AGRIFFA AND THE OCCULT SCIENCES
IN RENAISSANCE DRAMA

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in English

by

Elaine-Theresa Rosdorff

June 1974
The thesis of Elaine-Theresa Rosdorff is approved:

______________________________
Committee Chairman

California State University, Northridge

June 1974
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The writer wishes to express her appreciation to the Thesis Director, Dr. Catherine Dunn and the members of the Committee, Dr. Annemarie Peterson and Dr. Thomas Wright.

Special thanks and deepest gratitude are extended to my husband, Jan Rosdorff, and our son, Robert, for their assistance and support.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page ............................................. i
Approval Page ....................................... ii
Acknowledgment Page ............................... iii
Table of Contents ................................... iv
Abstract ............................................... v
Introduction .......................................... 1

Chapter
   1) White Magic ................................. 8
   2) Black Magic ................................ 34
   3) Alchemy ..................................... 60

Conclusion .......................................... 93

Bibliography ........................................ 96
ABSTRACT

AGRIPPA AND THE OCCULT SCIENCES IN RENAISSANCE DRAMA

by

Elaine-Theresa Rosdorff

Master of Arts in English

May, 1974

This Thesis traces some of the major sources for the Renaissance beliefs in magic and alchemy as well as their influence on sixteenth-century dramatists.

The Neoplatonists, Ficino and Pico, venerated the ancient sources from which they derived their concepts of a religio-magical world view. In his prime work, De occulta philosophia, Henry Cornelius Agrippa borrowed from the Neoplatonists and incorporated a number of their ideas into his work. Because of his fame as a Renaissance scholar, he is one of the major sources cited in this paper. Agrippa's major academic goal was to establish magic as a pure science, untarnished by the onus of superstition. In his book, he reflects the predominant Renaissance tenets about white magic, black magic, alchemy and a number of other occult sciences which influenced the sixteenth-century playwrights.
This Thesis is divided into three chapters, each dealing with an occult science as reflected in a Renaissance play. In the first chapter, the fundamental Elizabethan beliefs in white magic, the magus, his powers, and his goals are presented in relation to Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. In the second chapter, the basic tenets held about black magic, the magician, his powers and goals are exemplified in Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*. The final chapter deals with the Renaissance beliefs in alchemy as depicted by Jonson's *The Alchemist*.

The primary emphasis of this Thesis is not to ridicule the Elizabethans for their occult beliefs but is instead an attempt to understand why it was natural for them to view their world as they did.
INTRODUCTION

The advocacy and practice of magic were pervasive in the thought and behavior patterns of the Elizabethans. Because of their prevalence, numerous Renaissance scholars sought an academic basis for such occult sciences as white magic, black magic, and alchemy. Charles G. Nauert confirms this notion:

Even the most creative minds of the flourishing, sophisticated, urbanized culture of the High Middle Ages, men as great as Albertus Magnus, St. Thomas Aquinas, and Dante, believed fully in the sympathetic bonds linking all reality, the hierarchy of being, the existence of occult qualities, the astral influences, the action of good and bad demons, as described in books of magic. . . . The Renaissance continued unbroken this traditional belief in the occult sciences.¹

In order to accommodate philosophically this magical world-view, the sixteenth-century Neoplatonists attempted to integrate the occult sciences with the revered tenets of ancient theology and Judaic-Christian revelation as validated in the writings of such venerated authorities as Moses, Noah, and the Patriarchs.²


Because of the Elizabethan's fondness for syncretizing their lives and their world, such a disparate yoking of disciplines was readily accepted and practically utilized. This homogeneously integrated body of magical and religious ideas could help to explain the close cause and effect relationships experienced by the Elizabethans who conceived of themselves as inhabitants of a tripartite hierarchical world: intellectual, celestial, and elemental. It was thought that virtue descended from the Creator to the angels in the intellectual world, to the stars in the celestial world until it was finally received by the animals, plants, metals, stones, etc. in the elemental world. This Neoplatonic concept promoted the idea that it was possible for an occult practitioner to ascend this hierarchy to acquire divine knowledge and to harness these forces for beneficent use.

Their analogical reasoning also made plausible a world-view in which the universe was conceived as animated, containing an intricate network of interconnecting forces.\(^3\) They found comfort in the belief that everything in the universe was closely interrelated and that a close harmony

\(^3\)Nauert, p. 121
existed between the microcosmic and macrocosmic spheres
which were regulated by intermediary deities under the
omniscient control of God. Henry Cornelius Agrippa, noted
sixteenth-century German philosopher, affirms this belief
in the animating influence of the superior realms over
the inferior:

It is necessary that the heaven and Celestial
bodies, seeing they have a power, influence,
and manifest operation upon these inferiors,
should be animated . . . . All famous Poets,
and Philosophers affirm therefore that
the world and all celestial bodies must
have a soul that is also intelligent.

He later elaborates more fully on the idea of the animated
world and the influence of the celestials on the sensible
world:

The world, the heavens, the Stars and the
Elements have a soul with which they cause
a soul in inferior and mixed bodies . . . .
For as the world is a certain whole body,
the parts thereof are the bodies of all living
creatures.4

Similarly, Diacetto, an influential sixteenth-century
Florentine philosopher envisioned the universe as:

one animal, whose soul, by means of the
stars, imprints forms on the sub-lunar world;
these are conveyed by cosmic spirit, and if
the form has been imperfectly received
owing to the inadequacy of the receiving

4De occulta philosophia, 1651, University Microfilms,
Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan, II.1v, lvi. (All subsequent
references to this work will be noted as D.O. and placed
in the text.)
matter, this imperfection can be corrected by attracting more spirit from the appropriate planet.5

For example, every animal, plant, stone, etc. was thought to be under the influence of a particular planet. Thus, honey bees, saffron, and gold supposedly possessed a salary nature. The close correspondences of the color and the nature of the physical objects typically mimicked the planetary influence considered its source.

Like many Renaissance intellectuals, Diacetto also imagined that demons were assigned as intermediary messengers between the planets. One could attract the power and influences inherent in each planet through its assigned demonic messengers. There were two distinctly different types of messengers available to the occult practitioner. The good daemon was thought to be attracted by the magus, a practitioner of white magic, whose impeccable character, spiritually-enriching education and altruistic goals were employed in the benevolent application of his power. On the other hand, bad demons could be expected to be conjured by the black magician, who was usually of disreputable character, deficient in

education, with self-serving and often destructive goals employed in the malevolent application of his power.

Ficino, another Florentine Neoplatonist, included in his concept of man's role in the religio-magical universe the belief in an astral body or spirit. He believed that the astral body is acquired by the soul "from the various stars and spheres it passes during its descent into the earthly body." Man, because of his stellar source, is therefore strongly influenced by these astral forces. Ficino and his associate Pico share similar beliefs about these forces and their powerful effects on human actions and destinies. In addition, they felt that:

the heavens are the universal cause of all motion and life in the sub-lunar world. They operate by means of a [non-elemental] heat . . . borne by a celestial spirit which penetrates everywhere, nourishing, tempering, forming, and vivifying."

Like the spirit which links man's body and soul, this celestial force was believed to provide a vital sustenance for man on this earth.


Of these philosophers, Henry Cornelius Agrippa has been selected as the prime source for this paper because of his reputation as a renowned Renaissance authority and scholar on occult sciences. He devoted a large portion of his academic life to restoring the tarnished reputation of magic. In his major work, De occulta philosophia completed about 1533, he integrated a diverse body of ancient theological and philosophical beliefs. Included are his opinions about such diverse topics as natural or white magic, astrology, alchemy, the ethical function of music and also the damning consequences of practicing black magic. In it, he primarily attempted to remove the onus of superstition placed on magic by setting its tenets in the more respectable context of ancient scholarship.

The Elizabethan veneration of the wisdom of the ancients, coupled with their fascination with the occult sciences, is evident not only in this and other extant, scholarly treatises, but is also reflected in the drama of the period. This Thesis will explore the sixteenth-century concept of magic and alchemy and its sources in such occult philosophers as Agrippa, and its impact on the contemporary playwrights. This study will be divided into three chapters: white magic, black magic and alchemy. For each chapter, an appropriate play has
been selected to exemplify the tenets of the particular occult science. In the first chapter, William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* will serve to illuminate the basic, prevailing beliefs in white magic, the magus, his nature, powers, and goals. Similarly, in the second chapter, Christopher Marlowe's *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus* will help to illustrate the fundamental aspects of black magic, the magician, his nature, powers and goals. In the third chapter, Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist* will be explored for the prevailing Elizabethan notions about this occult science. In it, the ideal alchemist will be contrasted with the charlatan practitioner and his gulling practices.

A practical background and some insights can be provided for the second and third chapters on black magic and alchemy, respectively, by first establishing the fundamentals of white magic and the magus in Chapter 1.
CHAPTER 1

WHITE MAGIC

Sixteenth-century dramatists were profoundly influenced by a rising interest in white magic and the magus. The widespread existence of such belief in and practice of magic is evident in the controlling efforts imposed by both church and state institutions. For example, the Calvinists sought suppression of the growing conviction in beings who intercede with God for man's needs. Further, the government sought legislation to distinguish between white and black magic in order to establish a legal basis for witch hunts and heresy trials.

In order intellectually to substantiate these prevailing, magical views, Renaissance scholars delved deeply into the ancient sources they revered hoping to find not only illumination but also a cloak of respectability. These sources, primarily Middle-Eastern and Greco-Roman, provided the conception of white magic they sought, for there it was regarded as an art which the magus acquired through study and self-discipline based on certain concepts of knowledge, particularly a clear understanding of man's position in the universe.

This concept of white magic is partially-rooted in Neoplatonism which considers knowledge as a strictly
contemplative virtue. One of the major Neoplatonic sources was Plotinus, a third-century mystic who envisioned the universe as hierarchical: it ranged from the lowest animal level to the Divine Mind, with Whom the soul might ultimately merge in a mystical union. Plotinus felt that the soul could contemplate the Divine, recreating It within, and thus make itself like the Divine. 8 The individual identity would then be lost in its merger with the Supreme Being. 9 Man communes with this Divine Mind via a cosmic current which emanates from God and is omnipresent and omnipotent in the universe. This power, which Plato called Eros, elevates man's soul above the mundane spheres of existence into the metaphysical realm where he can then achieve perfection.

Ficino, a Neoplatonist from the Florentine academy, differs from Plotinus in his concept of the universe and knowledge. He envisioned the universe as a hierarchy with man in the central position between the spiritual and material world. Because of man's dual nature, he is privileged to traverse either down to the lower forms through his irrational soul or upward to God via contem-


plation through the agency of his rational soul. Man has the choice to seek the Infinite and His superior knowledge or to regress to the brutish level. However, because man, unlike the lower forms of life, was endowed with "reason and contemplation" as well as a desire for offerings of devotion to God, Ficino felt that his natural propensity would be toward his Divine Source. While in this exalted hierarchy, man could learn to manipulate natural magic for beneficent ends in the world.

Through his contact with the Florentine philosopher Ficino, Pico della Mirandola gained knowledge of Platonic and Neoplatonic doctrines which he further enriched by his understanding of Jewish philosophy and the Cabala. He designates and elevates man's position in the universe to a higher station than either Plotinus or Ficino. In his "Oration on the Dignity of Man," he envisions man as free from his traditionally restrictive position in a hierarchy and confers freedom on him through the exercise of the doctrine of free will. Pico believed that God


11 Cassirer, Kristeller, & Randall, Jr., pp. 215-216.
accorded man great latitude in his life so that he might ordain for himself the limits of his nature.\textsuperscript{12} Man was free to aspire to the higher forms through love for his Creator and through intelligence, good judgment, control of his passions and, especially education.\textsuperscript{13} With this as his philosophical position, Pico defines white magic as "nothing else than the utter perfection of natural philosophy" and quotes Porphyry who states that a magus is equivalent to an "interpreter" and "worshipper of the Divine" who, through the working of nature and universal harmony, can attract the virtues inherent in everything.\textsuperscript{14}

The Florentine Neoplatonists Ficino and Pico profoundly influenced the philosophical beliefs of Henry Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim. In his De occulta Philosophia, he incorporates many of their concepts as he pursues his major objective: to purify magic of its unsavory aspects and attributes and its classification as a charlatan's practice. Agrippa attempted to align the occult sciences under a more respectable canopy of philosophy and religion.

\textsuperscript{12} Cassirer, Kristeller, & Randall, Jr., p. 225.

\textsuperscript{13} Cassirer, Kristeller, & Randall, Jr., pp. 225-30. This education would involve the study of natural and moral philosophy which would help cleanse and enlighten his soul to comprehend the Divine.

