Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* and Lady Mary Wroth's Sonnets



Understanding the Nuances of Early Modern England

## Today's Agenda

#### Lecture Agenda:

- 1. The Great Chain of Being Review
- 2. Lady Mary Wroth and her Sonnet Sequence
  - a. About Lady Mary Wroth
  - b. Pamphilia to Amphilanthus
- 3. Doctor Faustus
  - a. About Christopher Marlowe
  - b. Demons, Devils, Magic, and The Pope?
  - c. Against Mercantile Capitalism?
- 4. Secondary Reading Summary
  - a. "The Reformation, Inter-imperial World History, and Marlowe's Doctor Faustus" by Jane Hwang Degenhardt

# The Great Chain of Being

This is a core belief of medieval Christianity that continues through the early modern period. The higher you are in the chain, the more divine you are and thus the more social, political, and cultural power you had as a being.



## 1579 drawing of the Great Chain of Being from Didacus Valades, Rhetorica Christiana

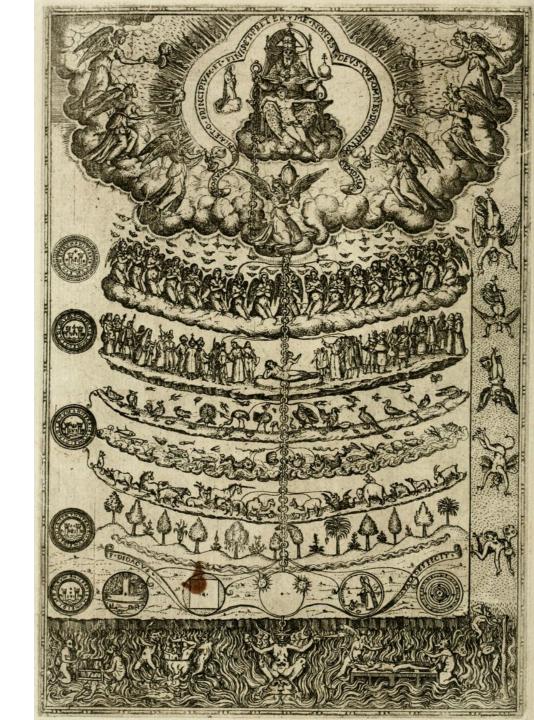
Other refreshers from last week -

England declared itself Protestant under Queen Elizabeth I

The Pope didn't like that and Catholic nations, like Spain,

cut off trade with England

• The first joint-stock company was founded under Queen Elizabeth I and was used to create shipping companies early ones traded equally with the Ottoman Empire but also set off to exploit India and the New World with companies like the East India Company and The Virginia Company



## Lady Mary Wroth English Noblewoman and Poet

## Lady Mary Wroth - Author of *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*

- Daughter of the Earl of Leicester, Robert Sidney and niece of the famous poet, Sir Philip Sidney
- Married to Sir Robert Wroth in 1604, becoming Lady Mary Wroth
- Sir Wroth had money issues and developed massive debts by the time he died in 1614 and she actually applied for aid from King James I in order to pay off her husband's creditors
- Her only child from that marriage died young, but she had two other children fathered by William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke
- Her first works were published in 1621, a prose romance titled *The Counttesse of Mountgomeries Urania* which is about the adventures of Pamphilia, Queen of Pamphilia, and her lover Amphilanthus
- James felt some of the stories in this were based on his court, and ordered her to stop printing the book so she did
- Then she made it into a sonnet cycle titled *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* which appeared at the end of what looks to be a second, unpublished manuscript of *Urania*
- Despite her never publishing a second edition in her lifetime, Lady Mary Wroth appears to have been discredited in court which led to little being known about her in her later years
- We do know she never remarried and she died roughly between 1651-3



This is a portrait of Lady Mary Wroth c. 1620 - unknown artist.

The instrument she is holding is called a theorbo - it's in the lute family. It's pretty much a lute with a long neck.

