

## THE FAUST LEGEND

What do men and women desire? For what will they barter their immortal souls? These two questions have haunted Western society, and these persistent queries find their fullest embodiment in the Faust legend. This memorable story, told and retold in novels, prose fiction, and drama, has also profoundly influenced music, art, and cinema. Sara Munson Deats explores its impact, tracing the development of the Faust topos from the seminal works of Marlowe and Goethe to the large number of dramatic and cinematic adaptations which have fascinated audiences and readers throughout the centuries. Her study traces the durability of this legend and its pervasive influence on the literature of the Western world, in which it has been adapted across time, languages, and nations to reflect the concerns of a given era or place. This is the first comparative analysis of the Faust legend in drama and film.

SARA MUNSON DEATS is a Distinguished University Professor Emerita at the University of South Florida. Former President of the Marlowe Society of America, she has published over fifty essays on early modern drama. Her twelve published books include three collections of essays on Christopher Marlowe, co-edited with Robert Logan; a collection of essays on Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*; and *Sex, Gender, and Desire in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe* (1997), for which she received the Roma Gill Award.

# THE FAUST LEGEND

*From Marlowe and Goethe To Contemporary  
Drama and Film*

SARA MUNSON DEATS

*University of South Florida*



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press  
 978-1-108-46917-3 — The Faust Legend  
 Sara Munson Deats  
 Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

**CAMBRIDGE**  
 UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom  
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
 314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi - 110025, India  
 103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108469173](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108469173)

DOI: 10.1017/9781108614290

© Sara Munson Deats 2019

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2019

First paperback edition 2021

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data*

NAMES: Deats, Sara Munson, author.

TITLE: The Faust legend : from Marlowe and Goethe to contemporary drama and film / Sara Munson Deats.

DESCRIPTION: Cambridge ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2019. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2019008518 | ISBN 9781108475853 (alk. paper)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: Faust (Legendary character) | European literature – History and criticism.

CLASSIFICATION: LCC PN57.F3 D37 2019 | DDC 809/.93351–dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2019008518>

ISBN 978-1-108-47585-3 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-108-46917-3 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

*I gratefully dedicate this book to my mother, Eula Bea  
Munson, who taught me to overreach*

*“Ah, but a man’s reach should exceed his grasp,  
Or what’s a heaven for?”*

*Robert Browning  
“Andrea del Sarto”*

## Contents

<i>List of Illustrations</i>	page viii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	ix
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xi
Prologue	i
1 The Background of the Faust Legend	ii
2 Marlowe's <i>Doctor Faustus</i>	39
3 Goethe's <i>Faust</i>	78
4 Post-Goethe Dramatic Versions of the Faust Legend	115
5 Cinematic Faustus	160
Epilogue	212
<i>Notes</i>	217
<i>Bibliography</i>	244
<i>Index</i>	257

## *Illustrations*

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| 1.1 Doctor Faustus. Frontispiece to <i>The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus</i> by Christopher Marlowe, published in 1897. This drawing presumably represents a portrait of the historical Johannes Faustus. Photograph by Universal History Archive/Universal Images Group/Getty Images. | page 22 |
| 2.1 Woodcut of Faustus conjuring Mephistopheles. Title page to Christopher Marlowe's <i>The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus</i> , 1631 edition. Photograph by Culture Club/Hulton Archive/Getty Images.  | 47      |
| 3.1 Goethe's <i>Faust</i> . "Faust at Work," after a painting by Rembrandt. Photograph by Culture Club/Hulton Archive/Getty Images.   | 88      |
| 3.2 Mephistopheles's "Prologue in the Sky" from Goethe's <i>Faust</i> . Photograph by Historical Picture Archive/Corbis Historical/Getty Images.  | 91      |
| 5.1 Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton in a scene from the 1967 movie, <i>The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus</i> , directed by Nevill Coghill and Richard Burton. Photograph by Bettmann Collection/Getty Images.  | 163     |
| 5.2 Devil of an Actor. Emil Jennings plays the winged Mephistopheles in the 1926 silent film <i>Faust</i> , directed by F. W. Murnau. Photograph by John Kobal Foundation/Getty Images.   | 166     |
| 5.3 Walter Huston plays Mr. Scratch in the 1941 film, <i>The Devil and Daniel Webster</i> , directed by William Dieterle. Photograph by John Springer Collection/Corbis Historical/Getty Images.  | 186     |

