ÇANKAYA UNIVERSITY
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
ENGLISH LITERATURE AND CULTURAL STUDIES

MASTER THESIS

THE IDEA OF THE RENAISSANCE INDIVIDUALISM AS SEEN IN *DOCTOR FAUSTUS* AND *THE DUCHESS OF MALFI*

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MARCH 2016

Title of the Thesis : **The Idea of the Renaissance Individualism as Seen in *Doctor Faustus* and *The Duchess of Malfi***

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ÖZ

Doctor Faustus ve *The Duchess of Malfi:* Oyunlarında Görülen Rönesansa Özgü Bireyselcilik Yaklaşımı

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M.A, İngiliz Edebiyatı ve Kültür İncelemeleri
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Mart, 2016, 84 sayfa

Dr. Faustus ve Malfi Düşesi'nin davranış ve kişilikleri, topluma direndikleri ve özgürlük tercihlerinde Rönesans'a özgü güvenin özelliğini gösteren kendi yollarını seçtikleri için, güçlü fikirleri nedeniyle dikkat çeker. İkisi de sosyal yasalara meydan okuyan ve onları kendi bireysel/kişisel yasalarıyla değiştiren şahıslar olarak tasvir edilirler. Kendilerini bulma yolunu araştırırken, ilahi gücü ve hayatın anlamını da ararlar. Bu, Dr. Faustus'a göre, insana doğal dünya üzerinde hakimiyet sağlayan sırların keşfedilmesidir. Dr. Faustus araştırmadan büyüyü kabul etmeyen biridir ve eğitimli bir teologdur. Bundan ziyade, (onu çöküşe sürükleyecek) tehlikeli gizli bilimlerle ilgilenme konusunda nihai kararını vermeden önce, her şeyi araştırarak uzun bir zaman geçirmiştir. Başkalarına zarar vermeden de olsa, bir kara büyücünün sık sık yaptığı yolda ölülerin ruhlarını çağırarak fal bakma, simya ve büyü alanlarına arzu duymaktadır. Faustus, kendisini hilelerle eğlendirir görünür ve oyunun sonuna doğru akademik niteliğini kaybeder. Malfi Düşesi'ne gelecek olursak; onun amacı, kısa da olsa erdemli ve mutlu bir hayat sürmektir. Düşes, erkek kardeşlerinin hakimiyetini reddederek kendi dişil doğal arzularını takip eder. Böylece Reformasyon ve Aydınlanma boyunca ortaya çıkan ''özgür kadın''ın erken bir örneğini sunar. Kilisenin baskısı başrolün davranışı üzerinde çok büyük bir etkiye sahiptir. Özellikle Rönesans ve Platonculuğun eğitim nosyonunu temsil eden Güneş gibi imgeler vurgulanır. Aynı şekilde o dönemde çok baskın bir rolü olan Machiavelli'nin bireyselci etkisi, her iki oyundaki karakterlerin farklı davranışları bakımından açıklanır. Tez, Rönesans'ın belki de temel keşfi olan bireyin güçlü duygularını keskin biçimde zıtlaşan iki ayrı oyunda sergileyerek, Rönesans bireyselciliğinin iki önemli kültürel ve edebi görünümüne dikkat çeker.

ANAHTAR KELIMELER: Rönesans, Bireyselcilik, Machiavelli, Aydınlanma.

ABSTRACT

THE IDEA OF THE RENAISSANCE INDIVIDUALISM AS SEEN IN *DOCTOR FAUSTUS* AND *THE DUCHESS OF MALFI*

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March. 2016, 84 Pages

The conduct and personalities of Dr. Faustus and the Duchess of Malfi are remarkable because of their powerful minds, as they resist the society and choose their own paths, showing a characteristically Renaissance confidence in their choice of freedom. They are both depicted as people who challenge the social codes and replace them with individual, personal codes. While they are on their individual quest for themselves, they also search for the divine power and the meaning of life. For Dr. Faustus, this is to discover the secrets which give man power over the natural world. Dr. Faustus is a learned man, a doctor of divinity who does not just jump to magic in one step, but rather spends a long time questioning everything before he decides to come eventually to this dangerous occult science, which leads to his downfall. His desire lies in necromancy, alchemy and magic, even though he does not harm others the way a black magician often does. Faustus seems to entertain himself with tricks, and loses his academic quality towards the end of the play. Coming to the Duchess, her purpose is to lead a virtuous and happy life, even if this life can be short. She follows her natural female desires, rejecting the domination of her brothers, thereby presenting an early example of the liberated woman who emerged during the Reformation and Enlightenment. The suppression of the Church has a good deal of influence on the protagonist's behavior. Images, notably of the sun in *The Duchess of Malfi,* which represents a Renaissance and Platonic notion of learning, are highlighted. Likewise, the Machiavellian individualistic effect, which was a very dominant influence at the time, is explained in terms of different conduct of characters in the two plays. By showing the powerful senses of the individual, and perhaps by showing the Renaissance's main discovery in two sharply contrasting plays, the thesis will draw attention to two important cultural and literary aspects of Renaissance individualism.

KEYWORDS: Renaissance, Individualism, Machiavellianism, Enlightenment.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First of all, I would like to express my deep and sincere gratitude to my Supervisor Assist. Prof. Dr. Neslihan EKMEKÇIOĞLU, without whose endless ideas and guidance, I never would have seen the light at the end of the tunnel. Many thanks to her for her dedication and countless hours of discussion.

I would also like to thank all of the professors of the Department of English Literature for the courses and classes they have given.

I am particularly grateful for the encouragement and the prayers of my mother, Muna, and for the patience and support of my father, Salim who are living now in Mosul, Iraq, and every one of my brothers and sisters.

For having provided me with many books which I needed for work on my thesis, thanks go to my good-hearted friend, Hüseyin Kürşat DURMAZ.

I dedicate this thesis to every outsider..

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of the thesis is to evaluate the two plays which belong to different periods by analyzing the main characters and their conduct through the lens of Renaissance individualism, by taking into account their search for freedom. Both the hero of *Doctor Faustus* by Christopher Marlowe and the heroine of *The Duchess of Malfi* by John Webster are strong and liberated characters, and they have certain things in common. Above all, they both represent the Renaissance concept of the centrality of the human personality. However, due to the difference of their societies and the times during which they lived, each of them uses his/her superior liberal mind on a different level to those around them to drive the plot and develops the way he/she conceives the society in which he/she lives. This thesis aims to bring to light features of each of the characters. By analyzing each protagonist's behavior and understanding of his/her society, it will be proved that the action of each character is a response to the society, with totally different motivations. The fundamental aim of this thesis is to draw attention to individual resistance of two different characters belonging to two different ages. It will show that the individual who confronts certain social norms is a major theme of Renaissance thinking and literature. We can better understand both plays while keeping this in mind. The method of the thesis focuses upon the historical and textual analysis and clarification. By placing the plays in the development of dramatic literature and society, the thesis shows that they are strongly related to changes in the society, particularly with regard to the Renaissance focus on the individual.

In spite of the fact that the two plays were written in different periods: one in the Elizabethan period, and the other in the Jacobean time, and the fact that they differ in their respective characters, as Faustus is an anti-hero, and the Duchess an emotional and virtuous heroine, in addition to the playwrights themselves being unlike; Marlowe, the innovative writer, and Webster the late playwright, still this thesis will be discussing those two cases separately, neither comparing nor contrasting them, rather than to show the resemblance of the

Renaissance conduct of the individual in those two plays. In the first chapter, which focuses on the fundamental Renaissance idea of Man as the centre of all things, there will be a discussion of the power of learning and the power of controlling nature by using occultism in addition to the importance of Man's free choice. This will also lead this study to the topic of religion, as religion ties the individual and society together. Thus, it will deal with the effect of marriage on the Duchess and also with the effect of Faustus not having married. Feminism and women's suppressed rights will be traced back to their roots. The aim of the second chapter will be to draw attention to the portraits of the individual and his/her respective potentials in the Renaissance imagery. It will deal with many images which are related to the aim of this thesis, notably the imagery of dark and light and thus the issue of good and evil. In both plays there are many images of the destructive power of the will. The third chapter will explore the Machiavellian idea of power, which is at the center of both plays in order to emphasize that the Machiavellian notions were embraced by Marlowe and are very clear in Mephistopheles' conduct, whereas they are considered as evil by Webster. Consequently, the Machiavellian role in the play was given to the Duchess's devilish brothers. In conclusion, the discovery of the power of the individual mind and the implications of the Renaissance elements in the two plays will be shown. In order to explain the importance of the great discovery of the Renaissance and individualism, in the first case the focus will be drawn to the well learned Faustus, whereas in the second case it will be focusing on the individual women who can also make their own decisions. The Duchess and the other female characters in the play express their free choice. However, by doing so, it will be proved that each of the mentioned cases represents a Renaissance theme.

In the earlier play, we have Doctor Faustus, who is motivated by ambition or curiosity for knowledge and by the need to find answers to his own doubts. He is in some respects a typical, well-educated Renaissance man, who – as is evident from the first act of the play – has spent most of his lifetime among books, encouraging himself to plunge himself deeper into knowledge because in his very first appearance Faustus tells himself: "Having commenced, by a divine in show, yet level at the end of every art, and live and die in Aristotle's works."

(I, i, 3-5, A) However, this kind of life has led him to unanswerable questions and doubts in his mind.

On the other hand, we have the Duchess of Malfi, who is motivated by love to rebel against her cruel society. She is a virtuous, innocent woman who lives in a society where a woman, and especially a Duchess, should sacrifice all her desires and dreams for the sake of her reputation and family. This kind of value system is presented in a particularly corrupt form by the members of her family. The play starts with the Duchess already widowed, and visited by her two selfish brothers, who warn her that she should never marry again because "She is a young widow: [they] would not have her marry again." (I, ii, 163-164) Although they claim that they are worried about her reputation, later we learn that they are much concerned with the possessions and the 'mass of treasure' (and other things) rather than merely reputation. Thus, they use this as a mask to disguise their own individual ambitions.

Next to each character's strong personality that cannot accept the different demands of the society, another issue is found in the dark potential influencing each character, which is the devilish figure who plays a major ruling part in pulling the strings of the fate of the two characters, leading them to self-destruction. As soon as we look at the lifestyle of Faustus, the first thing that will come to our mind is Francis Bacon's famous motto 'knowledge is power' which is mentioned in his *Meditationes Sacrae* (Qtd. in Bynum 2013: 75) However, it seems that Marlowe, who is famously known for his revolutionary ideas against traditional beliefs, wanted to say that knowledge is power but not always, for Faustus's knowledge, which seems to be a weapon or a cornerstone of his personality, is combined with evil, and has led him to a bond with the Devil and this is clearly seen when Faustus asks Mephistopheles "to do whatever Faustus shall command, be it to make the moon drop from her sphere". (I, iii, 37-38, A) Mephistopheles asks for another step before Faustus can gain his wishes, and requires 'conjuring speeches' from Faustus to "abjure the Scriptures and his Saviour Christ." (I, iii, 48, A) When he does so, Mephistopheles continues to state "we fly in hope to get his glorious soul, nor will we come, unless he use such means." (I, iii, 49-50, A) Therefore, it is clear that Faustus's weapon (knowledge) has turned against him, and that is especially seen when the Devil enters the play

as a slave for Faustus. Gradually, towards the end of the play, we accept the fact that Faustus is the real slave of Mephistopheles and not vice versa. Ghatti focuses on Faustus's superior mind in acting as a man who sacrifices himself to gain knowledge that will help all of mankind as Faustus thinks he is doing the right thing. (Qtd. in Braunmuller and Hattaway 1990: 75) In this sense, it can be said that Faustus was a martyr for humanity.

The Duchess of Malfi has married her steward, Antonio, and her love is an expression of a need to rebel. Her emotions are seen to be the weapon by the means of which she fights against her corrupted society, in which she is confronted by her devilish brothers, notably Ferdinand, who is always associated with fire imagery (choleric evil), but also the Cardinal, who will prove his devilish tendency when he murders Julia by putting poison on the Bible, so that when she kisses it, she dies. (V, ii, 264-273) It can be shown that Webster has deliberately used this irony in order to convey images associated with the Black Arts. Notably, it recalls the sacrilege ordered by Satan which makes the human use the holy book in such an insulting way that the Devil will be the slave of his wishes. However, this important topic of white and black magic in the Renaissance period will also be further explained.

Having mentioned these clear similarities (the superior mind, the refusal to cope with a social situation which opposes their individual wills, and confronting the devilish figure), now it becomes undeniably clear that the theme of non-conformity is shared by the two protagonists, the Duchess and Faustus. This issue is more obvious in Faustus's complete denial of society, firstly of Christianity's Catholic ideas, which is seen in Faustus's mockery of the Pope: "Are you crossing of yourself? Well, use that trick no more," (III, i, 78-79, A), and secondly his refusal of the common man, by putting "a pair of horns on [the] head" of the knight, (IV, i, 69-72, A) and thirdly his refusal to the low man, when he sells "a bottle of hay" instead of a horse to the Horse-Courser. (IV, i, 157, A) In fact, Faustus is a non-conformist who denies all levels of society as a whole.

At one point the Duchess of Malfi cries in anger saying how she wishes to go "into a wilderness where [she] shall find no path, nor friendly clue, to be [her] guide," (I, ii, 265-267) because she feels totally isolated from others. Forker has noticed that it is "no accident that the entire fourth act takes place in a

prison – an unnaturally darkened and confined space that represents isolation and constraint in their most far-reaching senses." (Forker 1986: 362) Yet to some extent, the Duchess is less non-conformist than Faustus, as she does not reject the values of the society as a whole. The Duchess's main reference point is love, in spite of the fact that her love and marriage to Antonio is a turning point in the way of waging her battle. Nevertheless, her love includes others, such as Cariola, her confidante. Moreover, she even trusted Bosola, her future tomb maker, as Cave notes "the moment the Duchess abandons her usual caution and tells the kindly-seeming Bosola the name of her secret husband. From that moment the private idyll is a lost Eden." (Cave 1988: 27) Just like Iago in Shakespeare's *Othello,* Bosola is the main villain of the play, and the moment of the Duchess trusting him may be considered to be a turning point in the dilemma of her tragedy; in other words, if the Duchess could recognize Bosola's actual intention, then the whole tragedy would not have even taken place. (Goldberg 1987: 110)

The last important issue is the supernatural elements, which is a frequent element in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. These supernatural elements are found commonly in Faustus, but rarely in the Duchess, which can only be seen after her death. According to Webster, the female mind is more emotional than the male mind. He presents women as very different from men in terms of character and physical strength. This was a widespread view on women at the time, no doubt partly influenced by classical ideas such as those presented by Aristotle (Aristotle 1957: 1260a11). In that the Duchess is defending her own freedom of happiness by her own method of secrecy, unlike Faustus, who is susceptible to evil, since he cannot find any consolation in love. He gives this as one of the reasons why he resorts to the supernatural.

The Duchess, an angel-like figure, used love (and marriage) in the face of the dilemma in order to win the battle against evil, as opposed to Faustus. For example, Faustus asked Mephistopheles in bad faith: "let me have a wife" (II, i, 140, A); but he desired marriage after the pact with the Devil, which was too late, and he was asking for it from his own enemy. This contrasts with the Duchess, who chose love even before the beginning of her battle with evil in the play. Indeed, the action of the play follows on from her decision to put love first and marry below her class. This aspect of her character is even clear shortly

before her death when she expressed her love and orders Cariola to "let the girl say her prayers ere she sleep." (IV, i, 194-195) Accordingly, Faustus's choice is undetermined compared with that of the Duchess, who is content with love.

Thus, we can conclude that the two characters, to some extent, have a common point which appears to be their resisting and revolutionary personality. However, as explained, each responded differently in accordance with his/her different values, and with different expressions of action. As for Faustus's knowledge, it took twenty-four years of his life before he realized the limitations of the mortal human being, and the terrible mistakes he has made. It is worth mentioning that Faustus broke down in the face of death: "O soul, be changed into little water-drops, and fall into ocean-never be found. My God! Look not so fierce on me!" (V, ii, 110-112, A) Damnation was inevitable, because in spite of the power Mephistopheles bestowed upon Faustus, at the moment of his death Faustus was ultimately on his own. On the other hand, though the Duchess's love lost the battle with evil, she faced death bravely, and although all her family was murdered except for her elder child, his survival at the end gives a glimpse of the hope of a brighter future.

The theme of the powerful personality that can conceive the society's shortcomings and rebel against all the social habits, preferring with their strong preference to perish rather than to obey the illogical rules, is an old theme that can be largely found in Greek Literature, notably in Sophocles' *Antigone,* which is the first famous play about a powerful and an emotional woman. Webster was certainly aware of it. *Antigone* is an early example of Greek drama where Antigone challenged her uncle's decision of 'not allowing her brother's corpse to be buried'. She could not accept that decision because it didn't agree with what she believed to be true to herself. This was the act of burying her brother's corpse in an appropriate manner so that his soul would rest in peace. Thus, she attempted to have a respectable burial for her brother even though she knew that in the eyes of the society and the law, she would be considered a transgressor. Defying the possibility of death, Antigone was determined that her uncle's decision was unfair, for her brother would be eaten by animals, only for the sake of political reasons. So she buried her brother by herself in contravention of her uncle's rules. Eventually, her uncle, the ruler, discovered what she had done and she declared

that she knew the law but chose to break it. It was her free choice. She defended herself by saying that her mind told her that she is doing the right thing. However, *Antigone* ended by the eponymous main character hanging herself, proving that one should die for one's beliefs.

0.1. Historical Background to *Doctor Faustus* and Marlowe

The titles of the two plays are based upon the names of the basic characters. Marlowe's *Faustus* was written between 1588 and 1592. There are two texts of the play: an A text and a B text. The textual details of the two versions' are difficult to grasp accurately. However, Text A which is a 1604 quarto was reprinted in 1609. Text B, which is a 1616 quarto, was reprinted several times, and is longer than Text A, Approximately 650 lines were added to Text B. Thus, many scholars considered Text A as the real and accurate text written by Marlowe. The debate between the originality of version A and version B seems to go on indefinitely. However, in this thesis, and from an opinion that each version needs the other to be totally understood, both versions will be considered as Marlowe's.

Marlowe borrowed his protagonist from a real historical German figure. Marlowe's play's first publication came under the name of *The Tragic History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus* in 1604, 11 years after Marlowe's death, although it was written around 1592 and was performed on stage in London prior to Marlowe's murder. Faust's story, which is well known in the Western World, has been introduced and re-introduced repeatedly by many playwrights and authors. All are based on the real life of a controversial character, the German Faust who was famously known as the person who sold his soul to the Devil in order to obtain the power of knowledge. Marlowe might have reproduced the story of the 1592 translation of *The Historie of the Damnable Life, and Death of Doctor John Faustus* about Doctor Johann Georg Faust, an alchemist, astrologer and magician of the German Renaissance whose death was uncertain and could be dated either 1540 or 1541. Marlowe might have added small details to the real story, such as the subplot characters, yet he kept the main important issue of the conflict between the human mind and the divine power.