## Pamphilia to Amphilanthus

- This is the second sonnet sequence published by a woman in England at the time (the first was by Anne Locke titled A Meditation of a Penitent Sinner in 1560)
- This appears to be a reply to her uncle's sonnet sequence, Astrophel and Stella, written in 1580 by Sir Philip Sidney
- Wroth upends the usual sonnet trope, where women are seen as unattainable objects of love by men, and instead has the focus of the sonnet sequence be on a woman's love for a man

- Probably started to be written around 1613
- Contains 105 sonnets and songs in total over four different sections
- The basic plot is that Pamphilia is trying to sort out her real feelings towards her lover, Amphilanthus, and throughout the sequences, reaffirms her love, confronts doubt and jealousy, and asks for forgiveness for doubting love from Cupid. The last eight sonnets, called the crown of the sequence, are where Pamphilia understands her suffering as a gateway to understanding human emotion.

## Sonnet 2 from *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*

Love like a jugler, comes to play his prise, And all minds draw his wonders to admire, To see how cuningly hee, wanting eyes, Can yett deseave the best sight of desire:

The wanton child, how hee can faine his fire So pretely, as none sees his disguise! How finely doe his tricks, while wee fooles hire The badge, and office of his tirannies,

For in the end, such jugling hee doth make As hee our harts, in stead of eyes doth take For men can only by theyr slieghts abuse

The sight with nimble, and delightful skill; Butt if hee play, his gaine is our lost will: Yett childlike, wee can nott his sports refuse.

## Sonnet 7 from Pamphilia to Amphilanthus

Love leave to urge, thou know'st thou hast the hand;
'T'is cowardise, to strive wher none resist:
Pray thee leave off, I yeeld unto thy band;
Doe nott thus, still, in thine owne powre persist,

Beehold I yeeld: lett forces bee dismist; I ame thy subject, conquer'd, bound to stand, Never thy foe, butt did thy claime assist Seeking thy due of those who did withstand;

Butt now, itt seemes, thou would'st I should thee love; I doe confess, t'was thy will made mee chuse; And thy faire showes made mee a lover prove When I my freedome did, for paine refuse.

Yett this Sir God, your boyship I dispise; Your charmes I obay, butt love nott want of eyes.

## Sonnet 35 from *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*

My hart is lost, what can I now expect, an eu'ning faire; after a drowlie day? (alas) fond phant'lie this is nott the way to cure a morning hurt, or faule neglect,

They who should help, doe mee, and help reiect, imbraſing looce deſires, and wanton play, while Venus bace delights doe beare the ſwaye, and impudencie raignes w¹out respect;

O Cupid, lett thy mother know her shame 't'is time for her to leaue this youthfull flame w<sup>ch</sup> doth dishoner her, is ages blame, and takes away the greatnes of thy name;

Thou God of loue, she only Queene of lust, yett striues by weakning thee, to bee vniust

## Sonnet 48 from *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*

How like a fire doth loue increase in mee, the longer that itt lasts, the stronger still, the greater purer, brighter, and doth fill noe eye w<sup>t</sup> wunder more, then hopes still bee

bred in my brest, wher fires of loue are free to vie that part to theyr best plealing will, and now impossible itt is to kill the heat soe great wher Loue his strength doth see.

Mine eyes can scarce sustaine the flames my hart doth trust in them my longings to impart, and languishingly striue to show my loue;

My breath nott able is to breathe least part of that increasing fuell of my smart; yett loue I will till I butt ashes proue

#### Song 4 - from the last section of the poem, known as The Crown

Louers learne to speake butt truthe fweare nott, and your othes forgoe, giue your age a constant youth vowe noe more then what you'll doe

Thinke itt facrilidg to breake what you promife shall in loue, and in teares what you may speake forgett nott when the ends you proue;

Doe nott thinke itt glory is to intifce, and then defeaue your chiefe honors ly in this by worth what wunn is, nott to leaue;

'T'is nott for your fames to try what wee weake nott oft refuse in owr bownty owr faults ly when you to doe a fault will chuse;

Fy, leaue this, a greater gaine 't'is to keepe when you haue wunn

then what purchaced is w<sup>t</sup> paine foone after in all fcorne to shun;

