

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Robert J. Goltra, Jr. for the Master of Arts

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Title: THE CEREMONIAL MAGICIAN OF TUDOR-STUART DRAMA:

A PRODUCT AND REFLECTION OF CONTEMPORARY BELIEF

Abstract approved:

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The period 1588 to 1611 produced many so-called magic plays. Of these, however, five may be called true ceremonial magic plays: Marlowe's Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, Robert Greene's Honorable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, Anthony Munday's John à Kent and John à Cumber, the anonymous John of Bordeaux, and Shakespeare's Tempest. In these five, magic is a key structural element, the magicians represent real entities, their magic belongs to one of two contemporary systems of magic, and the consequences of their actions reflect contemporary moral beliefs.

Used in medieval drama as abstract personifications of evil and good, spirits became, in Renaissance drama, less abstract and more capable of intervention. Furthermore, Italian commedia dell' arte contributed the figure of the magician to secular drama and may have influenced the behavior

of the English magician. Thus, the English audience was familiar with both spirits and magicians in English secular drama prior to Doctor Faustus.

A second element which influenced the use of the magician as character was the fervent belief of the Elizabethan Englishman in magic, a belief based on tradition and strengthened both by those medieval Catholic beliefs and practices which led the common people to equate the Church with magic and by reaction against those Reformation doctrines which deprived man of control over his environment and his physical and moral salvation.

During the Renaissance, interest in magic increased, and two discernable systems of ceremonial magic belief, theurgy and goety, emerged from Renaissance Neoplatonism. Although the members of the Elizabethan audience had varying degrees of knowledge concerning these systems, their general tenets were widely known, and they were closely connected to contemporary moral beliefs about magic. The orthodox view in Protestant England was that any magic was immoral. For the majority of the less orthodox, the line between goety, a system in which the magician had contact with devils, and witchcraft was ill-defined. Thus, any magician who had contact with devils was merely a witch. In contrast, those magicians who practiced theurgy, a system in which the magician had contact with median spirits, avoided the practice of witchcraft.

Both the systems of magic and the views of their morality are reflected in the ceremonial magic plays. Both Marlowe's *Faustus* and Greene's *Friar Bacon* practice goety and suffer adverse effects from doing so. Ultimately, they renounce that

practice. That Marlowe's Faustus is as incompetent and ill-prepared a magician as he is a scholar strongly suggests that it is the practitioner rather than the system of magic which is at fault. His fate thus reflects not the view that all magic is immoral, or even that association with devils can have no other end, but that the practice of magic is serious and should be considered so by the practitioner. In any case, his fate also satisfies both the orthodox belief and the belief that goety is, at base, witchcraft and sacrilege. Greene's Bacon is a competent goetist who suffers the inevitable consequences of sacrilegious association with devils. The goetist Friar Bacon of John of Bordeaux neither suffers such ill effects nor renounces his art. However, this magician's constant identification with Christianity and his protection of Christian values both negate the usual association of goetist with witch and emphasize the prevalence of that identification.

The favorable view of theurgy is reflected in John à Kent and The Tempest. John à Kent, in legend a consorter with devils, works only through a median spirit; it is his opponent, John à Cumber, who has contact with devils. Kent uses his powers for moral purposes and has no need to renounce his practice of magic. Prospero, the only pure theurgist of the five magicians, works through an aerial spirit and ceases his practice of magic not because that magic is inherently immoral or sacrilegious but because it has caused him to neglect his proper role as a temporal ruler.

Because the ceremonial magic plays reflect Elizabethan culture, an understanding of the beliefs of the period about

magic and about its moral implications makes possible a more informed reading of the plays.

The Ceremonial Magician of Tudor-Stuart Drama:
A Product and Reflection of Contemporary Belief

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To

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CHAPTER I

OCCULT THEMES IN ENGLISH DRAMA

Scholars have long noted the existence of a group of late Elizabethan and early Jacobean plays in which magicians and their magic play an important role.¹ The first of these plays was Marlowe's Tragical History of Doctor Faustus (1588), and the last was Shakespeare's Tempest (1611).² Not all, however, treat magicians and their magic in the same manner. For example, among the plays is Thomas Dekker's Comedy of Old Fortunatus (1599), in which the central characters use magical devices but do not obtain them by means of any contemporary system of magic. Although these central characters may, therefore, be described as magicians in that they make use of things magical, they cannot be considered as "real" magicians because they do not, by any implied or described performance of ceremonial magic, use their magical powers to gain an affinity with or control over any spirits. In other words, they do not possess the power of "true" magic, which C. J. S. Thompson defines as the

. . . art of influencing the course of events and of producing marvelous physical phenomena, by methods which were supposed to owe their efficacy to their power of compelling the intervention of supernatural beings, or of bringing into operation some occult force of nature.³

On the other hand, such plays as Ben Jonson's Alchemist (c. 1610) present the magician as a charlatan and the belief in magic as superstition and evidence of ignorance. Such plays do not take magicians or their magic seriously.

However, among the magic plays of the period are several in which "real" magicians perform ceremonial magic in accordance with a discernable contemporary system of magic. Their magic constitutes a key structural element of the works, and the consequences of their actions reflect contemporary beliefs about the morality of the practice of magic. These plays include Marlowe's Tragical History of Doctor Faustus (1588), Robert Greene's Honorable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay (c. 1589), Anthony Munday's John à Kent and John à Cumber (1589), the anonymous John of Bordeaux (c. 1590), and Shakespeare's Tempest (1611).⁴ Thus, although the so-called magic plays reveal diverse views of magic, it is possible to distinguish among these concepts. Moreover, while recognizing that the playwrights drew material from a variety of sources and that the plays include, as do all magic plays of the period, a mixture of elements, one can, within this group of five, make distinctions between characters who are theurgists (magicians who control and work through beneficent or rational spirits) and those who are goetists (magicians who attempt to control and use devils or irrational spirits). Although these five plays share with the others the general subject matter of magicians and their magic and partake of the general intellectual

climate of their times, they more accurately reflect the predominant beliefs of Elizabethan England about ceremonial magicians and their magic than do the other dramas. These five plays, then, are true ceremonial magic plays of the Tudor-Stuart stage.

The magician as dramatic character would, undoubtedly, have been difficult for the Elizabethan playwright to resist. Andrew Ettin points out the similarities between magician and artist: the magician functions as an artist in that he creates what is both real and nonexistent, he exercises creative mental power over nature, and he uses his imagination to investigate the world around him.⁵ Robert Rentoul Reed, Jr., notes that the foremost contribution which the magician character makes to a dramatic situation is in his ability to command beings whose intelligences and powers are much greater than those of human beings.⁶ Thus, the magician was as capable a figure for motivating the action in a drama as were distraught characters, such as Kyd's Hieronimo and Shakespeare's Othello.⁷

The magician character employed by Marlowe and by those spurred to imitation by the success of his magician, Faustus, was a logical extension and refinement of the use of the occult in earlier English drama. Frank Humphrey Ristine points out that "the Medieval dramatic heritage becomes an important consideration in accounting for the development of any dramatic form that arose after the influence of humanism had made itself felt on the indigenous stage."⁸ C. F. Tucker Brooke calls

attention, in particular, to the lasting influence of the mystery and morality plays on the entire English drama.⁹ The use of the occult in drama is as ancient as the tragedies of Aeschylus and Euripedes, but both these ancient Greeks and the English writers of the medieval period were motivated in their use of the occult by religious doctrine.¹⁰ In the mystery and morality plays, the god or demon who intervenes is conceived of as mainly an abstraction whose actions are symbolic of some superior power which governs or influences human affairs and not as a real entity which the audience might expect to see in real life.¹¹ The Anti-Christ of the medieval mystery plays uses a type of magic in bringing back to life various corpses, although, in the reality of the play-world, the corpses are actually demons in the forms of the dead; however, no real magicians or sorcerers inhabit the world of pre-Elizabethan drama.¹² The devils who carry the wicked off to hell are representative of the evil influences which cause the damnation of those wicked persons and were not meant to suggest physical beings which the audience might encounter, although the devils of some plays, such as The Fall of Lucifer, are arguably exceptions.¹³

The medieval use of demons, as well as good angels, continued in the morality interludes. The theme of these interludes is the struggle for the soul of man, and the demons presented in these works are personifications of no physical substance.¹⁴ These demons differ, however, from those in the

earliest medieval works. For example, in such works as the thirteenth-century poem, "The Harrowing of Hell," the major demons had been shown as being confined to hell after Christ's death. This condition had changed by the fifteenth century, when, for example, the Lucifer and Belial of The Castle of Perseverance (1425) were presented as concrete characters capable of intervening on earth.¹⁵ Reed notes that this ability is a dominant element in such morality interludes as Wever's Lusty Juventus, Thomas Ingleland's Disobedient Child, and Ulpian Fulwell's Like Will to Like, all of which retained popularity and were acted after 1558 (36).

The English secular dramatists of the early Elizabethan period chose to ignore the intervening demons of their native literary tradition. Indeed, the earliest uses of the occult in secular Elizabethan drama reflect the Renaissance admiration for the classics and for classical doctrine (Reed, 21). The authors of the 1558-87 period were usually academics especially attracted to the ten dramas ascribed to Seneca, from which they drew features and upon which they modeled their works.¹⁶ However, as early as Piker's Historye of Horestes (1567), one can see the blending of the goddess of wrath of the Senecan tradition with the intervening spirits of the medieval Christian tradition (Reed, 41). Reed sees the real importance of those plays which used the Senecan goddess of wrath and which combined this element with the native spirit tradition of English drama in the opportunities which they gave to later playwrights: the

playwrights' increasing use of the Roman goddesses accustomed both playwrights and audiences to the use of the supernatural in secular drama (41, 23).

Those secular plays prior to the opening of public theaters in 1576 had been written to appeal to courtly tastes.¹⁷ They were not intended to present contemporary beliefs about magic and magicians in any detailed or serious way.¹⁸ After the opening of public theaters, however, playwrights realized that they had to appeal to a more diverse audience.¹⁹ Brooke notes that the most important feature in the progress of Tudor drama was "the essential predominance in all plays which truly represent popular interest of the domestic, national spirit over the alien influences, however numerous and freely introduced."²⁰

The anonymous The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune reveals playwrights beginning to combine the magicians and magic of popular belief with the Senecan tradition. Although it was not published until 1589, it was acted as early as 1582 and contains a number of gods and goddesses who interact with the mortal characters of the play. Bomelio, an exiled nobleman, has studied numerous books on magic and uses his subsequent powers to aid the lovers, Fidelia and Hermione, whose relationship and its complications are the major elements of the plot.

The influence of the Italian commedia dell' arte on the English drama may also be seen in The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune, in which the presentation of Bomelio contains many of the elements of the commedia dell' arte magician.

This form of improvised drama had been seen by Englishmen at the French court as early as 1571,²¹ and evidence exists that English audiences were familiar with the form.²² One of the stock characters of commedia dell' arte is a magician whose magic combines sensationalism, pathos, and comic relief.²³

According to Barbara A. Mowat, the commedia dell' arte magician uses "charms to interfere in the lives of others" and uses "'spirits' to cudgel and torment" his enemies.²⁴ The commedia dell' arte magician often renounces his magic,²⁵ as do some of the magicians in the Tudor-Stuart magic plays. Marlowe's Faustus, Greene's Friar Bacon, and Shakespeare's Prospero all either renounce their magic or cease the practice of it.

Thus, the period preceding the appearance of Faustus on the English stage was one in which Senecan influence on the secular drama had been combined with the Christian spirit tradition of the medieval religious drama. Italian commedia dell' arte contributed the figure of the magician to secular drama. Moreover, the opening of the public theaters forced playwrights to appeal to a wider audience than merely the courtly. This audience's traditional belief in spirits, magic, and magicians made the magician an especially appealing dramatic character. The ceremonial magician characters practiced magic familiar to their audience and were affected by their practice as that audience expected them to be.

CHAPTER II
THE ELIZABETHAN AUDIENCE;
THE HISTORY OF ITS MAGIC BELIEFS

The magician character succeeded for Marlowe and others not only because of its inherent appeal as character and its historical development, but also because of its correspondence to the real magicians of the Elizabethan world. Hardin Craig notes that one must resist the temptation to view Elizabethan works as if their authors or audiences were our contemporaries. He points out that critics often neglect the point that ". . . the writers of the Renaissance expressed the opinions of their age."²⁶ The audiences of the time recognized the magicians or sorcerers of the stage as counterparts of those whom they knew to exist in their own communities and believed that the plays realistically portrayed the world in which they, the audience, lived.²⁷ To the Elizabethan audience, Felix Schelling notes, magicians practicing magic "seemed the natural representative of things universally known to be true."²⁸ The Englishmen whose opinions informed the magic plays and who watched their first performances had a traditional belief in spirits, magic, and magicians, a belief which had been strengthened by medieval Catholic practices and further intensified by the Reformation.

The general intellectual climate of the Renaissance encouraged an interest in magic. Renaissance man recognized

no real distinction between the material and the spiritual, concluding that the seeming distinction between the two resulted more from man's inability to perceive clearly than from any basic difference in the nature of the two.²⁹ The increasing stress on human reason did not, therefore, preclude belief in magic. In fact, the rise of humanism during the Renaissance increased rather than decreased its importance.³⁰ As the Renaissance developed, humanists stressed the importance and power of human reason. The Renaissance view of man as a micro-cosm linking the material and spiritual worlds contributed to a desire to exalt the power of man and to use magic as an instrument of that exaltation.³¹ The interest of Renaissance scholars in the ancient also contributed to the appeal of magic during the age. Scholars studied both real and bogus sources of ancient knowledge professing to contain solutions to human problems.³² Lynn Thorndike sees the growing influence of Neoplatonism, resulting from the scholarship of Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, among others, as contributing to

. . . a vague general notion that not only are the ethereal and elementary worlds joined by occult sympathy, but that all parts of the universe are somehow mystically connected, and that a simple magic key may be discovered by which we may become masters of the entire universe.³³

Even those who most vehemently objected to astrology because of the lack of free will which it allowed men were attracted to magic because it promised to liberate man from nature.³⁴

As great as was the appeal of magic to those who exalted both man's reason and his position in the universe, it had an equally strong appeal to those who rejected the humanists' exaltation of reason as being arrogant. This group believed that man was dependent upon God and could come to knowledge only through an understanding of God's symbols, scattered throughout nature. Moreover, they sought such an understanding through "illumination, revelation, and initiation into a body of ancient esoteric knowledge."³⁵ Clearly, then, the period was one which, as Charles G. Nauert notes, marked "not a stage in the abandonment of the occult in favor of pure reason, but a re-emphasis of the magical world view."³⁶

Although the Renaissance was also a period in which attention to science increased, this attention often was mingled with an interest in magic. James G. Frazer notes that because both magic and science are based on notions of order and uniformity, neither scientist nor magician doubts "that the same causes will always produce the same effects, that the performance of the proper ceremony, accompanied by the appropriate spell, will inevitably be attended by the desired results. . . ."³⁷ Men primarily devoted to science continued to discuss and accept occult ideas well into the seventeenth century.³⁸

Just as the changes in direction of thought during the Renaissance were conducive to a continuing, and even expanding, interest and belief in magic, so too was the Renaissance inheritance of medieval tradition. As Nauert notes, Renaissance

magic, like every other area of Renaissance life, continued medieval traditions.³⁹

Although Frazer notes the conflict of principle between religion and magic (a prayer supplicates; a spell commands) and the rivalry which exists between priest and magician,⁴⁰ Keith Thomas argues that the medieval Church weakened the distinctions between prayers and charms and that the magicians of Tudor England "did not invent their own charms: [instead,] they inherited them from the medieval Church, and their formulae and rituals were largely derivative products of centuries of Catholic teaching."⁴¹ He also points out that the same lack of distinction between religion and magic which often exists in primitive societies existed as well in medieval England.⁴² Certainly, the medieval period was one in which belief in the supernatural flourished. George Lyman Kittredge's Witchcraft in Old and New England details overwhelming evidence of the practice of magic and sorcery in England during this period.⁴³ Thus, while a conflict of principle may have existed, no such conflict existed in fact. Religion and magic had been inextricably bound since the beginnings of Christianity to the extent that early Christianity gained many converts simply because they were convinced that they were obtaining a more powerful form of magic.⁴⁴ St. Augustine, one of the great fathers of the Church, played an important role in the transmission of classical superstition to modern times and made it necessary for the Scholastics, for whom he was the final authority, to

fit those beliefs into their theology.⁴⁵ Thus, some of the best religious minds of the Middle Ages accepted the basic ideas of the magical sciences. Even the legend of Faust, in an early form, had associations with a prominent Christian figure. For example, the legend of Theophilus, an earlier version of the legend, had appeared in English in about 1,000 A.D., when Aelfric, writing a homily on the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, summarized it and mentioned the written contract.⁴⁶ Thus, the story of a magician entering into a contract with the Devil was first brought to England long before the 1580's, and the story's first recorded appearance in English was as part of a discourse about the mother of Christ.

