

The Staging of Witchcraft in the Jacobean Theatre

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Shokhan Rasool Ahmed M. A. (Exeter)

School of English

University of Leicester

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Abstract

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Shokhan Rasool Ahmed

This thesis investigates witchcraft during the reign of King James VI and I when belief in witchcraft was widespread in Scotland and England, and there was a growing tendency for dramatists to use witchcraft materials in their plays. The writings of Reginald Scot and King James I, alongside modern scholarly work by Keith Thomas, Allen Macfarlane, Diane Purkiss and others, will be considered to analyse beliefs about supernatural power and, in particular, witchcraft and witches' activities.

This study is principally concerned with the staging of drama at the Blackfriars theatre, especially from the time that the King's Men leased it in 1609. The thesis examines Jacobean plays which were staged at the Blackfriars, in comparison to Elizabethan (e.g., *Dr Faustus*, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, and *Mother Bombie*), and post-Jacobean plays (e.g., *The Late Lancashire Witches*) which were also performed there.

The nature and status of stage directions in these plays will also be investigated, paying particular attention to the status of stage directions in printed texts, and whether these were originally written by the playwrights themselves or were revised or supplied by editors, scribes or members of the theatre companies.

Finally, five case studies consider thematically-related plays performed by the King's Men at the Blackfriars. Several questions will be investigated. Why is it particularly important to look at the visual depiction of witches in theatre? What is the difference when a supernatural character 'enters' the stage via flying or platform traps and does it make any difference to the audience when supernatural characters use one form of entrance rather than another? The thesis will also evaluate how the technology of the Blackfriars playhouse facilitated the appearance of spirits, witches, magicians, deities and dragons on stage. The last chapter deals with native witches and 'cunning women' on stage and also considers why elderly women in early modern England were more prone to accusations of witchcraft than the young, and why a number of harmless women were tortured, including midwives and healers.

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Dedications

I dedicate this thesis to my late parents, who left us very soon. I hope this work makes you proud! I also want to dedicate this work to my remaining family and especially my lovely son, Sann.

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Table of Witch Plays

Author	Play	Date of performance	Date of publication	Theatre/playhouse
John Lyly	<i>Mother Bombie</i>	1588-1590	1594	Paul's playhouse
Robert Greene	<i>Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay</i>	1588-1592	1594	Rose
Christopher Marlowe	<i>Doctor Faustus</i>	1594	A-text, 1604	Rose
			B-text, 1611	Blackfriars
Thomas Heywood	<i>The Wise Woman of Hogsdon</i>	1604	1638	Curtain
John Marston	<i>The Wonder of Women or Sophonisba</i>	1604-1606	1606	Blackfriars
William Shakespeare	<i>Macbeth</i>	1605-1606	1623	Globe
Barnabe Barnes	<i>The Devil's Charter</i>	1606	1607	Court
Ben Jonson	<i>The Masque of Queens</i>	1609	1616	white hall

Thomas Middleton	<i>The Witch</i>	1609-1616	1778	Blackfriars
William Shakespeare	<i>The Tempest</i>	1610-1611	1623	Globe
William Shakespeare	<i>Cymbeline</i>	1611	1623	Globe
William Rowley, Thomas Dekker, and John Ford	<i>The Witch of Edmonton</i>	1621	1658	Court
William Rowley	<i>The Birth of Merlin</i>	1622	1662	Rose
Thomas Heywood and Richard Brome	<i>The Late Lancashire Witches</i>	1634	1634	Globe
William Davenant	<i>Macbeth</i>	1666	1673	Dorset Garden
		1667	1674	Dorset Garden and Blackfriars
Thomas Shadwell	<i>The Lancashire Witches, and Tegue O Dively the Irish-Priest</i>	1681	1682	Drury Lane and Blackfriars
		1707		