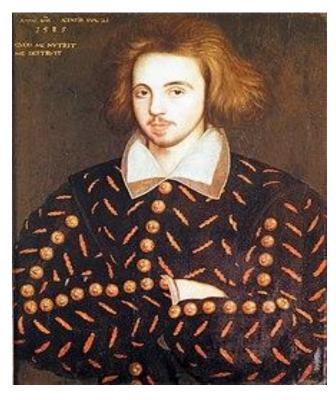
For if worthles to bee priz'd why att first will you itt moue, and if worthy, why dispif'd you can nott fweare, and ly, and loue,

Loue (alas) you can nott like 't'is butt, for a fashion mou'd non can chufe, and then dislike vnles itt bee by faulshood prou'd

Butt your choice is, and yo<sup>r</sup> loue how most numbers to deseaue, as if honors claime did moue like Popish lawe, non safe to leaue;

Fly this folly, and returne vnto truth in loue, and try, none butt Martirs hapy burne more shamefull ends they haue that lye

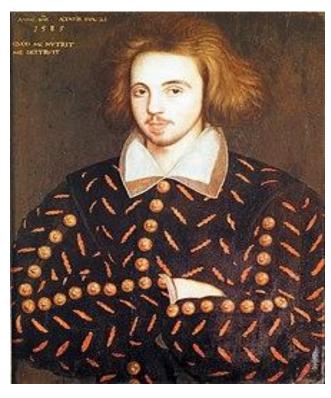
## Christopher Marlowe- Man of Mystery



Anonymous portrait, possibly Marlowe, at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge

## Christopher Marlowe

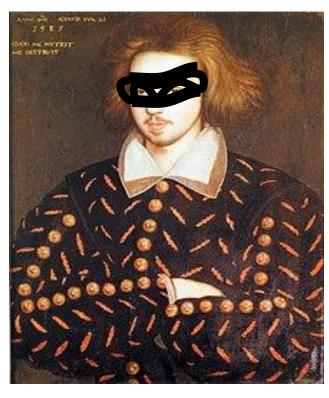
- Considered one of the most famous playwrights from the period, after Shakespeare
- Was said to be influenced by Shakespeare, was roommates with him for a short period of time too - and is thought to be the possible co-author of Henry VI.
- Died at the age of 29 and there's no good documentation as to why. Scholars guess anything from bar-room fights to getting executed for blasphemy against the church.
- There are multiple plays from the period depicting various ways in which Marlowe could have died but none of them really match, so there's no real consensus on how he died still. Some of those plays are *Palladis Tamia*, published in 1598 by Francis Meres where Marlowe was "stabbed to death by a bawdy serving-man, a rival of his in his lwd love,"



Anonymous portrait, possibly Marlowe, at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge

## Christopher Marlowe

- In 1925, a scholar by the name of Leslie Hotson said they discovered the coroner's report on the royal inquiry into Marlowe's death. This report was done by William Danby who was a lawyer and coroner for the royal court. According to this report, Marlowe got into an argument with three other men and it got heated between Marlowe and someone named Ingram Frizer, and after Marlowe stabbed Frizer with Frizer's own dagger, Frizer got it back and stabbed Marlowe under the right eye, killing him instantly. This account is still doubted for multiple reasons that this document might not be real and if it is real, it might be a cover up.
- There's also a theory that in 1593, blasphemous material was found in Thomas Kyd, another playwright's, housing which was formerly Marlowe's. Kyd claimed the documents belonged to Marlowe, and that Marlowe was an atheist. This theory points to Marlowe being executed by the crown.



Anonymous portrait, possibly Marlowe, at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge

## Christopher Marlowe

- There's also a theory that Marlowe was a spy for Sir Francis Walsingham's intelligence service during his years at Cambridge (1579-1587 he got a BA and a master's). Walsingham was the principal secretary to Queen Elizabeth I. There's a theory here that Marlowe's death has something to do with his service as a spy someone or something caught up with him.
- Historians also believe Marlowe was gay people believe that the label "anachronistic"
  was used as a euphamism in the period for
  homosexual relations, and that term has been
  used to describe Marlowe.
- He is also the author of other plays: Dido,
   Queen of Carthage, Tamburlaine, The Jew of
   Malta (yeah, this one is pretty anti-semetic, as is
   Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice), Edward
   II, and The Massacre of Paris.
- He's also a poet and wrote Amores, The Passionate Shepherd to His Love, Hero and Leander (an epic poem), and Pharsalia.