\textsuperscript{14} Cassirer, Kristeller, & Randall, Jr., p. 247.
His notion of Divine power is almost utilitarian. Men are encouraged to seek knowledge of the Divine through the study of natural magic. A clear understanding of this natural philosophy will enable him to draw upon the Divine power available to manipulate inharmonious world conditions. This potential for knowledge and its attendant powers was conceived possible by Agrippa because men existed in a tripartite world:

Elementary, Celestial, and Intellectual and every inferior is governed by its superior and receiveth the influence of the virtues thereof so that the very original and chief Worker of all doth by Angels, the Heavens, Stars, Elements, Animals, Plants, Metals, and Stones convey from himself the virtues of his Omnipotency upon us, for whose service he made and created all things: Wise men conceive it no way irrationall that it is possible for us to ascend by the same degrees through each World to ... the Maker of things, and first Cause. (D.Q., I.B, 2, 2B)

Because of his closely-linked relationship to nature and the universe, a learned, self-disciplined magus would be unlimited in his commerce with and manipulation of the Divine source of power. Agrippa adopted his concept of the existence of inherent virtues in all things from Ficino's translations of treatises incorporated in the Corpus Hermeticum, a body of occult writings which date
from about the second or third century, A.D.\textsuperscript{15} He is also indebted to Ficino for his concept of the Spirit of the World found in the latter's \textit{De vita coelitus comparanda}. This Spirit, Quintessence, or Medium was believed to confer occult properties on all herbs, stones, metals, etc. and originated from the celestial bodies.\textsuperscript{16} A full understanding of these properties was fundamental to the magus' successful practice of magic. Further, it confirms the Renaissance belief in sympathy and antipathy between all things in the microcosm and macrocosm.

Agrippa borrows from Pico and shares a mutual interest with him in the magical qualities of the Hermetic writings but goes beyond the Florentine in anticipating a divinely magical religion, one in which the magus can perform miracles normally designated to the angels of the highest sphere of the intellectual world (D.O., III. xxxii and xxxvi).

As discussed by Agrippa in the \textit{De occulta}, a magus was primarily distinguished by his virtuous character and a wide knowledge of occult sciences which would guide


him in harnessing the magical celestial powers in the universe. Because of his virtuous character, the utilization of his knowledge and power would be exclusively reserved for beneficent goals.

In his prefatory remarks Agrippa described the magus as one worthy of the title of a "wiseman, a priest, or prophet;" one whose virtuous character could accommodate a sustained state of grace; and one whose mind inhabited a body unpolluted by guilt or filthiness. The character of his mind and body was to be meritorious of the sacred knowledge and utilization of natural magic. This Agrippa believed would be the noblest application of natural philosophy (D.O., III. ixiv).

In order to comprehend the rationality of magic, Agrippa believed the magus' education should include:

Naturall Philosophy which contains the qualities and occult properties of every Being, mathematicks which includes the Aspects and Figures of the Stars which contain the sublime vertue and property of every thing as well as Theologie wherein are manifested those immaterial substances, which dispense, and minister all things. (D.O., I. ii)

Education in these disciplines he felt was a necessary prerequisite for the magus because "there is no work that is done by meer Magick, nor any work that is meerely Magicall." (D.O., I. ii).
A magus' exemplary character and academic training would qualify him to tap the powers of the celestial bodies, and understand their causes, effects, times, places, fashions, events, their whole and parts because it was through them that God emanated to the natural world, in a gradation of the superior to the inferior. For example, in order to draw upon the virtues inherent in the sun, one used plants, stones and metals which were designated as solar in character (D.O., I. xxxv).

The goals of a magus must reflect purely altruistic ends in order to qualify for optimum Divine power. In the Preface of De occulta, Agrippa asserts the practitioner had to justify its use for:

those things which are for the profit of man, for the turning away of evil events, for the destroying of sorceries, for the curing of diseases... for the preserving of life, honor [and] fortune.

In so doing, the magus, in his practice of white magic, would not offend God, his church, nor his own reputation because he was using divine powers properly.

Proof of the importance of white magic as a literary theme is clearly indicated by its widespread use for over thirty years in Renaissance drama. One of the earliest known, extensive uses of the theme of white magic in Elizabethan drama is in John Lyly's Mother Bombe
(c. 1590); it is at its zenith in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (c. 1610); and is last known to be used in Fletcher's *The Prophetess* (c. 1622).

The Lyly play is based on a true account of a woman who was falsely accused of witchcraft. At the beginning of the third act, however, we are told that she is able to "tell fortunes, expound dreames, tell of things that be lost and divine of accidents to come." Further, she is known as a "good" woman who is "never doing hame, but still practicing good" and "who yet never did hurt" (V. iii). Without a doubt she qualifies as a magus.

In about 1608, John Fletcher's play *The Faithful Shepherdess* exemplifies another extensive representation of the elements of white magic. Unlike most occult practitioners who are advanced in years, the protagonist Clorin is a pure, young, idealistic maiden who has studied the healing virtues found in herbs and has used them as:

> remedies/In men and cattle, be they stung with snakes/Or charmed with powerful words of wicked art.

(I. i. 33-35)

Her unselfish and chaste manner exerts such a powerful influence on a local group of lustful shepherds and shepherdesses that they all revert to virtuous behavior. As late as 1622, Fletcher wrote *The Prophetess* which also
incorporates wide use of white magical practices. 17

Shakespeare capitalized on the Elizabethan preoccupation with the occult sciences, and because of their contemporary popularity, one could have almost predicted the success of his play *The Tempest*. 18

Prospero, the protagonist, portrays a magus whose seemingly effortless application of the power of white magic harmonizes and heals a corrupt body politic and its constituents. One of the sources of Prospero's magical power is directly related to his moral character, a character which is, as Agrippa stresses:

implanted in man by nature . . . to everyone according to his capacity and purity . . . [but] by how much every one is laden with sin, by so much is he farther off . . . [from Divine powers]

(D.O., III. x1)

Prospero is capable of great feats of magic because he is pure, noble, educated, and dedicated to the welfare of his fellow man.

Another source of Prospero's magical power derives


18 William Shakespeare, *The Tempest* in Shakespeare Complete Plays and Poems, eds. C.J. Hill and W.A. Neilson (Cambridge, Mass.: The Riverside Press, 1942). All line references to this play will be based on this edition and will be given in the text.
from his altruistic goals and the ethical practice of his art, white magic. Prospero assures his daughter Miranda that he would not allow any harm to come to the passengers of the ship he has sunk with his tempest.

I have with such provision in mine art
So safely ordered that there is no soul
No, not so much perdition as an hair
Betid to any creature in the vessel ...
(I. ii. 28-31)

Prospero again reveals his concern for others when he inquires about and verifies the safety of the ship's passengers with his servant Ariel who assures the magus of their well-being. Agrippa confirms that a magus is capable of creating "lightenings and a tempest that they shall do no hurt" (P.Q., I. xl)

The magus augments his powers through education and we learn that Prospero has devoted many years of his life studying natural philosophy. As he tells Miranda about her regal heritage, we learn that as the Duke of Milan, he had neglected his royal duties while pursuing a life of

Prospero contrasts the three lowliest characters in the subplot of The Tempest, Stephano, Trinculo and Caliban who plan to murder the magus. But first they must steal his magic books which they consider to be his major source of power (III. ii. 95-104). They then hope to transfer that power directly to themselves from his books. (This analogical type of thinking was very common in the Renaissance.) The trio is unaware, however, that the degree of a magus' power was also believed to be dependent on and proportionate to his state of grace and virtue, qualities they are sorely lacking.
study and contemplation: "I cast [them] upon my brother
... [while] rapt in secret studies," (I. ii. 75-76)
While Prospero pursued the perfection of his understanding
of the occult sciences, his brother Antonio, in conspiracy
with Alonso the King of Naples, usurped his kingdom and
expelled Prospero and Miranda. Although education was
vigorously encouraged in the Renaissance, a leader's
primary responsibility was to maintain political stability
in his kingdom. Prospero was clearly remiss in the
execution of his royal duties. Ironically, however, he
will utilize the education which led to his usurpation
in order to regain his dukedom. Prospero has learned
a hard lesson: one must find a balance between an active
and contemplative life because the primary goal of
education is not for self-satisfaction but for service
to one's fellow man.

The study and training Prospero acquired in Milan
and during the twelve years on the island was a tedious
growth process. Agrippa cites the spiritual and academic
discipline demanded of a potential magus:

We must come to this purity of mind by degrees,
neither can any one that is initiated into
those mysteries presently comprehend all
deer things, but his mind must be accustomed
by degrees until the intellect becomes
more enlightened. (D.O., III. liii)

Virtue, study, knowledge, self-discipline and contempla-
tion are some of the stepping stones one must tread
before achieving an elevated state.

Some of the specific disciplines Prospero mastered were: conjuring good spirits, alchemy, astrology and other various arts. Because of his virtuous character, training in white magic, and altruistic goals, Prospero has learned to conjure only good spirits to assist him in his work. When Ariel is first summoned by the magus, we learn that he is a spirit who can easily accommodate himself to the four elements: air, water, fire and earth:

. . . . to fly,
To swim, to dive into the fire to ride,
On the curl'd clouds.
(I. ii. 190-2)

Agrippa discusses this class of spirits from which someone like Ariel originates and draws his power as the "original grounds of all corporeal things." These elements, of which Prospero and Ariel are masters, are in the "third order" of a tripartite hierarchy which is also called the "medium" or "soul of middle nature" and:

In them is, by means of certain numbers, degrees, and orders, the perfection of every effect in what thing soever, whether Naturall, Celestiall, or Supercelestiall; they are full of wonders, and mysteries, and are operative as in Magick Naturall, so Divine: For from these through them, proceed the bindings, loosings, transmutations of all things, the knowing and foretelling of things to come, also the driving forth of evill and gaining of good spirits.

(D. O., I. iii)
It is from this third order that Prospero has conjured Ariel and it is from this realm that their diverse magical powers are drawn. Prospero requires the assistance of a positive spirit such as Ariel whose powers approach omniscience, omnipotence and omniaction in such feats as raising the tempest and casting spells.

Ariel displays his vast power by conjuring a feast for Alonso, Gonzales, and Sebastian and then causing it to disappear as they approach the feast. Ariel again demonstrates his superior powers when he accuses Alonso and Sebastian of Prospero's usurpation. Their immediate response to his charges is to draw their swords. However, because of his magical powers, Ariel is invulnerable and makes a mockery of their threats:

... The elements,
Of whom your swords are temper'd, may as well
Wound the loud winds, or with bemock'd-at stabs
Kill the still-closing waters, as diminish
One dowle that's in my plume.
(III. iii. 62-64)

Ariel's magic rules so superior over these inferior beings that even the tiniest pinfeather in his costume remains unharmed. With the aid of Prospero's power, he binds the usurpers so that they may have an opportunity to repent for their crimes.

Although he is not a magus, Gonzalo, an honest old counsellor concerned about his king's safety displays his
knowledge of one of the occult sciences, metaprosopography. When the raging tempest threatens to sink their ship, he employs his learning in this art by predicting their fortunes based on the facial characteristics and coloring of a boatswain. Gonzalo searches the sailor's face for a "drowning mark" (I. i. 31). However, he is satisfied that the sailor's face is instead "perfect gallows." Having read the fortunes in the face of the crewman, he remarks they will "make the rope of his destiny our cable . . . If he be not born to be hang'd, our case is miserable." (I. i. 33-36) In a not uncommon Renaissance response, Gonzalo depends on his long experience as superior to reason in evaluating their predicament. Because the marks and complexion of the boatswain's face contained characteristics which were probably noted in other shipwreck survivors, he feels he can confidently predict they will not be drowned. His prediction is coincidentally correct.

