

**Read Ebook {PDF EPUB} Mephistopheles The Devil in the Modern World by Jeffrey Burton Russell**



Mephistopheles: The Devil in the Modern World by Jeffrey Burton Russell.

Completing the CAPTCHA proves you are a human and gives you temporary access to the web property.

What can I do to prevent this in the future?

If you are on a personal connection, like at home, you can run an anti-virus scan on your device to make sure it is not infected with malware.

If you are at an office or shared network, you can ask the network administrator to run a scan across the network looking for misconfigured or infected devices.

Another way to prevent getting this page in the future is to use Privacy Pass. You may need to download version 2.0 now from the Chrome Web Store.

Cloudflare Ray ID: 6595672a987216a5 • Your IP : 188.246.226.140 • Performance & security by Cloudflare.

Mephistopheles : The Devil in the Modern World.

Mephistopheles is the fourth and final volume of a critically acclaimed history of the concept of the Devil. The series constitutes the most complete historical study ever made of the figure that has been called the second most famous personage in Christianity. In his first three volumes Jeffrey Burton Russell brought the history of Christian diabolology to the end of the Middle Ages, showing the development of a degree of consensus, even in detail, on the concept of the Devil. Mephistopheles continues the story from the Reformation to the present, tracing the fragmentation of the tradition. Using examples from theology, philosophy, art, literature, and popular culture, he describes the great changes effected in our idea of the Devil by the intellectual and cultural developments of modern times. Emphasizing key figures and movements, Russell covers the apogee of the witch craze in the Renaissance and Reformation, the effects of the Enlightenment's rationalist philosophy, the Romantic image of Satan, and the cynical or satirical literary treatments of the Devil in the late nineteenth century. He concludes that although today the Devil may seem an outworn metaphor, the very real horrors of the twentieth century suggest the continuing need for some vital symbol of radical evil. A work of great insight and learning, Mephistopheles deepens our understanding of the ways in which people in Western societies have dealt with the problem of evil.

Отзывы - Написать отзыв.

LibraryThing Review.

To be frank, I haven't read any of the previous three of Jeffery Burton Russell's books which together comprise a "history of the Devil" from antiquity through the twentieth century. I started at the . Читать весь отзыв.

Mephistopheles: the Devil in the modern world.

This volume completes Russell's history of the concept of the Devil from antiquity to the present. (The series includes *The Devil*, Cornell, 1977; *Satan*, LJ 10/15/81; and *Lucifer*, LJ 11/15/84.) The . Читать весь отзыв.

Mephistopheles: The Devil in the Modern World.

The book gives a detailed historical account and analyses of the concept of the Devil and how it has changed, spanning from the sixteenth century to the end of the twentieth century. Russell draws upon all of the major religious and philosophical ideas, developments and thinkers that emerge throughout the period, as well as major literary works and authors who deal with the subject of the Devil. The book also includes a number of illustrations – examples of how Satan and evil is portrayed in art throughout the years. The first chapter, "Evil", clarifies the book's objective. He briefly delineates the notion of evil before moving on to the Devil, writing: "The Devil is the symbol of radical evil. But does he exist, and in what sense?" (18). Russell applies particular emphasis upon the question of "in what sense" and continues by discussing the ontological and epistemological concerns about gaining truth and absolute knowledge. Russell points out the limitations of the human condition: "We know only one thing directly and absolutely, and that is that 'something is thinking'" (19). He explains that tracing the history of mankind's notion of the devil will help us gain a greater understanding of the nature of evil. The second chapter, "The Reformed Devil", focuses on the sixteenth century. Russell writes that "it was a period that witnessed a profound shift in the center of gravity of perceptions of evil" (25). It explores the religious divisions of the period and discusses the belief in magic and witchcraft. He writes: "The theology of Luther and the rise of the witch craze both encouraged belief in the Devil" (28). The occult scenes in Goethe's *Faust* reflect the beliefs of Christians during the witch craze in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. *Faust's* own deal with the devil mirrors that of witches:

