

**MARLOWE ON THE ENGLISH STAGE: 1588-1988**  
**A STAGE HISTORY OF THREE MARLOWE PLAYS,**  
***DR. FAUSTUS, EDWARD II, AND THE JEW OF MALTA***

**BY**  
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TO MY MOTHER



## ABSTRACT

This study attempts to follow the stage history of three of Marlowe's plays, *Dr. Faustus*, *Edward II*, and *The Jew of Malta*, from Marlowe's own time to our own time. It also attempts to discuss changes in critical attitudes to these plays in particular, and to Marlowe in general, and to relate these to the plays' theatrical fortunes.

Each of the first and last three chapters is devoted to one play. The first three deal with the early stage history of the three plays under discussion. Chapter One discusses that of *Dr. Faustus*, Chapter Two discusses that of *The Jew of Malta*, and Chapter Three, that of *Edward II*. On the basis of what is known with reasonable certainty, and of what can be deduced from a general knowledge of the Elizabethan theatre, the first three chapters explore dates, places and circumstances of the performances of these plays. They also attempt to reconstruct the stage action of major scenes in the plays and to investigate what theatrical techniques were available or were made exclusively available for staging these scenes. In the light of the social, political, and cultural climate of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, there is also an attempt to study what the thematic issues in each play represented for Elizabethan audiences, and this is juxtaposed in the three last chapters with what they now represent for modern audiences. This juxtaposition hopefully illuminates our understanding of the plays in their own time and shows how some aspects of these plays which do not appeal to modern audiences and directors were, in fact, of great significance to their first audiences.

Chapters Six, Seven and Eight deal with the twentieth-century stage history of the plays in the same order as that of the three early chapters. The large number of performances in the twentieth century made the approach to these chapters inevitably selective. Therefore, in each chapter a certain number of performances have been chosen for detailed analysis, some of which have been seen; other performances have been discussed more briefly and only with a view to their effect in the stage history of the plays. For the productions discussed in detail, promptbooks and reviews have been examined, and, where possible, directors have been interviewed.

Together, the early and the modern period seem to exhibit two peaks of Marlowe's popularity on the stage. These are bridged by Chapters Four and Five, where the lack of Marlowe performances formed a kind of valley between two mountains. Thus these two middle chapters, as it were, provide the stepping stones between the first and the last three chapters. Chapter Four deals with the period between 1642 and 1800, reviewing the prevailing critical attitudes to Marlowe, and their relation to his absence from the stage. Chapter Five opens with a study of Edmund Kean's revival of *The Jew of Malta* in 1818 and of how the play was adapted to the social and theatrical climate of the time. The Chapter also reviews the critical attitudes to Marlowe's plays in the nineteenth century, as seen in editions of, and essays on, the plays; and it ends with a study of William Poel's revivals of two of the plays under discussion, *Dr. Faustus* and *Edward II*, in 1896 and in 1903, respectively.

All the eight chapters attempt to discuss the stage history of the plays in the light of the theatrical conditions of the times, and the ways in which these influenced the staging and interpretation of the text. There is no claim that it is possible to reconstruct the effect of a certain performance or *how* words were spoken, but, where promptbooks are available, there is a fair degree of certainty concerning *what* was spoken in the production. Thus, a study of cuts and additions made by actor-managers and directors proved necessary. In cases where further extracts from the promptbooks may be helpful to the reader, such extracts have been provided in appendices. There are also lists of dates and places of modern professional and amateur productions of these plays, which are useful though by no means exhaustive. Illustrations have also been provided, to illuminate points made in the discussion of particular productions.

The conclusion sums up the reasons why Marlowe's plays were popular only at certain times and in certain climates, discusses how certain difficulties experienced in staging them are still seen as major obstacles in productions. It finally focuses on Marlowe's position in the theatre of today.

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Finally, I hope through the dedication of this thesis to my dearest mother to express to her at least part of my sincere love, gratitude, and indeed life-time debt for her never-ending love and forbearance.

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## A NOTE ON ABBREVIATIONS

Because of the large number of reviews used, it has been necessary to create a system of quick reference to them both in the text and the notes. It should be noted that the abbreviations apply only within each particular chapter: for example ( $T_1$ ) means one thing in Chapter Six and another in Chapter Seven. However, the abbreviations start only from Chapter Five.

The abbreviations in Chapter Five are in notes: 3, 5, 80, 106.

The abbreviations in Chapter Six are in notes: 41, 47, 52, 67, 75.

The abbreviations in Chapter Seven are in notes: 42, 43, 44, 47, 60.

The abbreviations in Chapter Eight are in notes: 23, 26, 27, 31, 34, 43, 53.



## INTRODUCTION

Marlowe's plays were very popular in his own time. When the theatre was very active, when the open stage closely united spectators and performers, and when the Elizabethan audience was more interested in the play and in the actor playing the title-role than in who the playwright was, most of Marlowe's plays were soaring box-office successes. After *Tamburlaine* (1 and 2), *The Jew of Malta* and *Dr. Faustus* (and also *The Massacre at Paris*) became properties of the Admiral's Men, they were frequently performed at the Rose Theatre between 1594 and 1600. Some of Shakespeare's early plays were also staged there, but above all it was, as it were, Marlowe's theatre. Last year, when the remains of the Rose were discovered, appeals to retrieve and reconstruct it were based on its being, beside the Globe, the theatre where Shakespeare's plays were performed. There was virtually no mention of Marlowe's plays as having been performed there, a testimony to how little is still thought of him as a man of the theatre.

From the late seventeenth century until the beginning of the twentieth century Marlowe's plays were on the whole not seen as stageworthy. Only in the second half of this century has there been a widespread recognition (in theory as well as in practice) of Marlowe's plays as theatrically viable. This thesis aims to investigate the fortunes of three Marlowe plays on the professional English stage, from 1588 to 1988.

A study of the stage history of Marlowe is necessary to reveal above all, what really happened to Marlowe's plays through four centuries of the theatre. It should, however, be emphasised that the prime aim of this study is not to survey the extant, more or less factual, records concerning the performances of Marlowe's plays but critically to explore the questions of, first, why Marlowe's plays have been popular only at certain times and in certain climates and, second, how they have been interpreted in the social, political, and aesthetic context of various periods. Stage history will therefore be seen in relation to the course of literary and dramatic criticism of Marlowe.

There are several studies of Marlowe on the stage. Some, however, are purely historical, like C. F. Tucker Brooke's essay, "The Reputation of Christopher Marlowe", and John Bakeless's two volumes on Marlowe which devote each chapter to a play and discuss briefly the influence of each play on other plays in Marlowe's time and in later ages.<sup>1</sup> These two studies were very useful in tracing the chronology of some Marlowe

criticism and production. However, neither deals with the effects of productions on the stage and on Marlowe criticism. The sections in the Revels editions of *Dr. Faustus* and *The Jew of Malta* devoted to the stage history of these plays are again very helpful, but mainly concerned with listing a number of performances with a brief note on their value in the stage history of Marlowe.<sup>2</sup> Other studies that are theatrically orientated tend either to concentrate on one or two productions, or on a limited period. William Tydeman's study of *Dr. Faustus* in the Text and Performance series is useful in terms of emphasising the importance of studying, side by side, Marlowe's play in the closet and in the theatre. His section on performance, however, seems to be somewhat didactic, discussing a few productions in relation to what ought to be done. His sub-headings—"selecting the text", "playing the parts"—seem to lay down a certain rule and herald a report on whether the productions he chose to study followed that rule or not.<sup>3</sup> George Geckle's study of *Edward II* in the same series (which appeared after this thesis had been completed in its first draft) reviews the productions of *Edward II* in a way similar to that of the Revels editions. But for the discussion of the most important production, Toby Robertson's 1969 Prospect production, Geckle merely reproduces his long interview with the director. Admittedly, and as all my attempts to see Toby Robertson have failed, the text of this interview was immensely helpful for the section devoted to this production in the present study. Yet, the interview as such is not always illuminating for a reader who has not seen the production.<sup>4</sup> James Smith's essay, "*The Jew of Malta* in the Theatre", is objective and scholarly. It attempts to relate criticism of the play to its stage history, but it is brief and it focuses on the twentieth century.<sup>5</sup> Vesna Pistotnik's Ph. D. thesis at the Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham, studies all Marlowe's plays on stage and usefully reviews productions, but limits itself to those between 1960 and 1982, without trying to relate them to Marlowe criticism in that period.<sup>6</sup>

It cannot be claimed that the present thesis is comprehensive. To compress the record of Marlowe performances through four centuries into a single work demands an intensely selective approach in which of necessity certain details and aspects must be touched on only briefly or omitted altogether. The study has been a fascinating journey involving drama and theatre in a very wide way, but the temptation to go down some interesting side-tracks has had to be constantly resisted in an attempt to concentrate on the most important features of four hundred years of Marlowe on the English stage. To know the plays experientially on the stage was essential to this research and this is one of the reasons for the choice of three of Marlowe's plays, *Dr. Faustus*, *The Jew of Malta* and *Edward II*. It was fortunate, indeed an instructive and lasting pleasure, that I was able to see these plays on stage, and to consult directors.



Yet, the choice was prompted by other important reasons. There is a sort of interruption in the stage history of Marlowe's other plays, *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, *1 and 2 Tamburlaine*, and *The Massacre at Paris*. There have been no performances of these plays from the closing of the theatres to the beginning of the twentieth century, not even in any abridged form. Thus tracing the stage history of these four plays through four hundred years would create an unproductive gap that could not be filled by simply discussing the critical views of Marlowe in general.

By contrast, then, the three chosen plays provide a more continuous study; there were performances in the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century. In the case of *Dr. Faustus*, there were also productions of a mutilated text in the Restoration, and of an extremely abridged form of the text at the end of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century. As adaptation of any play forms part of its stage history, these abridged forms, along with some adaptations of *Dr. Faustus* in the twentieth century, are discussed. In addition, and apart from being the most interesting of Marlowe's plays, the three plays under discussion present controversial social, political and ideological issues which can be instructively related to the shifting fortunes of these plays.

The fact that each play has a different thematic nature and involves different theatrical problems has dictated the way in which each of the chapters devoted to individual plays—the first and the last three chapters—is constructed. In the case of *Dr. Faustus*, for instance—known as it is for its problematic text—involvement with textual problems was inevitable. However, these are discussed only where relevant, and some details have been relegated to the notes. In the case of *The Jew of Malta*, and *Edward II* it was hardly possible to avoid some consideration of the history of homosexuality and of anti-semitism.

Similarly, in dealing with various periods of theatrical activity, sources of information available for each chapter are different and, as such, not only was each treated differently, but also each presented its own difficulty. In the first three chapters, for example, where accounts of performances are not abundantly available, there is a reliance on general knowledge of both the society and the stage of the Elizabethan age, and on allusions to the plays in other works of the period. Absence of evidence became sometimes in itself a form of evidence. In the last three chapters where, on the contrary, there is a wide availability of reviews, the evidence has been dealt with as objectively as possible. Reviews are notoriously unreliable, and sometimes two reviews of the same production state diametrically opposed views. On several

occasions, taking a middle course seemed inevitable and nearer to the truth; and always it was necessary to see reviews in their context and in the light of other evidence.

The approach to studying the productions in the nineteenth and twentieth century is, however, the same for all. There are attempts at determining what text was spoken, at studying major cuts and additions, and at examining the size of the cast and its relation to interpretation and to the circumstances of performance. Stagecraft receives equal attention: settings, costumes, and stage business, and music and lighting when relevant. The interpretation of major roles in each play constitutes a third area of interest. The prominence given to each feature varies from play to play and from revival to revival: for example, while in *Edward II* it is important to discuss most of the characters, in *The Jew of Malta*, focus is laid mostly on Barabas, Ithamore and sometimes Ferneze; similarly, while Toby Robertson's production of *Edward II* (1969-70), and Clifford Williams's of *The Jew of Malta* (1964-5) were *tours de force* of acting and directing, John Barton's and Mark Brickman's productions of *Dr. Faustus* (1974 and 1987, respectively) were outstanding examples of adaptation.

The physical environment of each discussed production, the aesthetic notions of its actor and director, and the tastes of its audiences, are all given attention. In the case of unseen productions, promptbooks are relied upon as primary sources of information wherever possible. All too often, however, they are silent on what one most needs to know—how the words were spoken. Inevitably, there is a reliance on secondary sources, particularly on reviews—with the ever-present risk of seeing not the performance itself but what some eyewitness thought he saw. Wherever possible it is attempted to correlate the testimony of reviewers and to weigh their findings against the overall tone of theatre documents, and directors' interviews when available. Although one can never catch the stage moment exactly as it happened, one hopes that the reconstructions of stage action, if sometimes inadequate, are not seriously inaccurate.

In the accounts of productions, the attempt has been to steer a course between the two pitfalls of excessive and inadequate detail. The need for a readable narrative is hopefully reconciled with the abundance of material, in the awareness that not all of this available material is usable. To include as much detail as seemed relevant, without being over tedious, has been the main aim, if not always the achievement. Where there is a feeling of a need for more detail from promptbooks, extracts are provided in appendices. There are tables of the dates of modern performances of these plays,

which, though by no means exhaustive, should be useful. Including as many illustrations as possible, though many are not of as high a quality as would have been desirable, will hopefully be seen as an integral and illuminating part of this study.

In the following pages there is no attempt to suggest definitive interpretations of the three plays, but rather to record what has been done with them in the theatre and the effects which followed. From that record may emerge perhaps a greater appreciation of these plays' literary and theatrical potential, and some assessment of how much of that potential has been realised and may be possible to realise on stage in future productions.



## NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. T. C. F. Brooke, "The Reputation of Christopher Marlowe", in *Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 25 (June, 1922), 347-408. John Bakeless, *The Tragical History' of Christopher Marlowe*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1942).
2. *Dr. Faustus*, edited by John Jump, Revels edition (Manchester, 1962; reprinted, 1982). *The Jew of Malta*, edited by N. W. Bawcutt, Revels edition (Manchester, 1978).
3. William Tydeman, *Dr. Faustus, Text and Performance* (London, 1984).
4. George Geckle, *Tamburlaine and Edward II, Text and Performance* (London and Basingstoke, 1988).
5. J. L. Smith, "The Jew of Malta in the Theatre", in *Christopher Marlowe*, edited by Brian Morris, Mermaids Critical Commentaries (London, 1968), pp. 1-23.
6. Vesna Pistotnik, *Marlowe in Performance: 1960-1982* (Ph.D. dissertation, The Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham, 1983).

## CHAPTER ONE

*DR. FAUSTUS ON STAGE BEFORE 1642*

In the twentieth century, *Dr. Faustus* is a serious tragedy of damnation, raising a number of intellectual and religious questions. This is not necessarily how the play appeared to those who saw it performed on the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage.

Why, have we it not recorded, Faustus did  
Fetch Bruno's Wife, Duchesse of Saxonie,  
In the dead time of Winter, Grapes she long'd for?<sup>1</sup>

Julia in *The Two Merry Milke-Maids* uses *Dr. Faustus* as her piece of 'recorded' evidence to convince Duchess Dorigene of the existence of "such Art" as "negromancie", a report which Dorigene "holds fabulous". This play was "Acted before the King" in 1620, and at the Red Bull (as indicated on its title-page), thus offering this information from *Dr. Faustus* to a wide variety of audiences, public and courtly, taking the popularity of Marlowe's play for granted. At that time, *Dr. Faustus* was still in the repertoire of the Fortune where it had the reputation of creating a great stir, which was remembered as late as 1675.<sup>2</sup> The names, though obviously confused—Bruno for the Duke of Vanholt, and Saxonie instead of Vanholt—show that the memory was most probably of one or more performances of *Dr. Faustus*.<sup>3</sup>

This chapter will explore the way *Dr. Faustus* lingered in the memory of sixteenth and seventeenth-century audiences and the effects of the performances of the play, on different stages, before the closing of the theatres. Accounts of these performances are abundant, compared to those of performances of other Marlowe plays, and are often generous in description, but only when they state a point in common can they be taken with a fair degree of certainty, at least in relation to the play's effect on its audience. The fact that those who provided these accounts were sometimes biassed must always be considered. Points in common, together with a study of parallels with other plays of the period, and a general knowledge of the Elizabethan attitudes to the different moral issues in the play will be illuminating in the study of how the play fared on sixteenth and early seventeenth-century stages.

*Dr. Faustus* was one of the most popular plays of its time and of the whole period up to the closing of the theatres. According to Henslowe's *Diary*, between 30 September 1594 and 5 January 1597 the play was performed twenty-five times at the Rose by the Admiral's Men.<sup>4</sup> It is not known whether the date of the play

is 1588/9 or 1592.<sup>5</sup> What is important, however, is that since its first performance recorded in the *Diary* was on 30 September 1594, and since it was not marked as 'ne', it is almost certain that the play was performed before 1594. A reference (cited below) in Middleton's *The Black Book* (1604) to the "old theatre" in connection with a performance of *Doctor Faustus* suggests that it was probably acted at the Theatre where the Admiral's Men were playing in 1590/91. The play was probably acted at the Bel Savage, as one of the accounts of its performances (mentioned below) might suggest. The play is believed once to have been the property of Pembroke's Men, who perhaps sold it to Henslowe when they were in a serious financial difficulty,<sup>6</sup> and who then reconstructed their own copy from memory.<sup>7</sup> This might account for the existence of two texts of the play known as the A text (1604) and the B text (1616).<sup>8</sup> If this is true, the early performances of the play might have taken place in the provinces before it became part of the repertoire of the Rose, as Pembroke's Men are believed to have been formed to act outside London in the time of the plague.<sup>9</sup>

By 1597, the play seems to have grown stale, as takings went down from £3 12d, at the first recorded performance on 30 September 1594, to 5d, on 5 January 1597.<sup>10</sup> However, a reference to "the sittie of Rome", "dragon in fostes", and "faustus Jerkin his klok" in an inventory in 1598, most probably points to continuing performances.<sup>11</sup> The fact that in 1602, the date when Edward Alleyn re-joined the Admiral's Men after his retirement in 1597, Henslowe paid Samuel Rowley and William Birde £4 "for adicyones in doctor fostes" points to many performances in prospect.<sup>12</sup> An account of a performance at the Fortune (cited below) indicates that the play remained a favourite over a long period of time. As part of the repertoire of the Admiral's Men it was surely taken into the provinces when they were touring in 1597,<sup>13</sup> and as one of their successful plays, it would have been acted at court in 1597-1598 when the Admiral's Men were given invitations to act there.<sup>14</sup> The succession of ten editions from the 1604 quarto to the 1631 edition, and the greatly mutilated 1663 quarto, which says on its title-page "as it is now acted", stress the play's continued popularity into the Restoration (but that will be dealt with in Chapter Four).<sup>15</sup> Its vitality cannot be doubted if one considers the frequent borrowings from and echoes of the play in other works of the same period until the closing of the theatres in 1642.<sup>16</sup>

The play seems to have proved adaptable to different kinds of stages. It was attempted on well-equipped stages like the Rose's and the Fortune's, and on the barest of the stages in the provinces, and was offered to a variety of spectators, public and courtly. What concerns us, therefore, is to know what features of the play made particular demands on these stages, what stage effects were indispensable for the



staging of the play, whether they were generally available or made exclusively available for a particular performance. And, finally, what did an Elizabethan or Jacobean audience see as the main attraction in performances of the play.

Most of the allusions, if not all, to various productions of *Dr. Faustus* suggest that the Elizabethan public saw the play mainly as a sensational piece of black magic and devilish exercise, a favourite horror show in twentieth-century terms. The terms in which the play is referred to in the several anecdotes about performances, suggest the strong commotion that the play caused because of its representations of devils. In his *Astrologaster* (1620), John Melton gives an account of a production of *Dr. Faustus* at the Fortune:

Another will fore-tell of lightning and Thunder that shall happen such a day, when there are no such inflammation scene, except men goe to the *Fortune* in *Golding Lane*, to see the *Tragedie of Doctor Faustus*. There indeede a man may behold shagge-hayr'd Devills runne roaring over the Stage with Squibs in their mouthes, while Drummers make Thunder in the Tying-house, and the twelve penny Hirelings make artificiall Lightning in their Heavens.<sup>17</sup>

A fright among the audience is reported in Middleton's *Black Book*: "He had a head of hair like one of my devils in *Doctor Faustus*, when the old theatre cracked, and frightened the audience",<sup>18</sup> and an anonymous account tells of a fright among the players themselves:

Certaine Players at Exeter, acting upon the stage the tragical storie of Dr. Faustus the Conjuror, as a certain number of Devels kept everie one his circle there, and as Faustus was busie in his magicall invocations, on a sudden they were all dasht, every one harkning other in the eare, for they were all perswaded, there was one devell too many amongst them; and so after a little pause desired the people to pardon them, they could go no further with this matter, the people also understanding the thing as it was, every man hastened to be first out of dores. The players...contrarye to their custome spending the night in reading and prayer...<sup>19</sup>

The excitement of having devils on stage and the properties and spectacular stage-effects specially used for this purpose (squibs, drums, thunder, and artificial lightning) strengthened an already established belief in the reality of devils, and thus gave a chance for the Puritan campaigners against theatres to use it as a warning example in their propaganda. In 1633, *Dr. Faustus* was William Prynne's main evidence in trying to convince people that devils mixed with stage-players who were

performing on Sundays, and that the fires caused in playhouses were mainly "examples of Gods judgements upon many players":

Nor yet to recite the sudden fearefull burning even to the ground, both of the *Globe* and *Fortune* play-houses, no man perceiving how these fires came: together the *visible apparition of the Devill on the stage at the Belsavage play-house, in Queene Elizabeths dayes, (to the great amazement both of the Actors and Spectators) whiles they were there prophanely playing the History of Faustus* (the truth of which, I have heard from many now alive, who well remember it,) *there being some distracted with that feareful sight...*<sup>20</sup>

One could imagine how much was yet added to Puritan propoganda when a star like Edward Alleyn made a vow during one of the performances of the play not to act again, as John Aubrey has it:

The Tradition concerning the Occasion of the Foundation, [i.e of Dulwich college] runs thus; That Mr. *Alleyne*, being a Tragedian, and one of the Original Actors in many of the celebrated Shakespear's plays, in one of which he play'd a *Dæmon*, with six others, and was in the midst of the Play surpriz'd by an *Apparition of the Devil*, which so work'd on his Fancy, that he made a Vow, which he perform'd at this Place.<sup>21</sup>

It is remarkable how in this account *Dr. Faustus* was considered one of Shakespeare's plays. It shows that the audience was concerned more with the effect of the play than with the identity of the author. It is still more remarkable that Alleyn is said to have "play'd a Dæmon", which, though evidently a slip, shows how the existence of devils in the play was an outstanding feature of its performances.

The prologue at the Globe in Shirley's *Doubtful Heir* (1640) seems to refer to this main feature in performances of plays like *Dr. Faustus*, informing the audience that the play which is to be performed will be attempted "Without impossibilities the plot:/ No clown, no squibs, no devil in't".<sup>22</sup> Dekker uses the play as a point of reference in describing a piece of spectacle: "wilde fire flew from one another, like Squibs when *Doctor Faustus* goes to the divell".<sup>23</sup> In Samuel Rowland's *The Knave of Clubbes* (1609), a character is mockingly described as he is trying to raise a devil:

The Gull gets on a surplis,  
With a crosse upon his breast,  
Like *Allen* playing *Faustus*,  
In that manner he was drest:  
And having all his furniture,  
He steps into the ring...<sup>24</sup>



These references to Allyn as Faustus seem to concentrate on Faustus as a conjurer, as if he became a yardstick for plays that included magicians.

Having all the attention directed to supernatural aspects of the play leaves us with an obvious interpretation of *Dr. Faustus* on Elizabethan stages. It acquired an importance for the opportunities it provides for sensational spectacle. It cannot be denied that most Elizabethan plays were greatly visual but, unlike *Dr. Faustus*, some of them were praised for their poetry, tragic impact, or the acting skill demonstrated. Among Marlowe's own plays, *Tamburlaine*, for example, though extremely visual, was praised not only for its spectacle and shows of cruelty or magnificence, but also for its mighty line, and for Allyn's acting in the title-role.<sup>25</sup> Despite the great speeches in *Faustus*, it seems the play was a triumph not so much because of Allyn's acting as because of efforts spent on perfecting stage effects. A look at Henslowe's list of properties shows how he acquired special visual aids for the staging of the play, to bring out its aspects of magic, witchcraft and visual splendour: "dragon in fostes", "the sittie of Rome", "i Hell mought", and a "robe for to goo invisibell".<sup>26</sup> The *Diary* also includes lists of animal headpieces,<sup>27</sup> which probably were used in the staging of a play that calls for all the visual resources available in a theatre. For Henslowe to prepare a "dragon" which is not vital to the plot, is enough proof of a great interest in spectacular aspects of the play.

The fact that the play calls for extensive visual aids does not necessarily mean that it strictly demands fully-equipped stages. Rather, it can be said that it allows a chance for the use of whatever is available in the possession of a company, and perhaps a few extra properties prepared for it, though not very heavy ones. It cannot be denied that the A text is less demanding than the B text as far as the use of properties and areas on the stage is concerned, but it does not necessarily call for simpler stage effects, it simply has fewer instances that warrant the use of a complicated technique. Most of what one might call complicated action is included in the parts unique to B, which are characterised by an expansion of the middle scenes of the play, by adding new stage-directions, and by adding lines of dialogue that suggest the use of a certain property, or a certain area on the stage. This has led to a sharp—and still unresolved—dispute, in which both sides sound reasonable, about whether the B text was a version modified by the Birde-and-Rowley 1602 additions to allow for the use of new stage techniques that probably became available at the Rose, or whether these additions are lost and B is the original text, while A represents a shorter text suitable for performances in the provinces.<sup>28</sup> It is then necessary to discuss the questions of: (i) whether the B text actually calls for more facilities on stage, and

(ii) whether arrangements were made at the Rose for staging this text, which were then included in the action.

The B text is believed to demand an upper level because of the fact that devils watch Faustus twice during the action, first when he conjures (B,iii), and secondly at the end when the devils say "Thus from infernal Dis do we ascend../ To mark [Faustus] how he doth demean himself" (B,xix,1 and 10). There is no "above" in the stage-directions either in iii or in xix; it is added by editors.<sup>29</sup> Besides, there is nothing in the dialogue to prove that it was necessary for the devils to be above. The devils' words "do we ascend" imply a process of moving upwards, but whether from the stage to the gallery or from under the stage to the stage is uncertain. Though it is certainly more impressive to have the devils monitor the action from an upper level, they could have watched Faustus from any corner of the stage (an action not unfamiliar on Elizabethan stages).<sup>30</sup> The second suggestion in B of the use of an upper level is the fact that Benvolio (the Knight in the A text) appears at a window (B,xi). Apart from the stage-direction, there are three references in the text to a window: "See, see, his window's ope" (21), "Wilt thou stand in thy window and see it then?" (38), and "See, see...what strange beast is yon, that thrusts his head at the window" (xii,70-1). These references seem in fact to reflect a need to stress that Benvolio is supposed to be at a window, and not the existence of a real window on stage. Another reference to it suggests its absence, as it is not even identified: "I am content for this once to thrust my head out at *a window*" (42-3, my italics). It is probable that the Rose had a window on an upper level, but this does not mean that this scene was modified in B to warrant its use, nor does it mean that it was cut in A to prepare a version of the play convenient for staging in the provinces. According to the conditions in which the players had to perform at that time, moving from public playhouses to private, and to the provinces, with few facilities available, one could say that it was possible to stage B without an upper level. Of course, having an upper level in addition to the tiring house façade would have added more meaning to a play that very much deals with the hierarchy of heaven and hell, a meaning that is attempted in the setting of some modern productions of the play (discussed in Chapter Six), but it is not of absolute necessity.

Some incidents that are unique to B and are believed to require additional theatrical resources, are Benvolio's revenge on Faustus, which needs the special property of Faustus's false head (xiii), and the scholars' discovery of Faustus's limbs "torn asunder by the hand of death" (xx,7). Both involve the use of artificial parts of the body, and limbs were mentioned in the inventory of the Rose in 1598.<sup>31</sup> The need of these limbs for those two incidents made plausible the conjecture that they belonged



to the 1602 additions. Here, it is worth noting that both texts include the incident where the Horse-courser pulls Faustus's leg off (A,1206/ B,xv,34-5), and thus both need an artificial leg. Whether the A text was prepared for the provinces or not, at least it demands one artificial limb, and it seems this was not an impossibility for a touring company. It is also worth noting that both texts include the scene where Faustus cuts his arm, a scene which would have been staged as realistically as possible and for which bladders of blood or red ink were perhaps used.<sup>32</sup> The act of bleeding features in both texts, and though it would be easier to stage on equipped stages, it would not have been impossible on more extempore stages.

The event of the saving of Bruno (B,viii), the meeting of the rustics at the tavern (B,xvi) and their eruption into the Duke's courtyard (B,xvii), are all unique to B, but they do not seem to demand difficult stage-effects and large properties; they are merely longer than the scenes in the A text. One controversial incident in the B text is the last dialogue of the Angels in which they tell Faustus what "celestial happiness" he has lost (B,xix,106). It calls for the use of a throne that descends by means of a certain machinery in the heavens. Its absence in the A text has led to the conclusion that it was added in 1602, when such a machinery was certainly available at the Rose. Yet, according to Henslowe's *Diary* this machinery was installed in 1595,<sup>33</sup> so there is no explanation why Henslowe had to wait until 1602 to include it in *Dr. Faustus*. Therefore it is not certain that the Angels' speech was part of the additions. The scene might have been staged without a throne before 1595: after all the emphasis on its being a descending throne is only indicated in the stage-directions, "*Music while the throne descends*" (105), which might not be Marlowe's. In the speech there is only one quick reference—"yonder throne"—which might very well be simply a figure of rhetoric; the absence of a throne would have no effect on the action. Ben Jonson satirically refers to a "creaking throne" in his prologue to *Every Man out of His Humour*,<sup>34</sup> which suggests its having been an awkward practice on stage, and possibly not one that Marlowe would have envisaged for his play.

What has been argued is not in defence of the originality of either A or B, it is only an attempt to reach the conclusion that, regardless of which text represents the original, both could be staged on the barest of stages if necessary, and presumably both were.<sup>35</sup> The description of Rome features in both texts, but Henslowe seems to have had a special property for this: "the sittie of Rome", presumably a painted cloth used for performances at the Rose to achieve a geographical preciseness. Having no such property in performances in the provinces does not mean that this part had to be cut;



the description is detailed enough to stimulate the audience's imagination on the least equipped stages, even without "the sittie of Rome".

It is important to consider whether a trap was an absolute necessity for the staging of the play, and for both texts. It is believed that the Rose had a trap, which if true would be very appropriate for a play like *Dr. Faustus*. It would not be large enough, however, to accommodate complicated action. Presumably, it was used for the entrance of some denizens of hell, judging from the fact that the accounts of performances stress how effective the presence of devils was in frightening the audience, and judging from plays played at the Rose that call for the use of a trap.<sup>36</sup> The woodcut for the 1616 quarto shows a devil rising from a trap (see illustration 1). Though its evidence cannot be reliable, at least it suggests the Elizabethan expectation of where the devil should emerge from. Even if Marlowe was not writing in anticipation of a trap, as once suggested,<sup>37</sup> it would certainly be used when available. It is very probable that Mephostophilis used it for his first entrance in his "[ugly] shape" (A,iii,266/ B,iii,25). Perhaps another actor appeared from the trap in the "ugly shape", or probably as the 'dragon' referred to in Henslowe's *Diary*, as seven lines would not have allowed Mephostophilis time enough to change his costume and to return through another door, probably in a friar's shape.<sup>38</sup> It is difficult to believe that Marlowe did not know the facilities available at the Rose, as *Tamburlaine* was acted there in his lifetime. If Marlowe did not expect a trap to be available for Mephostophilis to use, at least it is certain that he strove for a horrific entrance for him in a certain devilish shape, and, knowing the difficulty of acting in it, he allowed him a chance to change, incorporating this into the action, with a touch of anti-catholic humour to amuse the audience: "That holy shape becomes a devil best" (A,iii,270/ B,iii,28).

It might be argued that the B text calls more urgently for a trap than the A text does, particularly for the scene in which the scholars discover Faustus's limbs. Smoke and squibs produced from the trap were not unfamiliar in public playhouses,<sup>39</sup> and it is probable that, while smoke was produced through it, the devils came to take Faustus to hell (whether they exited down a trap, or into a certain 'discovery space'), and that during the scene artificial limbs were flung up from the trap to achieve an impressive image of realism. But this does not lead to the conclusion that the scene cannot be staged on a bare platform. The devils could still surround Faustus, blocking the audience's view from all sides, to carry him off to hell. Each could also be hiding an artificial limb in his costume and, when closing in on Faustus, they could drop it on the ground at the right instance, unnoticed by the audience amid noises they presumably

produced (hissing and roaring). This scene, and Mephostophilis's entry, could be very effectively staged with a trap, but it is not absolutely necessary.

What the play seems to need is a raised platform, at least two exits, a group of scenic emblems and properties (chairs, a table, books, candles, torches, daggers, banquet items, horns...etc.), a set of costumes symbolic and ordinary, and whatever stage-effects available (thunder and lightning). Having more than that will be useful, but of secondary consideration. It is important here to mention that in the Prologue to *The Two Merry Milke-Maids* there is an apology for the lack of some extra stage-effects that suggests that these are effective but not indispensable—

Tis a fine play:  
For we have in't a Conjuror, a Devill,  
And a Clowne too; but I feare the evill,  
In which perhaps unwisely we may faile,  
Of wanting Squibs and Crackers at their taile—

a reference that perhaps bears a relation to the stage-directions: "*Enter Mephostophilis: sets squibs at their backes: they runne about*" (A.ix,1013), and thus indicates that such stage-effects were not always available. At the Rose, having a star like Alleyn, who was praised for his acting being so lifelike (though to some his style was exaggerated),<sup>40</sup> did much of the trick, and elaborate costumes, properties and spectacular stage-effects, achieved by simple means, did the rest.

With regard to this conclusion, is a discussion of the staging of *Dr. Faustus* on Elizabethan stages worth engaging in? Or is it possible in the first place? Though any argument is basically conjectural, it is worth reflecting on some points concerning the staging of the play at the Rose, as it was the playhouse that accommodated most of its performances. It is also important to discuss Elizabethan attitudes to the play in general, to locate its position among other plays of the period.

There is much controversy as to whether an 'inner stage' or a 'discovery-space' existed on the stage of the Rose, and whether it was used for the staging of the play, specifically for Faustus's study, and probably for the "Hell-mought". The stage-direction "*enter Faustus in his study*" does not necessarily indicate 'discovered' and Faustus's study need not be located in an interior space. The emphasis in the Chorus's demonstrative speech "And this the man that in his study sits" (Prologue,28) supports this, because it implies a need to locate the place in the absence of the verisimilitude of a study. During the action the study is needed more than once, and it is inconceivable that a table cluttered with Faustus's academic paraphernalia was set each time. Yet, not



having an enclosed space would mean a loss of the metaphorical significance of a confinement for the first stage of Faustus's career which would reflect the sort of imprisonment he created for himself. It has been suggested that Faustus probably enters "laden with his books, either with the Chorus or while the Chorus is speaking, and sits down by a 'scenic emblem' indicating his study".<sup>41</sup> But Faustus needs to be seen in his study, settled on a chair for a few seconds, to give an image of an involved scholar. This 'scenic emblem' was probably a sheltered space or some hangings recognised by the audience as a study, that must have remained on stage all the time, placed in a way that would not impede the action. Hosley's analysis of the 'discovery space' on Elizabethan stages allows for the conclusion that Faustus's study could well have been set in a 'discovery' that was made out of hangings on an open door-way space.<sup>42</sup> But did Faustus stay there during his sixty-two-line speech?

The theory of an interior stage seems a far-fetched one considering that the 'inner stage' was so obscured that bringing lights was necessary.<sup>43</sup> And if we accept the idea that the study was set in a 'discovery space', we are also ignoring all theories of audibility and visibility on Elizabethan stages. Besides, Elizabethan acting was characterised by wide gestures; Alleyn's in particular were known as exaggerated: "He vaunts his voyce upon an hyred stage./ With high-set steps...".<sup>44</sup> These "high-set steps" will be rather restricted in a 'discovery', and it would be tedious for the audience not to be able to see Alleyn and hear him properly for sixty-two lines, particularly for those spectators, if any, seated in the gallery above the tiring-house. However, the action presented in confined spaces was often limited and it usually spilled out onto the main stage. Stage-directions for other plays which call for similar interior places, and which were performed at the Rose or at the Globe, suggest that a study or a counting-house clearly located in a sort of recessed space was not unfamiliar.<sup>45</sup>

Marlowe seems to have been aware of the limitations of the facilities for interior scenes, and thus he limits the action of these scenes. Though Faustus's first speech has sixty-two lines, there are opportunities for movement on stage. It can be argued that Faustus's being in a study was meant to be a kind of tableau to focus on his involvement in the review of sciences, but then the action could spill out onto the main stage as early as line 6: "Sweet Analytics, 'tis thou hast ravish'd me!" (for which Faustus could have picked a book from the study and come out onto the stage) or lines 11-12: "A greater subject fitteth Faustus's wit./ *Bid on Kai me on* farewell, Galen come...". Furthermore, the regular punctuation of the speech, almost every ten lines, with exclamations, questions, or forceful assertions—like "farewell, Galen come" (12), "Physic, farewell! Where is Justinian?" (27), "When all is done, divinity is best" (37),

"Divinity, adieu!" (47)—seems to indicate that Faustus did not remain in his study, or at a table, all the time, but rather moved each time to fetch a new book, thus spreading the action onto the main stage. Even in modern productions, as will be seen in Chapter Six, directors tend not to place Faustus in his study during the whole speech, and even attempt to forestall any tediousness by having other characters around Faustus. In support of this, *The Devil's Charter* (1607) represents a similar situation where the actor clearly came in and out of a study: "*Alexander in his studie beholding a Magicall glasse with other observations.... Alexander commeth upon the Stage out of his study with a booke in his hand....Exit Alexander into the studie*".<sup>46</sup>

In both texts, Faustus uses the study more than once. In his first speech, and in the scene when he is waiting for Mephostophilis to "bring [him] glad tidings from great Lucifer" (A,v,467/ B,v,28), there seems to be a need for a certain place, object, or emblem that would become connected with a study from the beginning of the action. The B text might seem to require this more than the A text. There are two additional references to the use of the study in the B text: in vi by Faustus and Mephostophilis, and in xviii at "*Thunder and Lightning. Enter Devils with covered dishes. Mephostophilis leads them into Faustus' study. Then enter Wagner*". In the first reference, as Faustus and Mephostophilis start their discussion about heaven, hell, and the universe, it would be difficult to have them stand in the study, though the stage-direction indicates their being there. The A text has the same beginning to this scene, but there is no reference to any location. It is probable that the stage-direction which locates the action in B, was added later, in connection with some performances at the Rose. In the second reference, it is only in the stage-direction that the study is used by devils for a kind of procession, but in both texts the scene starts with Wagner's words "I think my master means to die shortly". It is thus also probable that this reference was added for staging at the Rose (perhaps one of the 1602 additions) where tableaux would be more desirable and more possible. Yet, it could be that the word "study" did not necessarily refer to a study, rather to the area that became connected with it. Therefore, only as far as stage-directions are concerned, B seems to require a permanent emblem on stage that would stand for a study. Apart from that, the uses of the study in both texts call for similar representations, and any hangings or recessed area might serve, as long as the action spills out of it.

One piece of evidence needs to be examined before accepting that the study was set in a 'discovery space' with hangings. The drawing of the title-page of the 1616 quarto shows Faustus standing in a circle, holding a stick and a book, with a window and a shelf on view in the background (illustration 1). On the one hand, this might



imply that Faustus's study was somewhere on the rear stage against the tiring house wall, and also that a circle was used when Faustus conjures, as referred to in the play when Robin warns Dick to "Keep out of the circle" (B,vii,12, not mentioned in A). On the other hand, it could suggest that whoever drew the title-page had seen the play performed and understood the location of the first scene, and of the conjuring scene, no matter how austerely it was staged, but that, when he came to reconstruct an image of Faustus, he added his imaginative vision of the scene. There is nothing to prove that the drawing represented the way the study looked on stage of the Rose, or any stage.

The "Hell-mought", which Henslowe seems to have prepared as an additional stage-effect, and which is specifically referred to only in the stage-direction in B, "*hell is discovered*", has been the subject of controversy as to whether it was represented with the help of a trap, or was located on stage. It has been suggested that hell's mouth was located in a 'discovery space',<sup>47</sup> or at the corner of the stage in a curtained space.<sup>48</sup> Neither text calls for such a property—except possibly for the Bad Angel's reference, in B, to a "torture house", which seems to be symbolical—but since it is referred to in the *Diary*, it is certain that this property was used for at least some performances of *Dr. Faustus*. Perhaps Henslowe did not prepare this property specifically for *Dr. Faustus*, but, once it was available, it added to the effectiveness of the staging of that play. In any case it might not have been available before 1598, the date under which it is listed in the *Diary*.<sup>49</sup>

There is also a possibility that "Hell-mought" was connected with the use of a trap for Faustus's last descent. An anonymous report in the *English Wagner Book* (1594) which, though it might not be connected with performances of *Dr. Faustus*, is "strongly coloured by memories of the play in performance",<sup>50</sup> suggests that Faustus might have fallen into a trap:

When Faustus having long raged, of a sudden howling loud and tearing his hair, laid both his arms upon his neck and leaped down headlong off the stage, the whole company vanishing, but the stage with a most monstrous thundering crack followed Faustus hastily...

These words seem to echo the reference in *The Black Book* to the old theatre cracking. Depending on this report, it has been suggested that the "Hell-mought" was the dragon itself:<sup>51</sup>

there might you see the groundwork at the one end of the stage, where out the personated devils should enter into their fiery ornaments, made like the broad wide mouth of a huge

dragon, which with continual armies of smoke and flame  
breathed forth his angry stomach's rage...

This is, however, uncertain, as the *Diary* lists both the dragon and "Hell-mought" separately in one inventory.<sup>52</sup> The latter might have been a cloth painted in flaming red, pushed up the trap, with smoke produced, illustrating the words of the Bad Angel about the roasting of bodies in hell (xix,116-27). But the play might be staged without a trap as suggested by Glynne Wickham.<sup>53</sup> If we are sympathetic to a symbolical theory of Elizabethan staging, we are liable to conclude that, in case a trap was available, no matter how small it was, it would be used for certain moments in the action, such as some entrances of devils (they certainly used other entrances to be able to "run roaring over the stage"), and specifically for Faustus's last fall into hell. However, placing hell in Faustus's study as envisaged above (in the discovery) would achieve an interesting symbolism and the discovery of Faustus's limbs in B would be easier to stage there.

Some effort must have been spent on the staging of Faustus's travels to show what Faustus obtained from his pact. The preparation of the "sittie of Rome" has already been mentioned. There would be no need, obviously, for scene-changing, as these are frequently created by the dialogue (ii,1; vii,4; viii,24; x,1-2; Chorus,2,13; xii,2; xiv,5...etc.). The basic means to make the middle scenes spectacular would be costumes, tableaux and stage-groupings. These scenes would exhaust the wardrobe of any company, whether a touring one or not. Henslowe's *Diary* is full of references to silver and golden gowns, silk taffeta and a "robe for to goo invisibell".<sup>54</sup> It is needless to say that the dignitaries that Faustus meets would be dressed as lavishly as possible, using clerical, imperial, and duCal robes. Presumably there would be attempts to swell the scene with as many actors as possible, to reflect a contrast between the loneliness in the first stage in Faustus's life, and the glamour of courts and palaces.

Elaborate costumes and make-up were also characteristics of devilish figures.<sup>55</sup> The collection of animal head-pieces that Henslowe kept was probably meant to show devils as ugly and "shagge hay'rd" and, as the *English Wagner Book* seems to suggest, grotesquely dressed, with hair growing in their faces and a bush of hair on their heads. The clown in the A text refers to devils with "wilde long nailes...hee divels [with] hornes, and...shee divels [with] clifts and cloven feete" (A,iv,415-7). If they were thus clearly distinguished from other characters, this no doubt helps to explain why they were singled out in the accounts of performances. The devils would need to be ugly in order to show how illusive were the pleasures Faustus obtained from his pact. The Deadly Sins were perhaps not as horrific as the devils,



otherwise their sight would not "delight [Faustus's] soul" (vi,170), though in some modern productions this paradox is desirable for an ironic effect. They might have carried properties emblematic of their identity (as they have done in some modern productions), as they were part of a popular iconographic tradition.<sup>56</sup> Lucifer and Beelzebub, who probably doubled as Valdes and Cornelius, would have been distinguished from small devils by their more elaborate magnificence. The *English Wagner Book* suggests an image of Lucifer "shaking his great bush of hair...with his fire-burnt scepter, and his like coloured crown all of gold...the flames which proceeded from his frightful eyes did dim the sight of Wittenbergers below". It is true that these verbal images may not fairly represent possible presentation on stage, but at least the description here reflects conventional images of the chief devil.

Mephostophilis, who in both texts is hardly ever absent from the action, may have looked less terrifying than other devils. Certainly he was not as terrifying as Lucifer who "look'st so terribly" (vi,89). Faustus asks him to change his ugly shape and return a "Franciscan friar" (A,iii,269/ B,iii,27). The possibility of another actor taking this task over, already mentioned, would have given Mephostophilis a chance to return quickly to Faustus, suggesting a devilish dexterity. If Mephostophilis changed into a friar's shape, he would presumably be distinguished from the friars in the papal scenes. The A text makes it less probable that he had to have a devilish appearance as the Horse-courser speaks to him directly, asking him to entreat Faustus to sell him his horse; and he discusses with him whether Faustus is sleeping or not (A,xi,1190-215). At the same time, this conversation would gain in irony if Mephostophilis was in some way distinguished as a devil. If he looked different from other devils, this might explain the absence of accounts of the play mentioning Mephostophilis as a repulsive devil. He would be remembered rather as an evil messenger, more humorous than terrifying.<sup>57</sup>

Concerning the heavenly characters, the Angels could have been disposed symmetrically, dressed perhaps in contrasted colours indicating their tasks. Colours were important codes on Elizabethan stages, easily understood by audiences.<sup>58</sup> Tamburlaine's changes of mood were reflected in changes of colours: white, red, and black. In the *English Wagner Book* is mentioned a "legion of bright angels riding upon milk white chariots" who "from the aforesaid heaven there descended"; they were so "naturally done," that one would think "it had been heaven itself or the epitome of it". What is more difficult to ascertain is whether Faustus was supposed to see them when they first appear, a question often asked by critics.<sup>59</sup> There is nothing in the text to indicate that Faustus is aware of their presence: his words "how am I glutted

with conceits of this" (A,i,110/B,i,77) that immediately follow the Bad Angel's, could be merely Faustus's reaction to what he reads in his books. This uncertainty has inspired some modern directors of the play, disconcerted by the incredibility of Angels on stage, to make them invisible, with their voices either heard off-stage or provided by Faustus himself as part of his spiritual-psychological conflict. Or, as a still greater innovation they have been reduced to mere puppets held by Faustus, their lines said by Faustus (see Chapter Six). Elizabethan audiences, however, understood the externalised personification of the forces of good and evil. There were special conventions for invisibility on stage (cf. "a robe for to goo invisibell"). Faustus, for instance, is supposed to be invisible in the papal scenes, but this is emphasised in the dialogue by Mephostophilis (A,vii,873-5/B,xi,12-25), and it is improbable that this technique was used for the Angels.

Helen, who is "heavenly" to Faustus (xviii,93), was classified by Elizabethans as a succuba, of infernal origin.<sup>60</sup> Therefore Faustus's connection with her would be easily seen not only as an aesthetic ritual but also as a recipe for damnation. But there would be a touch of irony (and perhaps comedy, as Helen would have been presented by a boy actor), echoing the devil dressed as a woman earlier in the play. Having 'her' twice on stage could point, on the one hand, to the fact that 'her' appearance was a desired piece of spectacle. Ceremonial entrances were sometimes repeated if they entertained the audience,<sup>61</sup> though, of course, Marlowe builds the repetition into the meaning of his text. On the other hand, it might simply be a technical device by Marlowe to establish the boy-actor as the beautiful Helen before 'her' second and more important appearance to Faustus. 'She' might have used the yard to prolong 'her' passing over the stage,<sup>62</sup> accompanied by Mephostophilis to indicate 'her' evil origin, besides 'her' being a paragon of beauty—a paradox that modern directors find difficult to achieve.

Valdes and Cornelius would perhaps be dressed in rich clothing to provide temptation for Faustus, who sees them at a stage of worldly fortune, based on a magic skill that in fact he will never reach, and to contrast them with the scholars who would be poorly dressed in order to validate Faustus's wish to dress the students in silk (i,89). Their magic is, however, likely to have been seen as a matter of wasting time, "As Faustus did, and many that are there [Wittenberg]/ In Negromancie..." (*The Two Merry Milke-Maids*, II,ii,186-7, f. F4v).

In spite of the fact that the play would exhaust the company's store of properties and costumes, it would not require a huge cast. Owing to its dependence on



a morality structure, it would allow a great deal of doubling. Characters vanish, once they have performed their task. They appear in pairs and are suppressed in pairs: Valdes and Cornelius, two scholars, Lucifer and Beelzebub, Robin and Wagner, Robin and Dick, the Pope and Cardinal, the Emperor and Benvolio, the Duke and Duchess...etc. No more than seven actors and two boys would be needed (John Aubrey's account mentions Alleyn with six others), and perhaps hired actors would help in the most crowded scene, the pageant of the Seven Deadly Sins.<sup>63</sup> This aspect of the play would facilitate the company's task, though it shows how heavy the stress on the actor's memory was. Perhaps this would allow for actors' jokes to find <sup>their</sup> way into the text, to compensate for any failure of memory which, because of the varied nature of the play, would not greatly affect the action.<sup>64</sup> This morality structure of the play made it adaptable to different playing conditions, and hospitable to experimentation. Recently, on modern stages, as will be shown in Chapter Six, it has proved stageable with only three actors.

However, there is more than the morality structure in the play. Though it has been seen by critics as a dramatisation of orthodox Christian teaching familiar in moralities, *Dr. Faustus* has apparently atheistical statements, and much questioning of the reality of heaven and hell. In spite of the frequent moralising by the angels, scholars, the Old Man, and even Mephostophilis himself, judging from the accounts of the performances of the play, this aspect seems to have been overshadowed by the excitement that the appearance of the devils caused. More importantly, regardless of Faustus's long review of sciences, apparently he was seen by some members of the audience as mainly a conjuror, and consequently his life was seen as a misspent one. This would be because of the fact that the scenes that display the scholarly side of his life, and that to critics "reenact and reassert the emblems of Christian learning",<sup>65</sup> constitute only one third of the play. The rest of the play, the comic and middle scenes, have a double function, for, besides entertaining the groundlings, they would reflect Faustus's misspent life and stress his identity as a conjuror. He is consistently called 'conjuror' by low characters, and 'magician' by characters of a high rank.

Furthermore, it has been shown that performances of plays on Elizabethan stages took a much shorter time than they do on modern stages. Comparisons with other plays of the same period indicated that to act *Dr. Faustus* would probably have taken no more than two hours for the A text, and two and a half for the B text.<sup>66</sup> This, combined with the Elizabethan style of acting, characterised by stylized gestures and speech, would have been detrimental to the psychological aspect of the play (as seen and realised in modern productions). Faustus's first soliloquy would seem rash, and

perhaps what the audience would mainly notice from his review of sciences would be his deliberate attempt to ignore the second half of the syllogism on repentance that promises redemption—and that presumably the audience would know by heart (i,39-47)—<sup>67</sup> and his ultimate choice of magic. This would be accentuated in his second review of the sciences in the presence of Valdes and Cornelius, where he is shown to prefer their quick advice to "all [his] labours" in learning (68). Besides, it is surprising that, though Faustus is called by the name 'doctor' many times in the play, it is usually accompanied by reference to conjuring (vii,2/ xv,27,32; xvi,18-9; xvii,1...etc.), and at one instance he is called a devil (xiii,45). Even the scholars do not call him doctor when they first appear (ii,1-2,5), and in the last scene with him (xix), they refer to him only as 'Faustus'. In addition to that, the instances where he is called 'conjurer' (xi,30,46; xii,25; xiii,2,19,28,33,97, etc.) and 'magician' (xii,1; xiv,14, etc.), along with the words 'conjuring', 'conjured', 'magic', and 'necromancie', far exceed any reference to any academic titles.<sup>68</sup> And it can be argued that he did not even reach the rank of a magician who, for Elizabethans, had to be successful in raising devils and have them in his control. Faustus does not raise Mephostophilis who tells us that "[he] came hither of [his] own accord" (A,iii,289; B,iii,46).

It is important to notice that each time Faustus reflects on repentance, this provides the opportunity for devils to appear on stage, or for shows to be prepared from hell to distract Faustus from his purpose. Volumes have been written on whether, to an Elizabethan audience, Faustus was seen as damned from the beginning, or whether his chances for repentance were open until the last warning conveyed to him by the Old Man.<sup>69</sup> If he was seen as irretrievably damned, it would be useless to reiterate opportunities for repentance. Faustus's frequent attempts to turn to God would undoubtedly offer a tension without which the play would be tedious. But it seems that for at least some part of an Elizabethan audience, the tension was only partially concerned with a desire to have Faustus saved. Its major function appears to have been to provide a culmination either in a terrifying appearance of devils, or in magnificent shows from hell. It is very similar to the suspense that the spectators willingly but painfully enjoy when something occurs that will cause the murderer to appear in a horror film. This is supported by the fact that throughout the play there are continuous warnings to Faustus that if he repents "devils will tear [him] in pieces." (vi,83; cf. xviii,76), which must have further loaded his attempts to do so with apprehension of the emergence of the devil.

It seems, then, that the most crucial moments in the play were at one and the same time theological crisis points and warrants for spectacle. When in the middle of



his discussion of hell, and at the most crucial point of Mephostophilis's confession that "I am an instance to prove the contrary,/ For I tell thee I am damn'd and now in hell." (v,137-8), Faustus suddenly says "But leaving this, let me have a wife" (141), then he might be moved by a cruel God or by his own sexual depravity,<sup>70</sup> but he also provides another chance for a piece of spectacle and comedy. The same could be said about Faustus's request to see Helen shortly after her first appearance: it both emphasizes his damnation and reiterates a beautiful show and complements it with one of the most poetic passages in Elizabethan drama. There is emphasis throughout the play on its self-conscious theatricality: Faustus's words to Mephostophilis before the papal procession arrives, "then in this show let me an actor be,/ That this proud Pope may Faustus' cunning see" (viii,76-7); Faustus's and Mephostophilis's metamorphosis as the two cardinals (B,viii,161); Faustus's words to Mephostophilis about "Present[ing] before this royal Emperor/ Great Alexander and his beauteous paramour" (xii,34-6); and later Faustus's words to the Emperor—"My gracious lord, you do forget yourself/ These are but shadows, not substantial" (54-5)—that disillusion the Emperor, and it seems also the audience. All these point to the fact that the play is conscious of itself as pure theatre, keeping in mind that there would be some members of the audience sitting on the stage as both stage-audience and theatre audience. In this sense, *Dr. Faustus* is a wonderful blend of reality and illusion. It has been recently suggested that these kinds of shows would also reflect a form of theatrical pleasure that would captivate the audience and silence them, and thus echo familiar Elizabethan political practices, a point which, however true, would probably not be realised except by the more sophisticated of the spectators.<sup>71</sup>

It becomes obvious from a reading of the play that it provides hints of topical issues (particularly in Faustus's nationalistic dreams to "fly to India for gold", "wall all [England] with brass", and "chase the prince of Parma from our land"...etc.,i,81-96). It also incorporates a familiar morality structure and a structure of Christian teaching, and offers a main tragic line that occasions poetic passages. But all these aspects were presented through a system of spectacle, sandwiched with comic relief, that seems to have eased the serious side of the story—even the terrible ending. It was perhaps left to the more sophisticated part of the audience, or to the poets of the age, like Shakespeare, who (once the text was available) probably complemented their seeing of the performance with a reading of the play, to appreciate this serious side of it, and thus to draw, not only on the play's visual images but also on its verbal splendour. The frequent borrowings from the Helen speech have been always noted.<sup>72</sup> It has been argued that in some plays, particularly *King Lear* and *Macbeth*, Shakespeare reproduced images from *Dr. Faustus*, that, for Elizabethan audiences, would acquire



meaning mainly through their memory of the play in performance. Jean MacIntyre interestingly argues that in *King Lear*, in the scene where Edmund stabs his arm to be able to accuse Edgar of having attacked him (II.i), Shakespeare has drawn on the image of Faustus's cutting his arm to sign the infernal pact with his blood. She also goes on to argue that in the dagger scene in *Macbeth* (II,ii) Shakespeare borrowed the language with which Faustus questions whether the congealing of his blood and the inscription on his arm are illusion or reality, or are ominous or heavenly signs.<sup>73</sup>

It is almost certain that Faustus's pact with the devil had a verbal and visual impact on the stage, and that it would be staged as realistically as possible, probably with a bag of blood or red ink under Alleyn's sleeve—and <sup>was made to</sup> it is said that the act of bleeding <sub>look</sub> very real.<sup>74</sup> Judging from anecdotes about the various performances of the play, it seems the visual always overshadowed the verbal. Explicit references to Faustus's sufferings (unlike the implicit echoes discussed above) are rare, and R. C. Gent's *The Time Whistle* is the exception that proves the rule:

O horrid act! O execrable evill!  
 Another Faustus, hapless hopelesse man,  
 What wilt thou doe, when as that little sand  
 Of thy soone emptied houre glasse is spent?<sup>75</sup>

It is a truism that what the eye registers is remembered more than what the ear does. It seems the eyes of those who saw performances of the play were mainly responsible for the general impression of *Dr. Faustus* as an exciting show of horror. Ben Jonson's words in *Every Man out of His Humour* (which seem to refer to *Faustus*), no matter how biased they are, suggest that when spectacle prevails, there is no place for poetry:

Where neither Chorus wafts you o'er the seas;  
 Nor creaking throne comes down, the boys to please;  
 Nor nimble squib is seen, to make afeared  
 The gentlewomen; nor rolled bullet heard  
 To say it thunders...

(Prologue 15-19)

Henslowe might have been partially responsible for the "creaking throne". Marlowe's text certainly offered chances for extravagant spectacle, but not in the same degree to which the visual was to swallow the verbal aspects in productions of the play. How high the degree was is clear from the fact that the years that followed the closing of the theatres seem to have carried the play along through the reports of its performances, as a mere exciting piece of horror, dancing, music, and sound-effects.

The play, and also the legend of Faustus as a whole, was gradually turned into a point of mockery. Fear of the devil or magicians, which characterised accounts of performances, seems to have vanished, as appears from the words of a character in *The Knave in Grain* (1640):

Hee that can plucke this peece of my jawes, spight of my teeth, and I keepe my mouth fast shut, Ile say hee is more than a Cheater and a Doctor Eaustus, or Mephostophilus at least.<sup>76</sup>

Faustus and the devil company have become less threatening, as Goggle in Randolph's *Plutothalmia* (1651) puts it:

We fear not Dr. Faustus: his landlord Lucifer  
Says that his lease with him is out of date;  
Nor will he let him longer tenant be  
To the Twelve Houses of astrology.<sup>77</sup>

Eventually, the play was to be deprived of its tragic line, and to be turned into a popular farce that had nothing to do with the play as we know it, except in a rough outline. Apart from a few performances of a mutilated version of the text in the Restoration, Marlowe's play, as we have it, was buried with the closing of the theatres, and for a long time only fragments of it featured on public stages. It started coming to life again at the beginning of the nineteenth century through the attention it received as a literary text, and it struggled its way to the stage only at the turn of the twentieth century, as will be shown in the coming chapters.



## NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. J. C. Cumber, *The Two Merry Milke-Maids* (1620), edited by John Farmer, in *Old English Drama, Facimile Student Editions* (London, 1914), II,ii,192-4, f. Gr.
2. See Chapter Four of this thesis.
3. The names Bruno and Saxonie are not in the *Faust-Book*, which makes it more certain that *Dr. Faustus* was the source of Julia's information. For extracts from the *Faust-Book*, see the Revels edition of *Dr. Faustus*, Appendix II, pp. 129-36.
4. *Henslowe's Diary*, edited by R. A. Foakes and R. T. Rickot (Cambridge, 1961), pp. 24, 55.
5. Owing to the shortness of Marlowe's literary life the date of the play became crucial to critics and editors, and thus caused a sharp controversy in which both sides often sound reasonable. Critics and editors divide into two groups: those who give an early date, and those who give a late date for the play. The early date is established on basis of the closeness of its style to *Tamburlaine's*; echoes in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1589); borrowings from it in *The Taming of the Shrew* (1594); reference in *The Black Book* to a performance at the Theatre which is dated not later than 1591, when the Admirals Men were playing there; allusions to the event of Antwerp bridge (1585), and to the prince of Parma, which, it is thought, were topical issues that it would not be any more interesting to refer to them later than 1590; and finally, the existence of an anonymous "ballad of the damnable life and death of Doctor Faustus the great Cunngerer", entered in the Stationers' Register on 28 February, 1589, which is believed to show knowledge of Marlowe's play. Among those who support the early date: U. M. Ellis-Fermor, *Christopher Marlowe* (London, 1927, reprinted 1967), p. 4; P. H. Kocher, "The English Faust-Book and the Date of Marlowe's *Faustus*", and "The Early Date for Marlowe's *Faustus*", in *Modern Language Notes*, 55 (1940), 95-101 and 58 (1943), 539-42, respectively; Bakeless, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 275-7; M. M. Mahood, *Poetry and Humanism* (London, 1950), p. 66; J. B. Steane, *Marlowe: A Critical Study* (Cambridge, 1964), p. 119; William Empson, *Faustus and the Censor: The English Faust-book and Marlowe's Doctor Faustus*, recovered by John Henry Jones (Oxford and New York, 1987), pp. 51-2; The late date is established on basis of Marlowe's source *The English Faust-Book*, of which the first edition appeared in 1592, in other words, it is believed that though there was the original German edition, Marlowe could not have followed this, and there are passages in the play which are closer to the English translation than to the German original. The late date is also based on the existence of mature parts in the play which cannot be close to *Tamburlaine*. Among those who believe in the later date (and with whom I agree) are: T. Brooke, "The Marlowe Canon", in *Publication of the Modern Language Research Association of America* 37 (1922), 367-417; Frederick S. Boas, *Christopher Marlowe: A Biographical and Critical Study*, (Oxford, 1940, 2nd. edition, 1966), p. 203; W. W. Greg, *Marlowe's 'Doctor Faustus', 1604-1616: Parallel Texts*, (Oxford, 1950; reprinted 1968), he reasonably rejects the proofs for an earlier date; he argues that the anonymous ballad of the life of Doctor Faustus shows not only knowledge of the play but also *The Damnable Life*, and "it may have been based on the German 'Historia'". He also argues, concerning the reference to Antwerp Bridge and the Prince of Parma, that "allusions to historical events are not always made at the moment when they would be most topical"... etc. (see pp. 6-10). For the late date see also Harry Levin, *The Overreacher* (London, 1954), p. 132. John Jump, edition of *Doctor Faustus*, "the case for the later date remains the stronger" (pp. xxiii-v). Fredson Bowers, ed. *The Complete Works of*



*Christopher Marlowe*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1973, 2nd. edition, 1981), vol. 2, pp. 124. In her most recent edition of *Dr. Faustus*, Roma Gill finds it impossible to assign a date to the play, *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, edited by Roma Gill, 2 vols. (in progress), *Dr. Faustus*, vol. 2 (Oxford, 1990), p.xii. Hence all references to the B text will be to the Revels edition, and references to A text to Greg, *Parallel Texts*. Where there is neither A or B in brackets the reference is to the B text.

6. See John Tucker Murray, *English Dramatic Companies: 1558-1642*, 2 vols. (London, 1910), vol. 1, p. 65; E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols. (Oxford, 1923), vol. 2, p. 128. See also Chapter Three of this thesis.

7. See Greg, *Parallel Texts*, pp. 61-2.

8. There is also a sharp controversy on which text presents the original the A or the B text. It is important first to be aware of the differences between the two texts: The individual papal scene in the A text (vii) is expanded to two long scenes that feature the event of the saving of Bruno (viii-ix). The brief event of the knight in the A text (x) becomes longer in the B text, with three additional scenes (xi,xiii,xiv) of Benvolio's revenge on Faustus, Faustus's on him and his friends Fredrick and Martino, and a scene where the three knights discover themselves, as a result of Faustus's revenge, in a forest "Half smother'd in a lake of mud and dirt" (xiv,4). There is also an additional comic scene in which the rustics are in a tavern complaining how Faustus dupes each of them (xvi), and which seems to lead to the eruption of the yokels in the duical courtyard (xvii), an expansion unique to the B text. In addition to that, in the last scene the B text introduces at the beginning a speech by the three devils, in which they emphasise their watching the action (xix,1-19). It also introduces in between Faustus's farewell to the scholars and his last speech, a passage by Mephostophilis, in which he mockingly confesses that he is the one who leads Faustus astray (87-97), and a dialogue with the Angels in which they point to Faustus what "innumerable joys" and "celestial happiness" he has lost (98-132). And as is well known, the B text ends the play with the scholars discovering Faustus's limbs "All torn asunder by the hand of death." (7). Among those who believe in the originality of the A text are: Levin: "such drastic telescoping seems to indicate an acting version constrained by the narrow resources of a touring company" (p. 146, see also p. 151); Steane: "The B text in all its emphasis leads a way from what is valuable in the play, and destroys what in A is an acceptable balance of fitness and triviality" (op. cit., p. 125); Bowers, vol. 2, p. 130; Gill, ed. cit. (1990), p. xvii. For the B text: Leo Kirschbaum, "The Good and Bad Quartos of 'Doctor Faustus'", *The Library* (4th. series), 26 (1946), 272-94; Greg, gives examples of the parallels in *The Taming of A Shrew* (1594), and how they agree with B, and thus its closeness to originality; to prove the dubious originality of A, Greg gives examples: the reference to Dr. Lopez in A, an event that occurred in 1594, and thus probably inserted; the clown's words in A about French crowns, which Greg believes to have been available in the English market only after 1595; the simplicity of its staging points, according to him, to the fact that "the A-text calls...for nothing beyond a bare stage."; he also gives parts of A drawn on B (e.g: Horse-courser's account of the horse, B,xvi,22-51/ A,xi,1176-29)...etc; Greg concludes in the strongest defence of the B text: "The picture that we now have is not simply that of a text curtailed for performance in a limited time by a company of limited resources, but of one that has been progressively adapted to the needs of a declining company and the palate of an uncultivated audience." (p. 39; see pp. 29-97). Jump follows Greg's views "Surely it is clear that B is not an expansion of A at all; that, on the contrary, A is a curtailment of a more original text that has come down to us as B" (p. xxvi).

9. See note 10, Chapter Three, p. , below.

10. *Diary*, pp. 24, 55.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 319, 320, 293 respectively.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 206.
13. See Murray, vol. 1, p. 124.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 125.
15. Editions: 1604, 1609, 1611, 1616, 1619, 1620, 1624, 1631, 1663.
16. For a study of these parallels, borrowings, and echoes, see Tucker Brooke, "The Reputation of Christopher Marlowe", pp. 373-4; Bakeless, vol. 1, pp. 306-27. See also Jean MacIntyre, "Doctor Faustus and the Later Shakespeare", *Cahiers Élisabéthains*, 29 (1986), 27-38.
17. John Melton, *Astrologaster, or The Figure-Caster* (1620), Augustan Reprints Society (Los Angeles, California, 1975), p. 31 (or second pagination f. E4r).
18. Thomas Middleton, *The Black Book*, in *The Works of Thomas Middleton*, edited by A. H. Bullen, 8 vols. (London, 1885-6), vol. 8 (1986), pp. 5-45, p. 13.
19. Quoted by Chambers (from 'J. G. R.', a manuscript on "the last page of a book in my possession, printed by Vautrolier", 1850, 2 *Gent.Mag.*, xxxiv, 234), vol. 3, p. 424.
20. William Prynne, *Histrio-Mastix* (London, 1633), pt. I, Act 6, scene 18, fol. 556r (or second pagination f. Ggg4r).
21. John Aubrey, *The Natural History and Antiquities of the County of Surrey*, (1673) 5 vols. (London, 1718-19; reprinted Dorking, Surrey, 1975), vol. 1, p. 190.
22. James Shirley, *The Doubtful Heir*, in *The Dramatic Works of James Shirley: Now First Collected with Notes by the Late William Gifford*, 6 vols. (London, 1833), vol. 4, pp. 275-362, Prologue at the Globe, p. 270 (or second pagination f. U2r).
23. Thomas Dekker, *The Works of the Armourers* (1609), in *The Non-Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, edited by Alexander B. Grosart, 5 vols. (London, 1884-6), vol. 4 (1886), pp. 85-166, pp. 154-5
24. Samuel Rowlands, *The Knave of Clubbes* (1609) in *The Complete Works of Samuel Rowlands: 1598-1628*, printed by the Hunterian Club, 3 vols. (New York and London, 1866; reprinted 1880), vol. 2, Do. 24, pp. 3-48, p. 29.
25. Dekker in his *Old Fortunatus* talks about "Warlike Tamburlaine" (I,i,192), *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, edited by F. Bowers, 4 vols. (Cambridge, 1953-1961, reprinted 1970), vol. 1, pp. 105-206, p. 122. Thomas Heywood mentions Alleyn's "lasting memory in Tamburlaine", Prologue to the stage, at the Cockpit, in *The Jew of Malta*, Revels edition. See also Bakeless, vol. 1, pp. 240-73.
26. *Diary*, pp. 319, 325.
27. For e.g.: "bores heade", "heades", "i snake", "lyon heades", "bulles head"...etc., *Ibid.*, p. 320.
28. Questions concerning what the nature of the 1602 additions was, what was the reason behind them, and whether they were the parts unique to B, are constantly



asked by critics and editors, without the possibility of a definite answer. It cannot be denied that rejecting the additions of 1602 as the parts unique to B text, puts us in a difficulty as to how do we account for the large sum of money that Henslowe paid, and where are these additions? Their being fitting to action does not eliminate the possibility that they were among the added parts, as whoever added them might be well aware of the context of the play. It is not impossible that Birde and Rowley had put the knight at a window as it has an echo in the *Faust-Book*, and added the throne and the special speech for its use, which also has an echo there. This is, however, a dangerous conclusion, it will mean that Marlowe was not the author of the parts unique to B, in fact it is difficult to know. Greg believes that the 1602 additions are probably lost and that they are not the parts unique to B. Jump also agrees with him, their basic evidence is an allusion in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* to Faustus's revenge on the three knights which is unique to B (*M.W.W*, iv,v,67ff./ *Faustus*, B, xiv,4); as *The Merry Wives* was probably written in 1600 or 1601, it implies that the scene in question does not form part of the 1602 addition. On the basis of a detailed analysis Greg concludes "It is therefore with some confidence that I advance the conclusion that none of the passages peculiar to B represent the additions paid for by Henslowe in 1602, and that structurally at any rate the B-text preserves the more original, and the A-text a maimed and debased version of the play" (*Parallel Texts*, p. 29; see also, pp. 27-9, and Jump, p. xxvi/ and note to xiv,4-5, pp. 76-7). Bowers strongly believes that the additions may very well be included in the parts unique to the B text on the basis of the existence of rhyming couplet present in B (viii/xi) while nowhere else except in epilogue; some adjectives characteristic of Rowley's style; repetitions in some parts of B whereas they are parts unified in A; and the possibility that the parallel in *The Merry Wives* is related to the Faust-Book (see vol. 2, pp. 124-38). One tends to agree with Bowers, yet it is difficult to be certain. The B text has undergone changes but it might be only few relating to the act of censorship of 1606.

29. See Greg, *Parallel Texts*, B, I,iii and V,ii, pp. 177, 281.
30. Cf.: *The Silver Age*: "sinkes himselfe: Flashes of fire; The Divels appeare at every corner of the stage with severall fire-works. The judges of hell, and the three sisters run over the stage, Hercules after them: fire-works all over the house", quoted by A. Nicoll, "Passing Over the Stage", *Shakespeare Survey* 12 (1959), 47-55, pp. 50-1.
31. *Diary*, pp. 318-9. The fact that Henslowe does not mention Faustus's limbs, while he does "the Mores lymes", and "Hercolles lymes", led at least one critic to conclude that they were part of the additions in 1602, but this is a mere conjecture, Henslowe's records cannot be predictable, see MacIntyre, op. cit., p. 36 (n. 15).
32. See Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage, 1574-1642*, (Cambridge, 1980; reprinted 1985), pp. 166-8. See also E. M. Waith's introduction to his edition of *Titus Andronicus*, The Oxford Shakespeare (Oxford, 1984), where he quoted a contemporary evidence of how real the cutting of heads seemed on the stage: "Then (to make the sight more dreadful) put a little into a chafing-dish of coals...a little blood be sprinkled....There are other things which might be performed in this action, the more to astonish the beholders, which because they offer long descriptions...as to put about his neck a little dough kneaded with bullock's blood...being pricked...will bleed and seem very strange" (from Reginald Scot's *Discovery of Witchcraft*, 1584, Bk. 13), p. 66.
33. "throne in the heavens the 4 of June 1595" (*Diary*, p. 7).
34. Ben Jonson, *Every Man out of His Humour*, in *The Complete Works of Ben Jonson*, edited by G. A. Wilkes, 4 vols. (Oxford, 1981-2), vol. 1, pp. 175-411, Prologue, l.16, p. 183; see below, p. 25.



35. It can be argued that whether the A text or the B text is more original, both were acted on different stages. If the A text was the original, it was surely acted before 1594, thus not at the Rose, probably in provinces or at the Theatre, and therefore it reached Henslowe as it was and was acted without the additions before 1602. If the B was the original, and the A was reconstructed from memory, it means the B text was acted on different stages before it reached the Rose in 1594; and if the B text was owned by a certain company who probably prepared a shorter version from it to suit the provinces, it means it reached Henslowe as the B text and from 1594, it was not only acted at the Rose, but at the Fortune, probably court, and even provinces. There is no need then to say that either text was arranged for performances for a certain kind of stage.
36. See Ernest L. Rhodes, *Henslowe's Rose: The Stage and Staging* (Lexington, Kentucky, 1976), pp. 14-20.
37. Glynne Wickham, "'Exeunt to the Cave': Notes on the Staging of Marlowe's plays", *Tulane Drama Review*, 8 (1964), 184-94, p. 186.
38. See below, p. 20.
39. See Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage*, p. 160.
40. See W. A. Armstrong, "Shakespeare and the Acting of Edward Alleyn", *Shakespeare Survey* 7 (1954), 82-9; A. Gurr, "Who Strutted and Bellowed?", *Shakespeare Survey* 16 (1963), 95-102.
41. H. W. Matalene, "Marlowe's *Faustus* and the Comforts of Academicism", *English Literary History*, 39 (1972), 495-519, p. 502.
42. See Richard Hosley, "The Discovery-space in Shakespeare's Globe", *Shakespeare Survey* 12 (1959), 35-46, pp. 37, 43.
43. See R. B. Graves, "Elizabethan Lighting Effects and the Conventions of Indoor and Outdoor Theatrical Illumination", *Renaissance Drama*, 12 (1981), 51-69.
44. Quoted by Gurr, "Who Strutted and Bellowed", p. 98 (from Joseph Hall, *Virgidemiarum*, 1597).
45. For examples see Rhodes, op. cit., Appendix C, p. 244 and p. 25. See also Hosley, op. cit., passim.
46. Barnabe Barnes, *The Devil's Charter* (1607), edited by Sybil Rosenfeld, Fascimile Student Editions (1913), IV,i, ff. F4v, G1r, G2v.
47. Rhodes, p. 55.
48. See E. J. Burton, *The British Theatre: 1100-1900* (London, 1960), p. 94.
49. *Diary*, p. 319.
50. Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage*, p. 169. The relevant part of this is <sup>re</sup>produced in details by Michael Hattaway, *Elizabethan Popular Theatre: Plays in Performance* (London, 1982), pp. 162-4, from which I quote. See also Chambers, vol. 3, pp. 71-2.
51. Suggested by both Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage*, p. 169, and Hattaway, *Elizabethan Popular Theatre*, p. 182.

52. *Diary*, p. 319.
53. Wickham, pp. 188-9.
54. *Diary*, pp. 291-4, 325.
55. See Annette Drew-Bear, "Face-Painting in Renaissance Tragedy", *Renaissance Drama*, 12 (1981), 71-93, pp. 81-2.
56. See D. H. Zucker, *Stage and Image in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe* (Salzburg, Austria, 1972), p. 148. In Derek Stevens amateur production of *Dr. Faustus*, 1986, the Sins could be known mainly by their costumes and properties. See Appendix B.
57. For example: in Massinger's *Picture* (1633): "...you know/ How to resolve yourself what my intents are./ By the help of Mephistophilus..."; in Alexander Brome's *The Cunning Lovers* (1654) : "Sweet Conjuror, good Mephistophilus", see Brooke, "The Reputation of Christopher Marlowe", pp. 378-9.
58. Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage*, p. 182.
59. For a discussion of this argument see Matalene, p. 510.
60. See W. W. Greg, "The Damnation of Faustus", *Modern Language Review*, 41 (1946), 97-107.
61. See J. W. Saunders, "Vaulting the Rails", *Shakespeare Survey* 7 (1954), 69-81; see also Nicoll, "Passing Over the Stage".
62. For similar cases, see Nicoll, "Passing Over the Stage", p. 48.
63. For a discussion of the play's morality structure and the number of actors required for the play, see D. M. Bevington, *From 'Mankind' to Marlowe* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), pp. 254-9; and Douglas Cole, *Suffering and Evil in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1962), pp. 231-43.
64. Bowers argues that the A text contains some actors' gags, *Works*, vol. 2, p. 138.
65. Michael Hattaway, "The Theology of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*", *Renaissance Drama*, 3 (1970), 51-78, p. 78. For a discussion of the aspects of Christian learning see Ellis-Fermor, op. cit., pp. 61-87; P. H. Kocher, *Christopher Marlowe: A Study of his Thought, Learning, and Character* (Chapel Hill, 1946), pp. 104-19; Greg, "The Damnation of Faustus"; Levin, op. cit., pp. 130-142; Clifford Leech, *Christopher Marlowe: Poet for the Stage*, edited by Ann Lancashire (New York, 1986), pp. 83-99; See also King-Kok Cheung, "The Dialectic of Despair in *Doctor Faustus*", in *A Poet and A Filthy Play-maker*, New Essays on Christopher Marlowe, ed. K. Friedenreich, R. Gill, and C. B. Kuriyama (New York, 1988), pp. 193-201; John S. Wilks, *The Idea of Conscience in Renaissance Tragedy* (London and New York, 1990), pp. 144-69.
66. See Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage*, p. 161.
67. See Kocher, *Christopher Marlowe*, op. cit., pp. 106-7; Levin, pp. 136-8; Cole, op. cit., pp. 197-9; Hattaway, "The Theology of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*", p. 58; Leech, pp. 89-90.
68. According to Louis Ule's *A Concordance to the Works of Christopher Marlowe* (Hildesheim and New York, 1979), for example, in the B text: the word 'conjure'



occurs 7 times; 'conjurer' 9; 'conjuring' 7; 'magic' 12; 'magical' 1; 'magician' 3; 'necromancy' 1; 'necromantic' 2; 'show' 11; 'pleasure' 8 = total of 64 words concerned with magical shows; 'doctor' 31 times, 4 times with 'cunning' or 'cozening', and 6 times in a context of conjuring and magic.

69. See Kocher, *Christopher Marlowe*, pp. 108-11; Cole, pp. 219-21; Helen Gardner, "Milton 'Satan' and the Theme of Damnation in Elizabethan Tragedy", *English Studies*, 1 (1948), 46-66.
70. Recently Faustus was seen as a man deprived of sexuality, and that his pact is mainly to attain a sexual self-fulfilment; this is supported by examples from the text, see Kay Stockholder, "'Within the Massy Entrails of the Earth': Faustus's Relation to Women", in *A Poet and A Filthy Playmaker*, op. cit., pp. 203-19.
71. Cf.: "the play enacts some of the suspicions about deceptive pleasure but, most importantly, it simultaneously shows the dangerous strength of that pleasure by trapping the audience within it" (see Simon Shepherd, *Marlowe and the Politics of Elizabethan Theatre*, Sussex, 1986, pp. 103-7). Empson also suggests that the play alerts the audience to the fact that they are watched by government's spies: "It was usual to believe that devils could hear anything you said... Marlowe would realize quite early that his rash talk was being followed by official spies, and would enjoy hinting to the audience: 'you are all like Faust; all being heard by official spies.' It would help to alert them for the main trick" (op. cit., p. 53).
72. See Brooke, "The Reputation of Christopher Marlowe", pp. 373-4.
73. See MacIntyre, pp. 30-1
74. Cf.: <sup>about Burroughs</sup> "Whilst he but seem'd to bleed, / Amaze, thought even hee dyed in deed.", quoted by Gurr, "Who Strutted and Bellowed?", p. 97 (from *Third Funeral Elegy*, 2nd., version, 1619).
75. *The Times' Whistle* (1614), R. C. Gent, anonymous satire preserved in manuscript in Cathedral Library, reprinted by J. M. Cowper, in *Early English Texts*, no. 48, (1871), quoted by Bakeless, vol. 1, p. 313.
76. J. D. Gent, *The Knave in Grain* (1640), edited by R. C. Bald, Malone Society Reprints (Oxford, 1960), v, ll. 2939-42, (f. Mv.).
77. E. M. Butler, *The Fortunes of Faust* (Cambridge, 1952), p. 55.

## CHAPTER TWO

### *The Jew of Malta* on Stage Before 1642

*The Jew of Malta* was one of the most popular plays of its own time. This chapter explores the reasons for that popularity and attempts to consider how the play might have been staged. Because of the nature of the play it will be necessary to focus on the character of Barabas and the ideological and political questions involved in his characterisation, as well as on the staging of the crucial scenes—in most of which he, of course, appears. Above all, his Jewishness inevitably raises the question of Elizabethan anti-semitism.

*The Jew of Malta* was staged more frequently than any of Marlowe's other plays. Henslowe registers a total of thirty-six performances between 1591-1596.<sup>1</sup> Its stage fortune was at least partly determined by the topical coincidence of the trial of Dr. Roderigo Lopez, the Queen's Portuguese-Jewish physician on the accusation of conspiring to poison the Queen, and his execution on 7 June, 1594. This, it seems, boosted the play's popularity, as it had ten performances in the last six months of the same year.<sup>2</sup> The play was, however, popular enough even before this event, to judge from the fact that, at its first recorded performance on "26 Feb 1591", and though it was not new, the takings mounted up to fifty shillings.<sup>3</sup> From this performance until "3 of aprell 1593", it was performed almost fortnightly by different companies at the Rose: the Sussex's Men, the Queen's Men, and the Strange's Men, until it became a property of the Admiral's Men in 1594.<sup>4</sup> Further references listing a "caulderm for the Jewe" in an inventory for 1598,<sup>5</sup> and the cost of providing (or renewing)<sup>6</sup> properties and costumes "for the Jewe of Malta" in 1601,<sup>7</sup> suggest more revivals.

Later, the play seems to have moved into the repertoire of the reputedly vulgar Red Bull,<sup>8</sup> which may indicate that it had lost its appeal for the more intellectual audiences. However, it was chosen for revival in 1633 by Queen Henrietta's Company both at the Cockpit and at Court, according to the title-page of the only early edition that we have of the text.<sup>9</sup> In this text Thomas Heywood provided prologues and epilogues for both the Cockpit and Court revivals, which further stress the play's popularity in its own time but, at the same time, point to the fact that the play was becoming out of fashion for Heywood's audience, though still apparently entertaining.<sup>10</sup>



Henslowe's preparation of a special cauldron for *The Jew*, and his constant supply of 'divers things' for it until 1601 (after which, of course, we have no record), seem to testify to the great importance the play had for him even when it grew old in the repertoire. The sensational execution of Dr. Lopez seems to have led Henslowe to revive all plays in his repertoire that figured Jews. Having a Jew in the title-role, and various occurrences of poisoning, *The Jew of Malta* would have been the most appropriate for that occasion. It may in this respect have been overshadowed only by Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, which became a major rival from that time till our own age.

Although they are often selective and of doubtful reliability, reports of a performance still help in reconstructing the effect of a play, especially when one aspect of a performance is singled out in most accounts, as we have seen in the case of *Dr. Faustus*. The problem with *The Jew of Malta* is that there are no reports of its performances on Elizabethan stages. All that is available to us are some descriptions of later stage villains, Jews, or usurers, some of which are inspired by Alleyn's appearance as Barabas, and also some borrowings of the techniques used to depict Barabas's villainy, including his verbal routines of asides and satirical jokes. Yet, together, these borrowings testify to a kind of proverbial significance attached to Alleyn's Barabas.

In *A Search for Money* (1609), William Rowley describes an ugly usurer as having "an old moth-eaten cap buttoned under his chinne, his visage like the artificiall Jewe of Maltae's nose".<sup>11</sup> This suggests that Rowley found a reference to Barabas a handy one, and that he was counting on the readers' or spectators' familiarity with Alleyn's appearance as Barabas, besides implying that Alleyn wore an artificial nose, of which there is internal evidence in the text.<sup>12</sup> It seems that Barabas was established as a prototype of the villain-Jew, and that as such his name became a synonym for cunning, covetousness, and Jewishness. As early as 1592, in Harington's *Epigrams*, there is an allusion to Barabas as a villain: "Was ever Jew of Malta or of Millain/ Than this most damned Jew more Jewish villain?"<sup>13</sup> Dekker seems to allude to Barabas as a merciless revenger

When it came to the eares of the *Sinfull Synagogue*, how the rich Jew of London (*Barabbas Bankruptisme*) their brother, was receyved into the Citty, and what a lusty *Reveler* he was become...<sup>14</sup>

Calling him the "Jew of London" might be explained by the popularity of the play in London, or by a deliberate re-location by Dekker to suit his subject. As late as 1641, Barabas was still a prototype of evil:

But I'm the very *Jew of Malta*, if she did not use me since that worse than I'd use a rotten apple.<sup>15</sup>

Barabas was also recalled as an image of a rich merchant or a miser. Dekker alludes to Barabas as the owner of trading ships in his *News from Hell* (1606): "Lies there a Boate readie (quoth my rich Jew of *Malta*) to take me in so soone as I call?"<sup>16</sup> Pisaro, the usurer in William Haughton's *English Men for My Money* (1598?), soliloquizes about his wealth and ships in a diction similar to Barabas's:

...more pleasure I have  
To thinke upon this moistening Southwest Winde,  
That drives my laden Shippes from fertile *Spain*...  
Thirtie two shippes have I to equall them  
Whose wealthy fraughts doe make *Pisaro* rich.<sup>17</sup>

The words "my obligations, my bond.../ My shippe, my bonds, my bondes, my ship", which are spoken by Mammon, a usurer in *Jack Drum's Entertainment* (1601),<sup>18</sup> show obvious echoes of Barabas's confusion between girl and gold in his lines "My gold, my girl..." (II,i,48-50,54). This suggests that Barabas's lines were so familiar that they could be used as a cliché in everyday speech, a formulaic expression. And judging by the number of performances, and the takings received by Henslowe, it is obvious that a large number of people had a chance to see the play on stage.

However, many allusions to the model of the Jewish stage-villain do not necessarily refer to Barabas, but rather to Shylock. M. J. Landa argues that neither Barabas nor Shylock were responsible for establishing prototypes of stage-Jews, and that the stereotypical figure existed long before them in popular literature and drama.<sup>19</sup> The large nose and the red hair were features already connected with Jews. But if Marlowe was not responsible for pioneering, or at least revitalizing, the model, how could we explain the extreme popularity of *The Jew of Malta*? How could we explain Shakespeare's adapting of Marlowe's model in his *The Merchant of Venice*? And why should Rowley refer to the artificial nose of the Jew of Malta, and not to another stage-Jew? It is true that there were plays that dealt with Jews before Marlowe, but they dealt with them more exclusively as usurers and money-lenders. Barabas is not a money-lender; on the contrary, he keeps his money safe in "a little room", "warily, guarding that which [he] ha' [s] got" (I,i,187). It is also true that the big nose was a characteristic attached to Jews before Marlowe, but it would seem that it was given particular



prominence when worn on stage by no other than Alleyn, who by that time had become extremely popular as Hieronimo and Tamburlaine.

Landa himself, perhaps inadvertently, admits that the tradition of portraying Jews as villains might have come to an end with a figure of a good Jew created by Robert Wilson in his *Three Ladies of London* (1584), had it not been for the fact that Marlowe came

bursting suddenly upon the world three years [sic] afterwards, his genius almost full ripe at the outset, [and] rectified that as soon as he had swept away the impedimenta of the transition period and laid the imperishable foundation of the British national drama on which Shakespeare was to erect so mighty a structure.<sup>20</sup>

The figure of Barabas was actually imperishable because it was innovative. It blended three popular stereotypes which promised the audience a panorama of diabolism and cunning that was a source of great entertainment on Elizabethan stages. These are obviously: the Machiavellian villain, the Jew-villain, and the morality Vice. To each were attached fixed types of behaviour, like double-crossing, murdering, poisoning, theft, and setting people at enmity. Marlowe's new creation was a breakthrough in the very fusing of the various techniques used to perpetuate such evil acts. By experimenting with them on stage Marlowe benefited later dramatists who have drawn on the figure of Barabas, as Shakespeare seems to have done in *The Merchant of Venice*, and Ben Jonson in *Volpone*. Parallels between *The Jew* and such Shakespeare plays as *The Merchant*, *Richard III*, and *Titus Andronicus*, have been often noted.<sup>21</sup> That the figure of Shylock shows more dramatic skill than that of Barabas does not eliminate the point that Shakespeare drew on the figure of Barabas, and that Barabas became a source of reference for later dramatists.

The fact that Marlowe resurrected Machiavelli (probably for the first time on Elizabethan stages)<sup>22</sup> to introduce the play (instead of the morally pious chorus of *Faustus* and *Tamburlaine*) would be in itself an invitation to expect a sensational abundance of evil. A large part of the Elizabethan knowledge of the famous Florentine is believed to have permeated through the distorted image that became established by Gentillet's translation of his works, at the time probably the most available source of Machiavelli's theories.<sup>23</sup> Either from reading Gentillet or by hearsay among the illiterate, the stereotype of Machiavelli as an incarnation of all the wickedness in the world was inflated out of proportion. Machiavelli was thus seen as a bloody schemer who committed evil for its own sake. This misconception existed before *The Jew of*

*Malta*, as did other stage-villains whose characters reflected Elizabethan 'Machiavellianism', but the originality of Marlowe was that he put the spirit and body of Machiavelli himself on stage, and thus brought his audiences face to face with the bogeyman. His appearance on stage, perhaps through a trap (as in Barry Kyle's 1987 production discussed in Chapter Seven) to establish his infernal connections, would have been thrilling to Elizabethan audiences, and satisfying to popular tastes. By calling on the Florentine, and by making him ask the audience to "grace [Barabas] as he deserves./ And let him not be entertained the worse/ Because he favours [Machiavelli]" (Prologue, 33-5), Marlowe embodied in Barabas the popular 'stage-Machiavel' that was to become a stock-figure for later dramatists.<sup>24</sup>

Yet, the very fact that Barabas conforms only to popular Machiavellianism, rather than to genuine Machiavellian principles, has caused a sharp controversy as to whether Marlowe knew Machiavelli at first hand but chose to satisfy popular tastes, or whether he shared the misconception with his fellow country-men, and realised it in his characterisation of Barabas.<sup>25</sup> That the character of Ferneze, for example, conforms in many respects to the Machiavellian ideal has come to be accepted by recent scholarship, and has also been brought up in modern productions of the play.<sup>26</sup> His protection of Malta, which Alfred Harbage thought would make him a hero to Elizabethan audiences, even though he works by deceit and double crossing,<sup>27</sup> corresponds to genuine Machiavellian political theories. Ferneze's continuous reference to Heaven and retribution constitutes the religious cover which Machiavelli highly recommends in a political leader. His religious and patriotic slogans would even resemble Elizabethan policy, particularly as the Turks were common enemies of England as well as Malta. In addition to that, it can be argued that Ferneze's last thanksgiving reflects Simmon Paterike's criticism of Machiavelli and praise of Queen Elizabeth which Marlowe might have read with the cynicism of a secret political agent:

...she, the most renowned Queen hath hitherto preserved the state of her realme, not only sage but flourishing not by Machiavellian artes...but by true vertue...justice and faith.<sup>28</sup>

However, by the part of the audience who held a distorted image of Machiavelli, this would not be easily recognised, and Barabas would seem as nothing but 'Machiavellian'. But how much of Marlowe's audiences did this part constitute? Elizabethan audiences were mixed. Marlowe and his contemporaries were writing both for an ignorant and vulgar audience and for the more 'privileged' playgoers.<sup>29</sup> In his two versions, then, of the Machiavel, Marlowe could be seen to appeal to both tastes.



Of course he had to, otherwise his play would not have stayed that long in the repertoire.<sup>30</sup> That he succeeded is obvious from the frequency of revivals of *The Jew of Malta*. It is typical of Marlowe to present the two sides of any question. In the instance of *The Jew*, it seems he included the popular stereotype of Machiavelli and the real image of him side by side, as if he had written a "secret play between the lines of his official play".<sup>31</sup> Marlowe did not then pander his knowledge for popular tastes. To escape censorship, and to earn his living Marlowe would have had to make this hidden meaning in the play difficult to recognise. Exploiting this deeply rooted misconception of Machiavelli, Marlowe safeguarded his own cynicism about politics.

However, Alfred Harbage seems right in arguing that, in general, in spite of the hypocrisy of the Maltese government, Ferneze's victory would be piously approved by Elizabethan audience. Though Malta is Catholic,<sup>32</sup> and though Elizabethan audiences would have enjoyed the anti-Catholic jokes in the play, the victory at the end would be seen as a Christian one against Jews and Turks, and Barabas's end would have been hailed as that of a hated Jew, no matter how entertaining he had proved to be. This brings us to the second stereotype attached to Barabas, which is of vital importance to the play, that is his being a Jew. As with Machiavellianism, Elizabethans had a distorted image of Jews. There were few Jews in England at the time. Thus the 'knowledge' of them was largely based on popular conceptions of Jews as torturers of Christ, murderers of children, and poisoners of wells—views that are referred to in the play.<sup>33</sup> This was developed further from hearsay and from models of stage-Jews in medieval drama that were exaggerated due to lack of social contact with real Jews. In short the stage-Jew was a figure of grotesque evil, given all the alleged atrocities and fiendish qualities of Jews. Reviling the Jew was part of the social conventions of Marlowe's time. There are examples even in Shakespeare's plays of the word 'Jew' being used pejoratively.<sup>34</sup>

Yet, Elizabethan anti-semitism had in it nothing racial as understood in twentieth-century terms. A Jew was hated, as a Moslem would be, simply because he was a non-Christian. The religious aspect of the conflict between Christian and Jews in the play is obvious. Ithamore would also be seen as a non-Christian, and this is suggested in Barabas's statement which (in spite of Bevington's argument)<sup>35</sup> seems to satirise a Christian view: "we are villains both:/...we hate Christians both" (II,iii,216-7). G. K. Hunter interestingly argues that Barabas's language is mostly derived from Biblical sources. This would give it a strong hold on the audience. According to Hunter, for an audience who were more Biblically educated than a modern audience, most of Barabas's references (like Faustus's syllogisms) would also be turned against

him, as he would be perceived as distorting and undercutting Biblical dicta to suit his own conclusions.<sup>36</sup>

A case in point is Barabas's line, which usually grants him the approval of modern audiences, "The man that dealeth righteously shall live..." (I,ii,117). This would be seen by Elizabethans as a deliberate expunging of the rest of this Biblical echo: "by faith".<sup>37</sup> A line like "infinite riches in a little room" (I,i,37), which tends to strike modern audiences as a wonderful piece of psychological obsession with one idea, would for Elizabethans echo a Biblical image of Christ in Mary's womb.<sup>38</sup> This image for Marlowe is an economic way of stirring the audience against Barabas, even while endowing his hero with an appealing rhetorical language. Of course, the very name 'Barabas' was familiar to Elizabethans as the name of a "robber and murderer in the Scriptures who was chosen for amnesty in place of Christ" and thus as an anti-Christ.<sup>39</sup>

Barabas would certainly be condemned from the beginning, and Elizabethan audiences, unlike their modern counterparts, would see in the Barabas who fell into the cauldron the same Barabas they saw in the confiscation scene. His fall would be applauded as a "traditional image of hell"<sup>40</sup> associated with Jews as poisoners, and thus iconographically and Biblically right. Therefore, the 'deterioration' in Barabas's tragic stature between the first two acts and the last three in the play that has engaged most of nineteenth and early twentieth-century critics would not be felt by Elizabethan audiences.<sup>41</sup> The scene where Barabas's money is confiscated (I,ii), which is so puzzling to modern audiences in the way it excites sympathy towards him, would be seen by Marlowe's audiences as a common and acceptable practice on part of a Christian governor, as Jews were usually taxed more than Christians, in addition to its being the triggering of the series of revenges that characterised the stage-villain. Of course, the villain did not need a reason for his evil, but Marlowe created a Vice figure with justifiable reasons, at least at the beginning, for his evil doings.

With a Jew in the title-role, probably for the first time on Elizabethan stages, to enact the alleged characteristics of Jewishness and condemned to perish at the end, the play would have been highly entertaining to Marlowe's audiences. As already pointed out, there seems to be no doubt that the audiences recognised fascinating parallels between Barabas and Dr. Lopez. They would, of course, recognise this topicality in Shylock, who was put on stage almost concurrently in 1594, but, as mentioned earlier, the devices of poisoning in *The Jew of Malta* would ring more bells to the spectators. One would imagine that the parts of the play that refer to poisoning



would have been more emphasised in 1594 than in previous performances. The audiences would perhaps have found in Barabas's remarks about the strength of the "hinges" and "cords" (V,i,1-2) by which he safeguards the effectiveness of his machinery to overthrow the Turks some echoes of references to hanging.

While to modern audiences nothing could ever repay the enormous loss of lives in the play, to Elizabethan audiences Barabas's being boiled in the cauldron would compensate for the mass-murder he inflicted, and would be expected in the same way as the downfall of the Vice in the moralities was. His being theatrically attractive, though evil, is the very quality of the morality-Vice: his ever having a new plot up his sleeve, his acting like a satirist with interesting political and sexual innuendos, and his tone of camaraderie that drives the audience to silent complicity with him.<sup>42</sup> The way the other characters are drawn, mainly to highlight characteristics in Barabas, owes much to the morality structure in introducing a technique of symmetrical suppression and alternation of these characters. This, in Elizabethan performances, would have facilitated the staging by allowing the doubling of roles among a limited number of actors (seven with two boys at the most),<sup>43</sup> while it creates problems for modern directors, as will be shown in Chapter Seven.

The way Barabas engineers the action is derived from the Vice-figure. It makes the text lay a strong emphasis on tricks, through elaborate descriptions of the means by which they are executed and through persistently inviting the audience to watch the skill behind them.<sup>44</sup> This leads one to agree with Harbage that, on Elizabethan stages, the play functioned mainly as a "native sport" (p. 53) or a game of Jew-baiting. In a playhouse that was still capable of conversion overnight into an arena for baiting bulls or bears, an Elizabethan audience would scarcely have been looking for tragic dignity in the career of a Vice-like Jew. Barabas would be, as Harbage calls him, a "popular entertainer" (p. 53). For Alleyn to disguise under a big nose and probably a red wig,<sup>45</sup> and a Jewish gaberdine<sup>46</sup> seems to have lent a pantomimic spirit to the play. His quick recovery from the peak of emotion after the Jews leave him (I,ii,215), his switching from one trick to another, from dissembling to disguise, his retrieving his money, and his dying and coming to life again, all seem like a pantomime. This impression is heightened by the generally quick-moving action and by Barabas's full use of locations on stage, obtaining access to the confiscated house, remote-controlling Lodowick, Mathias and Ithamore in the market scene (II.iii), climbing up to watch the two lovers fighting (III,ii), gaining access to the gates of Malta, and finally engineering a complicated machinery to overthrow the Turks. These

highly theatrical characteristics of the play in general led Harbage to call it a "stage-piece" in which

there is maximum fluidity in the treatment of time and place [, and in which] intrigues are projected and completed almost simultaneously, and characters move from place to place, including in and out of houses, without interrupting their dialogues.<sup>47</sup>

Was all this 'fluidity' difficult to present on Elizabethan stages? The quick-moving action makes it seem that the play demanded a kind of successive staging where movable properties, serving as symbols, defined time and place; where the stage might chameleon-like change its character as the properties within it changed; where characters became associated with places, or where quick hints as to locality were given within the dialogue.<sup>48</sup> The play does not afford scenic literalism: the different locations on stage—the Council-house, indoors and outdoors, outside Malta's walls, through Malta's gates—seem to have required prompt and simultaneous presentation. These locations would be flexibly associated in the mind on an unlocalised stage. Marlowe seems to facilitate the task for the players by his economic way of incorporating into the text solutions for possible problems in staging. He avoids the need of large pieces of furniture on stage. The convenient absence of a bed when friar Bernardine is discovered sleeping (IV,i,140) is incorporated in the dialogue showing Bernardine, unable to trust Barabas, refusing to sleep "inside". Thus a bench could serve, which meant avoiding the complication of carrying a large property like a bed on and off the stage, particularly as what follows is, of course, the extremely complicated action of strangling Bernardine, and propping up his body for friar Giacomo to see. The play does not carry the audience from Wittenburg to Rome, or from a study to hell's mouth, as *Dr. Faustus* does; nor does it have the comic scenes which, while they interrupt the action in *Faustus*, also serve as theatrical intervals between the major events and so help to create a sense of the passing of time and the change of place. Yet despite its more unified action, *The Jew* presents some intriguing theatrical problems that need to be discussed.

Both *Dr. Faustus* and *The Jew of Malta* open after the prologue with a location that is restricted, and that symbolises the claustrophobic obsession of the hero, and from which he later deviates, Faustus to magic, and Barabas to revenge. It has always been a matter of controversy whether this scene in *The Jew* demanded a 'discovery space'. Bennett believes that it was presented with a rear-stage; Bawcutt believes that "it is unlikely that Barabas was in full view of the audience while the prologue was being spoken, and probably at the end of the prologue 'Machevil' drew a



curtain and disclosed Barabas sitting at a table..."<sup>49</sup> As we saw in *Dr. Faustus*, the idea of the rear-stage is difficult to entertain because of visibility problems. However, we must take our evidence from the text. Barabas appears immediately so involved in counting his treasure that it is improbable that he enters carrying "*heaps of gold*". As recent scholarship has rejected the idea of "inner-stage", one could at least expect that a sort of hanging, behind which was a table cluttered with Barabas's symbols of wealth, would be needed.

Barabas's first speech calls for wide gestures that would be empty without some use of properties. The demonstrative devices in his first line, "So that of thus much return was made" (1), point to the existence of an amount which Alleyn had to have on stage. The same is true for other lines: "There was the venture summed..." (3), "Here have I pursed their paltry silverlings" (6), "this trash" (7), "thus much coin" (13), etc. Some lines seem to call for stage-business that would have been facilitated by properties. For instance, the lines, "Fie, what a trouble 'tis to count this trash!" (7), and "Without control can pick his riches up,/ And in his house heap pearl like pebble stones" (22-3), seem to show Barabas plunging his fingers into a heap of coins. And the line, "sell them by the weight" (24), suggests a weighing of the stones in his hand, or even on a scale.<sup>50</sup> In addition to that, the lines "This is the ware wherein consists my wealth" (33), "Infinite riches in a little room" (37), and "warily guarding that which I ha' got" (187) seem to call for either a casket, or a simple closing of a curtain to symbolise Barabas's tendency to hide his wealth in secret places. Money bags and simulations of precious stones would not have been difficult to provide, and in fact they seem to have been needed at other stages of the action, in the scene where Abigail throws money to Barabas, where the speech indicates four lots of money, "Here... Hast thou't? There's more, and more and more" (II,i,47),<sup>51</sup> and in the scene where Pilia-Borza rips money off Barabas (IV,iii).

In the first scene one assumes that the three Jews do not see Barabas's wealth, especially as, when the Jews arrive, they do not talk to Barabas immediately, and seem to be unaware that he sees them:

*Fst. Jew:* Tush, tell not me 'twas done of policy.  
*Sec. Jew:* Come therefore, let us go to Barabas,  
 For he can counsel best in these affairs;  
 And here he comes.

(I,i,139-42)

This suggests that the area that symbolised his counting house was to be somehow covered or away from the entrance where the Jews emerged, so that Barabas would

have time to hide his gold and approach the Jews. Thus it seems either that Barabas's counting house was behind a curtain which he drew when the Jews arrived, or that he had a casket that he shut as soon as he perceived them. It is possible also that both a curtain and a casket were used, judging from Henslowe's interest in properties, and so when Barabas cleared the stage for the Council-house, he might have only drawn the curtain. There is a great opportunity for energetic performance in this speech. This, together with the merchants' arrival, would have allowed the action to spill out onto the main stage if the counting house had to be hidden from view.

One thing the play seems to demand is various points of access to the stage. The most crowded scene in the play, in the market-place (II,iii), shows Marlowe's exploitation of the stage as a whole. The number of exits and entrances, all happening successively, suggests that Marlowe was able to anticipate the capacity of the stage to accommodate such a complicated scene. Characters enter consecutively in groups, each occupying a space on stage where the other group is supposed not to overhear its dialogue. Solo and conversational asides are employed abundantly through the scene in which the stage represents the slave-market: between Barabas and audience (7-31, 36-7, 39, 42, 52, 58, 66, 83...etc), Barabas and Mathias (149-54), and Mathias and the audience (141-2), and all with a view to those speaking not being heard by the other characters on stage. Each group of characters seems to form a tableau to be commented upon by another group before entering the action, and finally the stage would be cleared to represent Barabas's house and to accommodate Barabas's new plot against Lodowick and Mathias. The scene seems to require a totally unlocalised stage and various entrances. Rhodes conjectures five openings to the stage of the Rose which, if true, would have tremendously facilitated the staging of this scene.<sup>52</sup>

The scene where Barabas's body is discarded over the city walls (V,i) displays utmost flexibility on part of the audience who had to imagine a switch from one location to another and to accept a pantomimic act of resurrection of Barabas simply by his words "what all alone?" (V,i,61). T. W. Craik assumes that the body

was simply tossed forward and allowed to roll towards the front of the platform...it would then lie for a moment in full view, an object of anticipatory interest, until Barabas's rising.<sup>53</sup>

J. L. Simmons interestingly conjectures that the yard could have been used for this act, judging from the governor's "so", which implies that the "disposal of Barabas's body was theatrically effective", involving a reasonable distance.<sup>54</sup> There is ample evidence that the yard was used in Elizabethan theatres,<sup>55</sup> and Simmons' remark that the



throwing of Barabas's body into the yard would have confirmed "the special alliance between his [Marlowe's] hero and that hero's only confidant [the audience]" is indeed poignant.<sup>56</sup> But one is less sure about Simmons' other conjecture, that Barabas could have then met the Turks, who also entered in the yard, and according to his plans and descriptions (V,ii,86-94), walked with a few of them beneath the stage to the back to gain access to the tiring-house, and opened the doors onto the stage to enact their invading of Malta. The area under the stage was used for the appearance of devils and other characters with infernal connections, and for pushing some properties up onto the stage,<sup>57</sup> but these actions seem not as complicated as that of a group of actors walking beneath the stage to the tiring house. Besides there is no evidence that the stage was high enough to accommodate such movements,<sup>58</sup> unless Simmons means that Barabas and the Turks crawled underneath, but this would unnecessarily delay the action, and put undue physical stress on the actors.

Simmons, however, supports his conjecture with the fact that the stage-directions have an entrance for the "*Turks, [and] Barabas, [with] Ferneze and Knights [as] prisoners*" (V,ii), but no entrance for Calymath, which, according to him, indicates that presumably Calymath was still in the yard, and thus needed no entrance. Here, again, it is difficult to be certain, considering how unsafe it is to take literally stage-directions in an edition that was prepared forty years after Marlowe's death. One is tempted to avoid any inaccuracies involved in assumptions about the use of areas around the stage, and safely to conclude, as Craik does, that Barabas's body was simply "tossed forward". Except for one doubtful point—Barabas's and the Turks' re-entry with Ferneze and the Maltese knights as captives—Craik's solution is simple and satisfying. If Barabas met the Turks on the platform instead of in the yard, where would be the "sluice" that "make a passage for the running streams" (86-7)? And where would Barabas "...lead five hundred soldiers through the vault/ And rise with them i' the middle of the town,/ [to] Open the gates" for Calymath (91-3)? Of course, these words might only be a means to stimulate the audience's imagination, and Barabas could have exited through one stage-door (into Malta), and re-entered with the prisoners through another. This would be possible, except that it is a very simple technique for a scene that seems to have held a special significance for the audience. It is referred to in Webster's *The Devil's Law-case* (which was performed after 1615 at the Red Bull): Romelio "*enter[s]...in the habit of a Jew*", and says: "...Why, methinks/ That I could play with mine own shadow now,/ And be a rare Italianated Jew../ As to coin money, corrupt ladies' honours,/ Betray a town to th' Turk..." (III,ii,1-13).<sup>59</sup> We know that Richard Perkins acted Webster's plays at the Red Bull, and so he might have also acted *The Jew* there before appearing in Heywood's revival in 1633; and thus

when he played Romelio he might have referred to his own acting in *The Jew*. The same scene is retold at length, as late as 1663, in a mutilated quarto of *Dr. Faustus*.<sup>60</sup>

An exit and re-entry, no matter how short the interval, and a convincing access to Malta, seem to have been needed for Barabas and the Turkish soldiers to validate the ingenuity of their invading Malta. Indeed the yard could have been used for the whole event of throwing Barabas's body and the invading of Malta. Barabas could have simply passed round one side of the platform, through one of the alleys in the yard, gained access to the tiring-house, and thus burst the doors open onto the stage. This would give prominence to the act of rising in the middle of the town, and the scene would be remembered for the ingenuity of its staging. In addition to that, there are examples of such usage on Elizabethan stages, and of access between the yard and the tiring-house,<sup>61</sup> which in this case would signify the hollow rock in the sluice. As such, this scene would be one of the examples of the flexibility of the Elizabethan stage, and would reflect one of its assets, the intimacy between actors and audiences.

An upper level seems to have been needed for Abigail to throw the money to Barabas from a window (I,i), and for Barabas to watch Lodowick and Mathias fighting. In both instances the action is simple and needs no properties except some money bags in the first instance. T. W. Craik argues that Barabas would be watching the duel from the "most effective stage-position" readily available, and not necessarily from an upper level.<sup>62</sup> Rhodes discusses the possibility of the hut at the top of the theatre having been used for scenes with an upper level window.<sup>63</sup> It is worth mentioning that Barabas and Abigail do not see each other until line 42. Either Barabas could not see her sooner because he had his back to her, or he entered with a drooping head as his sad speech might suggest "Thus like the sad presaging raven..." (1). He may have sat down somewhere on stage, as later only by a small movement on his part he had a glimpse of Abigail's light: "As good go on, as sit so sadly thus/ But stay, what star shines yonder in the east?" (40-1).<sup>64</sup> Using the hut at the very top would seem to be an unnecessary complication to the action, and Barabas's catching a glimpse of Abigail would be clumsy, particularly as the Rose was a large theatre, so that Barabas and Abigail would be too distant from each other.'

The cauldron scene is by far the most difficult scene to reconstruct. As part of an iconographic punishment in hell, one would expect this scene to use a trap-door for its significant symbolism. But how could Alleyn risk falling into it from a sort of upper level, especially after one performance of *Tamburlaine* had caused the death of a



woman and a child?<sup>65</sup> Not forgetting that the cauldron was clearly meant to be on view, otherwise there would be no point in Henslowe's preparing it. It is important to remember that the cauldron is only mentioned in the inventory of 1598. Does this mean that it was not used in performances earlier than 1598? In fact the text does not mention a cauldron except in the stage-directions, and only "a deep pit past recovery" (V,v,36) is indicated. We have then to consider both possibilities.

How can the fall be staged without a cauldron? Barabas's description seems to imply that he was on the gallery, the floor of which has a trap:

Here have I made a dainty gallery,  
The floor whereof, this cable being cut  
Doth fall asunder, so that it doth sink  
Into a deep pit past recovery.  
(V,v,33-6)

The fact that when Calymath is about to mount the gallery—"Ay, Barabas;/ Come bashews, attend" (59)—Ferneze stays him—"Stay Calymath"—speaks few lines and gives the signal, makes it seem that Barabas does not see what happened or does not have time to react. After creating the illusion of having a trap in the gallery floor (33-6), Barabas might have pretended a fall when the signal was given, and thus, under the cover of the confusion of the shot, disappeared from sight, rushed down to the tiring house, and to the trap, where perhaps another actor shouted "Help" (64) to make the staging as real as possible, and to give Barabas enough time to arrive. This, of course, is sheer hypothesis, but, without a cauldron, it seems the only possible way to achieve the symbolic effect of Barabas falling into hell.

With the cauldron available, staging becomes more puzzling. It could not be "*discovered*" as the stage-direction indicates, unless there was some way to hide it. It could have been thrust out from one of the doors, as other large properties, like beds, usually were. Locating it in the place that had represented his counting-house would achieve an interesting symbolism. Bawcutt conjectures with some trepidation that, the lines which describe a special construction on stage (V,v,1-36) suggest that a kind of wooden house or booth was erected on stage "with a trap-door in the roof, space inside for the cauldron, [and] curtains in front."<sup>66</sup> This conjecture could be supported by the presence of two carpenters to help Barabas who is "*with a hammer above very busy*": Bawcutt goes on to argue that this hypothesis seems plausible, as later Barabas alone ascends the construction. Rejecting such a theory would mean that Alleyn had to mime his fall, and cause a delay to the action of a few seconds. Also, one would argue, if Bawcutt's conjecture is completely refuted, the incorporation of the carpenters would

question Marlowe's economy of technique. For its iconographic significance, Barabas's fall would not be staged with minimum resources, it was "more than a piece of empty melodrama"<sup>67</sup> as sometimes it might appear to modern audiences.