Although the medieval Church fought against belief in magicians and magic throughout the Middle Ages, it fought against only the kind of magic that was not sanctioned by the Church. Significantly, the Church did not deny the possibility of supernatural action. Rather, it stressed that such action could emanate only from God or the Devil and proceeded to base the legitimacy of any magic on the official Church view of it; for example, the Church considered the working of miracles (unquestionably the performance of true ceremonial magic in terms of C. J. S. Thompson's definition of the magic art) to be the most efficient way to demonstrate the truth of its teachings.⁴⁷ The medieval Church, then, was an important source of a belief in magic, regardless of its professed stance against magicians and magic.

According to D. P. Walker, "the mass, with its music, words of consecration, incense, lights, wine, and supreme magical effect--transubstantiation," was a fundamental influence on all medieval and Renaissance magic.⁴⁸ The common Englishman, who did not understand the theology behind the doctrine of transubstantiation, believed that the ceremony was one in which the power and knowledge of the priest, combined with the pronunciation of words in a ritualistic manner, produced a change in the nature of material objects.⁴⁹ The emphasis of the Church upon the doctrine of the divine word, imparted in the Gospel of St. John, paralleled the Neoplatonic magical theory of language, which postulated the direct correspondence between a word and the divine idea which it expresses.⁵⁰ Moreover, the veneration of relics during the period shows the magical power with which the people endowed religious objects. In addition, the medieval Church seemed, to the English people, to be a source of supernatural power which could help them in their daily lives. As Thomas points out, the sacraments seemed to them to work automatically, regardless of the moral worth of the priest (47).

In principle, then, the medieval Church protested against belief in magic; in practice, the medieval Englishman believed that the Church was magic. By the early Middle Ages, the Church had extended its practice of magic beyond the boundaries of the strictly religious. The Church had, by then, developed a whole range of formulae designed to bless secular activities (Thomas,

29). Thus, the Church sanctioned magic that was both religious and secular, and by relying on magic to achieve its ends, it not only failed to provide any real alternative to a belief in magic but also established a new source of magical power for the common Englishman. Those who did not attend Church, or who attended reluctantly, continued to accept the magic of the village wizard (Thomas, 159). Those who embraced Catholicism accepted the magic systems provided by the Church. Thus, both groups believed in magic, the primary difference being simply its source. During the Middle Ages, then, the Church blurred its own professed distinction between religion and magic and, by doing so, intensified rather than diminished a belief in the efficacy of magic.

The Reformation also had a major impact upon the belief in magic; however, it led not to a rejection of magic by the majority of the populace of Protestant England but to an increased intensity in their belief in it. Thus, magic, which the common people had identified with the doctrines and sacraments of the Catholic Church, was not abandoned under the influence of Protestantism. In fact, in the late sixteenth century, Protestant England was generally more favorable toward magic and the occult than had been Catholic England,⁵¹ both in spite of and because of the efforts of the activists of the Reformation.

The line between magic and religion, which had been blurred by the medieval Church, was sharply redrawn by the activists

of the Reformation, who viewed the sacraments and ceremonies of the Catholic Church as part of a blasphemous magic (Thomas, 51). The most vehement opposition to magic in sixteenth-century England came from the Puritans, who, in contrast to medieval Catholic theologians, denounced both ecclesiastical and non-ecclesiastical magic and believed almost any kind of formal prayer or ceremony, including those of the Anglican Church, to be sorcery. This Puritan, and the more general Protestant, reaction against magic was not due to or specifically directed against the rediscovered magic of the Neoplatonists but was against the rituals of the Catholic Church; during Elizabeth's reign, the term "conjurer" could be used to describe any Catholic priest (Thomas, 69, 68). The Protestants were much more zealous in their pursuit and persecution of witches than had been the Catholics. Henry Charles Lea argues that one of the reasons the persecution of witchcraft greatly increased after the Reformation was that exorcism remained the only generally accepted supernatural function which the clergy could exercise and from which they could profit.⁵² In spite of the activists' vigorous assault, however, the populace of Protestant England did not forsake magic. As late as 1584, a Protestant document estimated that as many as three-quarters of the people still retained some belief in magic, belief which was, perhaps, inspired by need (Thomas, 78).

One major difference between the world view of Catholicism and that of Protestantism concerns the role of human effort in

salvation. As Paul R. Sellin points out, the world shown in the medieval Everyman is one in which a human being can choose between alternatives and, thus, assert his will. In other words, he can choose salvation and deliberately satisfy the conditions necessary for grace.⁵³ In contrast, the theologies of Martin Luther and John Calvin remove man's ability to choose his fate and deny his control over his own spiritual destiny. To both Luther and Calvin, God alone choose and controls. Luther's reliance on faith alone, Calvin's insistence upon God's unknowable will and omnipotence, and man's helplessness in the face of these concepts removed human effort from the equation of salvation for the sixteenth-century Englishman and, thus, removed any surety of that salvation.⁵⁴ The notion of the Church as a sacramental agent was no longer viable. The Englishman who had credited the words of the mass with a magical efficacy now faced a doctrine which rejected any spiritual effect of words.⁵⁵ The Reformation eliminated the ecclesiastical magic that men had felt could protect them and did not substitute any system of protection in its place. W. E. H. Lecky argues that

. . . whenever a religion which rests in a great measure on a system of terrorism, and which paints in dark and forcible colours the misery of men and the power of evil spirits, is intensely realized, it will engender the belief in witchcraft or magic.⁵⁶

The Reformation's rejection of man's ability to control his salvation and its emphasis on the fallen nature of man and the

constant presence of the Devil in the world fulfill Lecky's requirements. To the common Englishman, the religion of the Protestants was one of much less power than had been that of the Catholics. It offered him no supernatural assistance. Instead, it forced him to rely on his own resources and the uncertain will of God for solutions to his daily problems. It is no wonder, then, as Thomas writes,

. . . that many should have turned away to non-religious modes of thought which offered a more direct prospect of relief and a more immediate explanation of why it was that some men prospered while others literally perished by the wayside.⁵⁷

The common Englishman needed a system to account for the evil that befell him and found such a system in a magic in which evil magicians could produce evil effects.⁵⁸ Thus, the sixteenth-century Englishman did not renounce magic and embrace the doctrines of Protestantism; instead, he turned to magic with renewed vigor to find relief from the austerity of Protestantism.

That the inhabitants of Renaissance England took full advantage of the available systems of magic may be seen in the extent of magic practices and in the variety exhibited during the period. While many of the occult writings of the time were not available to the masses, K. M. Briggs notes that many manuscript books of magic for the less learned were available.⁵⁹ Whatever the source or sources of information about magic may have been, however, in 1578, magic was reported to be the

subject most frequently debated by Englishmen.⁶⁰ Magicians such as Dr. John Dee and Dr. Simon Forman were well-known and active in London, and almost every English village was reputed to number among its inhabitants several witches or sorcerers.⁶¹ Thus, magic was of major concern to the intellectual as well as to the rustic, and magicians were active in the city as well as in the villages. Furthermore, the intellectual and the rustic both influenced and were influenced by each other to some extent. Thomas argues that "it was the intellectual magician who was stimulated by the activities of the . . . [village magician] into a search for the occult influences which he believed must have underlain them" (229). The intellectual had much to consider. The magic of the villages was used for almost any conceivable purpose. According to Thomas, one primary use, however, was as a part of or substitute for medicine. The lack of any orthodox medical services left most of the populace reliant on traditional folk medicine with its use of charms and spells, many of which reflected the old belief in the curative power of the medieval Church. Among these was the use of garbled versions of Catholic prayers, not as supplications but as admonitory spells (178-79). Just as the intellectual was led by the village magician to speculate about magic, so the village magician was led by the intellectual's speculation to alter his magic rituals. Drawing circles on the ground, pronouncing incantations, fasting and prayer, the use of such props as wands, candles, and sceptres--all were

modifications of common rituals which resulted from the direct influence of intellectual speculation and which increased in use and were further modified under the stimulus of Renaissance Neoplatonism (Thomas, 229). Whether the result of the influence of one upon the other (or of some other cause), the intellectual debater and the village magician shared a common belief in the power of sympathy, the connection of the spiritual and the material and the ability of the two to act upon and influence one another (Thomas, 227).

Thus, the sixteenth-century audience had a traditional belief in magic which had been strengthened by medieval Catholic practice and principle and further intensified by the Reformation. To such an audience, living in a world in which the practice of magic was widespread, the magician was a real entity. Moreover, such an audience would have recognized both that the magician character represented a real entity and that his magic corresponded to one of the two major systems of ceremonial magic extant during the period. These systems of magic are reflected in the true ceremonial magic plays.

CHAPTER III
THEURGY AND GOETY:
SIXTEENTH-CENTURY THEORIES OF MAGIC

Although the structure of sixteenth-century theories of ceremonial magic was not a rigid one,⁶² two general lines of thought may be perceived: that of the theurgists and that of the goetists. The fundamental belief common to both was that suprasensible living essences existed which could both operate in the physical world and be represented by a form in that world.⁶³ The major distinction between the two systems was in the type of essences which the ceremonial magician summoned to his assistance. For assistance in controlling lesser spirits, theurgists called upon those median spirits which they believed to exist in the Platonic chain between man and the gods; goetists called upon superior devils for assistance in controlling lesser devils.⁶⁴ In this distinction lies the most generally accepted criteria for distinguishing "good" or "white" magic from "bad" or "black" magic.⁶⁵ Excepting those who believed all magic to be witchcraft, people believed that the theurgist worked with and within a divinely sanctioned Chain of Being and that the goetist turned for assistance to the devils who had revolted against God.⁶⁶ The line between the goetist and the witch was an ill-defined one, and the stigma which had been attached to magic was, to a large degree, transferred to witchcraft and,

therefore, to goety.⁶⁷ Thus, three views of the morality of magic existed in sixteenth-century England: the orthodox religious view that all magic was witchcraft, the less orthodox but commonly held view that the morality of the magic depended to a great extent upon the magician's source of aid, and the unorthodox view presumably held by the practitioners of goety that no form of magic was immoral.

Lecky argues that, because of Plato's aggrandizement of the realm of spirit, any revival of interest in Platonic philosophy was automatically accompanied by a corresponding revival of interest in magic.⁶⁸ Certainly, the sixteenth-century theories of ceremonial magic, theurgy and goety, were both closely linked to the Neoplatonic revival which emerged in the Florentine Italian Renaissance and which was spurred on by Ficino's translation of the Corpus Hermeticum, the supposed teachings of the Egyptian god Troth, Hermes Trismegistus.⁶⁹ This volume, falsely believed to be pre-Christian, possibly even pre-Mosaic, taught that, by mystical regeneration, it was possible for man to regain the domination over nature which he had lost with the Fall of Man. Neoplatonists conceived of the world as one shaped by emanations from an unknowable Absolute which operates through successive stages of activity until the emanations become matter. Platonists, thus, conceived of the universe as consisting of two realms: the supersensuous of intelligible matter which contains the forms of all things, and the reflected world of sense which contains corporeal

matter.⁷⁰ One of the stages through which the emanations from the Absolute passed was the stars, which were believed to imprint forms upon the sub-lunar world.⁷¹ The Neoplatonists believed man to be a microcosm in whom the forms of all things have been imprinted and who should be able not only to comprehend nature but to control and direct the activities of nature.⁷² In his volume on natural magic, Agrippa writes that ". . . it should be possible for us to ascend by the same degrees through each World to the same very original World itself, the Maker of all things and First Cause. . . ." ⁷³ This ascension was believed to require the casting away of material preoccupations and the purification of the soul. One who had been so purified was believed able to acquire vast knowledge of nature and to employ the powers of nature for beneficial purposes. He was believed to be able to use the power he attracted both to change himself and, by reflecting the power onto them, to influence others.⁷⁴

The similarity between the type of ascension described by Agrippa, with its subsequent union with an Absolute of unlimited power, and the practices and beliefs of Christianity is obvious. The powers believed possible under Neoplatonic doctrine differ from those ascribed to the Christian God only in that no divine cause is assumed.⁷⁵ Ficino and other early Renaissance Neoplatonists sought to avoid religious censure by stressing Neoplatonic practices not overtly anti-Christian. They emphasized their desire to work only through natural

forces. They taught that each material object bore the dominant imprint of a particular heavenly body and that one could ascend (achieve a more harmonious relationship with a particular body) by eating those foods, drinking those beverages, using those scents, and otherwise adopting those things which that body had imprinted.⁷⁶ Even this doctrine, which relies on no spiritual intermediaries between man and the First Cause, is an obvious threat to religion because of its attribution of power and ability to man, an attribution with an inherent consequence of atheism.⁷⁷

However, other Neoplatonic thinkers crossed the boundaries which Ficino and others had set upon the practice of Neoplatonic magic. For example, Pico's Oration on the Dignity of Man urges that one who wishes to realize man's potential should study magic and the Cabala, in addition to ethics, dialectic, philosophy, and theology. The Cabala, a collection of wisdom supposedly passed from one generation of Jews to the next from Mosaic times, deals with divine or ceremonial magic, celestial or mathematical magic, and the natural magic which concerns the occult virtues in natural objects.⁷⁸ These thinkers were not concerned with attracting impersonal planetary influences. They were concerned with the descent of Soul from the Absolute through gods and demons to the world of sense; they emphasized the relationship between those gods or demons and man.⁷⁹ They believed that the world was under the dominance of spirits and that one who could gain knowledge of these spirits could control

them for his own purposes. This substitution of spirits for the planetary influences stressed by Ficino was even less acceptable to organized religions because it carried not the threat of atheism but the threat of a rival religion. Orthodox Christians saw all the demons and spirits of the Neoplatonic system as devils and considered both theurgy and goety as witchcraft and the ceremonies of the magician to be no more than a witch's signal to his master.⁸⁰

Wayne Shumaker points out that, during the 1580's and 1590's when witchcraft trials were at their height, many treatises denounced all magic as the acts of devils who have great knowledge from their earlier existence as angels and from the thousands of years they since have had to study the universe. These treatises proclaimed that magicians could take no credit for any feats they performed.⁸¹ Nevertheless, magicians continued to perform. Although Pico rejected goety, many Renaissance Neoplatonic practitioners of magic did not. Both systems of magic continued to be an important part of the Renaissance Englishman's life, as theurgists sought to reach union with various orders of celestial demons, even angels, while goetists sought control of devils and the terrestrial demons of pagan belief.⁸² Theurgy, thus, continued to contain the Neoplatonic ideal of ascension by man to a higher realm, while goety was more concerned with earthly material power. The theurgists claimed to be celebrating the majesty of God and insisted that the goetists turned from God in search

of personal power.⁸³ Thus, although both theories were linked to the Neoplatonic revival, a distinction existed between the philosophies of the two. Nevertheless, the distinction between the actual magic practices of the two, if any, was ill-defined.