Many clues regarding the extraordinary focus on one's self in most of Marlowe's plays can be traced back to his early life and character. Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593) was born in Canterbury in England and grew up in a home a few streets away from Canterbury Cathedral, which was a famous religious place for pilgrims. His father, John Marlowe, was a man with very limited skills compared with his fellow tradesmen. On many occasions, he was brought to court for non-payment of rent (Proser 1995: 30) which seems to have been caused by his frequent drunkenness. His mother, Katherine Arthur, was thought to be the daughter of a local clergyman, but in further modern studies, is considered to be the daughter of a yeoman family. Marlowe's early life was touched and shaped by the death of, first, his elder sister when he was four and then of his two infant brothers and by the survival of his four sisters. (Proser 1995: 11) Marlowe joined King's School and was awarded a scholarship to study at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge between 1580 and 1587. He encountered a number of problems in receiving his M.A. from the University due to his repeated absence, then the trick was done by a royal note, from her majesty showing that Marlowe "was doing the Queen good service." (Proser 1995: 12) This led critics to conclude that Marlowe had been working as a spy for the Queen. However, after receiving his M.A., he went to London without taking religious orders. In London he achieved remarkable success as a playwright with *Tamburlaine*. (Proser 1995: 13) The events in Marlowe's childhood concerning the death of his siblings mixed with the bad image of his drunkard father, seem to stir an endless ambition in the artist's heart, with his desire to become an overreacher whose aspiration had no boundary, as can be seen in most of his plays. This unlimited ambition often forces the protagonist to use Machiavellian strategies in presenting a lofty goal which was always more important than the means he used to fulfill it. Thus, in achieving such an important aim, the protagonist can always find justifications for his misdeeds done while he is on his way toward his achievements. Nicholl regarded "Marlowe as "opportunistic" in his spying, and agreed that this opportunism was a feature of his personality." (Qtd. in Proser 1995: 23) Even though as a child he received all the love and attention in the family, being the only surviving male among many females caused him to take all his mother's care. (Proser 1995: 35) Yet the contradicted image of the past seems to have

affected his personality. Marlowe was over loved by his mother because of his genius and so he could not identify himself with his own father who was a weak father figure whereas his mother was a strong woman of substance. Thus, the mood of a "mama's spoiled child," who desires to gain everything at any cost, shaped most of Marlowe's plays. (Proser 1995: 41) Generally speaking, Marlowe's lifestyle, like all his stage characters, was that of a troublesome personality. Downie points out that "accusations of atheism and sodomy were a common contemporary method of blackening a man's character." (Downie 2000: 29) That is to say, whether Marlowe had sodomite or atheist tendencies is not certain. What is certain was that on May 30, 1593, Marlowe carried out his final violent action when he fought with his friend, about who was to pay for the meal. According to the Queen's Coroner's report, "It was Marlowe who wounded Ingram Frizer in the forehead with a dagger only to be similarly assaulted when Frizer defended himself; but in Marlowe's case the wound was fatal." (Qtd. in Proser 1995: 16)

Marlowe witnessed a time of great transformation from the dominating religious force of the medieval period into the more enlightened mind-opening notions of the Renaissance. This significant leap helped people to transform from a society which stressed conformity into one of individualism, where people could experience new ideas without the need for strict authority pushing them to act in accordance with others. Marlowe knew the danger of the chains put on the human mind by religion, thus he presented a hero who consciously decided to enter the forbidden zone of ultimate knowledge in order to achieve what no one else could achieve. Marlowe was a man of political activity, scientific curiosity and a playwright who fully understood the large chasm between religion and science. On the one hand, a man of faith should blindly believe and submit to what revelation claims to be the ultimate truth. A free-minded scientific man with curiosity and doubt needs to find the truth through the empirical approach based on experience. Not only using the mind in its full capacity but also doubting everything was a key element of the Renaissance period.

0.2. Historical Background to *The Duchess of Malfi* and Webster

Webster first published his play in 1612-1613 under the title of *The Tragedy of the Duchess of Malfi*. The play was originally based on the real events that took place between 1508 and 1513, as mentioned in William Painter's *The Palace of Pleasure* (1567) The name of the real Duchess, according to Painter's book, was Giovanna d' Aragona whose father, Enrico d'Aragona, Marquis of Gerace, was an illegitimate son of Ferdinand I of Naples. Her husband was Alfonso Piccolomini, the Duke of Amalfi. As having similarly occurred in the play, after the death of her husband, she secretly marries Antonio Beccadelli di Bologna. It is clear that Webster "makes some alterations, most importantly in displaying total sympathy for the Duchess. Bosola becomes the central, ambiguous villain, a complex character who repents his part in the Duchess's murder." (Ranald 1989: 49) However, a play with such violence and terror fits Jacobean drama, which is the development of the Elizabethan drama flavored with Seneca's ideas. Webster made notable modifications to the real Italian story in order to present his notions about the Jacobean society. The real story as mentioned by Burckhardt, and also as described by Bandello, was as follows:

> The physician and lute-player Antonio Bologna had made a secret marriage with the widowed Duchess of Amalfi, of the House of Aragon. Soon afterwards her brother succeeded in securing both her and her children, and murdered them in a castle. Antonio, ignorant of their fate, and still cherishing the hope of seeing them again, was staying at Milan, closely watched by hired assassins, and one day in the society of Ippolita Sforza sang to the lute the story of his misfortunes. (Burckhardt 1995: 288)

However, Webster makes a change in the character of Antonio; he depicts Antonio as someone who is an expert in training horses, a sensitive man who is the exponent of the delicate art of horse breeding instead of being a lute player. This change should not be ignored because it seems that Webster wanted to refer to the chivalric codes of a noble person. When he was asked by Ferdinand about his opinion regarding the horsemanship, Antonio, who knows everything about the good horses in the French court, answers smartly: "Nobly, my lord: as out of the Grecian horse issued many famous princes, so out of brave horsemanship

arise the first sparks of growing resolution that raise the mind to noble action." (I, i, 58-60) Thus, if a man can understand the nature of the horse, it means he is a learned and skilful man. This gives a certain positive value to Antonio's character. Moreover, these qualities of Antonio explain the reason why the Duchess chooses him as a husband among every other character. Antonio is not noble by birth, but he is noble in soul and conduct. Thus, he also lives according to his own individual beliefs.

Even though there is very little is known about the life of John Webster, still these few life details can explain Webster's unique ideas. His father (John Webster Sr.) was a carriage-maker in London. (Ranald 1989: 2) which often involved in more sinister sides of London life as carriages were needed to take criminals to public execution, or plague victims to burial. Thus the 'dance macabre' atmosphere of Webster's plays can be traced back to this childhood memories, which became inseparable characteristics of his writing skills. The playwright's father became one of the leading parishioners and councilmen of the Church, which allowed the father to achieve a very prosperous business in the Church. (Ranald 1989: 2-3) His mother was Elizabeth Coates, the daughter of a blacksmith. They lived in St Sepulchre's parish. During his childhood, Webster mostly witnessed the coming and going of the carts carrying the dead bodies to the church. As most critics stated, Webster saw "the skull beneath the flesh" which underlined his interest in what was "macabre". Unfortunately, due to the Great Fire of London (1666), many details regarding John Webster's life were lost. However, apparently he was born in 1580. No accurate evidence was found to prove that young John Webster attended the Merchant Taylors' School. His wide knowledge of the law and its ramifications mixed with his "notable animus against dishonest lawyers" suggest that he might have studied at the Middle Temple. (Ranald 1989: 5) Between 1605 and 1606, he married Sara Peniall – who was ten years younger than him – at St Mary's Church, Islington, during Lent, usually a forbidden season for marriage. Soon afterwards, less than two months after their wedding, they had a child who was given the same name as that of his father and paternal grandfather. The new-born child was baptized at St Dunstan's in the West on 8 May, "thus haste, a special dispensation, and privacy were

essential.” (Ranald 1989: 6) Presumably, John Webster had enough money to lead a peaceful life, but this family life did not prevent him from witnessing the corruption and decay in the society in which he lived, depicting it with his wide imagination. In the year 1614 or 1615, his father died and he presented “himself for membership in the Merchant Taylors’ by right of birth as an eldest son under the sponsorship of two members of the company.” (Ranald 1989: 7) John Webster died sometime between 1628 and 1634.

CHAPTER ONE

INDIVIDUALISM AND THE RENAISSANCE: MAN AS THE CENTRE OF EVERYTHING

This chapter will be focusing on the important issue of individualism as a basis of Renaissance ideas. In the beginning we will look at the reflection of Renaissance individualism in *Doctor Faustus*, shedding light on knowledge, religion, and free choice. There will be a discussion related with some similarities between Faustus's behavior and other famous enlightened characters such as Agrippa, John Dee and Bruno in order to shed light on Faustus's positive side. Then we will look at the same issue of Renaissance elements in *The Duchess of Malfi*, notably the issue of women's free choice, marriage and class, and in these areas where the New Protestant Society brought great changes, especially after half a century of the female Monarch on the English throne which accepted Protestantism and opened a new path of liberty. This past era of Queen Elizabeth I had a clear influence on the way Webster dealt with women. However, the issue of misogyny against women will also be looked at from its very biblical roots. The major point of this chapter – and this thesis as a whole – is to highlight the Renaissance indications regarding individualism of each play separately, pointing to the theme of one's personal values encountered by the different perspectives of others.

1.1. Knowledge and Religion

Humans are born with an unquenchable and innate desire for knowledge. Aristotle asserts that we all have the desire to know, because "learning things gives great pleasure not only to philosophers but also in the same way to all other men." (Aristotle 1957: 1448b) In addition, the biblical story of Adam and Eve and the Original Sin underscores Aristotle's claim:

> …and the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to

> the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And then the eyes of them both were opened and they knew that they were naked. (Genesis 3: 4-7)

However, the imagery of darkness and light is also clear in the Bible in addition to the possibility that knowledge offers for human eyes to be opened accompanied by an inevitable condition which suggests that the end of this desire is unreachable. More tragically, as the Bible tells: the moment "the eyes of them both were opened and they knew that they were naked." (Genesis 3: 7) That is to say, the more one obtains knowledge, the more one will understand the vulnerable limitation set for a human being. Having refused God's options, man had to go on in his journey alone by making his own choices. "Once outside the garden, humanity's struggle to master the Book of Nature began, and all subsequent changes represented a deterioration from the Edenic ideal." (Harkness 1999: 67) Thus, it can be said that according to the enlightened person, only knowledge was forbidden to Adam but since he made a free choice, he must go on. In this sense, and to use Ficino's words: "The tree of knowledge, even if it seems to have rather bitter roots, brings forth the sweetest possible fruit." (Ficino 1996: 77)

It is worthy to mention that the Old Testament deals with the verb "to have sex" as "to know." The book of Genesis retells the events of Adam and Eve after being banished from the Garden of Eden, after eating from the Tree of Knowledge. It was then that "Adam *knew* Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord." (Genesis 4: 1, my italics) Thus, from the biblical semantic viewpoint, "to know" parallels "to have sex" which both if carried out without a specific boundary, are considered to be a sin. Similarly, in Marlowe's time, men of theology, who imposed unlimited authority on the mind and its questioning nature considered any knowledge not sanctioned by the Church to be a sin that would lead people to damnation, because from the moment Eve "took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband," (Genesis 3: 6) from then on, man inherited this original sin, a possibility of being seduced by woman or knowledge. Thus, according to the theological perspectives, Faustus did "practice more than heavenly power

permits." (Epilogue, 8) Nevertheless, the question presents itself: Who is the one to decide the level around which this practiced knowledge can go in accordance with what 'heavenly power permits'?

1.2. Cornelius Agrippa and John Dee

Cornelius Agrippa (1486-1535) attempted to prove that 'heavenly power permits' the act of white magic in understanding God's universe. Agrippa was a famous German theologian, astrologer, alchemist and occult writer whose ideas were the most influential on Marlowe. His thoughts were very dominating in the Occult Renaissance before the rise of the scientific revolution. Agrippa discusses Theurgic magic, in which God's power is used to understand the universe, which he basically explained as a 'white' or 'good' magic. In her masterpiece book *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age,* Frances Yates points out that even though Agrippa's ideas were strongly attacked by his contemporary theologians due to their misinterpretation, the real goal of his work was to have white magic correspond with the teachings of Christianity. She claims that "Agrippa is not an atheist; he is an evangelical. He frequently refers to the Epistles of St Paul, and from one of these the title of his sermon could have been taken 'I am determined to know nothing among you save Christ Jesus'" (Qtd. in Yates 1979: 50). Elsewhere defending Agrippa, she shows that "by associating all the magics with holy influences [Cabala] he makes them safe [from demonical powers]." (Yates 1979: 55) Thus, from the perspective of Frances Yates's reasoning, Faustus is also not a black magician. However, the repeated appearance of the good and bad angels in *Doctor Faustus* proves that point. That is to say, the appearance of the good angel and also the "angel hovers o'er [Faustus's] head" (V, i, 53, A) indicates the goodness of Faustus. In the same way, this power of goodness warns him not to go to the extreme. In her same book, Frances Yates was at pains to explain her point:

> Faustus is not a medieval sorcerer: he is a Renaissance scholar who has taken all learning for his province with a particular bent towards the natural sciences. The medieval anti-sorcery formula, ignorantly applied to the Renaissance scholar, produces Faustus, the genius with an artificially-induced neurosis. (Yates 1979: 141)

However, the beginning of the play confirms Yates's point of view. Doctor Faustus starts with the manifesto of a new kind of knowledge revolution, so to speak, demonstrating the many fields in which Faustus has a mastery of knowledge: 'Analytics' (logic), 'Galen' (Medicine), 'Jerome's Bible' (theology), etc. Moreover, since he has attained the end of every field thus 'these metaphysics of magicians' were inevitable for him. This is because, as Burckhardt defends the reputation of the Renaissance scholars:

> scholar of the Renaissance was forced to combine great learning with the power of resisting the influence of ever-changing pursuits and situations. Add to this the deadening effect of licentious excess, and – since do what he might, the worst was believed of him – a total indifference to the moral laws recognized by others. Such men can hardly be conceived to exist without an inordinate pride. They needed it, if only to keep their heads above water, and were confirmed in it by the admiration which alternated with hatred in the treatment they received from the world. They are the most striking examples and victims of an unbridled subjectivity. (Burckhardt 1995: 176-177)

However, without such a great amount of knowledge Faustus would not even be sufficiently qualified to practice such new fields of magic which will make him "on earth as Jove is in the sky" (I, i, 78, A) because, as Agrippa explains, the mastery of many fields of knowledge is one of the most important conditions in dealing with the angelic or satanic spirits. Likewise, Agrippa strongly warns against conjuring without adequate learning, which is clearly shown in Mephistopheles's behavior toward Robin and Rafe, who conjured without any kind of learning at all. Mephistopheles utters: "how am I vexed with these villains charms! From Constantinople am I hither come only for pleasure of these damned slaves." (III, ii, 31-33, A) Thus Mephistopheles metamorphosed them into ape and dog.

It is Cornelius in the play who guides Faustus in the manner which looks as if he were his godfather. Speaking to his other magician fellow: "first let him [Faustus] know the words of art, and then, all other ceremonies learned," (I, i, 160-161, A) there could be two reasons for Marlowe to use the character of Cornelius as the representative of Agrippa (the magician) in the play. The first is

that Agrippa was a famous German Magician by whom the real Doctor Faustus had been affected. The second reason is that Agrippa has given inspiration to John Dee whose ideas undoubtedly were on Marlowe's mind when he created Doctor Faustus. John Dee (1527-1608) was a famous Elizabethan English magician, astrologer, alchemist, mathematician and scientist. As Yates mentions, Dee was particularly close to the Dudley family and to Robert Dudley, who became Earl of Leicester and the favorite of Queen Elizabeth I. Robert Dudley had been Dee's pupil when he was a child. (Yates 1979: 93) Dee spent many years in collecting books and ancient manuscripts for his large library, which was visited by many remarkable characters, including Queen Elizabeth. As proved by Yates, Dee's library contained "the intellectual richness of the Renaissance" (Qtd. in Harkness 1999: 3) According to Yates, "Dee's outlook is that of Renaissance Neo-Platonism as interpreted in Pico Della Mirandola's synthesis" and "Dee's Neo-Platonism is associated with Renaissance cabala" based on Agrippa's *De Occulta* (Yates 1979: 54) Like Agrippa, Dee thinks of the universe as divided into the natural, the celestial and the super-celestial spheres. Dee concentrates upon number as the key to the universe, here there is a strong association with Pythagoreanism (proportion, harmony and numerology).

Yates divides Dee's life into three categories: the first which represents the glory of Dee as Elizabethan science leader (1558-1583) is surrounded by the famous Sir Philip Sidney's circle and other enlightened characters. During this time "like the Christian Cabalists generally, he believed that such daring attempts were safeguarded by Cabala from demonic powers." (Yates 1979: 96) That is, Dee was still 'a pious Christian cabalist' who was committed to religion knowing that he was in a safe position to conjure angels rather than demons. In the second period (1583-1589) which seems to be a 'missionary venture,' Dee was wondering out of London, spending some time in Cracow, Poland, and eventually in Prague. Dee spent several years in Bohemia, along with Edward Kelly (the devilish friend). They were pursuing their special alchemical experiments in summoning the angels with practical Cabala. "Dee was moving now on the more 'powerful' levels of Christians Cabala through which he hoped to encourage powerful religious movements." (Yates 1979: 103) The last period of Dee's life (1589-1608) depicts an old poor man mistreated by his own

country to which he devoted his whole life for its glory. Things were changed in England after Dee's return (after the Armada). The death of Lord Leicester and Sir Philip Sidney (Dee's supporters) played a great role in bringing Dee close to the point of failure. Dee was not able to find the previous intellectual circle around him and was confronted with a growing witch-hunt against him. (Yates 1979: 105) In order to rid himself of this witch-hunt reputation, Dee appealed to the king asking him to punish those who were accusing him with such false accusations. However, all his attempts were in vain and he was not cleared. 'The prophet of some far-reaching religious movement' died in great poverty and in bitter neglect at Mortlake in 1608. The Hermetic-Cabalist movement failed in bringing about any religious reform. As a result the Renaissance Neo-Platonism, which had inspired this movement, was also suppressed, and "the Renaissance magus turned into Faust." (Yates 1979: 109-110)

Even though he was accused of having ideas contrary to the Christian religion, Dee's discovered manuscripts of conversation with angels, (recorded by Dee between 1581 and 1609) showed that Dee believed that

> Human beings, hampered by Adam's original sin, were unable to communicate with God and His creatures and had to struggle to emulate the angels, who were perfect and unaffected by original sin and the moral fall. In the world promised after the Apocalypse, angels and humanity would live in harmony with nature, in perfect communion with God and all levels of the cosmos." (Harkness 1999: 103-104)

Therefore, Dee was convinced that the 'Book of Nature' was corrupt thus he wanted to cure it. In other words, Dee believed that natural philosophy could not decipher the secrets of the universe, so he attempted to communicate with angels as messengers between humans and God in order to find solutions for humanity, or to use Pico's words, to marry Heaven with earth. In preferring faith in God and his angels to natural science, Dee seemed controlled by the idea of his predecessor, Agrippa who reminded his readers that "trusting too much in nature rather than in God was a sure way to communicate with bad demons instead of good angels." (Qtd. in Harkness 1999: 128) That is to say, the physical world is an imperfect and deformed copy of the perfect non-physical world, which can only be revealed by God. Needless to say, Dee's work with Kelly, which can be

seen as a turning point in blackening his name, proved that Dee was manipulated by a demon (or by Kelly himself), notably after the episode of exchanging their wives on following the angel's so-called suggestion. Dee mentioned it openly in his diary that they "had [their] two wives in such sort, as [they] might use them in common." (Qtd. in Bassnett 2006: 287) Even though Dee's life ended without achieving his main goal, Raphael's (the angel) promise to him seems to be fulfilled: "thou shalt die with fame and memory to the end." (Qtd. in Harkness 1999: 103) However, ironically Dee was always remembered as a necromancer.