Simply enough, the action requires that the cauldron be hidden from Calymath, and as such, it could be placed behind some sort of hangings. Barabas could then descend from the gallery to the tiring-house (or to one of the entrances to the stage that would be conveniently blocked from view behind the hangings), and jump into the cauldron with the sound effects mentioned above: confusion of the shot and the shouts of help. The presence of the carpenters in the gallery with Barabas would then be useful to give the illusion of the complexity of the machinery. It could be argued that if anything dangerous was attempted for the staging of this scene, it would hardly have been practicable to perform the play so frequently.

One further theatrical exigency remains to be mentioned. It seems that, in order to emphasize its villainous intrigues, the play demanded a certain group of properties that presented important symbols, or represented significant plot steps. Apart from the symbols of wealth, mentioned earlier, letters appear to have been important. That their use was often implausible seems to have been overshadowed by their visual impact as Barabas's basic tools for plotting. When Barabas returns home with Lodowick he uses the letter which Abigail hands to him as a justification for leaving her alone with the governor's son: "I am a little busy, sir, pray pardon me.../ But go you in; I'll think upon the account." (II,iii,233,243). Later Barabas sets enmity between Lodowick and Mathias by means of another letter sent through Ithamore to Mathias. The sudden emergence of this letter from up his sleeve without his having to leave the stage to fetch it (II,iii,371-2) would seem to have been accepted by the audience, for all its implausibility, as the visual explanation of the whole situation. The confusion later as to who among the two lovers received the letter—for instead of Mathias, it is Lodowick who enters reading a letter (III,ii,3)—which has been noted by some editors,<sup>68</sup> would seem to have been ignored, for the same reason. News from letters seems to connect, and to be connected to, the rest of the action, circulating as a kind of transmitted speech, or visual igniters of action. Barabas's plot to poison the nunnery is a consequence of Abigail's letter, and his poisoning of Ithamore, the courtesan, and Pilia-Borza, is a consequence of Ithamore's letter to Barabas in which he demands more money.

Cozenage was, then, both subject and technique in *The Jew of Malta*. The theatrical technique in itself becomes, as mentioned earlier, part of a convention of



Jew-baiting. How greatly the Elizabethan audiences would have enjoyed a play like *The Jew* can be surmised from one of Stephen Gosson's accounts of Elizabethan performances in general:

...in the Theatres they generally take up a wonderfull laughter, and shout altogether with one voyce, when they see some notable cosenedge practiced, or some slie conveighance of baudry brought out of Italy. Whereby they showe them selves rather to like it then to rebuke it.<sup>69</sup>

Gradually, the fashion was growing stale, and the play seems to have moved to the Red Bull where sometimes only parts of it were performed.<sup>70</sup> However, the story of the play did not lose all the glamour it once possessed, for, as mentioned earlier, an outline of it formed part of the additions to a mutilated text of *Dr. Faustus* in 1663. In 1633, when Heywood revived all of it, the play seems not to have been widely appreciated. Heywood's two prologues and epilogues for the court and the public performances reveal how the play was received after it had apparently disappeared from public stages for a long time.<sup>71</sup> Heywood's tone is generally apologetic, and even apprehensive: "We know not how our play may pass this stage..." By asking the audience to excuse Richard Perkins, who played Barabas in this performance, if he failed to reach Alleyn's skill, Heywood revealed the possibility, at least, that some members of the audience still remembered Alleyn as Barabas, and that, at that time, the play was mainly credited for Alleyn's presence and versatility of performance in it.<sup>72</sup> His epilogue to the court is particularly apologetic:

It is our fear, dread sovereign, we have been  
Too tedious; neither can't be less than sin  
To wrong your princely patience. If we have,  
Thus low dejected we your pardon crave:  
And if aught here offend your ear or sight,  
We only act and speak what others write.

Obviously, Elizabethan theatre-goers were able to find in Barabas a personality that conformed with their preconception of the villainy of the Jews. The innovation that distinguished Barabas's characterisation was later lost. After Cromwell's recall of the Jews in 1655, the mystery that had hitherto surrounded them may have been largely dissipated. If such was the case, their ceasing to be regarded as oddities or novelties might help account for a loss of interest in *The Jew of Malta* in particular, and in the Jew as a literary subject in general. Apart from the problems of tone and structure of the play that have occupied nineteenth and twentieth-century critics, there is also the fact that Marlowe's age was less prone to the moral

squeamishness that characterised nineteenth-century audiences, and the racial awareness that hinders modern audiences from enjoying the play.

After the revival in 1633, the play suffered an eclipse for two hundred years, after which it was revived by Edmund Kean in 1818, simply because of the attraction of the title-role, and with the text considerably adapted in a manner that reduced Barabas's crimes (see Chapter Five). In our own time *The Jew of Malta* does not hold a favourable position among Marlowe's plays. In the end the subjects that caused the play's popularity in the 1590's have made its appeal more doubtful to later ages, as will be revealed in the coming Chapters.



## NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. See Henslowe's *Diary*, op. cit., pp. 16-26, 34, 36, 37, 47.
2. Ibid., pp. 22-6.
3. Ibid., p. 16.
4. *Diary*, p. 21; See also Chambers, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 424-5.
5. *Diary*, p. 321.
6. In his edition of the play, N. W. Bawcutt suggests that the reference in the *Diary* to more things for the play, "may simply have been a straightforward renewal of costumes and stage properties worn out by use". (*The Jew of Malta*, ed. cit., Introduction, p. 2). All quotations from the play will be from this edition unless otherwise stated.
7. "maye 1601 to bye divers things for the Jewe of malta the some of...lent mor to the littell tayller the same day for more things for the Jewe of malta the some of..." (*Diary*, p. 170).
8. See Chapter Four of this thesis.
9. There is an entry of the play in the Stationers' Register on 17 May 1594, and there is an entry of a ballad the day before "The murtherous life and terrible death of the rich Jew of Malta", but no quartos before 1633. See Chambers, vol. 3, p. 424. See also Bawcutt, ed. cit., p. 38.
10. See below p. 49.
11. William Rowley, *A Search for Money* (1609), edited by J. Payne Collier, in *Early English Poetry, Ballads, and Popular Literature of the Middle Ages*, Percy Society Reprints (London, 1842), vol. 2, pp. 5-50, p. 19.
12. Cf.: "I worship your nose for this!" (II,iii,175); "I have the bravest, gravest, secret, subtle, bottle-nose knave to my master that ever gentleman had" (III,iii,9-10); "God-a-mercy, nose" (IV,i,23).
13. Quoted by Brooke, "The Reputation of Christopher Marlowe", p. 380.
14. Thomas Dekker, *The Seven Deadly Sins of London* (1606), in *The Non-Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, edited by Alexander B. Grosart, 5 vols. (London, 1884-6), vol. 2, pp. 1-82, chapter 2, p. 31. That using London instead of Malta could be a convenient slip, is supported by the fact that in the same year Dekker refers to the Jew of Malta in another work of his, see below, p. 36.
15. Quoted by Brooke, "The Reputation of Christopher Marlowe", p. 380 (from Cowley's *The Guardian*, 1641, II,iii).
16. Thomas Dekker, *News from Hell* (1606), ed. cit., vol. 2, pp. 82-154, p. 142.
17. William Haughton, *Englishmen for My Money* (1616), Malone Society Reprints (1912), i, ll. 2-4/10-11. Though the first extant text is the 1616 quarto, there is a reference to this play in Henslowe's *Diary* as early as 1598. See Introduction to the

Malone Society Reprint, p. vi. Cf. also Barabas's lines: "But now how stands the wind?/ Into what corner peers my halcyon's bill?" (I,i,38-9).

18. John Marston, *Jack Drum's Entertainment* (1601), in *Old English Drama*, Facsimile Student Editions (1912), towards the end of Act III (f.3).
19. M. J. Landa, *The Jew in Drama* (London, 1926) He argues that there was an enormous number of Jewish money-lenders and usurers in the religious drama. He mentions some works that dealt with Jews before Marlowe: the anonymous play *The Jew* now lost, Lyly's *Eupheus* (1578)...etc. The issue is even discussed in Stephen Gosson's *The School of Abuse* (1579). Landa goes on to argue that some plays depicted Jews as scape-goat or 'stunt' figures to discuss the issue of usury over which a furious controversy developed in England (see pp. 45-50). The word 'Jew' was used as a synonym for rascals, thieves and usurers. He gives the example of North's *Diall of Princes* (1568): "Let him take heed also that he do not call his servants drunkards, thieves, villaines, Jews, nor other such-like names of reproach" (p. 15). The lost play *The Jew* is according to Landa: "the father of the stage-Jew of theatrical history...the red-haired babe who stepped from the cradle of the religious drama and was reared in the nursery of the age of transition" (p. 53).
20. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
21. Cf. for example "Still have I borne it with a patient shrug/ for suffrance is the badge of all our tribe./ You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog..." (*Merchant*, I,iii,104-6), and "Sufferance breads ease" (*Jew*, I,ii,240), "I learned in Florence how to kiss my hand./ Heave up my shoulders when they call me dog..." (II,iii,23-4). Cf. also: *Merchant*, I,i,33-4, *Jew*, I,i,45; *Merchant*, I,iii,38, *Jew*, I,ii,161-2; *Merchant*, I,iii,65-9, *Jew*, I,i,103-4; *Merchant*, I,iii,93, *Jew*, I,ii,111; *Merchant*, I,iii,104, *Jew*, I,iii,23-4...etc. For more parallels see *The Merchant of Venice*, edited by J. R. Brown, The Arden Shakespeare (London, 1964), p. xxiii; and Landa, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-5; see also Maurice Charney, "Jessica's Turquoise Ring and Abigail's Poisoned Porridge: Shakespeare and Marlowe as Rivals and Imitators", in *Renaissance Drama*, 10 (1979), 33-44. For parallels with *Titus Andronicus* see Edward Meyer, "*Machiavelli and the Elizabethan Drama*", in *Litterarhistorische Forschungen*, 1-2 (Weimar, 1897), pp. 51-2; see also The Oxford edition of *Titus Andronicus*, pp. 37-8, and notes to I,i,69 (n. 6), p. 87, and to V,i,128 (n. 40), p. 174; cf.: Barabas's and Ithamore's catalogues of crimes (*Jew*, II,iii,176-200) with Aaron's speech:

As kill a man or else devise his death,  
Ravish a maid or plot the way to do it...  
Set deadly enmity between two friends...  
Oft have I digg'd up dead men from their graves  
And set them upright at their dear friends doors.  
(V,i,128-9,131,135-6)

For parallels with *Richard III*, cf.: "Was ever woman in this humour woo'd?/ Was ever woman in this humour won" (I,ii,232-3) with Barabas's "Now tell me, worldlings, underneath the sun/ If greater falsehood ever has been done" (V,v,49-50), and Ithamore's "Why, was there ever seen such villainy" (III,iii,1); Cf. also *Richard III*, II,iii,384-5, and *Jew*, I,i,34-5; Barabas's pretending repentance "...religion/ Hides many mischiefs from suspicion" (I,ii,281-2) and Richard's "...thus I clothe my naked villainy/ With odd old ends stol'n forth of Holy Writ..." (I,iii,336-7); compare also Richard's finding in Buckingham his other self (II,ii,151-3) with Barabas's similar discovery, III,iv,42-3; For more parallels, see *Richard III*, edited by Antony Hammond, The Arden Shakespeare (London and New York, 1981, reprinted 1987), pp. 91-2.



22. There is a reference in the *Diary* to "Matchavell", and "Matchevell", pp. 16, 17, 18, but it cannot be certain whether this refers to another figure of Machiavelli in one of the plays of the period or to a play called Machiavelli.
23. Among those who believe that Elizabethan knowledge of Machiavelli might not be first-hand, see Meyer, op. cit., pp. 30-52, particularly, pp. 39, 41; Bakeless, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 347-54, particularly p. 349; Kocher, op. cit., pp. 194-202, particularly, pp. 194, 195, 197, and 201.
24. See Meyer, pp. 39-52, particularly, pp. 48-9; Irving Ribner, "Marlowe and Machiavelli", in *Comparative Literature*, 6 (1954), 348-56, p. 351. There is also a strong parallel between the figure of Romelio in Webster's *The Devil's Law-Case* and Barabas; see *The Complete Works of John Webster*, edited by F. L. Lucas, 4 vols. (London, 1927; reprinted Michigan, 1966), vol. 2, pp. 217-8, 339.
25. Among those who believe that Marlowe knew Machiavelli's works at first hand is: Una Ellis-Fermor, op. cit., pp. 88-104, particularly, pp. 91, 102. More recent studies have focused on the likelihood that Marlowe knew Machiavelli's works but chose to include both images of him in his play in such a way that it would not be easily recognised: see Levin, op. cit., p. 61; Irving Ribner, "Marlowe and Machiavelli", p. 351. Catherine Minshull, "Marlowe's 'Sound Machevill'", in *Renaissance Drama*, 13 (1982), 35-53, believes that Marlowe created both types of Machiavellianism, Elizabethan and real, in Barabas and Ferneze respectively, and for her the strongest evidence that Barabas does not stick to real Machiavellian policies is his entrusting his worst enemy Ferneze (pp. 40-1); see also Shepherd, op. cit., p. 87. Antonio D'Andrea, in "Studies on Machiavelli and His Reputation in the Sixteenth Century: Marlowe's Prologue to 'The Jew of Malta'", in *Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 5 (1961), 214-48, particularly p. 239.
26. See Chapter Seven on modern performances of *The Jew of Malta*, p. 237.
27. See Alfred Harbage, "Innocent Barabas", in *Tulane Drama Review*, 8 (1964), 47-58, pp. 51-2. Cf. also Bernard Spivack, *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil* (New York, 1958; reprinted 1964), p. 346, where he calls the play "the story of Malta's heroic resistance...".
28. Quoted by Meyer, p. 21, from 'Epistle Dedicatorie', in Simmon Paterike's trans. lation of Gentillet in *Kalends Augusti Anno* (1577).
29. See Ann Jennalie Cook, *The Privileged Playgoers of Shakespeare's London: 1576-1642* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1981), particularly, pp. 216-75. Cook attempts to prove that the 'privileged' in Elizabethan society constituted the dominating part of the audience, due to many factors, financial, social, and even hierarchal.
30. See Gurr, op. cit., pp. 195-215.
31. Minshull, p. 51.
32. Del Bosco refers to his being sent from the Catholic King, see II,ii,5-7.
33. Cf.: "Sometimes I go about and poison wells" (II,iii,178); see also I,i,113-9; I,ii,81-2/113/161/338/343; II,iii,216-7; IV,i,1-2/19. See G. K. Hunter, "The Theology of Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*" in *The Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 27 (1964), 211-40, reprinted in *Dramatic Identities and Cultural Tradition* (Liverpool, 1978), pp. 60-102. See also Landa, pp. 56-8; Baycutt, ed. cit., p. 9; Judith Weil, *Christopher Marlowe: Merlin's Prophet* (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 22-50; for a study of the attitudes to Jews in early times see Frank Felsenstein,

"Jews and Devils: Anti-Semitic Stereotypes of Late Medieval and Renaissance England", *Literature and Theology*, 4 (1990), 15-28.

34. See Landa, p. 70.

35. Bevington argues that this line proves more that Barabas is first and foremost a villain, as this word comes before "we hate Christian both" (Bevington, p. 226), but I think it could explain why Jews were seen as villains, and thus the line may contain a note of mockery on Marlowe's part of a dominant Christian principle.

36. Hunter, "The Theology of Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*", *passim*.

37. See Weil, pp. 28-9.

38. Hunter, "The Theology of Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*", pp. 75-9.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 64. Hunter points to examples in the play where Barabas is paralleled to Job, only to function as anti-Christ, *ibid.*, pp. 73-4.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 93.

41. See Chapter Five and Seven.

42. For a study of the influence of the morality Vice on Barabas, see Bevington, *op. cit.*, pp. 218-33; see also Spivack, pp. 346-53.

43. Bevington, p. 221.

44. Cf. for e.g: "Summon thy senses, call thy wits together..." (I,i,177); "A reaching thought will search his deepest wits/ And cast with cunning for the time to come..." (I,ii,223-4); "Now will I show myself to have more of the serpent than the dove; that is, more knave than fool." (II,iii,36-7); "True; and it shall be cunningly performed.../ And like a cunning spirit feign some lie/ Till I have set 'em both at enmity." (II,iii,369,384-4); "Why, was there ever seen such villainy,/ So neatly plotted and so well performed..." (III,iii,1-2); "Now I have such a plot for both their lives/ As never Jew nor Christian knew the like." (IV,i,117-8); "Now tell me, worldlings, underneath the sun/ If greater falsehood ever has been done." (V,v,49-50).

45. When in 1814 Kean revived *The Merchant of Venice*, he wore a black wig that attracted much attention, which suggests that there was a break in a certain tradition in representing the stage-Jew: see Chapter Five. See also Toby Lelyveld, *Shylock on the Stage* (London, 1961), p. 8; and Landa, p. 67.

46. In Thomas Jordan's "The Forfeiture: a Romance" (1664), there is a reference to a specific make up of the stage-Jew: "His beard was red, his face was made/ Not much unlike a Witches; His habit was a Jewish Gown./ That would defend all weather..." (my italics), quoted from *Jordan's Royall Arbor of Loyal Poesie*, by Bakeless, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 368.

47. Harbage, p. 51.

48. Cf. for example, "This is the Market-place" (I,ii,1), Bellamira's "he is seldom from my house" (III,i,10)...etc. (my italics).

49. *The Jew of Malta and The Massacre at Paris*, edited by H. S. Bennett (London, 1931), p. 31. Bawcutt, *ed. cit.*, Appendix C, p. 199.



50. In the R.S.C. production in 1987, a small scale was used among Barabas's other properties on the table, see Chapter Seven.
51. In Kean's revival in 1818, the promptbook indicates that there were four money bags prepared at the balcony, see Chapter Five, p. 113.
52. See Rhodes, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-35. In the R.S.C. production of 1987 a scaffold was used to accommodate the slaves, so that they were lifted up and thus gave more space on stage. See Chapter Seven, p. 240, this suggests how demanding this scene is.
53. *The Jew of Malta*, edited by T. W. Craik, New Mermaid edition (London, 1966), p. 93.
54. J. L. Simmons, "Elizabethan Stage Practice and Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*", in *Renaissance Drama*, 4 (1971), 93-104, p. 96.
55. See Saunders, "Vaulting the Rails", *op. cit.*
56. Simmons, p. 103.
57. For examples of the use of the trap at the Rose, see Rhodes, Appendix C, pp. 226-8; Cf.: In *A Looking Glass for London*, "The Magi with their rods beate the ground, and from under the same riseth a brave Arbour." (517-25). See also Wickham, *Early English Stages*, vol. 2, pt. 2, p. 177. He argues that action under the stage was difficult and that Marlowe, aware of that, has attempted to avoid such complicated action; see also his "Exeunt to the Cave: Notes on the staging of Marlowe's Plays", *op. cit.*; see also Gurr, *op. cit.*, p. 173.
58. The height of Elizabethan stages is estimated at a maximum of 5-6 ft., Rhodes estimates 5 ft. to the Rose, Rhodes, Appendix D, p. 265.
59. *The Devil's Law-Case* edited by Elizabeth M. Brennan, New Mermaid edition (London, 1975). The play was printed in 1623; Bentley suggests that it was written around 1610, and performed after 1615 by Queen Anne's men at the Red Bull, G. E. Bentley, *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage*, 7 vols. (Oxford, 1941-68), vol. 5, p. 1250-52. If such was the case, and as *The Jew* was performed at the Red Bull after the Rose, the reference might be to a performance at the Red Bull. It is also worth noting that Queen Henrietta's Company, who played *The Jew* at the Cockpit, is believed to have derived part of its members from Queen Anne's Company who was playing at the Red Bull, and Richard Perkins might have moved from the latter to the former and thus revived *The Jew* at the Cockpit as part of his old repertoire at the Red Bull. See Bentley, vol. 1, pp. 220, 250-9.
60. See Chapter Four.
61. See Saunders, *op. cit.*, pp. 74-6.
62. Craik, Introduction to his edition, p. xv.
63. See Rhodes, Appendix C, pp. 257-8.
64. See Bawcutt's notes to 1.40, p. 100.
65. See Bakeless, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 199.
66. Bawcutt, *ed. cit.*, Appendix C, p. 200.

67. Hunter, "The Theology of Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*", p. 94.
68. See Bawcutt, notes to this scene, p. 128, and Bowers, op. cit, vol. 1, p. 338.
69. Stephen Gosson, *Plays Confuted in Five Actions* (London, 1582?), f. C8v-DI, quoted by Bawcutt, ed. cit., p. 26.
70. See Chapter Four, p. 78.
71. See Bawcutt, Appendix A, pp. 191-4.
72. He was praised for being "Proteus for shapes", prologue to *Cockpit*, l.10.



## CHAPTER THREE

*EDWARD II ON STAGE BEFORE 1642*

*Edward II* appears to have had fewer performances than *The Jew of Malta* and *Dr. Faustus*. Written between 1591-1592, the play seems to have suffered, in terms of theatrical popularity, from the plague of 1593.<sup>1</sup> However, the fact that four editions of the play were published (1594, 1598, 1612, 1622, and possibly 1593)<sup>2</sup>—fewer than in the case of *Dr. Faustus* but more than the number of editions of the extremely popular *Jew*—defies attempts to call the play unpopular, at least in terms of literary interest. In trying to pursue the stage history of the play, one is faced with the frustrating statement made by most editors of the play to the effect that "beyond the statements of the title-pages of the different editions nothing whatsoever is known as to the production of the play".<sup>3</sup> It cannot be denied that the only certainties available are the details of the title-pages. There is reference to the play's being "sundrie times publicly acted in the honourable cittie of London, By the right honourable Earle of Pembroke his servants" on the title-pages of the early quartos, and to its being "publicly Acted by the late Queenes Majesties Servants at the Red Bull in St. Johns Streete", on the title-page of the 1622 quarto.<sup>4</sup> There are also some vague allusions in Henslowe's *Diary* to a play called "Mortymmer", and to "the Spencers",<sup>5</sup> but these more likely refer to Jonson's lost play *Mortimer, His Fall*.<sup>6</sup>

In spite of this scarcity of information, this chapter will attempt to look into the early stage history of *Edward II* and the way it would have been staged in Elizabethan theatres. Through allusions to the play, and through reference to other relevant plays in the period, reasons behind the 'unpopularity' of *Edward II* (or perhaps only its small number of performances) will be studied in the context of what it represented for its early audiences, theatrically, politically and socially. Having no evidence at all will sometimes be in itself a guiding light which, together with our general knowledge of Elizabethan life and theatre, will hopefully lead to reasonable conclusions.

Unlike Marlowe's other plays (except *Dido*), *Edward II* seems not to have been a property of a large company like the Admiral's, and a famous impresario like Henslowe, and thus its chances for popularity were more slender. The play was "sundrie times" acted in London, but the fact that it was printed as early as 1594, and perhaps 1593, giving less than a two-year difference between performance and

printing, suggests a loss of theatrical interest in it, as plays tended not to be released to the printers if they were still popular on stage.<sup>7</sup>

It is important here to look at the history of Pembroke's Men who owned the play. There is no record of their existence before the autumn of 1592 when they were playing at Leicester, though they might have been active as early as 1587.<sup>8</sup> Concerning their activities in London, there is nothing certain except that they were called to court twice, on 27 December 1592 and on 6 January 1593,<sup>9</sup> during which time they might have acted *Edward II* on the public stages to which the title-pages refer. But what is puzzling is that from 28 January 1593, till the end of the year, plays were prohibited because of the plague, and the company left for the provinces until August 1593 when they returned to London in serious financial difficulty.<sup>10</sup> Since there is an entry of the play in the Stationers' Register on 6 July 1593, one is tempted to ask: when did the company have a chance to act the play "sundrie times"? The time between 27 December and the end of January would not be enough, as plays were rarely repeated more than once every week, judging from Henslowe's record of performances. This leaves us with two possibilities: the first is that Pembroke's Men had a London season prior to the autumn of 1592 which is not recorded, and during which they performed *Edward II*.<sup>11</sup> This would mean that the play was performed before June 1592, as theatres were closed by then, but it seems improbable that the company was acting in London and was not called to court during that time. The second possibility, is that the phrase "sundrie times" was merely a cliché that did not necessarily record a fact. It is also probable that the play was first acted in the provinces, particularly as it is believed that Pembroke's Men were an amalgamation of the Admiral's and the Strange's, formed to play in the provinces at the time of the plague.<sup>12</sup>

From the fact that Pembroke's Men had little success and were bankrupt in August 1593, it can be inferred that, though *Edward II* might have been still popular, they had to sell the play, among other plays, to the printers to make up the financial loss. They were also pawning their costumes and properties.<sup>13</sup> But this inference cannot be irrefutable, as the tradition was that a popular play would be more likely to be sold to another company than to the printers. There is a possibility that, as the company left for the provinces, Marlowe joined the Admiral's again, judging from an entry of *The Massacre at Paris* in Henslowe's *Diary*, in January 1593,<sup>14</sup> and sold *Edward II* to Henslowe, and thus Pembroke's Men rushed their copy, probably a prompt, to the printers in retaliation, and hence the existence of a lost 1593 edition. If this was the case, then its having been printed early after its composition explains the loss of theatrical interest in it. Our main concern, however, is that—whether the play



was unpopular, and thus sold to the printers, or whether it was pirated as once suggested,<sup>15</sup> and thus released to the printers in retaliation—somehow the play lost popularity on Elizabethan stages.

The next important question to ask is whether the printing of the 1598 quarto resulted from a production of the play. There is a phrase exclusive to the title-page of this edition: the four editions share the following information on their title-pages: "*the troublesome raigne and lamentable death of Edward the Second, King of England: with the tragickall fall of proud Mortymer...*", the 1598 title-page alone adds "*And also the life and death of Peirs Gaveston the great Earle of Cornewall, and mighty favorite of King Edward the Second*". Though nothing can be proved by this piece of addition, at least it shows an interest in the degenerate character of Gaveston, and a fresh perspective towards the play. It is possible that Pembroke's Men continued to perform the play until 1597. We know that a certain Pembroke's company was acting at the Swan in 1597, where on 28 July 1597 it performed *The Isle of Dogs* that brought the theatre into disrepute, and consequently caused the closure of theatres by an act of the Privy Council.<sup>16</sup> We also know from Henslowe's *Diary* that a Pembroke's company joined the Admiral's to play at the Rose in October 1597.<sup>17</sup> Though it is not certain whether it was the same Pembroke's company, the chronology of the events makes it probable that it was. If so, the company might have acted *Edward II* at the less reputable Swan, where it would be more welcome than at the Rose, and where interest would be directed to the degeneracy of Gaveston; and when the company was prohibited from acting, it joined the Admiral's at the Rose. Though only a possibility, it might point to a performance being the reason behind the printing of 1598 edition. In the case of the 1622 quarto, it is certain that it was stimulated by a production of the play, as the title-page relates it to another company, though it suggests performances of the play to a less sophisticated audience and on the less reputable stage of the Red Bull.<sup>18</sup>

Accounts of productions of the play are almost non-existent, except for one which, in the nature of Elizabethan drama, reports an audio-visual aspect of the play. In his *The Honour of the Garter* (1593), Peele testifies to the terribly tragic effect that the murder of Edward II had on Elizabethan audiences:

that cruell Mortimer  
That plotted Edwards death at Killingworth,  
Edward the Second, father to this king,  
Whose tragick cry even now me thinkes I heare,  
When gracelesse wretches murdered him by  
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It cannot be denied that Edward's murder was known to Elizabethans before Marlowe's play, through Holinshed's *Chronicles*, Marlowe's main source of the play, and that it was more gruesomely detailed in Holinshed:

they came suddenlie one night into the chamber where he laie in bed fast asleepe, and with heaue featherbeds or a table...being cast upon him, they kept him down and withall put into his fundament an horne, and through the same they thrust up into his bodie an hot spit, or...through the pipe of a trumpet a plumbers instrument of iron made verie hot, the which passing up into his intrailles, and being rolled to and fro, burnt the same, but so as no appearance of any wound or hurt outwardlie might be once perceived. His crie did mooue manie within the castell and towne of Berkley to compassion, plainelie hearing him utter a wailefull noise, as the tormentors were about to murther him, so that diuerse being awakened therewith...praied heartilie to God to receive his soule, when they understood by his crie what the matter ment.<sup>20</sup>

Peele's words, however, seem to point more to Marlowe's play. The description of the ever-lasting sound effect of Edward's cry is less likely to have resulted from a mere reading of Holinshed's account, and the killers of Edward would have been more likely to strike Peele as "graceless" if seen in a performance. Also, and more importantly, the singling out of Mortimer as the only plotter of Edward's death seems to point more to Marlowe's play, because, according to Holinshed, Mortimer was not the main enemy of Edward, and it was not even he who wrote the letter which led to the murder of Edward.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, we have Peele's account to stand with a fair degree of certainty as substantial evidence of an Elizabethan audience's reaction to the sadistic murder. It seems that the murder was acted without any attempt to reduce its horror, being the most remembered aspect of a particular performance. The violence of the murder would have had a persuasive effect on the audience as to the cruelty of Mortimer and Isabella, and to the tragic suffering of Edward, in the same way as the whole concept of violence on Elizabethan stages had. The effect of the darkness of the deed and of the place, even when acted in daylight, seems to have been established in audiences' minds.

Apart from Peele's account, what is worth mentioning is a group of parallel passages between *Edward II* and other plays in the period, in addition to issues inherent in the play that, in relation to the social and political problems of the time, might help to establish the importance the play had for the Elizabethan audiences. There are parallels with plays such as Peele's *Edward I*, *2 & 3 Henry VI*, *The Troublesome Reign of John King of England*, *The Wounds of Civil War*, *Solyman and Perseda*, and *Arden of Feversham*.<sup>22</sup> In the case of the last two, most editors think



it certain that Marlowe was copied, but in the case of the others, it is argued that Marlowe could be the borrower.<sup>23</sup> In *Richard III* is found the majority of verbal and thematic echoes,<sup>24</sup> but while it is fairly certain that Shakespeare borrowed from *The Jew* and *Tamburlaine*, it is doubtful whether he did from *Edward II*,<sup>25</sup> and in this case Marlowe was more likely the borrower.

Most of the parallel passages, whether borrowed from Marlowe or not, are merely verbal echoes that do not help to provide substantial information about the theatrical impact of Marlowe's play, though they testify to its literary success. Some of them, however, and strangely enough in those cases where Marlowe seems to be the borrower, clarify Elizabethan attitudes to some issues in the play. In *Edward I* for instance, there is a passage similar to one in *Edward II*:

It shall suffice me to enjoy your love,  
Which whiles I have, I think myself as great  
As Cæsar riding in the Roman street,  
With captive kings at his triumphant car.  
(*Edward II*, I,i,170-3)

Not Cæsar leading through the streetes of Rome  
The captive kings of conquered nations,  
Was in his princely triumphes honoured more,  
Then English Edward in this martial sight.  
(*Edward I*, i, 92-5)<sup>26</sup>

Marlowe and Peele might have been only drawing on a common stock idea; if so, neither was the borrower. The fact that the words are more appropriate to Peele's context, which was enough for some editors to believe that Marlowe was the borrower,<sup>27</sup> at least points to how the audience might have reacted to Gaveston's words. They would have shocked the audience, the undignified nature of his relation with Edward being stressed by the contrast with a common heroic image.

Similarly, *The Troublesome Reigne of King John*, which parallels *Edward II* in many instances, includes a line—"...so I scome to be subject to the greatest/ Prelate in the world" (pt. 1, v,75-6)<sup>28</sup>—which echoes "Why should a king be subject to a priest?" (*Edward II*, I,iv,96). The fact that both Marlowe and the author of *The Troublesome Reigne* were led to use this phrase suggests that it expressed a favourite Elizabethan sentiment. It can be imagined that audiences were on Edward's side at this point.

The literary importance of the play seems to be undoubted. Even though *Richard II* has always been considered as superior to *Edward II*, it is obvious that



Shakespeare drew on Marlowe's play thematically and even verbally.<sup>29</sup> Whether we agree with Irving Ribner that the history play was a tradition established long before Marlowe's *Edward II* and Shakespeare's *Henry VI* plays, or with the more logical conclusion of Ornstein, that the tradition started with Shakespeare's *Henry VI* plays,<sup>30</sup> one could still see *Edward II* as a turning point in an already established tradition, or as an innovatory influence behind a new one. At least one might agree with Ribner's point of view that "In *Richard II* Shakespeare gives us a type of historical tragedy which Marlowe had already shaped for him in *Edward II*".<sup>31</sup>

An important issue in relation to the literary influence of the play, is the sudden interest that writers took in the troublesome reign of Edward II after Marlowe's play had come into being. Michael Drayton wrote five long historical poems each dealing with one aspect of the reign. His *Piers Gaveston* (1593) elaborates on the relationship between Edward and Gaveston, and on the bad influence it had on Edward and on the realm, a subject that is not greatly discussed by Holinshed, and thus is more likely inspired by Marlowe's play. His *Mortimeriados* (1596) deals with Mortimer's career and fall with emphasis on his relationship with Isabella, again a subject that is brought up by Marlowe.<sup>32</sup> This indicates Drayton's interest in the additional hints that Marlowe gives to the understanding of the reign of Edward II. The same applies to the anonymous play *Edward III*, and presumably to Ben Jonson's *The Fall of Mortimer* now lost. Taken together they indicate a significant interest in a notorious reign that Marlowe has put into dramatic focus.

Having considered the play's literary importance, we come now to consider why it was not a theatrical success. Apart from its having been owned by a small company, what was probably detrimental to the play's success on Elizabethan stages was its dangerous subject matter, in that it deals with a fragment of history that was undignified, and particularly with a deposition and killing of a king. The play figures a "little England",<sup>33</sup> made a victim of conflicting desires and ambitions which are developed within no providential frame like the one that Shakespeare provides in his history plays. Elizabethan audiences may have felt some unease at watching the unflattering image of an England governed by a weak and degenerate king, though it formed part of their history. It is true that *Richard II* deals with a similar theme, but Shakespeare's tendency to appeal to his audience with rhetorical images of a united England (such as the one in the garden scene, III,iv), seems to have succeeded in camouflaging a piece of morally dubious and unsober history. In addition to that, *Richard II* deals with a rebellion which by being successful becomes not really a rebellion, but rather a form of reformation.<sup>34</sup> In spite of that, it is worth mentioning



that, though *Richard II* would seem less subversive than *Edward II*, it is well known that the first three quartos of *Richard II* were printed without the deposition scene, and that it was acted by the Lord Chamberlain's Men on demand by Earl of Essex on the night before his rebellion in 1601. Moreover, Queen Elizabeth was said to have complained that *Richard II* "was played 40 times in open streets and houses".<sup>35</sup> *Edward II*, one would have thought would have been an even more dangerous play, especially as the text was printed in full, with the deposition scene, almost concurrently with performances of the play.

It is not that the subject of an ill-advised monarch was unprecedented in Elizabethan history. In actual life, liability to oppose the monarch was increasingly becoming common.<sup>36</sup> Though Puritan leaders in Parliament believed in the heinousness of rebellion, they did not abstain from opposing Elizabeth's policies. The discussion between Edward and his peers where they tell him to "Learn then to rule us better, and the realm." (I,iv,39), which Marlowe elaborated on from his source,<sup>37</sup> touched the very issues that dominated Elizabethan politics. The motto that queen Isabella utters in the scene of the reconciliation between Edward and the lords: "Now is the king of England rich and strong/ Having the love of his renowned peers" (I,iv,365-6), seems to reflect the political principle of Parliamentarianism that stressed the necessity of harmony between the monarch and the nobles. But the play also includes some dangerous hints at Elizabethan political practices that would be easily recognised by Elizabethan audiences. Hattaway remarks how the line "Two kings in England cannot rule at once" (V,i,58), could have reminded the audience of the "awful pragmatism that had led to the execution of Mary Queen of Scots only a few years before the play".<sup>38</sup> Also the ambiguous letter that Mortimer writes to provoke the killing of Edward, would probably have echoed a common political practice of double-dealing on <sup>the</sup> part of Elizabeth, in which

the repressive state that writes human relations denies responsibility for its texts, just as Elizabeth so outrageously punished secretary Davidson for delivering the order for Mary of Scots' execution which she herself had signed.<sup>39</sup>

Irving Ribner tells us how Elizabeth's possible marriage to a foreign prince was opposed by Thomas Norton fearing the idea of placing the realm under a foreign control.<sup>40</sup> Though Ribner does not make the connection to *Edward II*, it seems Edward's relation with Gaveston, and Gaveston's strong hold on him would, for Elizabethan audiences, echo such an event.



It might perhaps be expected that Elizabethan audiences would enjoy such political innuendoes in the play, but with the lack of a national framework of reference to act as a safety background against which they could accept political cynicism in the play, it would be less likely. What makes the play theatrically less interesting for an Elizabethan audience, is also the fact that Marlowe made the characters unattractive. Edward is rendered more so than he is in the chronicles. Holinshed mentions Edward's "disordered manner" (p. 547) for which he was "hated...so extremelie" (p. 587), but he refers to his being not a bad warrior and of "good and corteous nature" (p. 587) and to his care to have Isabella back after her long stay in France where she "slacked all the summer" (p. 578). Though Marlowe refers to Edward being "by nature...mild and calm" (I,iv,387), he makes him mainly weak (II,ii,158) and wanton, not willing to save Mortimer's Junior's uncle (II,ii), not caring at all for Isabella (I,iv,170-86/ II,ii,171-2), and in general blemishing the realm with "disgrace" (II,ii,188).

Similarly, though at the beginning Mortimer is admired as he faces Edward with obvious patriotic intentions, his career unravels in a Machiavellian sequence of plotting against the king, and the rebellion he represents descends precipitously into cruel opportunism. At the same time Mortimer has little of the popular Machiavellianism of *The Jew*, and *The Massacre at Paris*. Even Lightborn's diabolical joy in his devious accomplishments is established in too hideous a background ever to amuse the audience, as the more grotesquely humorous Ithamore presumably did. Likewise, the end of the play does not represent an encouraging image of retribution. Bevington believes that it follows a morality justice with prince Edward as a "fit instrument for restoring virtuous role",<sup>41</sup> but he seems to forget that, though childhood was merged into adolescence in Elizabethan concepts, for Elizabethans a kingdom ruled by a child was a recipe for destruction which they probably saw in *I Henry VI*.<sup>42</sup> Thus while *Richard II* displays patriots at work to restore order, *Edward II* figures a mere child as a dubious restorer of order. Concerning the Elizabethan reception of the play, we are led then to agree with Ornstein that it seems "nobody has admired *Edward II* for its depiction of political reality".<sup>43</sup>

It seems also that nobody has admired the treatment of homosexuality in the play. An Elizabethan audience would no doubt relate it to the myth of Sodom and Gomorrah. L. J. Mills suggests that the relationship between Edward and Gaveston could be interpreted in terms of Elizabethan classical friendship,<sup>44</sup> but it seems more likely that Elizabethan audiences were meant to recognize a sodomic relation in the play. Marlowe gives more emphasis to Edward's sodomy than is there in the chronicles. Holinshed refers to Edward's and Gaveston's "heinous vices", "voluptuous



pleasure", and "filthie and dishonourable exercises" (p. 547), and to Gaveston as Edward's "dearie beloved familiar" (p. 551), but Marlowe does more to bring up their homosexuality. In the chronicles Gaveston dies early and the big role in corrupting Edward is left to the Spencers, but Marlowe focuses on Gaveston as Edward's chief favourite. And though in the chronicles Gaveston was married to Margaret before Edward married Isabella (p. 547), Marlowe delays Gaveston's marriage, perhaps to make him free of ties to a woman and thus emphasise Edward's homosexual inclinations. Gaveston's marriage is brought up later in the play to show his ignoring of Margaret reflecting Edward's own treatment of Isabella, and therefore underlining the homosexuality of both men. This deviation from history would be recognised by those members of Elizabethan audiences who were familiar with the chronicles.

There are also other significant connotations in the play that were linked in the minds of Elizabethans with a sodomic world. Gaveston's soliloquy establishes a kind of "disguised dumb show"<sup>45</sup> of Edward's dream kingdom that is full of sodomic yearnings. There are recurrent words and images that were related to sodomy, such as "wanton poets" (I,i,49), a "lovely boy in Dian's shape" (60), "frolic", and "Ganymede" (I,ii,67; I,iv,73; II,ii,63), and other frequent references to "naked swords" (I,i,125), and "stabbing" (II,i,43) that suggest "phallic puns".<sup>46</sup> Altogether these words form for Elizabethans a body of homosexual terminology.<sup>47</sup> Also Edward's murder, though based on Holinshed, would have particularly strong homosexual echoes for Elizabethans, especially with the added iconographic power of the theatre.

It cannot be denied that all references to homosexuality in the play take the form of veiled hints and ambiguous suggestions, but this was what characterised Elizabethan concepts and attitudes towards homosexuality. In Renaissance England 'homosexuality' was an unknown word; what we term 'homosexuality' was known as 'sodomy' in Elizabethan terminology, and in general categorised under 'debauchery'. Sodomite practices were not unusual but they were usually ignored by the authorities for political and social convenience.<sup>48</sup> In his study of homosexuality in Renaissance England, Alan Bray examines the ambivalence that characterised governmental attitudes towards it:

For all the violence with which this society repressed homosexuality, there is an ambiguity in its attitude, unacknowledged yet surprisingly easy to see.<sup>49</sup>

Bray does not discuss *Edward II*, but his comments here seem to echo the lords' attitude towards Edward II's homosexuality, their banishing of Gaveston and allowing



him back again. The fact that the main concern of the government was the maintenance of social order, and that "what was offended against was the stability of the social order",<sup>50</sup> echoes Mortimer's main complaint about Edward's behaviour:

Uncle, his wanton humour grieves not me;  
 But this I scorn, that one so basely born  
 Should by his sovereign's favour grow so pert,  
 And riot it with treasure of the realm  
 While soldiers mutiny for want of pay...  
 'tis this that makes me impatient.  
 (I,iv,401-5/ 418)

The play then seems uncannily to anticipate England under James, the homosexual king. And thus one could expect it to have been politically dangerous on Elizabethan and Jacobean stages.

It might have been the topicality of the subject of homosexuality in the play that stimulated the production by Queen Anne's company at the Red Bull. The reference on the title-page might point to an earlier date than 1622, as the company lost its title in 1619, when Queen Anne died, and as it had been acting at the Red Bull prior to that. Thus the play was probably performed in 1618/19. One is led to wonder whether the trial in 1618 of Peter du Guy, a Frenchman, for sodomy<sup>51</sup> had anything to do with the sudden return of interest in a play that figures Gaveston as a French sodomite, not to mention the interesting alliterative coincidence between their names: Piers de Gaveston, and Peter du Guy. This might be supported by the fact that the notorious Red Bull is known to have accommodated other plays that dealt with sodomy, such as *Swetnam or the Women-Hater*, performed at the Red Bull in 1618/19.<sup>52</sup>

Being then a dangerous play to perform on public stages, it is possible that Marlowe intended it for the relative obscurity of the provinces, particularly as it is the least spectacular among Marlowe's plays. The use of only one stage level, the elaborate stage directions, the long descriptions of action (like III,ii,94-120), all seem to point to a simple stage. If Wickham's argument that nearly all Marlowe's plays were written for an unequipped stage is accepted as plausible,<sup>53</sup> it can still be said that *Edward II* was written in anticipation of an even more unequipped stage than Marlowe's other plays.

While *The Jew*, and *Dr. Faustus* might call for an upper level, there is nothing in *Edward II* to suggest its use. And the only scene that one might think warrants the use of a trap, namely the dungeon scene, includes a detailed description of the miserable surroundings, as if anticipating difficulty in realising it effectively on



stage. In V, iii Edward refers to the dungeon, and even the stench in it, although he is still only on his way to it ("Friends, whither must unhappy Edward go?" [4]) and although at this point it is out of context:

But can my air of life continue long  
When all my senses are annoyed with stench?  
Within a dungeon England's king is kept,  
Where I am starved for want of sustenance...  
(17-20)

Later in this scene Matrevis emphasises the darkness of the place to which they are taking the king: "Come, come away; now put the torches out;/ We'll enter in by darkness to Killingworth" (47-8). After two scenes, with Edward and his captors (V,v), the audience is immediately reminded that Edward is now in the dungeon, and is given an elaborate description of the place:

*Mat.* Gurney, I wonder the king dies not,  
Being in a vault up to the knees in water,  
To which the channels of the castle run;  
From whence a damp continually ariseth  
That were enough to poison any man...  
*Gur.* yesternight  
I opened but the door to throw him meat,  
And I was almost stifled with the savour.  
(1-9)

It is more probable that Edward is not on stage at that point, as Gurney asks Matrevis to "Send for him out thence..." (13), but he is not necessarily in a trap. The repetitive emphasis on locating the action, and then the frequent hints at the necessity of spilling it out onto the main acting area, point to a lack of verisimilitude. Sentences like "Here is the keys, this is the lake;" (25), "be not far off" (28), "the next room" (29), "So when I call you, bring it in" (35), and "Here's a light to go into the dungeon" (37), would seem redundant if the place was realised more fully on stage. Later, when Lightborn is supposed to have entered the dungeon, the stress on the darkness and foulness of the place is even heavier. Lightborn exclaims "Foh!", Edward wonders "What light is that?" (40-1), and then adds further to the description of the dungeon: "This dungeon where they keep me is the sink/ Wherein the filth of all the castle falls.../ And there in mire and puddle have I stood/ This ten days' space..." (55-9). It can be argued that Edward was in the trap to start with, and was then called out, yet what follows Gurney's intention to "Send for him out thence" is Lightborn's entrance. Later it is Lightborn who goes into the dungeon, and after his encounter with Edward he calls for Matrevis to come (106). It is of course impossible that Edward stayed in the trap and that the rest of the scene took place there, and it seems also improbable



that he was in the trap even at the beginning, particularly as he is supposed to be so weak as hardly to be able to climb up.

It seems then that by these elaborate descriptions of locations the text does much of the work, and the play is made easier to stage for a touring company. Of course other Marlovian plays are also rich in descriptions of location, but these come more as rhetorical set-speeches such as the description of Rome in *Dr. Faustus* (viii, 32-46). The scene where Barabas constructs a machinery to overthrow Calymath (discussed in the previous Chapter) might appear to be similar to the dungeon scene in terms of descriptions of location, but it does not have the repetitive nature of statements like "this is the lake" or "this is the dungeon", besides, the emphasis on locations in it comes more as a single speech by Barabas alone, while in the dungeon scene it comes naturally and frequently into the dialogue.

Further evidence is that the play does not seem to call for large stage properties, except for a throne and a table which would not be difficult to carry, and a feather-bed, which could have been simply a mattress. Looking at Holinshed, it is important to notice that Marlowe reduced to only one the many battles reported there, thus lessening the complexity of the action. This, of course, is the way many writers of history plays (including Shakespeare) create dramatic concentration. But what makes staging this play easier for a touring company is the numerous chances allowed for the doubling of roles. This again is a characteristic in common in other plays of the period, but in *Edward II* the opportunities for doubling are even greater,<sup>54</sup> because of Marlowe's timing of the historical events in the chronicles. The way Gaveston dies in the middle of the play (III,i) and is replaced by Spencer (though the same actor would not have played the two roles as they appear together in II,ii); the way the Bishop of Coventry appears briefly in the first scene (I,i) and is then rapidly suppressed to open the way for the Archbishop of Canterbury (who enters in the middle of the scene that follows, as if to allow time for a costume change); the way the Elder Mortimer is said to have been "taken prisoner by the Scots" (II,ii,141) to metamorphose, say, into the Elder Spencer; the way Lancaster, Warwick, and Pembroke, are executed (IV,i) to introduce new characters into the action (Leicester, the Bishop of Winchester, Trussel and Berkeley); and the way Baldock and Spencer are suppressed (IV,iv) when Matrevis and Gurney are needed in the action (V,ii), all point to an anticipation of a small company.

Another way to facilitate the staging of the play for strolling actors is the emphasis on costumes, this being the most practical performing equipment to travel



with.<sup>55</sup> The use of costumes provides meanings in the play. Edward's love of appearances is immediately established in Gaveston's soliloquy which sees Edward's court in terms of costume shows, "Italian masques" (I,i,45), and pages clad "like sylvan nymphs (57) with "Crownets of pearls about [their] naked arms" (62). The three poor men, presumably in poor clothes, were perhaps meant to contrast with Gaveston's picture of luxury, and with his clothes, which were most likely rich, as described by Mortimer later (I,iv,406-14). The poor men would thus symbolise for the audience the world which Edward and Gaveston hold in contempt. The point is made clearer by the fact that, among the three, Gaveston chooses the traveller that would tell him "lies at dinner-time", and rejects the soldier and the horse-rider, which foreshadows the kind of favourites welcome in Edward's court, devoid of military grandeur.

Marlowe seems to have made the task easier for the actors by making Mortimer offer a sort of review, or dress-rehearsal, describing what each character was meant to be wearing (I,iv,406-18). Mortimer complains that Gaveston is dressed in "a lord's revenue on his back" (405), a "short Italian hooded cloak,/ Larded with pearl; on his Tuscan cap/ A jewel of more value than the crown" (411-3), while people "jest at [the lords'] attire" (417), suggesting that they appeared in poor workaday clothes. What Baldock and Young Spencer were to wear is also indicated later: "not a black coat and a little band,/ A velvet-caped cloak...[etc.]" (II,i,33-4). The importance of Edward's own costume is also apparent in the transformation of it later, and the stress on the contrast. Edward ends up in "tattered robes" (V,v,66), but reminds the audience, as he asks Lightborn to remind the Queen, that "[he] looked not thus/ When for her sake [he] ran at tilt in France," (67-8). The reversal in what people are wearing throughout the action adds a touch of a *de Casibus* theme to the play.<sup>56</sup> which, according to Shepherd, would have been a "major source of pleasure to Elizabethan audiences whose theatre specialized in those 'twinklings' of transformations".<sup>57</sup> It could be imagined how much Henslowe would have spent on costumes for *Edward II*, if he had staged the play at the Rose (as Nicholas Hytner did in his Manchester Royal Exchange production of 1986).<sup>58</sup> As there are no entries in his *Diary* of the purchase of such costumes, this perhaps adds more support to the conjecture that Henslowe did not think of accommodating the play in his playhouse.

In addition to costumes, Marlowe employs a dramatic technique of juxtaposition which intensifies meaning in the play, and thus replaces the task of providing elaborate spectacle. Though this technique is employed in his other plays, particularly *Dr. Faustus* and *Tamburlaine*, in *Edward II* almost every event in the



first half of the play has its counterpart in the second half. Mortimer is put in juxtaposition with Gaveston; both enter holding a letter that concerns the king and how to make use of him (I,i/ V,iv)—a juxtaposition that would have struck Elizabethan audiences for whom entrances and exits had a special significance—and both foreshadow the command they have over the newly coronated kings (Edward II, and Edward III).<sup>59</sup> Edward's and Gaveston's humiliation of the Bishop of Coventry (I,i), is juxtaposed with Matrevis' and Gurney's treatment of Edward, when they wash him in puddle water (V,iii). Margaret is juxtaposed with Isabella, both being ignored by their husbands.<sup>60</sup>

The points made add up to a conclusion that *Edward II* is in itself a simple play to stage. It can be inferred from the fact that the four printed editions of the play differ slightly and only in minor details of wording, punctuation and spelling, that the play was not performed as frequently as other Marlowe plays.<sup>61</sup> It is surprising that, though the play was performed at the Red Bull between 1618-19, the 1622 edition shows no major variants that point to possibilities of adaptation to altered stage requirements made by the Red Bull. It is probable that there was some haste to put the play on, to catch an audience still excited by the execution of the French sodomite (mentioned above). In his study of the staging of Elizabethan plays at the Red Bull, Reynolds conjectures that a trap might have been available on the stage of the Red Bull, and that it was probably used for the dungeon scene, as, according to him, about twenty-four lines are spoken before entering the dungeon, and as there is a mention of keys that suggest closure.<sup>62</sup> It is true that there are twenty-four lines spoken before entering the dungeon, but the rest of the action occurs in what should be taken as the dungeon. The give and take dialogue between Edward and Lightborn, as Edward suspects his intentions, and as Lightborn offers to leave him if he does not trust him (V,v,42-105), seems to call for the main acting area on stage, or at least a place where the audience can see Lightborn's looks in which Edward finds "Small comfort"(43), and which "can harbour nought but death" (72). It would be ridiculous to imagine all this happening in a trap, with the table and feather-bed brought in and the audience relying on what they hear. A recessed area might be a more plausible conjecture, though it seems the elaborate description of action and the long dialogue between Edward and Lightborn need to be clearly visible and audible, and thus they seem to demand the main acting area.

Reynolds believes that *Edward II* might call for the use of a 'discovery space', at least for a point in I, iv, when Edward asks the lords "What are you moved that Gaveston sits here?" (8) as perhaps the question would lose the effect of immediacy if



Edward and Gaveston were not 'discovered' already sitting on the throne.<sup>63</sup> It is possible that Edward and Gaveston were 'discovered', but the effect will be clumsy, if the lords who enter engaged in signing "the form of Gaveston's exile" (1), have to turn suddenly to where Edward and Gaveston are 'discovered' sitting on the throne rather than having their attention attracted by Edward's and Gaveston's entry. There is nothing in the text to prove either conjecture right. What seems clear, however, is that the play could easily be staged on a bare stage, with simple stage-effects, and without a 'discovery', trap or an upper level. It is a play that depends more on emblematic staging, costumes and verbal images that were familiar to Elizabethan audiences. The presence of the Mower (IV,vi,45), which to modern audiences would seem unnecessary for the development of the action, would symbolise for Elizabethans the iconography of time and death.<sup>64</sup> Having figures in the play who appear briefly during the action (like the Mower, Rice Ap Howell, and James), and who would seem of no vital significance to modern audiences, is part of a "dramatic documentary" that would further authenticate historic information for Elizabethan audiences.<sup>65</sup> Edward's protracted hesitation in surrendering the crown, which might seem tedious to modern audiences, would function as a rich and serious piece of theatre for Elizabethan audiences for whom the crown held symbolical meanings of power and national unity.

One is liable to agree with Hattaway who argues that the play was performed on a bare stage, with only a throne, large enough for Edward and Gaveston to sit on, to stand as a "looming image at the centre of the stage of the power vacuum created by the king's abdication",<sup>66</sup> the kind of setting used in most modern productions of the play. The simplicity of the means needed to stage the play seems to appeal to the modern theatre, especially the Brechtian theatre that insists on the simplest and most economic stage-effects, on the significance of certain properties, and on the ability to offer the play to all types of audiences. Perhaps, one of the reasons Brecht was attracted to *Edward II*, was the simplicity of scenery needed and the stress on emblems and costumes. It is interesting to find that the most successful modern production of *Edward II* was one that employed a bare set, and that was in fact intended for touring purposes, namely, Toby Robertson's Open-air production of 1958, which will be discussed in Chapter Eight.



## NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1. There is a dispute about the date and text of the play, but a less sharp one than in the case of *Dr. Faustus*. In his introduction to *Edward II*, Brooke dates the play before *The Massacre at Paris*: "We must assume, what in any case, would be probable, that the tragedy had been known on the stage for a considerable time before it came into the hands of the printer. The year 1591, or the early part of 1592, seems then the most likely date for the completion of *Edward II* and its first theatrical presentation" (*Works*, p. 307). Ellis-Fermor argues for a later date for the play, considering it the last of Marlowe's, on basis of the development of the Machiavellian concept in Marlowe's plays, among which *Edward II* seems to her to be the most mature (*op. cit.*, p. 121). In their edition of the play (*Edward II*, edited by H. B. Charlton and R. D. Waller, London, 1933) Charlton and Waller attempt to date the play on basis of the parallel passages it shares with other plays in the period, such as *2 & 3 Henry VI*, Peele's *Edward I*, *Arden of Feversham*, and *Solyman and Perseda*; they date *Edward II*, after the first three plays, and before the last two. The reasons are respectively: that in the case of the *Henry* plays and Peele's play, the parallel passages seem more congruent with the context of the situations in these plays than they are in *Edward II*, and some passages are metrically better than they are in Marlowe's (see pp. 15-6); and in the case of *Arden* and *Solyman*, Marlowe's passages seem to be better suited to the context (see pp. 17-9); on these grounds they conclude that "it can hardly be doubted that *Edward II* existed in MS. by the autumn of 1591" (p. 19). Chambers dates the play between 1592-93 (vol. 3, p. 425). Boas argues that in the case of the parallel passages between *Edward II* and *Arden of Feversham*, and *Solyman and Perseda* the authors of the last two plays borrowed from Marlowe, and thus he seems to date *Edward II* before 3 April, 1592, which is the date *Arden of Feversham* was registered and published (*Christopher Marlowe*, pp. 198-201). Bakeless dates the play in early 1592 on basis of the title-page of the 1593 Manuscript that says that the play was already performed "sundrie times" (*op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 5). In his edition of the play, Moelwyn Merchant is not troubled by the date of the play he points out that from the parallel passages "precise chronological dependence is impossible to determine with certainty, nor is it of ultimate critical significance" (*Edward II*, New Mermaid edition, London, 1967, Introduction, p. xii). Roma Gill sees it as the last of Marlowe's plays on the basis of dramatic structure (edition, *Edward II*, Oxford, 1967, p. 15). Leonora Leet Brodwin, also thinks it the last, as it shows a culminating treatment of love ("*Edward II*: Marlowe's Culminating Treatment of Love", *English Literary History*, 31 (1964), 139-55. Unless otherwise stated, all quotations from the play will be from Roma Gill's edition.
2. The play was first registered on 6 July 1593, but the earliest known edition is the octavo of 1594. Its title-page says: "*The troublesome raigne and lamentable death of Edward the second, king of England: with the tragicall fall of proud Mortimer: As it was sundrie times publicquely acted in the honourable citie of London, by the right honourable the Earle of Pembroke his servants*". There are two copies of this edition, one in Zurich and the other in Cassel, Germany (see Charlton and Waller, *ed. cit.*, p. 1; Bowers, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 11.) both were not discovered until 1876 (see Bakeless, vol. 2, p. 8), before which the quarto of 1598 was believed to be the first edition. There is some reason to believe that there was an earlier edition in 1593: Dyce's copy of the 1598 quarto in South Kensington (other copies in the British Museum, and the Bodleian) has the first two leaves, which include the title-page and the first seventy lines, supplied in manuscript which bears the date 1593 on its title-page (W. W. Greg, produces the 1594 Quarto, and provides a



photographic reproduction of the manuscript and the title-pages of the different quartos in the Malone Society Reprint of *Edward II*, 1925). As there are some variants, though slight, between the text writing of the manuscript and the quarto of 1594, some editors are led to believe that there was in fact an edition in 1593 which has not survived. Some think, however, that the date 1593 on the title-page of the manuscript might be a slip for 1598 but there are points in which the manuscript agrees with the 1594 edition as against the quarto of 1598. Among those who believe there was an edition in 1593, see Brooke, *Works*, p. 308; W. W. Greg (ed.), *Edward II (1594)*, Malone Society Reprint (Oxford, 1925), p. vii (for lists of variants see pp. viii-xii); Charlton and Waller, pp. 1-5. See also Bakeless, vol. 2, p. 8. Bowers seems to be alone in arguing that there was no such edition: "the rather extraordinary departures from them [the readings of 1593 if it exists] of a reprint in 1594 are difficult to account for..." (vol. 2, p. 3, n. 3); he provides an invaluable detailed textual discussion in order to prove his conclusion of the 1594 being the first edition (pp. 4-12).

3. Greg, ed. cit., p. viii. Cf. "Concerning the stage history of *Edward II* there appears to be no information except that given on the title-pages of the early editions" (Brooke, *Works*, p. 308); "Nothing is known of the stage history of *Edward II* apart from the meagre information afforded by the title-pages or deducible from them and the Stationers' Register..." (Charlton and Waller, ed. cit., p. 28); "Little is known of the stage history of *Edward the second*" (Bakeless, vol. 2, p. 26).
4. This quarto exists however in two states, one repeats the same information about the play having been acted by Pembroke's Men, and the other links it to Queen Anne's Men (see Charlton and Waller, ed. cit., p. 2).
5. *Diary*, "vortiger" (p. 184), believed to have been altered from Mortimer; "mortymore" (p. 205) (Chambers believes this to be a slip of Henslowe for 'vortigern', vol. 3, p. 425); "spencers", pp. 106, 107, 118.
6. Only a slight fragment exists of this lost play, see Merchant, ed. cit., Introduction, p. xvii.
7. See Bakeless, vol. 2, p. 5. See also Chambers on the printing of plays, vol. 3, pp. 159-200, especially pp. 183-5.
8. See Murray, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 59; Charlton and Waller, ed. cit., p. 6; Chambers, vol. 2, pp. 128-34.
9. Murray, vol. 1, p. 59., see also Chambers, vol. 2, p. 128.
10. Henslowe wrote a letter to Alleyn on 28 September, 1593 in which he told him about the fortunes of Pembroke's Men: "as for my lorde a penbrockes w<sup>ch</sup> you desier to knowe wheare they be they are all at home and hauffe ben t<his> v or sixe weackes for they cane not saue ther carges <w><sup>th</sup> trauell as I heare..." (*Diary*, p. 280).
11. See Charlton and Waller, ed. cit., p. 8.
12. Chambers, vol. 2, p. 129.
13. See Murray, vol. 1, p. 65.
14. "ne Rd at the trag of the guyes 30 jan 1593" (*Diary*, p. 20).
15. See Eleanor Grace Clark, *The Pembroke Plays: A Study in the Marlowe Canon* (Ph.D. dissertation, Bryn Mawrice College, 1928), pp. 22 and 39-40.



16. See Murray, vol. 1, p. 67.
17. "the xj of octobe begane my lord of Admerals and my lord of penbrockes men to playe at my house 1597" (*Diary*, p. 60). In February 1598 the Act of 1572 to prevent vagabond companies from playing was modified, and only companies under the patronage of at least a baron were allowed to act in the city, thus only the Admiral's and the Chamberlain 's (see Murray, vol.1, pp. 70-1).
18. See below for what might have stimulated interest in the play in 1622, p. 66.
19. *The Honour of the Garter*, ll.220-4, in *The Life and Minor Works of George Peele*, edited by David H. Horne (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952) (vol. 1 of *The Life and Works of George Peele*, General editor Charles Tyler Prouty, 3 vols. (New Haven and London, 1952-1970)), p. 253.
20. Raphael Holinshed, *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland*, 6 vols. (London, 1587; reprinted London, 1807), vol. 2, p. 587.
21. Having Mortimer as the chief traitor and enemy is exclusive to Marlowe who might have been inspired by *The Mirror for Magistrates*, particularly "The Two Mortimers", where we find: "That for a traytour he was taken and a tyrant" (l.28); cf. also ll.43-9 on Mortimer's discourse of power, and l.40 where he is accused: "That with the princes mother he had layne" (*The Mirror for Magistrates*, edited by Lily B. Campbell, from Original Texts in the Huntington Library, Cambridge, 1938). In Holinshed's *Chronicles* all attacks on Edward are arranged in groups, and are mainly led by the queen, who is the main enemy to Edward, cf., "Howbeit, she with the rest of hir confederats had (no doubt) laid the plot of their devise for his despatch, though by painted words she pretended a kind of remorse to him in this his distresse, & would seeme to be faultlesse in the sight of the world..." (Holinshed, vol. 2, p. 586). Cf. also the passage where the ambiguous letter was written which immediately follows Kent's plans to save Edward: "The queene and other of the governours understanding this conspiracie of the earle of Kent, and of his brother, durst not yet in that new and greene world go about to punish it, but rather thought good to take awaie from them the occasion of accomplishing their purpose. And hereupon the queene and the bishop of Hereford wrote sharpe letters unto his keepers, blaming them greatlie, for that they dealt so gentlie with him, and kept him no streictlier, but suffered him to have such libertie, that he advertised some of his freends abroad how and in what manner he was used, and withall the bishop of Hereford under a sophisticall forme of words signified to them by his letters, that they should dispatch him out of the waie, the tenor whereof wrapped in obscuritie ran thus: 'Edwardum occidere nolite timere bonum est:/ To kill Edward will not to feare it is good" (ibid).
22. See Charlton and Waller, ed. cit., pp. 8-27, and Bakeless, vol. 2, pp. 27-40. There are also parallel passages in Richard Barnfield's *Affectionate Shepherd*, and in Middleton's *The Wisdom of Solomon Paraphrased* (see Bakeless, vol. 2, pp. 37-8).
23. See Charlton and Waller, ed. cit., p. 8. Bakeless, however, argues that there is no evidence that Marlowe ever read Peele (vol. 2, p. 28).
24. See Bakeless, vol. 2, pp. 245-8; and Harold F. Brooks, "Marlowe and early Shakespeare", in *Christopher Marlowe*, edited by Brian Morris, Mermaids Critical Commentaries (London, 1968), pp. 67-94. See also *Richard III*, ed. cit., pp. 57-61. There are parallel situations that occur in both plays, such as the murder of Clarence (*R.III*, I,iv) and the days of Edward's capture; Richard's warning to the murderers that "Clarence.../ May move your hearts to pity, if you mark him" (I,iii,348-9) echoes Mortimer's and Lightborn's conversation (V,iv,26-7). Mortimer's treatment of Edward III (V,iv,91-2) and Richard's of the young prince (III, i) have things in



- common. Queen Isabella's fearing that the fact that her son is showing intelligence, indicates that he might be "not marked to many days on earth" (III,ii,80), echoes Richard's aside about the young prince "So wise so young, they say, do never live long" (III,i,79).
25. *Richard III*, ed. cit., p. 59. See Chapter Two of this thesis.
  26. "*Edward I*", *The Dramatic Works of George Peele*, edited by Frank S. Hook (New Haven and London, 1961) (vol. 2 of *The Life and Works of George Peele*), pp. 69-170.
  27. Charlton and Waller, ed. cit., p. 9. See also Bakeless, vol. 2, p. 29.
  28. '*The Troublesome Reign of King John*': *Being the original of Shakespeare's 'Life and Death of King John*', ed. F. J. Furnivall and John Munro (London, 1913).
  29. Cf. "What must the king do now?/ What says king Bolingbroke? Will his Majesty/ Give Richard leave to live till Richard die?/ You make a leg, and Bolingbroke says 'ay'" (*Richard II*, III,iii,143/ 173-5), and "Fetch hither Richard, that in common view/ He may surrender" (IV,i,155-6) with "*Edward*: And, Leicester, say, what shall become of us?/ *Leicester*: Your Majesty must go to Killingworth/ *Edward*: Must! 'Tis somewhat hard when kings must go" (IV,i,155-6). The parting of Bushy and Greene (III,i), is reminiscent of Edward's with Spencer and Baldock (IV,vi,68-100). See *Richard II*, edited by Peter Ure, *The Arden Shakespeare* (London, 1956; reprinted 1983), p. lxxxiv; all quotations are from this edition.
  30. Irving Ribner, *The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare* (Princeton and New Jersey, 1957), p. 127. Robert Ornstein, *A Kingdom for A Stage* (Cambridge: Mass, 1972), pp. 6-7. See also Harold Brooks, "Marlowe and the Early Shakespeare", op. cit., p. 71.
  31. Ribner, p. 156.
  32. See Merchant, ed. cit., pp. xvii-xxii. Drayton revised *Mortimeriados* later in *The Barons' Wars* (1603). He discusses the relation between Mortimer and Isabella again in his *Two England's Heroical Epistles* (1597).
  33. Shepherd, p. 118.
  34. See *ibid.*, p. 48. Cf.: "shouting at a bad monarch implies a recognition of the good monarch..." (*ibid.*). See also Ornstein, pp. 13-4.
  35. See Lily B. Campbell, *Shakespeare's 'Histories': Mirrors of Elizabethan Policy* (San Marino, California, 1947), p. 191.
  36. See Ornstein, pp. 28-9.
  37. Cf.: "he began to have his nobles in no regard, to set nothing by their instructions, and to take small heed unto the good government of the commonwealth" (Holinshed, op. cit., p. 547).
  38. Hattaway, *Elizabethan Popular Theatre*, p. 143.
  39. Shepherd, p. 117.
  40. Ribner, p. 179.
  41. Bevington, op. cit., p. 244.



42. In *I Henry VI*, Shakespeare starts with the death of Henry V, and the prophecy that disorder and chaos will prevail especially as Henry VI has to rule when still a child. Cf.: Exeter's "'Tis much when sceptres are in children's hands;" (IV,i,192). If the audience was familiar with this play, they must have remembered it while watching *Edward II*. There are points in common as for example the reference to Edward and Henry VI being overruled: "Whom like a Schoole-boy you may over-awe" (*I Henry VI*, I,i,35), "As though your highness were a schoolboy still/ And must be awde and governed like a child" (*Edward II*, III,ii, 30-1). The end of *I Henry VI* with Suffolk informing the audience of the consequence of having a weak king "Margaret shall now be Queen, and rule the king;/ But I will rule both her, the King, and realm" echoes Mortimer's words after Edward III is appointed a king: "The prince I rule, the queen do I command" (V,iv,48). Quotations from *I Henry VI*, are from *The First Part of King Henry VI*, edited by Andrew S. Cairncross, The Arden Shakespeare (London, 1962; reprinted 1977).
43. Ornstein, p. 6.
44. L. J. Mills, "The meaning of *Edward II*", *Modern Philology*, 32 (1934), 11-31. His evidence is Mortimer Senior's speech about the fact that the mightiest kings have had their minions (I,iv,390-400), and Edward's defence of his friends in the Abbey of Neath (IV,vi,67), see Chapter Eight of this thesis, note 7, p. 280.
45. Bent Sunesen, "Marlowe and the Dumb show", *English Studies* 35 (1954), 241-53.
46. Shepherd, p. 198.
47. It is relevant here to mention Drayton's "*Piers Gaveston*", which is an exact contemporary of *Edward II*, in which Drayton talks about the relationship from Gaveston's point of view. Drayton mentions friendship as a possibility: "O seld-seene friendship in the world a wonder!" (l.79), but simultaneously there is an abundance of reference to the wantonness of Gaveston and Edward: to the Ganymede myth: "This Edward.../ Like sportful Jove, with his rapt phrygian page" (ll.115-6); and to sodomic practice: "...my cheeke, the pillow for His head/...my bosome was His bed" (ll.131-2), "My limbs.../ So often hugg'd in princely Edward's Arms" (ll.213-4). Also there is reference to the myth of Sodom and Gomorrah: Edward's "abhorred sin" (l.623), "who on the land these Miseries had brought" (l.672). These allusions point to the fact that Drayton recognised a sodomic relation in the play even in its earlier appearance. Quotation of "*Piers Gaveston*" are from *The Works of Michael Drayton*, edited by J. William Hebel, 5 vols. (Oxford, 1932-41), vol. 2 (1932), pp. 431-50.
48. See Alan Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England* (London, 1982), pp. 70-7.
49. Ibid., p. 99.
50. Ibid., p. 73.
51. Ibid., p. 73; Bray does not mention *Edward II* in connection with these trials, he merely lists them. For other trials, see pp. 26, 40, 43, 48, 72-74.
52. G. F. Reynolds, *The Staging of Elizabethan Plays at the Red Bull Theatre 1605-1625* (New York and London, 1940), pp. 21, 45. Bowers remarks that the revival referred to in the 1622 edition might be before 1617 as the company moved from the Red Bull to the Cockpit in 1617 (Bowers, vol. 2, p. 12). This is not the case in fact: Murray asserts that between 1609-1623 Queen Anne's company was associated with the Red Bull, and that they left this theatre only temporarily while it was repaired and soon returned to it (vol. 1, pp. 194-6). It is interesting that Queen Anne's company was itself a touring company, and was acting in the provinces



- before 1609, the date it was given a licence to play at the Red Bull (Murray, vol. 1, p. 187).
53. Wickham, "Exeunt to the Cave': Notes on the Staging of Marlowe's Plays".
54. See Bevington, p. 237.
55. Marlowe emphasises costumes also in *Tamburlaine*, but they have more importance in *Edward II*, as there is an obvious lack of ceremonial action compared to *Tamburlaine*.
56. See Zucker, op. cit., p. 115. See also Hattaway, *Elizabethan Popular Theatre*, p. 142.
57. Shepherd, p. 64.
58. See Chapter Eight on Nicholas Hytner's production.
59. Cf.: "Wouldst thou be loved and feared? Receive my seal;/ Save or condemn and in our name command" (I,i,167-8), and: "I seal, I cancel, I do what I will./ Feared am I more than loved" (V,iv,51-2).
60. Recent criticism has begun to recognise the significance of these techniques in *Edward II*, see Chapter Eight, p. 252.
61. Greg in his Malone Reprint edition and Bowers in his *Works*, produce lists of variants between editions which include merely slight differences in spelling, punctuation and seldom any in wording. See Greg, pp. viii-x; Bowers refers to these in his notes to the text. Likewise, Charlton and Waller. All modern editors have drawn attention to the misnomenclature between Arundell and Matrevis in 1594, which they think indicates a doubling of roles: See Greg, ed. cit., p. xii, and Bowers, vol. 2, p. 8.
62. Reynolds, p. 90.
63. Ibid., p. 58.
64. See Zucker, p. 132. See also Clifford Leech, "Edward II: English History", in *Christopher Marlowe: Poet for the Stage*, pp. 121-45, pp. 128-9; This is a revision of his article "Marlowe's Edward II: Power and Suffering", *Critical Quarterly*, 1 (1959), 181-96, Leech's article has also been published in *Critics on Marlowe*, edited by Judith O'Neill (London, 1969), pp. 69-79.
65. Hattaway, *Elizabethan Popular Theatre*, p. 150.
66. Ibid., p. 145.



## CHAPTER FOUR

## MARLOWE ON STAGE FROM 1660 TO 1800

In 1681, writing in defence of his originality, and to prove that he has not borrowed from Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* in his *Tamerlaine the Great*, Charles Saunders says:

I shall testifie that I never heard of any Play on the same Subject...though it hath been told me, there is a Cockpit Play going under the name of *the Scythian Shepherd*, or *Tamberlain the Great*, which how good it is any one may judge by its obscurity, being a thing not a Bookseller in London, or scarce the Players themselves, who Acted it formerly cou'd call to Remembrance...whoever was the Author, he might e'en keep it to himself secure from invasion, or Plagiary...<sup>1</sup>

Though it is difficult to believe that Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* was hardly remembered, as it was still referred to in contemporary works,<sup>2</sup> Saunders' defence points to a tendency of disparagement of Marlowe's works at that time, and at least makes it evident that Marlowe was not popular and could be easily ignored. Allusions to Marlowe in the Restoration period are not only few but also vague. Almost all display only a slight remembrance of Marlowe rather than a continuity of popularity. Even before the Restoration Edmund Gayton's statement reflects this slight acquaintance with Marlowe's works in his *Pleasant Notes upon Don Quixot* (1654):

I have known upon one of these Festivals, but especially at *Shrove-tide*, where the Players have been appointed, notwithstanding their bills to the contrary, to act what the major part of the company had a mind to; sometimes *Tamerlane*, sometimes *Jugurth*, sometimes the Jew of *Malta*, sometimes parts of all these...<sup>3</sup>

Edmund Pestwiche seems to be familiar with *Dr. Faustus*, but only superficially, in his poem "An Ale-mach" (1651):

A boy like *Mephostophiles* to attend 'em  
Whom they keep in perpetuall motion, still  
Emploid either to empty, or to fill....  
By this time they had made more Ale away  
Than would have serv'd Faustus to 's load of hay.<sup>4</sup>

A vague allusion is found in a poem called "Upon Lute-strings Cat-eaten" in *Musarum Deliciae* of Sir John Mennis and James Smith (1655):

A thousand tricks, that may be taken  
From *Faustus, Lambe, or Frier Bacon*.<sup>5</sup>

It seems most of the allusions refer to the unintellectual side of *Dr. Faustus*. Faustus was "conjuring Faustus", and Mephostophilis, a "boy" rather than a dangerous antagonist to Faustus. What is remembered about *Dr. Faustus* is Faustus's "tricks", and "load of hay", and other more trivial aspects.

In the Restoration reference to Marlowe was becoming increasingly vague. Davenant shows familiarity with Marlowe's works in his play *A Playhouse to Be Let* (1663):

There's an old tradition,  
That in the times of mighty 'Tamburlaine'  
Of Conjuring 'Faustus' and the 'Beauchamps bold'  
You poets us'd to have the second day.<sup>6</sup>

But gradually references to Mephostophilis and Faustus became limited to comic contexts. Cowley's *The Cutter of Coleman-Street* (1663) employs Mephostophilis as a humorous figure of mischief: "How a Devil that little *Mephostophilus* got hither before me?".<sup>7</sup> This points to the main interest in *Dr. Faustus* being its spectacular and farcical side. The figure of Faustus started to be paralleled to low figures, such as a cobbler. In Thomas Jordan's comedy *Money is an Asse* (1668), there is a humorous remark referring to the relation between Faustus and Mephostophilis. As Clutches, a usurer, is trying to make a match for his two daughters to marry, respectively, Mr. Money and Mr. Credit, he always seeks Callumny's, his servant's, help and constantly calls him. At one point, Callumny, called upon by his master, remarks: "Well, now Faustus calls his Mephostophilis".<sup>8</sup> In Robert Wild's comedy *The Benefice* (1689), Faustus' conversations with Mephostophilis are "mal-compared":

a Discourse like that between *Dr. Faustus* and the *Devil*, or  
two or three Men in a Pig-Market.—That's a Dialogue.<sup>9</sup>

Wild's mention of Faustus, however, might not refer to Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*, or any performance of it, but rather to *The Life and Death of Dr. Faustus, Made into a Farce*, an adaptation by William Mountford of Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* which might have been performed between 1687-88,<sup>10</sup> and which overshadowed the connection of Faustus with the Marlowe canon for more than a hundred years. During the Restoration and until Mountford's farce appeared, Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* was



four times performed, but it seems not very successfully. On 26 May, 1662 Pepys saw a performance of it at the Red Bull, but "so wretchedly and poorly done, that we were sick of it...",<sup>11</sup> and Edward Browne saw it performed by Killigrew's company at the Cockpit in Drury Lane, also in 1662.<sup>12</sup> Pepys' account suggests a growing Restoration distaste for *Dr. Faustus*, yet the fact that two productions were staged so close together surely suggests that theatre managements did not start out with a 'distaste'; they must have expected success. Thus two theatres accommodated the play and further hastened the decline in the fortunes of *Dr. Faustus*: the Red Bull, was known to be unrespectable, and the Cockpit, though still respectable, quickly lost its importance in later years when new theatres were built.<sup>13</sup> The play was also produced by the Duke's company at Dorset Gardens in 1675,<sup>14</sup> probably with Betterton as Faustus and Mountford as Mephostophilis,<sup>15</sup> which, if true, might have prompted Mountford to do his adaptation; and the same company performed it before the king at the Duke's Theatre on 28 September 1675.<sup>16</sup>

What is important about these Restoration performances is that it is more likely that the companies did not use one of the early quartos of *Dr. Faustus*, the 1604-11 and 1616-31, but rather a text which was printed in 1663 "with New Additions as it is now Acted With several New Scenes" as the title-page of the quarto indicates.<sup>17</sup> After Heywood's 1633 edition of *The Jew of Malta* no editions of Marlowe's works appeared until this mutilated edition of *Dr. Faustus*. This raises the question why such a text should be prepared in 1663, unless for performances to fit current tastes and trends. Tucker Brooke, however, suggests that "the text was prepared for acting by strolling companies during the Commonwealth period".<sup>18</sup> It is difficult to accept Brooke's hypothesis, especially if we examine those alterations which would not make the text of the play less complicated for a strolling company than the 1604 quarto, or even the 1616 one. The 1663 quarto retains most of the 1616-31 text but varies from it in vocabulary, word-order, verse-lineation and rhythm, and by cutting some of Faustus's soliloquies to a minimum. Apart from that there are some scenes and lines added and some omitted.

The major alteration in the 1663 quarto is the incorporation of the story of the siege of Malta which follows precisely the outline of the story of *The Jew of Malta*. This strangely comes in in a scene that replaces the papal scenes in the 1616 quarto, but with a humour which seems so dull in comparison to the jesting with the Pope in the original. Set at the court of Salomaine (III, ff. Dr-D4v), the Sultan of Babylon, the new scene starts exactly as the papal scenes do, with Mephostophilis introducing Faustus to the place, telling him that Salomaine: "this day.../ Holds a solemne feast for



his late victory". Salomaine asks his Bashews to tell the story of the si ge of Malta, and this is then based on the events of *The Jew of Malta*, up to the point where the Turks enter the city. Five new characters are introduced in this scene: Salomaine, two Bashews, the Empress and a conjurer. The presence of the Empress occasions a piece of courtly love poetry, as the Emperor warmly welcomes her when she enters, at which point Faustus, invisible, disturbs the ceremony. The series of disturbances that Faustus causes to the Pope in the 1616 quarto is reduced in 1663 to one or two inflicted on the Empress: stealing a kiss from her and later snatching the drink which she was offered by the Emperor to comfort her. The dirge is cut, and a conjurer is called in to discover the cause of the disturbances, which he does in almost a repetition of Faustus's conjuring of Mephostophilis. This shows where the interest lay in the production. As Mephostophilis appears to the conjurer the crowd is frightened and the Emperor takes the Empress with "come my dearest, thy life is worth all ours".

In between these events is inserted a speech between Mephostophilis and Faustus in which Mephostophilis explains to Faustus that: "...all those rights [sic] and / spells which mortals use to make us rise/...are very fables, forg'd at first/ In hell, and thrust on credulous mortals / To deceive 'm", an addition that denotes an age, unlike Marlowe's, when people did not take magic seriously, but rather laughed the devil away. Before Faustus's last hour a scene is added, between Dick, Horse-courser, Clown and Hostess, in which the yokels ask the Hostess to sing their favourite songs. If the Hostess was acted by a woman, her songs would have added particular enjoyment to Restoration audiences.<sup>19</sup>

What these alterations might indicate is an attempt at adaptation which originated either from a feeling of a lack in Marlowe's play of features attractive to Restoration audiences such as heroic love, music and songs, and more women's roles; or from a feeling that it was necessary to expunge unfavourable aspects in the play; or from both. Richard Perkinson tries to relate the changes in the quarto of 1663 to the Restoration stage rather than that of the Commonwealth. Calling the changes a "Restoration 'improvement'"<sup>20</sup> on the 1616 quarto of *Dr. Faustus*, he believes that the modification in Restoration attitudes towards Catholicism explains the expunging of the papal scenes, as a Commonwealth adaptor would not have missed the popular satire that the papal scenes offer. In 1660 King Charles II offered Davenant and Killigrew a grant to revive old plays but on condition that they "doe not at anytime hereafter cause to be acted or represented any Play, Enterlude, or Opera containing any matter of profanation, scurrility or obscenity..."<sup>21</sup> This, rather than an adaptation to puritanical Commonwealth attitudes, is probably one of the reasons behind another



major kind of alteration in the 1663 quarto, namely the reduction, and at some points the removal, of some of <sup>the</sup> potentially offensive moral statements: Faustus's blasphemous lines and allusions to religious scepticism. Thus, Faustus's lines to Valdes and Cornelius where he tells them that it is not only their words that has led him to practise magic but his "own fantasy" (B,i,102-04), which show Faustus as a wilful blasphemer, are cut. And though the second rejection of the sciences uttered in front of Valdes and Cornelius is retained, the greatly blasphemous lines "Divinity is basest of the three,/ Unpleasant, harsh, contemptible and vile" (107-08) are completely cut, perhaps to make the passage less religiously offensive. Similarly cut is Faustus's line where he tells Mephostophilis "For I confound hell in Elysium" (iii,62); and the word "damnation" in the previous line ("This word damnation terrifies not me"), and in other instances in the play, is replaced with "being lost", which destroys the strength of such lines.<sup>22</sup> The description of Lucifer as "most dearly loved of God" (68), is cut. Most significant of all the cuts made in the 1663 text is the expunging of six lines that include both profanity and religious scepticism on Faustus's part. These lines are Faustus's dispute with himself as to whether God will accept him:

Ay, and Faustus will turn to God again.  
 To God? He loves thee not.  
 The God thou servest is thine own appetite,  
 Wherein is fixed the love of Belzebub.  
 To him I'll build an altar and a church,  
 And offer lukewarm blood of new-born babes.

(v,9-14)

Furthermore, Faustus's call on Christ (vi,85-6) is given to the Good Angel which further cancels an important point in Faustus's vacillation between following Mephostophilis or Christ. This also makes irrelevant Lucifer's threats and warnings to Faustus not to call on Christ. Though these alterations could reflect the puritanical attitudes of the Commonwealth period, they could also reflect a Restoration interdict that was apparently exercised on performances.

The rest of the changes are minor ones that reveal nothing except perhaps haste in preparing the text. A case in point is the reiterating of Chorus I,1-25. These lines are spoken once by the Chorus and once by Wagner without any change in the wording, thus still mentioning the Pope and "holy Peter's feast" (24) though the papal banquet was not retained in the text. The insertion of the story of the siege of Malta could be related to the popularity *The Jew of Malta* enjoyed before the Restoration. As theatres reopened in 1661-62, new plays were not initially available and thus a snippet of *The Jew* would add something from the popular old repertoire.<sup>23</sup>



The most significant point about the 1663 quarto in the stage history of *Dr. Faustus* is that it seems it constituted the form of Restoration knowledge of and access to Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* from the opening of the theatres until the appearance of Mountford's farce in 1687-88. The expunging of Faustus's sceptical reflections and satirical religious comments reduced Faustus's problem to mere infatuation with magic and turned him into a mere conjurer (one can here perceive how right Pepys was in his judgement on the performance he saw with his wife at the Red Bull). Two important allusions are revealing of how *Dr. Faustus* was seen through Restoration eyes. In his *Theatrum Poetarum* (1675), Edward Phillips says of Marlowe:

of all that he hath written to the Stage his *Dr. Faustus* hath made the greatest noise with its Devils and such like Tragical Sport...<sup>24</sup>

This view of Marlowe as a maker of "tragical sport", was later intensified, judging by William Winstanley's echoing of Phillips' view in 1687. In his *The Lives of the Most Famous English Poets*, Winstanley classifies Marlowe as a "maker of Comedies and Tragedies" but "much inferior to Shakespeare", and he lists all Marlowe's other plays as tragedies, except for *The Jew of Malta* which he calls a tragi-comedy, leaving *Dr. Faustus* about which he says:

None made such a great Noise as his Comedy of *Doctor Faustus* with his Devils, and such like tragical Sport. Which pleased much the humours of the vulgar.<sup>25</sup>

By then *Dr. Faustus* is assumed to be a comedy.

The next hundred years of the stage history of *Dr. Faustus* have remarkably little to do with Marlowe. From the closing of the theatres till the end of the nineteenth century the play as Marlowe wrote it (always remembering, of course, the instability of the early texts) was never staged except for the three above-mentioned productions, which, though they used a mutilated text, at least represented the majority of what Marlowe wrote. It seems that *Dr. Faustus* was attractive to Restoration taste mainly for its supernatural element which legitimated the sinking, flying, vanishing, ascending and descending of characters. The fascinated horror with which Faustus's blaspheming and conjuring of the devil were regarded became less important than the attraction of the spectacular machinery involved in such actions. With this attraction, and with a view of the play as comic, it caught the attention of William Mountford who, in 1687, turned it into a short farcial piece of three acts in his "*The Life and Death of Dr. Faustus, Made into a Farce with the Humours of Harlequin and Scaramouche*. As



*they were several times Acted by Mr. Lee and Mr. Jevon At the Queens Theatre in Dorset Garden*". The exact date of the first performance is not known, as it was not published until 1697. The title-page indicates that it was performed "several times" by Lee and Jevon in principal roles as Harlequin and Scaramouche and, since Jevon died in 1688,<sup>26</sup> it is probable that Mountford's farce was performed as early as 1687. It was revived after Mountford's death, in 1697, by Betterton's company as the title-page also indicates: "Newly Revived. At the Theatre in Lincolns Inn Fields, with Songs and Dances between the Acts".<sup>27</sup> Its publication in 1697 most likely indicates a revival. The farce was revived again on 31 January 1724 at the Haymarket as a result of the success of two after-pieces related to the legend of Dr. Faustus, *Harlequin Doctor Faustus*, and *The Necromancer or Harlequin Doctor Faustus*, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Mountford emphasizes the farcical element in *Dr. Faustus* and replaces its Renaissance intellectuality with off-hand quick action. Marlowe's lines are reduced to the minimum needed for a sketchy outline of Faustus's story with no aim at elaboration except of spectacle, slapstick and skillful use of machinery. Faustus's story is stripped of any serious intentions. His first speech is reduced to merely a few lines in which he demands magic. From then on, the action aims only at providing appropriate points where a new theatrical trick can be employed. The points in the action which summon the presence of the angels are all retained with as much variety in the staging as possible. The angels no longer represent the conflict Faustus experiences as much as they offer excitement at their ability to make spectacular entrances and exits. They fly up and sink down; Mephostophilis descends and ascends and "speaks under ground";<sup>28</sup> and devils and sins sink or vanish. The last dispute of the Angels, where the Good Angel tells Faustus what "splendid Glory" he has lost,<sup>29</sup> is retained for the occasion it provides of flying characters and a use of a throne as a large property. The supernatural episodes are retained: the conjuring of Mephostophilis; the signing of the pact with the congealing of blood and the inscription on Faustus's arm; the appearance of devils with crowns; Faustus's discussion with the Angels about repentance which leads to Lucifer's and Beelzebub's visit, with the Deadly Sins following. Mountford, however, gives the Deadly Sins different speeches (Act II), which provide popular satirical hints, such as Sloth's "I was begotton at Church by a sleepy Judge on a Coster monger's Wife in the Middle of a long Sermon", and Envy's "I always curst the Goverment that I was not prefer'd; and was a Male-content in Three Kings Reigns"; or humorous comments such as Coveteousness's "Then I was a Baker, and from every Neighbour's loaf I stole two Pounds and swore 'twas shrunk in the Oven".



Among Faustus's tricks is retained the event of the Horse-courser with the pulling off of Faustus's leg, the conjuring of Alexander and Darius, and the implanting of Benvolio's horns and his revenge on Faustus. There is no interest whatsoever in the verse or in Faustus's stature except in so far as his desires introduce opportunities for spectacle and acrobatic entrances of supernatural characters. The apostrophe to Helen is simply reduced to one line: "My Soul is fled; come Helen, give me my Soul again." The whole event of Helen's appearance comes at the very beginning of the play, with the desire for a wife as part of the exciting tricks of a show. Not only are Faustus's lines reduced to a minimum but some of his very serious lines are turned to low comedy. Thus his lines about salvation become: "Scarce can I name Salvation, Faith, or Heaven/ But I am pinch'd, and prick'd in a thousand places" (Act II), as if suggesting a comic physical closeness between Faustus and the devils. Faustus's attempt to repent is turned into a piece of skilful stage-technique: as he approaches to pick up the Bible and another book "*they both fly out of's hand and a flaming thing appears written*" (Act I). The last scene is merely a quick summary of Marlowe's lines. Faustus's conversation with the scholars is cut short and delegated to the Old Man and only one of the scholars is introduced, to discover Faustus's limbs after he has been dragged down by the devils. The play ends with Faustus sinking with the devils, and with the Old Man moralising: "And whatsoever pleasure does invite/ Sell not your souls to purchase vain Delight"; and the scene changes to hell and "*Faustus Limbs come together. A Dance, and A Song.*"

In the play as a whole, the scenes related to Faustus are dominated by scenes that figure Harlequin and Scaramouche with an abundance of farcically impossible situations, ridiculous chasings and beatings and other elements of pure fun, like ludicrous disguise and acrobatic feats, and other opportunities for spectacle and theatrical effects. Scaramouche is introduced as a chimney-sweeper who gives up his job to serve Faustus for forty dollars. Apart from that neither Scaramouche nor Harlequin communicate with Faustus. Indirectly one relates them to Faustus's household very much like the relation of Robin and Dick to Faustus in Marlowe's text. Scenes alternate between Faustus and Mephostophilis on the one hand, and Scaramouche and Harlequin on the other. Mephostophilis is, however, related to the latter by being reduced in one scene to a "good Mr. Devil" who provides them with food, drink and companions. One of the companions that Mephostophilis conjures is a Giant who "*leaps into two*" and whose "*upper part...flies up, and the under sinks and discovers a Woman*" (Act II).



It would be tedious to mention every single change and addition in Mountford's text. What concerns us is the importance of this adaptation in the stage history of *Dr. Faustus* and what led Mountford to choose the play as a source for his farce. In the period between the re-opening of the theatres and the middle of the eighteenth century the theatres witnessed the shifting fortunes of farces and after-pieces amid soaring competition between the two major companies, the King's and the Duke's, to outbid each other for audiences.<sup>30</sup> There was a craze for large expenditure on theatrical spectacle and stage-machinery, and variety was thought to guarantee audiences. A mixture of tragedy, farce and comedy was desirable. In the period during which the two companies were united (1682-1694), there seems to have been a preference for old plays.<sup>31</sup> During the same period, Harlequin and Scaramouche had become popular after the frequent visits to London of the Italian actors of the *commedia dell'arte*, and Mountford saw in Faustus's story an opportunity for Jevon and Lee to repeat their success as Harlequin and Scaramouche in Aphra Behn's *The Emperor of the Moon* 1687.<sup>32</sup> But the question remains why *Dr. Faustus* was chosen among old titles to be turned into a farce. There is a probability, as mentioned above, that Mountford 'discovered' *Dr. Faustus* by taking part in the 1675 performances of the play.<sup>33</sup> Most important of all, however, is that no doubt *Dr. Faustus* provides a strong base for abundance of theatrical effects by establishing a world of magic which acts like a valve to release all sorts of situations that could appear improbable without it. Thus the play had a potential for the stage of Dorset Gardens, which was famous for its theatrical facilities and for a highly sophisticated machinery.<sup>34</sup> Mountford's text resembles a promptbook prepared by a director that seems to have been fitting the stage facilities to a dramatic scenario. The papal banquet in *Dr. Faustus* is understandably expunged in Mountford's farce but not without inspiring Mountford to include another vanishing banquet prepared by Mephostophilis for the starved Harlequin and Scaramouche in a scene that would possibly have been the most effective of all on the stage of Dorset Garden. (last scene in act II). As they sit to eat, the table "*runs away*" from them, and in another instance it "*flies up into the Air*"; and, as they beg Mephostophilis to help them, "*They are hoisted up to the Table at which point the table flies down*" again.

Here the question arises again why *Dr. Faustus* was chosen among many other plays that dealt with a world of magic. It would seem that the dramatic structure of *Dr. Faustus* makes the play more open to adaptation than many other plays of the period. The structure of alternating scenes is already there in Marlowe's play. An insertion of Harlequin and Scaramouche seems to be merely a replacement of Robin, Wagner and the Clown, and their relation to Faustus is not important since Marlowe



himself does not offer a clear connection between the yokels and Faustus, except indirectly as a mirror image of Faustus's career.<sup>35</sup> Thus, while in modern opinion *The Jew of Malta* is the most farcical among Marlowe's plays, *Dr. Faustus* was seen as such in the seventeenth century. *The Jew of Malta*, in which Barabas is the central figure, aware of all other characters in planning to outdo them, does not present the same kind of adaptable structure.<sup>36</sup>

It would be wrong, however, to over-emphasize (as Borgman does)<sup>37</sup> the farcical potential of Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*. Mountford clearly started from a completely un-serious view of the play; and whereas Marlowe's play was seen by an audience who was overwhelmed by the sight and sound of Alleyn as Faustus which would dominate the play, Mountford's audience came to see a play dominated by Jevon and Lee as the two greatly popular figures of Harlequin and Scaramouche. Perhaps during the time when Mountford's farce was seen on the London stages, there was no member of the audience who, like Pepys in 1662, had a memory of Marlowe's *Faustus* to prevent him from enjoying the new farce. If there was a memory at all, it would most probably have been of the 'poorly done' 1663 quarto, by comparison with which, one dare say, Mountford's farce would appear more enjoyable.

Mountford's farce had a detrimental role in the stage history of *Dr. Faustus*. Mountford himself did a disservice to Marlowe by basing his farce on the outline of Marlowe's play, maintaining some of the serious scenes, and even utilising Marlowe's verse (which, though distorted and garbled, is still recognisable). Had Mountford's work been purely farcical, dealing only with the humours of Harlequin and Scaramouche, it would have been taken as a farce in its own right, and less injustice would have been done to Marlowe in the process. As such, and having no production of Marlowe's play to compare with, *Dr. Faustus* was remembered through Mountford for more than a hundred and fifty years. When Mountford's farce was revived in 1724 as a result of the success of the two pantomimes that were related to the legend, it was obviously seen as their original source. The title-page of the 1724 edition describes it as the: "original play of *the Life and Death of Dr. Faustus*—with the humours of Harlequin and Scaramouche-written by Mr. Mountfort, With sinkings, flyings, dances, and other decorations proper to the same".<sup>38</sup> When it was registered in the *Monthly Catalogue* of 1723-24, there was no reference to Marlowe's text:

*The Life and Death of Doctor Faustus*, a Farce; Written by that Celebrated Comedian Mr. Mountford. From whence the Grotesque Entertainment called *the Necromancer*; or, *Harlequin Dr. Faustus* is taken; With the Original Songs between the Acts and every Machine Particularly described.<sup>39</sup>



As late as 1830, when Marlowe was remembered in connection with the legend of Dr. Faustus, Mountford's adaptation was seen as more acceptable than Marlowe's original. In his *Some Account of the English Stage from the Restoration in 1660 to 1830* (1832), John Genest saw Marlowe's play as less "judicious":

but as he [Marlowe] represents all that happens to Faustus as matter of fact, his play is of course a strange one—Mountford has more judiciously represented the story as farcical...he has selected what he wanted with Judgment, and left out such parts as were too serious for his purpose...<sup>40</sup>

Thus, gradually, Faustus's story was transposed. Starting from the 1663 quarto, when it was still largely Marlowe's version, it changed to a scenario in Mountford's farce and thence to a mere title in the two pantomimes that dealt with the legend of Dr. Faustus but without any reference whatsoever to Marlowe. Any part of these two pantomimes that belonged to the legend was borrowed from Mountford, as the *Monthly Catalogue* states. Between 1723 and 1730, the two pantomimes were performed frequently as afterpieces. John Thurmond's *Harlequin Dr. Faustus* opened at Drury Lane in November 1723, and it proved very successful. As a tit-for-tat, Christopher Rich put on his pantomime, *The Necromancer, or Harlequin Dr. Faustus*, at Lincoln's Inn Fields, in December 1723. Both continued to be greatly popular well into the 1740s. In 1724, at the time of the great competition between the Drury Lane and the Haymarket theatres, the company at the Haymarket chose to perform Mountford's farce as the original source of the two successful *Harlequin Dr. Faustus* pantomimes.

The two pantomimes turned *Dr. Faustus* into a mere stereotype title. Interest was mainly in including Faustus as a common figure gifted with magical power that would open opportunities for elements of the grotesque, the spectacular, and the farcical. A complete obliteration of the serious side of Faustus occurred in the merging, in these two pantomimes, of Faustus's character into Harlequin's. Though there were serious pantomimes, both versions of *Harlequin Dr. Faustus* were among the un-serious ones.<sup>41</sup>

*Harlequin Dr. Faustus*, "composed by John Thurmond. Dancing master" as its title-page says, starts with a detailed description of the action. Faustus signs a contract at which promptly "*Mephostophilus flies down upon a dragon vomiting fire*"; this is followed by a piece of elaborate pantomime action of Mephostophilis courting Faustus who relents at the end and accepts a wand from Mephostophilis which gives him magical power, and which he waves to perform one trick after another. The rest of



the action consists of a series of repeated and stylized situations of people visiting Harlequin-Faustus to discover their fortune, or turning into victims of his tricks. He steals a woman from her husband; deceives a usurer who offers his money for Faustus's leg which the usurer cuts with a knife but which Faustus retains by choosing another leg among "*legs of several colours, sorts, and sizes*" that Mephostophilis makes available to him; he also offers showers of silver to a bawd to obtain a courtesan, and then lets them vanish; and he robs a shop together with his friends Scaramouche, Punch and Pierot. Harlequin Dr. Faustus is a combination of the legendary Faustus and the conventional Harlequin, but more of a trickster than a magician. Visual means of expression were used, such as properties and colourful costumes, and mimetic dancing. Impossibly exaggerated situations were employed with episodes of cruelty, bawdiness, and the grotesque, the very familiarity of which drew attention away from their subject-matter to the skill with which they were executed. The traditional emblems of a scythe and an hour-glass are used for the last scene in which great effort is made to turn it into a horrific *coup de théâtre*: "*two friends enter and seize the Doctor, and are sinking with him headlong thro' Flames, other Devils run in and tear him piece-meal, some fly away with the limbs...*"

A review in *The Daily Post* of 30 November, 1723, exclusively praises the "Tricks" employed in the action and the 'Magnificence' of the last scene and makes no mention of Marlowe:

*Harlequin Dr. Faustus...meets with universal Approbation. The incidents are taken from the old History of the Doctor and several Tricks supposed to be done by the Power of the Black Art, are executed in a very surprising Manner, and the last Grand scene is superior in Magnificence to anything that has ever yet appeared on the British Stage.*<sup>42</sup>

Rich's pantomime is very similar "containing the particular Tricks, Incidents, Songs, Dances, Alteration and Addition", as the title-page states, but it has occasional pieces of dialogue. It starts with an infernal spirit (instead of Mephostophilis) who blackmails Faustus by the sight of Helen into signing a paper. The rest of the action is a mixture of exciting tricks and scenes of cruelty, on part of Harlequin-Faustus. In scene vi, for instance, Harlequin-Faustus admires a Miller's wife and plays tricks on the Miller to get her; after a series of pursuits, chasings, mockings, climbings up and down Harlequin-Faustus leaves the Miller tied on one of the sails of the mill and sets it to work (see illustration 2). Again attention is given mostly to turning the last scene into a spectacular piece of theatre: "*the Doctor is seiz'd by spirits and thrown into the Dragon's Mouth, which opens and shuts several Times, 'till he has swallow'd the*



*Doctor down, belching out Flames of fire, and roaring in a horrible manner*" (scene vii); and the pantomime ends with the lines "Now triumph Hell, and Friends be gay/  
The sorcerer is become our prey". Rich's pantomime was so successful that the theatre at Lincoln's Inn Fields could not accommodate all who thronged to see it.<sup>43</sup>

The significance of the two pantomimes in the stage-history of *Dr. Faustus* is in the fact that, in this period, the only source of attraction in the legend of Dr. Faustus was the magical world, the grotesque elements and the frisson that the last scene created on the stage—aspects which, joined with the presence of Harlequin and Scaramouche, helped to keep parts of the legend on eighteenth-century stages. In a preface to *The Necromancer* is shown how the figure of Faustus was turned into an entertainer:

The Entertainment of Doctor Faustus has at both Houses met with such prodigious Success, that it's grown the Subject of almost all Companies, both in Town and Country....there are scarce any in the Country, especially young People, who have had but a bare mention of it, that do not long as much for the Sight of the Doctor....'Tis for their Sakes chiefly I have collected the following Scenes, that they may have the Pleasure of seeing, in Print at least, the wonderful Tricks and powerful Art of the so much talk'd of Faustus, as perform'd at both Theatres.<sup>44</sup>

It was a characteristic of the times that farce and pantomime sometimes drowned interest in other forms of drama, even in Shakespeare's plays. The popular taste of the age can be surmised from Rowland's unpublished play *The Imposter* (1723), which seems to criticise the different versions of Faustus that were staged in the London theatres:

I have heard what universal success old *Faustus* have been received with in London. I (will) try, how the country folks will receive him too. For here's an old black cloak which...will make me look as like, if not more resemble the real Doktor *Faustus*, then my friend Harlekeen did...and why should not the country folks be as great asses as these of the town....I take upon me the name of Doctor *Faustus*, he being the most famous and yet the very silliest of all Congerors....Lord, what manly exploits have been acted in the praise of this real and noble doctor here, o it would make ones hair stand an [sic] end to see the monstrous dragon come flying between the apple-trees with such fury as if it could blast the trees to such a degree, that one would not think to have had a bit of fruit in three or four years...that fellow, that fears to tell his name at the showhouse, where the Tag rag and bob tail flocked to see the Divill and Doctor *Faustus* for fifty nights together and made a perfect beargarden of the play-house....Poh, but that silly fellow that You talked of is a silly

whelp; if ours here is not wiser, I would not give a farthing for him nor his performance neither....God I thought, this puppy had been an empty skulled fellow, such as that *Faustous* at London....Ay, but we find him quite otherwise....If it had been such a one, we need not have feared him....No for all he was terrible in picking peoples pockets.<sup>45</sup>

The spirit of laughter was by now strongly associated with the figure of Faustus, and for one hundred years after the appearance of the two Faustus-pantomimes comedy was the only dramatic form in which this figure could be expected to appear. Dramatic criticism was, however, aware of the unworthiness of these pantomimes. A reviewer in *The Universal Journal*, 4 March, 1724, who it seems saw both pantomimes, condemned them both:

I would not have you think I am condemning Mr. Lunn's [Rich's] *Necromancer*, in complaisance to my quondam Friends of Drury-Lane. I think Dr. Faustus makes an equal ridiculous Figure at both Houses. Lunn has improved upon them...You will see strange alterations, Cloaks flying upon Men's Shoulders, Harlequin, Scaramouch, Punch, and Pierrot riding upon Spirits in the Air; dancing Wheat-Sheaves, Flaming Barns, Barking Dogs, Flying Flasks....Things altogether as edifying and entertaining as to see a couple of Fellows spend half an Hour in kicking and buffeting each other...<sup>46</sup>

The two pantomimes were constantly revived and revised, new tricks being added, old scenes altered, and new machines invented.<sup>47</sup> In order to achieve variety and innovation other legendary figures were added who in one way or another referred to Dr. Faustus as the originator of the magic. In *Wagner And Abericock*, also by Thurmond (1727), for example, Wagner is shown to inherit magical power from Faustus, who has died before the pantomime begins, leaving Wagner a spirit called Abericock to aid him.<sup>48</sup> Thus Faustus was turned into a mere off-stage figure which nevertheless still attracted attention to a new piece of pantomime. The Faustus pantomime was undoubtedly very popular in the eighteenth century. It was, however, bitterly attacked by Pope in a note to his *Dunciad* (1728)—

Faustus, Pluto and c., Names of miserable Farces of Tibbald and others, which it was their custom to get acted at the end of the best Tragedies, to spoil the digestion of the audience—<sup>49</sup>

drawing the reader's attention to the fact that the two playhouses "rival'd each other in showing the burning of hell-fire, in *Dr. Faustus*".<sup>50</sup> The reason why the two pantomimes remained popular in spite of their being thus satirised is interestingly



attributed by E. M. Butler to the fact that it is a characteristic of the legend of Faustus to excite opposite opinions. James Ralph, for example found in pantomimes in general a moralistic function:

The Plans of their little Pieces do not barely aim at Morality but enforce even Religion: And, it is impossible to view their Representation of...Doctor Faustus' Death, Mother Shipton's Tragical End, but that the bravest Body alive must be terribly afraid of going to the D—l.<sup>51</sup>

Strangely enough, as if danger was always connected to performances of *Dr. Faustus*, one of the performances of *The Necromancer* or *Harlequin Dr. Faustus* had caused misfortune to the players. In his *A General History of the Stage* (1749), W. R. Chetwood speaks of a performance of *The Necromancer* in which a piece machinery broke and injured two players after which accident, for future productions, "those persons [i.e. the actors] are represented by inanimate Figures, so that if they break a Neck, a Leg, or an Arm, there needs no Surgeon".<sup>52</sup>

Thus, with no regard to credibility, puppets became acceptable in the world of *Dr. Faustus* (a point that is now being utilised in some modern productions).<sup>53</sup> In the period of 1723-24, at the peak of the popularity of the pantomimes and after-pieces, one could still find reviews which condemned the legend of Dr. Faustus and which, it seems, contained no trace of Marlowe as the first English dramatist to have dealt with it:

but those Things [tricks] are shewn only for the sake of shewing them...  
there is something in the legend of Dr. Faustus too mean for the Stage. The Theatre should not descend to borrow its Entertainment from the puppet show.<sup>54</sup>

This seems also to link the legend to the puppet-shows of George Powell that figured Faustus as an entertainer. Satirising these, Swift tells us that the figure of Faustus was sometimes seen as even of a secondary importance compared to that of Punch:

Why, *Tim*, you have a Taste I know,  
And often see a Puppet-show.  
Observe, the Audience is in Pain,  
While *Punch* is hid behind the Scene,  
But when they hear his rusty Voice,  
With what Impatience they rejoice...  
Shou'd *Faustus*, with the Devil behind him,  
Enter the Stage they never mind him;  
If *Punch*, to spur their fancy, shews  
In at the door his monstrous Nose,  
Then sudden draws it back again,  
O what a pleasure mixt with pain.<sup>55</sup>

Notwithstanding all these changes to the figure of Faustus, he was not the most popular entertainer on eighteenth-century stages.

No wonder then that Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* disappeared from the stage for nearly two hundred years. The legend itself became a very popular subject for chapbooks in the eighteenth century, and "many versions were published of it in various parts of the country".<sup>56</sup> In his collection of chapbooks of the eighteenth century, John Ashton included "The History of Dr. John Faustus", calling it "a type of its class".<sup>57</sup> The title-page of this version shows where the emphasis lay in the story:

*The History of Dr. John Faustus*  
shewing  
*How he sold himself to the Devil to have power to do what he*  
*pleased for twenty-four years. Also*  
Strange Things done By Him And His Servant  
Mephistopholes.  
With an Account how the Devil came for him, and tore him  
in Pieces.<sup>58</sup>

One of the "strange things done by him" is to "[make] Seven Women Dance naked in the Market".<sup>59</sup> The nature of Faustus's story was obviously attractive to vulgar popular tastes. One reason why *Edward II* and *The Jew of Malta* were not taken notice of was that neither legitimised miracles on stage, or appealed to the taste for farce and pantomime.

Yet the eighteenth century saw the dawning of a critical interest in Marlowe. Serious reconsideration of his works seems to have started with the inclusion of *Edward II* in Dodsley's first edition of *Old English Plays* in 1744, and of *The Jew of Malta* in his second edition in 1780.<sup>60</sup> Dodsley's interest, however, was not theatrical. The texts of both plays were prepared not to be staged but only to be preserved as old plays, and to be made available to the reading public. There was a general desire on part of many eighteenth and nineteenth-century scholars and editors to preserve old texts.<sup>61</sup> Having been "so crossed with a want of materials of old drama", Dodsley states that by editing some old plays he had "no intention to do more than search out the several authors",<sup>62</sup> and to "snatch some of the best pieces of our old dramatic writers from total neglect and oblivion..." (p. lxx). The printer of Dodsley's second edition of old plays, in which *The Jew of Malta* was added, also laments the fact that the works of ancient dramatic writers "have been known in so imperfect a manner, that their very names have almost escaped the readers of the present times" (p. v), and that only through the stage are these writers remembered and consequently "the whimsical caprices of fashion...seldom leave any memorial of their existence..." (p. ix). Therefore, Dodsley's inclusion of Marlowe's two plays displays an attempt to "ensure their



duration" (p. xiii), and a historical and biographical interest in Marlowe's life and death which characterised the next one hundred years of Marlowe criticism. Apart from a short account of Marlowe's life, death and reputation, Dodsley offers no criticism of Marlowe's plays as dramatic entities. Only through the notes does he provide occasional praise of the verse of *Edward II*—as, for example, his admiration of Gaveston's soliloquy:

How exactly the Author, as the learned Dr. Hurd observes, has painted the humour of the times which esteemed masks and shews as the highest indulgence that could be provided for a luxurious and happy monarch, we may see from the entertainment provided, not many years after, for the reception of King James at Althrop, in Northamptonshire, where this very design of silvan Nymphes, Satyres and Acteon was executed...<sup>63</sup>

Besides, his only critical commentary on *The Jew of Malta* works against it, as Dodsley tries to draw the reader's attention to the fact that the monstrous figure of the Jew in the play is a product of a prejudice against the Jews which prevailed in Marlowe's time, and that Barabas's deeds are not at all characteristic of Jewish personalities.<sup>64</sup>

The importance of Dodsley's collection was mainly historical and antiquarian. It did not stimulate dramatic criticism of Marlowe's plays. In the year following Dodsley's edition, 1781, in his *The History of English Poetry*, Thomas Warton offered a few critical comments on Marlowe, but they were mainly confined to his poetry, quoting some passages of *Edward II* as examples of Marlowe's poetical power (I,i,51-64/66-71). Warton attempts to relate Marlowe's desire "to sport with sacred subjects" to

the preposterous ambition of courting the casual applause of profligate and unprincipled companions [rather than] to any systematical disbelief of religion. His scepticism, whatever it might be, was contrasted by the prejudiced and peevish puritans into absolute atheism.<sup>65</sup>

Warton's only dramatic criticism of Marlowe's plays is that, though they "manifest traces of a just dramatic conception...they abound with tedious and uninteresting scenes..." On *Dr. Faustus*, Warton conveys how the pantomime tradition had changed the conception of the play: *Dr. Faustus*, Warton proclaims, was

a proof of the credulous ignorance which still prevailed, and a specimen of the subjects which then were thought not improper for tragedy. A tale which at the close of the

sixteenth century had the possession of the public theatres of our metropolis, now only frightens children at a puppet-show in a country-town.<sup>66</sup>

Also in 1781, in his *Observation on the Three First Volumes of the History of English Poetry*, Joseph Ritson provides some observations on Marlowe, but all he does is to answer the attempts of scholars, particularly Warton, to rescue Marlowe from accusations of atheism, claiming that "not an iota of evidence has been produced on either side",<sup>67</sup> following his discussion with a re-print of the "Baines' Notes" as an encouragement for critics to go back to these and re-evaluate the evidence.