The ceremonial magician, whether theurgist or goetist, had at his disposal various means of gaining control of spirits by means of which he sought to operate. Suffumigations and observations of the phases of the heavenly bodies (practices clearly tied to the non-demonic magic advocated by Ficino) were believed to be important,⁸⁴ as was the power of music. Early Renaissance Neoplatonists believed music to have great power because they believed that both music and the human spirit were living kinds of air moving in an organized manner and that a song had an even greater power because it carried an intellectual content.⁸⁵ However, the magician was thought to exercise his greatest power with incantations and symbols expressing verbal and numerical relationships.⁸⁶ Words used in incantations were held to have two types of power: the first was the power of the idea represented by the word; the second was the power of the mind using the word.⁸⁷ Moreover, the power was thought to be even greater if the word came from a language considered noble, particularly from Hebrew. The joining of the words in incantations was believed to give a power greater than that in the sum of the individual words. Hebrew letters were not considered conventional symbols but so representative of the structure of the universe that

manipulation of them held an intrinsic power.⁸⁸ Magicians believed those names which express the true essence of things to be the most powerful but believed that man could not usually discover true names by the exercise of reason and must search occult hermetic literature for them.⁸⁹ The name "Jesus" was deemed the most powerful, since God was believed to have given it power over all things.⁹⁰ Numbers, which are represented by letters in some systems of notation, were believed to possess great power, and magicians placed great importance in the study of mathematics.⁹¹ For example, the number "10," because it represents a circle and a return to unity, was thought to be the most powerful of all numbers.⁹²

Symbolic figures were considered to be as powerful as numbers. The circle, believed to be the perfect figure, and the pentacle, considered a great force against demons, were held to be the most powerful geometric figures.⁹³ The circle, one of the most important parts in any magical ceremony, formed a spiritual barrier which protected the magician from any evil spirits which might be invoked. Even the theurgist, who sought to invoke beneficent spirits, might be in danger of invoking such evil spirits if he had been careless in his preparation or impure in his intention.⁹⁴ Moreover, lack of suitable precaution was believed to invite death from epilepsy, apoplexy, or strangulation.⁹⁵

The ceremonial magician, then, had to prepare himself, both by studying those areas of knowledge essential to his art

and by placing himself in the proper frame of mind for the almost religious rite in which he was engaged. Agrippa set forth as prerequisites for any formal control of spirits a learning in the natural sciences, mathematics, and divinity, as well as the renunciation of carnal desires.⁹⁶ Before the actual performance of his magic art, the magician also had to prepare himself by means of repentance, expiation, fasting, ablutions, and meditation.⁹⁷ Once he had prepared himself, however, the sixteenth-century English magician, whether theurgist or goetist, had a great array of weapons to employ in the practice of his art.

In sixteenth-century England, then, two distinct systems of magic existed: that of the theurgist, who worked through beneficent spirits, seeking to ascend to a higher realm, and that of the goetist, who, in his search for personal power, sought to control devils. These two basic lines of thought concerning the spirits to whom a magician could look for assistance had been contributed by Italian Neoplatonism. Nevertheless, although the details of the arts of theurgy and goety may not have been known to the members of an English audience by those designations, the Neoplatonic doctrines of the spirit world were known to the educated. Moreover, the common people, most of whom accepted the reality of magicians practicing magic, could readily connect their belief in the reality of "white" and "black" magic to the concepts of magic based on the assistance of higher spirits and of magic which

appealed to devils. Thus, the systems of magic reflected in the ceremonial magic plays would have been understood by the sixteenth-century audience, an audience which had a great interest in magic and which did not, in spite of the orthodox religious view, universally condemn magic as being immoral.

The historical development of the magician as character, the common acceptance of and belief in magic, the existence of two particular systems of magic--all were conducive to the appearance of the magician in Tudor-Stuart drama. Appear he did, but the role the playwrights assigned their magicians varied. Among the magic plays, those of the Jacobean period (with the exception of Shakespeare's Tempest) do not reflect the seriousness with which the sixteenth-century Englishman viewed magic. The Jacobean were more analytical, less sure of man's potential to understand and control the universe, and placed less belief in magic, if not in witchcraft.⁹⁸ Those plays which treat the practice of magic as chicanery, such as Jonson's Alchemist, belong to the Jacobean period. Though the conjurations in Jacobean plays may be elaborate, they are spectacle and show no real belief in the powers of magic.⁹⁹ Barnabe Barnes' Devil's Charter (1607) presents conjurations and many of the trappings of the magician's art, but the magician's intention from his first appearance is to form a compact with Satan, and, despite the superficial elements of the magician's ceremony, he is merely a witch. Those magic plays which do reflect the Elizabethan's seriousness about

magic and which have as their central characters "real" ceremonial magicians reflect, in addition, contemporary views of the morality of the practice of magic.

Thus, in the true ceremonial magic plays of the Tudor-Stuart stage, the two successful theurgists, Prospero in The Tempest and John à Kent in John à Kent and John à Cumber, who work through median spirits, escape condemnation, and their magic results in no evil effects. Friar Bacon in John of Bordeaux is a successful goetist. His exclusive work through devils would seem to require that he be identified as a heretic and that he renounce his magic. However, in John of Bordeaux, Friar Bacon is cloaked in Christian morality. While he does, indeed, traffic with devils, he does so with the sanction of God for the benefit of man. He is, therefore, a reflection of the medieval identification of the Church with a helpful and moral magic, an identification not uncommonly made by the members of the Elizabethan audience and considered by them to be valid. The goetists who do not have an affinity with God do not escape so easily. Friar Bacon, a successful goetist in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, and Marlowe's Faustus, an unsuccessful goetist, must both renounce their magic. Given the censorship of the period and the orthodox religious view of magic, any traffic with devils not specifically sanctioned by God could probably not avoid such a result if the playwright were to escape censure for himself. In the case of Faustus,

however, another reason may exist for his damnation; his failure as a magician.

CHAPTER IV

FAUSTUS: THE FIRST CEREMONIAL MAGICIAN OF THE ELIZABETHAN STAGE

Sir E. K. Chambers dates the composition of Marlowe's Doctor Faustus as 1588.¹⁰⁰ Scholars who argue for a later date point out that no English translation of the German Faust-Buch was available in England until 1592.¹⁰¹ However, Jeffrey Hart notes that on February 28, 1589, "a ballad of the life and death of Doctor Faustus the great Cunngerer" was entered in the Stationer's Register and argues that the Faust story was, therefore, known in England prior to 1592. He also notes that many Englishmen pictured Germany as the homeland of sorcerers and magicians, a fact which indicates their acquaintance with German tales of magic.¹⁰² Moreover, a legend very similar to that of Faust was already familiar to the English. As earlier mentioned, the legend of Theophilus, complete with written contract between a man and the Devil, appeared in a homily written about 1,000 A. D. Kittredge, pointing to its appearance in the thirteenth-century South English Legendaries and in the fourteenth-century North English Homilies and noting that a third version is extant in Middle English, calls the legend "a stock item in medieval collections of miracles and virtues."¹⁰³

Assuming that Marlowe had somehow seen an early version of the Faust-Buch, his use of the material is both accurate and

restrained. Faust had died in 1539, and his deeds had been greatly exaggerated after his death. The biography published in 1587 was viewed as history, and Marlowe took few liberties with his material; his doing so would not have been viewed with favor by his contemporaries.¹⁰⁴ He did, however, omit some of the more extravagant features of the Faust-Buch, such as the appearance of Beelzebub and Belial in the shape of grotesque animals breathing fire, perhaps to make his work more plausible.¹⁰⁵

Faustus's signing of the compact with Satan, the ignoble uses to which he puts his (or rather Mephistophilis's) powers, his rejection of numerous offers of salvation, and his tragic and horrifying end all seem to show him as the witch of orthodox religious belief and to reinforce the notion that magic is, at base, merely witchcraft. However, the portrayal of Faust and the tragic stature with which Marlowe endows him are at odds with the usual Elizabethan portrayal of the witch, usually shown as a base and ignorant creature attended by a familiar in animal form.¹⁰⁶ Sidney R. Homan, Jr., has asked why Marlowe, given his admittedly unorthodox religious views, would write a play so in keeping with orthodox opinion.¹⁰⁷ Though Homan deals with those elements from the morality plays which he considers Marlowe to have introduced as non-thematic elements in the play, his question is valid for any study which deals with the magic of the play and with Faustus as a magician. However, one wonders if the question should more accurately

be not why Marlowe chose to reflect the orthodox religious view of the morality of his magician but whether, in fact, he did so choose. A more satisfactory manner in which to view Faustus may well be to view him not as a man who is automatically a witch because he practices magic but as a goetist who becomes a witch because his intellectual flaws and his lack of skill lead him to failure as a magician and, thus, into witchcraft and damnation. Contrary to the traditional view, Faustus may not be a man who has reached the limits of human knowledge and who wishes to transcend those limits through magic. He may, instead, be a man who is neither capable of knowing all that can be known nor of understanding that which he does know.

In desiring to practice magic, Faustus may well be reacting against the same harsh spiritual doctrines of Reformation theology which caused the general increase of interest in magic noted earlier in Protestant England. Faustus has been educated at and teaches at Wittenberg, a university noted for the radical Calvinism of its faculty,¹⁰⁸ but ultimately he does not share the convictions of his colleagues' faith. Rather, the Calvinist doctrine of the elect and of justification by faith alone which disturbed the belief of many in any assured salvation evidently had the same effect on Faustus, who shows a lack of any real belief or interest in theology. Earlier described by the Chorus as "Excelling all whose sweet delight disputes / In heavenly matters of theology,"¹⁰⁹ Faustus himself notes that, since he has taken a degree, he must "be a divine in show" (I.i.3). This

is not a man who is either accomplished in or devoted to religion. This is a man who is more interested in the verbal jousting which gains him esteem than in the study and meditation which might result in his increasing both his knowledge and his ability to reason correctly. That Faustus lacks both knowledge and the ability to reason correctly is made clear in his discussions of the worth of theology, logic, medicine, and law.

Of theology, Faustus proclaims, "Divinity, adieu!" (I.i.47) Faustus gives no indication of having given any extensive consideration to the matter, but, as Joseph T. McCullen notes, Faustus does not have complete knowledge of his theological studies, nor does he recognize their worth.¹¹⁰ Thus, he is hardly in the position to consider his decision intellectually. McCullen notes that Faustus, when evaluating the worth of theology, reads the Biblical injunctions "The reward of sin is death . . ." (I.i.40) and "If we say that we have no sin we deceive our- / selves, and there's no truth in us . . ." (I.i.42-43), but he omits reading those following parts of each verse which promise, respectively, eternal life and forgiveness of sin.¹¹¹ Faustus, then, relies for his interpretation of theology only upon the harsher sections of the Scriptures; he fails to take note of those sections which offer consolation. He concludes, "Ay, we must die an everlasting death" (I.i.45). That his conclusion is not supported by the true and complete meaning of what he has just read may be the

result of his careless inattention to detail or of his lack of the ability to reason. His spiritual despair, perhaps induced by the intensity of the Calvinist doctrine for which Wittenberg was noted, may contribute to the lack of clarity in his thinking about theology. However, if so, the effect of his spiritual despair is clearly compounded by his inherent insensibility, for he does not restrict his flawed interpretations to matters of theology.

Of logic, Faustus declares, "Sweet Analytics, 't is thou hast ravish'd me," and he asks himself, "Is to dispute well logic's chiefest end?" (I.i.6, 8) Obviously answering himself affirmatively, he declares, "Then read, no more; thou hast attain'd the end" (I.i.10). Clearly, he has mistaken a method, disputation, for the desired result of that method, truth.¹¹² In spite of his education and his reputation, he again betrays an inability to apply his knowledge and to reason correctly.

Of medicine, Faustus notes, "The end of physic is our body's health" (I.i.17). Having so noted, he declares that he has attained that end because his prescriptions have saved many cities from the plague. Yet, having declared his medicine capable of the end he has set forth, he rejects it because he is "still but Faustus and a man" (I.i.23) and cannot, therefore, "make man to live eternally, / Or, being dead, raise them to life again" (I.i.24-25). Faustus confuses the man-like end of preserving health, an end which he has attained, with the god-like end of granting eternal life.

Of law, Faustus concludes that its "study fits a mercenary drudge, / Who aims at nothing but external trash" (I.i.34-35). He bases his conclusion upon his reading of two incorrect and incomplete excerpts from Justinian's Institutes,¹¹³ both of which deal with property. He gives no apparent attention to the contribution which law makes to an orderly society in its many other applications, as, indeed, it does in the peaceful resolution of questions of property.