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Witchcraft and Witch Plays

Research into witches in early modern England has intensified in the last ten years as scholars have become more interested in the topic of witchcraft, especially its relation to gender. Universities worldwide now offer courses on witchcraft.¹ Landmark studies include David D. Hall's 'Witchcraft and the limits of Interpretation' (1985)², which is a review of the earlier debates of witchcraft cases in which he pays attention to the distinction between early modern mentalities and beliefs. Books such as Darren Oldridge's *The Witchcraft Reader* (2001)³ explore the roots and outcomes of anxieties about witches. Oldridge's research covers witch beliefs in the late middle ages, the history of the witch-hunts in early modern period alongside the persistence of witchcraft in the present day. However, my project differs from previous scholarly work on witchcraft so far since it pays particular attention to the presentation of stage directions in Jacobean witchcraft plays, and to comparative evidence from different theatrical environments concerning the existence (or otherwise) of flying machinery on the stage. In other words, this thesis explores historical questions surrounding witchcraft practices which intersect with issues of staging conditions and theatrical trends; it considers the significance of stage directions in witchcraft plays, either as evidence of performance practice or as later interpolations.

It is thought that the word witchcraft came from the Indo-European Saxon word 'Wicca'.⁴ There is not a universal definition for witchcraft but all critics and historians agree that witchcraft has a connection with the evil spirits. In the *OED*, witchcraft is

¹ For example, 'Popular Religion, Women and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe' is taught in the School of Divinity at the University of Edinburgh, 'Witchcraft, Magic and Gender in Literature' is taught in the School of English at the University of Exeter, and 'History of the Witch-Hunts in Scotland as well as the British, Continental, American and African witch-hunting experience' in the School of Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of Glasgow. Furthermore, 'History of Magic, Witchcraft, and Superstition' is taught in the department of History at Iowa State University and 'Salem Witch Trials in History and Literature' at the University of Virginia.

² David D. Hall, 'Witchcraft and the limits of Interpretation', *New England Quarterly*, 58 (1985), 253-281.

³ Darren Oldridge, *The Witchcraft Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002)

⁴ 'Wicca', *Oxford English Dictionary*,

<<http://www.oed.com.ezproxy4.lib.le.ac.uk/view/Entry/243472?redirectedFrom=wicca#eid>> [Accessed February 2011]

defined as involving 'the practise of witch or witches; the exercise of supernatural power supposed to be possessed by persons in league with the devil or evil spirits'.⁵ Keith Thomas, drawing on anthropological studies of African witches in *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (1973)⁶, and Alan Macfarlane, in *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England: a Regional and Comparative Study* (1999)⁷, examined the history of witchcraft in England down to village level. Their approach focused on neighbourly disputes and peasant beliefs, and especially the part played by accusations of witchcraft in village tensions, though they also emphasized the importance of the *Malleus Maleficarum*, a demonological treatise written by Heinrich Kramer in 1486. *Malleus Maleficarum* is still the most influential guide for the persecution, torture and execution of witches. The treatise was first translated into English by Montague Summers in 1928, who called it 'one of the most important, wisest and weightiest books of the world'.⁸ The treatise covers many features of classic demonological witchcraft, such as the witches' pact with the devil and infanticide.⁹ Liberal and feminist readers, however, have highlighted its misogynistic dimension, since it especially attacks woman as witches; they consider witch-hunting as 'woman-hunting'.¹⁰

The diverse agendas of historians like Gareth Roberts, Brian Levack, Fernando Cervantes, Marianne Hester and Lyndal Roper are evident from their respective contributions to a recent collection of essays, *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Studies in Culture and belief*.¹¹ Their investigations are not only confined to the social aspects of

⁵ 'Witchcraft', *Oxford English Dictionary*, <<http://www.oed.com.ezproxy4.lib.le.ac.uk/view/Entry/229580?redirectedFrom=witchcraft#eid>> [Accessed February 2011]

⁶ Keith Thomas, *Religion and The Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century England* (London: Penguin, 1971)

⁷ Alan Macfarlane, in *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England: a Regional and Comparative Study*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 1999)

⁸ Jacob Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum*, with an introduction, bibliography and notes by Montague Summers (London: John Rodker, 1928)

⁹ William E. Burns, *Witch Hunts in Europe and America: An encyclopedia* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2003), pp. 158-160.