In spite of the fact that, in the last decade or so of the eighteenth century, scholars devoted a good deal of research to Marlowe, it was mainly to increase academic knowledge of him, by providing editions of his works or authentic accounts of Marlowe's life and death. Marlowe's works were read by men of letters, but no real dramatic criticism was written—which is not surprising, as there were no productions of the plays. A faint dawn of Marlowe criticism began with Charles Lamb, who in 1808 provided the reading public with "the best scenes of old Dramatists"<sup>68</sup> in his *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets*. His choice of Marlowe specimens, however, was confined to eloquent passages, rich in images, and his interest was mainly in Marlowe's poetry. Lamb, however, included a few critical comments on Marlowe's plays, which, though they did not place the plays in the highest esteem, at least improved his reputation—though, again, as a poet. Lamb's criticism of *Edward II* is both useful and positive:

The reluctant pangs of abdicating royalty in Edward furnished hints which Shakespeare scarce improved in his Richard the Second; and the death scene of Marlowe's king moves pity and terror beyond any scene ancient or modern with which I am acquainted. (p. 24)

But he condemns *The Jew of Malta*—

Marlowe's *Jew* does not approach so near to Shakespeare's as his *Edward II* does to *Richard II*. Shylock in the midst of his savage purpose is a man...Barabas is a mere monster brought in with a large painted nose to please the rabble— (p. 26)

and, calling Faustus a "conjurer", relates the theme of *Dr. Faustus* only to Marlowe's "atheistical positions" (p. 34). Of both Barabas and Faustus he says:



Barabas the Jew and Faustus the conjurer...both talk a language which a believer would have been tender of putting into the mouth of a character though but in fiction. (p. 34)

*The Jew of Malta* was not less condemned in *The Monthly Review*, which even listed the play under the category of poetry:

The murders...are humorous beyond example. *Titus Andronicus* and *Tom Thumb* are nothing, on point of homicide, to *the Rich Jew of Malta*...The Jew lives like Beelzebub upon earth, and dies blaspheming. Very few passages of poetical vigour, or powerful originality of thought, compensate for the grotesque absurdities of this sanguinary composition.<sup>69</sup>

In 1816 Charles Wentworth Dilke did more justice to *Dr. Faustus*, in the critical comments in his edition of the play in his collection of *Old Plays*. He condemned the "buffoonery and stupid humour of the second-rate characters [that] are constantly intruding on our notice",<sup>70</sup> and thus he chose to edit the 1604 Quarto which had less of this buffoonery than the 1616 one. But at the same time he thought that "the feelings of Faustus [were] so tremendously excited, so awfully intense...uncomparable to any suffering in the plays of the period". Dilke's views of the play can be seen as the first serious appreciation of the theme and the first attempt at objective dramatic criticism. Though he condemns its structure—

Whoever shall attempt to judge of it by dramatic rule, will find himself baffled in every attempt, and, according to his humour laugh or censure....The unity of time and place are set at all defiance; four and twenty years pass...and the scene changes with as much facility from Wittenberg to Rome...—

he finds Faustus's character representative of all humanity, a "personification of the weakness and worst passion of our nature: ambitions of power" (p. 9).

It seems, however, that Dilke's choice of *Dr. Faustus* for his collection stemmed not from a view of it as the best among Marlowe's plays, but from a desire to complete what Dodsley had begun. On the title-page of his *Old Plays*, Dilke describes his endeavour to edit old plays as a "continuation of Dodsley's collection". Thus as *The Jew*, and *Edward II* were already edited by Dodsley, he turned to *Dr. Faustus*, with the intention of filling a literary vacuum, "[confining] himself to the republication of some scarce and valuable plays".<sup>71</sup> There was no intention to recommend Marlowe's play to the stage.

The appearance of the above-mentioned editions was, however, not without benefit to the Marlowe canon. More critical attention than before was given to his plays. In 1817 Henry Maitland devoted two critical articles to *Dr. Faustus* and *The Jew of Malta* in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. He painstakingly provided summaries of both plays and quoted a few passages from each.<sup>72</sup> He gave *Faustus* its due praise and criticism:

The commencement and the conclusion are solemn, lofty-even magnificent but the middle part is out of all keeping...<sup>73</sup>

His view of the last scene is almost unequalled in its enthusiasm: "His last soliloquy will not suffer by a comparison with any passage in any dramatic writer".<sup>74</sup> But Maitland's appreciation of *Dr. Faustus* seems to be only on poetic grounds. He compares it to Byron's *Manfred*, and finds it inferior as dramatic poetry.<sup>75</sup>

Looking at *The Jew of Malta*, Maitland thinks it not only "absurd" to compare Shylock to Barabas,<sup>76</sup> but also "unfortunate" for Marlowe who, Maitland believes, by the comparison, "would almost appear...as if he belonged to an age of ignorance and barbarity".<sup>77</sup> He condemns Barabas as "an incarnation of a fiendish and diabolical spirit", but he is able to find in him "now and then, an air of wild humanity", and to admire the "powerful dominion...[and] extreme rapidity of the chief character."<sup>78</sup> Yet his approach to *The Jew of Malta* was again orientated towards the poetry. Quoting some of the best of Barabas's lines, he discovers that, "there is something not unpoetical in his avarice".<sup>79</sup>

One is reluctantly having to admit that, though Marlowe criticism was beginning to flourish in the early nineteenth century, it was intended either for purposes of comparison with Shakespeare's plays, or to raise admiration of the poetical elements which his plays were believed to possess, though in scarcity. The general view of Marlowe was, as Drake put it in 1817, that, though Marlowe was the best author after Shakespeare, he was: "egregiously misled, however, by bad models, and his want of taste has condemned him, as a writer for the stage, to an obscurity from which he is not likely to emerge."<sup>80</sup> But Marlowe did to some extent emerge out of this obscurity, as the early nineteenth century witnessed a revival of one of his plays, and two were staged in the late nineteenth century. These early and late revivals were bridged by another complete absence of Marlowe from the stage, but this time the absence was giving birth to the idea of the stage-worthiness of Marlowe's plays. These changes will be the subject of the next chapter.



## NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. Charles Saunders, *Tamerlane the Great* (London, 1681) (University Microfilms, Michigan, 1973), preface, f. Av.
2. In Thomas Shadwell's *The Humourists* (London, 1671), a character says:  
I have been beaten more severely than ever  
Turk was by Tamberlain...  
(IV, f.Hv, or second pagination, p. 49)

For references to *Tamburlaine*, see Bakeless, vol. 1, pp. 238-48.

3. Edmund Gayton, *Pleasant Notes upon Don Quixot* (London, 1654), Bk. 4, Chap. xxi, p. 271.
4. Quoted by Brooke, "The Reputation of Christopher Marlowe", p. 385. From Edmund Pestwich's translation of Seneca's *Hippolytus* (1651).
5. John Mennis and James Smith, *Musarum Deliciae, or The Muses Recreation* (London, 1655; 2nd. edition, 1656), p. 54.
6. Quoted by Brooke, "The Reputation of Christpher Marlowe", p. 383-4.
7. Quoted by Brooke, "The Reputation of Christpher Marlowe", p. 386. See also Thomas Shadwell's *The Sullen Lovers* (London, 1668), where Sir Positive-At-All claims he can practise magic, and among other things he can "...nay raise a Devil with Doctor Faustus himself, if he were alive", act II, f. E3r (or second pagination, p. 29).
8. Thomas Jordan, *Money is an Asse* (London, 1668), II,iv, f. C3v (or second pagination, p. 14).
9. Robert Wild, *The Benefice* (London, 1689) (University Microfilms, Michigan, 1975), act I, f. A4v (or second pagination, p. 8)
10. See *The London Stage I: 1660-1700*, edited by William Van Lennep (Carbondale: Illinois, 1965), p. 342.
11. Ibid., p. 51.
12. See Albert S. Borgman *The life and Death of William Mountford* (Cambridge, 1935), p. 34 (n.1) (From Edward Browne, *Memorandum Book*).
13. *The London Stage I*, p. 35.
14. Ibid., p. 239. See also Allardyce Nicoll, *A History of Restoration Drama* (Cambridge, 1923), p. 348.
15. According to Van Lennep the British Museum copy of the 1663 quarto has Betterton's name opposite Faustus, and Mountford's opposite Mephostophilis (*The London Stage I*, p. 55).
16. See Nicoll, *A History of Restoration Drama*, p. 310.

17. *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus, Printed with New Additions as it is now Acted With several New Scenes...* (London, 1663) (University Microfilm, Michigan, 1975). For the benefit of the reader in his edition of Marlowe's works, Tucker Brooke provides extracts from this quarto in his appendix to *Dr. Faustus*, pp. 195-229.
18. Tucker Brooke, *Works*, Introduction, p. 141.
19. Pepys admired the songs on stage particularly if sung by actresses, see *The London Stage I*, p. xxvii.
20. Richard H. Perkinson, "A Restoration Improvement of *Dr. Faustus*", *English Literary History*, 1 (1934), 305-24, p. 307.
21. George Jolly asked King Charles II to allow him to perform in London theatres; the King issued a permission for him on 21 August, 1660, where Davenant and Killigrew were included. Quoted (from *State Papers, Dom., Charles II*, xxiv, 37, Public Record Office) by Leslie Hotson, *The Commonwealth and Restoration Stage* (Cambridge, 1928), pp. 177-8
22. Another example can be found in "Now, Faustus, must thou needs be damned" (v,1), where "damned" is turned to "lost".
23. Perhaps the resettlement of the Jews in England in 1655 that caused a slight decrease in attacking the Jews, made it difficult to stage the whole of *The Jew of Malta*.
24. *Theatrum Poetarum, or A complete Collection of the Poets, Especially the most Eminent of all Ages* (London, 1675), "The Modern Poets", ff. Aa12v-Bb1r (or second pagination, pp. 24-5).
25. *The Lives of the Most Famous English Poets* (London, 1687), p. 134.
26. See *The London Stage I*, p. 342.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 476.
28. Act I; All quotation from Mountford's text are from the edition of the Augustan Reprint Society, publication number 157 (Los Angeles, University of California, 1973), with an introduction by Anthony Kaufman. Hence reference to this introduction will be cited as Kaufman.
29. Mountford's text has "splendid Glory" (act III) instead of Marlowe's "celestial happiness" (xix,106).
30. See Leo Hughes, *A century of English Farce* (London, Princeton, 1956), pp. 76-93.
31. See *The London Stage I*, p. 313.
32. Kaufman, p. ix.
33. Mountford might have used the 1663 quarto as Otto Frank suggests in his edition of Mountford's farce (Heilbronn, 1886), p. xxxvi; but Borgman provides examples from *The Life and Death of Dr. Faustus* that appear to prove that Mountford used both the 1663 and the 1631 texts (Borgman, pp. 184-5).  
For an example of Mountford's use of the 1663 text, see:



That I shall wait on Faustus whil'st he lives,  
So thou wilt buy my service with thy Blood.

(Mountford).

That I shall wait on Faustus whilst he lives,  
So thou will buy his service with thy Blood.

(1663)

That I shall wait on Faustus whil'st he lives,  
So he will buy my service with his soule.

(1631)

and for an example of his use of the 1631 text, see:

Why shouldst thou not? Is not thy soul thy own?

(Mountford.)

Why shouldst thou not? Is it not thine own?

(1663)

Why shouldst thou not? Is not thy soule thine own?

(1631)

Borgman thus puts a hypothesis (which is interesting but unnecessary) that there was an intermediate edition between the 1631 and the 1663 editions. We can add to Borgman's examples of Mountford's use of the 1663 text the following examples: Faustus's words to Helen in Mountford's "what would I give to gain a kiss from off those lovely lips" resembles Faustus's words in which he expresses his wish to kiss the Empress in the 1663 text: "An excellent beautie this Mephostophilis/ I must needs have a touch at her lips." Also when Benvolio and the knights attempt to take their revenge on Faustus, in both Mountford and the 1663 text, the words "what shall the body do?" are given to Faustus instead of one of the knights.

34. See *The London Stage I*, p. xi.

35. The comic subplots were added to the Faust story by Marlowe; they are not in the English *Faustbook*; and though they have two functions, a serious and a comic one, they still encourage such an adaptation as Mountford's.

36. See Chapter Five, p. 112..

37. Borgman, p. 35.

38. Ibid., p. 190. See also *The London Stage II: 1700-1729*, 2 vols., edited by Emmett L. Avery (Carbondale, Illinois, 1960) vol.2, p. 758.

39. *The Monthly Catalogue*, 1, March, 1723-December, 1724: January, 1724, p. 6 (n. 10) (London, 1724; published again by Gregg Press, London, 1964).

40. John Genest, *Some Accounts of the English Stage from the Restoration in 1660 to 1830*, 10 vols. (Bath, 1832), vol. 1, p. 452.

41. Emmett L. Avery discusses three types of pantomimes—a serious one showing a mythological or traditional story told in dancing; a type like *Harlequin Dr. Faustus* which lacked a serious side and had only grotesque elements; and a type that alternates between the serious and the grotesque—"Dancing and Pantomime on the English Stage: 1700-1737", *Studies in Philology*, 31 (1934), 417-52, pp. 437-38).

42. Quoted in *The London Stage II*, vol. 2, p. 747.

43. In *The Daily Journal*, 9 January, 1724, a reviewer says: "The Concourse of People to see it was so exceeding great, that many Hundreds were obliged to go back again, as not being able to gain admittance; the Entertainment was wonderfully

satisfactory to the Audience..."; quoted by Avery in "Dancing and Pantomime on the English Stage", p. 441.

44. The printer of the 1723-edition, preface, p. 19.
45. Quoted by Butler, *The Fortunes of Faust*, pp. 59-60.
46. *Universal Journal*, 4 March, 1724, quoted by Avery, "Dancing and Pantomime on the English Stage", p. 442.
47. A review in *The Universal Journal*, 25 March, 1724, speaks about the addition of new tricks: "In Expectation of this Happy Time, they are to spend the whole Summer in making necessary Preparations, inventing new Engines, and new Machines. We are to have a Scene of Old Women who are by far to outfly the Lancashire Witches; and singing Spirits, superior to those in the Tempest. Others are contriving strange Metamorphoses, and are to give us the Masque of the Amours of Jupiter and Leda, and the Loves of Venus and Adonis. In the Former, Harlequin in the Character of Jupiter is to be chang'd into a Swan upon the Stage...".
48. See Avery, "Dancing and Pantomime on the English Stage", pp. 443-4.
49. Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad*, in *The Poems of Alexander Pope*, General editor, John Butt, 6 vols. (London and New Haven, 1943; 3rd. edition, 1963), vol. 5, edited by James Sutherland, Bk. III, note to l.307, p. 185. The lines are:
- Hell thou shalt move; for Faustus is thy friend:  
Pluto with Cato thou...etc.
- Cf. also ll.229-32, in Bk. III, p. 176:
- He look'd, and saw a...Sorcerer rise,  
Swift to whose hand a winged volume flies:  
All sudden, Gorgons hiss, and Dragons glare,  
And ten-horn'd fiends and Giants rush to war.
50. Ibid.
51. Quoted by Butler, op. cit., p. 67 (from James Ralph's *The Taste of the Town*, London, 1731, p. 229).
52. W. R. Chetwood, *A General History of the Stage* (London, 1749), P. 139.
53. See Chapter Six.
54. *Saturday Post or Weekly Journal*, 7 December, 1723.
55. From "Mad Mullinix and Timothy" (1728), in *The Poems of Jonathan Swift*, edited by Harold Williams, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1937; 2nd. edition, 1958), vol. 3, pp. 772-82, p. 776 (ll.91-106).
56. John Ashton (ed.), *Chapbooks of the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1882), p. 38.
57. Ibid. It is worth noting that John Ashton directed the reader's attention to the vulgarity of the chapbook on Dr. Faustus and particularly when compared with Goethe's play—"This is essentially vulgar, and perfectly fitted for the popular taste it catered for; but we, who are familiar with Goethe's masterpiece, can hardly read it without a shudder" (ibid.). He mentions Marlowe only in passing as one of those who had dealt with the legend of Faustus.



58. Ibid., p. 39.
59. Ibid., p. 49.
60. Robert Dodsley, *Collection of Old Plays* (London, 1744; 2nd. edition, 1780), 12 vols.; *Edward II* is in vol. 2, and *The Jew of Malta*, vol. 8.
61. See Robert D. Williams, "Antiquarian Interest in Elizabethan Drama Before Lamb" in *Publications of the Modern Language Research Association of America*, 53 (1938), 434-45. He discusses how "as the number of men with the leisure and a desire to distinguish themselves through the accumulation of antiquities increased, the demand for rare books became ever more insistent, with the result that the collection of libraries of such books became a very profitable occupation" (p. 436); and how the editors appealed "to the superior discrimination of the reader in his closet" (p.439).
62. Dodsley op. cit., vol. 1, pp. xxvii-viii.
63. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 315 (n. 13).
64. Ibid., vol. 8, p. 359, note 32 to the line "What? has he crucified a child?", Dodsley says: "With respect to the particular charge against the Jews, mentioned in the text, it probably, as Dr. Percy says, never happened in a single instant."
65. Thomas Warton, *The History of English Poetry* (3 vols., London, 1781; new edition in 4 vols., London, 1824), vol. 4, pp. 260-67, p. 264.
66. Ibid., p. 265.
67. Quoted by Judith O'Neill (ed.), *Critics on Marlowe* (London, 1969), p. 15 (from Joseph Ritson, *Observation on the Three First Volumes of the History of English Poetry in a Familiar Letter to the Author*, London, 1782, p. 40).
68. Charles Lamb, *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets* (London, 1808; reprinted 1907), Introduction, p. 1.
69. *The Monthly Review and Literary Journal*, 67 (1812), p. 434.
70. *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Dr. Faustus*, edited by C. W. Dilke, in his *Old Plays*, 6 vols. (London, 1816), vol. 1, p. x.
71. Ibid., p. xviii. Dilke also states that he intended to preserve old plays as "national and original Drama" (p. x), blaming the ignoring of old plays on "puritanical principles" and on the interregnum that "stopped the course of dramatic literature..." (p. viii).
72. For example, from *Dr. Faustus* he quotes Faustus's speech "My heart is hardened...", and Mephostophilis' description of Rome; from *The Jew*, Barabas's first soliloquy, parts of the confiscation scene and Ithamore's and Barabas's catalogue of crimes. Henry Maitland, "Marlowe's *Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*", in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 1 (1817), 388-94; and "The Jew of Malta, Marlowe", 2 (1817-18), 260-6.
73. Ibid., 1, p. 393.
74. Ibid.
75. Ibid., p. 388.

76. Ibid., 2, "*The Jew of Malta*", p. 266

77. Ibid., p. 260.

78. Ibid., p. 265.

79. Ibid. (such as Barabas's lines at night, II,i,1-19).

80. Quoted by Judith O'Neill, *Critics on Marlowe*, p. 17 (from Nathan Drake, *Shakespeare and His Times*, London, 1817, vol. 2, p. 245).



## CHAPTER FIVE

### MARLOWE REVIVALS FROM 1818 TO 1904.

If one were to imagine any of Marlowe's plays to have been chosen for revival on the early nineteenth-century stages, *The Jew of Malta* would be the last, considering all the negative critical views recorded against it, from Dodsley to Maitland.<sup>1</sup> Surprisingly, the only revival of Marlowe's plays between 1675 and 1896 was one of *The Jew of Malta* in 1818, at Drury Lane. After the play had been "Neglected long in dark oblivion's shade"<sup>2</sup> it opened on 24 April and continued for eleven performances, with Edmund Kean in the title-role. Reviews showed an awareness of the play's long absence from the stage and thus called the choice of it for revival a "hazardous experiment...after a total neglect of two centuries..."<sup>3</sup> The revival of *The Jew of Malta* remains a puzzle until we know the reason behind this choice. Looking at the state of theatrical affairs at the time, and at Kean's biography, provides some illumination.

The beginning of the nineteenth century, though rich in poets and dramatic poems, was not an age of play-writing. Theatres relied heavily on Shakespeare and his contemporaries, whose plays were fit for the star-system that then prevailed. Shakespeare's plays were mercilessly altered to further fit the demands of the star-system. John Philip Kemble was the chief tragic actor of the time; he developed a classical style for acting Shakespeare, which was later turned artificial by those of his followers who desired to copy him literally. Dramatic criticism, which was flourishing at the time, shows a yearning for a new star and a new style. On 26 January, 1814, Kean made his first appearance at Drury Lane as Shylock. The success was tremendous and for the Drury Lane management, which was on the edge of bankruptcy, Kean's Shylock came as a "saviour".<sup>4</sup> That night marked Kean's debut as a star, and his Shylock received considerable attention by the critics;<sup>5</sup> even the minutest detail of his performance was described. His Shylock was considered as the best ever seen.<sup>6</sup> Kean initiated a tradition of depicting a human Shylock, liberating the figure of the Jew from conventional representation as utterly evil. Perhaps the most revealing description of Kean in this part is Hawkins's:

To introduce Shylock as a "decrepit old man, bent with passion, warped with prejudice, and grinning deadly malice" is an obvious inconformity with the spirit of the part, and it was reserved for Kean to withdraw the portrait from the conventional errors of its representation, to apply his clear,

sound and vigorous understanding to a new and original conception of the character...to a fine comprehension of the Jew that prevails at the present time.<sup>7</sup>

His conception continued to influence later Shylocks and later presentations of stage Jews.<sup>8</sup> For two years Kean dominated the stage of Drury Lane, as the greatest tragic actor. His decline, however, approached quickly, along with a worsening health. The season of 1817-1818 was an unsuccessful one for Drury Lane. It was agreed that Kean would be left to act plays of his own choice, as he refused to serve under the new sub-committee which was formed on the spur of the moment in the hope of saving Drury Lane from another near-bankruptcy. *The Jew of Malta* was then chosen by Kean himself together with three other plays—which were all doomed to failure.<sup>9</sup> The season marked the decay of Kean's powers. Kean's motive for choosing *The Jew of Malta* seems obvious: after his memorable success as Shylock, it probably occurred to him that with another stage-Jew, the prototype of Shakespeare's, the success of 1814 would be repeated. In addition to that, perhaps the nature of *The Jew of Malta* might have prompted Kean to choose it, as he was known to prefer plays that contain a kind of pivotal central character around which minor characters turn, provided they do not distract attention from it.<sup>10</sup> He, therefore, would resist the staging of any play that figured effective minor characters who might in any way overshadow the hero. Charles Bucke, whose play *The Italians* was set aside in the season of 1818 and replaced by *The Jew of Malta*, tells us how he indirectly sensed the reason of Kean's disfavour of his play, as Kean hinted to Bucke that the character of Manfredi, a minor character in the play, was "too much in his line", and that no one should write a tragedy for Drury Lane "without making the entire interest centre in the character *He* [sic] should perform."<sup>11</sup>

The state of theatrical affairs at the time of the performance of *The Jew of Malta*, along with Kean's character and career, seem to clarify the reasons for the choice of the play for a crucial theatrical season. The character of Barabas surely could not be overshadowed by any other in the play and thus it was tailored for the demands of Kean and his style. As one of the reviewers writes: "the character of Barabas is...well enough adapted to display some of Mr. Kean's peculiar powers" (*BEM*). In 1826, in his edition of Marlowe's works, G. Robinson gives a brief stage history of *The Jew of Malta* in which he similarly describes the revival of 1818:

It was also revived on the stage, a few years ago, for the purpose of exhibiting the powers of a celebrated actor, in the character of Barabas, the Jew.<sup>12</sup>



The text prepared by Samson Penley for the performance in 1818 was greatly altered. In spite of the fact that some critics thought the variations from the original were "too inconsiderable to be noticed" (*EM&LR*), the alterations are too extensive to be negligible;<sup>13</sup> and while it is easy to justify some of the changes, it is difficult to understand the reason behind others. Perhaps the most important and extensive group of alterations was that prompted by the care taken to avoid offending the Jews. The early nineteenth century was a period of friendly interest in the Jews which, according to Toby Lelyveld, was the reason Kean's interpretation of Shylock was widely welcomed.<sup>14</sup> Since 1655, when they resettled in England, Jews had been struggling to be accepted on equal terms with Christians. By the beginning of the nineteenth century there were nearly twenty thousand Jews in England,<sup>15</sup> and Jewish merchants were a financial support to the government.<sup>16</sup> An attempt to wipe out a stain in dramatic literature and to set up a new standard for the stage-Jew started seriously by the beginning of the nineteenth century, co-inciding with the emancipation of the Jews.<sup>17</sup> In his comments on *The Jew of Malta* in his *Specimens of Dramatic Literature*, mentioned before,<sup>18</sup> Lamb shows something of this change in attitudes:

Barabas is a mere monster brought in with a large painted nose to please the rabble....[But] it is curious to see a superstition wearing out. The idea of 'a Jew' has nothing in it now revolting. We have tamed the claws of the beast...and now we take it to our arms, fondle it and write plays to flatter it...<sup>19</sup>

With these new attitudes towards the Jews *The Jew of Malta*, as we know it, would be tremendously offensive to the Jews. Explaining to the readers the reason for his refusal to participate in the season of 1818, Bucke, in the preface to *The Italians*, vents his anger at the delay of his play in a severe (and obviously biased) criticism of *The Jew of Malta* as an attack against Jews:

I thought proper to decline:—first, because I felt a reluctance to be, in any way, assisting in the revival of a Tragedy, so barbarous, and so entirely unfitted for the present age, as *the Jew of Malta*: but, principally, because I felt ashamed, in being accessory to the cruelty of offering such an undeserved, as well as unprovoked, insult to the great body of the Jews:—all of whom took so much offence at the representation—particularly as it occurred during the week of the Passover—that, for the whole of the remaining season, it was more difficult to recognize a Jew in the house, than even a Woman of Fashion.<sup>20</sup>

Thus while the performance of *The Jew of Malta* marked an occasion of condemnation of the Jews in Marlowe's time, it marked a positive phase in the history of Jews in England in the nineteenth century. The intention not to offend the Jews would be obvious from the beginning of the performance;<sup>21</sup> Machevil's prologue was entirely replaced by a prologue delivered by a Mr. Barnard who played Selim-Calymath. The new prologue states the intention of the production as mainly saving relics of literature from "spots of age" and not "t' expel that prejudice which mark'd the age [Marlowe's]" by casting "opprobrium o'er the Hebrew name".<sup>22</sup> The prologue registered a statement of equality among people, that "On ev'ry sect pernicious passions fall/ And vice and virtue reign alike in all", which again must have been aimed at safeguarding the production against being seen as an attack on the Jews. In addition to the opening there were many cuts in lines that would constitute a possible offence to Jews. The most important were the cut in Ferneze's lines where he lays the blame of the Christians' suffering on the sins of the Jews (I,ii,63-5) and the cut in Barabas's speech about the difference between him and Job (I,ii,182-92), which, if left, might have appeared to be an ironic comment on the Jewish religion. Barabas's ridicule of the Christians as an "unchosen nation" (II,iii,8-10) and his hope to see them starve (26-9) were cut, as the lines would imply extreme hatred towards the Christians on part of the Jews. Katherine's warning to Mathias not to speak to Barabas because "he is cast off from heaven" (163) and Abigail's lament that there is "no pity in Jews" (III,iii,53-5) were also cut. Barabas's lines to Lodowick about the Jewish custom of turning "into the air to purge [themselves]/ For unto [them] the promise doth belong", when they see gentiles (II,iii,46-9), were left out.<sup>23</sup>

But perhaps the most interesting example of the direction of these alterations is the turning of Barabas's generalization about the Jews into lines describing his own behaviour as individual and idiosyncratic. At this point, it is useful to compare the original with the promptcopy: for while the original has:

We Jews can fawn like spaniels when we please,  
And when we grin we bite; yet are our looks  
As innocent and harmless as a lamb's.  
(II,iii,20-2)

the promptbook has:

For like a Spaniel I can fawn at pleasure  
And when I grin, I bite; yet are my looks...etc.

Changing the plural to the singular would counteract any inclination towards moral generalisation against the body of the Jews as a whole. Abigail's pleading with the Friars to "Convert [her] father that he may be saved" (III,vi,39), was changed to "urge



repentance", as if trying to avoid limiting salvation to Christians. And Abigail does not die a Christian as in the original; her line to the friar, "...witness that I die a Christian" (40), was also expunged. The largest cut made for this purpose was Barabas's dissembling to the friars (IV,i,52-60), in which he draws a stereotype of Jewish behaviour such as being "Hard hearted to the poor", "covetous", a usurer who takes "A hundred for a hundred". His proposed way of repentance by fasting, praying and creeping on his knees to Jerusalem (64-71), which would be offensive to both Jews and Christians as a ridicule of religious practices, was also cut.

Into the same category falls another group of alterations, namely the reduction of Barabas's atrocious acts and moral offences. The mere absence of Machevil's prologue would help immensely in toning down the evil hovering over the play from its very beginning. Barabas's catalogue of crimes which he boasts of to Ithamore (II,iii,176-200) was shortened and delivered as an aside that was meant as a kind of test of Ithamore's reaction. Thus it functioned merely as a set of uncommitted crimes on <sup>the</sup> part of Barabas so that, apart from smoothing down Barabas's image as a Jew, it softened the cruelty done or mentioned in the play. This act of turning a dialogue into an aside was approved by critics and audience alike:

Instead of omitting this speech...Barabas is made (aside) to feign that he has done all this, in order to try Ithamore's disposition. This is a very happy thought and the answer of Ithamore is not less so. (BEM)

In fact Ithamore's lines in the original were strangely replaced by Lightborn's response when in *Edward II*, Mortimer assigns to him Edward's murder (*Edward II*, V,iv,28-38).<sup>24</sup> Though Lightborn's lines are by no means less gruesome than Ithamore's, at least they avoid mentioning Ithamore's violence exercised against the Christians, such as "setting Christian villages on fire" (208), or "[strewing] powder on the marble stones" (214) where the pilgrims to Jerusalem knelt.

The major cut in Barabas's atrocities was the omission of anything relating to the poisoning of the nuns and the murder of his daughter. The lines concerning Barabas's desire to kill Abigail (III,iv,32-3), those which elaborate on Barabas's preparing the pot of rice (48-118), and anything related to this act (III,vi,1-8;IV,i,1-20), were expunged,<sup>25</sup> and the last scene of the third Act and the first of the fourth were linked together to form one scene which followed Abigail's confession and death. Abigail was made to die from natural causes, "*Discovered on a couch with the Abbess, Nuns, and a friar*",<sup>26</sup> most likely overcome by grief at Mathias' death, as the

theme of their love is expanded throughout this text (as will be shown later in this chapter). Genest does not find this version of Abigail's death a reasonable one:

he [S. Penley] has very injudiciously left out all that relates to the poisoning of the nuns—in his third act, Abigail leaves the stage apparently in perfect health—a short scene of thirty five lines ensues—and then she is discovered on her deathbed, though it is impossible to divine what can have occasioned her death in so short a time.<sup>27</sup>

But Penley was not to blame as the intention was to make Barabas less inhuman by purging him of the worst crime, that against his own daughter. This allowed Penley to go further, by making Barabas completely ignorant of Abigail's death and thus giving him a sentimental lament of a loving parent, which he delivered when one of the friars broke the sad news to him.<sup>28</sup> This complied with Maitland's point of view that "the only purely human feeling about the Jew [in the original] is his parental affection",<sup>29</sup> until he poisons his daughter.

In the procedure of lessening the number of Barabas's victims, he was made to cause the death of only one friar who was "strangled by Ithamore...though not before the audience, as is the case in the original" (*NMC&UR*). The argument between the two friars (IV,i,94-102) was shortened and Jacomo left the stage not intending to come back for Barabas's wealth, and thus the trick of setting the body of Bernardine upright to deceive Jacomo (156-208) was cut. It seems this would have appeared a crude device to the early nineteenth-century audience, who were used to farce but not in plays of the tragic tone for which Kean was famous. The manner of Barabas's own death was also changed to a simpler and a less unnerving one. Instead of falling into the cauldron Barabas was "fetched down from a gallery with shots"<sup>30</sup> by a group of Maltese knights who were hiding with their guns:

When the Turkish guests appear, he unfolds to them the plot, and, at the same moment, a party of the Maltese troops, who were previously concealed, make their appearance, and Barabas falls by a discharge from their guns. (*NMC&UR*)

This change was justified by Leigh Hunt as a "piece of consideration certainly for our nerves and extremely well managed".<sup>31</sup> But any one who is familiar with Elizabethan conventions would realise how much the ending would have missed of the symbolism inherent in Barabas's fall which interested both Henslowe and the Elizabethan audience in Marlowe's time.<sup>32</sup> One of the reviewers, however, saw that this change was imposed "not much for the better" (*BEM*). One may also wonder whether the



omission of the cauldron was conditioned by what could be staged on the Drury Lane stage, and by Kean's own state of health.

On the whole there was also an attempt to purge the play of obscenity, not surprising when, even Shakespeare's plays were Bowdlerized for use by young or female readers.<sup>33</sup> Barabas's sexual innuendoes about the nuns and friars, and his ridicule of Christian practices were either cut or contextually changed.<sup>34</sup> His satirical comments about the nuns reaping the fruit of their practice "in fullness of perfection" (II,iii,82-9), and Ithamore's question to Abigail whether the nuns have "fine sport with the friars" (III,iii,37-8) were cut. Barabas's warning to Abigail to entertain Lodowick "provided that [she] keep [her] maidenhead" (II,iii,232), and his instruction to her to "kiss him" were eliminated, as was the Friar's anti-climactic line at Abigail's death "Ay, and a virgin too; that grieves me most" (III,vi,41) (a line that has proved very comic for modern audiences);<sup>35</sup> and some of Bellamira's lines were curtailed.<sup>36</sup> It seems this endeavour was not unappreciated by critics:

In its revival much of the rancour against Jews which sully Marlowe's pages was expurgated; all expressions incompatible with a better sense of morality and refinement than that of the Elizabethan period was removed...and phraseology corrected and modernised...<sup>37</sup>

This would be expected on early nineteenth-century stages, especially after 1810, the year which marked the introduction of stalls that accommodated respectable ladies of fashion whose presence must have led to a severer moral tone, when "the aim naturally was to please by inculcating some moral, to avoid offending public taste".<sup>38</sup> There was also an attempt to refine Kean's Barabas. He was given a song to deliver when he disguised as a harper which was said to have "finely relieved" the "heaviness of the fourth act",<sup>39</sup> and to have "delighted the audience"<sup>40</sup> immensely. In the context, the song expressed nostalgia for one's home and a sense of alienation (see Appendix A). Not one review missed mentioning the song, as if it had been the best part of the performance. It was said to have

produced a very powerful effect and was rapturously encored. Our reader will readily suppose that this vocal undertaking was more remarkable for its taste than its compass; and if the piece should become popular, it will owe that popularity to Mr. Kean. (*EM&LR*)<sup>41</sup>

Though irrelevant to the play, it seems the song overshadowed other parts of the performance. A reviewer in *The European Magazine* tells us how on one evening, on

30 April, the audience stopped the performance, noisily insisting on Kean's repeating the song:

having resisted a very general encore at the conclusion of the Harper's song, the audience testified their disapprobation by opposing the further progress of the piece. (*EM&LR*)

Not until it was announced that Kean felt "indisposed" was the good humour restored and the play proceeded (*EM&LR*). This practice was not unusual on part of the early nineteenth-century audience who were mercilessly noisy at performances, both in cases of approval and disapproval.<sup>42</sup> However, the delight at the song did not stop the reviewer of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* from severely criticising the event, in the conviction that "This contemptible degradation could never be of his own [Kean's] choosing" (*BEM*).

We cannot avoid mentioning a very important set of additions to the play which form an extensive body of 'plagiarism' from *Edward II*. The performance opened not with Barabas in his counting house, but with Mathias reading a letter from Abigail and expressing his love to her in exactly the language of Gaveston's soliloquy (*Edward II*, I, i, 1-16), but, of course, changing all the "hims" to "hers". The scene proceeded tediously between Mathias and Lodowick as they talked about their friendship, and as Lodowick revealed his secret love for Abigail, unaware of Mathias' love for her, at which point Mathias became agitated and delivered a speech which is a mixture of Mortimer's blame of fortune (*Edward II*, V, vi, 59-66), and Edward's lines "And either die, or live with Gaveston..." (I, i, 137-46). Later in the play, before they fight, a long argument between them was added as if to establish the reason for their duel. Interestingly, the line which Abigail utters in the original (to Lodowick, but about Mathias)—"Nothing but death, shall part my love and me" (II, iii, 322)—was used by Lodowick to tease Mathias into thinking that Abigail was not devoted to him and thus to provoke him into fighting. It seems that Penley felt a lack of motivation in the original, which prompted him to make this alteration for the sake of credibility. But more importantly there appears to be an attempt at introducing an element of sentimentality, in accordance with early nineteenth-century theatrical fashion. Therefore a sub-plot of love, passion and suffering was introduced into the performance, Abigail was given a large number of lines from *Edward II*, some of them Isabella's and some Edward's (see Appendix A). Isabella's lines in which she vows to importune Edward again with prayers (II, iv, 60-70), and those in which she expresses her love to Edward (II, iv, 15-21), were given to Abigail as soliloquies in which, respectively, she vowed to importune Barabas to stop his evil plots and in



which she expressed her love for Mathias. As she learned of her father's plots against Mathias, and later at her deathbed, Abigail was given Edward's lines which he delivers at the Abbey of Neath (VI,vi,41-3/61-3).

Borrowings from *Edward II* did not only aim at introducing a theme of true love, but they also gave a sense of patriotism and political practice which was in fashion at the time.<sup>43</sup> Del Bosco's character was given more scope as a strong ally to Malta who encouraged Ferneze to declare war against the Turks. He was introduced in an added scene of twenty-one lines between two Maltese knights, who praised his arrival in Malta, and explained his intention as being a patriotic one and not merely a mercenary one of selling slaves, as is the case in the original. For this purpose a mixture of the Lords' lines in *Edward II* was assigned to the two Maltese knights (I,i,122-33). The additions in *The Jew of Malta* show that a lack of poetical power was felt in the play, and inserting lines from *Edward II* to compensate for this lack is, in a sense, an act of faithfulness (however perverse it may seem to us) to Marlowe's art. But at the same time, the choice of *Edward II* points to the fact that this play must have been seen mainly as a store-house of poetical beauties, as appears from critical views of Marlowe's works after 1818 (discussed below).

In spite of the fact that there were good intentions behind these various alterations, they were not greatly welcomed by the critics. The added first scene was criticised as "long and tedious," compared to the

fine and characteristic commencement of the original...Lodowick and Mathias are very uninteresting and intrusive people at best; and it is quite time enough to be troubled with them when the author wants them in order to heighten his principal character. But it is a remarkable fact, that managers of the theatres seem to know less of the true purposes and bearings of the dramatic art than any other given set of people...we think the play, upon the whole, greatly injured by the alterations and see no reason for any of them. (BEM)

This shows that *The Jew of Malta* is not the kind of play that will always tolerate alteration according to the whims of theatre managers and trends of fashion. The question remains whether the play was easily adaptable to the stage of Drury Lane which was very different from the stage, or stages, for which *The Jew of Malta* was written—moving behind the proscenium arch into a picture frame. It seems that stage conditions at Drury Lane necessitated other types of alteration. For instance, most of Barabas's original asides were cut,<sup>44</sup> especially those in the slave-market scene (II,iii). In the first place, no market-place was attempted on stage. There were

hints in the promptbook to its existence off-stage: "this way to the Market-place"; but Barabas did not talk to slaves, and the purchase of Ithamore was a quick exchange of words between Barabas and a Jewish merchant who was supposed to have purchased Ithamore for Barabas already, off-stage. The eliminating of the market-place might have been due to its being the most crowded and thus the most difficult scene to stage.<sup>45</sup> The auditorium of Drury Lane was a large one; thus audibility and even visibility presented problems. Some spectators who sat at a distance complained of being unable to see the actors' faces, or to hear their voices.<sup>46</sup> On a picture frame stage it would have been extremely difficult to hear all Barabas's asides that break swiftly into the conversation. The adaptability which the Elizabethan stage enjoyed, and the flexibility with which Alleyn would have thrown his asides to the surrounding Elizabethan audience, were unfortunately lacking on the stage of Drury Lane. Even the action of the play, which would have been speedy on the bare open stage of the Elizabethan playhouses, seems to have been slowed down in 1818. The alterations seem to have helped to slow the rhythm, especially the exchange of added lines between characters. As we have seen, these were perceived as tedious, even where they supplied motivations lacking in the original.

Though there was an attempt at spectacular effects on the Drury Lane stage, scene changing was clumsy: stock flats and wings were used and pictures moving on a separate canvas and roller system. These methods may explain the alteration of the manner of Barabas's death. For the same reason, the fighting between Lodowick and Mathias seems to have occurred off-stage as the promptbook has "*They exeunt fighting*". But it seems there was a balcony from which Abigail could throw the money to her father, as the promptbook has "*four money bags ready at balcony*". Other scenes were attempted as realistically as possible, as for example the arrival of Del Bosco in Malta, which is described elaborately in the promptbook: "*The harbour of Malta, Turkish fleet seen at a distance. A boat comes ashore. Martin Del Bosco and company lands from it.*" Most probably this image was achieved on the stage, by means of painted canvas, or wings. The playbill proudly announced that the play was being mounted "with new decorations".

By and large, despite all attempts to de-emphasize Barabas's atrocities and to lessen the racial and moral offences in the play, the performance of 1818 was not a success. The play's viability on nineteenth-century stages was uncertain; and critics at the time



doubt[ed]...whether, with all its merits, it ha[d] struck many of its readers...as a drama much adapted to [their] stage. (EM&LR)

In a manner similar to twentieth-century reactions to a performance of *The Jew of Malta*,<sup>47</sup> the nineteenth-century audience found the second part of the play out of keeping with the promising first act: "the performance flag<sup>s</sup>[ed] very much in the second and third acts, and [was] not likely to become a favourite with the public" (BEM). The first act was seen as "the best in the piece" (NMC&UR), and the most unique in exhibiting a "favourable and continued specimen of [Kean's] powers" (EM&LR). Later acts were puzzling to reviewers:

...the succeeding ones are by no means equal to the promise of the first, and the catastrophe is so forced and artificial, that we doubt whether there is another performer on the stage who could have saved it from a laugh. (EM&LR)

Kean apparently did save it. Thus the demerits of the play worked towards a triumph for Kean as a star. While he was appreciated—

nothing can more strongly show the power and popularity of Mr. Kean, than his having been able to illumine and render tolerable so dark a portrait as that of Barabas— (T<sub>2</sub>)<sup>48</sup>

Marlowe was condemned:

*The Jew of Malta* is perhaps that which exhibits more of his faults and less of his beauties than any [of his plays]. (T<sub>2</sub>)<sup>49</sup>

Kean's interpretation of Barabas seems to have continued the tragic tone of his Shylock. Apart from being given touches of parental feeling, this Barabas avoided any suggestions of the comic stage Jew that would have distinguished Elizabethan performances, and that is now adapted in modern productions of the play.<sup>50</sup> Kean probably used a black wig, as he did in his part as Shylock,<sup>51</sup> with no false nose as Ithamore's hints at it in the original (II,ii,178; III,iii,10) were cut. A false nose would have distorted Kean's face which "was capable of expressing every shade of emotion".<sup>52</sup> Kean succeeded "in communicating...a high degree of tragic solemnity" (EM&LR), but not a sympathetic one. His Barabas was still seen as utterly evil, "still unnatural though it [Barabas's figure] has undergone considerable alteration" (NMC&UR). His love of facial expressions was apparently released in mimicry (see Illustration 3) that gave vicious traits to the character:

He completely seized the spirit of his author, and placed before us the boldest picture of cunning and revenge we ever beheld... (NM&UR)

He conveyed a "taste of self-hugging, revenge and triumphant Machiavelism",<sup>53</sup> which he kept constantly before the audience "from the rising until the falling of the curtain" (EM&LR). Some parts of his performance were praised in all the reviews, especially his joy at retrieving his money "hugg[ing] his wealth", as the promptbook has it, with "absolute delirium of drunken joy" (BEM).<sup>54</sup>

Though the play was performed eleven times, and was "announced for representation amidst universal applause" (NMC&UR), it had no staying power on the nineteenth-century stages. The audience was interested in the star rather than the play, and the whole weight of the performance rested on Kean. It might be that one of the reasons it did not appeal to the audience was that Kean's was the first Barabas to mount nineteenth-century stages, and one of the pleasures of theatre going at the time was the opportunity of comparing different actors' interpretations of major roles. Shakespeare plays, unlike Marlowe's, offered this kind of pleasure as they were constantly revived. More important, however, was that the failure was also due to the nature of the play, for, though it was seen as energetic and varied, it was also thought brutal. A reviewer in *The European Magazine* gave a picture of the possible reasons for disapproval of the play:

whether from the recollection of Shakespeare's Shylock, or from a distaste of the simplicity of our ancient writers, or, as we would rather hope, from a disinclination to recognize within the limits of probability the multitude of atrocities ascribed to the Jew, he does not make that impression upon the whole which was to be expected from so great a name.  
(EM&LR)

Thus the revival of *The Jew of Malta* did not help stimulate interest in Marlowe's works. The play was, and will always be, compared with Shakespeare's play on a Jew, and this was particularly so in 1818 when Kean's Shylock was still in the mind of the audience at Drury Lane: "Kean's Barabas is fine but it bore no more comparison to that of Shylock, than the play of *The Jew of Malta* [did] to *The Merchant of Venice*" (BEM). And in this respect, later criticism of Marlowe's works does not show much change in viewpoint, as will appear later in this chapter.

That the revival of *The Jew of Malta* resulted merely from personal interest on part of Kean, rather than from a general acceptance of the stage-worthiness of Marlowe's plays, is evidenced by the criticism that followed this revival. Appreciation



of Marlowe as a dramatist was a slow process, compared to a wide spread admiration of Marlowe as a poet. Lamb's severe criticism of *The Jew of Malta* has seemed valid even until the present time. And, oddly enough, though he wrote volumes on Kean's revival of *The Merchant of Venice*,<sup>55</sup> Hazlitt did not mention his revival of *The Jew of Malta*. In 1820, in his *Lectures on the Literature of the Age of Elizabeth*, Hazlitt's criticism of *The Jew of Malta* seems to be generated by a mere reading of the play. He approves of the existence of "some striking passages" in it, but he believes that it is

outrageous in plot and catastrophe...for the rest, it is a tissue of gratuitous, unprovoked, and incredible atrocities, which are committed one upon the back of the other, by the parties concerned, without motive, passion or object.<sup>56</sup>

Apparently, Hazlitt did not have Kean's revival in mind in which Barabas's enormous list of committed atrocities was modified. He also found *Edward II* lacking in dramatic power:

The management of the plot is feeble and desultory...the characters are too worthless...and their punishment is, in general, too well deserved to excite our commiseration (p. 54).

According to Hazlitt, the play cannot stand comparison with *Richard II*, and only "the death of Edward II in Marlowe's tragedy is certainly superior to that of Shakespeare's king..." (p. 54). Of *Dr. Faustus* Hazlitt remarks that "though an imperfect and unequal performance, [it] is [Marlowe's] greatest work" (p. 44), but he finds the comic parts "mean and grovelling to the last degree" (p. 49). It is also worth mentioning, that, as an example of Marlowe's artistic achievement, Hazlitt quotes the same lines that Lamb did in his *Specimens*.<sup>57</sup>

In 1821, an unsigned article on Marlowe, in the *Retrospective Review*, largely concentrated on Marlowe's life and death and the accusations of atheism laid against him.<sup>58</sup> The writer criticises the lack of poetry in *The Jew of Malta*: "there are but a few grains of poetry sprinkled through it; no wit, no interest...nothing to please the imagination, or satisfy the judgment" (p. 153); the fact that it is "full of daggers, poisoning and bloodshed..." (p. 153); and that its central character is "a lump of hatred and malice—an imperfection of evil, a mere devil..." (p. 154). According to him, *Dr. Faustus* and *Edward II* are of a "much higher order...written in a chaster spirit of poetry" (p. 156). The last scene of *Edward II* "would have been sufficient to immortalize Marlowe if he had not written another line" (p. 159); and the last scene of

*Dr. Faustus* "is the only one of any merit in the play, and is of such tremendous interest as to compensate for the mediocrity of the rest" (p. 173). Characteristically, the same specimens of Marlowe's poetry that Hazlitt and Lamb reproduced are quoted in this essay. Clearly then the main appreciation of anything in Marlowe's plays was again poetic, and hence the view that

their excellence consists rather in detached scenes than in general effect. There is a want of coherence in them (p. 181).

In 1826, in his edition of Marlowe's works G. Robinson added nothing new to Marlowe criticism, apart from making texts of his works more easily available. Again Robinson discusses Marlowe mainly as a poet and, like the critics and editors that preceded him, he devotes the majority of his introduction to Marlowe's life and death, and to his mighty line. His brief critical notes on Marlowe's plays merely repeat what other critics had already said.<sup>59</sup> Well into the middle of the nineteenth century, critics shared the same views of Marlowe. They favoured his verse rather than his dramatic talents, disliked *The Jew of Malta*, valued *Edward II* as the best among his plays, regarded *Tamburlaine* as bombastic, and admired *Dr. Faustus* without its comic parts. The same ideas were repeated over and over again by James Broughton, J. P. Collier, Henry Hallam and others.<sup>60</sup> There were few comments on the theatrical fortunes or theatrical potential of Marlowe's plays. Kean's revival was mentioned only by Broughton, who, though he entertained the common view of *The Jew of Malta*, showed at least some interest in its stage history when he said: "the play was coolly received on its reproduction in 1818 and soon laid aside".<sup>61</sup>

In 1850, Alexander Dyce registered an important achievement with his edition of Marlowe's works which was the first complete one ever.<sup>62</sup> Dyce attempted a scholarly stage history of the plays. He mentions the entries referring to the plays in Henslowe's *Diary*, the properties that were possibly used in the staging of Marlowe's plays in Elizabethan times, and allusions to the plays in sixteenth and seventeenth-century literature. He makes brief references to Mountford's farce and to the Harlequinade *Faustus* that had led to the degradation of the *Faustus* legend in the public mind. Concerning the fortunes of *The Jew of Malta* on the Elizabethan stage Dyce writes:

Barabas was originally performed by Alleyn; and the aspects of the Jew was rendered as grotesque and hideous as possible by means of a false nose" (p. xx).



He also briefly mentions Kean's revival of the play, concluding, somewhat misleadingly, that "owing to his (Kean's) exertions in *Barabas*, it was very favourably received" (p. xxii). Dyce's criticism of Marlowe's plays, however, offers nothing new, except for a tendency to devalue *Edward II*. He complains of its "heaviness" and of "its crowded incidents [that] do not always follow each other without confusion" (p. xxii). Dyce's dislike of *Edward II* shows an approach similar to that of some early twentieth-century critics of Marlowe.<sup>63</sup> The importance of Dyce's edition, however, lies in his notes to the texts. These are not confined to explaining ambiguous words and to comparing textual variations, but also, through them, Dyce provides clarification of inadequate stage-directions and explanation of locations of events at points of scene changing, to help the reader follow the action. This provision by Dyce is due to the lack of opportunities of seeing the plays on stage, but it points to a start of interest not merely in the poetry of Marlowe's plays but in understanding the action on stage.<sup>64</sup>

In the period after the appearance of Dyce's edition criticism of Marlowe's plays remained on the whole very static. Critics' views stemmed either from an admiration of his poetry, or from a dislike of the atrocious, the bombastic, the atheistical and the ludicrous which they saw in his plays. In 1864, H. A. Taine's criticism of Marlowe narrowly concentrated on the violence and passions in Marlowe's plays. The section he devotes to Marlowe in his *History of English Literature*, makes it seem as if Marlowe's plays exhibit nothing but murder.<sup>65</sup> Relating Marlowe's thematic interests to his outrageous character, Taine asks "what poetry could emanate from a life so passionate...but exaggerated declamation, heaps of murder, atrocities, a pompous and furious display of tragedy bespattered with blood...?" (p. 386). According to Taine, *Barabas* is "maddened with hate, [and] is thenceforth no longer human" (p. 388). *Edward II* shows "extremes of hate or tenderness" (p. 391), and *Dr. Faustus* is an example of "voluptuous wishes" (p. 394).

In 1870, Edward Dowden concentrated on Marlowe's atheism, and on the fiery passion, lust for power and insatiable curiosity that his plays dramatise. But he also offered useful critical insights. In *Dr. Faustus* Dowden found

an atmosphere of learning, of refinement, and of scholarly urbanity, which makes us feel how thoroughly Marlowe had preserved his original conception of the character of Faustus, even while he degraded him to the low conjurer of certain passages, introduced by a writer singularly devoid of humour, to make sport for the groundlings of the theatre.<sup>66</sup>

And though *The Jew of Malta*, according to him, is full of "evil desires, evil thoughts, evil living", Barabas is still a "superb figure. His energy of will is so great...Even his love of money has something in it of the sublime..." (p. 79). Dowden, however, condemns *Edward II* as it has "few splendid passages, [and] is rather a series of scenes from the chronicles of England than a drama" (p. 74). By attributing the extremes in Marlowe's plays to "the ill effect of the demands made upon him by sixteenth-century playgoers" (p. 80), rather than to traits in his character, Dowden took a positive step towards the widening of an understanding of Marlowe's art. On the whole, however, Dowden's critical approach was not radically different from that of his predecessors. The "splendid passages" he finds in *Edward II*, the "atmosphere of learning" in *Dr. Faustus*, and "the sublime" in *The Jew*, all seem to refer to Marlowe's poetic rather than his dramatic skill.

Nevertheless, the intervals between the appearance of one edition of a Marlowe play and another gradually began to shorten—a sign, it seems, of a growing sense of the importance of Marlowe in the history of English drama. In 1878 A. W. Ward edited *Dr. Faustus* and Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, with an extensive introduction, in which he offered historical facts relating to the legends of both plays.<sup>67</sup> With notes on the history of witchcraft and extracts from Marlowe's and Greene's sources, Ward probably helped readers to an understanding of *Dr. Faustus* as a more serious play than the later seventeenth and the eighteenth-century public had thought it to be. Ward also provided the readers with a short stage history of *Dr. Faustus* (pp. lxxv-lxxxiv) followed by allusions to it in Elizabethan and Renaissance literature (pp. cxxxviii-cxl). In a brief survey he reviews how, in the course of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, *Dr. Faustus* was gradually turned into a mere theme for farces, harlequinades, chapbooks, puppet shows, operas and musical ballets; and he emphasises that this was more due to the demands of the public and the nature of the legend than to a weakness inherent in Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* (pp. cxlii-cxliv). This in itself is a positive step towards reviving the play's reputation after its reduction to a source for burlesque on early eighteenth-century stages, as has been shown in Chapter Four.

In 1885, A. H. Bullen edited Marlowe's complete dramatic works, including some critical comments on Marlowe's dramatic achievement, but without much innovation. In this respect, he relied on Dyce and other previous editors of Marlowe's works.<sup>68</sup> Occasionally Bullen throws out some hints of theatrical importance, such as his comments about *Tamburlaine* on the Elizabethan stage:



It is easy to conceive what roars of applause would be evoked by the entrance of Tamburlaine drawn in his chariot by the harnessed monarchs.<sup>69</sup>

Havelock Ellis edited Marlowe's plays in 1887, for the Mermaid series, which aimed to publish the "Best Plays of the Old Dramatists".<sup>70</sup> This probably was the reason why Havelock Ellis left out *The Massacre at Paris* and *Dido*, as neither play was deemed to be among the "best plays". According to J. A. Symonds, who provided the general introduction for this edition of Marlowe's works,

the masterpieces of our Romantic Drama, when the majority of Shakespeare's plays have been excepted, are few in number, so few indeed that they will be adequately represented in the 'Mermaid Series' (p. xxii).

And among those few were five of Marlowe's plays. It has to be admitted, however, that it was still the poetic elements in Marlowe's plays that gained recognition, and that were thought to compensate for the alleged faults in his plays. Ellis comments that

with the exception of *Edward II*, which stands alone, Marlowe's dramas are mostly series of scenes held together by the poetic energy of his own dominating personality (p. xxxiv).

But at least Ellis's critical comments show the beginning of a change in the stereotypical views held on Marlowe's plays. He allows *The Jew of Malta* an important position in dramatic literature:

The vigorous design and rich free verse of *The Jew of Malta* show a technical advance on *Faustus*. Only Milton, as Mr. Swinburne has somewhere remarked, has surpassed the opening soliloquy of Barabas (p. xli).

Furthermore, Ellis states with conviction that, not only in the last scene, *Richard II* is inferior to *Edward II*:

The whole of Shakespeare's play, with its exuberant eloquence, its facile and diffuse poetry, is distinctly inferior to Marlowe's, both in organic structure and in dramatic characterisation (p. xlii).

He also thinks that Marlowe's *Faustus* is superior to Goethe's *Faust* in some respects:

it is power, power without bound, that he [Faustus] desires...the lust of the flesh...and the lust of the eyes....This gives him a passionate energy...which Goethe's more shifting, sceptical and complex Faust lacks (p. xxxviii).

In spite of all this, Marlowe was still seen as primarily a poet, and a Marlowe play on stage still seemed far from a likelihood—not even as a vehicle for a star actor, as had been the case in Kean's revival of *The Jew of Malta*.

However, a voice, though faint, calling for performances of Marlowe's plays could still emerge from the silence of the critical isolation of Marlowe's plays from the stage. This was Henry Morley's in 1866, when he pleaded for the revival of English plays rather than the adapting of French ones (a trend which was becoming a fashion in the second half of the nineteenth century):

It would be easier as well as wholesomer to pare the sound old English apple than to scoop and cook and sugar those rotten French windfalls to the English taste....We dare go back even to Marlowe, whose *Edward II* needs but a few touches to make it a good acting play. Now that *Faust* is in the ascendant, it might even be said that freedom of omission in the comic scenes, with elsewhere two or three skillful modifications, would give to our stage in Marlowe's *Faustus* a grand part for a good actor.<sup>71</sup>

But his plea remained unheeded. Real endeavours at bringing Marlowe back to the stage began only in 1896, when Thomas Donovan edited some English historical plays "Arranged for Acting, as well as for Reading", one of which was *Edward II*.<sup>72</sup> In his preface Donovan calls the plays he chose to edit "the best of those plays founded on English history" (p. v). His aim was not to reprint the original texts of old plays, but rather to adapt them "in what [was] thought to be the simplest and most effective form for dramatic performance" (p. v). Donovan was convinced that these plays were written to be acted, but they had been neglected because "as written, they [could] not be acted" (p. v). Principally Donovan attempted to give each play "the form best suited for dramatic effect" (p. vii). His comment on the theatrical destiny of these old plays on nineteenth-century stages is in itself illuminating on the position of Marlowe's plays:

Today, however, realism rules in the drama. The best of plays will have no hearing unless the stage is filled with pictures closely resembling nature....Any attempt, therefore, to restore these plays to the theatre must be attended by an effort to bring them in line with the altered conditions of the stage. (p. vii)



Consequently, instead of the scholarly attempt to present the old plays as much as possible in their original form, in which eighteenth and nineteenth-century editors had been engaged, Donovan provided new act and scene divisions, eliminated some parts which he found redundant, and modified some. In so doing, Donovan hoped that these plays would "be assigned, once and for all, an honoured place on our national stage" (p. vii). It is important to note, however, that Donovan made no changes to *Edward II*, which might seem to indicate a satisfaction with its original form.<sup>73</sup>

Though the main reason behind Donovan's choice of *Edward II* could be that it was one of the plays that dramatised the history of England, and though the play in the form he provided was not actually acted, at least he showed an interest in the play's theatrical potential. In fact the gap between Marlowe's plays on the page and Marlowe's plays on the stage was beginning to narrow. In the same year as Donovan's edition was published, *Dr. Faustus* was chosen for revival by William Poel for the Elizabethan Stage Society, and few years later, in 1903, *Edward II* was revived, also by Poel, after an absence from the stage of nearly three hundred years.

The second of July 1896 witnessed the first London production of *Dr. Faustus* since 1675. It was performed in St. George's Hall, and the production was revived eight years later, at the Court Theatre, after which it also went on tour.<sup>74</sup> The production was one of the early experiments of the Elizabethan Stage Society which William Poel established in 1894, with intentions similar to those of eighteenth-century editors, namely to save Elizabethan plays from oblivion, but this time by making them come alive in production. Poel's major aim was to produce Elizabethan plays in an Elizabethan style, to induce in a modern audience, as far as possible, an Elizabethan frame of mind.<sup>75</sup> Starting with very little financial support, Poel was against the commercial theatre of his age which employed exaggerated scenic effects and which massacred the text to fit those needs. His basic principles for his Elizabethan revivals were to obtain an authentic text, and to reconstruct an approximation of Elizabethan stage conditions and acting styles.

Poel always, rightly or wrongly, trusted first quartos of Elizabethan plays as being more authentically true to the original production,<sup>76</sup> and thus he chose the 1604 text of *Dr. Faustus*, particularly as it was this text which most editors at that time chose to edit.<sup>77</sup> A note in the programme of the 1904 tour says that the text used for the revival "follows closely the 1604 edition; but occasional passages have been introduced from the edition of 1616", and there were a few additions and cuts.<sup>78</sup> The production opened with a new prologue, composed by Swinburne in praise of

Marlowe<sup>79</sup> which was seen as "an eloquent, if not extravagant, tribute to Marlowe's Memory".<sup>80</sup> A masque uncalled for in the text opened the scene in the Duke of Vanholt's palace, in which five of the Deadly Sins came back with skeletons to perform a gruesome dance of death for the Duke and Duchess.<sup>81</sup> This would have made the Duke's expression, "Thanks , Master Doctor, for these pleasant sights" (xvii,1), somewhat incongruous. Apart from Poel's love of pictorial display, there was no clear reason why he added this masque, except that, perhaps, he found the conjuring of grapes for the Duchess rather lame as a demonstration of Faustus's magic. Also added was a Chorus before the last scene of Faustus's damnation, which stressed the religious significance of the action, as the lines were taken from the Angels' and Mephostophilis's last words to Faustus before the striking of the clock (xix,97-8,104-105).<sup>82</sup>

Though Poel believed that continuity of action was important on the Elizabethan stage, and that "so many Elizabethan plays had a double plot to avoid, even for a moment, an empty stage",<sup>83</sup> he made most of his cuts in the middle part of the play. The comic scenes were freely trimmed, there was no Horse-courser and no Vintner. Even the yokels' disruption at the Duke's palace was cut. Poel felt that he had made the right decision:

There is no justification for reviving with historic accuracy the middle part of the play, which is not Marlowe's. The extent to which this part of the play can be made successful on the stage depends upon pictorial more than upon dramatic art. The endeavour in the present revival is to strengthen by pictorial aid that part of the play which is least interesting and profitable as dramatic literature.<sup>84</sup>

In addition to cutting some parts of the text, Poel shifted some lines and rearranged some scenes. For example, scene vi followed scene v directly, omitting the first ten lines ("When I behold the heavens...") and starting with Faustus's decision to repent "I will renounce this magic and repent" (vi,11). Poel added those ten lines to Faustus's and Mephostophilis's dispute on astronomy (33-69) in order to make a separate scene later during the action, in which he introduced a tableau of "*Faustus and Mephistopheles among the stars*". Poel's love of pictorial tableaux seems to have obscured his judgment as to how this rearranging of lines would affect the overall structure of meaning. Having Faustus sign the deed, enquire about hell, demand a wife, and obtain the all-embracing magic book, all in one scene (v), and immediately, without allowing time to contemplate what he had obtained, decide to "renounce this magic and repent", would seem too sudden a reversal to grasp. It seems to have escaped Poel's notice that the interval between one scene and another stood for an



interval of time that symbolised a conflict occurring in Faustus's mind. A scene between v and vi in which Robin steals one of Faustus's books (and which is probably lost) would have provided such an interval.<sup>85</sup> Thus, arguably, the Faustus of 1896 was not allowed time to contemplate the magic book and, moreover, his decision to repent straight away would show him so strongly doubting the power of magic from the very beginning that his persistence in it would seem puzzling. Furthermore, saving the debate on astronomy for later, and leaving in scene vi only Faustus's question "who made the world" (vi,69), would show Faustus at this point simply as a doubter in the existence of God.

The performance was in three parts with two short intervals, one "at the end of the scene introducing the Seven Deadly Sins", and another "after the scene with the Duke of Vanholt".<sup>86</sup> This divided the play into clear-cut morality stages, temptation, sin and damnation. The division was probably unintentional; Poel was not concerned with thematic consideration as much as with Elizabethan stage conditions. His main purpose which, it seems, distracted him from other important aspects of the play, was to reconstruct a semblance of the Elizabethan stage. At St. George's Hall he built what he described as "a stage after the model of the old Fortune playhouse".<sup>87</sup> His choice of the Fortune rather than the Rose theatre could be due to the fact that, at the time, it was more possible to reconstruct the Fortune, the builders' contract of which was known, than any other playhouse.<sup>88</sup> Poel's attempt at the reconstruction of an Elizabethan stage and his distribution of action on the various playing areas, attracted more attention from reviewers than anything else in the production. We are fortunate in having an extremely detailed description of the stage from one of the reviewers:

The two pillars between which the curtain hangs stand about six feet from the footlights, and a little further away from each side of or in front of the curtain, whether it is drawn or not. The curtain open reveals a room of which the back is in two storeys, each with its own curtains. The Chorus...came from behind a subsidiary small curtain on the right of the central structure, and having finished her verses walked back behind the same curtain. Then the principal curtain was drawn, and disclosed Dr. Faustus in his study.... Mephistopheles, in traditional fiendish shape, appeared in the...balcony at the back. When ordered to come again as a friar, he came out through the curtains of the lower storey....The farcical and other interludes...took place in front of the stage with the principal curtains closed....The lower curtains at the back when opened revealed a great dragon's mouth wide open, representing the mouth of hell. Out of this came Mephistopheles, and under his escort the Seven Deadly Sins, Alexander and his paramour, and Helen. The Good Angel always came from the curtains on the right-hand side, and stood in front of the stage; the bad angel came from her

own special door at the back of the room. The important scenes, the conjuration, the appearance of the deadly sins, of Alexander to Charles V and of Helen to the students and to Faustus, the Pope's dinner, and the appearance of Faustus and Mephistopheles on Olympus, all took place in the room revealed when the chief curtain was opened... (MP<sub>1</sub>)

In this exploitation of different areas on the stage, and in using them as symbolic of characters' function, Poel seemed to have approximated Elizabethan conditions. Though it was difficult to come to terms with the idea of rejecting new theatrical techniques for old ones, the audience welcomed the experience as greatly educational:

One was helped to feel the tremendous difference between the influence of the two forms of stage upon the drama that used them...on such a stage. Elizabethan drama had to be a drama of harangues, as on our own stage—an illusive hole in the wall—drama is almost bound over to be realistic. (G<sub>1</sub>)<sup>89</sup>

In the process of recreating an Elizabethan style, Poel took great pains over the preparation of costumes and properties. The choice of costumes was made after meticulous research, whether in Henslowe's *Diary* or other sources of theatrical knowledge of the period: "dresses were all studied in which antiquarian research and taste were combined" (MP<sub>1</sub>). By this Poel aimed at producing, as one reviewer put it, costumes "accurate to the period" (DC<sub>1</sub>). We know from the programme that "the dress of Faustus [was] traditional", but in what way 'traditional' is difficult to tell. Some critical comments by reviewers, however, make it clear that Faustus's dress was not what the woodcut on the title-page of the 1616 edition displays: Alleyn as Faustus wearing a long fur-trimmed academic robe with a white ruff (see illustration 1). The famous quotation in Samuel Rowland's *The Knave of the Clubbes*, which suggests that Alleyn was dressed in "a surplice with a cross upon his breast",<sup>90</sup> seemed to William Archer to have inspired Poel:

from this cross and surplice, Mr. Poel has instinctively deduced...the heiratic tone and time of the whole production.<sup>91</sup>

Mephostophilis was said to have first appeared in "traditional fiendish shape" (MP<sub>1</sub>). According to Shaw, Mephostophilis looked like a "devil from the roof of Notre Dame" (SR). Later, however, when he changed into a friar's garb (probably in red),<sup>92</sup> and throughout the whole production, his face was concealed in a hood in which was placed an electric lamp. Though this device gave a "supernatural air" to Mephostophilis (MP<sub>1</sub>), it was an unexpected attempt at modernisation, and quite inconsistent with Elizabethan conditions of audibility and visibility on stage. Archer



found it "a flagrant and foolish anachronism", resulting in what Speaight calls "unnecessary handicap".<sup>93</sup> Other supernatural characters approximated traditional representation. Lucifer appeared amid "fire and smoke," and was "rendered more demonical by the addition of one or two attendant devils" (*MP*<sub>1</sub>). The angels were an "imitation of the quaint painted medieval statues...in German churches" (*MP*<sub>1</sub>). The 'wife' had a fair countenance but her connection with the devil was shown by means of a skeleton fixed at her back, an innovation more appropriate to the representation of Helen, whose beauty was hid from the audience as she was made to walk upstage. This worked in harmony with the verse, as

all her beauty could be read in the rapt expression on  
Faustus' face, and there was no risk of rhetoric being  
contradicted by reality.<sup>94</sup>

Authenticity was given to the stage business connected with the summoning of the demons, as we are told in the programme that it was "in accordance with that described by Reginald Scott in his *Discovery of Witchcraft*, published in the sixteenth century". And the devils seem to have appeared in the "style of pantomime" (*DC*<sub>1</sub>).

The Seven Deadly Sins were intended to be the most authentic figures in the play, as we are told in the programme: "the designs for the Seven Deadly Sins have been taken from sixteenth-century engravings found in the British Museum". They also carried properties symbolic of their function: Pride "with her dainty dress and hand-mirror, [and] Gluttony with her huge dish" (*DT*). The Sins were made attractive rather than gruesome or grotesque, to justify Faustus's joy at the show. But as "they were most picturesquely represented" (*DC*<sub>1</sub>), there must have been a risk of losing their devilish connection. The Sins impressed reviewers mainly by the theatrical effect as they "made their entrance through the jaws of a red and green monster with fangs for teeth..." (*DC*<sub>1</sub>). This pageant was seen as "most thoroughly dramatic" (see illustration 4). Shaw writes about how favourably they were greeted:

the Seven Deadly Sins were *tout ce qu'il y a de plus fin de siècle*, the five worst of them being so attractive that they got rounds of applause on the strength of their appearance alone.  
(*SR*)

Clearly, those who came to see a revival by the Elizabethan Stage Society, intent on judging Poel's methods of achieving authenticity, concentrated on the staging rather than on Marlowe's play. William Archer was puzzled more than anything else by the fact that the Sins were all presented by women:

It would be of course too much to insist that women should be entirely excluded...but it is hard to see why the Seven Deadly Sins should be represented by women, in flat contradiction of the text which evidently contemplated male monstrosities.<sup>95</sup>

Having sought to strengthen the production with "pictorial aid", as he called it in the programme, Poel presented Faustus's travels in systematic visual frames. Each scene of his travels opened with a tableau in the inner space, of Faustus among the stage-audience of his magical displays,<sup>96</sup> with an additional tableau (previously mentioned) of Faustus and Mephostophilis among the stars. These tableaux would have given a unity of style to the production by narrowing the focus on Faustus's achievements. Effort was also expended on an extravagant choice of properties, which reminds us of Henslowe's interest in preparing a large list of them for Elizabethan performances. From the auction catalogue, Marion O' Connor produces a list of the bits and pieces that were probably introduced in the production of *Dr. Faustus* in 1896:

sundry masks for play of *Dr. Faustus*, 2 demon's heads, bull's head, wig with antlers, gold pie and dish, ewer, basket of fruits, 5 dragon's heads with claws and Beelzebub wings, a black cashmere demon's wings in papier maché and astronomical globe. Faust's magic signs, 2 imps.<sup>97</sup>

Like Henslowe, Poel used a dragon to represent the mouth of hell that swallowed Faustus at the end. The Elizabethan Stage Society was praised chiefly for its effort at recreating such Elizabethan aspects. William Archer thought that the Society

might do excellent service in giving costume recitals, under something like Elizabethan conditions, of plays which are impossible, and indeed undesirable on the regular stage—such plays...as *Doctor Faustus*....Let it leave to the theatre the plays which are the theatre's—which are not of an age but for all time.<sup>98</sup>

The reviewer in *The Daily Mail* was well aware of the main features of the production of 1896:

Last evening it was obvious that the real interest was aroused by the unfamiliar stage, the audacious accessories; 'Marlowe's mighty line' went for nothing. The attraction lay in Lucifer, the devil of medieval imagination; Mephistopheles, horned, sooty, and a-grin [sic]; and the odd little attempts at pageantry here and there permitted by the text. Particularly successful was the procession of the Seven Deadly Sins... (DM<sub>1</sub>)



What also threw the emphasis on to the visual aspects of the production was the manner in which Marlowe's verse was delivered. Poel preferred the formal style of speech to the naturalistic. But because of the extensive training imposed on the actors, they exaggerated the delivery to the extent of extreme artificiality. The speaking seems to have been kept to a calculatedly monotonous tone:

There was an occasional false emphasis, and the whole style adopted inclines...in the direction of slowness and deliberateness. (*MP*<sub>1</sub>)

Doré Lewin Mannering played Faustus "with dignity... [but] with slow and measured delivery" (*MP*<sub>1</sub>), which made him fail to "make the changes from repentance to defiance sufficiently marked" (*DT*). Lucifer and the Angels spoke with an "ecclesiastical intonation" (*DT*). Dennis Eadie as Mephostophilis spoke "on the lower notes of a deep voice, after the fashion hitherto peculiar to the Ghost of 'Hamlet'" (*ST*<sub>1</sub>). The whole performance acquired an "ecclesiastical solemnity";<sup>99</sup> even the papal banquet was carried on with a "ceremonial stateliness which [was] amusing enough but not even plausibly Elizabethan".<sup>100</sup> It is worth mentioning here that the banquet, though mainly farcical, was not played, as other comic scenes were, in front of the closed curtain. Poel, who believed in divine providence,<sup>101</sup> and who saw the play as "altogether anti-papal and anti-Romish",<sup>102</sup> might have been reluctant to let this scene be too energetically funny; particularly as he also shortened the dirge and expunged the part where Faustus hits the Pope on the ear.

Judging from reviews, it would seem that while some critics felt that the production scored on visual effect, others thought that the ecclesiastical tone underlined the religious side of the story and turned it into a morality play. The stately manner of speech, remarked one reviewer, made it seem that "the tone of the miracle play was intended to be reproduced" (*MP*<sub>1</sub>).<sup>103</sup> Poel himself perceived a religious seriousness in the play as he claimed in the programme for the 1904 revival:

the greater seriousness which marked the age of the Reformation gives a tragic dignity to the conception of the revolt of a human being against his God, and invests the spirit of such a defiance with what has been truly called a titanic character.

This is presumably what he intended to bring out in his production. Shaw did not find this solemn tone irrelevant to the nature of the play—

Mephistophilis was as joyless and leaden as a devil need be...yet he never for a moment bored us....The actor who

hurries reminds the spectators of the flight of time, which it is his business to make them forget— (SR)

rather, he saw it as the move towards producing "blank-verse plays...under the control of managers who like them instead of openly and shamelessly treating them as inflictions to be curtailed to the utmost".

The importance of Poel's production lay not so much in the thematic interpretation of the play as in the fact that to see *Dr. Faustus* staged was a new experience that could only have been ventured by a theatrical company for which financial profit was not a priority, such as Elizabethan Stage Society.<sup>104</sup> *Dr. Faustus* was still seen as a difficult play and a box-office failure:

*Dr. Faustus* is the most difficult work of its kind that could be selected for theatrical representation in the present day. Its strength...its sharp contrast of mysticism and realism—to say nothing of the stupendous issue of the story, hampered by the rough humour of the subordinate characters—make stage treatment a more hazardous experiment even than the revival of the most undramatic of Shakespeare's plays(DC<sub>1</sub>)

One reviewer saw the whole significance of the production in that "one realised more than ever the marvellous advance made by Shakespeare upon the greatest of his forerunners" (ST<sub>1</sub>). Another predicted that this production might be the last of its kind, which, according to him, was "an experience, a thing to be done, an oddity to be seen, and talked about, but that, [one would] think, [was] all" (DM<sub>1</sub>). The same reviewer went on to remark that, though the story of *Dr. Faustus* was itself of "absorbing interest",

the method employed in the sixteenth century to set forth the story; the ludicrous ideas which then obtained of humorous relief; the child-like dependence upon a kind of (provincial) pantomime and effect of horned and hooved devils lurid against a

lavish Display of Red Fire,  
all this makes dead against the audience of today.

However, Shaw responded positively to the production. Admiring the simplicity of the stage and the spirit of ensemble playing which Poel created, Shaw thought that the production was promising, not only for Marlowe, but for future staging of Elizabethan plays, and probably other plays. It was the start of a director's theatre that would place more importance on what the playwright wrote, and less on what the actor desired out of the role:



The relief of seeing actors come on the stage with the simplicity and abnegation of children, instead of bounding onto an enthusiastic reception with the 'Here I am again' expression of the popular favorites of the ordinary stage, is hardly to be described....What a gigantic reform Mr. Poel will make if his Elizabethan Stage<sup>5</sup> should lead to such a novelty as a theatre to which people will go to see the play instead of to see the cast! (SR)

Poel's revival of the play in 1904 was only for touring purposes, thus it was identical with the 1896 one. The promptbooks and the reviews of both productions show that they differed only in casting. The slow rhythm of speech seems to have persisted in 1904. Hubert Carter as Faustus delivered his great speeches with "attempted subtleties" (DC<sub>2</sub>), that not only spoiled "the splendour and flow of the rhetoric, but [took away] the heart of the play" (DC<sub>2</sub>). George Ingleton as Mephostophilis, like Dennis Eadie before him, adopted "the slow, woebegone, sepulchral delivery favoured by the Ghost of Hamlet's father" (MP<sub>2</sub>). The angels' delivery was condemned by critics:

nothing [was] gained by making the good and bad Angels chant their speeches, which would come home more poignantly if spoken. (MP<sub>2</sub>)

The chief attraction of the production in 1904, was again "the introduction of the Seven Deadly Sins" (DM<sub>2</sub>). But it seems that, in 1904, either the Sins were not as attractive as in 1896, or else the audience saw them differently, for one reviewer found it a fault that the Deadly Sins were "represented by seven...would be comic ladies...[which] fairly jeopardis[ed] the serious aspect of the tragedy" (ST<sub>2</sub>).

The expectation of Elizabethan conventions and costumes again affected the audience's response in 1904. The reviewer in *The Manchester Guardian* writes about Faustus's costumes in the woodcut on the title-page of the 1616 edition, and about the costumes suggested by the quotation in *The Knave of the Clubbes*, and remarks that

we looked eagerly for these garments, but did not exactly find them as one usually finds in the Society's performances everything that reseach can furnish. (G<sub>1</sub>)

The same reviewer was disappointed at not finding truly Elizabethan stage conditions; for that, "spectators had to be sitting on three sides of the stage" (G<sub>1</sub>). Perhaps the most surprising reaction to the revival of 1904 was that the play, while again seen basically as a morality,<sup>105</sup> was considered inferior to the morality play

*Everyman*, which was concurrently performed, on alternative nights, by the Society. Most reviewers found *Everyman* more modern in its appeal than *Dr. Faustus*:

With all its magnificence, it [*Dr. Faustus*] is not...a good play....The older play [*Everyman*]...goes much straighter to feelings that will not change from age to age. (*G*<sub>1</sub>)

The pleasure of seeing *Dr. Faustus* in 1904 was again more antiquarian than timeless:

Everybody's mind was for the moment simplified—not, indeed, to the point of sharing Elizabethan joy in such a play, but to the point of genuine interest in that joy and partial comprehension of it. (*G*<sub>1</sub>)

In spite of that, there was a voice in 1904 asking for more of Marlowe on the regular stage:

The time will, no doubt, come when London will be vouchsafed a more intimate acquaintance with Marlowe's work than Mr. Poel's plans allow. (*ST*<sub>2</sub>)

This positive attitude to Marlowe's works was probably due to the success of Poel's *Edward II* a year earlier, in 1903. This production suggested new possibilities for appreciation of Marlowe's dramatic potential. It opened on the 10 August, at the New Theatre, Oxford, and was more acclaimed than *Dr. Faustus*.<sup>106</sup> This clearly reflects the prevalent critical attitudes (discussed above) that tended to view *Edward II* as the best of Marlowe's plays.

The production was mounted "at the request of the University Extension Delegacy" (*ST*<sub>3</sub>), thus the audience consisted chiefly of "academic people and Extension students" (*G*<sub>2</sub>). This apparently made possible a straightforward and scholarly treatment of the play. Poel, unlike modern directors, did not fall into the trap of emphasizing one thematic line at the expense of another.<sup>107</sup> What Poel did, however, was to tone down controversial aspects of the play. The homosexual overtones in the play were suppressed, and the political side of the story was not placed in focus. An examination of the promptbook reveals that Poel removed an amazing number of lines from Marlowe's text. Many of Gaveston's lines in which he draws a metaphorically homosexual world in the image of a "lovely boy in Diane's shape" (I,i,61-70) were cut. Also expunged were those parts of Edward's passionate speeches suggestive of physical love between him and Gaveston (I,iv,316-17; II,ii,53-6; III,ii,146-53). Accordingly the Elder Mortimer's words to the Younger Mortimer, about how "the mightiest kings have had their minions", and Lancaster's description



of Gaveston as a "Greekish strumpet" (II,v,16-7) were all cut (I,iv,393-402). Furthermore, Gaveston was shown as an ambitious young man aspiring for riches rather than merely Edward's lover; the promptbook indicates that he very suggestively sat down on the throne at his line "Is all my hope turn'd to this hell of grief?" (I,iv,117). This is not so much an 'interpretation' by Poel but a way of avoiding shocking the audience by staging overt homosexuality.<sup>108</sup>

It is more difficult to see why Poel should also have played down the political friction between the King and the Lords. Edward's lines which show his dislike of political systems of hierarchy that oblige a king to be "subject to a priest", and his threats to fire the churches and slaughter priests, were cut (I,iv,99-105). The opposition of the Lords to the King was not as sharply realised as it is in the play. The Lords, including Mortimer, were made to kneel to him in the scene of temporary reconciliation (I,iv,341).<sup>109</sup> The dispute between the Lords about whether to gratify Edward's request to see Gaveston was shortened (II,v).<sup>110</sup> Mortimer was not as strong an antagonist to Edward as he is in Marlowe's text; in particular, the whole event of the capture of Mortimer's uncle and Edward's refusal to ransom him, which seems to be the turning point in Mortimer's attitude toward King Edward, was cut in the production (II,ii,109-21,141-53,259,265-6). Also Mortimer's soliloquy in which he reveals his Machiavellian plans to have Edward killed (V,iv,1-21) by means of an ambiguous letter, was expunged, and instead, Lightborn enters only to take his orders from Mortimer. Similarly Mortimer's threat to cause the death of the penitent murderer Matrevis was discarded (V,vi,4-7). The result of these cuts was that Mortimer's relation to hired assassins, puzzling as contradiction of the image which Mortimer projects earlier in the play, was subdued; and his opposition to the King's party in the second part of the play was made to appear a necessary consequence of his being the only one left among the Lords, and one who, unless he resisted, would be doomed to die as an escaped prisoner. On the other hand, however, eliminating the strong opposition on part of Mortimer would have provided no clear motivation to the cruel butchering of Edward. This problem was solved by devising the murder in such a way as to reduce its horror. Without Mortimer's letter, the murder was less hideous and more straightforward.

The motivation behind Poel's changes to Edward's death-scene was not so much political (as it might have been in Elizabethan times, when staging the killing of a king was a dangerous matter) as aesthetic. The gruesomeness of the murder was said to have been "rightly curtailed" ( $T_3$ ) by drawing a quick curtain on the interior

space where it was executed. Thus there was no prolonging of the horrific moment.<sup>111</sup>

The scene

was still profoundly moving...owing to Mr. Poel's very impressive...stage management...and to admirable playing of the part of Lightborn...the power of the scene itself scarcely needed any assistance. (MP<sub>3</sub>)

In the process of reducing the complexities in the play, Poel chose to remove those puzzling aspects of characterisation which have been generally considered as weaknesses in Marlowe's dramatic art. Isabella's sudden change of character was toned down by cutting most of her lines, specifically those that reveal her strong passion for Edward (I,iv,179-83,186-7; II,iv,16-20,25-30), and those where other characters talk about her misery (II,iv,188-93). Her decision to "once more...importune him [Edward] with prayers" (II,iv,64-6) was similarly expunged. Therefore, she was left only with that side of her character which opposes King Edward:

Isabel was presented from the first as lighthearted and shallow, incapable of any genuine feeling; as receiving the King's rebuffs as though, at least, they were indifferent to her... (T<sub>3</sub>)

Another crux in characterisation, Kent's vacillation between loyalty and disloyalty to Edward, was modified. The scene where Kent joins forces with the Lords (II,iii) was cut in its entirety, and Kent was left with a few comments on Edward's culpable infatuation with Gaveston, with his waiting for Mortimer to escape from prison, with disloyalty to his brother only after Edward had executed the Lords (IV,i), and with a final heroic attempt to save Edward from imprisonment (V,iii).

Costumes and properties were described as "Elizabethan dresses and accessories" (G<sub>2</sub>). Though Poel strove for Elizabethan staging, the New Theatre made this aim difficult to realise. Speaight tells us, how "Poel replaced his balcony by a raised platform which could be screened off, when required, from the forestage".<sup>112</sup> Scene changing was quickly effected by the existence of a small interior space that "served equally well for court scenes and for the dungeon horrors" (G<sub>2</sub>), and by the simple drawing and undrawing of a curtain. In general Poel's use of the different areas on the stage was highly approved of by reviewers:

the variety and naturalness with which the front space only, and then the same space enhanced by the interior, take their turn is astonishingly adequate for every effect of art. By this



device the notes of place which will bewilder in the ordinary performance are wholly done away with, and we pass from London, to Kenilworth and back in a few minutes without knowing or caring. (*G*<sub>2</sub>)

Obviously, the play was presented "practically continuously" (*ST*<sub>3</sub>). Visually, however, the scheme of production struck reviewers as "decorative and conventional" (*MP*<sub>3</sub>). By means of pictorial grouping the production was relieved from "the costly and cumbrous crowds of the ordinary Shakespearean play" (*G*<sub>2</sub>). The battle was presented conventionally "with...few combatants meeting in a kind of scrimmage and quickly passing" (*G*<sub>2</sub>).

In spite of the fact that the acting style was not as highly praised as other elements of the production, at least it did not strike an artificial note, as was the case with *Dr. Faustus*. Granville Barker, as Edward, was said to have given a "very subtle study in insolence, cowardice and depravity" (*MP*<sub>3</sub>), and to have "brought out with considerable feeling the weak and vacillating side of the character" (*T*<sub>3</sub>). But he failed at reconciling the two phases of Edward's life. The almost unanimous agreement of the reviews on this point—i.e. Barker's inability to convey the different sides of Edward's character—indicates the arrival of a more reliable and less partial criticism of Marlowe in the theatre. Three reviewers express the same opinion: that Barker was

young, febrile, jaunty and amorous in the first half of the play...without a break...after the interval he appeared...older and shrunken with sorrow and the sense of his own impotence; (*G*<sub>2</sub>)<sup>113</sup>

and that he delivered the speeches in his last phase in a "voice of quivering despair," which displayed "no touch, however, of majesty" (*T*<sub>3</sub>). As a result, Barker made the King in his days of capture and imprisonment "unnecessarily contemptible" (*MP*<sub>3</sub>), and "too weak to make the poignant poetry of his words audible to all" (*G*<sub>2</sub>).

Shakespeare Stewart's *Gaveston* seems to have acquired a comic trait. Reviewers complained about the fact that he played *Gaveston* "too much in the vein of light comedy" (*T*<sub>3</sub>), and that he "overdid the coxcomb business" (*MP*<sub>3</sub>), which would have rendered Edward's infatuation with him rather unjustifiable.

On the whole, however, the production was a success. There was frequent praise of it by reviewers. Stage business was said to have worked in harmony with, and as a complement to, the lines of the text. One reviewer remarked that

when Lancaster threw Gaveston's cap on the ground and Gaveston went from sight with a final burst of laughter at his captors, or the scouts entered silently and unhooded the disguised king, much was added even to Marlowe's words.  
(G<sub>2</sub>)

The same reviewer went on to stress that the audience

could never hereafter tolerate seeing a play of this kind performed with modern conventional upholstery. Mr. Poel...has struck, after a long experiment, upon the true and right method of staging.

More importantly, and apart from being a success for the Elizabethan Stage Society, the production was a milestone in Marlowe's dramatic reputation. It revived the extinct interest in seeing Marlowe's plays on stage. *Edward II* began to be seen as not only a "finer play to read...[but] an even finer play to see acted" (MP<sub>3</sub>). And a comparison between *Richard II* and *Edward II* began to be seen as "not entirely to Shakespeare's advantage" (MP<sub>3</sub>), particularly in performance:

Even in reading, but much more emphatically in seeing the two plays represented upon the stage, does one realise the extent to which Shakespeare, in his *Richard II*, is rehandling themes and motives with which we have made our first acquaintance in the *Edward II* of Christopher Marlowe.  
(ST<sub>3</sub>)

It could be argued that the lack of information regarding Elizabethan productions of *Edward II*, made it easier to accept Poel's production for what it offered. Unlike the case of *Dr. Faustus*, there would not have been many preconceived expectations on part of the audience. The significance of the production lay both in the fact that it was the first after 1622, and in that it was the bridge upon which Marlowe's plays crossed to more acceptance and popularity. The twentieth century witnessed shorter intervals between one performance of Marlowe's plays and another. The next chapters will discuss some of these productions of Marlowe which reveal how his plays have become differently interpreted by the directorial interference that marked the theatrical activities in the twentieth century, and as such, have acquired a better place in the theatre of our own time.



## NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

1. See Chapter Four.
2. The prologue in the promptbook, prepared by Samson Penley. The promptbook for this production is in the Enthoven Collection in The Victoria and Albert Theatre Museum, London.
3. *The Times* 25 April, 1818 ( $T_2$ ). For more reviews of this production see: *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 3 (1818), 208-10 (BEM); *The European Magazine and London Review*, 73 (1818), 429-30 (EM&LR); *The New Monthly Catalogue and Universal Register*, 9 (1818), 444-5 (NMC&UR); See also F. W. Hawkins, *The Life of Edmund Kean*, 2 vols. (London, 1869; reprinted New York 1969), vol. 2, p. 39.
4. See Raymond Fitzsimons, *Edmund Kean* (London, 1976), p. 48.
5. See for example *The Times*, 3 February 1814 ( $T_1$ ); see also Hawkins, vol. 1, pp. 122-53; and Fitzsimons, pp. 52-7.
6. "We have never seen a better Shylock" ( $T_1$ ).
7. Hawkins, vol. 1, p. 148. Compare also William Hazlitt's description: "When first we went to see Mr. Kean in Shylock, we expected to see, what we had been used to see, a decrepit old man, bent with age and ugly with mental deformity, grinning with deadly malice, with the venom of his heart congealed in the expression of his countenance, sullen, morose, gloomy, inflexible, brooding over one idea, that of his hatred, and fixed on one unalterable purpose, that of his revenge. We were disappointed, because we had taken our idea from other actors, not from the play...", from his *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays*, 1817-18, edited by Ernest Rhys, Everyman Library (London, 1906), p. 211.
8. For a stage history of *The Merchant of Venice* see Lelyveld, op. cit (see Chapter Two, n. 45).
9. The plays were: *Richard Duke of York*, adapted by Merivale from several of Shakespeare's plays; *The Bride of Abydos*, William Dimond's adaptation of Byron's poem; and Shakespeare's *King John*.
10. He was also known to have plotted the destruction of any new talent that threatened to equal or surpass his. His plot against the new star Junius Brutus Booth is well known; see Fitzsimons, pp. 105-11.
11. See Fitzsimons, p. 126.
12. *The Works of Christopher Marlowe*, 3 vols. (London, 1826), vol. 1, p. 184.
13. Leigh Hunt also thought that there was no reason to say that the play was "founded on" Marlowe's tragedy as it was "the old tragedy itself with only few alterations"; see *Leigh Hunt Dramatic Criticism 1808-1831*, edited by Lawrence Huston Houtchens and Carolyn Washburn Houtchens (Oxford, 1950), p. 194 (hence Hunt).
14. Lelyveld, p. 58.
15. Ibid., p. 57.

16. See Landa, op. cit., p. 113.
17. See Landa, pp. 128-9, and 143 (see Chapter Two, n. 19).
18. See Chapter Four, n. 68.
19. Lamb's *Specimens*, p. 26.
20. Quoted by Brooke, "The Reputation of Christopher Marlowe", p. 402.
21. Hawkins says "there was no intention to insult the general body of the Jews by producing the play during the feast of the passover", vol. 2, p. 41.
22. Quoted from the promptbook, see Appendix A for extracts.
23. Compare also I,i,131-7; II,iii,240-1, which were also cut.
24. This passage from *Edward II* is part of an extensive body of plagiarism from the play to which I will return later in this chapter.
25. One wonders whether the cuts in acts of poisoning were prompted by sensitivity to the subject as at the beginning of the season the management of Drury Lane had been accused of trying to poison the audience by using gas-lights as an innovation in the theatre. See Fitzsimons p. 121. It is worth mentioning also that the poisoned flower, which Barabas uses in the original to get rid of Ithamore, Bellamira and Pilia-Borza, was turned to poisoned wine instead. This might also be related to the same accusation, as poisoned wine kills through drinking and not smelling, like the poisoned flower, and as such the connection would be less apparent.
26. Promptbook. See Appendix A.
27. Genest, op. cit., vol. 8, p. 647.
28. The promptbook. See Appendix A.
29. *Blackwood Edinburgh Magazine*, 2 (1817), p. 266.
30. Hunt, p. 194.
31. Ibid.
32. See Chapter Two.
33. See Gary Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare: A Cultural History from the Restoration to the Present* (London, 1989), pp. 206-10.
34. For example: II,iii,82-9; 92-4.
35. See Chapter Seven.
36. For example: lines 2-4 in III,i were cut, and Ithamore's word "concubine" (30) was changed to "that she were mine".
37. Hawkins, vol. 2, p. 41.
38. Allardyce Nicoll, *A History of Early Nineteenth Century Drama 1800-1850* (Cambridge, 1955), (vol. 4 of *A History of English Drama*, 6 vols., Cambridge, 1952-59), p. 15.



39. Hawkins, vol. 2, pp. 42-3.
40. Hunt, p. 195.
41. Compare also: "sung a pretty air with considerable science as well as with taste and feeling, and was warmly encored" (*NMC&UR*).
42. Colman the Younger, the actor, complained about the unruly audience: "Why is a vocal performer so often kept on a see-saw, called back, sent off, and at last, after ten minutes, perhaps of confusion, obliged to sing it in the midst of the 'tumult and disorder' of a divided audience?" (Quoted by Nicoll, *A History of Early Nineteenth Century Drama*, p. 9, from R. B. Peake, *Memoirs of the Colman Family*, 1841, ii.364-5).
43. Nicoll, p. 13.
44. For e.g.: II,iii, 36-7/ 43/ 53-6/ 59/ 61-4/ 92-4/ 98.
45. See Chapters Two and Seven on early and modern stage history of *The Jew*, respectively.
46. See Nicoll, pp. 23-4. He quotes F. G. Tomlins, *A Brief View of the English Drama, from the Earliest Period to the Present Time: with Suggestions for Elevating the Present Condition of the Art, and of its Professors* (1840), p. 73, on how a spectator sitting far from the stage "[could not] see the countenance of the performers without the aid of a pocket telescope, he [could not] hear anything except the ranted speeches".
47. See Chapter Seven.
48. Compare also "if ever there was an instance when the acting was likely to overbear all obstacles in the production itself, it was that of Mr. Kean as Barabas" (*T<sub>2</sub>*); and also: "he is the only character worth mentioning" (*EM&LR*).
49. Compare also Hunt: "*The Jew of Malta* exhibits more of his defects than any of the other six plays from his pen", p. 40.
50. See Chapters Two and Seven.
51. See Fitzsimons p. 52; see also Hawkins, vol. 1, p. 126.
52. See Fitzsimons, p. 104.
53. Hunt, p. 195.
54. Compare also: "Nothing could have been finer than the absolute delirium of drunken joy..." (Hawkins, vol 2, p. 42).
55. See Hawkins pp. 134-43; and Fitzsimons, p. 55.
56. William Hazlitt, *Lectures on the Literature of the Age of Elizabeth and Characters of Shakespeare's plays* (London, 1820; reprinted Bohn's Standard Library, 1895), pp. 43-55, p. 53.
57. Such as, for example, Faustus's first soliloquy (i,1-62), the apostrophe to Helen (xviii,99-118), and Faustus's last speech (xix,133-90); Barabas's soliloquy at night when he waits for Abigail (II,i,1-19); Edward's lines to Gaveston expressing his love towards him (I,iv,108-15, 123-9), and Gaveston's soliloquy (I,i,1-24, 49-70).



58. The series of "*Early English Drama*" in *The Retrospective Review*, vol. 4 (London, 1821), pp. 142-81.
59. *The Works of Christopher Marlowe*, Criticising *The Jew of Malta*, Robinson says: "It possesses little to raise our interest or awake our sympathy" (vol. 1, p. xv). For him *Edward II* is "much superior in truth and consistency of character as well as in chasteness of composition...the catastrophe is distinguished by a truth and pathos of the most effective kind" (Ibid.). Robinson admires *Dr. Faustus* but not its comic scenes: "in it Marlowe displays more vigour of imagination and originality of conception than in any other of his productions...[but] Those parts...in which the clowns are introduced...[weaken] the impression of the play and [give] a ludicrous turn to it..." (vol. 1, p. xvi).
60. James Broughton, "Life and Writing of Christopher Marlowe", *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 100-1, January-June (1830), pp. 3-6/ 121-6/ 222-24/ 313-15/ 593-7. J. P. Collier, *The History of English Dramatic Poetry to the Time of Shakespeare. And Annals of the Stage to the Restoration*, 3 vols. (London, 1831), vol. 3, pp. 112-38. Collier did nothing but reiterate the same ideas prevalent on Marlowe. *Edward II* is "the most perfect" (p. 138), *Dr. Faustus* is "full of power, novelty, interest, and variety" (p. 127), and *The Jew of Malta* is formed "to take powerful hold of the vulgar mind, and to gratify it by the exhibition of blood, and horror to and extent that appears in our day either ludicrous or revolting" (p. 135). Admiring Faustus's last speech Collier wonders "what form of verse could be better adapted to the situation of Faustus...?" (p. 131). Henry Hallam, *Introduction to the Literature of Europe in the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Centuries* (London, 1834; rpr. London and New York, 1882), pp. 362-66. About *The Jew of Malta* Hallam says: "the first two acts of *The Jew of Malta* are more vigorously conceived...than any Elizabethan play, except those of Shakespeare...But latter acts...are a tissue of uninteresting crimes..." (p. 361); *Dr. Faustus* is "full of poetical beauties; but an intermixture of buffoonery weakens the effect" (ibid.); and *Edward II* is the "best after those of Shakespeare" (ibid.). The only difference between Hallam and other critics is that he defends *Tamburlaine* from the accusation of bombast "The bombast, however, which is not so excessive as has been alleged, was thought appropriate to such oriental tyrants" (p. 361).
61. Broughton, op. cit., p. 594.
62. Alexander Dyce, *The Works of Christopher Marlowe, with Notes and Some Accounts of His Life and Writing*, 2 vols. (London, 1850; 2nd. edition 1956).
63. See Chapter Eight.
64. As, for example, in *The Jew of Malta*, at the throwing of Barabas's body over the city walls, Dyce provides the following note: "Here the audience were to suppose that Barabas had been thrown over the walls, and that the stage now represented the outside of the city" (vol. 1, p. 333); in *Dr. Faustus* Dyce draws the reader's attention to points where the action takes place in Faustus's study, and discusses whether it has a curtain or not, for example after the first Chorus Dyce provides the following conjecture: "Most probably, the Chorus before going out, drew a curtain, and discovered Faustus sitting" (vol. 2, p. 6).
65. H. A. Taine, *The History of English Literature* (originally: *Histoire de la littérature Anglaise*, Paris, 1864), translated by H. Van Laun, 4 vols. (Edinburgh, 1873), vol. 1, pp. 385-97.
66. Edward Dowden, "Christopher Marlowe", *Fortnightly Review*, 7 (January 1-June 1, 1870), pp. 69-81, p. 79.



67. *Marlowe's Tragical History of Doctor Faustus and Greene's Honourable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (Oxford, 1878; 4th. edition 1901).
68. *The Works of Christopher Marlowe*, edited by A. H. Bullen, 3 vols. (London, 1885). In his preface Bullen states that he relies on previous editions. He agrees with his predecessors about *Dr. Faustus* being a series of dramatic scenes rather than a regular drama.
69. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. xx.
70. *Christopher Marlowe*, edited by Havelock Ellis, "With a General Introduction on English Drama during the reign of Elizabeth and James I", by J. A. Symonds, *The Best Plays of the Old Dramatists*, Mermaid series (London, 1887; reprinted London and New York, 1893), the title-page to the series.
71. Quoted by Marion O'Connor (from Henry Morley, *The Journal of a London Playgoer*, 2nd. edition 1891; reprinted by Leicester University Press, Leicester, 1974, 'Prologue', p. 23) in *William Poel and the Elizabethan Stage Society*, Theatre In Focus series (Cambridge, 1987), p. 42.
72. *English Historical Plays by Shakespeare, Marlowe, Peele, Heywood, Fletcher and Ford*, edited by Thomas Donovan, 2 vols. (London, 1896), title-page (*Edward II* is in vol. 1). Some of the other plays included are *King John, Edward I, Edward III, Richard II, 1 and 2 Henry IV, Henry V*.
73. Donovan actually stated in his introduction that "Marlowe's *Edward II* is given almost unbridged" (p. viii). He only offered hints for the location of some points of action, such as at I,ii, "a garden", and at I,iii, "parliament, Westminster". He also included parts of Marlowe's "*The Passionate Shepherd*" at the end of II,ii to celebrate the marriage between Gaveston and Margaret, a scene which he found "meagre" (p. viii).
74. The tour started on 29 October at the Royal Court Theatre in London, then it went on as follows: 31 October, Corn Change, Bedford; 1 November, Guildhall, Cambridge; 2 November, St. Mary's Hall, Coventry; 3-5 November, Albert Hall, Nottingham; 7-9 November, Free Trade Hall, Manchester; 10-12 November, Music Hall, Edinburgh; 14-16 November, Queen's Room, Glasgow; 17-19 November, Union Hall, Aberdeen; 21 November, Town Hall, St. Andrew's; 22 November, Town Hall, Newcastle; 23 November, Assembly Rooms, Durham; 24-26 November, Albert Hall, Leeds; 28-30 November, Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool; 1-3 December, Birmingham & Midland Institute; 5-6 December, Music Hall, Chester; 7 December, Town Hall, Rugby; 8-9 December, Town Hall, Oxford; 10 December, Town Hall, Cheltenham.
75. See Robert Speaight, *William Poel and The Elizabethan Revival* (London, 1954), p. 59.
76. See *Ibid.*, pp. 60-1.
77. Dodsley, Ward, Ellis, and Bullen edited the 1604 text. Dyce edited both texts.
78. The programme to the autumn tour. The promptbooks for both 1896 and 1904, along with the programmes are in the Enthoven Collection, Victoria And Albert Theatre Museum. The parts added from the 1616 text were few, for example: the conversation between officers (xi,1-20) before the scene with the Emperor which, I think, was added from the 1616 text to allow Poel to prepare a tableau for the papal banquet (This will be discussed later in the Chapter). There was no Benvolio. Also the Emperor words in the 1616 text about the mole on Alexander's Paramour's neck



(xii,61-4). Lines 91-6 from the same scene, in which Faustus ridicules Benvolio's underestimation of his power were added but were said to the knight of 1604 text. Part of the Angels' speech in the 1616 text, when they return to tell Faustus what bliss he has lost, were added, but with some of them assigned to the Chorus.

79. The prologue consists of 48 lines entirely devoted to the praise of Marlowe, for example:

The music known of all men's tongues that sing,  
When Marlowe sang, bade love make heaven of spring;  
The music none but English tongues may make,  
Our own sole song, spake first when Marlowe spake;  
And on his grave, though there no stone may stand,  
The flower it shows was laid by Shakespeare's hand.

80. *Morning Post*, 3 July, 1896, p. 3, hence (*MP*<sub>1</sub>); For more reviews of this production see: *The Daily Chronicle*, 3 July (*DC*<sub>1</sub>); *The Daily Mail*, 3 July (*DM*<sub>1</sub>); *The Daily Telegraph*, 3 July (*DT*); G. B. Shaw, *The Saturday Review*, 4 July, reprinted in *Marlowe: The Critical Heritage 1588-1896*, edited by Millar Maclure (London, 1979) (*SR*); *The Sunday Times*, 5 July (*ST*<sub>1</sub>).

For reviews of the revival of 1904:

*The Daily Chronicle*, 31 October, 1904, p. 3 (*DC*<sub>2</sub>); *The Daily Mail*, 31 October (*DM*<sub>2</sub>); *The Manchester Guardian*, 8 November (*G*<sub>1</sub>); *The Morning Post*, 31 October, p. 9 (*MP*<sub>2</sub>); *The Sunday Times*, 30 October, p. 5 (*ST*<sub>2</sub>).

81. At this masque, the promptbook has "*Curtain open, discovering tableau. Masque before the Duke of Vanholt. Dance.*"

82. The lines of the Chorus were:

Faustus, admired throughout the farthest land,  
And cloyed with all things that delight man's heart,  
Is now again returned to Wertenberg.  
His sin by custom grown now into nature,  
To Faustus brings repentance all too late.  
Pomps, riches, magic—what avail these now?  
All hope in heaven is lost. Despair! farewell!  
Fools that will laugh on earth must weep in hell.

83. Speaight, p. 93.

84. The programme of the Autumn tour 1904. Ward also provides some remarks in this programme, which expressed the same opinion about the comic parts in the play: "There seemed...to be no necessity on the present occasion for reviving with literary accuracy the middle part of the tragedy".

85. See the Revels edition of *Doctor Faustus*, note between v and vi, p. 34. In his edition of Marlowe's plays, however, Steane does not point to the possibility of a lost scene in which Robin steals the book, thus the two scenes which are I,v, and II,i in Steane's edition follow each other without a break (J. B. Steane, *Christopher Marlowe: The Complete Plays*, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1969).

86. The programme 1904.

87. Ibid.



88. Unlike now, when the remains of the Rose Theatre have been discovered and scholars have acquired more information on the structures of Elizabethan playhouses.
89. I quote from reviews of the 1904 revival before discussing the production as the two revivals did not differ very much.
90. See Chapter One.
91. William Archer, *The Theatrical World of 1896* (London, 1897), p. 204. See also O'Connor, op. cit., p. 44; and Speaight, p. 114.
92. Marion O'Connor examined the Elizabethan Stage Society's auction catalogue of 1905, and found two garments, both red, associated with Mephistophilis: "a red velvet and satin Mephistopheles tunic and trunks, satin-lined cape, hose and belt", and also "a Mephistopheles gown and cowl in red voile", op. cit., p. 44.
93. Speaight, p. 115. See also Archer, op. cit., p. 210. See also O'Connor, p. 121 (n. 98).
94. Speaight, p. 115.
95. Archer, p. 209
96. Examples of these tableaux from the promptcopy: "*Curtains open, discovering tableau: Faustus and Mephistopheles among the stars.*"; "*Curtains open discovering a tableau, a Papal banquet.*"; "*Curtains open, discovering tableau, Court of the Emperor Charles, Soldiers, Attendants, and two Scullions.*"; "*Curtains open, discovering tableau: Masque before the Duke of Vanholt.*"
97. O'Connor, pp. 43-4.
98. Archer, pp. 205-6.
99. Ibid., p. 207.
100. Ibid., p. 208.
101. Speaight, p. 37.
102. Poel's own remarks in the programme, 1904.
103. Cf. also "It is as much an ancient 'morality' as a play. It brings in religion at every turn" (*DT*). See also Speaight, p. 113.
104. Cf.: "Only from an association of cultured amateurs to whom art is more than money can we hope on these—or perhaps any other times to obtain a performance alike so curious, interesting, and inspiring as that of last night" (*DC<sub>1</sub>*).
105. The review in *The Sunday Times*, 30 October, suggests its being a morality: "Nothing could be more powerful, more thrilling, actually more discomfoting, than the supreme moments before, during, and after the striking of the clock.... It was...as if I saw that great abstract power which we call conscience materialised before my eyes".
106. For reviews of this production see: *The Guardian* (*G<sub>2</sub>*), *The Morning Post* (*MP<sub>3</sub>*), and *The Times* (*T<sub>3</sub>*) for 11 August, 1903; and *The Sunday Times* (*ST<sub>3</sub>*), 16 August, 1903.

107. See Chapter Eight on *Edward II*, in Nicholas Hytner's production of 1986.
108. Knowledge of the stage business discussed in the Chapter was obtained from the promptbook in the Enthoven Collection of Victoria and Albert Theatre Museum.
109. Compare Nicholas Hytner's production in 1986, where he discovered an inherent irony in this line making action adverse to words: Chapter Eight.
110. Other cuts : II,v,50-1, 59-68, 87-93.
111. Compare in Chapter Eight Nicholas Hytner's representation of the murder where he prolonged the effect until it hurt. Speaight describes how Poel staged the murder:

As Edward fell asleep, Lightborn worked his way round to the back of the bench and seated himself by the king's head. Presently he awoke, and while he was speaking the lines

Something still buzzeth in mine ears,  
And tells me if I sleep I never wake...

Lightborn's right hand came up slowly behind him, and the reply 'To rid thee of thy life', closed over his head, touching the spot between the brows which hypnotists touch in order to produce rigidity. Edward became petrified, as if he were now in a cataleptic state, and the eyeballs rolled upward showing the whites of the eyes in a ghastly stare. The traverse curtains closed and a wild prolonged shriek was heard from behind them. Then Matrevis and Gurney entered from in front with Lightborn drawing on his gloves—a macabre, imaginative touch. A moment later he was stabbed by his two accomplices.

112. Speaight, op. cit., p. 179.
113. Cf. also *The Times*, and *Manchester Guardian*, both, 11, August, 1903.



## CHAPTER SIX

*DR. FAUSTUS ON THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY STAGE*

The twentieth century has witnessed a considerable number of productions of *Dr. Faustus*, whether amateur or professional.<sup>1</sup> William Poel's production, though a partial success, encouraged stage treatment of the long abandoned play. Poel's return to Elizabethan conventions was beneficial for the staging of Elizabethan plays in general, but it seems time was still not ripe for his methods to be realised nationwide. Gradually these methods permeated into the theatre of the twentieth century. There was a desire for a stage closer to the audience, for more intimacy between it and the actors, and for ensemble acting rather than the star-system of the nineteenth century. In the beginning of the twentieth century, the old style of playing Shakespeare was still dominant. Changes were happening but slowly, leading finally to a director's theatre rather than the actor-manager's theatre that characterised the nineteenth century. This director's theatre was simultaneously a playwright's theatre where the playwright's intentions preceded the star's. It was only then that *Dr. Faustus* could hope to find a place.

Positive attitudes towards *Dr. Faustus* in the beginning of the twentieth century were perhaps initiated by George Santayana's conviction (1910) of Faustus's tragic stature, that Faustus

is still damned, but he is transformed into the sort of personage that Aristotle approves of for the hero of tragedy, essentially human and noble, but led astray by some excusable vice or error....Marlowe's Faustus is a martyr to everything that the Renaissance prized,—power, curious knowledge, enterprise, wealth, and beauty .<sup>2</sup>

In 1914, Felix E. Schelling strongly recommended the play to the stage:

Doctor Faustus is a better play on the stage than the careless reader might suppose it....The tragic and untimely death, too, of Marlowe, the daring character of his genius and the stories of his doubts of God have conspired to make this play one of the most interesting in our literature.<sup>3</sup>

In spite of this positiveness of judgement, however, critics of the first half of this century tended to apply to the play one or the other of two single-minded interpretations. Paul Kocher and W. W. Greg saw the play as unequivocally dramatising the Christian view of the world in the Morality tradition.<sup>4</sup> Una Ellis-



Fermor (1927) adopted a romantic view of Faustus and saw in the play an example of "man's fight against the universe and his ultimate fate", of "the possibility of escape to spiritual freedom or a doom of slavery to demoniac powers."<sup>5</sup> Harry Levin's view of it as a story of overreaching is typical of the development of this romanticism in responding to the play.<sup>6</sup>

In the two approaches, which are usually termed the conservative and the romantic, critics failed to explain what in the play contradicted their own interpretation. The moralistic approach failed to explain the absence of providence in the play, and the fact that the argument of the Bad Angel is always the stronger, not to mention Mephostophilis's confession, "'Twas I that, when thou wert i' the way to heaven/ Damm'd up thy passage..." (B,xix,93-4)", that makes Faustus damned by predestination and not by a moral choice. The romantic approach, pointing always to the magnificence of Faustus's aspiration, failed to explain the strong moralistic tone provided by the Chorus, the Old Man, the Angels, and Mephostophilis himself. The last Chorus, with its "Faustus is gone: regard his hellish fall,/ Whose fiendful fortune may exhort the wise/ Only to wonder at unlawful things..." (Epilogue,4-6), is either forgotten or ignored. The middle span of Faustus's life and the low-comedy scenes have always been an obstacle for critics of the two schools. For example, and in spite of Ellis-Fermor's sympathetic reading of the play and her calling Faustus "never criminal", he is, for her, still "foolish and frivolous".<sup>7</sup> This has led sometimes to the easy way out of attributing what in the play did not suit one's own interpretation to the problem of the uncertain authenticity, and thus some parts are dismissed as not written by Marlowe. The ambivalences in the play have been difficult to accept or explain. Nevertheless, *Dr. Faustus* has always been seen as a great play, at least in respect of its poetry.

