramatization of the Faust legend. *Faustus* is informed that he must sin in order to go to hell. He ponders, "What sin, how can I commit a sin without a soul?" Mephistopheles responds less emphatically, "Kill anything" (I16).

Faust then murders his companions—the boy and the dog—and falls to his death into hell, where he wishes to escape the reality he has created by rejecting God in favor of science. Stein, however, believes that the word "hell" exemplifies this incredibly technological reality (or nightmare): "Any light is just a light and now there is nothing more either by day or by night just a light" (91). The unending light can be interpreted as a contemporary parallel to the infernal fires of hell.

This technological light has the ability to dominate all other types of light and, like the hell of theology, all different kinds of faith because of its heat and brightness (it is neither warm and nourishing like the sun nor gently haloed like candlelight). Stein, who was a resident of Europe in the 1930s, thus conveys the apprehension of a continent that had only recently emerged from the first mechanized world war and was now poised on the verge of a second, whose technological devastation and human destructiveness would inspire greater imagination. She asserts that life cannot be understood and that there is no God to establish an ethical order or stop humanity from annihilating itself through technology, like other avant-garde writers of her era.

Stein has also lost faith in the traditional patriarchal God, like so many other avant-garde writers, but she has also lost faith in special feminine spirituality and, paradoxically, in the ability of anyone who lacks absolute faith. After all, Faust's "individual quest" results in murder, sadness, and anarchy. And after World War II, writers like Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, Samuel Beckett, and Eugène Ionesco—who saw human folly—the hellfire of the Holocaust and atomic obliteration—of the last great war as having betrayed humankind—began to write again, continuing the awful behavior that permeates Stein's Doctor Faustus.

### **Conclusion**

This research deals with an important point in this play, which is the heart of the beliefs of the hero, as the hero, as a consequence of his tremendous ambition, intends to overturn many concepts, including religious and social, that he employs for his personal aspirations and his worldly instincts. To achieve this, he must conclude an agreement with Satan for a period of twenty-four years, during which he will grant a great opportunity to worldly practices that were going on in his mind. During these years, the hero will go through several stops to achieve his personal and personal goals. However, the question arises, has Faustus achieved what he wanted? Through this research, it was found that Dr. Faustus fulfilled only petty and petty desires that were neither worth the effort nor deserving of selling himself to Satan in return for that. In conclusion, we can say that the writer Marlow presented us with personal behavior and internal conflicts with the hero that ended with a great tragic end Dr. Faustus the protagonist of the play is a man who is willing to sacrifice everything, even his soul, in exchange for power and immortality, so his insatiable passion for everything he had is the first factor causing the destruction of Dr. Faustus.

The play of Dr. Faustus is also considered an ethical play because it depicts a conflict between what Christianity considers a sin and a man's desire for knowledge, power and infinite wealth.

This research touches on an important point in this play: the quest for nothing even in the play Dr. Faustus light the light, Dr. Faustus does not achieve anything, despite some changes by Gertrude Stein, but the result is one, which is nothing.

The question is whether Dr. Faustus achieved what he wanted? From this research, it turns out that Dr. Faustus has fulfilled only petty and small desire, not worth it, not worth selling himself to the devil for that.

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