¹⁰ Christina Larner, *Enemies of God: The Witch-hunt in Scotland* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1981), pp. (92, 102).

¹¹ Jonathan Barry, Marianne Hester, and Gareth Roberts, *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Studies in Culture and Belief* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). See Gareth Roberts, 'The Descendant of Circe: Witches and Renaissance Fictions', Part three, pp. 183-206. Marianne Hester, 'Patriarchal Reconstruction and Witch-Hunting', pp. 288-306. Hester relates the witch-hunt and the accusations of

witchcraft but include subjects such as devils, patriarchy, fantasy, contemporary writings and fiction. Their studies also cover the continental tradition of witchcraft at both village and elite belief levels. More recently still, James Sharpe, in his *Instrument of Darkness: Witchcraft in England 1550-1750* (1996), deals with areas neglected by Keith Thomas and Alan Macfarlane, such as gender and music.

Scholars have distinguished between various different types of witchcraft and magic in early modern England. The stereotypical witch first appeared around 1450 in cultural belief, and witchcraft was regarded as a criminal offence until the middle of the eighteenth century. Several Witchcraft Acts were passed as serious penalties for witchcraft and its practice.¹² Belief in witchcraft was widespread in this period, among the educated and uneducated alike. Such beliefs can be approached through early modern demonological theorists in England and Europe, the different cultures of witchcraft beliefs and accusations in rural communities, and the legal persecution of witchcraft in England and on the continent. During the past two decades, feminist writers have begun to survey this neglected field from the perspective of witchcraft and gender. For instance, Christina Larner (2001) has argued that women were believed to be more easily tempted to sin than men, something which was related to their femininity.¹³ However, Thomas and Macfarlane have maintained that witch accusations were fundamentally a matter of economics: women were more apt to be marginal and poor, thus more likely to find themselves accused. Marianne Hester has drawn on Thomas's idea that the accused were usually older, poor and often widowed women.¹⁴ In this perspective, witch-persecutions can be seen as an attack on independent women by a patriarchal society in which women were cast as inferior to men. Thus the majority of the executed witches were women.

women was not merely a reflection of an old-age stereotype, nor merely the by-product of a patriarchal society, but argues that the witch-hunt was utilised as a means of social control of women within a general context of social change and the reconstruction of a patriarchal society. Brian P. Levack, 'State-building and witch hunting in Early Modern Europe', chapter One, pp. 96-118. Fernando Cervantes, 'The Devil's Encounter with America', pp. 119-145. Lyndal Roper, 'Witchcraft and fantasy in early Modern Germany', part three, pp. 207-236.

¹² For example, the Witchcraft Act 1735 was passed as penalties for those who practiced witchcraft, such as casting spells, predicting future, calling up familiars (spirits), and ability to find stolen goods.

¹³ Christina Larner, 'Was Witch-Hunting Women-Hunting?', in *The Witch Reader* ed. by Darren Oldridge (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 273-276.

¹⁴ Marianne Hester, 'Patriarchal Reconstruction and Witch-Hunting', p. 277.

Furthermore, many scholars have viewed the term 'witch' as effectively equivalent to 'woman'. Radical feminists, however, have revised witch stories and recast protagonists as healers: midwives rather than witches. One of the most important publications in this respect was Roper's 1994 work, *Oedipus and the Devil*¹⁵, which represented a significant change as feminist historians began to enter the debate and highlight the matter of gender. The key interpretative factors in witchcraft were its relation to maternity, malevolence and the nurturing mother, and conflicts between the family and the neighbourhood.