1.3. Bruno's Spiritual and Scientific Ideas

There are some similarities in the themes surrounding the trial and execution of Bruno and the case of Doctor Faustus who himself was condemned for seeking knowledge which was not allowed. Other examples of geniuses punished in that period are Servetus and Agrippa. Giordano Bruno (1548-1600) or as often nicknamed 'the martyr to scientific truth' was one of the most inspiring Italian characters at that time. His revolutionary ideas forced him to leave his country to roam in other European countries. Then, he came to England to write and publish many works there. He helped to inspire the 'Sidney circle' and the Elizabethan poetic Renaissance. With a dedication to Philip Sidney, Bruno in Oxford preached his view of Hermetic-Cabalist reform. He explained that the gods represent "the virtue and powers of the soul," and that since "in every man…there is a world, a universe," the reform of the heavens is the reform or the production, of a personality, (Qtd. in Yates 1964: 220) referring to the need for reformation in the re-understanding of the celestial world as a step to fix its parallel world below. Elsewhere in his fought against the Church, he explained that the Egyptians' spiritual ideas – notably those mentioned by Hermes Trismegistus – and the way they dealt with gods was much earlier than the Greeks, Hebrews and Christians, and that the Egyptians had the best religion and the best magic and the best law of all the others. (Yates 1964: 223) Thus, like Faustus, Bruno was interested in occult methods for gaining power over nature, and his influence was important in circles known to Marlowe. With reference to the issue of the conflict between religious cultures and science, Gatti remarks that "in a European dimension, the figure who assumes this role with most power and

daring is Giordano Bruno, whose image of the heroic searcher for new knowledge of the structure of the universe directly inspired Marlowe's dramatic and poetic articulation of the Faust myth." (Gatti 1989: 75) However, in 1600 Bruno was burned at the stake on the plea of committing heresy against the Roman Catholic Church. The fatal accusation was largely based on his support of occult practices.

1.4. The Renaissance

Before diving into the Renaissance, it is worthy to mention the general situation prior to the Renaissance. In the eighth century notably in 711 Muslims who were mainly Moors and Arabs coming from Morocco started invading some parts of Spain and they settled down there for many centuries. The remarkable thing that those Muslims were doing in such a critical time when the West was still struggling in the Dark Ages was to translate the books of antiquity. And they also developed many branches of ancient science. However, in the eleventh century, when the Christians of Western Europe (Crusaders) were fighting to re-take Spain from the Muslims, it was in that time that they acquired those valuable books. (Kieckhefer 1989: 18) Muslims not only developed the ancient Greek knowledge, they also preserved many books for Europeans to take them back later because those books were mostly lost in the Western world during the medieval period. Thus, Spain being the bridge to Europe played a great role in delivering African and Arabic culture and science and eastern philosophy to the West. In the twelfth century, the transported Arabic books of new conceptions of occult sciences such as alchemy, astrology, philosophy and natural magic arrived in Western Europe. By the thirteenth century, the materials that were brought from Arabic culture were widespread, and their influence forced the intellectuals to reconsider their views on magic anew. (Kieckhefer 1989: 17-18)

The Renaissance was the period seen between the middle of the fourteenth century to the beginning of the seventeenth century. It was the time when people witnessed the increasing and distinctive importance of philosophy, arts and humanism in general. With Dante's writings, notably The *Divine Comedy* the West was entering a new era. The language was to be more than just a means of communicating among people. Humanism, which puts the human in the center

of the creation, strengthened the speedy emergence of individualism. Humanism was firstly pioneered by Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio. It was the first time where the human is evaluated as something more important than the society. However, this movement started from Italy, which then passed to the European countries before finally arriving in England. However, shortly after his death, Dante was followed by the 'father of humanism' Petrarch who beside literature, also believed in the goodness of the human. He writes: "It is better to will the good than to know the truth." (Qtd. in Greenblatt 2005: 110) The extraordinary effect of Petrarch's lovely and poetic writing especially his sonnets, will later inspire Shakespeare in England. However, just like Dante and Petrarch, Boccaccio also wrote his love poems in the Italian vernacular language which in the process of time became the modern Italian language.

Vasari (1511-1574), an Italian painter, architect and historian, argues that the artist as a creator has the ability to create like God. Thus, the artist was seen not only as a painter who paints but also as an individual who has a huge knowledge of antiquity mixed with the modern experience. As a result the figures that the artist creates seem to breathe. (Vasari 1965: 19)

One could compare the attitude to the individual which we see in Marlowe and Webster to the importance of the individual genius in the visual arts. Central to the development of Renaissance art was the emergence of the artist as a creator, being respected for his imagination which was fed by his education in modern and ancient thought. A group of painters, which included painters such as Masaccio, attempted to create art forms which went hand in hand with the appearance of the natural world mixed with human personality. *The Birth of Venus* painted by Sandro Botticelli in the 1480s, represents the beauty of the human body, which by contemplating leads to spiritual beauty. More importantly, his masterpiece, *The Primavera*, which is often nicknamed *Allegory of Spring* (1482) famously depicted well known mythological figures in a garden where the beauty of nature is mixed with the beauty of divine gods and goddesses. In the middle of the painting, we see that the goddess of love was centered to emphasize Neo-Platonic love, as represented by Venus, defined as the Mother of Flowers by Ovid, who rules over both earthly and divine love. The painting was prepared by Botticelli after having a discussion with Ficino, who suggested that love is the

most important element in nature and the most fundamental point of life itself. (Snow-Smith 1993: 70-72) Venus, according to Ficino, is love that also gives life and has the ability to go beyond the material world into the presence of the intellect and the ideal. (Baldini 1984: 90) In fact, this great painting summarizes allegorically Ficino's main Platonic notion which holds man as the possessor of a spark of divinity, rather than the holder of guilt as was often believed in the medieval times.

It is also important to mention that the fourteenth century was chiefly impressed by the writings of Cicero, Seneca and Aristotle. Most of the works of these outstanding geniuses were translated into Latin. And were, for many years, the basis of the scholastic teaching. One fundamental shift which took place after that period was the rediscovery and rebirth of the priceless Greek, Latin and some Egyptian texts of literature such as Plato, Plotinus, Hermes Trismegistus, and other remarkable minds. In his introductory essay on *The Life of Pico Della Mirandola*, Walter Pater opens with these words: "No account of the Renaissance can be complete without some notice of the attempt by certain Italian scholars of the fifteenth century to reconcile Christianity with the religion of Ancient Greece." (Mirandola 2011: 4) The Florentine Academy, which was founded after Gemistus Pletho, the philosopher, reintroduced Platonic thought to the West between 1438 and 1439, which was sponsored by politicians such as Cosimo de' Medici and led by Marsilio Ficino, who took the responsibility of translating the ancient Greek books into Latin. As Clement Salaman mentioned in the introduction of Ficino's book, *Meditations on the Soul*,

> Cosimo gave Ficino a small estate very close to his own villa at Careggi in 1462. The woods of Monte Vecchio where Ficino undertook spiritual practice in solitude rise up behind the site of his house. It must have been at this house that Ficino began the first translations of Plato that were commissioned by Cosimo." (Ficino 1996: xiii)

However, the process of translation went on by many other scholars. Furthermore, In 1486, the brilliant minded Pico della Mirandola introduced his 'manifesto of the Renaissance' *Oration on the Dignity of Man*. In this work, Mirandola regards man as keeping an important point in the Great Chain of Being and as having the capacity to become like God because among all the creations,

he is the only possessor of free will. In the first pages of this oration, Mirandola imagines God speaking to Adam: We " have placed you at the very center of the world… We have made you a creature neither of heaven nor of earth, neither mortal nor immortal, in order that you may, as the free and proud shaper of your own being, fashion yourself in the form you may prefer." (Mirandola 1958: 7) Because the human was such 'a great miracle' he ought to be praised and understood as a wonderful aspect of God's creation. In his other works, Mirandola also made a great contribution in reconciling Christian theology and philosophy.

Most of those works, the newly translated Neo-Platonic books focused on philosophical issues such as free choice, God, eternal life and aesthetic topics. Thus, there was a shift from a common unified way of thinking to the importance of the individual. Plato's works, such as *The Republic*, *The Symposium* and *Phaido*, are some of the most effective books in pushing these concepts forward. However, his teachings took some time before being accepted by people who could not easily remove Aristotle's dominating effect, which had been considered for a long time to be a resource to the only single truth to the abstract thought method. However, the teaching of the Neo-Platonic thinkers, who were inspired by Plato, was very shocking for people, especially issues such as the ability of man to connect with the divine power through knowledge. Traditionally trained scholastics found such teaching a threat to Christianity, claiming that humans have finite knowledge and should not concern themselves with what is infinite and divine. However, people's attitude gradually started to change. Thus, the effect of this movement included many levels of society and there was no doubt that those who would be affected by it the most were those individuals with considerable genius.

1.5. Faustus as a Renaissance Hero

Undoubtedly, Faustus is the representation of the Renaissance man who struggles to escape from the darkness of the old stereotypical thinking to a life with new perspectives which bring to mind the famous allegory of the cave by Plato, which was re-introduced in the Renaissance. The Platonic ideas and

their influence helped to replace the old Aristotelian scholastic paradigms. The Platonic hero in the cave leaves his friends sitting in the dark, looking at the shadows of things in front of them which are reflected by the fire behind them, thinking that they are seeing the real things. (Plato 1993: 514a-516b) This Platonic approach to knowledge represents an invitation to individuality, which is the total opposite of the Aristotelian philosophy, which focuses on the society that "man is by nature a social animal" (Aristotle 1957: 1253a) rather than to focus on the individual.

When Plato explained the task of the real sun seer, which was to go back to his friends who were stuck in the dark to show them the real light even though he would 'make a fool of himself' Plato foreshadows that the real light seer would take the risk of being condemned or killed by those people who would consider him to be a mad man. (Plato 1993: 517a) This is also seen in Faustus, as ironically Faustus could set himself free from the cave of the old way of thinking. However, his problem is that he seems only to care about himself and does not follow Plato who tells us to think of others, which is very similar to the story of Icarus, which is referred to many times in Doctor Faustus, who after escaping the prison with his father, Daedalus, instead of going to share his knowledge with people he opts to fly close to the sun against his father's warnings even though he was destroyed. In this sense, Faustus appears similarly to the existential person who is ready to sacrifice for others but simultaneously is unable to lead a life in contact with others. This paradoxical trait is one of the main keys to understanding the controversial behavior of Faustus. That is, Faustus's plans for others can only be fully understood in the long run.

In the character of Doctor Faustus there are many ingredients of the European Renaissance genius, who instead of being superficially attracted to gods, and from an artistic viewpoint, chooses to be destroyed utterly for the sake of man. And because the medieval mind was used to crush individuals under the name of God, so Faustus wholeheartedly volunteers to be crushed like Prometheus by God in order to give opportunity for individuals to be godlike. Harry Levin remarks that "Marlowe's tragedy of the scientific libertine [who] gained control over nature while losing control of himself." (Qtd. in Jump 1969: 17) This demonstrates a Renaissance idea that there is no limitation on the

human's self-improvement, which is often followed by the act of resisting the cultural influences, as these very things form concrete conclusions about life, which will separate man from achieving radical changes in his society. It can be said that the concept of genius stems from changing from 'conclusion' to 'confusion.' In such thinking, this genius is forced to be isolated from conventional approaches of God and people in order to create his own individuality in his life.

However, the Renaissance artistic taste of adoration of beauty in everything is expressed by Faustus the very moment he sees Helen of Troy. He wonders: "was this the face that launched a thousand ships?" (V, i, 90, A) The image of Helen immediately brings the glorious days of the ancient Greeks. Furthermore, from the same artistic perspective, Faustus could not see any justice or beauty in the Christian doctrines the way he conceives them. On the one hand, the Bible says: "The reward of sin is death. That's hard." (I, i, 41, A) On the other hand, the Bible says "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and there's no truth in us." (I, i, 44-45, A) That is, sin and death are inevitable, so Faustus feels damned for a long time even before making the pact with the Devil. Thus he tries to create another imaginary end of his life: "this word 'damnation' terrifies not me, for I confound hell in Elysium: my ghost be with the old philosophers!" (I, iii, 56-59, B) The aesthetically-imagined picture of Faustus sitting with the damned philosophers looks as if it creates a shield against the suffering to come. In fact, Faustus's need to be with the glorious 'old philosophers' is a typical Renaissance emotion. Burckhardt has noticed a similar strange desire in Dante and other Renaissance poets: "the ruins within and outside Rome awakened not only archaeological zeal and patriotic enthusiasm, but an elegiac or sentimental melancholy. In Petrarch and Boccaccio we find touches of this feeling." (Burckhardt 1995: 121) In fact, Faustus seems to be obsessed by beauty. In this sense, beauty becomes an equivalent to justice.

1.6. The Similarities between Faustus and John Dee

Faustus starts to work away from Wittenberg so as to be free from disciplinary boundaries and to seek court patronage as a better alternative, which echoes Dee in his first period as explained earlier: "very early in his career he

chose to work outside the institutional framework of the university, seeking to pursue a career as an independent scientific intellectual, and this meant the pursuit of aristocratic or royal patronage [with the Queen and the Emperor in Prague]." (Clulee 1988: 11) Doctor Faustus gains a good deal of privilege with the emperor, whose words impressed him: "none in my empire, nor in the whole world, can compare with thee for the rare effects of magic." (IV, i, 2-3, A) However, the second period of Faustus's life shows his developing relationship with Mephistopheles (the mediator between the human and the supernatural powers). Doctor Faustus wants to learn about the cosmos and the secrets of the universe. Thus, he likes to 'argue divine astrology,' but due to Mephistopheles' insufficient answers, Faustus mocks at Mephistopheles: "think'st thou that Faustus is so fond to imagine that after this life there is any pain? Tush, these are trifles and mere old wives' tales," (II, i, 133-135, A) Faustus commits the sin of pride when he puts himself in a higher place than Mephistopheles, who according to him, does not know what he knows. In this sense, he is similar to Dee, who thus was manipulated by his fellow Edward Kelley, which as mentioned in Dee's *A True and Faithful Relationship:* "unto E.K [Edward Kelley] offered my soul as a pawn, to discharge E.K. his crediting of them, as the good and faithful Ministers of Almighty God."(Qtd. in Clulee 1988: 218) However, the third period of Faustus also echoes Dee's, where "he is grown into some sickness by being over-solitary." (V, ii, 7, A) Unfortunately, Faustus, who once dreamed of considerable high achievements such as being 'the flow'ring pride of Wittenberg' or 'tell the secrets of all foreign kings,' has metamorphosed into a 'subject of merriment' to die leaving behind a dark reputation of a necromancer. Faustus, like John Dee, who lives as Peter J. French, says: "in a world [which was] half magical, half scientific." (Qtd. in Clucas 2006: 4) Despite the fact that the Elizabethans may have understood the play as anti-Renaissance, there are still many similarities between the two promising scholars: "Marlowe and his *Doctor Faustus* must surely have been an important factor in the opposition to Dee, fomented from the public performances of this sensation play. Audiences would inevitably have recognized Faustus as an unfavorable reference to Dee." (Yates 1979: 141)

1.7. Faustus' Scientific Mind

Faustus understands the fragility of the hedonistic truth that Epicurus offered. According to Epicurus, the basic constituents of the world are atoms flying in empty space, and since there is no existence of Platonic forms or immaterial soul, thus the gods have no influence on our lives. As a result, Epicurus concludes that we can gain knowledge of the world by relying upon the senses. However, on seeing the shadows of Alexander and his paramour, Faustus shrieks 'these are but shadows' which illustrates the emptiness of the sensual, and thus temporary, truth. Later, when Faustus thought that he could find salvation in Helen's lips then he was reminded of the destructive power of sex: "was this the face that launched a thousand ships and burnt the topless towers of Ilium?" (V, i, 90-91, A) "Her lips suck forth my soul." (V, i, 93, A) The intelligible reference to her kissing him, rather than to his kissing her, indicates that Faustus's action springs from a need of salvation more than a real sexual desire. In other words, he wants Helen's kiss just as a means by which he achieves mystical union with God. Faustus often feels that his 'senses are deceived'. He is a man frustrated by his own high ambition.

In his *Rebel* Camus tries to explain the characteristics of the rebel. He claims that "Every act of rebellion expresses a nostalgia for innocence and an appeal to the essence of being," (Camus 1967: 76) we can apply this modern theory of Camus on Faustus notably when we remember Faustus in his last scene screaming: "O soul, be changed into little *water-drops*, and fall into the *ocean*, ne'er be found," (V, ii, 110-111, A, my italics) this process of returning back to water expresses Faustus's dilemma very well because from the viewpoint of Thales's philosophy, water is the essence of everything. And because Faustus has a scientific mind so he knows that "atoms cannot be destroyed." (Democritus) Even though he tries to take the choice of re-incarnation, to be changed from human to 'brutish beast' then to 'water drops' and then to be lost in the 'ocean' but unfortunately by the very returning to the ocean, he will return to the source, "water is the absolute essence of everything" (Thales) Thus, there is a strong desire in Faustus's subconscious pushing him to return to the essence of being as a result of his rebellion.

1.8. *The Duchess of Malfi*: True Religion and Corrupted Religion

Leading scholars have expressed different theories on the cause of the rise of individualism. The most convincing theory relates individualism to religious developments. For instance, in his *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy,* Burckhardt concludes that it was those remarkable individuals who had created the Renaissance individualism, whereas Greenblatt comes with his *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* arguing that the case is the reverse, that is, there are sets of socially acceptable standards provided by the society which help to create one's special identity. Things become more complex with John Martin, whose *Myths of Renaissance Individualism* shows that the last two mentioned studies were not totally accurate, because "in the Renaissance world, the lives of the poor – the layered qualities of their identities – were far more complex than many historians have assumed." (Martin 2004: 68) In his view, there are many reasons behind the emergence of the Renaissance individual. Political, economic and social conditions played a significant role and it likewise differed from one individual to another. (Martin 2004: 72) However, in one of the recent studies made in his masterpiece *Inventing The Individual*, Siedentop takes a more convincing and more interesting approach than every other study so far. He argues that religion is the origin of the Western individual. At the beginning of his book, he explains how the Ancient Greeks used to have the paterfamilias buried in the house, after keeping a fire in order to be worshipped by their descendants; thus, they would become personal gods that were inseparable from the house. (Siedentop 2014: 11) In this respect, when defending his homeland, the ancient citizen was therefore defending the very core of his identity because religion, family and territory were inseparable. (Siedentop 2014: 25) These ideas, after being transferred to the Roman Empire, which at the beginning showed hostility toward Christianity, had been strengthened by the Christians (the martyrs), who apparently had found something within themselves more important than the social conventions and conformity. Those martyrs illustrated that the exercise of an individual would, based on conscience, make their will visible to others. They offered a model of heroism open to all: They "through belief in Christ did not openly challenge patriarchy or servitude. But it offered self-respect. A moral revolution was under way." (Siedentop 2014: 80-81) However, after the Roman

Empire converted to Christianity, this personal will of heroism started to be expressed differently by the monks who wholeheartedly sought to develop a higher will by overcoming their personal appetites in solitude and silence. Some went to the wilderness, others to the mountains. However, in this phase, the Roman audience was removed by God, and the audience's shouting was replaced by the inner voice of God inside the individual's heart. (Siedentop 2014: 86-87) That was the seed of individualism and then through the passage of time, the issue was more developed leading to the modern self-aware individual.