In his less than comprehensive examinations of the worth of theology, of logic, of medicine, and of law, Faustus reveals himself to be a man who, despite a reputation for great knowledge and intellect, has only a superficial knowledge of the subjects which he has, presumably, studied in depth and who does not have the ability to reason correctly and, by so doing, to apply that knowledge which he does possess. He also reveals his lack of interest in the benefits that these disciplines can provide to the members of a society. His desire to raise the dead and his rejection of a theology which does not promise eternal life show a man who aspires to a more than human, god-like power and existence. It reveals that same rejection of human limitations which characterized many Renaissance humanists and which Pico urged in his Oration on the Dignity of Man. Pico, however, had advocated the study and practice of magic only as a supplement to the other avenues open for human advancement. For Faustus, with his limited knowledge and his intellectual flaws, magic

is the only avenue. Thus, he turns to magic as the only way in which to achieve his ends. He declares:

These metaphysics of magicians
And necromantic books are heavenly;
Lines, circles, scenes, letters, and characters,
Ay, these are those that Faustus most desires.
(I.i.48-51)

He sees magic as capable of providing "a world of profit and delight, / Of power, of honor, of omnipotence" (I.i.52-53), so he embraces magic, saying, "All things that move between the quiet poles / Shall be at my command . . ." (I.i.55-56). Clearly, Faustus is describing the position in the Chain of Being which he hopes that his practice of magic will allow him to achieve when he declares, "A sound magician is a mighty god" (I.i.61). Yet, as he turns to the new area of study, one must consider both whether Faustus has the ability to master his new discipline, whether, in fact, he can be a "sound magician," and what the exact nature of his commitment to that discipline is.

The Elizabethan concept of learning required that the student pursue self-knowledge, have faith in man's spiritual destiny, accept his responsibility to society, and show wisdom in his conduct.¹¹⁴ Faustus's inability to recognize the imperfect nature of his accomplishments in his previous studies is clearly revealed in his analyses of those studies. His rejection of divinity and his fear of death reveal a complete lack of faith in his spiritual destiny. His rejections of

logic, of medicine, and of law show a disregard for the needs of society. Both his analyses and his rejections reveal his inherent insensibility, his basic lack of wisdom. In the Elizabethan concept of learning, then, he lacks the necessary tools for true learning.

Indeed, one must ask the nature of Faustus's commitment to magic. He desires, he says, "Lines, circles, scenes, letters, and characters" (I.i.50). These are but the outward symbols, the trappings of magic. Faustus shows no desire to understand the principles which underlie the use of these symbols in the practice of magic. He merely wants to use the outward symbols as instruments to gain worldly wealth and power. He wishes to command spirits who can "fly to India for gold, / [and] Ransack the ocean for orient pearl" (I.i.81-82). He desires to know the secrets of foreign kings (I.i.86) and to become a king (I.i.93). He seeks not the theurgist's union with median spirits to obtain beneficial effects and to move toward an eventual union with an Absolute but the goetist's power over inferior spirits to obtain personal benefit. Further, Faustus is not even willing to invest the time and effort required to become a "good" goetist, a "sound magician" (I.i.61). He has a vision of the power which magic can give to a "studious artisan" (I.i.54) but is much more interested in the power than in the study required to achieve that power. Immediately upon deciding that the power which he seeks lies in magic, Faustus sends his servant, Wagner, to summon two magician friends,

Cornelius and Valdes. His reason for so doing--"Their conference will be a greater help to me / Than all my labors, plod I ne'er so fast" (I.i.67-68)--is the closest approach Faustus makes to any acknowledgement of his intellectual limitations and of his unwillingness to invest the time required to master the subject of magic. His calling upon these particular assistants again reveals his faulty perception.

Just as one must question Faustus's ability to become a successful magician and the nature of his commitment to so doing, so one must question the efficacy of his choice of tutors. When Faustus expresses his desire to "be as cunning as Agrippa was" (I.i.116) and to be so almost instantaneously, his companions fail to point out the requirement for extensive study of mathematics, natural science, religion, the Cabala, and Hermetic literature urged by those who believed in the efficacy of magic. Rather, they tell him that "these books, thy wit, and our experience / Shall make all nations to canonize us" (I.i.118-19). As Cornelius and Valdes have not hitherto been "canonized," they evidently count on the intellect of Faustus as the key ingredient previously missing from their attempts to gain power and wealth through magic. Faustus does not question the previous inability of his tutors to succeed through the practices they now propose to teach him.

For their part, Cornelius and Valdes base their judgment of and their belief in Faustus's abilities on his reputation for knowledge and wisdom, a reputation Marlowe has already

shown to be undeserved. Cornelius tells Faustus, "He that is grounded in astrology, / Enrich'd with tongues, well seen [in] minerals, / Hath all the principles magic doth require" (I.i. 137-39; brackets in the original). This advice encompasses the cabalastic areas of the celestial, astrology; of the divine, languages; and of the natural, physical science. However, it ignores those other earlier noted preparations generally thought necessary for a safe and effective ceremony to be carried out. In particular, it ignores the importance placed on the mental and spiritual preparation of the magician by means of repentance, expiation, fasting, ablutions, and meditations. Even if those preparations mentioned by Cornelius were all that were considered necessary for the ceremonial magician's operations, Faustus has shown such limited understanding of those disciplines in which he claims mastery that one should have little confidence in his grounding in these areas, also. When Faustus expresses his impatient desire to begin his career as a magician (I.i. 149-51), Valdes does not urge him to begin the study and preparations necessary to master the art of magic but rather to "haste . . . to some solitary grove, / And bear wise Bacon's and Albanus' works, / The Hebrew Psalter and New Testament" (I.i.152-54). Although Valdes does tell Faustus that he and Cornelius will inform him as to what other items he should take to the "solitary grove," Cornelius must point out to Valdes that they should let Faustus know the incantations and ceremonies necessary for the invocation of spirits before he begins his

attempts at magic. Although Valdes recognizes the wisdom of this suggestion, he goes on to tell Faustus that, once he has learned "the rudiments" of magic, "thou [wilt] be perfecter than I" (I.i.161). Marlowe may well be commenting both on the level of knowledge concerning magic attained by Faustus's instructors and on the subsequent degree of ability as a magician which Faustus is likely to attain. Faustus, as unaware of the difficulties in his situation as he has been shown to be of so much else, plans to "canvass ever quiddity" of magic immediately after dinner and to conjure on that very night (I.i.161-65).

The conjuration which he attempts is, in the tradition of goety, not that of an able magician, but neither is it blasphemous nor the signal of the witch.¹¹⁵ Faustus, in his performance, exhibits doubt either about his ability as a magician or about the power of magic itself. He does not go forth in confidence to command devils to obey his will. Rather, he must urge himself to "try if devils will obey . . . [his] hest" (I.iii.6). In his effort, however, he does not necessarily resort to witchcraft. He states that he has prayed and sacrificed to devils before beginning his conjuration (I.iii.6). Robert H. West points out that the prayer which Faustus has uttered may be the "dulia," which the Roman Catholic Church allowed to saints and angels and which magical rituals regarded as applicable to other spirits, rather than the "latria," the prayer of total submission.¹¹⁶ Moreover, the sacrifices to

which Faustus refers are not necessarily blood sacrifices,¹¹⁷ and the fact of his having performed them does not automatically make him a witch. Many magic ceremonies made use of offerings of food, drink, or other items which were intended to attract spirits and to impose an obligation on them by their acceptance of gifts.¹¹⁸ Faustus could as easily be referring to this type of sacrificial offering as to any other. He has taken steps to protect himself from the spirits whom he intends to raise and to enforce his will upon them. He has drawn the circle believed to protect the conjurer (I.iii.8). He has anagrammatized God's name and those of various saints as one seeking to use the mystical power of letters and words (I.iii.10). He has drawn geometric figures and characters to attract the influence of heavenly bodies. In his invocation itself, he seeks to use Jehova's name to enforce his will. Nevertheless, the invocation has no clear rationale. In his performance, Faustus both supplicates and commands. He both appeals to Beelzebub that Mephistophilis may appear and commands that Mephistophilis do so (I.iii.18-25). However, although Faustus's performance is not that of an accomplished practitioner, it does indicate that he takes precautions against those spirits which he might invoke, and it does not indicate any clear intention on his part to submit totally to any evil force.

Faustus's performance may not blaspheme, but it does clearly indicate that his grasp of the magic art, so recently acquired with the assistance of such obviously inadequate

tutors, is no more complete than had been his understanding of theology, logic, medicine, or law. Mephistophilis does, however, appear.

When Mephistophilis appears in his true form, Faustus commands that he change it for that of a monk (I.iii.26-29). After Mephistophilis exits to do so, Faustus congratulates himself on his excellence as a magician (I.iii.35-36). Yet, when Mephistophilis informs Faustus that he appeared to him not at the command of Faustus, nor of Beelzebub, Faustus immediately accepts this statement as truth. By doing so, he again reveals the tenuous nature of his belief in his ability as magician. Mephistophilis tells Faustus that, "when we hear one rack the name of God, / Abjure the Scriptures and his Saviour Christ, / We fly, in hope to get his glorious soul" (I.iii.50-52). In the scheme of magic which Faustus had spent an entire evening mastering, he has rejected neither the Scriptures nor Christ. What he has done to this point has not included the renunciation of God required of the witch, but he agrees to that renunciation almost immediately. Mephistophilis may win Faustus to his point of view when he describes witchcraft as "the shortest cut for conjuring" (I.iii.55). Faustus, who was interested in magic only as a means of gaining earthly benefits and who sought to substitute the questionable expertise of Cornelius and Valdes for any real effort to master the subject, quickly agrees that he has, indeed, done what Mephistophilis describes and agrees to be subject to Beelzebub (I.iii.58-60).

From the orthodox Christian view of magic, Mephistophilis's interpretation of Faustus's conjuration is correct. Moreover, given Faustus's incomplete mastery of other subjects and the scant attention he gave to magic, his ceremony may well have failed to establish his control over demons. However, the irony may be that Faustus, for all his lack of ability and experience in magic, has succeeded in establishing such control. Mephistophilis answers Faustus's questions regarding the nature of Lucifer and hell in a way which appears truthful and which, if Faustus had shown any ability to reason, would seem designed to turn Faustus away from witchcraft (I.iv.66-84). If Faustus has succeeded, however, he has done so by accident, and he fails to take any advantage of his success. He questions Mephistophilis, but he desists when Mephistophilis, who seems pained by the interrogation, begs, "O Faustus, leave these frivolous demands, / Which strike a terror to my fainting soul" (I.iii.85-86). Faustus ignores the warnings inherent in the answers Mephistophilis gives him and urges, "Learn thou of Faustus manly fortitude" (I.iii.89). Showing his customary lack of insight and reason and totally accepting Mephistophilis's verdict as to his spiritual condition, Faustus himself proposes the pact which will turn him from erstwhile magician to witch (I.iii.95-105).

When Mephistophilis reappears, he tells Faustus that he must sign a formal pact in blood to secure his allegiance to

Satan (II.i.34-36). Mephistophilis threatens to return to hell if Faustus balks but obeys his command to stay (II.i.37-38). Faustus questions Mephistophilis about Lucifer's reason for desiring his soul and about the pain felt by those in hell. Mephistophilis again seems to provide truthful answers to the questions (II.i.40-46). Faustus, however, is unable to act upon or to reason from either the answers given to his questions or the obedience shown by Mephistophilis. He completes the pact despite the warning given by God by means of Faustus's congealed blood (II.i.61) and the inscription which appears on his arm (II.i.75-76).

With the completion of the pact, the performances of magic in the remainder of the play obviously have no connection to the art of the ceremonial magician, being the result of that pact and, therefore, witchcraft. Yet, given the portrait of Faustus which Marlowe presents in the opening scenes, Faustus's ceremony, and his seeming command of Mephistophilis prior to the signing of the pact, the possibility exists that Faustus began as a goetist and became a witch only as the result of his inadequacies as a magician, inadequacies which would have been recognized easily by the Elizabethan audience with its interest in and knowledge of magic. Marlowe's Faustus is a man who seeks to use magic to transcend the bounds of human knowledge, yet he has already failed, despite his reputation as a scholar, to master his previous studies and to apply successfully what knowledge he does possess. His choice of

instructors in the magical arts and the nature of the instruction he receives from them cast doubt not, perhaps, upon the morality of his practice of magic but upon his competence as a magician. Further doubt is cast upon Faustus's competence by his inept performance of the magic ceremony, by his inability to interpret correctly Mephistophilis's remarks, and by his failure to heed God's warning. Rather than the totally orthodox religious view of magic as witchcraft, which the play seems to provide, then, the playwright may have given a very different view, one more in character for the unorthodox Marlowe. The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus may show the dangers inherent in the practice of magic by one who is unwilling or, perhaps, unable to master a difficult and dangerous art or by one who lacks faith either in his ability to practice the art or in the art itself. The crucial factor in Faustus's damnation may well be his lack of skill in magic or, perhaps, his lack of faith in his own abilities. Certainly, God damns Faustus for his witchcraft; however, Faustus turns to witchcraft only when he does not succeed as a magician, or, perhaps, does not realize that he actually has succeeded. Consequently, the view of magic in Doctor Faustus may not be that magic is witchcraft and, thus, immoral; nor that Faustus errs in seeking to practice magic with devils as his source of aid; but that Faustus is incompetent as a magician. That he must finally renounce his magic is as much in keeping with this view as with the more orthodox ones. Those in the audience who did not believe

magic to be immoral would have been as satisfied with Faustus's tragic end as those who believed that magicians should not consort with devils or who believed that all magic was witchcraft. When, at play's end, Faustus screams, "I'll burn my books . . ." (V.ii.135), the comment may be that of a man who should, instead, have studied and believed in them.

CHAPTER V

FRIAR BACON; THE COMPETENT GOETIST

Robert Greene's Honorable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay (c. 1589) introduces Friar Bacon, the other goetist of the ceremonial magic plays. According to Felix E. Schelling, "It was in direct emulation of the German 'black magic' of Faustus that Greene conveyed into his charming comedy of English rural life the English 'white magic' of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay."¹¹⁹ However, Percy Z. Round points to a chapbook entitled The Famous Historie of frier Bacon and to Ball's Illustrium majoris Britanniae scriptorum Summarium as sources for Greene's play,¹²⁰ and Frank Towne points out that neither these sources nor the play itself present Bacon as a "white" magician.¹²¹ Indeed, an examination of the play reveals that, contrary to Schelling's assessment, Bacon is a goetist whose masterful control of devils leads to such unfortunate consequences that he must renounce his magic. Bacon conjures a devil to do his bidding with the words, "Per omnes deos infernales, Belcephon!"¹²² When Bacon eventually renounces magic he states that

. . . it repents me

sore

That ever Bacon meddled in this art.
The hours I have spent in pyromantic spells,
The fearful tossing in the latest night

Of papers full of necromantic charms,
 Conjuring and adjuring devils and fiends,
 With stole and alb and strange pentag[o]non,
 The wresting of the holy name of God,
 As Soter, Elohim and Adonai,
 Alpha, [Sabaoth] and Tetragrammaton,
 With praying to the fivefold powers of [hell]
 Are instances that Bacon must be damn'd
 For using devils to countervail his God.

(IV.iii.86-89; brackets in the original)

Bacon is clearly a goetist who has sought and achieved control of devils; he is not a "white" magician or theurgist.