Deborah Willis, in *Malevolent Nurture: Witch Hunting and Maternal Power in Early Modern England* (1995)¹⁶ and Diane Purkiss, in *The Witch in History: Early Modern and Twentieth-Century Representations* (1996)¹⁷, writing primarily as literary critics, have discussed the witch in Elizabethan and Jacobean plays which are the subject of this thesis. Twentieth-century meanings of witchcraft are analysed alongside the historical in their accounts. Purkiss has focused on witchcraft beliefs in history and their manifestation in court records, early modern drama, as well as modern histories and fictions. She has examined village stories and plays which were reshaped with spectacular effects on stage by early modern dramatists. She divides the dramatists into 'fantasists' and 'realists', those who attempted to represent the concerns of witch believers. In *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (1997)¹⁸, Stuart Clark has explored the appeal of demonology to scholars working on the early modern period. Clark firmly believes that beliefs in witchcraft should not be taken as an alternative for something else: people believed in witchcraft because that was how they understood the world, not because they did not understand it. The significance of Clark's approach is in taking the

¹⁵ Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality and Religion in Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 1994)

¹⁶ Deborah Willis, *Malevolent Nurture: Witch Hunting and Maternal Power in Early Modern England* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1995)

¹⁷ Diane Purkiss, *The Witch in History: Early Modern and Twentieth-Century Representations* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996)

¹⁸ Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997)

nature of these beliefs seriously, rather than dismissing them as the mere product of a superstitious age.

While informed by this scholarship, this study differs by focusing on a brief phenomenon in the history of witches in literature, considering how witchcraft scenes were staged at the Blackfriars by the King's Men Company of players. The argument presented here mainly concerns the staging of witchcraft in Jacobean drama during the period of 1603-25, when interest in witchcraft was particularly intense. The main questions that will be considered in this thesis are the following: why is it particularly important to look at the visual depiction of witches in theatre? Does the visual spectacle of witchcraft scenes intersect with the genre of the plays? To what extent do changing theatrical tastes affect the way that witches are shown on stage?

It is the contention of this thesis that while Elizabethan plays focused more on the witch's behaviour and the idea that she was subordinated to the devil, early Jacobean literature more typically depicts Continental practices of witchcraft such as flight, ritual magic, and midnight festivities or revelry. Scot's *The Discovery of Witchcraft* (1584) was the first demonological treatise to synthesize the supernatural world of the Continent for the English reader, including the aerial journeys of witches at night.¹⁹ A new interest in

¹⁹ The congregation of witches and their revelry at Sabbaths were elements of English witch lore commonly known to audiences, however this was not the case with witches flying. Thomas, Macfarlane and Sharpe all support the idea that the sexual aspect of witchcraft was not a feature of English witch lore in trials since the accusations were by one female against another rather than from male to female. Thomas states that interest in witch belief corresponds with 'a time when women were generally believed to be sexually more voracious than men.' He also points out that diabolic copulation and the lore of incubi and succubi are thoroughly explored in continental literature such as *Malleus Maleficarum*, but 'in England the more blatant sexual aspects of witchcraft were very uncommon features of English trials.' Keith Thomas, *Religion and The Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century England* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1973), pp. (568, 679). Sharpe refers to the same demonological tract, claiming that most of the arguments conveyed in the pamphlets about English trials agreed except on the issues of 'the sexual intercourse' between witches and the devil. He also argues that 'despite their use of continental, and more specifically continental Catholic, authors, there was little by way of sexual prurience, concern over sexual intercourse between human beings and animals, and the absurd obscenities of the sabbat.' He also adds that English Protestant writers very rarely cited *Malleus Maleficarum*, despite the extravagant claims that have been made for its importance; James Sharpe, 'The Debate on Witchcraft', in *A Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture*, ed. by Michael Hattaway (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), pp. 653-661, (p. 656). Sawyer distinguishes between English witchcraft beliefs and persecutions on the Continent in which they are neither 'riding brooms, nor kissing the devil's behind, nor cannibalizing babies', except the act of maleficium. According to witchcraft evidence, witches were both male and female but the most acute focus is on female witches, especially in English studies. This is as a result of 'complex economic and social forces

Continental texts on witchcraft coincided with technological advances in the English stage, which made a variety of dramatic effects possible in the private playhouses, such as flying witches, and the appearance of spirits and deities in Elizabethan plays. This is especially true of Blackfriars due to the physical arrangement of this theatre, with its roofed venue, and its use of artificial light.