## The Passionate Shepherd to His Love published 1599 - six years after Marlowe's death

Come live with me, and be my love; And we will all the pleasures prove That hills and valleys, dales and fields, Woods, or steepy mountain yields.

And we will sit upon the rocks, Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks By shallow rivers to whose falls Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses, And a thousand fragrant posies; A cap of flowers, and a kirtle Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle; A gown made of the finest wool Which from our pretty lambs we pull; Fair lined slippers for the cold, With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and ivy-buds, With coral clasps and amber studs: And, if these pleasures may thee move, Come live with me, and be my love.

The shepherds' swains shall dance and sing For thy delight each May-morning: If these delights thy mind may move, Then live with me, and be my love.

## The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd by Walter Raleigh published in 1600, one year after Marlowe's was published

If all the world and love were young, And truth in every shepherd's tongue, These pretty pleasures might me move To live with thee and be thy love.

Time drives the flocks from field to fold When Rivers rage and Rocks grow cold, And Philomel becometh dumb; The rest complains of cares to come.

The flowers do fade, and wanton fields To wayward winter reckoning yields; A honey tongue, a heart of gall, Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall. Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of roses, Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies Soon break, soon wither, soon forgotten: In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

Thy belt of straw and lvy buds, Thy coral clasps and amber studs, All these in me no means can move To come to thee and be thy love.

But could youth last and love still breed, Had joys no date nor age no need, Then these delights my mind might move To live with thee and be thy love.

## Doctor Faustus



Yes, there's a 1967 trailer for a *Doctor Faustus* movie.



And it was performed at The Globe Theater in 2011 - here's a trailer for that.

## A brief overview of *Doctor Faustus*

Doctor Faustus is a play that examines the concepts of good and evil, of redemption and damnation, of Christianity and magic, and of early capitalist profit and the cost of profiteering according to our secondary reading. Doctor Faustus, a scholar, has studied everything except the taboo - necromancy. Selling his soul to the devil, Doctor Faustus takes on the role of magician and at first thinks he's going to conquer the known world but instead resides in multiple courts as a form of entertainment for those with power, never living up to his imagined position as one of the powerful before his soul is dragged to hell.



This image is a frontispiece to a 1620 printing of the play



Bell, Book, and Candle - aka, the scene where Faustus messes with The Pope

#### Scene IX

The banquet is brought in; and then enter FAUSTUS and MEPHOSTOPHILIS in their own shapes.

**MEPH.** Now, Faustus, come, prepare thyself for mirth: The sleepy cardinals are hard at hand To censure Bruno, that is posted hence, And on a proud-pac'd steed as swift as thought Flies o'er the Alps to fruitful Germany, There to salute the woeful Emperor.

**FAU.** The Pope will curse them for their sloth today, That slept both Bruno and his crown away. But now, that Faustus may delight his mind And by their folly make some merriment, Sweet Mephostophilis, so charm me here That I may walk invisible to all And do whate'er I please, unseen of any.

•••

POPE. Lord Archbishop of Rheims, sit down with us.

**ARCH.** I thank your Holiness.

**FAU.** Fall to, the devil choke you an you spare!

**POPE.** Who's that spoke? Friars, look about

**POPE.** Lord Raymond, pray fall to: I am beholding To the Bishop of Milan for this so rare a present.

**FAU.** I thank you, sir. *Snatch it.* 

**POPE.** How now! Who snatch'd the meat from me? Villains, why speak you not?—
My good Lord Archbishop, here's a most dainty dish Was sent me from a cardinal in France.