However, generally it is only after such self-recognition that the human being will defy the political power and the corrupt representation of religion, and because the process of self-knowing is unquenchable, the more human obtains from it, the more he needs to express his individualism, no matter how dangerous the consequences will be. Therefore, the problem starts at the very moment when that person's individuality is threatened by others. It is then – as history and literature show – that the human will die for what he thinks to be good for himself, and for his society as well.

The control of women's sexual conduct and reproductive functions had high importance in the strongly patriarchal society of Renaissance Italy. The theological, medical, legal and social discourses on sexual difference continued, for many years, affirming the notion that women were inferior in all ways to men. Thus they became subject to men's dominion. As a result, both social and religious doctrines upheld chastity as the supreme virtue of women, whether as young unwed virgins, wives or widows. It is well known that the preservation of female virginity before marriage, as well as the reputation of the marriage, played a key role in the culture of honor. As a result, the woman's sexual behavior would reflect and underpin her status, and was important for the honor of the family as a whole. It was a matter of importance to the males in the family who sought to defend the honor, particularly of the leading families. By contrast, men were allowed more liberty. As Rocke notes, "while men were to respect the virtue of women of honorable families, they had a large pool of slaves and servants, poor or immodest women, and prostitutes with whom they could acceptably indulge their desires." (Rocke 2003: 142)

Cox points out that "the possibility of women achieving a real and effectual equality with men is squarely perceived as dependent on their ability to earn their own living, to fend for themselves." (Cox 2003: 165) Thus, marriage played an important role in both economical as much as political terms. Some families forced their daughters to be nuns hypocritically motivated by the reputation of their daughters' spiritual welfare which in fact based on self-interest "motivated purely by worldly pride and desire to pile up riches… [these] crimes are carried out with the complicity of the government itself and the Church." (Cox 2003: 171) Arcangela Tarabotti, Italian nun and writer, talks about an armed uprising by women "if all nuns who lacked a vocation were on the outside, their number would be great enough to form a vast army." Tarabotti insists that women are not only naturally the equals of men, but also concretely envisages the possibility of women entering male fields of activity and competing with them directly for "honor and gain." (Qtd. in Cox 2003: 172) All the same, this fighting-nun image is seen in the Duchess's behavior, in her struggle for freedom she affirms her longing to do "as men in some great battles, by apprehending danger, have achiev'd almost impossible actions." (I, ii, 250-253)

Fathers frequently fail to make provision for their daughters in their wills, which is why the poor creatures have no other choice but to turn to 'blameworthy and despicable' means. In case the father has thought to support his daughter financially, her dowry is often usurped by her brothers, "who keep her on in the house as an unpaid servant, effectively buried alive." (Cox 2003: 175) This seems to be the case in *The Duchess of Malfi*. Forker has noticed that "despite her technical hegemony, the Duchess is a virtual prisoner in her own realm long before she is physically incarcerated, and she herself appears to recognize this from the beginning." (Forker 1986: 301)

Thus, women were imprisoned by their brothers after the death of their father. In *II merito delle donne (The Worth of Women)*, Moderata Fonte, the Italian writer (1555-1592) points out that a woman, when she marries, has to take on the expense of children and other worries, "especially if he is poor, as often happens, what else does she gain from it, except that instead of being her own mistress and the mistress of her own money… She becomes a slave, and loses her liberty and, along with her liberty, her control over her property, surrendering all

she has to the man who has bought her, and putting everything in his hands." (Qtd. in Cox 2003: 178-180) Thus, marriage was a bad financial bargain for women. Nevertheless, it was important for the Duchess to use it as an expression in pursuing her individuality. Of course for many feminists, the only woman who could be happy in such a society would be a woman who lives without men. However, Webster has presented three women with free choice; Cariola, a single woman, Julia, a married woman with other unlawful relationships, and the Duchess, with one sacred relationship, despite the fact that they were all crushed by the merciless power of masculinity; yet it was the Duchess's tragic death that made the whole change on the villains aftermath. The Duchess used the holiness of marriage as a means to self-realization. It is based on virtue rather than libido; she affirms this to Antonio "for we now are one we'll only lie, and talk together, and plot t'appease my humorous kindred; and if you please, like the old tale, in Alexander and Lodowick, *lay naked sword between us, keep us chaste*." (I, ii, 396-399, my italics) Cox shares a similar view on that topic "for a woman to choose to live alone was not only an eccentric but a potentially dangerous choice" (Cox 2003: 178-180) not because women lack self-protection but because society lacked justice. The society with its government and Church was against women. Unlike Italy, things in France were much better for women. Lucrezia Marinella, the Italian author and advocate of women's rights, points out that "In France, indeed, the financial reigns of households and family businesses are firmly in female hands: men there may not spend even a centime unless at the request of their wives, and women not only administrate business dealings and sales but private income as well." (Qtd. in Cox: 2003: 162) Thus, it was not a coincidence that Antonio starts the play returning from France like "a very formal Frenchman in [his] habit" (I, i, 3) talking about his visit to France, depicting her as a female model to imitate. Thus, his acceptance to follow the Duchess's orders without hesitation also stems from his stay in France which taught him how a woman ought to be treated. He explains to Delio the reason behind France's greatness: "their judicious king begins at home;" (I, i, 6-7) in other words, society's change starts at home, with women.

The Duchess has a different idea about knowledge. She believes that knowledge is negative and not helpful in the face of a dilemma. On her last

farewell to her son, she openly states; “farewell, boy. Thou art happy, that thou hast not understanding to know thy misery; for all our wit and reading brings us to a truer sense of sorrow.” (III, v, 65-69) This implicitly means that the Duchess has reached this important truth after a long personal journey in her difficult life that strengthened her powerful mind providing her with such revolutionary character, which reflects the biblical story of Solomon’s wisdom concerning the issue of knowledge and wisdom “for in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.” (Ecclesiastes 1: 18) Solomon, who reaches the truth which shows that the human’s knowledge is futile after he spends a long journey of testing everything in life, ultimately concludes that everything “under the sun” is meaningless unless one connects himself to God. Thus, a man who focuses on knowledge will be misled of the wisdom of finding the spiritual truth. However, other characters in the play share the same view on knowledge. Bosola, who formerly was a promising student, attempts to warn the Duchess that there is nothing but sadness that lies behind knowledge: “heaven o’ver our heads, like her looking-glass, only gives us a *miserable knowledge* of the small compass of our prison.” (IV, ii, 123-124, my italics) Forker has noticed that “the word “nothing,” which Webster employs twenty-four times in *The Duchess*, echoes throughout the play with cumulative force and in a context that keeps us ever mindful of human weakness and uncertainty, of death and of *the pathetic of our knowledge*.” (Forker 1986: 307, my italics)

The above mentioned reason is connected to the reason explained by Burckhardt where he wanted to fathom the reason behind the decline of ‘humanists in the sixteenth century.’ He points out: “the position of the humanist was almost incompatible with *a fixed home,* since it either made frequent changes of dwelling necessary for a livelihood, or so affected the mind of the individual that he could never be happy for long in one place.” (Burckhardt 1995: 176, my italics) For those reasons which the Duchess must have been well aware, she chooses faith rather than knowledge as a cornerstone to express her individuality.

One of the most dominating hallmarks of Webster’s plays is the display of the environment in which we see the absence of moral elements. The Cardinal acts totally contrary to his position. On the other hand, the Duchess is labeled a ‘whore’ by other immoral persons where all her behavior is pointing to the

contrary. In short, Webster presents the terrible bare truth of human nature. "Webster is no less the moralist, but he does not preach. His plays are an agonized search for moral order in the uncertain and chaotic world of Jacobean skepticism by a dramatist who no longer accepts without question the postulates of order and degree so dear to the Elizabethans." (Ribner 1962: 118) We find those individuals who are supposed to act as models for improving society's morality are the same persons to be responsible for deteriorating systematic codes. The Cardinal's misunderstanding of the Bible: "I am puzzled in a question about hell: He says, in hell there's one material fire, and yet it shall not burn all men alike," (V, v, 1-3) is mockingly expressed in the manner of a lecherous person who wants to understand God's mystery within a human being's limited understanding of the world without taking the pains of showing little faith in the greatness of an afterlife. This explains Machiavelli's words: "We Italians are irreligious and corrupt above others… because the Church and her representatives set us the worst example." (Machiavelli, *Discourses*: 26)

However, the abused-power of the Church seen in the Cardinal's conduct recalls the famous trial scene in *The White Devil* where the power of justice is abused to its fullest extent when the lawyer speaks in the Latin tongue with Francisco, assuming that Vittoria could not understand Latin. However, they are astonished to know that she could speak Latin: "I will not have my accusation clouded, in a strange tongue: all this assembly shall hear what you can charge me with." (*The White Devil*, III, ii, 17-19) Knowledge, in this sense, was used by Vittoria as a shield against the abusing masculine power. It can be easily seen that both Vittoria and the Duchess were stuck in the same corrupt environment. The first is strengthened by her knowledge, the second by her virtue. "If Vittoria and the Duchess earn our respect it is because they aspire to more than physical pleasure: they challenge the male prerogative to determine values in life." (Cave 1988: 22) Both Vittoria and the Duchess have recognized the other side of the coin, and thus consider marriage as the only reality where the world of reputation is an illusion made and judged by men themselves. However, in order to face such a corrupted institution, one needs to gain unlimited authority. After proposing to Antonio, the Duchess openly declares her newly acquired power "we now are man and wife, and 'tis the Church, that must echo this" (I, ii, 390-

391) the power of the priest being an agency between man and God is overthrown. Thus the patriarchal chains of the Church are replaced by a self-sprung authority. This, furthermore, asserts that the moment in which the Duchess is married is, at the same time the moment that she gained power to set out on her fight.

In Webster's plays, the atmosphere is often suffocating and bleak where evil holds sway: "it is as if God has abandoned the world of His creation, leaving humanity to work out its problems unaided. Evil is rampant throughout." (Ranald 1989: 40) On the other hand, a character with full integrity of life is centered in the middle of that dark place. Ranald believes that even with such a difficult position, most of Webster's characters "do possess an energy in the pursuit of their individualism which defies anything life, or fate, can offer. They glory in their all too human loneliness, exercising a tragic, almost existential freedom which can bring them only to death." (Ranald 1989: 41)

After Antonio's rhetorical and existential words of how "heaven fashioned us of nothing. And we strive to bring ourselves to nothing," (III, v, 80-81) he fared the Duchess well, and at the final moment she cries "let me look upon you once more, for that speech came from a dying father." (III, v, 85-86) Here, we unquestionably accept the fact that besides the Duchess's powerful mind, she has a full understanding about the things being set around her. It seems as if she has an ability to foresee her future, as Ranald argues,

> Webster's treatment of the Duchess, however, is not morally judgmental. He portrays her as aware and intelligent, understanding the pitfalls that lie ahead of her, sensual in an affirmative sense as a reprehensive of feminine procreative sexuality, proud, and strong-willed. As a noblewoman she is accustomed to ruling a great house and is determined to gain her heart's desire, no matter what the cost. (Ranald 1989: 54)

1.9. The Duchess as a Renaissance Heroine

In his important book about the Renaissance in Italy, Burckhardt criticizes the simple-minded people: "Like bad physicians, they thought to cure the disease by removing the symptoms, and fancied that if the tyrant were put to

death, freedom would follow of itself." (Burckhardt 1995: 39) Likewise, it is insufficient to present a play where its villains die at the end. From that perspective, Webster creates a model of goodness. Because the death of her opponents is not enough for the birth of the Renaissance woman, the model should also die with all her strength and faith creating an emotional opportunity for the audience to feel the catharsis. Forker comments on the enlightenment that occurred in Bosola after the Duchess's death: "Bosola's images of his own moral enlightenment as arousal from a dream ("I am angry with myself, now that I wake" [IV, ii, 325] repeats a phrase, perhaps unconsciously picked up from the Duchess, who had compared a different kind of awareness to waking up earlier in the same scene: "tell my brothers that I perceive death, now I am well *awake.*"" (Qtd. in Forker 1986: 358, my italics) Thus, it can be said that the Renaissance needs good models with revolutionary ideas, rather than the destruction of bad persons. That is to say, the Renaissance's aim is to build up rather than to tear down. In other words, there is beauty in the death of beauty, which, in Ficino's words, is 'the nostalgia for something lost.' Antonio's meditation on the ruined abbey, also recalls Dante's nostalgic longing for the ancient glory, Antonio says:

I do love these ancient ruins.
We never tread upon them but we set
Our foot upon some reverend history:
And, questionless, here in this open court,
Which now lies naked to the injuries. (V, iii, 9-13)

On the other hand, the Cardinal has an anti-Renaissance power of destruction. Silvio says "That Cardinal hath made more bad faces with his oppression than ever Michelangelo made good ones: he lifts up 's nose, like a foul porpoise before a storm" (III, iii, 46-48) so the power of building beauty and the power of destroying it are also clear between the two fighting sides.

Webster succeeded in presenting an ideal protagonist for the Jacobean audience where everybody expects the female to be obedient and silent to males who are always dominant and brave because only such a woman could represent a Renaissance model. This can only be accomplished through planting equality between men and women. This hidden urge is rooted in the Duchess's unconsciousness. During a moment of anger, she unconsciously expressed it with

the masked Bosola "were I a man, I'd beat that counterfeit face into thy other." (III, v, 115-116) Therefore, Webster's opinion of strengthening the woman's side can undoubtedly be achieved through love.

1.10. Woman's Silence

Dympna Callaghan digs to considerable depths in the famous Renaissance tragedies to conclude that the female voice was often silenced in those plays because it represents the voice of truth. (Callaghan 1989: 84) She shows many examples, notably Emilia's voice when it was heard at the end of the play (*Othello*); it re-whitened Desdemona's reputation (and revealed the whole truth), but brought at the same time death to Emilia. Likewise, the Duchess's absence dominates Act V. Scene iii, "her voice is heard as an echo from the grave [Warning Antonio]. Like the voice of prophecy of Margaret in *Henry VI*, or of Cassandra, the Duchess here fulfils a typically female role in warning her husband of a catastrophe to come." (Callaghan 1989: 85-86, 94-95) In this sense, the Duchess is depicted as a saint whose soul can have a concrete effect on human lives. Callaghan explains other reasons behind women's silence in many plays (notably Desdemona's). She concludes that the "woman is constructed as a liar even when her utterance is without words." (Callaghan1989: 82) Besides the danger put on women's speaking, women's behavior was often misinterpreted. For instance, women with 'painting' on their face were considered to have demonic powers that might deprive men of their power. Bosola openly explains the connection between the female appearance and witchcraft to the old lady: "One would suspect it for a shop of witchcraft, to find in it the fat of serpents, spawn of snakes, Jews' spittle, and their young children's ordure." (II, i, 34-36) Women's beauty is seen as something demonic to justify the terrible punishment to come to them by men. "All witchcraft comes from carnal lust, which is in woman insatiable." (Callaghan1989: 144) Callaghan states that it is only the Duchess, among most of the other tragedies' protagonists (*King Lear, Othello, The Duchess of Malfi*, and *The White Devil*), who had the role of the virtuous woman and the woman ruler: "not only is the Duchess an exception to the rest of her family, she is also the paragon of flawless femininity. She conforms to the

feminine ideal of silence, but since she is so exceptional her speech is actually better than her silence. She is divine in appearance and in her chastity, and even her dreams place her heaven, unlike the mass of vain women with whom she is implicitly compared." (Callaghan1989: 150) Thus, the image of the saint- figure is one of the important characteristics of the Duchess.

The Duchess never abandons her Christian faith. And her spiritual welfare requires "the patience saint and martyr." (Forker 1986: 323) Her beliefs in the afterlife were so strong that it seemed as if she not only believed in it but even conceived it. Bosola, even though could not see it, was able to feel her powerful faith. He tells Ferdinand that the Duchess's silence "expresseth more than if she spake," (IV, i, 10) thus, this thing later will affect his conscience. On the other hand, the transition from faith to doubt and vice versa marks self-discovery in her psychology. "I'll go pray –no, I'll go curse;" (IV, i, 93) elsewhere she rebels: "The Church enjoins fasting: I'll starve myself to death." (IV, i, 75-76) As Sir Walter Raleigh wrote, it is "Death alone that can suddenly make man to know himself." (Qtd. in Forker 1986: 325) Forker believes that this "implies spiritual enlargement and growth, deepened perception, indeed a fundamental readjustment of values. Certainly it includes the readiness to face execution in an expanded frame of reference, for the Duchess no longer seeks merely to escape further suffering." (Forker 1986: 326) Thus, she is very firm looking into the eye of death: "tell my brothers that I perceive death, now I am well awake, best gift can give, or I can take." (IV, ii, 212-214) To quote Agrippa's words which are paralleled in the Duchess's act: "If ye desire to attain to this divine and true wisdom, not of the tree of the knowledge of good and ill, but the tree of life, cast aside the sciences of man. Now entering not into the schools of philosophers and sophisters, but into your own selves, ye shall know all things: for the knowledge of all things is compact in you." (Qtd. in Szonyi 2004: 125) In this respect, the Tree of Knowledge is the invention of the serpent, whereas the second (the Tree of Life) can be reached through spirituality. Since the human was created in the image of God, so every spiritual life is a quest for the recovery of that image within oneself.

In the end and after all the tragic things that happened to her, we see the Duchess is still keeping her promise to herself made at the beginning of the

play concerning those who will stand in her way towards her love to "make them [her] low foot-steps." (I, ii, 249) It is interesting that the Duchess is still seen as victorious even after her death as Ferdinand tells Bosola, "cover her face; mine eyes dazzle: she died young," (IV, ii, 249) which once again recalls Plato's Allegory of the Cave, when Plato mentioned those people of the cave who used to look at 'the shadows of artefacts.' Plato believed that after being released from the darkness when a man looks towards the real light, "it hurts him to do all this and he's too dazzled to be capable of making out the objects whose shadows he'd formerly been looking at," (Plato 1993: 515c) this will 'hurt his eyes.' That is, after the Duchess' death, Ferdinand realized the truth that he has killed the source of goodness, and that the things he blamed on his sister were in fact found inside of him. Thus, he was overwhelmed by an unnamed feeling that "she and I were twins and should I die this instant." (IV, ii, 255) Blaming her killer, Bosola, he says: "I bade thee, when I was distracted of my wits, go kill my dearest friend, and thou hast done 't." (IV, ii, 257-258) As Ranald states, "he is shocked at the sight of the virtue he has destroyed. Forced into the realization that he has killed an irreplaceable part of himself." (Ranald 1989: 55) It is after the murder of the Duchess that Ferdinand's madness (and illness) started to be demonstrating very clearly on his behavior.