King James's personal interest and preoccupation with witchcraft, manifested in his *Daemonologie* (1597), stimulated English interest in witchcraft when he acceded to the English throne in 1603, and this was reflected in a growing tendency for dramatists to use witchcraft materials in their plays. In particular, they drew inspiration from the trials and court records of that time. For example, the second plot of Middleton's *The Witch* may have been a response to the real political events of the divorce of Lady Frances Howard and the Earl of Essex 1613, and the Overbury poisoning trial in May 1616.²⁰ The dramatists of both *The Late Lancashire Witches* and *The Witch of Edmonton* were also inspired by the court records and trials of village witches during the time the plays were written.²¹ The performing of these plays was important not only as dramatic showpieces to impress the audience, but also as a way of stimulating audience debate about the nature of witchcraft. Because of the large number of people accused of (supposed) witchcraft practices, the court and theatre became closely interlinked; plays echoed the social and political realities of that period.²²

as well as traditional folk and Christian beliefs that emphasized the threatening nature of women'; Sawyer Ronald C. Sawyer, 'Strangely Handled in All Her Lymes': Witchcraft and Healing in Jacobean England', *Journal of Social History*, 22 (1989), 461-485 (p. 465).

²⁰ *The Witch* is an obvious example of a play which had a connection with an early seventeenth-century court scandal and each character in the play can be seen to reflect a court figure of that time. Marion O'Connor, 'The Witch', in *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works*, ed. by Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 1124-1164 (p. 1124). The discussion of this play can be found in chapter 4.

²¹ Alison Findlay, 'Sexual and spiritual politics in the events of 1633-34 and *The Late Lancashire Witches*,' in *The Lancashire Witches: Histories and Stories*, ed. by Robert Poole (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), pp. 146-65.

²² For more information see Ann Lancashire, 'The Witch: Stage Flop or Political Mistake?,' in *Accompanying the Players: Essays Celebrating Thomas Middleton, 1580-1980*, ed. by Kenneth Friedenreich (New York: AMS Press, 1983), pp. 161-181 (pp.163-170).

1.2 Theatre

This study is concerned with the staging of Jacobean drama at the Blackfriars theatre, especially from the time that the King's Men leased the Blackfriars in 1609. The public playhouses were the Theatre, the Curtain, the Fortune, the Red Bull, the Swan, Rose, and the Globe. The private playhouses were Blackfriars, Porter's Hall, Whitefriars, Salisbury Court, the Phoenix, the Cockpit, and Whitehall Palace. Both types of playhouses, private and public, were commercial. As Irwin Smith has noted, 1576 is important in the history of the English stage as it was in this year that the First Blackfriars, one of the first commercial indoor playhouses in England, was established by Richard Farrant. The first Blackfriars, located on the north bank of the Thames close to the Inns of Court, was built by James Burbage as a 'public house' and became one of the leading theatres in England, later becoming a 'private house'. It was closed down in about 1584, but a second Blackfriars was built in 1597, and lasted until 1642.²³ Of the Jacobean plays performed at the second Blackfriars theatre, several took full advantage of the flying machines and new mechanisms available here to stage intricate scenes. This thesis proposes that because of the technical devices available at the Blackfriars during the time the plays were staged, Jacobean witches became able to 'fly'. Several tragicomedies were also performed which required technical devices to stage their supernatural scenes, such as flying machinery, free-flying wire and artificial light. The Blackfriars was technically more sophisticated in terms of its ability to stage the visual spectacle of the plays since it had flying machinery concealed above the stage. By contrast, the lack of flying machinery in outdoor playhouses meant that witches could not be represented as 'riding on the air' during their Sabbaths and festivities. Flights were controlled by stagehands in the heavens: 'the raising- and -lowering apparatus consisted of a windlass ... and a rope or wire that originated at the windlass, ran from it over a pulley located above the centre of the great

²³ Irwin Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse: Its History and Its Design* (London: Peter Owen, 1964), p. 130.

trap in the heavens floor, and hence to the car (...)'.²⁴ There is no doubt the King's Men could stage the performances of the supernatural entities on stage successfully after they took over Blackfriars and installed flying machinery for supernatural effects.