**FAU.** I'll have that too. [Snatch it.]

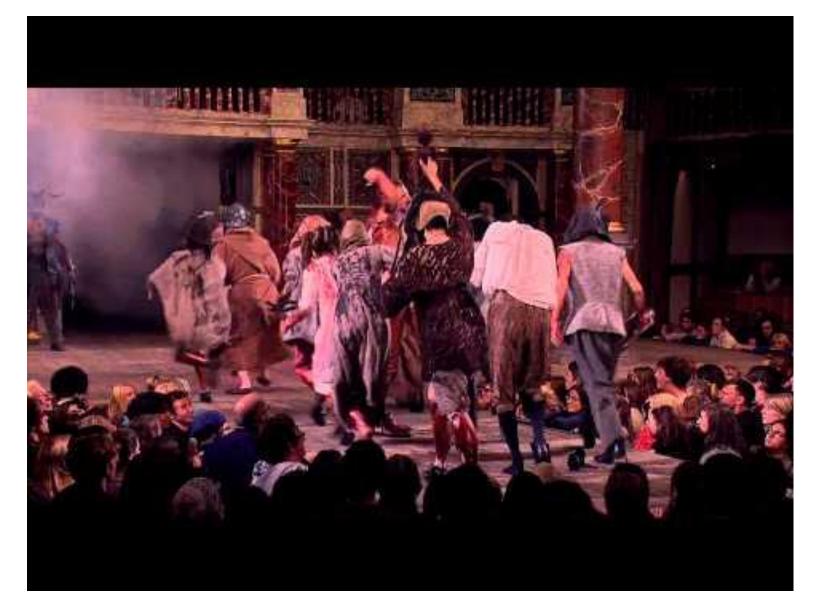
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**MEPH.** Now, Faustus, what will you do now? for I can tell you you'll be cursed with bell, book, and candle.

**FAU.** Bell, book, and candle; candle, book, and bell; Forward and backward, to curse Faustus to hell!

•••

[FAUSTUS and MEPHOSTOPHILIS] beat the Friars, and fling fireworks among them, and so exeunt.



Act V scene II from The Globe production - "he that loves pleasure must for pleasure fall" in this production.

From our text it appears to be from the final scene within Faustus's long speech that starts with "God forbade" (XIX around line 167).

"FAUSTUS. God forbade it, indeed; but Faustus hath done it: for vain pleasure of twenty-four years hath Faustus lost eternal joy and felicity. I writ them a bill with mine own blood: the date is expired; the time will come, and he will fetch me."

Doctor Faustus is a play, undeniably, about the corruption and damnation of its hero but this damnation isn't just about a moral soul but rather also about the soul of a nation and the corrupting principles of material accumulation. Michael Keefer points out in his edition of Doctor Faustus that the play centers around the question: "can Faustus repent? It would seem that Anglican theologians of the period, if consulted on the matter...would have responded with a unanimous negative" (511). Doctor Faustus's damnation is sealed when he terrorizes the Pope character, and Faustus confirms his damnation in his exchange with Mephastophilis:

**MEPH.** Now, Faustus, what will you do now? for I can tell you you'll be cursed with bell, book, and candle.

**FAU.** Bell, book, and candle; candle, book, and bell; Forward and backward, to curse Faustus to hell!

Mephastophilis first suggests that Doctor Faustus's actions within this scene will get him cursed with "bell, booke, and candle," and finally he gets five curses from the Friar who remains on stage after The Pope is removed. While this scene is comedic and presented to a protestant audience (while The Pope is Catholic), Mephostophilis and Doctor Faustus both stating that Doctor Faustus is damned in addition to the Friar is a marker showing how far Faustus has been corrupted and is damned. In the final Chorus of the play's epilogue, in which Doctor Faustus has passed, further adds textual evidence to Doctor Faustus's damnation when the Chorus states:

Cut is the branch that might have growne ful straight, And burned is Apolloes Laurel bough, That sometime grew within this learned man: Faustus is gone, regard his hellish fall, Whose fiendful fortune may exhort the wise, Onely to wonder at unlawful things, Whose deepenesse doth intise such forward wits, To practice more than heavenly power permits

