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The Disobedience of a Christian Man:

Sin and Free Will in Marlowe's Doctor Faustus

by Lorena A. Henry

Thesis presented to the Department of English of
the University of Ottawa as partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Thesis Supervisor: David L. Jeffrey

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Faustus: Heroic Rebel or Christian Sinner?

CHAPTER 1: Faustus: Heroic Rebel or Christian Sinner?

Christopher Marlowe's Doctor Faustus has inspired much critical controversy, particularly in the twentieth century. Part of the reason it has been the object of so many varied and opposing interpretations is due to additions and revisions in the extant texts by authors other than Marlowe. These alterations make it difficult to pin down Marlowe's original conception of the play.¹ Notwithstanding the play's textual corruption, critics have offered radically opposed views on Faustus' character and the meaning of his damnation. The primary critical divergence is over whether Marlowe intended Faustus to be viewed as a tragic hero or as a sinner.) Foundational for the critics' interpretation of Faustus is their interpretation of the doctrinal framework in which Faustus operates. Does Marlowe intend us to view the Christian cosmology in which Faustus is damned as essentially good and just, or as oppressive and suffocating to man's aspiring nature? Is Faustus an archetypal

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Christian sinner, or a heroic rebel resisting the limitations of human nature?

Following this split, divergence amongst critical opinion arises over the degree to which Faustus should be held responsible for his damnation. Does Faustus repeatedly and freely turn away from God's grace, and thus choose damnation in spite of God's proffered salvation? Or is Faustus merely a victim in a universe where his will is so bound by original sin that he is not free to choose obedience to God unless God has predestined him for salvation? In the former interpretation, the critic is left with the problem of Faustus' terrible anguish in the final scene, where he seems to be a victim of circumstances that are out of his control. On the other hand, it would seem that if one interprets Faustus as a victim of predestination, the play ceases to be tragic, and we must view Faustus as a human pawn in a Divine game where one is arbitrarily damned or saved.

An early twentieth century advocate of this latter interpretation is George Santayana, who states:

This excellent Faustus is damned by accident or by predestination; he is brow-beaten by the devil and forbidden to repent when he has really repented. The terror of the conclusion is thereby heightened; we see an essentially good man, because in a moment of infatuation he has signed away his soul, driven against his will to despair and damnation.²

Santayana interprets Faustus as a heroic figure who would

Ⓢ

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have been recognized by Marlowe's audience as "a braver brother, a somewhat enviable reprobate who had dared relish the good things of this life above the sad joys vaguely promised for the other." In Santayana's view, Faustus is a "martyr" to the Renaissance values of "power, curious knowledge, enterprise, wealth and beauty," and the devil represents the true good in Marlowe's play. Santayana concludes by suggesting that Marlowe and Goethe share an essentially similar attitude toward Faust, but where Marlowe was still bound by his medieval roots, Goethe "glorifies the return from Christianity to paganism."³

Santayana's view of Faustus as a tragic hero who is "noble and human but led astray by some excusable vice or error,"⁴ has been developed and modified by many scholars after him. U.M. Ellis-Fermor argues that Faustus is a tragic hero, whose failing was to ignore the limitations imposed on man by God and to strive against nature to perfect himself. In her book Christopher Marlowe, Ellis-Fermor suggests that Marlowe was torn between dogmatic Christian "orthodoxy" (she does not distinguish different Christian theological traditions) and pagan individualism and imagination. Like Faustus at Wittenberg, Marlowe "resents and blames... the dry and barren learning which he rightly perceives has led him somehow astray." At the beginning of the play, Faustus is at the point of

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discovering that all the academic disciplines he has pursued fall short of "that infinity for which he craves." Unable to accept the limitations of the human condition, Faustus turns to magic as an imaginative source of transcendence, "as the means by which his imagination can be like the imagination of God." Unfortunately, though, Faustus is deluded in his expectation of magic, which can only offer an illusion of idyllic power. He is

propelled onward along the road to damnation by threats and seductions of the Bad Angel and the Devils, and by his own sense of despair, until he is beyond repentance and salvation and has one fleeting clear glimpse of the delusion, before terror overwhelms him.⁵

Again we see Faustus presented as a victim of an inhumane universe, where his heroic attempt to realize the ideal in his own life resulted in inevitable tragedy.

Ellis-Fermor attempts to explain why the play is explicitly critical of Faustus by arguing that "Marlowe's thought in this play wavers between submissive acceptance of a traditional dogmatic system, and a pagan simplicity of outlook to which instinct and temperament prompt him."⁶

Because of the "gloomy theology" with which Marlowe was indoctrinated, his conclusion is grim. Marlowe concludes that "The reward of sin is death... if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves," for sin is death of the spirit, but it is also inherent in everything man does.⁷

The inevitability of man's damnation, which is the

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conclusion Faustus arrives at when he dismisses divinity, is now generally seen by critics to be a fallacious argument on Faustus' part. When he quotes "The wages of sin is death," he leaves out the rest of the verse, "but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom 6:23).⁸

Similarly, when he quotes "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," he ignores the following verse, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1John 1:8-9). In order to argue, as Ellis-Fermor does, that Marlowe's conclusion to the play is that damnation is inevitable, one must argue that damnation becomes inevitable for Faustus, despite the hope of salvation offered by Scripture.

Charles G. Masinton and Richard Waswo both defend the conclusion that damnation was inevitable for Faustus by arguing that Marlowe uses the Protestant doctrine of salvation by grace to show how Faustus could do nothing on his own to avoid damnation. In Christopher Marlowe's Tragic Vision: A Study in Damnation, Masinton argues that Faustus' tragedy lies in his attempt to overcome the human condition:

It is the story of the universal misery and downfall to which man's proud, rebellious, and ambitious nature inevitably leads him when he seeks glory and power by rejecting the accepted limits of normal behavior or violating conventional forms of morality.⁹

By treating Faustus' fall as a dramatization of man's human

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condition, Masinton suggests that damnation is the loss of Faustus' vision of the ideal, which has "given his life meaning and sustained his conception of himself." He compares Marlowe's conception of damnation with the orthodox Christian notion of poena damni - suffering as a result of the deprivation of God's presence - but he suggests that Marlowe diverges from Christian doctrine by perceiving damnation as an inevitable part of man's condition, and as something which occurs temporally as internal psychological suffering.¹⁰ He further argues that Faustus' indulgence in magic is both an attempt to transcend the mortal state and a reaction of despair to the determinism in his theological education. He suggests that Faustus' career becomes a dramatization of the anxiety of a Renaissance man, who has left the ordered theology of medievalism, but has not found a coherent world view with which to replace it.¹¹

Thus, in Masinton's opinion, Marlowe's world view is fundamentally deterministic. Man is determined psychologically because his choices are governed by irresistible drives and desires ("one's will is not distinguished from one's fate"), and his plight is tragic because he does not foresee the unfortunate consequences of his actions in the beginning.¹² In the case of Faustus, predestination is the theological parallel to the determinism inherent in man's psychological make-up.

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Masinton argues that the irony of Wittenberg Protestantism is that, because man's will is so bound by original sin, "the only possible route to salvation - through faith - is blocked because faith itself comes only as a gift from God."¹³

Richard Waswo differs in emphasis somewhat from Masinton in his interpretation of Doctor Faustus. He argues that the Protestant doctrine of original sin is not merely a theological analogue to the psychological limitations of the human condition. He suggests, rather, that Marlowe's primary concern is to dramatize the tragic consequences of a Protestant world view within the context of an individual life. In his article "Damnation Protestant Style: Macbeth, Faustus, and Christian Tragedy," he discusses specifically the Protestant concept of the sin against the Holy Ghost to explain Faustus' damnation. He quotes several Protestant preachers of Marlowe's time who suggest that when one commits a sin against the Holy Ghost, the person is no longer psychologically capable of repentance.

Over a century earlier, St. Thomas Aquinas had also argued that the sinner cannot will to repent when he has committed the sin against the Holy Spirit. However, Aquinas also maintained that the sinner is not excluded from the reach of God's grace, because God can pardon the sin just as He can cure an incurable disease.¹⁴ Waswo points out that

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the English-Protestant preachers accepted the notion that God's grace can pardon all sin, but made the possibility of God's intervention more remote by suggesting the individual must repent before forgiveness can be given. Thus, the sin is unforgivable in fact, but not because Christ is incapable of forgiving it. Waswo argues that when Faustus quotes Scripture in order to set up the false syllogism that damnation is unavoidable, he commits the sin against the Holy Ghost by condemning the Gospels. Ironically, by ignoring the "good news" of Christ's mercy, he determines that he will not receive it.¹⁵

All the critics we have examined so far suggest that Faustus is presented as a victim of spiritual laws which do not allow second chances for repentance and salvation. The last two critics I will look at in this introductory chapter suggest that Marlowe is at pains to portray Faustus as a sinner who chooses to resist the moral order of the universe, despite repeated signs and warnings which should have led him to repentance and salvation.

In his article "Marlowe's Dr. Faustus," James Smith argues that many of the characters in the play - the Angels, the Old Man, Mephistophilis, Lucifer, and Helen - should be interpreted (in late medieval perspective) as allegorical aspects of Faustus, as well as characters in their own right.¹⁶ He suggests that the Good Angel represents both an

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objective order of goodness by which Faustus is measured, and also Faustus' own potential for perfection within that moral order. (It is worth noting that, in Smith's view, Faustus' sin is not his desire to be perfect, but his desire to be self-perfected. Santayana, Ellis-Fermor, and Masinton all argue that it was Faustus' desire for perfection which led to his damnation.) Smith argues that the moral order is independent of Faustus, and only by conforming to it could Faustus achieve happiness and peace. But, "if he sacrifices his own perfection he is tormented by its loss, and in either case the order is vindicated."¹⁷

Smith argues that the suggestions of the Good and Bad Angels are not arguments to persuade Faustus, so much as they are occasions for Faustus to choose. The fact that Faustus continues to re-affirm his choice against God illustrates the fact that "he has neither eyes nor ears save for the immediate advantages of having chosen evil."¹⁸

Smith concludes by arguing that Faustus remains in association with evil of his own free will. In order to avoid seeing Faustus as "brow-beaten by the devil and forbidden to repent when he has really repented," as George Santayana suggests, Smith maintains that Lucifer is both the devil and an aspect of Faustus, "who is thus agent as well as victim in his own torment."

And an interpretation of this kind should always be made whenever, at first sight, it appears that

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Faustus' moral freedom is being infringed. It is not, for example, only Lucifer and Beelzebub who forbid him to continue the study of "astrologie;" it is his own evil will, which has already determined not to embrace the truths to which astrology is leading.¹⁹

Smith's interpretation of Lucifer as a manifestation of Faustus' evil will is vulnerable to the criticism that it begs the question of whether Marlowe intended to present Faustus as morally free or as morally determined. Douglas Cole's interpretation of Dr. Faustus defends more fully the claim that Marlowe is at pains to present Faustus' will as morally free. In his book Suffering and Evil in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe, Cole suggests that the central irony of the play is that Faustus brings about the condition of separation from God by repeatedly choosing against Him, "and the punishment of the damned soul is to remain eternally in the state he has deliberately chosen."²⁰ The important difference between Cole's and Waswo's perceptions of the process of damnation is that Waswo sees the sinner as spiritually bound by the consequences of a single sin, whereas Cole sees damnation as something the sinner creates through deliberate and repeated choices over a lifetime. Cole defends his interpretation of Dr. Faustus by examining in detail Marlowe's debt to the dramatic traditions of the earlier Middle Ages. He looks closely at the theological attitudes toward evil, sin, and redemption in the medieval cycle dramas and the morality plays, and he demonstrates how

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Marlowe draws upon these traditions in his presentation of Faustus' suffering and damnation. He also compares Marlowe's play to the English Faust Book, Marlowe's primary source for the Faust legend, in order to pinpoint Marlowe's original contributions to the character of Faustus.²¹

Cole points out that the Good and Bad Angels are Marlowe's invention, and he suggests that their presence in the play serves to reinforce the idea that Faustus' choice is his own. Like Smith, Cole suggests that their function is not to persuade Faustus by argument, but to present true and false alternatives between which he must choose.²² Mephistophilis' warning to Faustus about the nature of Hell, and his admonition that Faustus "leave these frivolous demandes, / Which strike a terror to my fainting soul" (11.306-07), are also completely original with Marlowe, and they serve to reinforce Faustus' myopia and his responsibility for his own fall.²³ Cole also points out that Marlowe diverges from the English Faust Book by having Faustus suggest, without fear, the diabolic contract for his soul. Furthermore, Marlowe enhances the essentially ironic quality of Faustus' choice by having him invert the language of Christian worship when he commits himself to the Devil.²⁴

Cole suggests that more than once in the play Faustus moves toward repentance, but does not get beyond conviction of sin. His only thorough repentance is given to Lucifer.²⁵

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Cole notes that in the English Faust Book Mephistophilis demands a renewal of the contract from Faustus, but Marlowe has Faustus offer it freely.²⁶ Readers will recall that at the end of the play Faustus has a striking vision of redemption. Cole notes that Faustus repeats the pattern of incomplete repentance, but his final prayer is again to Lucifer, and

as soon as Faustus re-directs his attention to Lucifer, the vision of redemption vanishes and is replaced by a vision of the wrath of God... where mercy is rejected, justice takes over.²⁷

The emphasis in Cole's interpretation of Dr. Faustus is thus on Faustus' responsibility in resisting the redemptive moral order of the universe.

It is clear when one compares the readings of Cole and Smith to those of Waswo, Masinton, Santayana and Ellis-Fermor, that critics have been attributing very different theological presuppositions to the play - presuppositions which run the whole spectrum from theological and psychological determinism to voluntarism. Evidently, choices among these various positions along the spectrum have each a decisive impact on readings of the play as a Renaissance tragedy. In this thesis, I want to examine what I take to be Marlowe's indebtedness to both medieval theology and Protestant theology contemporary to him, in order to suggest some of the theological tensions that lie behind the difficulty of interpreting Faustus'

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culpability in his damnation.

In my second chapter I will establish some of the fundamental differences between popular medieval doctrine on sin, free will and salvation, and the doctrines later taught by the Reformation theologians. To do this I will use the teachings of St. Augustine, St. Bonaventure, and St. Thomas Aquinas as representative of medieval theology, and the teachings of William Tyndale and Martin Luther as representative of Reformation theology.

In my third and fourth chapters I will demonstrate Marlowe's indebtedness to the medieval morality play and saint's play traditions, and show how the medieval theology which informs these dramatic styles also forms the doctrinal foundation for Doctor Faustus. The influence of the morality play tradition has been thoroughly examined by Robert Potter in The English Morality Tradition and David Bevington in From Mankind to Marlowe, as well as Cole in Suffering and Evil in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe. However, besides the morality play tradition, Doctor Faustus also contains important structural and thematic parallels with the English saints' plays The Conversion of St. Paul and The Play of Mary Magdalene. As far as I know, no critical research has yet been done on the influence of the English saints' plays on Doctor Faustus.²⁸

In my concluding chapter, I will argue that Marlowe

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presents Faustus as an arch-Protestant sinner, who wilfully abuses the Lutheran doctrines of election and predestination in order to convince himself that he is outside the pale of God's saving grace, and therefore "free" to pursue his worldly ambitions without further anxiety over his spiritual destiny. However, by establishing Doctor Faustus within the context of medieval drama, Marlowe dramatically constructs a cosmology in which Faustus is given the necessary grace for repentance. Thus, far from being liberated of "other-worldly" concerns, Faustus finds himself having to repeatedly deny the possibility of God's forgiveness in order to maintain his commitment to necromancy. By the end of the play, when he is fully convinced of the reality of hell and desires to escape damnation, he finds that his will is so bound by sin and demonic possession that, ironically, he is no longer capable of receiving the grace which he now desires.

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CHAPTER 2: Theological Backgrounds To Doctor Faustus

Marlowe's England was a place of political and theological tension between the differing factions of Christianity. Elizabeth's State Church essentially was a political compromise, made with the intention of alienating as few as possible of her subjects in both the Roman Catholic and Protestant extremes.¹ The court reformers who wrote the settlement of 1559 had proceeded on the assumption that the Church of Rome was basically a true Church, and that by eliminating its errors and superstitions, England could recover the pure religion that was practiced in the early Middle Ages.² The Presbyterians, however, contended that the entire structure of the Roman Church was erroneous, and that it was necessary to return to the very earliest Biblical models of the Church.³ The notion of universal priesthood, originating with Luther, was used by Presbyterians in England to denounce the authority of the Bishops and the authority of Elizabeth herself as head of

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the Church.⁴ In England, at a time when religious uniformity was highly desired for political stability, the Reformation claim that the Church should be a voluntary association of believers was perceived by non-Lutheran and non-Calvinist divines as dangerous both to the authority of the Church and to the continuity of the Christian community in general.⁵

The voluntarist model of the Church, which was advanced by reform thinkers, reflected a very different theological perspective on the human condition than that of medieval theology. The Catholic model of the Church - in which one's membership, like one's citizenship, was assumed at birth - allowed for a fairly optimistic view of human nature. While all members fell short of the Church's moral ideals, the inclusiveness of the Church's structure meant that individuals could feel confident of their salvation by virtue of their participation in the Church's sacraments. Thus, the Church challenged its members to grow in sanctity, not only for fear of damnation, but also out of love of God.

The voluntarist model of the Church, however, implied that the Church had no mediating role in man's salvation, and that the individual was dependent solely upon the stirrings of his own conscience to evaluate his spiritual condition. Not surprisingly, the theology of the Reformation tended to emphasize personal sin and

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unworthiness, and take a pessimistic view of the human condition. Because the issue of personal salvation was made eminently important, the theology of the Reformation was concerned primarily with man's justification before God: his status of election or damnation.

The pessimistic attitude of Reformation theologians toward the human condition, and their consequent emphasis on psychological introspection (not for the purpose of spiritual growth, but primarily for the purpose of evaluating one's status of justification before God), were distasteful to Anglican and Catholic imaginations.

Shakespeare's character Hamlet is a notable example of a Wittenberg scholar whose pessimistic view of humanity contributed significantly to his tragedy. While we have little direct knowledge of Marlowe's personal beliefs, it is safe to assume that as a Cambridge theological student, Marlowe would have been very sensitive to the theological tensions of his time. These tensions have important implications for understanding the tragedy of Doctor Faustus, who was a Wittenberg Divine and the creation of an Anglican theology student.

As necessary background for appreciating the theological implications of Faustus' tragedy, I have selected a few texts of the most prominent theologians whom both Marlowe and Faustus would have studied. This survey

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cannot, of course, do justice to the theological complexity of the works of these great writers, but it can establish some generalizations about medieval and reformation theology useful for interpreting Marlowe's play. As representative of medieval theological attitudes toward the human condition, sin, and the nature of man's relationship to God, I have selected texts from St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Bonaventure, and Boethius. As representative of the Reformationist perspective I have selected Luther, because of his association with Wittenberg, and William Tyndale, because he was one of the most prominent, and controversial English Protestant writers in the sixteenth century.⁶

St. Augustine's belief that human nature, though tainted by original sin, is still imprinted with the image of God, typifies the early medieval attitude toward the human condition. Augustine argues that the Imago Dei is manifest in man through man's instinctive desire to seek God and worship him as man's Divine Source:

Man is one of your creatures, Lord, and his instinct is to praise you. He bears about him the mark of death, the sign of his own sin, to remind him that you thwart the proud. But still, since he is part of your creation, he wishes to praise you. The thought of you stirs him so deeply that he cannot be content unless he praises you, because you made us for yourself and our hearts find no peace until they rest with you.⁷

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However, as a consequence of the Fall, man easily misinterprets his longing for God as a longing for the good things God has created.⁸ Because man's condition is one of separation from his Source, he has the tendency to perceive all desirable things in separation from their Source. This tendency is the fundamental characteristic of sin: to enjoy the goodness of created things as an end in itself rather than to use the created world as a means of enjoying God:

For we enjoy the things that we know when the will rests by rejoicing in them for their own sake; but we use things by referring them to something else which we are to enjoy. Neither is the life of man vicious nor culpable in any other way than in enjoying things badly and in using them badly.⁹

In The Consolation of Philosophy, the medieval philosopher Boethius argues similarly that God is the only fulfillment of man's desire for happiness. Strongly influenced by neo-Platonism, Boethius contends that the good things which man desires in life are imperfect reflections of the One Good for which man's immortal soul longs. God is "full of the highest and most perfect good... therefore it follows that true happiness has its dwelling in the most high God."¹⁰ While Boethius argues that human reason is sufficient to attain this perfect happiness, Augustine integrates the Biblical notion of man's fallenness with the Platonic concept of perfection as man's Good, through the Christian doctrine of the incarnation and atonement:

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We would not be able to [achieve perfection] except that Wisdom Himself saw fit to make Himself congruous with such infirmity as ours and to set an example of living for us not otherwise than as a man, since we ourselves are men.... Although He is our native country, He made himself also the Way to that country.¹¹

In the later Middle Ages, it is especially in Franciscan spirituality that Christ's Incarnation was glorified as God's fullest possible response to the human condition. Because God identified himself with man in his humble, fallen state, all of creation is to be glorified in turn through its identification with God.¹² This intimate connection between creature and Creator is reflected in the Franciscan emphasis upon knowing God through study of his creation. Augustine suggested that it is through visible reality that man can come to know invisible truth, with the help of Divine Illumination. St. Bonaventure, the great Franciscan philosopher, identifies even more closely a knowledge of visible reality with knowledge of invisible truth in his doctrine of light. Borrowing from the British scientist Robert Grosseteste, Bonaventure suggests that light is the universal principle of energy and activity, permeating the material world. Light in its purity is God Himself, and the light we experience sensually is a mirror of the pure light which is invisible to the senses: "light in the created universe is a participation in God's

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Light."¹³ Thus, the sensual beauty we enjoy in a tree or flower through the light of the sun is fully analagous with the beauty of God which we are to enjoy with our spiritual senses as it is revealed to us through His Light. Perfect union between the material world and God is achieved in the Incarnation of Christ, where God's pure Light informs and glorifies human flesh and takes upon itself human nature.