Not surprisingly, only amateur companies seem to have risked performances of *Dr. Faustus* in this period of uncertainty of critical attitudes towards the play and dominance of the proscenium arch in the theatre in general. Three amateur productions of the play followed William Poel's before the first professional production, on 12 March, 1940, at the Rodolf Steiner Hall, London. Reviews of this production reflect the play's position in the theatre and the reasons for the lack of interest in it. Having treated the play without any attempt to solve the so called 'incongruities' by, for example, cutting some of its farce, the production did not prove particularly successful. The play was still seen as good poetry but not good theatre. Puzzled as to whether the play was a "high and philosophical tragedy, or...a popular melodrama in the style of *Dracula*", *The Times* (13 March, 1940) concluded that the only justification for



performing it was its poetry which "on occasion chang[ed] the writer's lavishly sensational imagination into a rare and even delicate perception". This production was followed in 1944 by the Old Vic's production at the Liverpool Playhouse, directed by John Moody. Neither production seems to have been greatly successful, as they received very little mention by the press, and no attention by the critics who have dealt with the stage productions of *Dr. Faustus*.<sup>8</sup> It was not until 1946 that *Dr. Faustus* had a noteworthy production (or at least one more welcomed by the media): by Walter Hudd for the Stratford Festival. It opened on 12 July at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre with Robert Harris as Faustus and Hugh Griffith as Mephostophilis. It was revived in 1947, but with Paul Scofield as Mephostophilis. The production was favourably received as imaginative, thought-provoking and serviceable to the play (and as such will be discussed later in this chapter).

Two years later, in 1948, the Old Vic company ventured another production of the play under the direction of John Burrell at the New Theatre, London.<sup>9</sup> Again the company was not successful, as it gave a "dry, precise" and deliberate performance, and with the limiting proscenium stage and the permanent set the 'weaknesses' of the play were more exposed (*Times*, 8 October). The apostrophe to Helen was delivered against background music to compensate for the lack of poeticism in the delivery of the verse. This would have drowned the meanings in Faustus's words. The reviewer for *The Times* (8 October) found the spectacular elements in general, and especially Faustus's magical tricks, not particularly significant:

Ghosts may send a shiver of doubt down our spines, but little he-demons and little she-demons are for us, either amusing or tiresome....and we are not very strongly induced to smile at the tricks which it pleased him [Faustus] to play on Popes and European grandees.

The failure of this production to stimulate an interest is obvious from the fact that for the next ten years or so *Dr. Faustus* disappeared from the professional stage.

The changes that occurred in the British theatre after 1955 led to more productions of the play: the Theatre of the Absurd, the Theatre of Anger, the non-illusionistic theatre—which owed much to the Brechtian influence of the first visit of the Berliner Ensemble in 1957—the emancipation of the theatre from censorship in 1967 and, in general, the freedom the modern theatre began to enjoy. These changes, however, were preceded after the end of World War II by a revival of interest in Elizabethan conventions and in the open stage for the staging of Shakespeare's plays, an interest that probably partly resulted from the need for simpler sets for the so-called



'lunch-time Shakespeare' that developed during the raids in the war.<sup>10</sup> Shakespeare was recapturing London as the war ended. Elizabethan and Jacobean plays began to be retrieved from the study-shelves, there were, for instance, performances of Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* (1945), and *The White Devil* (6 March, 1947), and Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* (August, 1951). All these events naturally led to a return of interest in one of the most important of Shakespeare's contemporaries and for his most significant play.

These theatrical changes were more or less contemporary with the growth of new critical attitudes towards the play. Modern equivalents to Faustus began to be perceived by which the play acquired an appeal to modern audiences. Faustus started to be seen not only as a blasphemer who deviated from Christian learning, nor as a man vulnerable to desires of wealth and power and thus living in a moral conflict, but as a Renaissance man, the modern scientist, the atheist, the conjuror, the deluded intellectual, and the lonely melancholic man, all in one. Consequently the middle span of Faustus's life began to acquire significance, and the ambivalent aspects in his character became relevant.

Typical of this new attitude to the play is Nicholas Brooke's argument (1952) that *Faustus* is an inverted Morality that deals with the relativity of moral values. He rightly sees in Faustus's desires for both knowledge and pleasure a natural mixture and not a deterioration: "[Faustus] has an appetite for knowledge, and another for sex....If Faustus had deteriorated in character during the play he would be content with any 'hot whore', not insist on Helen herself".<sup>11</sup> Dismissing neither view, the romantic or the traditional, he combines them to explain the blend of the serious and the trivial, the philosophical and the cheap iconoclasm. In defending the play against triviality, however, he rightly concludes that there was no other way for Marlowe to present Faustus's magical achievement in theatrical terms. Similarly, Robert Ornstein (1955) provided an interesting study of the unity of the play and stated with conviction that "the slapstick scenes...unite with the seemingly fragmented main action to form a subtly ironic tragic design."<sup>12</sup>

With the publication of J. B. Steane's *Marlowe: A Critical Study* (1964), the play acquired more significance. Steane's study of it accepted all the 'ambivalences and incongruities' as part of the whole dramatic and thematic design:

*Faustus* is a play of violent contrasts within a rigorous structural unity. Hilarity and agony, seriousness and irresponsibility: even on the most cautious theories of authorship, Marlowe is responsible at times for all these



extremes. This artistic instability matches the instability of the hero. The extremes of optimism and depression, enthusiasm and hatred, commitment to Hell and aspiration to Heaven, pride and shame: these are the swings of the pendulum in Faustus' world, and they are reflected by the sickening to-and-fro motion of the verse—an ambivalence first felt in the Prologue's 'forme of Faustus' fortunes, good or bad'.<sup>13</sup>

In 1977, Judith Weil found that Faustus follows a spiritual path and passes through three stages in his life, which are all vital to the whole structure of the play. Through his career, according to her, and "because he partly realizes his great loss, he rises towards tragic stature".<sup>14</sup> Perhaps her calling the play a "satirical tragedy" was a positive step towards the discovery of a versatility in interpreting *Dr. Faustus*. Likewise, Constance Brown Kuriyama's criticism of the play (1980)—as a psychological struggle to choose between submission or rebellion against paternal authority, whether it be God, father, or society—has added depth to it and made it a play with a strong modern appeal.<sup>15</sup>

Whether by accident or not, the number of performances of the play has increased after Judith Weil's study. A look at a list of performances (Appendix E) shows that productions of the play have since then occurred not only every year, but sometimes even more than once in one year. Eventually, seeing the play in theatrical terms became an essential part of a study of *Dr. Faustus*. In his review of a Manchester performance (1981, discussed below), Russell Jackson recommended the play to the stage and found that the middle section of the play should not stop directors from staging it:

Faustus's journey is an attempt to forget his contract and its approaching maturity. The overall effect of these scenes is not reductive irony, showing Faustus squandering his powers on trivial shows, but an impression of the honour, pleasure and pageantry he enjoys. The ultimate emptiness of these amusements is the greater for their temporary satisfaction.<sup>16</sup>

The concept of hell as a state of mind has made the play appealing to a modern audience. Michael Scott (1982) compares *Dr. Faustus* with Sartre's *Camera*, thus accepting it in the vein of the Theatre of the Absurd and the Existentialist Theatre, encouraging more performances of it. He sees the play as possessing "some universal quality readily perceptible, if not easily defined, by the twentieth-century spectator."<sup>17</sup> Referring to some recent revivals, Michael Scott concludes that they have proved that

*Dr. Faustus* is a difficult play but it is within its problematic structure and ambiguous tenor that the height of its achievement lies. It demands to be approached head on and



accepted in the context of its complex image, a disparate and yet unified aesthetic pattern which proves to be both the strength and appeal of its central icon. (p. 30)

Theatrically-orientated studies of the play have become common. William Tydeman's study of it in the Text and Performance series is an example of how important the play has become for the theatre and for modern audiences.

To return to the fifties, following the start of positive criticism of the play, performances started to appear at few-year intervals. In March, 1957, Nevill Coghill staged the play with Oxford University Dramatic Society at the Oxford Playhouse.<sup>18</sup> Though his production was an amateur one, it received attention by the media and as such became noteworthy. Nevill Coghill presented the play as "a moral interlude liberally diversified with music and spectacle" (*Times*, 6 March). Spectacular scenes were accompanied with "a quintet of devils seated on stage playing conspicuously modern instruments," and the parade of the Seven Deadly Sins was

exquisitely decorative toward its close with the members of the pageant clinging to a rapt Faustus in coils that threatened to stifle him until with a thunderous command he dismissed them. (*Times*)

Some parts of the spectacle were "questionable", yet they seemed to have given prominence to Faustus's achievements from his devilish pact, and the production was said to have dealt "inventively" with the middle section of *Faustus* (*Times*, 6 March). The main feature of the production, however, was that, the 'incongruities' of Faustus's character were still seen as problematic. Vernon Dobtcheff's Faustus was seen as a character of fragmented variety as his performance stressed each aspect of Faustus individually: "he [could] assume the postures of overweening ambition, grovelling humiliation, or trivial mockery at a moment's notice" (*Times*, 6 March). On the whole, however, there was a positive step towards accepting the ambivalences in the play.

Nevill Coghill revived this production in 1966 at the same playhouse as a semi-professional one, but with Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor as guest-stars.<sup>19</sup> There was complete concentration on the stars; minor characters only revolved around Richard Burton; and Faustus's career seemed to have been concerned only with the appearance of Elizabeth Taylor as Helen. Nevill Coghill was said to have "aim[ed] at stateliness [but] achiev[ed] only lethargy" (*Times*, 15 February). The comic scenes were left to trail on, "delivered in laboured Mummerset and fake Cockney" (*Times*, 15 February). They seemed insignificant in relation to scenes where the two stars appeared. Richard Burton "seem[ed] to be walking through the part" (*Times*, 15



February), and only "the final score, delivered against a crescendo of chimes and knocking heart-beats, [made] a tremendous effect" (*Guardian*, 15 February). One reviewer commented that the production was "one of the theatrical occasions on which everything seem[ed] to matter except the play....it [was] hard to find any justification for the event..." (*Times*, 15 February). As such the production did not contribute much to the stage-history of the play except in its drawing large audiences who came to see the stars, and who might not otherwise have been introduced to the play. However, both revivals by Nevill Coghill accepted the ambivalent nature in Faustus which helped to make his pranks stageable and relevant (stressing neither the romantic nor the moralistic interpretation), thus possibly influencing future productions.

In 1961, and for the third time, the Old Vic Company staged *Dr. Faustus*, this time under the direction of Michael Benthall.<sup>20</sup> It opened on 22 August at the Assembly Hall, Edinburgh, and moved later to the Old Vic Theatre, London. The Old Vic succeeded this time in providing a coherent production where the visual aspects of the middle scenes were emphasised, establishing the worthiness of Faustus's romantic aspirations for magnificence and power. Though Paul Daneman as Faustus seemed of "no higher status than that of a conjurer in a Sinbad outfit," he managed to give a "likeable" character and to redeem the lapses into rough buffoonery "with the genuine passion which he brought to the great scene of Faustus's last hour" (*Guardian*, 23 August). The most outstanding feature of the production was that the play seemed to "[take] on a new lease of life" by having been presented on a platform stage (*Times*, 23 August). The papal scenes acquired solemnity: "any joke seem[ed] out of place, and the final wrecking of all this grandeur by Faustus and Mephistopheles seem[ed] indeed a devilish outrage" (*Times*, 23 August). When the play moved from the platform stage in Edinburgh to the proscenium one in London, the spectacle lost a great deal of its effectiveness, and the audiences at the Old Vic were less involved than those who surrounded the stage on three sides in Edinburgh. This in itself alerted later directors to the fact that the proscenium might always have been partly responsible for the lack of success that the play experienced on the stage at the beginning of this century, and that it could work better on the open stage.

In the sixties, however, a trend of adaptation of the play started, reminiscent in some respects of the eighteenth-century stage history of the play, when (as shown earlier in Chapter Four) the play was cut and tailored according to the needs and tastes of the age. This time, however, it is the serious side of the story that is in focus. Charles Marowitz, notorious for his political adaptations of plays, staged an adaptation of *Dr. Faustus* on 2 December, 1965, at the Close Theatre, Glasgow (also possibly



influenced by the fashion of adaptation in R.S.C.'s productions, especially John Barton's *The War of the Roses*, 1963-4).<sup>21</sup> The production enjoyed a boost by the rumpus created over Charles Marowitz's presentation of Sloth wearing a crown in an allusion to the Queen. It was delayed for twenty-four hours—raising the curiosity of the audience—until "the offending reference to the Queen [was] removed or at least modified" (*Guardian*, 4 December). The idea of adapting the text came from Marowitz's conviction that "not only was *Faustus* a flawed masterpiece but the enormity of those flaws almost invalidated the qualities which made it a masterpiece at all".<sup>22</sup> The uncertainty of authenticity offered Marowitz the justification for mutilating the text:

there is no play at all—only a small wad of diffuse material most of which is thought to be Marlowe's, some of which is most certainly not Marlowe's and a good deal of which is clearly the work of hacks so inferior to Marlowe that it is criminal they should ever have horned in on the collaboration. (introduction, p. 101)

Charles Marowitz's intention was "remoulding Marlowe to modern uses...achieving 'relevancy'...in the process" (*Guardian*, 4 December). He rearranged the scenes of the play, adding material from the *Faust-book* and some "topical elements of satire and a modernity of behaviour" (introduction, p. 102). The production took the form of a trial of Faustus with a judge delivering the Chorus and Faustus's life presented in a quick flashback. The intention was to investigate "from a contemporary standpoint...the assaulted conscience of a scientist who trespassed the bounds of permissible knowledge" (introduction, p. 101).<sup>23</sup> Marowitz added a dialogue between Oppenheimer and Faustus about atomic weaponry which touched on the political issue of exploiting science to destroy the world.<sup>24</sup> Faustus's study was a laboratory with "test-tubes, chemicals, charts of elements, etc." (p. 118); the Devils' show was turned to a "film of nuclear blasts" (p. 128).<sup>25</sup> The interpretation also stressed the relativity of moral questions. Faustus was destroyed by forces of Good, while the forces of Evil were presented in figures recognizable to the audience. Mephostophilis was dressed as a businessman "in an expensive Italian suit...carry[ing] a brief-case"—in which he put Faustus's damnation contract (p. 119),—Lucifer in "a military garb", Beelzebub as "a Tory Diplomat" (p. 142), and Valdes and Cornelius were "middle-aged and German-looking, and carry[ing] briefcases" (p. 114). The Seven Deadly Sins were "played by Mephistophilis, who [wore] six masks caricaturing different heads of states. The seventh, Lechery, [was] depicted by a conventionally sexy female mask" (p. 143). Part of the middle scenes formed a sequence of tableaux of the leaders of the Super Powers, Germany, France, America, and Britain, honouring



Faustus to the sound of their national anthems "playing...in a light-hearted revue style" (p. 158). The allusion to corrupt political power and to the atomic bomb was clear. The production, however, was not very successful, except in terms of contemporary relevance. Charles Marowitz himself dismissed the play by unrightly concluding that it "should be forsaken and a completely new work created which would use only the *gest* of the original but none of its language" (introduction, p. 102). It is worth noting also that one reviewer thought that Charles Marowitz was faithful to the text and that only "modern dress, some very moderate textual rearrangments and additions...up-to-date noises off...[made] up...the sum of [Marowitz's] innovations" (*Guardian*, 4 December). This disconcertingly suggests lack of familiarity with Marlowe's text. In general, it seems, Charles Marowitz's adaptation achieved some coherence and modernity, yet it was hardly Marlowe's.

In 1968, rejecting Charles Marowitz's treatment, and, at the same time, trying to avoid the conventional ways of staging the play that stress either the romantic or the moralistic interpretation, Clifford Williams directed the play for the R.S.C. at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, apparently accepting all the ambivalences in the play.<sup>26</sup> Though it was not wholly successful, the production was revolutionary. The presentation of the Sins skillfully brought out their repulsive and devilish nature (ignored in previous productions), though their ugliness made Faustus's pleasure in them—"Oh how this sight doth delight my soul!" (VI,170)—somehow unwarranted (see illustrations 19-20). For the first time in the stage history of the play, Helen appeared nude on stage in 1968, making the "most explicit committal to the era of permissiveness".<sup>27</sup> The effect was believed to have been "anaesthetic", and Faustus's speech turned to "superfluous triviality".<sup>28</sup> Helen's nudity on stage created roars of disapproval and shock which overshadowed all other aspects of the production. Reviews appeared headed by Helen's name.<sup>29</sup> But the production was inventive, and the fall to hell was a "sensational explosion of colour, noise, and shape", as the whole back wall collapsed and swallowed Faustus, "a medieval conception boosted by twentieth-century technical aids".<sup>30</sup> Fragmentary and notorious as it was, Clifford Williams's production was important in that it was the first R.S.C. production of *Dr. Faustus*, and in that it gave a significance to every scene in the play in a versatile treatment that posed interesting questions for later directors.

In spite of their controversial aspects, the inventiveness of Charles Marowitz's and Clifford Williams's productions seems to have encouraged experimentation with the play. The following year, Ann Stutfield presented an adaptation of the play which opened on 28 October, 1969, at the Newcastle Playhouse. The production concentrated



on the psychological side of the play, on hell as a state of mind, and thus brought modern echoes to the theme.<sup>31</sup> In April, 1970, Gareth Morgan followed a similar line when he staged the play for the R.S.C., Theatre-go-round group, with a small cast at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, and later transferred it to the small space of a studio setting in Stratford.<sup>32</sup> The aim was to solve the play's seemingly diverse aspects and to experiment with the use of only twelve actors "on a rudimentary set...of black studio-workshop boxes".<sup>33</sup> Doubling was functional, intended to draw some interesting parallels that, in the general atmosphere of the production, could link all scenes together (Clement McCallin, for example, doubled as the Pope and Lucifer). Michael Scott described the performance as "competent within its financial limits and challenging in its appeal."<sup>34</sup>

In 1974, with the R.S.C., John Barton provided the most original treatment of the play so far, introducing drastic changes in the text, dramatic structure, thematic concepts, and means of staging. His supernatural cast was merely a group of puppets, his set only Faustus's study. This production (which will be discussed later in detail) was a turning point in the stage history of the play, after which followed a series of productions in each of which there was an attempt at, if not adaptation, at least innovation, and a desire to surprise the audience with a new interpretation.

Alan Judd directed a puppet and puppeteer touring performance of the play in December 1975 for Barry Smith's Theatre of Puppets. It combined different forms of theatre, Renaissance, medieval, and modern, serious and grotesque.<sup>35</sup> In 1978, Sue Wilson presented her adaptation at the Nuffield Theatre, Southampton. In it she tried to demonstrate that Marlowe used the Morality framework only subversively to show Faustus rebelling against the religious order (possibly inspired by Nicholas Brooke's study mentioned above). Her innovation was in presenting the play with a small cast of five that demanded extensive doubling in the manner of the Morality tradition.<sup>36</sup>

In 1979, with a very modern reading of Faustus as an academic man tempted by his friends to excessive use to alcohol and drugs, Nicholas Young directed an adapted version that opened on 31 October at the Connaught Theatre, Worthing. It was played by six actors and with the whole action set in Faustus's study, apparently influenced by John Barton's treatment, which implied that the external events were in fact a journey in Faustus's mind.<sup>37</sup>

In 1980, with a similar approach, and for the first time in the post-Renaissance stage history of the play, it was produced with an all-male cast.



Christopher Fettes's production opened on 25 February at the Lyric Studio, Hammersmith.<sup>38</sup> Its success brought it later to the Fortune Theatre. The main feature of the production was the attempt to stage the play with a small cast of six, and with a cohesive setting that was simple but effective. The audience (at the Lyric) was arranged on three sides of the action, and there was a long "refectory table with a white curtain" (*Guardian*, 29 March) behind which "the full gamut of visionary excitement, some beyond the demands of the text [were] conveyed with the parade of the seven deadly sins eerily picturesque, and subtly shaded" (*Guardian*, 26 February). This solved the problem of having supernatural characters, giving a compromise between internalised and externalised presentations of them, and thus they appeared as "figures in a mirage" (*Guardian*, 29 March). Christopher Fettes introduced some cuts and alterations to the text in an attempt to merge the sublime and the ridiculous. This was apparently successful, according to Michael Billington, the "broken-backed treatise for once [had] the impact of real tragedy" (*Guardian*, 29 March). The tragic tone was, in fact, provided mainly by Patrick Magee's Mephostophilis who "[spoke] with the rich pain of a devil....his own haunted face show[ing] the eternity of punishment that [lay] ahead" (*Times*, 26 February). Against this, James Aubrey's Faustus was said to have been a "weakly sensual man [with]...none of the intellectual weight of the character" (*Times*, 26 February). This posed a common problem in staging the play, that of having Mephostophilis overshadow Faustus. Though, according to Nicholas de Jongh, the central performance had "weaknesses [that] detract[ed] from an evening of some fascination" (*Guardian*, 26 February), the move away from stressing either Faustus's grand spirit of overreaching or the sublime tone of an orthodox interpretation helped to "rescue the play from its traditional dive into triviality" (*Guardian*, 29 March). It is worth noting also that there was an attempt, characteristic of the time, at spicing the production with modern parallels. These, not having been motivated by a unifying interpretation of the play, turned out as mere anachronisms, "unsupported eccentricities and loose ends" (*Times*, 28 March); for example, Helen appeared as an erotic boy with no feminine disguise; the Chorus "look[ed] like a monk but smok[ed]" (*Guardian*, 26 February); Mephostophilis appeared with a cigar, and Valdes and Cornelius as two sickly creatures, Cornelius in a "wheelchair with glasses which belong[ed] to science fiction..." (*Guardian*, 26 February), and Valdes "asthmatically coughing next to him".<sup>39</sup> Though these touches were sometimes unnecessary—"indeed one wondered how Faustus could embrace sin when early in the play Valdes and Cornelius appeared as sickly degenerates"—<sup>40</sup> they were welcomed by the audience in 1980. Perhaps the achievement of Christopher Fettes's production was that it inspired critics to draw modern parallels with the play. Irving Wardle thought that in this play "Marlowe join[ed] hands with Sartre" (*Times*, 28 March)



Thus between John Barton's production in 1974 and Christopher Fettes's in 1980 stagings of *Dr. Faustus* seem to have entered a period of adaptation. A performance of the play without an attempt at innovation was unusual. But, on the whole, the extremity of adaptation stretched the meaning of the play and established it as a play that is versatile to various theatrical tastes and conditions. Since then, however, there has been a kind of return, similar to that of William Poel in 1896, to a more straightforward performance of the play, to faithfulness to the text, and to less obsession with finding unique ways of staging it. But by this time modern equivalents of the play were established in memories, and analogies could always be easily and freely drawn. Traditional or modernistic, *Faustus* had become more acceptable in the theatre.

Adrian Noble's production opened on 17 September, 1981, at the Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester.<sup>41</sup> It was an attempt towards proving that "even as we have it the play carries conviction and that it can be given unity and coherence without interpolation or savage cutting" (*CQ*, p. 4). There were only a few cuts, aimed at shortening the play and balancing the tragic and comic. Staging "combin[ed] gaunt simplicity with moments of visual splendour" (*Times*, 18 September). The use of the areas on the stage was symbolic: Faustus's study, for example, was placed on a high platform to which Faustus mounted at the beginning of his speech, and descended at the end as if losing higher values. Movements and grouping on stage were also symbolic. The action began in an academic atmosphere with a bell summoning scholars in black gowns to church (represented by a stage door with a wooden cross hung over). Faustus withdrew from the crowd as if he "absent[ed] himself from divine service...and mount[ed] the platform to perch among his books" (*CQ*, p. 4). Faustus's travels were "impressively regal with economy of means" (*CQ*, p. 6). Ben Kingsley succeeded in bringing out "the shallowness of Faustus's personality" in his discussion with James Maxwell's Mephostophilis (*CQ*, p. 5). This made it easier for him to move between the sublime beginning and end and the middle territory of the play, and "the hysteria and desperation [of the final scene] were powerfully effective" (*CQ*, p. 8). In spite of that, the central performance was not seen as illuminating to the play. Having no specific view of Faustus's identity, Ben Kingsley was said to have given

no clear sign of precisely who Faustus [was] or what he most want[ed]. He touch[ed] on intellectual pride, sensuality, and the spirit of Renaissance inquiry. But as he [left] all these options open, there [was] no centre to the character" (*Times*, 18 September).



Almost inevitably, it is easier for an adapted version to give the story a central focus. However, in the atmosphere of welcoming attitudes to the play, the production was seen as "a logical [and] faithful account of a difficult play" (CQ, p. 9).

It was not until 1986, and then only as done by an amateur company, that there was another chance to see *Dr. Faustus* produced without exaggerated attempts at modernization. Derek Stevens directed the play as part of the 1986 Ripon Festival of Art and Literature at the Ripon Cathedral with sixty amateur actors, the majority of whom were for the first time involved in a theatrical production. The production was aimed at introducing a local audience, especially school children, to an authentic version of the play. The director had illuminating ideas on the staging of some scenes in the play, particularly on presenting the Deadly Sins and Helen of Troy.<sup>42</sup>

The last decade seems to have reconciled the two approaches to the play, the modernistic and the conservative. There was a combination of both adaptations and straightforward productions. In 1987, the Actors Touring Company, under the direction of Mark Brickman, staged an adaptation of the play with three actors only, which drew largely on Christopher Fettes's and John Barton's productions, with even more innovation. Drastic editing was the dominant feature of this production which opened on 5 October, at Shaftesbury Hall, as part of the Cheltenham Festival of Art and Literature; later it toured around Britain. Soon after this performance, the Young Vic Company responded with their production which strove to be faithful to the text. Directed by Anthony Clark it opened on 21 April, at the Young Vic Theatre, London. These two productions along with Walter Hudd's of 1946, and John Barton's of 1974, have been chosen for detailed discussion in this chapter. The choice is motivated by the fact that the four productions represent different directorial approaches, different stage conditions, and different interpretations. In addition to that, the productions have been selected because of the availability of promptcopies, reviews, and photographs. The two most recent ones have been seen and the personal opinions of the directors were pursued.<sup>43</sup> More importantly, the four productions are significant in the stage history of *Dr. Faustus*, Walter Hudd's in being the first noteworthy professional production; John Barton's in being the first and most original major adaptation of the play; Mark Brickman's for the fact that it shows how directors became influenced by John Barton's adaptation, and for its employing the smallest cast so far for the play; and finally Anthony Clark's for its return to Elizabethan conventions and respect for the text of the play.



Though volumes have been written about the play in the twentieth century, it is necessary, as a background to these productions, to recapitulate briefly the problems that *Dr. Faustus* poses for modern critics and directors. *Dr. Faustus* has been established in the twentieth century as a problematic and puzzling play for both literary and theatrical critics. It poses problems concerning date, authorship, text, genre, and theme.<sup>44</sup> While questions of dating have been unimportant to directors, the uncertainties of authorship have provided excuses for cuts. Though choosing the text has, of course, primarily been an editor's problem, critics have had to specify to which text their criticism applies. The problem of the two texts had led to the question of genre. Is the play a tragedy or a comedy? The general belief is, of course, that it is a tragedy, but those who believe in the B text are faced with the obstacle that, while the A text achieves a balance between the tragic and the comic, in the B text the comic outweighs the tragic.

These issues, however, have not been the basic obstacles in the staging of the play. Other problems have engaged directors. The first is Faustus's identity. Is Faustus a learned man who is heroically ambitious and optimistic, and desires power and knowledge, is he a figure who blasphemes and is damned by his despair of God's mercy and his perseverance in sin, or is he a stupid and proud scholar who merely desires wealth and entertainment at the expense of others? As has been shown above, in the academic criticism of the play it has been possible to accept all these interpretations as ambivalences, but for theatrical presentations the ambivalent nature poses the difficulty of finding a coherent or balanced mode for the play in the limited space of one performance. Another problem is the structural one of the apparent collapse of the play in the middle, and the low tone of the comic scenes. The actor has to move from one mood to the other with little or no preparation or explanation to help him reconcile Faustus's varied moods. In addition to that, even if the fall of the middle scenes from the sublimity of the beginning and end of the play is accepted, the comic scenes remain a puzzle in terms of their relevance to the main plot. And though much has been written about their relevance to Faustus's story as a distorting mirror, reflecting and amplifying important points in Faustus's nature,<sup>45</sup> on the stage it is difficult to realise such significance.

Not less important is the problem of the appeal to modern audiences. Does a play dramatising the story of a man ensnared by devils and lectured on the wages of sin hold any attraction for twentieth-century theatre-goers? Not to mention the question of the credibility of the supernatural creatures in the play. Should the angels and devils be externalised on the stage? If they are, what should they look like? Will



the effect be comic or horrific? Or should the supernatural creatures be internalised? If so, does that include Mephostophilis whose share in the play is almost half the lines? If, therefore, only part of the supernatural cast is internalised, does not that create a sense of inconsistency? A puzzling aspect in the play is also the dual nature of the events and the characters involved. The Seven Deadly Sins, for instance, provide a show from hell, but they are immensely enjoyed by Faustus. Helen is supposed to be a succuba, but she is described in the most beautiful lines in the play.<sup>46</sup> Mephostophilis is the devil responsible for leading Faustus astray (at least in the B text), but he also makes the most honest and tragic statements about hell on earth, and about the fall of Lucifer (III,68-84; V,120-38). The director has to come to terms with this double function of each of many scenes and characters. He has either to emphasise one function—in which case the loss of the other is immensely damaging to the whole meaning of the play—or he has to try to reconcile the two, which has not always proved possible.

When Walter Hudd chose to stage *Dr. Faustus* in 1946, these problems in the play were strongly believed to cause difficulties that justified its being kept away from the stage. The performance was welcomed mainly for the fact that the play was "seldom performed",<sup>47</sup> and "the might of Marlowe's line...not heard often in the English Theatre" ( $G_1$ ), and for the fact that it was seen "for the first time in Stratford" ( $WA_2$ ). Reviewers approved of the play as "the sole non-Shakespearean play of the season" (*BrM*), and a "noteworthy addition to the repertoire of the Festival company" (*BSM*).

Walter Hudd used the 1616 version with occasional borrowings from the 1604 one, and with a minimum of cuts, made for technical rather than interpretative reasons. For example, devils did not watch Faustus conjure (as in the B-text); Faustus conjured alone on the stage, following the A-text, and thus the surprise at the Devils' appearance in scene vi with the Seven Deadly Sins was not wasted. Benvolio of the B-text was replaced by the Knight of the A-text and was robbed of his revenge on Faustus, making the scene shorter; and the business of Bruno, which lengthens the papal scenes in the B-text, was cut, leaving only the banquet, as in the A-version. Walter Hudd seemed to have refused to be daunted by the alleged weaknesses in the play. He was accused by some reviewers of treating "the special difficulties of this 'tragical history' as though they did not exist..." ( $T_1$ ).

The scenery, was not elaborate, echoing Poel's austere set in 1896, though on a proscenium stage (see illustrations 5-7). Walter Hudd created an atmospheric heaven



with a skycloth and a design of symmetrical archways in the background which were "impressive and eye-catching" (*LSC*). He solved the problem of scene-changing, which could have proved clumsy on the Stratford stage, by erecting a permanent set and achieving a "minimum of scene-changing" (*LSC*) by using four different levels linked by staircases. All characters shared these four levels with practical effectiveness, and it seemed as if "heaven and hell [were] about them with no restriction to height or depth" (*BG*). The method was criticised for the amount of "mountaineering" (*BED*) or "stairclimbing", and one reviewer went on to comment that it "must [have been] tiresome to the players and...to the audience" (*G*<sub>1</sub>). "Everyone seemed to be running upstairs and downstairs" (*BED*). Despite the apparently successful use of levels, a lower level was surprisingly not employed symbolising a hell from which its denizens might issue. Only at the very end "emphasis [was] given to the general visit to hell by making use of the orchestra pit for the headlong descent" (*BG*). Surrounded by the four levels was Faustus's study set in a central and permanent inner-stage. The location of the study encircled by the levels directed more attention to Faustus as a man in the centre of events, like a pivot around which all other characters moved, particularly with the large cast of sixty actors which seemed a small universe in itself.

It seems that, among this large cast, Robert Harris in the title-role succeeded in endowing Faustus with dignity, "passion and command" (*O*<sub>1</sub>), portraying in a spirited and energetic performance Faustus's "amiable soul" (xviii,43) and heroic aspects. His first speech had the analytical strength of a scholar striving for better ways to knowledge. Faustus's strong will was enhanced by stage-business when he firmly and loudly slammed the rejected books—as indicated by the stage directions in the promptcopy—thus establishing Faustus's determination. His performance, however, elicited contradictory reviews. While some found that he dealt "fluently and gracefully with Faustus's varied moods of ambition, arrogance, self-pity and despair in a very fine performance" (*BED*), others found that he pitched Faustus on a "note of high romance" (*T*<sub>1</sub>), and that he seemed to have given "insufficient emphasis to the deterioration in Faustus' character" (*LSC*), though he introduced "here and there some delicate touches of romance and fantastical comedy" (*BP*). Similarly, some thought that he had "the voice for Marlowe's line" (*O*<sub>1</sub>), and that an outstanding feature of his performance, and of the production as a whole, was his delivery of the verse. He was said to have treated "very skillfully...the magnificent speeches of the unhappy Faustus" (*WA*<sub>2</sub>), and to have been particularly admirable in the apostrophe to Helen and in the last speech: "He [let] the call to Helen caress the air, and...he [conveyed] much of the man's last anguish, unutterable loneliness and despair" (*O*<sub>1</sub>). Other reviewers were of the opinion that



Robert Harris "[brought to the play's swelling climax neither enough change nor enough passion" ( $P_1$ ).

This lack of passion in the last scene was seen mainly as a "producer's fault" ( $P_1$ ). Walter Hudd chose to place Faustus very far from the audience "on an open heath high above the stage merely that we may behold him descending into the fiery pit with solemn pageantry" ( $T_1$ ). This would have thwarted Robert Harris' attempt to involve the audience's emotion by inevitably imposing a sense of seclusion and detachment, and thus "the final descent of Faustus [lost] force by taking place in the vasty hinterland of the Stratford stage" ( $P_1$ ).

The contradiction of opinions about Robert Harris' performance (though characteristic of theatre reviewers) would seem to reflect a contradiction in the production as a whole. Not only in the last scene was Walter Hudd's approach to staging at odds with Robert Harris' tragic interpretation of Faustus, but throughout the whole performance, actor and director seemed to work at cross-purposes. What Walter Hudd chose to expunge from the text was not in support of Robert Harris' dignified Faustus. He cut the scene with Bruno (viii), for example, presumably as clumsy and complicated to stage, but not the leg-pulling scene (xv); while the latter degrades Faustus, the former adds a touch of heroism to his character. Also the expanded Vanholt scene, with the eruption of the rustics (xvii,35-116), was kept though it shows Faustus turning into a silly jester. This scene is important in the sense that it brings Faustus closest to the low characters in his gradual descent,<sup>48</sup> but out of tune with a production where the actor was playing on a heroic note. Altogether, it is more likely that the cuts were made for technical convenience. One reviewer's comment on Walter Hudd's treatment of the text was that

there [was] a tacit assumption that scenes which baffle the modern mind by their naivety need as little interpretative finesse as those which have kept the awful majesty of their universality. ( $T_1$ )

Walter Hudd's presentation of the supernatural characters lacked the sinister side which is needed to make audiences feel that Faustus is living a real struggle against an evil power. Devils were conjured up "simply and without fireworks" ( $BG$ ), "strange [and] gargoyle-like" ( $LSC$ ). The terrifying nature of the hierarchy of hell was missing, so much so that the devils in "grotesque masks tended to amuse rather than horrify" ( $WA_2$ ), which made Faustus's fear of Lucifer completely unwarranted. The show of the devils offered by Mephostophilis to distract Faustus from the fear of the congealing of his blood and the inscription on his arm, consisted merely of



"pantomime devils in bargain basement masks" (*BED*) (see illustrations 9 and 12). The pantomimic effects of the devils were further enhanced by stage-business: there are clear indications in the promptbook that the devils frightened the clown and Dick by slapstick gestures, such as pinching and tickling, which reminds us of the Harlequin tradition in the eighteenth century.<sup>49</sup>

Similarly, the Seven Deadly Sins were not less amusing (see illustration 11). They possessed an air of cheerfulness and jocularly which was useful in justifying Faustus's attraction to them and his blindness to the danger they foretold. But their hideous nature was drastically missing as they appeared in "striking, and...exotic" (*BP*) costumes which had a "touch of Disney about them that [was] not very apt at the moments when Marlowe hoped to chill the blood" (*G*<sub>1</sub>). The promptbook indicates that each performed a dance before leaving the stage. Gluttony "sound[ed], and look[ed]...like lovely Grub in Itma" (*P*<sub>1</sub>). The Sins were apparently there only to amuse and thus the importance of the audience's realising their double function was underestimated.

Nor did Hugh Griffith as Mephostophilis supply the sense of lurking evil that was wanting in the production. He "[attempted] nothing very sinister" (*BG*), he had "no limp or lean and haggard look...[and] no menacing gestures" (*EJ*). He was "a tragic man" rather than a fallen angel" (*SAH*). The Good and Evil Angels—dressed in white and black respectively, with feather wings for both, and a grotesquely ugly mask for the bad Angel—were believed to want a "little more confidence in their appeal to Faustus" (*EJ*). It was thought that the Good Angel failed to show "urgency in salvation" (*S&T*<sub>v</sub><sub>1</sub>). Thus the overall effect of such a presentation of the creatures of heaven and hell was a lack of any feeling of danger surrounding the sinning Faustus and thus his end would appear unjustifiable or "intolerable" (*SAH*).

Walter Hudd's production also allowed no magnificence to be attached to Faustus's European travels, "Faustus's pranks...could be made spectacular...[but] here they [were] perfunctory and slipshod" (*BED*). Scenic austerity in the middle parts of Faustus's career becomes symbolically and religiously relevant if there is an intention to prove Faustus's pact with the devil useless, or to show him as a deluded man who is duped into thinking that what the devil has offered is fruitful. But in this production austere effects clashed with Robert Harris' extreme pleasure in his tour around the world and in his duping of the Pope and the Emperor. As Robert Harris led the audience to expect a show of magnificence, Walter Hudd's realisation of these expectations bleakly disappointed both him and the audience. Such contrast can be



significant when irony is pursued, but in 1946 heroism was the target and thus, there was a feeling that

What this production shriek[ed] out for [was] showmanship, a slap-up ballet, something in the way of beauty and voluptuousness to lead Faustus up the garden path—and make him like it. (*BED*)

The appearance of Helen, however, added something of the heroic to Faustus's record. For the role was chosen a beautiful actress, Jennifer Coverdale, who "[endowed] Helen with classical grace and beauty" (*SAH*), giving the audience "some kindly light amid the encircling gloom" (*S&TV<sub>1</sub>*). This certainly made Helen live up to Marlowe's lines and ennobled Faustus's search for perfect beauty. On the other hand, Helen's connection with the devil was completely missing, and the Old Man's warning to Faustus of the danger she entailed lost its force (see illustration 17).

Incoherent as it was, the production had some points that gained approval. The comic scenes were played "with great gusto" (*BED*), and were clearly entertaining. The Horse-courser received special mention as he showed a "vigorous" comic personality (*SAH*); Wagner, as the promptbook indicates, carried a bottle throughout and presented an image of a drunkard which made Faustus shine in contrast. The rest of the comic characters also contrasted well with Faustus:

some of the best acting was seen in the presentation of the 'low' characters, the Horse-dealer and his companions, whose simple and childish attitude [was] so effective a foil to the subtleties of both Faustus and Mephistophilis." (*LSC*)

David King Wood as the Chorus seems to have made a strong impression that "would live in the memory" (*EJ*). Reviews were unanimous in praising his delivery of the lines, which was thought to have given "an air of monkish, and benign detachment from all worldly matters" (*SAH*).<sup>50</sup> He supplied sublimity and piousness that would have added a sense of the serious and tragic to Faustus's story, thus compensating somewhat for the lack of this in the rest of the production.

It should be mentioned that, whether or not the lack of menace in Walter Hudd's devils was the result of problems of visibility on the proscenium stage, the absence of evil would be felt more keenly as the play was inevitably compared with *Macbeth* which was running at the same time with *Dr. Faustus* in the Stratford repertoire and also with Robert Harris in the title-role. The Shakespeare play, being a sophisticated psychological study of temptation and hovering evil, inadvertently



imposed a certain perspective from which to view *Dr. Faustus*, and there was a search on the part of the spectators for a psychology similar to what *Macbeth* had offered them. More so as the décor for *Faustus* was reminiscent of that used for *Macbeth*. One reviewer commented that the scenery in *Faustus* "unfortunately [bore] a pale resemblance to the setting for *Macbeth*" (BP). On the Elizabethan stage, Marlowe's and Shakespeare's great tragic roles were played by different actors, Alleyn and Burbage, and never in the same theatre. In the modern theatre it has repeatedly happened that the same actor plays a Marlovian and a Shakespearean part in the same repertoire, as Eric Porter playing both Barabas and Shylock at Stratford-upon-Avon, in 1965 (see Chapter Seven), Ian McKellen playing Edward II and Richard II in 1969 (see Chapter Eight), and Albert Finney playing both Hamlet and Tamburlaine at the National Theatre, in 1976.

It is a pity that few reviewers considered the fact that, juxtaposed with a Shakespearean play that analyses evil, this production of a Marlovian play was bound to suffer. According to one reviewer the production was valuable only in that it stressed "more surely...Shakespeare's supremacy in the Elizabethan theatre..." (DT<sub>1</sub>).<sup>51</sup> There were some reviewers, however, who appreciated Walter Hudd's attempt to direct the play. One reviewer asked earnestly to have Marlowe protected from Shakespeare and went on to comment that "to set '*Faustus*' beside '*Macbeth*' is such monstrous cruelty to Marlowe..." (SAH). Another reviewer was even more positive as he saw in *Dr. Faustus* an appeal to modern audiences:

The soaring ambition, the thirst for knowledge, of the learned doctor of Wittenberg, seem to be closely paralleled by the science of today; and the unworthy use of power put into his hands has a terrible warning for us... a memorable sermon...  
(LSC)

By some, Walter Hudd's production was thought "faithful and just to the young poet, and as entertaining as the script allow[ed]" (SAH). Even if seen by others as unsuccessful and commercially risky, the production was undeniably a positive step towards anchoring *Dr. Faustus* in the professional theatre and in experimenting with the possibilities of staging an almost full text. The clash, in it, between the heroic and the ludicrous, which was seen as its main fault, was informative, in that it confirmed the belief that for a unifying image of Faustus it was necessary to sacrifice some parts of the text, particularly some of the comic scenes. This leads us to John Barton's production in 1974, in which the mutilating of the text was carried to an extreme, for the sake of this unifying image.



John Barton's adaptation of *Dr. Faustus* for the Royal Shakespeare company opened on 13 August, 1974, at the Nottingham Playhouse and moved to Newcastle and to the Edinburgh Festival, after which it was played for one night, on 5 September, at the Aldwych Theatre, London. It also went on tour in 1975 to Manchester, to Billingham, and to Cardiff before it became part of the R.S.C. Stratford season in 1975.<sup>52</sup>

Thus the production was offered to a wide variety of spectators and was accommodated at different theatres. How many of the spectators who saw *Dr. Faustus* in 1974 were familiar with Barton's directorial approach to classical plays is difficult to know. To regular theatre goers, at least, he would probably be known for his full-scale adaptation of Elizabethan plays (*The War of the Roses* 1963-4, and *King John* 1974), and for his belief that a "straight rendering of the text, with your own preconception left undisturbed, is a...literary rather than a theatrical experience" (*P&P*). *The Wars of the Roses*, as has been mentioned before, seems to have initiated a vogue of adaptation, at least in the repertoire of the R.S.C. In the words of one reviewer,

The company would seem to have fallen upon a phase in which they feel it incumbent upon them to put on works they hold in low esteem but which, by dint of ingenious adaptation and direction, they might just about make tolerable for indulgent audiences. (*Sp*)

The effect of Barton's *King John* of 1974 was still fresh in memory when he mounted his *Dr. Faustus* in the same year:

Happily undeterred by the *King John* fiasco...he has applied his skills to the one Elizabethan play which stands above all others in need of adaptation. (*T<sub>2</sub>*)<sup>53</sup>

The idea that *Dr. Faustus* is in "need of adaptation" led to a generally favourable critical attitude towards Barton's treatment of the play, though he had tampered ruthlessly with the original text. One reviewer, who seems to have seen both Barton's *Dr. Faustus* and Keith Hack's adaptation of *Measure for Measure*, which was running concurrently with Barton's *Dr. Faustus* at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, has concluded that

One leaves the Royal Shakespeare Company's production of *Measure for Measure*...full of anger against a director who has imposed his own idea on to a play to a point where it is distorted and wrecked. One leaves the...production of *Dr. Faustus* at the Aldwych Theatre, full of admiration for a director who can transform a flawed masterpiece into a splendid, even awe-

inspiring work which illuminates and strengthens the original conception. (*JC*)

This shows the sacredness with which a Shakespeare text is treated compared to the ease with which critics exonerate an act of adaptation of a Marlowe one. It was almost unanimously believed that Barton has "quite justifiably" (*WOL<sub>1</sub>*) cut into Marlowe's text:

Anything which sweetens that arid desert ride between the great twin peaks of this play's beginning and end is an act of mercy... (*DM*)

Though according to some critics the adaptation was a "partial success", according to others, it turned the play into a "complete body" (*T<sub>2</sub>*). Unity was probably achieved, but, by examining the drastic cuts and additions that Barton exercised on the text, it is difficult not to agree with the opinion that Barton "[had] quite unashamedly dabbled with the text to such an extent that it [was] difficult to tell where Marlowe end[ed] and Barton [began]" (*S&T<sub>v2</sub>*).

Barton dispensed altogether with the comic characters, except the Horse-courser (to whom some of Robin's lines were assigned), and expunged all comic scenes which were believed to be "frivolities [that]...no one [was] going to miss" (*Sp*), and which Barton himself thought to be "non-Marlovian scenes...sub-plots in prose...in none of which Faustus appears, and in practice...they tend to trivialise the tone of the play".<sup>54</sup> Barton also decided to eliminate the papal scenes in their entirety, a decision (discussed below) that was seen to be of "immense benefit" (*JC*). The rest of the middle section of Faustus's career was retained. The Emperor scene, slightly changed, was kept, with Benvolio turned into a conflation of the Knight of the 1604-text and Benvolio of the 1616-text, but stripped of his revenge on Faustus.

The Vanholt scene was unnecessarily bawdily extended, with "disastrous unMarlovian references to pubic hair and the clitoris" (*DT<sub>2</sub>*), to dramatise a sexual relation between the pregnant Duchess and Faustus, which is not called for in the text (see illustration 16). By this John Barton developed an aspect of Faustus's character only hinted at in the text: "for I am wanton and lascivious and cannot live without a wife" (v,142). Before Faustus met the Duke and the Duchess, John Barton introduced a conversation between Faustus and Wagner in which they talked about the Duchess' beauty, which was supposed to increase Faustus's desire for intercourse with her. This was to be achieved by charming the Duchess with a potion,



That she shall dote on Faustus in a trice  
 Though she be cold yet will I warm her straight  
 That she shall lust to have her dote of me.<sup>55</sup>

Having drunk it, the Duchess is ripe for conquest:

*Duchess:* Once by thy Art thou didst erect a castle  
 For my good lord; what will you now erect  
 To pleasure me?...

*Faustus:* I raise my spirit...  
 Within a vale where lies a tangled grove,  
 At whose sweet centre is a little mount,  
 And there my potent spirit flourisheth.

*Duchess:* Oh how I long for thee to raise thy spirit!

At this point she "*pushes him to bed*".<sup>56</sup> When it was time for the Vanholts to leave, the Duchess stayed behind to enquire from Faustus: "I wonder much at what pass'd this day/ And how so wanton I have born myself", at which Faustus tried to kiss her but was rejected because of her pregnancy, and explained that she abstained from sexual pleasure because she "[feared] damnation". Even though she pleaded with Faustus to remove his charm, she also promised him future pleasure, in a speech of more sexual innuendoes:

I vow to thee, when Spring is come again,  
 And I am of this tedious burden light,  
 Then come to me and I shall be thy grove;  
 And in my garden shall you conjure then,  
 And we shall be so frolic thou shalt think  
 Thou art in Paradise.

And the scene ended with Faustus painfully feeling that the Duchess had proved more virtuous than him.

The rest of the action was made up of a combination of the A and the B-versions, "[getting] good things from both" (*DT*<sub>2</sub>), with many lines cut and the Latin lines translated. The gaps left by the cuts were filled by extracts "mostly derived from Marlowe's source commonly known as the *English Faust-Book*", as John Barton was struck by the "close connection between it and the play".<sup>57</sup> He also reshaped "in [his] own words ideas and incidents found therein",<sup>58</sup> providing a "running commentary on the hero's sufferings" (*DT*<sub>2</sub>). The outcome was a text of about 1650 lines (with nearly 550 lines cut from the original and 420 added, 339 in blank verse and 81 in prose) short enough to fit a touring performance.

In all its aspects, the production was meant to focus only on Faustus's career, not as Marlowe's overreacher who travels around the world, but rather as a lonely and helpless neurotic invalid, imprisoned in his own fears, lack of faith, lusts and unachieved desires, nursed, fed and put to bed like a spoilt child. The main line of interpretation of Faustus's tragedy was clearly established right at the beginning of his pact with Mephostophilis. A few lines were added to the contract to stress that the conflict in Faustus's mind was a result of his doubts in God's existence:

Secondly, to deny my Christian belief, and to defy God and his Christ and all the host of Heaven, and all living creatures that bear the shape of God, yea, all that lives.

The action mainly consisted of scenes figuring Faustus, accompanied either by Wagner or Mephostophilis. These scenes alternated with long Choruses—formed from the original Choruses with additions from *the Faust-Book*, or of Barton's own composition—either to introduce what was to follow or to comment on what had already happened. Ironically enough, the Choruses were delivered by the three main devils, Beelzebub, Lucifer, and Mephostophilis, who seemed to control Faustus's world with their ubiquitous presence as they always watched Faustus from different places on the stage. This emphasised the absurdity of Faustus's attempt to repent, and thus reduced him to a deluded man placed for observation on the couch of the three devils, who discussed his behaviour in the Choruses as if performing a psychopathological diagnosis.

The main function of the Chorus of devils was, paradoxically, a highly didactic one, commenting on Faustus's behaviour and ways of living, "adjuring the audience to obey Christian law..." (DT<sub>3</sub>), and stressing Faustus's loneliness. At the end of every scene, the audience was constantly reminded by the "pious moralising Chorus" (NS) of how much time was left to Faustus. After he met the Emperor, Beelzebub appeared to comment "And so began the latest year of Faustus's life",<sup>59</sup> and after the Vanholt scene, Beelzebub returned with a long Chorus to remind the audience that "Faustus had but three months left to him...". There was in fact a strong emphasis on time's slippery nature which steadily increased the tension. The first Chorus, nearly unchanged, was delivered by Lucifer, inviting the audience to observe how Faustus (on view) will be damned. Valdes and Cornelius were no other than Beelzebub and Mephostophilis barely disguised (but the disguise was never recognised by Faustus). This made it seem as if the devils were conspiring against Faustus, and were in full control of the events.



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After the Seven Deadly Sins that ended the first part of the performance, the three devils opened the second part with a long Chorus of nearly fifty lines (only seven of which were taken from the original), varied between prose and verse. In a manner of a discussion they talked about how Faustus "as each year did pass/ Grew ever greater in renown and fame", and how he made journeys where he "viewed the clouds, the planets and the stars", guided by his "gentle spirit" Mephostophilis. They told the audience how Faustus was reflecting upon his sins and how he "took up pen and ink,/ And wrote of all that he had done and seen". This was added by Barton to show that Faustus was writing a biography which he thought would "bring him honour" after his death, and would help him to understand his sins. It would be interesting to know to what extent Barton made Faustus's neurosis clear to the audience. Among the lines of this Chorus, Beelzebub said:

And this was the beginning of Faustus' book which he ever continued every day of his life, for he believed by setting down his thoughts and sins, he would in some measure become more able to handle them. In this he erred. In truth, the more he searched himself, the more uncertain he became whether he had grown into the thing he was, through the temptory of the Devil, or through his own tainted nature.

This Chorus also introduced a (narrated) vision of paradise, supposedly seen by Faustus during his journey.<sup>60</sup> The didacticism of these insertions would seem to go against the thrust of the production as a study of a neurotic man, except as helping to provide an increasing sense of loss. The Chorus finally led up to Faustus's return to Wittenburg, after his supposed journey, with a mind that "grew satiate/ Of rarest climes and royal courts of kings", thus preparing us for the middle part of Faustus's life. A very important Chorus, also delivered by Beelzebub, was added to introduce the third and last part of Faustus's life. It highlighted Faustus's desperate action as his end was approaching:

And so the new year began and Faustus had but three months left to him. And if during that time he had any good motion towards repentance, it lasted not long....Often he would range abroad and conjure desperately....At one time to win a wager of a country clown for three farthings he ate a load of hay. At another he cozened a Jew of sixty marks....And so he lived an epicurish and swinish life, and became at the last, a very confusion of all the vices...

The dominant and most important feature about the production, apart from the textual changes, was Barton's choice of a set (designed by Michael Annals) and his approach to staging which was clearly meant to support and amplify his interpretation



of the play. In spite of the fact that the Chorus narrated Faustus's journey, Faustus moved nowhere. All the action was confined to his study, and instead of visiting courts of kings he received men of high ranks in his "dusty den" (*DM*) of a room that formed the only scenery on stage. The room achieved a strong sense of claustrophobia, as it was simultaneously used as a sitting, dining, and bedroom. It was equipped with all Faustus's domestic and scientific needs: tables, chairs, a stove for Mephostophilis's fire, an organ, and a lectern to which Faustus significantly returned each time he spoke about God and repentance. At the back there was a kitchen from where Wagner offered food to Faustus and company, and from where Gluttony issued after a sound of crashing of dishes and plates. There was also a bed to which Faustus often resorted at moments of exhaustion, where he fell asleep, snored and woke up vomiting.

Properties had an important function within the proposed overall reading of the play. The whole place, especially the shelves, were "richly cluttered" (*G<sub>2</sub>*) with Faustus's academic and personal paraphernalia: books, bones, scrolls, folders, skulls, a rack of flasks and test-tubes, boxes, mirrors, a crucifix, baskets, plates...etc, indicating "symbols of his [Faustus's] passion..." (*SLP*). Framed pictures or books of pictures helped to represent some places which, apparently, could not be shown on the stage, including hell—which was merely a book of pictures that Faustus opened at the end to see what torture was awaiting him, according to the Bad Angel's words (xix,116-27)—and heaven—which was a picture that Faustus took off the wall to see what "celestial happiness" he had lost (106-15). Probably symbolising the perfection which Faustus never attained, a picture of the Mona Lisa was introduced among the properties which Faustus clutched in his arms as, wearing Arab dress, he dashed about after the second Chorus had described the journey he never made. Employing this set of pictures to represent different locations, would further reflect a sense of phantasmagoria and claustrophobia, showing Faustus as a man living in a world of dreams, nightmares and images.

This became more apparent in the fact that among the properties were the rest of the supernatural characters in the shape of glove-puppets, some small and some life-size (designed by Jennifer Carey), manipulated either by Faustus in the case of the Angels, or by "black-cowled" (*P<sub>2</sub>*) "Banraku like demons" (*T<sub>2</sub>*), in the case of the 'wife', the Seven Deadly Sins, and the apparitions of Alexander and Paramour. The abstract nature of the demons in black would have eliminated any individuality in the Sins, and thus increased their ambiguity, making Faustus's curiosity in them well justified and at the same time stressing the illusory nature of Faustus's pleasure.

Holding up a "halo-ed angel puppet and a bug-eyed beastie" ( $P_2$ ), Faustus performed the colloquy between the Angels providing different voices for them as if they were his two selves, particularly, as the promptbook shows, as at the end Faustus threw the Bad Angel in the fire anticipating his own end. This innovation was believed to have "[removed] the play's clash of moral absolutes from the metaphysical plane and [plumbed] it firmly into Faustus's head" ( $NS$ ), turning Faustus into a schizophrenic character. The show of devils was turned into some items of clothing, as Mephostophilis "[draped] over his (Faustus's) Shoulders a cloak of cheap tinsel" ( $P_2$ ) (see illustration 10).

As a culmination of the successive illusions Helen was turned into a blond puppet, worked by Mephostophilis, which Faustus took to bed; and as he "sensuously [fondled] that bodyless head's hollow dress" the degradation of the seeker after experience had become complete ( $P_2$ ). According to one reviewer, however, turning Helen into a "paltry marionette...[sterilised] the ineluctable lure of flesh-and-blood sensuality" ( $DT_3$ ). The perfect sexual experience that Faustus desired in the vision of Helen dwindled into absurdity, and Marlowe's lofty lines must have sounded pathetic when uttered by such a Faustus and to such a Helen.

Though the puppets gave an air of the grotesque to the production, they also created "an appropriate air of unreality" ( $S\&T_2$ ). It seems that the ludicrous and the hallucinatory were balanced as Ian McKellen's Faustus, "[injected] life into [the puppets] by the force of his belief in their reality—though he [was] undoubtedly helped by the plasticity built into them" ( $JC$ ). Among the properties, there were gifts exchanged between Faustus and Mephostophilis after the signing of the pact: a bell for Mephostophilis and an hour-glass for Faustus (see illustration 35). To explain the purpose of these gifts Barton had added lines of dialogue which conveyed a terrible sense of fatalism:

*Faustus:* I would have thee keep thee ever like a friar  
And round your neck, like to Saint Anthony,  
A little bell, which ere you do appear  
You shall ring once or twice that I may know  
That thou art come.

*(He offers a bell, and Mephostophilis offers him an hour-glass)*

*Mephostophilis:* And here's a gift for thee:  
This hour-glass, the sands whereof  
Shall move themselves so slow.  
A man might think they move not, though they do;  
And there will pass four and twenty years  
Ere they shall shift from this to this below  
And in that space your soul shall be suck'd



## From Heaven to Hell.

In the third Chorus Beelzebub directed attention to the hour-glass: "And so time ran away with Faustus, as the hour-glass...". Furthermore, a "Death's head clock" ( $G_2$ ) was seen in the background, enhancing the audience's awareness that the passing of time equalled the approach of death: "One's eyes [were] always moving to the fatal hour-glass and the clock, which signals the passing hours with a returning [sic] skeleton" ( $T_2$ ).

Wagner seems to have constituted part of the claustrophobic surroundings, always present and always nursing Faustus and waiting on him. A very sympathetic relation developed between them, both by adding conversations between them and extending the ones in the original, and by the way Wagner served Faustus. During the first speech, for example, Wagner was moving around with a basket collecting the books that Faustus rejected, offering Faustus soup and returning it to the kitchen untouched, obeying Faustus's order to call Valdes and Cornelius, and offering them fruits while they were talking to Faustus. Often he seemed to know more about his master than anybody else did. He explained Faustus's situation to the scholars, asked the Horse-courser not to wake Faustus up as "Alas... he has not slept these eight nights"; he brought Faustus a robe and laurel wreath whenever he received visitors, and informed Faustus of the time. At the end he asked him about his health and promised Faustus to publish his book after his death, at which Faustus in return promised him full inheritance of all he had.

The set and properties, combined with the guarding Mephostophilis and the serving Wagner, achieved a strong feeling of imprisonment. Faustus seemed like a figure of trapped humanity in

a dark, dissected cage of a room stacked with books, bottles, baskets, stove, and all the mediæval necessities of a savant, a clock marking the passing hours with its ambulating skeleton, and a solitary servant. ( $P_2$ )

This was an intended effect, Barton meant to reinforce the idea that "Hell is not some exotic picture-book, but a state of mind" ( $G_2$ ).

Ian McKellen's acting of Faustus was in line with Barton's interpretation which in its turn offered McKellen a chance for a star performance. With large parts of Marlowe's subplots cut, McKellen was inevitably in full focus. His Faustus was a psychological study of desire, deprivation and despair, incorporating all the aspects of

a neurotic behaviour: giggling, raging, pacing up and down, hallucinating, vomiting, brooding, groaning, weeping and falling asleep.<sup>61</sup> His acting style depended above all on facial expressions and on movements of "his arching cat-like body" ( $G_2$ ) which eloquently conveyed the turmoil in Faustus's mind:

With a dreadful icy smile, hollow cheeks, piercing haunted eyes, clawing hands and epileptic contortions, Ian McKellen's Faustus turn[ed] from a neurotic frustrated misfit into a spoilt child clawing at power, a tortured vice-sated disillusioned being. (*EN*)

His untidy appearance in a "loose dun-coloured academic robe" (*DM*), "bushy [haired]" ( $G_2$ ), with a "weak moustache and feebler beard" ( $DT_2$ ) combined with his acting style and a "thin, nasal tenor" ( $DT_2$ ) to create a pathetic egotistic "bloodless, stooped invalid...who...never ventur[ed] outside his dusty studio..." ( $DT_2$ ).

To some reviewers this image seemed a point of weakness in the production. It seems that Ian McKellen cut Faustus down to size, and turned him into

a frightened weakling who encounter[ed] the Seven Deadly Sins with no more than the obscene giggle of a schoolboy over a dirty book. Only at the climax...does the player enlarge his pure but narrow diapason to encompass something closer to tragedy than pathos. ( $DT_2$ )

Another reviewer found Ian McKellen's "whining and giggling appearance too low-key, often monotonous" (*YP*), which prompted the conclusion that "a little more repose might make a more convincing philosophical Faustus" (*ES*).

Barton's low-key approach to the production would unavoidably reduce the stature of the central character, but this was purposeful. Faustus was meant to be anything but philosophical. Ian McKellen showed a "sad case of existential decay, a man coarsened and finally destroyed" (*NS*). The danger of this approach lay in the fact that it could lead to a histrionic style unfit for Marlowe's poetry. But McKellen's star performance was such that it "quite won" one reviewer, "from [his] intellectual objection to the production" (*NS*). He compensated for the lack of heroism in Faustus by enacting an "internal dialectic", believed to be "only thinly expressed in the text" ( $G_2$ ). The reviewer in *The Sunday Telegraph* could not think of another actor "capable of presenting a naked soul raked in torment with such passion and intensity" (*STel\_1*). McKellen did not attempt a rhetorical speaking of the verse but a "conversational delivery" ( $P_2$ ), and though he "[did] not treat famous lines like holy mountain



peaks...he [could] charge so plain a phrase as 'Hell for ever!' with a rending inconsolable despair" (*P*<sub>2</sub>).

Clearly the key to McKellen's success was in the range and variety of his performance. Thus, even as a deluded Faustus he showed "periodic returns to a clear-sighted view of his predicament" (*T*<sub>2</sub>); and this admirably fitted the concept of a schizophrenic individual who had become a battle-ground of repentance and despair. Barton had added lines, at various points, which enabled McKellen to move suddenly from pleasure to distress.<sup>62</sup>

Ian McKellen started the first scene as an "obsessed explorer" (*NS*) frantically searching one book after another. As long as only Wagner was on stage with him (as described above) he was the master, seemingly in control of his situation, but as soon as he fetched the Angel puppets and supplied voices for them, his schizophrenic nature was revealed. His inability to understand himself, while others around him did, was strongly suggested by his words to Valdes and Cornelius added by Barton, "Then to speak plainly and without delay/ My boy doth know my mind as well as you". A similar effect was produced later by Wagner's words to the scholars which Barton changed to:

For is he not by nature changeable and subject to shifts and  
strange mutations...for nothing is certain, he being a finical  
and fantastical fellow, in futurity I say...

His agitation was made clearer by the frequent journeys he made round the stage, as shown in the promptbook, to the organ to fetch the angels, to the lectern whenever he mentioned God, and to his bed whenever his frenzy exhausted him. He was thus circling around like an imprisoned bird beating its wings against the cage.

Barton's re-writing of the text made more emphatic Faustus's refusal to take any hints, however explicit, of the true nature of his predicament. The most notable example of this is a passage, entirely composed by Barton (inserted after the second appearance of the angels and Faustus's "My heart is harden'd...", vi,25)), in which Faustus seeks Mephostophilis's advice on what he would do in Faustus's place—advice which, strangely enough, Mephostophilis supplies with moving honesty:

*Mephostophilis:*            Were I a man as thou  
   And God had once adorn'd me with thy gifts  
   Then whiles God breath'd within me would I  
   strive  
   By humbling of myself and holy prayers,

To win eternal joy within his kingdom.  
*Faustus:* But that I have not done.  
*Mephostophilis:* Thou sayest Faustus,  
 Thou hast denied thy God who gave thee  
 life,  
 Who gave thee speech and hearing, sight  
 and sense,  
 To glorify and understand his will,  
 And given up thy soul to Lucifer.  
*Faustus:* Wouldst thou be in my case as I am now?  
 Why sighest thou?  
*Mephostophilis:* Faustus, I tell thee, yea:  
 For yet I would so humble me at last  
 That I would win the favour of my God.

After this, even his appeal to Christ (which was changed in wording but came, as in the original text, after Faustus's question: "who made the world?", vi,85) was a demonstration of Faustus's split personality:

I do repent, and for that part in me  
 That doth not or cannot, yet grant me grace  
 That that damn'd part be penitent as the rest;  
 I do repent me, Faustus doth repent  
 Show me some sign of grace and I'll repent.  
 Yea, show me but one sign, My Christ, Sweet Christ.

When Lucifer and Beelzebub appeared at this point, they stressed his helplessness by their words to him (again added by Barton):

...think what unquiet life,  
 what strife and sad debate thou dost incur  
 In seeking to repent, the which thou cannot.  
 'Tis waste of breath...

The stage-directions in the promptbook show that, though the Seven Deadly Sins were puppets, they also made Faustus quite helpless: Envy pushed him off his chair, Sloth leaned on the organ and charmed him to sleep, after which Lechery entered and pulled him onto the floor, while he screamed "Help! Help!". When Mephostophilis brought him the Helen-puppet, Faustus circled "*clockwise*"<sup>63</sup> and finally at "And none but thou shall be my paramour", he resorted to bed with the puppet, and as he fell asleep Mephostophilis covered him with a blanket, and took Helen away (as an adult would take a toy from the arms of a sleeping child). After a pause Faustus suddenly sat up in bed and vomited, a physical sign of his mental and spiritual sickness.

This fatigued and frenzied Faustus contrasted sharply with Emry James's "cool, ironical, and unblinking" Mephostophilis ( $G_2$ ), who all through the action seemed to know "immeasurably more than his mundane master [would] ever think to



ask" ( $P_2$ ). His sad, gloomy face, his moments of friendly discussion with Faustus, and above all, his honest advice to Faustus won the audience's sympathy and admiration, and made him the "unwaveringly truthful character he [was]...concealing a world of unexpressed pain" ( $T_2$ ). He had no devilish features about him, and ironically he was "submissive to his temporary master, and also capable of singing him gently to sleep" ( $T_2$ ), kneeling to him to receive his gift (the bell), or hanging up Faustus's boots. The immeasurable sadness and suffering awareness that Mephostophilis adopted throughout the production strengthened the sense of hell on earth. This is what Mephostophilis's character usually suggests to modern directors, and though it adds depth to the play, the focus on the tragic devil often overshadows Faustus's tragedy and can make him look more foolish.

In line with the general interpretation of the production, no striking theatrical effects were used to drag Faustus to hell. The trap he fell in was more of a psychological one—an end that has proved more appealing to modern audiences. In his last speech, Ian McKellen, older in appearance (see illustrations 33 and 39), was "grasping at life" at the "stars move still", and "shout[ing] in piercing anguish", "feverishly, busily, apprehensively wait[ing] for the devil to claim him" (*EN*). He seemed to have wrestled the life out of his own body, and died from mental exhaustion, descending into the abyss of psychological destruction. The three devils sat cool and immobile on their chairs and delivered their last long Chorus as if watching the end of an experiment. And, rather than having the scholars come on stage to discover Faustus's limbs, the Chorus narrated this event from the *Faust-book*, which seems to have sounded more moving to Barton:

when it was day, the scholars arose and went into the room where they had left him, which they found all besprinkled with blood and his brains cleaving to the wall: for Lucifer had beaten him from one wall against another. Then sought they for his body, and at length they found it in the yard.

It was unanimously agreed that the staging, acting, and textual editing all worked together to present Faustus's mental state, and thus won a unity of plot out of Marlowe's play, making it more "comprehensible" (*SLP*). The production was seen as "a vivid essay of a soul in torment, with the greatest of Marlowe's poetry beautifully preserved" (*DM*). Barton was praised for having purged the play of its alleged triviality, bridging its beginning and end admirably: "to have connected those two peaks without the usual collapse into triviality [was] a huge achievement" ( $T_2$ ), and to have transformed Marlowe's "broken-backed theological treatise into a thrilling theatrical event [where] word and image coalesce" ( $G_2$ ) was thought to have been worth the

effort. Some reviewers found the production a "revolutionary" one, as it united philosophical and theatrical traditions by "[looking] back to the medieval puppet play which started it, [anticipating] the philosophical profundity of Goethe's pinnacle, and [hinting] at the Existentialists" (*STel*<sub>1</sub>). It seems, as Stanley Wells has once rightly noted, that

the more drastic the adaptation, the more easily will we be able to accept it in its own right. Indeed, the more likely it is to have validity in its own right—to be a transmutation of the original; a distinct if indebted creation.<sup>64</sup>

Unfortunately the idea that Marlowe's text is flawed and that Barton had redeemed this in his adaptation seems to have prevented the reviewers from writing objectively and fairly about Marlowe's play as such. A great disadvantage of Barton's version, which appears to have been overlooked by the enthusiasts, would have been the puzzlement and confusion caused to the theatre-goers who for the first time came to see a play by Marlowe. One reviewer remarked that the weakness in Marlowe's text was "hardly a reason for not staging it as the young genius conceived it", and he went on to ask "Do we hack out the trivia which exists in some of Shakespeare's greatest plays?" (*YP*). There is no doubt that a story about a pact with the devil does not have a strong appeal to modern audiences who take a more relaxed view of religion and superstition than their Elizabethan counterparts, but in trying to modernize the story Barton had changed *Dr. Faustus* into a different play. It is the extent of the adaptation, rather than the conception as such, which is to be deplored. It is difficult to come to terms, as one reviewer put it, with the fact that genuine Marlovian scenes are cut to be replaced "with incidents from a source that the poet knew, doubtless considered, and certainly rejected" (*DT*<sub>3</sub>). Barton's answer to this is that "many passages from the *Faust-book* can illumine Marlowe's text and accord with it better than any of the non-Marlovian sections we cut in this production".<sup>65</sup> Barton's attempt to resolve contradictory aspects in the play is theatrically commendable, but is not his approach more contradictory than Marlowe's itself? At one point he admits that to achieve his desire to confine the set to Faustus's study he had to "change the location of three scenes by minor re-wording and to omit one other (the Pope scene) which could not be played there";<sup>66</sup> and at another he claims that he does not approach a text with a deliberate interpretation, rather the interpretation itself emerges out of the text:

I probably do less background than most of my colleagues...I prefer to immerse myself in the text itself [and] start rehearsals with certain feelings and ideas about the play, but without a detailed overall interpretation. (*P&P*)



The adaptation seems to have raised more questions than it provided answers. If the devils were controlling the events, why should Mephostophilis be very submissive? Why should Faustus be shown as a schizophrenic and hallucinating invalid, if the point is that he is conspired against? And why should Faustus manipulate the Angels, and have the power to throw the Evil Angel into the fire at the end? In addition to that, if Faustus was meant to be deluded by the illusory nature of the apparitions, where do the Emperor and his entourage, who watched and admired the life-size puppets of Alexander and his Paramour, stand? If Barton meant to offer a psychological reading of the play, what was the function of the running moral commentary provided by the Chorus? Furthermore, if Barton's reason for cutting the comic scenes is that they trivialise the tone, why should he leave the Horse-courser of all the comic characters? Is it because he is the only comic character in direct contact with Faustus? But is not the leg-pulling incident more trivialising to the tone than other comic scenes? And why did he extend the Vanholt scene with such irrelevant matter? The only reason for the extension of this scene is that it presumably showed Faustus's sexual appetite tantalizingly increased and then—in an epitome of his whole life of frustrated desires—thwarted. But, accepting this as a reason, why not benefit from what Marlowe offers in the Helen moment of perfect beauty embodied in front of Faustus, but denied him?

Barton's selective approach remains something of a puzzle. His production, however, became a source for future adaptations insofar as it examined the extent (and limits) to which a director can change *Dr. Faustus*, whether because he/she is prompted by a specific interpretation of the text, or because he/she is handicapped, unlike Barton, by a stage with limited resources, a small budget, or a small cast. The latter was the case with the next production in this discussion, that is the Actors Touring Company's where the adaptation was interestingly inspired by performance conditions, and where the image of Faustus largely drew on Barton's.

In 1987, The Actors Touring Company (A.T.C.) toured with their production of *Dr. Faustus* using a text that had been drastically altered by the director, Mark Brickman, and with only three actors available. Among the many theatres and stages that accommodated the production, it formed part of the Cheltenham Festival of Art and Literature, where it was produced at the Fringe Theatre in Shaftesbury Hall, on 5 and 6 October.<sup>67</sup>

The thrust stage of Shaftesbury Hall, and the simple set that was designed for touring purposes, meant that the production was based on fairly rudimentary stage

conditions. Movable blocks covered with either red or black cloths stood for chairs and tables, which were basically the only furnishings asked for in the text used. The use of only two basic colours added a consistently gloomy and mysterious atmosphere. The play was set in a "swotty, ashen-faced, flirting with evil in a study that seems to have been designed by an undertaker..." (O<sub>2</sub>). Apart from giving a sense of unity, the simplicity of the set helped the audience to concentrate on the words spoken and on the small number of actors.

Among the basically plain properties (candles, books, bottles of champagne, and an hour-glass...etc.) some skeletons were used, not to impersonate any devilish creature, but to figure as one of the attractions of a journey which Faustus made to the underworld, and which was part of the director's addition to the text. There was also a tape-recorder, almost permanently on stage, and in the conjuring scene it replaced Mephostophilis's first horrifying appearance, when it started playing automatically at Faustus's mention of Mephostophilis's name, providing a more modern way of having a ghostly presence: "We did not want the superhuman aspects. We wanted something more in tune with the time, like Ghost-busters, something the audience could relate to, thus we had a tape-recorder switched on automatically..."<sup>68</sup>

The main feature of the production was the changes made in the text. The A.T.C. is known for its tendency towards adaptation.<sup>69</sup> Two major reasons, however, led Mark Brickman to adapt this particular text: firstly, the circumstances surrounding the production, and secondly, his wish to apply his own interpretation to the play. Each reason led to the other. Being able to afford only three actors, Mark Brickman had to "find a way of doing the play with such a small number of actors" (Brickman, Interview). He dispensed altogether with Cornelius, Robin and Dick, the Horse-courser, the Hostess, the Vanholts, and the Scholars. He did not think the comedy unworthy of being staged; on the contrary he thought that it "does work better on stage than people say", but he tried to jettison it to "focus on the relationship between Faustus and Mephostophilis, which is the heart of the play" (Brickman, Interview). Both the A and B-texts were used, and *The Faust-book*, and Lucian's *Dialogue of the Dead* were drawn on to fill the gaps caused by the extensive editing of the text. The result was a two-hour performance, short enough to go on tour.

The problem that still remained was how to stage Faustus's travels around the world. The splendour of these could not be achieved without some ceremonial magnificence that usually necessitates a crowd. Mark Brickman was led to the idea of having Mephostophilis and Beelzebub (the only two characters apart from Faustus)



play every one that Faustus met "in the sense that they were two devils playing a trick upon him, so if he wanted to meet the Pope or the Emperor, they would be both" (Brickman, Interview). This would seem to be the only way possible to stage *Dr. Faustus* with three actors. The outcome is very different from what Marlowe seems to aim at in presenting Faustus's travels. The effect is claustrophobic instead of peripatetic. This, however, fitted well with Mark Brickman's interpretation of Faustus's life. He sees Faustus as an unheroic figure, who is unable to travel anywhere, unable even to blaspheme:

Faustus is basically afraid of death. That was how I've seen him. I do not have a heroic conception of Faustus at all. I see him as a little man, greedy, stupid and very afraid of death. (Brickman, Interview)

Consequently, the Faustus of the A.T.C. was deprived of the Good and Evil Angels' dispute, which in Marlowe's text provides the sceptical side of Faustus's character. Peter Lindford's Faustus did not possess enough intelligence to even develop such an intellectual conflict. The audience was given "a picture of an abandoned Man, and not one over whom the forces of good and evil are actually fighting" (ST). Peter Lindford drew an image of a snivelling and impotent don with a childish and stupid stare, lolling into a state of total oblivion by silly and infantile games prepared for him by Mephostophilis and Beelzebub:

Faustus...is no brave Renaissance scholar...but a neurotic little don in a shabby suit on the look out for furtive thrills...more often he talks in the infuriating whine of a spoilt child demanding sweets in ever larger quantities". (DT<sub>4</sub>)

His appearance was that of "a graceless bookworm with lavatory-brush hair, [and] with a life-time of frustrated sensuality pulsating behind his pebble-glass..." (T<sub>3</sub>).

In contrast to the unattractive Faustus, George Anton, as Mephostophilis, and David Westhead, as Beelzebub, gave a subtlety to the characters of these two devils, showing their ability to dupe Faustus effortlessly. No devilish features were attempted, except that Mephostophilis's elaborate make-up, beautified him as an indication that he was a fallen angel.<sup>70</sup> Dressed in tight-fitting black clothes, Mephostophilis looked "sexy and languidly demonic" (I<sub>2</sub>). He adopted a confident attitude that made Faustus's ignorance pathetic. He seemed "tanned—toasted by hellfire—with a languorous insolence that ensures that even when obeying orders he is free" (O<sub>2</sub>).

An awkwardly intimate relationship developed between Mephostophilis and Faustus. The production was filled with "erotic encounter[s]" between them ( $G_3$ ). The pageant of the Seven Deadly Sins was enacted solely by Mephostophilis, as a one-man show, and had echoes of an orgy in movements and gestures. Mephostophilis "flowed from one to another with mercurial ease" ( $O_2$ ), while Faustus danced to jazz music with a bottle of champagne and a cigar, like one indulging in his craze for sensual pleasures. The show ended with Lechery giving Faustus full sexual satisfaction, explicitly on stage, after which Faustus "[tried] to dance himself into orgiastic ecstasy in an acutely embarrassing exhibition of willed jollity" ( $I_1$ ). This "ambiguous relationship" ( $T_3$ ) reached its climax at the end of the play when Mephostophilis cradles Faustus in his arms and "extracts his soul with a long lethal kiss to the paradisaal accompaniment of the Schubert Quintet" ( $T_3$ ).<sup>71</sup>

Beelzebub was also dressed in black but contrasted with Mephostophilis by being less familiar with Faustus, appearing to him only in disguise as Wagner, the Pope, the Emperor, and Charon (a character added from Lucian's *Dialogue of the Dead*). Mark Brickman tried to contrast the two devils by leaving all the evil work to Beelzebub, who "splendidly metamorphosed through all subsidiary roles" ( $I_1$ ).<sup>72</sup> Most of the time he was "lurking and watchful but silent upstage" ( $FT_1$ ), incarnated as Wagner.

Thus events developed as a conspiracy prepared against Faustus. From the very beginning both Mephostophilis and Beelzebub were watching him. Beelzebub, in Wagner's attire, delivered the first Chorus fused with part of the devils' last speech in the original "Thus from infernal Dis do we ascend/ To view the subjects of our monarchy..." (xviii,1-7), which, shifted to the beginning, gave a strong sense of fatalism. As Faustus was delivering the first speech, the two devils stood flanking the stage, and Beelzebub kept bringing black books, handed over to him by Mephostophilis, to put on Faustus's desk. Faustus gabbled his first speech, with no sense of involvement. This was meant to show that "Faustus has already decided, and the review of science is something he has to go through to get to magic, and to justify his decision" (Brickman, Interview). During Faustus's speech Mephostophilis and Beelzebub were watching disinterestedly, as if attending a scene with a familiar end. Occasionally, Beelzebub would prompt Faustus, as if every word had been arranged for him beforehand.

On a sign from Beelzebub, Mephostophilis next produced a rich red robe, to appear to Faustus as Valdes. After Valdes and Faustus left the stage, Beelzebub



commented on the vanity of Faustus's endeavours, taking over Faustus's speech in the original in which he says "Why, the signory of Emden shall be mine" (v,24-6, changing 'mine' to 'thine') but ending it with Mephostophilis's words exclusive to the B-text "But all in vain" (xix,15), thus stressing the absurdity of Faustus's existence. For the conjuring of Mephostophilis, Faustus lined up his conjuring paraphernalia (candles, bottles, and books) on the floor, like a child who is preparing for his favourite pastime. Mephostophilis appeared to him without exaggerated stage-effects, apart from a brief clap of thunder, looking totally unconcerned, as if bored with Faustus's immature desires. He burst into scornful laughter at Faustus's "I charge thee to return and change thy shape..." (iii,25-6), and as Faustus was reading the pact, he stood with his back to him looking as confident as ever, even lighting a "casual cigarette" (*FT*<sub>1</sub>), rendering all Faustus's words utterly pathetic. The show of "*crowns and rich apparel*" (v), was turned into an act of ridicule and his questions to Mephostophilis about the universe, hell and heaven did not show Faustus as a sceptic with a quenchless yearning to obtain knowledge, but rather as a mimic of intellectuality. His conclusion that "hell's a fable" (v,128) was "not flung out with a breezy, atheistical swagger, but timorously, as though expected instantly to be falsified" (*I*<sub>1</sub>).

The papal banquet (which, for no apparent reason, came before the Seven Deadly Sins and Faustus's question "who made the world", vi,69) and the Imperial court scene were also staged as not very clever tricks played by two adults on a child. Both Mephostophilis and Beelzebub continually gave signals to each other, winking, coughing and nodding behind Faustus's back. Beelzebub took both the roles of Emperor and Pope, using a simple item of clothing for disguise, either pulling a red hat to indicate the Pope, or producing a crown to personify the Emperor. Every comic potential was wrung out of the banquet: "The jokes on the Pope and the Emperor, with Faustus gorging stolen food and wrapping himself in a table-cloth as an imperial robe, [were] pushed to the very limit of infantile omnipotence" (*T*<sub>3</sub>). Beelzebub, as a ludicrous Pope, managed to amuse the audience as well as Faustus. He read the dirge while whipping himself, and this self-inflicted punishment produced roars of laughter from audiences, who it seemed were as ready to enjoy a joke on the Pope as Elizabethan audiences were. The Emperor's role was merged with Benvolio's, and Faustus was given black sun-glasses (instead of horns) by Mephostophilis, to put on the Emperor/Beelzebub who pretended to have been hurt.

Behind this atmosphere of knockabout farce was felt a saturnine mood. The orgiastic show of the Seven Deadly Sins ended with Faustus's wish to see hell. It was then followed by a journey to the underworld to which Charon, introduced as a new

character, ferried Faustus, and lectured him on the bitterness of Man's destiny, and on how the love of pleasure leads to damnation.<sup>73</sup> A very eerie effect sprang mainly from a rack of skeletons of once famous personalities which Charon fetched to show Faustus what became of Men after death. On a highly tragic note Charon explained to Faustus how death had struck these people at the height of their desires and taken them to a place of no return. Every time Faustus became reflective, he was given a glass of champagne. Helen's skeleton was on the rack, this replacing her first appearance to the scholars in the original text. As Faustus could not identify her among other skeletons, she was pointed out to him by Charon, at which Faustus laughed bitterly and delivered himself of lines meant to ridicule the Greeks and the beauty of Helen disfigured by the hand of death—a prosaic echo of the famous apostrophe to Helen: "And is this what those thousand ships sailed for from all over Greece?...how it came to pass that the Greeks did not perceive that it was for the sake of such a transitory object, that they gave themselves all that trouble..."

When Faustus asked Mephostophilis to show him other famous beauties of the world, Mephostophilis pointed to the rest of skeletons giving each a name, and this made Faustus comment dejectedly: "I see nothing but bare bones and skulls, in which nothing is to be discriminated". This speech, like the whole trip, focused on the bare and monstrous truth of Death, and thus chillingly conveyed the desperately trivial benefits Faustus gained from his pact with the devil. At the end of the trip Faustus danced and laughed hysterically. Mark Brickman wanted to show that "because Faustus did not understand death he laughed at it" (Brickman, Interview). This point seems to have reached the audience. One reviewer commented that, whether

settling down with a cigar and champagne for a floor-show of the Seven Deadly Sins, or attempting a ragtime dance in the Underworld, all [that Faustus] communicated [was] a sense of desperate bravado. (T<sub>3</sub>)

As there were no Angels to tell Faustus about what "celestial happiness" he has lost, Mark Brickman (as did John Barton) had included an image of paradise which tragically and effectively contrasted with the journey to hell:

I wanted a moment where he had a glimpse of what he might have achieved in heaven, so I wanted a dream or a vision of some ideal which both he and Mephostophilis had lost at that point. (Brickman, Interview)

This glimpse was given in a long speech by Mephostophilis (see Appendix D), while Faustus laid his head on his lap, and in the background was heard atmospheric music



which was meant to "create a sense of longing and pathos" (Brickman, Interview). The "pain of being outcast [was] superbly conveyed" (O<sub>2</sub>).

The second sight of Helen (reminiscent of Barton's Helen) only showed Faustus at the height of pathos. He came on stage in a loose dressing-gown untidily buttoned, his face sooty and panicky. A puppet was brought by Mephostophilis and dumped in Faustus's lap, who lay with it and caressed it with a sickening sensuality. She was

no more than a tacky puppet with a white-masked face, and in the evening's most chilling moments, the mask [slipped] to reveal a skull beneath the plastic skin, just as Faustus [was] attempting to make his soul immortal, not with a kiss but a swift knee-trembler.(DT<sub>4</sub>)

Using a puppet to impersonate Helen was probably necessitated by the shortage of actors, but it was also a deliberate attempt at a thematic statement:

I wanted to go with this irony, that rather than him having a beautiful woman there, I wanted us to relate it to the skeletons and bones he's seen earlier when he went to the underworld. We did go with the very particular line of thought in the production, because he did not meet a real Emperor nor a real Pope, so there was no real Helen, thus he became more of a stupid character... (Brickman, Interview)

In that way Mark Brickman achieved the consistency which John Barton failed to fulfil in presenting the different apparitions.

Within this interpretation, one was not led to expect a spectacular ending to the play. Accompanied by discordant music, Mephostophilis and Beelzebub cleared the stage of all objects except a skull and an hour-glass, as if taking Faustus's possessions and preparing his coffin. Faustus's last speech was unremittingly accompanied by funeral music which nearly drowned his words. He delivered it in a panic, gasping for breath, and sobbing hysterically. On the stroke of twelve, to intensify the horror, the moment of utter exhaustion was held in a short pause, as if nothing would happen. But then Mephostophilis dashed in and sucked forth Faustus's soul with a long devouring kiss that, to at least one reviewer, seemed a homosexual image "in reiteration that gay behaviour leads literally to the Devil" (G<sub>3</sub>). In fact it was not meant as such. The choice of this way of presenting the finale was prompted by the lack of anything but simple means of staging:

It was obvious at the end of the play that we were not going to be able to do it with smoke, trapdoors and stage-machinery, so we had to find a kind of psychological way of carrying that moment through. I just had an image which was that in the same way that Helen sucked Faustus's soul out of him as he kissed her, that...Mephostophilis should kiss him and suck his soul out. (Brickman, Interview)

Inevitably this meant that there was no sympathy towards the sinking Faustus at the end:

With such an approach, much of the poetry inevitably goes for nothing, and the loss is at its most acute in the normally riveting final scene...[where] it is hard to feel any sympathy for Lindford's snivelling wreck of a man. (DT<sub>4</sub>)

In terms of stage history, the A.T.C.'s adaptation was a very important treatment of *Dr. Faustus*. It looked at modern equivalents of Faustus,<sup>74</sup> and explored means of staging the play on a small budget and, probably for the first time in the stage history of the play, with a cast of three. The experiment with a minimal cast produced the interpretation: "we altered the play, Faustus might have become ignoble, but we had to do it that way with only three actors" (Brickman, Interview). The play became an epitome of human pathos: a man, in a desperate attempt to escape death, sells his soul to the devil and in return receives only an illusion of knowledge and sensual gratification.

Like Barton then, Mark Brickman achieved unity of plot, but in his case it was thematically a more coherent one, even though unpremeditated. This was because Faustus was the only deluded person, and all the events were understood in this context. The magic tricks, played as they were by two actors on Faustus, were thought "more acceptable" (ST<sub>el2</sub>) than they would have been if the characters involved had been meant to be a 'real' Emperor, and a 'real' Pope. Thus the production solved the credibility of the supernatural aspects, which is one of the major problems in staging the play. Furthermore, Mark Brickman avoided the kind of moral commentary heard in Barton's production, whether by Choruses or by Angels, which might have clashed with the psychological line of interpretation.

The production combined cost-effectiveness and artistic aptness; it was a welcome experiment: "the whole thing [was] an object lesson in how simple means can achieve strong effects and how small budget can measure up to a great work" (ST). In these terms, one reviewer found the production highly significant:



We have waited too long for solid artistic evidence that classic plays, with their large uncommercial casts, can be made more cost-effective and efficient in the market places when performed by a radically reduced number of players. *Dr. Faustus* can in the name of expressionism, Theatre of the absurd, or symbolism, effortlessly be conveyed by just a trio of thespians. (G<sub>3</sub>)

As the first of its kind, the production was seen as an event of which even the R.S.C. "could be proud" (STel<sub>2</sub>). Undoubtedly, in theatrical, economical, and textual terms the production was an experimental success, but again for audiences who hardly knew Marlowe, it would be less informative. And to those who believe in faithfulness to the literary text, it would seem a ruthless vandalism. One of those is Anthony Clark who directed a "virtually uncut" version of *Dr. Faustus* for the Young Vic Company,<sup>75</sup> at the Young Vic Theatre, London, with a view entirely different from those of John Barton and Mark Brickman, a view not unsimilar to William Poel's. The production opened on 21 April, 1988, and continued until 21 May. The Young Vic Theatre Company has been known over the last two decades for its aim of making classical plays easily accessible, especially to a young audience, and particularly to students.

Anthony Clark, thus, saw no risk in presenting the whole text of *Dr. Faustus*. He used the longer version of the B-text "only with some of the clown bits, and the speech of the Emperor, in which he explains why he wants to see Alexander, from the A-version".<sup>76</sup> There were no attempts to find any modern parallels to Faustus, allowing the audiences to "draw whatever relations and analogies they like" (Clark, Interview). Any narrowing of focus on one aspect in the play was avoided "because then you have to cut" (Clark, Interview). According to Antony Clark,

great plays can't be cut and dried or forced into a context; what we are doing is not cutting the play to fit into a particular interpretation, but we're trying to find the heart of the play, which is the tension between free will and the limitation of human aspiration. It will only be cut if we can't find a way of making it work on stage....We'll celebrate the ambiguities and show the complexities...<sup>77</sup>

The middle and comic scenes of the play were played in full (probably for the first time in the modern stage-history of the play) with an apparent conviction in their significance and applicability. Anthony Clark saw in Faustus a versatile image hospitable to all elements in the play. He saw him as an old man "who has lived in a close community of an academic world and has been denied a certain way of living, a sort of epicurean and more luxurious one..." (Clark, Interview). Once he has involved himself in a pact with the devil the audience has to see to what extent Faustus's life-

style has changed. This should be achieved, according to Anthony Clark, through the comic scenes:

You have to have a scene where Faustus is receiving money, where he is receiving applause. There is a connection between these scenes. If we could not make them work on stage in any way, then we could cut them. (Clark, Interview).

For Anthony Clark, the often rejected scenes launched a dramatic exploration in how you move from one type of theatre into another with all sorts of different styles of presentation. The heterogeneous mixture of the tragic and the comic in the play impressed him as a reflection of the shifting fortunes of the characters (Faustus, Bruno, Benvolio, and even Mephostophilis and Lucifer) in the light of Renaissance thought that perceived for Man a possibility of changing his destiny. Thus the play is a mixture of two worlds: the medieval, which denies this possibility, and the Renaissance, which explores it. These two worlds, according to Anthony Clark, are deliberately introduced by Marlowe "in an attempt to explore stage-craft" (Clark, Interview).

The approach to staging was simple. There were hardly any scenic changes; nevertheless, spectacular effects were achieved by simple means. The style was Elizabethan in its free use of time and space. An informal atmosphere was created by an open stage surrounded on three sides by the audience (see illustration 46). Intimacy between audience and actors was intensified by having all the ten actors who formed the cast (except the Faustus, Peter Guinness) watch the action when not themselves involved in it. Dressed as black-capped students, they were seated in a row of desks that flanked the stage at audience level and formed the first row of spectators, thus blending illusionistic and non-illusionistic theatre. Though the main reason for this was to find a way to stage the play with only ten actors, it also gave the production a consistently scholarly atmosphere.

The set also reflected an academic environment in addition to a medieval one. Faustus's study remained in the back centre of stage. It was a circular space lined with books which formed its "imprisoning walls" (*T*<sub>4</sub>); and, symbolically, it was only through the gaps between these bookshelves that Faustus could be seen whenever he sat in his study. The convex curve of the book-case, like the stem of a ship, could slide open to reveal Faustus's study. This way of mounting the study made it a flexible one that served different points in the action. In it Faustus engaged in contemplation, and in it the audience could see him with the scholars while Wagner spoke of the banquet that was going on (xviii,5-10). And at the end it was flaming with red lights, indicating the hell into which Faustus was pulled.



Above the study, marbled columns rose to form another interior that suggested a "circular temple" ( $T_4$ ), and that served as another level on which Lucifer appeared to Faustus, and on which Mephostophilis and Faustus flew over the universe, and watched the papal procession approach. This gave prominence to some lines, making the image fit the words spoken, such as Mephostophilis's description of Rome (viii,32-46), and Faustus's lines in which he gives an account of their trip around the world (1-23), and most of all the lines where he says: "So high our dragons soar'd into the air/ That looking down the earth appear'd to me/ No bigger than my hand in quantity" (71-3) (see illustration 47). Over this circular temple hung some metallic images of planets, indicating Heaven, and a snake offering a "naive account of the fall from heaven with its eye to the centre of the stage".<sup>78</sup> The whole stage was capped with a "brilliant blue sky-chart" ( $T_4$ ). The main aim behind the set was to create a medieval world of Heaven, Hell and Earth, with a Renaissance atmosphere achieved by the use of emblems of power and learning, such as the books and the planets. Kate Burnett, the designer, aimed at a set which could be "consistent with the constraints of a small cast...", and at the same time, "serve the dynamics of a play written and performed at the end of the 16th century" (Kate Burnett, Action Pack). Audiences' reaction suggested that she had been successful: "Heaven, Earth and Hell are all grandly encompassed in Kate Burnett's impressive ceiling-to-floor set" ( $TO$ ).

There were obvious attempts to assemble images that condensed many meanings into visual eloquence. Apart from the symbols mentioned above, the floor of the stage, for instance, consisted of grave stones and table tops, which were vandalised and cracked to reflect the most powerful of evil images which, according to Kate Burnett, was "perverted good...good turned to evil use" (Kate Burnett, Action Pack). The set was praised for its consistency with the meaning of the play:

the sight of Kate Burnett's set, before the action begins, is reassuring in its simplicity, its practicality, and its clear respect for the playwright. ( $DT_5$ )

Throughout the action a strategy of ensemble acting was adopted. The ten actors shared the many roles in the play, doubling or, as one reviewer called it, "sextupling" ( $TES$ ). Having established their identity as students by occupying the desks at the very beginning, the actors mounted on the stage to deliver the chorus "as though the story has already happened..." (Clark, Interview). And as they returned to their seats to watch Faustus coming on for his first scene, it seemed as though the story was to unravel in a flashback and they were to watch themselves, with the audience, telling and enacting the story again. Faustus's first speech was put across as an

academic disputation with his students, who shared some of the lines, and thus the claustrophobic nature of Faustus's involvement in his studies was not emphasised. Though this way of staging the opening speech "grew out of rehearsals" (Clark, Interview), it had its advantages:

There are obvious reasons of stage-craft for having the cast as Faustus' scholars and working in an ensemble style. It helps the changes and transformation by giving an overall dynamic. The scholars also create a bridge between the play and the modern audience, making Faustus more believable. It is as if they are commenting on 'one of our number who is going off the rails'. The retrospective quality they give to the story helps the tragedy and the irony of it. (Clark, Action Pack)

The actors moved from one role into another with flexibility, using convertible costumes and easy-to-handle items of clothing to help the metamorphosis. Producing costumes from up-their-sleeves or out of their desks, one of them turned into Wagner by simply flinging an apron around his waist; two others pulled out red caps to turn into Valdes and Cornelius; and another two personified the Angels by simply sitting on opposite sides of the row of desks, wearing the contrasting colours of white and black, and speaking the lines above a sound as of wind, which gave a supernatural touch, and suggested a conflict occurring in Faustus's mind. Scholars turned into devils in flaming red, by flinging gowns over their heads and approaching Faustus to the sound of "trumpeting farts, or by producing tambourines from their desks to celebrate the diabolic pact, a sort of damnation Army" (FT<sub>2</sub>). The show of '*crowns and rich apparel*' was made spectacular by simple means: a vast canopy, gold, blue and silver was spread over Faustus and became a blasphemous cope for him to wear. This came out of one of the students' desks and, flung over Faustus's shoulders, produced a sudden dazzling effect intended to show "an overt display of wealth and power" (Clark, Interview).

Mephostophilis suddenly emerged from the group of seated students, and the horror of the moment was achieved by the simplest of means through effective musical accompaniment. Amid dazzling lights and with an ear-splitting mixture of metallic music, banging of desks, and stamping of feet, he appeared "bald and screaming...to a jolting impact" (FT).<sup>79</sup> Likewise, Helen was conjured up for the scholars by wrapping one of the students in gold and black until 'he'<sup>80</sup> stood as immobile as a doll, while another student exclaimed "Too simple is my wit to tell her praise" (xviii,28), with a pause after 'Too simple', as if stressing the triviality of such magic tricks. Denizens of hell were thus treated sceptically as no more than stage-tricks, and magic shows were



made to be easily seen through by the audience, to avoid distraction by elaborate stage-effects:

If we had spectacular effects you'd be more amazed by the effect itself than by what it was about....What I'm trying to do is say 'what is this bit of magic about', keeping it simple and understandable. You'll still get the shocks and the surprises...  
(Clark, Action Pack)

Anthony Clark found that it is inherent in Marlowe's play that there is no such thing as magic, apart from theatrical illusion and showmanship.

The papal scenes were played in their entirety, including the saving of Bruno which has often been cut by directors. The scenes were given considerable attention in terms of spectacle and grandeur. John Strickland, as the Pope, appeared in an enormous robe and huge crown giving a mocking replica of magnificence (see illustration 25). Saint Peter's Chair was a swing with protruding metallic teeth, which, after the Pope mounted on Bruno's back, was left swinging over Bruno. Though the image seemed to echo Tamburlainian sadism, having the Pope "pushed back and forth on St. Peter's chair as if it were a child's swing [was simply] a nice touch" (*G*<sub>4</sub>). In general, the papal Court was "genuinely funny...presided over by John Strickland's Pope [who] unnervingly resembl[ed] Paul VI" (*T*<sub>4</sub>). The Pope's attitudes, however, rightly reflected arrogance, covetousness, and viciousness—all inherent in Marlowe's play—<sup>81</sup> so much so that, when Faustus (who was watching with Mephostophilis from above the study) disrupted the banquet, it was enjoyed by the audience as a heroic act. The richly equipped table was turned upside down and Faustus entangled the friars with the vast white table-cloth and whipped them while, trembling all over, they were reading the dirge which produced loud laughter from the audience.

The rest of Faustus's travels were also played with spectacular effects, and on a highly comic note, but at the same time bringing out significant relevancies to the meaning of the play. The Emperor, for instance, lavishly dressed and carrying boxes of jewelry, was an image of covetousness. The Duchess gulped the grapes in an obvious parallel to Gluttony. The scenes with Robin and Dick proved more comic and also more relevant than they are usually thought to be, particularly that they were given to actors not less skillful than Peter Guinness in the title-role. Also the connection of the comic characters to Faustus's household was stressed by having them help Wagner in tidying-up Faustus's study.

Anthony Clark found the scene of the Seven Deadly Sins the most puzzling, because it was supposed to condense various meanings in one image:

It is difficult to know at what level to play it....It has to be a show from hell, therefore it has to be something that Faustus does not quite well recognize. We thought of putting it in modern dress, but then Faustus will not need to say 'and what art thou...?'. Faustus is seeing something he has never seen before. (Clark, Interview)

Accordingly, the unrecognisable quality of the Sins was realised by representing them as caricatures, using large rod-puppets manipulated by actors. This "[achieved] a Muppet-like verisimilitude..." (*WOL*<sub>2</sub>). The puppets were "based on a wire structure [that] hang from the head...straight over" (Kate Burnett, *Action Pack*), and each showed the character of the particular sin. Though this design originated in the necessity for quick changes imposed by a small cast, it also aimed at giving a "naive and abstract" quality to the Sins (*ibid*). The show obtained significance from Faustus's reaction. Instead of looking straight at the parade, he was looking away with Lucifer behind him pressing hard on his shoulders, as if forcing him to listen. This seemed to tell us that Faustus was seeing the Sins in the eye of his mind, as if they were a vague reflection of himself. Faustus's facial expressions alternated between false joy and real pain, a mixture that acquired meaning:

he has to find it [the show of the Seven Deadly Sins] funny, so hell will not turn to pieces [straightaway], while listening to horrendous lines. It also has to be a restricted laughter so that Faustus will not further condemn himself. (Clark, Interview)

The pain Faustus showed while listening to them caused a loss of the comic touch inherent in their words, and rendered Faustus's line 'O, how this sight doth delight my soul!' (*vi*, 170) somewhat unapplicable. Yet, this pain, along with the fact that Faustus was not looking straight at the show, appeared to be an indication that Faustus has hell within him and thus the concept of hell as a state of mind was established without having to stress a neurotic aspect in Faustus's character. Correspondingly, it was deliberate "to show Faustus dying and pulled to hell in the same place which involved him in studying" (Clark, Interview), as will be discussed later.

The ensemble acting which was one of the strengths of this production had its disadvantages when it came to portraying the tragic feelings exclusive to Faustus. Peter Guinness had the dignity needed for the part but he seemed to have avoided excelling other characters, and hence the view that the "great moments and purple



passages [defeated] him" (*TES*). In addition, he made Faustus too proud ever to develop a conflict, or to feel any fear, and thus the part lacked any internal dialectic: "his fierce, scholarly sobriety never [suggested] a hero still torn between God and the Devil..." (*G<sub>4</sub>*). At the same time, he was also too dignified to enjoy the knockabout tricks prepared for him by Mephostophilis, and though his pride had something of the heroic to a modern audience, Faustus

[did] not seem to be a virtuous man rushing towards his doom...[he projected] no sense of being really wicked, of enjoying sin enough to risk damnation, nor of wanting to be saved. (*I<sub>3</sub>*)

Anthony Clark admitted the fact that the most difficult task for the actor was to show that "there [was] a real struggle between good and evil" (Clark, Interview). Though this might be due to Peter Guinness' own failure to show this 'real struggle', Anthony Clark seems to believe that it is a difficulty in Marlowe's Faustus:

He cannot repent because he is too arrogant and self-assured. He cannot admit his mistake even till the end when he curses his parents. He never believed the ultimate experience of hell. (Clark, Interview)

Although Anthony Clark did not attempt to search for modern echoes in Faustus, he saw in his indifferent attitude a neutrality that would appeal to modern audiences:

Nowadays we don't have a shared universal understanding of good and evil, it is relative....This is why Faustus is such a modern character. He's a pragmatist. He decides what he wants...he does not connect it with good and evil....He embarks on a path which is recognizably making a pact with a devil, but you have to believe in ultimate good and eternal damnation to be affected. Faustus does not believe the devil has any power over him. A character who does not seem to have a conscience has a very attractive pull for a modern audience. (Clark, Interview)

Faustus's arrogance contrasted sharply with the highly tragic note on which Stephen Jenn played Mephostophilis, probably encouraged by Anthony Clark's view of him as a "tormented soul" (Clark, Interview). Bald-headed and in a monk's habit, he executed Faustus's orders, often with a head bent in sorrow at Faustus's unawareness of his situation. He gave "an excellent [Mephostophilis]...watchful, grave and stirred to compassion by Faustus's tears" (*G<sub>4</sub>*). "Frequently motionless" (*T<sub>4</sub>*), he spoke in a low voice full of muted desolation and disapproval that seemed to emerge from a rich experience. His was a "deprecatory manner, pronouncing with aged-old [sic]

resignation his famous line 'why, this is hell'..." (Sc). During the parade of the Seven Deadly Sins he crouched apart on the floor to watch Faustus with bitter sadness, unable to help him in the presence of Lucifer. He shared Faustus's tricks, carried Helen on his back and dumped her on the floor for Faustus to use and abuse, and at the end he left Faustus to his doom in an almost fatherly, heart-broken withdrawal. Stephen Jenn succeeded, however, in reconciling both sides of Mephostophilis's character. At some points he displayed a certain scorn for Faustus's blindness and a devious determination to let him suffer alone what he himself had once experienced. Lurking always above or up-stage, he watched Faustus with a "piercing stare [that made] him seem more sinister than he deserv[ed]" (WOL<sub>2</sub>). His sometimes passive attitude intensified the threatening nature of his relation with Faustus; the "eternity of loss in his sorrowful glance, [made him] a powerfully evil presence" (TES).

In spite of her devilish connection, Helen was also made a sympathetic character. Brought in on Mephostophilis's back—the only suggestion of her connection with the devil—she touched Faustus tenderly, and submissively disappeared with him into the study. She was meant to appear more of a victim of Faustus's desires:

What Faustus wants seems to be always at the cost of somebody else, that seems to be consistent through all the scenes...Helen is a woman who was abducted...and was a victim of her own beauty, so we wanted to show that one of the scholars was put on the pedestal for others to enjoy, but she herself does not know what they have seen. The second appearance she was carried by the devil...to make her as passive as possible. (Clark, Interview)

Hers seemed to be a suffering existence, exhausted from constant attempt to live up to men's expectation. This was an innovating view of Helen in the way it adopted an objective attitude to the whole event. It was not only Faustus who was damned by her beauty and by her devilish temptation, Helen herself was also damned by his depravity and his conviction that she could grant him immortality. This made of Helen not only a devil, but also a universal symbol of femininity and as such the apostrophe to her acquired more significance.

The finale was made effective by the ensemble efforts of actors, designer, director and musicians. It was not only Peter Guinness' efforts that made Faustus's end sympathetic. Without Mephostophilis's fatherly pity for Faustus, without the scholars' conversation with Faustus before he died, and without the design that acquired meaning throughout the production, it would have been difficult to be moved by Faustus's last grand moment, particularly with the stubborn pride he intermittently



displayed. His "shrieking disappearance to hell" (*FT*<sub>2</sub>) was made stirring also with the help of a deafening "underworld music" (*FT*<sub>2</sub>), while he vanished into the study amid red smoke. As the study doors closed, the effect was intensified by sad music which accompanied the scholars' discovering of his limbs.

Yet, in spite of this moving end of Faustus's tragedy, for some critics the production seemed predominantly comic. Though one reviewer found that the "didactic element [was] emphasized throughout" (*T*<sub>4</sub>), the majority felt that the tragic aspects were diminished. One reviewer found that the production was "many things but not tragical" (*I*<sub>3</sub>), another described it as "just a wonderful melodrama overflowing with comedy" (*CL*), and another felt that

much of the production [was] very funny as Faustus [turned] his wiles over the Pope and as thunderbolts [crashed] about the place in all too real simulation of the Devil's wrath. (*WOL*<sub>2</sub>)

It seems that the absolute honesty to the literary text had damaging effects. One reviewer "[wished] only that he [Anthony Clark] had chosen to omit the comical prose scenes, which [were] an unnecessary irritant..." (*DT*<sub>5</sub>).<sup>82</sup> The reason for this kind of reaction would seem to be connected with the Young Vic's principle of ensemble work. A distinct feature of the production was giving equal importance to both the comic and the tragic outline in the story in the process of ensemble acting, as opposed to the star-performance that usually characterises productions of *Dr. Faustus*. The production welcomed rather than rejected the comic parts, to offer opportunities for all actors in the company to show their skill.

It is also worth mentioning that the production was unfortunate in being almost inevitably compared with the production of Goethe's *Faust* at the Lyric, Hammersmith, which had opened on 30 March (directed by Simon Callow). Some reviewers found Goethe's drama intellectually superior, and viewed the Young Vic production from this perspective:

Where Goethe introduced us to a modern man hungry for ecstasy, Marlowe gives us a foredoomed hero in a Christian allegory. Intellectually, you feast on one play and fast on the other. (*I*<sub>3</sub>).

This attitude, however, seems to be a rejection of the play, rather than of the production, and indeed some reviewers preferred Marlowe's play to Goethe's in terms of modernity:

Each [play] resolutely remains a child of its time....Oddly enough, Marlowe's version seems by far the more contemporary in outlook though relatively hollow in content.  
(Sc.)

Some found it more appealing: "whatever the claims for Goethe's version as a statement of Enlightenment reasoning, *Dr. Faustus* is the more satisfying play" (ILEA).

There can be no doubt that the Young Vic production is important in the stage history of the play, in that it did full justice to the play by treating Marlowe's text with respect. The company explored ways of staging the full text of *Dr. Faustus* with a small cast, and limited resources. It showed how ensemble playing allowed the actors to represent all the roles in the play with equal importance; and how the staging can be simplified by making actors produce their own music and theatrical effects. Consequently, the production proved that some parts of the play that are usually seen as worthless are not completely unstageable. It would be wrong, however, to claim that the staging of the full text was totally successful: it resulted in a "long evening [3 hours, 15 mins] not without dull patches" (T<sub>4</sub>). But equal attention having been given to comic parts, it appeared in the process that Marlowe's humour is not dull if played by skilful actors, and that, if the minor parts are not left to less skilful actors, as is usually the case in staging the play, they can reveal great comic and dramatic potential. Robin's part, for example, left a strong impression on at least one reviewer: "Peter MacQueen's Robin, unshaven, bony and ragged, with social and scholarly aspiration, [rang] distinguished variations on the clownish theme" (FT<sub>2</sub>).

To those who did not regret the loss of a tragic focus, the overall strength of the production lay in its neutrality of interpretation. It was seen as "intelligent, accessible and entertaining" (T<sub>0</sub>), providing a good introduction to the play for audiences unfamiliar with Marlowe's drama. One reviewer described it as "straightforward, sensitive", and embracing "strong playing underlined by visual ingenuity and some startling theatrical strokes" (FT<sub>2</sub>).

The four productions discussed above expose different problems in staging *Dr. Faustus*, problems that have always been attached to the play, and thus affected its fortunes on the stage. Walter Hudd's production established the necessity for the director's presentation to work hand in hand with the actor's depiction of the central character (a problem that would not have troubled Alleyn in a director-less theatre). It also showed the risk of subduing the dual nature of the creatures of hell: how, when the devils and sins are only amusing, the horror behind Faustus's pact with the kingdom of hell is underestimated; and how, when Helen is only beautiful, there can be no reason why the audience should see Faustus reaching the utmost cause for



damnation in his meeting with her. Though John Barton's production unified the play by drastically sacrificing the text, it introduced few solutions to the alleged problems in it. Similarly, the A.T.C.'s production had to expunge large parts from the text to provide unity of theme, but it was interesting in that it showed how a very small cast imposes a certain way to treat the play. Finally the Young Vic's performance staged the full text for the benefit of a more or less academic audience; but the result was some loss of focus throughout the production. What is needed in fact is a combination of the good points that each production introduced, Robert Harris's dignified Faustus, John Barton's internalising of supernatural characters, Ian McKellen's periodic returns to moments of intellectual sadness, the A.T.C.'s coherent psychological treatment of the theme, and the Young Vic's ensemble acting, respect for the text, and ingenious set. This combination might sound impossible; but what concerns us is that, in spite of the flaws inherent in each production, it seems *Dr. Faustus* has become more and more acceptable on stage. A very recent production was mounted (at the time of completing the writing of this thesis) by the Royal Shakespeare Company, at the Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, under the direction of Barry Kyle, who seems to have become the director of Marlowe's plays for the R.S.C. Marlowe seems to have found a home in the repertoire of the Swan Theatre in Stratford, with his *Jew of Malta* in 1987, *Dr. Faustus* in 1989, and *Edward II* in 1990.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER SIX

1. See Appendices E and F.
2. George Santayana, *Three Philosophical Poets* (Cambridge, 1910), pp. 146-9, pp. 146, 149.
3. Felix E. Schelling, *English Drama* (1914), quoted from John Jump (ed.), *Marlowe: Dr. Faustus, A Casebook* (London and Basingstoke, 1969; 4th. edition, 1984)
4. Kocher, op. cit., pp. 104-19. W. W. Greg, "The Damnation of Faustus", *Modern Language Review*, 41 (1946), 97-107. see also James Smith, 'Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*', *Scrutiny*, 8 (1939-1940) 36-55.
5. Ellis-Fermor, op. cit., p. 87.
6. Levin, *The Overreacher*, pp. 129-59.
7. Ellis-Fermor, p. 78.
8. See Jump, ed. cit., p. lxii; Verna Ann Foster, "*Dr. Faustus* on the Stage", *Theatre Research*, 14 (1974), 18-44, pp. 30-1; William Tydeman, *Doctor Faustus, Text and Performance* (London, 1984), p. 48. All these studies mention only the date of the production.
9. For reviews of this production see: *The Daily Herald*, *The Daily Telegraph*, and *The Times*, 8 October, 1948, *Manchester Guardian*, 9 October, 1948, *The Sunday Times*, *The Observer*, 10 October, 1948, and *The Spectator*, 15 October, 1948. See also Tydeman, p. 48.
10. See J. C. Trewin, *Shakespeare on the English Stage: 1900-1964* (London, 1964), pp. 186-93.
11. Nicholas Brooke, "The Moral Tragedy of *Doctor Faustus*", *The Cambridge Journal*, 5 (1951-2), 662-87, p. 667.
12. Robert Ornstein, "The Comic Synthesis in *Doctor Faustus*", *English Literary History*, 22 (1955), 165-72, p. 165.
13. J. B. Steane, *Marlowe: a Critical Study* (Cambridge, 1964; reprinted 1965), pp. 164-5.
14. Weil, op. cit., p. 56.
15. Constance Brown Kuriyama, *Hammer or Anvil: Psychological Patterns in Christopher Marlowe's Plays* (New Jersey, 1980), pp. 95-135.
16. Russell Jackson, "*Doctor Faustus* in Manchester", *Critical Quarterly*, 23 (1981), 3-9, p. 8.
17. Michael Scott, *Renaissance Drama and a Modern Audience* (London, 1982; reprinted 1985), p. 18.
18. See Tydeman, p. 49; *The Times*, 6 March, 1957; *Plays and Players*, May, 1957.