Optimum astrological conditions were of primary

20Diverse astrological allusions are found in several other plays of Shakespeare: In King Lear, Kent observes that "It is the stars/ The stars above us, govern our conditions" (IV. iii. 34-37); in Romeo and Juliet, it is the "inauspicious yoke of stars" (I. iv. 707-710) which lead the lovers to their fatal deaths; and in Measure for Measure, Claudio states [Life is] "A breath . . . / Servile to all the skyey influences" (III. i. 6-11).
consideration to the magus. He depended on the auspicious timing and location of planets and stars in conjunction with his work because each planet was considered to have a particular influence on every animal, plant, rock and element and the qualities thought to be naturally inherent in them. Agrippa confirms this Elizabethan belief, commenting that:

All the ancient wise men consent in this, that it is of very great concernment; that in what moment of time and disposition of the heavens, everything, whether naturall or Artificiall both received its being in this world . . . that the course of fortune dependeth thereon, and may be foretold thereby. (D.O., III. lxiv)

The prime importance of astrology to the magus is stressed again in his De vanitate:

Then al these skills [magical] of divination are rooted and grounded upon Astrologie . . . and thus doo all divinations require the Arte and Vse of Astrologie, and confesse, that it is as a keye necessarie to the knowledge of all secretes . . . [and] he whiche professeth Magicke without Astrologie doth nothinge.21

Prospero augments his white magical powers to assure the successful outcome of his plans by applying his

---

21 Agrippa, Of the Vanitie and Uncertaintie of Artes and Sciences, Imprinted at London, transl. James Sanford, Cap 40, p. 54 and 54r.
knowledge of astrology. After waiting twelve-long years on his island, he realizes he must act now while he is astrologically-favored to rectify his world and regain his fortunes:

.. . 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. 180-4)

The magus' concern with the time and position of the stars is reflected in his comment to Ariel that he had many things to accomplish "'twixt six and now" (I. ii. 239-240) and his later reflection "ere suppertime must I perform much business appertaining" (III. i. 93-95). In striving to complete his tasks by sunset, the magus affirms his dependence on the element of light to the successful practice of white magic. Agrippa asserts that "the Celestial! and bright Fire drives away spirits of darkness" and good spirits which were called angels of Light, are more potent in the presence of light as attested in ancient religious ceremonies with candles and fires (D.Q., I. v). 22

22 Note: Ben Johnson's Masque of Queens treats the element of light similarly. While the Hags and their Dame plot to "blast the light" of the masque of Virtues, Heroic Virtue interrupts the Hags' frenzied dance because "All dark and envious witchcraft fly the light."
Light was considered to originate from the Father down
to the Son, through the hierarchy to the celestial bodies
and ultimately to man. In order to assure the successful
completion of his goals, Prospero is capitalizing on every
benevolent force in the universe that he can harness with
his powers.

In the practice of his art, Prospero depends heavily
on various types of magical equipment such as a wand,
cloak, book, and magical songs. His magic wand is used
when Ferdinand proposes marriage to Miranda and Prospero
temporarily impedes their romance "lest too light winning/
Make the prize light" (I. ii. 451). He accuses Ferdinand
of being a spy and traitor and in response, the young man
draws his sword in protest. Prospero then disarms him
"with this stick" and charms Ferdinand from moving: "My
nerves are in their infancy again/ And have no vigor in
them" (I. ii. 484). Prospero's magic wand saves his life
and gives him the opportunity to command Ferdinand into
menial labor until the young man is educated and disciplin-
ed and so that he can appreciate Miranda even more.

When Prospero in the role of a father talks to
Miranda about her former life in Milan, he removes his
"magic garment" (I. ii. 24) which, like his staff, adds
to the magus' power. The magic robe was necessary when
he raised the tempest with Ariel and will be donned later
to lull Miranda to sleep while Prospero and Ariel make further plans. Prospero wears it for the last time at the beginning of the fifth act when, with Ariel's assistance, he begins to resolve all of the personal and political problems and reunite the families and friends.

One of Prospero's prime sources of power is his book of magic which is mentioned a few times in the play. As Ferdinand and Miranda are pledging their troth to each other he announces:

... I'll to my book,
For yet ere suppertime must I perform
Much business appertaining.
(III. i. 93-95)

His study of the occult sciences is a continuous process of self-discipline necessary to success as a magus. However, after accomplishing his goals, restoring his dukedom and reconciling all families in harmony, he no longer requires his book of magic. He therefore destroys it (V. i. 56) so that the secret writings in it will not be dissipated by the uninitiated as 'pearls cast before swine.' Agrippa joins the tradition of many ancient and occult practitioners, such as Plato and Pythagoras, who commanded that holy mysteries should not be divulged to the common people, but instead should be considered consecrated secrets. The Nettesheimer further notes that most esoteric records and rituals are closed and held secret from the public to avoid pollution of divine
matters. Consistent with this thinking, Agrippa's *De Occulta* does not reveal specific, detailed information "of the chiefest secret mysteries of Ceremonial Magick," for which he asks our pardon (D.O., III. ii).

Another vital supplemental force to Prospero's magical power is revealed in his extensive dependence on music. The magical songs in *The Tempest* are not ornamental additions; but are integral components of Shakespeare's drama. Like magic, speculative music was considered to have a positive, affective quality on men and their actions; an invaluable tool for a magus. As in other disciplines, Elizabethans believed that the existence of music in the macrocosmic world had a harmonious, ordering influence on the human affairs of the microcosm. They cited the Biblical example of how David restored King Saul to health and harmony with his music.

Their veneration for the wisdom of the ancients and their notions about music was based primarily on a tripartite arrangement by Boethius:

... and according to his scheme, the three branches of music were...

*musica mundana* (music of the world),
*musica humana* (human music), and *musica instrumentalis* (instrumental music).

Boethius defined *musica mundana* as the harmony of the universe which included the cosmological order of elements, astral bodies, and seasons whose typical mode...
was, for the ancient and medieval worlds, the music of the spheres where Heaven's perfection and order could be heard in the harmonic proportions that governed the universe. The most significant term in Boethius' \textit{musica humana} is the notion of 'temperament,' which applied both to the tuning of strings and to the tempering of various parts of the human soul, thoughts, feelings, the relation of the soul to the body, etc.\textsuperscript{23}

Agrippa also confirms the positive value of speculative music to which the ancient's subscribed:

\begin{quote}
Musical harmony \ldots doth wonderfully allure the Celestial influence and doth change the affections, gestures, notions, actions, and dispositions of all the hearers,
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\[\text{[and]}\] The wise Ancients therefore knowing that the harmonious dispositions of bodies and souls are divers, according to the diversity of the complexions of men, did not in vain use musical sounds and singings as to confirm the health of the body, and restore it \ldots to wholesome manners, until they make a man suitable to the Celestial Harmony, and make him wholly Celestial! \[\text{[as]}\] there is nothing more efficacious to drive away evil spirits than musical harmony. (\textit{Q.O.}, II. xxiv)
\end{quote}

Like magic, the theory of speculative music was embellished by Platonists and Christians who evolved

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}
the Ethos theory which promotes the idea that when speculative music was performed by a 'true musician,' a close counterpart of the magus, it could evoke virtue in human beings and harmony in their worldly affairs. Some examples from The Tempest will illustrate this concept. The purpose of Ariel's first magical song is to entice Ferdinand to Miranda and his destiny so that the harmonious union of lovers will help restore microcosmic and macrocosmic order. Ferdinand's fear of death is eased by the soothing music which has also served to lure him to safety on Prospero's island.

This music crept by me upon the waters,
Allaying both their fury and my passion
With its sweet air; thence I have follow'd it.
Or it hath drawn me rather.
(I. ii. 391-4)

In order to release Ferdinand from filial subjection to his father, Ariel, in his second song lies to Ferdinand that his father has drowned: "Full fathom five thy father lies;/ Of his bones are coral made;" (I. ii. 396-7). This false information prepares Ferdinand to act independently when he meets and woos Miranda. He is free to propose marriage and offer the queenship to her without parental consent.

In Act II. i. 190-195, Ariel while invisible induces a pleasant sleep to come over King Alonso and his counsellor, Gonzalo, with his magical song. This slumber music is a merciful gesture from Prospero as a temporary respite for the weary travellers. While they sleep, Antonio encourages Sebastian to usurp his brother Alonso's throne by murdering both men. However, through the magical intervention of invisible Ariel, the sleeping men are wakened with a song of warning about the "open ey'ed Conspiracy" (II. i. 301). Again, the affective quality of speculative music from the celestial spheres has preserved life and political order.

Prospero also uses the magic of music to restore Alonso and Sebastian to rational and responsible thinking. This merciful gesture is indicative of the exemplary behavior of a magus. He recognizes that the speculative music begins to dissolve:

> the darkness of their rising senses [and] Begin to chase the ignorant fumes that mantle Their clearer reason. (V. i. 64-68)

Although their greed and lust for power formerly clouded their rational faculties, the magic of music has begun to restore them to clear thinking:

> Their understanding Begins to swell, and the approaching tide Will shortly fill the reasonable shore . . . (V. i. 79-81)
Although Ariel commands vast power, it is greatly surpassed by Prospero. When Ariel challenges his master about his prolonged service to the magus, Prospero reminds the spirit of his twelve years imprisonment in a pine tree imposed by the witch Sycorax. It is only because Prospero's superior powers of white magic could triumph over black magic that Ariel was freed, but placed in temporary service to the magus.

Prospero's white magic contrasts the black magic practiced by Sycorax who used spells, curses, and bindings to the detriment of mankind. While Sycorax used her black magic to keep men in bondage, Prospero uses his white magic to liberate men from their various forms of bondage.

Caliban, the son of Sycorax "got by the devil" (I. ii. 319), in spite of Prospero's efforts to redeem him, is a product of his parents; a personification of evil propagated on Prospero's island. Like his mother, he curses everyone and even attempted to violate Miranda, Prospero's young daughter. The preservation of chastity was a major concern in the Renaissance; violation would have been judged as a reprehensible deed by an Elizabethan audience. Caliban is aware of Prospero's superior power and resigns himself, for the moment, to obedience because he realizes:
His art is of such power
It would control my dam's god, Setebos,
And make a vassal of him.
(I. ii. 372-4)

Caliban's base nature is contrasted again to Prospero's noble character when he curses his master's powers and verbalizes some Renaissance concepts of natural philosophy about the healing power of the sun:

All the infections that the sun sucks up
From bogs, fens, flats, on Prospero fall
and make him
By inch-meal a disease! (II. ii. 1-3)

Again in the following lines, Caliban bitterly complains of Prospero's superior magic and "his spirits [who] hear me" and punish him for his wickedness with pinches and bites. This punishment of Caliban is based on a cause and effect relationship. Each time Caliban is wicked or curses, he is punished by the good spirits.

In the ultimate use of his white magical powers, Prospero conjures up a spectacular masque in honor of his daughter and her fiance. This demonstration, which Prospero calls "some vanity of mine art" (IV. i. 41), impresses the betrothed so that they are more receptive to his admonition to preserve Miranda's chastity until they are wed. The masque participants reinforce his advice as they bless the young couple with joy, fruitfulness, and good fortune. These supernatural representatives Prospero has conjured further serve to link the microcosm and
macrocosm of this select audience in a close-knit harmony. However, when Prospero suddenly remembers the "foul conspiracy/Of the beast Caliban and his confederates" (IV. i. 139-140), the magus' magical power sharply wanes and the supernatural spectacle disperses. The intrusion of this dissonant thought has caused the vision to disappear. The magical power of the magus diminished when Prospero's quality of consciousness was reduced by disharmonious thought of the conspiracy. Nevertheless, the magus' primary motivation for the masque was accomplished; the young couple were sufficiently inspired to heed his advice.

Because Prospero's major goal has been to practice white magic, which affirms that "the rarer action is/in virtue than in vengeance" (V. i. 27), his project has been brought to a successful conclusion with harmony, transformation, and reconciliation re-established in the microcosm and macrocosm. His magical powers, no longer necessary, are now set aside in order to nurture his spiritual growth.25

25 This parallels a similar action which takes place in Robert Greene's The Honorable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay. At the conclusion of this play which uses magic altruistically, the practice of magic is renounced and attention is focused on spiritual cultivation.
CHAPTER II
BLACK MAGIC

While Elizabethan audiences enjoyed Shakespeare's dramatic exposition of white magic in *The Tempest*, their attraction to drama which incorporated black magic was equally keen. Robert Reed verifies this interest in black magic and identifies it as a distinct genre of supernatural forms in Renaissance drama. He found the theme of sorcerers, witches and demons in "more than seventy plays by Shakespeare and his contemporaries." 26

Like white magic, Elizabethan notions about black magic derive from ancient Greco-Roman origins and are recorded in Anglo-Saxon documents as early as the seventh century. 27 Evil spirits and demons were also officially recognized as existing entities in the Bible, in many religions, and in most European courts of law. Churches held exorcism ceremonies to deal with satanic forces and legislation was also necessary to control the growing practice of the black arts which often frightened the superstitious Elizabethans. Therefore, one must not underestimate the powers the Elizabethans attributed to

26 Reed, p. 9.
27 Reed, p. 55.
the devil. Even though demons were considered to be fallen angels, it was believed that they could still utilize the extensive body of knowledge amassed while they were in God's service. After their fall, however, they used God's gifts negatively, interfering in men's affairs.

The average Elizabethan also had a stereotyped conception of the black magician's character. Some conventional traits would include grandiose ambitions, and lust for wealth, power, and fame. His education which was deficient in contrast to that of a magus would be utilized exclusively in the perverse application of the principles of natural philosophy for selfish and often corrupt purposes.