While Marlowe's Faustus fails as a goetist because of his intellectual flaws, his lack of skill, or both, Greene's Friar Bacon is competent in his art. That he must finally renounce that art does not, however, reflect the view that all magic is witchcraft, and, thus, immoral, any more than does Faustus's renunciation. Friar Bacon had simply made an inappropriate choice by relying on devils for aid.

Andrew V. Ettin describes Bacon as "vain and egocentric,"¹²³ and Albert Wertheim argues that in the course of the play Bacon demonstrates, or causes to be demonstrated, each of the seven deadly sins.¹²⁴ They are correct that Bacon is flawed. Both critics, however, see Bacon's flaws as already existing traits enhanced by or revealed by his ability to practice magic. A more accurate view may be that these flaws result directly from Bacon's practice as goetist. Bacon is not guilty, as Faustus eventually is, of witchcraft. He does not lose his humanity as Faustus eventually does. He does not conclude a pact with devils. He commands devils. He describes himself

as having such power that the "great archruler, potentate of hell, / Trembles when Bacon bids him or his fiends / Bow to the force of his [pentagonon]" (I.ii.53-55; brackets in the original). Even to many of the religiously orthodox, Bacon's ceremonial magic, which sought and bound devils to the will of the magician, was less damning than the express consenting to devils of the witch-pact.¹²⁵ Although he is not a witch, Bacon's negative behavior may, nonetheless, be the direct result of his art. Those Neoplatonic theorists of magic who sought to distinguish between a lower order of spirits, which they sought to control, and devils, with which only witches usually consorted, postulated the existence of irrational demons who controlled the material world.¹²⁶ They believed that, although man was capable of controlling them, prolonged association with these irrational spirits would lead a goetist toward a lack of reason and cause him to be, therefore, more subject to passion.¹²⁷

If, in theory, a goetist who worked through irrational demons which possessed no inherently evil nature was in danger because of his association with these spirits, a magician whose magic brought him into frequent contact with devils would seem to be in even greater peril. Much of Bacon's behavior during the course of the play shows the effects one might expect the magician's contact with devils to cause. Bacon's behavior reflects cruelty, immorality, vanity, and lack of judgment. Only when his actions precipitate a double murder does Bacon

recognize the harmful nature of his magic. However, that he is able, finally, to recognize the nature of his magic and to renounce it reinforces the view that the fault is not in Bacon but in his system of magic.

Bacon's magic seems at times both harmless and comic, yet it has a strain of cruelty even on many of these occasions. Though Burden, one of his colleagues, has irritated Bacon by declaring, "Bacon roves a bow beyond his reach, / And tells of more than magic can perform, / Thinking to get a fame by fooleries" (I.ii.80-82), Bacon's actions in response to this assessment are inappropriate and unnecessarily harsh. He does not respond merely by performing some magic feat to demonstrate the error of Burden's view. Rather, his objective is, as his servant, Miles, tells Burden, to "turn you from a doctor to a dunce, and shake you so small that he will leave no more learning in you than is in Balaam's ass" (I.ii.108-10). Bacon accomplishes this feat by commanding a devil to produce Burden's mistress (I.ii.124). While the production of the mistress from Henley and Burden's subsequent embarrassment are to an extent comic, and clearly meant to be so, Bacon's action is both mean-spirited and destructive. He has needlessly embarrassed his colleague, and his magic has been used merely to assuage his vanity and to take revenge.

Bacon's involvement in the secondary plot, the love triangle of Prince Edward, Lacy, and Margaret of Fressingfield, reveals a lack of morality in Bacon's application of his magic. Edward

decides to employ Bacon's magic to capture Margaret (I.i.141). His real desire is not, however, marriage, but sexual conquest. He has complained to Lacy, "[O]ur country Margaret is so coy, / And stands so much upon her honest points, / That marriage or no market with the maid" (I.i.133-35), and he has sent Lacy to woo Margaret for him. Wertheim points out that Edward is described in hunter images.¹²⁸ In conversation with Margaret, Lacy describes him as he "that revell'd in your father's house, / And fill'd his lodge with cheer and venison, / Tired in green . . ." (I.iii.44-46). Bacon not only agrees to aid the hunter's quest but also reveals that Lacy is wooing Margaret on his own behalf rather than on Edward's (II.ii.98). Bacon offers his "glass prospective" to enable Edward to view events in Fressingfield (II.ii.125-26), thus encouraging enmity between Edward and Lacy. When Edward offers Bacon forty thousand crowns to prevent the marriage ceremony of Lacy and Margaret, Bacon replies, "Fear not, my Lord, I'll stop the jolly friar / For mumbling up his orisons this day" (II.iii.150-51). Subsequently, Bacon uses his art to prevent the marriage of two people who love each other by striking dumb a priest and interrupting a religious ceremony. He compounds this action by sending a devil to carry away the priest, Friar Bungay (II.iii.172-74). Clearly, Bacon has again used his art for self-serving ends, and he has held up to ridicule not just a fellow academic but a fellow priest. That Bacon's magic does not cause lasting damage to the friendship of Edward and Lacy or to the romance

of Lacy and Margaret is due to Edward's recognition of the strength of the love between the other two (III.i.116-21) and not to any action by Bacon.

The magic contest between Bacon and Vandermast, a German magician, may be one which, as Jeffrey P. Hart writes, "redounds to the glory of England as much as to the credit of Bacon."¹²⁹ Yet the text casts doubt on Bacon's motivation. While the preceding contest between Friar Bungay and Vandermast was motivated both by nationalistic pride (III.ii.13-17) and by a dispute as to which type of spirit, pyromantic or geomantic, gives their master greater magical power (III.ii.27-28), Bacon is motivated only by a need to show his personal superiority as a magician. Vandermast greets Bacon courteously: "Lordly thou lookest, as if that thou wert learn'd; / Thy countenance as if science held her seat / Between the circled arches of thy brows" (III.ii.123-25). Bacon replies by denigrating Vandermast's knowledge (III.ii.130) and by taking control of the spirit of Hercules which Vandermast has produced (III.ii.137-38). Not content with having shown his control of devils to be a magic superior to the pyromancy of Vandermast, as well as to the geomancy of his fellow Englishman, Bungay, Bacon orders the spirit of Hercules to transport Vandermast back to Germany (III.ii.158-59). Though King Henry praises Bacon, telling him he "hast honored England with thy skill, / And made fair Oxford famous by thine art" (III.ii.166-67), Bacon has, in fact, been more interested in his personal reputation

and the embarrassment of his adversary than in the glory of his nation or university.

The episode of the destruction of the Brasen Head reveals both Bacon's vanity and his increasing lack of judgment. Bacon tells his servant, Miles:

With seven years' tossing necromantic
 charms,
 Poring upon dark Hecate's principles,
 I have fram'd out a monstrous head of
 brass,
 That, by the enchanting forces of the Devil,
 Shall tell out strange and uncouth aphorisms,
 And girt fair England with a wall of brass.
(IV.i.17-22)

Bacon and Bungay have grown weary of awaiting pronouncements from the Head, and Bacon charges Miles to keep watch and awaken him if the Head speaks (IV.i.30-35). He cautions Miles, saying, "Now, Miles, in thee rests Friar Bacon's weal: / The honor and renown of all his life / Hangs in the watching of this Brazen Head" (IV.i.27-29). Miles, who has been characterized throughout as a comic-fool, is, despite the advantage of availability, a strange choice for such an important assignment. However, Bacon allows his passion for rest to overcome his reason. As might be expected, Miles fails to call Bacon at the crucial moment, and the Head is broken (IV.i.60-87). Bacon reviles Miles and dismisses him from service (IV.i.120-37), promising, "Some fiend or ghost haunt on thy weary steps, / Until they do transport thee quick to hell" (IV.i.147-48). The real blame for the loss of seven years' work, however, lies with Bacon.

His choice of Miles for such an important assignment shows that deterioration of reason believed to be an effect of prolonged contact with irrational spirits. Bacon does not, however, recognize his failings in the matter, choosing instead to place the entire blame on Miles.

Friar Bacon's error in choosing Miles to watch the Head is similar to Faustus's error in choosing Cornelius and Valdes to teach him the magic art. Faustus's error is, however, the result of an inherent lack of wisdom. Bacon's error is more the result of a progressive deterioration of judgment as shown by the progressively disastrous results of his magic. In the Burden episode, Friar Bacon uses his magic only to embarrass a colleague, and he does so only after that colleague has taunted him. In the Lambert-Serlsby episode, Bacon, through his magic, causes two deaths, and he does so with even less provocation than he had had on the earlier occasion. He does so not to assuage his vanity or to take revenge but to display his prowess as magician.

The Lambert-Serlsby episode of IV.iii finally brings Bacon to a renunciation of his magic. Lambert and Serlsby, two gentlemen who have quarreled over which should marry Margaret, meet in a duel. If Bacon had not earlier prevented the marriage of Lacy and Margaret, the cause of the men's disagreement would not have existed and, thus, their duel and subsequent deaths would not have occurred. The consequences of Bacon's behavior do not, however, end with the duel. The sons of Lambert and

Serlsby, "college mates" who are unaware of the duel about to occur, arrive at Bacon's cell and desire to use his "glass prospective" to observe their fathers (IV.iii.27-30). Bacon allows them to do so. When he is informed that the youths see their fathers "in combat," Bacon, rather than forcing them from the glass, urges them, "Sit still, my friends, and see the event" (IV.iii.64). Observing the deaths of their fathers, the youths stab and kill one another (IV.iii.70-73). Only then does Bacon recognize that his practice of magic has caused a loss of reason and judgment. He realizes that his vain desire to display his prowess in his art has directly caused two deaths and that he has indirectly caused two others (IV.iii.76). He breaks his glass and renounces his magic, finally seeing it as a practice which has upset the natural, divine order of the world (IV.iii.86-98). Bacon's renunciation of magic does not, however, save one of the victims of that magic. Miles is carried off by a devil (V.ii.77-78) whose comment--"How restless are the ghosts of hellish spirits, / When every charmer with his magic spells / Calls us from ninefold-trenched [Phlegethon]" (V.ii.1-3; brackets in the original)--typifies the Elizabethan belief in the widespread practice of magic.

While Bacon renounces his magic, as does Faustus, Bacon's view of his spiritual condition is much different from that of Faustus. Apparently untouched by Calvinist theology, he urges himself to "drown not in despair; / Sins have their salves, repentance can do much" (IV.iii.99-100) and pledges ". . . I'll

spend the remnant of my life / In pure devotion, praying to my God / That he would save what Bacon vainly lost" (IV.iii. 107-09). Bacon's view clearly reflects the medieval Catholic belief that a human being can choose salvation and deliberately satisfy the conditions necessary for grace.¹³⁰

While Greene's play certainly contains elements of romance and comedy, one should not ignore the other elements of the play and consider Bacon a "white" magician who renounces his magic merely to satisfy the unfavorable orthodox view of magic. Bacon is a successful goetist, a magician who attains a power over spirits not achieved, for whatever reasons, by Faustus. However, Bacon uses his power only for personal ends. For all his competence, then, Bacon demonstrates man's inability to use the powers of magic in a constructive fashion and, perhaps, man's inability to remain unaffected by his contact with spirits. Bacon is almost an empirical scientist who is finally able, his impaired reason notwithstanding, to see the evidence before him and to reject a system of magic whose harmful effects on both himself and others have become obvious.

Despite his renunciation of magic in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, Bacon again appears as a magician in John of Bordeaux or The Second Part of Friar Bacon. W. W. Greg considers the extant play to be a shortened version of the original text.¹³¹ Although the authorship and date of composition are uncertain, Greg concludes that Greene probably authored the play as a sequel to Friar Bacon and that it was composed around 1590 (Greg,

p. ix). Accepting Greene's authorship, one can understand the playwright's desire to repeat the magic of his popular friar in a new production. However, having concluded the first play with his friar's renunciation of his art, Greene was unlikely in the sequel to show an unrepentant Bacon again "countervailing" his God. Not surprisingly, one finds in John of Bordeaux a very different magician using magic in a very different way. Although Friar Bacon is still a goetist, he no longer uses "devils to countervail his God" (FB IV.iii.98). Instead, he uses his magic for the benefit of man.

The Bacon shown in the play's opening scene is a different man from the haughty friar first seen in Friar Bacon. He has traveled to Germany and, after being greeted by the German emperor, Frederick, and by Vandermast, the German magician whom he bested in the magic contest in Friar Bacon, says that he "left not his English skolls to gayne / a broud wealth or promotion . . ." (41-42), both of which had been important desires of the earlier Bacon. In this first speech, Bacon recalls the repentance for his misdeeds which he expressed in the earlier play. He notes, ". . . Bacon is ould and age can not / be blith for many yeares must meditat on sin . . ." (43-44). Later, in response to a question posed by the Turkish Emperor, Amurath, as to his identity, Bacon replies that he is "a Cristian borne my calling is a frier" (145). Thus, in John of Bordeaux, Bacon first identifies himself not as a powerful magician but as a monk, whereas in Friar Bacon, neither

Bacon's words nor his actions attach any importance to his religious affiliation or office until his renunciation speech. Later in the same exchange with Amurath, Bacon does show the same vanity in his powers that the earlier character often expressed (144-82), but his vanity is now at least somewhat tempered by his Christianity, as is his magic.

Bacon reveals his continued interest in magic when he and his servant, Perce, are captured by the Turks. Their guard reports that the two were taken "setted in a thicket this poring on a booke / wher in was draune formes and Carrectors that seme / most strange . . ." (130-32). Bacon's continued practice of magic and command of devils is clear when he later uses his powers to procure Amurath's crown, robe, and sword and to escape (170-240). Bacon conjures a devil, who, disguised as a soldier, first threatens and then carries off to hell a spirit in the shape of the Turk's son. However, Bacon's use of his powers in this episode has a different moral cast than did the uses to which he placed them in the earlier play. Here, he employs them not to embarrass a colleague, as he did Burden in Friar Bacon, or a seemingly friendly fellow practitioner of magic, the earlier Vandermast, but to embarrass and escape from the heathen foe of Christian European civilization. This Bacon, then, has not renounced magic but has renounced any immoral practice of it.

Another of the plot lines reveals Bacon's changed moral nature. One similarity of this play to Friar Bacon is the

existence of a love triangle. Ferdinand, the son of the Emperor, wishes to possess Rossalin, the faithful wife of John of Bordeaux, a commander in the Emperor's war against the Turks. Ferdinand's carnal designs on Rossalin are similar to those of Prince Edward in the earlier play. Bacon had shown no compunctions about aiding Prince Edward's assault on Margaret's chastity, but his response to the situation in this work is much different. The magician who seeks to break God's laws and to further an adulterous relationship here is not Bacon but Vandermast. Ferdinand offers wealth, as did Edward in Friar Bacon, but, while Vandermast accepts, as did Bacon, he cautions that magic cannot affect the mind and cannot compel the unchristian renunciation of chastity (306-11). Vandermast, instead, devises a strategem to use magic to brand John of Bordeaux falsely as a traitor and counts on his disgrace and the subsequent deprivations of his family to deliver Rossalin to Ferdinand (321-32). If this plan does not succeed, the German magician's secondary one is to deliver Rossalin to Ferdinand when she is asleep, a state during which her mind cannot resist his magic (334-37).