Both St. Bonaventure and St. Augustine suggest that the world can be a valuable school for man's spiritual growth if it is used correctly. While Augustine does emphasize the danger of enjoying material goods, he shares with Bonaventure an optimistic view of man's ability to recognize and resist sin through the exercise of reason. St. Bonaventure suggests that man's appetites can be regulated either by free will or by "synteresis." Synteresis is "the instinctive inclination of the affective nature of man towards moral good and away from moral evil."¹⁴ This tendency toward moral good is irrevocably set towards its final end of beatitude, since it is through the embracing of moral good that man will finally be led to the possession of beatitude. Of course, this inclination in man "God-ward" has been affected by the Fall and must be redeemed through God's grace. Even so, Bonaventure sees it as a natural tendency in human nature.

St. Thomas Aquinas, a contemporary of St. Bonaventure,

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also holds a basically optimistic view of the human condition. Aquinas suggests that man has a natural receptiveness for God's grace:

As daylight from the sun is diffused into the room, so the light of grace is infused into the soul by God. Although grace is beyond the nature of the soul, there is, nevertheless, in every rational creature the readiness to receive grace, and from grace the vigour to act accordingly.¹⁵

Although the Fall has tainted man with an unavoidable propensity for sin, Aquinas views man's fallenness as a change in his degree of dependence on God, and not as a contamination of his whole being.

Bonaventure identifies original sin as man's "ignorance in his mind and unruly passions in his flesh."¹⁶ Aquinas suggests that original sin is found in the disfunctioning of the will and the "disobedience" of man's lower faculties:

In the case of original sin, the human will, which is the moving principle in human acts, is deprived of original justice, which the lower powers are prone to waste themselves - we may term this their concupiscence. Consequently, the formal element in original sin is the lack of original justice, the material element is concupiscence... it estranges us from God and commits us to the world.¹⁷

Lack of original justice in the will does not mean that man's will is itself corrupt, but that it has a tendency to choose wrongly:

The cause of the initial sin is not an

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evil, but a good, namely the will, not joined to another good, namely the rule of reason and divine law.¹⁸

Reason is the one faculty in man unaffected by the Fall, for "the spark of reason cannot be extinguished so long as the light of mind remains; and sin can never make away with the mind."¹⁹ The light of reason is what Aquinas describes as "natural law," by which man intuitively knows what to pursue and what to avoid. However, man's flesh became rebellious because of the Fall, causing his concupiscence to urge him to the contrary of reason.²⁰ Both Bonaventure and Aquinas argue that man can control his concupiscible urges when he is in a state of grace. Bonaventure suggests that the intellect provides the will with the necessary freedom to resist immorality.²¹ Aquinas distinguishes further between the roles of grace and free will by suggesting that although man is capable of moral rectitude to a great extent when he is in relationship with God, he cannot maintain perfect moral purity but must trust in God's willingness to forgive.

If you say that someone can persevere to the end of his life free from grave sin... it is tantamount to saying that someone can put himself in a state into which sin cannot enter, render himself impeccable. This is not within our power of freewill; our effective ability does not go so far as to execute this intention. We cannot command our final perseverance, but must ask it from God.²²

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It is in regard to man's natural sinfulness, his capacity for good, and his role in determining his own salvation, that the Reformation theologians notably differ from the medieval philosophers, who were their predecessors as authorities on these questions. Two theologians who may serve as representative of Reformation thought are Martin Luther, the chief figure associated with Faustus' Wittenburg, and William Tyndale, perhaps the most outspoken and controversial Protestant dissenter of Marlowe's day.

Although medieval theologians affirmed that the separation from God incurred through the Fall was such that man's salvation - his reconciliation to God in eternal life - would have been impossible except for Christ's gracious sacrifice, we find in Tyndale's and Luther's teaching a particular emphasis on man's unworthiness to be saved. Tyndale suggests that "we are heirs to the vengeance of God by birth and from our very conception," and "we have our fellowship with the damned devils under the rule of Satan while we are in our mother's womb."²³ Tyndale's emphasis upon the sinfulness of man's natural condition leads him to argue that our wills are absolutely bound to sin. Unlike Bonaventure, Tyndale suggests that there remains in man no natural inclination toward God:

Our will is locked and knit faster unto the will of the devil, than could an hundred thousand chains bind a man unto a post. Unto the devil's will consent

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we with all our hearts, with all our minds, with all our might, power, strength, will, and lusts.²⁴

It follows from his belief that man's will is inclined absolutely toward evil, that man is incapable of doing anything good from his own nature. Unlike Aquinas, who argued that we were still able to perform good acts, Tyndale claims that man must first receive a type of supernatural goodness before he can do any good work.²⁵

Martin Luther also argues that the natural human condition is unworthy of salvation, suggesting that we must first be entirely stripped of our human nature through humility and emptying of self,²⁶ in order to receive the "naked mercy of God who will reckon us righteous."²⁷

Although Bonaventure and Aquinas agree that we are made righteous only through God's mercy, they differ from Luther by suggesting that man's fallenness is confined to his unruly will and concupiscent passions. Luther contends:

It is not only a lack of a certain quality in the will, nor even only a lack of light in the mind or of power in the memory, but particularly it is a total lack of uprightness and of the power of all the faculties both of body and soul and of the whole inner and outer man. On top of all this, it is a propensity toward evil. It is a nausea toward the good, a loathing of light and wisdom, and a delight in error and darkness, a flight from and an abomination of all good works, a pursuit of evil.²⁸ (italics added)

We can see from this passage that Luther perceives

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man's fallen condition to be far more serious in its implications than any of the earlier theologians we have looked at. His belief that man's will is fundamentally inclined toward evil is in direct opposition to Bonaventure's notion of synderesis, and he argues:

For they say that since the will has this synderesis, "it is inclined," albeit weakly, "toward the good." And this minute motion toward God (which man can perform by nature) they imagine to be an act of loving God above all things! But take a good look at man, entirely filled with evil lusts (notwithstanding that minute motion). The Law commands him to be empty, so that he may be taken completely into God.²⁹

Luther identifies all aspects of human nature with the flesh, suggesting that "if we were truly untainted with sin, our souls would leave our flesh and fly to God."³⁰ In contradistinction to Aquinas, Luther claims that because the Fall has affected every aspect of human nature, even reason is part of the flesh,³¹ and therefore not a reliable interpreter of our experience of the external world. He suggests that

the spiritual man, although he is present in all things with his senses, yet in his heart he is entirely withdrawn from these things and dead to all of them. This comes about when a man comes to hate all things of this life from the very marrow of his bones, indeed, when he detests all the things which go on in this life and yet endures them with patience and even with joy and glories in the fact that he is like a

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dead body.³²

We recall that along with Bonaventure's emphasis on the goodness of creation and its value for revealing God to the human imagination, he also suggested that man's sensual and aesthetic delight in natural things is an icon for the spiritual delight he can experience in God. Augustine too, although more suspicious of delight in material things, emphasized the joy that is part of man's relationship with God: "For these earthly things, too, can give joy, though not such joy as my God, who made them all, can give."³³

Luther, however, suggests that man is incapable of experiencing any foretaste of the beatific vision in this life, because pure love of God is free from any pleasurable benefit to his fallen faculties:

It is called "God's love" because by it we love God alone where nothing is visible, nothing experiential, either inwardly or outwardly, in which we can trust or which is to be loved or feared; but it is carried away beyond all things into the invisible God, who cannot be experienced, who cannot be comprehended, that is, into the midst of shadows, not knowing what it loves, only knowing what it does not love, and desiring only that which it has not yet known, saying: "I am sick with love" (Song of Sol. 2:5), that is, I do not want what I have and I do not have what I do want.³⁴

A further consequence of Luther's distrust of human nature is his belief that even man's sinful condition must be accepted by faith, "for man of himself could not know

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that he is unrighteous and sinful unless God comes into him and reveals it to him."³⁵ In response to St. John's comment "if we say we have not sinned we make God a liar" (1John 1:10), Luther argues:

Even if we do not recognize any sin in ourselves, it is still necessary to believe that we are sinners. . . For just as through faith the righteousness of God lives in us, so through faith we must believe that we are sinners, for it is not manifest to us, indeed, we often do not seem to ourselves to be aware of the fact.³⁶

In the extremity of his emphasis on persistent human sinfulness, Luther goes on to suggest that to believe one is a sinner requires more than intellectual assent to the doctrine of original sin: "But when you have confessed with your mouth that you are such a person, then you must also earnestly feel the same way about yourself in your heart, and you must conduct yourself in this manner in every act and in your entire life."³⁷ Luther here suggests that a true attitude of repentance requires one to engender a profound sense of self-distrust. By doing so, the sinner learns to believe his own unworthiness and experience his profound need for Christ's righteousness.

Of course, for both Tyndale and Luther - indeed for all theologians of the Reformation period - the single most important doctrine which informs their theology is that of salvation by faith. Luther suggests that the only way a

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Christian can have any kind of assurance about the status of his salvation is if he persistently searches himself for unconfessed sin, and never grows complacent about his need for God's mercy,

For we are not called to ease, but to a struggle against our passions; which would not be without guilt (for they are really sins and truly damnable) if the mercy of God did not refrain from imputing them to us. But only to those who manfully struggle and fight against their faults, invoking the grace of God, does God not impute sin.³⁸

When a man ceases to be fearful and anxious about his sinfulness, God's imputation returns, for as soon as God's mercy is presumed upon, He withdraws it.³⁹

Likewise, Tyndale argues that we are justified by God when we acknowledge our sinfulness. It is interesting to note that, in the following passage, Tyndale's use of the word "knowledge" implies that he equates self-knowledge with the knowledge of personal sinfulness:

Another confession is there which goeth before fayth and accompanyeth repentaunce. for who so ever repenteth doeth knowlege his synnes in his herte. And who soever doeth knowlege his sinnes receaveth forgiveness (as saith John in the fyrst of his fyrst Pistle) Yf we knowlegeoure synnes he is faythfull and lust to forgeve vs oure sinnes. and to clense vs from all vnrighteousnes/ that is/ because he hath promised/ he must for his truethes sake doo it. This confession is necessayre all oure lyves longe/ as is repentaunce... for we all wayes repente and all wayes knowlege or confesse our synnes vnto god/ and yet

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dispeare not: but remembre that we are washed in Christes bloude.⁴⁰

Although Tyndale accords with Luther in his suggestion that man must persevere in a life-long attitude of contrition, it is clear from this passage that Tyndale is considerably less concerned that he remain anxious and fearful about God's mercy. In the following passage Tyndale suggests even more explicitly that God's promise of forgiveness should be experienced as Good News:

Because we are iustified thorow fayth/
we are at peace with god thorowe oure
lorde Jesus Christe/ that is/ because
that God/ which can not lye/ hath
promysed and sworne to be mercyfull vnto
vs and to forgeve vs for Christes sake
we beleve and are at peace in our
consciencs.⁴¹

It is clear that both Luther's and Tyndale's theologies of sin emphasize man's passivity in relationship to God. Because they believe man's will is turned absolutely away from God and toward evil, they also believe that his will is in no way free to choose God. Tyndale writes:

Now when we saye/ every man hath his fre
will/ to doo what him lusteth I saye
verely that men doo what they lust. Nor
with stondynge to folow lustes is not
fredome, but captivite and bondage. If
God open any mans wittes to make hym
feale in his herte/ that lustes and
appetites are damnable/ and geve him
power to hate and resiste them/ then is
he fre even with the fredome where with
Christe maketh fre/ and hath power to
doo the will of God.⁴²

Because free will was lost with the Fall, man only regains

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freedom as a gift from God. Tyndale's and Luther's emphasis on God's omnipotence and righteousness, and man's helplessness in his fallen state, is compatible with the controversial doctrine of predestination. But before we consider certain implications of Luther's arguments for predestination, it is helpful to reflect on Aquinas' theological reconciliation between man's free will and God's omnipotence.

We recall that Aquinas does in fact affirm that man has the freedom to turn to God in repentance, or to resist God's grace and remain in a state of sin. He suggests that God's mercy always remains available to man right until the time of death:

Divine justice does not treat men who still have their course to run as though they had finished. Only when their life is over can human beings remain fast in evil: unalterableness and immobility mark the end of a process. All our present life is a condition of flux. We are always travelling and never in a position of having arrived - our thorough restlessness bears this out.... That we should stick in our sins is certainly not to be expected from the way Divine Providence works in the world.⁴³

In this passage we see that Aquinas views earthly life as a process in which the individual either moves toward God or away from Him, and Aquinas suggests that God intends that all men should move toward Him.

Aquinas affirms explicitly that God's grace is

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available to all men, and that the power of resisting God's grace lies in the human will:

Rational natures are poised between two alternatives. God moves the human spirit to good; nevertheless it could resist. It is God's doing, then, that man prepares himself to receive grace. If he lacks faith then the cause of the failure lies in him, not God.⁴⁴

To obstruct or not to obstruct the entrance of divine grace, this lies in the power of man's own free will; if he does so, then he is not unjustly blamed. God for his part is ready to give grace to all.... Those only are deprived of grace who of themselves offer hinderances to it. The sun shines on the whole world, nobody could see but for its light; if somebody blunders into something unseeing because he keeps his eyes shut he has only himself to blame.⁴⁵

These two passages reconcile the doctrine of justification by grace with the notion of human free will by suggesting that man's free will is limited to a negative power of resisting God. Man cannot choose God, but God has chosen man - all men - and yet men are free to refuse Him. The analogy of the sun's light to God's grace is particularly apt, because it is through the Son's singular act of grace that all men come to be reconciled with God.

However, the notion that God's grace is offered universally is problematic, because it seems to detract from God's omnipotence. If God desires all men to be saved, how can it be that many in fact are not saved? Can men resist

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God's will? Aquinas attempts to resolve this problem by distinguishing between God's will and God's wish. Although it is God's general wish that all men be saved, for any individual He may ~~wish~~ will that he be damned if he refuses the grace offered him.⁴⁶ Thus, damnation is not merely a consequence of man's choice to resist God, it is a positive reflection of God's will for that individual.

Luther and Tyndale, however, are not satisfied that such a resolution accords God enough power. Luther draws upon Scripture and human experience to argue that God elects certain individuals to salvation and refuses others. He cites Ishmael and Esau as two examples of individuals who were not chosen by God, not for any personal fault of their own, but for God's own purposes. Luther also argues that God imposes upon His saints many evils, but he does not lose them. Furthermore, He permits many people to live good lives and yet not be saved, and others who lead wicked lives are suddenly converted and saved.⁴⁷ To the rejoinder that God is unfair if he hardens the hearts of certain individuals so that they cannot repent and be saved, Luther replies:

We are all of necessity in sin and damnation... those whom God hardens are those to whom He gives voluntarily to will to be and remain in sin and to love iniquity. Such people are necessarily in sin by the necessity of immutability, but not by force.⁴⁸

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In other words, because man does not have any claim upon God's grace, God is in no way unjust for refusing it to those he has not elected. Their consequent remaining in sin is not imposed upon them by God, but part of their natural condition.

In the end, however, Luther argues that because God is God, and His Will is righteousness itself, we are in no position to suggest that God is unfair:

For the fact is that there neither is nor can be any other reason for His righteousness than His Will. So why should man murmur that God does not act according to the Law, since this is impossible? Furthermore, since His will is the highest good, why are we not glad and willing and eager to see it be done, since it cannot possibly be evil?⁴⁹

Tyndale puts forward the same argument, that man is not in a position to comprehend the decisions and actions of God:

And why God giveth it not every man, I can give no reckoning of his judgements. But well I wot, I never deserved it, nor prepared myself unto it; but ran another way clean contrary in my blindness, and sought not that way; but he sought me, and found me out, and showed it me, and therewith drew me to him.⁵⁰

Luther's and Tyndale's belief, that man in his fallen condition has not retained any of the natural sanctity he had as God's creature before the Fall, informs their teaching about man's relationship to God and to the world. We saw in the teaching of Augustine, Bonaventure, and Aquinas that their perception of the influence of original

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sin in man was balanced by their belief that he was created as the Imago Dei. For Tyndale, the image of God is redeemed in man when he takes on Christ's nature through baptism in the Holy Spirit. Luther, however, stresses strongly the ongoing influence of original sin, during man's earthly life.

Luther's pessimism about the human condition also leads him to distrust any mystical experience of God. Luther stresses that God's self-revelation is fulfilled in his Word, and man can only grow in knowledge of God through Scripture. Consequently, Luther is not sympathetic to St. Bonaventure's incarnational theology, which suggests that God reveals Himself in His creatures. For Luther, because all of creation is fallen, and particularly because man cannot trust his ability to interpret the world correctly, all aspects of his earthly life must be rejected as hinderances to a pure faith in God's Scriptural promises. Because the world is antithetical to God, it is only when man suffers tribulation that his worldly experience is an asset to spiritual growth.

Finally, Luther's and Tyndale's emphasis on man's unworthiness to be loved by God, informs their belief in Divine election and predestination. Man in his fallen condition has no claim upon God's grace, and therefore God is in no way culpable if He promotes one individual and not another. Luther further suggests that it is only man's

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egocentricity which causes him to perceive God's election as unjust. If his heart was set fully on God, he would see that anything He wills is good, because God's will is Righteousness itself.

In the following chapter we will reflect on certain evident ways in which medieval theology directly influenced both the nature and function of medieval drama. In Doctor Faustus, Marlowe's use of medieval dramatic traditions serve to contextualize the play within the medieval theological belief systems we have examined. The ambiguities critics have perceived concerning the possibility of Faustus's repentance are the result of tension between the medieval theological structure which implicitly informs the play and the Lutheran theology which informs Faustus' beliefs about himself and God. Faustus' tragedy is presented by Marlowe as a consequence of his theological training at Wittenberg and as a result of his perseverance in personal sin.

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CHAPTER 3: Doctor Faustus and the Morality Play Tradition

Although Marlowe trained as a theologian in controversial times, and although his dramatic subject in Doctor Faustus is a controversial theologian, it is essential that we bear in mind that Marlowe's own text is a theatrical document - an imperfectly reconstructed script for what may be the greatest bridge play between the dramatic traditions of the Middle Ages and those of the Renaissance. Its position bridging these two dramatic traditions parallels its position with respect to the two theological traditions already discussed. For this reason, it seems most appropriate to begin an analysis of Doctor Faustus as a dramatic work by reflecting on its relationship to what has usually been viewed as the most prominent type of dramatic tradition from the recent past, the morality play.

The morality play is a relatively late development in medieval drama, and it is the one dramatic genre which

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provides a direct link between medieval theatre and the Renaissance plays of Shakespeare and Marlowe.¹ Between the mid-fifteenth and late-sixteenth centuries, it underwent several changes. The generalized mankind figure of the early moralities became a particular character from history or legend, and the plot became increasingly focused upon the worldly prosperity of the hero, rather than upon the hero's spiritual condition. More importantly, the outcome of the plot shifted from the spiritual salvation of the mankind figure, to the loss of material prosperity and tragic death of the hero in the later plays.² Because Faustus is a particular legendary hero, and because the outcome of the play is tragic, Doctor Faustus would seem to follow immediately from the later morality plays. Nevertheless, the focus of the plot upon Faustus' spiritual deterioration and the on-going possibility of his repentance and salvation, suggest that Marlowe is drawing more directly upon the traditions of the earliest morality plays.

Before directly examining Doctor Faustus as a morality play, I will reflect upon the medieval attitude toward sin and redemption which informs the tradition. As we noted in the previous chapter, medieval theologians tended to be optimistic about man's ability to resist sin through the exercise of reason, and also confident in God's desire to redeem all of sinful humanity. Their faith in "reason

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informed by grace" is an attitude found in most medieval literature. It is especially evident in the numerous practical handbooks on sin which were written for local clergy.