The private or indoor playhouses were roofed, had an urban location, and were more favoured by the wealthy because of their proximity to the Inns of Court.²⁵ They had benches for the well-to-do to sit on next to the stage, and also had galleries. They were intimate venues, heated in the winter and illuminated by candlelight. In addition to this, private playhouses had a much higher admission fee compared to public ones, an indication of the prestige of the venue. The location of the outdoor playhouses was suburban and they were unroofed and had the benefit of natural light. At the same time, they faced the disadvantage of bad weather, which had an influence on reducing business compared with the private playhouses. Smith repeats another distinction made by William A. Armstrong between the private and public playhouses that the first private playhouses were occupied only by companies of child actors whereas all the public playhouses were served by men.²⁶ The boys' companies traditionally had a musical interlude in the indoor performances but no intervals were used in the outdoor performances. Music in the indoor performances was used as a means of managing pauses between scenes and to drown out the creaking sound of the flying machine. Rasmussen suggests that 'pauses between acts would not only have been better facilitated in indoor theatres, but might also have been required (so that candles could be trimmed)'.²⁷

The theatre managers' use of the terms 'private' and 'public' playhouses was an attempt to take advantage of the 1574 Act of the Common Council, which was enacted to restrict plays and acting except,

²⁴ Ibid., p. 418. (see fig. 1), John A. Mckinven, *Stage Flying, 431 B.C. to Modern Times* (Glenwood, IL: David Meyer & Magic Books, 2000), p. 29.

²⁵ Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage: 1574-1642*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 82-88.

²⁶ Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse*, p. 131. See also Scott McMillin, 'Middleton's Theatres', in *Thomas Middleton: the Collected Works*, ed. by Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), pp. 74-87 (p. 79).

²⁷ Eric Rasmussen, review of 'Shakespeare Reshaped', ed. by Gary Taylor and John Jowett, *Modern Philology*, 94 (1996), pp. 233-237 (p. 234).

Anie plaies, Enterludes, Comedies, Tragidies, or shewes to be played or shewed in the private house, dwellinge, or lodging of anie nobleman, Citizen, or gentleman, which shall or will then have the same thear so played or shewed in his presence, for the festyvities of anie marriage, assemblie of ffrendes, or otherlyke cawse, withowte publike or comen collection of money of the auditorie, or behoulders theareof.²⁸

The word 'common' here means 'public'. Sturges points out that the term 'private' needs scrutiny and was used in opposition to the term 'common': 'there hath not heretofore been used any common playhouse within the same precinct'.²⁹ The First Blackfriars had actually been in the precinct but it was ignored by the 1596 petitioners because it was not a 'common' playhouse. Sturges argues that during the reigns of James and Charles the court showed 'a constant interest in professional theatre, supporting it through the Privy Council against the City authorities and influencing its development and style of repertory'.³⁰ This aristocratic support allowed the King's Men to perform a great number of plays in the early Jacobean period.