While these beliefs about black magic are everywhere evident in the Elizabethan period, some additional concerns and characteristics are developed in Christopher Marlowe's The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus. Especially important in an age which concerned


29 All line references to this play will be given in the thesis text and are based on: The Norton Anthology of English Literature (revised), I, ed. M. Abrams et al., New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1968.
itself with social distinctions is the question as to why Doctor Faustus, a graduate in such noble studies as theology and philosophy, chose black magic instead of white? Does the character of "baser born" men make them more easily predisposed to embrace a life of evil? Perhaps the impetus to compensate for past inequities is partially the motivating force which drove him harder to find fulfillment at any price.

His waxen wings did mount above his reach
And melting, heavens conspired his overthrow.
(I. 21-22)

Like Icarus, we are told in this introductory choral summary, Faustus aspired too high, beyond his human position in the hierarchy, above his niche in the Elizabethan concept of a Chain of Being. His excessive pride, ambition, and indulgence in the acts of black magic, to the disregard of his soul's salvation, would ultimately doom him to eternal damnation.

The play opens just before Faustus makes his fatal choice. In the internal colloquy of the first scene, he is considering being "a divine in show," in appearance only rather than in reality, in order to satisfy his growing materialistic desires. This is uncharacteristic for a magus but appropriate to a magician; he longs for wealth, power, and fame:
Faustus, heap up gold
And be eternized for some wonderous cure.
(I. i. 14-15)

In spite of his recognition for the discovery of exceptional healing remedies, an art of a magus, he realizes he is "still but Faustus, and a man" (I. i. 23). As he begins to resent his human limitations, his spiritual ground is being cultivated for the seeds of demonic temptation.

Faustus' primary aspirations, though somewhat extraordinary, reflect the changing self-awareness evident in Renaissance man's interpretation of his position in the universe. Because man was in the key position between the earth and God and was being encouraged by philosophers, such as Pico and Agrippa, to explore the potential limits of his divine nature and its close relationship to his Creator, it might have been anticipated that a character such as Dr. Faustus would evolve, representing the extreme example of a pervasive trend.

In addition to this soaring self-confidence, he expresses doubt in the soul's immortality or its eternal damnation and therefore convinces himself that black magic provides the opportunity to assuage his materialistic and power-hungry drives;

A world of profit and delight,
Of power, of honor, of omnipotence,
Is promised to the studious artisan.
(I. i. 53-55)
In retrospect, these selfish character traits and self-aggrandizing goals sharply contrast those of the noble magus such as Prospero. One could almost imagine that Marlowe's play outline was anticipated by Agrippa who warned that anyone attempting to perform magic outside of a religious framework will bring upon himself judgment and will ultimately be delivered to the evil spirits to be devoured (D.Q., III. vi).

Faustus also craves greater powers than those conferred on God's annointed rulers which an Elizabethan audience would have considered as a serious character flaw. Realizing royalty are even limited to human boundaries, he therefore desires the powers of a magician which are like those of a "demi-god" (I. i. 62), far beyond his station in life. And while kings or rulers, such as Prospero, use their powers nobly in service to their subjects and kingdoms Faustus intends to dissipate his magical energy on purely self-indulgent whims.

In a contest for his soul, the Bad Angel caters to Faustus' ambitions and lures him into deeper damnation by encouraging him to aspire still higher and to be: "on earth as Jove is in the sky, Lord and commander of these elements" (I. i. 76-77). The demon encourages the magician to seek God's position as did the fallen angels who were finally cast out of heaven for their untenable
aspirations.

These various, unchecked, negative character traits of Faustus cause a steadily diminishing state of grace which result in his erroneous use of free will. His first major error in the exercise of free will occurs when Faustus requests the two magicians Valdes and Cornelius\(^{30}\) to teach him the principles of conjuring a demon.

Through free will, man initiates the contact with angelic or demonic spirits and is ultimately responsible for his actions and decisions in this intercourse. Agrippa amplifies this point:

> Divine Providence hath set over us more pure spirits with whom he hath entrusted us . . . that they should help us, and drive away evil spirits from us.

However, Agrippa continues, man's free will often interferes with the good angels' intentions as he declines from:

> the right path adhering to the spirits of errors, giving victory to the Devil; for it is in the hand of man to adhere to whom he pleases. (D.O., III. xx)

Even Mephistophilis fails to convince Faustus that this

\(^{30}\)Cornelius was Marlowe's representation of Henry Cornelius Agrippa, one of the most famous occult scientists in the Renaissance. He refers to the Humanist by name in I. i. 118.
action endangers his soul. The latter flippantly rejects the demon's warnings of eternal damnation for two reasons. First, he again expressed doubt about the immortality of the soul. His irreligious character has reduced Faustus' state of grace to the point where he lacks faith in the immortality of the soul. Secondly, Faustus feels his lust for wealth, power, and fame can only be fulfilled through the practice of the arts of black magic.

His ambitious character consistently contributes to a waning state of grace which makes him unable to respond to the pleadings of the good angel to "abjure this magic, turn to God again!" and turn to "contrition, prayer, and repentence," (II. i. 16). These recommendations specify the acts necessary to maintain or restore the state of grace in which one is able to overcome demonic temptations.

Faustus' ignoble character continually reflects serious errors in judgment and in free choice as he decides to embrace black magic for self-gain. He angrily challenges his congealed blood when he attempts to sign the demonic pact by asserting his spiritual prerogative: "Is not thy soul thine own?" (II. i. 68). Though he clearly takes personal responsibility for his choices here, he will later blame Mephistophilis for tempting
his soul. Agrippa affirms this great responsibility and
latitude God has given to men:

Because man is created in the image and
likeness of God, his soul, the Godpart
"cannot be seen, heard nor touched. And
as God himself is infinite, and cannot
be compelled by any, so also the minde
of man is free and cannot be enforced
or bounded." (D.O., III. xxxvi)

Besides being ambitious, Faustus also has a "wanton
and lascivious nature" (II. ii. 142). He inappropriately
requests Mephistophilis to provide him with a wife. To
fulfill this request would require a religious ceremony.
Mephistophilis circumvents this problem by providing
Faustus with "the fairest of courtesans" (II. i. 150)
to which the latter heartily subscribes. The magician's
moral standards sharply contrast with those of the magus.
Unlike Faustus, Prospero demanded purity of thought,
word, and deed not only of himself but also of his family
and subjects. Faustus' continual immoral actions
proportionately reduce his state of grace to even lower
levels. When a good angel again attempts to aid him, he
now reflects a growing distrust in the mercy of God:
"Yea, God will pity me, if I repent" (II. ii. 15-18).
However, his weak intention to repent is shown by the
word "if." Faith and strength of conviction are necessary
for him to overcome his evil adversary. Agrippa illumines
this principle and admonishes that faith is a necessary
component of every religio-magical experience:

He that works in magick must be of constant belief . . . as a firm and strong belief doth work wonderfull things . . . [but] distrust and doubting doth dissipate, and break the vertu of the mind of the worker.

(D.Q., I. lxvii)

Faustus cannot feel worthy of salvation now because "his heart is hardened" (II. ii. 18) beyond repentence or faith in salvation. This is also reflected later when, in desperation, Faustus cries out: "Christ, my Saviour! My Saviour! Help to save distressed Faustus' soul" (II. ii. 84-85), and only satanic representatives respond. Agrippa quotes Porphyry who warns that the religious condition of a supplicant (such as we see in Faustus) predetermines the quality of spiritual intercession:

Unless we having our minds purged, be worthy to be heard; and also those things which we desire, be worthy to be done, it is manifest that the gods will not hearken to our prayers.

(D.Q., III. lv)

In this scene as in his final, agonizing death scene, Faustus commands the celestial magical powers to intercede and save him from the horrible punishment Elizabethan audiences would have felt he had earned. However, in the absence of a state of grace, his unworthy and unrepentent soul cannot attract celestial aid; his invocation only provokes the anger of Lucifer, Beelzebub and Mephistophilis (II. ii. 86).
Agrippa also warns that we face the loss of our soul if we do not abstain from practices which infect the mind or spirit, and avoid "idleness and luxury; for the soul being suffocated with the body and lust cannot foresee any celestial thing" (D.O., III. lv).

Faustus' lifestyle is devoted to the practice of black magic as well as indulgence in idleness and luxury. Further, he is steadily replacing the virtues of his character with damning vices; and as a result, his practice of free will becomes more obfuscated, leading his soul beyond redemption.

In his travels with Mephistophilis, we see Faustus' character degenerate further as he irreverently interferes in the orderly processes of the papal election. When this august body becomes aware of the presence of a troubled spirit, the priests cross themselves, causing Faustus intolerable distress. Agrippa confirms the inherent potency of the sign of the cross which was recognized even before Christ by the Egyptians and Arabians for its great power because:

it is the most firm receptacle of all Celestiall powers . . . containing four right angles and it is the first description of the superficies having latitude and longitude . . . [therefore even] Stars are then most potent when they possess four corners in the figure of the heaven, and make a cross, by the projection of their rayes. (D.O., II. xxii)
Because of Faustus' spiritual degeneration through the practice of black magic, he cannot tolerate the celestial power of this sign and strikes the Pope who ironically damns his already damned soul for this misdeed.

An old man also pleads with Faustus:

leave this damned art.
This magic that will charm thy soul to hell
and quite bereave thee of salvation.
(V. i. 37-39)

However, after twenty-four years of undisciplined character, an unnurtured state of grace, and abuse of free will, Faustus' corrupt nature is so firmly entrenched, it has become psychologically irreversible. Because of the predominant cyclic patterns of habit and guilt, he is beyond redemption. The magician's predicament stands in sharp contradistinction to that of the magus. Prospero, after years of self-discipline, piousness and correct use of free will was able not only to restore his own life to wholeness but even those of his adversaries.

Like their vast differences in character, the occult practitioners' attitudes toward education are also distinctly diverse. Prospero dedicated most of his life to the study of natural philosophy, in order to comprehend natural magic; Faustus, except for some dabbling in books of magic (II. i. 165-175), lacked this self-discipline. Cornelius, one of his magician friends, recommends that
he study such disciplines as astrology, incantations, conjuring, and alchemy (I. i. 139-155), some necessary prerequisites for a successful magician. However, Faustus, impatient for results, commanded the magicians to teach him conjuring immediately so that he could practice it that very night, even at the risk of losing his soul.

Faustus' warped attitude toward education and his magic books remains consistent to the end of his life. As a token gesture and in exchange for salvation, Faustus, under duress, offers to burn his books of magic (V. ii. 88) but his offer comes too late. He is beyond repentence and has waited until his demonic pact was almost expired before surrendering them. This distinctly contrasts Prospero's attitude and actions. He used his magic books only till he fulfilled his altruistic goals and then destroyed them voluntarily.

In addition to the need for conjuring, education, and the knowledge contained in certain magic books were two more basic elements. They were ceremony and pact which

31 In Robert Greene's The Honorable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, Friar Bacon employs his powers of black magic "using devils to countervail his God" I. xiii. However unlike Faustus, he has never signed a pact with the devil and he has a natural gift similar to Prospero in The Tempest -- developed through study. Bacon's application of magical power is admired by the audience because he also uses it positively in a contest of strength.
black magic also shares with white magic. A conjuring ceremony for a magus or a magician was heavily dependent on the utilization of inherent magical virtues and powers which the ancients and Elizabethans ascribed to certain herbs, animals, plants, planets, seals, names, symbols, invocations, chants, music, time, place, and the presence or absence of light, etc. Various magical implements such as capes, wands and books were also deemed necessary paraphernalia to augment the powers of occult practitioners. Both the magus and magician engaged in similar mental and physical activities in preparation for the conjuring ceremony but with different qualities, motivations, and effects. A magus usually prepared himself with divine meditation, cleansing and purification rites; conversely, the magician often came dirty, barefoot, and engaged in demonic meditation.

The conjuring ceremony was expected to establish two things: first "a mutual attraction between the human channel and the acting spirit" and secondly to draw power from this mutual attraction. 32 For example, Prospero attracts the services of a good spirit, Ariel, because of

his own elevated spiritual state and his goals of benevolent service to God and man. In contrast, however, a character such as Marlowe's Dr. Faustus attracts the services of demons, tied to the conditions of a demonic pact. Because of his decadent character, spiritual state, neglected education, and his major goal of self-aggrandizement, the price of his power is the loss of his soul. While Prospero attracts a ministering angel because of his meticulous practice of white magic, Faustus attracts satanic forces because of his practice of black magic and because of his rejection of theology and Scripture.