An example of such a handbook is the twelfth century text, Vices and Virtues. In it, vices and virtues are discussed in the form of a dialogue between the penitent Soul and Reason. The style is modelled on Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy, and Reason, like Lady Philosophy, plays the role of the compassionate counsellor who can lead the soul to wholeness through faith informed by reasoned understanding. In her first speech, Reason presents the typically Boethian argument that the recognition and "handling" of sin is a matter of self-knowledge:

Almighty God be thanked that thou so well understandest thyself!... This turning is truly through God's right hand! Now as thou wilt so eagerly know my name, I will tell thee forsooth. I am a gleam of God's face that was shaped in thee, dear, dear soul, Ratio by name, that is, discernment. I left thee, because thou followdest more thy self-will than thou didst my counsel. When I went from thee, then went forth with me the same good will and that good mind which God had shaped in thee.... Then couldst thou do no good nor any of the holy virtues that God had shaped to help thee.... Thus the devil betrays many other souls that prefer to follow their bodies' will, than to learn God's lore or follow it.... Afterwards came to thee the cursed spirits of greed, drunkenness, of lechery, of covetousness, and many others, all too many, and have

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ruled thee after their own will in their thraldom ever too long. Now as thou hast forsaken them through God's grace, now is great need to thee that thou understandest with sharp wit what these virtues are, which can shield thee from these cursed spirits, and with God's help and with theirs may bring thee home to thy land, whereto thou wast shaped.³

In this passage we see that the process toward spiritual wholeness is begun when, through God's grace, the soul makes an effort toward self-awareness. It is interesting to note that sin in this passage is described as madness. The soul "lost his mind" by preferring his "body's will," with its natural desires that have been tainted by original sin, to the "lore" of God which requires learning and discipline. The more the soul sins, the more difficult is the choice of conversion because the individual's will becomes "possessed" by sinful habits. The cycle of sin is broken when the soul recognizes its need for repentance and accepts from God the grace of forgiveness and healing. Then it regains its freedom to choose virtue.

While practical handbooks were useful for parish clergy and literate laymen, unlettered folk required another medium for their moral education. The Franciscan movement of the thirteenth century facilitated the growth of European vernacular culture, which opened up a number of cultural mediums for educating the laity. The early Franciscan friars had poets write songs around the chief events of the

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Gospel story, the Passion, the miracles of the Virgin Mary, or the Joys of Paradise, and these were sung by friars in public places in order to attract crowds for a sermon.⁴ The friars would also take well known secular songs and sing them with religious lyrics as a means of involving lay people in worship. On the same basis, the Franciscans valued drama because it was a medium by which the Biblical history of man's salvation could be made accessible to ordinary people.⁵

From the perspective of Franciscan spirituality, theatre was a uniquely helpful tool for evangelism. In The Mind's Journey to God, St. Bonaventure stresses the value of human delight in sensual experience as a means of leading the individual to a transcendent experience of delight in God.⁶ Elsewhere, St. Bonaventure explicitly suggests that religious theatre is the most useful of the arts for leading the individual to God because it combines sensual delight with teaching:

every mechanical art is intended for man's consolation or his comfort; it either benefits or delights, according to the words of Horace:

"Either to profit or to delight is the wish of poets."

And again:

"He has gained universal applause who has combined the profitable with the pleasing."

If its aim is to afford consolation and amusement, it is dramatic art, or the art of putting on plays, which embraces every form of entertainment, whether

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song, music, fiction, or pantomime.⁷

In Bonaventure's theology, the delight which drama offers is not simply a means for making the teaching palatable.

Rather, it is in itself conducive to leading the soul into union with God. David Jeffrey points out that in Bonaventure's theology of art,

drama, music, and lyric... are legitimately set to function according to the three-fold purpose of Scriptural and natural revelation: to demonstrate the "eternal Incarnation of the Son of God," to illustrate the "pattern of human life," and to orient towards the common evangelical objective of "union of the soul with God."⁸

Thus, drama was doubly useful as an evangelical tool, for not only did it dramatize religious truth, it also offered the truth in an aesthetically pleasing manner. Simply by enjoying the play, the audience could be led to a deeper sense of the immanence of God in earthly life.

The Franciscan friars are specifically identified with medieval drama in England. The Digby manuscript, which contains two of our three extant English saints' plays and a portion of the morality play Wisdom, originated with the Grey Friars.⁹ The Franciscans were recorded as having performed at Coventry, and they were also responsible for the revival of the Corpus Christi cycle in 1556. St. Francis himself obtained Papal permission for the first vernacular nativity play to be performed in Italy.¹⁰

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The homiletic tradition of the friars was influential in the development of vernacular drama in a number of ways. Firstly, by taking their homilies to the market place, the friars set a precedent for open-air performance which made drama more acceptable to the public.¹¹ Secondly, the fact that the friars used the vernacular language in their preaching also set a precedent for the shift from Latin drama to vernacular drama.¹² Finally, and most importantly, there is substantial evidence that the Franciscans integrated drama into the preaching of their sermons. Jeffrey notes that "in many of these 'sermons' specific directions make it impossible to mistake the representational nature of the performance, and in some cases it appears as though parts were actually spoken or sung by the appropriate players."¹³

As an evangelical medium, drama had an advantage over preaching in that it could visually demonstrate to the audience the need for personal repentance through the characters who struggled with common moral dilemmas. The cycle drama imitated the structure of God's plan for salvation in history, from the Fall of Adam and Eve to the Last Judgement, and thus reminded the audience of the Providential framework in which their present reality participates. Individual plays within the cycle recapitulated the historical theme, often by an introductory

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address to the audience in which the audience was reminded that God is the Author of history. Each play was a particular manifestation of God's historical revelation for those who have "eyes to see and ears to hear."

The morality play was, in turn, a microcosm of the history of salvation presented in the cycle dramas. In the morality play, the events and actions within the plot concerned themselves with the universal experience of the soul among the moral forces of human life.¹⁴ The linear, temporal nature of the plot provided an obvious parallel with the linear process of human conversion.¹⁵ Thus, the evangelical intent of the medieval dramatist was facilitated by the nature of drama itself: the members of the audience were invited to pattern their own lives after the model of conversion dramatized by the play, through identifying with the mankind figure.

The central theme of all morality plays was that sin is inevitable, but forgiveness is always possible. Because the morality play demonstrated that sin is an unavoidable part of the human condition, the audience was liberated from a sense of individual guilt. As Robert Potter puts it, "its initial attack is on the hypo-critical pretension that any human being can be strong enough to resist being human."¹⁶ Early on in the play, the mankind figure discovers his freedom of will and chooses to exercise it against the

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authority of God, thus dramatizing the fall from innocence to sinfulness.¹⁷ This fall was usually presented in a highly comic way, allowing the audience to identify with the foibles of the human condition. Virtue was temporarily presented as less attractive than sin so that the audience could be led to recognize that the pleasures of the flesh are always more immediately attractive than considerations of eternal life.¹⁸

The use of comedy to portray sin had the two-fold effect of making the pleasures of temptation real for the audience at the same time as evil was portrayed as ultimately silly and impotent. Douglas Cole points out that "the comic furnishes a ready vehicle for the reflection of man's moral limitations and absurdities."¹⁹ The Christian notion of evil as privation (a lack of proper being) implies that evil has no true metaphysical reality, and thus its temporal manifestation in sinful behavior can be made the object of mockery. Because medieval drama affirms the Christian belief that all nature and history take place within a universal Divine Comedy, "in the long-range Divine scheme of things, evil is essentially both impotent and vulnerable."²⁰

The comic elements in the morality play also reinforced the serious homiletic speeches of the character who represented God or Divine Truth. For example, in the play

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Mankind, the humorous exploits in which Mankind gets involved when he has turned from the advice given him by Mercy, serve to illustrate dramatically the teaching that Mercy had delivered in abstraction.²¹ Mankind's failings dramatize the weakness of vice, and the unpleasant consequences of his sinful behavior would have been recognized by the audience as a manifestation of collective guilt.²² Members of the audience could then participate in verifying the Christian belief in salvation from sin by making personal acts of repentance.²³

The highly religious and evangelical emphasis of the early morality plays gradually gave place to more secular themes.²⁴ As I noted earlier, the transition from intermediate to late morality plays involved a shift from allegorical figures to particular individuals, from the issue of spiritual salvation to the problem of temporal prosperity, and from a comic ending to a tragic ending. Yet even in the late sixteenth century, the intention of early medieval dramatists to portray the invisible truths of Christian history, and to involve the audience in a collective act of recognizing those truths, would have been familiar to Marlowe's audience.²⁵ By using numerous details from the early morality play tradition, Marlowe evokes the pattern of spiritual comedy as a context for his audience to interpret Faustus' tragedy.

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Cole points out that the comic scenes in Doctor Faustus are in keeping with the traditional comedy of evil found in medieval drama, because they illustrate that contact with the powers of evil leads inevitably to the loss of human dignity and order.²⁶ While a strong argument can be made for the relevance of the comic scenes in interpreting Faustus' damnation,²⁷ an analysis of their function in the play is not necessary to appreciate Marlowe's use of medieval drama as a theological framework. Marlowe's use of the morality play tradition is perhaps clearest in the functional roles of the various characters in the play.

Faustus, of course, parallels the traditional mankind figure of the morality play. Although he is a particular legendary figure, the Chorus' description of his common birth ("Now is he borne, of parents base of stocke, / In Germany, within a Towne cal'd Rhodes" 11.12-13)²⁸ suggests the common bond of humanity between Faustus and members of the audience. Furthermore, by beginning with Faustus' birth and following his life through to his death, Doctor Faustus parallels the structure of the morality play The Castle of Perseverance.²⁹

While morality plays do not always encompass the full life cycle of the mankind figure, they all include the mankind figure's fall from innocence into sin, and his subsequent repentance and restoration into right

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relationship with God. For example, in the play Mankind, Mankind's capacity for sin is acknowledged by Mankind himself in an opening speech:

My name is "Mankinde." I have my composition
Of a body and of a soull, of condicion contrarye -
Betwix them tweyn is a grett division.
He that shulde be subjecte, now he hath the
victory.

This is to me a lamentable story,
To se my flesch of my soull to have governance.
Wher the goode-wyff is master, the goodeman may be
sory.
I may both syth and sobbe; this is a pituouse
remembrance.
(11.194-201)³⁰

Although Mankind is told by Mercy that he can resist sin by practicing patience and perseverance, Mankind fails to be continent, thus demonstrating to the audience the fallenness of human nature.

In a similar manner, Anima, who represents the soul in the play Wisdom, begins in a state of grace. In this play, Anima's first speech does not so much remind the audience of the fallen human condition as it stresses an ideal love relationship between God and man:

Fro my yougthe thys haue I sowte
To haue to my spowse most specyally,
For a loue of yowr schappe am I wrowte.
Above all hele and bewty pat euer was sowght
I haue louyde Wysdom as for my lyght,
For all goodnes wyth hym ys broughte.
In wysdom I was made all bewty bryghte.
(11.18-24)³¹

The soul's love of Christ is presented by the playwright in the language of secular love. The analogy of secular and

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sacred passion, rooted in the Biblical book of the Song of Songs, was developed by the Franciscans and others in order to make experientially real the mystical union between man and God.³² The Franciscan emphasis on sacred passion is pervasive in Wisdom, charging the theologically-ridden discourse with emotion and vitality.

In this play it is not Anima who falls away from Wisdom, but the allegorical faculties of Mind, Understanding and Will. By treating Mind, Understanding, and Will as individual personae, the playwright retains Anima in her status as the intended spouse of Christ at the same time as he presents her as the victim of their culpability.

In Doctor Faustus, Faustus has already fallen into a state of sin when the play begins. However, his childhood state of innocence and his fall into sin is recapitulated by the chorus:

At riper yeares to Wittenberg he went,
Whereas his kinsmen chiefly brought him vp;
So much he profits in Diuinitie,
That shortly he was grac'd with Doctors name,
Excelling all, and sweetly can dispute
In th' heauenly matters of Theologie,
Till swolne with cunning, of a self-conceit,
His waxen wings did mount aboue his reach,
And melting, heuens conspir'd his ouer-throw:
For falling to a diuelish exercise,
And glutted now with learnings golden gifts,
He surfets vpõ cursed Necromancie:
Nothing so sweet as Magicke is to him;
Which he preferres before his chiefest blisse,
And this the man that in his study sits.
(11.14-28)

The association evoked by the Chorus with Icarus implicitly

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brings to mind the close parallel with Lucifer's over-reaching ambition. The final lines of this passage emphasize the dichotomy between Faustus' use of knowledge for self-serving ends, and a proper obedience to the limitations placed upon man by God. This dichotomy parallels the dichotomy suggested in Wisdom, when Wisdom warns Anima against "cunnyng... excellent" and tells her to "drede and conforme your wyll to me./ For yt ys be heelfull dyscyplyne pat in Wysdam may be" (ll.88-89). By describing obedience to God as Faustus' "chiefest bliss," the Chorus tentatively affirms a Christian cosmology in which man's happiness can only be ultimately found in relationship to his Creator.

Faustus' opening speech is both like and unlike the opening speeches of Anima and Mankind. Faustus does not describe himself to the audience as a representative of the human condition; in many ways his soliloquy seems more particular than universal. But Faustus is an everyman figure in that his ambitions fit the Renaissance dream of wealth, honour, and omnipotence.³³

Faustus' character is revealed to the audience as he dismisses various career possibilities. In his book The Dramatist and the Received Idea, Wilbur Sanders notes that Faustus' rejection of the different disciplines parodies the conventional medieval exercise of "dispraise of

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learning."³⁴ However, instead of proving the limitations of human wit and showing that the disciplines fall short of their objectives, Faustus evaluates the disciplines according to personal gain. For example, Sanders points out that in Cornelius Agrippa's De Incertitudine et Vanitate Scientiarum, Agrippa objects to philosophy because its conclusions ground themselves upon authority rather than experience. Faustus has no similar serious intellectual objection; instead, he reduces the scope of philosophy to the technique of disputing well, in order to dismiss it on the grounds that it offers him no further challenge.³⁵

His dismissal of medicine is most revealing, because it implicitly evokes the stock late medieval analogy with Christ's role as Healer. While Agrippa's objection to "physicke" was simply that it does not work, Faustus shows us that he is in fact a brilliant and effective doctor. In his article "Doctor Faustus and Hell on Earth," Christopher Ricks points out that because Doctor Faustus was written and performed right around the time of the bubonic plague in England, the audience would not have taken lightly Faustus' claim to have saved "whole cities" from the plague.³⁶ Faustus' profession to have "cured" a "thousand desperate maladies" is even more interesting because, as Ricks observes, there were no cures for the plague: you either escaped it or you died. Consequently, it is significant

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that Faustus feels no social responsibility to use his great medical talent. Instead, his concern rests solely upon the prestige of his occupation:

Couldst thou make men to liue eternally,
Or being dead, raise them to life againe,
Then this profession were to be esteem'd.
Physicke farewell.
(11.51-54)

This passage also reveals that Faustus' ambition is to be something of another Christ, and it suggests that his dissatisfaction with his own medical accomplishments stems from his fundamental dis-ease with being human: "Yet art thou still but Faustus, and a man" (1.50). As an exemplar of the sin of pride, Faustus not only represents a besetting sinful liability of the Elizabethan period, but he demonstrates a drive which is to some extent common to all men: the desire (as Cole expresses it) "to re-create the universe in non-theistic terms."³⁷ It is at this fundamental level of rebellion that he is most fully a mankind figure, and the play dramatically portrays the consequences of persevering in the attempt to exist independently of God.

Faustus' dismissal of law also reveals his self-interested motives. Sanders points out that Agrippa rejected law because it fails to realize in the temporal order the justice that humanity demands of the Divine order.³⁸ Faustus dismisses law as "too seruire and

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illiberal for me," once more referring the value of the discipline to his own personal preference. A. Bartlett Giamatti further notes that Faustus quotes Justinus twice in his rejection of law. The first time he quotes him incorrectly, and the second time he begins the quotation "The father cannot disinherit the son except..." (1.32), but does not finish the quotation. Giamatti argues that the unfinished part of the citation is completed by the rest of the play: God the Father cannot disinherit man His son except when man chooses to refuse God's grace.³⁹ What Faustus views as "legalistic trash" is in fact an abiding spiritual principle.

In the famous passage of his soliloquy where he dismisses Divinity, Faustus manipulates Scripture in order to justify himself. Marlowe would have expected his Renaissance audience to recognize the prominent Scripture verses which Faustus quotes, and to have been able to complete the conspicuously omitted portions of these familiar passages. When he quotes "The reward of sin is death" (1.67), he leaves off the rest of the verse: "gratia autem Dei vita aeterna, in Christo Jesus our Lord."⁴⁰ ("But the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom.6:23). And when he quotes "If we say we have no sin, / We deceive our selves, and ther is no truth in vs" (1.1.69-70), he ignores the subsequent verse: "Si

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confiteamur peccata nostra, fidelis est et iustus, vt remittat nobis peccata nostra, et emundet nos ab omni iniquitate." ("If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9). This second Biblical verse was used in the Order for Morning Prayer in The Book of Common Prayer, and it was followed by a homily which emphasized God's mercy and the promise of salvation.⁴¹ By reading only half-truths out of Scripture, Faustus actually reminds his audience of the whole story of God's redemptive relationship with Mankind. He also introduces the central dramatic irony of the play. By ignoring the possibility of grace, and by misinterpreting Scripture to make a defiant choice against God ("What will be, shall be? Diuinitie adew" 1.77), it is actually Faustus who will determine his own damnation.⁴²

Although Faustus' opening soliloquy is dramatically different from Mankind's opening speech in Mankind or Anima's opening speech in Wisdom, nevertheless it is functionally similar in that it reveals to the audience Faustus' moral character. Marlowe also creates resonances between Faustus and the traditional mankind figure of the morality play by including the pageant of the seven deadly sins. In a morality play like The Castle of Perseverance, the seven deadly sins typically tempt the mankind figure

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into engaging in sinful behaviour. Marlowe uses them, though, to reflect Faustus' internal condition. Faustus implicitly associates himself with Adam ("That sight will be as pleasant to me, as Paradise was to Adam the first day of his creation" ll.673-74), but instead of naming the sins, the sins give their names to Faustus: "Now Faustus, question them of their names and dispositions" (ll.678-79). The fundamental pettiness reflected in the sins' "dispositions" is in keeping with the medieval comedy of evil, in which evil is shown to be ultimately silly and impotent.⁴³ Faustus associates himself with their pettiness by receiving their names and approving of them.⁴⁴ The subsequent comic scenes, in which Faustus engages in foolish and spiteful pranks, dramatize the degrading effect of sin on human character.

The medieval notion of deadly sin as demonic possession is also implicit in this scene. We saw how Reason in Vices and Virtues described sins as spirits who rule the soul "after their own will."⁴⁵ Similarly, Wisdom explains to Mind that his sin has created Anima's hellish countenance:

As many dedly synnys as ye haue vsyde,
So many deullys in yowr soule be.
Beholde wat ys þerin reclusyde!
Alas, man, of þi Soule haue pyte!
(ll.909-12)

and the rubrics read "Here rennyt owt from wndyr þe horrybyll mantyll of þe soul seven small boys in þe lyknes

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of dewylls and so retorne ageyn." In Faustus' case, the personified sins both reflect Faustus' psychological condition, and also dramatize how his will is increasingly possessed by Mephistophilis, Beelzebub, and Lucifer.

While the seven deadly sins do not function as tempters as they did in the morality play tradition, the traditional role of tempter is carried out by Cornelius and Valdes.⁴⁶ Faustus says to them "Know that your words have won me at the last./ To practise Magicke and concealed Arts" (11.128-29), and their infamy as magicians is established by

one of the scholars:

O Faustus, then I fear y which I haue longe
suspected:
That thou art falne into that damned Art
For which they two are infamous through the world.
(11.216-18)

Nevertheless, the effect of including plotters against Faustus' innocence actually emphasizes our sense of Faustus' responsibility for his own decision. Unlike Mind, Understanding and Will in Wisdom, who only fell into sin after a great deal of rhetorical persuasion on the part of Lucifer, Faustus' opening soliloquy reveals to the audience how it was his own rhetoric which convinced him to abandon Divinity. Furthermore, Faustus' resolve to practice magic requires no encouragement from Cornelius or Valdes: "Valdes, as resolute am I in this,/ As thou to liue, therefore object it not" (11.156-57). Finally, there is the implication that

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through his commitment and cunning, Faustus will excel Cornelius and Valdes in magic: [Valdes] "First I'll instruct thee in the rudiments, / And then wilt thou be perfecter then I" (11.183-84).

Mephistophilis, of course, represents the central Vice character of the morality tradition. His role is analagous to Lucifer in Wisdom and Tittivillus in Mankind, but here Marlowe uses him to increase the irony of Faustus' damnation.⁴⁷ Unlike any demon in the medieval tradition of Christian theatre, Mephistophilis actually exhorts Faustus to leave necromancy, with apparently no ulterior motive: "O Faustus leaue these friuolous demandes, / Which strikes a terror to my fainting soule" (11.306-07). By placing such an exhortation in the mouth of a devil, a figure least likely to encourage Faustus to repent, Marlowe leaves no doubt about Faustus' culpability in pursuing necromancy.

Mephistophilis also functions as a Vice figure by inadvertently affirming the Christian moral order of the universe. In the morality play, it is a traditional function of the Vice figure to affirm the Christian cosmology by describing his own fallen relationship to it. In Wisdom, Lucifer affirms the Christian moral order by describing to the audience his fall from grace:

I was a angell of lyghte;
Lucyfeer I hyght,
Presumynge in Godys syght,
Werfor I am lowest in hell.