Although Vandermast succeeds in causing the Emperor to dismiss John of Bordeaux and to cast out Rossalin and her family (479-87), Bacon acts, in contrast to his role in Friar Bacon, as a restorer of order and defender of Christian principles. John of Bordeaux appeals to the heavens for aid in correcting the injustices done to him and his family (617-18);

Bacon answers this plea. When Rossalin still refuses Ferdinand's advances, Vandermast summons a devil, Asteroth, to bring the sleeping Rossalin to Ferdinand (652-54). Bacon, sensing the presence of a devil, summons Asteroth and learns of his errand (655-60). Showing his recognition that magic should be used only for moral purposes, Bacon describes Vandermast as an "vnCevell scoller that abusest art and / turnest thy skill to pre Ieduis the Iust . . ." (661-62). This Bacon has the same unsurpassed power over devils which the earlier Bacon boasted of and demonstrated in Friar Bacon. He charges Asteroth to

. . . stay trembling
 lacke to my stratch out waund or I will tei thy
 for a thowsand years wher [belce] Lucefer nor all
 the devells in hell shall once resece the from my magicke
 spells.
 (667-70; brackets in the original)

Bacon resolves this situation by forcing Asteroth to substitute Vandermast's wife for Rossalin (699).

The changed nature of Bacon's view of the world, of God, and, perhaps, of his own situation and the nature of his magic, is clear in the counsel he gives to Rossalin. He urges:

Ladie be patien in yowr meseries the hand of god is hevie
 for a tyme to tri yor sufference in affliction, but when
 he sees you humbled to his mynd this bitter stormes will
 have a quiet calme and he will temper fortunes teranie
 and manifest yor wertues to the wored. (983-87)

If one considers the misery of Bacon after the Lambert-Serlsby episode in Friar Bacon, his renunciation of magic in that play,

his certainty of forgiveness, and his subsequent practice of magic for Christian ends in John of Bordeaux, this speech of consolation to Rossalin may reflect his own experiences. He may see himself as one afflicted, humbled, and then allowed to manifest his virtues by means of his magic. This view is supported by a conversation between Bacon and a young scholar earlier in the play (725-46). Although the passage is corrupt, Bacon seems to answer affirmatively the scholar's question as to whether a higher power governs his practice of magic (737-40). Moreover, when Frederick orders Rossalin, her children, and Bacon to prison (1043), Bacon cautions him that ultimate power rests with God (1046).

That the power over devils which Bacon now exercises is sanctioned by or reinforced by the power of God is clearly revealed in the episode in which he summons devils to release the prisoners from jail. When he summons Asteroth and Rabsacke to his aid, they refuse to obey his commands and claim his body and soul as their property (1130-44). Bacon proclaims that devils have "no / pouer over a Cristian fayth" (1144-45), forces them to obey, and sends them to capture Vandermast (1151-54). Bacon completes this episode with a demonstration of Christian charity: he releases all of the prisoners after counseling them to mend their ways (1220-25). He completes the restoration of order by using his magic to show that the charges against John of Bordeaux are false, by striking Vandermast mad and placing him

in the care of a devil, and by bringing Ferdinand to repentance (1261-1338).

Although the Bacon of John of Bordeaux is undeniably a goetist, a controller of devils, he is a goetist of a different type from Faustus or the Bacon of Friar Bacon. Though both of the other goetists follow the traditional practice of using the name of God in the ceremonies by which they gain (or perhaps in the case of Faustus, attempt to gain) control over devils, neither exhibits any intent to use his power in a moral or Christian way. Both Faustus and the early Bacon desire to increase their own power and renown and have no reservations about upsetting the natural or divine order of the world in the process. Both show a disregard for other human beings and for the effects of their magic on others. In Doctor Faustus and in Friar Bacon, the magician is brought to repent his practice of magic, a result which is consonant both with the orthodox religious view of magic and with the less orthodox views discussed earlier which the plays may reflect. The Bacon of John of Bordeaux, however, uses his magic in a much different manner. He explicitly identifies himself as a Christian magician and acts to protect Christian virtue. Moreover, his comments are those of a goetist who controls devils with the sanction and perhaps the aid of God. The Christian nature of both this magician and his magic relieved the author of the necessity of including any identification of the magician as a heretic and of alluding to the practice of magic as witchcraft. Clearly,

this Friar Bacon, a reflection of the medieval identification of the Church with a helpful and moral magic, would have appealed to those members of the audience who believed in the efficacy of magic and in the morality of its practice, those who believed that the magician could celebrate the majesty of God. If his powers are a reflection of his affinity with God, then the Friar Bacon of John of Bordeaux is similar to those magicians of theurgical theory whose powers came from an affinity with beneficent spirits. As a magician, he is more akin to the magicians of Anthony Munday's John à Kent and John à Cumber and Shakespeare's Tempest than to Faustus or to his own previous incarnation as the magician in Friar Bacon.

CHAPTER VI
THE THEURGISTS:
JOHN À KENT AND PROSPERO

The magicians of Anthony Munday's John à Kent and John à Cumber and Shakespeare's Tempest reflect theurgy, the second system of ceremonial magic of the sixteenth-century, a much different type of magic than that of the other ceremonial magicians. Faustus, the Friar Bacon of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, and the Friar Bacon of John of Bordeaux all have contact with and attempt to control devils in the course of their practice of magic. The only one of the three who is not shown to renounce his magic is the Bacon of John of Bordeaux, who is a "Christian" magician whose powers are used for moral purposes. In contrast to these magicians, Munday's John à Kent and Shakespeare's Prospero have no direct contact with devils, and their magic works through spirits of nonsubterranean origin. Nevertheless, Munday's play gives no indication that John à Kent is a theurgist in the sense of one who seeks to move upward in the Chain of Being toward an Absolute, a movement which one may argue to be Prospero's goal. Like the Bacon of John of Bordeaux, Munday's John à Kent uses his magic to benefit others. He does not, however, employ his magic to change himself as, one may argue, Prospero does. Thus, Prospero may be the only true theurgist, while the magic of Kent may actually be

that control of aerial spirits which the Key of Solomon terms "theurgia-goetia."¹³² The distinction is, however, not a major one. Both Kent and Prospero avoid devils, and both work through nonsubterranean spirits. Moreover, the use of magic by John à Kent to further the course of love in John à Kent and John à Cumber and the nature of the spirit, Shrimp, who serves as his assistant, parallel the beneficial uses of magic by Prospero in The Tempest and the nature of his assistant, Ariel.

The historical John à Kent was said to have concluded a pact with the Devil to obtain his powers.¹³³ In John à Kent and John à Cumber, however, contact between the magician and devils is not indicated. Soon after John à Kent's appearance in the play, Sir Griffin Meriddock, a young nobleman, inquires as to whether the magician has the power to call up ghosts and spirits:

Canst thou my freend, from foorth the vaultes beneathe,
 call vp the ghostes of those long since deceast?
 Or from the vpper region of the ayre:
 fetche swift wingde spirits to effect thy will?¹³⁴

Kent answers that he can easily do both. While his reply shows him to be a necromancer, it does not show him to be a goetist who exercises his power through devils. In fact, early in the play, Kent seeks to reassure the audience of the nature of the production. He previews the lighthearted nature of the play and of his magic when he declares his intent to "help, hinder,

giue, take back, turne, ouerturne, / deceiue, bestowe, breed pleasure, discontent. / yet comickly conclude, like Iohn a Kent" (134-36). A magician who practiced through devils would hardly expect or desire that his magic have a comic end. The only textual references which link Kent's powers with devils come from the mouths of rustic clowns. In a conversation (1031-82), Hugh, a sexton, describes Kent as one who, according to tales, "neuer goes abroad with out a bushell / of deuilles about him . . ." (1041-42) and who uses those devils to punish any who denigrate him (1039-44). One of Hugh's fellows, Turnop, declares that he

. . . neuer kist wench
or playd the good fellowe . . .
. . . but my wife hath knowen on it ere I came home, and
it could not be but by some of his flying deuilles.
(1056-59)

The nature of these characters who link Kent to devils and the lack of thought and firsthand knowledge which they exhibit comment more clearly on their lack of sophistication and credulity than on the nature of Kent's magic.

The plot of John à Kent and John à Cumber revolves around John à Kent's efforts to aid two young noblemen, Lord Geoffrey Powis and Sir Griffin Meriddock, to marry their intendeds, Marian and Sidanen, who have been betrothed by their parents to the Earls of Morton and Pembroke. The moral nature of Kent's intent and of his magic is reflected in his actions immediately

after Powis and Meriddock have asked for his assistance. Before acting to aid the two, he seeks to ascertain the worth of Marian and Sidanen and whether they desire to be wed to Powis and Meriddock. Kent appears disguised as an elderly hermit and requests "charitable comfort" (217). In response to his plea, both girls exhibit Christian charity (230-31). Having them meet him at a spring which maidens traditionally visit before marriage, he questions them as to their desire to marry Morton and Pembroke and discovers that neither desires the marriage arranged for her and that they plan to kill their grooms and themselves (419-65). Kent's magic, then, functions to assist individuals who have revealed both compassion and strong moral convictions against forced marriages.

In contrast, his fellow magician, John à Cumber, endeavors to aid the parents of Marian and Sidanen in enforcing the marriage of the girls to Morton and Pembroke. The conflict is not, however, simply one between two magicians who have different views about arranged marriages. It is a conflict between "white" magic and "black" magic, for John à Cumber is clearly one who has trafficked with devils and who uses shades in his art. In a soliloquy (528-49), in which Kent informs the audience of the need for a rival magician to "driue . . . [him] to sound pollicyes" (542) and give the play a conflict, he describes Cumber as a magician "that ouerreachte the deuill by his skill" (544). The Earl of Morton tells how Cumber "once beguylde the deuill, / and in his Arte could neuer finde his matche" (696-97). Kent

notes that Cumber "went beyond the deuill, / And made him [sell] serue him seuen yeares prentiship" (999-1000; brackets in the original). Cumber's magic is, however, perhaps by its very nature, less powerful than Kent's. The action clearly shows the superiority of Kent's "white" magic to Cumber's "black" magic, and even Cumber reveals his recognition of the less potent nature of his magic when he enlists the aid of the rustics in his contest with Kent (1060-82).

Felix E. Schelling argues that the contest between Kent and Cumber is Munday's imitation of those between Bungay and Vandermast and Bacon and Vandermast in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay.¹³⁵ However, John W. Ashton points out the contrast between the contest in John à Kent and John à Cumber and those of the English ballads and folk tales which seem to be reflected in Greene's play.¹³⁶ In these works, the contest is rapid and is quickly concluded with the defeat or annihilation of one of the contestants. On the other hand, the contest between Kent and Cumber extends the length of the play, and Kent, rather than desiring the annihilation, literal or figurative, of his opponent, offers Cumber a second chance to match his skill (1460-91). Kent, then, does not use his magic for evil purposes, even against a magician who seeks his aid from devils.

Kent does not use his magic to destroy; instead, he uses it to manipulate others and, thereby, to restore order. Though Kent is the one acting to upset the normal order by subverting the desires of the parents, he sees himself as enforcing an

older and more natural order of things. He tells Sidanen: "I knowe not Lady how the world is chaunged. / when I was young they wooed the daughter first, / and then the father, when they had her graunt" (434-36). Although he supports the daughters, Kent does not desire a permanent state of enmity between Marian and Sidanen and their parents. After initially besting Cumber and uniting the two couples, he offers Cumber another opportunity to affect the marriages desired by the parents on the condition that the parents agree to accept their daughter's desires and "ceasse contention" (1475) if Cumber is defeated (1463-76). After obtaining such a pledge, Kent uses a "dazeling mist" (1613) to blind Cumber to the entrance of Powis and Meriddock into the chapel where they wed Marian and Sidanen. Thus, Kent achieves a peaceful resolution to the conflict with no harm's being inflicted.

In the course of the play, Kent uses trickery, disguise, and a mist which confuses his opponents. His magic operates on the minds and imaginations of his opponents, much as does that of Prospero. In particular, he battles Cumber, using the powers of his assistant, Shrimp, whom Reed considers to be the only one of Munday's characters who is not "lifeless and two-dimensional."¹³⁷ Ashton notes that both Shrimp and Ariel, Prospero's assistant in The Tempest, are very different from the rough and devilish fairies of English folk tradition: both are supernatural spirits, but not of subterranean origin;

both delight in mischief, and both use music to enchant and lead others.¹³⁸ Although Ariel is the more fully developed of the two, Shrimp and his powers are certainly worthy of note.

Performing magicians were common figures on the street corners of Elizabethan and Jacobean England.¹³⁹ These magicians, known as "juglers," commonly had young boy servants, bound in service by contract, who aided them in their illusions.¹⁴⁰ The Elizabethan audience, regardless of any knowledge of pneumatological theories, would easily have identified Shrimp in this context. Shrimp's appearances in the play are characteristically preceded by the stage direction, "Enter Shrimp a boy," and he often refers to Kent as his master and is, in turn, addressed as would be a servant. Aside from this aspect of the character, Shrimp is one of those beneficent rational spirits which theurgists ("white" magicians who avoided any invocation of or resort to assistance from devils) used in their performance of magic. That Shrimp is capable of rational independent action is revealed by those of his actions which further Kent's designs and for which he has received no clear or detailed instructions. For example, when Kent desires to acquaint Morton and Pembroke with the disappearance of their prospective brides, he merely directs Shrimp to go to Chester and expresses a desire that those asleep be awakened (551-52). With no other direction, Shrimp sings Morton and Pembroke a song, heard only by those two, which accomplishes Kent's purpose (577-87).

Shrimp uses his music not only to awaken anxiety but also to lead, to comfort, and to render others unconscious. Marian's father details his son Oswen and Oswen's friend Amery to deliver Marian and Sidanen to Chester for the wedding. Shrimp uses his "instrument" to produce music which forces the group to follow the course desired by Kent (1100-09). When Marian and Sidanen despair that they will be forced to wed Morton and Pembroke, Shrimp's music and song comfort them (1114-28). Upon delivering Marian and Sidanen to Powis and Meriddock, Oswen and Amery are charmed into a deep sleep by Shrimp's music.