19. For reviews of this production see: *The Guardian* (Philip Hope-Wallace), and *The Times*, 15 Feb, 1966; *The Illustrated London News*, *The Observer*, and *The Sunday Telegraph*, 26 February, 1966. See also Harold Hobson, "All This and Helen, Too", in *The Sunday Times*, 20 February, 1966, reprinted in Jump, *Dr. Faustus, Casebook*, pp. 222-4. See Tydeman, p. 61; and Vesna Pistotnik, *Marlowe in Performance: 1960-1982*, (Ph.D. dissertation, The Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham, 1983) pp. 245-52. The production was also filmed.
20. Reviews: *The Guardian* (Philip Hope-Wallace), *The Financial Times* and *The Times*, 23 August, 1961; *Yorkshire Post*, 24 August, 1961. See also, Tydeman, p. 49, and Pistotnik, pp. 226-39.
21. Reviews: Christopher Small, "Dr. Faustus at the Close", *The Guardian*, 4 December, 1965; Charles Spencer, *Financial Times*, 6 December; *The Times*, 22 November; See Pistotnik, pp. 239-45.
22. From the introduction to his edition of the adapted text, *The Marowitz Hamlet and The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*, edited by Charles Marowitz, a Penguin edition (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1969). Reference to this introduction and to Marowitz's adaptation will be given in the chapter; as he does not provide act and scene numbers, quotations from his text will be referred to by the page numbers of this edition.
23. Faustus's first speech was cut and the production opened with a judge addressing Faustus in the Old Man's words: "Though thou hast now offended like a man..." (xviii,38-54), after which the trial began in a flashback starting with the Chorus, as if re-telling Faustus's story, and moving to Faustus's asking Wagner to call Valdes and Cornelius (i, 63-65).
24. As Marowitz's production toured the world, this dialogue, as Marowitz states in his introduction, was not added in all productions, it formed part of the one in Sweden, but as he sees it as a significant one he includes it in his introduction noting that: "If the ideas juggled in this chat could be assimilated in a production of the play, the work might be salvageable" (p. 102). However, whether or not it was included in his production at the Close theatre, Glasgow, it is illuminating to quote some of the lines to see where the focus lay:

*Faustus*: A scientist—a true scientist that is—has no choice. He is always peeking into the future like some helpless voyeur who cannot resist the next titillation. Even if I was assured that perpetual damnation lay in store for me, still I would not be able to act other than I did.

*Oppenheimer*: I'm relieved to hear you say that....By ourselves we scientists are quite helpless and, in fact, harmless. It is only when the bloody governments take us over that we become lethal.

*Faustus*: ...One cannot be crucified for pursuing logic.

*Oppenheimer*: Precisely....Should one abandon relativity and nuclear science because in certain hands they can produce destruction? One may as well abandon fire because it sometimes leads to arson.

*Faustus*: ...I may have consorted with the devil, but you actually manufactured his goods.

*Oppenheimer*: ..Your sin was by far the greater because you established the precedent that a scientific inquiry should have no limits...it is you and not I who are the Father of the Atom Bomb....

*Faustus*: ...a man is responsible only for himself...I cannot be held responsible if Carolus appropriates my ingenuity for political ends...The ultimate responsibility is with those who wield power; not with their underlings.

25. Charles Marowitz's own stage directions in his edition; he provides detailed stage directions in his text; the words in italics refer to them.
26. For reviews of this production see: Gareth Lloyd Evans, *The Guardian*, 26 June. For 27 June: *Birmingham Mail*; *Evesham Journal*. For 28 Jun: *Birmingham Post*; *Coventry Evening Telegraph*; Eric Shorter, *The Daily Telegraph*; Milton Shulman, *Evening Standard*; B. A. Young, *Financial Times*; Doreen Tanner, *Liverpool Post*; Frances Filson, *Oxford Mail*; *Reading Evening Post*; *Stratford Upon Avon Herald*; David Nathan, *The Sun*; Irving Wardle, *The Times*; *Watford Eve Echo*; For 29 June: "Faustus—All Fears Allayed", *Cambridge News*; Herbert Kretzmer, *The Daily Express*; Arthur Thirkell, *The Daily Mirror*, *Hereford Evening News*; *Manchester Evening News and Chronicle*; "Faustus and his box of tricks", *Nottingham Evening Post*; *Nunerton Evening Tribune*; Ivor Brown, *Western Mail*; Martin Keeley, *Worcester Evening News*; *Yorkshire Evening Press*. For 30 June: *Easter Daily Press*; Ronald Bryden, *The Observer*; Rosemary Say, *The Sunday Telegraph*; Harold Hobson, *The Sunday Times*; All these reviews were obtained from the Shakespeare Memorial Library in Stratford-upon-Avon. See also a review by Gareth Lloyd Evans, "The Reason Why: The Royal Shakespeare Season 1968 Reviewed" in *Shakespeare Survey* 22 (1969), 135-44, pp. 140-1.
27. *Shakespeare Survey* 22 (1969), p. 140, and see illustration 18.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 141.
29. For example: "Helen launches a thousand questions" (*Evesham Journal*, 27 June); "Helen Now Virtually Nude" (*Birmingham Mail*, 27 June); "Near-nude Helen" (*Reading Evening Post* 28 June); "A Packed Audience Sees Nude Actress" (*Manchester Evening News and chronicle*, 29 June); "A Helen totally on view" (*Western Mail*, 29 June); "Helen of Troy nearly nude at Stratford" (*Easter Daily Press*, 29 June); "Helen, the bare Facts" (*The Daily Mirror*, 29 June).
30. *Shakespeare Survey* 22, p. 141.
31. For a discussion of this production see Pistotnik, pp. 271-4.
32. See Scott, pp. 27-8; see also Pistotnik, pp. 274-83.
33. Scott, p. 27.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
35. See Pistotnik, pp. 297-302.
36. See *ibid.*, pp. 302-8.
37. See *ibid.*, pp. 312-4.
38. It moved to the Fortune Theatre, London on 27 March. For reviews see: Nicholas de Jongh, *The Guardian*, 26 February; Michael Billington, *The Guardian*, 29 March, 1980; Ned Chaillet, *The Times*, 26 February; Irving Wardle, *The Times*, 28 March. See also Tydeman pp. 50, and 63-83; Scott, pp. 29-30; and Pistotnik, pp. 314-28.



39. Scott, p. 29.
40. Ibid.
41. See Russell Jackson, "Doctor Faustus in Manchester" (CQ) (see note 16, above); Irving Wardle, "Doctor Faustus", *The Times*, 18 September, 1981; see also Pistotnik, pp. 328-38.
42. I was able, thanks to Mr. Stevens, to attend rehearsals for this production, and to consult the promptbook and his own M.A. dissertation on the staging of *Dr. Faustus: The Politics of Literature* (University of Newcastle, 1985), which was very helpful and beneficial. As my study is of professional productions, I omit any detailed discussion of this production, which, however, was greatly illuminating to my study of the staging of *Dr. Faustus*, I will refer to it in notes where relevant. A brief account of the production is provided in Appendix B, below.
43. Mark Brickman and Antony Clark were consulted. My continuous attempts to see John Barton were unfortunately unsuccessful.
44. See Chapter One.
45. See Ornstein, "The Comic Synthesis in *Doctor Faustus*"; G. K. Hunter, "Five-act Structure in *Doctor Faustus*", *Tulane Drama Review*, 8 (1964), 77-91, reprinted in *Dramatic Identities and Cultural Tradition*, pp. 335-49, pp. 347-9. See also Roy T. Eriksen, "The Forme of Faustus' Fortunes': Structural and Thematic Analysis of Christopher Marlowe's *The Tragedie of Doctor Faustus 1616* (Oslo, 1987), particularly Chapter Four "The Imperial Sequence: The Question of Dramatic, Thematic, and Formal Unity", pp. 133-67
46. See Greg, "The Damnation of Faustus".
47. *Warwick Advertiser*, 13 July, 1946 (WA<sub>1</sub>). Other reviews: M. F. K. Fraser, *Birmingham Evening Despatch*, 13 July (BED); *Birmingham Gazette*, 13 July (BG); *Birmingham Mail*, 10 July (BM); *Birmingham Post*, 19 July (BP); *Birmingham Sunday Mercury*, 14 July (BSM); W. A. Darlington, *The Daily Telegraph*, 13 July (DT<sub>1</sub>); John H. Bird, *Evesham Journal*, 20 July (EJ); *The Guardian*, 19 July (G<sub>1</sub>); *Leamington-Spa Courier*, 19 July (LSC); J. C. Trewin, *The Observer*, 14 July (O<sub>1</sub>); Eric Shorter, *Punch*, 24 July (P<sub>1</sub>); *The Stage and Television Today*, 18 July (S&Tv<sub>1</sub>); Ruth Ellis, *Stratford-upon-Avon Herald*, 19 July (SAH); *The Times*, 13 July (T<sub>1</sub>); *Warwick Advertiser*, 13 July (WA<sub>1</sub>); *Warwick Advertiser*, 19 July (WA<sub>2</sub>). The promptbook for this production was consulted in the Shakespeare Memorial Library, The Shakespeare Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon.
48. See G. K. Hunter, "Five-act Structure in *Doctor Faustus*", he argues that each scene from the signing of the pact to the end of the play carries Faustus a step downward, closer and closer to the lower in human estimation, starting with all the grandeur of the Papal court, moving to the Imperial, and the Ducal. And he gets closer to low characters in the process.
49. See Chapter Four of this thesis (an example from the promptbook: at iv,33 "Devils scratch the Clown's back").
50. Cf. "beautifully spoken" (SAH). "Marlowe's superb verse is beautifully spoken by...David King Wood in the role of the Chorus" (BG). "David King Wood speaks beautifully for the Chorus" (BED). "David King Wood uses to good purpose his fine vocal qualities in his short appearance as the Chorus" (BP).
51. Cf. "how very much greater was Shakespeare as a dramatist and a poet" (WA<sub>1</sub>).

52. Reviews of this production: Jack Tinker, *The Daily Mail*, 6 September, 1974 (DM); John Barber, *The Daily Telegraph*, for 6 September (DT<sub>2</sub>), and for 9 September (DT<sub>3</sub>); Caren Meyer, *Evening News*, 6 September (EN); Milton Shulman, *Evening Standard*, 6 September (ES); Michael Billington, *The Guardian*, 6 September (G<sub>2</sub>); David Nathan, *Jewish Chronicle*, 13 September (JC); Benedict Nightingale, *The New Stateman*, 13 September (NS); Jeremy Kingston, *Punch*, 18 September (P<sub>2</sub>); *South London Press*, 17 September (SLP); Kenneth Hurren, *The Spectator*, 14 September (Sp); Peter Hepple, *Stage and Television Today*, 12 September (S&Tv<sub>2</sub>); *The Sunday Telegraph*, 8 September (STel<sub>1</sub>); Irving Wardle, *The Times*, 6 September (T<sub>2</sub>); *What's on in London*, 13 September (WOL<sub>1</sub>); Anthony Seymour, *Yorkshire Post*, 9 September (YP). On Barton's ideas on adapting, see Vincent Guy (interviewing John Barton), *Plays and Players*, November, 1969 (P&P).
53. Cf: "John Barton...can be awfully high-and-heavy handed. He recently saw fit to write *King John* as a homily against the Common Market; and now he performs a similar service for Marlowe..." (NS).
54. Note in the programme for the revival at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, 1975.
55. The promptbook was consulted in the Shakespeare Memorial Library, Stratford-upon-Avon. Extracts from it are in Appendix C.
56. Stage direction in the promptbook.
57. Programme note, 1975.
58. Ibid.
59. The promptbook. See Appendix C for these Choruses.
60. See Appendix C. Cf. below the discussion of the Actors Touring Company's production, where a vision of Heaven was also introduced in nearly the same words as Barton's.
61. Cf.: "a very busy performance leaping about for a precious book, nudging the servant of Lucifer for some reactions to his activities, gleefully hugging himself at his own cleverness, or thrashing about in fearful agony as he prepares to meet his doom" (ES).
62. For example, after he met the Emperor, Faustus delivered his soliloquy of "the restless course of time...", at the end of which he heard the bell that Mephostophilis had around his neck, and told him "Go, leave me, Mephostophilis/ I fain would rest my bones a while/ Leave me I say.". Also after he sold the horse to the Horse-courser Mephostophilis appeared on the balcony at which Faustus told him "I call'd thee not and therefore get thee hence", after which Faustus fell asleep.
63. The promptbook.
64. Stanley Wells, "Shakespeare's Text on the Modern Stage", *Deutsche Shakespeare-Gesellschaft West Jahrbuch* (1967), 175-193, p. 191-2.
65. Programme note, 1975.
66. Ibid.



67. The production opened on 27 August, 1987. Unfortunately it was possible to trace its course only from the following dates: 15-19 September, at The Crucible Studio, Sheffield; 5-6 October, Cheltenham Festival; 7-8 October, New Hereford Theatre, Hereford; 9 October, The Theatre, Chipping Norton; 10 October, Thame Sports and Arts Centre, Thame; 20-22 October, Fareham and Gosport Drama Centre, Fareham; 23-24 October, Central Studio, Queen Mary's College, Basingstoke; 28-31 October, Gulbenkian Studio Theatre, Newcastle-upon-Tyne; 4-7 November, Riverside Theatre, Coleraine; 12-13 November, Horsham Arts Centre, Horsham; 14 November, Cricklade Theatre, Andover; 18 November, Bulmershe College, Reading; 19 November, Tivoli Arts Centre, Eastbourne; 20 November, Old Town Hall Arts Centre, Havant; 21 November, Trinity Arts Centre, Tunbridge Wells; 24 November-12 December, Lyric Theatre Studio, London. Since I had a chance to see the performance for the Cheltenham Festival at Shaftesbury Hall, the discussion of the set will refer to this. It should not constitute a problem as the set seemed to be similar in all performances. Nor were the stage and set a major issue to the reviewers, who referred, if at all, to a simple and bleak set—I will hence forward refer to the Company by its common abbreviated title A.T.C. Reviews of the production: Charles Spencer, *The Daily Telegraph*, 27 November, 1987 (DT<sub>4</sub>); B. A. Young, *Financial Times*, 9 October (FT<sub>1</sub>); Nicholas de Jongh, *The Guardian*, 28 November (G<sub>3</sub>); Paul Taylor, *The Independent*, 14 September (I<sub>1</sub>); Alex Renton, *The Independent*, 2 December (I<sub>2</sub>); Kate Kellaway, *The Observer*, 6 December (O<sub>2</sub>); Francis King, *The Sunday Telegraph*, 29 November (STel<sub>2</sub>); John Peter, *The Sunday Times*, 29 November (ST); Irving Wardle, *The Times*, 26 November (T<sub>3</sub>).
68. Mark Brickman explained his points of views and intentions in my interview with him on 19 February, 1988. Hereafter, Brickman, Interview.
69. In the programme notes it is said that the A.T.C. is "a small/mid-scale touring company, committed to touring dynamic and exciting interpretations of classic texts." Examples of their past productions are: Byron's *Don Juan*, adapted by John Retallack; Alfred Jarry's *Ubu The Vandalist*, adapted from Cyril Connolly's translation by John Retallack; Moliere's *Don Juan*, adapted by Nigel Gearing and A.T.C.; Henrik Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, adapted from Michael Meyer's translation by Mark Brickman; Alfred Jarry's *Ubu In Chains*, adapted from Cyril Connolly's translation by John Retallack; Moliere's *Bourgeois Gentleman*, adapted by Mark Brickman and A.T.C.; Tirso de Molina's *Heaven Bent, Hell Bound*, translated and adapted by John Clifford.
70. Mark Brickman told me in the interview that "it seemed to evolve that Faustus in rehearsal became uglier and uglier as a person, and Mephostophilis became more and more beautiful, reminding us of the fact that he was a fallen Angel, so why should he not look beautiful".
71. Mark Brickman said in the interview that: "What we found developing in rehearsal is a sort of erotic relationship between them. We have not started out with that intention at all, it was simply something that seemed to come out of the text. It seemed to have a correlation in Marlowe's own life, being an intellectual himself, also probably sexually pervert."
72. "As Mephostophilis was the beautiful devil, Beelzebub developed gradually to be the henchman who did the hard work." (Brickman, Interview).
73. See Appendix D for full text.



74. In the programme Mark Brickman provided notes about some great scientists whose lives might have echoes of Faustus's, obviously influenced by Charles Marowitz's approach: "Nietszche predicted the 20th century would be a Faustian time of living dangerously. Our age of violence, intensity of ideas and ambitions, will bear comparison to the Renaissance's impulsive risk-taking. We have our own meteoric Tamburlaine in Hitler. We have Einstein and D.N.A. to match the restless experimentation of Galileo and da Vinci....The passion for glamour, the urgency to communicate, are Renaissance features recast in a new Gutenberg Galaxy of rock stars....Robert Oppenheimer is our most recent Faust. One of his colleagues stated on television that 'Oppie made a Faustian pact', and his Mephisto was the U.S army providing him with all the resources he wished for at Los Alamos...". Nevertheless, the production did not seem to convey these ideas, or to show that there was a scientist in Faustus. Unless Mark Brickman wanted to show a distorted image of these scientists—and there was nothing to suggest that either—the notes to the production seemed irrelevant to his treatment.
75. Jeremy Kingston, *The Times*, 30 April, 1988 (*T*<sub>4</sub>). The only cuts in the production were: Mephostophilis's aside: "What will I not do to obtain his soul" (v,173), and lines xix,1-19, "Thus from infernal Dis do we ascend...". More reviews of the production: John Connor, *City Limits*, 12-19 May, 1988 (*CL*); Charles Osborne, *The Daily Telegraph*, 2 May (*DT*<sub>5</sub>); Martin Hoyle, *Financial Times*, 3 May (*FT*<sub>2</sub>); Michael Billington, *The Guardian*, 2 May (*G*<sub>4</sub>); Robert Hanks, *Independent*, 4 May (*I*<sub>3</sub>); *Inner London Education Authority News*, n. 14, April, 1988 (*ILEA*); Christopher Grier, *The Scotsman*, 7 May (*Sc*); Helen Rose, *Time Out*, May (*TO*); John James, *The Times Educational Supplement*, 6 May (*TES*); Michael Darvell, *What's on in London*, 11 May (*WOL*<sub>2</sub>).
76. Anthony Clark's own words in my interview with him on 26 May, 1988. Hereafter, Clark, Interview.
77. From the Action Pack which was sent to me by, Ann Meyer, the publicity secretary, in which Anthony Clark, the designer, Kate Burnett, and the musician, Mark Vibrans, explained their points of views behind what they did in the production. Hereafter, Action Pack.
78. Kate Burnett, designer, her own comments in the Action Pack. Hereafter, Kate Burnett, Action Pack.
79. Mark Vibrans who provided the music to the production commented on the banging of the desks in the Action Pack: "As musical director I have to train the actors to do the musical effects, understanding that they are under a lot of pressure during a short rehearsal period and have many other things to learn and remember. I try and keep it simple and effective...exploring possibilities of creating moments where the music happens naturally from the actors playing things which are on the set or having particular instruments to use...the desk banging—we all remember as school kids banging our desks when we wanted to annoy the teacher...makes a terrific row. I'm always interested in making the set musical".
80. The scholar who took the part was an actress, but she was not meant to appear as such throughout the production as she was wearing the same thing as other scholars with an attempt to avoid emphasising her sex.
81. For a discussion of how the Seven Sins reflect Faustus's behaviour, and the rest of the scenes, see Nigel Alexander, "The Performance of Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*", *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 57 (1971), 331-49. See also D. H. Zucker, *Stage and Image in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe*, pp. 149-58.



82. Cf.: "the jokes are, alas, all there" (*FT*<sub>2</sub>); and "As we watch Faustus upsetting a papal banquet, sticking horns on a mocker's head or allowing his leg to come off in a horse-courser's hands, we cannot help thinking that eternal damnation is a pretty high price to pay for a lot of academic prankishness" (*G*<sub>4</sub>).

## CHAPTER SEVEN

*THE JEW OF MALTA*

## ON THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY STAGE

A recent survey of anti-semitism in Britain has confirmed that *The Merchant of Venice* was instrumental in contributing throughout the centuries to create the Jewish stereotypes of usurers and vicious money-lenders.<sup>1</sup> Taken at face-value, *The Jew of Malta* would seem more anti-semitic than *The Merchant of Venice*. This is evidenced by the different attitudes towards Kean's revivals of both plays in the beginning of the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> The stage history of *The Jew* inexorably carries with it the burden of the history of people's attitudes to Jews. The first few decades of the twentieth century witnessed a strong anti-semitism in Britain, both before and after the First World War. The Jewish settlement and the development of Jewish commercialism and dominion in the black market caused extreme tension and indignation at the idea that the Jews were "living off the fat of the land".<sup>3</sup> Though there were always attempts to deny the existence of anti-semitism in Britain it was widespread. In 1920, *The Times* exclaimed: "whatever our past sins in the matter of the persecution of the Jews, we have more of them than we deserve, and of the worst kind".<sup>4</sup> An article which appeared in 1917 expressed similar regret that the name of humanity should be used to excite a wideworld sympathy with Jews:

let them say what they have to say in the name of Israel, and we will appreciate how tragic and even worthy of sympathy is their exceptional situation. But if they dare say a word in the name of humanity, they will lose their last friend.<sup>5</sup>

Another article expressed fears of the increasing number of Jews in England and their constant dominion over financial power:

there is no doubt that the Jew constitutes a great danger, a source of international and universal trouble...[but] we would be wrong if we saw in him a monster, a demon who stops at nothing, because that is the way he wants to appear....Our concern is to understand the Jew and beat him at his own game.<sup>6</sup>

There is no need to spell out how strongly these views parallel issues in *The Jew of Malta*. In such a state of affairs, a performance of the play would only inflame the widespread anti-Jewish feelings, and would be a dangerous territory for the



director. No wonder, then, that the beginning of the twentieth century witnessed almost no professional productions, apart from one brief revival, in 1922, by the Phoenix Society, for two nights only. This revival may have been prompted by theatrical interest in the new slant given by T. S. Eliot's criticism of the play in 1919. The play remained, however, the property of academic and amateur circles.<sup>7</sup> That *The Merchant of Venice* was not absent from the professional stage might be due to the never-ending interest in Shakespeare's plays, and to the Portia-Bassanio plot which reduces the emphasis on the figure of Shylock. Some productions of *The Merchant* in the early twentieth century concentrated on Portia's story, turning the play into a fairy-tale or a romance.<sup>8</sup>

One should not, however, exaggerate the importance of the role that anti-semitism plays in the stage-history of *The Jew*. There is also its generally negative critical history. The fact that *The Jew of Malta* was the only one of Marlowe's plays that was revived at a time when no Marlowe play had found its way to the stage for nearly two hundred years did not, as shown in Chapter Five, encourage a better reception of the play among nineteenth-century critics. The negative attitude towards the play of much twentieth-century literary criticism seems to have eliminated any possibility of more theatrical revivals, and only muffled voices were raised in its defence. Apart from the Phoenix Society revival, it was not until 1964 that the play caught the attention of the professional stage, thus bringing the period of its absence from it to nearly 150 years.

The beginning of the twentieth century saw only an extension of the nineteenth-century views of the play as nothing but a corrupt text, a series of unmotivated crimes, a central character that is at best a mere monster, a structure that becomes disrupted, and a tone that is far from unified. T. S. Eliot's well-known reading of the play as a "farce of...terribly serious, even savage comic humour..." introduced, as early as 1919, a fresh positive view that was to become one of the most influential criticisms of the play.<sup>9</sup> It proved persuasive, however, only in the second half of the century; until then it seemed simply unheeded. M. C. Bradbrook (1935) refers to Eliot's view being inadequate to justify the 'weaknesses' in the play:

*The Jew of Malta* is one of the most difficult of Elizabethan plays. T. S. Eliot's explanation will not cover the obvious change of tone between acts I and II and the rest of the play.<sup>10</sup>

Clearly, the major problem in the play was in the assumption, triggered by nineteenth-century critics and adopted almost unanimously by early twentieth-century

critics, that the play disintegrates sharply after the first two Acts. With regard mainly to the tragic tone in the play Tucker Brooke found that it is

beyond question that the vigorous flow of tragic interest and character portrayal with which the play opens wastes away amid what, for the modern reader, is a wilderness of melodrama and farce.<sup>11</sup>

Kocher's sharp rejection of the play—that it "bulges grotesquely under the pressure of Marlowe's satirical impulses, which dart in at every opportunity or no opportunity"—provides a sample of how negatively the play was viewed.<sup>12</sup> As late as 1962, views were still largely dismissive. In his search for a sense of tragic suffering in Marlowe's plays, Douglas Cole found that "*The Jew of Malta* is a spectacle of personified evil at work, rather than a spectacle of tragic suffering", and Barabas "emerges as a grotesque caricature rather than a subtly dramatic character."<sup>13</sup> Bakeless shared this attitude to the play, as he believed that it

is not a great play....It is not even a good play; for, breaking squarely in two in the middle, it lacks even the saving virtue of unity. It is indeed, not so much a play at all as the great beginning of a play.<sup>14</sup>

Instead of challenging this idea of deterioration, critics were absorbed in finding the reasons behind this break in the middle, and their attempts led them, sometimes intentionally, sometimes inadvertently, to a further condemnation of the play. The reasons given varied between different claims, that the play was only partially authentic, that there is a certain loss of interest on Marlowe's part, or that the structure of the play shows a struggle between inherited morality tradition and Marlowe's attempt to introduce a new dramatic technique.

The belief that the play may not be wholly authentic resulted from this alleged weakness of the second half of the play, but it was supported by the fact that the only early edition we have was supplied by Heywood forty years after the play's entry in the Stationers' Register, and that the play has some incidents that echo others in Heywood's works.<sup>15</sup> This theory has not been proved beyond doubt; nevertheless, critics have maintained the conviction that for some reason, the text has been tampered with. According to Brooke, "undoubtedly the 1633 quarto presents the tragedy in a form sadly corrupted and altered from that in which it left the hands of Marlowe."<sup>16</sup> F. P. Wilson suggested that

to suppose that the same man who wrote the first two acts was wholly responsible for the last three is revolting to sense and



sensibility, for these belong to a different world of art, if indeed they can be said to belong to the world of art at all!<sup>17</sup>

The theory of the corrupt text presented critics with the easy solution to the problem of the play's 'deterioration', but it did not go unchallenged. A number of critics have defended the authenticity of the play. J. C. Maxwell exclaimed that "manuscripts, unlike apples, do not become corrupt simply by lying in a drawer."<sup>18</sup> Another problem, however, lay in the fact that those critics and editors defended the authenticity by further condemning the play. Maxwell, for instance, saw even the early scenes in the play as not pointing forward to anything substantially different from what we actually have, accepting Kocher's view that Marlowe "threw the character away".<sup>19</sup> Una Ellis-Fermor suggested that Marlowe had either

lost interest after the first two acts and found his inspiration insufficient; or...he was for some reason obliged to finish hastily what he had begun carefully; or...he left the play to other hands after he had finished the first two acts, sketched the outline of the next two, and written a rough draft of the fifth.<sup>20</sup>

Thus though her criticism of the play shows obvious influence from Eliot's positive views—such as her statement that "there are passages in it, set forth in all good faith that read like Swift at the height of his irony"—she, like others, believes strongly in the existence of a certain deterioration in the action, to the extent that she builds her evaluation of Barabas's character on the basis of acts I and II, and Act V "with reservation".<sup>21</sup>

Those critics who have not been troubled by problems of authenticity, have related the loose episodic structure of the second part of the play to the morality tradition inherited in Elizabethan playwriting, and have seen in Barabas's crimes an echo of the career of the Morality Vice, as has been shown in Chapter Two. This theory was again not directed towards improving critical attitudes towards the play, and we end up with a statement like A. L. Rowse's about the play being a sensational exhibition of horse-play, "all com[ing] from the traditional stock-in-trade of the moralities and jest-books".<sup>22</sup>

Attempts to re-value the play and to find significant issues in it began in the second half of the century. In 1953, Harry Levin's criticism of the play inspired positive attitudes towards it and opened new horizons in viewing the play as subtler than was once thought. He refers to the fact that Marlowe deepens the style in the play by using Biblical references and notes how some events that might appear ludicrous to



modern readers have ritual meanings related to legends that could never "be comprehended within the theatrical medium".<sup>23</sup> Not only did he accept the play as "an artistic whole [while] noting its incongruities and tensions", but he also perceived some psychological traits in Barabas's character, a kind of tragic weakness of wanting to be loved.<sup>24</sup> Levin's criticism introduced hints which have been developed by later critics and gradually the play gained more importance among Marlowe's works. Howard Babb followed Levin's view of the play as "an artistic whole" and emphasised "a kind of consistency...emerg[ing] from the play...a single set of issues: religious hypocrisy and governmental expedience".<sup>25</sup> He thus found that *The Jew of Malta* is more intense than is *The Merchant of Venice*:

So complex a reality as we have here cannot be found in *The Merchant of Venice*, which might seem a parallel case. Caricature deepens into pathos in Shakespeare's work, reversing the direction of our play [*The Jew*], with the result that we are too emotionally involved to feel the parts as widely separate.<sup>26</sup>

1964 seems to have been a fortunate year for *The Jew of Malta*. In the course of it, through his study of Marlowe's plays, Steane made a strong case for *The Jew*. Admitting that it provoked heterogeneous definitions—

few plays have been given more names: tragedy, comedy, melodrama, farce, tragical-comical, farcical-satirical, 'terribly serious' or 'tediously trivial'; 'terrifying', it seems cannot be too heavy a term, nor 'absurd' too light—<sup>27</sup>

he finds that the play "for all its inhumanity, is not a depressing play" (p. 171), rather it dramatises a materialistic society with "business-like realism" (p. 168). He thus urges an imaginative reading, stressing its being a "very funny play", and drawing attention to how much the play loses if judged only from a reading of it. Extending Babb's study of the play as an exploration of policy, Steane draws attention to how modern it tends to be in its dramatisation of a Wall-Street atmosphere (p. 178) in which Barabas's change into a villain is a natural outcome and no sudden deterioration (p. 182). In the same year, G. K. Hunter's study of the theology of the play revealed a great subtlety of meanings in its language. Hunter showed how Marlowe enriched his style by the use of theological sources of reference that only/Biblically educated audience can understand. His study is still inspiring more research into the complexity of the style in the play.<sup>28</sup>

This favourable view of the play was supplemented, in the same year, by three professional theatrical revivals. These revealed the play's dramatic and theatrical potential and, as will be shown later, helped to show that the problem in the play that



had mainly engaged critics almost vanished in performance. The incoherence and 'deterioration' in the serious action were not felt on stage as they are on the page. The positive effects of the revivals become obvious from the fact that studies of the play after 1964 are characterised by a general acceptance of the play as a unity, and by a remarkable confidence in the voices that speak in its defence.

Although Richard Van Fossen's edition of the play (1965) must have been prepared before these revivals, he deals with the question of the deterioration of the serious action, stating that the play does not break in the middle, "rather, the serious and comic elements in the play are present together from the very beginning of Act I to the end of Act V, admittedly in varying proportions..."<sup>29</sup> He concludes that, except for some loose ends here and there, the play "is marvelously well integrated," and that the

richness of language in passages skillfully alternated combines with the richness of episode and of theme to produce a total effect that is nothing short of dazzling.<sup>30</sup>

The following year, T. W. Craik similarly stressed the play's dramatic potential, concluding his study with a plea that the play should be judged in the theatre:

*The Jew of Malta* is essentially a play for the theatre, and it is in the theatre that it must be judged, not according to preconceived notions of tragic dignity and tragic depth. It is not a profound play, but it is a good one, vigorous and varied in its dramatic effects, by no means appealing only to an unsophisticated audience...and not limited in its interest to its own age.<sup>31</sup>

Even Sanders, who criticises the "heavy-handed dramatic technique" in the play, admits that there is in it "a great deal more than a vulgar anti-semitism and a melodramatic Machiavellism," and that some of its parts "merit the title of 'serious farce'".<sup>32</sup> An example of Sanders's attempt at an objective criticism of the play is his justification of an often condemned passage in it, namely Barabas's monstrous catalogue of crimes:

Barabas confesses to most of the criminal occupations with which anti-semitic polemicists had credited the Jews...and on this level the speech is a quiet jibe at the Christians who believe such tales. Barabas clearly makes no great effort to convince Ithamore or us of its accuracy: the syntax is of the 'throw-away' kind—'As for myself, I...some-times I...and now and then...Being young I...And, after that...some or other...' [sic]—and he puts the lid on the whole performance by enquiring blandly, 'But tell me now, how hast thou spent thy time?'<sup>33</sup>



In 1968, J. L. Smith offered the first purely theatrical study of the play, encouraging the critics not to judge *The Jew* "from the comfort of their study armchairs".<sup>34</sup> He provides a fairly detailed discussion of some productions of the play hoping that it would "shed some light on its dramatic genre" (p. 3). By exploring how satirically certain scenes in the play functioned on stage in the 1964 revivals, Smith discovers that "the Marlowe of the theatre is terrifyingly modern", and thus he puts a challenging question: "can the Marlowe of more academic critics boast as much?" (p. 23).

Recent critics have attempted to rise to the challenge. Steane, as mentioned above, had already discovered this air of modernity in the play. In the same year (1968) Sanders perceived a "strain of tough honesty in *The Jew* which commands respect [,] an entirely healthy strain" that is more realistic than what one finds in tragedy or comedy and, as such, more attractive to modern readers.<sup>35</sup> Stephen J. Greenblatt has gone so far as to compare Marlowe's representations of Jewishness with Marx's, and has found many parallels.<sup>36</sup> In his edition of the play (1978) Bawcutt pronounces that the play "is far more of a unity than many earlier critics allow," and he also wonders why even "now that we have grown accustomed to 'black comedy' and the theatre of the absurd, we may still find it difficult to decide just how seriously Marlowe intended the play".<sup>37</sup>

Recently, Constance Brown Kuriyama has applied the concepts of psychoanalysis to *The Jew* which was thought to be a play so barren of any internalised treatment of the human condition—or, as for example Cole puts it:

viewed from the perspective of a broadly naturalistic drama, a drama that makes some efforts at psychological realism or, at least, adequately motivated characterisation, the Jew of Malta will always appear an inhuman and incredible creature .<sup>38</sup>

Kuriyama tries to search into the motivation behind Barabas's acts by relating the play to Marlowe's own psychological identity. She discovers that Barabas suffers psychologically by being an outsider, experiencing all kinds of deprivation, of genital sexuality, identity, and security, thus improving on Levin's allusion to Barabas's want of love. In addition to that, placing Barabas's motivation outside the realm of the caricature of the Morality Vice, she argues that Barabas is "incorrigibly selfish",<sup>39</sup> and his egocentricity leads him to struggle for an identity of which his possessions, including Abigail, are the parts and means. Kuriyama's criticism of the play, though it is at times far-fetched, has broadened the horizons of the research into the richness of



the play. Her attempt to validate her analysis adds more credit to the play as she stresses how hospitable *The Jew of Malta* is to different shades of meanings:

The play is no more bound by self-reference than by the conventional limitations of the stage Jew, the revenge play, or the Christian ethos. It is perhaps this very unconventionality and daring, this odd impartiality of the play's vision, even more than its widely acclaimed technical brilliance, that constitutes the play's appeal to the modern temper. Marlowe's cynical appraisal of human motives, his contempt for creeds and enthusiasms, and his pronounced ambivalence toward materialism necessarily strike responsive chords in us. To object that Marlowe is not telling the whole truth, or that he is not properly outraged by what he does tell, seems almost impertinent. When we inspect the back of a tapestry, we expect to lose sight of the front. And a degree of moral neutrality is sometimes indispensable to accurate perception, particularly when the facts are universally incriminating.<sup>40</sup>

Whether these innovatory views were realised in the theatre is another matter. In spite of the changes in critical opinion, revivals of the play did not happen as frequently as one might expect. It seems that it was only because 1964 was the year of Marlowe quatercentenary that the play received three productions: the first opened on 17 February, at the Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury, directed by Donald Bain, with Michael Baxter in the title-role; the second opened on 10 March, at the Victoria Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, under the direction of Peter Cheeseman, with Bernard Gallagher as Barabas; and the third was the R.S.C.'s revival at the Aldwych, which opened on 1 October, under the direction of Clifford Williams (discussed below). Then the play disappeared for another twenty years until 1984, when it had a brief revival at the Donmar Warehouse, London.<sup>41</sup> In 1987, the R.S.C. staged another revival under the direction of Barry Kyle, which opened on 7 July, at the Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, and moved later to Newcastle and to the Barbican. However, the fact that three directors chose *The Jew* from among Marlowe's plays to celebrate his quatercentenary seems to indicate that the play was starting to acquire a better position in the theatre, even if it enjoyed less frequent revivals than other Marlowe plays. The two R.S.C. productions of 1964 and 1987 have been chosen for discussion in this chapter, firstly, because both have been extensively reviewed, secondly, because both directors, Clifford Williams and Barry Kyle, have been consulted, and thirdly, and only in the case of the latter, because I have been able to see the production. But before analysing any of these two productions in detail, it is important to be aware of how the other professional productions fared on stage.

Starting with the Phoenix Society production in 1922, one can say that its importance lay in the fact that it was the first time after Heywood's revival in 1633 that the full text of the play was acted—that is, without the extensive editing of Kean's revival in 1818. The Phoenix society was praised for its effort to introduce a forgotten Elizabethan play to the professional theatre. Allan Wade, who directed the play, made the whole action pass into a world of unreality. The critics regarded the production as a "monstrous farce, a careless burlesque of human speech and action".<sup>42</sup> The assumption seems to have been that the play would not be acceptable to the audiences of 1922 unless they were made not to believe in its brutalities, but merely to laugh at them. The production showed for the first time that what would have been tragic for Elizabethan audiences, like the piling up of corpses on the stage, would appear too incredible to be other than comic to modern audiences:

here is not the stuff of tragedy. Even the many murders contrived by Barabas cannot drag a tear from our eyes because we do not believe in him or them....The inhumanity is so loudly expressed that it can move only a smile. (*BM*)

There were reports that the theatre was "full of laughter...and of such good laughter that one were a fool to frown upon it" (*T<sub>1</sub>*). Barabas's plot against Mathias and Lodowick, and his poisoning of the nunnery, were said to have produced "loud and unrestrained laughter" (*BM*), and the friar's words "...all the nuns are dead; let's bury them." (III,vi,44), were received as the "climax of a successful farce because Mr. Homewood [Bernardine] spoke the words as if the unfortunate ladies were voyaging in too stormy a Mediterranean..." (*T<sub>1</sub>*). The production was physically energetic, aiming at a break-neck speed, obviously to overshadow the alleged weaknesses in the play. The defect in this production seems to have been that Baliol Holloway in the title-role failed to fuse together both aspects in Barabas: vindictive villainy and attractive worldliness. He "fought splendidly for his tragedy" (*T<sub>1</sub>*), "spar[ing]...nothing of his brutality" (*BM*), so that his Barabas was mainly regarded as "sheer satanism" (*G<sub>1</sub>*). Thus while the other aspects of the production were aimed at laughter, a strongly vindictive Barabas did not fit. For some reviewers Barabas appeared as a "kind of Punch who belabour[ed] all who came nigh him with a stout staff" (*BM*).

What is also worth noting about this production is that for the audience in 1922, though the play gained a great deal on the boards, it functioned mainly as "a play of words...[where] most of [the] characters were mere vehicles of bombast" (*BM*). It was more a demonstration of Marlowe's "mighty line" (*BM*) than a theatrical success. Apart from sheer entertainment, the play seemed to offer audiences nothing. Barabas's death which would have culminated the play for Marlowe's audiences in a mixture of



delight and pious approval, did no more than "arouse another incredulous laugh" (*BM*). The way Barabas carries his plots through, which would have been enjoyed by Elizabethans was seen in 1922 as greatly unsophisticated in its lack of mystery and suspense, and as representative of "stark simplicities of sin" (*G<sub>1</sub>*). The modern audiences "are not thrilled by the spectacle of a man salting porridge with poison and chuckling over the dead" (*G<sub>1</sub>*), and thus Elizabethan audiences were accused of having lacked taste in accepting an "artless fabrication of horrors" (*G<sub>1</sub>*).

In spite of the fact that the production was successful in distracting attention from the anti-semitism in the play, it raised the question of whether the play was "intended to be as amusing as the Phoenix chose to make [it]" (*T<sub>1</sub>*). There was a general lack of seriousness about the production that produced a feeling that the whole evening was "sold out to the easy laugh" (Smith, p. 12). Eliot's 'serious farce' was turned into an incredibly comic one. In this, the production contrasted sharply with Kean's revival which focused on the tragic in the play. Neither Kean nor the Phoenix Society succeeded in fusing together the serious and the farcical. Clearly, the Phoenix revival did not stimulate further productions of the play and, though the play was not unattempted by minor companies, its theatrical reputation was not established until 1964, when radical changes in the theatre had opened opportunities for a better acceptance of materials that in the past had been condemned as heterogeneous.

By 1964, the public had become accustomed to the Theatre of the Absurd, and to the Theatre of Anger, but, and more importantly, the year also saw the first performance of Joe Orton's *Entertaining Mr. Sloane*. Orton's importance as an innovator lay in the fact that he reinstated farce as a vehicle for dangerous subject matter, by recreating horrors and taboos alongside comedy that would provoke healthy laughter at human absurdities. He was the first to exploit the sick joke in the theatre in order to lead the audience to accept ideas that might otherwise be largely offensive. The theatre of 1964 was widely coloured by Orton's spirit and, indirectly, directors of *The Jew of Malta* seem to have been influenced by Orton's innovatory principles.

In February of this year, Donald Bain intended to present the play as a 'serious farce', and Barabas as a "satirical spy with left wing tendencies".<sup>43</sup> Michael Baxter as Barabas succeeded somehow in combining both the serious and the ludicrous in Barabas's character: "he introduced into his reading a deliberate element of ham, but blended it with enough subtlety, enough isolation, and love to make him nearly always sympathetic" (*T<sub>2</sub>*). But on the whole, the events in the play did not seem to have helped to achieve the equilibrium aimed at. Michael Baxter appeared as a traditional Jew with

red hair and gabardine which made of Barabas a mere stereotype and thus he remained a "caricature of avarice and persecution mania," ( $T_2$ ), and his death was seen as the "greatest caricature of all". The production was enjoyed merely as a piece of "lively entertainment" ( $T_2$ ). There was a feeling that somewhere it went wrong, as one reviewer suggested that if "played more bitterly...letting the humour finds its own level, this could have been a dangerous evening" ( $T_2$ ).

Working in terms of black comedy was left to Peter Cheeseman who found the play interestingly modern in its faint distinction between the tragic and the comic. Cheeseman felt that

this is just the kind of humour we can now encompass, the humour of the sick joke, and the black comedy. Its mood is extravagant. There is violence in the atmosphere, in the subject matter, and in the very switchback motion from tragedy to comedy within the joke itself.<sup>44</sup>

This Barabas was not intended to be played merely as a pantomime devil, but as also having a credible character. Bernard Gallagar departed from the traditional stage-Jew figure by appearing more as a successful marketeer but maintaining some grotesque features, like a long pointed nose. But in spite of trying to play the serious in Barabas along the comic, he was mainly seen as a "caricature...[of] real medieval humour—sweeping round a black cloak like a vulture, cackling like Dracula, licking his chops in exultation...". The tragic grievance in Barabas was attempted but appeared only as "occasional hints" ( $G_2$ ), and though there was a "kind of dignity" in him, it was "[only] in the beginning" ( $G_2$ ). The production had only "brief moments of real anguish" ( $T_3$ ) which did not ripen further throughout the evening. Thus, though Peter Cheeseman attempted to realise the humour of the sick joke, the production ended up mainly as a "bloody farce," and the whole event was marked for its "inconsistency" ( $G_2$ ). It was as if the comic elements in the play dominated the serious, so that it was difficult to achieve the balance that Cheeseman aimed at.

The historical importance of the production, however, lay in its having been experimental, not only in its attempt at black comedy, but also in its use of a small space in the round. One reviewer who had always felt that a Marlowe play would not work in a small theatre thought that

the rhetoric [would] over-alienate the audience by its stiltedness, [and would] project itself out of the walls because of its bombast in a small theatre...[but] the experiment [came] off pretty well...movement [was] frequent, quick, and informal. ( $G_2$ ).



The fact that *The Jew* worked in terms of audience participation (though an imposed one), creating intimacy between spectators and actors, and the fact that the production took place in a limited space, seems to have added some kind of profundity to it in spite of its inconsistency. Though largely enjoyed by the audience, the play was still a puzzle, with its unjustified murders and preposterous characters, and the aim of achieving a black comedy was not fully realised.

When the R.S.C. staged their production in October of the same year, *The Jew of Malta* was described as black comedy. The R.S.C. had already established its reputation as a successful large company with the revival of Shakespeare's early histories in *The War of the Roses*, in 1963/4, and by 1964, it had become the major rival of the National Theatre Company.<sup>45</sup> It was also the season of Peter Brook's Theatre of Cruelty. The season included *Richard III*, and Peter Weiss' *Marat/Sade*. In his study of the R.S.C.'s history, David Addenbrooke writes about the spirit of the season:

nearly every play staged by the RSC during 1964 was, in some way, influenced by 'cruelty': there was cruelty, mental and/or physical; violence and/or implied [sic]; and 'vulgarity', both Elizabethan and modern. During the year, the company's productions included the *Richard II* to *Richard III* history cycle at Stratford; Pinter's *The Birthday Party*, Rudkin's *Afore Night Come*, Beckett's *Endgame*...Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* and Weiss's *Marat/Sade* at the Aldwych....One result of the 1964 season was the Dirty Plays controversy. Another result was the year of productions which virtually compelled audiences to leave the theatre with their senses and intelligence jolted and disturbed as never before.<sup>46</sup>

Thus *The Jew of Malta* fitted well into the season. Clifford Williams's revival of the play came as a celebration of Marlowe's quatercentenary, timed for October to be less overshadowed by the Shakespeare quatercentenary over which the R.S.C. was engaged in a sharp competition with the National Theatre. The R.S.C. London season at the Aldwych was proving a dangerous rival to the National Theatre, and this might be one of the reasons why Clifford Williams decided to make the play competitive in terms of entertainment. There seems also to have been a general belief that it was the first in forty years, as there was no mention in the programme of the other productions that had taken place in the same year. The great attention the production received led to its revival six months later in the Stratford season, in tandem with *The Merchant of Venice*, but with an almost entirely new cast. Clive Revill as Barabas in 1964 was replaced by Eric Porter who also played Shylock in *The Merchant*, Ian Richardson as Ithamore in 1964 was replaced by Peter McEnery, Glenda Jackson's Bellamira in 1964

was taken over by Patsy Byrne. Though the directorial approach was the same in both revivals, the individual touch of each actor, and particularly of the actor in the title-role, made certain differences, as will be shown later.<sup>47</sup>

Clifford Williams proceeded from a belief in the credibility of the events in the play as showing "present day attitudes...[to] the desperate wickedness of the world" (*P&P*<sub>2</sub>). Having no "firm views of Barabas's character when [he] thought of directing the play",<sup>48</sup> Clifford Williams avoided forcing a certain treatment or tone on the play and only by experimenting through rehearsals did he discover that the play tends naturally to be a satirical comedy:

You play it seriously, to the hilt with no attempt at comedy, and it turns out to be very funny, and it is meant to be.  
(Williams, Interview)

That Williams achieved this aim is evidenced by the almost identical phrase used by reviewers to the effect that the production was "one of the funniest shows in London" (*YP*<sub>2</sub>). The revival in 1965 seems to have produced the same effect, as it was described as a "laugh-a-minute melodrama" (*SAH*<sub>2</sub>). Titles of reviews seized on this outstanding feature.<sup>49</sup> Critics were engaged in reporting how there was "no control of laughter" (*NS*), and how it was "liable to break at the [supposedly] saddest moments—such as the wholesale poisoning of a convent of nuns" (*Bar*) into a "continous roar of laughter" (*JC*<sub>2</sub>). Some critics even took pains to specify at which point the laughter was the loudest—"one of the biggest laughs was the line 'All the nuns are dead. Lets go and bury them,' [sic]" (*BrM*<sub>1</sub>)—or the longest: "[the] effect on last night's audience had to be heard to be believed: 'Brother, all the nuns are dead' (laughter): 'Let's bury them' (Prolonged Laughter)" (*T*<sub>4</sub>).<sup>50</sup> Every deed of cunning on part of Barabas was a new twist of the farcical screw:

the emphasis was definitely on farce and each time the Jew conceived of some new diabolical means of murdering or out-witting his Christian opponents the audience roared with delight. (*ES*)

Whether this treatment of the play met with general approval is another matter. The production, as the play itself, elicited contradictory reviews. For those who were less troubled with literary or moral considerations, Clifford Williams's production was seen as a successful piece of "black comedy" (*WM*), or a "tongue-in-cheek" (*NC*<sub>1</sub>) interpretation that was filled with sardonic relish, leaving the "farce [to] take its course unchecked" (*BP*<sub>1</sub>). There was a general belief that Clifford Williams "has rightly decided to send it up rotten" (*DM*<sub>1</sub>), because if played "straight it would no doubt be



the biggest bore" (*SAH*<sub>1</sub>). Clifford Williams was congratulated on having "at least substitut[ed] sporadic hilarity for offensive tedium" (*WOL*), and in spite of the fact that the production was heavily spiced with "uncorked bursts of loud and lusty laughter" (*DE*<sub>1</sub>), for Bernard Levin some lines still missed the comedy hidden in them:

the trouble is that Mr. Williams has not played hard enough for all the laughs, so that although there is a good deal of merriment throughout the evening, there is also many a yawn.  
(*DM*<sub>1</sub>)

Other reviewers, while admitting how enjoyable an evening they had experienced, expressed certain doubts about whether it was in the nature of the text to excite laughter: "though I can't deny that it makes a thoroughly entertaining evening, it is hardly true to the text" (*FT*<sub>1</sub>). It was lamented that Marlowe's mighty line was "lost in clowning" (*O*<sub>1</sub>), and thus "[became] mighty ridiculous which [was] hard on Marlowe..." (*ST*<sub>1</sub>). The production was also criticised for "lacking proper gravity [and for] bidding us enjoy horrors at which we might be appalled" (*Tr*<sub>1</sub>). But, surprisingly, what approval and opposition shared was the belief that the humorous was the only possible way to put *The Jew* on the modern stage. According to most reviewers it seemed necessary to take Barabas's career as a "huge and entirely deliberate joke" (*T*<sub>4</sub>), as his deeds were too preposterous to be true. It is important to note, however, that condemnation seemed more directed at the play than at the production, and thus it seemed to have been influenced by the critical reputation of *The Jew*. It was Marlowe who was held mainly responsible:

In view of what the play offers in its middle and later scenes in the way of the totally preposterous, then playing for laughs seems the only way with a modern audience. (*G*<sub>3</sub>)

Clifford Williams, however, claims that owing to the nature of the play all was dependent on the rendition of the title-role. Being one of the longest Marlowe roles written,<sup>51</sup> Clifford Williams conceived that it is the kind of play that

you tend to build...round what the actor is offering, an actor gives a particular feeling, and the whole company is led by that feeling. (Williams, Interview)

He proceeded from his belief that Barabas is the hero of the play, no matter what is thought of him in terms of moral values. He operated from the point of view that every villain has a streak of humour and sympathy in him that makes him "horrible but

lovable...Barabas, Iago, and Richard III all have humour, and it is impossible not to enjoy them" (Williams, Interview).

At the Aldwych, in 1964, Clive Revill was apparently able to encompass all Barabas's conflicting characteristics by sheer vitality and versatility. He presented the Jew with both a "diabolical gleam in his eye [and the] 'glad-eye' of the pantomime 'Baddie'" (*U*), thus probably approximating an Elizabethan image of an evil Barabas (but without an artificial nose as Alleyn's in Marlowe's time).<sup>52</sup> With a "pointed Mephistophelian beard," he appeared to possess "a jaunty cock-sureness and a calculating eye which convey[ed] intense amusement at his own villainies...a gesture of a healthy mocking contempt for all gentiles...[and] an embracing grin after each misfortune" (*JC*<sub>2</sub>). His performance had simultaneously "a command of the sardonic-sinister" (*BP*<sub>1</sub>), and the gusto of a "pantomime demon-king figure" (*JC*<sub>1</sub>). Clive Revill excited a mixture of reluctant acceptance and marvel. To some reviewers he appeared as a "humorously plausible rascal" (*LP*<sub>1</sub>) and to others it seemed as if "evil bubbles in him with such furious intensity that one expects to see steam spurting from his nostrils and streaks of flame shooting from his lips" (*ES*).

It was believed that "all the laughs came from Clive Revill" (*YP*<sub>2</sub>). His resourcefulness contributed greatly to the success of the production. This was clear from the versatile stage business he effected, with a "face like a turbine" (*NS*) moving from farce to drama in a masterly "sense of timing" (*YP*<sub>2</sub>). He paced up and down energetically between Christians and Jews in the confiscation scene (I,ii), arguing with "subtle restraint," reacting with a "shrug of the shoulder and a quick triumphant smile" (*MENC*). He employed a gesture of "eye-rolling" (*BEP*) when he was testing the reaction of the friars at his dissembled repentance (IV,i,47-76), and when he moved between Abigail and the nuns to perform his false rejection of his daughter, and to confirm with her the place of the hidden treasure which was to be salvaged, "his timing of asides being masterly" (*LP*<sub>1</sub>). When thinking of a new plot his main gesture was "hand-scything" (*BEP*) that would have effectively displayed the working of his mind and his obsession with revenge. Reviews were filled with praise of his acting skill:

Craftiness seems to be dancing within his scheming brain; he darts about like a magpie after glittering; he speaks with enormous authority...moving with ease through the intricacies of the play as a whole. (*S&Tv*<sub>2</sub>)

And, although he did not play for sympathy, one "[grew] a good deal more fond of him than of any other character" (*T*<sub>4</sub>).



For Eric Porter's portrayal of Barabas in the Stratford revival a few months later, there is almost no detailed descriptions of his acting style. Critics in 1965 were engaged in describing his performance as Barabas mainly in relation to his role as Shylock. What seems to be clear, however, is that Barabas's appearance differed in the two revivals: Clive Revill, in a Jewish gabardine and "stove-pipe like hat",<sup>53</sup> pointed beard, carefully combed dark red hair, and no ornaments about him, exhibited the austere figure of a stingy Jew; but Eric Porter, in "an elaborate rich gown, a mantle of thick piled fur" (Smith, p. 20), and heavily bejewelled with rings and chains, gave a portrait of a physically massive, successful financier, "broad-shouldered, upright, and derisively defiant of the world" (*JC*<sub>3</sub>) (see illustrations 52 and 53). This seems to have resulted from a need to find a clear-cut difference between Porter's Barabas and his Shylock. Porter's Shylock had to be the more austere and introvert, enveloped in his hatred of the Christians, while his Barabas seemed, in comparison, to need more relish and liveliness which enabled his moment-to-moment shifts of allegiances and plans according to the state of affairs. In a discussion between Clifford Williams and Eric Porter, they attempted to imagine both the heroes in a restaurant, and found out that the "contrast between them [was] easily imagined":

Shylock would be the small man...fanatically zealous in the matter of Jewish food, despised for his appearance...whereas Barabas, though still not liked by the other customers, would command a certain awe. He'd be a spruce [sic], immaculate, a carnation in his button-hole, not too fussy about eating pork if it suited him...[having] more money...more ability than any of them....like a king on top of them all... (*P&P*<sub>2</sub>)

Apart from appearance, the individual touch each actor possessed was seen as the major point that distinguished between the two revivals:

Clive Revill was good enough but Eric Porter...with his splendid voice and strong build was able, without losing any of the two-faced comedy, to give the part a volume and weight which it is seen now to need. (*G*<sub>4</sub>)

This preference for Eric Porter was actually voiced by most reviewers. His was seen as an unequalled performance, "the most perceptive, concentrated and expressive performance of Barabas since Marlowe created the character..." (*WE*<sub>1</sub>), beside which "all else pal[ed] into insignificance" (*YP*<sub>3</sub>). Being a "weightier actor than Mr. Revill" (*DM*<sub>2</sub>), he added more "villainous dignity" (*DT*<sub>2</sub>), or more "hints of grandeur" (*S&T*<sub>v2</sub>). Like Clive Revill, however, he gave a picture of a "crafty old wolf" (*CET*<sub>1</sub>), and a "positively endearing person...[,] totally unprincipled...but keenly ironic, intelligent

and amusing" (*LP*<sub>2</sub>). The gravity Eric Porter added to the part, also made Barabas "a worthy and potentially tragic representative of a stricken and persecuted race" (*S&Tv*<sub>2</sub>).

Porter's delivery of asides received similar admiration to that of Revill's. He was said to have been "stupendously good...in his confidential asides, whether to his accomplices or to the audiences" (*BEN*). Eric Porter was said to have succeeded in balancing his acting "on the knife edge between the farcical and the serious" (*BEN*), while Clive Revill's performance, as one reviewer put it, was seen to have fallen short

only of some final, moral drawing transfiguration: a moment of reversal and recognition to leave us alienated and shuddering, as the Jew ceases to embody our own amused cleverness and swells into the baleful new Sathanas. (*NS*)

Because of the difficult task that awaited Eric Porter in trying to achieve differences between Shylock and Barabas while preserving the ethnic similarities, and because of his success in overcoming this challenge, admiration would inevitably have been directed at his skill as an actor performing the two roles within twenty-four hours, an opportunity that was denied to Clive Revill.

Apart from the individual style of each actor, the approach to staging Barabas's different monologues and encounters with other characters was the same in both revivals. After the Prologue—spoken at the Aldwych by Derek Godfrey, who "extract[ed] every juicy ounce" from the lines (*Tr*<sub>1</sub>) with a "serpent's tongue" (*EN*<sub>1</sub>), and so setting a tone of sinister humour for the production, and at Stratford by Tony Church (who doubled as the governor)<sup>54</sup> "looking like Clement Freud about to dictate a recipe for caustic soda a la Borgia" (*SAH*<sub>2</sub>)—Barabas entered carrying a huge account book that seemed to replace the heaps of gold with a more modern symbol of a world of finance (see illustration 52). The various pauses of the first speech were achieved by means of reflecting and writing down sums in the book. Both actors walked confidently on the stage, Clive Revill in his austerity giving an image of the obsession with money, Eric Porter appearing more like a successful tycoon. Barabas's shocking act of tossing wealth aside, "Fie, what a trouble 'tis to count this trash!" (*I*,i,7), was achieved by a violent slam of the book, making concrete Barabas's boredom with the necessity of sorting out his riches, as what was in view was only a dull account-book. But at the same time the absence of spectacular "infinite riches" (37), would have lessened the ironic tone of the lethargy Barabas falsely displays at counting his enormous wealth.



The major feature of both Revill's and Porter's acting of Barabas's different transformations of mood seems to have been a full-bodied and full-blooded energy. They "[broke] through between the friars" (*P&P*<sub>3</sub>) who were about to take the 'converted' Abigail (I,ii,337), "jump[ed] away" (*P&P*<sub>3</sub>) when the nuns started chanting, hilariously affected a fury at Abigail, and gleefully watched Abigail's suitors fight. Also both intimidated the three Jews by pushing them against a wall and both dragged Ithamore by the hair (Smith, p. 20). "Find[ing] it hard to tolerate the unsophisticated villainy of [the] slave accomplice...[Eric Porter] snap[ped] out of patience at [Ithamore's] cliché[s]" (*T*<sub>5</sub>) (see illustration 71), as when Barabas gives Ithamore the letter which bears the challenge to Mathias, at which Ithamore says "'Tis poisoned, is it not?" (II,iii,374).

Clive Revill and Eric Porter were both impressively backed by their respective Ithamores. In 1964, Ian Richardson, with an "odd goat-footed walk" (*SAH*<sub>1</sub>), "compellingly devious" (*S*), was "so adept in [sic] extracting the last crumb of fun from lines in which the fun [could] sometimes only be obtained by probing beneath the surface" (*FT*<sub>1</sub>). In 1965, Peter McEnery was more of a grotesque "red-eyed, twisted, [and] vulture-like" Ithamore (*SAH*<sub>2</sub>), a "cross between Caliban and a youthful Hunchback of Notre-Dame, leap[ing], crawl[ing], [and] squat[ing]" (*WE*<sub>1</sub>). Ian Richardson's Ithamore was seen as more "phsychotic" (*T*<sub>5</sub>), more like a "depraved Ariel, or a Puck smitten with rabies" (*T*<sub>4</sub>), but he was able to "suddenly silence the house in the middle of [the] near-farcical scene" between him and Bellamira (*BP*<sub>1</sub>). Both Ithamores were treated sadistically by the two Barabases; but the character of Ithamore was seen mainly as an intentional "comic relief" (*FT*<sub>1</sub>).

This diabolic duo of master and slave, a continuous contrast to the dim-witted Christians, produced the most entertaining moments in the production when they put their heads together for new mischief. The preparation of the poisoned pot of rice was a vigorous and hilarious piece of acting and as such received special mention by critics for its comic potential (see illustration 63). Clifford Williams gave reality to the whole event by producing such an abundance of smoke that, as the promptbook indicates, a fireman had to stand by. As Barabas seemed involved in preparing the lethal powder, Ithamore snatched the pot away, "[took] a sip from spoon...[and] start[ed] to eat with both hands,", at which Barabas "grabb[ed] him by the hair", "add[ed] the poison and [spat] into the pot" (*P&P*<sub>3</sub>). The effect verged on black comedy. Thus, as the audience became virtually anaesthetised by laughter, the dying nuns, who came "coughing and chocking" (*P&P*<sub>3</sub>), brought the laughter to a climax, instead of producing a sense of horror. And, as mentioned earlier, the friars' lines that followed made the audience risk

"laughing themselves into a coma" (*P&P*<sub>1</sub>). As Abigail's death speech started to sober the audience, Bernardine's line "Ay, and a virgin too, that grieves me most" (III,vi,41) caused the suppressed laughter to explode. Smith found that this moment in the production so brought together the tragic and the farcical that it entered into the realm of '*pantomime noir*':

the audience [was] torn between its natural sympathy for the pathetic Abigail and convulsions of laughter at the complete callousness of the farcical characters around her. (Smith, p. 18)

Thus the sick humour of the Barabas-Ithamore pair overruled any consideration of humanity and commonsense. Their air of camaraderie apparently made them attractive in contrast to the dull and hostile community around them; and while Bellamira and Pilia-Borza made another farcical team, their mischief stood out as far less ingenious. The two Bellamiras, however, received special mention in reviews. In 1964, Glenda Jackson, playing also a striking part in the *Marat/Sade*, was "snake-haired" and looked "uncommonly fetching with a performance of real style" (*T*<sub>4</sub>); Patsy Byrne, in 1965, gave a "marvellous parody of provocation run to seed lumpily sheathed in black satin and trailing behind her a scarlet train that [made] snake-like exits of its own" (*T*<sub>5</sub>). The major difference between the two interpretations of the courtesan was that, while Glenda Jackson gave an image of the "*femme fatale*," Patsy Byrne presented a "down-at-heel Cleopatra whose command of male admirers was more desperate than arrogant" (*P&P*<sub>3</sub>). Being escorted in both revivals by Timothy West's Pilia-borza, a comic figure in boots and tunic "with a strip of Mexican blanket for a sash" (Smith, p. 6), both the Bellamiras mainly fitted in the comic context of the production, and the scenes where they appeared seemed to reviewers to be intended as "near-farcical" (*BP*<sub>1</sub>).

In his presentation of the Christians Clifford Williams was led by what he liked most about the play, namely that Marlowe was "equally hard on both Jew and Christian" (Williams, Interview). His Malta was a world of hypocrisy, greed and expediency, but without the vigour of Barabas and Ithamore. This is, of course, in the text, but it was apparently given more emphasis in the production. Clifford Williams, perhaps subversively, showed Barabas emerging as a more "clear sighted opportunist within a society that would act in the same way if it dared" (*T*<sub>4</sub>). Money became the keyword in the production, and what Barabas appeared to be doing was only having more of it than the Christians. Accordingly, Tony Church as the governor in both revivals gave a "restrained sketch of hypocritical piety and patriotism" (*ST*<sub>1</sub>). He ordered the Jews to give up their possessions, confronted Barabas, and seized all his



wealth without a shade of regret on his face. This would have contrasted sharply with Barabas's whole-hearted plea to retrieve his wealth.

Public scenes demonstrated the political double-dealing in Malta. The scene where the Christians ask the Turks for a month's leave (I,ii,1-33) looked like a "summit conference...[marked] with mutual mistrust...advisory whispers and weighty pauses", and culminated in a "public handshake to seal the new alliance" (Smith, p. 17). The scene where the Christians confront the Turks with their refusal to pay the tribute (III,v) had an air of military preparation, with the knights of Malta wearing helmets and raising swords in the air, thus stressing the motif of struggle for power (see illustration 61). The state scenes, which could easily seem brief and cursory, had been spectacularly amplified. The Turks entered with a Turkish march and Ferneze and his party to the accompaniment of trumpets. The significance of this ceremoniousness was not lost on the audience: "Turks blazing in white and red against the sombre cloaks of the Maltese" (*O*<sub>1</sub>).

Lodowick and Mathias were not mentioned at all in reviews. They probably functioned as mere caricatures, which is all that the text allows. The sketchy drawing of these two minor characters seems to cause difficulty for directors of the play, as will be shown in discussing Barry Kyle's production. Even in Kean's revival, so centered on its star, there were attempts to expand the scope of these two roles.<sup>55</sup> In 1964, their fighting and killing each other did not allow any tragic response from the audience. Barabas appeared behind a wall to applaud them as if watching a "football match" (*SG*). Katherine's and Ferneze's laments were delivered in a formal and perfunctory fashion, an exchange of words necessary to mark the occasion but void of any real emotion.

Similarly, nuns and friars were established as absurd from the beginning, their comic appearance deliberately exaggerated. Nuns appeared in enormous round head-pieces like "super-colossal 'pie-frill'" (*U*) (see illustration 64). Led by an abbess carrying a crucifix, their procession entered to the tune of ritual chants, "shrilling in Latin their righteous glee at the apparent conversion of Abigail" (*WM*). The recruiting of Abigail into the nunnery was performed by a ritualistic placing of hands on heads. Their comic appearance juxtaposed with their stylized performance meant that they functioned as a ridicule of the religious body in Malta. Monks formed a "knock-about team" (*T*<sub>4</sub>), appearing at Abigail's 'conversion' like a "brace of sensual friars" (*SAH*<sub>1</sub>), "worse than Barabas with the added unattraction that they [were] small scale" (*WM*). The highest point of farcical absurdity turned into satire, was achieved in their fight

over Barabas's money (IV,i), "their initial rectitude falling from them layer after layer until they [were] rolling on the floor in a fight for Barabas's soul" (*FT*<sub>1</sub>). The friars' spiteful wrangle over the spoil fitted superbly into the pattern of bitter comedy (see illustration 51). But the fact that religion was sold out for mocking laughs was criticised by at least one reviewer, who thought that "the singing nuns...should not have been carrying a crucifix," and that "a farce [would] remain funny as long as the bounds of propriety [were] kept" (*U*).

In such a corrupt community, however, Barabas would have become almost endearing in his wickedness. According to one reviewer Barabas was "monstrous but paradoxically purest among all...with no time to dress his selfish intentions in self-sacrificing phrases" (*DW*). Smith admired Clifford Williams's success in "building up the serious formalities of power politics, religious ritual, or funeral procession [while] allowing the farcical action or satiric asides of Marlowe's text to do the rest" (Smith, p. 16). This was enhanced by the anti-climatic nature of Marlowe's poetry which, according to Clifford Williams, is like "a Gothic cathedral, it builds up to a point, and then falls down suddenly" (Williams, Interview). By the end, as Barabas was boiling in the cauldron, audiences seemed to have fully grasped this point, so that even without the aid of Barabas's satirical comments they laughed at Ferneze's final attribution of praise to heaven. To Clifford Williams this was "a sign that the audience understood the cynicism of the play" (Williams, Interview).

Though the production ended on a note of violent comedy, there was no sympathy for the dying Barabas. According to Clifford Williams, "everybody was happy that Barabas fell in the cauldron" (Williams, Interview). Thus though he has been the centre of admiration all through the play, his death elicited a natural human feeling of pleasure at seeing evil overcome, perhaps not as triumphant as that which the Elizabethan audiences would have experienced, but possibly more sophisticated in its being less prejudiced. Some spectators, however, were so much persuaded of Barabas's indestructibility, as if the whole thing was merely a pantomime, that they left the theatre with "only a sense of irrepressible liveliness, confident that the wily old charmer will somehow escape from his cauldron to meet the wolfman" (*NS*).

The 'deterioration' in Barabas's tragic image between the first two acts and the last three, which has constantly vexed critics, did not trouble Clifford Williams. Though he was convinced that it was difficult to "draw a psychological thread from his character", he saw Barabas, as Kuriyama has stated recently, as a



jewel, with many surfaces, you turn the jewel that way, you see the surface of darkness, you turn it that way, you see a bright crystalite [sic] colour, and you turn it that way you see a soft romantic colour, and you have to play each scene exactly as it is written, and hope that it will all come together. (Williams, Interview)

And in fact it did come together coherently, not only through the talent Clive Revill and Eric Porter showed in moving between Barabas's different facets, but also by maintaining the quick rhythm of the action that acquired a "cartoon quality" (Williams, Interview). Scenes followed each other without pauses or changes of scenery. The performance took only 135 minutes (Smith, p. 16), which suited the apocalyptic nature of the plot, the transformations of allegiances in a corrupt society, and Barabas's dynamic and precipitate reactions to a given situation.

Much of this flexibility was credited to Ralph Koltai's design, which was compatible with the demands of the text in which changes of location occur within the space of a line. It consisted of a massive pair of "sliding sunshine-baked walls...overhung by a crooked Maltese cross, [and it was] gorgeously simple" (*SAH*<sub>1</sub>) in being designed to move around, "slide apart for indoor scenes, and lock together for street scenes" (*T*<sub>4</sub>) (see illustration 54). The ingenuity of this was thought to have been alone "worth a visit" (*CMC*). The set was praised for its neutrality, and its protean adaptability to "accommodate the moment to moment changes between pantomime, horror, and wintry calm" (*T*<sub>4</sub>). The top of walls represented different houses: Abigail appeared on one of them to throw the money bags to her father (II,i), Barabas appeared behind another to watch the duel between Abigail's two suitors (III,ii), and in the musician's scene (IV,iv) Bellamira sat with Ithamore and Pilia-borza on top of another to indicate her house (see illustration 65). For the state scenes walls were pushed backwards to open up a large area to accommodate groupings of the different factions in Malta. Barabas's death was "well managed with a pivoted trap which allowed him to hang over the smoking cauldron to the last gasp" (Smith, p. 22). The bleached walls gave a "vivid mediterranean atmosphere" (*Bar*), and the fact that the set, chameleon-like, kept dividing and joining itself up in new shapes, also enhanced the feeling of an unsettling world of policy.

Thanks to this flexibility, there was no need for extensive cuts (a total of 108 lines). However, though the points in the production where the set changed were few (I,ii,216; II,iii,221; IV,i,128; V,i,60), some of them seemed to have been unsuccessfully chosen, as they came in the middle of scenes. For instance, the setting changed at I,II,216, at the point when the three Jews leave Barabas on stage alone to

his misery, and he snaps into "See the simplicity of these base slaves...". Any interruption of the action here for the sake of changing the setting would have undercut a great moment of farce: Barabas's quick recovery from his frenzy at the loss of his wealth. In Barry Kyle's 1987 production this moment was allowed its full effect and was hugely enjoyed by the audience, as will be shown later. The set changed also at (V,i,60), when Barabas's body is thrown over the walls. The time needed to change the set would have again imposed an unnecessary interruption to Barabas's *deux ex machina* resilience, which seems to need an instantaneous effect to be enjoyed. Understandably, however, Clifford Williams perhaps thought that some credibility would have been required to understand the new location where Barabas's body was disposed of. In 1987, when Barry Kyle chose to stage this with a simple rolling forward of Barabas's body to preserve the interesting effect, it proved necessary to find a way of emphasising that Barabas was now in a new location.<sup>56</sup>

But, to sum up, Clifford Williams's production was highly acclaimed for the effective set, and the "brilliant portrayal of the Jew" (S), but mainly, and most importantly, for the fact that in it Clifford Williams "has taken this cruel and foolish play, and sent it up so hard and so high that it is probably in orbit...never to return" (DE<sub>1</sub>). It was welcomed as a "theatrical rarity" (DT<sub>1</sub>). Though there were conflicting reviews, the negative ones directed themselves against the play, rather than the production. One reviewer was convinced that the play "ha[d] little to offer but blood, sweat, tears...and a few lines worth salvaging", and for this reason "praise [was due] to the RSC...*The Jew* be[came] a riotously entertaining piece" (SAH<sub>1</sub>). Another reviewer found that seeing *The Jew* on stage proved to him that it was Marlowe who wrote the often condemned comic scenes in *Dr. Faustus* (WM).

Just as the play has been variously classified by critics, the production was given a wide range of contradictory definitions: "horror comic-strip" (CH), "satirical farce" (WOL), "burlesque" (JC<sub>2</sub>), "pantomime for adults" (NG), "brutal satire" (DE<sub>1</sub>), "black comedy" (WM), "Punch & Judy" (S&Tv<sub>1</sub>), "Chaplin" (Bar), "tragi-panto" (NG), and finally, "melo-drama" (SAH<sub>2</sub>). It was, therefore, widely agreed that "all the more honour [was] due to Clifford Williams...for doing so much with somewhat intractable material" (WM). Some reviewers, extended the idea of intractability to the whole Marlowe canon. One reviewer stated that a "producer who sets out to persuade an audience to take a Marlowe play with complete seriousness would labour in vain" (Tr<sub>1</sub>).



To recover the effect this production had on the public, it is revealing to juxtapose the contradictory statements made by reviewers, sometimes about the same evening's performance. Thus, while some critics thought that it "[was] not...the ideal play with which to celebrate Marlowe's quatercentenary" (*JC*<sub>1</sub>), and that either *Tamburlaine* or *Faustus* "would have done more honour to Marlowe's memory" (*FT*<sub>1</sub>), others emphasised

how wise [it was] of the RSC to have decided against a pious revival of *Dr. Faustus* or *Edward II*, and to have a work that has not been seen for over 40 years, and which can prompt no parrot reference to the author's 'mighty line'. (*T*<sub>4</sub>)

Similarly, one is lost between voices calling the production "highly entertaining" (*WEN*), "fascinating" (*WM*), "fine, funny, lively...and brilliant" (*ND*), and those grumbling about its being a "bore" (*BEP*). And, while according to some reviewers it was "timeless" (*MENC*), and a "valid contemporary theatre" (*WM*), according to others, it was "nothing more than part of a remote Elizabethan fantasy" (*JC*<sub>1</sub>).

These contradictions reflect the critical history of the play. The contradictionness of the play itself meant that it fitted into the season of the Theatre of Cruelty, in its cynicism against the establishment. At least one reviewer credited the often condemned mixed genre of the play as an effective and deliberate "theatrical camouflage masking the play's real purpose," (*T*<sub>4</sub>) and another found that it could "be enjoyed even while it disturb[ed]" (*JC*<sub>1</sub>). Interestingly, in the season of "dirty plays" and of conflicts between the R.S.C. and the censor,<sup>57</sup> *The Jew of Malta* could well have seemed the purest among the plays of the season.

It is also interesting to note that the Stratford revival did not receive less praise than the one at the Aldwych, in spite of the inevitable comparison with *The Merchant of Venice* which occupied reviewers.<sup>58</sup> It would not be an exaggeration to say that it was the very fact that *The Jew* was put together with *The Merchant* that worked for more appreciation of Marlowe's play. Marlowe was hailed as a "master practitioner of black farce" (*T*<sub>5</sub>), the production was seen as "tremendously fun," and the audience was said to have "entered happily into its mocking spirit" (*LP*<sub>2</sub>). Oddly enough, for a good many reviewers *The Jew of Malta* emerged as the more appealing play. According to one reviewer, the experience of seeing both plays concurrently made him realise "the lack of comedy there seem[ed] to be in...*The Merchant*" (*CET*<sub>1</sub>). As against *The Merchant*, *The Jew* appeared to have benefitted from the freshness of novelty. One reviewer even suggested a "ten-year moratorium of [sic] *The*

*Merchant...once this season [was] over" (P&P<sub>3</sub>).<sup>59</sup> By some it was believed that "Shakespeare [was] shown up by Marlowe" (*Sun*).*

The only substantial complaint voiced, though not indignantly, about the 1964/5 revivals, was that the season of 'Cruelty' had dulled the audience's revulsion at deeds like Barabas's. Philip Hope-Wallace

wish[ed]...that [he had] blenched and shied a little more as perhaps did Marlowe's contemporaries at the Jew's overt villainies...[But] the horror remained horror comic. (*G<sub>3</sub>*)

There was regret at the sick humour on aesthetic as well as moral grounds: "a few shudders at the more gruesome moments would have added spice to what emerg[ed] as an evening of high satirical comedy" (*LP<sub>2</sub>*).

What strikes us in examining the reviews of this production is the near-absence of any condemnation of the play as anti-semitic. One cannot but be reminded here of the violent reaction against Kean's revival almost a hundred and fifty years earlier, when the play was entirely rejected as anti-Jewish in spite of its having been heavily edited to reduce passages offensive to Jews, as has been shown in Chapter Five. One reviewer confessed to having thought the play anti-semitic when he read it but "having seen the play brilliantly interpreted and acted [he was] astonished at [his] own naivety". He concluded that it "[was] of course a savagely anti-Christian play..." (*ND*). Any anti-semitic feeling seemed to have been lost in an unholy admiration for the Jew. Marlowe's satire became "affectionate for the Jews, vicious for Christians" (*ST<sub>1</sub>*). Milton Shulman felt that

somehow this production shifts the entire emphasis of the play so that instead of a magniloquent anti-semitic tract, it is the cunning Jew in spite of all his barbarous villainy, who wins our support and admiration. (*ES*)

It was thought that the R.S.C. "need not worry" about being accused of anti-semitism, because today an audience does "not believe that Jews kill sick people groaning under walls" (*EN<sub>1</sub>*), and because the humour removed any trace of offence: "even the most thin-skinned Jew [could] sit back and enjoy this production" (*JC<sub>3</sub>*).

If there was any offence, then either it was not declared, or it was hidden behind other targets of criticism. It is possible that racial feeling provoked Bernard Levin's violent reaction against the R.S.C.'s choice of a play: "and now for goodness sake put Marlowe back in his grave for another 400 years" (*DM<sub>1</sub>*). This contrasts with



the consensus of opinion, epitomised by another reviewer who was puzzled as to "how [the play] has been buried so long under the neglected stigma of a classic..." (NS).

Marlowe was not buried for another four hundred years, as Bernard Levin wanted, but *The Jew of Malta* was put on the shelf for another twenty-two years (except for the brief revival of 1984), until the R.S.C. produced it again under the direction of Barry Kyle. Why it was that Clifford Williams's production, though very successful, did not encourage more revivals will be clear from an examination of the reason why the next production was not as successful.

When one examines Barry Kyle's production it becomes obvious that what kept *The Jew* off the stage for so long after Clifford Williams's production was the fear of being anti-semitic. It is no longer the play's puzzling genre, but the possibility of arousing racial offence to modern sensibilities, that faces a director of the play nowadays:

I think the fear that the play was anti-semitic was the first fear I had. I first read the play when I was a student, my memory of it was of something that was fairly radically anti-semitic, melodramatic and uneven...However, in the intervening twenty years...the theatre has changed, and it is more possible to put on the stage something which is as varied as this. Clearly the specific things in the play that are concerned with racial war seemed in many ways to be a lot more topical now because war is more accessible. But I did actually worry finally that Jewish people would find the play offensive.<sup>60</sup>

Alun Armstrong, who played Barabas, entertained similar fears about the audience's reception of Barabas's character. As an actor, he understood the risk of playing Barabas without the audience's sympathy. He felt that "if he could not win the audience on his side in the first fifteen minutes, the whole evening would not work..." (Kyle, Interview). For Barry Kyle this was a very "true and theatrical [albeit unscholarly] reaction...the only way ultimately [to play Barabas] is that the audience had to be fascinated." (Kyle, Interview). Though Alun Armstrong's fears had to do with an actor's anxiety to find the right technique to play the role, they also seem to have originated from what he felt as the play's anti-semitism. Both he and Barry Kyle were justified in their doubts, as will appear later, but their fears seem to have been detrimental to the production, the main features of which were an all-too-clear attempt to temper the anti-semitism in the play, and an emphasis on the comic, or even pantomimic, aspect of Barabas's character, to subdue the atrocities of his crimes. The humorous about Barabas outweighed the evil and the comic in the play overshadowed the serious.

The Prologue opened the performance on a note of the chilling horror of evil looming in Malta. Dressed in black, Machevil (John Carlisle) punctured his way through a map of the world and was hoisted up to swing on a trapeze "invok[ing] the spirit of policy" (*O*<sub>4</sub>). Overlooking the theatre, he viewed the audience below with piercing eyes, while intoning the lines in "sinister Hammer-horror accents" (*FT*<sub>4</sub>), thus striking a frisson in the audience and giving a sardonic quality to the beginning.

Alun Armstrong's Barabas formed an immediate contrast to the chill left by Machevil. His appearance was blatantly comic "with a Hamborg-hat...strip<sub>ed</sub> garment, looking like an old-fashioned Kosher Butcher" (*JC*<sub>4</sub>). He projected an image of a "jovial tycoon raking in wealth not from usury, but from trade" (*JC*<sub>4</sub>). The way his opening speech was delivered made it more obvious that Alun Armstrong was set on a battle to win the audience onto his side from the very first moment. Comedy was squeezed out of lines that usually strike us as mainly lyrical. Laughter was achieved by inserting deliberate stage-business. Sitting at a table with packing cases around him, a small scale, and a croupier's rake, he swept coins from the table, weighed them, and then let them shower down noisily into a casket under the table, producing loud laughter from the audience. At "And thus are we from every side enrich'd" (*I*,i,106), he moved downstage and covered his body with the world map as if to stress his world-wide trading, producing a comic effect by stabbing away at it to indicate the whereabouts of the Jews he spoke off:

Here's Kirriah Juirim, the great Jew of Greece,  
Obed in Bairseth, Nones in Portugal,  
Myself in Malta, some in Italy,  
Many in France... (123-6)

There was clearly an attempt to establish a line of direct communication between him and the audience. At one point, for instance (at least in the two performances I saw), he called out to a member of the audience who recognised the irony behind his reference to the relation between Agamemnon and his daughter Iphigeneia (Bawcutt's spelling in the Revels edition)—for which an explanatory note was provided in the programme—: "you've read the programme, ha?". This produced a crescendo of laughter from the audience. When the three Jews approached, Alun Armstrong offered them the open arms of a dissembled welcome, while behind his back, he slammed shut the lid of the casket with his foot, thus providing the first gesture of entrusting the audience as his confidants even before the introduction of any of the asides that would later serve such purpose.



Merchants came from every corner of the stage, even using upper levels. At each piece of good news Barabas gave a scream of ecstasy. Barry Kyle's intentions were to show Barabas "a very happy man" (Kyle, Interview), not obsessed with money with the ugliness of an addict but rather enjoying it with beauty and relish. Even that most famous line displaying Barabas's addiction "Infinite riches in a little room" (37), was "muffled...by...throwaway tones" (I<sub>2</sub>). At the end of the scene, as Alun Armstrong left the stage carrying a money-box—"Warily guarding that which I ha' got" (187)—the mutual trust between him and the audience was affirmed, and he was established as an amiable person. Thus "the character's towering rapacity [was] not established as strongly as it should [have been]" in the first speech (I<sub>2</sub>), which seems to have been a result of dodging any hint of the stereotypical Jewish greed for money.

Having aimed for the audience's sympathy from the beginning, Alun Armstrong could hope for no more to strengthen it than what the following scene naturally yields (I,ii). For a modern audience the confiscation scene would certainly work in Barabas's favour, and this intention seems built into the original text. According to Barry Kyle, in this scene *The Jew* is superior to *The Merchant of Venice*:

Marlowe has provided one thing which is making the job a lot easier than Shakespeare does in Shylock because the play does begin with a clear portrayal of the wrong done to Barabas. It is very clear that threatened by the Turks the Christian looked for someone else to pay the price. It is a gift in the play that Marlowe has begun that way to show that those who turn into serious murderers, like Barabas, actually, very often, have as their point of departure some deep grievance [sic]. (Kyle, Interview)

Barabas and his fellow Jews appeared as a group of comic characters, dressed in black "Jacobean puff breeches...with trilby hats..." (FT<sub>4</sub>) Their naive attitude as they approached centre stage in quick short and unsure steps, fearing the worst, contrasted sharply with the stiff unblinking group of Christians, who were clad in austere white robes adorned only with a big blazing red cross—a shining symbol of their religious hypocrisy—and who stood behind the Jews forming a physical threat to this helpless minority. The fact that Barabas was the cleverest among the Jews was emphasized as the Jews kept turning to him for eloquence against Ferneze's pharisaical argument. As in Clifford Williams's production, the vitality of his defence contrasted with Ferneze's "skull face" (T<sub>6</sub>), and his icy, unrelenting self-control. The injustice of taking Barabas's wealth was highlighted by properties, as the Knights of Malta started moving cases from the background at "a sign from Ferneze" (94). When the stage was almost empty

except for the chairs on which the other Jews were sitting, the Knights pushed them off to take the chairs as well. This gave an immediate visual image of the confiscation of Barabas's wealth, and of the exclusion of the Jews in a Christian society. Barabas's loneliness was further emphasized when the three Jews left him alone on stage, stripped of all his bliss, a moment that was sure to gain him the full sympathy of the audience.

His sudden resilience—first weeping vehemently into his handkerchief, and then snapping instantly into "See the simplicity of these base slaves" added admiring laughter to sympathy. The serious tone was retrieved as Abigail dashed in, with her luggage, to weep on Barabas's shoulder. Their embrace created a touching image of father and daughter. As they sat on the suitcases on an empty stage, they were two outcasts in a cruel society. In "sensible shoes and plain skirt," Janet Amsbury gave a "touching" Abigail (*DT*<sub>3</sub>). She was, however, "strong, [and] intelligent" (*FT*<sub>4</sub>), with a sense of humour, as when she pointed to her nose at "they will suspect me there." (*I,ii,284*). She was able to show how difficult it was for her to accept her father's plots, and so her love for Barabas counted far more than if it had been the dutiful emotion of a naive and submissive character. Barabas showed no paternal dominance over her; rather, together they formed a loving pair of comrades in a hostile world. Barabas's revenge on her, when she joined this world against him, was therefore less unjustified. The most hilarious moments in the production also came from their partnership, especially her pretended conversion. The audience clearly loved the energy both of them manifested in this scene, particularly Alun Armstrong who delivered his asides with pantomimic gestures, pacing up and down between Abigail and the nuns, flinging Abigail away from him with exaggerated violence, while she repeatedly rushed back to him, pretending to placate him, just to hear his asides. The scene acquired something of the quality of a comic opera.

The second encounter between father and daughter, at night, to redeem the seized money, was another comic scene but so exaggerated as to produce a general sense of unreality. Barabas entered hid behind a massive dustbin, which he wheeled out to center stage. On recognising him, the audience burst out laughing, and it was clear by then that they saw him as mainly comic. The fact that he was totally out of Abigail's sight was taken advantage of. She appeared at a window counting the hidden treasure, and what attracted Barabas's attention was not her lamp but a coin dropping from her hands, which raised laughter in response to "What star shines yonder in the east?" (41).



The sense of stylised comedy, rather than plausibility, was strengthened when, instead of redeeming the wealth in the form of money-bags thrown secretly to Barabas, showers of gold and silver coins poured with a deafening noise and dazzling gleam into his dustbin. During this apparently endless flow, Alun Armstrong writhed in ecstasy on the floor, and as he eventually wheeled his wealth off stage, he broke into a song and dance that were uproariously accompanied by the audience's applause, as if that was the best part of the show. Perhaps the audiences at Stratford in July, when a large part of them would be tourists, would not have been troubled by the emphasis on entertainment. But most critics felt that this was a disastrous point in the production as it thwarted any possibility of taking the play seriously. Eric Shorter laments the fact that at the beginning Alun Armstrong

had the power, for a while, to stir [the audience] as the island's most overtaxed Jew...But when he wheels a dustbin under his daughter's bedroom window for her to pour into it his officially confiscated fortune, clattering at dawn, [one can] tell that the director has also given up trying to make realistic sense of either character or situation. (DT<sub>3</sub>)

The programme for the production was filled with reference to parallels between Marlowe and Joe Orton, in general, and *The Jew* and *Loot* in particular. In the 1964 revival it was perhaps too early to realise such parallels as the début of Orton was simultaneous with the production. By 1987 Orton was part of British theatrical history, and Barry Kyle's production started with the intention of highlighting the play as a black farce similar to Orton's. But from the moment that the shower of money shattered the eardrums, there was a feeling that the production had fallen back on anachronistic humour, inserted here and there. There was undermining of some significant moments and exaggeration of others. The poisoning of the pot of rice seemed to have been left to trail on with no attempt to heighten the black comedy inherent in it. Ithamore (Phil Daniels) brought a small pot onto the stage, and Barabas picked up the poisonous powder from a small cat-door trap in the stage-floor, in a most matter-of-course way that made the audience laugh. There was no attempt to reconcile the comedy and horror in this scene, as was done in 1964. Barry Kyle was adding farce to scenes which were already farcical. In the following scene, for example, the friars dashed in "like the Crazy Gang catching the nuns' vomit in chamber pots" (G<sub>7</sub>). Life-size dummy-nuns fell from above, and the friars jumped to dodge them. Though the lines "let's bury them...", and "Ay, and a virgin too..." achieved the desired effect of undercutting the moments of tragedy—as the friars delivered them "as if they were a sudden afterthought" (G<sub>7</sub>)—the effect lacked the tongue-in-cheek tone that seems to have been realised in Clifford Williams's production.

Critics were struck by the way Barabas and Ithamore "squatted in deck chairs" (*G*<sub>6</sub>) to watch the friars fighting over Barabas's wealth. The duel was a long piece of slapstick offering the audiences only a "light relief" (*BDN*) that "made [them] only giggle" (*DT*<sub>3</sub>). However, more emphasis was placed on the friars' corruption by making Ithamore and Barabas function like a stage-audience. There was not much sympathy for them when one died and the other was convicted of his murder, particularly as one of them (Jacomo) even displayed a faint erotic interest in Abigail when she summoned him to enroll her again into the nunnery (see illustration 75). Barry Kyle made them look dull and dim-witted, not even as entertaining as those in Clifford Williams's production, as if the comedy were to be exclusive to Barabas and Ithamore.

Alun Armstrong's performance fell into a "consummate role play[ing]" (*G*<sub>6</sub>) aimed at making the play as amusing as possible. The audience was said to have been "vastly entertained by the display of technique" (*ST*<sub>3</sub>). One such display was the scene when Barabas descends on the three blackmailers, disguised as a French musician. Issuing onto the stage like "some grotesque hybrid of George Formby and Maurice Chevalier—with a ukelele and trill[ing] an ooh-la-la Gallic ditty" (*I*<sub>2</sub>), Alun Armstrong functioned as a mere "night club singer" (*BEN*) and his asides were virtually drowned by audience laughter. When Barabas's body was thrown over the walls, the high comic potential of his resilience was undermined by the director trying to add more to it. As it was performed by a simple rolling of Barabas's body to front stage, which would have confused some spectators as to the whereabouts of the new location, Barry Kyle chose to pinpoint the change by "playfully" (*I*<sub>2</sub>) using sound effects of the singing of birds, and visual effects of their droppings falling over Barabas's body only to "get belly-laughs." (*I*<sub>2</sub>). According to one critic,

this comic moment [went] for nothing here, not just because the production appear[ed] to be unaware of the humour, but because the director ha[d] spatted the sleeping form with birds' droppings, killing the real comedy stone-dead. (*FT*<sub>4</sub>)

These added touches were not generally acclaimed by critics, but rather seen by some as "pantomime panderings to the audience—typical of the crude ingratiating RSC productions increasingly allow themselves" (*I*<sub>2</sub>). They constituted unnecessary obstacles to the serious moments in the play, such as Abigail's death. Barry Kyle believed that "the more comic it [was] the more black it would seem" (Kyle, Interview). But the production seemed to have given less attention to the Marlovian notion of the absurdities of a terribly amoral universe than to a "ceas<sup>e</sup>less desire to keep [the audience] entertained" (*G*<sub>7</sub>). This could be due to the fact that the Swan Theatre,



which opened in April 1986, was to be devoted to reviving neglected Elizabethan and Jacobean plays. The company might have approached the play with a feeling that it was an unpopular one and with the intention to bring it to life as highly entertaining. One reviewer thought that the constant endeavour to add comedy to the play, showed that the R.S.C. "were terrified of being boring" (*ST*<sub>3</sub>). This had caused tension in the cast, and it was suggested that "if he [Barry Kyle] [could] refrain from gilding the lily and get the cast to relax and realise how funny it [was], the show [would] come together with a vengeance" (*FT*<sub>4</sub>). Failing this, the action scored highly on vivaciousness and versatility, but "lack[ed] underlying seriousness" (*G*<sub>6</sub>).

Alun Armstrong's performance was the major, though not the only, cause of this unfortunate lack. Having got the audience on his side, he seemed to have feared losing it and thus made of Barabas merely a zestful, energetic, and jovial villain. His performance was the outstanding feature of the production; it "wicked[ly]...captivat[ed] the audience" (*BEN*) into a condition of secret complicity: "what is most disturbing about Barry Kyle's...production is what is best in it: Alun Armstrong's towering central performance" (*O*<sub>3</sub>). It was enjoyed for the display of energy which turned Barabas into a "rollickingly villainous" character (*MS*). He did not attempt to play Barabas as other than an "entertaining robot of roaring contempt for everything and everyone except his gold..." (*DT*<sub>3</sub>). Starting the performance as "a genial merchant with no more than a wry mistrust for his overlords" (*T*<sub>6</sub>), it was difficult for him to lead up to his later career as a vicious revenger and thus the element of grandeur that Eric Porter, and to a large extent Clive Revill, displayed in 1964/5, was missing and there was "no sense that the character [was] obsessed by revenge" (*G*<sub>6</sub>).

Barry Kyle saw in Barabas a sympathetic figure who was also the "wittiest, funniest, and sexiest" (Kyle, Interview) in the play, but he emphasised this to the exclusion of almost everything else, as if Barabas's endearing energy was a "defence against the charge of anti-semitism" (*O*<sub>3</sub>). The lack of evil in his character, however, turned him into a "psychopathic prankster" (*O*<sub>3</sub>), and thus his involving himself in a series of farcical murders with no internal conflict made Barabas a "stereotype" (*TO*), almost a Vice. Though he displayed energy in moving between resilience and despair—weeping into his handkerchief, snapping into throw-away asides, overflowing with "parental warmth, whenever he [brought] in an accomplice to cook up the next crime..." (*T*<sub>6</sub>), and breaking into a silly French vaudeville song, his performance overall was seen to have "nobly [sunk] into monotony" (*FT*<sub>4</sub>).

Even Ithamore was only "tenderly villainous" ( $O_4$ ), a "volatile mixture of Caliban and Harpo Marx" ( $G_7$ ). Though "emerg[ing] from a crate cruelly muzzled" ( $L$ ), he succeeded in "investing pathos [in] a character hardly less monstrous" ( $STel_3$ ). Barabas's treatment of him showed no attempt at intimidation; together they joined hands treating the action as a "heroic farce of survival" ( $O_4$ ), enjoying the execution of their plots. Their union against the society around them (at least until Ithamore betrayed Barabas) had something of the tragedy of the outsider, and "something genuinely touching develop[ed] between [them]" ( $T_6$ ). Their catalogue of crimes was delivered with no shred of evil in it. Alun Armstrong threw it away to test Ithamore, and thus Ithamore's contribution became an exaggerated comic fiction to answer Barabas back, too sadistic to be true. The effect was nowhere near the frisson of horror and excitement that Elizabethan audiences would have experienced. This was understandable when the aim was to play down Barabas's atrocities: a modern audience would not easily swallow the gruesomeness of the picture drawn by Barabas, if this was to be taken seriously.

What made Ithamore and Barabas endearing in their respective villainies, was a corrosive critique of the Christians around them, similar to that projected by Clifford Williams's production in 1964. The play certainly encourages this kind of treatment, but in Barry Kyle's production it was highlighted, no doubt as part of a 1980s tendency to locate the individual's disorder in relation to the corruption of his society. There was no redeeming feature in any member of Christian Malta, no patriotism in their defiance against the Turks, and not a shade of righteousness in their treatment of Barabas; they all seemed "a pallid lot" ( $O_3$ ), "icy, patronising and even more treacherous than Barabas" ( $JC_4$ ). Ferneze was made extremely hateful, not even attempting to dissemble patriotism. His behaviour showed clear expediency and a "skull-faced" attitude to Barabas's pleas for justice ( $T_6$ ). While his knights wore white robes with "the red cross of the Templars emblazoned on [them]" ( $JC_4$ ), he appeared in a white suit, his hair carefully combed back, looking more like the chief of the Mafia than a governor. He was made utterly greedy and hypocritical by the way stage-business punctuated, and sometimes contradicted, his lines. When Del Bosco persuaded him to refuse the payment of the tribute and declare war against the Turks (II,ii) he headed off stage in calculated triumph, only to stop suddenly and turn back to take a money-casket that was lying on the floor, while moralising on his readiness for war: "Honour is bought with blood, and not with gold." (56).

Barry Kyle made good use of the brief appearances of Ferneze to stress his inner corruption. In the scene where he and Katherine lamented the death of their sons



Ferneze took advantage of Katherine's closeness to peep down her cleavage (see illustration 74). The gesture was greeted with laughter and so undermined any possible tragic touch to the scene, particularly as the speech of grief was delivered with stylized monotony (see illustration 73). Ferneze's indifference to his son's death marked him as no better than Barabas who killed his daughter, and this impression was ingeniously clinched in the final scene when Ferneze delivered his final thanks to heaven while removing a wig to reveal himself as no other than Machevil of the Prologue in disguise. This saved the scene from comedy, and a chilling sensation of bitterness and horror was communicated to the audience.

The way the other characters were directed in the play did not allow for more than caricature interpretation of their roles. Barry Kyle found the way Marlowe has drawn his minor characters one of the great difficulties in directing *The Jew*. The characters of Lodowick and Mathias presented some obstacles to the pace and unity of the action. Displaying no definite motives behind their interest in Abigail, Barry Kyle thought that they "[could] be interpreted almost any way" (Kyle, Interview), but he found it difficult to reach a decision, and the scene that involved their plot with Abigail posed a real problem:

If you actually study this scene with actors you find some real holes in it, certain things that simply do not add up....That was the one scene we got stuck on, because there are so many questions like, for example, the actress playing Abigail wanted to know in what spirit was she participating in this exchange with Lodowick...how much she felt for Don Mathias, and that was complicated. Also does Lodowick love Abigail...or is his interest purely a sort of sexual fascination with someone of another race? or is he somehow caricatured or is he a more real character? (Kyle, Interview)

The brief appearances of these characters made this problem difficult to solve. Lodowick was thus made to appear a "comically unsympathetic character" (Kyle, Interview), coldly sensual, an image of like-father-like-son, but without Ferneze's wit. His dialogues with Barabas, Mathias and Abigail were delivered in a monotonous manner, and he appeared unattractive, "moustached like Kitchener, [and] not too bright" (FT<sub>4</sub>). Mathias, not less puzzling a character, was not shown as sincerely in love with Abigail, since Barry Kyle found certain moments in the play which contradict such a reading: as when Mathias suddenly leaves Abigail with Lodowick "hand in hand" (II,iii,278) on a single sign from Barabas (280), and when later he leaves Abigail with the justification that "if [his] mother come/ She'll die with grief" (355-6). Barry Kyle saw that the most unmistakable characteristic in Mathias was a certain "mother-fixation...far more profound than his love for Abigail" (Kyle,

Interview) and emphasised this line of interpretation. Consequently both Lodowick and Mathias functioned as mere caricatures, at best totally unattractive characters. Their parents' indifference to their deaths made Barabas's less culpable, and according to Barry Kyle Barabas did not directly kill them, "he merely engineer[ed] the situation" (Kyle, Interview).

The sketchy drawing of these two characters seems to have constituted a problem not only for twentieth-century directors of the play but also for nineteenth-century actors. In Kean's revival in 1818, as has been shown in Chapter Five, the scope of these two characters was expanded to dramatise a love theme. Katherine presented similar difficulties. In the play she appears briefly in the slave auction scene, an image of a society lady shopping for slaves, while making hostile comments about Jewishness. For Barry Kyle this brief appearance made it extremely difficult for the actress to appear later to grieve for her son's death and "from nowhere produce a massive tragic performance....There [was] nothing to add up" (Kyle, Interview).

The fact that the minor characters around Barabas were skeletal, made Barabas's ubiquitous presence a bonus in the production, and the fact that Alun Armstrong's interpretation was largely stereotypical was less of a drawback, as he was warmly contrasted to the grim environment around him. Scenes of conflict between Turks and Christians were ostentatiously trivialized into a poker-game atmosphere filled with the kind of tension that inspires the gamblers around a table. Turkish delight was served in the scene where the Turks came to demand the tribute (see illustration 76). But Barry Kyle tried to find modern political equivalents in the conflict between the Maltese and the Turks. Except for the three Jews, costumes deliberately introduced some "updatings" in a style that was a mixture of periods. Turks in particular were dressed in uniforms like those worn by Arab guerrilla soldiers. They appeared to reviewers as "equivalents of Shi'ite militia-men" (*T*<sub>6</sub>), armed with guns that made them "look like El Fatah" (*FT*<sub>4</sub>). Barry Kyle had two reasons for presenting the Turks thus. Firstly, he thought that the fact that the Turks only appear briefly at the beginning and again towards the end of the play, makes the play "structurally weak" (Kyle, Interview). He had to find a way to attract more attention to them: "if I would make a film of the play I would try and find a way of keeping the Turks always around, permanently threatening the island". Secondly, he felt that the conflict in Malta very much reflected the war in Lebanon: "the tragedy in the play is now alive in Beirut" (Kyle, Interview). And, indeed, the first scene with the armed Turks, all sitting around the negotiating table, immediately reminded us of the war and the dealings of different factions in Beirut (see illustration 69).



The fact that the conflict occurs between Moslem, Jew and Christian, and the way allegiances change on the spur of the moment, very much reflected the turbulent quality of the war between religious sections in the Middle East. For this reason, Barry Kyle stressed the religious identity of the characters as a "basis of warfare in the play" (Kyle, Interview). But while Christianity was simply reflected only by the red crosses that adorned the Maltese cloaks, the Islam of the Turks was obtrusively rendered by verses of the Koran heard in the background at various moments, as for example at the slave-auction. When the messenger from Barabas came to invite the Turks to the mined banquet (V,iii), Calymath was shown performing his Islamic prayers (though not in the correct Islamic way which would have offended Moslems in the theatre). And when Calymath arrived at Barabas's house, flags were lowered with Arabic words of welcome. Obviously, Barry Kyle was trying to enhance the significance of the Turks by highlighting their being Moslems, something which the play does not emphasise, but this went with almost no stress on Barabas's Jewishness, and with not enough on Christianity, and therefore it created a sense of unbalance. Barry Kyle's production, while it avoided offending Jews, would in 1989-90 offend Moslems, especially with the topicality of the Salman Rushdie affair.

The impression of pace and turbulence was maintained successfully by the design which, as in Clifford William's production, was meant to minimise the scene changes as much as possible to keep an uninterrupted rhythm. The focus of the design, according to Barry Kyle, was "to try and take the Marlowe image of the superhuman and the universe" (Kyle, Interview). In Stratford this found expression on the thrust stage of the Swan in the world map that covered the trap at the beginning of the action, while in London at the Barbican, on a more spacious stage, "it was necessary to add a background" (Kyle, Interview), and thus the whole stage was surrounded with maps of the world with bullet-holes going through them, suggesting continuous fighting. The designer, Bob Crowley, created an inverted cross from packing cases looking like a "towering central column of wooden crates that open[ed] up to become a bordello, castle-walls, or convent" ( $G_6$ ). The packing cases gave an "apt symbol of acquisitiveness" ( $FT_4$ ). The neutrality and multi-purpose adaptability of the set was exactly what the action needed. The interior of the tower stood successively for different houses: it opened up into the upper rooms of Barabas's house when Abigail appeared above to throw the hidden money to Barabas, and it stood for Barabas's new house in the scene when he knocked at the door calling Abigail to come out and meet Lodowick (II,iii,223). With the help of lighting it signified Bellamira's house, its interior a red glimmer, and in the end it "unhing[ed] into the diabolical drawbridges for the final trap" ( $T_6$ ), with a rope that enabled Alun Armstrong to hang over the fiery pit

until the last gasp. In the market-place scene, which needed space to accommodate the many characters, a scaffold was lowered for the slaves to be displayed on. This left the stage free for the various encounters in the scene and allowed for the flow of the dialogue and the asides.

The flexibility of the set helped again, as in 1964, in reducing the need for cuts in the text. Most of the cuts were in the asides which would have been difficult to deliver on a round stage. The expunged asides, however, were mainly those that are too long to be delivered realistically, or with the sharp zest needed to puncture instantly the moral posturings around Barabas. Perhaps the most significant cuts occurred in lines that refer to a general concept of the Jews as despicable. Barabas's lines "We Jews can fawn like spaniels when we please..." (II,iii,20-2), which were adapted in Kean's revival for the purpose of obliterating anti-semitism, were eliminated in Barry Kyle's production. If we entertain any doubt whether Barry Kyle was justified in cutting these lines, we need only go back to 1964, when a reviewer actually picked these few lines from the whole play to compare *The Jew* with *The Merchant* as plays:

Set Barabas' speech 'We Jews can fawn like spaniels', besides Shylock's 'Hath not a Jew eyes?' and the gulf of humanity between them gapes wide. (BEP)

It was probably this kind of comparison between the two plays that prevented Alun Armstrong from reconciling the evil and the humorous in Barabas, particularly as the play was again put on concurrently with *The Merchant of Venice*, which was running at the main R.S.C. theatre in Stratford (but without the cross-casting and directing of 1965). In spite of the fact that *The Merchant* for much of the time deals with the Jewish question from the Christians' point of view, and in terms of the traditional image of Jews as usurers, while *The Jew* exhibits Christians from the Jews' point of view as pharisaical hypocrites, the latter has always been seen as the more anti-semitic. Bill Alexander, who directed *The Merchant* in 1987, was said to have treated it as a "racist tragedy...brilliantly show[ing] how racial persecution [bred] an answering revenge" (G<sub>6</sub>). His production, therefore, touched openly on the issue of racial discrimination, while in Barry Kyle's production of *The Jew*, as already pointed out, the fact that Barabas was Jewish was slightly blurred. Barabas's vendetta was successfully rooted in blameless motives not only by satirically exposing the Christians' fraudulence, or by tempering the atrocious by giving it a comic frame of reference, but also, in spite of the dominating comedy, by occasionally accentuating Barabas's lines that justify his acts of revenge, or those that give a tragic touch to his



loneliness. The line in which he stated his reason for plotting Lodowick's death—"His father was my chiefest enemy" (II,iii,252)—was singled out by being delivered in a loud voice of absolute vindictive grievance. Similarly, his pain at Abigail's deserting him—"I am moved" (III,iv,35)—had the tone of real suffering in it.

And yet, surprisingly, these temperings of the offensive in the play did not stop reviewers from seeing the play as "irredeemably anti-semitic" (*O*<sub>3</sub>), and Barabas as a "racial stereotype of greed and evil" (*ST*<sub>3</sub>), whose wickedness "manifest[ed] itself in anti-semitic archetypes that [could] be almost unchanged in Nazi propaganda films" (*O*<sub>3</sub>). *The Guardian* of 1 April 1988 relentlessly criticised the production as provoking laughter at Jewish stereotypes. Heading her review with the words "a society that can laugh at *The Jew of Malta* by pretending anti-semitism is dead", Melanie Phillips devotedly lamented the fact that a play about a Jew who was "as evil a character as ever stepped from the nightmares of anti-semitic folklore...[was]...playing to packed houses and ecstatic reviews at the Barbican" (*G*<sub>8</sub>). According to her, the fact that Barry Kyle treated the play as a farce did not in the least solve the problem, instead it worsened the situation by "enabl[ing] reviewers to claim that anti-semitism [was] thus much diminished", and by actually accentuating rather than modifying the caricature. She saw in the black hats and knee-breeches of Barabas and the three Jews a caricature of "19th century Poland", and thus, she argued, "any sense of Barabas's tragic dignity as the victim of Maltese rapacity...which [was] in Marlowe's text...[was] entirely removed". Her views of the place of anti-semitism in British society are worth quoting:

some people will question whether any of this actually matters....Jews are now happily integrated into the life of this country...[and] they can laugh at their own caricature. Anti-semitism is surely a thing of the past, No? No! Certainly, it is far less noticeable...certainly, formal discrimination against Jews is now relatively rare and pales...besides the overt and active discrimination...against black and Asian people. Rather, it rumbles away under the surface, erupting every now and then....If Marlowe had portrayed not Jews but black people as villainous anti-Christ, can anyone imagine that such a play would now be put on?

Regardless of how justified this reaction can be, it also seems hypercritical;<sup>61</sup> and yet it makes Barry Kyle's absorption in his fears not completely unwarranted. He was obviously treading in an artistic minefield. Oddly enough we seem to be going back to Kean's revival, to the almost identical critical phraseology used by Charles Bucke about putting *The Jew* on at the crucial time of the Passover;<sup>62</sup> It was also the time of the Passover in April 1987, as Melanie Phillips tells us:

Tonight is the beginning of the Passover....A time to reflect that Jews are more secure in this society than ever before...and yet an audience at the Barbican can clutch its sides in helpless laughter at a vicious caricature of the Jew as devil. (*G*<sub>8</sub>)

Aside from this serious problem, the production was on the whole not unsuccessful. It must not be forgotten that it did not have the advantage of historical novelty that Clifford Williams's did, nor the advantage of the theatrical climate of 'Cruelty' of the 1964 production. Barry Kyle's production becomes significant in that it shows more clearly the problems involved in putting *The Jew* on modern stages: firstly, that the comic was, if not the only, at least the safest way by which to offer the play to a modern audience, "Kyle has correctly judged that Christopher Marlowe's grand guignol can only be made to work theatrically if it's played as a crazy comedy" (*O*<sub>3</sub>); secondly, that a quick rhythm and a flexible set seem to be the most appropriate for the play; thirdly, that without some modernising being applied to the play, however far-fetched it is, *The Jew* would remain mainly an example of Renaissance anti-semitism; and finally, that the anti-semitism in the play is undoubtedly still a thorn in the flesh for directors of the play.

What remains to be said is that—though the hints of parallels with modern events remained unexplored and thus puzzled audiences, and though the comedy was somewhat overwhelming in Barry Kyle's production—the above-mentioned tragic touches in the production—Barabas's pleading with Ferneze with "palpable sincerity" (*L*) to come "live with [him]" (*V,ii,91*), and, of course, the last doubling of Ferneze and Machevil (in which Barry Kyle seems to have been inspired by recent criticism)—all made the production, at least at the end, pass for something close to Eliot's "serious farce". It was seen as "thoroughly intriguing" (*TO*), a

violently funny, beautifully dovetailed, and unpompous piece of theatre, which suggest[ed]—as Eliot once did—that Marlowe's gift to the English stage was his appetite for a dreadful and desperate farce. (*I*<sub>1</sub>)

Critics realised Marlowe's ability to write black farce, and felt a kinship with the spirit of Swift, Orton, and even Brecht:

from the very first moment of Barry Kyle's production, where John Carlisle's Machevil whispers a cadaverous induction as he swings above the stage, we are in the bawdy, hellish world which will later pass into the keeping of Jonson and Swift—a world where we laugh at the fantastical nerve and insolence of evil....*The Jew of Malta* is mordant intellectual knockabout, spiritually far closer to Brecht than



Shakespeare....Mr Kyle's clear and superbly acted production captures this knife-edged tone, its balance of intellect and cruelty, with immense assurance. (*I*<sub>1</sub>)

Michael Billington suggested that the modern audience "could hardly ask for a more vigorous revival of Marlowe's black dangerous, pre-Orton farce," and that "whether the production's almost promiscuous ingenuity obscur[ed] what Machevil calls 'the tragedy of a Jew', [would] be a matter of personal taste" (*G*<sub>7</sub>). With these more confident views of Marlowe as a writer of black farce, and *The Jew* as raising "the spirit of Orton" (*DT*<sub>3</sub>), the play seems to be acquiring a better position in the theatre. In 1964, one reviewer perceived a certain modernity in *The Jew*, as he pointed out some similarities between Barabas's fighting back at the Christians, and Jimmy Porter's attack on the Establishment, and called Barabas "an angry old man" (*P&P*<sub>1</sub>). Though this is not so far-fetched, it would hardly be a viable notion when the audience is constantly and painfully reminded of Barabas's Jewishness. With this issue standing out as such, the play, unlike *Faustus*, does not offer a wide range of possibilities of modernity that the audience could relate to. Will the play then only work in a climate like that of 1964? Only when *The Jew* is no longer attacked as terribly anti-semitic, and only when it is not placed into relentless comparison with *The Merchant*, can one venture to say 'no it will not', because, it seems, only then will *The Jew of Malta* be, as Smith has described it, "terrifyingly modern" (Smith, p. 23).