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In reformyng of my place ys dyght
Man, whom I haue in most dyspyght,
Euer castyng me wyth hem to fyght
In that hewynly place he xulde not dwell.
(11.333-40)

While the audience is privileged with inside information, Mind, Understanding and Will remain ignorant of Lucifer's true identity, and their ignorance provides part of the plot device for explaining their fall into sin. Mephistophilis, on the other hand, actually affirms the authority of Christ and the spiritual danger of using occult magic in his very first speech to Faustus:

For when we heare one racke the name of God,
Abiure the Scriptures, and his Sauour Christ:
We flye in hope to get his glorious soule;
Nor will we come vnlesse he vse such meanes,
Whereby he is in danger to be damn'd:
Therefore the shortest cut for coniuring
Is stoutly to abiure all godlinesse,
And pray deuoutely to the Prince of hell.
(11.273-80)

The effect of this passage is to remind the audience of their shared belief in a Christian cosmology, and to clearly indicate Faustus' culpability for ignoring such a direct witness.

Throughout the first part of the play, Faustus frequently questions Mephistophilis on spiritual matters, and Mephistophilis' replies always confirm Christian doctrine. For example, when Faustus questions him about his own nature, Mephistophilis answers:

Vnhappy spirits that liue with Lucifer,
Conspir'd against our God with Lucifer,

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And are for euer damn'd with Lucifer.
(11.296-98)

Mephistophilis goes on to describe the theological notion of poena damni, the suffering that arises from being deprived of God:

Think'st thou that I that saw the face of God,
And tasted the eternall Ioyes of heauen,
Am not tormented with ten thousand hel's,
In being depriu'd of euerlasting blisse?
(11.302-05)

While Mephistophilis directly affirms a Christian cosmology in his speeches on the nature of damnation, he also indirectly affirms God's authority by what he is incapable of discussing with Faustus. In his thirst for knowledge, Faustus questions Mephistophilis on matters of astronomy. Their discussion leads Faustus to ponder the origins of the universe (which reflects the Augustinian notion that all truth ultimately leads the individual to God), but Mephistophilis refuses to discuss Divine Creation with Faustus (l. 639). Similarly, when Faustus asks for a wife, Mephistophilis persuades him to take a courtesan, since he recognizes marriage as a divinely instituted sacrament:

Marriage is but a ceremonial toy,
And if thou louest me thinke no more of it,
I'lle cull thee out the fairest Curtezans,
And bring them euery morning to thy bed.
(11.540-43)

In a continuation of the theological and dramatic ironies, Mephistophilis also proves to Faustus the essential

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goodness of man, and his supremacy in creation:

Meph: But think'st thou heauen is such a glorious thing?

I tell thee Faustus it is not half so faire
As thou, or any man that breathe on earth.

Faust: How prou'st thou that?

Meph: 'Twas made for man; then he's more excellent.
(ll.573-78)

This passage is a central one for interpreting the theological tensions in the play. It is clear that Mephistophilis' assertion, that man is most excellent in God's creation, affirms the emphasis in early medieval theology upon man as the Imago Dei. This emphasis is quite different from Luther's emphasis on the total depravity of the natural human condition.

Through Mephistophilis' teaching, the audience is reminded of the basic tenets of medieval Christian doctrine. Because Faustus too is reminded by Mephistophilis of the faith he has rejected, it is necessary for him to develop rationalizations that permit him to persist in sin. In this regard, he is like the mankind figure of the morality play who comforts himself with the thought that he has plenty of time to repent. In Mankind, Mercy warns Mankind against the danger of death bed conversion ("If ye tary till your discesse, ye may hap of your desire to misse", l.864), and in Wisdom, Will initially resists Wisdom's call to repentance by arguing,

We be yit but tender of age.
Schulde we leue þis lyue? Ya, howe?

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We may amende wen we be sage.
(11.890-92)

At the beginning of Doctor Faustus, however, Faustus does not concern himself with repentance at all because he is convinced that he can choose or create an alternative vision of reality:

There is no chiefe but onely Beelzebub:
To whom Faustus doth dedicate himselfe.
This word Damnation, terrifies not me,
For I confound hell in Elizium:
My Ghost be with the old Phylosophers.
But leauing these vaine trifles of mens soules,
Tell me, what is that Lucifer, thy Lord?
(11.282-88)

Faustus' wilful blindness to the truth of Christianity permits him to believe that he can be the supreme relativist, free to select his own spiritual destiny. It is this wilfulness which permits him to dedicate himself to Beelzebub at the same time as he claims to be ignorant of Lucifer's nature.

Later in the play, Faustus is no longer able to convince himself of the unreality of Hell. He finds he must have recourse to the more familiar rationalization used by Will in Wisdom, that repentance can be saved for the moment of death:

What art thou Faustus but a man condemn'd to die?
Thy fatall time drawes to a finall end;
Despaire doth driue distrust into my thoughts.
Confound these passions with a quiet sleepe:
Tush Christ did call the Theefe vpon the Crosse,
Then rest thee Faustus quiet in conceit.
(11.1546-51)

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In her article "Ironic Biblical Allusion in Marlowe's Doctor Faustus," Sara Munson Deats notes that the thief on the cross actively repented by acknowledging his guilt.⁴⁸ Faustus, by contrast, lulls himself with the excuse that he can remain completely passive in regard to his own salvation.

The theme of repentance in Doctor Faustus here draws significantly upon the morality play tradition. In both Mankind and Wisdom, the mankind figure is recalled to God by divine intercession. In Wisdom, for example, Wisdom reveals to the Mind his need for repentance:

O thou Mynde, remembyr the!
Turne þi weys, þou gost amyse.
.....
I am Wysdom, sent to tell yow thys:
Se in what stat þou doyst indwell.
(11.873-74, 879-80)

Significantly, it is not through argument that Mind, Understanding and Will are led to repent, but through being shown the contaminated condition of Anima.⁴⁹ This detail accords with Wisdom's earlier admonition to Anima not to desire "cunnyng... excellent"(1.87), but rather to seek knowledge of God through self-knowledge (c.f. 11.95-98). Through their fall into sin, Mind, Understanding and Will lost touch with the indwelling presence of God. It is only by being led to recognize how that Divine Image has been defiled that they are moved to repent. This process, of recognizing one's need for repentance through the

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intercessory prodings of divine grace, closely parallels that described by Reason in Vices and Virtues. Once guilt is acknowledged, self-awareness returns, and Understanding knows once more the plight of the human condition:

Be yow, Mynde, I haue very knowenge
That grettly Gode we haue offendyde,
Endles peyn worthyi be owr dysyrvyng,
Wyche be owrselff neuer may be amendyde
Wythowt Gode, in whom all ys comprehendyde.
Therfor to hym let vs resort.
He lefte vp them þat be descendyde.
He ys resurreccyon and lywe; to hem, Wyll, resort.
(ll.933-40)

In Faustus' case, the call to repentance occurs numerous times throughout the play, but each time Faustus simply reaffirms his commitment to sin. Faustus' need for repentance is repeatedly suggested to him by the Good Angel. The Good and Bad Angels are another device taken directly from the morality play tradition; they are in The Castle of Perseverance and in the saint's play Mary Magdalene. In these medieval plays the Angels take up the theologian's task, and try to persuade the central character through argument and exhortation. In Doctor Faustus, however, Faustus is almost unaware of their presence, and the Good and Bad Angels are confined to attempting to sway Faustus' will.⁵⁰ The Angels usually arrive when Faustus is in a state of doubt, for it is only at that point that an act of repentance on his part is possible, and they leave again when Faustus firmly recommits himself to following Lucifer.

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The effect of the Angels' presence is twofold. Firstly, it keeps alive for the audience the fact that repentance and forgiveness remain available to Faustus. Secondly, by making the influence of the Angels subliminal, the weight of Faustus' decision against repentance remains with Faustus, rather than with the external forces of vice and virtue as it is in the morality plays.⁵¹

The only real repentance Faustus makes is to Lucifer, immediately after he comes very close to repenting to God. The Good Angel promises Faustus that if he repents, devils "shall neuer raise thy skin" (1.651), and Faustus cries out "O Christ my Saviour, my Saviour, / Helpe to saue distressed Faustus soule" (11.652-53). This plea is very moving, and we are touched by the fear and suffering Faustus experiences. Even so, his use of the verb "helpe" suggests that he possesses no real faith in the efficacy of Christ's atonement, and he does not acknowledge his need for repentance. This passage in the A text, "Ah Christ my Saviour, seeke to saue distressed Faustus soule" (11:711-12), suggests more explicitly that Faustus wants Christ to make a special effort to save him.⁵² The use of the explicative "ah" instead of "oh," and the lack of the second "my Saviour," renders this version less passionate and anguished than that of the B text.

In any case, that Faustus is not repentant is made

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evident in the quickness with which he submits to the authority of Lucifer:

Lucif. Christ cannot saue thy soule, for he is iust,
There's none but I haue interest in the same.
Faust. O what art thou that looks'st so terribly.
Lucif. I am Lucifer, and this is my companion Prince in
hell.
Faust. O Faustus they are come to fetch thy soule.
Belz. We are come to tell thee thou dost iniure vs.
Lucif. Thou calst on Christ contrary to thy promise.
Belz. Thou should'st not thinke on God.
Lucif. Thinke on the deuill.
Belz. And his dam to.
Faust. Nor will Faustus henceforth: pardon him for
this,
And Faustus vowes neuer to looke to heauen.
(11.655-66)

It is important to note that while Lucifer and Beelzebub persuade Faustus to abandon repentance to God, they do not even threaten him in this passage, and Faustus' repentance to Lucifer is offered freely. This scene demonstrates Aquinas' argument, discussed briefly in the previous chapter, that the human will is always free to turn away from God.⁵³ That Faustus should not resist Lucifer is only human; the tragedy lies in the fact that he has gotten into such a state of demonic bondage that an act of super-human courage would have been required by Faustus to continue to call upon Christ in Lucifer's presence. It is after he repents to Lucifer that Lucifer summons that pageant of the seven deadly sins, which dramatizes for the audience Faustus' internal bondage to sin.

The Old Man, of course, parallels the role of Mercy and

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Wisdom in Mankind and Wisdom. Unlike the Good Angel he speaks to Faustus directly, explicitly exhorting him to repent and reminding him of God's forgiveness. It is interesting to note the difference between the Old Man's speech in the A and B texts of the play. In the A text, the Old Man emphasizes Faustus' need for heart-felt contrition, the vileness of Faustus' sin, and the doctrine of Christ's atonement:

Breake heart, drop blood, and mingle it with
teares,
Teares falling from repentant heauinesse
Of thy most vilde and loathsome filthinesse,
The stench whereof corrupts the inward soule
With such flagitious crimes of hainous sinnes,
As no commiseration may expel,
But mercie Faustus of thy Sauour sweete,
Whose blood alone must wash away thy guilt.
(11.1306-13)

In the B text, the Old Man's speech is focused less upon the vileness of Faustus' sin, and more upon the divine love and mercy awaiting Faustus if he repents:

Yet, yet, thou hast an amiable soule,
If sin by custome grow not into nature:
Then Faustus, will repentance come too late,
Then thou art banisht from the sight of heauen;
No mortall can expresse the paines of hell.
It may be this my exhortation
Seemes harsh, and all vnpleasant; let it not,
For gentle sonne, I speake it not in wrath,
Or enuy of thee, but in tender loue,
And pittie of thy future miserie.
And so haue hope, that this my kinde rebuke,
Checking thy body, may amend thy soule.
(11.1818-29)

Where the A text tends to focus on Faustus in his particularly sinful condition, a degree of sinfulness with

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which it would be difficult for the audience to identify, the B text offers a more general exhortation for repentance and the promise of mercy. The greater universality of the B text is more in keeping with the morality play tradition, where the audience is called to make a personal act of repentance through affirming the promise of mercy dramatized by the play. Furthermore, the emphasis upon compassion and love in the Old Man's speech is comparable to the loving gentleness with which Mercy and Wisdom lead Mankind and Anima to spiritual wholeness.

Doctor Faustus thus draws upon numerous details from the morality play tradition. Faustus functions as a mankind figure both by exemplifying the sins of ambition particularly associated with the Elizabethan period, and by representing, more universally, man in a condition of fundamental rebellion against a theistic universe. The pageant of the seven deadly sins is also drawn from the morality play tradition, and here Faustus exemplifies the human condition when man is possessed by the sinful habits he has chosen, thus illustrating the medieval notion of sin as demonic possession.

Throughout the play, Faustus is reminded of his need for repentance and the promise of God's forgiveness. The Good and Bad Angels function as representatives of the two options available to Faustus, and serve to remind the

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audience of the efficacy of repentance. Cornelius and Valdes parallel traditional morality play characters as plotters against Faustus' innocence, but Marlowe inverts the tradition by using them to emphasize Faustus' culpability for his own fall. Similarly, Mephistophilis parallels the role of the Vice figure, but his witness to the Christian order of the universe serves to emphasize Faustus' wilfulness in denying that order. Finally, the Old Man embodies the Divine promise of mercy. By acting as a witness to Faustus' redeemability and loveableness as a human being, he reminds the audience that repentance is always an available alternative to perseverance in sin.

Faustus and the Saint's Play

CHAPTER 4: Doctor Faustus And The Saint's Play Tradition

Along with the morality play and the cycle play, the English saint's play was a popular dramatic form in the Middle Ages. Although there are only three extant English saints' plays, The Conversion of St. Paul, The Play of Mary Magdalene (1502), and The Play of the Sacrament, references to numerous other plays suggest that it was once a flourishing dramatic form.¹ Bevington points out that "in several matters of staging and dramatic technique, these plays reveal important affinities to other dramatic genres of the fifteenth century, especially to the Corpus Christi cycle and to the morality play."² The saint, like the mankind figure in the morality play, is representative of the universal life of the Christian. At the same time, he is also a particular individual, and in his individuality he is more closely affiliated with the individual characters of the cycle play than the generalized figure of mankind. Thus, at the same time as the saint represents the ideal

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pattern of the Christian life, he is also a historical or legendary figure whose story reveals God's work in the life of a particular individual.

In The Conversion of St. Paul and The Play of Mary Magdalene, the playwrights are concerned to depict the psychological process that leads to conversion. The converted saint stands in implicit contrast to the unconverted sinners in the play: characters who remain emotionally inaccessible to the audience. In Doctor Faustus, Marlowe draws upon the psychology of conversion as it is modelled in the saints' plays to develop, in the character of Faustus, a psychological model of the unrepentant sinner.

Before examining in detail certain ironic parallels between saints' plays (as illustrated in The Conversion of St. Paul and The Play of Mary Magdalene) and Doctor Faustus, I will briefly look at the history of the cult of the saints in the late-fifteenth century and the sixteenth century, in order to establish the prominence of hagiography in England during Marlowe's time.

From the sixth century right until the fifteenth century, the stories of saints' lives were a popular form of creative literature.³ Perhaps the best known English Renaissance collection of saints' lives is William Caxton's The Golden Legend, a fifteenth century translation of

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Jacobus de Voragine's Legenda Aurea (1258-1270): Like its earlier Latin source, Caxton's book was intended primarily as devotional material for laymen. While Jacobus wrote in Latin, thus reaching lay people via the clergy, Caxton's English translation aimed at reaching literate laymen directly.⁴

The medieval spirit of devotion to the saints is perhaps best captured by Caxton in his explanation of the celebration of All Hallows Day. Caxton suggests that the saints are no other than our brothers and sisters, and so "their solempnyte is our dignyte, for whan we worshipe oure brethern we worshippe our selfe, for charyte maketh al to be comyn, and our thynges ben celestyall erthely and perdurable."⁵ Thus, the saint was more than an example: he or she was a revelation of God's power in human flesh,⁶ and also "a force of immortality present in the life of the mystical body, and perenially operative in the affairs of his succeeding brethren."⁷

Although the cult of the saints offered a rich tradition of pastoral value for instructing people in religious fundamentals, the saint's images and relics were clearly vulnerable to the abuses of idolatry and superstition, not to mention the greed of those who exploited the uneducated by selling relics. Erasmus spoke out against the abuses of the cult of the saints in his work

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The Pilgrimage of Pure Devotion, but he did not see idolatry as an inevitable consequence of the veneration of the saints.⁸ The Protestant reformers, however, were exceedingly sensitive both to the heresy that the saint's image or relic may have intrinsic supernatural power, and also to the heresy that the saint, as an advocate for man, was capable of influencing God's will for the salvation of sinners. In The Obedience of a Christian Man (1528), William Tyndale speaks to this latter concern, suggesting that the intercessory prayers of a saint can be no different than our prayers when we pray for each other, or our efforts to preach the Gospel to each other:

Yff Paul were here and loved me... what good coulde he doo for me or wish me/ but preach Christ and praye to God for me/ to open myn herte/ to geve me his sprite and to bringe me vnto the full knowledge of Christ: vnto which porte or haven/ when I am once come/ I am as safe as Paul/ fellow with Paul/ ioyntheyne with Paul of all the promyses of God and Gods trueth beareth my prayer as well as Pauls I also now coulde not but love Paul and wish him good/ and praye for him/ that God wolde strength him in all his temptations and geve him victory/ as he wolde doo for me.

Given that we recognize the saints as our equals in Christ, Tyndale goes on to argue that we ought to reserve our worship for Christ alone, and rely upon the saints only as good examples of the Christian life:

Late vs therefore set our hertes at rest
in Christ and in Gods promyses/ for so I

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thinke it best/ and let vs take the
sayntes for an example only and let vs
doo as they both taught and did.¹⁰

Accordingly, we find in the Protestant reaction to the cult of the saints a de-emphasis of the saint as a living member of Christ's body, and a denial that he is "perennially operative in the affairs of the brethren." Instead, the pastoral value of the saint's life is seen only as a historical model from which we can learn to emulate a Christian life of devotion. It is this educational role which is recognized in The Institution of a Christen Man (1537), in which the bishops and archbishops of England prohibit the veneration of the images of saints. They go on to add:

yet they be not so prohibited, but that they may be had and sette up in churches, so it be for none other purpose, but only to thintent, that we (in beholding and looking upon them, as in certayne booke, and seinge represented in them the manifolde examples of vertues, which were in the saintes, represented by the sayd images) may the rather be provoked, kendled, and stired, to yelde thankes to our lorde, and to praise him in his said saintes, and to remembre and lamente our synnes and offences, and to praye god that we may have grace to followe their goodnes and holy lyvinge.¹¹

In 1538, Cromwell published Injunctions for the Clerge under the authority of King Henry VIII, in which he stressed more clearly the necessity of the clergy to discourage parishoners from any veneration of saints:

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suche Images as ye knowe in any of your cures to be so abused with pilgrimages or offeringes of any thynge made therunto, ye shal for avoyding of that moste detestable offence of Idolatrie, furthwyth take down and deley, and shall suffre frome hensforthe no candels, tapers, or Images of wax to be set afore any Image or picture.¹²

Nevertheless, statues of the saints were yet valued by Cromwell as reminders of the saint's story as an example of Christian virtue:

ye shal suffre to remayn styll admonisshyng your parishioners, that Images serve for no other purpose, but as to be bokes of unlearned men that can no letters, whereby they myght be otherwyse admonysshed of the lyves and conversacion of them that said Images do represent.¹³

When Henry reissued his own version of The Institution of a Christen Man, he endeavoured to give instruction for the proper use of images.¹⁴ He argued that the second commandment does not forbid the making of images, but only the worship of them, and he went on to caution:

images may be set in the churche, and ought not to be despised, but to be used reverently, although we be forbydden to doo anye godly honour unto them. These lessons shuld be taught, by every curat to there parryshe.¹⁵

Nonetheless, as the Protestant movement developed firmer roots during the subsequent two decades, the exemplary value of the images of the saints was not perceived to outweigh the risk of encouraging idolatry. During the first year of

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the reign of Queen Elizabeth, an injunction was published directing visitors to enquire of the parish clergy,

whether in their Churches and Chapels, all Images, shrines, tables, candlestickes, trindels, and rolles of wax, pictures, paintings, and all other monuments of fayned and false Miracles, Pilgrimages, Idolatrie, and superstition be removed, abolished and destroyed.¹⁶

This injunction continued throughout the reign of Elizabeth.

The pervasive influence of the iconoclasts in England is perhaps best summarized by the arguments of the homilist of

The Seconde Tome of Homelyes (1563). He argues that not

only is the making of images in direct contravention of the second commandment, but also that people could not possibly be instructed about the correct use of images, for "the nature of man is none other-wyse bent to worshipping of images (if he have them and see them) then it is bent to whordome and adultry in the company of harlots."¹⁷

We can see by this brief historical sketch that the censorship of the cult of the saints was a gradual process in the sixteenth century. It was never the exemplary function of the saint which was problematic, but the tendency of the common people to worship the saint as an independent source of healing and power. The abolition of saint's images altogether coincided with the attitude of distrust toward human nature which typified so much of reform doctrine.