Prospero's pact with Ariel was for the latter's temporary benevolent services in exchange for freedom from the curse and spell of Sycorax. However, the magician's pact with the devil promised extraordinary powers during his allotted lifetime in exchange for his soul. The satanic pact might include such tenets as: one must deny Christ, undergo a mock baptism, receive a new name, swear allegiance to the Devil, pray to be struck out of the Book of Life and inscribed in the Book of Death, promise sacrifices to the Devil, vow not to honor the Eucharist, to blaspheme, and to abstain from holy water. 33

33 Shumaker, p. 80.
As Faustus begins to conjure, he incorporates the elements of both the ceremony and pact such as prayer, sacrifice and blasphemy:

And try if devils will obey thy best,
Seeing thou has prayed and sacrificed to them.
Within this circle is Jehovah's name
[S.D.: He draws the circle on the ground]
Forward and backward aggramatized
(I. 3. 7-9)

As part of the conjuring rite, holy names are blasphemed as in "Jehovah" above, or the demonic power inherent in demonic names is utilized to strengthen the practice of black magic. Faustus therefore calls on the gods of the lower regions, Beelzebub, Demogorgon and Mephistophilis, while he rejects the Trinity (I. iii. 15-25). Mephistophilis also advises the novice practitioner that the quickest way to conjuring:

to abjure the Trinity
And pray devoutly to the prince of hell.
(I. iii. 56-57)

Conjuring also occurs in the subplot of the play and burlesques the actions of the main plot. Faustus' servant Wagner parallels his master by conjuring a devil whose powers he uses for self-aggrandizement and at the expense of his moral and spiritual character. In contrast to the main play, however, Mephistophilis considers Wagner's soul as less worthy of acquisition than that of Faustus. He therefore abandons the former in order to devote his energies to capture Faustus' soul; a greater triumph for hell over heaven. See especially I. iv. 6-7 where Wagner asserts that Robin "would give his soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton."
Faustus again blasphemes with words and names later when he signs the pact with Mephistophilis. He uses Christ's final words: "It is finished" (II. i. 74). When Christ uttered these words, He had completed a life of dedicated service and would shortly ascend into eternal life in heaven. Faustus ironically and blasphemously utters these words at the verge of a life which will lead him to eternal hell. Later Mephistophilis chants a demonic incantation of names appropriate to his evil nature and goals and to supplement his black magic in taunting the Pope and his cardinals at a banquet by making Faustus invisible:

The planets seven, the gloomy air,
Hell, and the Furies forked hair,
Pluto's blue fire and Hecate's tree
With magic spells so compass thee
That, no eye may thy body see.

(III. ii. 18-21)

Among the evil names and forces evoked are Hecate, the goddess of the earth and Hades who is closely associated with sorcery.

Faustus calls on the name of Christ again during a moment of despair over his pact with Lucifer. He is severely reprimanded by the latter for this violation and backsliding to former religious beliefs. The devil fears the power of the name of Christ because of its inherent virtues believed able to attract celestial powers of impressing, changing, binding, enchantments, conjurations, etc. (D.O., I. lxxi).
Faustus again employs principles of conjuring as he blasphemes by using elements of Christian ceremony in his conjuring rite. As he calls on Jehovah and Gehenna, he sprinkles holy water, and blesses himself with the sign of the cross.

Unlike Prospero who has learned to conjure spirits after years of study and self-discipline, Faustus who is undisciplined is incapable of this art. However, Mephistophilis deludes the magician into believing he has the power to conjure in order to lure him more easily into a demonic pact through the use of negative psychology:

"O Faustus leave these frivolous demands [for demonic power] which strike a terror to my fainting soul"
(I. iii. 85-86). Faustus' anticipated response is evoked; Mephistophilis is sent to Lucifer with the magician's proposal for a basic pact:

Say he surrenders up to him his soul
So he will spare him four and twenty years,
Letting him live in all voluptuousness.
(I. iii. 94-96)

Lucifer accedes to these conditions but in return Faustus must:

write a deed of gift [his soul] with thine own blood,
For that security craves Lucifer.
(II. i. 36-37)

However even nature rebels against Faustus' alliance with the forces of black magic by congealing his blood and
retarding the signing of the pact. Ironcally, Faustus promises his soul to the devil for the knowledge and gifts he might have commanded as a magus and without the damning consequences of a demonic pact.

After a short time, Faustus finds the demonic powers accorded him by the terms of his pact unsatisfying and demands greater compensation. His growing discontent, however, is a greater reflection on his discontent with himself and his errors in free choice. His discontent grows into doubt and despair until finally we witness him repeatedly agonizing over his deficient pact with Lucifer. His suffering goes unrelieved as each attempt to rescind the pact is thwarted. When he calls on Christ, he is chastized by the devil for his disloyalty to their pact. He later deludes himself into a false sense of hope as he recalls Christ's forgiveness of the thief on the cross who had been promised paradise (IV. v. 21-25). However, Faustus has committed worse sins than those committed by the thief. The Elizabethan audience considered his first sin, the making of a demonic pact, as one of the blackest sins a man could commit. That, in addition to all of the other sins he has committed, are incomparable to those of the thief on the cross whose repentent manner made him worthy of Christ's forgiveness. Faustus first deluded by the Devil, now deludes himself with his
simplistic rationalization. When Faustus despairs again over his failure to fulfill himself with the powers of black magic, Mephistophilis wisely diverts his attention from the inequitable pact to an amorous tryst with Helen of Troy. In the penultimate scene of agony, Faustus confesses to his fellow scholars that he can no longer call on God "whom Faustus had adjured . . . [and] blasphemed" with his practice of black magic. In his final agony over his consummated pact with Lucifer, Faustus piteously calls on God and Christ to save him, but his prayer of intercession is offered too late by an unrepentent soul.

Faustus' powers were inconsequential to the price of his pact with Lucifer. In contrast to those of the magus, his conjuring powers existed only in appearance. For example, he is incapable of making himself invisible when he wants to disrupt the papal electoral college but must depend on Mephistophilis' powers to alter his state. Ariel, however, with the aid of Prospero's power, is able to come and go invisibly while discharging his duties.

Faustus uses his powers of black magic for negative and vengeful ends, becoming more and more like the devil. He punishes Benvolio who doubts his powers. When the knight remarks that Faustus "looks as like a conjurer
as the Pope to a castermonger" (IV. ii. 25-26), the magician turns him and his friends into stags with horns on their heads. Agrippa calls this "witchinge" magic and states that men may be transformed into beasts but that this work often inclines toward the "craftes and errors of ye devils of hell."\(^3\) By close association with the devil, Faustus' practice of black magic becomes more like his spiritual captors' in cruelty and method. These and a few of the other feats of black magic Faustus performs (which will be discussed below in context with his goals) are insignificant compensation for the demonic pact price however. Further, his original intent, to become a "demi-god" has never been realized; his powers have not brought him fame, wealth, nor power.

Mephistophilis' powers of black magic, on the other hand, have been the major controlling force since the beginning of Faustus' downfall. One of the devil's powers is sharp insight into the disposition of a prospective client. A man's diminished state of grace was considered by the Elizabethans to be the vulnerable point of entry for a devil into a man's soul. Faustus'

\(^3\) Agrippa, De vanitate, Cap. 44, p. 57.
evil predisposition insured Lucifer's success with him when the devil first observed his mind wandering from Scripture to worldly thoughts (V. ii. 97). Faustus even senses the satanic presence working on him internally as he comments: "For my head but ruminates on necromantic skill" (I. i. 105-106). Through cunning foresight and delusion, Mephistophilis makes Faustus feel he has struck a superior bargain with Lucifer to insure that he will not rescind their pact. Mephistophilis truly plays the devil's advocate while telling Faustus the truth of the existence of hell and damnation while Faustus retorts that "hell's a fable" and doubts "that Faustus shall be damned" (II. i. 127 & 129). The wisdom of this application of Mephistophilis' power becomes evident when Faustus later attempts to place the responsibility for his predicament on the demon. The latter reminds him: "Twas thine own seeking Faustus, thank thyself" (II. ii. 4). Mephistophilis' foresight in this encounter emphasizes the superior powers the satanic representative wields.

Prestidigitation\(^{37}\) is the magical art Mephistophilis employs in a number of feats to display his powers. Some

\(^{37}\) This art, as defined by West (p. 89) is the bafflingly rapid and invisibly effected disposition of objects.
examples of this art occur when Faustus is supposedly invisible at the Pope's banquet, eats half-a-load of hay, loses his head in an attempted ambush, and has his leg pulled-off by Horse Courser.

Another aspect of Mephistophilis' power is seen in the diversionary tactics he uses to distract Faustus from his despair over his pact. The satanic representative, through the agency of black magic, conjures an anthropomorphic show of the seven deadly sins. Ironically, Faustus has been steadily incorporating them into his life since his association with the devil. In contrast, Prospero uses the conjuring powers of white magic to reinforce virtue and chastity in his daughter and her betrothed and appropriately, the magus evokes positive mythological beings for his masque of virtue.

Black magic is used in another form of distraction by Mephistophilis. He diverts Faustus' attention from the demonic pact and his doubt of salvation by travelling around the world so that the latter can satisfy his curiosity about cosmography. In his chapter "of the measure of the world" Agrippa condemns the folly of such activities and stresses man's need for personal insight.

38 Agrippa, De vanitate, Cap. 27, p. 37v, 37r.
He concludes that while this art endeavors to teach us the greatness of the earth, the deepness of the sea, the situation of the islands and all countries, rites, customs, etc., "wee gette no other fruite thereof, but that which we overgreedily searche out, other men's matters, [and] we learne not to knowe ourselves."

Implicit in its ideal goal, learning and knowledge, according to Renaissance notions, were for the improvement of self and one's fellow man. Faustus had no such altruistic goals. He indulged his wanderlust instead of gaining insight into his own character or contemplating his spiritual needs.

Beside the powers of conjuring conferred on him by the devil, Faustus, like the magus, depends on a knowledge of astrological conditions to strengthen his practice of black magic. Faustus uses astrology perversely when he calls on "erring stars," those which wander unstably like evil spirits (I. iii. 10-11). Faustus depends on the darkness of night to reinforce his attraction of demons to augment his black magical powers. Night or midnight are also the appropriately designated times for the black magician to conjure, to make the demonic pact, and finally consummate it.

In addition to his conjuring powers and application of astrology, Faustus also depends on the magical powers
inherent in geometrical figures to supplement his practice of black magic. He draws a conjuring circle to call up the satanic forces. Agrippa explains the positive use of this figure:

Geometric figures like all of the signs and symbols also have powers and the power of unity is ascribed to the circle for unity is the center and circumference of all things. A circle is called an infinite line . . . whose beginning and end is in every point . . . hence a circular being the largest and perfectest of all is judged to be most fit for bindings and conjurations; whence they who adjure evil spirits are wont to environ themselves about with a circle. (D.O., II. xxiii)

Faustus' perverse use of this geometrical figure sharply contrasts Prospero's benevolent use of the circle with which he restored Alonso, Sebastian, and Antonio to right reason.

The magician's abuse of power is closely related to the goals he has established. Before Valdes and Cornelius even teach him how to conjure, Faustus fantasizes about the boyish, materialistic objects he will command with his black magic. He anticipates ordering demons to fetch "Indian gold, oriental pearls, and foreign fruits" (I. i. 83-86). An Elizabethan audience would have recognized that his rational soul was now subordinated to his animal soul by such actions. He is further seduced into the practice of black magic by promises of power, honor, and wealth which the Bad Angel reminds
Faustus will satiate his greatest goals. To show his power, Faustus uses his magic for negative ends: pure amusement and self-aggrandizement. He shows off his conjuring powers in the royal court of Charles V by calling up the spirits of Alexander the Great and his mistress Thais (IV. ii. 46) and later Helen of Greece (V. i. 13). These were appropriately decadent, historical figures to the practitioner of black magic. In contrast to the magician, Prospero's goals extend no further than the reclamation of the 'honor and wealth' that are naturally his as the Duke of Milan.

The fruits of Faustus' goals are harvested on the final night of his pact. After a night of dreadful "shrieks and cries" (V. ii. 4), three scholars discover his torn limbs. After a sinful life of exploiting the powers of black magic to the detriment of his fellow man, Elizabethan audiences would have found his ghastly death justified. Agrippa asserts that every man's death and after-life is closely-related to the quality of his mortal life:

It is appointed for all men once to dye; death is fatal to all; but one is natural whereas another violent . . . .
the degree determined by God for the absence or punishment of sins. Whatever vices therefore souls have committed in the body unexpiated in this life, they are constrained . . . to purge themselves of them in hell, and to undergo punishment for them. (D.Q., III. ii)
After a wanton life of commerce in black magic and with the devil, Faustus realized that he had earned his eternal subjection to the torments of hell.
CHAPTER III

ALCHEMY

Like white and black magic, alchemy was firmly entrenched in the history of literature and was propagated as a dramatic theme from Geoffrey Chaucer to Ben Jonson. 39

Ideally, the alchemist like the magus acquired knowledge through self-discipline and study. The knowledge of the self was especially important if the alchemist was to be successful. Agrippa stressed:

Alchemy teacheth, that no man can come to the perfection of this art, who shall not know the principles of it in himself, but by how much the more everyone shall know himself, by so much he obtaineth the great power of attracting it, and by so much operateth greater and more wonderfull things. (D.O., III. xxxvi)

Agrippa believed that man contains in himself all things which are in God; therefore to know one's self is to know the elements, plants, and all things in the universe and how they can be manipulated.