## NOTES TO CHAPTER SEVEN

1. See Tony Kushner, *The Persistence of Prejudice: Anti-Semitism in British Society During the Second World War* (Manchester and New York, 1989), P. 111.
2. See Chapter Five.
3. Quoted from *The Jewish Chronicle*, 11 May, 1917, in Leon Poliakov, *The History of Anti-Semitism*, 4 vols. (first published in France, as *Histoire de l'Antisémitisme*, Colmann-Lévy, Paris, 1955-1977), translated from the French by George Klin (London and Oxford, 1974-1985), vol. 4 *Suicidal Europe, 1870-1933* (Oxford, 1985; originally, *Histoire de l'Antisémitisme, Tome IV*, Paris, 1977), p. 192.
4. *The Times*, 17 July, 1920. Quoted by Poliakov, op. cit., p. 213.
5. *The Jewish Chronicle*, 2 November, 1917. Quoted by Poliakov, p. 199.
6. *The Times*, 9 October, 1920. Quoted by Poliakov, p. 213.
7. See Appendix H for a list of amateur revivals.
8. See Lelyveld, op. cit., pp. 110-14.
9. T. S. Eliot, "Christopher Marlowe", in *Selected Essays* (London, 1932; 3rd. edition, 1951, reprinted 1972), pp. 118-25, p. 123.
10. M. C. Bradbrook, *Themes and Conventions of Elizabethan Tragedy* (Cambridge, 1935; 2nd. edition, 1980, reprinted 1983, p. 149.
11. Brooke, *Works*, p. 232.
12. Kocher, op. cit., p. 288.
13. Cole, op. cit., pp. 123, 142.
14. Bakeless, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 328.
15. See Chapter Two, above. See also Boas, pp. 130-1; Bawcutt, ed. cit., pp. 39-40; Bowers also says: "that Heywood, or whoever was the actual interpreter for the revival, would not touch up an old play for a new audience is...most improbable" (op. cit., vol. 1, p. 256).
16. Brooke, *Works*, p. 231.
17. F. P. Wilson, *Marlowe and the early Shakespeare* (Oxford, 1953; reprinted 1973), p. 65.
18. J. C. Maxwell, "How Bad is the Text of *The Jew of Malta?*", *Modern Language Review*, 48 (1953), 435-8, p. 438.
19. Ibid.
20. Ellis-Fermor, op. cit., p. 97.
21. Ibid., pp. 93, 98, respectively.



22. A. L. Rowse, *Christopher Marlowe* (New York, 1955, reprinted, London, 1964), p. 95.
23. Levin, *Overreacher*, p. 83.
24. Ibid., pp. 96, 99.
25. Howard S. Babb, "Policy in Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*", *English Literary History*, 24 (1957), 85-94, p. 86.
26. Ibid., p. 93.
27. Steane, op. cit., p. 166.
28. See Chapter Two, note 33, above. For more studies on this point, see Weil, op. cit., pp. 22-49; and Coburn Freer, "Lies and Lying in *The Jew of Malta*", in *A Poet and A Filthy Playmaker*, New Essays on Christopher Marlowe, edited by Kenneth Friedenreich, Roma Gill, and Constance Brown Kuriyama, (New York, 1988), pp. 143-65.
29. *The Jew of Malta*, edited by Richard W. Van Fossen (London, 1965), introduction, p. xvii.
30. Ibid., pp. xix, xxv.
31. Craik, ed. cit., p. xviii (see Chapter Two, note 53).
32. Sanders, op. cit., pp. 39, 40, 45.
33. Ibid., p. 51.
34. "The Jew of Malta in the Theatre", in *Christopher Marlowe*, edited by Brian Morris, Mermaids Critical Commentaries (London, 1968), pp. 1-23, p. 3.
35. Sanders, p. 58.
36. "Marlowe, Marx, and Anti-Semitism", *Critical Inquiry*, 5, (1978-79), 291-307.
37. Bawcutt, ed. cit., p. 17.
38. Cole, op. cit., p. 131.
39. Kuriyama, op. cit., pp. 171-2.
40. Ibid., pp. 173-4.
41. I could not trace any review for this production. Though *Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama*, 27 (1984) lists a review in *The Guardian* dated 13 March 1984, it is actually not there.
42. *Blackwood's Magazine*, 212, December, 1922 (BM), Other reviews of this production, *The Guardian* and *The Times*, 7 November, 1922 (G<sub>1</sub>), (T<sub>1</sub>); see also Smith, "The Jew of Malta in the Theatre", pp. 4, 11-2.
43. *The Times*, 19 February, 1964 (T<sub>2</sub>). For more reviews, see *Stage and Television Today*, 27 February, 1964 (S&Tv<sub>1</sub>); see also Pistotnik, op. cit., pp. 126-9.

44. Quoted from the programme to the production, in Smith, p. 14. For reviews of the production, see *The Guardian*, 11 March, 1964 (*G*<sub>2</sub>), *The Times*, 16 March, 1964 (*T*<sub>3</sub>); see also Smith, pp. 14, 20-1, and Pistotnik, pp. 129-37.
45. See Sally Beauman, *The Royal Shakespeare Company: A History of Ten Decades* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 239-44.
46. David Addenbrooke, *The Royal Shakespeare Company: The Peter Hall Years* (London, 1974), pp. 137-8.
47. Reviews of 1964: "Rip-roaring melodrama at the Aldwych", *Barnet Press*, 9 October (*Bar*); signed W. H. W., "When in Doubt, Play it Black", *Birmingham Mail*, 2 October (*BrM*<sub>1</sub>); J. C. Trewin, "A Collector's Piece", *Birmingham Post*, 2 October (*BP*<sub>1</sub>); signed D. H., "Marlowe's 'Jew' Lacks All Humanity", *Bristol Evening Post*, 2 October (*BEP*); *Catholic Herald*, 9 October (*CH*); "Drama Played for Laughs", *County of Middlesex Chronicle* 9 October (*CMC*); Herbert Kretzmer, "Horror Played for Laughs is a Hit", *Daily Express*, 2 October (*DE*<sub>1</sub>); Bernard Levin, "For Goodness Sake Put Marlowe back in his Grave", *Daily Mail*, 2 October (*DM*<sub>1</sub>); W. A. Darlington, "Villainies with Grim Humour", *Dialy Telegraph*, 2 October (*DT*<sub>1</sub>); Peter Avis, *Daily Worker*, 3 October (*DW*); Felix Barker, "Marlowe's Theatre of Cruelty", *Evening News*, 2 October (*EN*<sub>1</sub>); Milton Shulman, "Surprise! Roars of delight for the Villain", *Evening Standard*, 2 October (*ES*); B. A. Young, "The Jew of Malta", *Financial Times*, 2 October (*FT*<sub>1</sub>); Philip Hope-Wallace, *Guardian*, 2 October (*G*<sub>3</sub>); John Gross, "The Jew of Malta", *Jewish Chronicle*, 9 October (*JC*<sub>1</sub>); Charles Landstone, "Ranting Melodrama", *Jewish Chronicle*, 9 October (*JC*<sub>2</sub>); "Humour in Kit Marlowe Now Proved", *Kentish Times*, 9 October (*KT*); Anthony Merryn, "Laughs in the Wrong Places", *Liverpool Post*, 2 October (*LP*<sub>1</sub>); "Cynical Humour Marks Marlowe Anniversary", *Manchester Evening News and Chronicle*, 6 October (*MENC*); E. Vickery, "A Play not to Be Missed", *New Daily*, 6 October (*ND*); Roland Bryden, "Superjew", *New Stateman*, 9 October (*NS*); *Northampton Chronicle*, 9 October (*NC*<sub>1</sub>); "Marlowe as Farce", *Northern Echo*, 3 October (*NE*); *Nottingham Guardian*, 10 October (*NG*); *Observer*, 4 October (*O*<sub>1</sub>); Molly Hobman, *Oxford Mail*, 3 October (*OM*); *Plays and Players*, December 1964 (*P&P*<sub>1</sub>); "Mystery of Marlowe Revived", *Scotsman*, 5 October (*S*); "Marlowe as Farce Gives Lively Evening", *Shields Gazette*, 5 October (*SG*); *South London Press*, 9 October (*SLP*); *The Spectator*, 9 October (*SP*); R. B. Marriott, "'The Jew of Malta' at the Aldwych", *Stage and Television Today*, 8 October (*S&Tv*<sub>2</sub>); signed J. G., "Marlowe's Goldfinger", *Stratford-Upon-Avon Herald*, 9 October (*SAH*<sub>1</sub>); Alan Brien, *Sunday Telegraph*, 4 October (*STel*<sub>1</sub>); Harold Hobson, *Sunday Times*, 4 October (*ST*<sub>1</sub>); "Fitting Recognition for Marlowe Year", *Times*, 2 October (*T*<sub>4</sub>); Mervyn Jones, *Tribune*, 9 October (*Tr*<sub>1</sub>); "This might have been produced by a 16th Century 'Crazy Gang'", *Universe*, 9 October (*U*); Graham Samuel, "Not Marlowe's Jew", *Western Mail*, 10 October (*WM*); Kenneth A. Hurren, *What's on in London*, 9 October (*WOL*); Eric Gillett, "Marlowe Gets to West End", *Yorkshire Post*, 2 October (*YP*<sub>1</sub>); "Laughs Galore in a Revival", *Yorkshire Post*, 10 October (*YP*<sub>2</sub>).

For reviews of the Stratford revival, April, 1965:

"Merits of the Two Jews", *Bolton Evening News*, 17 April (*BEN*); "Marlowe's turn at Stratford—and it's a Tonic after Season's Subdued Start", *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, 15 April (*CET*<sub>1</sub>); Bernard Levin, "I repeat: Marlowe's Jew is Still a Load of Rubbish", *Daily Mail*, 17 April (*DM*<sub>2</sub>); W. A. Darlington, "'The Jew of Malta' Played for Laughs", *Daily Telegraph*, 15 April (*DT*<sub>2</sub>); B. A. Young, "The Jew of Malta", *Financial Times*, 17 April (*FT*<sub>2</sub>); Philip Hope-Wallace, *Guardian*, 15 April (*G*<sub>4</sub>); Charles Landstone, "Contrasting Views of a Jew", *Jewish Chronicle*, 23 April (*JC*<sub>3</sub>); Doreen Tanner, "The Shudders were Missing", *Liverpool Daily Post*, 15 April (*LP*<sub>2</sub>); *Northampton Chronicle*, 23 April (*NC*<sub>2</sub>); Penelope Gilliatt, "Back to the Jew-Baiters", *Observer*, 18 April (*O*<sub>2</sub>); *Oxford Times*, 23 April (*OT*); Frank Cox,



"Two Jews at Stratford", *Plays and Players*, May 1965, pp. 10-1 (*P&P*<sub>2</sub>); Peter Robert, *Plays and Players*, June 1965, pp. 34-5 (*P&P*<sub>3</sub>); R. B. Marriott, *Stage and Television Today*, 22 April (*S&Tv*<sub>3</sub>); John Gardener, "'The Jew of Malta' and 'The Merchant of Venice'", *Stratford-upon-Avon Herald*, 13 April (*SAH*<sub>2</sub>); David Nathan, "Shakespeare Shown up by Malowe", *The Sun*, 17 April (*Sun*); Alan Brien, "Two Jews at Stratford", *The Sunday Telegraph*, 18 April (*STel*<sub>2</sub>); Harold Hobson, *The Sunday Times*, 18 April (*ST*<sub>2</sub>); "The Jews of Marlowe and Shakespeare", *Times*, 17 April (*T*<sub>5</sub>); "Lively Melodrama at Stratford", *Warwick Advertiser*, 23 April (*WA*); Ray Seaton, "A Triumphal Barabas", *Wolverhampton Express*, 15 April (*WE*<sub>1</sub>); *Worcester Evening News*, 15 April (*WEN*); Desmond Pratt, "Barabas—a Study in Villainy", *Yorkshire Post*, 15 April (*YP*<sub>3</sub>).

Reviews of *The Merchant of Venice*, 1965:

signed W. H. W., "The Power of Eric Porter's 'Shylock'", *Birmingham Mail*, 17 April (*BrM*<sub>2</sub>); J. C. Trewin, *Birmingham Post*, 17 April (*BP*<sub>2</sub>); *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, 17 April (*CET*<sub>2</sub>); Herbert Kretzmer, "New Shylock with the Iguana eyes", *Daily Express*, 17 April (*DE*<sub>2</sub>); Felix Barker, *Evening News*, 17 April (*EN*<sub>2</sub>); B. A. Young, *Financial Times*, 17 April (*FT*<sub>3</sub>); Philip Hope-Wallace, *Guardian*, 17 April (*G*<sub>5</sub>); Doreen Tanner, *Liverpool Post*, 17 April (*LP*<sub>3</sub>); "Shylock—but on a Small Scale", *Nottingham Evening Post*, 17 April (*NEP*); Don Chapman, "Orinical Shylock", *Oxford Mail*, 15 April (*OM*<sub>2</sub>); Mervyn Jones, *Tribune*, 23 April (*Tr*<sub>2</sub>); "Shylock's reconciliation—and more", *Wolverhampton Express*, 17 April (*WE*<sub>2</sub>); Desmond Pratt, *Yorkshire Post*, 17 April (*YP*<sub>4</sub>).

48. Clifford Williams gave me his personal views in an interview with him on 23 February 1988, hereafter, Williams, Interview.

49. Cf.: "Surprise roars of delight for the villain" (*ES*); "Horrors played for laughs" (*DE*<sub>1</sub>); "Laughs in the wrong places" (*LP*<sub>1</sub>); "Laughs Galore in a revival" (*YP*<sub>2</sub>); "Rip-roaring melodrama..." (*Bar*); "Drama played for laughs" (*CMC*); "Funniest farce in town" (*SG*).

50. Cf.: "When the Jew's daughter dies in the arms of a monk crying: 'I die a Christian!' [sic], the monk replies: 'And a virgin too. That grieves me most.' collapse of Aldwych audience!" (*ES*); *The Daily Worker*, 3 October mentions these lines in particular as Marlowe's deliberate attempt to excite laughter: the company was "well assisted by the author with such dialogue as the heroine's expiring 'Wittness that I die a Christian...'".

51. Levin calculates that Barabas speaks a total of 49% of the lines in the play compared to 33% for Tamburlaine in Part I, 38% for Faustus (1616), and 47% for Faustus (1604) (Levin, Appendix G., p. 211).

52. See Chapter Two.

53. See Smith p. 20. See also illustration 50.

54. See below on the 1987 production.

55. See Chapter Five.

56. See below, p. 234.

57. see Addenbrooke, op. cit., pp. 79-83, 138.

58. Clifford Williams said in *Plays and Players*, May, 1965 that, though the plays seem similar, they are also very different: "When we decided last year to do *The Jew* there were no plans to link it with *The Merchant* and it was only after the

success of *The Jew* in London that its inclusion in Stratford season seemed to tie it up in some ways with the projected *Merchant* revival....What we're looking at is not the similarities between them but the differences".

59. Clifford Williams found directing *The Merchant* more difficult than *The Jew*: "For one thing *The Merchant* has peculiar difficulties for the director today, in as much as it's so well known that every aspect of it has been explored already. It's impossible to find one's own slant on the play without someone observing 'Oh yes, that was done in '54!'" (Ibid.).

60. I was able to interview Barry Kyle on 8 July, 1988, hence (Kyle, Interview). For reviews of the R.S.C. production, 1987: Phil Tusler, "Alun's Wicked Performance Captivates the Audience", *Birmingham Daily News*, 16 July (BDN); Richard Edmonds, "Humour Never Lets up in this Colourful Play of Absurdities", *Birmingham Mail*, 15 July (BrM<sub>3</sub>); Eric Shorter, "The Cruelty and Joy of vengeance", *Daily Telegraph*, 16 July (DT<sub>3</sub>); Martin Hoyle, *Financial Times*, 16 July (FT<sub>4</sub>); Michael Billington, "Revenge of a tireless Rogue", *Guardian*, 16 July (G<sub>6</sub>); Andrew Rissik, *The Independent*, 16 July (I<sub>1</sub>); David Nathan, *Jewish Chronicle*, 24 July (JC<sub>4</sub>); Jim Hiley, "Royal Flush", *The Listener*, 23 July (L); Kenneth Hurren, *Mail on Sunday*, 19 July (MS); Sean French, "Murder in Malta", *Observer*, 19 July (O<sub>3</sub>); Francis King, *Sunday Telegraph*, 19 July (STel<sub>3</sub>); Robert Hewison, *Sunday Times*, 19 July (ST<sub>3</sub>); Robert Gore-Langton, *Time Out*, 22 July (TO); Irving Wardle, "Topical Twist", *Times*, 16 July (T<sub>6</sub>).

Reviews at The Barbican, 1988:

Michael Billington, "This is the Jew that Marlowe Drew", *Guardian*, 25 March 1988 (G<sub>7</sub>); Melanie Phillips, "A Society that can Laugh at *the Jew of Malta* by Pretending Anti-Semitism is Dead", *Guardian*, 1 April (G<sub>8</sub>); Peter Kemp, "Marlowe's mighty fine [sic]", *The Independent*, 25 March (I<sub>2</sub>); *Observer*, 27 March (O<sub>4</sub>).

61. I asked a member of audience during the interval, who oddly enough happened to be Jewish, whether she liked the production, and she exclaimed: "yes, immensely; I am a Jew you see, and I am glad that for the first time, Barabas is made really sympathetic".

62. See Chapter Five, p. 106.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

*EDWARD II* ON THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY STAGE

*Edward II* has descended to us by way of nineteenth-century critics as the best of Marlowe's plays and, though the least theatrical, the least problematic.<sup>1</sup> The text is considered more authentic than those of Marlowe's other plays. However, the fact that, in comparison to Marlowe's other plays, there is obvious austerity in its poetry, has been noted and deplored by many twentieth-century critics.<sup>2</sup> The view of its superiority as a sign of Marlowe's dramatic maturity—evidenced mainly by Marlowe's economical arrangement of his historical materials into dramatic shape—went with little challenge well into the 1960s.<sup>3</sup> In this play Marlowe moves away from narrowing his focus on one colossal figure, to give more attention to minor characters than is the case in his other plays.<sup>4</sup> This has led to a general view that the play shows a mature Marlowe moving towards Shakespeare by employing a more credible concept of the world which, though bleak and devoid of magnanimity and heroism, is more human than the hyperbolic world of *Tamburlaine*, *The Jew*, and *Faustus*.<sup>5</sup> Its consistency in arousing tragic feelings throughout the action, as opposed to the mixture of the tragic and comic in Marlowe's other plays, has been praised.<sup>6</sup>

The view of Marlowe as an individualist—dramatising a private Marlovian world picture—standing in sharp contrast to the humanitarian Shakespeare—dramatising the Elizabethan world picture—has tended to hamper the possibility of perceiving a larger frame of reference in *Edward II*. Most critics have seen the play as narrowly personal.<sup>7</sup> While the play has always been seen as a part of the tradition of English history plays, a political and moral significance has often been denied it. 'Personal' or 'political' have become the terms of the major dispute over the play, with an overwhelming majority voting for the first view. Even the critics who see the play as personal, fail to find any psychological depth in it. The homosexual issue in the play, which is undeniable, has often been avoided by critics, as Leonora Leet Brodwin complained in 1964,<sup>8</sup> or disguised behind terms like: homosexual overtones, Edward's expressions of love, need of friends, and even classical friendship.<sup>9</sup>

In 1968, the play received its most negative criticism from Wilbur Sanders, who sees it as a history to which Marlowe was attracted merely "by the opportunity it offered him to treat a forbidden sexual deviation".<sup>10</sup> He sharply denies the play any political, social, humanitarian, or even personal significance. *Edward II*, Sanders

argues, displays Marlowe's "indifference to both humanity and to art", and thus it is "amoral, not by intention, but by default" (p. 142). He saw in the hints at political issues, such as Mortimer's and Lancaster's verbal attack on Edward (II,ii,155-98), a "false dawn" (p. 127), and, in general, he found a "singular absence of any guiding and shaping intelligence behind the presentation of the historical material" (p. 126). Even in Edward's emotions Sanders saw nothing but a "lethargy of barren and repetitive protestations of love, from which it never recovers" (p. 125).

Negative as it is, Sanders's criticism seems to have provoked, in reaction, a more positive attitude towards the play. At the same time, theatrical revivals drew more attention to Marlowe's works, and not only to *Dr. Faustus*, traditionally seen as his masterpiece.<sup>11</sup> In the last twenty years there have been series of studies of *Edward II* that have discovered in the very lack of poetry a symbolical function, in the absence of heroism a meaning more humanitarian than had been thought, in the moral void a more modern attitude towards social, political, and personal problems, and even in the very unspectacularity and untheatricality of its action (like the use of one level, and less ceremony) a deliberate attempt on Marlowe's part to clarify significant meanings in the play.

W. M. Merchant's edition of the play in 1967 is partially responsible for this new positive view of *Edward II*. In it W. M. Merchant was the first to develop the idea that there is after all a consistent historical and public theme in the play, displayed by significant emblems, symbolic action and meaningful metaphors, which provide a prevailing tone in the play, and that this "substitutes a constantly shifting irony for the rhetorical surge of *Tamburlaine*, the savagery of *The Jew of Malta* and the tragic intensity of *Faustus*—with *Edward the Second* deploying, arguably, the most mature means."<sup>12</sup> In 1968, J. R. Mulryne and S. Fender stressed that neither the negative view of the play, represented by Steane, Sanders and others, nor the positive one proposed by W. M. Merchant, is wrong but that the play makes both views possible:

The undeniable presence of the emblems, together with their undeniable negation in the realistic action, poses a special case: it suggests a tone at once more pessimistic than Professor Merchant has suggested, and more universal, more general, than the conventional view holds. Here are all the guidelines by which a more conventional dramatist would indicate a meaning. Marlowe, however, shows us the clues only to negate the meaning. In this way he dramatises a gap between...all the official positions, the public motives, the apparent universal order, and all the private prejudices, the selfish motives, the real universal chaos...<sup>13</sup>



Their objectivity encouraged further examination of the play, and studies of the emblematic richness of *Edward II* have increased in the last ten years or so, through which the play has acquired a psychological, social, historical, literary and universal value.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, the issue of homosexuality in the play struggled into wider acceptance, as homosexuality became an important problem in society, and one that was openly discussed. The play could now be welcomed as a unique exhibition of the problem by an Elizabethan playwright.<sup>15</sup>

Constance Brown Kuriyama has recognised in the play a unifying and functional pattern of antithesis that justifies the repetitive nature of events, which reflects a world where characters are motivated by a solipsistic conception of survival. She very rightly noticed an aim behind the austere poetics of the play:

Before we condemn *Edward II* for its relatively barren and unprepossessing exterior, we might at least consider that its drabness has a purpose...The restrained verse and the rigid form are...appropriate to the play: it is a play of limitation and constraint...<sup>16</sup>

While the action of the characters has been seen as not enough motivated, particularly Isabella's and Mortimer's, Kuriyama has discovered profound psychological patterns in the behaviour of each, classified as egocentric interests. In these she has found further explanation of the play's structural and verbal idiosyncrasies. She points to both the political and a psychological importance of the play in that, first, it dramatises Edward's conflict between personal values "dictated by his egocentric character—and the demands of his society",<sup>17</sup> and, second, it represents a social solution offered by Marlowe, which she calls "counterphobia": dealing explicitly with a social problem, particularly homosexuality, to control an anticipated disaster.<sup>18</sup>

In 1988, in the most recent collection of essays on Marlowe, three critics dealt positively with *Edward II*. C. J. Summers admires the fusion of the personal, social and political, which earlier criticism had denied the play, finding in the very indeterminacy of judgment on Marlowe's part, an intelligent perception of the ways of the world:

The radicalism of *Edward II* resides in the play's intersection of sex and politics and in Marlowe's refusal to moralize either....The failure to envision a providential history has been seen by some readers as a serious defect in *Edward II*, while it has been excused by others on the grounds that what engaged Marlowe's imagination was not politics but the personal tragedy of an individual who happens to be a king. It seems to me that both views are wrong. Rather than

constituting either a flaw or an irrelevancy, the refusal to moralize history is at the heart of both the play's profound political heterodoxy and the personal tragedy of the king.<sup>19</sup>

Sarah Munson Deats complains in an interesting essay on the play, that amid the critical disparagement of the hollowness of language in *Edward II*, nobody has noticed its symmetrical structure, especially the opening and closing of the play, which provide a funeral of a king and a coronation of another younger one. These, according to her, establish a frame within which events repeat themselves with altered emphasis, or in a reverse order. All the action, she argues, provides repeated symmetrical situations, which by being underlined gain meaning.<sup>20</sup> David Bevington and James Shapiro, in a joint essay, stress the importance of that "decay of ceremony" in *Edward II* which is usually deplored, in reinforcing meanings in the play. They point to the continuous emphasis on this through disrupted ceremonial tableaux and recurrent emblems of hostility, murder and destruction. With a view to the staging of the play, they marked the functional inclusion of properties and stage-objects (crowns, swords, costumes, portraits, jewels...etc.) which highlight significant rituals in the play, and thus render it more theatrical and abundantly visual than has been usually thought.<sup>21</sup>

These recent studies have discovered dramatic and theatrical methods used by Marlowe, and thus made the play richer and more exciting for the theatre. After a quick historical review of the professional revivals, the rest of the chapter will discuss in detail three revivals that seem to underline important problems in the stage history of the play.

The twentieth-century theatrical history of the play reflects the development of critical attitudes towards it. We have seen in a previous chapter how William Poel's production in 1903, which offered the play to the public after three hundred years' absence, was mainly characterised by the subduing of the homosexual and political issues in the play, thus depriving it of its best strength.<sup>22</sup> The success of the production, however, prompted another professional revival two years later, in 1905, directed by Frank Benson for his Shakespearean company, at Stratford-upon-Avon, with Benson himself in the title-role.<sup>23</sup>

The revival again displayed reluctance to stress the political and homosexual sides of the story. Reducing the play's "five acts and twenty four scenes into four acts and twelve scenes" (*LSC*), it seems that it concentrated on King Edward's benevolent emotions towards Gaveston which, according to one reviewer, "could be traced to a generous motive, and it was this love that culminated in the final catastrophe" (*S&Tv1*).



Gaveston was called only "favourite", "foreigner" and "Frenchman", with no mention of his being the king's lover or minion. The production also reflected the fastidious attitude of the audience that marked Poel's production, as it expunged the violence of the murder scene, "The death scene was, thanks to the skill of the dramatist and actors, robbed of its horrors" (*LSC*), though reviews do not mention how. The squeamishness of the audience, however, can be sensed from the fact that, though Mortimer's head was placed in a basket, obviously to reduce the gruesomeness of the sight, it was, according to one reviewer, "dripping" (*G<sub>1</sub>*), which "greatly affected the sensibilities of the fairer portion of the house" (*S&T<sub>v1</sub>*). In addition to that, it seemed the audience could not come to terms with the instability of some characters, particularly Isabella. The reviewer in *The Manchester Guardian* remarked that "Miss Gertrude Scott's Isabel was a somewhat enigmatic blend of the tragedy queen and the minx, but it is difficult to render either Isabel or Gaveston both intelligible to a modern audience, and at the same time true to Marlowe's intentions".

Though the production was not very successful, one reviewer thought that it "proved most acceptable, [and] was greatly enjoyed...[as] shown by the hearty applause..." (*LSC*). The same reviewer admitted, however, that "The drama incidentally is not of a character calculated to raise the spirits of the playgoer". The remembrance of Frank Benson's performance as Richard II, which preceded his Edward II, doomed the production to inferiority:

In Edward's occasional moments of introspection Mr. Benson was admirable....Still there was never anything that quite took one's breath away, as there was in several passages of his Richard, and there is in every great piece of acting. (*G<sub>1</sub>*)

Benson's revival did not encourage more theatrical attention to the play, and, for fifty years after, *Edward II* was left for amateur companies to perform.<sup>24</sup> The play obviously presented some difficulties for the theatre in the first half of the twentieth century which led to its absence from professional stages. Apart from the alleged poverty of its poetry, the vacillation and the ambivalence of the characters have always caused indignation. The transformation of Isabella from a wronged, loving and patient wife, into a Machiavellian adulteress; the change of Mortimer from an admirably patriotic representative of the political order surrounded by nobles, to a greedy usurper surrounded by hired assassins; the puzzling instability of Kent; Edward's abrupt replacement of Gaveston with Spencer after the devastating crisis of the loss of his favourite and even the metamorphosis of Edward III from a protected child to a figure of retribution able to tread on filial emotions to punish his mother—all have generally been seen as defects in the play. Not least is this true for the enigma behind Edward's

exempting Mortimer from execution by sending him to the Tower, with no explanation whatsoever, a point which Brecht improved in his adaptation of the play.<sup>25</sup> It is probably these puzzling aspects of the play that made *Richard II* overshadow *Edward II*.

Though Brecht's adaptation of the play in 1924 drew critical attention to it, it was only in 1956, after the visit of the Berliner Ensemble to the Palace Theatre, during which they performed Brecht's *Edward II* for the first time in London (though in German), that we had another professional performance of Marlowe's play. It was directed by Joan Littlewood for the Theatre Workshop Company, and played for a four-week season at the Theatre Royal, Stratford-att-Bowe.<sup>26</sup> The fact that Joan Littlewood's experimental theatre was already established as a successful project helped audiences to view Marlowe's play positively. The director interpreted the play as "a sacrificial ritual," underlined by the "tension between the civilised and the primitive" in the relation between the different characters in the play ( $T_1$ ). Edward (Peter Smallwood) in "a victim's white robe," was an image of "a devoted dupe" controlled by Gaveston (Maxwell Shaw) ( $T_1$ ). "Neither vicious nor attractive," he was seen as "a civilised butterfly broken on the political wheel" ( $T_1$ ). Joan Littlewood seemed to have solved the difficulty of having to choose between stressing either Edward's homosexuality or his inability to rule the country, and thus in accordance with the company's ensemble acting style, the focus was apparently not only on the flaws in Edward's character as the main factor in the action, but on all the actors as major participants in the turmoil of events. The production, therefore, made the play more appealing to modern audiences; it was thought that it "[might]...change some inherited opinions on Marlowe" ( $T_1$ ).

Though Joan Littlewood's production was the first professional production after 1905, the first really influential production of the play was in 1958, an amateur one directed by Toby Robertson for the Marlowe Society at the University of Cambridge. It was transferred to the Arts Theatre, London, the Open Air Festival, Stratford-upon-Avon, and finally to the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith. Derek Jacobi played Edward and John Barton played Mortimer. The production was received by audiences more favourably than had been expected, and thus it will be worthwhile returning to it later in detail (especially, of course, as the two main actors were to become, respectively, a leading actor and a major director in the British theatre of subsequent decades).



In April 1964, Clive Perry directed *Edward II* for the Phoenix Theatre, Leicester, with Richard Kay (who played Edward III in 1958 Open Air production) in the title-role, and John Quenton as Gaveston. The production was mainly appreciated for the fact that the play was a "seldom seen chronicle play [thus] well worth reviving especially this time when Stratford is given over wholly to history".<sup>27</sup> It was played in repertory with *Richard II*, and was transferred to the New Arts Theatre, London. The combination of the two plays clearly did not promote the success of *Edward II*: one reviewer commented that "the thought of Shakespeare's *Richard II* intrud[ed] as unmercifully as anything in this raw chronicle" ( $G_2$ ). The company was praised, however, for having made the effort to "put on a classic of uncertain appeal" ( $T_2$ ) for a "seating capacity of under 300" ( $G_2$ ).

Two years later, in April 1966, the Birmingham Repertory Theatre gave a production under the direction of John Harrison, with Henry Knowles in the title-role and Gary Watson as Gaveston. It was acted on a proscenium stage, with a simple set reminiscent of a workshop acting area. Actors sat on chairs in a semi-circle. The small acting space emphasised intimacy and audience involvement. The acting was stylised and non-naturalistic, striving for an atmosphere of rehearsing. Actors put on costumes in view of the audience, doubling with no attempt to change their appearance beyond recognition. Elaborate costumes were used, which could be immediately recognised as stage dresses. The production offered a chance of exploring the possibility of stage techniques and the theatrical potentials of the play.<sup>28</sup>

Another two years later, in April 1968, the National Theatre Company presented a production of Brecht's *The Life of Edward II*, which was directed by Frank Dunlop at the National Theatre. The production concentrated on monarchy, which had interested Brecht in his adaptation, showing Edward II full of grandeur and royalty. Apart from its appeal, at the peak of interest in Brecht within the English theatre of the 1960s, the adaptation might have seemed easier to stage than Marlowe's play, as the company did not have a "young actor capable of tackling"<sup>29</sup> Marlowe's mighty line. In spite of that, the production did not place Brecht's play as superior to Marlowe's: a year later, one critic remarked that the National Theatre's choice of Brecht's play instead of Marlowe's "must remain one of the puzzles of the modern stage".<sup>30</sup>

The negative critical attitude towards the National Theatre production of Brecht's play, if it did not motivate the 1969 Prospect production of Marlowe's play, at least it made it more welcome. Toby Robertson directed *Edward II* at the Assembly

Hall for the 1969 Edinburgh Festival. With Ian McKellen as Edward, the production achieved great success, and was transferred to the Mermaid Theatre in Puddle Dock. It then went on tour until, finally, it reached the Piccadilly Theatre. It was also televised in 1970.

After the Prospect production (discussed in detail below) the play was repeatedly produced. In August 1978, it was staged at the Little Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh, by the Royal Lyceum Company, under the direction of Stephen McDonald. Another production opened in April 1980, at the Bristol New Vic, directed by Richard Cottrell for the Bristol Old Vic company.<sup>31</sup> In 1983, a year after another revival of Brecht's adaptation,<sup>32</sup> the Compass Theatre Company toured with their production of *Edward II*, directed by Neil Sissons. The most recent professional production, at the time of writing, was Nicholas Hytner's at the Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester, which opened on 23 October, 1986, with Ian McDiarmid in the title-role.

Three productions have been chosen for discussion in this chapter: Toby Robertson's 1958 Open Air production, his 1969 Prospect production, and Nicholas Hytner's 1986 production. Though amateur, the first production is significant in so far as it illuminates Toby Robertson's Prospect production, and as it has become the most important production in the stage history of the play, and one that is constantly referred to by critics. The second production is worth discussing in detail as it was concurrent with the removal of theatrical censorship and with the reduction of legal prosecutions of homosexuals. The third production also deserves considering, being the most recent, and one which I have myself been able to see, and concerning which I have been able to consult Nicholas Hytner.<sup>33</sup>

Toby Robertson's 1958 Open-Air production was extensively and unanimously praised by the media. Most reviews appeared under headings expressing admiration: "An Experience of Beauty",<sup>34</sup> "Symphony of Colour and Action" (*CET*), "It's Magnificent" (*BED*). When rain stopped the performance before the last act, according to one reviewer it "would have been worth sitting through the fiercest thunderstorm to see this again" (*WA*). It was praised quite ecstatically by most reviewers, if not all:

a production...one feels can rarely have been bettered....From Gaveston's first entrance...through the plotting of the nobles...his downfall, and the rebellion of Earl Mortimer against Edward...one watches fascinated. (*BP*)

Harold Hobson exclaimed:



I do not see how Mr. Robertson's production could be improved, or his appreciation of the verse more responsive. This is a play, this is a performance to strengthen the heart, and to make the senses swim. (*ST*<sub>1</sub>)

What elicited all this praise can be seen through one reviewer's description of the production as "firm and clear, without trying to impose upon the play a subtlety it does not possess" (*SAH*<sub>2</sub>), or in what Clifford Leech called "neutrality" (in his essay on *Edward II* that was mainly inspired by his admiration of this production).<sup>35</sup> "Neutrality" seems to have emerged from an equal distribution of focus on all aspects and characters in the play. The audience was impressed by all the actors, who were anonymous at the time, and both "the strident blast of the nobles, and the tragedy of Edward [caught its] imagination" (*BED*).

However, in his long interview with John Russell Brown, printed in the special Marlowe issue of *Tulane Drama Review*, Toby Robertson stated that he had "emphasised the emotional side"<sup>36</sup> of the play. Edward's genuine emotion and his relation with Gaveston became "intensely moving" (*G*<sub>3</sub>). Derek Jacobi's interpretation of his love for Gaveston was such an outstanding feature of the production that not one reviewer failed to mention it:

it is sincere on both sides, and in the context of baronial persecution has a curious dignity and freshness...forcing a flexible voice now and then, the anonymous Edward at Stratford goes on to clarify the king's bouts of rhetorical-assertion. Feeble they are, but never mean... (*O*<sub>1</sub>)

In spite of the focus on Edward's nature and love, the production did not turn into a narrowly personal study; it was, as has already been pointed out, praised for its "neutrality". Toby Robertson believed that "the play [was] centr[ed] on Edward" (Robertson, p. 177), but at the same time he thought that the minor parts were "eminentlyactable" (Robertson, p. 177), and thus he allowed every actor his opportunity to make an impression on the audience's mind. This was basically achieved through the familiar tradition of anonymity among the actors of the Marlowe Society which eliminated any expectation of a star-performance. Edward's relation with Gaveston was emphasised but for the better, as it gave the barons' protest each time a fresh provocation. Toby Robertson tried to stress the idea that what they were condemning was not Edward's homosexuality, but rather his inability to reconcile his emotion with public demands, which he thought to be inherent in the text. To achieve this, Edward's homosexuality was treated without tension, which relaxed the audience and made it concentrate on the emotional aspect of it rather than the purely sexual.

Not only intimacy was missing, but more importantly, I believe, any contrast between light and darkness, which is constantly referred to in the action (I,i,15-7; I,iv,16-7; IV,i,10; IV,iii,43-6; IV,vi,62/ 84-5/ 105; V,i,64-9; V,iii,6; V,v,7/ 37/ 41/ 58/ 63) and which (although, of course, Marlowe's own stage would not have projected this visually) would be of vital symbolic importance to Edward's stages of misery: moving from the thrill of "Italian masques" and "pleasing shows" (I,i,54-5), to a dark claustrophobic dungeon "wherein the filth of all the castle falls" (V,v,56).<sup>39</sup> Similarly, as J. R. Brown remarked, "one wasn't sure whether Edward and his nobles were at court, or in the country" (Robertson, p. 175). Though the whereabouts were not of major importance, some scenes would necessitate a change to emphasise the meaning of the play.<sup>40</sup>

Important meanings were, however, conveyed through costumes that were very spectacular and elaborate, and thus a main attraction of the production. The richness of Gaveston's and Edward's costumes in contrast to the drabness of the lords', should stand out clearly (and presumably they did, on Marlowe's stage). Toby Robertson emphasised the distinction between the two parties in designing "Italian Renaissance clothes [for Edward's party], and medieval and Gothic [with] fur and steel" for the barons (Robertson, p. 179). The king's party appeared as "ambitious intellectuals basking in Marlovian hedonism" ( $O_1$ ), with a "portrait of corruption" ( $SAH_2$ ) in the case of Baldock, put in contrast to a "ruddy and cunning...philistine" Lancaster ( $O_1$ ), and a "threatening" Mortimer ( $SAH_2$ ).

The rhythm of the action was a breakneck speed. Toby Robertson, at his first reading of the play, was struck by this aspect of the play's nature. It was difficult to decide "where to break" (Robertson, p. 181). Two intervals held the balance of the rhythm of the action. The first was at Edward's "poor Gaveston, thou hast no friend but me" (II,ii,223), at which Gaveston "appear[ed] out of the darkness", and both Edward and Gaveston left the stage (Robertson, p. 181). Breaking the action at this point must have intensified the emotions of the King's relation with Gaveston. The next interval came after Edward's triumph (III,ii), which would have been well contrasted with the intense pathos of the first part, making Edward's last fall still more pathetic; and it would have solved the problem of the sudden change of Edward from a lover to a warrior, and finally to a worn-out old man. Having two intervals confirmed the play's 'tripartite structure', offering three stages in the action.

The quick rhythm of the action was effectively "punctuated by moments of intensely moving solitude which point[ed] the tragedy to a relentless compulsion..."



(BP). Amid the turbulent action, Edward's private emotion emerged. Toby Robertson admitted the difficulty of displaying Edward's personal sentiments, not so much because it would slow the rhythm as because this was the most intimate aspect of the play, which put the actor in the title-role in a situation of unease and alienation from the other actors.<sup>41</sup> But Derek Jacobi, as Edward, was praised for his ability to move "superbly from angry, petulant weakness, to withered bent dignity" ( $G_3$ ), and for his granting the king a "royalty of pain" ( $G_3$ ). An actor talented enough to stretch across this range of acting styles would not have found private emotions difficult to bring out. Even the last scene of horror functioned as a "love scene", showing Edward in Lightborn's lap like a "child asking for love, wanting love and affection" (Robertson, p. 179), begging even his executioner for love, which must have created high pathos among the audience.

The repetitive nature of the scenes, and the reiterating of Gaveston's exile and Edward's mourning for his absence were not, happily, an incentive to cut parts of the play. Toby Robertson found the repetition necessary as a "part of the development of the play" (Robertson, p. 176), which in turn was a development of Edward's character whose nature entailed repetition of what, in fact, dominated his life. Even with the repetition, there was no monotony as the actors' delivery of the verse was highly impressive, showing a "feeling for the line and sweep of the verse," which was thought to have been "an object lesson to all who essay the mighty line" (BP). There was a "blend of voices [varying] from tenderest whisper to hoarsest rage" ( $T_3$ ). Every word was given its full meaning and rhythm "scarcely an inflexion but [was] turned to bring out a mood" (BP).

The Marlowe Society production of *Edward II* was an important revival of the play. There was felt a "diffused vitality of the human spectacle...[which] seemed to make the play more available to us as a whole than it had previously been" ( $ST_1$ ). The production, in short, was seen as faultless except in the unclaustrophobic effect of the setting. It was thought to have made the play a "masterpiece fit for a national repertory" ( $O_1$ ), "an event to cherish in the memory for years to come and...a yardstick with which to judge future revivals of Marlowe's great study of a weak king" (WE).

The production was, in fact, a 'yardstick' for Toby Robertson himself, as he was thinking of doing another revival of the play, a 'yardstick' he vowed to follow in his 1969 production, and a 'yardstick' for later directors of *Edward II*. The success of the 1958 revival in which "so much seem[ed] right" (Robertson, p. 182), became to

Toby Robertson, and should now become, to us, a reference point for the next revival to be discussed, the Prospect Theatre Company's production.

In contrast to the 'neutrality' which characterised the 1958 production, Toby Robertson's 1969 production was exclusively a victory for Ian McKellen as a newly established star. It was first seen at the Assembly Hall, Edinburgh, before it went on a prolonged tour, until it reached the Piccadilly Theatre, London, where it stayed until 21 March, 1970.<sup>42</sup> In the Scottish capital Ian McKellen gathered lavish praise from the media. Reviews were filled with statements like: "It was probably the playing of Ian McKellen which dominat[ed] the long evening",<sup>43</sup> he

ha[d] presence, height, and control, and in addition the real right voice for Marlowe's 'mighty line'...he [spoke] in such a way that the whole constellation mov[ed] into place around the bright star in the sky..." (G<sub>4</sub>)

Similar praise was elicited by McKellen's performance when the production moved from Edinburgh to the Mermaid Theatre, London (23 September- 11 October). Reviewing it at the Mermaid, Eric Shorter stated that Ian McKellen's "[was] an astonishingly intense performance [,] it [took] real dramatic strength to indicate such sustained weakness for three hours without losing our attention" (DT<sub>4</sub>); and Michael Billington pointed out that

Mr. McKellen's Edward...is much more than an exciting display of nervous energy. It shows a proper sense of tragic development. In the civil war scenes he moves as if his limbs were suddenly twice as heavy and his body burdened by weighty regalia; and by the end the character has become a worn, ragged shadow though still with the same insatiable craving for physical contact...this is an audacious, powerful and memorable performance. (T<sub>5</sub>)

Not that Toby Robertson intended to lay all the emphasis on the central role, but his production in 1969 was inevitably overshadowed by Richard Cottrell's production of *Richard II*, which the company performed in repertory with *Edward II*, also with Ian McKellen in the title-role. Having left a strong impression by his performance as Richard II, the two plays being performed on alternate nights, all the attention focused on Ian McKellen's acting, and on whether his Edward would be as successful as his Richard. The issue of which of the two was better dominated reviews, and other aspects in the production received minor attention.<sup>44</sup>



Harold Hobson thought the praise bestowed on the production of *Edward II* was unwittingly imposed on the media, while in fact undeserved:

The audience, after "Richard II"; justly alerted by the Scottish critics to the fact that there was a great actor in Edinburgh, went prepared for a masterpiece, and saw what they expected to see, even though it wasn't there. (ST<sub>2</sub>)

By the time the production reached the Piccadilly Theatre on 27 January, 1970, McKellen received less praise:

There must be a temptation to posture if you are repeatedly called 'great' and if your name is in Piccadilly Circus lights almost as large as Cinzano, Coca Cola and indeed 'Midnight Cowboy'. It is not a temptation entirely resisted by Ian McKellen in his much publicised performance as the King of Marlowe's 'Edward II' which last night reached the Piccadilly Theatre...I just hope that the development of his most sensitive talent may not be permanently arrested by this neurotic insistence that instead of achieving greatness he must have it thrust upon him. (DT<sub>5</sub>)

More just was Peter Roberts, who registered his disappointment at both productions in so far as McKellen was concerned, as he believed not only *Edward II* but both productions to have been "overpraised" (P&P<sub>3</sub>). However, one has to admit that, as offering a deeper insight into the psychology of a deluded monarch infatuated with ceremony and the idea of kingship, *Richard II* would inevitably stand out as a better play. For this reason Eric Shorter called the entwining of the two plays in one repertory a "courageous conjunction" (DT<sub>4</sub>). To the great detriment of *Edward II* it was thought that "when one [saw] them both on successive nights...Shakespeare's emerg[ed] as infinitely the subtler and richer" (P&P<sub>2</sub>). According to one reviewer, "it [would] always seem to us...that *Richard* [was] the original and *Edward* the copy" (ST<sub>2</sub>).

Although in 1969, Toby Robertson closely adhered to the principles of his 1958 production, with only slight differences in costumes, setting and staging techniques, as will be shown later, the effect of the Prospect production was very different. Toby Robertson tried to avoid making the play only personal in his Prospect revival; thus he hoped to bring out "the interaction of the personal and the political".<sup>45</sup> But in 1969, the main thrust of the story seemed to be extremely personal. This was not only because, as already mentioned, the focus was on Ian McKellen's stardom, but also because his acting style tended to be exaggerated, always emphasising the physical in the form of energetic body movements and facial expressions (as we saw in his performance as Faustus, discussed in Chapter Six). "His *Edward* start[ed] out as an

astonishing display of unfocused nervous energy: he wheel[ed] exultantly about the stage at the return of his boyfriend..." (P&P<sub>2</sub>). When Gaveston appeared to him, he changed into an irresponsible "infantile lover" (T<sub>4</sub>), to be metamorphosed at Gaveston's death to a "blood drunken warlord, and finally the emaciated wreck in the sewers of Berkeley..." (T<sub>4</sub>). His was a physical performance which revealed itself in a "high pitch" (FT<sub>1</sub>) style, and an extravaganza of stage business: "shout[ing], scream[ing], and slobber[ing] incessantly" (ST<sub>2</sub>). Toby Robertson himself thought that McKellen "did not play the king...[as he] took [his] petulance into a very, very high point" (Geckle, p. 97). At the return of Gaveston he unnecessarily "chewed hard on a medallion" (P&P<sub>2</sub>), displaying pleasure vented in animalistic physical gestures. He threw himself on the floor at the news of Gaveston's death to rise slowly when swearing revenge. After the battle, triumphant, he shouted, swinging his sword high, giving a "marvellous image of a man entering into his strength" (ES).

McKellen's exaggerated stage business did not find favour with all critics. Harold Hobson perceived in his Edward "no remnants of the beautiful and gallant prince who ran at tilt in France..." (ST<sub>2</sub>). He was only occasionally moving. One reviewer thought that

there was just one passage...the tender farewell to his beloved Gaveston where this talent shone and [one] was able to believe and feel his emotion instead of simply inspecting his technique. (DT<sub>5</sub>)

The same reviewer went on to comment that the death scene was moving partly "because Mr. McKellen's movements were necessarily restricted". He was admired, however, in the scenes of his captivity, as he appeared "deeply pathetic," and particularly in the deposition scene, in which "The moment of his surrendering the crown [was] beautifully caught...[effectively showing] how possession of the gold circlet still seem[ed] to him to bestow the right to command..." (FT<sub>1</sub>).

Though Ian McKellen gave justifications for his approach to the role of Edward II, he seems to have regretted the exaggerated quality of his performance. In an interview with Michael Billington for *The Illustrated London News* of 17 January, 1970, he said:

I tend to start with a strong, clear line which is my own performance....The idea was to show a very young man who suddenly gets the key of the kingdom and who has all the potential to develop into a marvellous person. In fact, because his emotions and desires are thwarted, he develops not into a kind, compassionate man but into a tyrant who, when he



defeats Mortimer in battle, feels fulfilled for the first time in his life. The next stage is his degradation and loss of power, and he just becomes a desiccated old shell crawling about waiting to die. That seems the main line. The mistake perhaps was bringing that out in a pictorial way—through changes in make-up, costumes, the carriage of the body.<sup>46</sup>

Even Toby Robertson, a decade later, in his interview with George Geckle, expressed his dissatisfaction with McKellen's style, which he believed was "histrionic" (Geckle, p. 89), and was the reason the effect of 'neutrality' of 1958 disappeared in 1969.

Ian McKellen's style was basically detrimental to the production in that it brought out the homosexual Edward more than Edward who is "by nature...mild and calm" (I,iv,387). In his tight trousers, bright shirt and golden wig combed backward, he gave the impression of an effeminate creature (see illustration 81). His love for Gaveston seemed at times a means to provoke the nobles, "monotonously exhibitionistic...and all these smacking kisses before his angry nobles suggest little more than that Edward was tiresomely addicted to showing off" (*ST*<sub>2</sub>). The physicality of his performance conveyed a central animal need for physical contact which was maintained even at the end when he received a tender kiss from his murderer which echoed an image at the beginning when he shared a "mouth-to-mouth kiss with his homosexual favourite Gaveston" (*DT*<sub>2</sub>). The juxtaposition reinforced a parallel between Gaveston and Lightborn and, in turn, stressed the homosexual side of the play.

Even at his weakest point, Edward displayed physical energy, "every nerve and muscle was quivering in his body" (*O*<sub>2</sub>). In the dungeon he circled around, his steps drawing the lines of the confinement in which he was trapped. When Lightborn, Robert Eddison, entered from below carrying a torch, and a bunch of keys, he viewed his victim silently as Edward was lying on the floor in filthy rags. Their looks met in a frozen pause, and suddenly Edward jumped to attack Lightborn, who struggled with him and finally calmed him down with affectionate embraces. He washed him in a "nurse-like" (Geckle, p. 92) manner, so that the murder acquired an "extraordinarily sadistic element of actually being in love with the sacrificial victim" (Geckle, p. 92). As Lightborn implanted a kiss on Edward's lips, staging the "last love scene" as Toby Robertson calls it, the horror was intensified, and the murder was executed in the most "grisly naturalistic manner" (*G*<sub>4</sub>), with no attempt to tone the horror down. Toby Robertson went back to Holinshed this time, to stage the murder exactly as it is described there, which then would be more gruesome than in Marlowe.<sup>47</sup> Judging from

reviews, the killing of Edward was almost unbearable; some people "overwhelmed, had left the house" (*ILN*).

The production in 1969 was characterised by physicality. While in the 1958 production was dramatised, in Toby Robertson's words, "love in the classical sense", in which there was "nothing to be ashamed of..." (Robertson, p. 177), in the 1969 one, thematic emphasis was sacrificed to give a "lustful and full blooded production" (*DT*<sub>2</sub>). As the years 1966 and 1968 had, respectively, witnessed the abolition of prosecution for homosexual acts between consenting adults in private, and of theatrical censorship, the reaction to this newly granted freedom in the Prospect production seemed an exaggeration of relief after a long suppression. Thus the "homosexual impulse [was] brought out in direct illustration" (*S&T*<sub>v3</sub>). Harold Hobson saw that "Toby Robertson's bald and unhypocritical production [brought] out Marlowe into the open, writing him up largely as pro-sodomy and anti-snob" (*ST*<sub>2</sub>). To some critics, however, explicitness was appreciated as a double-edged sword in that it showed the passion of the king as both frightening in its danger to Edward himself as a ruler, and moving in its depth and sincerity" (*S&T*<sub>v3</sub>). But while in 1958 it was called "wonderful love between two men", in 1969, it seemed purely "homosexual infatuation" (*ST*<sub>2</sub>); while reviewers in 1958 called Gaveston "Edward's friend", "Frenchman", "favourite"...etc., in 1969, Gaveston was called "boyfriend", "beloved", and "homosexual".

The fact that the Gaveston of 1969 (James Laurenson) was not as vulnerable in Edward's presence as the Gaveston of 1958, made the relation not as admirably "genuine on both sides"<sup>48</sup> as it appeared in 1958. James Laurenson was more calculated and less energetic than Ian McKellen, and thus functioned as a foil to Edward's effeminacy and delusion. His double-sided nature was revealed: political opportunism enough to "draw the pliant king which way [he] pleased" (*I*,i,52), and emotion enough to love Edward "more than all the world" (*I*,iv,77). Physically attractive and masculine he achieved grace and "ironic detachment" (*DT*<sub>2</sub>). It was a deliberate device by Toby Robertson, who made the 1958 Gaveston, "too much Edward's creature", to make his 1969 counterpart "a more Machiavellian figure...[by] emphasiz[ing] that line 'to draw the pliant king which way I please', so that the dupe, in a sense, was Edward, not Gaveston" (Geckle, p. 95).

Moreover, as other characters pivoted around the stardom of McKellen, the homosexuality of Edward became more outstanding; and while in 1958 all characters made an impression in their own right, there is hardly any mention of other characters in the reviews of the 1969 production. Timothy West as Mortimer contrived to collect



"all the audience's sympathy at first...throwing it away entirely at the end" (*DT*<sub>2</sub>), an effect needed, however, as in the first part of the play, with the audience on his side, he would succeed in justifying his attack on Edward's misbehaviour, and in the end his turning into a despised dictator would warrant the sickening murder. Baldock and Spencer displayed a "mixture of courtliness and ambition" (*FT*<sub>1</sub>). There was special attention given to Robert Eddison as Lightborn: J. C. Trewin said that he "ha[d] a terrifying quietness: he governed the stage like an icy emanation...[and] possibly it [was] this scene for Edward and Lightborn that [would] live first in [the] mind" (*ILN*).

There was hardly any mention of Isabella, Kent, or Edward III, or the events in which they were involved. From Toby Robertson's interview with George Geckle one can at least surmise that the last scene presented for him an image of retribution, unlike what is usually thought by critics: "well I think you get the feeling, in fact, of retribution...there is a mechanism—somebody does these things, somebody comes and takes over from that, he goes on his way, becomes corrupted by power or whatever it is, comes through to the same point..."<sup>49</sup> For this reason Edward III was a teenager in 1969 (unlike in 1958, when Edward III seemed more innocent and vulnerable), which would make him able to "have quite a strength of character to stand up against Mortimer at that point" (Geckle, p. 91).

Apart from the explicit physicality of the homosexuality, the 1969 production followed that of 1958 in most aspects. Toby Robertson maintained the bare set as he vowed to do (Robertson, p. 182), in the conviction that it achieved a neutrality that "[left] everybody to come out and speak for himself, and this instinctively, implicitly, produc[ed] the interaction of ideas and thought and characters" (Geckle, p. 93). The bare set was useful for touring purposes, but this time Toby Robertson succeeded in pinpointing the changes of location by effective use of lighting (which was, of course, a predictable attempt to improve on the 1958 production by utilising the facilities in indoor theatres). The playing area was designed with "concentric circles...[with] a huge marbled dais spiralled by ramps" (*FT*<sub>2</sub>). The floor was distinguished by three different colours, blue, brown and green, and by means of lighting one colour was emphasised exclusive of the other to indicate scene-changing, and to add symbolical meanings to the scene. At Edward's meetings with Gaveston, for example, lights were dimmed, in contrast to a "brightly-lit" (*ES*) stage in court scenes. Moments of confrontation between the two parties were singled out by lighting focus, and a political touch was added by giving "particular stress to lines marking the dreadful progress of the story... 'Learn then to rule us better...' [I,iv,39]" (*DT*<sub>2</sub>). The battle was presented in a stylised manner as a "tattoo display of skill-at-arms under waves of coloured light"

(*FT*<sub>1</sub>). "Atmospheric music" (*FT*<sub>1</sub>) was employed to underline the emotion. One reviewer found the accompanying music a kind of "jittery background music", and went on to comment that "such artificial aids were not needed to drum up the excitement" (*DT*<sub>2</sub>).

Costumes achieved a contrast between the two conflicting parties. Edward and his party appeared in modern dress, while the lords were dressed in a vaguely historical military robes. Toby Robertson was trying to make the costumes reveal a character before he/she even started speaking. Edward and Gaveston looked like a "couple of Hippies necking in Green Park" (*ST*<sub>2</sub>). They were dressed as two young men in the sixties, in tight trousers, checked or striped, light shirts adorned with leather-belts, and long medallion chains hanging around their necks (see illustration 81). Gaveston appeared, in Toby Robertson's words, in "a shirt down [sic] to his navel", so that the audience would know that "here's a sexy butch boy coming on stage..." (Geckle, p. 96). The barons appeared in "peacock robes of rainbow batik...[or in] richly adorned armours" (*FT*<sub>2</sub>). In general the costumes provided a "wholly Marlovian display of flamboyant spectacle" (*FT*<sub>1</sub>), suited to Marlowe's frequent reference to clothes and rivalries. But to one reviewer they were "more distracting than effective" (*DT*<sub>2</sub>), and to another they made the nobles look like "fantasy figures" with Mortimer even having a "touch of pantomime demon about him" (*DT*<sub>5</sub>).

The quick-rhythm action, which still struck Toby Robertson as an interesting aspect of the play, was maintained as in the 1958 production. It was effective in "disguis[ing] weak and murky patches...[while] keep[ing] the flow of the tragedy...within the grasp of the audience" (*G*<sub>4</sub>), and in rendering *Edward II* "more than is [sic] usually coherent and flowing in development" (*S&Tv*<sub>3</sub>).<sup>50</sup> The credibility of the passing of time was achieved by breaking the action twice, as in 1958, at II,ii,223, and at III,ii.

In spite of being mainly a vehicle for Ian McKellen's début, the 1969 production of *Edward II* was important in many respects. First, it proved that the play was adaptable to all stages, particularly with the help of the neutrality of a bare setting. It also introduced the rarely acted play to a wide variety of audiences nationwide, and to parts of Europe. In addition to that, the production offered a "rare chance to compare Marlowe's *Edward* with Shakespeare's *Richard*..." (*P&P*<sub>2</sub>) (very much like the one offered in 1965 to compare *The Jew of Malta* with *The Merchant of Venice*).<sup>51</sup> It is worth mentioning at this point, that though Ian McKellen's style as Edward II was not always liked, and although the majority of reviewers preferred his Richard to the



detriment of *Edward II*, there were some reviewers who, in fact, favoured his Edward. Peter Roberts said that "Paradoxically, [he] found McKellen's King Edward more interesting than his King Richard because less of a queen." (*P&P*<sub>3</sub>); according to John Barber, McKellen's Edward was a "vigorous, likeable characterisation. But in playing Shakespeare's king, the young actor has the courage to remain aloof and to disdain any obvious bid to win sympathy for a haughty and complex personality" (*DT*<sub>3</sub>); and similarly, J. C. Trewin thought that

sometimes he [McKellen] appeared to stand outside his Richard, regarding himself with the eye of a detached technician. He was always within Edward, credibly the hysterically obsessed neurotic, and at the last a man whose suffering would have touched any heart—except, one gathers, that of an Edinburgh City Councillor. (*ILN*)

Edinburgh City councillors protested at having the production staged in the Assembly Hall of the Church of Scotland, seeing that the homosexual motif was so prominent. Toby Robertson admits that the personality of the actors in 1958 and 1969, respectively, was mainly responsible for the difference in effect between the two productions. Asked whether he wanted McKellen to be flamboyantly homosexual, Toby Robertson answered: "I never thought he would, actually. But he did. It's very *physical*. This is where Derek [Jacobi] did it differently. I mean, Ian [McKellen] made it much more neurotic than Derek did" (Geckle, p. 97). Together the two productions by Toby Robertson became the most memorable and significant revivals of the play and, studied together, the comparison between them provides insights into difficulties in staging the play.

While the Prospect production did not start with the intention of making the play a personal study, though it ended up as such, in Nicholas Hytner's 1986 production, the play was chosen mainly for the "attraction of the central role".<sup>52</sup> Nicholas Hytner directed the play for Ian McDiarmid, an already established star, who "wanted to play the part" (Hytner, Interview), and both thought that the major feature of the play was a "very personal response to a particular fight to be alive" (Hytner, Interview). They found Edward heroic in his own way:

We had a strong view that though he is not heroic in the conventional tragic way, he is heroic in that he will not let go of what he wants. what he is doing is to be magnificently selfish...Edward tries at all cost to be himself. He tries to act the way he wants to act without any of the Shakespearean urge to examine himself. (Hytner, Interview)

Inevitably, then, the main feature of Ian McDiarmid's interpretation of the title-role, was a star-centered performance. The focus was on Edward as mainly a lonely and suffering homosexual. His sensuality was expressed unashamedly, and un hypocritically, and as such became "more sympathetic than the pompous politicians...".<sup>53</sup> He treated Gaveston with the obvious tenderness of a homosexual whose strong conviction in his passion overshadowed the prejudices of his heterosexual enemies. Viewing him almost with tears in his eyes, kissing him with complete indifference to the present lords, his "heart-felt performance [gave] dignity to a kingly love which could easily look like a foolish infatuation" (*YP*). He gave an example of an individual who is humane, compassionate, and who, unlike his enemies, was not obsessed with acquiring "any great charm or...any great tragic stature" (Hytner, Interview).

Ian McDiarmid played the kingship of Edward with barely a redeeming moment, always stressing his reluctance to bear its responsibility. He emphasised all Edward's expressions of unwillingness to rule: I,i,21-2/ 134-35; I,iv,38; II,ii,201-3; V,i,23-5. He attempted to show that

being a king Edward hop[ed], released him of the world of political necessity and social responsibility into a world of sensual hedonism.<sup>54</sup>

Ian McDiarmid handled Edward's kingship ruthlessly, granting titles "with a giggling insouciance, as though the business was a delightful game" (*RO*). He was indifferent to the lords' threats to depose him (I,iv,54-5), and negligent of his kingly appearance.<sup>55</sup> Often dragging his royal robe behind him, he rushed onto the stage without ceremony. Even in the battle he was no warrior, as the battle was represented merely by noises off-stage, in complete darkness, as if it never occurred. His victory speech (III,iii,36-55) was delivered in a stylised and affected manner, emphasising its unreality and temporariness, which was underlined later by Mortimer's quick escape from the Tower.

A merit of his performance was that he gave a variety of body movements and voice pitch as if "testing himself physically and vocally" (*NS*). Most of his threats took the form of a whisper which seemed to realise what E. M. Waith calls "shadows of action".<sup>56</sup> His thanking of the lords displayed childish traits as he addressed them (I,iv,384) in the squeaky voice of a child pleased with a new toy. But at other points in the performance, he made more of less prominent and memorable lines, such as "you



villains that have slain my Gaveston" (III,ii,142), and his farewell to Gaveston at his first exile (I,iv,138-9). His varied performance achieved psychological depth:

sometimes endorsing the emotionalism of his lines in a voice breaking with tears, at other times effectively underplaying, as when the play's potentially most disastrous line 'shall I speak, or shall I sigh and die' is given a clipped weary delivery that allows the self-regarding words to sound both utterly silly and altogether sincere. (TLS)

His petulance, however, made him seem, to some reviewers, as merely a "dynastic aberration who need[ed] more or less surgical removal so that the nation [could] resume ordinary business." (NS).<sup>57</sup> But by being politically unattractive while emotionally admirable, Ian McDiarmid achieved a complexity of character that compensated for the lack of psychological characterisation in the play which, for Nicholas Hytner, was the "main difficulty in it." (Hytner, Interview).<sup>58</sup> He was "by turns ironic, passionate, maudlin, heroic and clever" (NS).

All other aspects of the production were treated in relation to Edward. The main feature of the staging was that it displayed ultimate physical cruelty in both the characters and the environment, against Edward and his party. This was meant to contrast the lords' violence with Edward's humane homosexuality. The setting, spectacle, properties, and costumes, were all inspired by Nicholas Hytner's conviction that the play "must be personal" (Hytner, Interview). He gave vital importance to what emblems and physical settings might symbolise in relation to Edward's character and destiny.

The Royal Exchange round stage constantly reflected a bleak world, suggesting "both a circus and a bear pit" (G<sub>5</sub>). The actors approached it from six different entrances through the surrounding audience. And the audience combined with the lords, who, like a stage-audience, were always surrounding Edward, to provide a community of on-lookers scrutinising Edward, and thus intensifying the focus on him. A walkway around the upper gallery provided a second level, which represented the lords' battlements from which they spoke to Kent, who was below, when he came to join them (II,iii), and on which they stood to exchange threats with Edward and his party before the battle (III,iii,11-35). From this upper level, Lightborn gave instructions to Matrevis and Gurney, who were supposed to be below in a dungeon, represented with the help of dimmed lights, one light focusing on Edward. Later when Lightborn jumped down to them, the sense of belowness was achieved.

A huge black cloth covered the stage, bare except for a throne, which was also covered with the cloth until Gaveston revealed it at "May draw the pliant king which way I please" (I,i,52). This prompted the audience to concentrate on what Gaveston was saying in relation to the throne. The black cloth remained as long as Gaveston and Edward were together. Later, littered with silver coins strewn at an orgiastic Italian masque (discussed below) which was inserted by Nicholas Hytner at I,ii, Isabella pulled it off at her exit at II,iv,69, "like the great burden of her unhappiness" (*O*<sub>3</sub>). It was as if the world, from this point, began to be turned upside down by Isabella herself, who was, in actual fact, seen as the prompter of events in the second half of the play, particularly the murder (V,ii,43-5). The rest of the action was carried out on a floor "with a deep litter of dark compost" (*G*<sub>5</sub>). This was later turned to mud by water coldly dripping from an enormous tap which dominated these scenes, providing successively

the 'channel' where the Bishop of Coventry [was] ducked by Gaveston, a stream where Queen Isabella splash[ed] her bare feet after her first love-making with Mortimer...and the 'puddle water' in which Edward's captors wielding a pocket switch-blade crudely shav[ed] off his beard. (*TLS*)

Through the mud, red velvet cloaks splashed. Edward came hauling his royal robes across it after Gaveston's exile "sharpening the impression of human debasement" (*RO*). (One reviewer saw no reason why the actors should "trip over a cloth throughout the first half...[and] slip and squelch in wet peat throughout the second" (*NS*)).

Complementing the earth, the heavens were also put to an extreme use, in a fashion similar to the symbolic heavens of the Elizabethan theatre. A vast "shadowed hemisphere of the world [hung] over the action throughout" (*O*<sub>3</sub>), symbolising the universe. It stood like "half a tennis ball...lit from inside and out suggest[ing] by turns, sea, clouds, the world and a dungeon roof" (*I*), as its colour changed from light blue, when Edward and Gaveston were together, to ever increasing darkness as the world continued to prove its hostility to Edward. Later the hemisphere sent rain drops onto Edward as he reached the last stage of his journey into captivity, as if the world "literally started to weep" (*O*<sub>3</sub>), and finally turned completely dark in the dungeon scene. Both earth and heaven effectively provided quick changes of scenery to accommodate the fast flowing action, and thus solved the problem of short quick scenes that present a difficulty in staging the play.

There were in fact reasons for providing such a physical atmosphere. In addition to his love of symbolic setting, Nicholas Hytner saw that the play should have



"an extreme setting" (Hytner, Interview). The remarkable lack of psychological depth in the lines of the play made it inevitable that the physical aspects should be emphasised in the setting, to provide a contrast between the two worlds in the play. Thus in the second half the world was shown "bleaker because Gaveston has been removed" (Hytner, Interview). This point was taken by one reviewer, who found this effective in solving "the unravelling structure of the second half by presenting it to us as a world bitter...because love has been removed" (YP). Moreover, Nicholas Hytner saw that the need for extreme stage-effects was something inherent in the text, which always seemed to him to reflect a world hostile and malignant to Edward. There was, according to him,

a constant reference to earth and to excrement in the play. The cruelty of the environment seems to be well-worth reflecting on in the setting. We chose rain because we were exploring all ways to make Edward's physical surroundings as wretched as possible. Marlowe dwells, not sadistically, but in a very extreme way on how appalling Edward's circumstances were at the end. The scene where it rained [V,iii,37] when Edward described the horror of the journey; and the dungeon scene where again a great deal of time was spent describing how appalling the dungeon is, all could not be ignored (Hytner, Interview).

Nicholas Hytner was also well aware of the "consistent thematic interest in how people chang[ed] by what they wore" (Hytner, Interview). Care was taken to create costumes that would be expressive of character and illustrative of action. Nicholas Hytner combined Elizabethan and modern costumes, to treat the play as one on a modern theme. He avoided, however, updating it, because "it would lose contact with what it had been. The way the Elizabethans chose their costumes was emblematic, and that was what [he] wanted" (Hytner, Interview). This reminds us of how on Elizabethan stages the play would have acquired meaning by the symbolic use of costumes.<sup>59</sup> This Edward first appeared in a massive, red and gold-embroidered royal robe, spectacular enough to shock the audience when he later discarded it, as if releasing himself of a great burden, to be reminded of it by other characters—a gesture constantly repeated to emphasise Edward's irresponsibility and boredom with rule. He appeared later in a jacket and baggy trousers, loose as his desire to break free, and trivial as his dwarfish image: "Edward, under his voluminous crimson robe, is a shrunken, hesitant figure in creased baggy grey trousers and brocade smoking jacket" (TLS). Gaveston appeared, not as Mortimer describes him in the text, in a "short Italian hooded cloak/ Larded with pearl" (I,iv,412-13), but in black trousers, a white shirt and a crimson undergarment, "wrapped up in a white silk scarf and *comme des garçon* leather blouson" (PI), with hair carefully styled, presenting sensuality more than

political opportunism, thus enhancing Edward's homosexual inclinations. The lords looked "utterly unattractive" (*RO*) as they appeared as

a crew of slightly dishevelled heavies circul[ing] overbearingly in dark suits, braces and enormous belted raincoats...supplemented as the play [went] on by army boots and puttees... (*TLS*)

To one reviewer they seemed "like an anti-gay freemasonry of Lancashire butchers" (*P&P*<sub>4</sub>). Kent wore a raincoat of a disturbing cut, "the belt somewhere around his ankles" (*I*), as if reflecting his uncertainty and the fluctuation of his allegiances. Isabella maintained a single image in the first half of the production, dressed in a plain green velvet robe with hair neatly tied back, giving a general impression of a deserted woman, deprived of any sexual life. This image was changed after her first love-making with Mortimer (as the production had it, though not apparent in the text), when she entered carried by Mortimer at V,ii, with her hair loose and her legs bare.<sup>60</sup>

The strong focus on emblems was achieved not only in costumes, but also in properties. A minimum number was used throughout the action (except in the Italian masque) to allow a Brechtian method of concentrating on any property used, and particularly on the most recurrent one, namely Edward's crown. Made simply of golden paper, the crown acquired an important symbolism. On the one hand, it implied Edward's dealing with it as a childish toy: knocking it off his head to roll on the floor as he rushed to welcome Gaveston at II,ii,50; taking it off his head to place it on Gaveston's; or clinging to it as a child would adore a new toy. On the other hand, together with Edward's mistreatment of his royal robes, the paper crown stressed the idea that all power was superficial, changed simply by wearing a robe and a crown. Having this paper crown in view, the argument about it between Edward and his captives in the deposition scene achieved interesting irony. This was enhanced by similarly having the throne made from a "gold packing case in the manner of [simple] modern furniture" (*P&P*<sub>4</sub>).

The interest in the visual aspect of staging was apparent in the organising of major events into a clear and coherent pattern of parallel tableaux, visual groupings and elaborate stage business. This was mainly achieved by devising symmetry between the beginning and the end. The production started with a (mimed) prologue not called for in the text, which showed Edward II's father's funeral, and his own coronation as the new king. Edward II was crowned while all the actors, in black robes, surrounded him, singing to a mixture of religious and military music, circling around the hearse. This spectacular tableau established a sense of temporary order that was to contrast



sharply with the unfolding events of confusion and turbulence. The prologue also provided a wide scope of time giving the impression that the action was taking place sometime before Gaveston received his letter, thus increasing the curiosity of the audience. Edward II's funeral, at the end, was treated symmetrically—with the actors, this time stepping in mud—and while it represented a true sense of order after Edward III was crowned, backed with the view of Mortimer's bleeding head (placed on the hearse in a white cloth-bag dripping with blood), and the view of Isabella dragged to prison, the last tableau gave a bleaker image of a new world deprived of love.

Visual tableaux were also employed to underline Edward's homosexuality. Most of his meetings with Gaveston took the form of a tableau, in which they were entwined in an embrace, or locked together in a long kiss. These tableaux were complemented by the view of the disgusted lords standing in one group and watching—as if stressing that "the emphatic public conduct of the affair [was] what upset the nobility" (*FT*<sub>3</sub>), and by Kent, like a stage-audience standing far away, hiding his face, and anxiously eyeing the lords as if fearing a sudden explosion. The insertion of the Italian Masque before I,iv further emphasised the homosexual world of Edward and Gaveston. Effectively, the masque followed the lords' discussion of the coming "ruin of the realm" (I,iv,32), the "grief and baleful discontent" of the Queen (49), and the necessity of taking "arms against the king" (39). It also gave substance to some lines, such as Gaveston's future plans to "have Italian masques by night" (I,i,54), and Isabella's complaint that Gaveston was corrupting her lord (I,iv,150).<sup>61</sup>

Sung and spoken in Italian the masque was an elaborate homosexual show. Effeminate and half-naked boys filled the stage, dancing and singing in the manner of an orgy. Surrealist properties "not intended to be functional" (Hytner, Interview), descended from the flies: "a plank, two chairs, a walking stick, a watering can...a paint pot primarily coloured" (*O*<sub>3</sub>). The stage looked like a *kinder garten* which Edward enjoyed watching, splayed out on the throne, while Gaveston was either watching or being cuddled in Edward's lap. Nicholas Hytner was trying to imagine what Gaveston would be "staging to the king if he was doing it now" (Hytner, Interview). Not surprisingly, the masque was singled out for comment by the reviewers. It was described as a "blasphemous...dance-orgy" (*O*<sub>3</sub>) in a "post-punk" style (*G*<sub>5</sub>), and

a bizarre Dadaist cabaret: posers, body-builders, and tranvestites chant[ed] rhythmically through an intricate, narcissistic routine of dance and mime helped out by toy-like props.(*TLS*)

It was criticised because "it simply [went] on for too long" (*G<sub>5</sub>*). But this seemed effective in creating a span of time between Gaveston's first repeal and his first exile, which the text does not provide, and in the process justified the lords' preparation of the "form of Gaveston's exile" (I,iv,1), as they entered to find Gaveston in Edward's lap. Well could Edward ask of the entering lords, "as he mockingly showered them with silver confetti" (*RO*), "What are you moved that Gaveston sits here?" (I,iv,8). The masque functioned, then, as a kind of concentrated image of Edward's life with Gaveston. Its decadence did not worry Nicholas Hytner: "one does not have to be pompous and respectful when staging a classic" (Hytner, Interview). Like Gaveston, Baldock and Spencer (the Younger) functioned as figures in Edward's homosexual world. They constantly displayed homosexual signs throughout the production. Gaveston brushed Spencer's hair when he was advancing the king (II,ii,248); Spencer unbuttoned Baldock's garment suggestively as he was advising him to "...cast the scholar off/ And learn to court it like a gentleman" (II,i,31-2).

A main feature of the production was also fitting the word to the action. Visual substance was given to the lines which informed the audience how the treasure of the realm was spent on Gaveston, giving each time a fresh provocation to the lords' attack. At Gaveston's second repeal, Edward rushed onto the stage spreading a red carpet to welcome him. To Nicholas Hytner, the red carpet suggested "certain rituals to British audiences", reflecting the welcoming of a dignitary, and thus, "for the king of England to put the red carpet for his lover is very shocking..." (Hytner, Interview). As Gaveston stormed in, accompanied by the sound of strong wind and an aeroplane-engine, Edward pushed him down on the floor and kissed him on the mouth while rolling on the carpet. They maintained this position for a long time in full view of the row of protesting lords, until the tension became unbearable, putting the audience in the same situation as Kent's. Holding the crucial moments in the play was a favourite technique in the production, to help motivate the lords' attack on Edward. Lancaster's and Mortimer's long verbal attack on Edward (II,ii,154-98), was divided among the four lords,<sup>62</sup> who aggressively directed their blame on to Edward, circling around him, and threateningly pointing at him. The scottish jig of mockery was sung while they swirled Edward round to wrap him from top to toe in the red carpet, leaving him alone on stage looking like a mummy, an image that stressed his impotence. Ian McDiarmid broke out in anger (I,ii,99) and as he struggled out of the carpet, shouting "Edward unfold thy paws" (203), he could hardly get his hands out, and consequently his threats to "Let their lives' blood slake [his] fury's hunger" (204) were ironically pathetic. The interweaving of word and image was impressive.



Obviously, Nicholas Hytner intended a violent physical attack to be staged at II,ii as, later, he had cut Lancaster's warning "None be so hardy as to touch the king." (II,iii,27). According to him, "for Edward to be wrapped up in a carpet seem[ed] the sort of thing that a group of loutish Barons might do" (Hytner, Interview). He meant to show the lords as representing a "savagely ironic perception of the way the world react[ed] when it [was] ignored for the pursuit of love".<sup>63</sup> All their actions were characterised by physical violence. At the capture of Gaveston in II,v, they bundled him up on a stick like a piece of meat "pouncing on [him], they methodically beat him up" (RO). They always trooped on and off as a "group of hard-faced, blunt spoken provincial dignitaries who exude power from every pore" (ST<sub>3</sub>). But their verbal attacks on Edward were often interestingly sarcastic, verging on black comedy. The only scene of reconciliation between them and Edward (I,iv,339-84), which Judith Weil describes as the "proper balance of love and martial duty",<sup>64</sup> was turned into a source of sneering for the lords and laughter for the audience. As Edward was granting them titles, the lords thanked him with obvious unrestrained mockery, laughing between themselves as each swore loyalty to him (343, 348, 351, 356). They stood proudly looking down on Edward, even turning their backs as he approached to thank them, as if to avoid a contagious disease. The most ironical moment was when the Queen told Edward that the lords "wait attendance for a gracious look/ And on their knees salute your majesty" (337-8), and the lords remained standing as stiff and as unblinking as ever. This produced roars of laughter from the audience, who enjoyed the interplay between word and action.

In the process of fitting word to action, the relationship between Isabella and Mortimer was stressed, though the text offers feeble hints of it. The most viable proof of their relation, which is provided by Kent's "...for Mortimer and/ Isabel do kiss while they conspire" (IV,v,20-1), was given visual shape, when Mortimer, as mentioned before, entered carrying Isabella. Nicholas Hytner stressed their sexuality as a point of justice:

In the text the love between Edward and Gaveston is expressed so vividly, I do not see any reason why Isabel and Mortimer, who plainly are obsessed with each other...should not express their love physically. It is an important counterpoint to the physical love of Edward and Gaveston. Isabel should also be allowed to have her moment of physical passion. (Hytner, Interview)

In spite of this, however, the relationship formed a darker image than Nicholas Hytner had expected. Though visually demonstrated, it remained a cool affair that seemed not to contrast favourably with the love between Gaveston and Edward. Their sensuality as

they frolicked on the floor, for the Bishop of Winchester to view them on his entrance with the usurped crown (V,ii,28), seemed far more to be condemned than Edward's and Gaveston's parallel situations, as it entailed murder and conspiracy.<sup>65</sup>

Thus against the cruelty of the lords and the opportunism of Mortimer and Isabella was played Edward's humane and compassionate homosexuality. It was certain that at the end of the performance the sympathy was directed towards Edward. With the stress on extreme physicality in the production, it could be expected that the murder of Edward would be "stickier than Marlowe's own..." (G<sub>5</sub>). It came, as often suggested by critics, as a gruesome reminiscence of a homosexual act.<sup>66</sup> Lightborn approached like a "classless English gigolo" (O<sub>3</sub>), dressed in black leather tights. He jumped from the upper level, threateningly looking at Edward, who, in wet and filthy rags, crouched on a dirty feather-bed, with one light focusing on him to suggest the confinement of the dungeon (for which no trap or recessed area was available on the round stage). They hugged and kissed continuously, with a passion that increased the tension on the audience's part. Speaking to Lightborn in a hoarse and sobbing voice, Ian McDiarmid displayed utter exhaustion and despair, which made his murder more unjustified. He was compressed "not by the table of the text, but by the upturned throne itself" (T<sub>LS</sub>), which, though "not intended as functional" (Hytner, Interview), proved effectively symbolic. Later, the audience could see Lightborn stripping Edward, who was struggling under the upturned throne, and with a very realistic effect, thrusting a glowing red spit up Ian McDiarmid's anus, with no attempt to reduce the horror. Ian McDiarmid gave an ear-splitting scream, and as if the murder was not horrific enough, "the moment [was] held until it hurt" (G<sub>5</sub>). Characteristically, the scene finished with a tableau of Lightborn's body, stabbed from the back, over Edward's in a visual echo of homosexual intercourse.

Extremely shocked at the atrocity of this execution, one found it difficult to draw any conclusion from the scene that followed, though Alex Haig as Edward III was convincing. In the reviews, it was a source of contradictory opinions. To some reviewers, the last scene helped to leave them "with hope of male love uncorrupted" (Y<sub>P</sub>), and with the idea that "only the little prince ha[d] any dignity in his royalty" (G<sub>5</sub>); to others, it was a bleak event that made one "come out of [this] unsettling production...in urgent need of reassurance and consolation [, as it] challeng[ed] [one's] underlying convictions of faith that the world [could] gradually be made better" (N<sub>S</sub>).

As a whole, one could venture to say that with a nearly full-text production, except for a few cuts of "heraldic devices and historical details" (Hytner, Interview),<sup>67</sup>



Nicholas Hytner's production was a serious and important interpretation of Marlowe's *Edward II*. Though it did not address a wide variety of audiences as Toby Robertson's 1969 production did, it explored a contemporary interpretation of the theme, "hurling Marlowe's play into twentieth-century terms" (*YP*), showing a real world of suffering where "men love at their peril",<sup>68</sup> and where the treatment of homosexuality gave us a world we recognise.

What seems striking about Nicholas Hytner's production is that it realised the emblematic quality, the symmetrical structure, and the psychological pattern, which have been widely recognised by recent critical studies of the play. Though the staging stressed a personal view of the play, this also brought out a more general psychological truth. The only problem was that it did not exploit the emblematic richness and the psychological potential in the relation between characters, to present the play as dramatising a wider concept of human life which is social, and political as well as personal. Perhaps with a combination of this visual staging and the neutrality of Toby Robertson's 1958 production, one could hope for a production which would do full justice to the play.

It would be difficult to say that the twentieth-century productions of *Edward II* have been successful in escaping a narrowly personal treatment of the play. Political references in the play have always been enjoyed and stressed by directors, but the personal side has always dominated. Thus, while to Elizabethan audiences the play seems to have marked a topical political issue of rebellion and the deposition of the monarch, to a modern audience, even when a production focuses on the political aspect, the play has often been seen as largely personal. The petulance and vulnerability of Edward II have proved more conspicuous than the problem of fighting for political dominion, but the fact that even the personal element in the play is not treated in depth by Marlowe has made the play less fascinating than (say) *Richard II*. However, certainly, the three discussed productions of the play have remarkably shown its potential, both theatrically and from a literary point of view. This is reflected by the fact that, though the views of the current production of *Edward II* (1990) are not unanimously positive, there is a general feeling expressed by critics and reviewers that Gerard Murphy's production does not do justice to the play: that the play is a "better play than what we have seen".<sup>69</sup> This interesting reversal of the traditional tendency to blame Marlowe, rather than the director, suggests that one dares foresee more productions of *Edward II* in the coming years.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER EIGHT

1. See Chapter Five of this thesis.
2. On the austerity of the poetry in the play cf: U. M. Ellis-Fermor: "There is comparatively little poetry in it and little irregularity. We miss at once the splendour and the bathos of earlier plays" (p. 121). See also M. C. Bradbrook: "*Edward II* is generally acclaimed as Marlowe's greatest dramatic success; but this is only possible by ignoring Elizabethan standards, and judging purely on 'construction'. As poetic drama, the last speech of Edward is inferior to the last speech of Faustus or even to the early soliloquies of *The Jew of Malta*..." (*Themes and Conventions of Elizabethan Tragedy*, p. 154). J. B. Steane: "The verse is indeed normally thin and drab. Gaveston's first speech is fine, but generally it is a matter of only lines and phrases here and there having any considerable poetic merit" (*Marlowe, A Critical Study*, p. 207). E. M. Waith: "None of the dialogue can match the glitter of the greatest speeches in *Tamburlaine* or *Dr. Faustus*, or even of the remarkable opening speech of *The Jew of Malta*" ("*Edward II: The Shadow of Action*", *Tulane Drama Review*, 8, 1964, 59-76, p. 59).
3. On the superiority of its dramatic structure cf.: U. M. Ellis-Fermor: "An added maturity is revealed in the treatment of the people of the drama, in detailed descriptions, in control and adaptation of the plot" (p. 121). M. Poirier: "Better built than the others, it also evinces a more perfect harmony between the characters and the action" (*Christopher Marlowe*, London, 1951; rpr. 1968, p. 192). Harry Levin argues that the play shows "Marlowe's increasing flexibility, his maturing sympathies, and his unexpected insight into human frailties..." (*The Overreacher*, p. 108). Robert Fricker in "The Dramatic Structure of *Edward II*", *English Studies*, 34 (1953), 203-17, recognised a unifying "tripartite structure" in the play which he sees as "an organic whole" (pp. 214-5). Steane recognised a symmetrical structure in the play's construction with Edward in the middle and Gaveston and Mortimer on two sides of the action: "At a performance one has the impression that there are really two plays: in the first half the subject is the homosexual king and his favourite; in the second it is the rise of Mortimer and the fall of Edward....Actually the construction includes an important middle section marked out from the rest by the fact that in it the king is for a short time strong, determined and victorious. This point of equilibrium holds the balance between the two main blocs..." (pp. 204-5). E. M. Waith thinks that a *de casibus* motif gives a frame of rise and fall of a character which gives a unity to the play (pp. 60-4). In 1975, Lawrence Michael Benaquist also recognised this tripartite structure: "Since the play is tragic in the sense of the *De Casibus* manner of rising and falling action, the tripartite structure takes on the fascinating quality of producing three little tragedies..." (*The Tripartite Structure of Christopher Marlowe's 'Tamburlaine' Plays and 'Edward II'*, Salzburg, Austria, 1975, p. 11). F. P. Wilson advises "anyone who doubts whether Marlowe's gifts were really dramatic...to read Holinshed's account of the reign of Edward II and see with what art of selection, condensation, and adaptation Marlowe has shaped out of the chronicle history of a disagreeable reign an historical tragedy." (op. cit., p. 91). Irving Ribner admires the amalgamation of historical and tragic materials: "Marlowe approached his sources with a sure awareness of his purposes and perhaps a keener dramatic skill than had ever before been exercised in the dramatising of English history. For out of the great mass of material in Holinshed he carefully selected only what he needed for a well integrated tragedy..." (*The English History Play...*, pp. 128-9). Roma Gill, in her edition of the play says: "In *Edward II* the action is coherent throughout, building up the tension to a high peak at the capture of Gaveston, dissolving then recreating it for the arrest and murder of



Edward...and the opposition to the hero—Mortimer, the Queen and the snarling barons—is for the first time dramatically convincing." (Introduction, p. 15).

4. Cf. U. M. Ellis-Fermor: "a single figure is again the centre of interest...but with one notable difference, that it is no longer upon a powerful or dominating figure that the attention is concentrated, but upon a frail character in conflict with its surroundings and gradually overpowered by them." (p. 110). P. H. Kocher talks about the objectivity of the play as sympathies swing to all characters, the play "marks the further retreat of defiant individualism, and the advance of a more normal social consciousness" (op. cit., p. 206). Levin suggests that the equal interest on other characters was deliberate by Marlowe, as he did not count on Alleyn playing the part, so he gave equal interest on all characters (op. cit., p. 108). F. P. Wilson says that "*Edward II* is the one play of Marlowe's—except *Dido*—which is not dominated by one character..." (op. cit., p. 86), "The part played by one character is too important to omit even in the briefest summary." (p. 93). Wilson, however, finds it implausible that Marlowe divided the interest on all characters because he did not count on Alleyn (see p. 86). Cf. also Ribner, "The classical substantialism of *Tamburlaine*, with its resulting fixity of character, is now gone, and we find instead characters who change and develop under the pressure of events" (op. cit., p. 129).
5. See Bakeless, op. cit., II, pp. 4, 21. See also Levin, op. cit., p.108, and Cole, op. cit., p. 161.
6. See Cole, pp. 161-2. See also Clifford Leech, "*Edward II: English History*", (see note 64 to Chapter Three in this thesis) pp. 128-9.
7. See U. M. Ellis-Fermor: though she classifies the play as the last of Marlowe's on basis of its display of mature Machiavellian policy, she stresses the individualistic nature in the play as a "love-story" (op. cit., p. 117). Boas thinks that Marlowe is "basically dramatising homosexual affection", to which he was attracted by in the chronicles, "why, then, out of all the rich material provided by Holinshed did he choose the comparatively unattractive reign of Edward II? The reason is, I believe, to be mainly found in the relation between the king and Gaveston, which he brings into the forefront of the play. Homosexual affection, without emphasis on its more depraved aspects, had...a special attraction for Marlowe." (op. cit., p. 174). J. L. Mills describes the relation as classical friendship, thus very personal, and the central theme in the play as the "results of loyalty to his [Edward's] friends" ("*The Meaning of Edward II*", p. 13); he points out the words of endearment used in the play, and, in relation, gives examples from stories of Elizabethan friendship. Though Steane sees that Mills' conclusion excludes many subplots present in the play (op. cit., p. 230), he still sees the play as "narrowly personal" (p. 222). Wilson says that Edward III's words "enforce the feeling that the dramatist does not deeply feel the sacredness of royalty...the tragedy is in the main a personal tragedy without wider repercussions..." (op. cit., p. 102). Cole says that "*Edward II* is a personal tragedy set within the political context of the history play. Its political implications, even though clear to an Elizabethan audience, are strictly secondary to the stress on individual human agents and their fates. Edward's personal suffering stands out as the most memorable aspect of the play..." (op. cit., p. 185). Roma Gill sees the Homosexual motive the most dominant in the play: "A nice discretion has usually turned the eyes of critics away from the homosexual heart of *Edward II*, but it is this that gives the play its meaning and this, most probably, that prompted Marlowe's choice of Edward's reign for the subject of his tragedy" (Introduction to her edition, p. 28).
8. Brodwin, op. cit., p. 139, though her argument limits the scope of the play to only Marlowe's final treatment of love. She says that in *Edward II* Marlowe presented a



culminating treatment of love, stressing homosexual love as the most prominent, and immortal, as opposed to love directed to a woman, presented by his other plays.

9. See Mills, *passim*.

10. Sanders, *The Dramatist and the Received Idea*, p. 123.

11. In 1968, a collection of essays on Marlowe's works appeared, with not a single one on *Dr. Faustus*, which shows increasing interest in his other plays: *Christopher Marlowe*, edited by Brian Morris. In the preface (p. v) Brian Morris directs our attention to this fact saying that having had many studies of *Dr. Faustus* might have exhausted invention.

12. Merchant, ed. cit., p. xxiv; cf. also: "*Edward the Second* no more requires moral assertions, a clear-cut ascription of praise and blame, than Shakespeare demands for the characters of Falstaff, Hal or Cleopatra; it is part of Marlowe's achievement in this play that he sees the interaction of moral universes with such clarity and complexity within the play's world, while declining to make overt judgments more proper to a moral treatise" (p. xvii).

13. J. R. Mulryne and S. Fender, "Marlowe and the 'Comic Distance'", *Christopher Marlowe*, edited by Brian Morris, pp. 49-64, p. 62. Cf.: "The emblems are there, but we misunderstand them if we look for them to perform as similar techniques do in early Shakespeare history. That is, they do not ratify the realistic action. Instead they act as false leads, promising a falsely comforting 'meaning' which is then discomfitted in the realistic action." (ibid.).

14. See for example: D. H. Zucker, op. cit., pp. 114-42; R. A. Martin, *The Theatre of Experience: Dramatic Judgement in the plays of Christopher Marlowe* (Ph. D., University of California, 1976), pp. 205-37.

15. The play could very well be a study of homosexuality and its consequence in a given society, and in a given political situation. See for example Harold Beaver, "Homosexual Signs", *Critical Inquiry*, 8 (1981-82), 99-119; his study, though not on the play, could be applied to it, and thus, other subplots will acquire relevance: Isabella's change could be viewed as a revenge for the transgression homosexuality commits "against the institution of marriage and the family" (p. 99); Kent's vacillation could be an embodiment of the fluctuation of social attitudes towards homosexuality, and his attempt to rescue Edward could be explained as final acceptance of the fact that "What is 'natural' is neither heterosexual nor homosexual desire but simply desire. Desire is innocent..." (p. 101).

16. Kuriyama, op. cit., p. 176.

17. Ibid., p. 192.

18. Ibid., p. 194. She admits, however, that "many of its implications are still pursued symbolically" (ibid.). What makes her criticism positive is that she perceives in the play, a deep "insight into the political and social conditions of his [Marlowe's] age..." (p. 209), admiring Marlowe's "intense awareness of political evil and political corruption, and his tendency to see them in homosexual terms..." (p. 211).

19. Claude J. Summers, "Sex, Politics, and Self-Realisation in *Edward II*", in *A Poet and A Filthy Play-maker*, pp. 221-40, p. 223. He finds two issues in the play that can be argued to relate to Elizabethan as well as to modern social problems: "Existential loneliness"—shown in the characters' confusion of their social and real identities—and "homosexuality", which, he thinks, is humanised by Marlowe in order to "implicitly [attack] the hysteria that characteriz[ed] the religious, legal, and



popular attitudes of his day" (p. 223). Summers also finds the language in the play an effective method of illustrating a measure of impotence or conveying a way of dissembling [like Isabella's and Mortimer's], that characterises the social and political practices, "It is precisely because the world of *Edward II* is so unstable that the language of the play so frequently rings hollow...[and] language is equally devalued when it becomes merely a medium for dissembling" (pp. 228-9).

20. Sara Munson Deats, "Marlowe's Fearful Symmetry in *Edward II*", in *A Poet and A Filthy Play-maker*, pp. 241-62; Examples of symmetrical situations: The Bishop of Coventry's humiliation and Edward's captivity; Isabella's first attempt to persuade Mortimer for the repeal of Gaveston (I,iv,225-9), as if conspiring with Mortimer to assassinate Gaveston, and her second attempt to persuade Mortimer to kill Edward, (V,ii,42-3)...etc.
21. David Bevington and James Shapiro, "'What are kings, when regiment is gone?' The Decay of Ceremony in *Edward II*", *A Poet and A Filthy Play-maker*, pp. 263-78.
22. See Chapter Five.
23. For reviews of this production, see: *Manchester Guardian*, 29 April 1905 (*G*<sub>1</sub>); *Leamington Spa Courier*, 5 May (*LSC*); *The Stage and Television Today*, 4 May (*S&Tv*<sub>1</sub>); *Stratford-upon-Avon Herald*, 5 May (*SAH*<sub>1</sub>). See also T. C. Kemp and J. C. Trewin, *The Stratford Festival* (Birmingham, 1953), pp. 69-72; and Geckle, op. cit. (see notes to introduction), pp. 79-80.
24. See Appendix J for amateur performances.
25. In his adaptation of the play (1924), Brecht saw a need to change one line in this event to show Edward as a stronger personality "This one would not forget/ Our Majesty has special plans for him", scene 7, ll.50-1, "*The Life of Edward II of England*" (original title: *Leben Eduards des Zweiten von*), translated by Jean Benedetti, in *Bertolt Brecht Collected plays*, 8 vols., edited by John Willet and Ralph Manheim (London, 1970-1978), vol. 1, pp. 179-268, p. 218.
26. For reviews of this production see: Review by Philip Squire, *Plays and Players*, May, 1956, pp. 22-3; *The Times*, 20 April 1956 (*T*<sub>1</sub>).
27. W. A. Darlington, *The Daily Telegraph*, 2 July 1964 (*DT*<sub>1</sub>); Cf. also "The Leicester Phoenix Theatre Company deserve our thanks for letting us see this rarely-revived play; but I suspect that Marlowe would not join the thanks", Bernard Levin, "A King's Leanings decline and fall", *The Daily Mail*, 2 July 1964 (*DM*). For more reviews on this production see: Philip Hope-Wallace, *The Guardian*, 2 July (*G*<sub>2</sub>); *The Stage and Television Today*, 7 May (*S&Tv*<sub>2</sub>); Jeremy Kingston, *Punch*, 8 July (*P*); *The Times*, 2 July (*T*<sub>2</sub>). The production was designed by Christopher Morley, the set was intended for an open stage made of "metal sheets and gridworks" (*P*), with a minimum of props, and using drawbridges for a change of scenery. Costumes were made from "rough hessian decorated with strips of cooper and iron" (*P*). When the production moved to a small proscenium stage in the Arts Theatre, the stage was unnecessarily "loaded with a pair of creaking engines, timbered walls which an army of all too visible helpers manhandl[ed] into variety of precarious positions as drawbridges and platforms: and although the central upstage area [was] occupied by a triangular raked ramp it [did] not manage to eliminate masking by actors downstage" (*T*<sub>2</sub>). Clive Perry presented the play as a history by maintaining the high speed which was "the main excitement of the evening" (*T*<sub>2</sub>).
28. For reviews of this production, see *Birmingham Post*, 27 April 1966; *The Guardian*, 28 April 1966; *The Stage and Television Today*, 12 May 1966; Ion

- Trewin, "Stylised *Edward II*", *The Sunday Telegraph*, 1 May; for a detailed discussion of this production see Pistotnik, op. cit., pp. 176-84.
29. Harold Hobson, *The Sunday Times*, 5 May 1968, See also John Bower, *Plays and Players*, July, 1968.
30. J. C. Trewin, "Death of a King", *Illustrated London News*, 13 September 1969, p. 31; J. C. Trewin thought it "lucky to have swiftly had...[Toby Robertson's production] to do justice to Marlowe..." after the National Theatre production of Brecht's play (*ILN*).
31. For reviews of this production: see B. A. Young, *Financial Times*, 28 April 1980; Nicholas de Jongh, *The Guardian*, 25 April 1980; Jeremy Brien, *The Stage and Television Today*, 8 May, 1980 (*S&Tv.*, 1980); Ned Chaillet, *The Times*, 23 April 1980; For a discussion of this production, see Pistotnik, pp. 198-206. The main feature of the production was the set which had a "hexagonal stage" with a "skeletal dais" (Pistotnik, p. 199). The floor opened up to a cellar where Edward was kept, two "T-shaped marble-like stools" represented the throne (*ibid.*). The set implied "a cold desolate place," with its metallic background that gave a sense of violence balanced by "simple costumes and interesting lighting" (*S&Tv.*, 1980). The problems of the short sequence of events stretched over three hours with little purple passages, was said to have been overcome by "a fast paced production that never flagged in its relentless forward momentum" (*S&Tv.*, 1980). Robert O'Mahoney played Edward as a "weak and dominated figure who is contemptible even in his efforts to become a tyrant" (*S&Tv.*, 1980), this was increased by staging as the lords constantly emphasised their confrontation by standing in groups and tableaux surrounding Edward. Leaving from different doors, circling around the king and closing in on him, standing symmetrically to confront him. There was an important innovation when Gaveston doubled as Lightborn, which was seen as a "psychological interesting piece of double casting" (*S&Tv.*, 1980).
32. The twentieth-century productions of Brecht's play: August, 1975, by the Bush Theatre Company, in a tent in Shepherd's Green, then on tour. February, 1982, at the Roundhouse, directed by Rowland Rees.
33. All my continuous attempts to meet Toby Robertson were unfortunately thwarted by his being busy, thus he referred me to an interview he had with George Geckle, concerning his Prospect Production, Geckle, *Tamburlaine and Edward II*, pp. 88-98.
34. Harold Hobson, *The Sunday Times*, 10 August 1958 (*ST*<sub>1</sub>); for reviews of this production, see: *Birmingham Evening Despatch*, 12 August 1958 (*BED*); *Birmingham Post*, 12 August (*BP*); signed N. K. W., *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, 13 August (*CET*); signed G. L. E., *Manchester Guardian*, 13 August (*G*<sub>3</sub>); Laurence Kitchen, *Observer*, 17 August (*O*<sub>1</sub>); RoseMary Ann Sisson, *Stratford-upon-Avon Herald*, 15 August (*SAH*<sub>2</sub>); *The Times*, 12 August (*T*<sub>3</sub>); signed P. W., *Warwick Advertiser*, 15 August (*WA*); *Wolverhampton Express*, 9 August (*WE*).
35. Leech, p. 126.
36. Toby Robertson "Directing *Edward II*", an interview with J. R. Brown, *Tulane Drama Review*, 8 (1964), 174-83, p. 182.
37. On this point, see Levin, op. cit., p.119.
38. Cf.: "If the production has a fault it is that , planned for an indoor stage, it has not been sufficiently adapted to its outdoor setting" (*T*<sub>3</sub>).



39. On this point see Susan McCloskey, "The Worlds of *Edward II*", in *Renaissance Drama*, 16 (1985), 35-48. She thinks that references in the text indicate that all the scenes in acts I, and II, occur in daytime, and that after Gaveston's death in act III, darkness descends (p. 40). See also Kuriyama, op. cit., pp. 179-80.
40. For example: Gaveston's second return to Tynemouth, which would be repetitious of his first repeal at the beginning, if not staged with changes of scenery. Also the scene at the Abbey of Neath (IV,vi) seems to necessitate a change of scenery to a more tranquil atmosphere to achieve a contrast between the turbulence of earlier events, and the peace that Edward now hopes for.
41. For this purpose, Toby Robertson arranged "private sessions", working over the emotional side. By working alone "the actor's confidence increased" ("Directing *Edward II*", p. 180).
42. The production was presented in Forum Theatre, Billington; Mermaid Theatre, London; Volks Theatre, Vienna; Nova Scena, Bratislava; Arts Theatre, Cambridge; Nuffield Theatre, Southampton; New Theatre, Cardiff; Grand Theatre, Leeds; and Alexander Theatre, Birmingham.
43. John Barber, "Elizabethan pace set for *Edward II*", *The Daily Telegraph*, 29 August 1969 (DT<sub>2</sub>). More reviews of this production: John Barber, *The Daily Telegraph*, 1 September 1969 (DT<sub>3</sub>); Eric Shorter, "Unflagging power in *Edward II*", *The Daily Telegraph*, 25 September (DT<sub>4</sub>); Sean Day-Lewis, "'Great' Trouble facing Ian McKellen", *The Daily Telegraph*, 28 January 1970 (DT<sub>5</sub>); Milton Shulman, *Evening Standard*, 25 September 1969 (ES); B.A. Young, *Financial Times*, 29 August 1969, (FT<sub>1</sub>), also B. A. Young, for 28 January 1970 (FT<sub>2</sub>); Philip Hope-Wallace, *The Guardian*, 29 August 1969 (G<sub>4</sub>); J. C. Trewin, "Death of a King", *The Illustrated London News*, 13 September 1969 (ILN); Roland Bryer, *The Observer*, 31 August 1969 (O<sub>2</sub>); Michael Billington, "*Edward II* and *Richard II*", *Plays and Players*, November 1969 (P&P<sub>2</sub>); Peter Roberts, "*Edward II* and *Richard II*", *Plays and Players*, January 1970 (P&P<sub>3</sub>); signed R. B. M., "Ian McKellen as Edward and Richard", *The Stage and Television Today*, 2 October 1969 (S&Tv<sub>3</sub>); Harold Hobson, "A King Acclaimed", *The Sunday Times*, 31 August 1969 (ST<sub>2</sub>); Irving Wardle, "Every Inch the Kings", *The Times*, 30 August 1969 (T<sub>4</sub>); Michael Billington, *The Times*, 25 September 1969 (T<sub>5</sub>); unsigned, "McKellen's Two Kings again", *The Times*, 15 December 1969 (T<sub>6</sub>).
44. For example: "his Edward is a man who discovers that inside him is a king...his Richard is a king who pays too little heed to the internal man." (P&P<sub>2</sub>); see also (T<sub>4</sub>).
45. In his interview with Geckle (Geckle, op. cit., p. 89). See also "Directing *Edward II*", p. 182, where he told J. R. Brown that in the future he hoped to focus on the political side of the story: "In 1958 I emphasized the emotional side of it. Now I'd like to bring out more of the play between intellect and power".
46. Quoted by Geckle, pp. 87-8, from *The Illustrated London News*, 17 January 1970.
47. See Geckle, p. 92. See also Chapter Three p. 60.
48. See above, p. 258.
49. Geckle, p. 91. It is interesting to know that Toby Robertson directed *Edward III*, anonymous history play, 1596, and he tells us that Edward III, also becomes corrupted by power.

50. Cf.: "The chronicle...has more theatrical coherence on the stage than in the text" (*ILN*).
51. See Chapter Seven.
52. Nicholas Hytner's opinions about the production, pursued in my interview with him on 20 January 1987 (Hytner, Interview).
53. Robin Thornber, "King Brat", *The Guardian*, 25 October 1986 (*G*<sub>5</sub>). For more reviews of the production see: Michael Coveney, *Financial Times*, 27 October 1986 (*FT*<sub>3</sub>); Michael Schmidt, "Edward II in a Raincoat", *The Independent*, 25 October (*I*); Paul Allen, "Blood Lust", *The New Stateman*, 31 October (*NS*); Michael Ratcliffe, *The Observer*, 26 October (*O*<sub>3</sub>); David Roper, *Plays and Players*, December 1986 (*P&P*<sub>4</sub>); Christine Eccles, *Plays International*, January 1987 (*PI*); John Peter, *The Sunday Times*, 26 October (*ST*); Grevel Lindop, "Electric Emotions", *Times Literary Supplement*, 7 November 1986 (*TLS*); signed C. K., *Yorkshire Post*, 25 October (*YP*); Also review by Roger Holdsworth, in *Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama*, ed., David M. Bergeron (Kansas, 1986-1987), 29 (1986), p. 61 (*RO*).
54. Notes in the programme to the production.
55. See below, p. 272.
56. Waith, op. cit., p. 63.
57. Cf.: "This really is a king who seals everything with a kiss, whose handshake makes common men feel like candidates for Hepatitis B..." (*P&P*<sub>4</sub>).
58. Nicholas Hytner thought that "the main difficulty in the play was that most actors...were used to a kind of psychological depth that Shakespeare wrote in his play. Shakespeare's plays accord with what we think of now as psychology...Marlowe does not attempt that sort of reflected depth...he writes much for the moment, he only has a great insight into pain and distress" (Hytner, Interview).
59. See Chapter Three of this thesis.
60. This tendency to stress the change the appearance of Isabella between the first and second half of the play springs from a feeling of lack of psychological development in the character itself, and the need to use other means of characterisation, such as costumes. In the current R.S.C.'s production of *Edward II*, at the Swan (at the time of writing this thesis), Gerard Murphy, the director has cut some of Isabel's lines to make the character more dramatically plausible. Her change of character, however, is stressed by her wearing identical dresses in the two halves of the performance, one gold and one green, as if to show, through colour, the evil hidden in her.
61. The masque gave prominence to Mortimer's lines about the court of Edward, and against Gaveston who "... riot it with treasure of the realm/...he jets it in the court/ With base outlandish cullions at his heels/ Whose proud fantastic liveries make such shows/ As if that proteus, god of shapes, appear'd..." (I,iv,404-10). Also it must have added irony to other lines, showing, for example, that Edward will never "learn...to rule [them] better and the realm" (I,iv,39), but rather will try to have "some hook or corner left/ To frolic with [his] dearest Gaveston" (72-3).
62. As Gaveston was stabbed by Mortimer, and Edward, on his way off stage, threatened war to "abate these barons' pride" (II,ii,99), the lords dragged him back saying "Nay, now you are here alone, [we]'ll speak our minds" (154). A cut of a



- large number of lines (100-53) occurred here to have the four lords attacking Edward straight on.
63. Note in the programme to the production.
64. Weil, *op. cit.*, p. 150.
65. A cut was made here to move straight from the two lovers frolicking to the Bishop's entrance. The messenger's lines 23-7, were cut, to have line 28 straight away.
66. See Leech, *op. cit.*, p. 141; See also William Empson, "Two Proper Crimes", published in *Critics on Marlowe*, edited by O'Neill, pp. 118-9 (from a book review in *The Nation*, vol. CLXIII (1946), pp. 444-5).
67. Cuts: I,i,76-8, Edward's aside was cut due to the condition of the round stage. I,i,110. I,ii,34. I,iv,13/ 43/ 274-81. II,i,38. II,ii,7-46/ 72/ 100-52/195-6. II,iii,27-8. III,ii,53-4/ 58/ 74-5/ 150/ 152-4/ 174-5. III,iii,81-2/ 87-90. IV,ii,13-34/ 49-50/ 52-3/ 61-4/ 71-80, ( Sir John Hainault's lines 64-7 were assigned to Mortimer)/ IV,iii,10/ 31-2/ 40. IV,iv,2-4. IV,v,25-7. IV,vi,53-4. Total lines cut = 166 lines.
68. Note in the programme to the production.
69. Critic Nicholas Shrimpton in a review on the production, BBC Radio Channel 4, 11 July, 1990.

## CONCLUSION

It would be comforting to be able to end this thesis by saying that Marlowe's plays have finally re-established themselves in the theatre. This would require faith in spite of facts. Though in this century the curve of progress in Marlowe productions is a rising one, his popularity in the contemporary theatre is still questionable. In the last four years, during the writing of this thesis, the number of Marlowe productions has increased remarkably. Between 1986 and 1990, there have been five professional productions of *Dr. Faustus*, two of *Edward II* (one of which is still running at the Swan, Stratford-upon-Avon), and one of *The Jew of Malta*. Nevertheless, the picture is not as simple as mere numbers may suggest. A Marlowe production still tends to be received, by audiences and critics, as a revival of a forgotten classic—a one-off event, rather than a contribution to a continuous tradition.

As the first three chapters of this thesis suggest, Marlowe's popularity in the Elizabethan theatre was in some important ways dependent on particular features of Elizabethan thought and Elizabethan staging. The later history of Marlowe productions shows that, through 350 years, social, political, economic, and aesthetic developments in the theatre have in various ways contributed to making Marlowe's plays problematic, or to keeping them off the stage altogether. Each period has had its own problems with Marlowe. Thus, for example, when the star-system dominated theatrical activities in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Marlowe's heroes were not considered heroic enough to satisfy the professional egos of the leading stars (only miraculously, in 1818, as we have seen in Chapter Five, *The Jew of Malta* was chosen for revival by Edmund Kean, for his own reasons). When ensemble acting began to prevail in the theatre after the 1950s, Marlowe's plays were seen as having minor characters that are too feebly drawn to give equal opportunities for actors within the ensemble system.

In the Restoration, when the theatre re-opened, and when new aspects were introduced into the drama of the period—such as more female roles and more music and dancing—Marlowe's plays, lacking in those elements, had little to offer, except when there was a shortage of plays—old or new—to fill the repertoires. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, when theatrical fashions favoured farces and pantomimes, and when theatres were competing in the use of complicated machinery, only *Dr. Faustus*—with its mixture of genres and of human and supernatural characters, and with its structure of alternating scenes—was seen as



adaptable to such tastes. Thus, as shown in Chapter Four, only part of the play was kept alive on stage (though not recognised as Marlowe's).

In the late eighteenth and most of the nineteenth centuries, in the unsubsidised theatre, dominated on the one hand by the proscenium arch and the demand for realistic and elaborate settings, and on the other hand by the star-system, Marlowe's plays were not seen as suitable for the stage. Critics, almost unanimously, saw Marlowe as a poet to be read but not to be acted. In this period of commercial theatre, when even Shakespeare's plays were heavily adapted and bowdlerised, it took the special pleading of a star like Kean to bring about a Marlowe production. With no previous Marlowe performances to learn from, an actor-manager would have had to tackle a Marlowe play at his own risk. Thus, assumptions about alleged dramatic 'weaknesses' in Marlowe's plays (which were voiced by literary critics and which might have been disproved by performances) became strongly rooted and carried into the twentieth century. Most of the stage history of Marlowe's plays well into the twentieth century has been shaped and coloured by the notion of the plays as dramatically defective overall, though exciting in parts. But it was also a case of out of sight out of mind.