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Given the tenor of the sixteenth century, it is not surprising that so few English Saints' plays survived. Bevington suggests that the Biblical historicity of The Conversion of St. Paul and Mary Magdalene "may have rendered them palatable to Reformation tastes."¹⁸ It is also important to recognize that in these plays, Paul and Mary are primarily presented as examples of the Christian life, and as witnesses to the power of God to re-create the lifestyle and personality of the sinner. As dramatic art, they were a means for educating illiterate laymen about God's love for sinful humanity.

The fact that these two plays survived the Reformation may also be due to their lack of much of the fabulous and sensational elements that typify the stories in The Golden Legend. In his book Saints Lives and Chronicles in Early England, Charles W. Jones argues that the hagiographical legend is a romantic genre of literature. Saints' lives are romantic because they are not concerned with depicting human nature truthfully; rather, the saint is exalted above the level of reality in order to function as a model of aspiration and edification to the reader.¹⁹ One result of this idealization is that there tends to be a great deal of uniformity and overlap in the different saints' lives. Reginald of Canterbury, in his preface to the Life of St. Malchus, admits that he may have ascribed certain miracles

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to Malchus that were manifest in the life of another saint, but that this was not a problem because "all things are common in the communion of saints."²⁰

This romantic elevation of the saint was neither appreciated nor understood by the sixteenth century reformers. In the growing Renaissance concern for historical and scientific truth, they had no sympathy for a genre of literature which professed to express theological truth for the purpose of edification, at the same time as it was placidly unconcerned with historical accuracy. William Tyndale vehemently expressed his concern about all types of romance, particularly hagiography. He suggests that the hagiographer magnifies the saints' lives ~~above~~ measure and above truth.

and with their poetry they make them greater than God made them. And if they find any infirmity or sin ascribed unto the saints, that they excuse with all diligence, diminishing the glory of the mercy of God, and robbing wretched sinners of all their comfort; and think thereby to flatter the saints, and to obtain their favour, and to make special advocates of them, even as a man would obtain the favour of worldly tyrants.²¹

While it may be argued that by Marlowe's time hagiography was largely repressed as a literary genre, the attention and controversy it inspired in the sixteenth century attests to its prominence in English culture. It is not unlikely, therefore, that Marlowe was familiar with the

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saint's play as a dramatic genre, and that he expected his audience to recognize his use of this genre. Unfortunately, we are limited to two English saints' plays - The Conversion of St. Paul and The Play of Mary Magdalene - for establishing Marlowe's use of this genre in Doctor Faustus. While The Play of the Sacrament is a conversion play, its primary purpose is to present a convincing demonstration of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, rather than to portray the process of repentance in the life of an individual saint.

The Conversion of Saint Paul and The Play of Mary Magdalene, however, offer a depth of psychological realism which is not typical of hagiography in general. It would seem that their authors were less interested in dramatizing the romantic and sensational aspects of the lives of these two saints, than they were in depicting a psychological process of conversion, with which their audience could identify. Although Mary Magdalene was primarily derived from The Golden Legend,²² the romantic events in the plot do not detract from the psychological realism with which the playwright develops her character. He certainly could not be accused by Tyndale of excusing her of sin and thus "robbing wretched sinners of all their comfort," but neither does the playwright dwell upon the horrors of Mary's sinful past. Rather, he uses her to exemplify the psychological

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condition of sin as it effects all of mankind. Although The Conversion of St. Paul is less psychologically complex than Mary Magdalene, its playwright also uses Paul to exemplify the psychological change which conversion entails, and to contrast him with unrepentant characters in the play. In his own portrayal of Faustus, it would appear that Marlowe draws upon, and significantly develops, the psychological model of sin as it was used by the medieval playwrights to depict the saint before his or her conversion experience.

In The Conversion of St. Paul, Saul's opening speech identifies him as a typical tyrant figure from medieval drama, characterized by pride and an exaggerated sense of self-importance:

Most dowtyd man I am living upon the ground,
Goodly besene with many a riche garnement!
My pere on live I trow is nott found.
Thorow the world, fro the orient to the occident,
My fame is best knowyn undyr the firmament.
I am most drad of pepull universall;
They dare not displease me most noble.
(11.15-21)²³

In this passage, Saul illustrates the essentially competitive nature of pride. In Mere Christianity, C.S. Lewis suggests that "pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man,"²⁴ and clearly Saul's sense of self-worth is based on his perception that he is "most drad of pepull universall." Furthermore, it is typical of tyrant figures in medieval drama that their conception of power is always "power over"

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other individuals. Again, Saul typifies this character trait in his promise that he will bring all Christians "to punishment for their trespass... Both man and child, that I find of them" (11:25,35).

Faustus, we recall, begins with a speech in which he evaluates the merits of various occupations on the basis of the prestige they can bring him, revealing to the audience that he is motivated by pride. His line "Yet thou art still but Faustus, and a man" (1.50) suggests that he not only desires to be the most powerful person, but that he wishes to be above humanity all together. Faustus also desires power over the lives of others:

All things that moue betweene the quiet Poles
Shall be at my command: Emperors and Kings,
Are but obey'd in their seuerall Prouinces:
But his dominion that exceeds in this,
Stretcheth as farre as doth the mind of man:
A sound Magitian is a Demi-god,
Here tire my braines to get a Deity. (11.83-89)

Faustus' appetite for power extends far beyond the ambition of the average tyrant of medieval drama. The tyrannical side of pride, which Marlowe develops later in Faustus' character, is here masked by subtle rhetoric and the slippery logic of self-delusion.

In both The Conversion of St. Paul and Dr. Faustus, the characters of Saul and Faustus are glossed by the characters of the corrupt religious authorities of their respective times. In Saul's case it is the Jewish leaders who

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represent the paradigm of religious abuse. Saul starts out committed to the interests of the Jewish leaders in subduing Christianity, and the strength of his commitment is reflected in the trust which Caiphas and Anna place in him:

We may live in rest, by his consolacion.
He defendith us; wherefor we be bownde
To love him intirely with our harttes affeccion,
And honour him as champion, in every stownde.
Ther is none suche living upon the grownde
That may be like him nor be his pere,
By est nor west, ferre nor nere. (11.148-54)

The conditional nature of Anna's "love" for Saul becomes evident after Saul's conversion. Instead of being led to question the correctness of their own position, Caiphas and Anna display their egocentricity by perceiving Paul as a threat to their political power, and thus seeking to destroy him:

Nay, I had lever in fier he were brent
Than of Cesar we shuld have displeasure
For sich a rebell and subtile fals treator!
(1.1.619-21)

Caiphas and Anna's lack of spiritual integrity is contrasted with the converted Paul. Although Saul exhibits the standard characteristics of pride at the beginning of the play, his confrontation with God on the road to Damascus drastically alters his character. As soon as God accuses Saul of resisting Him ("It is hard to prike agains the spore!" 1.1.184), Saul responds with both fear and submission: "O Lord, I am aferd, I tymbble for fere!// What woldist I ded? Tell me here" (11.188-89). God removes Saul's sense of

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self-sufficiency by depriving him of his sight and physical strength, and he surrenders to God's authority, acknowledging his need for grace and guidance: "Whether shall I wynde, or whether shall I pas?/ Lord, I besecche thee, helpe me of thy grace!" (ll.202-3).

Paul's conversion dramatizes for the audience the process of repentance, baptism, and anointing by the Holy Spirit. His subsequent homily on personal sin and Christian commitment involves the audience even more intimately with the play, so that the reality and immediacy of the Christian message dominates the dramatic fiction. It is immediately after his sermon that Paul is arrested, which adds to the poignancy of his address. Paul's total submission to the will of God and his absolute trust in Providence illustrates how the love of God can conquer a nature as proud as Saul's was at the beginning of the play:

I am the servant of Jhesu almighty,
Creator and maker of see and sonnd,
Whiche is king conctipotent of hevyn glory,
Chef comfort and solace both to fre and bonde,
Agains whose power nothing may stonde.
Emperowr he is both of hevyn and hell,
Whoys goodnes and grace al thing doth excell!
(ll.594-600)

In his relationship to Anna and Caiphas, Paul moves from being their co-conspirator to being their victim.

In Dr. Faustus, Pope Adrian is the Renaissance equivalent of Caiphas and Anna, representing the extreme of religious corruption in Marlowe's time. Like Caiphas and

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Anna, the Pope views the authority of his position as a personal right to power. When Bruno appeals to the fact that he was elected by the Emperor, Pope Adrian responds:

We will depose the Emperour for that deed,
And curse the people that submit to him;
Both he and thou shalt stand excommunicate,
And interdict from Churches priuiledge,
And all society of holy men:
He growes to proud in his authority,
.....
But wee'le pul. downe his haughty insolence:
.....
Adding this golden sentence to our praise;
That Peters helres should tread on Emperours.
(ll. 936-41, 44, 47-48)

In this passage we see that the Pope's power over temporal authority extends far beyond the power of Caiphas and Anna.

The Pope's presumption of absolute power was exactly the type of religious abuse that the Reformation sought to resist. In particular, it was the belief that the Pope had control over the eternal salvation and damnation of souls which was seen as the ultimate blasphemy by Reformation theologians. Pope Adrian, not suprisingly, claims this authority:

Behold this Siluer Belt whereto is fixt
Seuen golden scales fast sealed with seuen seales,
In token of our seuen-fold power from heauen,
To binde or loose, lock fast, condemne, or iudge,
Resigne, or seale, or what so pleaseth vs.
Then he, and thou, and all the world shall stoope,
Or be assured of our dreadfull curse,
To light as heavy as the paines of
hell. (ll. 962-69)

Faustus' act of rescuing Bruno from execution appears, on the surface, to be one of mercy and justice. However, it

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is clear that the "righteousness" of Faustus' action is merely an inadvertent consequence of the selfish pleasure he takes in frustrating the Pope's pride:

The Pope will curse them for their sloth to day,
That slept both Bruno and his crowne away,
But now, that Faustus may delight his minde,
And by their folly make some merriment,
Sweet Mephisto: so charme me here,
That I may walke inuisible to all,
And doe what ere I please, vnseene of any.
(11.1021-27)

Faustus' subsequent pranks of stealing the Pope's meat and wine dramatize the essential pettiness of a character which is turned in upon itself. As W.L. Godshalk suggests, the Pope is Faustus' alter ego, for both characters claim supernatural power and authority (the Pope claims it from God, Faustus from Lucifer), yet both figures are completely self-serving.²⁴ Furthermore, while Pope Adrian represents the extreme of religious abuse which manifests itself as tyranny over the Christian community, Faustus exhibits the other extreme of individual alienation from (and antagonism toward) the Christian community. The Pope's meat and wine function as symbols of the eucharist, and by having Faustus steal them, Marlowe dramatizes Faustus' extreme irreverence for sacramental grace. As a satirical comment on Marlowe's time, this particular prank also suggests that Faustus stands for a type of Protestantism which emphasizes the importance of individual liberty above responsibility to the Christian community. Faustus, as the supreme individualist,

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and Pope Adrian, as the tyrant, both exemplify fundamentally similar characteristics of pride.

In both The Conversion of St. Paul and Dr. Faustus, the physical oppression of the saint by demonic forces is contrasted with the saint's spiritual safety. At the same time as Belial and Mercury have power to persuade temporal authorities to destroy Paul's body (cf. ll.477-79), Paul's spiritual sanctity, quite literally, hurts their pride:

The conversion of a sinner, certaine,
Is more paine to us and persecution
Than all the furies of the infernall dongyon.
(ll.472-74)

The play illustrates how the devices of Satanic pride have no ultimate effect upon the joy of the saint. Although the play does not end in Paul's martyrdom, it ends at a point where Paul is prepared to face death, and he embraces his fate without fear: "That Lordes pleasur ever mut be down,/ Both in hevyn and in hell, as his will is!" (ll.643-44).

The fact that at this point in the play Paul is rescued from martyrdom by angels shows how even the temporal power of demons can be overruled by the Providential plan of God.

It is characteristic of the saint's life that the saint faces death peacefully. St. Ignatius' biggest concern when he was on his way to Rome to be executed was that the Roman Christians might interfere to procure his release, and thus prevent him from witnessing to Christ in his death.²⁶ Helen C. White points out that often saints - particularly women

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saints - would argue undauntedly with those who have temporal power over them, thus rushing headlong into martyrdom.²⁷ Furthermore, the hagiographer gloried in describing the most ingenious and heinous forms of execution and torture. Frequently the martyr would not die before many attempts at execution were made, as a witness to the saint's disregard for physical affliction. White muses:

One does not know which to marvel at more, the dogged persistence of the pagan tyrants who in the face of incredible frustration still persist in trying to kill these seemingly indestructible zealots or the toughness of their victims.²⁸

Like Paul who calmly faces the conspiracy of devils and tyrants; the Old Man in Doctor Faustus typifies the spirit of the saintly martyr who is unperturbed by physical torture and death. By contrast, Marlowe suggests that Faustus is a failed saint, for it is his fear of the physical torture threatened by Mephistophilis ("Reuolt, or I'le in peece-meale teare thy flesh," 1.1849) which inspires him to command the devils to attack the Old Man as a sign of his renewed commitment to Lucifer:

Torment sweet friend, that base and aged man,
That durst dissuade me from thy Lucifer,
With greatest torment that our hell affords.
(11.1857-59)

Mephistophilis' reply affirms the conquest of the Christian's faith over temporal suffering:

His faith is great, I cannot touch his soule;

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But what I may afflict his body with,
I will attempt, which is but little worth.
(ll.1860-62).

In the A text, the Old Man has one final speech in which he dramatizes the composure of the Christian martyr:

Sathan begins to sift me with his pride,
As in the furnace God shal try my faith,
My faith, vile hel, shal triumph over thee,
Ambitious fiends, see how the heauens smiles
At your repulse, and laughs your state to scorne,
Hence hel, for hence I flie vnto my God.
(ll.1381-86)

Faustus' ambition, arrogance, and capacity for tyrannical behaviour are characteristics clearly shared by the tyrant figures of medieval drama. It is less clear that Faustus' character parallels that of the unconverted Mary Magdalene, for in The Play of Mary Magdalene, Mary apparently lacks the ambition and arrogance which would lead her to crave power over the lives of others. In fact, it is her psychological insecurity which precipitates her fall into sexual sin. As we shall see, however, the playwright illustrates that psychological insecurity is often a consequence of spiritual pride. In Faustus, Marlowe develops two apparently conflicting impulses which are both manifestations of his alienation from God: an exaggerated sense of self-worth on the one hand, and a profound sense of self-doubt on the other, accompanied by the tendency to turn to sensuality as a means of escape. In both The Play of Mary Magdalene and Doctor Faustus, the psychological and

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spiritual disintegration of Mary and Faustus are observed in their surrender to cupidity.

At the beginning of Mary Magdalene, the playwright establishes the stock manifestation of pride in the figures of temporal tyrants. Like Caiaphas and Anna in The Conversion of St. Paul and Pope Adrian in Doctor Faustus, Caesar, Herod, and Pilate dramatize the extreme of human pride against which Mary's character can be analyzed. Caesar's opening proclamation reveals the fundamental insecurity of those in positions of temporal power. Although he establishes his authority autocratically (c.f. 11.1-2), he needs to hear the affirming bravado of his own voice in order to feel secure about his power. His pride is evident in his claim to be the chief ruler of heaven and hell (1.5), and the "soveren of al soverens" (1.7);²⁹ titles which are rightfully held only by Christ. Furthermore, Caesar holds the whole human race in subjugation, yet ironically he is dependent upon them in order to have power over someone. Although he claims "That person is nat born that dare me disse-obey" (1.32), he immediately sends out a scribe to weed out dissenters or even grumblers from amongst his subjects. His deep psychological insecurity is further manifest in his parodic confession: "Now have I told yow my hart, I am wyll plesyd" (1.47).

Herod and Pilate are also tyrant figures. Herod is

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presented as the non-intellectual barbarian,³⁰ and in him we see most clearly the sadistic pleasure of tyrannical power, and its corruptive psychological consequences. Pilate is in an administrative role, and suffers from the duress of having his power mediated by the law and the authority of Caesar.³¹ Like Anna and Caiphas, Pilate's power is expressed by his manipulation of the letter of the law to "sett many a snare" (1.297). Because he is in an administrative position, though, he needs reassurance from his subjects in respect to the judgements he has made: "To put hem to peyn, I spare for no peté./ My serjuantes semlé, quat sye ye?" (11.239-40).

Along side these figures of temporal power is Cyrus, Mary Magdalene's father. He too speaks with pride and bravado, but rather than flaunting power he flaunts personal wealth: "Behold my person, glistening in gold,/ Semely besyn of all other men!" (11.53-54). However, Cyrus' temporal wealth, with which he claims to be "...sett in solas from al syng sore" (1.63), cannot secure him against death. In fact, we see it is of no real comfort in life either, for although Cyrus believes his material wealth will allow his children "to leven in rest and ryalté" (1.65), and Mary believes "This is a preservatiff from straitnes, we find,/ From worldly labors to my comforting" (11.97-98), her material well being is no comfort to her when she loses her

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father.

Mary's grief over her father's death makes her particularly vulnerable to Lechery's seduction because Lechery seems to offer her an escape from sorrow. Lechery first of all appeals to Mary's vanity in an address that parodies Gabriel's address to the Virgin Mary (ll. 440-444). Unlike the Virgin Mary, who immediately responded to the angel's address with humility, Mary Magdalene is "ravissith... to trankvelité" (l. 447) by Lechery's flattery. By hooking Mary through her pride in her physical attractiveness, Lechery achieves a position of influence over Mary. Lechery advises, "Print yow in sportes which best doth yow plese" (l. 459), and Mary acquiesces, "Ye be my hartes leche" (l. 461).

The desire to escape temporal suffering would be recognized by a medieval audience as essentially wrong-headed. St. Augustine suggests that "bodily affliction and torments, which we know troubled even the martyrs, and finally death itself, which our nature has merited by sinning, are relaxed for no one."³² Boethius argues that suffering results from being attached to the gifts of fortune, which are transient by nature, rather than seeking one's happiness solely in God.³³ Cyrus' death was an opportunity for Mary to recognize the transience of temporal goods, and by seeking consolation in God, to avoid

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the folly of her father. She fails the trial by choosing to escape the pain of temporal loss with temporal pleasure, and her fall is symbolized by her move from the castle to the tavern, which is a reversal of Augustine's spiritual pilgrimage from the "City of the World" to the "City of God." Similarly, the tavern's worldly wine which offers Mary temporary relief from pain ("From stodyis and hevines it woll yow relyff" 1.488), is a parody of the eucharistic wine which Christ offered as his blood to take away the sin of the world for all time.³⁴

Mary's seduction by Curiosity, the Galaunt, typifies the courtly love convention which medieval writers used as a general type of cupidity.³⁵ Sexual seduction is essentially an appeal to the beloved's pride through flattery, and as we have seen, Mary is easily persuaded of the perfections of her person.³⁶ Her initial suspicion of Curiosity's sincerity, "Qwat cause that ye love me so sodenly?" (1.522), is alleviated by his response:

O, nedys I must, mine own lady!
Your person, itt is so womanly,
I cannat refreyn, my swete lelly.
(11.524-26)

The seduction is complete after Curiosity has engaged Mary in dance, which is a symbol of her participation in the rhythm and measure of the world.

Despite her debauched condition when she leaves with Curiosity, we do glimpse a potential in Mary for deep

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devotion:

Evyn at your wil, my dere derling.
Thowghe ye wil go to the worldes eynd,
I wol never from yow wynd,
To die for your sake. (ll.543-46)

The medieval playwright may be asking us to see this affirmation as an indication of her potential for fidelity and charitable love. Even when its object is unworthy, the act of devotion reflects the hunger of the human heart for God because, as Augustine suggests, God made man for Himself and therefore man's deepest instinct is to worship Him. Nevertheless, if devotion is directed away from God and toward a creature it becomes a form of idolatry.

In this context, the reason secular passion becomes idolatrous is that its object is always a fantasy created by the lover's imagination. In The Art of Courtly Love, Andreas Capellanus suggests that the pleasure and suffering experienced by the courtly lover is brought about by "excessive meditation upon the beauty of the opposite sex,"³⁷ and this suffering is essentially inborn because "it does not arise out of any action; only from the reflection of the mind upon what it sees does this suffering come."³⁸ Augustine calls the pleasure/suffering of the lover "fornication of the fantasy",³⁹ because the object of love is pleasure itself, not the beloved independently of the lover's pleasure in desiring him.⁴⁰

The playwright depicts Mary in this narcissistic

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condition. When we see her alone in the arbour, meditating on her absent lovers, it is clear that she has not made a commitment to any individual but is addicted to the pleasure and suffering of concupiscible desire:

A, God be with my valentines,
My bird sweting, my lovys so dere!
For they be bote for a blossom of blisse.
Me mervellith sore they be nat here.
(1.1.564-67)

Her lapse into inner isolation is symbolized by sleep, where her consciousness is cut off absolutely from the external world. When she is moved to repentance, Mary seeks Jesus because she knows him to be "the welle of perfith charité" (1.611); the well symbolizing eternity, and charitable love being the only cure for the soul that is isolated in its own cupidity.