39 Ben Jonson, The Alchemist, ed. S. Musgrove, (Berkeley and L.A.: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1968), p. 4. All references to The Alchemist, Jonson's play, discussed in this paper are based on the above mentioned text. The editor also identifies elements of practical alchemy in such works as: Chaucer's Canon's Yeoman's Tale, Gower's Confessio Amantis, and Lydgate's Secreta Secretorum.
The ideal alchemist should be altruistically motivated in the utilization of his power for his ultimate goal, and the application of the truth of God's hidden design in the natural world. More specifically, as Agrippa conceived of his primary goal, a true alchemist sought the discovery and separation of the quintessence of the medium which was the "Spirit of the World" that conveys occult properties into all herbs, stones, metals, animals, plants, etc. It was believed that after extraction, this quintessence could be projected onto similar matter. As a result, a base metal such as iron or copper could be transmuted into a precious one such as silver or gold. Agrippa claims to have observed personally the success of such an alchemical process, but regretted that he and the others "could make no more Gold then the weight of that was out of which we extracted the spirit" (D.O., I. 3-33).

While the transmutation of metals was a worthwhile activity, a still nobler goal for the true alchemist was to discover an elixir which would transmute, revitalize, and refine men's souls. The hypothesis for this assumption was based on two notions: first, that the creation of man and the cosmos was a result of a chemical action
and, secondly, that the chemical action occurred according to orderly, knowable, chemical laws. Therefore many ethical Renaissance alchemists believed their most exalted work was to study the chemistry of creation in order to unlock not only the secrets of nature but also of the Creator.

The ideal, however, became easily subverted in the world of real men. The sixteenth and seventeenth century attitude toward life on earth had rejected the earlier contempt for this material world in favor of a deep enjoyment of the pleasure which financial prosperity afforded. Medieval man's spiritual preoccupation with life in the hereafter was sharply contrasted by the rising materialistic interests of the Renaissance man who sought the means to supply himself with the comforts of this world. This rising quest for wealth therefore provided a natural and often distinguished place in English society for the alchemist. Like the magician, the alchemist promised fame and especially fortune to his many naive followers, from the highest to the lowest stations. Even the Queen was not totally immune: "Very early in Elizabeth's reign,

repeated offers were made by enterprising alchemical pretenders to manufacture gold for her. And she more than dallied with the prospect."  

Similar to that of the magus and the magician, the alchemist's success was based not only on his knowledge of diverse arts such as metapoey, astrology, potions, and conjuring, but also on his moral condition. Chastity, a state of grace, prayer and minimal commerce with materialistic interests were all deemed necessary pre-requisites to attract the potent forces essential for a successful alchemical projection.

The alchemist also shares the observance of preliminary ceremonies with other occult practitioners. Basilius Valentinus in his *The Triumphal Chariot of Antimony* (ca. 1500) describing some of the practices observed in this introductory rite, specifies that: he is to invoke God's blessing on his work; contemplate nature and the preparation, use and profit of the proposed work; and, finally, be free from all ambition, hypocrisy and vice.  


42 Shumaker, p. 177.
When a culture becomes highly self-conscious about its unusual practices or peculiarities, these are the literary topics most amenable to exaggeration and distortion.\(^{43}\) Ben Jonson capitalized on the solemn believers and practitioners of alchemy by burlesquing them in *The Alchemist*. He especially ridicules their excessive dependence on a number of general notions found in the writings of the ancients which they venerated. For example, through his character Mammon, (who will be discussed in greater detail below), he derides their fundamental belief in the existence, through antiquity, of a philosopher's stone and its essence, a rejuvenating elixir:

\[
\text{Nay, I meane,} \\
\text{Restore his yeeres, renew him, like an eagle,} \\
\text{To the fifth age; make him get sonnes, and} \\
\text{daughters,} \\
\text{Yong giants; as our Philosophers have done} \\
\text{(The antient Patriarkes afore the floud) } \\
\text{By taking, once a weeke, on a knives point,} \\
\text{The quantitie of a graine of mustard, of it:} \\
\text{Become stout Marses, and beget yong Cupids.} \\
\text{(II. i. 55-62)}
\]

Jonson continues his derision and reverts back even farther in time to our prime progenitor, attesting to "a treatise penned by Adam" who supposedly also wrote about

the powers of "the Philosophers stone" (II. i. 82-83).

However, it is primarily through Jonson's protagonist, Subtle, that we learn about the prevailing Elizabethan beliefs in alchemy. Like the magus and magician, the alchemist's magical power is directly related to his moral character, education, and goals. In Shakespeare's The Tempest, Prospero's exalted moral character insured optimum magical powers; Subtle's character deficiencies resulted in a sham imitation of the former's capabilities. Subtle's character is revealed early in Act One when his associate Face charges him with studying "the more thriving skill/ Of bawdrie," (I. i. 48). The alchemist's impurity of thought and action sharply contrasts with the purity of Shakespeare's Prospero. He is very much like Marlowe's Faustus; neither one can wield the power that was considered necessary to magical success because of his lascivious nature. It is these upside-down values of his characters, Subtle, Face, and Dol that Jonson ridicules. Chastity and continence were widely-recognized practices of many dedicated occult practitioners. On the other hand, Subtle not only approves of lustfulness, but also seems to affect his patron, Mammon, by arousing the
latter's sensual appetite. With the magical powers of the philosopher's stone which Subtle has promised, he plans to strengthen the knight's body so that he can keep a harem of women satisfied:

For I doe mean
To have a list of wives, and concubines,
Equall with Salomon; who had the stone
Alike with me: and I will make me, a back
With the elixir, that shall be as tough
As Hercules, to encounter fiftie a night.
   (II. ii. 35-39)

In addition to his inclination to wantonness, Subtle is also dishonest. Face threatens to report him to the local authorities for his forbidden and unscrupulous alchemical activities. The Acts of 1403 and 1541 had prohibited alchemists from making gold and silver. Not only was Subtle attempting to make these precious metals, but he was also accused by his cohort of stealing gold by trimming it:

I'll bring thee, rogue, within
The statute of sorcerie, tricesimo tertio
Of Harry the eight: I, and (perhaps) thy necke
Within a nooze, for laundring gold, and barbing it.
   (I. i. 111-114)

Although his own character was considered by

44 His behavior contrasts that of Fletcher's Clorin in The Faithful Shepherdess. Her virtuous character and behavior was emulated by those who associated with her.
Renaissance standards as unworthy of the divine knowledge and powers attributed to an alchemist, Subtle reminds his gulls of their obligation to maintain a moral constitution while dealing with him. Subtle places the responsibility for the success or failure of his development of the philosopher's stone on his client, Mammon. He knows he is incapable of creating the stone or elixir and therefore establishes Mammon as his scapegoat. When the latter anxiously seeks early possession of the stone, Subtle admonishes him that the owner's character must reflect patience and worthiness of the celestial powers inherent in it:

Sonne, I doubt
Yo'are covetous, that thus you meet your time
I'the just point: prevent your day, at morning.
This argues something, worthy of a feare
Of importune, and carnall appetite.
Take heed, you doe not cause the blessing
to leave you,
With your un gover'ed hast. 45
(II. iii. 4-10)

Subtle further warns Mammon that if the stone is used to promote falsehood or lust, a curse will fall upon him (II. iii. 19-22). In fact he ironically accuses his customer of all the undesirable character traits which

45 In his Commentary (p. 146), Editor Musgrove notes that "haste was a cardinal error in alchemy, repeatedly denounced."
he himself possesses. Nevertheless, the appearance of a chaste character is also promoted by Face on behalf of his master. After intentionally setting up a licentious liaison between Dol and Mammon, Face warns him,

> How Scrupulous he (Subtle) is and violent, 'Gainst the least act of sinne.

(IV. i. 14,15)

Face pretends that his master has the impeccable character of an ideal alchemist and that it would distress him to know of his patron's lust.

In judging his questionable character traits, two more of Subtle's dupes tolerate and even attempt to justify his prophane ways. Pastor Tribulation rationalizes the alchemist's dubious nature to his Deacon, Ananias, hoping to allay the latter's fears until they possess the philosopher's stone, which he believes will help further the Puritan movement:

> Beside, we should give somewhat to mans nature, The place he lives in, still about the fire, And fume of metals, that intoxicate The braine of man, and make him prone to passion. Where have you greater Atheists, then your Cookes? Or more prophane, or cholerick then your Glasse-men? More Antichristian, then your Bell-founders? What makes the Devill so devillish, I would aske you, Sathan, our common enemie, but his being Perpetually about the fire, and boyling Brimstone, and arsnike?

(III. i. 16-27)
Analogical thinking, common in the Renaissance, is used and Subtle's evil nature is attributed to his alchemical work environment which depends on the heat of a fire, the element most closely associated with the devil. However, Agrippa places the responsibility for evil in a man's work on the character of the individual himself:

All evill, and whatsoever is found disagreeing and dissonance in inferior things, do proceed not from the malice of the Influence but from the evil disposition of the receiver [and therefore] . . . doth result something dissonant, deformed and evill. (D.O., III. xxxix)

It is because of his character, not his environment that Subtle cannot achieve good alchemical results.

Subtle's mischievous disposition also leads him to implicate Ananias and Tribulation in a counterfeit operation. He encourages the Puritans to bring him pewter so that he can convert it into Dutch dollars for them; however, he actually intends to sell the pewter for his own profit. When questioned about the legality of this procedure, he lies, speciously rationalizing and allaying their suspicions by calling the operation "casting" instead of "coyning" (III. ii. 151).

Subtle, together with the two other major characters Dol and Face, appears to undergo the personal character transformations sought by the alchemist. In reality, however, and consistent with Renaissance notions, all
three are incapable of any level of the refinement to which the ideal alchemist aspired.

Dol Common, the female partner, is a prostitute who appears to undergo transformation when she is mockingly called the romantic heroine "Claridiana" (I. i. 175) by Subtle. Face, in a later conversation with Mammon, refers to her as "A lord's sister" (II. iii. 221) who is being cured of her madness by Subtle. She pretends to be a chronologer, divine, and Hebraist (II. iii. 235-240) as well as a learned scholar in "mathematiques and distillation" (IV. i. 83). However, her final state is not different than her original one; she continues to be a cheating opportunist who tried in vain to escape with Mammon and their booty, "over the wall, o' the back-side" (V. iv. 133). Finally, Face questions if she'll go to "Madame Caesarean" (V. iv. 142), an allusion to her former profession, prostitution.

At the beginning of Act I, Face appears dressed as a Captain. He is really a lowly housekeeper whose master has left town in order to escape the plague. Subtle, however, claims to have transformed him by taking him "out of dung" (I. i. 64) and having made him "a second, in mine owne great art" (I. i. 75-77). Besides being promoted from housekeeper to alchemist's assistant, Face also serves as a procurer for Mammon and Dol (II. iii.
Mammon later elevates Face to the rank of "A count, nay, a Countpalatine" (II. iii. 331) as a reward for interceding with Dol for favors for him. However, when the true master of the house, Love-wit, returns home unexpectedly, Face returns to his former self, the housekeeper-butler:

I'll into mine old shape againe, and meet him, Of Jeremie, the butler. (IV. vii. 120-121)

Except for a series of assumed roles, no alchemical refinement has occurred for this servant.

Like his two cohorts Dol and Face, Subtle does not experience any permanent character improvement or spiritual purification, the ideal alchemist's goals. He is first presented as a charlatan/alchemist whom Face claims to have saved from "dung-hills" (I. i. 34). After that, he pretends to Dapper to be a doctor in the art of alchemy (I. ii. 6-7). Later Mammon addresses him as a rare physician and Paracelsian (II. iii. 229-230 and IV. v). When Mammon learns that Subtle will attempt to cure Dol's supposed mental illness, Surly verbally attacks Face and Subtle, asserting that the latter

---

46 Editor Musgrove in the Commentary (p. 147) notes that although most Renaissance medications were made with herbs, Paracelsus was called the rare physician because he was the first to use mineral substances and was therefore considered an evil magician.
imagines himself to be like "Faustus" (IV. vii. 47). Like Dol, Subtle barely escapes being apprehended by the law and returns to his former impoverished existence, as a charlatan alchemist. Both are back where they started, seeking out naive customers to dupe with their disreputable crafts.