"According to the Christian theology of that era, witches were people who had formally given themselves to the Devil by making a pact with him: in return for their service, Satan rewarded them with magical powers, which they used for evil purposes." (28)

*Faust* differs in that he uses his magical powers to gain knowledge and power, not just for evil purposes. Russell gives a detailed account of the beliefs of Luther concerning evil and the devil. In order to approach the concept of the devil, God must first be considered. Luther believed in the omnipotence of God, which means that "The Devil is God's tool" (37) and he must therefore surely hold God responsible for the evil in the world. God is loving and good, and so a dilemma arises: why would God allow evil? "All evils come from both the Devil and God" (38). The response to this dilemma is given as follows:

“Through Christ’s love we can understand that in all the apparent harshness of the world, God’s loving presence and purpose are never absent”(38).

“Though the Devil does evil under God’s command, God hates the evil and wishes us to fight against it” (38).

“Satan’s power over us is shattered by the incarnation of Jesus” (42).

Russell goes on to discuss Calvinism, which take a similar view. He discusses a string of theorists (too many to include) and ideas, which includes how the Devil intends to corrupt us: “The Devil seeks to convince us that worldly pleasures and sensual delights will make us happy” (51). Mephistopheles takes this approach in his attempt to gain Faust’s soul. Russell comments on the depiction of the demonic in art of this century and notes “the transference of demonic qualities to human beings” (54), as in Hieronymus Bosch’s (1450-1516) painting “Christ Carrying the Cross”

The “gloaters”, as Russell calls them, “are human, but they have crossed into the realm of the totally evil” (54). Russell discusses the Faustbook, and describes Faust as “the single most popular character in the history of Western Christian culture” (58), after Christ, Mary and the Devil. He comments on Faust’s individualistic strivings, relating it to the “antischolastic bias of the Protestant Reformation”. He points out that “Faust desires to obtain knowledge by his own efforts rather than to receive it by grace” and that this rebellion makes him the “prototype of the Romantic and modern revolt against authority”(59). Russell discusses the origin of the name ‘Mephistopheles’, “a purely modern invention” (61), and then the nature of Faust’s sins: “Faustus’ original sin is the prideful desire to obtain knowledge for its own sake and for the sake of the power it gives” (64)

“To his original sin of pride and folly, Faustus adds the final and unforgivable sin of despair” (62).