This study concentrates on the Blackfriars theatre in particular because it hosted the most significant dramatists from 1609-1616. It considers Jacobean plays (*The Witch, The Tempest, Cymbeline, Macbeth, The Masque of Queens, Tragedy of Sophonisba, The Wise Woman of Hogsdon, The Witch of Edmonton, The Devil's Charter, and The Birth of Merlin*) as well as some Elizabethan (*Dr. Faustus, Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, and Mother Bombie*) and post-Jacobean ones (*The Late Lancashire Witches*). However, not all the named plays were staged at the Blackfriars from the beginning, some of them were staged there after being revised and refashioned. The theatre managers at private playhouses were dealing with an elite audience which required and was interested in dances and songs. Accordingly, new instruments and machines at the Blackfriars were

²⁸ W. J. Lawrence, *Those Nut-Cracking Elizabethans: Studies of the Early Theatre and Drama* (London: The Argonaut Press, 1935), pp. 31-32. See also Tanya Pollard, *Shakespeare's Theatre: A Sourcebook* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2004), p. 308; Glynne Wickham, 'the Privy Council Order of 1597 for the Destruction of all London's Theatres', in *The Elizabethan Theatre*, ed., by David Galloway (Oshawa: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1969), pp. 21-44.

²⁹ Keith Sturges, *Jacobean Private Theatre* (London and New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987), p.2.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

installed to impress the audience. Sturges argues that ‘the private playhouse became a club, an academy and an art-house, while its public counterpart became notable for rowdy behaviour and, on stage, an over-dependence on jigs, fighting and horseplay’.³¹ One might suggest that the demand for spectacular effects is something that is now more commonly associated with popular entertainment rather than elite (it is interesting that this is not the case here). It is also true that the public playhouses staged plays like *Hamlet*, *The Tempest*, *Henry VII*, none of which catered to the lowest common denominator, and that wealthy people attended performances at outside venues as well as indoor ones.

To deal with Jacobean drama means focusing on the physical design of Jacobean theatres, the entrances, exits and the types of flying machinery utilised in public and private playhouses. Glynne Wickham, in his important article ‘To Fly or Not to Fly?’,³² discussed the visual spectacle of witchcraft in Middleton’s *The Witch*. Bernard Beckerman, in *Shakespeare at the Globe, 1599-1609*, considered the flying scenes in several plays, but not in depth.³³ However, Irwin Smith, in *Shakespeare’s Blackfriars Playhouse: Its History and Its Design*,³⁴ does go into some detail about the Blackfriars and its repertoires. He lists all the plays performed by the King’s Men at the Blackfriars, and identifies several plays which require flying machinery, although he does not give stage directions in detail. My study builds upon these scholars’ work by investigating the structure of the playhouses and stage directions in a systematic fashion. The questions considered are, what is the difference when a supernatural character ‘enters’ the stage via flying and platform traps? How did the supernatural entities fly and dance on stage in early modern England? Does it make any difference to the audience when supernatural characters use one entrance

³¹Ibid., p.4. see also Jean I. Marsden, ‘Spectacle, horror, and Pathos’, in *The Cambridge Companion to English Restoration Theatre*, ed. by Deborah Payne Fisk (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 174-190 (p. 174).

³² Glynne Wickham, ‘To Fly Not To Fly? The Problem of Hecate in Shakespeare’s “Macbeth”’ in *Essays on Drama and Theatre*, ed. by Benjamin Hunningher (Amsterdam: Baarn, 1973), pp. 17-82. This article has been influential on my own work in this thesis and inspired me in writing this project.

³³Bernard Beckerman, *Shakespeare at the Glob, 1599-1609* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1962), pp. 63-108.

³⁴ Smith, *Shakespeare’s Blackfriars*, pp. 414-425.

rather than another? It will also evaluate how the Blackfriars playhouse facilitated the depiction of spirits, witches, magicians, dragons and deities. The thesis will also examine how early modern witches were viewed and presented on stage even as, outside the theatre, they were accused of being the cause of crop failure, the spread of infection, bringing death and sickness to neighbours and strangers, poisonings and destroying goods.

