

NOTES AND QUESTIONS ABOUT EXCERPTS FROM HISTORIA & TALE OF DOCTOR JOHANNES FAUSTUS (1587) ALSO KNOWN AS THE “FAUSTBOOK” (FAUSTBUCH): chapters 1-6, 8, 18, 23-24, 27, 29, 32-33, 37, 39, 41, 43-44 (the text is on Blackboard in the content area Course Readings)

The original Faust tale has to be read in a specific and wholly religious context of 16th c Reform Christianity which it was written to proselytize. Reform Christianity believed it was the one true faith; its enemies were Judaism, Roman Catholicism and Islam. The secular foe of Reform Christianity was science – any form of knowing or thinking that did not accept God as the source of all knowledge. Here are some of the major questions that the Faustbook seeks to answer and that we shall take up in the classes on FEB. 2, (4), 9

Are science and religion compatible?

Chaps 6, 8 – THE CONTRACT

- 1. What does Lucifer promise?**
- 2. What does Faust promise?**
- 3. Why can't the Devil get Faustus a wife?**
- 4. What does the Devil give Faustus instead of a wife? Is Faustus satisfied?**

Chap 18 the Pope and the Turkish Emperor / Travel

- 1. What is the message of the depictions of the Pope/the Turkish emperor?**
- 2. What deadly sins are the Pope and the Turkish Emperor guilty of? If the Pope is gone to the Devil, and the true religion is anti-papist and Reform Christians need to know that, are the Devil and Faustus playing a positive role in making fun of the Pope?**

Chapter 23, 24, 27 (raising shades of the dead – foreshadowing)

- 1. Does Faustus actually heal anyone? Can he raise people from the dead?**
- 2. What is Faustus' main motivation for practicing magic?**

Chapters 29, 32, 37 Helen (demonic lust) and the pious Old Man (Christian repentance)

- 1. anti-Semitism: “For he did compare Faustus to all the Jews”**
- 2. Is repentance possible?**
- 3. Why can't Faustus repent?**
- 4. What lesson does the Old Man's fate convey?**

Chapter 39 – Focus on Wagner, the assistant who is wicked
Chapters 41, 44 – Despair of the condemned man; can the Devil
provide solace?; delivering the message, p 15; my historia is my true
story; “I die as both a good and as a bad Christian” vs. “Faustus also
was convinced that in making his written contract he had gone too far
and could not be forgiven.” 16