After recounting the story of Faust, the author moves on to discuss evil characters in Shakespeare and gives an interesting and detailed analysis of the devil in Hamlet (worth reading) claiming amongst other things that the ghost is in fact the devil and that Hamlet’s hatred leaves his mind and soul open for the devil to enter. The third chapter, “The Devil between Two Worlds”, focuses on how the devil fits into the conflict between the traditional Christian world and the emerging rational and materialistic world of the Enlightenment. Russell discusses various philosophers, such as Hobbes, Descartes, Locke and Bacon, and their theories regarding God, the Devil and how the world fits in between them. The rationalists rejected the Devil, and anything “not consonant with reason” (84). Descartes believed “God created the universe with its natural laws and then withdrew to allow it to function mechanically” (83) – thus he is not responsible for evils such as natural disasters. After discussing a selection of view points Russell embarks on a detailed analysis of Milton’s Paradise Lost and Satan’s ambivalent characterisation as hero/evil. The fourth chapter, “Satan Expiring”, focuses on the eighteenth century, where belief in the Devil began to waver significantly, thoroughly trodden on by the Enlightenment. The author discuss Voltaire, Hume, Kant and Diderot’s beliefs concerning good and evil and delineates the beliefs and logic of Marquis de Sade (1740-1814), the man behind sadism. Returning to the Devil, Russell writes: “Although we are incapable of discovering what the Devil is as a thing in itself, we are capable of establishing with complete certainty what the Devil is as a human concept, because we have created the concept[...] the Devil is the tradition of what he has been thought to be” (152). The natural idea to follow this assertion is that the devil was created so that man can shift blame from the individual onto another being. It is at this time that Goethe emerges with his Faust and reimagines the devil in a form that sticks with him until this very day. Russell writes that Goethe intended his Faust “to express the complexities and incongruencies of his own mind, of his culture, and of Western civilization as a whole” (158). Goethe’s Mephistopheles “has the ironic, aloof, critical, cold, judgemental qualities of the academics who Goethe despised” and possessed “slick intelligence and superficial charm” but “on a deeper level he is a fool, for he fails to grasp that the essential reality of the cosmos is the power of love” (159). Goethe’s Faust represents the whole of humanity, constantly striving to find truth. One of his (and our) main problems is his failure “to understand the importance of love” (162). Russell concludes that “it is the failure to love that makes Faust a tragedy”(165). Chapter 5, “The Romantic Devil”, discusses the Romantic’s view of the devil, which is somewhat strange as they manage to turn him into a symbol of good. The romantics viewed Satan as the “symbol of rebellion against the unjust order and tyranny of the ancien regime” (169) and through Milton’s portrayal of him and through the concept of the sublime he becomes a Romantic hero. “The Romantic Hero is individual, alone against the world, self-assertive, ambitious, powerful and liberator in rebellion against the society that blocks the way of progress towards liberty, beauty and love” (175). Satan is thus split into two: ‘Good’ Satan and the traditional evil Satan. The good Satan was the symbol of the ultimate revolutionary, striving for liberty. The evil Satan was the tradition figure, responsible for suffering and disaster. More than ever in literature, the devil is reduced to a comic figure, thanks to gothic novels. Since Faust, “the favourite theme among American writers has been the bargain with the Devil” (212). Russell explores numerous writers in this chapter, including Blake, Shelley, Byron, Hugo, Baudelaire and Poe. Russell ends the chapter with a brief remark on the influences of the devil and the demonic in classical music and literature of this period. Chapter six, “The Devil’s Shadow”, discusses the Devil in the world of Darwin, Marx, Nietzsche and Freud. The Chapter primarily explores the theories and beliefs of these philosophers in relation to the Devil and God. Unsurprisingly, Freud claimed that “the Devil is clearly nothing other than the personification of repressed unconscious drives” (228). Russell later remarks that during this time Satan becomes the “symbol of the demonic in the human mind” (238). The author explores the life and work of Dostoevsky in particular detail, analysis the role and influence of the devil on the characters and plot. Chapter seven, “The Devil in a Warring World” examines the devil in the twentieth century and its shocking events: the world wars, Hiroshima, the camps and genocides, etc. The late twentieth century saw the emergence of “Satanism” in music – an expression of “cultural despair” (257) and, more cruelly, in the followers of the Manson family. A sceptical reinterpretation of the bible occurs, questioning Christ’s depiction and his interaction with the Devil, whom the world no longer believed in as anything other than a symbolic personification of evil. Throughout the book Russell repeated recalls Baudelaire and others’ belief that the Devil’s greatest trick was to convince mankind that he doesn’t exist. Russell analyses the literature of Bernanos – who suggests that Satan finds entrance to our mind through our intellect (278) – and Mann, who reworks Goethe’s Faust in “Doktor Faustus”, with a more pessimistic outlook, reflecting the historical-political events of twentieth century Germany: “Demonic forces of darkness, madness, and negation permeate the novel” (282). The author also examines the somewhat terrifying works of Flannery O’Connor, who makes great use of the Devil in her works but, despite the murder and rape, offers the reader hope through the grace of god:

“More than in the Devil,” she wrote, “I am interested in the indication of Grace.” [...] The Devil is a comic figure in spite of his ability to cause real suffering, because God turns his every effort into an occasion of good so that he is always accomplishing ends other than his own.”(288)

This too is the case in Goethe's Faust. "The one thing that could save us from destruction [is] loving God and neighbour" (281). Russell concludes by commenting on the evil and potential devastation of the arms race of the cold war which were underway as he wrote. He describes the demonic qualities of nuclear warfare and urges us to put an end to it. He writes: "Evil can never be fought with more evil, negation with more negation, nuclear missiles with more nuclear missiles" (301). He also suggests that in today's world the Devil is receiving too little attention and implies in his final paragraph that love is what must be used to fight him with.

