[University Name]

Argumentative Essay

Characterizing Faustus

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English and [Course Number]

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**Doctor Faustus –Romantic Rebel or Damning Folly**

After reading Christopher Marlowe’s play, it is easy to judge if his main character i.e. Doctor Faustus is either a damning folly or a romantic rebel. There is a line in the book,

*“His waxen wings did mount above his reach,*

*And, melting, heavens conspir’d his overthrow…”* (Line 21-22)

Through this reference, the story of Icarus was told. He was a man who wanted to escape from the possession of Crete. He used the wings which his father made from wax and feather. However, when he used these to fly up as he got close to the sun, the wax melted and the feathers got burnt. This caused him to fall down. All of this happened because he failed to follow the instructions that his father gave him. In this story, the theme which is followed is the consequence of every decision which is influenced by personal ambitions which turn into over ambitions. The tale of Dr. Faustus can be easily related to the story of Icarus. It is because Faustus was also very over-ambitious. This turned into his suffering eternally. The timing of telling this story here by Marlowe pushes me to believe that just like the man who himself became the reason for his failed getaway and dug up his own grave Faustus possesses the same qualities making him a damning folly (Roohi).

On the other hand, these following lines from the play make me want to believe that Dr. Faustus was a romantic rebel;

*“When Mephistophilis shall stand by me,*

*What God can hurt thee? Faustus, thou art safe…”* (Line 24-25)

In these lines, the theme of rebelling against the bigger and stronger power is clearly evident. Faustus denies the existence of God here as he says that what power can hurt him. It was clear that in this line he meant that not even God can hurt him now. Therefore, it is safe to say that the rebellious Faustus is rebelling against God and his glory. He was doing all this within the influence of being romantic as he believed that he was greater in power. However later it becomes clear that all of this was only his false fantasies (Roohi).

Later on, these lines from Faustus make me think otherwise as to how it is proven that he was a damning folly;

*“Faustus hath cut his arm, and with his proper blood*

*Assures his soul to be great Lucifer’s…”* (Line 54-55)

*“Ay, so I do. But, Mephistophilis,*

*My blood congeals, and I can write no more.”* (Line 61-62)

How foolish does Faustus sound here? He is the man who is proud of himself because he believes that after cutting his arm and writing his name from his blood will help him sell his soul to the devil i.e. Lucifer. He believed that evil is more powerful than the existence of God. However, God still gave him a chance when his blood started to clot and he was unable to sign his name (Maskouki). The following lines from the play are proof;

*“…Why shouldst thou not? Is not thy soul thine own?*

*Then write again…”* (Line 68-69)

Faustus even at this moment ignored that God is trying to save him. Instead of being foolish, he heated his wound so that the blood starts to flow again. Once the blood started flowing again, he completed the task of writing his name from his blood. Thus, he thought he succeed to sign his soul to the evil Lucifer. This is one of the biggest examples which show that Doctor Faustus was a damning folly and nothing else. After having so many signs of being stopped and bowing down in front of goodness, he chose the evil Lucifer proving that he is a damning folly (Maskouki).

**REFERENCE LIST**

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