The Duchess was destined for great achievement, which in fact she had achieved, and afterwards, she looked at the sun without a blinking eye; others could not even look at her eyes. After the Duchess's death, her two brothers could not find a plea which might justify their bad action; thus, their death was inevitable.

CHAPTER TWO

IMAGERY USED IN THE DEPICTION OF THE RENAISSANCE MIND

"Imagery, as a general term, covers the use of language to represent objects, actions, feelings, thoughts, ideas, states of mind and any sensory or extra-sensory experience." (Cuddon, 1984: 322) Images basically center on a visible thing which is preserved in the mind and are 'metaphors'. As the word metaphor "pass-beyond" suggests, the simpler image is used to convey a more complex set of concepts. In ancient times, Egyptians signified the Sun as the source of divine knowledge. In the Renaissance literature, the Sun is the giver of life. Shakespeare nicknamed it 'the eye of heaven.' However, being the opposite of light, darkness always represented ignorance and the unseen evil.

This chapter will firstly focus on the images associated with the moral struggle of Faustus, notably the question of good and evil knowledge. Here there are images of heaven and hell, of angels, demons and the like. Both plays have many images which can be explained in relative to religious allusions which likewise will be highlighted. Then the chapter will discuss the imagery in *The Duchess of Malfi*, above all, the imagery of light and darkness, notably the sun will be clarified. Webster's images, more than those of Marlowe, are drawn from the New Testament. The New Testament is a rich source of imagery of light and darkness, for example: Jesus Christ refers to Himself as the light. This remarkable imagery can be traced back from the scripture:

> that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God (John 3: 19-21)

Additionally, this also recalls Dante's journey in the *Divine Comedy* when he sets out of the dark woods to reach the light (God). Dante climbs the nine spheres of heaven, where finally at the last step with his 'wings open' he jumps to arrive to the 'Eternal Light'.

2.1. A battle between Good and Evil

In the very first two lines of *Doctor Faustus*, the playwright addresses first to the Muse and then introduces his hero and his background, comparing Faustus' aspiring soul to that of the mythological Icarus; "his waxen wings did mount above his reach and melting heavens conspired his overthrow." (Prologue, 21-22, A) The chorus introduces "the form of Faustus' fortunes, good or bad." (Prologue, 8, A) The opening chorus serves as a foreshadowing of Faustus's battle between spirituality and physical pleasures. Faustus's words "lines, circles, signs, letters, and characters– ay, these are those that Faustus most desire" (1, 1, 53-54, A) refer to the symbols of alchemy. The triangle which represents the divine (trinity) inside of which there is a circle that represents the universe (the perfect world) holding the square in its middle which represents the four elements from which earth and human were created. The human cannot function alone. His actions depend on the influence of the stars and planets, which likewise transmit the heavenly energy. (Szonyi 2004: 290-291) Accordingly, Faustus attempts to climb the Great Chain of Being to reach the divine.

Faustus's solitude is the result of high sensitivity; he invariably sees mystery in the corners of the unlimited universe. Mangan sees that "the ambiguity of *Doctor Faustus* is so double-edged because Marlowe's own mind is a divided one." (Mangan 1987: 103) Faustus's unstable behavior refers to a person who seems to live in heaven and hell at the same time, "sweet Faustus, think of heaven and heavenly things." (IV, i, 20, A) "No, Faustus, think of honor and wealth." (IV, i, 21, A) Sewall believes that the tragic hero who has these qualities of thought, achievement, sensibility, and belief:

> Suffers because he is more than usually sensitive to the "terrible disrelations" he sees about him and experiences in himself. He is more than usually aware of the mighty opposites in the universe and in man, of the gulf between desire and fulfillment, between what is and what should be. (Sewall 1969: 170-171)

Faustus' speaking to himself suggests "a sense of inner isolation" (Snow 1988: 66) It should also be mentioned that besides his desire "of power, of honour, of omnipotence," (I, i, 56, A) Faustus has also plans for others. He wants

to “make man live eternally, or being dead, raise them to life.” (I, i, 24-25) He remarks:

> I’ll have them wall all Germany with brass
> And make swift Rhine circle fair Wittenberg
> I’ll have them fill public schools with silk
> Wherewith the students shall be bravely clad” (I, i, 90-94, A)

Faustus seems to have an unlimited desire to create heaven on earth. In his many aspects, Faustus is very similar to the existential hero whose actions –of destroying himself for the sake of others –are sprung from an existential feeling of finding one’s own essence. Cheung wonders “why does Faustus work so hard to go to hell despite the dialectical working of despair? [He submits] that Faustus’s theological despair has its root in existential despair.” (Cheung 1988: 198) The existential hero feels himself responsible for redefining things not necessary for the sake of afterlife reward. On the contrary, the existential person sometimes even chooses to be damned alone for the sake of others, as seen in Sartre’s *The Flies*, when the main character of the play decides to sacrifice himself for the sake of setting his country free even though he knows he will be rejected by gods and by his own people. As Orestes leaves his motherland, the flies follow him towards his damnation. The resemblance of *The Flies*’ end is astonishingly similar to that of *Doctor Faustus*, especially when Faustus eventually chooses to face the consequences of what he has done alone:

> SECOND SCHOLAR: O, what shall we do to save Faustus?
> FAUSTUS: Talk not to me, but save yourselves and depart (IV, ii, 56-46, A)

In his work ‘Master of Self-Delusion’ Traister took the matter so far to prove that

> Faustus had announced his original magical aspirations—to circle Germany with a wall, to stop rivers, to rise tempests, to change the political shape of Europe—when he believed he would be in control, compelling spirits to do his will. *None of his ideas was specifically evil.* (Traister 1988: 88; my italics)

Faustus is not evil. It is life without further change which makes him feel as if he were in hell. His actions throughout the play indicate that he wants to create different possibilities for others.

Faustus, after mastering many types of science, is still not satisfied as he is "still but Faustus and a man." (I, i, 23, A) In fact, Faustus addresses himself in the second-person in his soliloquies throughout the whole play: "settle your studies, Faustus, and begin." (I, i, 1, A), "Jerome's Bible, Faustus, view it well." (I, i, 38, A) "Faustus, try thy brains to gain a deity." (I, i, 65, A) It leaves no doubt that he is expecting to be godlike. Faustus's self-speaking refers to 'the self determination by language.' In other words, it indicates the power of words which were further explained by many cabalists, including Pico. Greenblatt discusses the use of self-naming "as if the hero continues to exist only by constantly renewed acts of will… in the neutrality of time and space his constructive power must exist within the hero himself; if it should fail for an instant, he would fall into nothingness. Hence the hero's tragic compulsion to repeat his name." (Qtd. in Wilson 2000: 120) In doing so, the character gives identity to himself by himself and not by others. This is the doctrine of Plotinus, the first Neo-Platonist. He believed that, by using our intellect, we can connect with the divine intellect of the world. Some critics believe that "the idea of a heavenly limit on human longing to know the secrets of the heavens recalls the Prologue's observation that the heavens 'conspired' Faustus's overthrow." (Primary resource xii) Thus, it seems that Faustus believed that he is predestined by God to an eternal suffering, and thus a shift will be seen in his unlimited faith in knowledge to be a god himself. However, this desire will be manipulated and turned against him because "Evil in the play is palpable and flashy. It intrudes into Faustus's temporal world: the devils put on shows for Faustus, parade riches before him, permit him to raise the dead." (Traister 1988: 86)

The appearance of the Good Angel and the Bad Angel in *Dr Faustus* draws a poetic imagery of endless conflict of thinking in Faustus's mind. In a doubtful world where each thought fights against its rival, we can absolutely see the manifestation of evil. The Good and Bad Angels, who depicted in such concrete terms appearing to Faustus whenever he begins contemplating his mortal soul, undoubtedly stand for the symbolical fight in his conscience. On the one hand, the Good Angel endeavors to convince Faustus to return to God. On the other hand, the Bad Angel attempts to have Faustus remain loyal to the Devil. This continual circle of thinking provides no opportunity for Faustus to realize

that it may be marriage that he needs the most; yet he decides to cure himself through the unlimited power of knowledge. Faustus thinks that "hell *must* hold the keys to forbidden knowledge." (Kelsall 172-173) Faustus's search for the forbidden 'pleasant fruits' echoes Dee's goal of bringing back the 'Lost Eden' on earth. Faustus was faced with the fact that "the discovery of hell [was] a complete disappointment" (Kelsall 1981: 171) and that his realization of the fragility of this hell's pleasures, such as "sleep, eating, walking and disputing" (II, i, 139, B), are worthless as they are all ruled by time, reminding him later of the need of love to be "immortal with a kiss." (V, i, 95, B)

At some critical point, an old man appears warning Doctor Faustus. The old man was at pains to explain everything: "O gentle Faustus, leave this damned art, this magic will charm thy soul to hell," (V, i, 34-35, B) when the hope of repentance was almost at hand for Faustus to grasp it, whereupon "Mephistopheles gives him a dagger" (V, i, 54, B) pushing him to the suicidal edge, which demonstrates the idea that the devil Mephistopheles despises any kind of heaven or even any imaginable divine place in the heart of man. Faustus bitterly says: "leave me a while to ponder on my sins," (V, i, 61, B) however, he knows that there is no way "to shun the snares of death." (V, i, 67, B) His solitary life has led him to those negative deeds. To a person such as Faustus: "The pleasures are a hindrance to thought, and the more so the more one delights in them," (Aristotle 1998: 1152d) which could be the reason behind his solitary life. Even though the reason for not marrying is not quite clear, its consequence is clear in the sense that it hastened Faustus's downfall. That is, Faustus's downfall would have been much less difficult were he slightly more motivated by love. In the same dagger scene shortly after his soliloquy ("I do repent, and yet I do despair" (V, i, 60, B)), we see this suppressed desire coming to the surface:

> One thing, good servant, let me crave of thee
> To glut the longing of my heart's desire:
> That I may have unto my paramour
> That heavenly Helen, which I saw of late,
> Whose sweet embraces may extinguish clear
> Those thoughts that do dissuade me from my vow,
> And keep my vow to Lucifer

(V, i, 84-90, A)

Faustus does not believe in the existence of hell. On the other hand, Mephistopheles expresses considerable fear of hearing anything regarding heaven. Mephistopheles keeps Faustus at bay from the topic of heaven: "O Faustus, leave these frivolous demands, which strike a terror to my fainting soul." (I, iii, 82-83, A) Mephistopheles is possessed with the idea of convincing himself that hell is everywhere; he cannot hear a word about heaven: "This is hell, nor am I out of it." (I, iii, 77, A) This recalls the rebellious act of demons, known as 'Poena damni' that leads them to be eternally damned in darkness. They are deprived of God's light and bliss because they refused to look at God's light, as also explicitly explained in Dante's journey from darkness to light in *The Divine Comedy*. In addition, the diabolical equipment used in the play, along with the terror and excitement they bring, create an extraordinary imagery of hell. "Shag-haired devils with squibs in their mouths run roaring over the stage; drummers made thunder in the tiring-house; technicians made artificial lighting in the heavens." (Yates 1979: 136) It is more interesting when we remember the unexpected appearance of devils on the stage during the performance of *Doctor Faustus*, which famously was considered as a shock to the audience and the actors themselves. (Marcus 1997: 17)

2.2. Enslavement and Hierarchy

The reason behind Faustus's disrespect of the Roman Church is justified by Pope Adrian's indulgence and inappropriate life style. The scene of the Pope putting his feet on Bruno's back, who could also be the representative of Giordano Bruno, on Saint Peter's Day creates very negative imagery of the evil, the corruption of the hierarchical representation of the Catholic Church. In this sense, Marlowe strongly criticizes the old medieval way of stereotypical thinking, which was highly dominated by Christian theology. It is true that as the popular religious leader against magic, Saint Anthony, says "where the sign of the cross is made, magic loses its power and sorcery fails." (Qtd. in Kieckhefer 1989: 6) However, we see the other side of truth on the stage that whenever "the Pope crosses himself… Faustus [being unseen] gives the Pope a blow on the head." (V,

ii, 85-87, A) It urges the audience to condemn the Pope rather than Faustus, since Faustus is on the safe side.

Besides the dominating theme of knowledge in *Doctor Faustus*, there is another theme which is that of ambition reflected in the imagery of climbing higher in the social hierarchy to have power over others, which is an issue inseparable from the Renaissance theme of 'knowledge is power.' On the one hand, Faustus wants to enslave Mephistopheles and commands as follows: "to give me whatsoever I shall ask, to tell me whatsoever I demand, to slay mine enemies and aid my friends." (I, iii, 95-97, A) On the other hand, Mephistopheles is dominated by another hierarchical power: "I am a servant to great Lucifer and may not follow thee without his leave. No more than he commands must we perform" (I, iii, 40-42, A) though some critics believe that Marlowe seems to have been responsible for writing the tragic action, and on the other hand to have contributed to the comical part of the play. (Kelsall 1981: 159) Nevertheless, it is interesting (if the subplot part were written by Marlowe) that the dominating theme is also reflected in the subplot of Wagner and Robin. The former has a strong desire to dominate the clown "wilt thou serve me, and I'll make thee go like Qui mihi discipulus?" (I, iv, 13-14, A) "Villain, call me Master Wagner." (I, iv, 69, A) Some critics, who consider Faustus's behavior as negative, observe "a certain poetic justice in the inexorable harshness of Faustus's own punishment." (Tydeman 1984: 35) Faustus, whose "limbs, all torn asunder by the hands of death" (V, iii, 6-7 B) at the end of the play, echoes Faustus's bad behavior towards the horse-courser in the first scene of Act IV.

2.3. The Two Extremes: Excess and Deficiency

Aristotle had introduced a social law to protect the human from being enslaved by pleasures. In short, Aristotle's Golden Mean is the aiming at the middle between the two extremes, one of excess, and the other of deficiency. For example, to be courageous is a virtue, but to take the excess, it will be considered as recklessness; and if it is deficient, it will be considered cowardice. (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1115a41f.) In fact, knowledge was presented as a negative form of addiction in *Doctor Faustus*: "let me have one book more– and then I

have done" (II, ii, 172, A) at every moment of suspecting or repenting, Mephistopheles or Lucifer come along driving Faustus's thought away from the good angel: "take this book. Peruse it thoroughly, and thou shalt turn thyself into what shape thou wilt." (II, iii, 162-163, A) Faustus's desire has gone unfulfilled throughout the play, and like any indulgent person, he is unable to stop his addiction as a result of the absence of the divine law in his life. He is turning from a master to a slave of desire. It is not a coincidence that when we reach Act III, now Mephistopheles calls his so-called master "my Faustus." (III, i, 29, A) Faustus's later words assert this fact:

> O, would I had never seen Wittenberg, never
> read book! And what wonders I have done, all Germany can
> witness, yea, all the world, for which Faustus hath lost both
> Germany and the world, yea, heaven itself-heaven, the seat of
> God, the throne of the blessed, the kingdom of joy-and must
> Remain in hell for ever. Hell, O, hell for ever! Sweet friends, what
> Shall become of Faustus, being in hell for ever?
> (V, ii, 47-48, B)

Mangan suggests that Marlowe has presented Faustus in order to warn England of the 1590s of the danger of unleashing the energies without limitations and adds that "the ambiguity of the play is thus in part a result of Marlowe's own awareness that his subject-matter *was* dangerous" (Mangan 1987: 102) On another occasion, while making the pact with the Devil, Faustus tries to sign it with his blood. Meanwhile, his "blood congeals" (II, i, 63, A), which stands for hesitation behind his lack of determination. Elsewhere, he says "Had I as many souls as there be stars, I'd give them all for Mephistopheles" (I, iii, 103-104, A). This cognitive conflict implies that Faustus is collapsing between the two extremes.

It is obvious that the reference to Icarus is not only referring to Faustus's ambition of reaching the sky but also referring to emphasizing his desire to control nature's power, to 'raise the wind' and to "rend the clouds.' However, in doing so, Marlowe chooses the better of the two extremes, which is the extremely imprudent courage rather than the deficiency of cowardice. Even though Aristotle's 'analytics' (logic) was the first to be thrown away by Faustus

at the beginning of the play, the end of Faustus still proves that Aristotle's Golden Mean would have been a far better choice than the two extremes. Gatti remarks that

> Faustus's rejection of the traditional logic is thus a double act of deliberate cultural provocation: not only Aristotle's is swept aside but with him the modern logician acclaimed by the Protestant cultures as the great reformer of the intricacies of Peripatetic discourse, the inventor of a new and simplified method of reasoning in the search for truth. (Gatti 1989: 89)

At the end of the play, Faustus thinks he still has Icarus's wings: "I'll *leap up* to my God! Who pulls me down?" (V, ii, 69-70, A, my italics) This recalls Dante's last phase (which is mentioned at the beginning of this chapter) of the ladder of heaven where the last stair is missed; thus, one must make a leap into the light (God). On the other hand, it also reminds us of the famous cycle play in medieval drama *The Fall of Lucifer.* So Faustus's inner conflict between good and evil is clear from the very beginning to the end of the play.

2.4. Allusions in *Doctor Faustus*

Allusion is a brief and indirect reference to a place, person, thing or something of literary or political significance. It does not describe in full detail the mentioned person or thing. It is only a passing comment made by the writer, who expects the reader/listener to possess the necessary background knowledge in order to create images in the mind of the listener/reader.

Allusions are commonly found in the language used by Faustus because he is a very learned man who shows his knowledge of books. When we place these allusions into robust categories, we may come to a better understanding of their use. The first category can come under the name of scientific (or philosophical) allusion, which includes Aristotle (I, i, 5-6, A), Galen (I, i, 13, A), Roger Bacon (I, i, 147, A), and so on. The second category pertains to those famous powerful figures in history, such as Alexander the Great (II, iii, 25, A), Frederick, Emperor of Germany (III, i, 136, A), the Colossus of Rhodes (IV, vi, 95, A), Sigismund, Holy Roman Emperor (III, i, 146, A), Alessandro

Farnese, Prince of Parma (I, i, 91, A), and so on. As for the third allusion, the category is a mythological one which includes Icarus (Prologue, 21, A), Achilles (V, i, 103, A), Helen of Troy (V, i, 12, A), Olympus (III, Chorus, A), Paris (II, iii, 25, A), and so on. The fourth category is biblical and includes John (I, i, 41-42, A), Romans (I, i, 39, A), Saba (Queen of Sheba) (II, i, 155, A), and so on. The point to be made here is that according to these four categories, it can be said that Marlowe has deliberately used the scientific allusion (the first category) mixed with the powerful figure (mentioned in the second category) to found a new source of glory and power 'to conquer and put a fence on [his] country'. Hilary Ghatti believes that the play (of *Doctor Faustus)* "in a time of violent religious and civil conflict, turns deliberately to magic in its traditional, forbidden, medieval form, but through that magic he [Faustus] searches for a new kind of knowledge of the universe, making his bid, in the face of the Devil, and the armies of hell, for the advancement of human learning about natural things." (Qtd. in Braunmuller and Hattaway 1990: 74) Marlowe suggests that the power of knowledge is much stronger than that of physical martial power, for the former power can achieve myths (classified as category three), the thing which can never be done through religion (classified as category four).