MEPHISTOPHELES: The Devil in the Modern World.

The last in a series of four books telling the history of the concept of radical evil embodied in the Devil. Earlier volumes were praised for their scholarship and astuteness and also for their sense of the poignancy of the ordinary person's bafflement by the intrusion of evil into their lives. For Luther, the Devil was an immediate presence--see a literal translation of *Ein Feste Burg*. Shakespeare noticed the heart's desire for evil for evil's sake, an evil transcending our conscious errors and feelings. Milton's *Paradise Lost* is discussed for 32 pages--"the last convincing full-length portrait of the traditional lord of evil." Thereafter for the atheists, matter produces mind, and mind creates the categories of good and evil. The romantics reversed the symbols--traditional Christianity had created a god who was really an evil tyrant. But the obstinate problem persists. Recently, says Russell, some psychologists have begun to look for a concept akin to the old one of evil to describe some phenomenon they encounter--personalities so completely founded on lies that traditional sociological and psychological understandings are irrelevant. The demonic quality of the arms race becomes clearer, Russell says, when we ask for whose good are these preparations for holocaust. The value of this book by a historian lies not in this last-page comment but in the 300 pages of descriptive analysis of the ways in which this basic question figures in the work of, among others, William Blake, G. Vico, Hume, Schleiermacher, Baudelaire, Mark Twain, William James, Dostoevsky, Thomas Mann, Freud and Jung. The author's use of this issue opens up the works discussed and incites the reader to explore.

Russell, Jeffrey Burton 1934--

Born August 1, 1934, in Fresno, CA; son of Lewis Henry (a publishers representative) and Ieda Russell; married Diana Mansfield (a teacher of English), June 30, 1956; children: Jennifer, Mark, William, Penelope. Education: University of California, Berkeley, A.B., 1955, A.M., 1957; University of Liege, Belgium, graduate study, 1959-60; Emory University, Ph.D., 1960. Politics: Democrat. Religion: Catholic. Hobbies and other interests: Conservation and preservation of wilderness, numismatics, Baroque music, British mystery stories.

#### ADDRESSES:

Home— Santa Barbara, CA. Office— Department of History, University of California, Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA 93106. Agent— Gerard McCauley Agency, Inc., P.O. Box 844, Katonah, NY 10536. E-mail— [email protected]

#### CAREER:

Writer, educator. University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, assistant professor of history, 1960-61; Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, junior fellow, Society of Fellows, 1961-62; University of California, Riverside, assistant professor, 1962-65, associate professor, 1965-69, professor of medieval and religious history, 1969-75; University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN, Michael P. Grace Professor of Medieval Studies and director of Medieval Institute, 1975-79; University of California, Santa Barbara, professor of medieval and church history, beginning 1979, became professor emeritus.

#### MEMBER:

Mediaeval Academy of America, American Society of Church History, Catholic Historical Association, Medieval Association of the Pacific, Sierra Club, Phi Beta Kappa.

#### AWARDS, HONORS:

Fulbright fellow, 1959; Guggenheim fellow, 1968; National Endowment for the Humanities senior fellow, 1972; grants in aid from American Council of Learned Societies and Social Science Research Council.

#### WRITINGS:

*Dissent and Reform in the Early Middle Ages*, University of California Press (Berkeley, CA), 1965, AMS Press (New York, NY), 1982.

*Medieval Civilization*, Wiley (New York, NY), 1968.

*A History of Medieval Christianity: Prophecy and Order*, Crowell (New York, NY), 1968, H. Davidson (Arlington Heights, IL), 1986, with Douglas W. Lumsden, P. Lang (New York, NY), 2000.