As noted earlier, according to Ficino and other Renaissance theorists on magic, music was an especially powerful instrument of magic because music, being, like spirit, a living kind of air moving in an organized way, could affect the emotions and imagination of the listener. These theorists maintained that the effect of music was greatly enhanced by the addition of a song, a carrier of intellectual content. While Shrimp uses only a tune to lead the party, he adds lyrics to it when he comforts the girls and when he charms Oswen and Amery to sleep. While Munday, and, for that matter, Shakespeare, may not have been directly acquainted with Ficino's work, the theories had been widely disseminated. Karol Berger points to Agrippa's De Occulta philosophia, widely known in England, as one means by which Englishmen had been acquainted with Ficino's theories.¹⁴¹

Shrimp's master, John à Kent, then, is a theurgist who uses a rational spirit to accomplish moral ends. His aims are

much different from those of Faustus and the Friar Bacon of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay. He restores and protects the natural order or, at least, what he sees as the natural order. He causes no spiritual or physical injury to himself or to anyone else. Unlike the "Christian goetist," Friar Bacon in John of Bordeaux, he drives no one mad. In contrast to the three goetists, Faustus and the two Friar Bacons, he has no contact with devils. This lack of contact negates any need for the magician to renounce his magic, as do the magicians in Doctor Faustus and Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, or to be "Christianized," as is the Friar Bacon in John of Bordeaux. While the play certainly does not reflect the orthodox view of magic as witchcraft, it does mirror the view held by those who considered the morality of the magic to be determined by the source of the magician's aid. Thus, John à Kent, the theurgist, bests John à Cumber, the goetist, and the author is relieved of any danger of being accused of promoting witchcraft.

Shakespeare's Tempest (1611) presents the only Jacobean characterization of a true magician. Reed points out that the successful depiction of such a character at a time when the Renaissance belief in man's potential and the belief in magic, but not in witchcraft, had faded may have been possible because of the play's setting, an island removed from contemporary society.¹⁴² The success of The Tempest, for whatever reason, is beyond dispute; however, the nature of Prospero's magic and

the nature of his abjuration of that magic are not. Jeffrey Hart views The Tempest as an answer to Marlowe's Faustus, noting that both "Faustus" and "Prospero" mean "fortunate," both are magicians, and both renounce their magic.¹⁴³ Walter Clyde Curry's seminal study, "Sacerdotal Science in Shakespeare's The Tempest," identifies Prospero as a theurgist who aims at "union with the gods" and whose magic is "a means of preparation for the intellectual soul in its upward progress." He argues that Prospero uses his powers to right the wrongs which had been done to him and to purify himself for such a union.¹⁴⁴ Hardin Craig generally agrees with this assessment and argues that Prospero does not renounce his magic; he abandons it when it is no longer necessary.¹⁴⁵ On the other hand, Barbara Mowat considers the nature of Prospero's magic to be less clearcut, pointing to Prospero's description of some of his past magic performances,¹⁴⁶ a description which shows his command of all four elements, as revealing not the performances of a theurgist who seeks spiritual union with the gods but of an enchanter who seeks god-like control over the natural and supernatural worlds.¹⁴⁷ She further argues that he renounces his magic in the tradition of those "wizards," such as the historical Friar Bacon, who feel concern for their souls.¹⁴⁸

As stated earlier, the primary distinction between the theurgist and the goetist was not in their magic practices but in the nature of the spirits which they called upon for aid in those practices. The theurgist worked through beneficent

spirits both with and within a divinely sanctioned Chain of Being; the goetist, on the other hand, worked through devils and subterranean spirits. The distinction is not in whether a particular magician has the power to command all spirits but in which spirits he chooses to command. Prospero's choice of a beneficent spirit as his assistant is clear.

Prospero performs his magic with the magician's traditional accoutrements. He possesses a magic robe, a staff, and books on magic. He draws conjuring circles and commands spirits. In the performance of his magic, Prospero is aided by Ariel, an aerial spirit much like Munday's Shrimp in his ability to move instantaneously and to become invisible. Ariel, a rational spirit, has command over lesser spirits, and these are also employed for Prospero's purposes. Clifford Davidson considers Ariel to be "one of the elemental daemons identified by Proclus and given their classic Renaissance description by Agrippa in De Occulta philosophia."¹⁴⁹ Such a demon would have power, as does Ariel, over many lower spirits. Ariel also uses music to affect the imaginations of men in much the same manner as does Shrimp. Conversations between Ariel and Prospero reflect the same master-servant relationship shown between John à Kent and Shrimp. At one point, for example, Ariel reminds Prospero of an earlier promise of freedom:

I prithee,
Remember I have done thee worthy service,
Told thee no lies, made thee no mistakings, serv'd

Without or grudge or grumblings. Thou didst
 promise
 To bate me a full year. (I.ii.246-50)

Davidson points to the similarity between the disappearance of the banquet placed before Prospero's enemies (stage direction at III.iii.52), a disappearance managed by Ariel, and a common "jugglers" trick called the "decollation of John Baptist" which was performed by the young assistants of street magicians.¹⁵⁰ Prospero's magic can affect both bodies and minds. He and his assistant can freeze men in place (I.ii.475-76), lead them where they will (I.ii.396-97), and render them unconscious (I.ii.185-86). He can make men see what he wills and can both drive them mad and restore them to sanity. Clearly, Prospero is a powerful magician who chooses to practice his magic with the aid of a beneficent spirit.

A second distinction between the two systems of magic, also mentioned earlier, was that theurgy contained the Neoplatonic ideal of ascension by man to a higher realm, while goety was more concerned with earthly material power. Prospero's magic is performed on the island to which he and his daughter, Miranda, were brought by "Providence divine" (I.ii.159) after his brother's usurpation of the Dukedom of Milan. Prospero relates to Miranda that his fall from power occurred because his studies in magic were his only concern. Thus, he says, "The government I cast upon my brother / And to my state grew stranger, being transported / And rapt in secret studies . . ."

(I.ii.73-77). Prospero further relates that he had neglected "worldly ends" and had been "all dedicated / To closeness and the bettering of . . . [his] mind" (I.ii.89-90). Mowat points out that the language Prospero uses in these passages is similar to that of those Renaissance Neoplatonists who completely rejected the worth of the physical world.¹⁵¹

Prospero, then, meets the requirements for the true theurgist: he works through a beneficent spirit, Ariel, and he has neglected the material in favor of the spiritual, that is, the elevation of his mind. If Prospero is, indeed, a theurgist in the strictest sense of the word, however, one must ask why he abjures his magic and returns to his original position in the Chain of Being.

Hardin Craig notes that "The Tempest is a Renaissance document and Prospero is a Renaissance figure" and that the aim of a Renaissance ruler would be to become a perfect ruler.¹⁵² Prospero, however, has not been a perfect ruler. He has, instead, neglected his duty in favor of his magic. Such a situation must be resolved. Indeed, for Shakespeare, an author whose works express a consistent bias in favor of order and who, in King Lear, shows the disorder and ruin caused by a ruler's unwillingness to exercise his office, to present a protagonist whose neglect of his office and duty is not central to the resolution of the play would be most uncharacteristic. Mowat points out Prospero's evident lack of self-recrimination for his neglect of office and considers his later abjuration

of magic as similar to the renunciation of the wizards of literary tradition in response to Christian concern for the danger the practice of magic posed to their souls.¹⁵³ If this were the reason, however, Prospero would return to his former position without having attained perfection. His return would be based upon concern for himself and not upon concern for his subjects. Instead, Prospero's abjuration may not result from concern for his soul but from his earlier neglect of duty.

On the island, Prospero again expresses concern for things of the world, a first step toward the final abjuration of his magic and his return to the world. He tells Miranda:

By accident most strange, bountiful Fortune,
Now my dear lady, hath mine enemies
Brought to this shore; and by my prescience
I find my zenith doth depend upon
A most auspicious star, whose influence
If now I court not but omit, my fortunes
Will ever after droop. . . . (I.ii.178-84)

Prospero's reference to his "enemies" and his concern for his "fortunes" indicate a renewal of involvement with the physical world and its inhabitants.

Whatever Prospero's original purposes for bringing the ship to his island, his magic allows him to test the nature of civilized man, those "enemies" on the ship, and his residence on the island enables him to observe the nature of uncivilized man. Thus, he increases his understanding of man. Prospero's magic is designed not to force those who overthrew him to repent

but to allow each to reveal his nature and to become penitent only if it is in him to do so. Thus, he does not interfere with man's inherent nature; he only provides the opportunity for it to be revealed.

Prospero's magic allows the passengers from the ship to demonstrate the lust for power of most men and their lack of principle when attempting to seize power. Acting through Ariel and the lesser spirits Ariel controls, Prospero clouds the minds of those involved in his overthrow. They are convinced that the ship which bore them has sunk in a tempest and that they alone survive, when in reality the ship is "[s]afely in harbour" (I.ii.226) and no one has been injured (I.ii.218). Ariel lulls to sleep all members of the party except Prospero's brother, Antonio, and King Alonso's brother, Sebastian (II.i), who promptly exhibit that same lack of principle and lust for power which deprived Prospero of his dukedom (II.i.209-95). Karol Berger notes that their plot to kill Alonso while he sleeps is reminiscent of the plot conceived and carried out against Prospero while he "slept" in his studies (222). Earlier, Gonzalo, the one man who aided Prospero after his overthrow, demonstrates both the political naivete of the common man and his desire for power when he declares his desire to form a perfect commonwealth which would have "no sovereignty" but of which he would be king (II.i.145-69). In a drunken state, Stephano and Trinculo accept Caliban's plot to kill Prospero and rule the island (III.ii), an acceptance which shows, as

do the other incidents, man's need to be ruled by one who can control the desire of others for power. Clearly, the civilized men cannot control themselves.

In the banquet scene (III.iii), Prospero's aim is to encourage the wrong-doers to repent for their earlier actions. When the men approach the meal which Prospero's spirits have placed before them, Ariel enters "like a harpy" (stage direction at III.iii.53), a reference to the harpies of the Aeneid who snatch the food from the Trojans' table and inform them that they must correct the wrongs they have done before proceeding on their journey (Berger, 226). Similarly, Ariel causes the meal which Prospero has had set before the men to vanish; reminds Alonso, Sebastian, and Antonio that they have cast Prospero from his rightful position; and pronounces a sentence of "lingering perdition" on them (III.iii.60-82). Berger points out that the Geneva Bible used by Shakespeare glosses "ariel" as "altar" in Hebrew and considers the meal which vanishes to be the counterpart of the sacrifice in Isaiah 29 which is not consummated because the sinners are not truly repentant (228). After Ariel has cursed the three men, Prospero declares:

My high charms
work,
And these mine enemies are all knit up
In their distractions. They now are in my pow'r
And in these fits I leave them. . . . (III.iii.88-91)

He has placed them in a confused mental state, which reveals

Alonso to be penitent, but Sebastian and Antonio still unrepentant (III.iii.95-104).

Leaving the men in this state, Prospero again turns his attention to Miranda and her lover, Ferdinand, Alonso's son. Prospero has tested Ferdinand as he has the others. He tells Ferdinand: "All thy vexations / Were but my trials of thy love, and thou / Hast strangely stood the test . . ." (IV.i.5-7). Prospero commands Ariel: "Bestow upon the eyes of this young couple / Some vanity of mine art . . ." (IV.i.40-41), and the "masque of Ceres" follows. This celebration of fertility and love is interrupted when Prospero remembers Caliban's plot against him (IV.i.138-42). This performance of spirits enacting Prospero's "present fancies" (IV.i.122) cannot continue when his mind becomes greatly troubled by the remembrance of Caliban's betrayal. Miranda states: "Never till this day / Saw I him touch'd with anger so distemper'd" (IV.i.144-45). "Caliban" is an anagram of "canibal," and the play shows a knowledge of Montaigne's essay "Of the Caniballes," which celebrates the ideal of the "noble savage" (Berger, 233). However, Caliban, the uncivilized man, has shown himself to be as ignoble as Antonio and Sebastian, the civilized ones.

In the course of the play, then, both civilized and natural man have been shown capable of treachery and bestial behavior. In his "revels" speech, Prospero recognizes the link which joins him to other men. He realizes,

The cloud-capp'd tow'rs, the gorgeous palaces,
 The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
 Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
 And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
 Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
 As dreams are made on, and our little life
 Is rounded with a sleep. . . . (IV.i.152-58)

Prospero as a theurgist may seek, and even attain, intellectual union with the gods, yet the inevitability of death links him to mankind. As Berger writes, "Prospero's despair is not over the unreality of man but over his mortality" (233). Prospero may punish Caliban and his fellow conspirators by setting upon them "spirits in the shape of dogs and hounds" (stage direction at IV.i.256), but he cannot ignore the realization prompted, in part, by Caliban's treachery. Prospero shows this realization of his humanity when Ariel reports on the condition of both those he has distracted and those attending them and declares that, if he were human, he would take pity on them (V.i.8-18). Prospero notes that he is "one of their kind" and, declaring that the "rarer action is / In virtue than in vengeance" (V.i.27-28), states: "My charms I'll break, their senses I'll restore, / And they shall be themselves" (V.i.31-32). Given the earlier events in Milan and the behavior of Sebastian and Antonio on the island, Prospero cannot believe that, without the power of his magic, any penitential feelings the men have will be long-lasting, nor can he feel joy at the prospect of their being "themselves." Yet, after what Barbara Estrin calls "a final salute to the ministers who helped him control the forces of

nature,"¹⁵⁴ Prospero declares that

. . . this rough magic
I here abjure, and, when I have requir'd
Some heavenly music, which even now I do,
To work mine end upon their senses that
This airy charm is for, I'll break my staff,
Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,
And deeper than did ever plummet sound
I'll drown my book. (V.i.50-57)

Prospero draws a magic circle and places both the party and himself within (stage direction at V.i.57). Within the circle, he declares his forgiveness of them and "dissolves" his charm (V.i.58-84). Having "abjured" his power and rejoined the world of men, Prospero sends Ariel to fetch the hat and rapier of the Duke of Milan (V.i.86-87).

The result of Prospero's immersion in magic and rejection of the world was his removal from his position of authority. It is not necessary in order to account for the success of the plot against him to contend, as does Berger, that Prospero's magic cannot function in the "real" world. While Berger views the island as "an imaginary realm" and Prospero's magic as an art "which did not work in the real world before his exile, and . . . will not work after his return to that world either" and argues that Prospero must abjure his magic to return to that world,¹⁵⁵ the island and Prospero's magic may be seen as real and Prospero's abjuration as voluntary and not a precondition for his return to Milan. His not having used his magic does not mean that the magic would not work. A theurgist who had

renounced the world would deign to use his magic to retain such a position. Prospero simply does not act in regard to his overthrow until "bountiful Fortune" thrusts the opportunity at him.