Both Mephistopheles' disrespectful attitude to the ignorant "damned slaves" (III, ii, 33, A) and his inability to hurt the old man for "his faith is great [he] cannot touch his soul" (V, i, 88, A) lead us straight to the two major powers that are actually out of Mephistopheles' domain, namely faith and knowledge (with its Golden Mean without exaggeration, otherwise, as we have seen with Faustus, it turned against him). Those are the only two powers that can stand in the face of evil, so it becomes clear that occult knowledge, for Marlowe, in the Elizabethan context, replaces the corrupted religion of the medieval era. It is no coincidence that each of the physical powers represented by Alexander the Great, and the sexual desire or the marital life represented by Helen of Troy are both muted, that is, neither of them speaks. Because Faustus knows that neither physical power (Alexander) nor physical pleasure (Helen) are enough in creating the new power that he has been trying to establish. Hunter is also of the opinion that Faustus's anti-papal activities stem from political motives, (Hunter 1969:

187) but as has been explained, by Mephistopheles' help pushing him toward the extreme, Faustus has lost that power by becoming merely a slave of pleasure.

2.5. Imagery in *The Duchess of Malfi*

The Duchess of Malfi opens with a foreshadowing of a battle between good and evil on the horizon, which is reflected in Antonio's words to his friend, Delio, describing the manifestation of evil as "Some cursed example poison't near the head, death and diseases through the whole land spread," (I, i, 14-15) which explains the process of contagious evil in its hierarchical form. On the same occasion, when Antonio hears about the murder committed by Bosola, which led him to spend "seven years in the gallies," (I, i, 66) he remarks that Bosola has little goodness in his heart. However, it is the Cardinal who will "poison all his goodness." (I, i, 74) Bosola proved later that he had little goodness in his heart when he said that the gold that he would be given for being a spy in the Duchess's house would make him "an impudent traitor, and should [he] take these, they'd take [him] to hell." (I, ii, 174-175) However, later we see Bosola also turning into a totally evil creature to the Aragonian brothers themselves. The Duchess's brothers without any doubt are responsible for Bosola's bad behavior, for to a person such as the Cardinal, poisoning others is an easy job, and from the perspective that 'evil attracts evil,' in the opening scene when Ferdinand tells the Cardinal to hire Antonio as a spy, the latter angrily and confidently answers "his nature is too honest for such business." (I, ii, 140) He preferred Bosola. His understanding of men's nature demonstrates a second sight of knowing others. All the same, it is Bosola's bad action that leads the brothers to be poisoned by their own villainous teachings by the end of the play. Travis Bogard notices that "the ultimate of Webster's world is not the death of any individual but the presence of evil and decay which drag all mankind to death," (Qtd. in Ribner 1962: 130) and among these decayed characters, the whiteness and the purity of the Duchess will be more easily distinguished.

It is interesting that words such as "world," "darkness" and "sun" are mentioned many times to create an imagery of a battle between light and darkness. At the same time, it draws a picture of the possibility of a new enlightened world. Ribner states that "the Duchess in her heroic opposition to her

brothers is the symbol of life, as they are the symbol of death, and the play maintains a tension between the opposing forces of life and death, with the values of life at last triumphant." (Ribner 1962: 136) As for Bosola, he is a dangerous and opaque character whose behavior is unexpected. His speedy changes in mood make it difficult for him to be put into any category. He is "a character whom critics have found particularly difficult in terms of human psychology." (Irving 1987: 131) However, after committing the crime ordered by Ferdinand, the latter refuses to reward him. Ferdinand tells Bosola that he "will give [him] a pardon for this murder." (IV, ii, 283) That is, he wants Bosola to commit a crime for the sake of the crime and not for the sake of the reward. Burckhardt remarks that "[i]n this country [Italy], finally where individuality of every sort attained its highest development, we find instances of that ideal and absolute wickedness which delights in crimes for their own sake, and not as [a] means to an end, or at any rate as means to ends for which our psychology has no measure." (Burckhardt 1995: 295) Additionally, Ferdinand is not the only devilish character who likes others to do evil for evil's sake, as the play has already opened with this very idea when Bosola complains about his old crime ordered by the Cardinal, which also went unpaid and says: "miserable age, where only the reward of doing well, is the doing of it" (I, i, 31-32). The situation of Bosola 'fell into the gallies' for the Cardinal's service appears enjoyable for the Cardinal to have another fellow in the same prison of hell. When Ferdinand leaves him, he openly states that "some fellows, they say, are possessed with the devil but this great fellow were able to possess the greatest devil, and make him worse." (I, i, 44-46) However, on the edge of collapsing, Bosola angrily tells Ferdinand:

> sir I serv'd your tyranny, and rather strove
> to satisfy yourself, than all the world:
> and though I loath'd the evil, yet I lov'd
> you that did counsel it: and rather sought
> to appear a true servant, than an honest man (IV, ii, 317-321)

Ferdinand's law of dealing with others has been set by himself on the hierarchical basis and others should behave according to his rules and this also includes courtiers, and when one of his courtiers laughs, Ferdinand becomes angry so he reproaches him saying: "why do you laugh? Methinks, you that are courtiers

should be my touchwood, take fire when I give fire; that is, laugh but when I laugh" (I, ii, 40-42) In addition, the imagery of fire seems to control his personality on more than one occasion, Ferdinand makes a reference to the fire, which draws our attention toward the temperament of a choleric person. In fact, the main obstacle of the brothers' alleged disapproval is based on class. The dual meaning of the poniard-gesture suggests a strict class law with possible violent consequences if it was crossed. The Duchess puts much emphasis on the action of the human being rather than his class, as she could differentiate the devilish people from the good people, which is, in her view, not related to the class or to the family. For instance, she "and Ferdinand are biological twins while he and the Cardinal are morally allied-twins." (Forker 1986: 304)

Ferdinand, in biblical terms, can be symbolically the opposite of God, namely the Devil, if we compare his words: "I will only study to seem the thing I am not." (II, v, 63-64) which contradicts God's words to Moses: "I am that I am." (Exodus 3: 14) which likewise recalls Iago's similar words in *Othello*: "I am not what I am." (*Othello* 1, 1, 65) On hearing the news about the Duchess's new born child from Antonio, Ferdinand goes out of his mind, using auditory, tactile and visual imagery that create a terrible black picture of an inquisition (anti-Renaissance) in the spectator's mind:

I would have their bodies
Burnt in a coal-pit with the ventage stopped,
That their cursed smoke might not ascend to heaven;
Or dip the sheets they lie in in pitch or sulphur,
Wrap them in 't and then light them like a match;
Or else to-boil their bastard to a cullis,
And give 't his lecherous father to renew
The sin of his back (II, v, 67-73)

He goes into the very details of the way he wants to make the punishment which demonstrates more than just a phase of anger rather than a sadistic desire of murder. Richard Allen Cave remarks on this occasion that "the extravagant, obsessive sadism is the passion of a man who dare not admit to his true, incestuous desires." (Cave 1988: 19)

There is no doubt that the marriage represents an ultimate battle against the dark power of her brothers. The Duchess wants to face the danger in order to assert and defend her individual freedom. To parallel the conventional wedding style of her time in which, as explained in *The First and Second Prayer Book*, the couple must declare their intention in front of an audience (252) as she wants her action to be legal and admitted. Thus, she orders Cariola to "place [herself] behind the arras where [she] may['st] overhear." (I, ii, 262-263) By doing so, the Duchess makes her actions divinely authorized. It is interesting that the Duchess started her battle with the price of her rebellion already in her mind,

> Duchess: Oh, you are an upright treasurer: but you mistook;
> For when I said I meant to make inquiry
> What's laid up for tomorrow, I did mean
> What's laid up yonder foe me.
> Antonio: Where?
> Duchess: In heaven. I am making my will. (I, ii, 278-283)

She is well aware of the dangerous consequences of her action yet she will do what is true for herself. Antonio seems to be the base for her battle. He also believes that marriage can be "heaven, or hell, there's no third place in't." (I, ii, 300-301) With her diabolic brothers' plan to bring hell on earth, she will try to create her personal heaven, and as for her brothers they are "to be pitied, and not fear'd." (I, ii, 371) That motif becomes clear when we reach the end of Act 1 when the Duchess confesses her most important desire of the marriage: "we'll only lie, and talk together, and plot't appease my humorous kindred/ lay naked sword between us, keep us chaste." (I, ii, 396-399) Of course, such rebellious behavior of a powerful minded woman can never be understood by norms, but such behavior is justified by the Duchess, who has noticed many things not yet seen by others. Here, the scene ends with Cariola lost in amazement saying "whether the spirit of greatness, or of woman reign most in her [the Duchess], I know not; but it shews a fearful madness: I owe her much of pity." (I, ii, 402-404) In fact, here we can use the words of Hamlet's uncle in a general framework, "Madness in great ones must not unwatched go" (*Hamlet*, III, i, 90) because such a person's action is not conventional. Thus, it leads to what norms think to be madness. That is, madness is an equivalent to smartness. Therefore, it is not

surprising that the Duchess is called mad by her maid, and close attention should be also paid to Cariola's differentiation between 'spirit of greatness' and 'of woman.' It sounds as if a woman cannot have a spirit of greatness. This highlights the reason for Webster to create such a woman with such a personality who separated herself from the stereotypical flock to take the possibility of being a martyr of what she believes. That is to say, Webster has created the revolutionary Duchess in order to found an idol for other women in his time, which is a woman who is much stronger than the restrictions put in place by the dominating masculine power. Abrams points out:

> the Duchess, one of the freest and most positive women in all English drama. In this respect, [Webster] quite reversed the attitude of his sources. Most of them condemn the Duchess as headstrong and libidinous. Webster boldly asserts her right to choose a husband without regard to her family or the codes of her social class. (Abrams, ed. *Norton Anthology* 1241)

The Duchess proved her power of rebellion in promulgating a new generation of women when she herself proposed to Antonio putting all the social habits, her brother's warning, and the class issue, against the wall. After hearing the Duchess's speech, Antonio expressed his shock saying "these words should be mine." (I, ii, 375) In other words, the Duchess has borrowed the man's role to achieve what he couldn't do by himself. Thus, it is a shifting of gender as much as an invitation to a societal transformation.

In Act 2, we see that the Duchess is already living with Antonio in her secret heaven where she is pregnant, which is a thing unnoticed but disturbs Bosola, who behaves just like the serpent of the Bible that seduced Eve in order to remove Adam from heaven. He, therefore, offers her "apricocks" and she instantly likes them. However, later she complains about how they make her 'sick.' On another occasion when the battle wages on, we see that Antonio blames it all on the "impudent snake," (II, iii, 38) so he says to Bosola: "you gave the Duchess apricocks." (II, iii, 30) However, in the same scene, heaven was driven away by the approaching hell because Antonio was forced to create a false story to hide the new born child, so he tells everyone: "we have lost much plate you know; and but this evening jewels, to the value of four thousands ducats, are

missing in the Duchess's cabinet." (II, ii, 43-45) In fact, the Duchess's behavior in leading such a secret life seems to follow the same pattern of Socrates, who in his endeavors to explain the reason behind such a life: "anyone who truly fights for what is just, if he is going to survive for even a short time, must act in a private capacity rather than a public one." (*Defence of Socrates* 1997: 32a) Thus, here we see the goodness of the Duchess being forced to be hidden. Forker believes that Webster "needed also to emphasize the private nature of a public woman, to show the personal charm and individuality that would not only explain but make emotionally acceptable the unusual relationship with her lover." (Forker 1986: 319) It seems that Webster wants to focus on what is 'the true being' and what is 'the false seeming' at the end of the play, when Bosola himself is hidden behind the curtain sneaking on the Cardinal. Bosola could bring hell to the Duchess's mansion as he likes to scare others. Meeting Antonio outside in the night time, he wickedly asks: "methinks 'tis very cold, and yet you sweat you look wildly;" (II, iii, 19) thus, Bosola is happy by awakening hell within the hearts of others.

The Duchess is ahead of her time. By her own choice, she creates a happy house with children in her secret marriage with Antonio, and when Bosola wants to murder her, she is not frightened. She has the courage to die like a man. She displays masculine courage as does Shakespeare's Cleopatra in her strength to confront death. It is strange that the play's heroine dies in the fourth act where we still have another full act without her. In fact, it is unquestionable evidence that Act 5 was structured by Webster to highlight the theme of hell on earth and poetic justice because we should not limit ourselves to only studying the action of the Duchess to prove that point because the other characters are inseparably connected to the theme of hell on earth. Luckyj remarks on that occasion:

> It is not until act V of *The Duchess of Malfi* that the death of the Duchess can be considered tragic. By shifting the focus from the victim to her destroyer, Webster draws out attention away from the fact of death to the context of death. With the humanization of Bosola, the Cardinal, and Ferdinand, the world of the play's evil is suddenly simply frail humanity, and the double vision of tragedy becomes possible. (Luckyj 1989: 101)

In this last act, hell becomes clear for all other characters. The Cardinal, who shouts for help, is stabbed by his own brother who thought he was in the battle field. As Forker concludes that "both brothers end as cyphers of their own fashioning, and Webster reinforces the irony of self-destruction by having the Cardinal cry out for assistance." (Forker 1986: 317) However, when Malateste, Pescara, Roderigo and Grisolan were shocked at their entrance by the terrible massacre, the Cardinal for the first time spoke the truth: "look to my brother; he gave us these large wounds." (V, v, 85-86) In other words, he is putting all the blame of that bloody event on his diabolic brother because the Duchess no longer exists to be blamed for their own misdeeds. That is, they used to direct their anger, which had been caused by their own immoral life, toward the Duchess. However, when she died, there was no lamb to suffer for their own bad actions, and therefore no other way but to face their selves and eventually to perish as a result.

However, it can be concluded that in the war between the good and the evil, the Duchess has stopped Ferdinand's plan of manifesting hell on earth. In spite of this, she comes to terms with the destruction of her heaven-like marriage to Antonio. Thus, she eventually attempts to take herself to heaven: "pull, and pull strongly, for your able strength must pull down heaven upon me" (IV, ii, 219-220) while similarly seeing his brother as "the devil." (V, v, 50) Ferdinand, in the end decided to go to hell after losing his plan of making one down here on earth, which is a very persuasive end because the inexplicable clash of light and darkness is supposed to be eternal.

2.6. Allusions in *The Duchess of Malfi*

The Duchess of Malfi is also full of allusions that color the language of the play with black and white references: "Webster fills his plays with allusions to and quotations from other writers, thereby placing his own tragedies in a larger world." (Pearson 1980: 72) We can chronologically review those allusions: Laban's sheep (I, ii, 208) Saint Winifred (I, ii, 296) Alexander and Lodowick (I, ii, 398) King Pepin (II, i, 94) Duchess of Florance (II, i, 106) Daphne, Syrinx, Anaxarete (III, ii, 23-25) Paris of Homer (III, ii, 34) Pluto the

god of riches, Jupiter (III, ii, 237-238) Hercules, Achilles, Hector, (III, iii, 39) and Caesar and Pompey (V, v, 55). Those allusions, as obviously seen, are mostly related to religion, battles and antiquity (mostly related to Italy), implicitly referring to fighting in life for spiritual beliefs. Webster has strengthened his message of the play by using imagery of a woman supplied with faith in her battle for her values.

To Webster's mind (but also generally in the English Renaissance drama) Italy is both an exciting and innovative cultural centre, but also violent and threatening. And even though Webster had presented his play for English audience still he wanted to assert the Italian Renaissance dimension of his play. However, any reader of Burckhardt's *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* would be shocked by the striking resemblance between Renaissance Italy and Elizabethan England as seen in the references to it that Webster did not change. There are many parallels; for instance, "strangled people" (29) "banishment/spies" (35) "daggers" (41) "pantomime" (261) "using masks" (269) the habits of "poisoned letter" (294) "figures of wax or bronze, which doubtless represented the lover" (349) "The secret use of weapons, especially of the dagger, in the service of powerful individuals, was habitual in Milan, Naples, and other cities" (295) Therefore, it is clear that Webster deliberately kept those references in order to assert the theme of the Italian Renaissance. However, we have seen how after the death of the Duchess, she became not unlike a saint whose soul seems to haunt the bad people leading them to their own self destruction, and also warns her husband of his coming death, which is likewise one of the characteristics of saints in Renaissance Italy wherein "in time of great danger the saints were heard to sigh at night along the street of the city." (Burckhardt 1995: 317)

2.7. Deformed Images

Webster has presented Ferdinand not only as a bad character but also as a mentally-deranged villain who often uses smart techniques to acquire what he wants. This deceptive nature was given to Ferdinand in order to give the Duchess an opportunity to prove her intelligence against him, because if

Ferdinand's character were weak, accordingly the challenge for the Duchess would be likewise inconsiderable. Ferdinand never gives but takes, never makes but destroys. In this sense, he is a destroyer of goodness. On the other hand, the Cardinal is always busy with the Church's issues, and it is clear that most events occur in Italy because "these wicked spirits do lurk in shrines, in roods, in images, and first of all pervert the priest," (Calfhill 1846: 317) which was well known by both Elizabethan and Jacobean audiences.

However, Ferdinand always means more than he says. His tricky nature is shown in the plot: "you told me you had got, within these days, a false key into her bed-chamber." (III, i, 79-81) Here, Ferdinand metaphorically asks for the key to his sister's heart. However, he enters her room in the dark. Forker claims that Ferdinand's sudden appearance in the Duchess's chamber was based on witchcraft: "throughout the drama, Ferdinand associates sexuality with witchcraft." (Forker 1986: 307) All the same, when he enters her room, which is a heaven for her and for Antonio, she thinks that it is Antonio who is coming to the room. The Duchess murmurs, "I enter'd you into my heart before you would vouchsafe to call for the keys." (III, ii, 59-60) Ironically, what she says can perfectly fulfill Ferdinand's needs, which was actually looking for the means by which he could enter her heart. Ferdinand's conversation with the Duchess in the dark without being seen is a unique technique. Pearson further explains: "Sight divorced from sound, implies Ferdinand's inability to see the world as it is, and to fit its clashing elements into a coherent whole." (Pearson 1980: 68) Thus, Ferdinand refuses to allow her to be happy in her heaven, as he already promised his brother that he will "root up her goodly forests." (II, v, 19) He leaves his poniard as a symbolic way of poisoning their happiness. It is interesting that the sword mentioned by the Duchess at the beginning of the play, (Look at page 31) which represents braveness and righteousness, has been replaced by Ferdinand's poniard, which represents hierarchy, cowardice, secrecy and plotting as it was used by Brutus and others to assassinate Caesar in *Julius Caesar*. Above all, and from the psychoanalytical point of view, the poniard has a sexual connotation which also can be referred to Ferdinand's unconscious incestuous desire for his twin sister. However, the use of symbols with deformed meaning is repeated throughout the play. For example, the ring which is once used in Shakespeare's

The Merchant of Venice as a love token to connote the chaste relationship between Portia and Bassanio (*The Merchant of Venice*, II, iii, 170-185), is used by Ferdinand as a deformed symbol expressing his incestuous sexual desire for his sister: "I will leave this ring with you for a love token." (IV, i, 48) Elsewhere, the Bible, which is a resort of salvation, is used in murdering Julia. Forker has noticed a remarkably similar technique regarding the Cardinal, whose rite [in the pantomime scene] was intended as he

> must stress the disjunction between the poignant feelings of individuals and the harsh impersonality of officialdom as embodied in municipal pageantry. Public metamorphosis from priest to a soldier institutionalizes the subversion of human and religious values in the play. As the sword replaces the pectoral cross and the accouterments of bellicosity those of pastoral concern, so mercy yields to retribution and love to death. (Forker 1986: 316)

This deliberate use of symbols with an opposite meaning is an attempt to emphasize the inherent evil in the play's devilish characters, who behave in a way opposite to what is normal for ordinary human beings.