In the early Middle Ages, cupidity was described as the root of all evil because it is an idolatry of the self which, if left unchecked, changes into the more obvious manifestations of pride. Mary's self-estimation that she is a "blossum of blisse" (1.566), deserving her lovers as booty, is not far in sentiment from Cyrus' declaration "Behold my person, glistering in gold" (1.53).⁴¹ With the help of the Good Angel, however, Mary breaks the cycle of sin by confessing her "sinne of pride" (1.682) and receiving from Jesus "helth and medsin" (1.681).

This fundamental dichotomy between cupidity and charity

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--is also at the center of Marlowe's psychology of sin in Doctor Faustus. Faustus' ambition, to transcend the limitations of the human condition and to be master of his own destiny, cuts him off from the possibility of worshipping a God who is greater than himself. By choosing to be his own god, Faustus makes himself the measure of all good, and ironically becomes ruled by his basest appetites. Even before Faustus makes a formal treaty with Lucifer, he recognizes "The God thou seru'st is thine owne appetite/ Wherein is fix the loue of Belzebub" (1.1.398-99).

Faustus' career is marked by increasing insecurity and fear, accompanied by an increasing reliance upon sensual pleasure as an escape from fear. Masinton notes that images of gluttony call attention to Faustus' lack of spiritual sustenance and his instinctive attempt to compensate for this loss by satisfying his physical appetite.⁴²

Furthermore, whenever Faustus begins to recognize the extent of his wretchedness he instinctively turns to pleasure to divert himself. In each case, gratification of his spiritual craving is replaced by futile pleasure or entertainment.⁴³

Initially, Faustus does not admit to himself that his carnal indulgence is a diversion from anxiety. After he asks Mephistophilis to tell him about hell, and Mephistophilis responds "For I tell thee I am damn'd, and

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now in hell" (1.529), Faustus appears to make light of Mephistophilis notion of damnation:

Nay, and this be hell, I'll willingly be
damn'd.
What sleeping, eating, walking and disputing?
But leaving this, let me have a wife, the
fairest Maid in Germany, for I am wanton and
lasciuious, and cannot live without a wife.
(11.530-35)

His sudden shift from discussing damnation to demanding a wife discloses his underlying fear. As damnation becomes more real for him, Faustus himself recognizes that pleasure is his only escape from despair:

Swords, poyson, halters, and inuenomb'd steele,
Are laid before me to dispatch my selfe:
And long e're this, I should haue done the deed,
Had not sweete pleasure conquer'd deepe despaire.
(11.591-94)

Faustus' surrender to cupidity is most fully symbolized by his lust for Helen. The fact that he desires Helen of Troy - the allegedly most beautiful woman in history - suggests that his lust is not simply for carnal satisfaction, but also for the intellectual satisfaction of his curiosity. In his article "Marlowe's Doctor Faustus," Smith uses Augustine's notion of the vice of curiosity to describe Faustus' degeneration throughout the play.⁴⁴ Augustine described curiosity as the desire for experiential knowledge as an end in itself, and he also connected it to the conjuring of devils as a means of attaining extraordinary experience. Helen is an appropriate symbol of

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Faustus' curiosity, for her legendary beauty seems to promise the ideal carnal experience.

In Mary Magdalene, the connection between cupidity and curiosity is made explicit. By naming Mary's gallant "Curiosity," the playwright suggests that he represents Mary's willingness to entertain carnal knowledge. His preoccupation with his physical appearance is a projection of Mary's vanity, and his flattery echoes back to Mary the trust she places in her own physical beauty. Her real desire to be lovable and loving is temporarily appeased by the facade of devotion exchanged between them.

Similarly, Faustus' real desire for eternal life, and his fear of eternal death, is masked by the fantasy that carnal love can capture an eternal moment:

Sweet Hellen make me immortall with a kisse:
Her lips sucke forthe my soule, see where it
flies.
Come Hellen, come, giue me my soule againe,
Here will I dwell, for heauen is in these lippes,
And all is drosse that is not Helena. (11.1876-80)

As the archetype of female beauty, and as an adultress, Helen of Troy is a literary type of cupidity. That she is also a demon only appearing as a woman compounds the essentially narcissistic nature of carnal love by the fact that Faustus knowingly accepts an illusion as his greatest reality.⁴⁵ Furthermore, that Faustus perceives immortality as having its source in a demon lover points to the fact that he has wed himself to eternal alienation from God.⁴⁶

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The concurrence of Faustus' desires to torture the Old Man and to take Helen for a lover dramatize the fundamental unity of irascible pride, manifest in tyranny, and concupiscible pride, manifest in idolatry. In symbolic contrast to Faustus, who attempts to escape fear by indulging in pleasures of flesh and fantasy, the Old Man realizes the beatific vision through the martyrdom of his body.⁴⁷ The death of the Old Man releases his spirit to enter into full communion with God, whereas the rending of Faustus' body is merely the completion of the spiritual death he has been dying from the beginning of the play.

In his final monologue, the irony of Faustus' spiritual condition is captured in the line he quotes from Ovid, "O lente lente currite noctis equi" (1.2045). Although Faustus says he wants the night to be prolonged so that he may have time to repent, in its original context this line was spoken by a lover who desired more time to enjoy the embraces of his mistress.⁴⁸ Furthermore, critics have noted Faustus' curious ambivalence toward his approaching doom. At the same time as he longs to escape his damnation, the syntax of the penultimate line of his soliloquy, "Vgly hell, gape not; Come not Lucifer" (1.2091), suggests that he is compulsively invoking what he is trying to keep away.⁴⁹ Wilbur Sanders captures the fundamental narcissism of Faustus' mental state in his comment,

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That irreducible love-hate that Faustus bears toward both God and Lucifer becomes that cry of erotic self-surrender and horrified revulsion as he yields to the embraces of his demon lover - 'Ah, Mephistopheles!'⁵⁰ (italics in original)

We have seen how Faustus' character parallels that of the sinner in the medieval saint's play in his ambition for power and in his escape from despair through sensuality. Marlowe also develops an ironic parallel between Doctor Faustus and the saint's play in Faustus' isolation from human community. In the hagiographical tradition, the saint's life usually included a departure from worldly communities into solitude with God, and, after death, a participation in the heavenly community of the saints. If the saint remained in the world it was without any dependence upon human community, for the saint was fulfilled in his communion with God. Faustus' career is marked by isolation from human community, but in his solitude he is also alienated from God. Marlowe depicts Faustus as an inverted saint by having him replace human community, not with divine communion, but with the company of devils.

In The Conversion of St. Paul, Paul's story follows the typical pattern of a saint's life. He starts out in community, - or rather conspiracy - with Caiphas and Anna. His worldly stature is reflected in the obedience of his henchmen (11.64-77), and the domineering aspects of his

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personality are glossed by his servant's abusive treatment of the stable groom.⁵¹ After he is struck down by God, he is deserted by his henchmen and isolated from human community by his blindness and paralysis. It is in this condition of solitude that he grows in communion with God:

But, gracious Lorde, of thy visitacion I thanke thee.
Thy servant shall I be as long as I have breth,
Though I therefor shuld suffer dethe.
(ll.266-68)

Even after he has entered the community of the disciples, Paul remains indifferent to his earthly life, desiring only that God's will be done (ll.643-44).

Mary Magdalene's participation in various communities also reflects her spiritual and psychological condition. She begins in community with Martha and Lazarus and, as we have seen, her journey from the castle to the tavern symbolizes her fall from Christian brotherhood into a community of sin. The psychological isolation that is part of sin is symbolically represented when she falls asleep alone in the garden, dreaming of her "valentines." After her conversion, Mary re-enters community with Martha and Lazarus at Maudlin Castle, the castle being a type of Augustine's "City of God."⁵²

Mary's independence of all earthly goods for emotional fulfillment is stressed in the second part of the play. Mary is sent on a mission to convert the King and Queen of

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Marseille, and although it is clear that a bond of love develops between them during the time she is there, Mary's deepest longing is for solitary communion with God. The absolute fulfillment of both body and soul, which Mary experiences in her desert hermitage, is dramatized by the fact that she is nourished only by divine manna:

O thou Lord of lorddes, of hye domencion!
In heven and erth worsheppyd be thy name.
How thou devidist me from hounge and vexacion!
O glorios Lord, in thee is no frauddes nor no
defame.
But I shuld serve my Lord, I were to blame,
Which fullfillith me with so gret feliceté,
With melody of angylles shewith me gle and game,
And have fed me with fode of most delicité!
(11.2032-39)

Doctor Faustus begins and ends with Faustus isolated in his study. The study is a symbol of his intellectual pride, by which he sought to elevate himself above the need for human community. The intellectual community Faustus has rejected is represented by the two scholars. The first scholar's comment, "I wonder what's become of Faustus that was wont/ To make our schooles ring, with sic probo" (11.190-91), suggests that Faustus has already isolated himself at the beginning of the play. Furthermore, the Latin phrase that Faustus is known for, "thus it is proven," points to both his intellectual brilliance and his arrogance. After the scholars have found out that he is practicing necromancy, the concern they express for him suggests that their friendship was available to Faustus:

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Were he a stranger, not allyed to me,
The danger of his soule would make me mourne:
But come, let vs go, and informe the Rector.
(11.219-21)

When the scholars return at the end of the play, their ignorance of Faustus' lifestyle for the past twenty-four years reminds the audience that Faustus has lived in social isolation. One of them observes, "He is not well with being ouer solitarie" (1.1929), and Faustus himself admits, "Ah, my sweet chamber-fellow, had I liu'd with thee, / Then had I liued still, but now must dye eternally" (11.1924-25).

Like the Old Man and the Good Angel, the scholars remind Faustus of the possibility of repentance: "Yet Faustus looke vp to heauen, and remember mercy is infinite" (1.1935). Had Faustus been in Christian fellowship, he may have received the support and challenge he needed to be moved to repentance. His isolation, begun even before his pact with the devil, can be viewed partially as a consequence of the individualistic emphasis in Lutheran thought. Luther's famous decree - "here I stand" - was seen in non-Lutheran and non-Calvinist quarters as symptomatic of an over-emphasis on the autonomous individual at the expense of the continuity of the Christian community.⁵³ Ironically, Faustus' self-imposed alienation from Christian community - originally motivated by pride and selfish ambition - leaves him particularly vulnerable to his morbid conviction that he cannot be forgiven.

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The great irony of pride is that once the proud individual becomes aware of his sinfulness, he is obsessed by the apparent magnitude of it. Despair is the counterpart of pride, for just as the soul is trapped in itself when it engages in self-aggrandizement, so the soul is still trapped within itself when it contemplates the greatness of its sin. Because he has made himself the measure of all things, Faustus cannot even conceive of Divine forgiveness penetrating his soul from without:

But Faustus offence can nere be pardoned,
The serpent that tempted Eue may be saued,
But not Faustus. (11.1937-39)

What finally distinguishes Faustus from St. Paul and Mary Magdalene is his persistent resistance to the invitation to repent. Paul's conversion story is quite dramatic, for not many sinners are accosted by God on the road. Yet the playwright stresses that it is not only because God manifested himself so clearly to Saul that Saul repented. The soldiers also witnessed God's power: "And me thowt that I hard a sounde/ Of wone speking with voice delectable" (11.252-53), yet they were not converted by the experience. Similarly, Anna and Caiphas received not only the eye-witness account of the soldiers, but also the testimony of Paul himself, yet they chose to believe "he is bewitchyd by sum conjuracion,/ Or els the devill on him is avengyd" (11.603-4). The playwright does not allow us to

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question why characters like Caiphas and Anna are not converted, but the implication is clearly that pride prevents them from acknowledging their fallibility.

In The Play of Mary Magdalene, we see in Mary's character a willingness to submit to the truth. The playwright is careful to develop her pride in her physical appearance so that it parallels the pride of Cyrus. Her propensity for charity, however, comes through when she is moved to repentance - not by any dramatic witness - but by the stirring of her own conscience. The authenticity of her repentance is seen by the fact that she is not so much afraid of damnation as she is disgusted with her present condition:

A, how the sperit of goodnesse hath promptyt me
this tide,
And temptyd me with tityll of trew perfythnesse!
Alas, how betternesse in my hert doth abide!
I am wonddyd with werkes of gret distresse.
A, how pynsivnesse potith me to oppresse,
That I have sinnyd on every side!
(11.602-07)

In both of the saints' plays we have looked at, the playwrights do not develop the unrepentant characters so as to permit the audience to glimpse the psychological process of rejecting grace. In Doctor Faustus, however, Marlowe develops precisely this theme. As we shall see in the next chapter, Faustus' beliefs about the nature of God and grace, combined with the power which he invites Lucifer to have over him, make it possible for him ultimately to reject the

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grace which he knows would save him. Drawing on the medieval psychology of sin as we have seen it developed in the character of the saint before his or her conversion, Marlowe portrays Faustus at the end of the play as a soul completely turned in upon itself, trapped in its condition of pride. It is his extreme egocentricity which ultimately keeps Faustus from surrendering to the authority of God, even when it becomes clear that he has absolutely failed to be the author of his own destiny. By developing him as an unrepentant sinner, Marlowe depicts Faustus as a tragic inversion of the figure of the converted saint of medieval drama.

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CHAPTER 5: Faustus: The Arch-Protestant Sinner

We have seen how Marlowe uses the morality play and the saint's play traditions as thematic and structural foundations for Doctor Faustus. As an everyman figure and as a failed saint, Faustus is the universal sinner who dramatizes the consequences of wilfully persisting in sin. In the previous chapter we noted that Marlowe draws upon the medieval psychology of sin in depicting Faustus as a soul turned in upon himself through pride. Both the morality play and the the saint's play dramatize how the sinner becomes increasingly bound by his sinfulness, but they also illustrate how he is set free when he is called to repentance by a divine agent. In Doctor Faustus, Marlowe portrays a sinner who repeatedly resists the call to repentance, despite deep psychological suffering created by his bondage to sin. "Why," we are forced to ask, "does Faustus not repent?"

In Chapter 1, I noted that critics have tended to

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answer that question in one of two general ways. Those of the "Satanic" school, such as Santayana and Ellis-Fermor, suggest that Marlowe is portraying Faustus as a heroic rebel, caught in an oppressive universe which does not allow for second chances. In this view Faustus does repent, but it is too late. Of those critics who believe Faustus to be a sinner, some, like Wawso and Masinton, argue that Marlowe is depicting Faustus as a Protestant sinner in a Protestant universe. Although Faustus rebels against God freely, by doing so he places himself in a position where he is no longer psychologically capable of repentance, and is consequently damned by God. The other critical approach which views Faustus as a sinner is that of critics like Cole, who argue that Faustus freely and repeatedly chooses to reject God's mercy, thus creating the condition of alienation from God which is the nature of damnation (poena damni).

In my reading of Doctor Faustus from the perspective of its roots in the morality play and saint's play traditions, I have tacitly argued the latter viewpoint: that Faustus wilfully rejects God's mercy, of which he is repeatedly reminded throughout the play. I will now undertake to qualify this position by suggesting that Faustus' despair of God's mercy is fueled, in part, by his Protestant theological training. Not really believing in hell, Faustus

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deliberately becomes an archetypal Protestant sinner in the belief that, by rendering himself incapable of repentance, he can be free to pursue his ambitions in this life without further concern for his spiritual safety. He then uses the deterministic aspects of Lutheran doctrine to deny his responsibility for persisting in sin. Marlowe, however, does not affirm a cosmology in which it is possible for a person to render himself incapable of repentance through a single sinful act. By his heavy reliance upon earlier medieval theology and dramatic forms, Marlowe forces us to recognize that Faustus has many opportunities to repent. At any point in the play, right until the final act, the Wittenberg theologian is capable of receiving God's forgiveness. However, his manipulation of the doctrine of election, which he initially uses to free himself of moral concern, ends up being a source of spiritual bondage. By the final act, his conviction that he is incapable of repentance and is damned necessarily, combined with a lifetime of commitment to sin, does in fact render him "hardened," incapable of receiving the mercy of God.

In Chapter 3 we noted that Marlowe presents Faustus as a universal sinner in Faustus' opening speech. In his ambition for wealth, honour, and political conquest, he expresses the Renaissance dream of the triumphant emergence of the individual. In his desire to transcend the

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limitations of the human condition all together, Faustus epitomizes the man of pride. More specifically, Marlowe presents Faustus as an archeotypal Protestant sinner who directly imitates many of the characteristics Luther suggests are signs of non-election.

The passages from Scripture which Faustus misreads are texts that were particularly popular among Protestant preachers because they are central texts supporting the doctrine of salvation by grace. As a Wittenberg theologian it is impossible that Faustus would not know the subsequent verses, so we must assume his quotation of half-truths is a very deliberate distortion of the text.¹ The deterministic philosophy Faustus extracts from Scripture is not supported by the context of the passages at all, yet we see in his speeches a willingness to believe - a faith if you will - that damnation is unavoidable:

Why then belike we must sinne,
And so consequently die,
I, we must die, an euerlasting death.
What doctrine call you this? Che sera, sera:
What will be, shall be; Diuinitie adiew.
(11.71-75)

Faustus' apparent surprise at having "discovered" the inevitability of damnation, suggested in the tone of lines 71 and 72, is replaced by a tone of grim and deliberate commitment in line 73.

The determinism he rejects comes not from the passages he quotes, but from the larger doctrinal context of his

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Lutheran education. In his Commentary on Romans, Luther describes how Scripture is a snare for those who are proud. Ironically, Luther uses a historical Faustus as an example of one who distorted Scripture as a weapon of deception:

Thus blessed Augustine in his Confessions describes Faustus the Manichaeon as a great snare of the devil... from the same feast, the same Holy Scripture, one man catches death, another life, one man honey, another poison, just as from the same rose, or flower, the spider collects venom and the bee honey. Thus nothing must be touched with so great fear and so little presumptuousness as the Word of God, because it immediately catches those of proud mind and traps them and makes them stumble... not by a fault of its own but because of presumptuous pride.²

Through his metaphor of the spider and the bee, Luther captures the fundamental dichotomy between the saved and the unsaved inherent in the notion of predestination. In characterizing his Wittenberg theologian, Marlowe may well have been aware of this passage; it is clear enough that he has Faustus deliberately set out to "collect venom" from Scripture.

Here the issue of vocation, traditional in medieval saints' lives, is made central to the opening of Marlowe's play. Faustus further rebels against Luther's development of traditional Catholic teaching by engaging in the process of deciding his vocation by himself. Luther stresses the importance of allowing God to call us to our vocation,

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For those people who choose on their own initiative cannot refrain from praising themselves. They please only themselves, and only so do they want to please God... The devil in this way disturbs every mind, in order that he may make void the calling of every person and to tempt him by seducing him to that for which he has not been called, as if God were a fool and did not know where he wished to call a person.³

In Faustus' case, the rhetorical deliberation with which he rejects various disciplines suggests that he is not seduced into choosing necromancy; rather, he has already made up his mind when he begins the decision making process. That he would engage in the facade of evaluating the vocations available to him suggests that he is deliberately rejecting Luther's notion of divine calling. Since Marlowe presents him to us as the chief theologian of Wittenberg, this and other consequent actions have a deepened ironic value.

It may involve much more than coincidence, therefore, that in his "decision" making process Faustus goes through Luther's four levels of perdition. When Faustus rejects logic, saying "Then read no more, thou hast attain'd that end" (1.39), and when he rejects medicine because "The end of Physicke is our bodies health:/ Why Faustus, has thou not attain'd that end?" (11.45-46), he demonstrates the first level of perdition, which is ingratitude. Luther suggests "self-satisfaction... takes pleasure in things received as though they were not received at all, and it leaves the

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Giver out of consideration."⁴

When Faustus evaluates medicine only on the basis of the prestige it will bring him,

Couldst thou make men to liue eternally,
Or being dead, raise them to life againe,
Then this profession were to be esteem'd.
(ll.51-53)

he demonstrates Luther's second level of perdition, which is vanity. Luther argues that when one has become vain in his thoughts, "One seeks only himself, that is, one's own glory, delight, and advantage."⁵

Following vanity one degenerates to spiritual blindness, where the sinner "has turned completely away from God."⁶ Faustus clearly exemplifies this blindness in his rejection of divinity. The final level of perdition is idolatry, "For when a person has lost God, nothing remains except that he be given over to every type of turpitude according to the will of the devil."⁷ In his embracing of necromancy ("Lines, Circles, Letters, Characters./ I these are those that Faustus most desires." ll.78-79) Faustus very deliberately enters this fourth stage. And yet his choice is doubly ironic, for by attempting to defy the God of Lutheran theology - by turning himself into an archetypal sinner - Faustus does in fact surrender his freedom to the will of the devil.