Doctor Faustus's ultimate end is described as "his hellish fall" because he was "fiendful" and sought "fortune." While Doctor Faustus had many chances to repent within the play, he refused each temptation to turn back which is what ultimately created his downfall and corruption moreso than the necromancy itself. Nicolas Kiessling in the article "Doctor Faustus and the Sin of Demoniality" points out that it's not consorting with demons nor the magic that undoes Doctor Faustus, but "it is pride... that best suits the character of Doctor Faustus as Marlowe conceived it" (211). Doctor Faustus is too proud to repent, to stubborn to see that magic isn't living up to what he thought it would be and ends up in hell because of it. It is Doctor Further, Clarence Green in "Doctor Faustus: Tragedy of Individualism" highlights Faustus's pursuit of "his own interests" which "brings disaster upon himself" (275). Moreover, it is the seeking of "fortune," and fortune described throughout the text as being from inter-imperialist exchanges like grapes in January which would have been an impossible commodity in Early Modern England because of the weather and the conditions of trade, as Degenhardt aptly points out in her essay that we'll be looking at next (402). Laura Doyle coined the term inter-imperiality and defines it as "encompass[ing] a political-economic field of several empires operating simultaneously in every period since ancient eras, and in relation to capitalist formations" in her work "Inter-Imperiality: Dialectics in a Postcolonial World History" (3). It is this desire for the impossible goods, ones that trade amongst imperialists or pre-colonialist nations couldn't acquire yet, before colonization and established routes to bring goods back to the mainland on a regular, systematic basis (for example, sugar from India, which would become a huge commodity for the English Empire once its colonization of India took hold in the later centuries) that drives Doctor Faustus towards damnation and corruption.

"The Reformation, Inter-imperial World History, and Marlowe's Doctor Faustus" by Jane Hwang Degenhardt

#### The Reformation, Inter-imperial World History, and Marlowe's Doctor Faustus

JANE HWANG DEGENHARDT

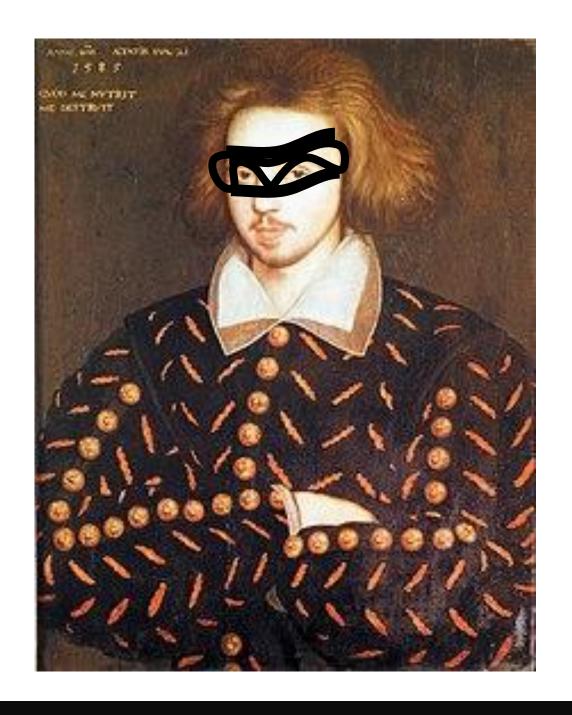
JANE HWANG DEGENHARDT is associate professor of English at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. She is writing a book on early modern "fortune," which examines the ways that travel, trade, and England's participation in a protocapitalist global economy influenced the popular stage as a site for reconciling the apparent whims of fortune with divine

#### IN WHAT HAS OFTEN BEEN READ AS A COMIC DISPLAY OF FRIVOLITY, THE PROTAGONIST OF CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE'S DOCTOR FAUSTUS

(c. 1589-92) produces a dish of grapes to satisfy the craving of a pregnant duchess. The duchess, a German, had implied that such a delicacy would be available to her in the summertime but was quite out of reach in the current month, January—"the dead time of the winter" (4.2.11). Whereas modern-day global capitalism makes fresh fruits and vegetables available year-round in northern supermarkets, the gratification of a wintertime desire for them in the late sixteenth century required magic or stagecraft.<sup>2</sup> Asked how he managed to procure the grapes out of season, Faustus explains, "[T]he 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 farther countries in the East; and by means of a swift spirit that I have, I had brought them hither, as ye see" (4.2.22-27). Thus, instead of simply conjuring the grapes out of thin air, Faustus employs a spirit courier who swiftly retrieves the grapes and transports them across the globe, from the warm climates of the Eastern Hemisphere to the German court of Vanholt. 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 grow in January. Additionally, the seizure of the grapes from "India, Saba, and farther countries in the East" implies a right of access that is attained (or circumvented) by Faustus's magic. In short, the magic for which Faustus has sold his soul to the devil is, in this instance, that of effortless global commerce—or, rather, the ability to attain a foreign commodity while bypassing the means of production and contingencies of exchange.