(Editor) *Religious Dissent in the Middle Ages*, Wiley (New York, NY), 1971.

*Witchcraft in the Middle Ages*, Cornell University Press (Ithaca, NY), 1972.

*The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity*, Cornell University Press (Ithaca, NY), 1977.

*A History of Witchcraft: Sorcerers, Heretics, and Pagans*, Thames & Hudson (New York, NY), 1980, with Brooks Alexander, 2007.

(With Carl T. Berkhout) *Medieval Heresies: A Bibliography 1960-1979*, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies (Toronto, Canada), 1981.

Satan: The Early Christian Tradition, Cornell University Press (Ithaca, NY), 1981.

Lucifer: The Devil in the Middle Ages, Cornell University Press (Ithaca, NY), 1984.

Mephistopheles: The Devil in the Modern World, Cornell University Press (Ithaca, NY), 1986.

The Prince of Darkness: Radical Evil and the Power of Good in History, Cornell University Press (Ithaca, NY), 1988.

(Translator into Latin) Madeleine L'Engle, *Ruga in aeternis* (title means "A Wrinkle in Time"), Quidst Press, 1990.

Inventing the Flat Earth: Columbus and Modern Historians, Praeger (New York, NY), 1991.

Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages: The Search for Legitimate Authority, Twayne (Boston, MA), 1992.

A History of Heaven: The Singing Silence, Princeton University Press (Princeton, NJ), 1997.

Alberto Ferreiro, editor, *The Devil, Heresy, and Witchcraft in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honor of Jeffrey B. Russell*, Brill (Boston, MA), 1998.

(Translator and author of introduction, with Tim Vivian and Kim Vivian) *The Life of the Jura Fathers: The Life and Rule of the Holy Fathers Romanus, Lupicinus, and Eugendus, Abbots of the Monasteries in the Jura Mountains*, Cistercian Publications (Kalamazoo, MI), 1999.

*Paradise Misaid: How We Lost Heaven—and How We Can Regain It*, Oxford University Press (New York, NY), 2006.

Also contributor to *The Transformation of the Roman World*, edited by Lynn White, University of California Press, 1966. Contributor to periodicals, including *Revue d'Histoire ecclésiastique*, *Medieval Studies*, *Church History*, *Speculum*, *American Historical Review*, and *Catholic Historical Review*.

#### SIDELIGHTS:

Jeffrey Burton Russell once told CA that "using the history of evil as an example," he has explored "the ways in which concepts may be most fully understood and accurately defined in terms of their history and sociology." One of the results of Russell's efforts "to develop an historical method uniting philosophy and content analysis with traditional historical approaches," as he describes it, is his tetralogy, which traces the history of the idea of the devil in philosophy, literature, and theology from ancient to modern times. The series includes *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity*, *Satan: The Early Christian Tradition*, *Lucifer: The Devil in the Middle Ages*, and *Mephistopheles: The Devil in the Modern World*.

In a review of *Mephistopheles*, *New York Times Book Review* contributor Robert Coles called the tetralogy "impressive." He wrote that "the author is not only a conscientious historian, ... [he] is also an introspective essayist who acknowledges his own continuing struggle to understand the nature and source of evil." Russell, commented D.J. Enright in the *Times Literary Supplement*, avoids the problem of choosing "between what might be deplored as insufficient documentation and the risk, or certainty, of boring, or maddening, the modern reader" by branching "out into a number of interesting and entertaining cognate topics." While holding his readers' interest, Russell explains how the idea of what the devil is (and, by association, what God is) has evolved over time. Collectively, these books explain to "us a lot about the attention and passion we have given to that idea," concluded Coles. Russell's "books tell us much about what we were and what we are today—people who all along have been trying to make sense of the world and to stay around in it as a species, our devilish capacity for hate and slaughter notwithstanding."