## *Acknowledgements*

This study is the result of my life-long fascination with the Faust legend. This interest, originally sparked in a graduate seminar offered by my mentor R. W. Dent of UCLA, developed into a dissertation comparing the *English Faustbook* to Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, and this fire continued to burn brightly throughout the years as I taught and wrote about Marlowe and participated actively in the Marlowe Society of America. In the early 1990s my colleague Flora Zbar invited me to give a plenary address comparing the treatment of the Faust legend in Marlowe and Goethe at an interdisciplinary conference at the University of South Florida. Discovering Goethe's *Faust* was a monumental event in my scholarly life; to paraphrase John Keats, I felt like a watcher of the skies when a new planet swims within her ken, and my interest in the Faust legend ignited anew. At that time, I conceived a plan someday to write a book analyzing the various treatments of the Faust legend in drama and film. Twenty-five years later I submitted my manuscript to Cambridge University Press.

Completing this study did not take a village, perhaps, but this book certainly benefited markedly from the support and assistance of many friends, colleagues, and institutions. First, I am grateful for all the aid I have received in locating not easily available information on the many plays, films, and productions discussed in this study. Special thanks must go to Nils Frischknecht and Martina Maria Sam for the insights they provided me personally on the premiere production of Goethe's complete *Faust* at the Goetheanum and also on subsequent productions of Goethe's complete play at the same venue. Also, my deepest appreciation goes to the library staff at the University of South Florida, which worked tirelessly to seek out information on the often obscure texts and criticism that I analyze in this volume.

In addition, I am deeply indebted to the friends and colleagues – David Bevington, Sheila Diecidue, Lagretta Lenker, Robert Logan, and Katherine

*Acknowledgements*

Wyly – who labored over my manuscript and offered many valuable insights and suggestions that have greatly improved the effectiveness of this study. I also owe thanks to Ann Basso who helped me locate and select the illustrations that I have used in this book. I would like also to express my gratitude to my two readers at Cambridge University Press, whose perceptive evaluations sent me back to my word processor for yet another revision.

Many thanks as well to my helpful and co-operative editors at Cambridge University Press – Jane Bowbrick, Kate Brett, and Eidith Burrett – who graciously answered my multitudinous questions and skillfully guided me through the circuitous route from acceptance to publication. In addition, I will forever be obligated to my super conscientious research assistant Robin Rogers, who formatted my notes, indefatigably proofread my manuscript, and prepared my Bibliography and Index.

And most of all, I wish to thank my husband, Gordon Deats, who throughout the long writing of this book offered nurture, critique, and frequently just the right word. His constant support for this and many other of my scholarly endeavors has energized and sustained me throughout my scholarly career.



## *Abbreviations*

- DF Christopher Marlowe. *Doctor Faustus: The A- and B-Texts (1604, 1616)*, ed. David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen. Manchester University Press, 1993. (All quotations of the play are from the A-text unless otherwise stated.)
- EFB John Henry Jones (ed.). *The English Faust Book: A Critical Edition Based on the Text of 1592*. Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- F-AH Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. *Faust: A Tragedy*, trans. Walter Arndt, ed. Cyrus Hamlin. 2nd edn. New York: W. W. Norton, 2001 (1st edn. 1976).
- FI-L Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. *Faust. Part One*, trans. David Luke. Oxford University Press, 2008 (1st edn. 1987).
- F2-L *Faust. Part Two*, trans. David Luke. Oxford University Press, 1998 (1st edn. 1984).
- F-P Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust, Part I & II*, ed. and trans. Charles E. Passage. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965.
- GFB *German Faustbook*
- SFT Philip Mason Palmer and Robert Pattison More. *The Sources of the Faust Tradition: From Simon Magus to Lessing*. New York: Octagon, 1966.
- SOED *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, rev. and ed. C. T. Onions. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968.