

Mason, Eudo C., Goethe's Faust Its Genesis and Purpose (University of California Press: Berkeley & Los Angeles) 1967

p. 313 It is highly improbable that Goethe thought of dividing his Faust into two distinct parts before 1797. . . .

p.314 It is moreover unlikely that Goethe foresaw in the years 1797-1801 that the second part would prove so entirely different in character from the first as it actually did, or that it would swell to considerably more than one and a half times the other's bulk. Quite a lot has long since been known from the paralipomena about Goethe's 1797 plan for Faust II, but not till 1943 was it clearly and virtually for the first time pointed out that he in the long run more or less consistently jettisoned most of the factors in that plan which would have made the second part substantially a straightforward continuation of the first, so far as dramatic emphasis and the conception of Faust's character are concerned. To recognize this was one of the many contributions to Goethe scholarship made by Wilhelm Emrich, who, however, in maintaining his legitimate enough paradoxical thesis that "Faust II nicht als 'Fortsetzung' des I. Teils zu betrachten ist" (Faust II is not to be regarded as a continuation of the first part<sup>1</sup>), does not altogether escape the danger of often insisting too one-sidedly and dogmatically on his new discoveries and criteria. It is indeed remarkable that, until Emrich came along, nobody had attached much importance to Goethe's own frequent declarations during his last years about the difference between the two parts of Faust, a particularly striking example of which is what he wrote to Stapfer on April 4, 1827: "Cette seconde partie . . . ne peut en aucune façon se rattacher à la première partie" (This second part can in no respect link up with the first part).

p. 315 These revolutionary views of Emrich's, though one might demur at some of his extremer formulations, are in the main indubitably sound, so far as the first four acts of Faust II are concerned. In those acts, on which Emrich has done work of the highest value, but which can only be considered very summarily in the present study, Goethe certainly did largely use the Faust theme as a pretext for setting forth symbolically and mythologically the interplay of the "Urkräfte" and "Urphänomene" of existence, as they presented themselves to his imagination in his final years. The difference between the two parts of Faust is, however, in this respect, not quite so absolute as Emrich makes it out to be. . . It lay in the very nature of the Faust theme that such a writer as Goethe should from the outset and all along envisage it not only dramatically, but also symbolically. The specifically dramatic and symbolical modes of treatment and interpretation are by no means incompatible with one another, and ideally it must have been Goethe's object to unite these two principles harmoniously without sacrificing one to the other.

p. 316 p. 376 In our attempts to find out what, if anything, holds the vast and heterogeneous Faust drama together, it is this conception of Faust's salvation that we have arrived at. We came to the conclusion that this conception is as old as the beginnings of Faust and that it was only modified in comparatively inessential respects during the sixty succeeding years. From this it arose that there are far fewer inconsistencies in Faust than is usually supposed and that it is in fact as consistent as there is any need for it to be in view of its dreamlike fantastic character. We would, however, in conclusion dissociate ourselves no less from those who claim a strict philosophical unity for Faust than from those who deny it any unity at all. The conception of Faust's salvation only holds the work together loosely, and Goethe has brought in much of the greatest value and interest which has little or no bearing upon it - for example, the "Klassische Walpurgisnacht" and the Helen of Troy episode. But Goethe could not thus have brought such a welter of multifarious motifs, themes, and incidents into the work unless he had had the conception not only of Faust's personality (which is curiously unstable), but also of his destiny as a string to thread them on (to use his own image), or, to use the perhaps even more felicitous image of Schiller, as a hoop to bind them together.