In addition to certain desirable character traits, education and correct application of that knowledge were influential predeterminants to the success of any occult practitioner. While Shakespeare's Prospero realized great success in the knowledgeable application of his education, Subtle was a failure in applying all the basic learning and arts of his trade: "alchemy . . . algebra, . . . [knowledge of] minerals, vegetalls, animals, . . . [and] conjuring" (I. i. 38-40). Face saved him from starvation, however, by taking him in from the streets during his master's absence. Subtle's failure as a learned alchemist is fully revealed by Face during an argument between the two men. The latter presents an inventory of Subtle's deficient education and lack of alchemical proficiency which is compared to that of a highwayman:
... all thy tricks
Of cosning with a hollow cole, dust, scrapings,
Searching for things lost, with a sive, and sheeres,
Erecting figures, in your rowes of houses,
And taking in of shadlowes, with a glasse,
Told in red letters: And a face, cut for thee,
Worse then Gamaliel Ratsey's.
(I. i. 93-98)

Because of his lack of formal training, self-discipline and skill, Subtle must present the appearance of a learned alchemist to impress his prospective dupe Ananias. He commands Face;

Take away the recipient,
And rectifie your menstrue, from the phelgma.
Then powre it, o' the Sol, in the cucurbite,
And let'hem macerate, together.
(II. v. 2-4)

Subtle's impressive alchemical instructions in jargon to Face mean: Take away the vessel for receiving the product of distillation and correct your solvent from the phlegm (a watery tasteless substance which is a product of distillation). Transfer it in the sunlight to a gourd-shaped vessel until it is thinned or separated into parts. By this false show of knowledge, he pretended to be a true alchemist. This alchemical knowledge, specifically the reduction processes, was one of the major activities for an alchemist. Agrippa affirms that they may reduce "everything . . . to the first cause it self . . . whereof whole Magick and all occult philosophy flowes"
(I. xxxvii).
Ananias labels these alchemical incantations of Subtle's as heathen Greek because "All's heathen, but the Hebrew" (II. v. 17). This commonly-held Renaissance notion is confirmed by Agrippa and his interpretation of the Cabala which states that:

[the] writing of the Hebrews is of all the most sacred in the figures of characters, points of words, and tops of accents, as consisting in matter, form, and spirit. (D.O., I. xxiv)

The reason for the sanctity of the Hebrew letters is:

because they have the greatest similitude with the celestials, and the world, and that the letters of the other tongues have not so great an efficacy, because they are more distant from them. (D.O., I. lxiv)

Subtle also pretends to demonstrate a knowledge of metaposcopy as he predicts great fortunes for Drugger; especially in noting the conjunction and favor of Mercury, the God of Commerce:

. . . Metaposcopie, which I do worke by,
A certain starre i' the fore-head, which you see not.
Your chestnut, or your olive-colour'd face
Do's never faill: and your long eare doth promise.
I knew 't, by certain spots too, in his teeth,
And on the nail of his mercurial finger.
(I. iii. 44-48)

Like the magus and magician, the alchemist Subtle also depended on a knowledge of astrology for casting horoscopes with zodiacal signs as noted about him by Face above, "Erecting figures, in your rowes of houses"
and later by Surly who calls him "the Faustus that casteth figures" (IV. vii. 47). Drugger also observes that the alchemist is trained in astrology: "You know men's planets/ and their good angels, and their bad" (I. iii. 10-16).47

In addition to a knowledge of astrology, the alchemist was trained in chiromancy. Subtle falsely prophesies Drugger's future when he reads his palm. In contrast to Prospero's positive and honest use of astrology, Subtle falsely manipulates the symbols of the planetary system seen in the tobacconist's hand. He emphasizes the financially-favorable influence of Mercury, the God of Commerce, in order to receive greater compensation for his services:

The thumbs, in chiromantie, we give Venus,
The fore-finger to Jove; the midst, to Saturne;
The ring to Sol; the least, to Mercurie:
Who was the lord, sir of his horoscope,
(I. iii. 52-55)

47 The popularity of astrology is evident in the Elizabethan era by the vast number of treatises, almanacs, and general works which were available on the subject. Renaissance dramatists embraced a moderate belief in the tenets of astrology which gave credence to the influential forces of stars in men's lives. Men were considered to be prudent if they heeded their natal stars before any serious undertaking. (Don Cameron Allen, The Star-Crossed Renaissance: A Quarrel About Astrology and Its Influence in England, [New York, Octagon Books, 1966], pp. 169, 170). See above pp. 22, 23 for astrology in The Tempest.
Subtle feigns a knowledge of palmistry again when he reads the hand of Dame Pliant:

Let me see your hand,
   O, your linea Fortunae makes it plaine;
And stella, here, in monte Veneris:
   But, most of all, junctura annularis.
He is a souldier, or a man of art, lady:
   But shall have some great honour, shortly.
  (IV. ii. 44-49)

Subtle deceives the rich widow into believing that he can predict her future husband through chiromancy. However, he and Face will attempt to pair her off to any man willing to meet their price in the barter. This deception sharply contrasts with the matchmaking efforts of Shakespeare's magus, Prospero, who sought an ideal companion for his daughter Miranda with one who would help bring harmony into their microcosm as well as the macrocosm through the union true love. In spite of the series of mis-matches, Face coincidentally manages a mutually agreeable arrangement between widow Pliant and his master Love-wit. But even this pairing is done to assuage his conscience for the abuse of his master's home (V. iv. 85). 48

48 In I. xxxiii of De occulta, Agrippa discusses palmistry and the interpretation of seals and characters of the planets "which ancient Chyromancers know in the hands of men: These doth [Pope] Julian call sacred and divine letters seeing that by them according to the holy Scripture is the life of men writ in their hands" (D.O., I. xxxiii).
Agrippa asserts that an alchemist must also have a diverse knowledge of the celestial virtues in all things which lie dormant like unburnt sulfur, and are only brought to life by a learned occult practitioner (D.Q., I. xxv). Subtle pretends to have a profound understanding of the powers assumed by the Elizabethans to be inherent in geographical locations and names. Therefore, in advising Drugger how to insure financial success in his business, he recommends:

Make me your dore, then, south; your broad side, west:
And, on the east-side of your shop, aloft,
Write Mathlai, Tarmiel, and Baraborat;
Upon the north-part, Fael, Velei, Thiel.
They are the names of those Mercurial spirits,
That doe fright flyes from boxes.
(I. iii. 63-68)

Drugger depends again on Subtle's supposed knowledge of the positive and influential power of words, names, and letters. The alchemist is asked to formulate a shop sign which will attract customers to the tobacconist:

No, that way is stale, and common.
A townes-man, borne in Taurus, gives the bull;
Or the bulls-head: In Aries, the ram.
A poore devil. No, I will have his name
Form'd in some mystick character; whose radii
Striking the senses of the passers by,
Shall, by a vertuall influence, breed affections,
That may result upon the partie ownes it:

..................
The first shall have a bell, that's Abel; 49
And, by it, standing ore, whose name is Dee,
In a rugg gowne; there's D. and Rug, that's
Drug:
And, right avenst him, a god snarling Er;
There's Drugger, Abel Drugger. That's his
signe.  
(II. vi. 11-24)

Another incident which mockingly exemplifies the power
believed inherent in names or words occurs while Mammon
awaits Subtle's arrival with Surly. The knight warns
the latter not to use "a profane word, afore him: 'Tis
poyson" (II. ii. 106). He fears the negative effect of
words on the alchemist will have a disastrous influence
on his work. 50

The primary business of alchemists was to refine
baser metals into finer ones. Subtle convinces Mammon
and Surly that he has the knowledge to perform such
conversions:

[projecting] imperfect metall, into pure
Silver, or gold, in all examinations.
(II. iii. 112-113)

Further, he predicts the successful outcome of this
transmutation based on the commonly-held Renaissance

49 Queen Elizabeth's alchemist and astrologer.

50 This incident parallels a similar occurrence in
The Tempest. When the conspirators' plot against
Prospero was brought to mind, his magical power was
scattered and the masque of mythological beings dispersed
(IV. i. 137-141).
notion that base metals could become gold "if they had time," just as an egg is a "chicken in potentia" (II. iii. 134-136). Alchemical processes were often compared to common events in nature such as birth and death, another example of sixteenth-century, analogical reasoning. Subtle proceeds to demonstrate a profound understanding of his craft by commenting that when the male and female of the metals are cojoined under proper conditions, gold will ultimately result:

... the one
(Which is the last) supplying the place of male,
The other of the female, in all metalls.
Some doe beleve hermaphrodeitiie,
That both doe act, and suffer. But these two
Make the rest ductill, malleable, extensive.
And, even in gold, they are; for we doe find
Seedes of them, by our tire, and gold in them:
And can produce the species of each metal
More perfect thence, then nature doth in earth.
(II. iii. 162-170)

Agrippa also discusses this alchemical phenomenon:

In it (i.e. the Quintessence) are all the generative and feminary Vertues. For which cause the Alchymists endeavor to separate this Spirit from Gold and Silver ... [which] if thou shalt afterward project upon any matter of the same kind (i.e.) any Metall, presently will turn it into Gold, or Silver. (D.O., I. xiii)

Like the magus, the alchemist admits he withheld the secret knowledge of his arts from the public. We hear Surly accuse Subtle of obscuring any understanding of his practices by using cryptic language, symbols, parables and allegories:
Of your elixir, your lac virginis,  
Your stone, your med'cine, and your chrysosperme,  
Your sol, your sulphur, and your mercurie,  
Your oyle of height, your tree of life, your  
bloud,  
Your marchesite, your tutie, your magnesia,  
Your toade, your crow, your dragon, and  
your panthar,  
Your sunne, your moone, your firmament,  
your adrop,  
Your lato, azoch, zermich, chibrit, heavtarit,  

(II. iii. 184-191)

Subtle admits to the obfuscation of his arts from the  
vulgar public:

And all these nam'd  
Intending but one thing: which art our writers  
Us'd to obscure their art.  

(II. iii. 197-199)

and also:

was not the knowledge  
Of the Egyptians writ in mystick symbols?  
Speak not the Scriptures, oft, in parables?

Agrippa confirms and approves the use of cryptic notations  
by occult practitioners who employed:

Certain unknowable letters and writings  
preserving the secrets of the Gods and  
names of Spirits from the use and reading of  
prophane men . . . For they did account  
it unlawful to write the mysteries of God  
with those Characters with which prophane  
and vulgar things were wrote.  

(D.O., III. xxix)

Subtle also boasts about the fine education he  
gave Face and becomes distressed with his apprentice's
ingratitude after he has taught him "rules, to cheat at horserace, cockpit, cardes,/ Dice, or what ever . . . ." (I. i. 75-77).

The promotion of this type of learning which leads to one's spiritual decay is discussed by Agrippa in describing what he envisioned as a hierarchy of evil spirits. These he asserts are beneath Beelzebub and are demons of eight more degrees "who delude men by false prophecy, wicked arts such as cards and dice, witchcraft" (D.O., III. xviii).

Supplemental to the alchemist's need for a knowledge of astrology, alchemy, chiromancy and other diverse arts was the art of the conjuring ceremony. Like the magus and magician, particular rituals were closely observed. Jonson mocks his characters' distortion of these rites by requiring one of Subtle's dupes, Dapper, to undergo a series of ridiculous procedures in anticipation of his aunt, the Queen of the Fairy. Subtle commands him:

O, good Sir!
There must a world of ceremonies passe,
You must be bath'd, and fumigated, first;
Besides, the Queene of Fairie do's not rise,
Till it be noone. (I. ii. 144-147)

Subtle's transfer of wicked knowledge to Face sharply contrasts the spiritually enriching educational curriculum Shakespeare's Prospero responsibly provided for Miranda: "I, thy schoolmaster, made thee more profit/
Than other princes can that have more time/ For vainer hours and tutors not so careful" (I. ii. 172-174).
He is also required to observe a specific time, a fast, and other ceremonial rituals in order to make himself worthy to receive his wealthy aunt:

Sir, against one a clock, prepare your selfe
Till when you must be fasting; onely, take
Three drops of vinegar, in, at your nose;
Two at your mouth; and one, at either eare;
Then bathe your fingers endes; and wash your eyes;
To sharpen your fine senses; and cry "hum",
Thrise; and then "buz", as often

...........................................

And put on a cleane shirt: You doe not know
What her Grace may doe you in cleane linen.
(I. iii. 163-170, 174-175)

Another element of ceremony for the alchemist as well as the magus and magician included the invocation of prayers. Face helps Subtle maintain the appearance of an ideal alchemist who seriously pursues this religious observance. When Mammon asks for Subtle, Face replies that he is:

At praiers, sir, he
Good man, hee's doing his devotions,
For the successe, [of the philosopher's stone]
(II. ii. 30)

Like the magus and magician, the alchemist required special equipment to supplement the power of his craft.