It was only through the academic and uncommercial enterprise of William Poel at the end of the nineteenth century and the very beginning of the twentieth century that Marlowe's plays were restored to the stage and their stage craft to some extent re-discovered. The fear of a box-office failure that had excluded Marlowe's plays from the professional stage, did not haunt Poel's attempts. He, of course, initiated a new interest and a new style in performing not only Marlowe's plays, but also Elizabethan plays in general. Acceptance of these plays into the professional repertoire was slow, however, particularly as the theatre remained commercial almost until the middle of the twentieth century. Criticism of Marlowe's plays was beginning to look beyond his 'mighty line', though also slowly. But an informed interest was emerging in Shakespearean drama and in Renaissance drama as a whole, and this led to a number of influential studies in its techniques and conventions in the second and subsequent quarters of the century. As arguably the most important of Shakespeare's contemporaries, Marlowe was seen on stage more often than before. Though directors and actors are not expected to read the criticism of the plays they produce, and though improvement in critical attitudes towards a certain play do<sup>es</sup> not always lead to more and better performances of it, it has been shown that in the case of the three plays under discussion, their theatrical performances have influenced and have in turn been

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influenced by Marlowe criticism. It is surely no coincidence that so many of the directors and actors involved in these productions are graduates in English.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, however, and following the course of criticism of Marlowe in the nineteenth century, Marlowe's reputation as an atheist and a rebellious personality had dominated criticism of his plays and thus had limited the scope of their interpretation and prevented them from seeming timeless, or possessing the universality attributed to Shakespeare's plays. Furthermore, Marlowe's plays, particularly the three plays discussed, deal with sensitive social, political and religious issues that are subject to changes of views and attitudes through history. Consequently, his plays became at times irrelevant, at times topical, and at times even dangerous. In the second half of the twentieth century, when a number of literary, philosophical and theatrical movements—established within a freer theatre—led to a wider frame of reference and understanding, some aspects of Marlowe's plays acquired modern appeal. Directors, however, bent upon novelty and contemporary relevance, have all too often been less concerned with Marlowe's plays themselves than with a set of ideas about them. Witness the strong focus in some productions of *Edward II* on the homosexuality of Edward, and in some productions of *Dr. Faustus* on the neurotic aspects in Faustus's conflict (see Chapters Six and Eight). These attempts at modernisation were in many ways advantageous to Marlowe, yet at times they led to radical adaptations which diminished Marlowe's plays and made it seem as if mutilation of the text is necessary when dealing with a Marlowe play.

The building of the Swan Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon, aimed at reviving neglected Elizabethan plays, would seem to have provided a stage for Marlowe. But it still seems to need a director or actor with a particular attraction to Marlowe, for one of his plays to be staged, as was the case in Manchester in 1986, when Ian McDiarmid wished to play in *Edward II* because of the attraction to him of the central role (see Chapter Eight, p. 268, above). Gerard Murphy, who has directed the current *Edward II* at the Swan, states the reasons that drew him to the play:

I became intrigued by the fact that the play is not done very often, and I wondered why? It is a very good play, it is one of the great plays of its period....I thought it was time to do it again and not be frightened of the issues that are involved in the play, political issues, the social issues and the sexual issues.<sup>1</sup>

Such encouragement is needed to bring Marlowe into favour again. In 1966, after the success of the revival of *The Jew of Malta* by the R.S.C., in 1964/5, Peter



Hall positively defended the play against accusations of simply being an "expedient" play for the climate and repertoire of cruelty that then dominated the R.S.C.'s season:

*The Jew of Malta* wasn't an expedient. It was a play I personally had long wanted us to do, because, I think it's an undervalued play. It's an anarchic farce which very much belongs to a shallow James Bond society....It's an atheist's play, it cocks a snook at everything, and is, I would have said, one of the central plays in a modern repertoire.<sup>2</sup>

Since then, however, there has been only one production of *The Jew of Malta*, in 1987 (apart from a brief revival in 1984).<sup>3</sup>

A major and detrimental factor in Marlowe's stage history is the apparently inevitable comparison between his plays and Shakespeare's. This is especially remarkable on the frequent occasions when a Marlovian production is concurrent with a Shakespearean one, or is even in the same repertoire, with the same actor playing the two title-roles—something which, of course, never happened in Marlowe's own time. From the beginning of the eighteenth century onwards, Marlowe has always been seen in his successor's light, and his plays have tended to be devalued in comparisons with counterparts among Shakespeare's plays. A production of *Edward II* is seen in terms of the superiority, in poetry and structure, of *Richard II*, as happened in 1964 and 1969 (see Chapter Eight). *The Jew of Malta* is doomed to inferiority by comparison with the humanity, as it were, of *The Merchant of Venice* (see Chapter Seven), as was the case with Clifford Williams's productions of the two plays in 1965. Even *Dr. Faustus*, which, one would think, has no direct counterpart among Shakespeare's plays, is set for relentless comparisons with *Macbeth*, as we have seen in the case of Walter Hudd's productions of *Dr. Faustus* in 1946 (discussed in Chapter Six), when Robert Harris played Faustus and Macbeth concurrently in the same repertoire at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre. John Russell Brown has rightly noted that

We stage Marlowe in a theatre accustomed to Shakespeare, with actors, directors, and designers who have all had experience of *his* [sic] plays: talents have been developed and techniques evolved...for Shakespeare's kind of dramatic action and characterisation. A careful dissociation is necessary before reading and performing Marlowe for his own sake.<sup>4</sup>

The comparisons between the two playwrights continue, however. In Stratford-upon-Avon, within the R.S.C.'s repertoire, where most of Shakespeare's and Marlowe's plays are performed, this "dissociation" is unlikely, especially with the Royal Shakespeare

Theatre towering over *The Swan* (and with *Richard II* about to be added to *Edward II* in the company's 1990 season).

All through the four centuries of the theatre, while Shakespeare was, to use Gary Taylor's word, "reinvented",<sup>5</sup> though sometimes in abridged forms, Marlowe was re-buried, revived occasionally when interest in him awoke, and "put back in his grave"<sup>6</sup> when the time was not ripe for his plays.

It remains to be said that, though Marlowe's plays are now more frequently seen on stage than they have been since before 1642, their splendour has all along gleamed only fitfully and according to the theatrical climate of the time. With statements like those made in reviews of last year's R.S.C.'s production of *Dr. Faustus* (1989), directed by Barry Kyle—"hardly an occasion to remember"<sup>7</sup>, and "not even Mr. Kyle can disguise the play's mid-term slither into school-boy prankishness..."<sup>8</sup>—, Marlowe is likely to be re-buried again. The stage history of Marlowe's plays is a history of unpredictability. Marlowe on the stage, to use Henry James's words on Ibsen, "has had a fortune...of acting as a sort of register of the critical atmosphere, a barometer of the intellectual weather."<sup>9</sup>



## NOTES TO CONCLUSION

1. Gerard Murphy in an interview in a review broadcast on BBC Channel 4, on 11 July, 1990. Simon Russell Beale who played Edward said that he did not expect the role to be as difficult and demanding as Shakespeare's tragic heroes: "Edward is proving to be immensely satisfying in a way I hadn't expected at all; I didn't expect it to be quite so emotionally taxing..." (Simon Russell Beale speaking to Matt Wolf in a review in *The Times*, 7 July, 1990). He also cheerfully said that "If they [the R.S.C.] did a Shakespeare play, my name went to the bottom of the list....Edward II...seemed far too heroic a part for me" (ibid.).
2. Charles Marowitz's interview with Peter Hall, printed in *Theatre at Work: Playwrights and Productions in the Modern British Theatre*, a Collection of Interviews and Essays, ed. Charles Marowitz and Simon Trussler (London, 1967), p. 151.
3. See Chapter Seven, p. 211, and note 41.
4. J. R. Brown, "Marlowe and the Actors", *Tulane Drama Review*, 8 (1964), 155-73, p. 155.
5. Gary Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare: A Cultural History from the Restoration to the Present* (London, 1989).
6. Bernard Levin in *The Daily Mail*, 2 October, 1964, on the R.S.C.'s production of *The Jew of Malta* in 1964 (see Chapter Seven, p. 228).
7. J. C. Trewin, *The Birmingham Post*, 12 May, 1989.
8. Michael Billington, *The Guardian*, 12 May, 1989.
9. Henry James, "On the Occasion of *Hedda Gabler*", *New Review*, 4 (June, 1981), 519-30. Quoted from Michael Egan, ed., *Ibsen: The Critical Heritage* (London, 1972; paperback 1985), p. 234.

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- (i) Promptbooks and Records of Productions.
- (ii) Sound Recordings.
- (iii) Interviews.
- (iv) Newspapers and Magazines.

### II. Editions of Marlowe's Works:

- (i) Single Plays.
- (ii) Complete Plays.

### III. Primary Works Cited or Referred to.

### IV. Secondary Works Cited or Referred to:

- (i) Articles and Chapters on Marlowe.
- (ii) Books on Marlowe.
- (iii) Context and Background.
- (iv) Dissertations.

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(iv) DISSERTATIONS

- Anderson, Sarah, *The Concept and Process of Dramatic Adaptation, Derived from a Study of Modern Adaptations of Shakespeare's Plays* (Ph.D., the Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham, 1980)
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## APPENDIX A

LIST OF CUTS AND ADDITIONS IN THE 1818 REVIVAL OF *THE JEW OF MALTA*.

**Prologue:** Machiavel's lines cut and new lines substituted (see below).

A long scene between Mathias and Lodowick added.

**I,i:**

Cuts: 4-6/ 12-8/ 25-31/ 69-104 (except 71-2)/ 131-37/ 142-44.

**I,ii:**

Cuts: 66-8/ 122-25/ 135-58/ 184-94/ 199-212/ 362/ 378-407.

The word "*But a month*", 28, was changed to "*But a week*".

**II,i:**

Cuts: 39/ 67.

Between II,i and II,ii, a short scene of twenty one lines was added.

**II,ii:**

Cuts: 47-51.

**II,iii:**

Cuts: 1-6/ 8-10/ 20-1/ 26-9/ 36-7/ 43-4/ 46-8/ 53 (first half only) 55-6/ 58-9/ 61-4/ 67/ 82-9/ 92-4/ 98/ 108-22/ 127-32/ 163/ 167/ 182-85/ 196-97/ 199/ 232/ 240-41/ 285-86/ 318/ 327-29.

101-32 were shortened, and some lines added about the purchase of Ithamore.

After 133 two lines added, Mathias talking about his jealousy.

150-51 were changed to "*Katherine: This is the dealer, is it not, speak son/ Mathias: Ay, he will tell you, what the Market Affords.*"

Between lines 167-68 a soliloquy for Abigail was added from *Edward II*.

At the end of the scene nine lines for Abigail were added from Isabella's lines in *Edward II* (II,iv,15-21)

**III,i:**

Cuts: 2-4.

Lines added between Bellamira and Pilia-Borza.

Fifty lines added before Mathias and Lodowick fight.

**III,iii:**

Cuts: 37-8/ 53-5/ 96-71.

III,v changed places with III,iv.

**III,iv:**

Cuts: 3-6/ 32-3/ 48-118.

**III,vi:**

Cuts: 1-8/ 40/ 41-53.

**IV,i:**

Linked to III,iv from line III,iv,47.

Cuts: 1-20/ 38/ 40-5/ 52-60/ 64-71/ 94-102/ 120-21/ 156-208.

[The scene added before act I,i:]

*A landscape, near Malta.*

*Enter Mathias, reading a letter.*

'My father is appeas'd—come dear Mathias,  
And greet with holy rites, thine anxious love.'  
Ah! words, that make me surfeit with delight!  
What greater bliss can happen to Mathias?—  
Sweet girl, I come, for these thy am'rous lines  
Might have enforced me to have swum from France,  
And, like Leander, gasp'd upon the sand,  
So thou would'st smile, and take me to thy arms.  
The sight of Malta to my exil'd eyes,  
Is as Elysium, to a new -come soul;  
Not that I love the city, or the people,  
(Save my kind mother, and my trusty friend)  
But that it harbours her I hold so dear;  
Fair Abigail, daughter to Malta's jew,  
And tho' my kindred all, with low'ring brow,  
Forbid the dawning pleasure of our love.  
I heed them not—in her arms let me lie,  
And with the world be still at enmity.

*Enter Lodowick*

Lod. Welcome to Malta, welcome to thy home.

Thy absence made us grieve, and now thy sight  
Is far more dear, than was thy parting hence  
Bitter, and irksome, to our mutual friends.

Mat. Kind Lodowick, your speech preventeth mine,  
Yet have I words left to express my joy.  
The shepherd nipt with biting winter's rage,  
Frolicks not more to see the painted spring,  
Than I do now, to greet my native land.  
But wherefore sad? What ice hath cool'd that fire  
Which sometimes made thy thoughts aspire to heaven?  
This dullness had not wont to dwell with thee.

Lod. 'Tis right—for now you see the great world chang'd.  
Tho' I am dead to thee, here lives a flame—  
But no—I had not long return'd from travel  
Oe'r the more polish'd French and Roman realms.  
Before my friend did likewise deign to quit,  
For some unravell'd cause, his native soil.

Mat. 'Tis freely own'd. If I delayed to share  
With thee the anxious hopes and fears,  
Which then too rudely furrow'd all my heart,  
'Twas that I could not brook your noble mind  
Should grieve, for what I too well knew was not  
Within the compass of your pow'r to heal;  
But now it is remov'd, and soon I ween  
To see the glowing picture of my hope  
Made perfect.

Lod. Then may you, my friend, be happy,  
Whilst I, like mists before the morning's ray,  
Fade to the clay cold earth; at once unsought for  
And forgotten.

Mat. My gentle Lodowick,  
Am I then deem'd unworthy of the secret



- Lod. That preys upon your quiet?  
 How, unworthy!  
 No, Mathias; full well art thou assur'd  
 That Malta does not hold the man, whose friendship  
 I dare look to improve; whose kind esteem  
 I seek to heighten, equal to thine own.  
 The...same cause which bound *your* secret from me,  
 Now fetters *mine*—You cannot yield me aid.
- Mat. Yes, your reproof is just; but sith you hold  
 Thus off, and will not cast the envenom'd buthen  
 From you, farewell, and know me your's for ever.
- Lod. Hold.. you shall not pass in ign'rance;  
 But, soon instructed in my fond anxieties,  
 Yield your advice to crush them. Ay, but how!  
 How search for phrase that may at once breathe forth  
 The folly of my heart? Yes, one soft word,  
 One gentle, gentle name will compass all,  
 And act, as 'twere, the friendly key, to ope  
 To freedom all my long imprison'd thoughts.  
 Proud Malta's isle combin'd, doth not so fair  
 A beauty boast as— Abigail.
- Mat. Heard I?— Abigail!
- Lod. Daughter to the wealthy Jew.  
 Wealthy, indeed, in having such a gem!
- Mat. Abigail?
- Lod. —I repeat it, she, the star  
 Of all my fondest thoughts; nor yet I think  
 Exists the power, that e'er shall force me from her—  
 My friend seems agitated.
- Mat. No—the heat—  
 The weather overpow'rs me; nothing futher—  
 'Twill pass o'th' sudden—death to ev'ry hope. *(aside)*
- Lod. Know you the beauteous Hebrew I have named?  
 Mat. I—I—have seen her—distraction! *(aside)*
- Lod. Well then,  
 What say you of her beauty?...is it not—  
 Ay, past all rivalry!
- Mat. It is indeed.  
 I cannot stifle my confusion further *(aside)*  
 How shall I act? he must not know our purpose.  
 'Till 'tis beyond his pow'r to intercept.
- Lod. Thus having loos'd the secret you desired,  
 In kind return I crave your prompt assistance  
 Knowing full well, your friendly hand will leave  
 No spring untouch'd, that I may call as mine,  
 This treasure of our isle.
- Mat. But first unfold,  
 If you have e'er received so much favour  
 From the fair one, that herewithal you raise  
 Such tow'ring prospects of success?
- Lod. These lips  
 I own, as yet have breath'd but distant homage;  
 Still if I may interpretas a lover  
 Th' expressive glances of her speaking eyes,  
 I do not doubt but fortune may be kind.
- Mat. With honour, Lodowick, think but with honour,  
 Or I renounce thee as a friend for ever!  
 Accursed be the wretch, who but in thought

Profances the spotless name of love, to blanch  
The cheek of beauty! like a sepulchre,  
Bearing with proud deceit a sculpter'd front,  
To hide decay, and frail mortality within.

Lod. 'Tis true, my father ne'er will brook alliance  
With one so lowly born.

Mat. Why then give o'er  
The cause:—dip not the shafts of love in poison,  
But strive—

*(Trumpets heard)*

Lod. You see the Governor approaches,  
I must attend; farewell my friend, your warning  
Is in vain, be the sequel what it may.  
It shall suffice me to enjoy her love.

*(Exit Lodowick)*

Mat. Base fortune, now I see that in thy whell,  
There is a point to which when men aspire,  
They tumble headlong down. My friend, enamour'd  
Of what my soul deems dearest upon earth,  
My gentle Abigail! and whom but now  
I called mine own. Yes, she must be instructed  
In the full passion of his youthfull thoughts.  
I cannot doubt her faith, so true as mine,  
Is hers—then let me banish all mistrust,  
And either die, or live with Abigail!

*(Exit)*

[Between II,i and II,ii:]

*Enter Knights and officers.*

Kngt. Now valiant knights, let's hasten to the shore  
And welcome brave Del Bosco to our Isle:  
Perchance the pow'r he brings may set us free  
From all these vile submissions to the Turk.

Offi. Be it our care then to entreat his aid,  
Which if he grants, soon shall the swelling clouds,  
That threat'ning hang so full of danger o'er us,  
Disperse and vanish from our anxious sight.

Kngt. Ay noble friend, so will we lay aside  
This front of peace, and in a wall of steel,  
The glorious livery of a soldier;  
Fight for our fading honour gainst the foe,  
Till we have pow'r to conjure down those fiends,  
Who dare aspire to rule o'er Christian knights.

Offi. Agreed, and be the Governor informed  
Of this our sudden change of policy.

Kngt. Then let us hence, to greet the Spanish Lord;  
And 'gainst the tribute, Selim seeks to raise,  
We'll henceforth parley with our naked swords.  
—The worst is death, and better die than live,  
To live disgracefully in such a league.

*(Exeunt)*

[The purchase of Ithamore: lines added after II,iii,97:]

Bar. But now, I must be gone to buy a slave [line 97]  
Yet stay, my purpose is already done,  
For yonder comes, a brother of my tribe,  
Who had but now, command to purchase for me;  
What trash and marvel, brings he with him here.



*(Enter 1st Jew, Officer, and Ithamore)*

Jew. Lo Barabas here, have I brought for thee,  
 A slave I trust full well, will suit thy need,  
 The price demanded, by his Spanish master,  
 Is there set down *(gives paper)*

Bar. What's this, two hundred crowns!...

**[Between II,iii,164 and 165, Abigail's soliloquy:]**

*(The outside of Barabas' House)*

*(Enter Abigail with a Letter)*

Abi. The grief of his exile gave, was not so much,  
 As is the joy of his returning home;  
 What need'st thou love, thus to excuse thyself,  
 I knew 'twas not within thy pow'r, again  
 So soon to visit me, and for my sake,  
 Neglect the greetings, of thy honour'd friends,  
 And yet this argues his entire affection.  
 In vain have others, sought to win her smile,  
 Whose eyes are fixed, on none but dear Mathias.  
 But see my father homeward bends his steps,  
 Once more, I'll importune with him my pray'r,  
 But e'er he shall dissuade me from my love,  
 This isle itself, shall fleet upon the ocean,  
 And wander, to the unfrequented Inde.  
 So well Mathias, has deserv'd of Abigail.

*(Exit into House)*

**[Abigail expressing her love towards Mathias, taken from Isabella's words in *Edward II* inserted at II,iii,362:]**

Abi. Heaven can witness, I love none but him;  
 From my embracements why thus force him hence?  
 O that these tears, that fill my anguish'd eyes,  
 Had power to hale you from your stern intent.  
 Why turn away, when thus I speak you fair,  
 Nay, frown not on me, father, I have done.  
 Since you thus sullenly deny my prayers,  
 You will not mourn, th'untimely loss of her,  
 Whose pining heart, her inward sighs have wither'd.

*(Exit into the house)*

**[Introducing the fight between Mathias and Lodowick, III,ii:]**

Mat. This is the place: now Abigail shall see,  
 Whether Mathias, holds her dear or no.  
 How keen a wound, does broken friendship make,  
 And tho' it pierce me, to the inmost heart,  
 It shall not force me, to resign my love.  
 Resign her, said I! ah! exits the power,  
 Can charm me to the task! no Lodowick;  
 That hand, which leads her, to the bridal couch,  
 Must first be spotted, by the work of death.

*(Looks at the letter)*

But sure he could not write in such base terms?

*(Lodowick enters)*

Lod. Ev'n so, and now revenge it if thou dar'st.

Mat. Hold Lodowick, first let me question of thee,

If, while I esteem'd myself thy friend,  
 By word, or action, I have ever caused,  
 Aught to befall, wherein thou might'st esteem,  
 Thyself dishonoured, by our amity?  
 You answer not, but I defy detraction,  
 And know, the native frankness of my heart;  
 Too long devoted to your interest:  
 Which now, you wing the vail of malice thro',  
 To 'reave from me, the lov'd reality  
 Of her, whose beauteous image, it so well Contains.

Lod. And what would you infer by this!

Mat. The plighted faith of Abigail is mine;  
 Which nought but death can force me to relinquish.

Lod. Thine! Abigail thine! but that, well I know,  
 Presumptuous vanity has ever held  
 Its flatt'ring bias o'er your fickle nature,  
 These words thou utter'st, speedily would rouse,  
 More than the mark'd contempt, they now occasion.  
 Where was the friendship then, of which you boast  
 When you neglected to impart your secret,  
 Knowing, the charms, that then attracted you,  
 Had likewise caught another in the toil.

Mat. My word for secrecy, was given of her,  
 Nor could I without her sanction, break it.

Lod. Her sanction truly! 'twere not much to grant,  
 And when indifference too, had arm'd her brow,  
 Blest as I know myself, with bounteous smiles,  
 And freely-given love of Abigail,  
 What hurried course, your anger takes, I reckon not.

Mat. I do not well conceive you Lodowick.

Lod. 'Tis pity you should now appear so dull.  
 List then Mathias, and be thus instructed;  
 Her heart, I know to be my own, her faith,  
 Thus was given to me, in her father's presence,  
 The words whereof, like sweetest harmony,  
 Still vibrates on mine ears, 'Dear Lodowick,  
 Nothing but death, shall part our mutual love.'

Mat. Villain thou liest, and in eternal tortures,  
 May that heart rankle, which engender'd it,  
 Draw wretch, and be of life or death, the issue  
 Of this, our mortal feud.

Lod. Nay do not doubt it,  
 We will not compromise in such a cause.  
*(They exeunt fighting, Barabas, who some time  
 before this had been observing, advances)...*

[Abigail learns of Mathias' death: lines added to mourn Mathias' death, III,iii:]

Abi. Oh day! the last of all my bliss on earth,  
 Centre of all misfortunes!—heavenly powers!  
 Why do you low'r thus unkindly on me?  
 Oh might I never ope these eyes again!  
 Never again, lift up this drooping head!  
 Oh! never more lift up this dying heart.

[Barabas's laments Abigail's death, IV,i:]

Bar. *(after a pause)* What, Barabas! and is thy heart of stone?



That not one drop can start to dim thine eyes  
 For such a daughter's loss! the time has been  
 When she was all her Father's hope and care,  
 When love paternal gush'd within this breast.  
 Tis gone: oppression's burning pow'r hath dried  
 The source of frail humanity for ever.  
 No, no, I cannot shed a tear.

[Barabas's song, IV,iv:]

Bar. Scarce had the purple gleam of day,  
 Glanc'd lightly on the glowing sea,  
 When forc'd by fortune's shafts away,  
 My native land, I quitted thee.

There tho' the sable raven soar,  
 And nightly screams her death-fraught yell,  
 Tho' rav'ning han dogs bay the door,  
 And howling wolves o'erpace the dell.

Tho' ice-winged tempests fret the sky,  
 And chill the early flow'rets bloom,  
 Tho' still we see our rosebuds die,  
 And in the snow the lillies tomb.

And these tired feet each soil have press'd,  
 Where joy and pleasures seem to be,  
 Where all by smiling Heav'n is blest,  
 Still, native land, I sigh for thee.

## APPENDIX B

### AN ACCOUNT OF DEREK STEVENS'S PRODUCTION OF *DR. FAUSTUS* FOR THE RIPON FESTIVAL OF ART AND LITERATURE, 1986.

Derek Stevens used the 1616 text with some elements of the 1604 text, for example, in the conjuring scene devils did not watch Faustus as in the 1616 text; the papal scenes included only the banquet as in the 1604 text. In my interview with him (Stevens, Interview), Derek Stevens told me that he thought the papal scenes would give offence to the audience in Ripon Cathedral, with Faustus snatching the Pope's food and drink, and kicking his bottom. The Bruno event would make the Pope look tyrannical, and having been given permission to rehearse and stage the play in the Cathedral he had to consider the feelings of religious groups in it. The event of Benvolio was kept, as in the 1616 version, but the revenge of the knights on Faustus was shortened by cutting the scene where, after Faustus has his revenge on them, they find themselves '*besmeared with mud and dirt, all having bloody faces*'(xiv). The Vanholt scene was kept in its entirety, with the eruption of the yokels.

In order to employ as many actors as possible in the production, Derek Stevens tried to keep as much of the play as possible. Parts in the play were needed for altogether sixty-three actors. This explains why the Seven Deadly sins had attendants not called for in the text. School children were expected among the audience; thus bits of comedy were useful, and the actors who played them were said to have "milked humour from Marlowe's comic scenes...and [thus] enhanc[ed] further the main action" (*Ripon Gazette*, 19 November, 1986). Derek Stevens said that: "What is special about this production...is that it is to be housed in a special place for a special occasion, and is to be made real by loving amateurs...who will...bring about certain changes of direction, thinking, and imagining..." (Stevens, Interview).

The space in the Cathedral made effectively meaningful surroundings. It was used entirely for all scenes and by all characters with no actual scenery to move or reset. Movements from scene to scene were achieved by well organized exits and entrances. A huge gate at the back formed background scenery with its significance continuously shifted throughout the performance to signify the doors of Faustus's study, Faustus's house, the gate of hell from where devils, the Seven Sins, and Helen issued, and through which Faustus was pulled down, and the gate to the Duke's courtyard. The colourful statues of the Choir screen at the back added an interesting façade (see illustrations 31-32). Faustus's magic book was a massive one lying on the forestage for Faustus's '*these metaphysics of magicians/And necromantic books are heavenly*' (i,48-9). The medieval floor of the playing area and the high remote roof formed the limits of the action, both actual and symbolical. The production

took place under the tower with the colourful figures on the screen bearing witness to all the shocking events, and Heaven high up and



remote in the gently lit roof. (*Ripon Cathedral News*, 215, December, 1986)

Intimacy with the audience was tremendous, with the audience surrounding the playing area on three sides (see illustration 23). The costumes were deliberately kept to three colours, dull white, grey or silver, and black, which made them timeless. With grey as the dominant colour, there was a symbolic neutral effect achieved which made the characters' function in the moral scale of good and evil not very distinct, and thus Faustus's vacillation justified. This left the audience to make their own judgement of Faustus. The restricted choice of colours also added visual unity to the production. All the characters were dressed in dark colours, so that

they can step into and out of light so they light up or disappear establishing the physicality of the epic nature of the play; A vast unrolling scroll of minor characters encountering for a brief time the major protagonist. (Derek Stevens, *The Politics of Literature*, M.A, University of Newcastle, 1985).

Masques were used, including elongated fingers and nails. The effect was saved from being pantomimic by the restriction of colour. The characters representing the good power were dressed in black, and those representing the evil were dressed in white (see illustration 32). This was confusing but inventive, "if evil is as clever and insidious as its history reveals, then its bright glamour and apparent innocence is a part of that talent to ensnare man" (Stevens, Interview). Lucifer, as his name indicates, was presented as the light bringer; he was dressed in white with a hat made of pieces of mirror, and holding a lamp directed at his face so that "light might bounce off him" (Stevens, Interview). Beelzebub, on the other hand, was dressed in black with a terrible oxygene masque reflecting in a modern way the unattractive side of hell. Stevens was successful in clarifying a double function in his residents of hell, by making Lucifer attractive and shining, and Beelzebub horrific.

Though the production was seen by some as "visually stunning" (*Ripon Advertiser*, 15 November, 1986) there was a lack of properties that became noticeable in some scenes. Particularly sparse was the middle span of Faustus's life. The papal court was suggested by a chair on which the Pope sat, and the rest of the characters were standing around him, food and drink were brought on trays, with no table for the banquet, and for Faustus to overturn. Likewise, the Emperor's Court was represented by only three characters, with Benvolio on one side of the walls that flanked the gate representing a window. This made Faustus's travels seem a poor change from his study. However, in the overall religious interpretation of the play, as will be shown later, this would have been significant.

The sparseness was redeemed in the scene of the Seven Deadly Sins, and the last descent to hell, for which crowds were employed. Derek Stevens's approach to the Seven Deadly Sins was inventive. Accompanied by strange and atmospheric music, the Sins approached one after the other till they surrounded Faustus in a semi-circle. Stevens tried to emphasize Faustus's and the audience's identification with them by using mirrors held by an attendant for every Sin, and directed at Faustus so

that he sees himself before he sees any Sin, indicating his capability to commit all these sins: "an amazing glimpse of infinity possible with such a physical arrangement of reflecting surfaces...a whirring kaleidoscope of reflected lights" (Stevens, Interview). With a minute pause after each one's speech the effect of hideousness was intensified. The Sins were made timeless, dressed in a mixture of medieval and modern costumes stressing their universality. Pride, for instance, suggested a "chauvinistic young man" (Stevens, Interview), with sunglasses and after-shave spray; Wrath suggested a punk and a drug-addict of our own time dressed in black leather and pointing to his arm with a broken bottle at "wounding myself..." (vi, 141); Sloth implied a twentieth century house-wife holding a bottle and the *T.V. Times* magazine; Covetousness was dressed in copies of the true form of fortune in our own time, namely credit cards (see illustration 22), with the music of the American T.V. serial that dramatises greed, 'Dallas', accompanying his approach; and Gluttony was covered with food wrappers and remains of food with the names of famous restaurants on them. Envy was the most difficult to modernize and externalize, being such an internal feeling; however, she had a Medusa head and she was made to whisper and hiss like a snake.

The curiosity the Sins aroused justified Faustus's delight in them, without, however, obscuring their hideous nature which was suggested by painting their faces white, making them lifeless and eerie. When all the Sins issued they surrounded Faustus with their attendants, forming a large crowd with mirrors reflecting the audience and Faustus, making the crowd look larger. The scene was the most spectacular and innovative in the production (see illustration 23).

The last scene was made very spectacular and terrifying. Faustus, who was at the centre of the playing area, was surrounded by all the cast who emerged from different directions with a slow and continuous shuffle that provided an appropriate sound effect to represent a horrendous moment. The large number of actors approaching Faustus gave an apocalyptic impression, particularly with the "music wail[ing] and thunder[ing]" as they finally disappeared with him (*Ripon Cathedral News*). The fact that even the human characters appeared in this scene, made it seem as if Faustus's action and sins were resurrected in front of him to justify his damnation. While they were approaching, the huge gate in the centre was slowly opened to swallow the whole crowd with a great theatrical effect which was intensified when Mephostophilis (Derek Stevens himself) turned to the audience with half a smile of triumph that Faustus was finally ensnared.

In her first appearance Helen had a veil on her face, and she passed quickly across the stage. This increased the scholars' curiosity in her and also Faustus's and thus justified the necessity of her second appearance to Faustus. In the second appearance Derek Stevens achieved in Helen—apart from beauty and demoniality—an identification with Faustus himself by using a design of repeated revelations with two masques covering Helen's face: first, a lifeless shop-window mannequin masque, to indicate perfect beauty; second, a masque made of fragments of a mirror, that Faustus might see a shattered image of himself in her; and finally her real face, but painted like a skull with ugly worms and



maggots. The masques were revealed at chosen points of the speech, the first, at "Was this the face..." (xvii,99); the second, at "Her lips suck forth my soul" (103); and the last, at "And none but you shall be my paramour" (117). There was an attempt to match word with action, to avoid any feeling of staleness that the familiarity of the lines might have created. The audience, puzzled, were thus made to think more of the lines.

Tony Goodall, as Faustus, gave the central part dignity and intellectualism. He showed enough analytical power in Faustus's first speech, but was restricted in his passion. In his own words: "the first speech is the most difficult in the performance as you have to reserve some emotion to the last, and thus you cannot let go and give all you have...something should be left to the last moment". He showed self-controlled joy at the Seven Deadly Sins, laughing like an intellectual who found no harm in enjoying the show, but he clearly indicated an awareness of their devilish nature. What was missing in his performance was enough thrill and zest in the middle part of his travels (this might be due to the sparse spectacle) which suggested that he was not enjoying his pact with the devil, and thus made his persistence in it questionable. But he gave "a brilliant and moving performance as the tormented Faustus" (*Ripon Advertiser*).

The fact that the play was performed in a cathedral influenced the director's approach to staging. The production had a religious touch about it that was welcomed by the staff in the Cathedral:

There was nothing at all enticing about the parade of vices; and who would have wanted to embrace that white masked Helen?...The powers of temptation were confusing (as they often are) whilst the results of evil were hideous....in the end (here's the bad theology), even when he cried for help, God was unable to save him. So he was doomed—and we are challenged and rather frightened and glad to be Christians who do wish for the good...and do believe that God will in the end receive us as His own (*Ripon Cathedral News*).

Mephostophilis, who was played by Derek Stevens himself, had a sinister attitude towards Faustus, which fitted well with the interpretation of the play. Having Mephostophilis played by the director was a nice touch as Mephostophilis seems the director of events, the character providing all the shows.

The production was important in that it showed that *Dr. Faustus* is a play that is appropriate for such an event as the Ripon Festival, where attempts to involve as many people as possible was a necessity. It was seen as "a fine example of community theatre at its best" (*Ripon Advertiser*). Having minor easy roles helped in employing people who had never acted before. *Dr. Faustus* is hospitable to such large enterprises. The production was also important in that it showed that a bare space can accommodate the play effectively, and simple means can achieve unity of interpretation, along with ensemble acting. The production also put into illumination practice some important ideas (such as the Helen moment, and the idea behind the reflecting mirrors in the scene with the Seven Deadly Sins) formed by Derek Stevens on the basis of academic research. Apart from the amateurish quality of the

acting, the press reception, though inevitably limited, was highly positive: "The production of *Dr. Faustus* was so good that one ceased to think about the performance as such and gave himself confidently to the experience" (*Ripon Cathedral News*). It was indeed, as the reviewer in *the Ripon Gazette* described it, "the devil of a good show".



## APPENDIX C

EXTRACTS FROM THE PROMPTBOOK OF JOHN BARTON'S  
PRODUCTION OF *DR. FAUSTUS*, 1974:

(The Words in square brackets indicate the order of scenes in the promptbook or where the additions come in relation to the Marlowe's text).

[After signing the pact, Faustus and Mephostophilis exchange gifts, lines added between lines 110 and 115 of scene v in Marlowe's text:]

Meph: Now, for an earnest that I am your servant.

Tell me what shape you would have me to put on.

Faus: I would have thee keep thee ever like a friar,  
And round your neck, like to Saint Anthony,  
A little bell, which ere you do appear  
You shall ring once or twice that I may know  
That thou art come.

*(He offers a bell, and Mephostophilis offers him an hour-glass)*

Meph: And here's a gift for thee:

This hour glass, the sands whereof  
Shall move themselves so slow.  
A man might think they move not, though they do;  
And there will pass just four and twenty years  
Ere they shall shift from this to this below:  
And in that space your soul shall be suck'd  
From Heaven to Hell.

Faus: What, call you this a gift?

Meph: So. Now, Faustus, ask me what thou wilt.

[line 115, scene v, in the original]

[After Faustus has been given the magic book, beheld the heavens and wished for repentance; added between lines 13 and 19, scene vi, with lines 20-32 cut:]

Faus: My heart's so harden'd, I cannot repent.

Scarce can I name salvation, faith or Heaven...

[lines 18-19, scene vi, in the original]

I do despair, and yet I will not die;

No, not die yet, but live in all delight,

And scorn me to repent. Therefore go on:

Meph: That is most like; but if you will, assay.

Faus: If I repent yet God will pity me.

Meph: Thou art a Spirit; God cannot pity thee.

[line 13 in the original]

Faus: Yea, God will pity me if I repent.

Meph: Ay, but Faustus never shall repent.

[lines 16-17 in the original]

Faus: My heart's so harden'd, I cannot repent:

And therefor tell me, Mephostophilis,

Wert thou a man as I and not a Spirit,

What wouldst thou do?

Meph: Were I a man as thou

And God had once adorn'd me with thy gifts

Then whiles God breath'd within me would I strive

By humbling of myself and holy prayers,

To win eternal joy within his kingdom.

Faus: But that I have not done.

Meph:               Thou sayest Faustus,  
                       Thou hast denied thy God who gave thee life,  
                       Who gave thee speech and hearing, sight and sense,  
                       To glorify and understand his will,  
                       And given up thy soul to Lucifer.

Faus: Wouldst thou be in my case as I am now?  
       Why sighest thou?

Meph:               Faustus, I tell thee, yea:  
                       For yet I would so humble me at last  
                       That I would win the favour of my God.

Faus: why dost thou tell me this?

Meph: Why should I not?  
                       Faustus cannot repent; it is too late,  
                       Forget thy man's mind, think thou art a Spirit,  
                       And joy in all a Spirit doth enjoy.

Faus: Be I a devil, yet God may pity me.

Meph: Thou art a Spirit; God cannot pity thee.

Faus: Why then,  
                       Seeing Faustus hath incurr'd eternal death  
                       By desperate thoughts against Jove's deity  
                       He is resolved to think no more of him.

[After the Seven Deadly Sins, vi, and replacing Chorus I before viii, keeping in mind that the comic scenes were cut:]

*New Scene (to open second part) [sic]*  
*(Enter Lucifer)*

Luci: The mighty Faustus, as each year did pass,  
       Grew ever greater in renown and fame.  
       To know the secrets of astronomy  
       Graven in the book of Jove's high firmament,  
       He mounted him to scale Olympus top,  
       And sitting in a chariot burning bright,  
       Drawn by the strength of yoked dragons' necks,  
       He viewed the clouds, the planets and the stars  
       From the bright circle of the horned moon  
       Even to the heights of premum mobile. [sic]  
       Which done, being guided by his gentle spirit,  
       He sounded out the very depths of Hell;  
       When he returned he took up pen and ink,  
       And wrote of all that he had done and seen  
       which once begun, he ever afterwards  
       Would write upon his travels through the world,  
       And all the wonders that he wrought by art.

Beel: And this was the beginning of Faustus' book which he ever continued every day of his life for he believed by the setting of his sins, he would in some measure become more able to handle them. In this he erred. In truth, however, the more he searched himself, the more uncertain he became whether he had grown into the thing he was through the temptory of the Devil or through his own tainted nature. But as time passed, he wrote as much from pride as to attain to knowledge of himself. For as his four and twenty years drew towards their end he consoled himself by thinking how his book, that told of all his exploits, should survive his death and bring him honour. And so he travelled forth continually with his spirit through many countries, until they came unto the high most hill in Cancusus. And there they [saw] a mighty clear fire come striking down from Heaven, upon the Earth, wherefore Faustus demanded of his spirit what it was.



*(Faustus with Mephistophilis discovered)*

Meph: It is paradise that lieth yonder, and the garden that God himself hath planted. But the stream of fire thou seest is the walls or defense of the garden, and that clear and dreadful light is the angel Michael, that guardeth the same with his flaming sword. And though [sic] thinkst thyself to be hard by, yet art thou farther off from hence than thou hast ever been. Neither thou, nor any of my fellows, nay, not great Lucifer, shall ever come nearer to that place than we be at this time.

Luci: So Faustus entered his fiery car,  
 And they returned home to Wittenburg.  
 From East to West his dragons swiftly glide,  
 And in a twinkling bring him home again.  
 But ever new exploits would hail him hence,  
 And so he ventured forth continually,  
 And all as swiftly year grew satiate [sic]  
 Of rarest climes and royal courts of kings,  
 And so he stay'd his course, returning home,  
 For he had but one year yet left to him.

*(Exit Lucifer. Enter Faustus in Arab dress and Mephostophilis to Wagner)*

Faus: Since that my fame is spread through in every land,  
 That great men come to visit me at home:  
 Among the rest the Emperor doth come,  
 Whom I must welcome with some stroke of art.  
*(continue with Emperor's entrance...)* [sic]

[Here the papal scenes viii and ix were cut, and only the Emperor scene kept.]

[After the Emperor scene: A chorus, replacing Chorus II in Marlowe's text:]

Beel: And so began the lastest year of Faustus' life. First was it Easter; whereupon all Christian men and women went joyfully into the streets with laughter and singing, been mindful of their Saviour's arising, but Faustus kept close in his chamber. And so it was throughout sweet Summer time, and so until the fall of leaf, and so ever onwards until Christmas time, when his boy gave Faustus a gift the which presented the birth of his Saviour at Bethlehem. But though all the children of light rejoiced again and went forth into God's house and were merry, Faustus kept ever to his chamber, observed of none but his boy and his spirit.

[Here came the scene with the Horse-courser, xv, followed by the Vanholt scene, xvii, with additions:]

*(Enter the Duke of Vanholt and his Duchess, attended [a countess])*

Faus: Please it your Graces both to enter in.  
 Duke: God give you joy this season, gentle Faustus.  
 Faus: Your ladyship must have a care, I think.  
 Duch: I must indeed when conjurors are by.  
 Faus: Fain would I please you, madam, by my art.  
 Duch: Nay, I joy not in necromantic art.  
 Duke: 'Tis wondrous to behold.  
 Duch:                 What wraps you, sir?  
 Duke: How have I long'd to see this place of Art.  
       Here mighty Faustus long hath liv'd and breath'd,  
       And sounded all the depths of magic arts:  
       Believe me, sir, I do no less delight  
       Now to behold this deep-enchanted room

Than late I did to see that castle bright  
Which you erected to delight my soul.  
What say you, wife?

Duch: I say it was so so .

Faus: Madam, it grieves me much that you should find  
My Art so tedious; 'twas my wish to please thee.

Duch: And, Doctor, you may wish whate'er you will.

Faus: Wilt please you drink of this?

I have well approv'd this wine is sweet to ladies.

Duke: I pray you, drink.

Count: Aye do.

Duch: Well, I will taste. 'Twill serve.

Faus: I trow 'twill serve.

Duke: And so do I.

Duch: Nay, I will swear 'twill serve:

*(Takes the cup from Faustus)*

I'll taste again.

Faus: Alas, it is a marvellous potent wine:

Duch: I'll taste

Faus: Drink little, for too much  
Will work upon you strangely.

Duch: So it doth:  
I like it much, O, wondrous, wondrous much;  
Methinks that I am ravish'd quite thereby,  
And all I see seems other than it was.

Duke: But tell us how, good wife.

Faus: What is thy will?

Duch: Methinks my will is as your will inclines.

Faus: Beseech your grace to look upon these books.

Duke: I'll drink of learning's fount.

Faus: Thou honour'st me.

Duke: Then, wife, unfold to him whate'er would please thee.

Faus: Here are the books.

I pray you lady tell me your desire.

Duke: Say what thing 'tis,

Duch: In sooth, I am most fain  
To have a thing of him, a little thing.

Faus: Ah, Madam, were it a greater thing than 'tis  
Now, at this time, so it would but content you,  
'Faith, you should have it.

Duch: 'Faith, I think I should.

Duke: What would you, sweeting, of the learned man?

Duch: I would, were it now summer, as it is  
December and the dead time of the year,  
All old and dull grey, foggy, spent and dry,  
Desire no better meat than eat my bellyful  
Of ripest grapes and other dainty fruit,  
As thou, sweet Doctor, by thy potent Art  
May conjure up to medicine my desire.

Faus: And so I will.

Duke: Thou art most kind and gentle.

*(Exit Mephostophilis)*

Faus: I will do more than this for your content-

*(The horse-courser knocketh at the door without)*

Duke: What rude disturber have we at the door?

Faus: Wagner, go pacify this drunkard straight.

Wag: What is the reason you disturb the Duke?

H-Cr: I'd speak with Master Fustian.



Faus: 'Tis the horse-dealer.

Duke: What would the fellow?

Count: This is most strange.

Faus: I do beseech your Grace, let him come in:

He is good subject for a merriment.

Duke: He is most welcome.

*(Wagner lets the Horse-courser in)*

H-Cr: Hey you, Mastere Fastian!

Faus: Faith, you are too outrageous, but welcome sir.

H-Cr: I should be welcome for the money I have paid thee. Give's half dozen of beer here. Water my horse.

Faus: This fellow's drunk, and knows not where he is

H-Cr: God save you Mistress.

Count: Why you saucy fellow

Faus: Nay, hark you; can you tell me where you are?

H-Cr: Ay, marry, can I. We are under Heaven.

Faus: Ay, but, Sir Sauce-box, do you know in whose house?

H-Cr: Ay, ay, the house is good enough to drink in.

Zounds, fill me some beer or I'll break all the barrels in the house.

Faus: Be not so furious: come, you shall have beer.

Go, fetch him some beer.

H-Cr: Ay, fetch some ale

We'll all drink a health...

All: We'll all drink a health...

H-Cr: To thy wooden leg

Faus: My wooden leg?

Count: What dost thou mean by that ?

H-Cr: Ha, ha! Dost hear him? He has forgot his leg.

Methinks you should not stand much upon it.

Do you not remember a poor horse-dealer you sold a horse to?

Faus: Yes.

H-Cr: And do you remember you bid he should not ride into the water?

Faus: Yes.

H-Cr: And do you remember nothing of your leg?

Faus: No.

Duke: Wherefore dost thou ask?

H-Cr: Why, did not I pull off one of his legs when he was sleep?

Faus: But I have it again now I am awake. Look you here, sir.

H-Cr: O horrible! Have you three legs?

Duch: I warrant him he hath.

Faus: Base fellow, hence!

H-Cr: You whoreson scab, you knave, you conjuror!

Give me my forty marks and be damn'd.

I say thou art a dev...

*(Faustus charms him dumb)*

Faus: I know well what thou art:

A foul malicious knave that dar'st to brawl

Before a mighty lord and his fair lady;

Duch: Hast charm'd his tongue?

Faus: I have so please your Grace.

Duke: Alas, I pity him, and pray you, Doctor,

To take your charm off from the unhappy knave.

Faus: And so I will: good Wagner take him hence.

*(Exeunt Wagner and the Horse-courser)*

My spell shall last a day, nor more nor less.

Duke: I wonder much what other mirth's in store?  
 Faus: Whate'er thou wilt, or what thy lady wilt.  
 Duke: How fare you, madam? You look strangely, love.  
 Duch: Most strange indeed; but, by my life, 'tis sweet.  
 Faus: Fie, she hast drunk up all the bottle dry.  
 Duch: Kind sir, I have, and more I'd have of thee.  
 Duke: As what, good wife?  
 Faus: Pray, gently speak thy mind.  
 Duch: Once by thy Art thou didst erect a castle  
       For my good lord; What will you now erect  
       To pleasure me?  
 Faus: I vow, whate'er thou wilt.  
 Duch: I am fain to learn thy Art.  
 Duke: Ay, so would I.  
 Duch: 'Tis said that when you fall to conjuring  
       You do it in a circle.  
 Duke: Is that true?  
 Faus: As true as I am fain to conjure now.  
 Duch: Well, if thou hast a pretty wit, thou mayst.  
 Faus: Then must you, lady, be my quick apprentice.  
 Duch: I will. But thou must show me all thy art.  
 Duke: But say where thou dost conjure doctor?  
 Faus: I raise my spirit, for that is the end  
       Of conjuring and necromantic art,  
       Within a vale where lies a tangled grove,  
       At whose sweet centre is a little mount,  
       And there my potent spirit flourisheth.  
 Duch: Oh how I long for thee to raise thy spirit!  
 Duke: But thou must conjure here this present time;  
       Must not thy prentice first provide a circle?  
 Duch: And so I will. And so tis ready for thee.  
       Sir conjuror I wait upon thy will.  
 Duke: I give thee leave. I pray assist him wife.  
 Duch: What follows next?  
 Faus: Nay thou knowst well what follows.  
 Duch: Come, show, if thou hast any wit or skill,  
       Thy art's full scope and sweet capacity.  
       Nay come. Nay come.

*(Enter Mephostophilis with the grapes)*

Faus: The grapes are come, heigh-ho.  
 Duke: 'Tis magical.  
 Count: Why, this is Art indeed.  
 Duch: Come! Help me feed upon thy blissful fruits.  
 Faus: So do I in earnest of sweet fruits to come.  
       How like you them?  
 Duch: O, wondrous, wondrous much.  
 Duke: This makes me wonder more than all the rest,  
       From hence you had them at this time of year.  
 Faus: Your Grace, from India I brought them by a Spirit.  
       Only to please thy lady.  
 Duke: And thou hast.  
 Duch: They be the best grapes, trust me, Master Doctor,  
       That e'er I tasted in my life before.

*(The clock strikes the half-hour)*

Duke: Lady, alas, 'tis time for us to part.  
 Duch: Alas that 'tis so, I am fain to stay.  
 Count: Madam your husband calls.



Faus: What means your Grace?

Duch: If thou'lt remove thy charm,  
I vow to thee, when Spring is come again,  
And I am of this tedious burden light,  
Then come to me and I shall be thy grove;  
And in my garden shall you conjure then,  
And we shall be so frolic thou shalt think  
Thou art in paradise. What ails thee, sir?

Faus: Talk not of paradise, I'll loose my charm.

Duch: I thank you, Faustus, for your gentleness.  
And now I am pleased with thee again, farewell:  
Haply when I am deliver'd in the spring,  
And that methinks is but a little time,  
Thou shalt have then thy promised reward.

*(Exit the Duchess)*

Faus: Alas, alas.

*(Exit Faustus)*

[The Chorus introducing the last part in Faustus's life, delivered by Beelzebub; corresponding with the three devils' lines, xix,1-19:]

And so the new year began and Faustus had but three months left to him. And if during that time he had any good motion towards repentance, it lasted not long, but was tainted like to that of Cain and Judas, for he thought his sins greater and more beastly than God could forgive. But in this he sought to guess God's mind by the nature of this own. He thought it folly to hope for grace, having quite forgot his faith in Christ, and so never fell to repentance truly, whereby he might have attained God's grace again. The which would in sooth have enabled him to resist the strong assaults of the Devil.

But Faustus could not do the same. Often he would range abroad and conjure desperately, whereby many a strange and merry jest he played that Lenten season. At one time to win a wager of a country clown for three farthings he ate a load of hay. At another he cozened a Jew of sixty marks by pawning of his foot to him. On Ash Wednesday he caused the pots and dishes at a feast to dance and then for a monstrous ape to come amongst them, dancing and skipping and showing them many merry conceits. And every night he would lay with all manner of women in all manner of delights.

And so he lived an epicurish and swinish life, and became at the last, a very confusion of all the vices, as Hell itself is confused.

And thus he fell into a sloth of spirit, a kind of dead despair that was perchance in him the greatest sin of all. For when despair and pride prevent a man from repentance, then is he damned indeed, for he hath put himself beyond the reach of God.

And so it grew towards Easter. And so time ran away with Faustus, as the hour-glass, for now was Good Friday past, and he had but a day and night to come of his four and twenty years.

[The last Chorus after Faustus is pulled to hell:]

Beel: And so it happened between twelve and one o'clock at midnight, the house of Faustus, was environed with smoke and fire, together with a noisome stench.

Meph: But when it was day, the scholars arose and went into the room where they had left him, which they found all besprinkled with blood and his brains cleaving to the wall: for Lucifer had beaten him from one wall against another. Then sought they for his body, and at length they found it in the yard, lying upon horse dung.

Beel: In the house they also found this history written by him saving only his end, the which was after by the Scholars thereto added. And thus ended the history of Faustus; out of which example all Christians may learn, to fear God and the Devil equally.

Luci: Cut is the branch...[etc.]

## APPENDIX D

EXTRACTS FROM THE PROMPTBOOK OF THE A.T.C.'S PRODUCTION  
OF *DR. FAUSTUS*, 1987

[Faustus's visit to the underworld:]

*(Enter Mephostophilis and Faustus. Charon waits with his ferry)*

Charon: Mephostophilis, dear friend! And a customer too.

I've been waiting here an eternity.

Meph: This is Faustus I bring, Charon. No customer. But we wish to make a trip to the other side. And Faustus' treasures will pay you well.

Charon: All aboard then! And hear how the matter stands! The boat as you see is small and in a terrible condition. It is leaky in several places and not equally trimmed. All of which is by saying [sic] no responsibility is taken for accident, death or loss of limb.

Faust: 'Death be not proud, nor yet canst thou kill me'.

Charon: Amusing fellow, Mephostophilis!

*(They set sail)*

We'll take a different route home. A better view. Turn your eyes to the left, good Faustus, and view the earth where you dwell. Look at the great masses of men at their occupations. Do you see how some are sailing to and fro upon the ocean, others carrying on war, others labouring in the fields, these crowding the courts of law, those the usurers' shops?

Faus: What a swarm! But what are then those forms hovering about them?

Charon: These are the hopes, Faustus, and the cares, and the false imaginations, the ignorance and folly, voluptuousness, avarice and envy, and the various passions that perpetually haunt them. But fear and hope, with their whole gang, flutter over them. The former, when it settles down upon them, often makes them lose their heads, and sometimes throws them entirely to the ground: whereas the hopes always buzz close to their heads. But so soon as anyone eagerly catches at them, away they all go, and he grasps the air.

Faus: It is ridiculous, Mephostophilis!

Charon: Ridiculous is the word. Especially when we observe the astonishing exertion and solicitude wherewith they pursue the objects of their desires; and then how suddenly comes gaunt death, and carries them off in the midst of their hopes. Death however has, as you perceive, an infinite number of officers and messengers marching before him, agues, fevers, consumptions, swords and daggers and poisons, judges and tyrants. On all these they bestow not a thought, while health remains. But when once they are thrown flat upon their faces, then nothing is heard but, alas, alas, ah me, ah me, weeping and wailing.

Meph: This is where the earthly forms of humans remain while their spirits depart to heaven or Lucifer.

Faus: Where then are those beautiful men and women of whom there was so much talk above, Mephostophilis?

Meph: There are Hyacinthus and Narcissus and Nireus, and Achilles, and Tyro, and Helen, and Leda, in short all the celebrated beauties of antiquity, all together in a cluster.

Faus: I see nothing but bare bones and skulls, in which nothing is to be discriminated.

Meph: Yet these bones, which appear to you so contemptible, have been extolled by the poets to this day.

Faus: But show me at least Helen. For of myself I cannot find her out.

Meph: That skull there is the beautiful Helen.

Faus: And is this what those thousand ships sailed for from all over Greece? Is this why all those Greeks and barbarians were killed? And all those cities sacked?

Meph: Ah, but my good Faustus, you should have seen her while she lived. You would have said the same yourself—that there was nothing reprehensible in 'enduring troubles for years for such a woman'.



Faus: What I wonder at, Mephostophilis, is how it came to pass that the Greeks did not perceive that it was for the sake of such a transitory object, [sic] that they gave themselves all that trouble. The Greeks, the learned Greeks with all the glories come to this.

*(They re-board. Faustus is reflective)*

Yet will I go to hell? Death and damnation I fear them not, I will turn fortune's wheel so God will be content [sic] with me and Faustus will sit with all his majesty.

**[The vision of Heaven introduced in the production:]**

Meph: It is paradise that lieth so far in the East, the garden that God himself hath planted with all manner of pleasure, and the fiery stream that thou seest, is the walls or defence of the garden. But that clear light that thou seest so far off, is the Angel that hath the custody thereof, with a fiery sword. And although that thou thinkest thyself to be hard by, thou hast yet farther thither from hence, than thou hast ever been. But neither thou, nor I, nor any after us, yea all men whosoever are denied to visit it, or to come any nearer than we be.

Faus: And that is the place where Lucifer once dwelled?

Meph: It is, Faustus.

Faus: Tell me in what form and shape, and in what estimation your lord Lucifer was when he was in favour with God.

Meph: Faustus, my Lord Lucifer was at the first an Angel of God. He sat on [sic] the Cherubims, and saw all the wonderful works of God, yea how was so of God ordained, for shape, pomp, authority, worthiness, and swelling, that he far exceeded all the others, the creatures of God, yea our gold and precious stones: and so illuminated, that he far surpassed the brightness of the Sun and all other Stars. Wherefore God placed him on the Cherubims [sic], where he had a kingly office, and was always before God's seat, to the end he might be the more perfect in all his beings. But when he began to be high-minded, proud, and so presumptuous, that he would usurp the seat of his Majesty, then was he banished out from amongst the heavenly powers, separated from their abiding into the manner of a fiery stone, that no water is able to quench, but continually burneth until the end of the world.

Faus: But is there no respite from that fire below?

Meph: Oh, we have with us in hell a ladder, reaching of an exceeding height, as though it would touch heaven, on which the damned ascend to seek the blessings of God; but through their infidelity, when they are at the very highest degree, they fall down again into their former miseries, complaining of the heat of that unquenchable fire. Yea, sweet Faustus, so must thou understand of hell.

Faus: Alas, ah woe is me! What have I done? Even so shall it come to pass with me as with Lucifer. Pride hath abused my understanding, in so much that I have forgot my maker, the Spirit of God is departed from me.

APPENDIX E

LIST OF PROFESSIONAL PRODUCTIONS OF DR. FAUSTUS

DATE	COMPANY	THEATRE	DIRECTOR	CAST	COMMENTS
1940 (12 Mar.)		Rudolf Steiner Hall, London			
1944 (16 May)	Old Vic Company	Liverpool Playhouse	John Moody		
1946-7 (12 Jul.)		Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon	Walter Hudd	F: Robert Harris M: Hugh Griffith (1947: Paul Scofield)	See Chapter Six
1948 (7 Oct.)	Old Vic Company	New Theatre, London	John Burrell	F: Cedric Hardwicke M: Robert Eddison	
1961 (22 Aug.) (14 Sep.)	Old Vic Company	Assembly Hall, Edinburgh Festival  Old Vic Theatre, London	Michael Benthall	F: Paul Daneman M: Michael Goodliffe Chorus: Walter Hudd L: Robert Eddison	B. Post: 22 Aug., 1961 B. Post: 15 Sep., 1961 D. Telegraph: 14 Sep., 1961 Guardian: 23 Aug., 1961 Plays & Players: Oct., 1961 Plays & Players: Nov., 1961 Times: 23 Aug., 1961/ 15 Sep.

B: Beelzebub    F: Faustus    L: Lucifer    M: Mephostophilis



DATE	COMPANY	THEATRE	DIRECTOR	CAST	COMMENTS
1964	Farnham Repertory Company				
1965 (adapted) (2 Dec.)		Close Theatre, Glasgow	Charles Marowitz		
1966 (25 May)		Nottingham Playhouse	Andre Van Gysegthem	F: John Neville	<u>D.Telegraph</u> , 26 May, 1966. <u>Plays &amp; Players</u> , Jul., 1966.
1968 (27 Jun.)	R.S.C.	Shakespeare Memo- rial Theatre, Strat- ford-upon-Avon.	Clifford Williams	F: Eric Porter M: Terrence Hardman	Designer: Abdl Elkader Farrah
1969 (adapted) (28 Oct.)		Newcastle Playhouse	Ann Stutfield		
1970	R.S.C.	Abbey Theatre, Dublin & then Theatre go-round Stratford.	Gareth Morgan	F: David Waller M: Alan Howard	<u>B. Post</u> , 25 Jun., 1970. <u>D.Telegraph</u> , 25 Jun., 1970. <u>Guardian</u> , 31 Mar., 1970. <u>Plays &amp; Players</u> , Aug., 1970.

DATE	COMPANY	THEATRE	DIRECTOR	CAST	COMMENTS
1974 (13 Aug.)	R.S.C.	Nottingham Playhouse	John Barton	F: Ian McKellen M: Emrys James	Designer: Michael Annals  See Chapter Six
(29 Aug.)		Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh			
(5 Sep.)		Aldwych Theatre, London			
1975		Stratford			
1975 (22 Dec.)	Barry Smith's Theatre of Puppets	Young Vic	Alan Judd		<u>The Stage</u> , 27 Sep., 1977
1977 (19 Sep.- 1 Oct.)	//				
1976 (10-27 Nov.)		Perth Repertory Theatre	Andrew McKibbin		<u>Plays &amp; Players</u> , Jan., 1977
1977 (22-26 Nov.)	York Theatre Royal Company	York Arts Centre	Alun Drury		
1977 (28 Nov.- 10 Dec.)	Chester Gateway Theatre Company	Chester Arts Centre	David Thacker		



DATE	COMPANY	THEATRE	DIRECTOR	CAST	COMMENTS
1978 (1-18 Mar.)		Belgrade Theatre, Coventry	Antony Tucky		Produced as <u>Faustus's Last Supper</u> <u>Guardian</u> , 3 Mar., 1978 <u>The Stage</u> , 18 Mar., 1978
1982 (16 Feb.-15 Mar.)		Wolsey Theatre, Ipswich			
1978 (Nov.)	Sherman Arena Company	Sherman Theatre, Cardiff	Duncan Miller & Frances Brookes		5 Actors
1978 (18-28 Feb.)		Nuffield Theatre, Southampton	Sue Wilson		
1979 (31 Oct.- 17 Nov.)		Connaught Theatre, Worthing	Nicholas Young		
1980 (25 Feb.)		Lyric Studio, Hammersmith	Christopher Fettes	F: James Aubrey M: Patrick Magee	<u>B. Post</u> , 31 May, 1980 <u>D. Telegraph</u> , 27 Feb. & 27 Mar., 1980 <u>Guardian</u> , 26 Feb. & 29 Mar. & 24 May, 1980 <u>Observer</u> , 2 Mar., 1980 <u>Time</u> , 26 Feb. & 28 Mar., 1980

DATE	COMPANY	THEATRE	DIRECTOR	CAST	COMMENTS
1981 (17 Sep.- 24 Oct.)		Royal Exchange, Theatre, Manchester	Adrian Noble		<u>Critical Quarterly</u> 23 (1981), 3-9 <u>D.Telegraph</u> , 19 Sep., 1981 <u>Times</u> , 18 Sep., 1981
1982 (1-7 Apr.)		Swan Theatre, Worcester	Ian Granville Bell		<u>Guardian</u> , 6 Apr., 1982 <u>The Stage</u> , 22 Apr., 1982
1983 (Apr.)  (May)	Nottingham Playhouse Company	York Theatre Royal, York  Nottingham	Michael Winter		<u>The Stage</u> , 16 Jun., 1983
1984 (11 Jul.- 11 Aug.)		Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh	Ian Wooldridge		
1986 (Summer)	Park Bench Theatre Company	Cambridge Festival Fringe			



DATE	COMPANY	THEATRE	DIRECTOR	CAST	COMMENTS
1987 (5, 6 Oct.)	Actors Touring Company	Adaptation on Tour Opened in Cheltenham, as part of Festival of Art & Literature	Mark Brickman	F: Peter Lindford M: George Anton B: David Westhead	See Chapter Six
1988 (1-5 Mar.)	Wales Actors Company	Sherman Theatre, Cardiff	Ruth Martin	F: David Robertson	<u>What's On</u> , 9 Mar., 1988 <u>Western Mail</u> , 8 Mar. 1988 <u>Stage</u> , 31 Mar., 1988
1988 (21 Apr.- 21 May)	Young Vic	The Young Vic, London	Antony Clark	F: Peter Guinness M: Stephen Jenn	
1988 (1-4 Jun.) (8-11 Jun.)	Vox Theatre Company	Green Room, Manchester Bolton Octagon Theatre Studio	Dave Bond	F: Sam Webster M: Keith Woodason	6 Actors
1989 (11 May)	R.S.C.	Swan Theatre	Barry Kyle	F: Gerard Murphy M: David Bradley	

**APPENDIX F**  
**(SELECTIVE) LIST OF AMATEUR PRODUCTIONS OF DR. FAUSTUS**

DATE	COMPANY	THEATRE	DIRECTOR	CAST	COMMENTS
1896 (2, 4 Jul.)	Elizabethan Stage Society	St. George's Hall, London	William Poel	F: D. L. Mannering	See Chapter Five
1904 (Oct., Dec.)		Royal Court & Terry's Theatre			
1907	The Marlowe Society	Cambridge			
1925 (Oct.)	The Phoenix Society	The New Oxford Theatre, London	Allan Wade	F: Ian Swinley	See: <u>Times</u> , 27 Oct., 1925 <u>D. Telegraph</u> , 27 Oct., 1925 <u>Saturday Review</u> , 31 Oct., 1925
1929 (20,22, 24, Aug.)	Norwich Madder-Market Players	Canterbury Cathedral Canterbury Festival	Nugent Monck		
1934 (Feb.)	Oxford University Dramatic Society	Oxford Town Hall	Gyles Isham		See: <u>D. Telegraph</u> , 21 Aug., 1929

F: Faustus H: Helen M: Mephostophilis



DATE	COMPANY	THEATRE	DIRECTOR	CAST	COMMENTS
1951	Cambridge Marlowe, Society	Arts Theatre, Cambridge	George Rylands		
1956 (6 Apr.)	Tavistock Repertory, Company	Tower Theatre, Canonbury, London	Evan Halterman	F: Richard Beale	
1957 (5 Mar.)	Oxford University Dramatic Society	Oxford Playhouse	Nevill Coghill	F: Vernon Dobtcheff	D.Telegraph, 6 Mar., 1957 <u>Plays &amp; Players</u> , May, 1957 <u>Times</u> , 6 Mar., 1957
1966 (14 Feb.)	// (Semi- Professional)	Oxford Playhouse	Nevill Coghill	F: Richard Burton H: Elizabeth Taylor	Filmed (See Chapter Six)
1960	Britol University, Drama Society		Michael Bakewell		
1960 (1 Aug.)	Cambridge Marlowe Society	Open air, Stratford- Upon-Avon.			<u>Plays &amp; Players</u> , Oct., 1960
(23 Aug.)		Lyric, Hammersmith.			

DATE	COMPANY	THEATRE	DIRECTOR	CAST	COMMENTS
1963	Oxford University Drama Society				
1971 (Jan.)	Marsh College Players	National Union of Students Drama Festival, South- ampton University			<u>Plays &amp; Players</u> , Feb., 1971
1974		Edinburgh Festival Fringe			
1975 (4 Dec.)	Clare Actors	Clare College, Cambridge			
1976 (Summer)	St. Peter's College, Oxford				
1977 (21 Feb.)	Bats Theatre Company	Christ's College, Cambridge	John Softley		
1978 (21-25 Nov.)	Oxford Unvirisity Dramatic Society	Oxford Playhouse	Jeremy Howe		



DATE	COMPANY	THEATRE	DIRECTOR	CAST	COMMENTS
1979 (18-21 Oct.)	Open Link Theatre Club	The Eddison Centre, London	Ian Munday		<u>The Stage</u> , Nov., 1979
1979 (19-24 Nov.)		Pembroke College, Cambridge	Richard Spaul		
1980 (14-18 Oct.)	Jesus College Dramatic Society	Jesus College, Cambridge	Tim Cribb, Stewart Eames & Howard Erskine-Hill		
1980 (21-29 Nov.)		Maddermarket Theatre, Norwich			
1981 (Mar.)	University College Players	Oxford Playhouse	R. Gaskin		
1981	Cambridge Experimental Theatre				
1982	The Attick Theatre Company, Glasgow	Glasgow			

DATE	COMPANY	THEATRE	DIRECTOR	CAST	COMMENTS
1982	King Edward's School	Straford-upon-Avon			
1983 (Jan.)		Gulbenkian Studio, Newcastle-upon- tyme			
1984 (6-10 Mar.)	Cambridge University Marlowe Society	Arts Theatre, Cambridge	David Parry		
1986 (12-15 Nov.)	Yorkshire Amateurs	Ripon Cathedral, Ripon Festival of Art.	Derek Stevens	F: Tony Goodall M: Derek Stevens	See Appendix B



APPENDIX G

LIST OF PROFESSIONAL PRODUCTIONS OF *THE JEW OF MALTA*

DATE	COMPANY	THEATRE	DIRECTOR	CAST	COMMENTS
1922	The Phoenix Society	Daly's Theatre, London	Allan Wade	B: Balliol Holloway	See Chapter Seven
1964 (17-22 Feb.)		The Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury	Donald Bain	B: Micael Baxter	<u>The Stage</u> , 27 Feb., 1964 <u>Times</u> , 19 Feb., 1964
1964 (10 Mar.)		Victoria Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent	Peter Cheeseman	B: Bernard Gallagher	<u>Plays &amp; Players</u> , May, 1964 <u>Times</u> , 16 Mar., 1964
1964 (1 Oct.)	R.S.C.	The Aldwych, London	Clifford Williams	B: Clive Revil I: Ian Richardson	See Chapter Seven
1965 (Apr.)		Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford- upon-Avon		B: Eric Porter I: Peter McEnery	
1984 (12-24 Mar.)	Oracle Productions	Donmar Warehouse, London	Peter Benedict		
1987 (7 Jul.)	R.S.C.	The Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon- Avon	Barry Kyle	B: Alun Armstrong I: Phil Daniels	See Chapter Seven

B: Barabas F: Ferneze I: Ithamore

APPENDIX H

(SELECTIVE) LIST OF AMATEUR PRODUCTIONS OF *THE JEW OF MALTA*

DATE	COMPANY	THEATRE	DIRECTOR	CAST	COMMENTS
1940 (Jun.)	Yale Dramatic Association				
1954 (13-14 May)	Reading University Dramatic Society				<u>Time</u> , 14 May, 1954
1957	Cambridge Theatre Group				
1960 (4-12 Mar.)	Tavistock Repertory Company	Tower Theatre, Canonbury			
1964 (Nov.)		Merseyside Unity Theatre, Liverpool			
1966		Merseyside Unity Theatre, Liverpool			
1966 (Oct.)	The Marlowe Society of Chiselhurst, Kent	Toynbee Hall, London			
1975 (11-15 Mar.)	Cambridge University, The Marlowe Society	Arts Theatre, Cambridge	John Chapman		
1984 (2-4 Feb.)	Hull University Drama Department		Ben Watt		
1986 (3 Jun.)		Netherbowe Theatre, Edinburgh			

B: Barabas F: Ferneze I: Ithamore



DATE	COMPANY	THEATRE	DIRECTOR	CAST	COMMENTS
1975 (12-17 Aug.) (Brecht's Play)	Bush Theatre Company	A tent on Shepherd's Green; then on tour			<u>Plays &amp; Players</u> , Oct., 1975
1978 (17 Aug.)	The Royal Lyceum Company	Little Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh	Stephen McDonald		
1980 (15 Apr.- 10 May)	Bristol Old Vic Company	The Bristol New Vic	Richard Cottrell		<u>Guardian</u> , 25 Apr., 1980 <u>Times</u> , 23 Apr., 1980
1982 (24 Feb.- 13 Mar.) (Brecht's Play)		The Roundhouse	Rowland Rees		<u>Plays &amp; Players</u> , Apr., 1982
1983-4 (30 Sep.- 1 Oct.)	Compass Theatre Company	Arts Centre, York; then on tour	Neil Sissons		<u>The Stage</u> , 15 Mar., 1984
1986 (23 Oct.- 22 Nov.)	Royal Exchange	Royal Exchange, Manchester	Nicholas Hytner	E: Ian McDiarmid	See Chapter Eight
1990 (10 Jul.-)	R.S.C.	The Swan, Stratford	Gerard Murphy	E: Simon Russell Beale	

APPENDIX J

(SELECTIVE) LIST OF AMATEUR PRODUCTIONS OF EDWARD II

DATE	COMPANY	THEATRE	DIRECTOR	CAST	COMMENTS
1903 (10 Aug.)	Elizabethan Stage Society	New Oxford Theatre, London	William Poel		See Chapter Five
1920 (Dec.)	Birkbeck College	Birkbeck College, London			
1923 (18 Nov.)	The Phoenix Society	Regent Theatre, London			
1951		ADC Theatre, Cambridge	John Barton		<u>Times</u> , 4 Dec., 1951
1954	Oxford Theatre Group	Edinburgh Festival	Casper Wrede		
1958	Cambridge University Marlowe Society	Arts Theatre, London, Open Air, Stratford; Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith	Toby Robertson		See Chapter Eight
1964	Bristol Old Vic Theatre School	Little Theatre, Bristol			
1964	Cambridge University The Marlowe Society				



DATE	COMPANY	THEATRE	DIRECTOR	CAST	COMMENTS
1964	Manchester University Drama Department				
1965 (Jan.)	Mountview Theatre Club	Crouch End, London			
1977 (Jun.)	The Fletcher Players	Corpus Christi College, Cambridge	Neil Harris		
1981 (Feb.)	The Brasenose Players	Brasenose College Hall, Oxford	M. Critchley	E: Marc Polansky	6 actors and one actress, (extensive doubling)
1982	Oxford Theatre Group				
1985 (summer)	The Clare Actors	Cambridge, on tour & at Edinburgh Festival	Danny Moar		

# The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus.

Written by *Ch. Mar.*



LONDON,  
Printed for *John Wright*, and are to be sold at his shop  
without Newgate, at the signe of the  
Bible. 1616.





2. Harlequin Dr. Faustus, John Rich in *The Necromancer* (reproduced from A. Nicoll, *The World of Harlequin*, Cambridge, 1963, p. 203)





*Mr. Kean as Barabas.*

*"Now have I such a plot for both their lives!"*

JEW OF MALTA.

*Drawn & Engraved expressly for the British Stage, May 1818.*



42

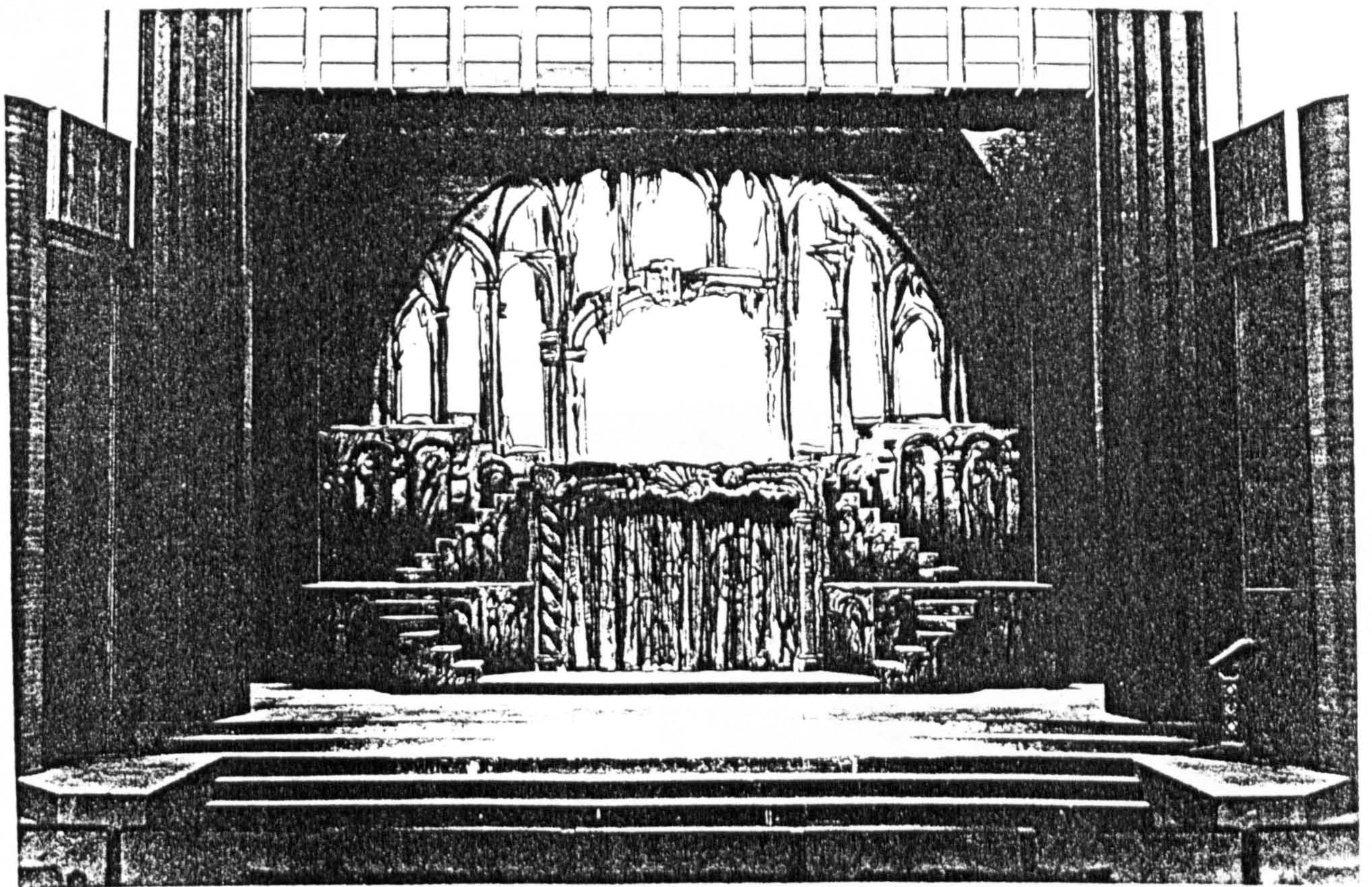
3. Edmund Kean as Barabas in the production of *The Jew of Malta*, Drury Lane, 1818 (Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Theatre Museum)





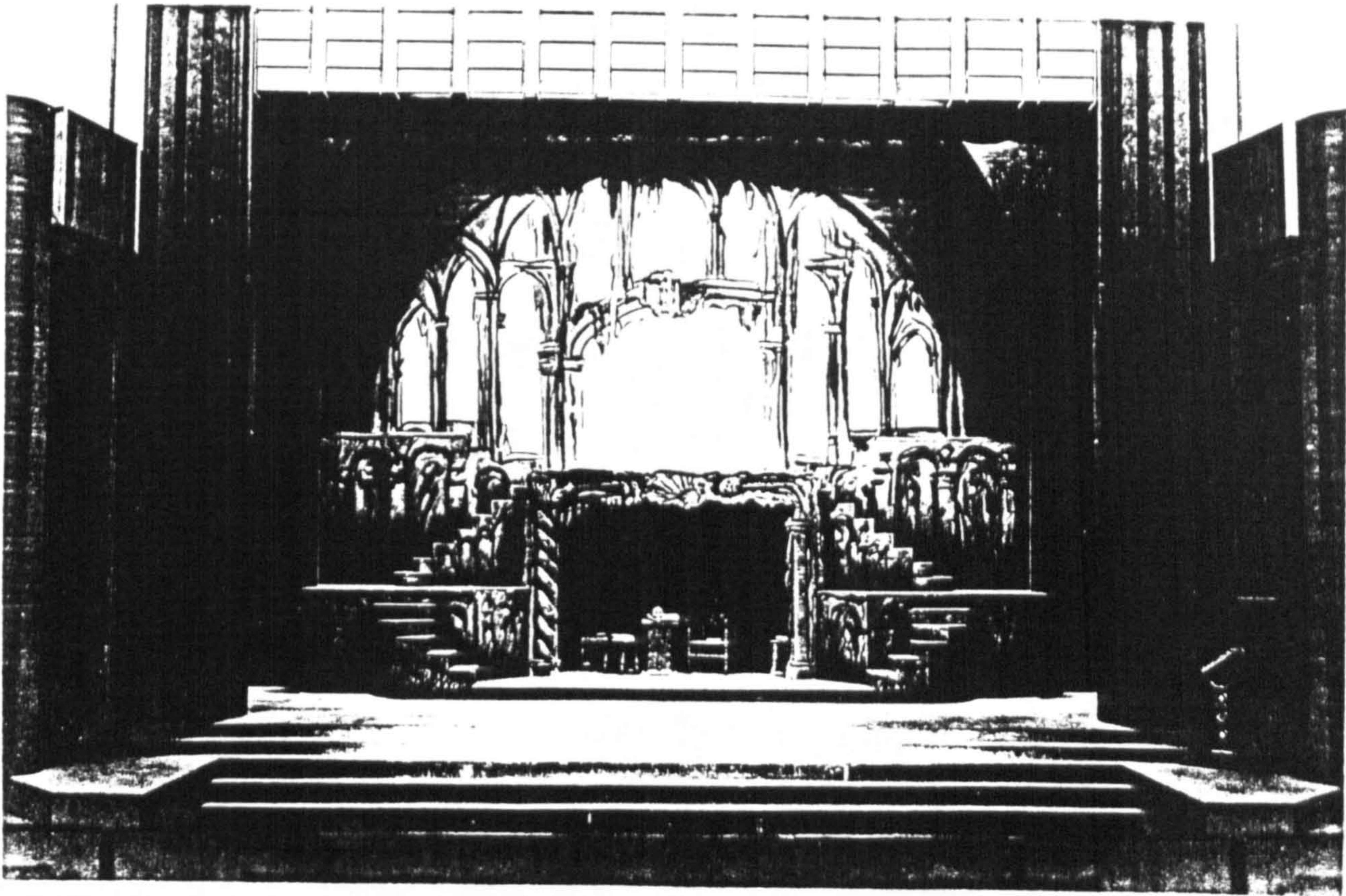
4. The Seven Deadly Sins in William Poel's production of *Dr. Faustus*, St. George's Hall, 1896 (Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Theatre Museum)



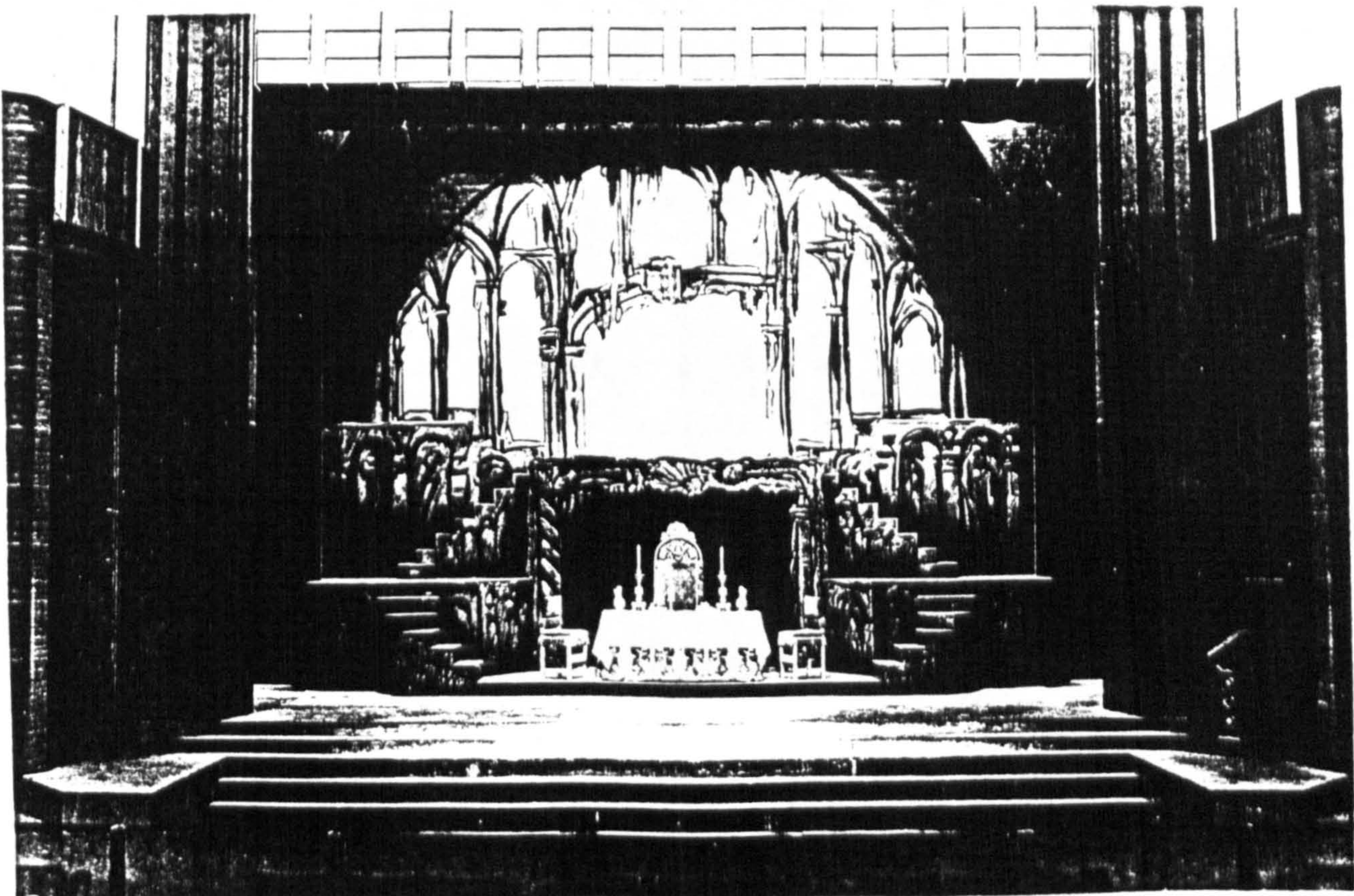


5. The set in Walter Hudd's production of *Dr. Faustus*, designed by Riette Sturge Moore, Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1946 (all illustrations of this production were obtained from Shakespeare Memorial Library, Stratford-upon-Avon)



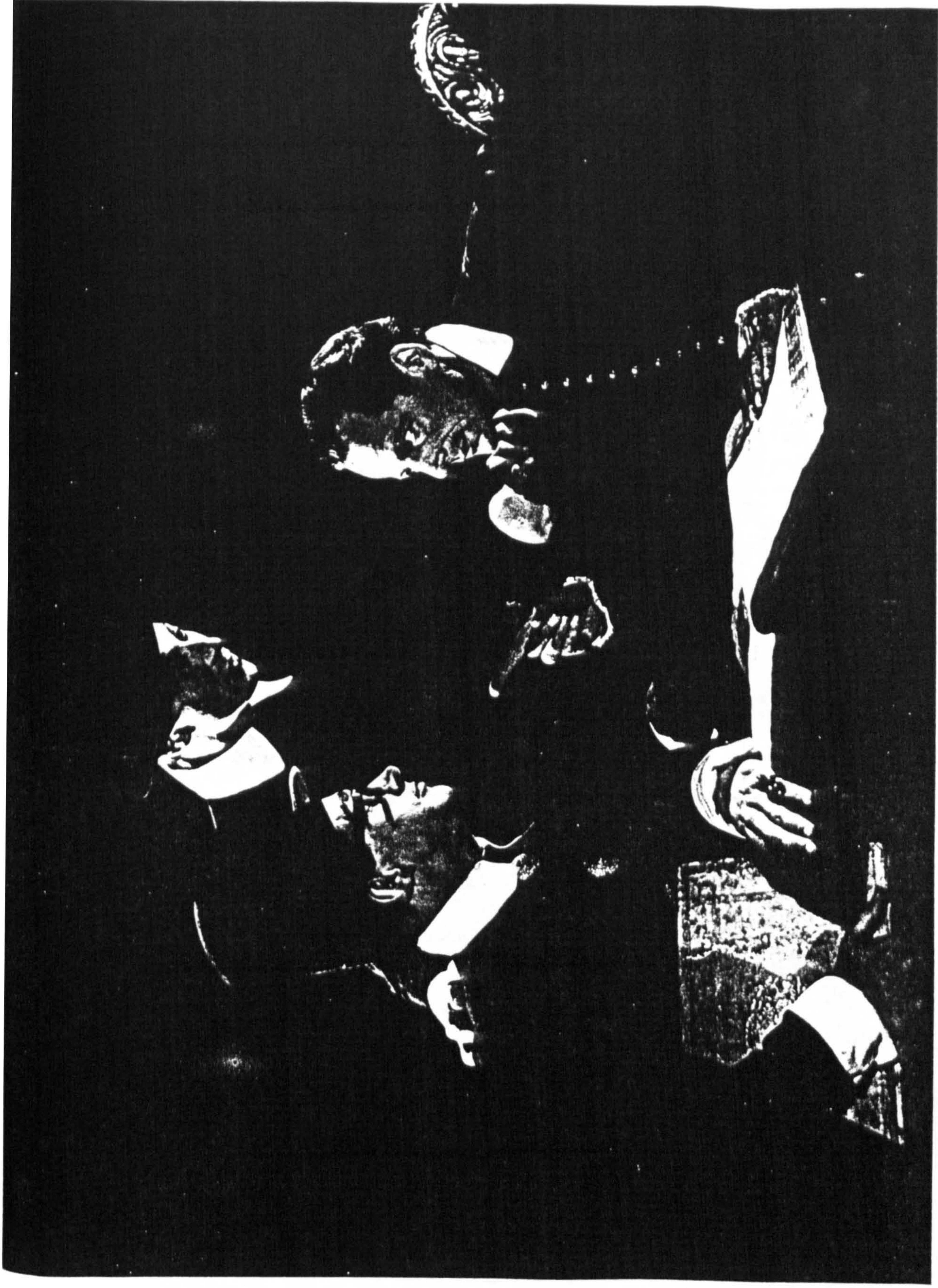


6. The Study in Walter Hudd's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1946



7. The setting for the papal banquet in Walter Hudd's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1946





8. *Faustus*: "As resolute I am in this/ As thou to live" (i,133-4): Robert Harris as Faustus, with Valdes (Paul Stephenson) and Cornelius in Walter Hudd's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1946





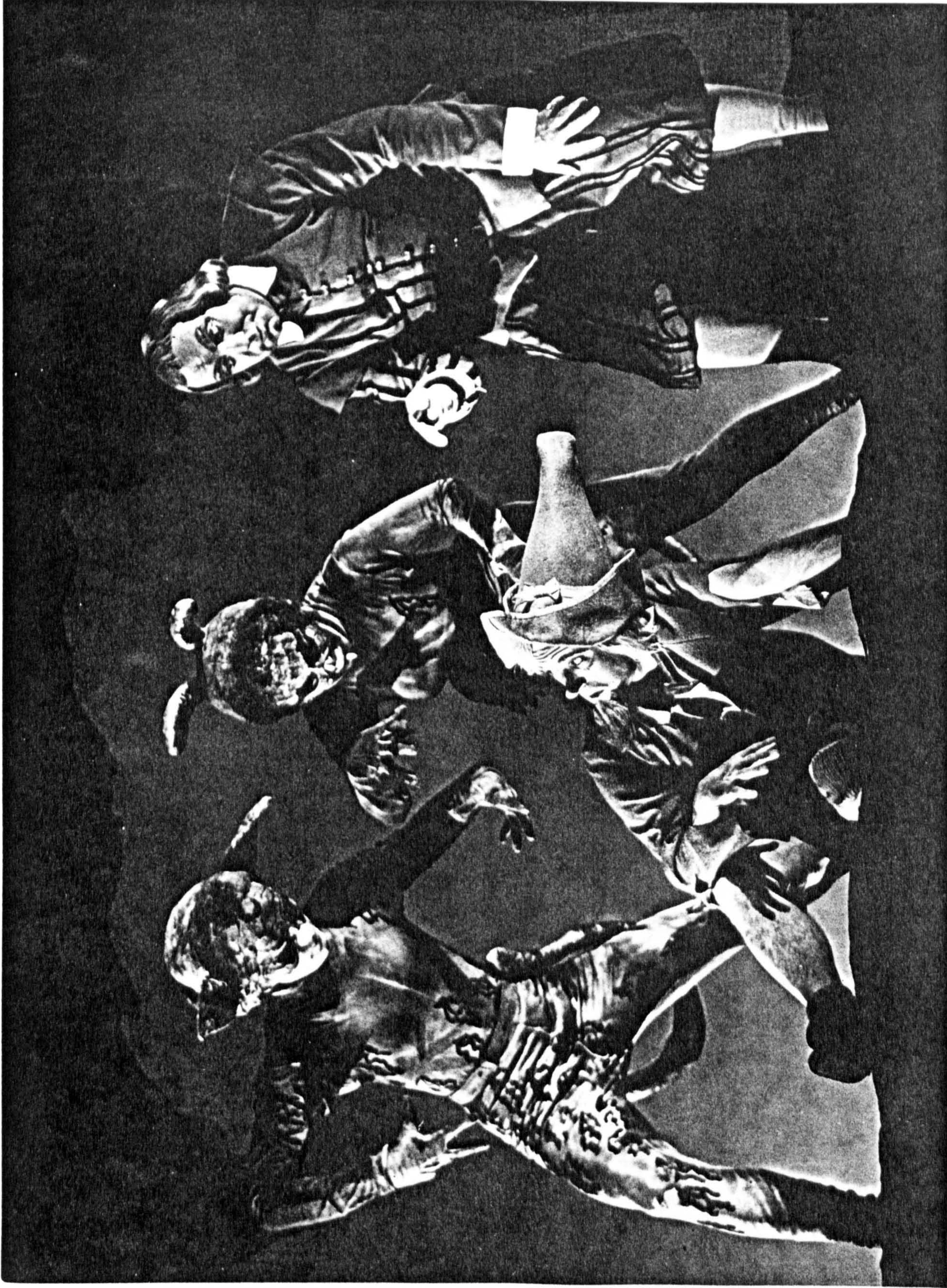
10. "Enter Devils, giving crowns and rich apparel" (v): Ian McKellen as Faustus and Emrys James as Mephostophilis in John Barton's production of *Dr. Faustus*, the Aldwych, London, 1974 (all illustrations of this production were obtained from Shakespeare Memorial Library, Stratford-upon-Avon)





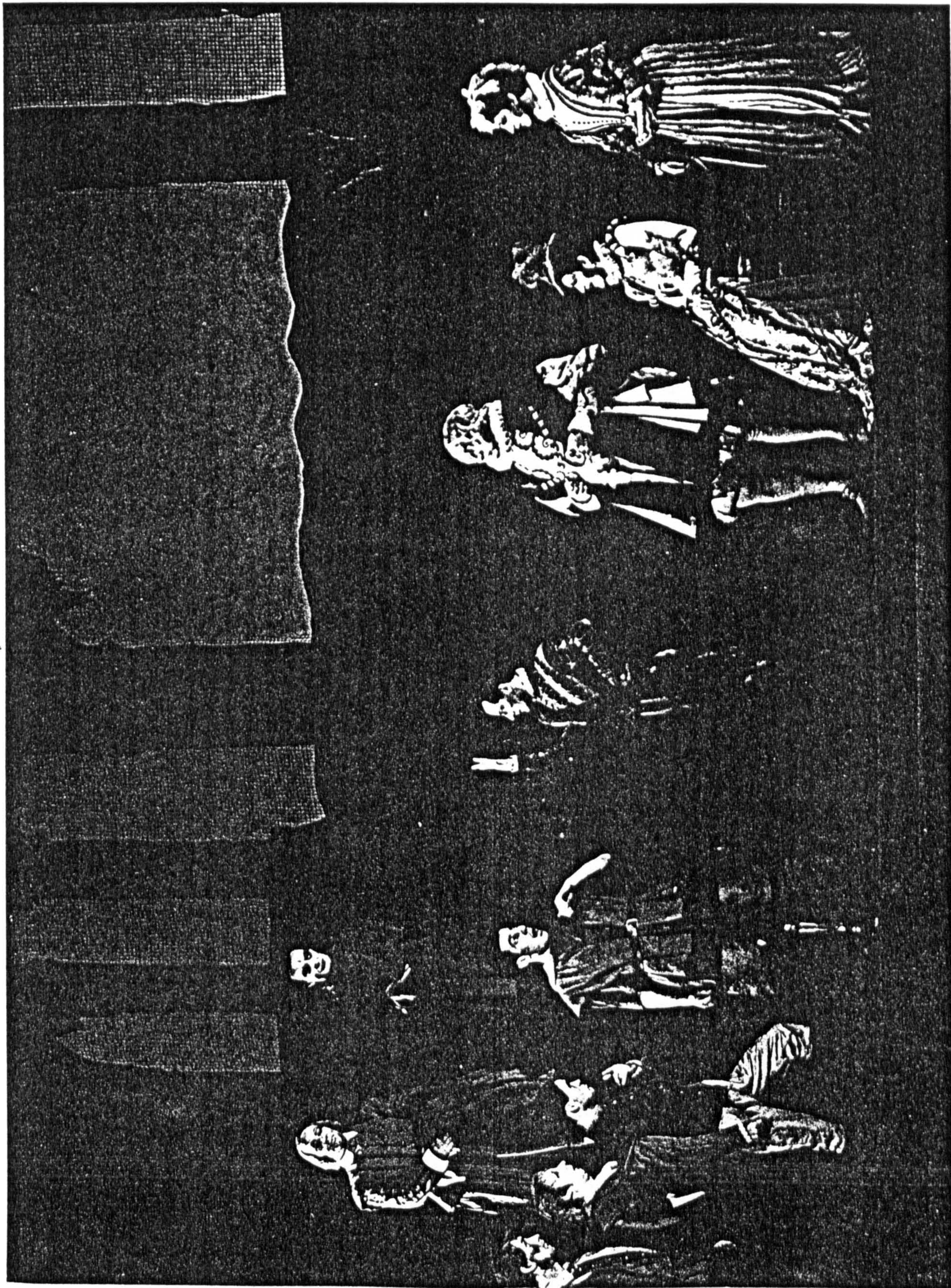
11. The Seven Deadly Sins (vi): Robert Harris as Faustus and Hugh Griffith as Mephostophilis in Walter Hudd's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1946





12. Baliol and Belcher (iv): Wagner (Robert Vernon) and Robin in Walter Hudd's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1946





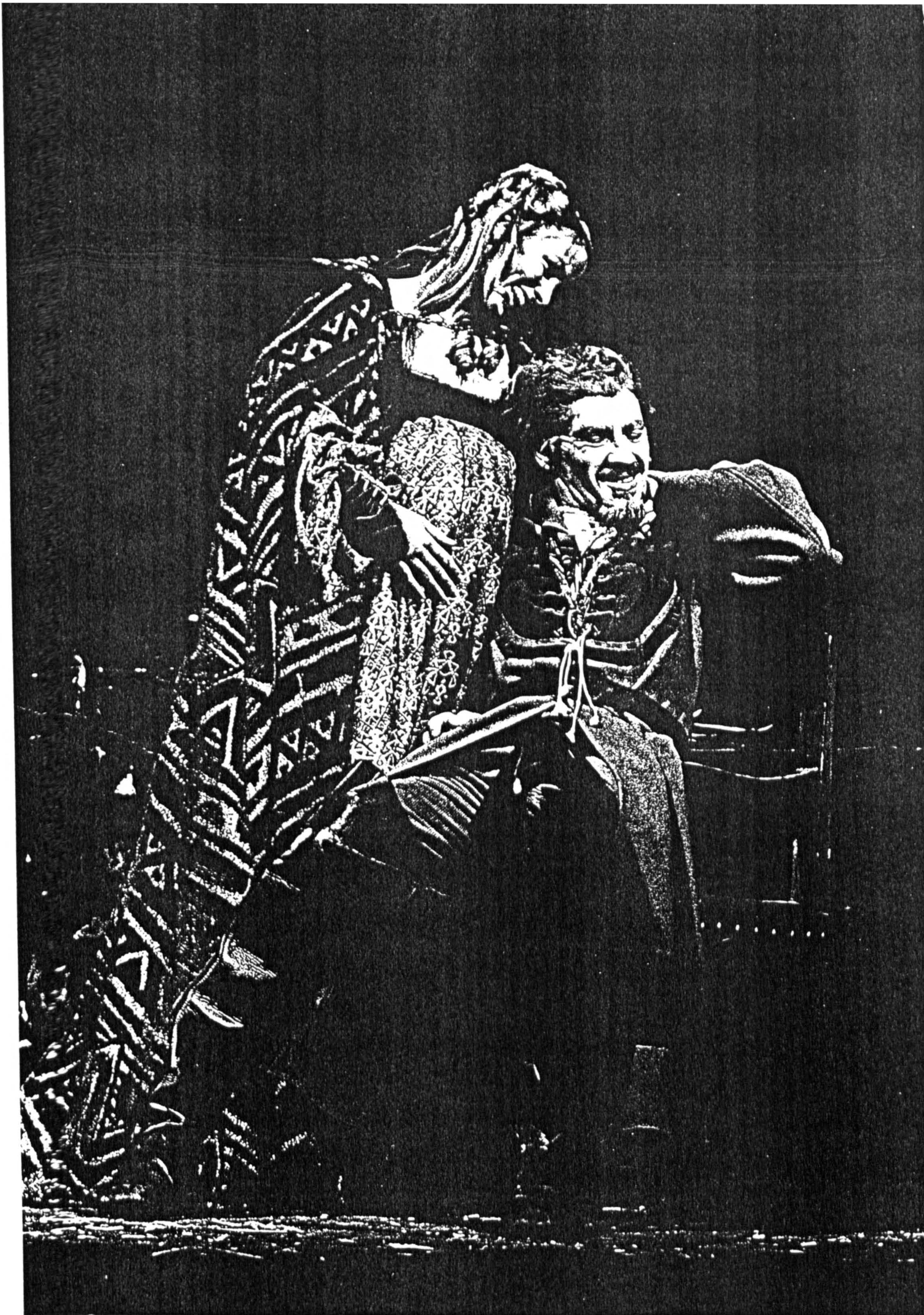
13. The eruption of the yokels: the Vanholt scene (xvii) in Walter Hudd's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1946





15. Richard Simpson and Diane Fletcher as the Duke and Duchess of Vanholt, Eric Porter as Faustus and Terrence Hardiman as Mephostophilis (xvii) in Clifford Williams's production of *Dr. Faustus*, The Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1968 (all illustrations for this production were obtained from Shakespeare Memorial Library, Stratford-upon-Avon)





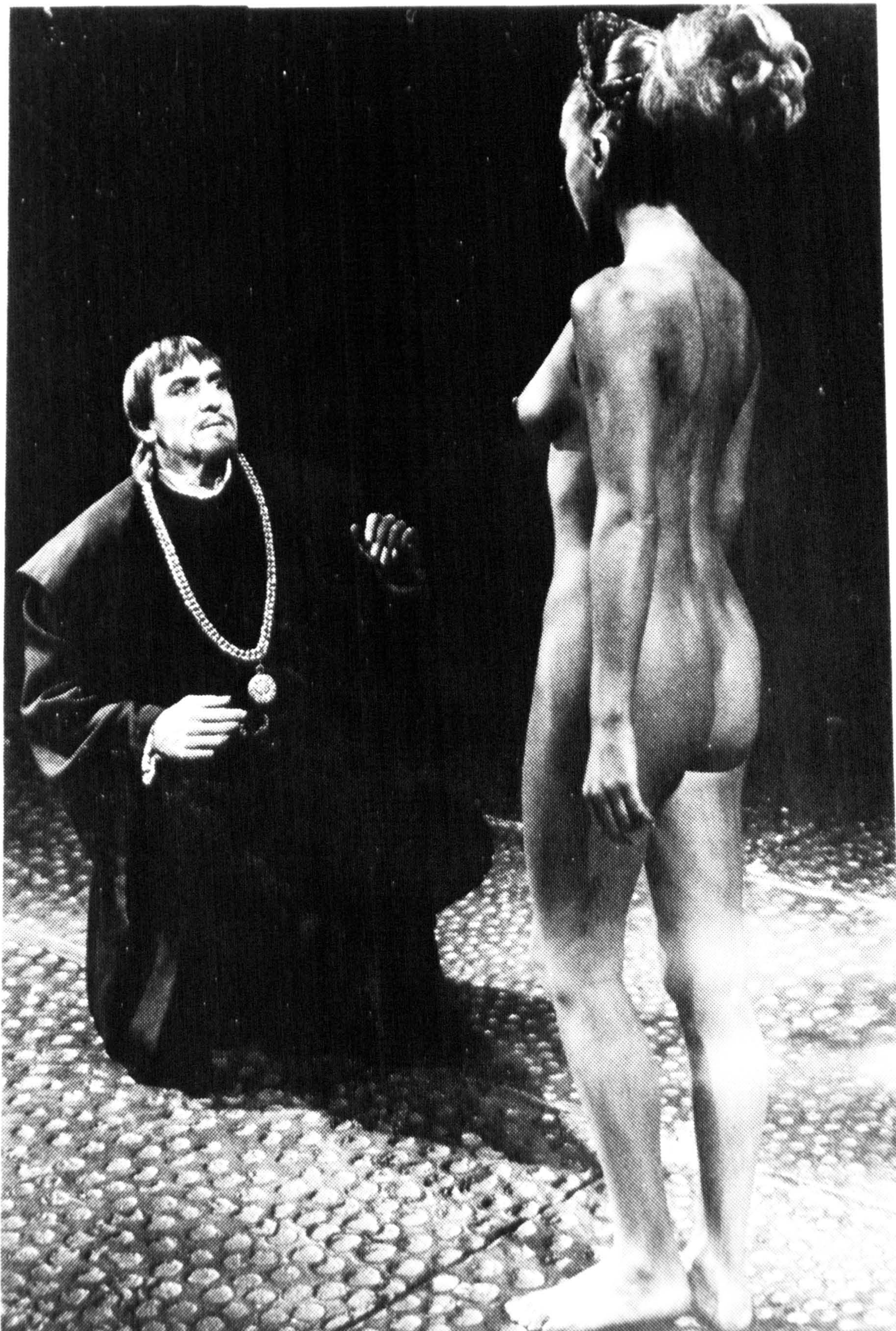
16. Ian McKellen as Faustus and Jean Gilpin as the Duchess of Vanholt in John Barton's production of *Dr. Faustus*, the Aldwych, London, 1974





17. Jennifer Coverdale as Helen and Robert Harris as Faustus in Walter Hudd's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1946





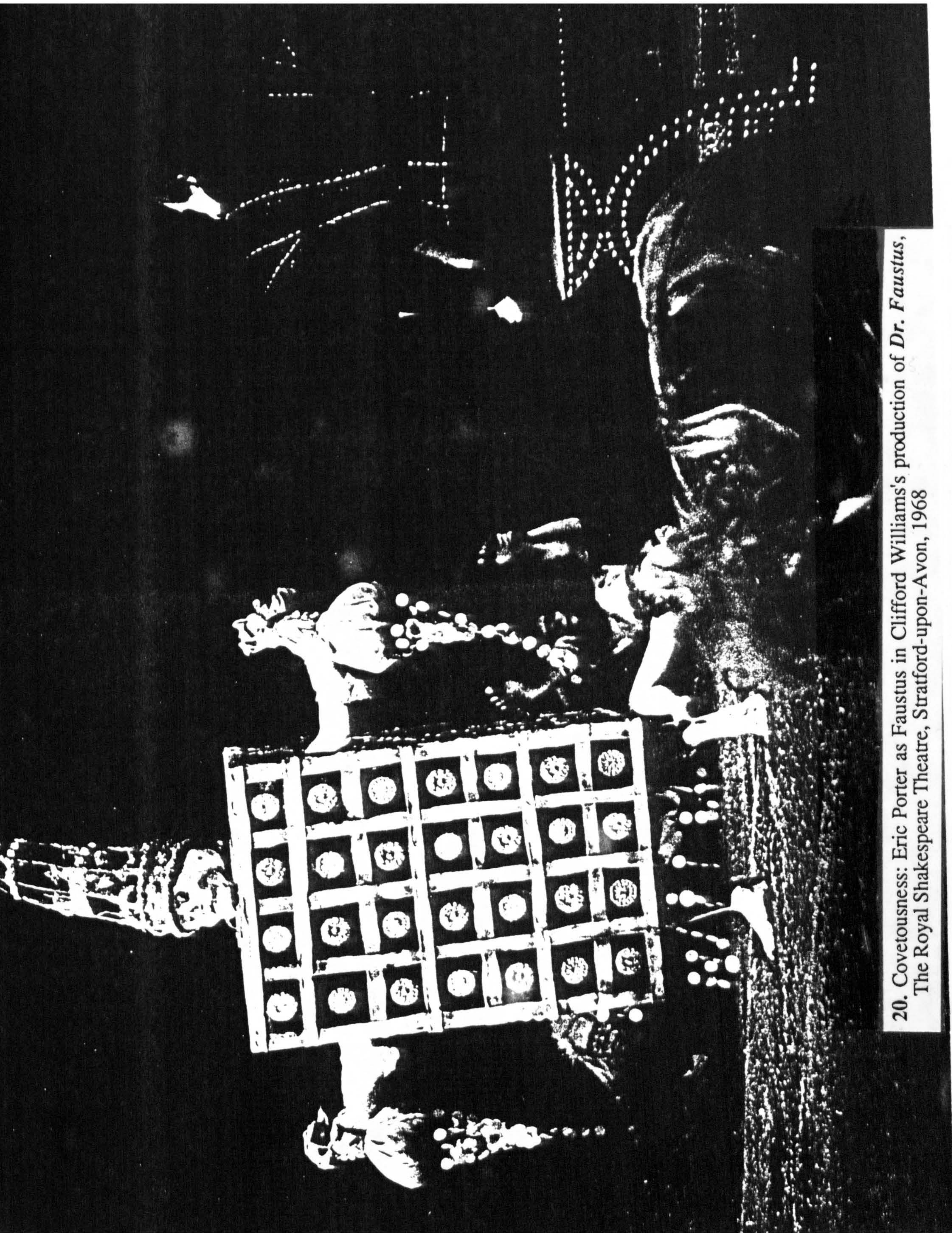
18. Maggie Wright as Helen and Eric Porter as Faustus in Clifford Williams's production of *Dr. Faustus*, The Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1968





19. Ted Valentine as Gluttony and Eric Porter as Faustus in Clifford Williams's production of *Dr. Faustus*, The Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1968





20. Covetousness: Eric Porter as Faustus in Clifford Williams's production of *Dr. Faustus*,  
The Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1968





21. The Seven Deadly Sins: Eric Porter as Faustus and Terrence Hardiman as Mephostophilis in Clifford Williams's production of *Dr. Faustus*, The Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1968



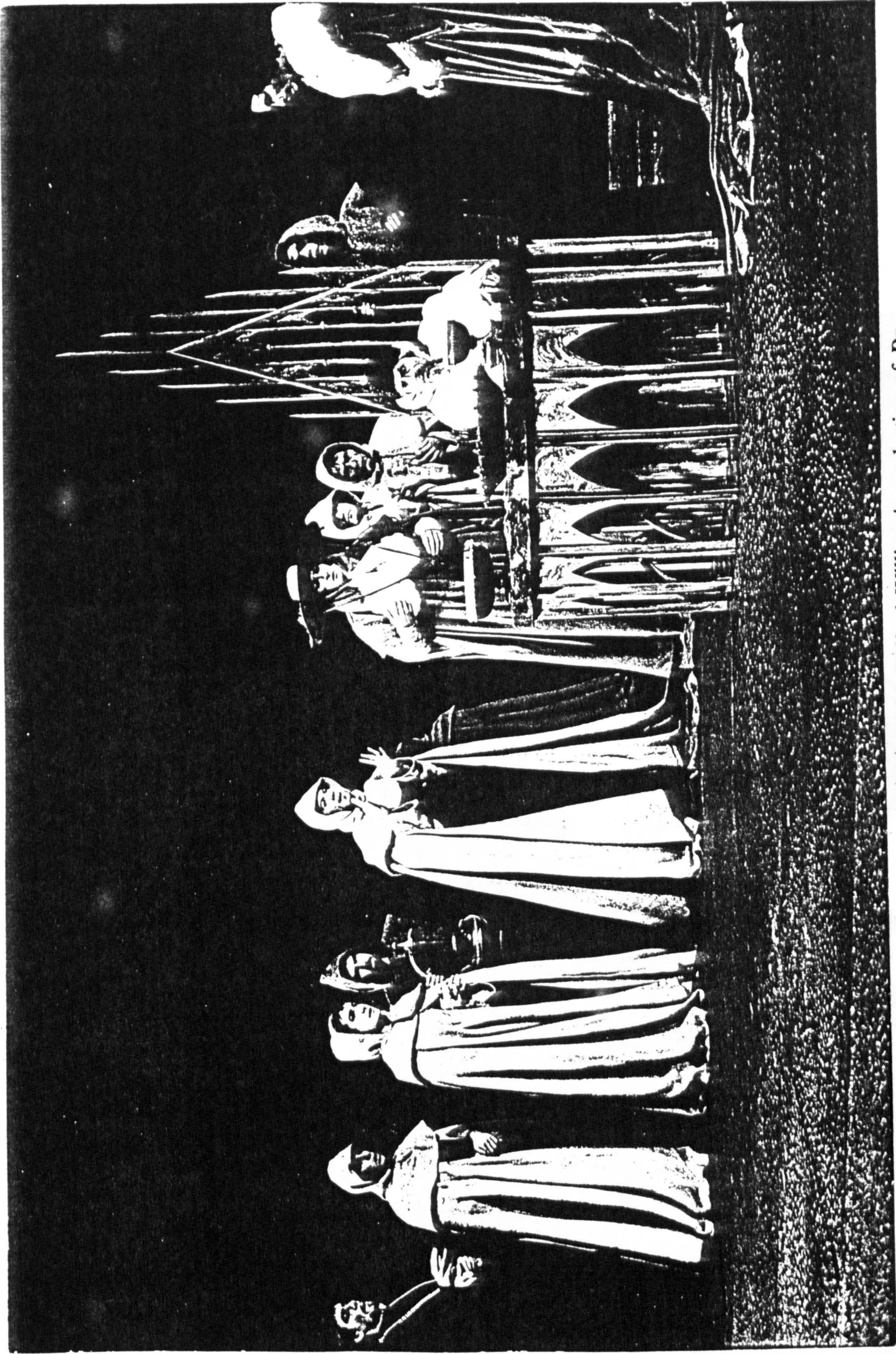


22. Covetousness in Derek Stevens's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Ripon Cathedral, 1986, Ripon Festival of Art and Literature (private collection)



23. The Seven Deadly Sins in Derek Stevens's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Ripon Cathedral, 1986, Ripon Festival of Art and Literature (private collection)