Luther goes on to argue that for those who reach the fourth stage of perdition, "God withdraws his helping hand

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from him and deserts him," and that "it is God's will that man be overwhelmed by sin... He makes him a slave to that which He means to punish most harshly."⁸ Luther goes on to explain how it is that God can punish sinners by willing that they sin further, by appealing to the doctrine of election:

some He does not will nor like to justify, so that through them He may show forth so much greater glory in the elect. Thus also sin He wills for the sake of something else, that is, for the sake of His glory and for the sake of the elect.⁹

In his desire to be author of his own destiny, Faustus conveniently uses the determinism in this doctrine of election to absolve himself of the responsibility for choosing against God. He seems deliberately to imitate Luther's reprobate man, who does not "fear the hidden judgements of God... For the reprobate despise it and pay it no attention, or in desperation they become presumptuous saying: 'If I am damned, I will be damned.'¹⁰

That Faustus believes himself to be damned is clear enough from his first conversation with Mephistophilis. Mephistophilis tells Faustus that he came not because of Faustus' power over him, but because of his blasphemy, and he adds "Nor will we come vnlesse he vse such means, / Whereby he is in danger to be damn'd" (ll.276-66, italics added). Faustus responds:

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Seeing Faustus hath incur'd eternall death,
By desperate thoughts against Ioues Deity:
Say he surrenders vp to [Lucifer] his soul:
(11.313-15, italics added).

Because he believes his damnation to be unavoidable, Faustus glibly ignores Mephistophilis' warning that his soul is only in danger of damnation, as well as Mephistophilis' explicit entreaty that Faustus "leauē these friuolous demandes, / Which strikes a terror to my fainting soul" (11.306-07). It is interesting to note that in this passage Faustus does not say that all men must sin and therefore die an everlasting death. Rather, he acknowledges that it is through his act of rebellion that he has, as he believes, "incur'd eternall death."

But it is also clear that Faustus does not really imagine the possibility of damnation at the beginning of the play. On the first occasion when the Good and Bad Angels attempt to influence Faustus' will, the Good Angel's warning, "O Faustus, lay that damned booke aside, / And gaze not on it least it tempt thy soule" (11.97-98), does not even register with Faustus. The Bad Angel's enticement, however, "Be thou on earth as Ioue is in the skye, / Lord and Commander of these elements" (11.103-04), is immediately affirmed by Faustus:

How am I gluttē with conceipt of this?
Shall I make spirits fetch me what I please?
Resolue me of all ambiguities?
Performe what desperate enterprise I will?
(11.105-08)

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When the Angels call Faustus to repentance a second time, Faustus has already begun to suffer doubts about the wisdom of his rebellion. Yet he comforts himself with the hope that through demonic forces he will have power over the quality of his temporal life:

Now Faustus, must thou needs be damn'd?
Canst thou not be sau'd?
What bootes it then to thinke on God or Heauen?
Away with such vaine fancies, and despaire,
Despaire in God, and trust in Belzebub,
Now go not backward Faustus, be resolute.
(11.390-95)

Faustus is very concerned to disbelieve in the possibility of salvation, for if he allowed himself to think that repentance could be efficacious, he would have to admit his culpability for continuing in sin. It is ironic that only by believing he is already damned can Faustus "be resolute" in his commitment to necromancy. After he experiences God's call to repentance, "O something soundith in mine eare./ Abiure this Magicke, turne to God againe" (11.396-97), he must re-affirm his conviction that he is beyond the pale of God's love: "Why he loues thee not: The God thou seru'st is thine owne appetite/ Wherein is fixt the loue of Belzebub" (11.398-99).

In this scene, the Good and Bad Angels arrive after Faustus apparently has resolved his conflict. Marlowe has them arrive at a point of apparent resolution in order to emphasize the fact that the Good Angel's call to repentance

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is independent of Faustus' internal conflict. Although the Bad Angel is the first to speak, the Good Angel's comment, "Sweete Faustus leaue that excrable Art" (1.404) is what re-creates doubts in Faustus' mind. In response to Faustus' question, "Contrition, Prayer, Repentance? what of these?" (1.405), the Good Angel argues the evangelistic message central to medieval drama: "O they are meanes to bring thee vnto heauen" (1.406). The Bad Angel's response, however, affirms Faustus' belief that there is an inherent dignity in refusing to submit to God's law: "Rather illusions, fruits of lunacy./ That make them foolish that do vse them most" (11.407-08). But as yet it is not self-righteous despair which moves Faustus so much as the Bad Angel's entreaty to "thinke of honour and of wealth" (1.410):

Wealth? Why the Signory of Embden shall be mine:
When Mephistophilis shall stand by me,
What power can hurt me? Faustus thou art safe.
Cast no more doubts; Mepho: come.
(11.411-14)

At this point in the play it is still not difficult for Faustus to convince himself of the unreality of hell. As damnation becomes more real for Faustus, his disbelief in God's mercy becomes a source of suffering. Waswo argues that because Faustus is no longer psychologically capable of repentance, the accusations of his conscience (as verbalized by the Good Angel) are part of the torments of hell.¹¹ As we have noted, however, Marlowe's use of the angels is taken

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from medieval drama, where the Good Angel's invitation to repentance provides the necessary external support for the sinner to recognize his need for forgiveness and thus break the cycle of sin. Furthermore, Cole notes that the scenes with the Angels are additions by Marlowe to the text of the English Faust Book, and serve to reinforce the idea that Faustus' choice to turn from God is his own and unconstrained.¹² Nevertheless, as Faustus comes to desire salvation, his ability to repent is constrained by his despair of God's mercy.

Ironically, it is Mephistophilis who first inspires Faustus with the hope that perhaps his damnation is not necessary. As we noted in Chapter 3, Mephistophilis functions like the Vice figure in medieval drama who inadvertently affirms orthodox Christian doctrines which are recognized and shared by the audience. Here, Mephistophilis presents Faustus with an image of man as the Imago Dei - a far more optimistic image than that provided by Faustus' own ostensibly Lutheran training:

...think'st thou heauen is such a glorious thing?

I tell thee Faustus it is not halfe so faire

As thou, or any man that breathe on earth.

Faust. How prou'st thou that?

Meph. 'Twas made for man; then he's more excellent.
(11.574-78)

Waswo suggests that Mephistophilis lies to Faustus for the first time in this passage, inviting him to believe that the joys of heaven are less than the glories of man.¹³ This

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reading seems unlikely, though, because Mephistophilis' teaching does not in fact build up Faustus' vanity, but rather inspires in him a hope that salvation may yet be possible - "If Heauen was made for man, 'twas made for me:/ I will renounce this Magicke and repent" (11.579-80) - a hope which is immediately affirmed by the Good Angel. The Bad Angel's lie, "Thou art a spirit, God cannot pity thee" (1.582), is quickly rejected by Faustus: "Be I a deuill yet God may pittie me,/ Yea, God will pittie me if I repent" (11.585-86). But the tragedy of Faustus' position is that, by having convinced himself that he is incapable of repentance in order to wholeheartedly pursue his worldly ambitions, he has become bound by the Lutheran doctrines he has chosen to affirm. When the Bad Angel insinuates, "I, but Faustus neuer shall repent" (1.587), Faustus submits without struggle to his belief that "My heart is hardned, I cannot repent" (1.589). The notion that God actively hardens sinners' hearts to prevent their repentance is argued by Luther,¹⁴ and Faustus uses that doctrine here in order to passively avoid responsibility for his spiritual condition.¹⁵

Passivity marks the subsequent scene, where Faustus again struggles with the possibility of repentance. Once more, Faustus is reminded of God by Mephistophilis, this time inadvertently through Mephistophilis' refusal to name

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Him as Creator. In response to Faustus' question, "Ist not too late?" (1.647), the Angels respond:

Bad. Too late.

Good. Neuer too late, if Faustus will repent.

Bad. If thou repent, devils will teare thee in peeces.

Good. Repent and they shall neuer raise thy skin:
(11.648-51)

In our analysis of Doctor Faustus as an inverted saint's play, we noted that saints were seldom spared physical hardship; but that their suffering was more than compensated for by spiritual joy. That the Good Angel would not only promise Faustus salvation, but also redemption from the devil's power to torture his body, is indeed a special grace. Yet even with this added security, the best Faustus can do is utter a plea for help which is completely void of any certainty in Christ's ability to save him: "O Christ my Sauour, my Sauour, / Helpe to saue distressed Faustus soule". (11.652-53, italics added).

When Lucifer, Beelzebub, and Mephistophilis appear, they do nothing other than echo Faustus' own despair of Christ's mercy: "Christ cannot saue thy soule, for he is iust, / There's none but I haue interest in the same" (11.655-56). Without any threats and with little verbal persuasion, Faustus quickly offers a full repentance to Lucifer which, Cole notes, parodies the traditional threefold structure of Christian repentance: acknowledgement of offence, appeal for mercy and pardon, and resolve not to

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offend again.¹⁶

As Faustus becomes more entrenched in his despair of salvation, he takes on more characteristics of Luther's conception of the sinner. In his passivity toward Lucifer, he is very much like Luther's carnal man, who "does not have this fire of indignation nor does he feel any resistance, for he is snatched away and meekly follows."¹⁷ As we noted in Chapter 3, Faustus' growing bondage to sin and demonic control is symbolized by his passive affirmation of the pageant of the seven deadly sins - his "reward" for repenting to Lucifer.

Both Masinton¹⁸ and Waswo¹⁹ suggest (correctly I believe) that Marlowe is concerned to depict in Faustus the progressive disintegration of a soul alienated from God. It is clear from the scenes we have examined that Faustus degenerates from affirming eagerly the egocentric ambitions of honour and wealth, to submitting passively to the Bad Angel's suggestion that he will not repent, and to Lucifer's suggestion that Christ does not love him. By disbelieving in the reality of damnation and embracing the qualities of the reprobate, Faustus believes he has freed himself from future obligation for moral choice. In reality, Faustus has limited the freedom of his will by engaging in sin (which is, in medieval theology, the traditional bondage of the sinner)²⁰ and by convincing himself that repentance would be

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ineffective. When he struggles to hope that repentance is still possible, he now finds himself ironically bound by his conviction that his sin has rendered him psychologically incapable of repentance. It is much easier for Faustus to trust the devil's threats of dismemberment than it is for him to trust the Good Angel's assurance of protection.

Besides his own belief in deterministic theology and the devil's threats, the contract he makes with Mephistophilis is also a psychological barrier which adds to his despair. In the scene where he signs the contract, Marlowe includes the coagulation of his blood and the warning "homo fuqe" as evidence of God's love for Faustus. But at the time Faustus does not really believe in damnation, and is as yet unconcerned with the love of God:

Faust. I thinke Hel's a fable.

Meph. I, thinke so still, till experience change thy mind.

Faust. Why, dost thou think that Faustus shall be damn'd?

Meph. I, of necessity, for here's the scrowle In which thou hast giuen thy soule to Lucifer.

Faust. I, and body too, but what of that: Think'st thou that Faustus, is so fond to imagine, That after this life there is any paine?

No, these are trifles, and meere old wiues Tales.
(11.519-27)

By the final scenes Faustus believes very strongly in the reality of hell, and the contract becomes another external focus on which he can project the responsibility for his damnation. With the passage of time, the contract becomes in Faustus' mind the reason his damnation is inevitable:

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Hell claimes his right, & with a roaring voice,
Sales Faustus come, thine houre is almost come,
And Faustus now will come to do thee right.
(11.1831-33)

Ironically, the contract was violated by Mephistophilis as soon as it was made. Faustus stipulated that "Mephistophilis shall doe for him, and bring him whatsoever" (11.490-91), but Mephistophilis could not bring Faustus a wife, which is the first thing Faustus asked for.²¹ By having Mephistophilis break his part of the contract, Marlowe makes clear to the audience that Faustus' damnation is not inevitable upon the expiry of the contract.

It is a strong critical temptation, however, to identify the necessity of Faustus' damnation with the legal contract he draws up. James Smith argues that after signing the contract, the consequences of Faustus' act stretch forward to eternity, and thus can only be represented by a symbolic period of time (twenty-four years).²² Therefore, although the play seems to be about Faustus working out his salvation/damnation in time, in another sense he is damned already.²³ Similarly, Masinton affirms that "Faustus' damnation begins the very moment he signs himself off eternally from God's mercy by assuming the attributes of a devil."²⁴

Marlowe, however, discourages us from identifying the moment of Faustus' damnation in time by fragmenting the formal issuing of the contract into stages. When Faustus

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first cuts his arm to write the contract, he declares: "Loe Mephosto: for loue of thee Faustus hath cut his arme, / And with his proper blood assures his soul to be great Lucifers" (11.441-42). The verbal declaration is followed by the writing of the contract, after which Faustus declares "Consummatum est: this byll is ended, / And Faustus hath bequeath'd his soule to Lucifer" (11.462-63). The apparent finality of this statement is mitigated by Faustus' "official" presentation of it to Mephistophilis:

Then Mephistophilis receiue this scrole,
A Deed of Gift, of body and of soule:
But yet conditionally, that thou performe
All Couenants, and Articles, betweene vs both.
(11. 481-83)

Even this is not climactic, however, for Faustus formally reads the contract to Mephistophilis, and then Mephistophilis asks "Speak Faustus, do you deliuer this as your Deed?" (1.504). The casualness of Faustus' final response, "I take it, and the deuill giue thee good of it" (1.505), renders the whole process anticlimactic. By spreading the contract out over a series of proclamatory acts, Marlowe actually prevents the audience from locating the precise commencement of Faustus' damnation in time.

Waswo argues that Faustus' damnation is not tied to the contract, but begins when he first despairs of salvation. Thus, "the pact is a mere ratification of the motive, means, and decision - the crucial internal determinents of

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Protestant morality."²⁵ This leads Waswo to argue that, dramatically, there is no chance of Faustus' repentance, and we do not experience the possibility of his salvation as a suspense-generating device.²⁶ I do not think this reading is adequate to our experience of the play. Rather, I agree with Cole that one of the main dramatic tensions in the play remains the implied possibility of Faustus' repentance.²⁷ However, Waswo is correct in arguing that all of Faustus' experiences throughout the play are part of his experience of hell²⁸ - but only retrospectively so. Faustus' psychological condition of increasing bondage to sin and alienation from God is the essence of his damnation. It becomes actual hell for Faustus only at the end of the play, when Faustus is so turned in upon himself that he is psychologically incapable of change.²⁹

When Faustus requests the Old Man to leave so that he may have time "to ponder on my sinnes" (1.1840), Faustus cannot but further distance himself from the possibility of repentance, for it is his self-preoccupation that is the nature of his bondage to sin:

Accursed Faustus, wretch what has thou done?
I do repent, and yet I doe despaire,
Hell straves with grace for conquest in my breast:
What shall I doe to shun the snares of death?
(11.1843-46)

In this passage we see, once more, that Faustus evades the responsibility of making a choice by treating repentance as

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a feeling rather than an act of the will. Furthermore, he externalizes his spiritual struggle onto the abstract forces of "hell" and "grace," and his egocentricity is further suggested by the fact that his concern is not to be made righteous, but to "shun the snares of death." As I suggested in Chapter 4, Faustus' damnation - his rejection of reality for fantasy enclosed within the self - is symbolically presented by his sexual intercourse with Helen. It has also been anticipated by Mephistophilis:

Fond worldling, now his heart blood dries with griefe;
His conscience kills it, and his labouring braine,
Begets a world of idlle fantasies,
To ouer-reach the Diuell; but all in vaine.
(ll.1907-10)

Mephistophilis' birth metaphor here suggests that Faustus' process of spiritual death will be complete when Faustus has fully enclosed himself in the subjective realm of fantasy/idolatry.

In the final scenes, Marlowe depicts Faustus as a soul completely turned in upon itself. When the scholars suggest to Faustus that he repent, Faustus' response reveals his obsession with his own sinfulness - not because it is sin, but because it is his:

But Faustus offence can nere be pardoned, The serpent
that tempted Eue may be sau'd, But not Faustus... O
would I had neuer seene Wittenberg, neuer read book &
what wonder I haue done, all Germany can witnesse: yea
all the world, for which Faustus hath lost both Germany
and the world, yea heauen itself: heauen the seate of
God, the Throne of the Blessed, the Kingdom of Ioy, and
must remaine in hell for euer. Hell, O hell for euer.

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Sweet friends, what shall become of Faustus being in
hell for euer?
(11.1937-48)

Faustus' egocentricity is poignantly suggested by his ironic claim that he is a greater sinner than the devil, "the serpent that tempted Eve." Even as the hour of his death draws nigh, it is "the wonders" Faustus has accomplished that fill Faustus' thoughts, which is highly ironic when we consider the trivial parlour pranks which make up most of Faustus' career. But at the same time as we recognize Faustus' narcissism, we cannot help but be deeply moved by his suffering.

It has been argued by Joseph Westlund that the endings of the A and B texts of the play are radically different. He suggests that while in the A text Faustus' damnation is self-induced, in the B text his damnation is revealed by Mephistophilis to be a diabolic plot.³⁰ In other places in the B text, however, Mephistophilis is careful to resist Faustus' efforts to blame him for Faustus' damnation. Marlowe's addition of the passage, in which Mephistophilis claims responsibility for causing Faustus to misread Scripture, is highly ironic, for it suggests that Faustus has so convinced himself that he is a victim of external forces that he cannot recall a time when his will was his own.

Time has run out for Faustus, not because the date is

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expired on the contract, but because more time will no longer do him any good. Indeed, at the end of the play he is already in hell, and the irreversibility of his psychological condition is suggested by the tone of the Angels' last speeches to him: they no longer encourage him to choose, but simply remind him of the consequences of the choice he has made. Faustus' final speech reflects his absolute ignorance of his condition and of the nature of damnation. Just as he asked the Old Man for time to ponder his sins, so now he beseeches the elements for "A month, a weeke, a naturall day,/ That Faustus may repent, and saue his soule" (11.2043-44). But unfortunately, Faustus' sin has "by custome [grown] into nature" (1.1819), and more time would not give him the opportunity to repent, but only the occasion to persevere in his "world of idle fantasies" (1.1989).

Thus, it is clear to the audience, though not to Faustus, why there can be no temporal limitation placed on one's suffering in hell. Damnation occurs when repentance ceases to be possible. Hell is realized subjectively when an individual cuts himself off absolutely from God. Ironically, Faustus unwittingly suggests this in his final effort to project responsibility for his spiritual condition outside of himself:

Curst be the parents that ingendred me;
No Faustus, curse thy selfe, curse Lucifer,

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That hath depriu'd thee of the ioies of heauen.
(11.2080-82)

In hell, Faustus' nature is no longer distinguishable from Lucifer's because both are defined by their absolute alienation from God.

We see, then, that Marlowe presents Faustus' damnation as a process of psychological disintegration. He makes it clear, however, that it is a process which becomes irreversible only in the last act. By drawing upon the medieval dramatic traditions of the morality play and the saint's play, Marlowe establishes the predicament of Doctor Faustus upon the doctrinal foundation of an earlier medieval theology. Faustus' character closely parallels the pre-converted saint, who suffers in bondage to sin until he is brought to recognize his need for repentance through the assistance of divine grace. Similarly, Faustus resembles the everyman figure, who rebels against the Christian way of life out of selfish desires for power and pleasure. But unlike the saint or everyman, Faustus resists numerous calls to repentance. Initially, this reflects his desire to persevere in his ambitions, for Faustus believes that only if salvation is impossible can he "be resolute" in his commitment to necromancy. But even after damnation becomes real for Faustus, he finds himself unable to believe in the efficacy of repentance.

By making Faustus a Wittenberg theologian, Marlowe

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implicitly suggests that, to some extent, Faustus is a victim of his theological training. However, unlike Masinton, who argues that "he cannot escape from its teachings because they are the very forms of consciousness through which he views the human condition,"³¹ I have argued that Faustus' bondage to his beliefs arises only after he has repeatedly affirmed them. As he repeatedly affirms the Bad Angel's suggestion that repentance is pointless and damnation is unavoidable, the deterministic Lutheran doctrines which he initially twisted for his benefit become the conditions of his own bondage. And ironically, as his will becomes bound by sin, his continued re-affirmation of the unavoidability of his damnation becomes increasingly automatic and less a free choice. Furthermore, by isolating himself from human community and seeking only the company of devils, he cuts himself off from external influences that could have mitigated his rigid Lutheran perspective.

Thus, Faustus creates his own damnation. The convenient but false belief, that he has no control over whether he is saved or damned, becomes true precisely because he refuses to acknowledge his continual resistance of God's grace. It is only through his choosing of determinism that determinism is realized.

Endnotes: Chapter 1

¹ For an in depth textual analysis of Doctor Faustus see W.W. Gregg's Introduction in Marlowe's Doctor Faustus, 1604 & 1616: Parallel Texts, ed. W.W. Gregg (1950; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), pp. 1-139. However, Michael J. Warren ("Doctor Faustus: The Old Man and the Text," English Literary Renaissance, 22 (1981), 111-47) argues that Gregg's effort to prove the superiority of the B text involves an overly subjective reading of the differing nuances of the two texts. He maintains that "both texts have their obscurities and their problems and their misprints, and both are probably faulty in relation to any authorial original, but of that authorial original we can know nothing" (p. 129). More recently, Michael H. Keefer has written in defence of the A text of Doctor Faustus ("Verbal Magic and the Problem of the A and B Texts of Doctor Faustus," The Journal of English and Germanic Philology, 82 (1983), 324-46).

² George Santayana, "The Rehabilitation of Faustus," in Three Philosophical Poets: Lucretius, Dante, Goethe (Cambridge Mas.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1910), pp. 145-53; rpt. in Twentieth Century Interpretations of Doctor Faustus, ed. Willard Farnham (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1969), p. 13.