52 Similarly, Marlowe's Faustus (I. iii. 16-20) prayed to the Satanic forces to increase his powers of black magic during his Latin incantation.
Face presents a partial inventory of the accoutrement he has provided for Subtle's alchemy laboratory:

I ga'you count'nance, credit for your coales, Your stills, your glasses, your materialls, [and] Built you a fornace . . . (I. i. 43-45)

The coal and the furnace were the alchemists' standard equipment and primary means of transmutation. They hoped to perform their refining processes with the intense heat that burning coal emits. This operation was believed to be necessary to transmute base metals such as copper, steel and brass into rarer ones such as silver or gold.

Another furnishing common to the occult practitioners was the ceremonial robe. Like Shakespeare's Prospero, Subtle dons one before commencing work. However, unlike the magus who augments his magical powers with this garment, Subtle uses his robe only to impress his customers with the appearance of an alchemist. Therefore, when a potential client arrives, Face advises: "Put you/your robes on" (I. i. 195). The stage directions are more specific in describing Subtle's entrance, "wearing a doctor's velvet robe and cap."

As with other occult practitioners, the quality of the alchemist's work was thought to be dependent not only on his character, specific knowledge, equipment, but also on his particular goals. While the magus did
not work for personal gain, the magician and false alchemist were materially motivated. Subtle's major goal was financial profit although he pretended to have an idealist's indifference to it. Face therefore, as part of their operation, intercedes for him and intimidates Subtle's first gull, Drugger, into paying a great sum of money, one proportionate to his predicted wealth in the immediate future as well as payment for that wealth anticipated in the distant future:

A crowne!Nd toward such a fortune? Hart, thou shalt rather gi'him thy shop.

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

He [Drugger] will appeare more gratefull, as your still Do's raise him in the world.

(I. iii. 85-92)

The pretense of an altruistic alchemist is carried on by Subtle again before his client Mammon:

. . . in all my ends, [I] have look'd no way, but unto publique good, To pious uses, and deere charitie,

(II. iii. 15-17)

While these goals can be truthfully attributed to Shakespeare's Prospero, Subtle's real goals consistently stand out in sharp contradistinction to his above-stated words.
Subtle attempts to extort additional funds from Ananias on the pretense that he must purchase additional coal and equipment before transmuting the Puritan's base metals into precious ones. Ananias refuses:

Yo' have had,
For the instruments, as bricks, and lome, and glasses,
Alreadie thirtie pound; and, for materials,
They say, some ninetie more . . .
(II. v. 66-69)

Subtle will not tolerate anyone's questioning his financial demands and therefore throws Ananias out and swears his spiritual work already performed on behalf of the Puritans will now be reversed. The alchemist has the psychological insight of a Mephistophilis. By reminding their petitioners (i.e. Faustus or Ananias) of their ambitious desires, they are lured into deeper commitment to their manipulators (Mephistophilis and Subtle). Capitalizing on the Puritan's desire for success at almost any price (again like Marlowe's Faustus), Subtle realizes he is under his command:

This will fetch'hem
And make'hem hast towards their gulling more.
A man must deale like a rough nurse, and fright
Those, that are froward, to an appetite.
(II. v. 87-90)

Ananias again expresses doubts about Subtle and complains to his Pastor, Tribulation that "the sanctified cause/
Should have a sanctified course" (III. i. 13-14). He
sagely expresses the Elizabethan belief that the means used in their work would reflect the quality in the end. But Tribulation's gullible but intense desire for success helps Subtle to fulfill his materialistic goals. Subtle demands another outrageous remuneration for more empty promises. His claims for the philosopher's stone and elixir are extended, promising they will even aid the Puritans in raising an army against their spiritual competitors (III. ii. 18-50).

As with all of the others he dupes, Subtle's goals of self-gain are also realized when he offers to conjure Dapper's fairy aunt to assist the latter in gambling. Appropriately, Subtle requests Dapper to give him coins which were minted during the time of Catholicism and which were supposedly preferred by fairies such as the "six-score Edward shillings," and "old Harry's sovereign, three James shillings," and an "Elizabethan groat." However, the final destination of these coins was the charlatan's pocket, not for Dapper's aunt. In addition, he commands that Dapper must "throw away all worldly pelfe" (III. v. 17) including such valuables as money, rings, etc. before he can meet with the Fairy Queen. Every item of intrinsic value is stolen from the

53 Musgrove, p. 149.
charlatan's victim. Later when Dol, dressed as his aunt, the Queen of Fairy promises him great luck in gambling, Subtle boldly commands:

You may bring's a thousand pound,
Before to morrow night . . .

(V. iv. 47)

Happily for Dapper, the alchemist is the first to be outwitted.

Mammon is also fleeced twice by the ambitious alchemist. When the knight supposedly exhibits lustful intentions towards Dol, he is accused of causing Subtle's laboratory and his work on the philosopher's stone to blow up because of his wickedness. Another £100 is therefore extorted from the knight in exchange for the remnants of the great work. He has paid a huge sum of money for empty promises, an omnipotent philosopher's stone, but had received nothing of any value in return. Subtle, like Mephistophilis in Marlowe's Dr. Faustus, has psychological insight into man's selfish nature. Guilt about this selfish nature will command a high penance price from its victim. The charlatan is therefore financially rewarded and achieves his goals with this knowledge of his victim, but not in exchange for his occult knowledge or services. In Shakespeare's The Tempest, however, we learned that Prospero worked diligently drawing on his training, to bring his enemies to
right reason and, finally, took no more materially than that which originally belonged to him; a strong distinction between the magician, alchemist and the magus.

The power an occult practitioner is capable of wielding has been shown to be directly proportional and related to his character, knowledge, equipment and goals. Face is threatened by Subtle early in their association. The alchemist claims to have the power of a "furie . . . /
That carries tempest in his hand, and voice" (I. i. 61-62). Although he is actually referring to the phial of explosives he is holding, Subtle is also alluding to his potential command of thunder and lightening in an alchemical metaphor. 54

As discussed above (pp. 70, 71), Subtle later boasts to Face that he has the power to refine men, the most magnanimous deed an alchemist can perform. He even claims to have elevated Face from the lowliest creature of the dung pile to:

the third region, call'd our state of grace
Wrought thee to spirit, to quintessence . . .
[which] would twise have won me the philosophers worke? (I. i. 64-71)

54Prospero in Shakespeare's The Tempest is capable of the power of creating a tempest but uses it constructively, not for empty threats or displays of temper. See especially I. i. and I. ii.
He believes he has transmuted Face like a base metal to a more precious, purer, refined state like silver or gold.

The alchemist extends his catalog of powers to conjuring. He convinces Dapper that through his powers, the latter can "winne up all the money i'the towne" (I. ii. 76-77) but only if Subtle will "give him (Dapper) a familiar" (I. ii. 80). To prove the existence of this pretended conjuring power to Dapper, Subtle depends on Dol's assistance. In exchange for vast sums of money, Dol pretends she is to be the superior spirit guide in bringing Dapper luck in gambling as his "Queen of Fairy" (I. i. 105). This intentional abuse and pretense of magical conjuring powers is again in contrast to Prospero who is actually capable of using the power of spirits but only for positive ends.

Second to refining men, the alchemists sought a way to develop a philosopher's stone, the anticipated key to wealth, fame and power. Subtle claims that he also has the power to make this miraculous agent and boasts about it to several of his customers. First, he falsely promises Mammon immeasurable wealth with this catalyst:
I will pronounce the happy word, be rich.
This day you shall be spectatissimi.55
(II. i. 8)

In addition to deceiving his clients that he has the
capability to produce the philosopher's stone, he arouses
excessive materialistic lust in them. We therefore
hear Mammon greedily anticipate:

This night, I'll change
All, that is metal, in my house to gold
And, early in the morning, will I send
To all the plumbers, and the pewters
And buy their tin, and lead up: and to Lothbury,
For all the copper. (II. i. 29-34)56

Subtle also convinces the Puritans Tribulation and
Ananias that he has the power to produce a philosopher's
stone that will confer omnipotence on its owners:

C, but the stone, all's idle to it! . nothing!
The art of Angels, Natures Miracle,
The divine secret, that doth flye in clouds,
From east to west: and whose tradition
Is not from men, but spirits.
(III. ii. 102-106)

In a glowing testimonial to the alchemist, Mammon
summarizes some of the other powers attributed to Subtle:

'is a divine instructor! Can extract
The soules of all things, by his art; call all
The vertues, and the miracles of the Sunne,
Into a temperate fornace: teach dull nature
What her owne forces are. (IV. i. 84-87)

55 Musgrove defines this as "especially looked up to." (p. 162).
56 This excessive craving for material wealth parallels Marlowe's Faustus. See especially I. i. 78-87.
In this commentary on the powers normally associated with the ideal alchemist, Jonson ridicules his character, the charlatan alchemist and his outrageous claims. But because Subtle is a charlatan, incapable of the feats of magic such as those performed by Prospero in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, he shifts the responsibility to Mammon blaming the knight's impurity for his failure to produce the stone. Face dramatically assists with the charade which diverts Mammon's attention away from the alchemist's impotence:

O Sir, we are defeated: all the workes
Are flowne in fumo: every glasse is burst.
Fornace, and all rent downe! as if a bolt
Of thunder had been driven through the house.
Retorts, Receivers, Pellicanes. Bolt-heads,
All strooke in chivers! (IV. v. 57-62)

Mammon's sins in the alchemist's house have supposedly tainted its pure environment which caused this disaster. This was a commonly-held Renaissance notion and Agrippa admonishes that anyone overwhelmed by commerce with the flesh or material passions may be unworthy of the gifts of the divine\(^{57}\) (*D.O.*, III. iii).

\(^{57}\) In Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*, the magician's decadence and 'hard-heartedness' exemplify and validate this notion. He ultimately finds himself beyond redemption or celestial intervention after leading a life of material and sensual lust.
In contrast to Shakespeare's Prospero and the magus' family, friends, and enemies, neither Subtle nor his clients have benefitted from their intercourse with each other. While Prospero has exerted a positive influence and change in his and other's personal and political realms, Subtle has created negative experiences and doubt in the clients he has gulled with his charlatanism. Finally he brings his own life as well as the lives of his associates to a state of fruitlessness.
CONCLUSION

Shakespeare's *The Tempest* presents Prospero utilizing only some of his potential as a magus, primarily in raising the tempest and in creating the illusion of the masque. Nevertheless, the Elizabethans would have realized that he was capable of far greater magical feats than those of the black magician because of his true powers. Further, these powers were augmented by the vast body of angels who responded to his exemplary disposition and devotion to academic self-improvement utilized in service of his fellow man. It was these powers then which enabled him to accomplish the reconciliation and harmony which were the true goals of the magus.

On the other hand, while Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* appears to demonstrate spectacular acts of magic, in reality his powers are virtually non-existent. His impotence is part of the devil's deception. The magician is led to believe that he can wield great power in the world but this is a false power which contrasts the true power of a magus because it is the devil's forces which are primarily operative. The magician, because of his self-aggrandizement and neglect of spiritually-enriching studies, can only attract demonic beings who provide an appearance of omnipotence while luring him into spiritual destruction.

Jonson's *The Alchemist* shows the perverted practice
of alchemy demonstrated by the protagonist, Subtle. The alchemist, like the magician Faustus, is an ignoble character who is disinterested in time-consuming scholarly pursuits. He dissipates his life's energy by functioning in the appearance of an alchemist in order to deceive unwitting patrons into paying exorbitant sums in exchange for impossible claims.

The three above-mentioned occult sciences can be found in a vast number of extant books, essays, and letters, all of which attest to the widespread acceptance of these arts. Furthermore, the strength of credence in the occult sciences in the Renaissance was widespread throughout Europe and is confirmed by some representative followers from all strata of society: The British Queen; high church officials [eg. Pope Julian]; creative minds and scholars such as Sir Thomas More and Erasmus; the theatrical patrons who understood the occult nuances, metaphors, and allusions of the playwrights; even the charlatans who practiced a flourishing business by duping superstitious, naive peasants. As Nauert points out in his introduction, many modern scholars may feel uncomfortable knowing their "enlightened" Elizabethan ancestors believed in the occult arts and, therefore, little contemporary scholarship has dealt with this "unacademic" subject. One of the purposes of this Thesis has been to
dispel this prejudice and like Agrippa, attempt to place a cloak of respectability over the Elizabethan beliefs by demonstrating that their occult notions were an integral part of their religious and philosophical world outlook.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


—. Of Occult Philosophy. Three books of occult philosophy by R.W. for Gregory Moule 1651.