Neither is it necessary to view Prospero's abjuration of magic as being motivated by his attainment of perfection and the resulting lack of further need for magic, as does Craig.¹⁵⁶ Given the opportunity, Prospero comes to recognize the mortality which, despite his powers, links him to mankind. As a member of mankind, he was supposed to rule; however, he neglected that role in his absorption in magic. Pico's Oration on the Dignity of Man had, as noted earlier, proclaimed man's ability to choose his place in the Chain of Being. Accordingly, Prospero makes his choice and returns to his original position as Duke of Milan. If Prospero is to rule as a man, he must give up that magic which gives him god-like power and forego that intellectual ascendance to the gods sought by theurgists. However, if he cannot, as Duke of Milan, ascend to the gods, Prospero can rule man. The behavior he has observed on the island demonstrates the need for rulers who can provide order and guidance,¹⁵⁷ and Prospero can. He reveals that he has perfected his abilities as a ruler when he reminds Sebastian and Antonio,

. . . [W]ere I so minded,
I here could pluck . . . [Alonso's] frown upon you
And justify you traitors. At this time
I will tell no tales. (V.i.126-29)

He has forgiven the pair, but he places no trust in them and controls them with a human ruler's instrument, fear, not with a god-like magician's art. The world's need for rulers, such as Prospero, who can both recognize human weaknesses and act to control them is symbolized by the "chess scene" (V.i.173-86). Ferdinand declares that he "would not for the world" "play . . . [Miranda] false" (V.i.175, 173). Miranda replies that "for a score of kingdoms you should wrangle, / And I would call it fair play" (V.i.176-77). The truth of her observation is soon echoed by Prospero, who has already forgiven those who "played him false." To Miranda's exclamation of joy, "O brave new world, / That has such people in 't" (V.i.185-86), Prospero remarks only "'Tis new to thee" (V.i.186).

Prospero abjures his magic, a theurgical magic which did not involve contact with devils, not for religious reasons but for a moral one. As a man with a position of rule in the Chain of Being, he neglected his duty. Given the opportunity and the means and having been reminded of man's need to be ruled and controlled, he corrects that error. He gives up a path upward to the gods in favor of a circular return to his earlier position. He returns as a perfected ruler, and this perfection is a result of his experiences as a magician.

CHAPTER VII
A CONCLUSION

The late Elizabethan and early Jacobean playwrights wrote many so-called magic plays; however, five of them are true ceremonial magic plays. Magic is a key structural element in these plays, magicians represent real entities, their magic belongs to one of two contemporary systems of magic, and the consequences of their actions reflect contemporary moral beliefs. These five plays are Marlowe's Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, Robert Greene's Honorable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, Anthony Munday's John à Kent and John à Cumber, the anonymous John of Bordeaux, and Shakespeare's Tempest. These ceremonial magic plays were a logical extension of the use of the occult in Elizabethan secular drama; moreover, they clearly were written to conform to the Elizabethan audience's beliefs about the practice and morality of magic.

The Elizabethan audience had a fervent belief in magic, based on tradition and strengthened both by medieval Catholic beliefs and practices and by reaction against those Reformation doctrines which deprived man of control over his environment and his physical and moral salvation. Although the members of this audience had varying degrees of knowledge concerning the ceremonial magic systems of theurgy and goety advocated by Renaissance Neoplatonists, the general tenets of both systems

were widely known. Those who did not believe all magic to be witchcraft, or who were not themselves goetists, considered the morality of the practice of magic to be dependent upon the system of magic practiced by the magician. The orthodox view in Protestant England, of course, was that any magic was immoral. For the majority of the less orthodox, the line between goety, a system in which the magician had contact with devils, and witchcraft was ill-defined. To these members of the audience, any magician who had contact with devils was merely a witch. In contrast, those magicians who practiced theurgy, a system in which the magician had contact with median spirits, avoided the practice of witchcraft.

The systems of magic and the views of their morality are reflected in the ceremonial magic plays. Both Marlowe's Faustus and Greene's Friar Bacon practice goety and suffer adverse effects. Ultimately, they renounce their magic. That Marlowe's Faustus is as incompetent and ill-prepared a magician as he is a scholar strongly suggests that, in his case, it is the practitioner rather than the system of magic which is at fault. His fate, thus, reflects not the view that all magic is immoral, or even that association with devils can have no other end, but that the practice of magic is serious and should be so considered by the practitioner. In any event, his fate also satisfies both the orthodox belief and the belief that goety is, at base, witchcraft and sacrilege. Greene's Bacon, a

competent goetist, suffers the inevitable consequences of sacrilegious association with devils. The Friar Bacon of John of Bordeaux, another goetist, neither suffers such ill effects nor renounces his magic. However, this magician's constant identification with Christianity and protection of Christian values both negate the usual association of goetist with witch and show how prevalent was that association.

The favorable view of theurgy is reflected in John à Kent and The Tempest. John à Kent, in legend a consorter with devils, works only through a median spirit; it is his opponent, John à Cumber, who has contact with devils. Kent uses his powers for moral purposes and has no need to renounce his practice of magic. Prospero, the only pure theurgist of the five, works through an aerial spirit and ceases his practice of magic, not because that magic is inherently immoral or sacrilegious, but because it has caused him to neglect his proper role as a temporal ruler.

Clearly, the ceremonial magic plays reflect the culture in which they were produced. Therefore, an understanding of Elizabethan beliefs about magic and about the moral implications of its practice leads to a more informed view of the meaning of the plays to their Elizabethan audiences and of the possible reactions of those audiences. Thus, such understanding makes possible a more informed reading of the plays.

NOTES

¹ Adolphus William Ward, A History of English Dramatic Literature, I, 443.

² Sir E. K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage, III, 422, 489.

³ C. J. S. Thompson, The Mysteries and Secrets of Magic, p. 1.

⁴ The Greg (Malone Society) reprint assigns the date to John of Bordeaux. The dates of all other plays are those given by Chambers.

⁵ Andrew V. Ettin, "Magic into Art: The Magician's Renunciation of Magic in English Renaissance Drama," Texas Studies in Language and Literature, 19 (1977), 283.

⁶ Robert Rentoul Reed, Jr., The Occult on the Tudor and Stuart Stage, p. 88.

⁷ Reed, p. 147.

⁸ Frank Humphrey Ristine, English Tragicomedy: Its Origin and History, p. 12.

⁹ C. F. Tucker Brooke, The Tudor Drama, p. 157.

¹⁰ Reed, p. 17.

¹¹ L. G. Salinger, "The Revenger's Tragedy and the Morality Tradition," in Elizabethan Drama: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. R. J. Kaufmann, p. 209.

¹² Reed, pp. 87-88.

- 13 Reed, p. 17.
- 14 Reed, p. 37.
- 15 Brooke, p. 51.
- 16 Brooke, p. 189.
- 17 Charles E. Whitmore, The Supernatural in Tragedy,
p. 183.
- 18 Ward, p. 447.
- 19 Ward, p. 447.
- 20 Brooke, p. 157.
- 21 Kathleen Marguerite Lea, Italian Popular Comedy, II,
347.
- 22 Felix E. Schelling, Foreign Influences in Elizabethan
Plays, p. 61.
- 23 K. M. Lea, I, 196.
- 24 Barbara A. Mowat, "Prospero, Agrippa, and Hocus Pocus,"
English Literary Renaissance, 11, No. 3 (1981), p. 292.
- 25 Mowat, p. 292.
- 26 Hardin Craig, The Enchanted Glass, p. 63.
- 27 Reed, p. 18.
- 28 Felix E. Schelling, ed., Shakespeare and "Demi-Science":
Papers on Elizabethan Topics, p. 172.
- 29 Craig, The Enchanted Glass, p. 1.
- 30 Charles G. Nauert, Jr., Agrippa and the Crisis of
Renaissance Thought, p. 225.
- 31 Nauert, p. 232.
- 32 Nauert, p. 231.

- 33 Lynn Thorndike, The Place of Magic in the Intellectual History of Europe, p. 224.
- 34 Nauert, p. 233.
- 35 Hiram Haydn, The Counter-Renaissance, pp. 83, 177.
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- 37 Sir James George Frazer, "The Magic Art and the Evolution of Kings," in Vol. I of The Golden Bough, 3rd ed., 22.
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- 41 Keith V. Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic, p. 42.
- 42 Thomas, p. 50.
- 43 George Lyman Kittredge, Witchcraft in Old and New England.
- 44 Thomas, p. 25.
- 45 Henry Charles Lea, comp., Materials Toward a History of Witchcraft, ed. Arthur C. Howland, p. 121.
- 46 Kittredge, p. 239.
- 47 Thomas, pp. 254-55, 26. See also C. J. S. Thompson's definition of magic, quoted earlier on p. 1.
- 48 D. P. Walker, Spiritual and Demonic Magic from Ficino to Campanella, p. 36.
- 49 Thomas, p. 33.
- 50 John G. Burke, "Hermetism as a Renaissance World View,"

in The Darker Vision of the Renaissance, ed. Robert S. Kinsman, p. 102.

⁵¹ Lynn Thorndike, A History of Magic and Experimental Science, V, 12.

⁵² H. C. Lea, p. 1306.

⁵³ Paul R. Sellin, "The Hidden God: Reformation Awe in Renaissance English Literature," in The Darker Vision of the Renaissance, ed. Robert S. Kinsman, pp. 152-53.

⁵⁴ Haydn, p. 19.

⁵⁵ Burke, p. 103.

⁵⁶ W. E. H. Lecky, History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe, p. 37.

⁵⁷ Thomas, p. 112.

⁵⁸ Reed, p. 52.

⁵⁹ K. M. Briggs, Pale Hecate's Team, p. 57.

⁶⁰ H. C. Lea, p. 209.

⁶¹ Reed, p. 19.

⁶² Thorndike, The Place of Magic, p. 75.

⁶³ Robert Hunter West, The Invisible World: A Study of Pneumatology in Elizabethan Drama, p. 2.

⁶⁴ West, The Invisible World, p. 47.

⁶⁵ Walker, p. 54.

⁶⁶ Haydn, p. 184.

⁶⁷ Thorndike, A History of Magic, p. 13.

⁶⁸ Lecky, p. 43

⁶⁹ Thomas, p. 224.

- 70 Walter Clyde Curry, Shakespeare's Philosophical Patterns,
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- 71 Walker, p. 32.
- 72 Curry, p. 152.
- 73 Henry Cornelius von Nettesheim Agrippa, Natural Magic,
Book I of Three Books of Occult Philosophy or Magic, trans.
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- 74 Burke, p. 101.
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- 77 Walker, p. 75.
- 78 Haydn, p. 180.
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- 81 Wayne Shumaker, The Occult Sciences in the Renaissance,
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- 82 Curry, p. 153.
- 83 Haydn, pp. 184-85.
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- 86 Nauert, p. 273.
- 87 Nauert, p. 274.
- 88 Shumaker, p. 135.
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- 90 Shumaker, p. 150.
- 91 Nauert, p. 275.

- 92 Shumaker, p. 144.
- 93 Shumaker, p. 144.
- 94 Nauert, p. 279.
- 95 Thompson, p. 157.
- 96 West, The Invisible World, p. 115.
- 97 Shumaker, p. 109.
- 98 Reed, p. 143.
- 99 Reed, pp. 144-45.
- 100 Chambers, IV, 422.
- 101 W. W. Greg, ed., Marlowe's Doctor Faustus, p. 1.
- 102 Jeffrey P. Hart, "Prospero and Faustus," Boston University Studies in English, 2 (1956), 199.
- 103 Kittredge, p. 239.
- 104 Reed, p. 19.
- 105 Reed, p. 90.
- 106 West, The Invisible World, p. 144.
- 107 Sidney R. Homan, Jr., "Doctor Faustus, Dekker's Old Fortunatus, and the Morality Plays," MLQ, 26 (1965), 497.
- 108 Sellin, p. 188.
- 109 Christopher Marlowe, The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, Quarto 1604 and Quarto 1616, in Elizabethan Plays, ed. Hazelton Spencer, Prologue 18-19 (p. 41). Subsequent references to this work are noted by act, scene, and line numbers following the material cited.
- 110 Joseph T. McCullen, "Dr. Faustus and Renaissance Learning," MLR, 1 (Jan. 1956), 9. McCullen shows that Faustus's

lack of complete knowledge extends to all areas of his study, as does his lack of recognition of their worth.

111 McCullen, p. 9.

112 McCullen, p. 10.

113 See Hazelton Spencer's note to Doctor Faustus, p. 42.

114 McCullen, p. 7.

115 West, The Invisible World, p. 130.

116 Robert H. West, "The Impatient Magic of Dr. Faustus,"

English Literary Renaissance, 4, 231.

117 West, The Invisible World, p. 129.

118 West, The Invisible World, p. 129.

119 Felix E. Schelling, Elizabethan Drama 1558-1642, I, 387.

120 Percy Z. Round, "Greene's Materials for Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay," MLR, 26 (Jan. 1926), 19.

121 Frank Towne, "White Magic in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay?" MLN, 67 (Jan. 1952), 10.

122 Robert Greene, The Honorable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, Quarto 1594, in Elizabethan Plays, ed.

Hazelton Spencer, I.ii.124 (p. 181). Subsequent references to this work are noted by act, scene, and line numbers following the material cited.

123 Etti, p. 276.

124 Albert Wertheim, "The Presentation of Sin in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay," Criticism, 16, 285.

125 West, The Invisible World, p. 134.

126 Curry, p. 179.

127 Curry, pp. 179-80.

128 Wertheim, p. 278.

129 Hart, p. 199.

130 Sellin, pp. 152-53.

131 W. W. Greg, gen. ed., John of Bordeaux or The Second Part of Friar Bacon, The Malone Society Reprints, p. vii.

Subsequent references to Greg's comments about the play are given in the text. References to the play itself are noted by line numbers following the material cited.

132 E. M. Butler, Ritual Magic, p. 35.

133 Schelling, Elizabethan Drama, I, 388.

134 Anthony Munday, John à Kent and John à Cumber, The Malone Society Reprints, gen. ed. W. W. Greg, 108-11. Subsequent references to this work are noted by line numbers following the material cited.

135 Schelling, Shakespeare and "Demi-Science", pp. 161-62.

136 John W. Ashton, "Conventional Materials in Munday's John à Kent," PMLA, 49 (Sept. 1934), 752.

137 Reed, pp. 107-08.

138 Ashton, pp. 756-57.

139 Mowat, p. 298.

140 Mowat, p. 300.

141 Karol Berger, "Prospero's Art," Shakespeare Studies, 10, 212.

142 Reed, p. 149.

143 Hart, p. 201.

144 Curry, p. 180.

145 Hardin Craig, "Magic in The Tempest," PQ, 47 (1968), 8-15.

146 William Shakespeare, The Tempest, in The Complete Works of Shakespeare, ed. David Bevington, 3rd ed. See V.i.41-50 (p. 1521) for Prospero's description. Subsequent references to this work are noted by act, scene, and line numbers following the material cited.

147 Mowat, p. 287.

148 Mowat, p. 289.

149 Clifford Davidson, "Ariel and the Magic of Prospero in The Tempest," Susquehanna University Studies, 10 (1978), 229.

150 Davidson, p. 232.

151 Mowat, pp. 284-85.

152 Craig, "Magic," p. 8.

153 Mowat, pp. 286, 289.

154 Barbara L. Estrin, "Telling the Magician from the Magic in The Tempest," Bucknell Review, 25, No. 1 (1980), 183.

155 Berger, p. 222.

156 Craig, "Magic," p. 14.

157 Berger, p. 230. While Berger argues that the play defends the need for "a commonly accepted legitimate power," he views Prospero as a usurper of Caliban's authority and

Caliban's conspiracy as parallel to Prospero's plan to regain control of Milan. I cannot agree that Caliban is presented as a rightful ruler.

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