2.8. Ferdinand's Villainy

It is clear that Ferdinand "is not satisfied with hurting, or even killing the lovers. He must consume them utterly, body and soul." (Goldberg 1987: 87) Thus, he wants to take his sister's life and also her glory, as he wants the Duchess to be just as bad as him, which is very clear in his words where he says that he wants to "root up her goodly forests, [and] blast her meads, and lay her general territory as waste as she hath done her honors." (II, v, 19-21) His extreme hatred towards virtue is clearly seen in his personifying it and addressing it "virtue, where art thou hid? What hideous thing is it doth eclipse thee?... Or is it true thou art but a bare name and no essential thing?" (III, ii, 70-71; 73-74) His troubled mind wants to provoke virtue itself. To kill his sister is not enough, but she should commit suicide in order to lose virtue here and also in the afterlife. He has no time even to see her husband: "let not the sun shine on him, till he's dead." (III, ii, 101-102) His mad obsession with darkness forces him to prefer others to lead the same darkened life.

The devilish Ferdinand, whose psychology always despises the light, says while he was talking to the Duchess in the darkness: “this darkness suits you well.” (IV, i, 31) Here, he insists on the topic of bringing hell on earth as he wants “to bring her to despair,” (IV, i, 116) which is an evil choice representing the denial of divine mercy. However, the Duchess attempts to defend herself: “I pray, sir, hear me: I am married… not to your liking: but for that, alas your shears do come untimely now to clip the bird’s wings that’s already flown!” (III, ii, 79; 81-83) In fact, the Duchess’s words here have a two-level form of allegory, that is to say, it has a surface narrative that conveys a hidden meaning. In other words, she is saying that she is ‘married’ and is in a holy ‘ceremonial’ state of mind protecting her from evil, which just like an angel she is already flying to her heaven. Thus, she will never allow to any diabolical power to stop her plan. After this speech, Ferdinand leaves her and returns home.

When Bosola explains the Duchess’s act of marriage on the ground that someone has used some sorcery “to make her dote on some desertless fellow,” (III, i, 65) Ferdinand mocks at him because he cannot believe that “there’s power in potions, or in charms, to make us love whether we will or no?” (III, i, 67-68) Thus, according to Ferdinand’s beliefs, there is no power that can manipulate our feeling or action. If there is any supernatural power, then it is that of witchcraft which can only be used in destroying love rather than in creating love. In other words, he believes in the Machiavellian strategies in terms of his free choice of doing evil and plotting against his sister even though his incestuous love for his twin sister is unconscious. He believes that people can choose their own fate rather than submit to the power of God, the stars and destiny. That is to say, he is an unbeliever who doesn’t want to confess the power of goodness, so he thinks that it is cleverer to act in villainy. Thus, he thinks that people who act according to fate are stupid and convinces himself that man should create his own fate in accordance with his individual ambitions and his self-interest no matter how immoral the methods he will commit. This immoral Machiavellian approach which was first used on stage by Marlowe is based on a typical Elizabethan notion which was actually further developed by Shakespeare, and underlines the relationship between one’s goal and one’s freedom in using the Machiavellian justifications in reaching his aims.

This implicitly refers to Lucifer and his free choice of misleading people from God, for among the angels, he was the only one who had that power to affect others. Likewise, Ferdinand's rationalism echoes Edmund in *King Lear*, who also stands against superstition but simultaneously puts his faith in playfulness: "This is the excellent foppery of the world, that when we are sick in fortune, often the surfeits of our own behavior, we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and stars; as if we were villains by necessity." (*King Lear*, I, ii, 115-119) Thus, the relationship between the planets and man's fate, which is undoubtedly a Renaissance notion, is denied by each of Ferdinand and Edmund. In the famous Act 4 Scene 1, when Bosola informs Ferdinand that the Duchess's "behavior [is] so noble," (IV, i, 5) Ferdinand thinks that "her melancholy seems to be fortified with a strange disdain." (IV, i, 11-12) He is angry because he wants her to lose her faith, so he casts a "curse upon her." (IV, i, 15) He employs every means to destroy her faith.

The famous medieval manuscript of black magic, entitled *Munich handbook*, mentions that "the magician needs wax images of the people he wishes to afflict, or rings, swords, and other objects. In some cases the handbook requires that he sacrifice a hoopoe to the evil spirits, or burn certain herbs so that the smoke can serve as a magical fumigation." (Qtd. in Kieckhefer 1989: 6) Ferdinand seems to act with the book of *Munich handbook* in hand when he gives his sister a dead hand with a ring and also sends the waxen alleged corpuses of Antonio and the children to the Duchess's chamber when she cries (not knowing that they are merely figures of wax): "it wastes me more than were't my pictures, fashioned out of wax, stuck with a magical needle, and then buried in some foul dunghill." (IV, i, 63-66). However, those fake figures will later become real when they (Antonio and his children) will actually be murdered. It is also not surprising that the Cardinal poisons the Bible (as mentioned earlier) because sorcerers often use the Church's holy objects and rituals for their transgressions. Searching for supernatural power wherever it might be found, "they will not scruple to bend holy things to their purposes." (Kieckhefer 1989: 82)

When Ferdinand sends madmen to the Duchess's lodging in order to drive her mad, she tells her maid, Cariola, that it is still better than silence. She contently says that just like the nightingale, she will "never live long in cages."

(IV, ii, 14) Still in the last moments before she was strangled, she forgives everybody. She knows that her brothers have caused her to lose everything, but she will never let them take her faith too. The manner in which she says "I am Duchess of Malfi still" (IV, ii, 132) is a reminder to herself and to her murderer that if they change her beliefs, she will lose. Socrates' characteristic of a good human being can dramatically be seen in the Duchess's behavior: "fix your mind upon this single truth: nothing can harm a good man, either in life or in death; nor are his fortunes neglected by the gods" (*Defence of Socrates* 1997: 41c-41d) Socrates believed that "it is out of the question for a better man to be harmed by his inferior." (*Defence of Socrates* 1997: 29c-29d) Moreover, those who hurt a good person will later be punished by the consequences of their own misdeeds; that is to say, they will be punished by truth. Ferdinand's project of destroying the public and private life of the Duchess will turn later into his madness, which likewise will lead to the destruction of the two brothers. However, "when [the Duchess] appears three times after her apparent death it seems as if she and the life force which she represents are proof against death." (Pearson 1980: 91) The Duchess succeeds in keeping her faith until her last breath.

Furthermore, the Duchess's death is not enough. According to Ferdinand, the children of the Duchess are also dangerous, because "the death of young wolves is never to be pitied." (IV, ii, 247) He wants to root up any future hope of goodness. Bosola consoles the Duchess by stating "you must live." (IV, i, 69) In other words, she must suffer. The Duchess replies "That's the greatest torture souls feel in hell, In hell that they must live, and cannot die." (IV, i, 70-71) Bosola asks her, "doth not death fright you?" (IV, ii, 199) The Duchess calmly answers, "who would be afraid on't, knowing to meet such excellent company in th' other world?" (IV, ii, 200-201), which is another reference to the platonic notion of virtue depicting Socrates, who expresses his longing for death: "What would any of you not give to share the company of Orpheus and Musaeus, of Hesiod and Homer? I say 'you' since I personally would be willing to die many times over, if those tales are true." (*Defence of Socrates* 1997: 41a) This undoubtedly underlines the influential Platonic ideas on Webster, and likewise, on his *Duchess*.

The curtain is drawn to show hell on earth when we know that Ferdinand suffers from lycanthropia, the magical transformation of a person into the form of a wolf. Ferdinand says, “He was a wolf, only the difference was, a wolf’s skin was hairy on the outside, his on the inside.” (V, ii, 16-18) In other words, the real representation of evil was on hold for the angel to die and ‘the full moon’ to appear, then the mask was thrown away to demonstrate the concealed devilish character. Ferdinand could not accept the fact that he can never stop goodness growing by killing his sister, and he feels haunted by his own shadow. He tells Malateste to “stay it; let it not haunt me,” (V, ii, 34) but the latter answers, “impossible, if you move, and the sun shine.” (V, ii, 35) Simply with the sun shining, Ferdinand’s devilish deeds will appear in a form of a shadow which is haunting him. It is clear that Ferdinand accepts his inability to bring a complete triumph of evil, very shortly after that he confesses, “when I go to hell, I mean to carry a bribe.” (V, ii, 39) Here is the first time we see Ferdinand believing that hell is what is waiting for him, so he implicitly comes to terms with accepting his failure as “his failure to create anything but evil implies the failure of law in a chaotic world.” (Goldberg 1987: 95)

The important event of Ferdinand’s madness can be recognized as poetic justice that is used in the play. The madness that Ferdinand tried to impose upon his sister returned back to him after the Duchess’s death: “his employment of madmen symbolizes his own approaching madness.” (Calderwood 1962: 115) Earlier, Ferdinand said that the wolf will find the Duchess’s grave ‘and scrape it up.’ Thus, if the dead body is not safe from the wolf, likewise the wolf also is not safe from the soul of the dead. In the same sense, Bosola, who once haunted the Duchess, now feels haunted: “The weakest arm is strong enough that strikes with the sword of justice still methinks the Duchess haunts me. There, there, ’tis nothing but my melancholy.” (V, ii, 334-338) That is, at the end of the play, everyone is repaid according to what they have done. The elder son standing among the dead murderers represents a new angel-like figure who will later overcome the darkness. Ribner is of the opinion that the end of the play shows that “Webster’s final statement is that life may have nobility in spite of all. The Duchess, not her brothers, stands for ordinary humanity, love and the continuity of life through children.” (Ribner 1962: 138)

In fact, the sun imagery has been strongly used many times to emphasize this issue. On hearing of his sister's so called pilgrimage which she used as a pretext to run away, the Cardinal states: "doth she make religion her riding hood, to keep her from the sun and tempest?" (III, iii, 55-56) Here, he proves that he also recognizes the Duchess's power of goodness, but he could not understand how such a virtuous Duchess can lie. His anger implicitly refers to his concrete conviction that the mask of religion should only be worn by him. Nevertheless, she had already told Antonio about Tasso and his "noble lie." (III, ii, 178) Pearson states that the Duchess is "trapped in an ambiguous world, forced to assume 'masks and curtains' when her own impulses would prefer frank and open demonstrations of feeling" (Pearson 1980: 64) because she knows that in order to fight against evil, she has to use her virtue to the fullest. In his *Between Worlds*, Goldberg remarks that:

> The Duchess' emotional freedom constitutes an act of rebellion against the ideology of her class which threatens to disrupt its power—by demolishing the fiction of honour upon which it bases its claim to superiority, by undermining the Machiavellian techniques which have served it so well, and by replacing its members with a multitude of deserving Antonio. In other words, the Duchess' commitment to nature involves an endorsement of the principle that all people are equal in nature. In the strict hierarchical world of *The Duchess of Malfi*, such a commitment cannot go unpunished. (Goldberg 1987: 84)

Thus, what can be honorable for the Duchess could be dishonorable for others since she behaves in accordance to her natural inner voice, whereas others behave in accordance to their evil needs. Her admiration of 'the birds, that livei'th field' explains her choice. However, the light imagery is very dominating in the play. When Ferdinand breaks down, the doctor assures everybody that he has brought him "salamander's skin, to keep [him] from sun-burning" (V, ii, 59-60) to a person such as Ferdinand, who likes to be in darkness, the sun (the truth) burns so hard. It can be concluded that the final meaning of the over-dominating imagery of darkness and light is the search for God.

CHAPTER THREE

MACHIAVELLIAN CONCEPTS IN THE TWO PLAYS

Cornwall notices that Webster "was like Marlowe with this difference – that as Marlowe's imagination was soaring, so, on the other hand, was his penetrating and profound. The one rose to the stars, the other plunged to the centre; equally distant from the bare commonplace of the earth, they sought for thoughts and images in clouds and depths, and arrived, by different means, to the same great end." (Cornwall 1823: 66) That is, Marlowe's main concern is to present characters with high ambitions whereas Webster's fundamental theme is to depict the society as it is. This chapter focuses on the Machiavellian controversial notion of power which is undoubtedly at the center of these two plays. Likewise, this chapter will demonstrate how Machiavelli's rebellious ideas were of interest to Marlowe, and presented in the character of Mephistopheles. Mephistopheles uses cunning and threats to achieve power over Faustus. Faustus is blinded by his ambitions and this is manipulated by the familiar spirit. By contrast, Machiavelli and the methods he commended were viewed as villainous by Webster, so the Machiavellian image of evil was given to the Duchess's devilish brothers.

3.1. Machiavelli

Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527) was born to Florentine noble parents. In his early years, he witnessed Florence flourishing under the rule of Lorenzo de' Medici. Machiavelli started working in the public service as an Italian statesman after the collapse of the reign of the Medicis in 1494, after which Florence started to be ruled under the Republic government. However, he lost his official job in the public service as a result of Medici's return to power in 1512. His writings began to have strong influences upon people in that period. During that time, Machiavelli wrote his masterpiece *The Prince*, which was dedicated to Lorenzo de' Medici. (Machiavelli 2005: ix-xiii)

Machiavelli's strong influence on the Elizabethan drama is unquestionable. *The Prince* represents a great change from the traditional view that often encourages the political leadership to commit itself and its ethics with Christian principles to a newer, more flexible view regarding morality. This magnificent book which is a commentary on ambition and on how power could be attained and maintained, seems to reflect Marlowe's insatiable desire for power. The ambiguous doctrines of Machiavelli were considered to be very dangerous. Machiavelli suggests that the eponymous main character should be capable of using force and fraud. He explains this idea of cunning with the metaphor of the lion and the fox: "a prince must know how to use well the nature of the beast. He should choose among the beasts the fox and the lion; for the lion cannot defend itself from traps, while the fox cannot protect itself from wolves. It is therefore necessary to be a fox, in order to recognize the traps, and a lion, in order to frighten the wolves." (Machiavelli 2005: 60) He asserts that those who base their behavior only on the lion do not understand things. In other words, the prince needs a strong playful mind similar to that of a fox, as well as physical strength like that of a lion. From this perspective, the duality of the character is a must for the prince in order to keep himself in power. On the other hand, Machiavelli explains that fooling people is very easy. He believes that "Men are so simple-minded and so controlled by their immediate needs that he who deceives will always find someone who will let himself be deceived." (Machiavelli 2005: 61) Machiavelli does not write for the public, but mainly for princes, administrators and personal friends. (Burckhardt 1995: 59) Machiavelli was firstly translated into French by Innocent Gentillet, then into English by Simon Patericke. The original text of Machiavelli was interpreted and changed many times based on those early translations. Much ink was spilled and is still spilling, on the nature of Machiavelli's real intentions. The Elizabethans saw the Machiavellian character as another typical Senecan villain. Other churchmen "branded the book the work of the Devil and its author an atheist." (Machiavelli 2005: vii) It is by the seventeenth century that Machiavelli's various books were re-studied thereby proving that Machiavelli was actually misinterpreted. Then, some thinkers such as Francis Bacon began to acknowledge Machiavelli's ideas. (Machiavelli 2005: viii) In his translation of *The Prince*, Peter Bondanella tries to

whiten its author's name. According to his modern reading, Machiavelli has never said that 'The end justifies the means,' he merely said 'the final result matters.' Therefore, he re-translated this famous line more accurately as follows: "one must consider the final result." (Machiavelli 2005: 62) Elsewhere, Machiavelli emphasizes the fact that God does not want to do everything by Himself, so he gives us our free will in order to achieve our glory by ourselves: "That is, that the prince who relies completely upon Fortune [the half of one's action which is ruled by fate] will come to ruin as soon as she changes." (Machiavelli 2005: 85) In addition, Machiavelli encourages the prince to go toward the excessive extreme; he further explains it with a grave misogynistic example. He believes so "because Fortune is a woman, and if you want to keep her under it is necessary to beat her and force her down. It is clear that she more often allows herself to be won over by impetuous men than by those who proceed coldly." (Machiavelli 2005: 87) Then in the final chapter, Machiavelli remarks that it is very important for the prince to have an idol: "this will not be very difficult if you keep before your eyes the deeds and the lives of those [historical heroes]." (Machiavelli 2005: 88) Knowing that they were rare and marvellous, they were nevertheless 'men' which will remind the prince that the mission is attainable.

3.2. Marlowe and the Machiavellian Ideas

Kingship, in its broadest sense, for Machiavelli, does not depend on class. Whether or not the person is from an aristocratic family is unimportant. What is important is how the ruler keeps his power not on the base of birth and royalty but on other techniques related to the game of appearance. This was a very revolutionary idea at the time. Even though the book was banned in Elizabethan England, Marlowe had unquestionably read it because Marlowe, the extremist rebel, rejects hierarchies of birth just as Machiavelli does. All of Marlowe's characters Tamburlaine, Doctor Faustus, The Jew of Malta and Edward II are lovers of power; this greedy desire goes hand in hand with Machiavelli's central encouragement of aiming for power at all costs. Faustus's quest of gaining magical powers is very central to the theme of the Renaissance focus on the achievements of the human mind, which can shape nature and change the world. Like in Machiavelli, in the play power cannot come from

thinking in conventional ways nor bowing to any system. Those who gain power, mainly Mephistopheles, gain power by rejecting the structure of traditional authority. That is why in writing *Doctor Faustus* Marlowe was regarded as a "freethinker, rejecting social conventions in order to achieve his individual and personal vision." (Hunter 1969: 178) In this sense, the play shows an agreement with Machiavelli to the very extreme end, for by cunning and manipulation the main character is overpowered to the extent that he is ready to sell his soul in order to reach his aim.

What makes Faustus's case more controversial and different from the other literary Marlowian characters is that Faustus, throughout the play, refers to his future plans being supposed to be done for the sake of others. This is wholly unlike Tamberlaine, Barabas, or the others. By doing so, Faustus invokes bad means to reach a good end. Therefore, he implicitly claims that 'the end justifies the means.' He is –like the play's author– a man of action. Moreover, we should consider Marlowe's famous motto, which is written on the only portrait that is supposed to be Marlowe's at Corpus Christi College at Cambridge University: 'Quod Me Nutrit Me Detruit' meaning 'What nourishes me destroys me.' Those words summarize Marlowe's thirst for power, but his awareness that it can be destructive. In Marlowe's personal life, as a spy and theatrical director, he was willing to use Machiavelli's stratagems.

Marlowe's different view on Machiavelli finds its best expression in the figure that represents Machiavelli, who appears as a stage character in the Prologue of *The Jew of Malta*. He tells the audience that he "count religion but a childish toy and hold there is no sin but ignorance." (*The Jew of Malta,* Prologue, 14-15) By employing this quotation, which criticizes religion but at the same time praises knowledge, Marlowe seems to be ahead of his Elizabethan contemporaries who considered Machiavelli as a teacher of absolute evil. As can be seen, the second part of the abovementioned Machiavellian sentence explains the reason behind mentioning the first one, which seems to be convincing because it plays an enlightening role in implicitly encouraging religion to educate rather than to keep people ignorant.