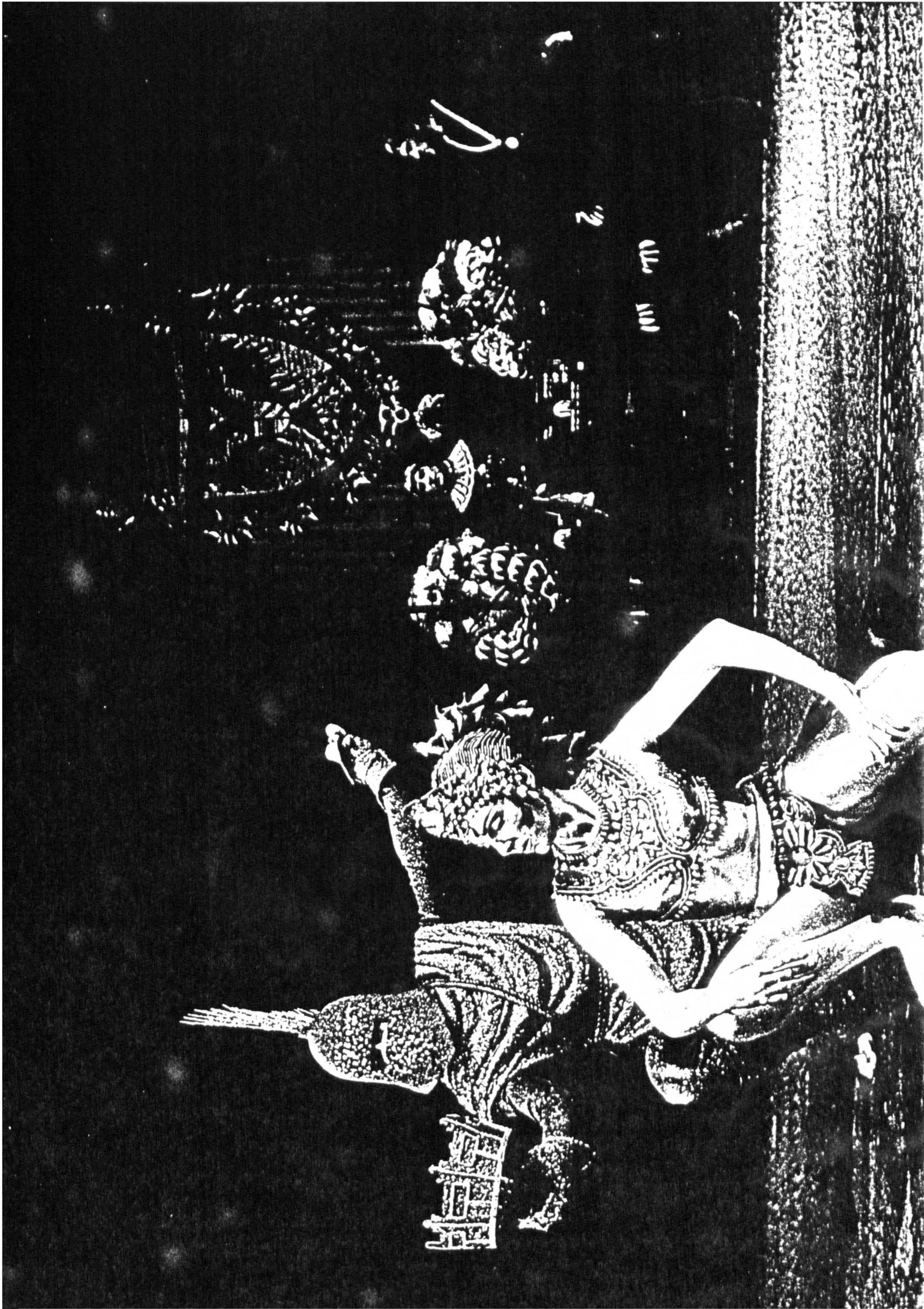
24. The papal banquet: Eric Porter as Faustus in Clifford Williams's production of *Dr. Faustus*, The Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1968





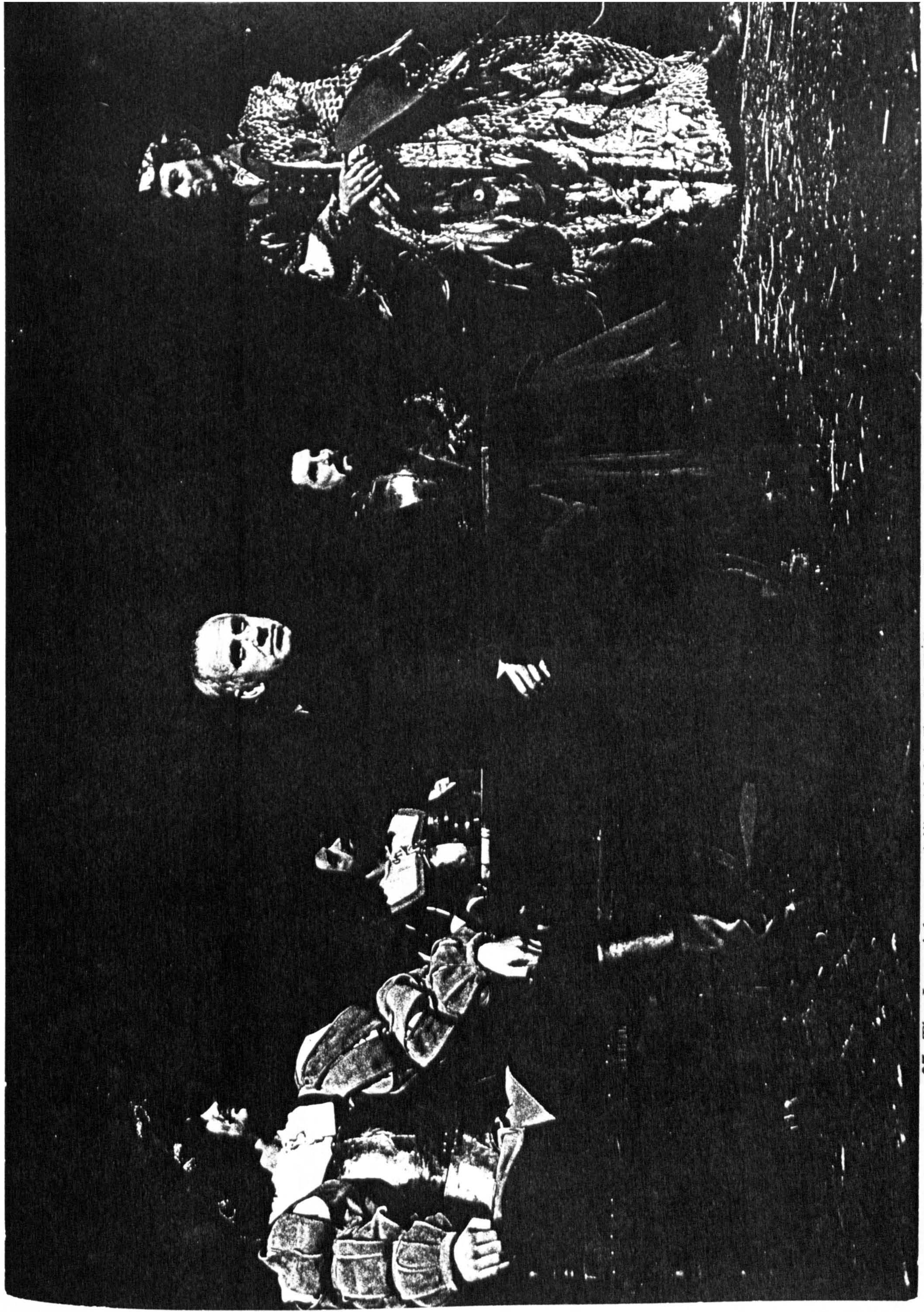
25. Jon Strickland as the Pope and Sean Cranitch as the Cardinal in Anthony Clark's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Young Vic, London, 1988 (all illustrations for this production were obtained from the Young Vic, Publicity Department)





26. Alexander and Paramour (xii) in Clifford Williams's production of *Dr. Faustus*, The Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1968





27. The Imperial scene (xii): (right) Ian McKellen as Faustus, John Boswall as Duke of Saxony, Emrys James as Mephostophilis, Julian Barnes as Benvolio and Leon Tanner as the Emperor in John Barton's production of *Dr. Faustus*, the Aldwych, London, 1974





28. Peter Rumney as the Emperor and Claude Close as Bruno in Anthony Clark's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Young Vic, London, 1988





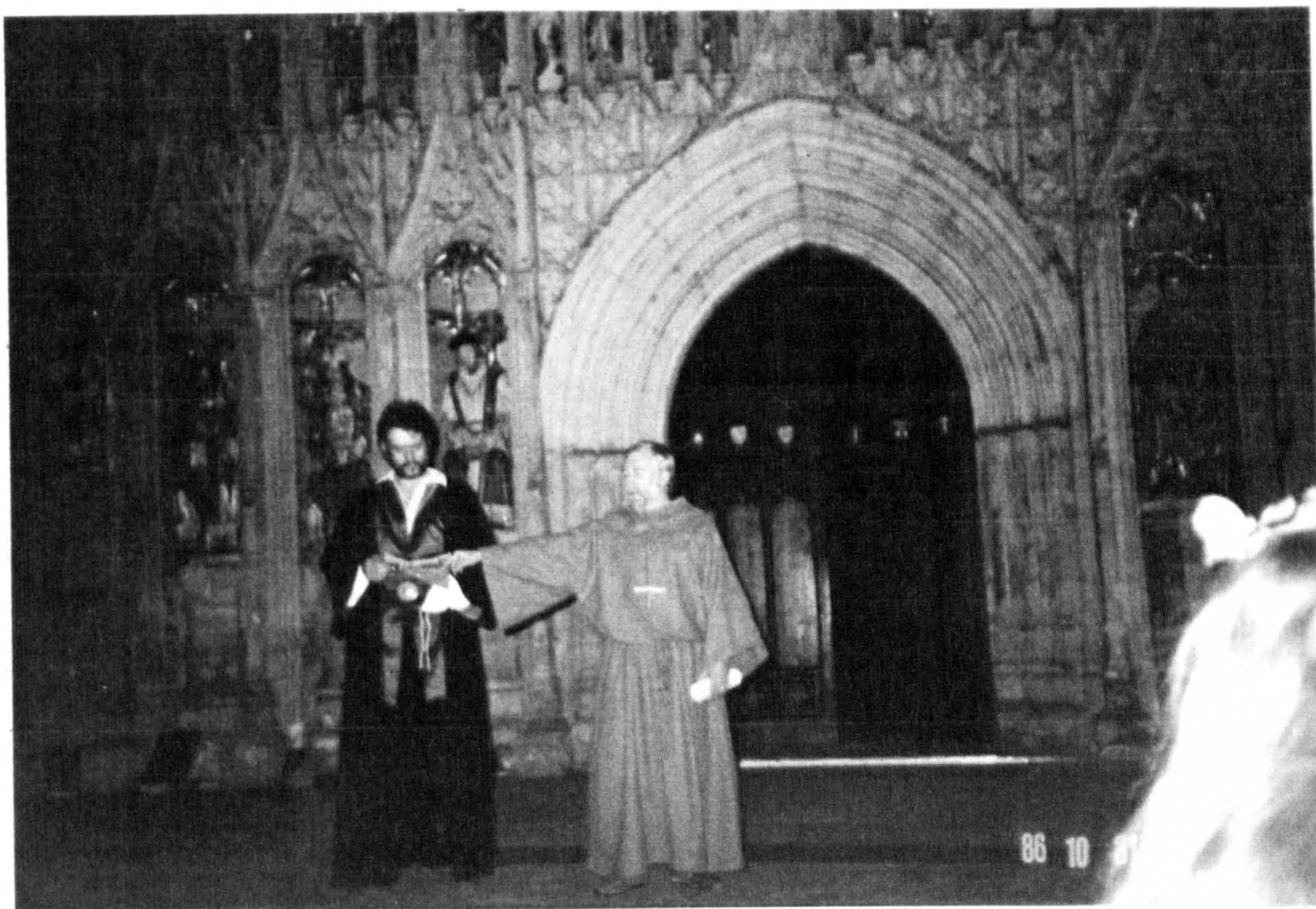
29. John Harrison as the Good Angel, Leonard White as the Bad Angel and Robert Harris as Faustus in Walter Hudd's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1946



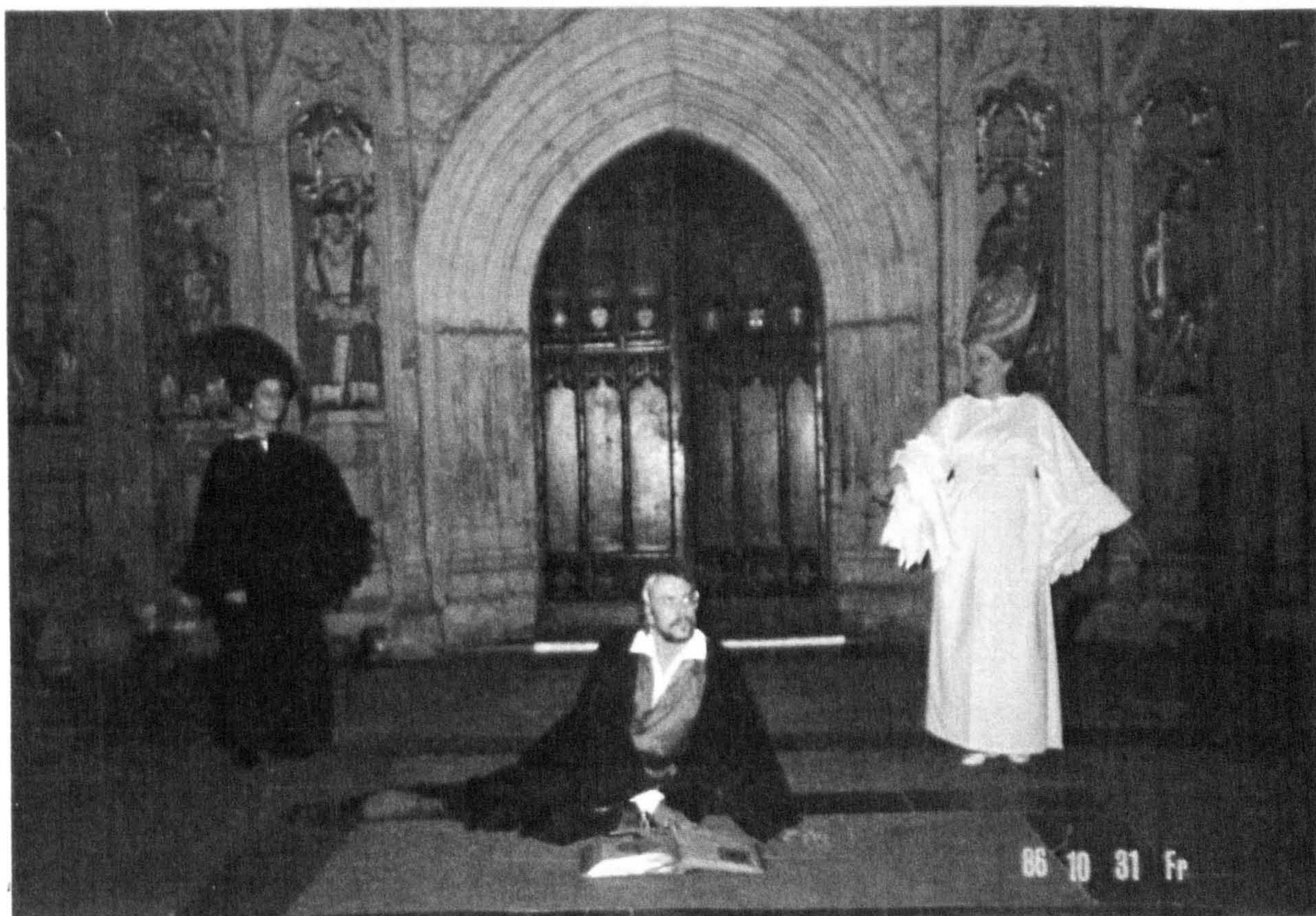


30. Ian McKellen as Faustus in John Barton's production of *Dr. Faustus*, the Aldwych, London, 1974



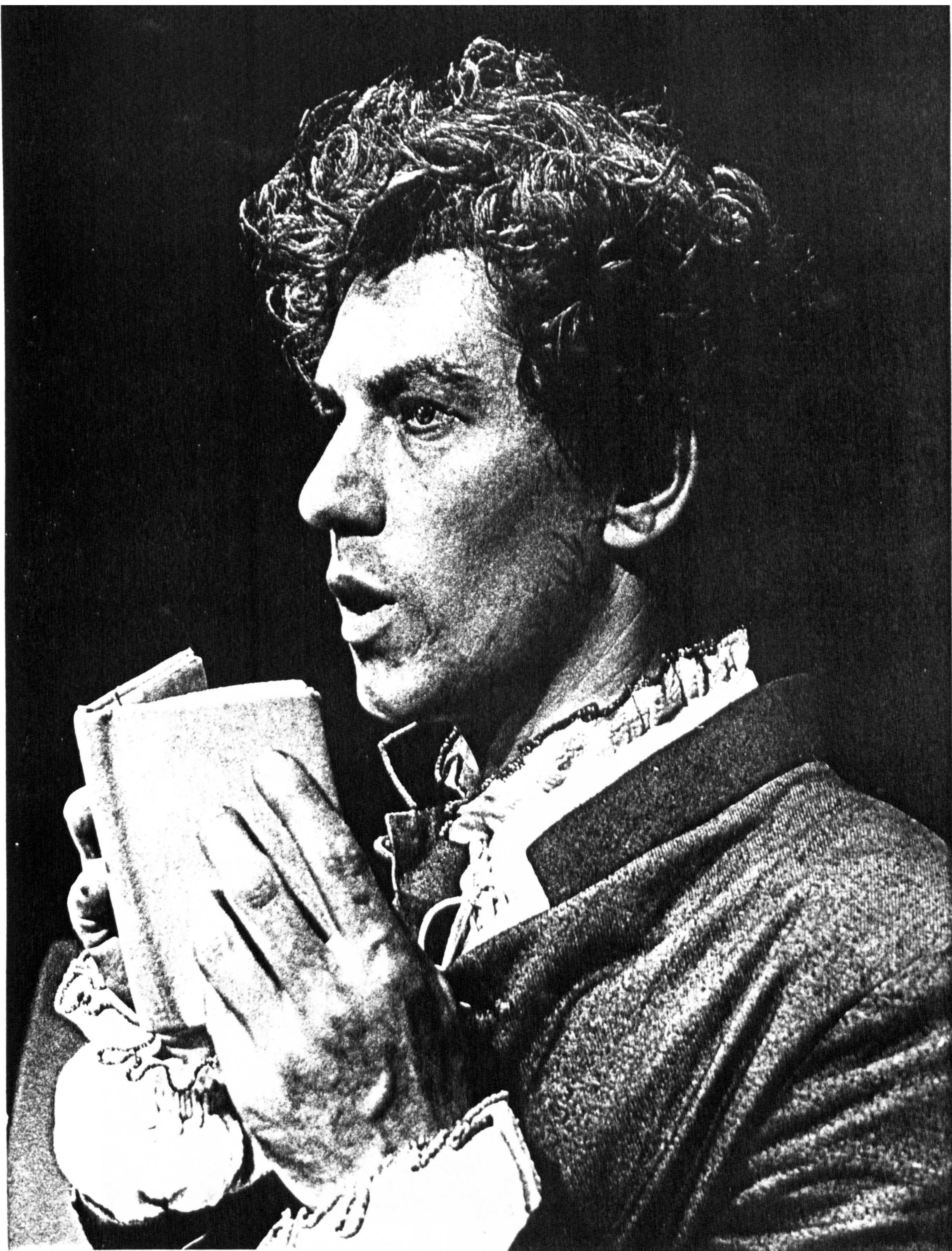


31. "Here they are in this book" (v,169): Derek Stevens as Mephostophilis and Tony Goodall as Faustus in Derek Stevens's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Ripon Cathedral, 1986, Ripon Festival of Art and Literature (private collection)



32. *Bad Angel*: "Go forward, Faustus, in that famous art" (i,73): the Bad Angel (in white), Tony Goodall as Faustus, and the Good Angel (in black) in Derek Stevens's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Ripon Cathedral, 1986, Ripon Festival of Art and Literature (private collection)





33. Scene i, Ian McKellen as Faustus in John Barton's production of *Dr. Faustus*, the Aldwych, London, 1974





34. Scene i, Eric Porter as Faustus in Clifford Williams's production of *Dr. Faustus*, The Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1968





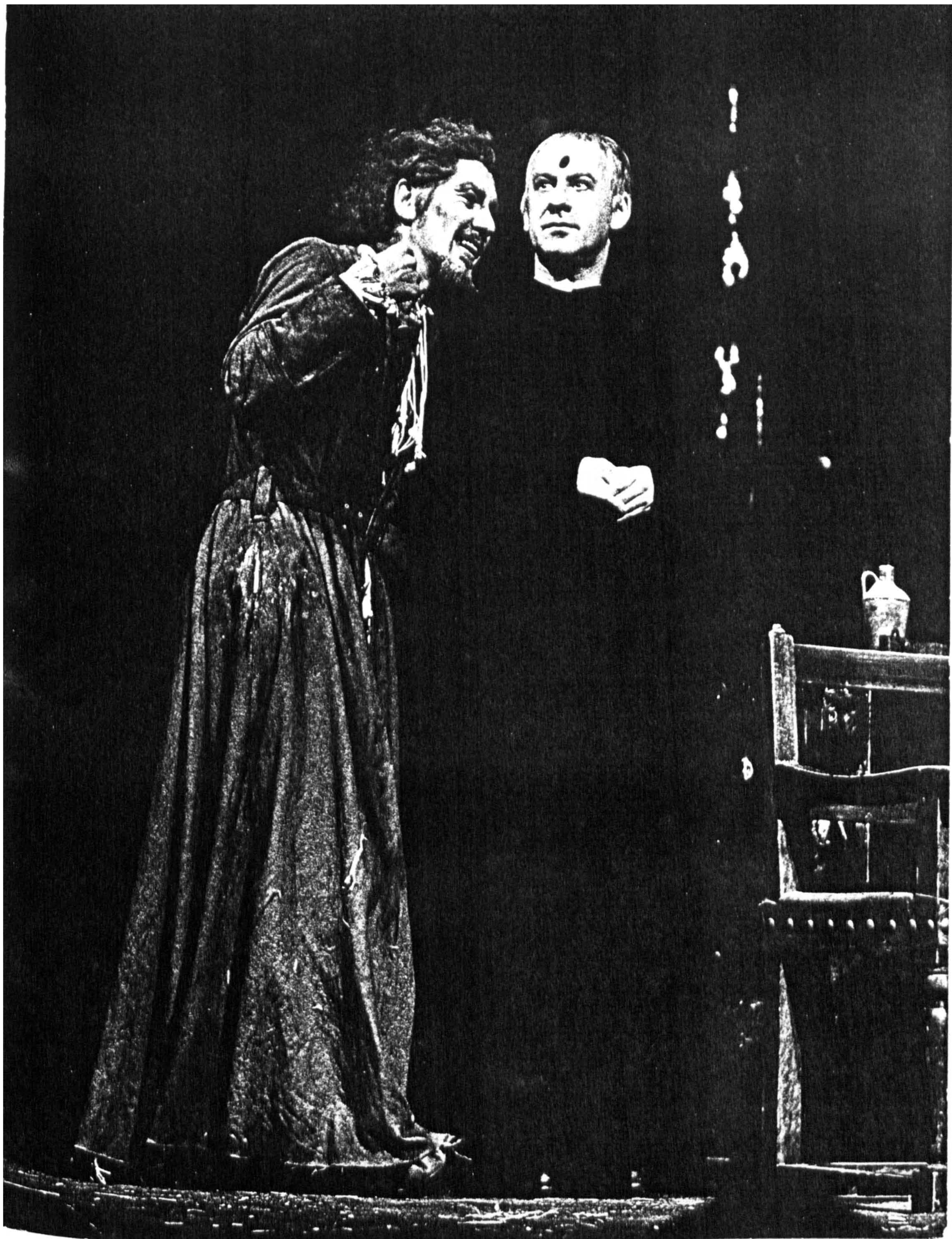
35. Ian McKellen as Faustus and Emrys James as Mephostophilis in John Barton's production of *Dr. Faustus*, the Aldwych, London, 1974





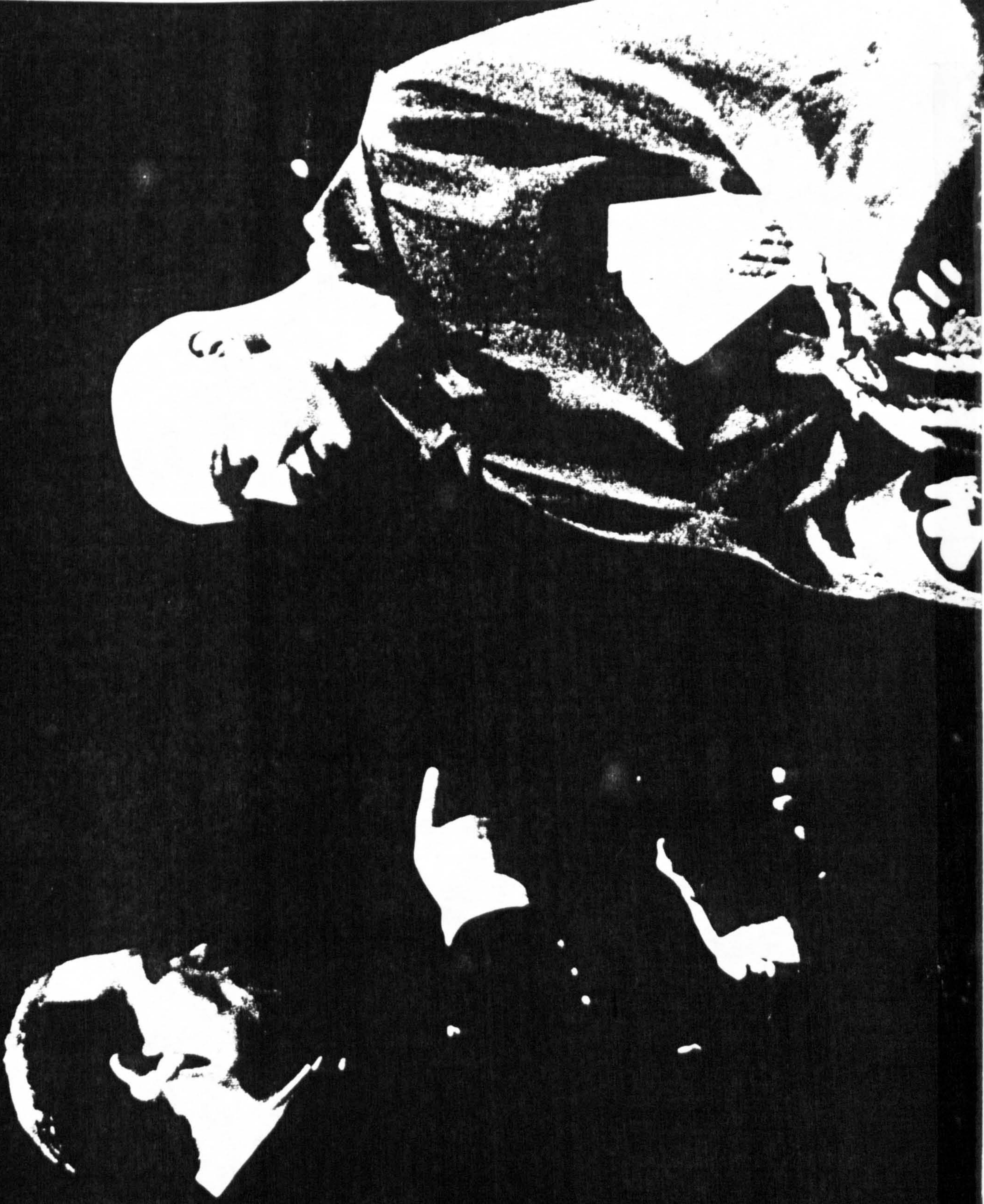
36. "Now, Faustus, what wouldst thou have me do?" (iii,37): Eric Porter as Faustus and Terrence Hardiman as Mephostophilis in Clifford Williams's production of *Dr. Faustus*, The Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1968





37. Ian McKellen as Faustus and Emrys James as Mephostophilis in John Barton's production of *Dr. Faustus*, the Aldwych, London, 1974





38. "Nay, let me have one book more, and then I have done" (v,174): Peter Guinness as Faustus and Stephen Jenn as Mephostophilis in Anthony Clark's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Young Vic, London, 1988





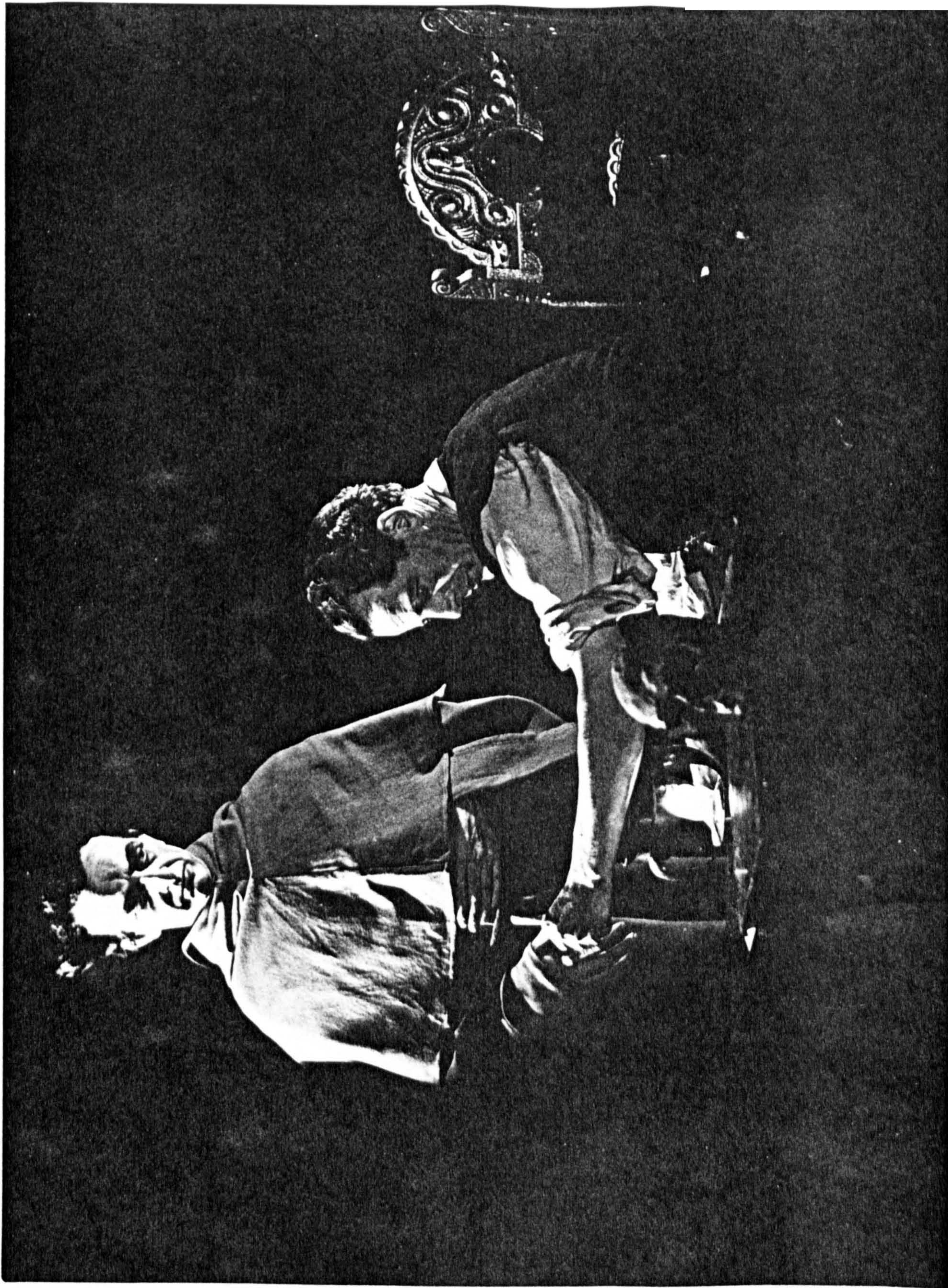
39. Scene xix: Ian McKellen as Faustus in John Barton's production of *Dr. Faustus*, the Aldwych, London, 1974





40. Ian McKellen as Faustus and Robert Fyfe as the Horse-dealer in John Barton's production of *Dr. Faustus*, the Aldwych, London, 1974





41. "Lo, Mephostophilis, for love of thee/ Faustus hath cut his arm..." (v,53-4): Robert Harris as Faustus and Hugh Griffith as Mephostophilis in Walter Hudd's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1946





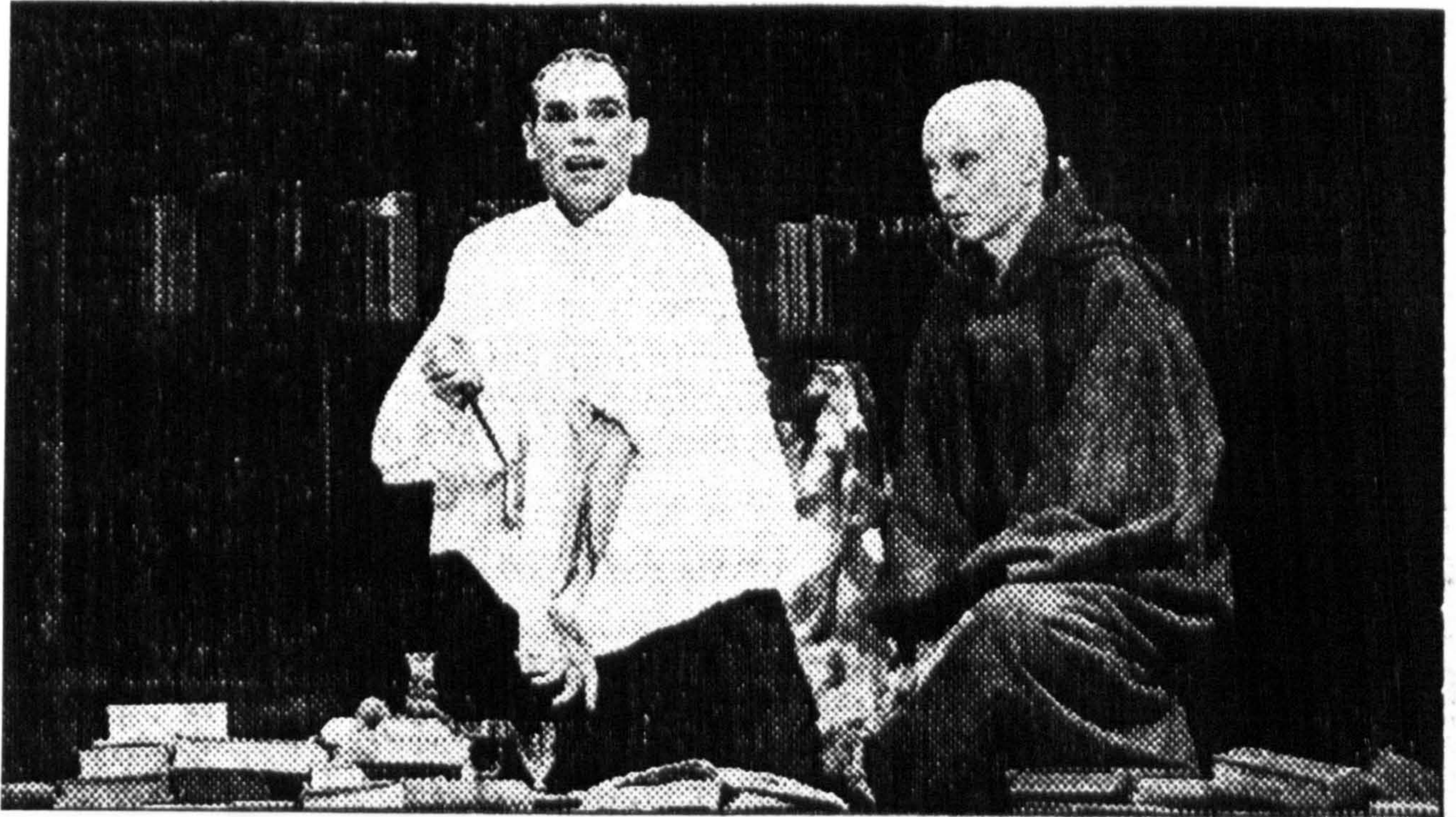
42. "Lo, Mephostophilis, for love of thee/Faustus hath cut his arm..." (v,53-4): Eric Porter as Faustus and Terrence Hardiman as Mephostophilis in Clifford Williams's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1968





43. "Lo, Mephostophilis, for love of thee/ Faustus hath cut his arm..." (v,53-4): Ian McKellen as Faustus and Emrys James as Mephostophilis in John Barton's production of *Dr. Faustus*, the Aldwych, London, 1974





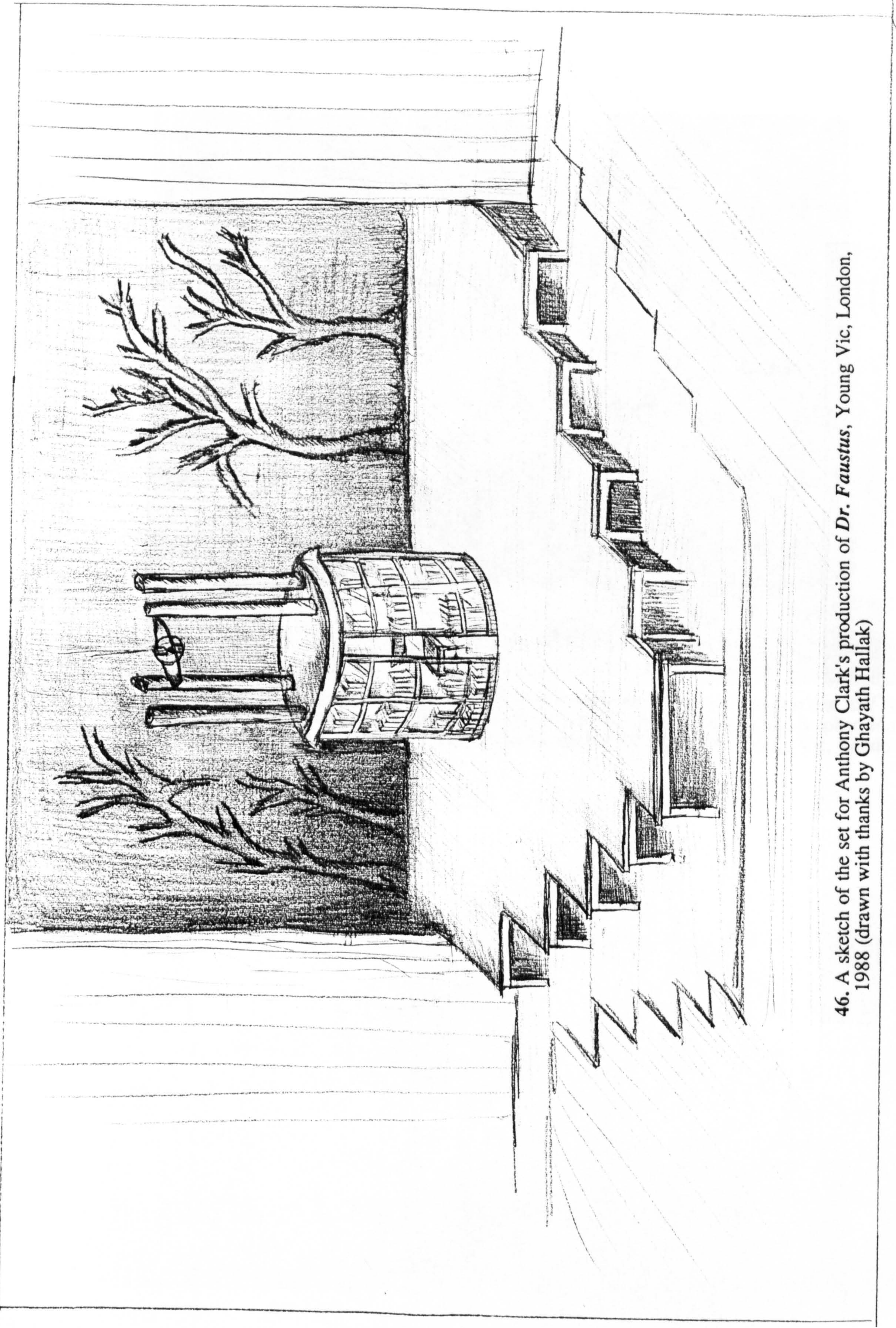
44. "Lo, Mephostophilis, for love of thee/ Faustus hath cut his arm..." (v,53-4): Peter Guinness as Faustus and Stephen Jenn as Mephostophilis in Anthony Clark's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Young Vic, London, 1988





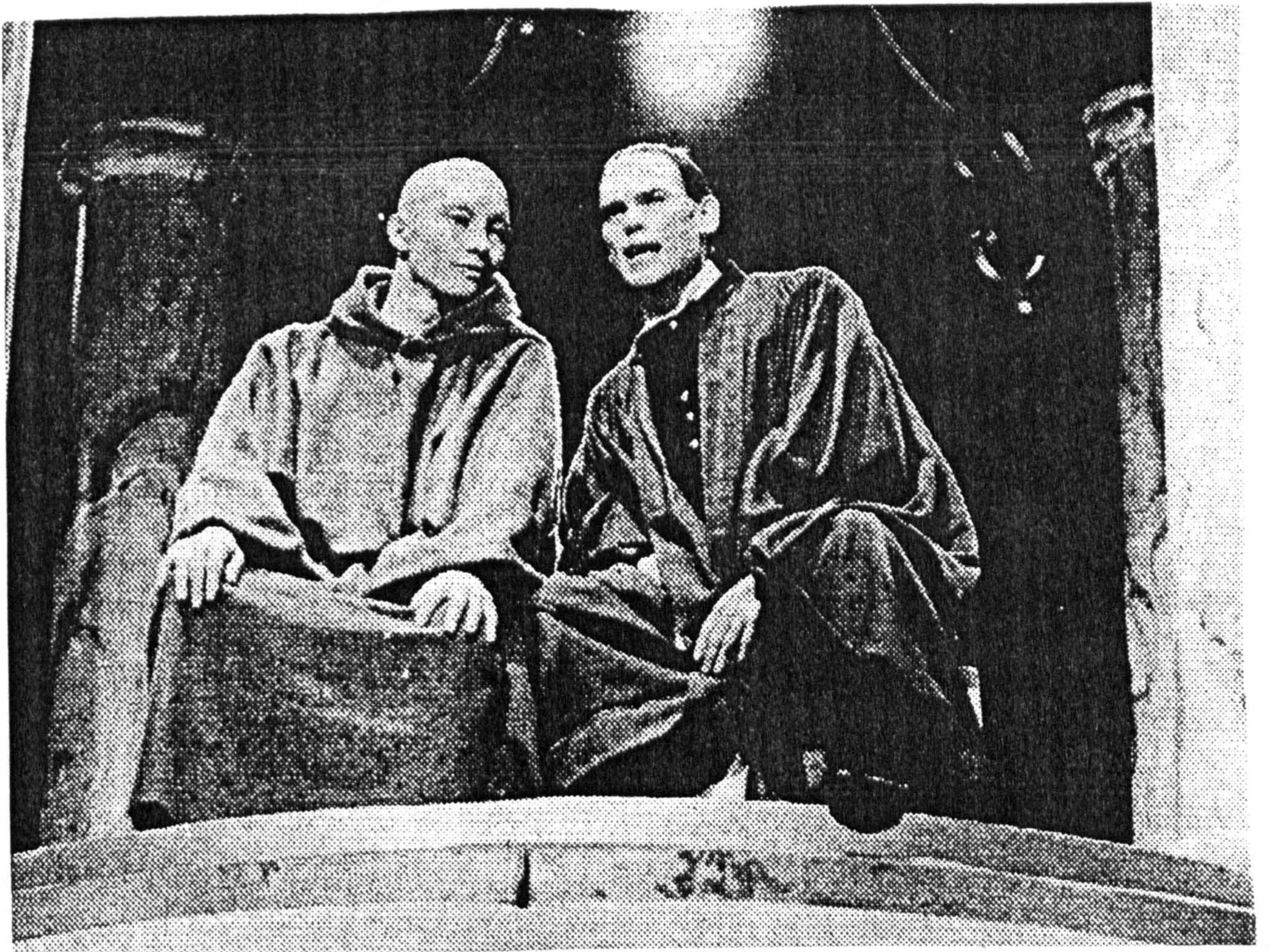
45. Peter Lindford as Faustus in Mark Brickman's Actors Touring Company production of *Dr. Faustus*, 1987 (reproduced from *The Financial Times*, 9 October, 1987)





46. A sketch of the set for Anthony Clark's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Young Vic, London, 1988 (drawn with thanks by Ghayath Hallak)





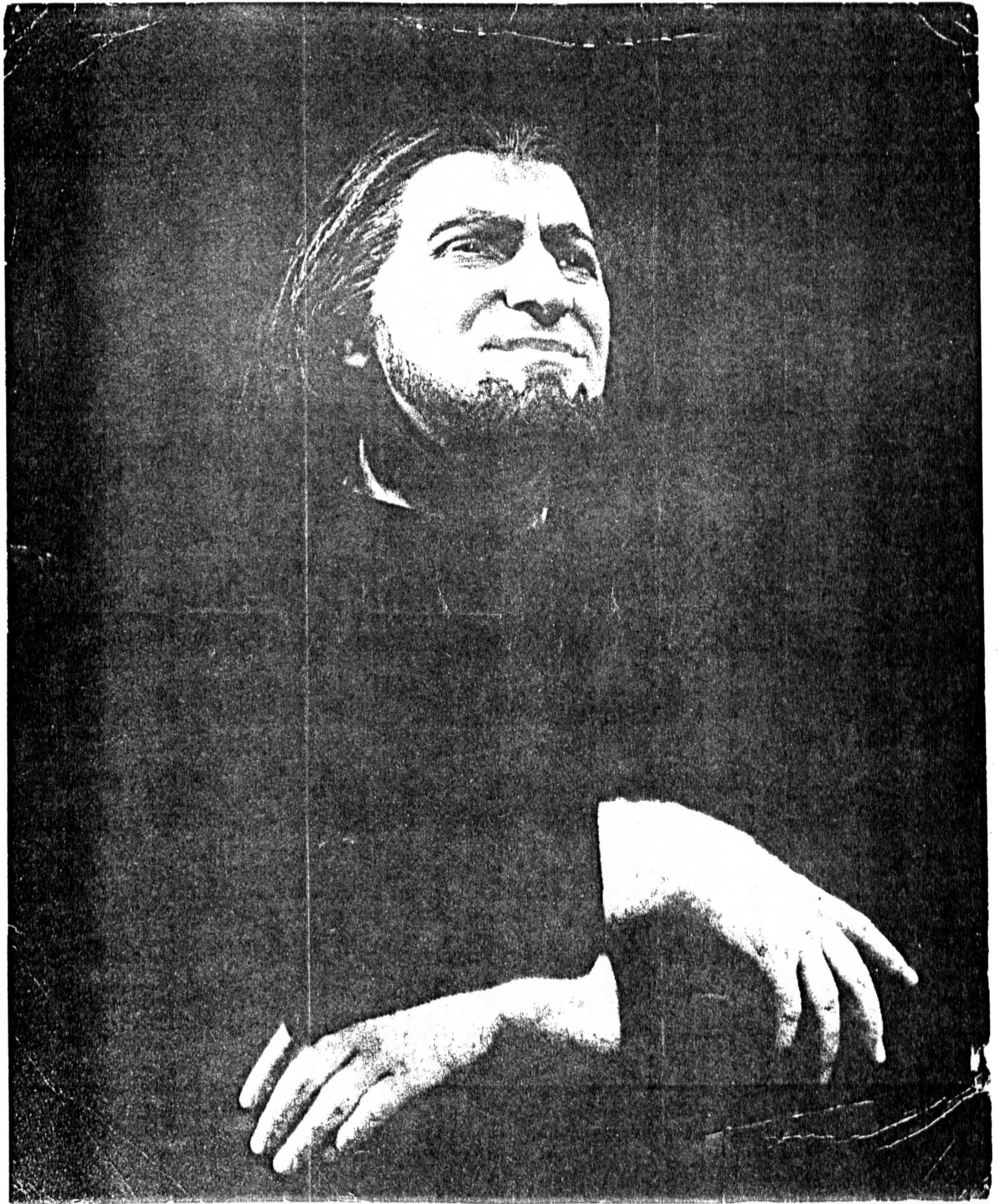
47. "So high our dragons soar'd into the air/ That looking down the earth appear'd to me/ No bigger than my hand in quantity" (viii,72-3): Peter Guinness as Faustus and Stephen Jenn as Mephostophilis in Anthony Clark's production of *Dr. Faustus*, Young Vic, London, 1988





48. Eric Porter as Faustus in Clifford Williams's production of *Dr. Faustus*, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1968





49. Clive Revil as Barabas in Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Aldwych, London, 1964 (all illustrations for this production and its revival in 1965 were obtained from Shakespeare Memorial Library, Stratford-upon-Avon)





50. Clive Revil as Barabas and Michele Dotrice as Abigail in Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Aldwych, London, 1964





51. Clive Revil as Barabas in Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Aldwych, London, 1964





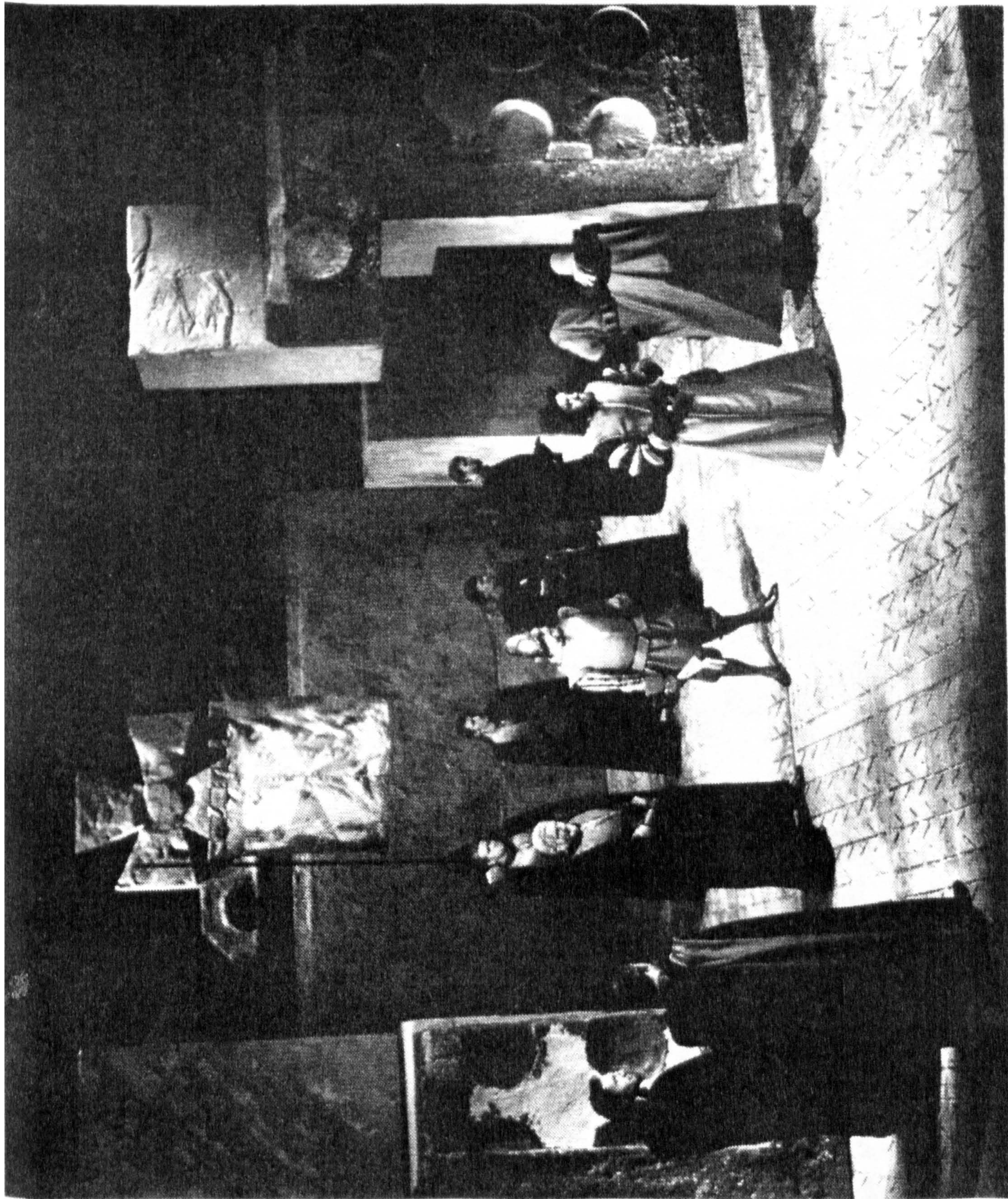
52. "Infinite riches in a little room" (I,i,37): Eric Porter as Barabas in the revival of Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1965





53. "What more may heaven do for earthly men/ than thus to pour plenty in their laps"  
(I,i,106-7): Eric Porter as Barabas in the revival of Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1965





54. The confiscation scene (I,ii) in the revival of Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1965





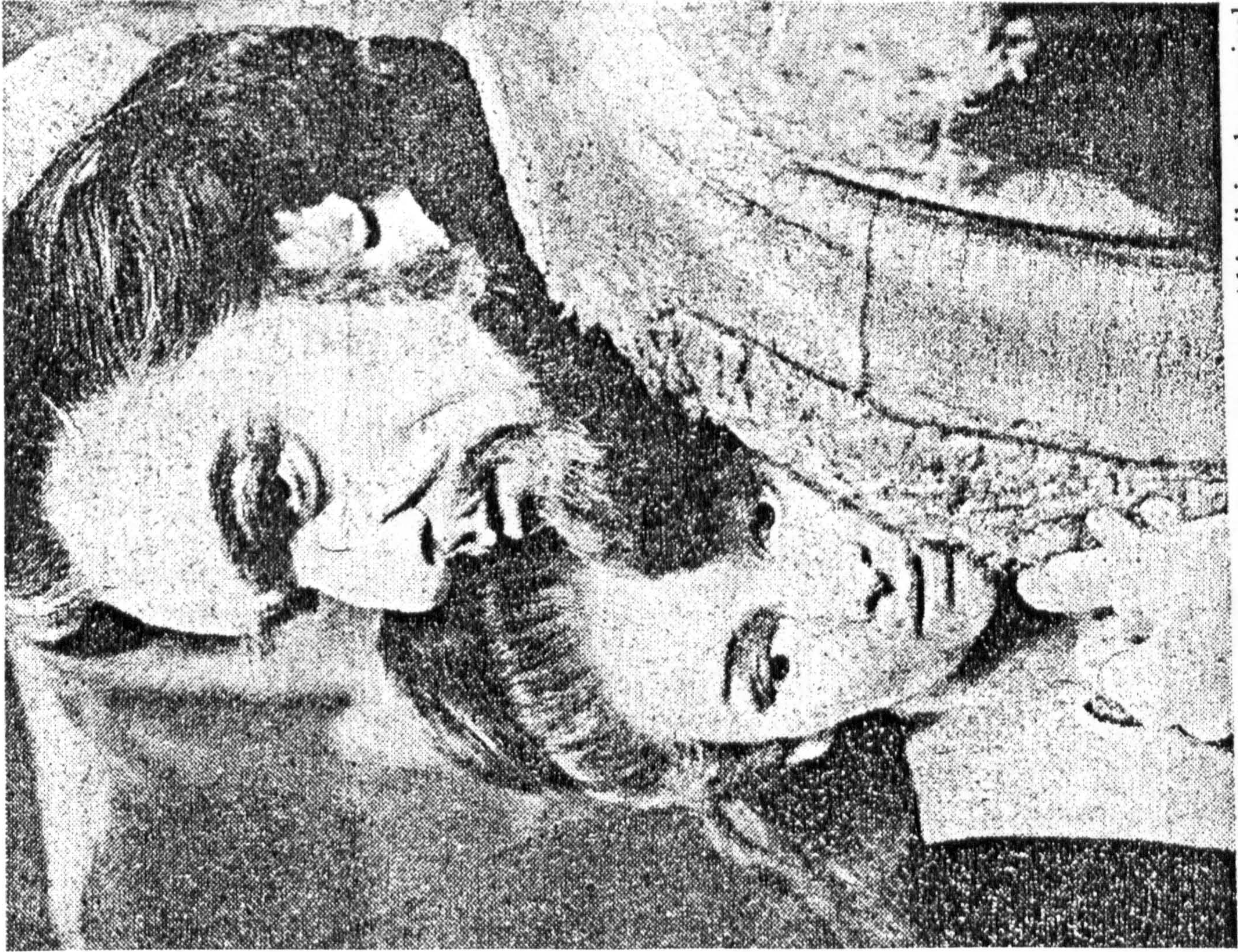
55. Eric Porter as Barabas and Tony Church as Femeze in the revival of Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1965





56. Eric Porter as Barabas and Tony Church as Ferneze (V,ii) in the revival of Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1965





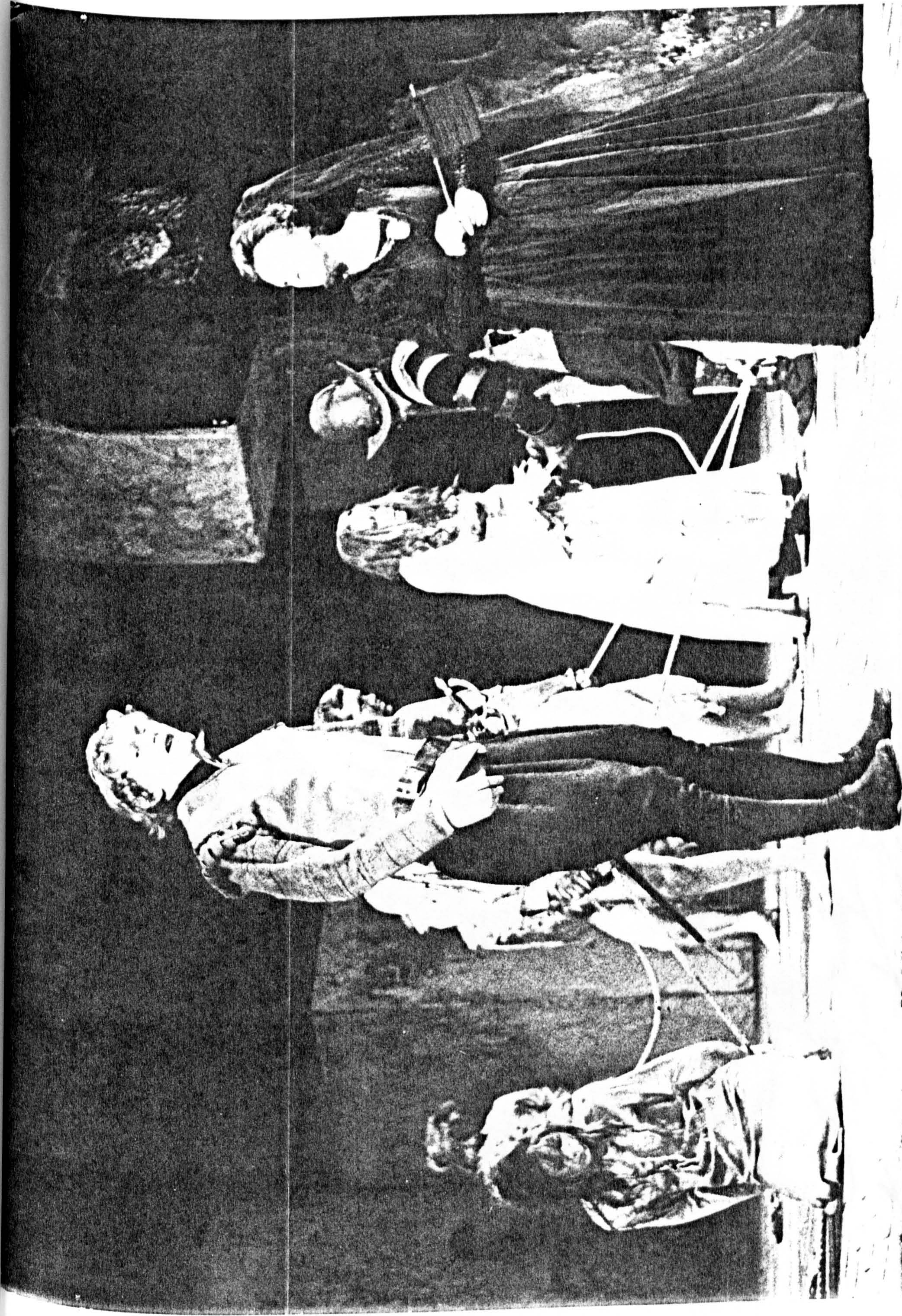
57. Eric Porter as Barabas and Katharine Barker as Abigail in the revival of Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1965





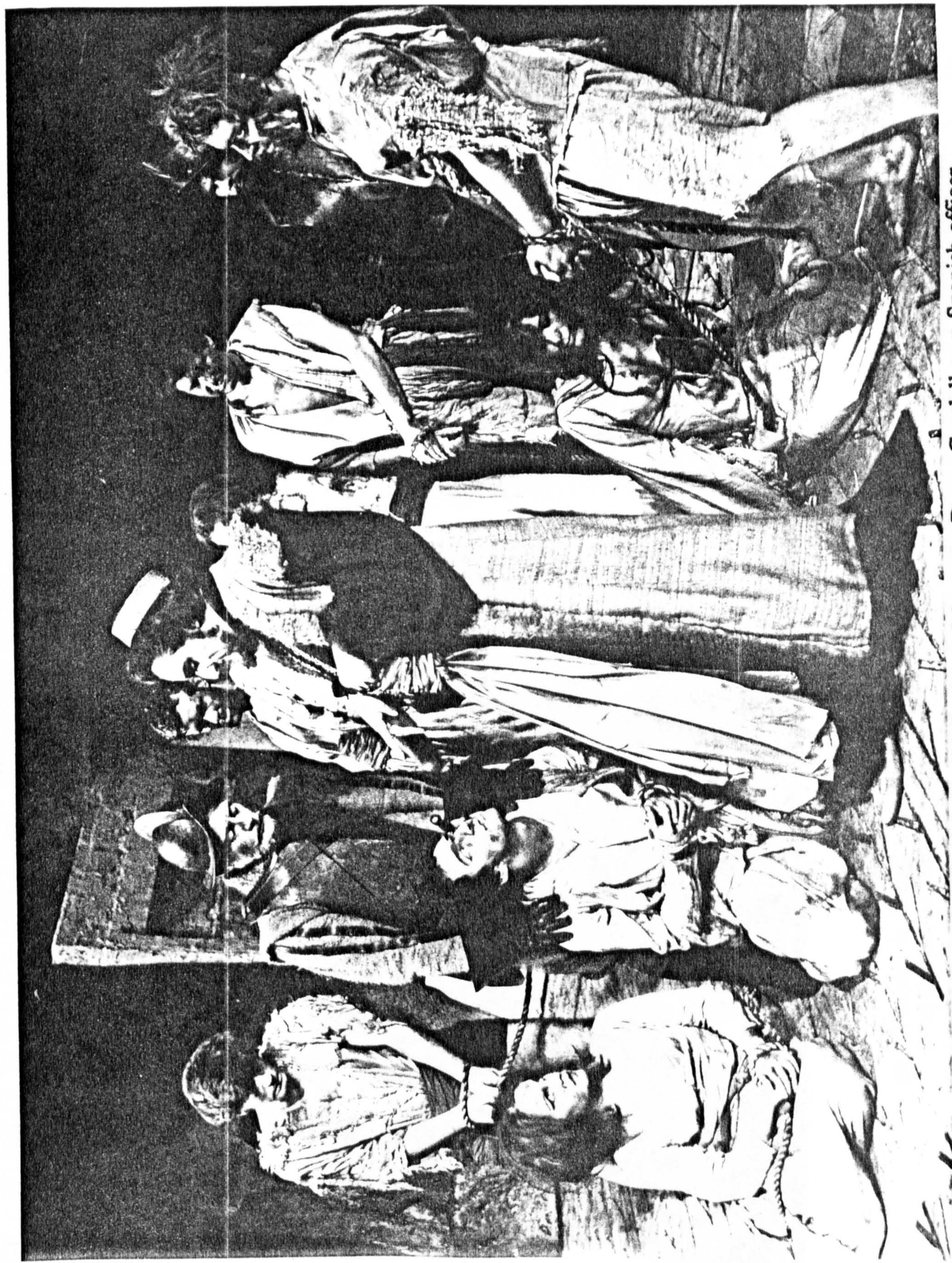
58. Eric Porter as Barabas, Katharine Barker as Abigail, and Tim Wylton and David Walter as the two friars in the revival of Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1965





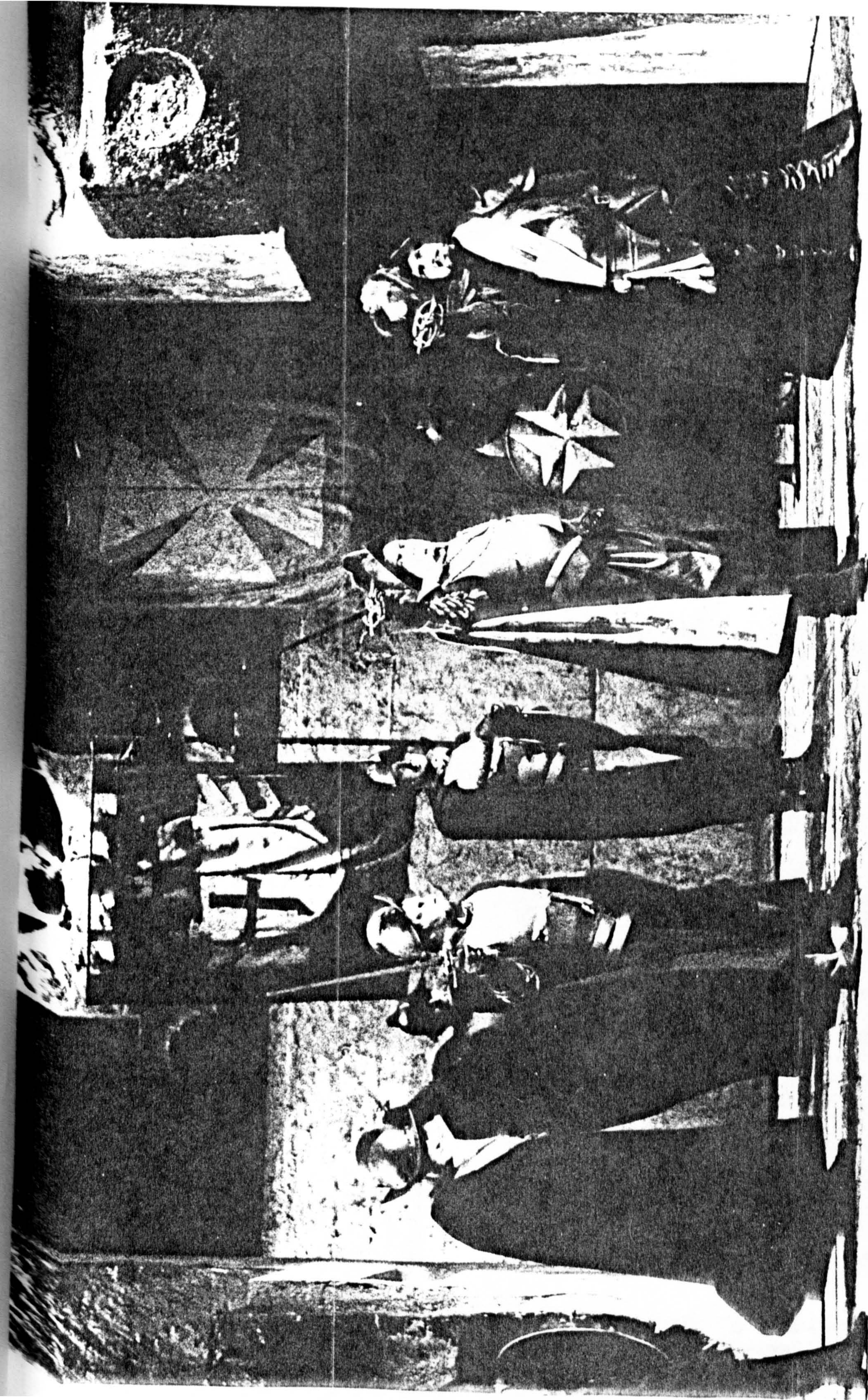
59. Michael Pennington as Mathias and Madoline Thomas as Katherine in the revival of Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1965





60. Eric Porter as Barabas, Peter McEnery as Ithamore, Bruce Condell as a Spanish officer, and Murray Brown as a Maltese officer in the revival of Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1965





61. "Honour is brought with blood, and not with gold" (II.ii.56): Tony Church as Ferneze, John Corvin as Del Bosco, with the Maltese Knights in the revival of Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1965





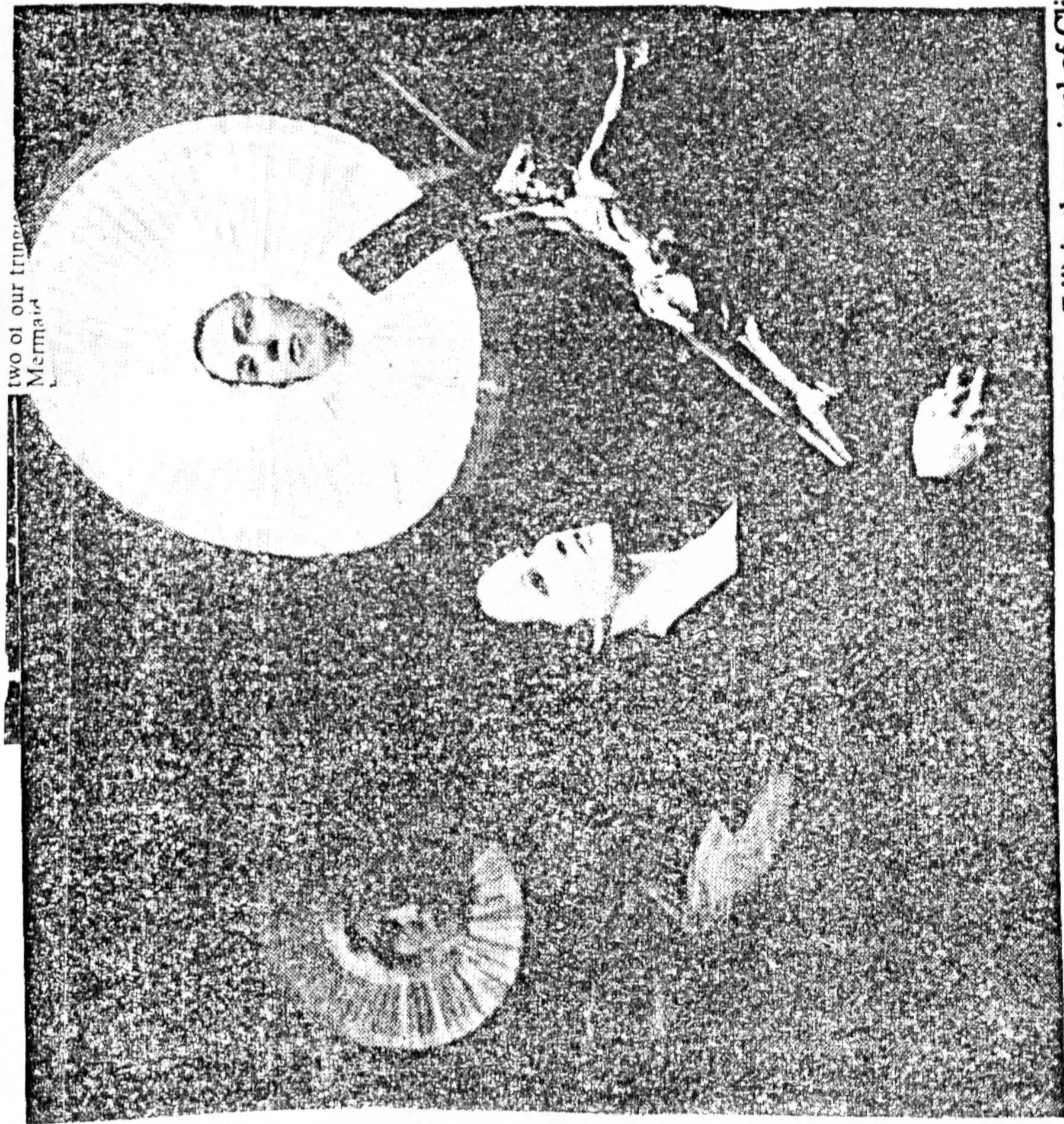
62. "Ay, but father, they will suspect me there" (I,ii,283): Eric Porter as Barabas and Katharine Barker as Abigail in the revival of Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1965





63. Eric Porter as Barabas and Peter McEnery as Ithamore (III,iv) in the revival of Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1965





two of our trines  
Mermaid

64. Katharine Barker as Abigail and Helen Weir as the Abbess (I,ii) in the revival of Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1965





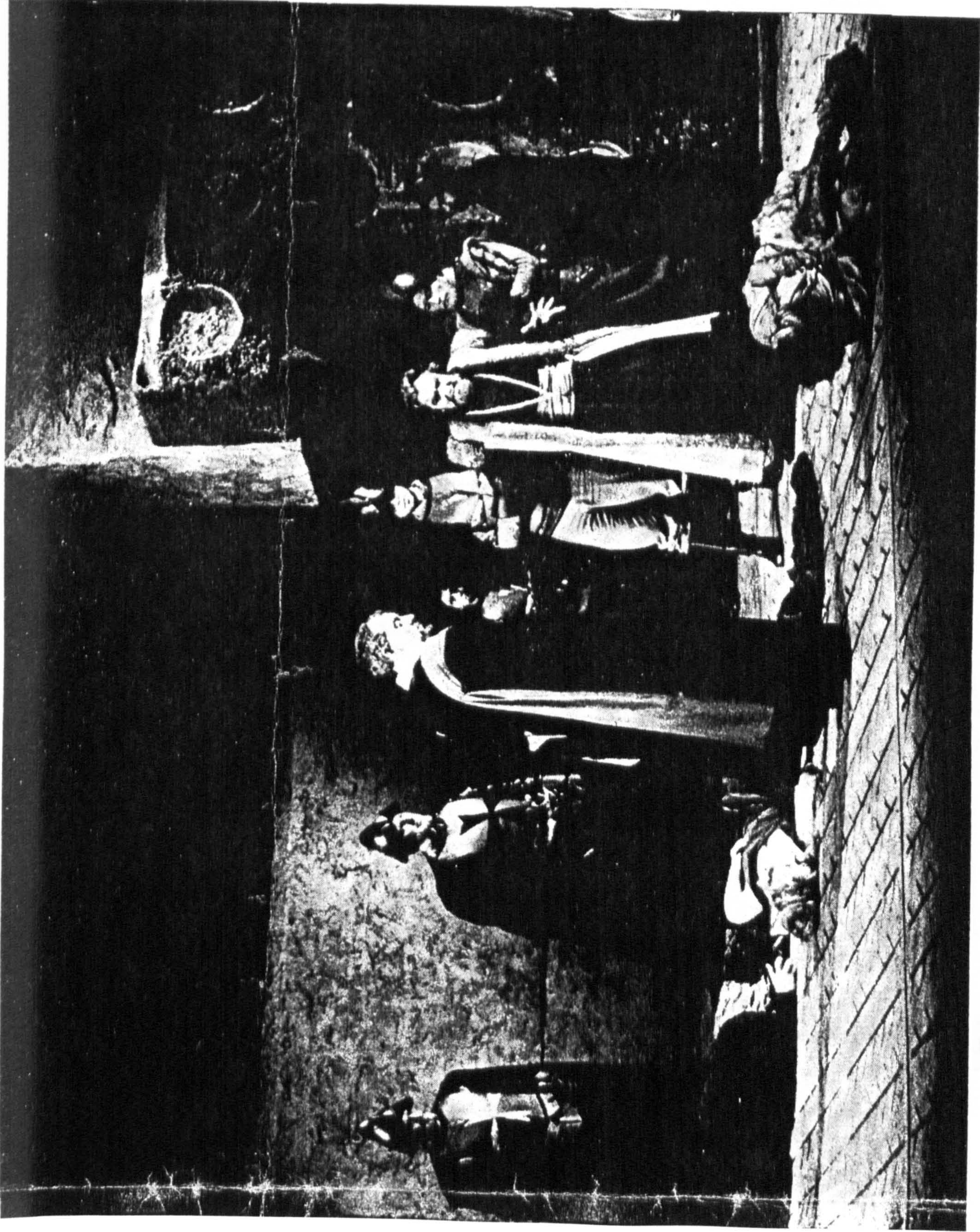
**65. Eric Porter as Barabas, Patsy Byrne as Bellamira, Peter McEnery as Ithamore, and Timothy West as Pilia-Borza (IV,iv) in the revival of Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1965**





66. Tony Church as Femeze, Patsy Byrne as Bellamira (V.i) in the revival of Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1965





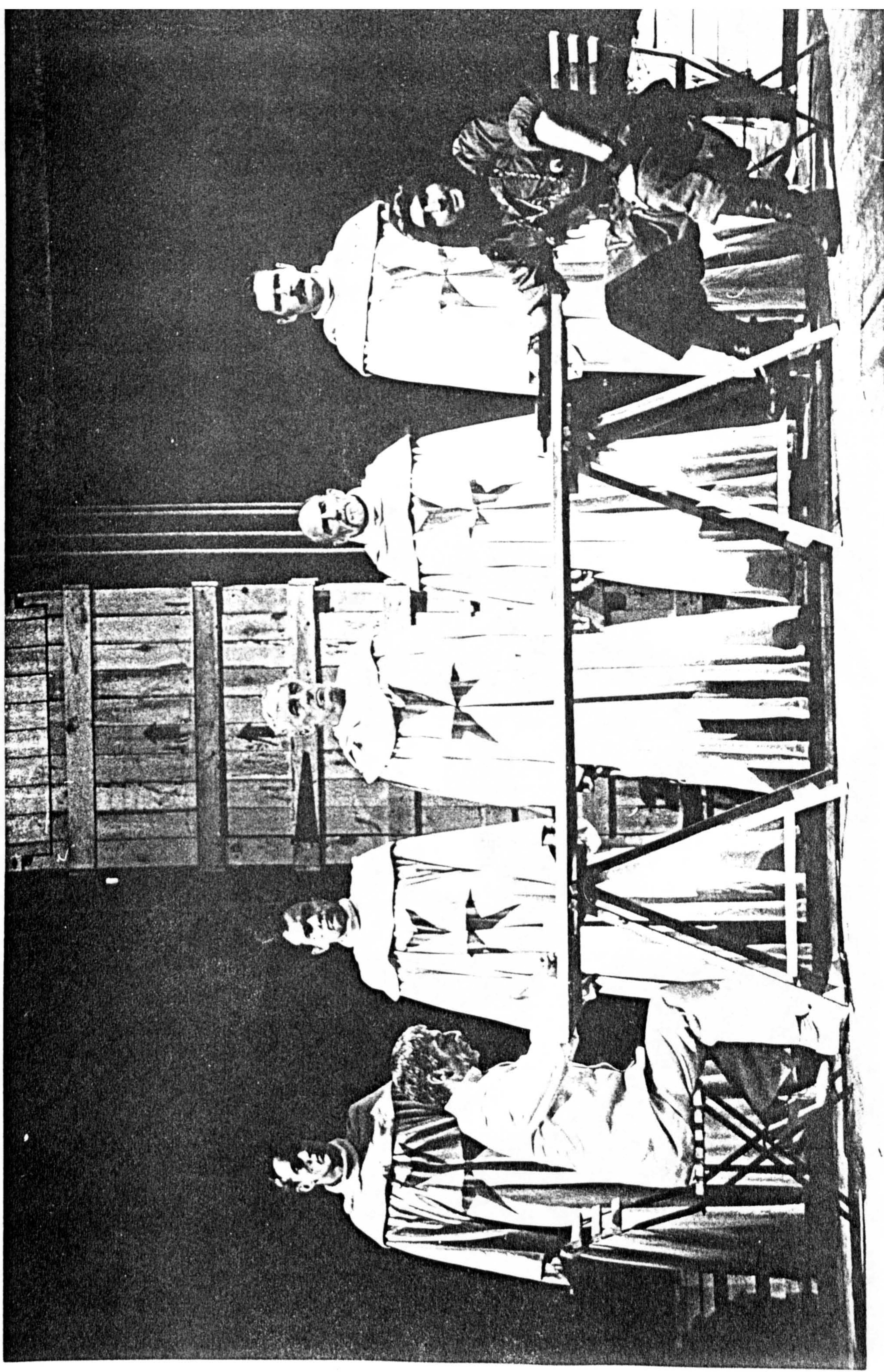
67. Eric Porter as Barabas, Tony Church as Femeze, and Peter McEnery as Ithamore (on the floor) (V,i) in the revival of Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1965





68. "Devils, do your worst; I'll live in spite of you" (V.i,41): Eric Porter as Barabas in the revival of Clifford Williams's production of *The Jew of Malta*, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1965





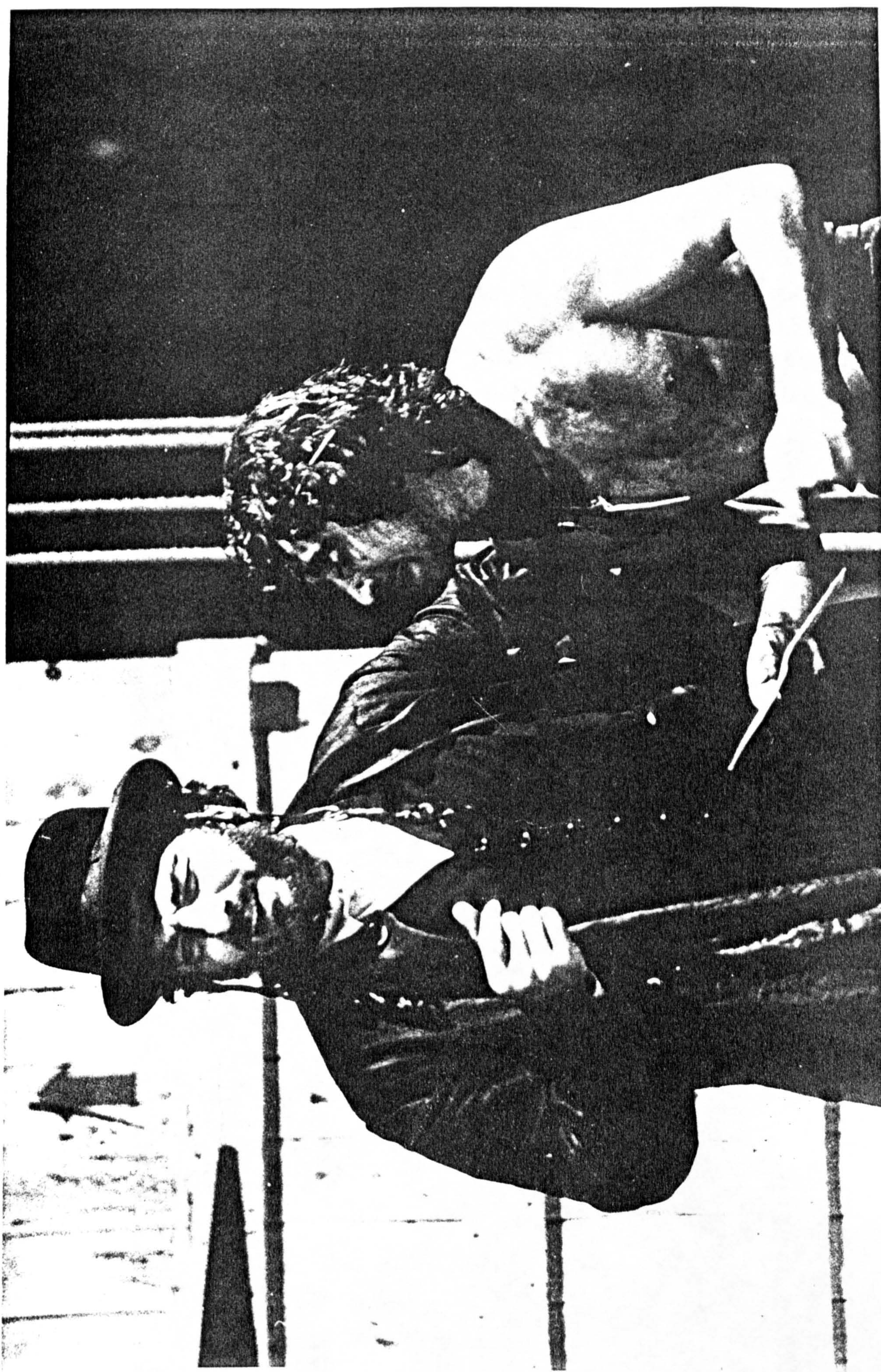
69. (L to R) Richard Leaf as Knight officer, John Carlisle as Femeze, Ian Bailey as Knight officer, Bill McGuirk as First Knight, Dennis Clinton as Knight officer, James Fleet as Lodowick, and Peter Polycarpou as Selim Calymath in Barry Kyle's production of *The Jew of Malta*, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1987 (photograph: Stephen MacMillan; all illustrations for this production were obtained from Shakespeare Memorial Library, Stratford-upon-Avon)





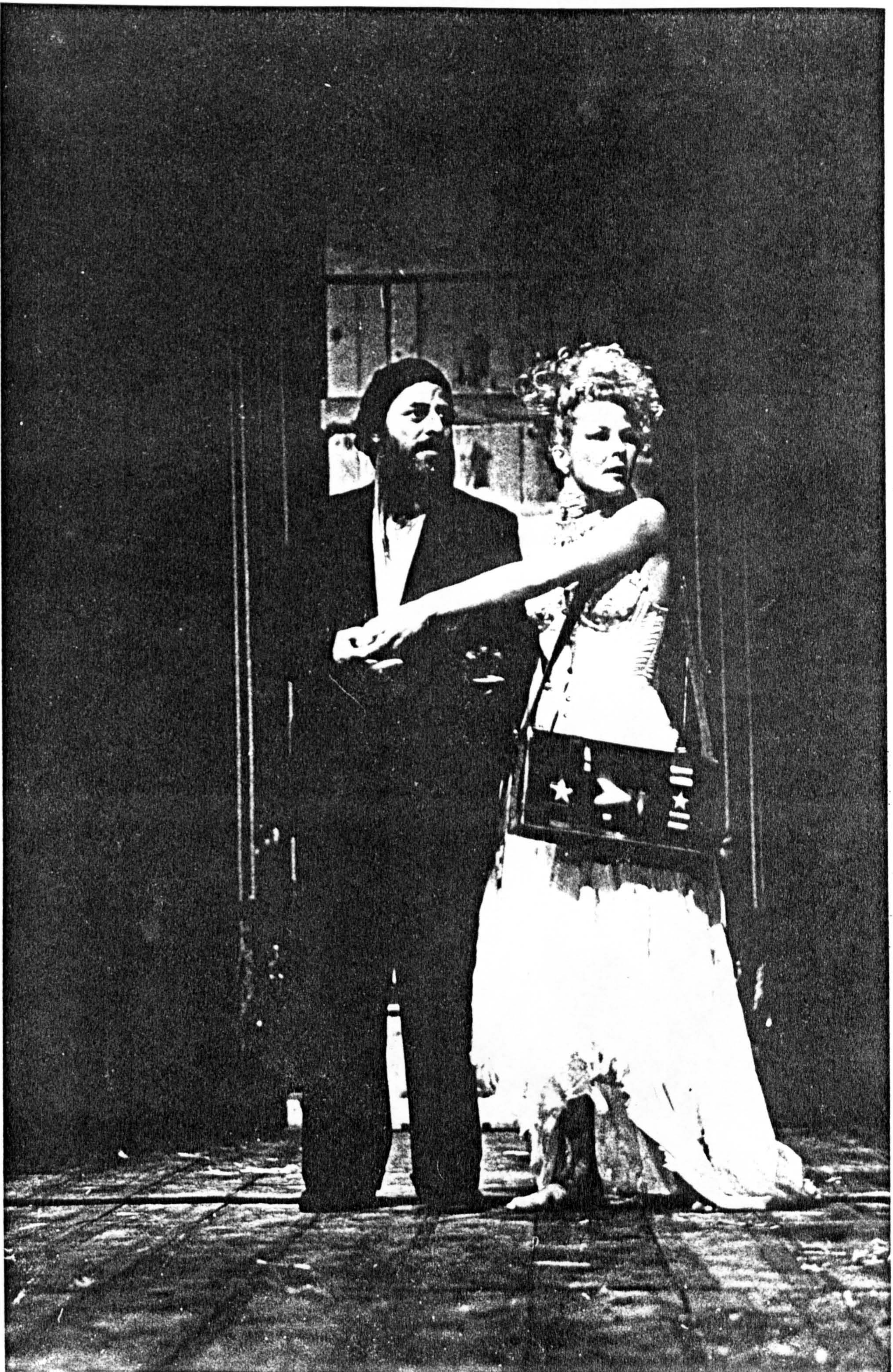
70. Alun Armstrong as Barabas and James Fleet as Lodowick in Barry Kyle's production of *The Jew of Malta*, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1987





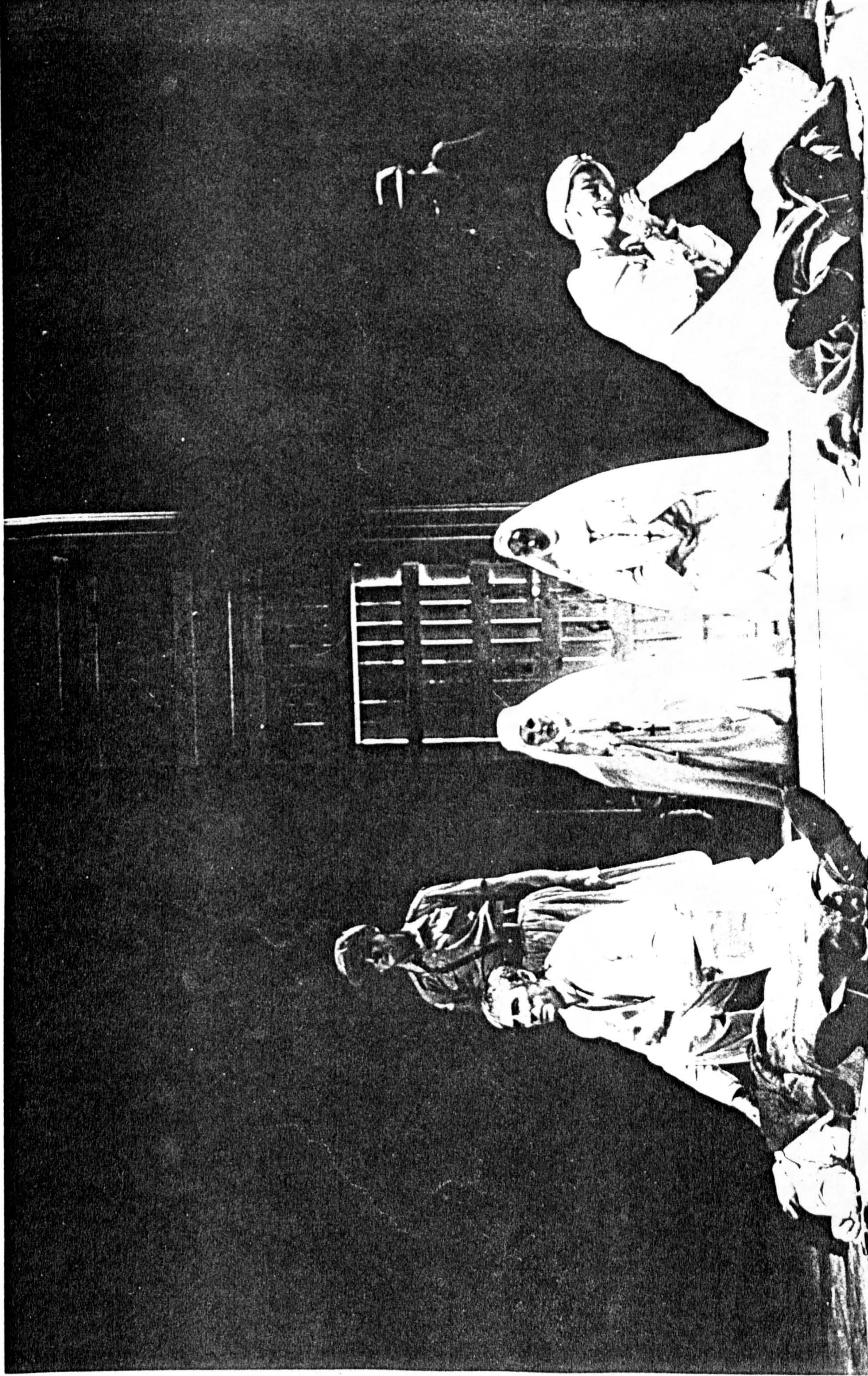
71. "'Tis poisoned, is it not?/ *Barabas*: No, no; and yet it might be done that way" (II.iii.374-5): Alun Armstrong as *Barabas* and Phil Daniels as *Ithamore* in Barry Kyle's production of *The Jew of Malta*, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1987





72. Barrie Rutter as Pilia-Borza and Stella Gonet as Bellamira (III,i) in Barry Kyle's production of *The Jew of Malta*, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1987





73. (Back, L to R) Bill McGuirk as First Knight, Shirley King as the Abbess and Deborah Goodman as a nun; (front, L to R) John Carlisle as Ferneze, James Fleet as Lodowick, Linda Spurrier as Katherine and Gregory Doran as Don Mathias (III,ii) in Barry Kyle's production of *The Jew of Malta*, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1987





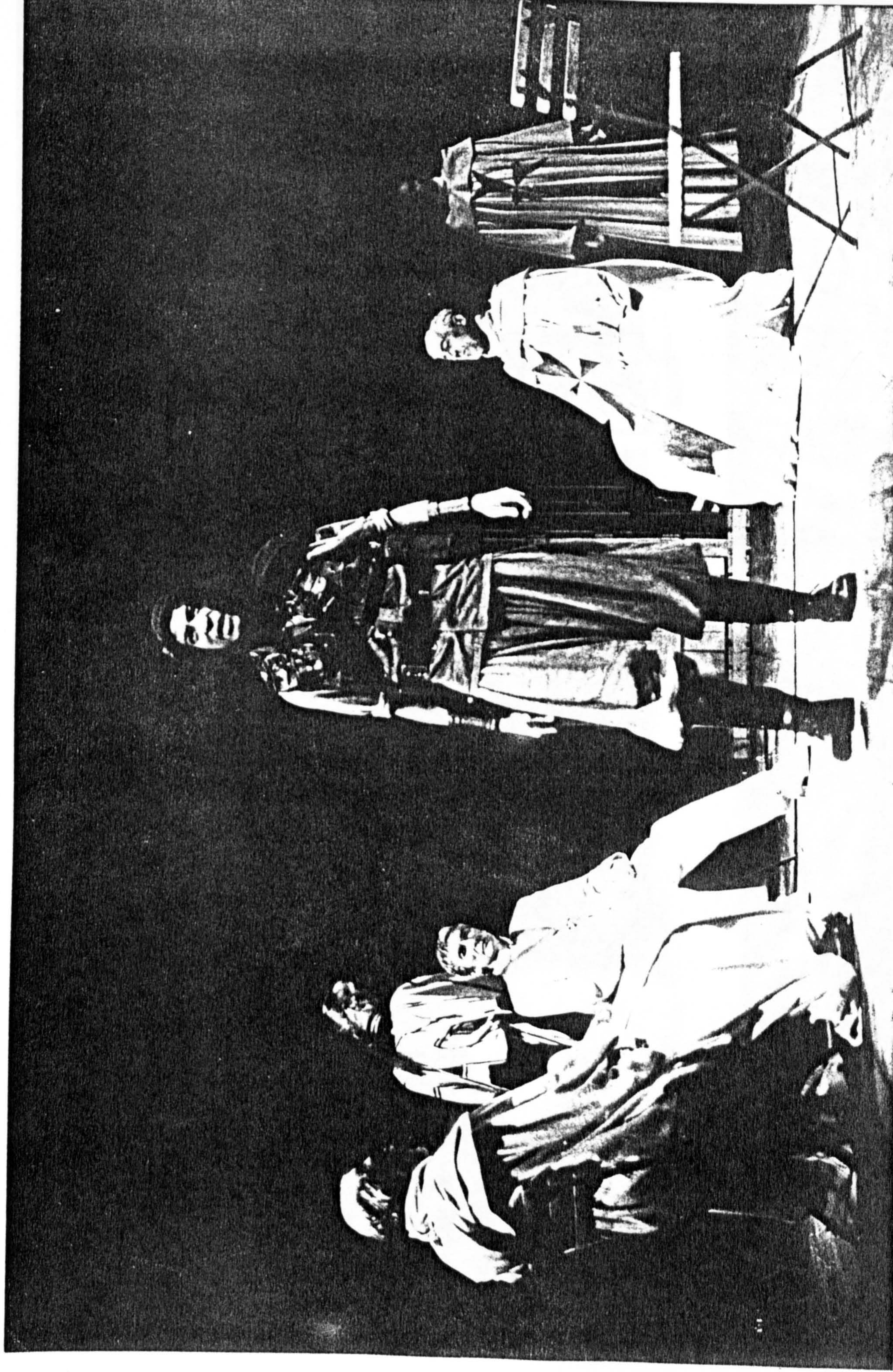
74. John Carlisle as Femeze and Linda Spurrier as Katherine (III,ii) in Barry Kyle's production of *The Jew of Malta*, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1987





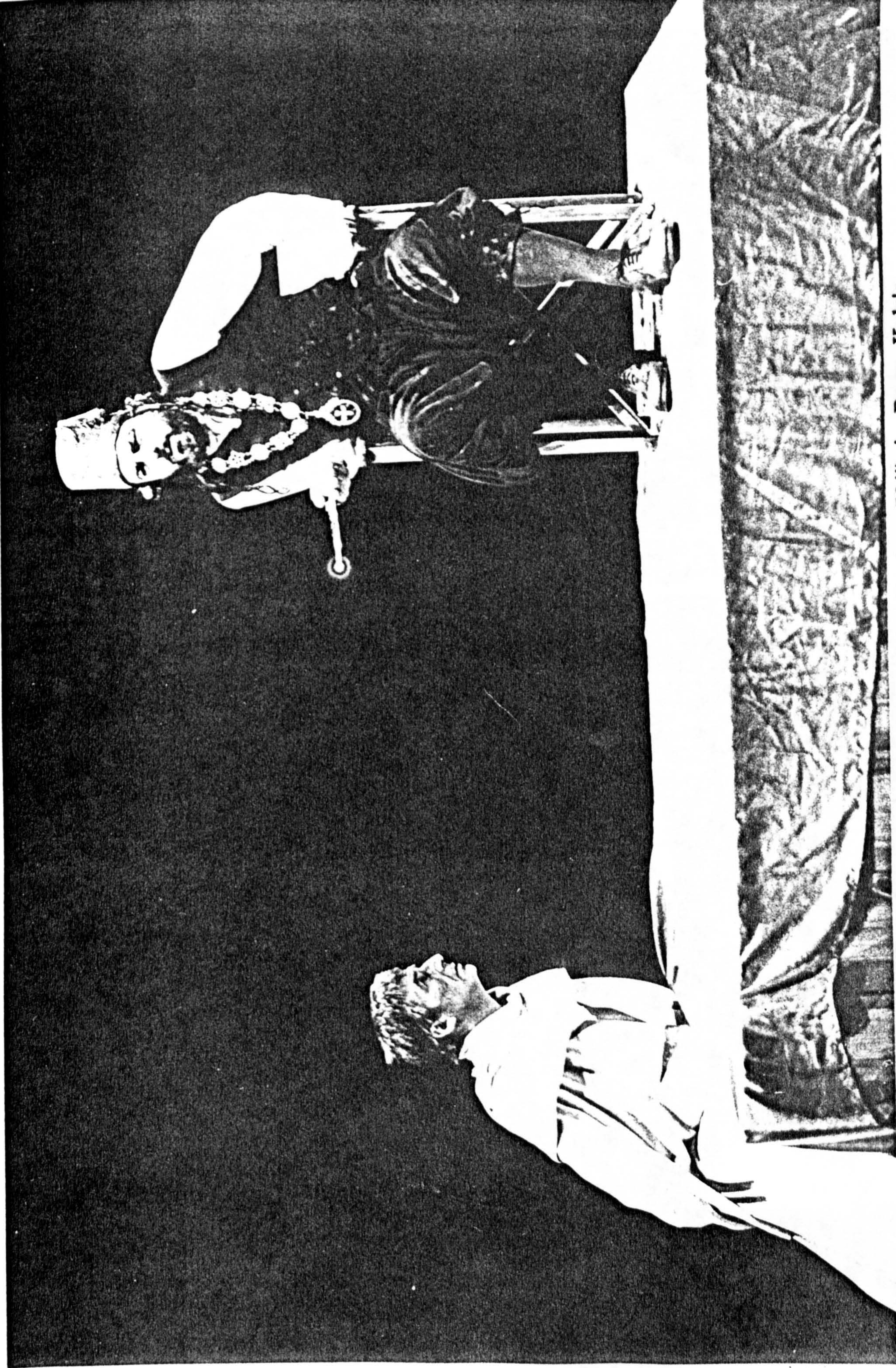
75. *Abigail*: "My duty waits on you" (III,iv,79): Geoffrey Freshwater as Friar Jacomo and Janet Armstrong as Abigail in Barry Kyle's production of *The Jew of Malta*, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1987





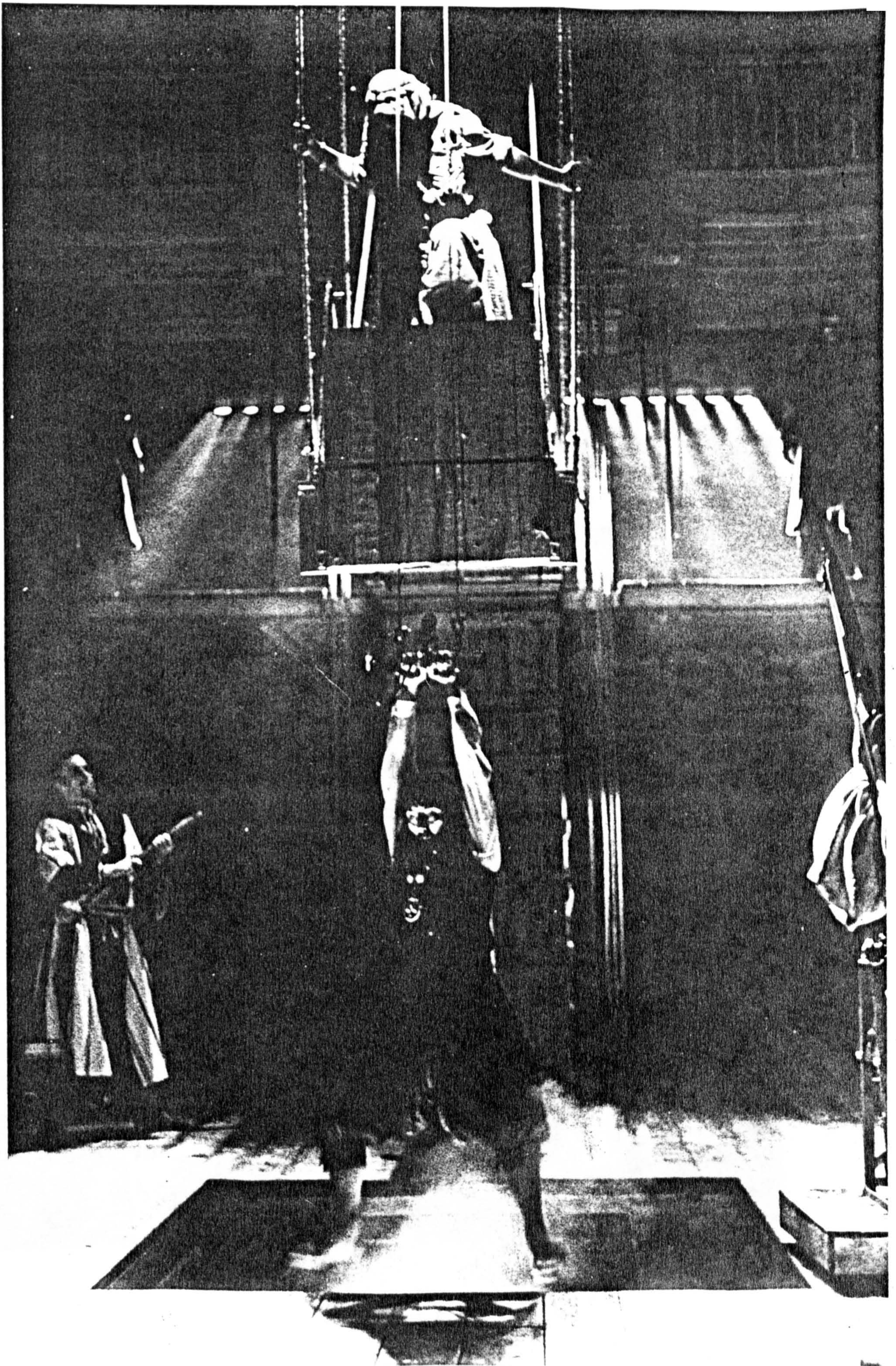
76. (L to R) Dennis Clinton as Knight officer, Michael Cadman as Vice-Admiral, John Carlisle as Ferneze, Akim Mogaji as Callapine, Bill McGuirk as First Knight and Ian Bailey as Knight officer (III,v) in Barry Kyle's production of *The Jew of Malta*, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1987





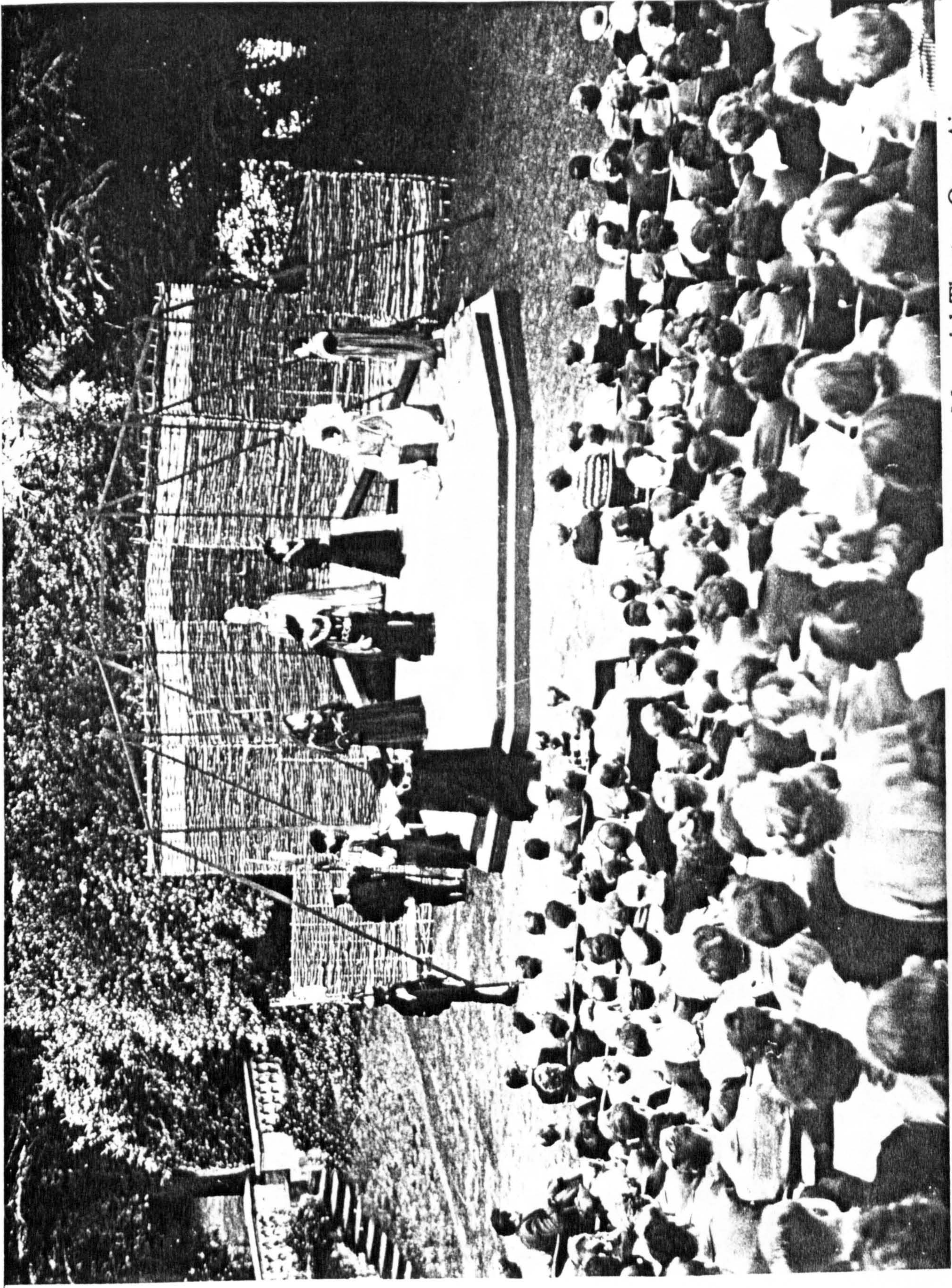
77. John Carlisle as Femeze and Alun Armstrong as Barabas (V,ii) in Barry Kyle's production of *The Jew of Malta*, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1987





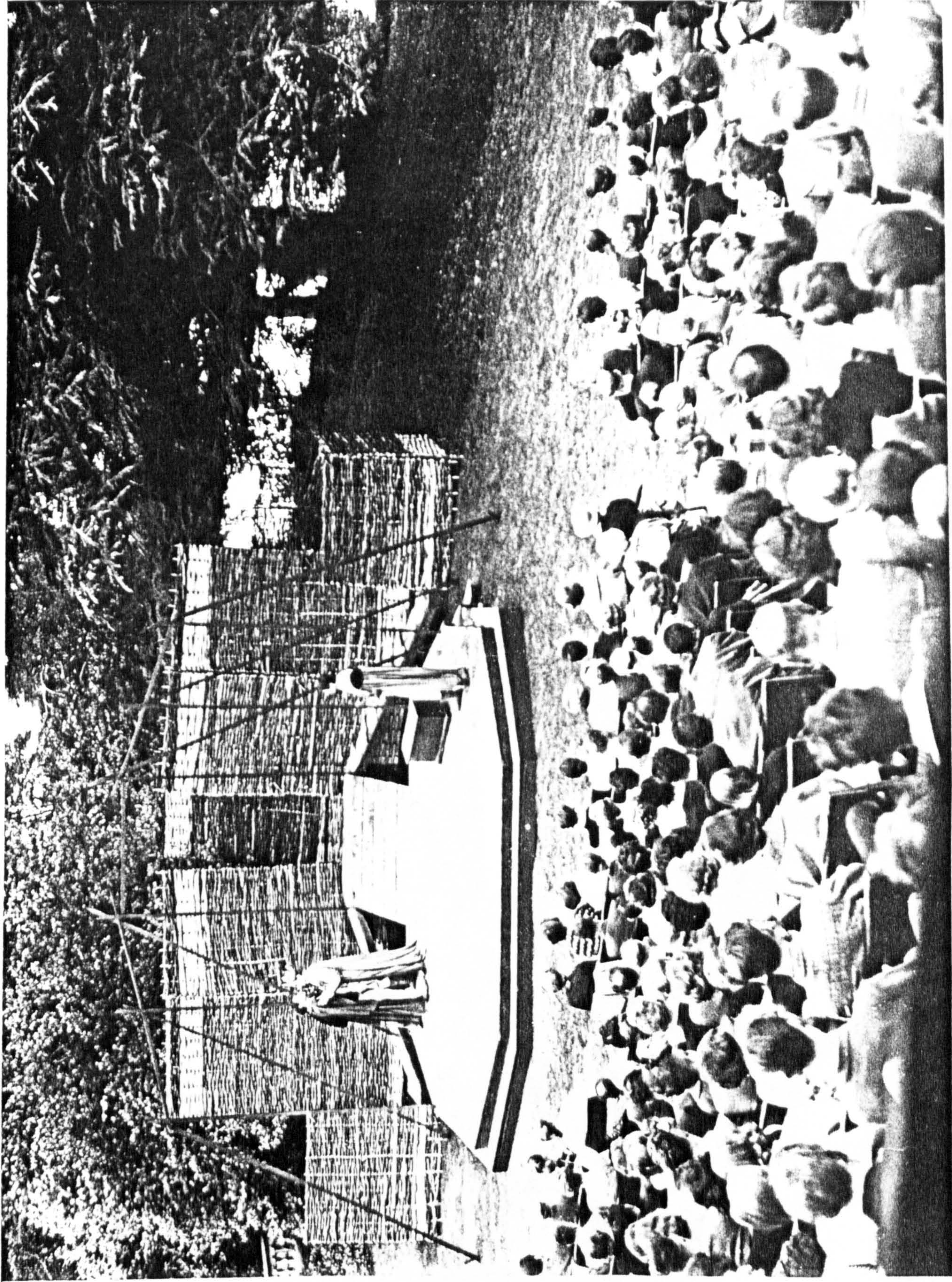
78. Michael Cadman as Vice-Admiral, Alun Armstrong as Barabas and Peter Polycarpou as Selim Calymath (V,v) in Barry Kyle's production of *The Jew of Malta*, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1987





79. Toby Robertson's production of *Edward II*, Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Open Air Theatre, 1958





80. Toby Robertson's production of *Edward II*, Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Open Air Theatre, 1958





81. Ian McKellen as Edward and James Laurenson as Gaveston in Toby Robertson's Prospect touring production of *Edward II*, 1969 (reproduced from George Geckle, *Tamburlaine and Edward II*, Text and Performance, London and Basingstoke, 1988)





82. Ian McKellen as Edward in Toby Robertson's Prospect touring production of *Edward II*, 1969