In *A History of Heaven: The Singing Silence*, Russell offers readers a brief survey that covers the history of the concept of heaven within religion, focusing on the Judeo-Christian tradition, though the balance of the book addresses the Christian concept of heaven as the Christian tradition places far more emphasis on the afterlife and what happens to a person when he or she dies. Russell begins his book with a single chapter devoted to a discussion of the afterlife in Jewish teachings, then moves on to the Christian tradition, tracing the concept of heaven as it has been depicted through the ages. He ultimately concludes with a discussion of Dante's *The Divine Comedy*. He looks at the various stories and details linked with the idea of heaven, from angels to the overall concept of paradise as a perfect place, along with the idea of immortality and how this is linked to the potential for resurrection. Russell also analyzes the various moral guidelines that are associated with heaven and the ways in which human beings believe that they might strive to achieve a place there, including a comparison of the ideas of predestination and free will. Finally, Russell considers the biblical predictions of the apocalypse and the resulting fate of all those who followed God's laws during life and are thereby considered worthy of a place at his side. Over the course of the book, he includes discussions and theories from various theologians, as well as how literature has depicted the idea of heaven over time. Steve Schroeder, writing for *Booklist*, commented that "apart from theological and historical illumination, ... this is an eloquent celebration of Dante's literary genius." George E. Griener, reviewing for *America*, held a similar opinion, remarking that "Russell's heart clearly is attuned to Dante's, as seen particularly in the conclusion to his breathtaking survey, where he deftly analyzes the Paradiso." *Christianity Today* reviewer Elizabeth Fox-Genovese opined that "no brief review can begin to do justice to the rich complexity and subtlety of Russell's thought."

Russell's *Paradise Misaid: How We Lost Heaven—and How We Can Regain It*, published in 2006, addresses the idea of heaven as a metaphor, one that stands for Christian belief as a whole. Over the course of his book, Russell looks at the ways in which Christians have slowly lost faith over the centuries as modern technology and science served to stand in opposition to traditional Christian doctrine and theories. He pinpoints the sixteenth century as the point in history when the work of scientists and mathematicians began to wear away at traditionally held beliefs and to cause faith in general to falter as people began to grow skeptical regarding the stories they had been told through the ages. As more and more scientific findings became tangible, with measurements and experiments that provided proof of the discoveries, the less-tangible areas of life—namely those things that had to be taken on faith alone due to lack of any physical evidence of their existence or meaning—began to lose ground,

and people began to shift away from religious teachings and blind faith. The shift from religion to what Russell refers to as "physicalism" continued through the twentieth century. He addresses this change and how those who maintained their faith sought to fight the trend, including the ideas of creationism and the rise of intelligent design. In addition, he stands against nay-sayers, offering reasons why faith should be able to stand hand in hand with science. Writing for the National Catholic Reporter, Darrell Turner commented of Russell that "the self-described lapsed atheist encourages both Christians and secularists to examine their bases for determining whether something is worthy of belief." A reviewer for Publishers Weekly declared that "Russell's elegant survey of heaven offers a first-rate history of a much debated subject." Bryce Christensen, reviewing for Booklist, concluded that "Russell's debunking of the debunkers takes on particular seriousness when he defends the scripture, religious poetry, and hymns that secularists dismiss as wishful metaphor."

#### BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL SOURCES:

##### PERIODICALS.

America, June 20, 1998, George E. Griener, review of *A History of Heaven: The Singing Silence*, p. 28.

Booklist, April 15, 1997, Steve Schroeder, review of *A History of Heaven*, p. 1367; April 15, 2006, Bryce Christensen, review of *Paradise Misled: How We Lost Heaven—and How We Can Regain It*, p. 9.

Christianity Today, October 6, 1997, Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, review of *A History of Heaven*, p. 58.

National Catholic Reporter, September 8, 2006, "Heaven, a Metaphor Pointing toward Reality," p. 14.

New York Times Book Review, March 8, 1987, Robert Coles, review of *Mephistopheles: The Devil in the Modern World*.

Publishers Weekly, April 3, 2006, review of *Paradise Misled*, p. 64.