³ *ibid.*, p. 15.

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 12.

⁵ U.M. Ellis-Fermor, Christopher Marlowe (1927; rpt. Hamdon: Archon Books, 1967), p. 65.

⁶ *ibid.*, p. 67.

⁷ *ibid.*, p. 76.

⁸ The Holy Bible, New International Version (International Bible Society, 1973), p. 1182. All subsequent Biblical quotations are taken from this edition, unless otherwise cited.

⁹ Charles G. Masinton, Christopher Marlowe's Tragic Vision: A Study in Damnation (Athens: Ohio Univ. Press, 1972), p. 4.

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- 10 *ibid.*, pp. 5-8.
- 11 *ibid.*, p. 122.
- 12 *ibid.*, p. 10.
- 13 *ibid.*, p. 117.
- 14 Richard Waswo, "Damnation Protestant Style: Macbeth, Faustus, and Christian Tragedy," The Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 4 (Spring 1974), 75.
- 15 *ibid.*, p. 82.
- 16 James Smith, "Marlowe's Doctor Faustus," Scrutiny, 8 (1939), 36-48; rpt. "Faustus as Allegory" in Twentieth Century Interpretations of Doctor Faustus, ed. Willard Farnham (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1969), p. 24.
- 17 *ibid.*, p. 25.
- 18 *ibid.*, p. 28.
- 19 *ibid.*, p. 32.
- 20 Douglas Cole, Suffering and Evil in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1962), p. 193.
- 21 *ibid.*, pp. 208-09.
- 22 *ibid.*, p. 202.
- 23 *ibid.*, p. 205.
- 24 *ibid.*, p. 210.
- 25 *ibid.*, p. 220.
- 26 *ibid.*, p. 220.
- 27 *ibid.*, p. 227.
- 28 cf. Susan Snyder, "Marlowe's Doctor Faustus as an Inverted Saint's Life," Studies in Philology, 63 (1966), 565-77. Snyder's article is an insightful reading of Doctor Faustus as an inversion of the typical structure of a saint's life. My reading focuses specifically upon the psychology of unrepentance, which Marlowe develops in

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Faustus, as an inversion of the psychological process of repentance and conversion as it is depicted in the English saint's play.

Endnotes: Chapter 2

¹ M. St. Clare Blyrne, Elizabethan Life in Town and Country, 6th ed. (New York, 1926; rpt. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1950), p. 159.

² J.B. Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, 1558-1603, 2nd ed., The Oxford History of England, ed. Sir George Clark (1936; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), p. 189.

³ *ibid.*, p. 189.

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 193.

⁵ M. St. Clare Byrne, p. 172.

⁶ Quotations from William Tyndale's The Obedience of a Christian Man appear in the original. All other theological texts appear in translation.

⁷ St. Augustine, Confessions, trans. R.S. Pine-Coffin (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1961), p. 21.

⁸ *ibid.*, p. 48.

⁹ St. Augustine, The Holy Trinity, The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation, 45, trans. Stephen McKenna (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic Univ. of America Press, 1963), p. 308.

¹⁰ Boethius, The Consolation of Philosophy, trans. Richard Green (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Educational Pub., 1962), p. 62.

¹¹ St. Augustine, On Christian Doctrine, trans. D.W. Robertson Jr. (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. Inc., 1976), p. 13.

¹² David L. Jeffrey, "Franciscan Spirituality and the Growth of Vernacular Culture," in By Things Seen, ed. David L. Jeffrey (Ottawa: Univ. of Ottawa Press, 1979), p. 148.

¹³ Armand A. Maurer, Medieval Philosophy, 2nd ed., The Etienne Gilson Series 4 (1962; rpt. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1982), p. 143.

¹⁴ St. Bonaventure, A Psychology of Love, 2nd ed.,

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trans. Robert P. Prentice (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Franciscan Institute, 1957), p. 37.

15 St. Thomas Aquinas, Theological Texts, selected and trans. Thomas Gilby (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1955), p. 139.

16 St. Bonaventure, The Mind's Journey to God, trans. Lawrence S. Cunningham (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1979), p. 34.

17 Aquinas, pp. 125-26

18 *ibid.*, p. 133.

19 *ibid.*, p. 114.

20 *ibid.*, p. 150.

21 Bonaventure, A Psychology of Love, p. 42.

22 Aquinas, p. 133.

23 William Tyndale, The Work of William Tyndale, ed. S.L. Greenslade (London: Blackie & Son Ltd., n.d.), p. 162.

24 *ibid.*, p. 163

25 *ibid.*, p. 169

26 Martin Luther, Lectures on Romans, Luther's Works, 25, trans. and ed. Hilton C. Oswald (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1972), p. 204.

27 *ibid.*, p. 137.

28 *ibid.*, p. 299.

29 *ibid.*, p. 262.

30 *ibid.*, p. 245.

31 *ibid.*, p. 340.

32 *ibid.*, p. 312.

33 Augustine, Confessions, p. 48.

34 Luther, p. 294.

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- 35 *ibid.*, p. 213.
- 36 *ibid.*, p. 215.
- 37 *ibid.*, p. 216.
- 38 *ibid.*, p. 339.
- 39 *ibid.*, p. 268.
- 40 William Tyndale, The Obedience of a Christian Man.
(Antwerp, 1528; rpt. Amsterdam Norwood, N.J.: Theatrum Orbis
Terrarum, Ltd. 1977), p. xcvi.
- 41 *ibid.*, p. cxxi.
- 42 *ibid.*, p. xxxvi.
- 43 Aquinas, pp. 118-19.
- 44 *ibid.*, p. 160.
- 45 *ibid.*, pp. 161-62.
- 46 *ibid.*, p. 178.
- 47 Luther, p. 374.
- 48 *ibid.*, p. 376.
- 49 *ibid.*, p. 386.
- 50 Tyndale, The Works of William Tindale, pp. 163-64..

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¹ David M. Bevington, From Mankind to Marlowe (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1962), p. 4. However, John Wasson ("The Morality Play: Ancestor of Elizabethan Drama?" Comparative Drama, 13 (Fall 1979), 210-21) challenges the centrality of the morality play in influencing Elizabethan drama.

² Cole, p. 42.

³ F. Holthausen, ed., Vices and Virtues, EETS (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1938), p. 22.

⁴ Jeffrey, "Franciscan Spirituality and the Growth of Vernacular Culture," p. 146.

⁵ *ibid.*, p. 158.

⁶ St. Bonaventure, The Mind's Journey to God, pp. 43-46.

⁷ St. Bonaventure, Reduotione artium ad theologiam, trans. and ed. Emma Therese Healy, 2nd ed. (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: Franciscan Institute, 1955), pp. 30-40. As quoted by David L. Jeffrey, "Franciscan Spirituality and the Rise of Early English Drama," Mosaic, 8 (1975), 24.

⁸ Jeffrey, "Franciscan Spirituality and the Rise of Early English Drama," p. 25.

⁹ Jeffrey, "Franciscan Spirituality and the Growth of Vernacular Culture," p. 157.

¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 158.

¹¹ G.R. Owst, Literature and the Pulpit in Medieval England (New York: Banes & Noble, Inc., 1961), p. 478.

¹² *ibid.*, p. 478.

¹³ Jeffrey, "Franciscan Spirituality and the Rise of Early English Drama," p. 27.

¹⁴ Bernard Spivack, Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil: The History of a Metaphor in Relation to his Major

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Villians (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, (1958), p. 103.

15 Robert Potter, The English Morality Play (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), p. 34.

16 *ibid.*, p. 36.

17 *ibid.*, p. 34.

18 *ibid.*, p. 35.

19 Cole, p. 15.

20 *ibid.*, p. 15.

21 Bevington, From Mankind to Marlowe, p. 17.

22 Potter, p. 36.

23 *ibid.*, p. 16.

24 Spivack, p. 62.

25 Potter, p. 123.

26 Cole, p. 217.

27 For an interpretation of Doctor Faustus which views the comic scenes as central for understanding the play, see Robert Orstein, "The Comic Synthesis in Doctor Faustus," ELH, 22 (Sept. 1955), 165-72.

28 Christopher Marlowe, The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus, in Marlowe's Doctor Faustus, 1604 & 1616: Parallel Texts, ed. W.W. Gregg, p.163. All direct quotations are taken from the B text of this edition, except where otherwise specified. I have chosen to use the B text because it is still more popular among critics as a copy text, and because my argument, that Faustus is free to respond to God's grace right until the final act, must be able to account for certain passages, unique to the B text, which appear to stand in evidence against it (notably, the Good Angel's last speech to Faustus, and Mephistophilis claim that he had caused Faustus to misread Scripture).

29 Bevington, From Mankind to Marlowe, p. 258.

30 Mankind, in Medieval Drama, ed. David Bevington (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1975), p. 904. All direct

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quotations from Mankind are taken from this edition.

31 Wisdom, in The Macro Plays, ed. Mark Eccles, EETS (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1969), p. 114. All direct quotations from Wisdom are taken from this edition.

32 Owst, pp. 16-21.

33 Cole, p. 233.

34 Wilbur Sanders, The Dramatist and the Received Idea (Cambridge: At The Univ. Press, 1968), p. 223.

35 A. Bartlett Giamatti, Exile and Change in Renaissance Literature (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), p. 109.

36 Christopher Ricks; "Doctor Faustus and Hell on Earth," Essays in Criticism, 35 (April 1985), p. 106.

37 Cole, p. 234.

38 Sanders, p. 224.

39 Giamatti, p. 110.

40 Biblia Sacra Vulgatæ Editionis. All Latin Biblical quotations are taken from this edition. It is interesting to note that Faustus quotes from the Jerome Bible - the Bible of the Roman Catholic Church - to dismiss divinity. Of perhaps further significance is the fact that he uses "the Hebrew Psalter and new Testament" (1.177) - the two parts of Scripture traditionally associated with Protestantism - to do his conjuring.

41 Diane Elizabeth Dreher, "'Si Peccasse Neegamus': Marlowe's Faustus and The Book of Common Prayer," Notes & Queries, 30 (1983), p. 144.

42 Cole, p. 198.

43 Warren D. Smith, "The Nature of Evil in Doctor Faustus," Modern Language Review, 60 (1965), 171.

44 ibid., p. 238.

45 Vices and Virtues, p. 22.

46 Bevington, From Mankind to Marlowe, p. 258.

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47 Cole, p. 241.

48 Sara Munson Deats, "Ironic Biblical Allusion in Marlowe's Doctor Faustus", Medievalia et Humanistica, ed. Paul Maurice Clogan, N.S. 10 (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1981), p. 211.

49 As W.A. Davenport notes (Fifteenth-Century English Drama, Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1982, p. 89), Mind's immediate repentance when Wisdom comes to him is one of the inevitabilities of allegory: "wisdom has come to mind and this in itself is the intellectual recognition of wrong."

50 Cole, p. 237.

51 *ibid.*, p. 202.

52 Michael J. Warren, "Doctor Faustus: The Old Man and the Text," English Literary Renaissance, 11 (1981), 124.

53 Aquinas, pp. 161-62.

Endnotes: Chapter 4

- 1 David M. Bevington, Medieval Drama, p. 662.
- 2 ibid., pp. 662-63.
- 3 Charles W. Jones, Saints Lives and Chronicles in Early England (Ithaca, 1947; rpt. Hamden: Archon Books, 1968), p. 52.
- 4 Helen C. White, Tudor Books of Saints and Martyrs, (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1963), p. 34.
- 5 William Caxton, The Golden Legend, (n.p.: n.p., 1892), p. 982.
- 6 White, p: 6.
- 7 ibid., p. 37.
- 8 ibid., pp. 76-77.
- 9 Tyndale, The Obedience of a Christian Man, p. cvii.
- 10 ibid., p. cvii.
- 11 The Institution of a Christen Man, (London: Thomas Berthelet, 1537), as quoted in White, pp. 82-83.
- 12 Injunctions for the Clerge, (London: [T. Berthelet?], 1538), as quoted in White, pp. 83-84.
- 13 ibid., p. 84.
- 14 ibid., p. 85.
- 15 A Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christen man, set by the Kynge's Majestye of England... (London: Thomas Berthelet, 1543), as quoted in White, p. 85.
- 16 Articles to be enquired of in the Visitation, in the First yeere of the Raingn of our most dread Sovereign Ladie Elizabeth...1559, (London: Robert Barker, 1600), as quoted in White, p. 90.
- 17 The Second Tome of Homelyes, (London: Richard Jugge

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and John Cawood, 1563), as quoted in White, pp. 93-94.

18 Bevington, Medieval Drama, p. 662.

19 Jones, p. 52.

20 *ibid.*, p. 61.

21 Tyndale, Works of William Tindale, p. 139.

22 cf. Darryll Grantley, "The Macro Plays", Notes & Queries, 31 (1984), 27-29. In this article Grantley identifies the South English Legendary as the primary source for the Digby Mary Magdalene, pointing to narrative structure and verbal detail as evidence.

23 The Conversion of St. Paul, in Medieval Drama, ed. David Bevington, p. 666. All direct quotations are taken from this edition.

24 C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity (New York, 1943; rpt. London: Fontana Books, 1964), p. 107.

25 W.L. Goshalk, The Marlovian World Picture (Paris: Moriton, The Hague, 1974), p. 177.

26 White, p. 8.

27 *ibid.*, p. 41.

28 *ibid.*, p. 42.

29 The Play of Mary Magdalene, in Medieval Drama, ed. David Bevington, p. 690. All direct quotations are taken from this edition.

30 David L. Jeffrey, "English Saints' Plays," in Medieval Drama, Stratford-Upon-Avon Studies, 16, ed. Neville Denny (London: Edward Arnold Ltd., 1973), p. 78.

31 *ibid.*, p. 78.

32 Augustine, On Romans, trans. Paula Fredericksen Landes (Chico: Scholars Press, 1982), p. 65.

33 Boethius, p. 98.

34 Teresa Colletti ("The Design of the Digby Play of Mary Magdalene", Studies in Philology, 76, (1979), p. 319) further notes that this scene also stands in contrast to the

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feast at Simon's house, where Mary receives from Christ spiritual sustenance through the forgiveness of her sin.

35 Andreas Capellanus, The Art of Courtly Love, ed. J.J. Parry (New York: Frederick Ungar Pub. Co., 1957), p. 6.

36 John M. Velz, "Sovereignty in the Digby Mary Magdalene", in Comparative Drama, 2 (1968), p. 36.

37 Capellanus, p. 2.

38 *ibid.*, p. 3.

39 Augustine, The Holy Trinity, p. 356.

40 Shirley Sugarman (Sin and Madness, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976, p. 28) uses the Narcissus myth as an explication of original sin, because the myth explores the psychology of desire when the object desired is enclosed within the self: "We find the figure of Narcissus - 'the self curved in upon itself' - in the emerging metaphor of madness - the hell of the isolated individual consciousness."

41 Velz notes that "Mary is led into a life of sin not by lust but by a pride much like that which is apparent in the false claims of sovereignty made by all of the major characters in the play," p. 36.

42 Masinton, p. 124.

43 *ibid.*, p. 127.

44 James Smith, p.28. J.C. Maxwell ("The Sin of Faustus," The Wind and the Rain, 4 (1947), p. 52) accords with Smith, and suggests further that "in the representation of Faustus' character, the presence of this vice of curiosity mediates the transition that has sometimes seemed unduly abrupt, between the essentially spiritual pride to which he succumbs, and the direct sensuality in which his earthly career culminates."

45 Goshalk, p.186. It has been argued by many critics that Faustus' monologue to Helen contains some of the most beautiful lines of poetry in the play. G.J. Watson (Drama: An Introduction, London: The Macmillan Press, 1983, p. 44) for example, suggests that this passage reflects Faustus' aesthetic sensitivity, which is in unresolvable tension with the orthodox moral framework from which Marlowe wants us to interpret the play. More recently, Michael Keefer ("Verbal

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Magic and the Problem of the A and B texts of Doctor Faustus", JEGP, 82 (1983), p. 345) has argued that Faustus' address to Helen is "permeated by a verbal magic which is transitive only in its effects upon the audience... and yet the glamour which his words cast tends to remove one's desire, and perhaps one's capacity, to make detached moral judgements of him." It seems to me that by yoking such an aesthetically beautiful speech with a morally horrendous situation, Marlowe in fact strengthens the ironical implications of Faustus' desire, and invites the audience to feel even more acutely his tragic culpability in rejecting God's love. St. Augustine once said, "For a mind which loves fervently is only to be praised when that which it loves deserves to be fervently loved." (The Holy Trinity, p. 310).

⁴⁶ W.W. Greg's article, "The Damnation of Faustus" (Modern Language Review, 41 (1946), 97-107), in which he argues that Faustus was damned for the sin of demonality, has received numerous critical responses. I agree with J.C. Maxwell ("The Sin of Faustus," p.50), that "to say 'with Faustus' union with Helen the nice balance between possible salvation and imminent damnation is upset' (Greg: p. 107) is true enough if it means that this act of Faustus is that in which his impenitence finally finds expression - that this union is the apparent good which he finally prefers to his salvation - but it is false if it means that this sin in its particular character is, and is bound to be, specially momentous."

⁴⁷ Goshalk, p. 186.

⁴⁸ Cole, p. 226.

⁴⁹ Edward Snow, "Marlowe's Doctor Faustus and the Ends of Desire", in Two Renaissance Mythmakers, ed. Alvin Kernan (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Univ. Press, 1977), p. 72.

⁵⁰ Sanders, p. 242.

⁵¹ Bevington, Medieval Drama, p. 664.

⁵² Owst, p. 78.

⁵³ This point was made by David Jeffrey in a letter, 13 Dec., 1986.

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1 Joseph Westland, "The Orthodox Christian Framework of Marlowe's Faustus," in Studies in English Literature, 3 (1963), 192. Deats (Sarah Munson Deats, "Ironic Biblical Allusion in Marlowe's Doctor Faustus," Medievalia et Humanistica, ed. Paul Maurice Clogan, N.S. 10, Totowa N.J.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1981, p. 209) also argues that Faustus' misrepresentation of Scripture is done "in order to convince himself that he is doomed to die eternally and thus to offer a convenient rationalization for his subsequent actions."

2 Luther, p. 425.

3 *ibid.*, p. 338.

4 *ibid.*, p. 159.

5 *ibid.*, p. 159.

6 *ibid.*, p. 159.

7 *ibid.*, p. 159.

8 *ibid.*, p. 160.

9 *ibid.*, pp. 162-63.

10 *ibid.*, p. 378.

11 Waswo, p. 77.

12 Cole, p. 202.

13 Waswo, p. 93.

14 Luther, p. 162.

15 Deats, pp. 210-12. Deats notes that Faustus is an unreliable witness about his own spiritual condition, and that his estimation that his heart is hardened should be superceded by the Old Man's testimony that Faustus still has "an amiable soul" (1.1818). She also points out that, with the exception of Faustus' reference to his heart being hardened, all of the ironic Biblical allusions in Doctor

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Faustus have to do with the mercy of God.

- 16 Cole, p. 220.
- 17 Luther, p. 334.
- 18 Masinton; p. 8.
- 19 Waswo, p. 71.
- 20 Aquinas, p. 139. Here Aquinas argues that sin lessens the soul's readiness to receive grace.
- 21 Cole, p. 211.
- 22 Smith p. 26.
- 23 *ibid.*, p. 27.
- 24 Masinton, p. 9.
- 25 Waswo, p. 86.
- 26 *ibid.*, p. 91.
- 27 Cole, p. 219.
- 28 Waswo, p. 86.
- 29 Malcolm Pittock ("God's Mercy Is Infinite: Faustus' Last Soliloquy," English Studies, 64 (1984), 302-11) locates the moment of Faustus' damnation at the point in Faustus' soliloquy where he calls on Lucifer after witnessing the vision of Christ's blood in the firmament. Pittock argues that right until that point, Faustus was still capable of receiving God's grace. He suggests that Faustus begins to repent, "oh my Christ" (1.2049), and then is tormented by Lucifer, "Rend not my heart, for naming of my Christ" (1.2050), begins to repent again, "Yet will I call on him" (1.2051), but then finally succumbs to Lucifer's torment "O spare me Lucifer" (1.2051). After this point (as numerous critics have pointed out), the vision of Christ's redemptive blood is replaced by a vision of the wrath of God.

Pittock's reading works well for the A text, but I am not satisfied with his effort to reconcile the last speech of the Good Angel, found in the B text, with the notion that Faustus is still capable of repentance in his last soliloquy. Indeed, Faustus' soliloquy in the B text lacks the line about Christ's blood streaming in the firmament, perhaps because Marlowe (or the editor of the B text) did

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not want to suggest that Faustus was shown a vision of God's mercy when he was no longer capable of responding to it.

Because I have primarily followed the B text, I have not adopted Pittock's argument in my reading of Doctor Faustus. My claim, that Faustus' damnation is presented as a degenerative psychological process, does not require us to establish the exact point at which Faustus becomes incapable of repentance. That he does reach this point in the last act, however, is made clear symbolically by the Angels' departure.

30 Westlund, p. 203.

31 Masinton, p. 116.

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