Machiavelli looks at man's condition as the victim of nature and fortune so he must use his mind and wisdom to full capacity in order to be the

master of the world. Man is born alone and naked; nonetheless, among all other creatures, he is capable with his ambition to overcome the misfortune set on him by fate to reshape circumstances for himself. Machiavelli's greatest concern was to support the wellbeing of his country. On the one hand, he hoped to urge his people in education and arts, where the prince would honor those who excelled in a particular skill. Furthermore, the prince should encourage anyone who sought in any way to enrich his city. (Machiavelli 2005: 78-79) On the other hand, Machiavelli teaches the prince how to remain in his position, which likewise will protect society from the chaos and disorder that Machiavelli witnessed in Italy at that time. Therefore, Machiavelli's remarkable philosophy actually demonstrates a man who has a considerable amount of knowledge about the "deeds of great men" attained through a "long experience in modern affairs and a continuous study of antiquity." (Machiavelli 2005: 5)

People in the Elizabethan period were confused as to whether they should act according to their free will or to continue to rely on the Church to determine the role of religion in their life, which will make them a thing played by the hand of Fortune, which is how Machiavelli contributed to the invention and support of the idea of individualism. Kocis is of an opinion that Machiavelli wants to say that "our moral obligations are created by us as a rational response to the needs of living together in society." (Kocis 1998: 29) In this sense, if one is to achieve anything considerable, one has to develop his personal moral action to cope with his intentions. Faustus comes under the power of a Machiavellian figure and, until his last lines, comes to reject any groundless fear created by religion; thus, he can take the risk of questioning the social and divine rules when they stand in his path towards his self-realization.

The episode of Faustus reading the Bible should be examined more carefully because it represents a turning point in Faustus's downfall (leading him to believe in predestination). Faustus half-quotes the Bible:

> The reward of sin is death. That's hard.
> [He reads] 'Si *peccasse negamus, fallimur*
> *Et nulla est in nobis veritas.'*
> If we say that we have no sin,
> we deceive ourselves, and there's no truth in us.

Why then belike we must sin,

And so consequently die.

Ay, we must die an everlasting death.

What doctrine call you this? *Che sera, sera,*

What will be, shall be? Divinity, adieu! (I, i, 41-50, A)

Now the question is how such a scholar of divinity like Faustus, who is supposed to know every word in Jerome's Bible, can take such an important decision without looking at the next line in the Bible which says 'but the gift of God is eternal life.' Kelsall argues that this behavior was intended by Faustus because according to him, "the failure of Faustus to complete his quotations from Jerome's Bible would be picked on by any school child." (Kelsall 1981: 163) That is, Faustus acts in such a way because he is frustrated with the Bible; he is not able to find any hope in it. Nonetheless, such an approach is questionable because the answer to this ambiguous event is further explained at the end of the play in Mephistopheles' final speech with Faustus, which appears as a confession for Faustus in order to understand what he once misunderstood: "I do confess it, Faustus, and rejoice. 'Twas I that, when thou wert I' the way to heaven, Damned up thy passage. *When thou took'st the book to view the Scriptures, then I turned the leaves and led thine eye*." (V, ii, 91-95, B, my italics) In this sense, Mephistopheles has adopted serious negative Machiavellian tactics which highlight the fact that Mephistopheles' pact was invalid. Faustus, in comparison, is a naïve character who believes the promises of power. Marlowe's theatrical commitment to Machiavelli's ideas is clear. Being somehow identical, they both experienced chaos and Renaissance. However, when Mephistopheles uses such ideas in order to destroy Faustus, he shows the power of Machiavelli. There is a contrast between the ways the two characters' progress towards realizing their goals. They easily disregard the moral structure if that possibly could bring them closer to their goals.

Mephistopheles accepts the task of providing service to a human with the aim of taking his soul at the end of twenty-four years. In addition, he adopts every means to keep his prey straying so that he will never be able to repent. The efforts of the good angel that appears in several parts of the play to give Faustus the opportunity to repent are confronted by those of the disguised Machiavellian

in Mephistopheles, who on one occasion threatens Faustus to "revolt, or I'll in piecemeal tear thy flesh," (V, i, 70, A) which clearly recalls Machiavelli's provocation for the prince to use violence which brings fear to his subjects: "fear is sustained by a dread of punishment that will never abandon you." (Machiavelli 2005: 58) Mephistopheles tells Faustus, "what else thou shalt desire, shall be performed in [the] twinkling of an eye," (V, I, 87-89, A) thus, his game is based on planting 'desires' in Faustus's heart. It is until the end that Faustus tells himself 'you are deceived,' which recalls the earlier mentioned notion when Machiavelli assures the prince that people can easily be deceived. Faustus uses the power of learning and the human intellect for the aim of attaining unlimited power, expressed as a wish to help the countries of the world. He says that he wants to:

> Make a bridge through the moving air
> To pass the ocean with a band of men;
> I'll join the hills that bind the Afric shore,
> And make that land continent to Spain (I, iii, 106-109, A)

Practicing this forbidden art would allow him to reach his individual goal, which was originally based on helping others, whereas Mephistopheles' aim was to "enlarge his kingdom/misery loves company." (II, i, 40-42, A) Compared with Mephistopheles, Faustus, who sought the power of the lion without adopting the tricky of the fox, was not a Machiavellian figure because he practiced the notion with a good aim in mind, but was fooled, but Mephistopheles used it for negative purposes.

3.3. Machiavellian Ideas in *The Duchess of Malfi*

However, Machiavelli, who once shocked the Elizabethans' audience in Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*: "By Webster's day had become a conventional stage figure, a symbol for opposition to the moral order which cloaked itself in a mask of virtue." (Ribner 1987: 128) Webster was a moralist who was very different from Marlowe, in whose presentation of the good and the evil was very much mingled. That is, there is no sharp line between them. Nevertheless, the distinction between good and evil in Webster's plays is shown very clearly. That

is, the good is good and the bad is bad. Webster, being such a moralist playwright, is not interested in such Machiavellian cunning; instead, he makes the play's antagonists; the Cardinal, Ferdinand and Bosola, use these immoral tactics which, likewise on some occasions, will stimulate the Duchess to 'leave the path of simple virtue' and behave forcefully against her moral codes. She confesses that these actions are unworthy of her: "Oh misery, methinks unjust actions should wear these masks and curtains, and not we." (III, ii, 158) The Duchess uses Machiavellian methods for virtuous ends in order to protect her secret life. On the other hand, her brothers use Machiavellian strategies for dark purposes in order to destroy her goodness. As Forker states: "One of many paradoxes of Webster's tragedy is that truth to self must not only disguise itself but be forced for defensive purposes to adopt the devious tactics of the enemy." (Forker 1986: 301) In other words, at some point, her salvation is somehow connected to the use of her brother's similar strategy. Thus, on more than one occasion, she lies. As Machiavelli advises, if a man always wants to behave according to moral virtues, he will surely be destroyed because society is full of immoral persons. (Machiavelli 2005: 53) Therefore, it is necessary for a person sometimes to use a double role according to necessity in order to protect himself/herself from evil people. Elsewhere, the Duchess re-asserts that she doesn't like this cunning role when she says, "I count this world a tedious theater, For I do play a part in't 'gainst my will." (IV, i, 83-84) In this respect, we can understand her earlier vow to her brother ("I'll never marry" (I, ii, 209)) a vow which a few minutes later, she breaks to affirm her determination to marry Antonio: "if all my royal kindred lay in my way into this marriage, I'd make them my low footsteps." (I, ii, 247-249) In this way, her decision is based on challenge and courage rather than on lies and deceit. In addition, since her marriage is secretly done then, in the public eye she will remain virtuous. After all, the whole game of her brothers is based merely on reputation. However, 'a noble lie,' as she will assert later, "must shield our honors." (III, ii, 180) In this sense, reputation implicitly becomes equivalent to a lie.

At the beginning of the play, the two brothers, paying a visit to her, speak with alleged love with her on the plea that she is their 'sister' (I, ii, 200-245), and when this technique proves weak, they adopt another approach where

she starts to be labeled as ‘a whore.’ Additionally, Ferdinand’s gesture with the poniard recalls Machiavelli’s words “since it is difficult to be both together, it is much safer to be feared than to be loved, when one of the two must be lacking.” (Machiavelli 2005: 58) However, the Duchess neither loves nor fears her Machiavellian brothers; she instead adopts similar tactics because after all, the Duchess is a political character who rules the Duchy.

Elsewhere, Machiavelli announces: “Any harm done to a man must be of the kind that removes any fear of revenge,” (Machiavelli 2005: 11) so from this perspective, the Cardinal adopts this Machiavellian technique against his own brother. When Bosola, having murdered the Duchess, comes to him, he acts as if he knows nothing about the crime which had been committed on his behalf as he tells himself: “this fellow must not know by any means I had intelligence in our Duchess’ death, for, though I counseled it, the full of all th’ engagement seemed to grow.” (V, ii, 100-104) He often isolates himself from his own evil misdeeds presenting an image of an innocent man who does not know anything about his sister’s death. He tells Bosola to kill Antonio because “while he lives, our sister cannot marry, and I have thought of an excellent match for her.” (V, ii, 120-121) His so-called plan of finding a husband for his sister seems real; nevertheless, they both know that the Duchess is no longer alive. Still, they do not show their real faces to each other because each one of them has a secret plot to be accomplished secretly. Bosola at this point wants to save Antonio from the mission which is given to him by the Cardinal, who wants to take Antonio’s life.

The ecclesiastic job (working as a churchman), as Machiavelli well understood, is not acquired either through virtue or through fate (chance); likewise, it is maintained without one or the other. Therefore, it must be kept by the game of appearance. Since the people who take the power of religion are protected by a higher cause that in general “the human mind is unable to fathom” (Machiavelli 2005: 40), that is, they speak on behalf of God, it is therefore sufficient for such a person to play the game of showing in order to win people’s approval for his conduct of double-standards. The Cardinal plays perfectly the role of a Church man because he knows that “a prince can never make himself secure when the people are his enemy, because there are so many of them.” (Machiavelli 2005: 35) Ferdinand also acts according to such an approach where

he, in the presence of others, is very generous, rewards Antonio for winning in a horse contest and asks his men to "give him [Antonio] the jewel" (I, ii, 9) On the other hand, when he is alone with Bosola, he refuses to give him the reward for his crime. (IV, ii, 280-315) Ultimately, Ferdinand merely rewards Bosola with these words: "you are a villain" (IV, ii, 301) That is, by the Machiavellian standards, since men are wicked and will not keep their promise to you, you likewise need not to keep yours to them.

Moreover, Antonio's seized land is given to "the Cardinal's mistress" Julia. (V, i, 26) On the other hand, the Duchess's Duchy "by her brother's instigation" (III, iv, 35) is seized by the Church. These two episodes have a striking resemblance to the Machiavellian notion regarding the prince and generosity where he claims that:

> spending the wealth of others does not lessen your reputation, but only adds to it. Only the spending of your own is what does you harm. There is nothing that uses itself up faster than generosity; for as you employ it, you lose the means of employing it, and you become either poor or despised or else, to escape poverty, you become rapacious and hated. (Machiavelli 2005: 56)

In the light of these Machiavellian interpretations, the Aragonian's strange behavior becomes more understandable.

The famous pantomime scene also depicts a strange event in which we see the Cardinal exchanging his religious clothes with a soldier's uniform while at the same time, the Duchess is being sent into her exile. The Cardinal here seems to follow Machiavelli regarding how the prince "must not have any other object nor any other thought, nor must he adopt anything as his art but war, its institutions, and its disciplines; because that is the only art befitting one who commands." (Machiavelli 2005: 50) Thus, we see the Cardinal replacing the cloak of the Church with the suit of a warrior. In this sense, it becomes clear that there is no sharp line between the power of the Church and the power of the State.

Undoubtedly, and as explained so far, the Machiavellian characteristics are very dominant throughout Webster's plays. These concepts are very clear in the conduct of the Aragonian brothers in *The Duchess of Malfi*. However, in *The White Devil*, Webster makes a clearer reference to the negative

Machiavellian notions: “those are found weightie strokes which come from th’hand but those are killing strokes which come from th’head. O the rare trickes of a Machiavellian!” (*The White Devil*, V, iii, 194-196) In this respect, the new moral order and the ideological change in people’s behavior while pursuing their ambitions are reflected in Webster’s plays. Consequently, corruption always results as the play’s villains seek to gain domination. On the other hand, the conflict between religion and politics is inseparable as seen in the Cardinal’s conduct. The Cardinal seeks power at any immoral cost; however, at the same time, he wants to keep his seeming image of that good Church man where the Machiavellian tactics are inescapable. That is why he warns Ferdinand to put limitation on his extreme anger when he hears the news of his sister’s secret marriage: “there is not in nature a thing, that makes man so deform’d, so beastly, as doth intemperate anger.” (II, v, 57-59) Ironically, Ferdinand here is also behaving according to Machiavelli’s codes: “a prince must know how to make good use of the nature of both the beast and the man.” (Machiavelli 2005: 60) Thus, Ferdinand is forced to adopt the Machiavellian duality. However, later he himself will be metamorphosed into a beast (wolf).

The last two lines of the play assert that the Duchess has used Machiavellian strategies for virtuous ends but not for villainous purposes, which nevertheless did not bring shame on her character. Delio sums up the whole story: “integrity of life is fame’s best friend, which nobly, beyond death, shall crown the end.” (V, v, 18-119) The Duchess dies in a very dignified manner where she is content with her behavior. That is to say, her action in contrast to her Machiavellian brothers did not destroy her integrity, but rather it glorified her.

Machiavelli’s ideas, which urge the human to fulfill his potential and goals with its twisted view on moral values, present another essential possibility to bring a change in the development of man’s character to cope with societal change that needed a new political system to cope with the people’s new ideology. In short, to be able to fulfill completely one’s own ambitions, even if this is contrary to all other men. This chapter has highlighted this Machiavellian concept the way the Elizabethans conceived it, and the way it was re-interpreted in the light of its more extended understanding in political terms. On the one hand, Faustus, whose true commitment is mainly to himself, works with the aim

of bringing change to his society; however, he encounters a Machiavellian whose practice of strategy is depicted in its most negative terms. On the other hand, the Duchess's two brothers use Machiavellian concepts in their most shocking sense, where at some moments, the Duchess forcefully adopts a similar technique to continue resisting indefatigably in order to protect her personal life.

To sum up, if Faustus wants to understand likewise to change the world, the Duchess needs to reach the final potentials of a woman's power in order to make a change in the female's condition. In this sense, they both need to behave in accordance with their own code of moral values.

CONCLUSION

The idea of Renaissance individualism is a very important and a broad subject, and it is essential for the understanding of the literary works in this period. This study has explored the concept and elements of Renaissance individualism in two different plays: *Doctor Faustus*, an Elizabethan play, and *The Duchess of Malfi*, a Jacobean play, as these are excellent examples of two differing aspects of the topic of the power of human genius over nature, often reaching the realms of occult power, and the emergence of independent women. The way every individual identifies him/herself with religion, free choice and society has been fully discussed. In the first case, it was shown how Faustus was motivated by occult science, which was something very prominent in the Renaissance period. By tracing back the nature of this hidden knowledge and by showing many examples of evidence from the lives of many Renaissance scholars, it has been proved that this teaching does not contradict religion. On the contrary, the problem lies in the poor representation of the Church itself. This study of the case of Faustus is motivated by the question of how such a promising scholar with such remarkable genius can sacrifice everything in a dangerous project of seeking full power over nature. This study has attempted to explain the actual intentions of this protagonist in terms of the occult dimension and the effect of Neo-Platonic ideas in creating such new understandings of God's world. In the final chapter, the relationship between Faustus and Mephistopheles is analyzed in terms of the Machiavellian concept of deception in order to gain power as well as to assert one's individualism. Even with the aspects of apparent evil, Faustus is nonetheless a Renaissance scholar who determinedly starts to pursue his ambition with good aims in mind. He just entertains himself with tricks. That is to say, he does not go so far in his magic. Faustus becomes the symbol of the Renaissance quest for individual knowledge, which became "the Scientific Revolution" of the 17th century.

The difference between white and black magic lies not in the basic conception, but rather in the purpose they serve. Most of Faustus's plans are focused on understanding the universe and achieving things for others. In this

regard, Faustus is a Renaissance scientist who takes a risk upon himself to find the truth in this dangerous occult philosophy. However, due to his strict scientific mind mixed with his pride, Faustus refuses to protect his employment of this dangerous occult science by using Cabalistic religion as suggested by Mirandola. Thus, he becomes an easy victim of Mephistopheles. Marlowe has presented Faustus according to the Elizabethan understanding of the idea of magic and the power of the human mind so he has put his Faustus in hell, later Goethe follows Marlowe but re-presents Faust according to an idealistic and romantic age. Goethe chooses to put his Faust in heaven rather than in hell because he believes that the one who works for others, even if he at some point has worked with the devil, still deserves to be in heaven, because to work for others is to work for God.

The second case, which sheds light on the Duchess's actions and extraordinary strong character, is motivated by the question: From where does the Duchess draw all her strength? Along with many scholars who have looked at her as a spiritual feminist, this study traces back the very beginning of the misogynistic view on women and how it is strengthened by the biblical implication that places women at a lower level. This study has proved that the Duchess has used her love of Antonio as an expression of rebellion against her devilish brothers to express her individuality and self-realization. The Duchess is not merely a feminist: she is a spiritual character whose characteristics as analyzed in the thesis are those of a saint. Besides, this study attempts to explore the effect of knowledge, notably the Neo-Platonic ideas, on the Duchess proving that the Duchess has got a good deal of knowledge of antiquity.

Many symbols and images are deeply explained showing implicitly Ferdinand's incestuous love towards the Duchess, and the Machiavellian brothers' witchcraft against the Duchess's unlimited faith. The imagery of the sun which itself represents a Renaissance symbol, has been reviewed as the source of truth and knowledge of antiquity.

As mentioned, due to the London Fire (1666), most documented resources concerning Webster's life were lost. Nevertheless, with Webster's obvious knowledge about law and literature, it is highly probable that he was familiar with Plato's books which represented the Renaissance revolution at the

time, implications of which were seen and explained in the Duchess's noble behavior.

Webster has created a female protagonist who is assertive, dominant, and self-reliant. In such a patriarchal society, the male characters feel the need to regain domination over the female; however, they are even shocked by her self-confident, defiant view and unlimited faith. The Duchess refuses to yield to the oppression of men and also rejects the rules of their patriarchal perspective. Armed with her faith and love, she struggles against the evil accusations of her brothers, who have absolute political and religious power. Moreover, when they adopt Machiavellian tactics to destroy her, the Duchess does not act as merely a faithful person who submits to the power of evil: instead, she uses her free will to its full capacity where she is sometimes forced to adopt the same Machiavellian but virtuous strategy to be one step ahead of her cruel brothers. Such choices cause her to be accused of being a 'lustful whore.' We have seen how Ferdinand and the Cardinal trust Bosola, the Devil incarnate, rather than their own sister because they believe that her angelic powers are dangerous. It can be said that the virtuous Duchess is as pure as a mirror by which her brothers could see the reflection of their own potential evil. Because the accusation of the Duchess of being 'lusty' and 'a witch' are manifested in the Cardinal's unchaste behavior and Ferdinand's use of witchcraft. Thus, after her death, they ultimately have to face the real evil inside of themselves. However, the brothers insist on regarding death as a punishment, which, by contrast, she accepts as a gift.

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WORK EXPERIENCE

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