Although critics have largely overlooked *Doctor Faustus's* pervasive engagement with global commerce and imperialism, the play clearly locates the Reformation in an inter-imperial world history. From the first act of the play, Faustus's temptation to abandon divinity in favor of necromancy takes the form of an imperial desire to rule. After receiving the enticement by an Evil Angel to "[b]e thou on earth as Jove is in the sky,/Lord and commander of these elements," Faustus responds "How am I glutted with conceit of this!" as though the idea gratifies a bodily hunger (1.1.78-80). While editors dismiss the reference to Jove as a common substitute for the Chrsitian God, Jove also signifies the king of the gods as well as the head of the Roman state religion, and os the name emphasizes the imperial connotations of "lord and commander." Ini response to this invitation, Faustus muses that with such power he will have spirits "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" (1.1.84-87). Thus, his appetite to reule finds immediate expression as an appetite for the precious eastern commodities and for fruits and "delicates" from the reas of the world that suggest potential colonial territories. Here and throughout the play, commerce is linked to imperial subjugation (406).

[Doctor Faustus's] final act of conjuration - that of Helen of Greece - further implicates Faustus in the play's critique of imperial ambition by identifying his overreaching desire with the fall of Troy. More specifically, the episode taps into the mythology of Paris's abduction of Helen, which led to the Trojan War and thus precipitated Troy's demise. Helen represents a powerful hinge in the imperial clash between Greece and Troy, and the play's point referenced her as "Helen of Greece" (rather than the more familiar moniker "Helen of Troy') only accentuates the resignifying force of her abduction. By drawing a parallel between Faustus and Paris, the scene critiques the self-entitled claim to others' possessions that Faustus and Paris are shown to share and links this transgression to the fall of empire (408-9).



Also - there's a reference in this article to Marlowe possibly being a spy:

"Perhaps Marlowe's own inter-imperial subject position as a suspected international spy who traveled on government business and was arrested in the Netherlands informs *Doctor Faustus's* imperial preoccupations" (409).

### Let's incorporate Degenhardt into our analysis of *Doctor Faustus*

The power and wealth promised to Doctor Faustus for selling his soul to gain magic simply don't pan out. Doctor Faustus desires a wife and gets no wife just as Doctor Faustus desires wealth and power yet has nothing to show for those desires in the end. He has never risen to the top but instead is always second-fiddle to another, using his magic to please those above him rather than aspire to their ranking. If we see the magic and material desires of Faustus as a metaphor for imperialism as Degenhardt claims, then these systems have failed to deliver their promises to Doctor Faustus. And this could be Marlowe's point: the risks involved in imperialism and mercantile capitalism, that of hefty investments in ships, the risk of human life, the subjection of other peoples and lands, and the possibility that after all of that work and investment, the ships can still be lost at sea or the goods aren't as valuable as the investment, simply weren't worth it. These systems promised wealth and prosperity to those who put in investments, but those promises could and would often fail in early modern England. Since England wasn't a sea-power yet nor a fully formed imperial nation at the time Marlowe was writing Doctor Faustus, Marlowe had no idea that England's future would be forever linked to the successes of these systems (to the detriment of many nations exploited by England and other countries who followed suit and became colonizers). All Marlowe saw at the time were the beginnings of an empire on which the sun never set, and before these systems were perfected and England was successful, there were many failures and promises of wealth that didn't pan out for Marlowe to warn against within his play.

# What do you think - is Marlowe's play anti-imperialism from your own reading of it?

## The Past isn't Black and White

While there are systems of power, beliefs, and rules in place, there are always those that resists or push back against the standards of the day. The past, and past peoples, are not a monolith (the second definition of the word - "a large and impersonal political, corporate, or social structure regarded as intractably indivisible and uniform"). The past, and past people are varied, just as we are today. When we historicize literature and look back at the social, political, economic, and cultural influences, we need to keep that in mind. Lady Mary Wroth and Christopher Marlowe are two examples of authors that pushed back against early modern English cultural, political, social, and economic norms.