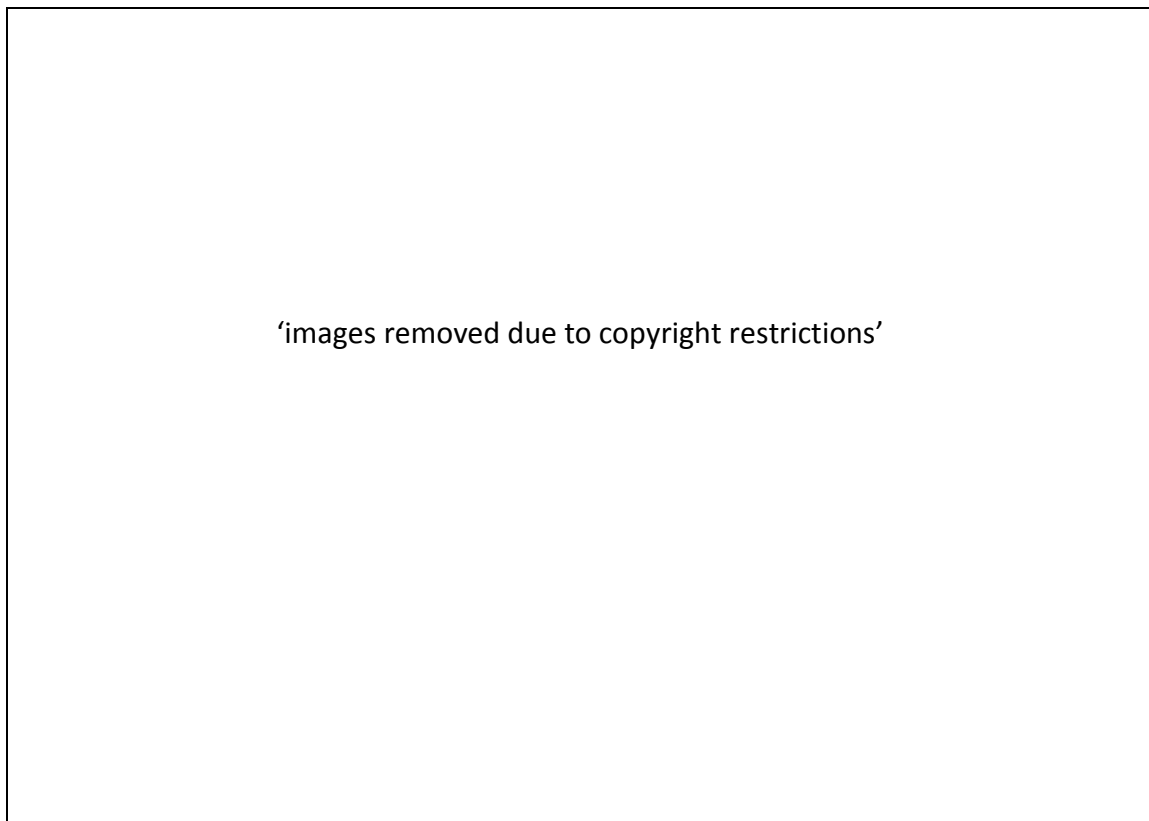


Fig. 1, an image of 'How to Make a Cloud Descend from the Stage to the Middle of the Stage, a Cloud, Moreover with persons on it' (McKinven, 29)

Demonological treatises such as Reginald Scot's *The Discovery of Witchcraft* (1584), and King James' *Daemonologie* (1597) focused on the diabolic nature of the witch and depicted her physical behaviour. The Jacobean witch on stage presented a theatrical spectacle whose wicked behaviour and characteristics conformed to these learned

demonological texts. However, the ability of stage witches to perform the Continental practices of witchcraft, such as transporting themselves through the air, was restricted in playhouses other than Blackfriars. This was because other playhouses did not have advanced machinery required to stage supernatural behaviour such as flying. The progress of stage spectacle was practically unmodified until almost the middle of the seventeenth century.³⁵ Representation of witches in drama of this period was therefore limited by the technical capacity of the public playhouses. However, in the Blackfriars, witches could be part of a heightened stage spectacle through the theatre's ability to simulate their magical capabilities on stage. For example, Malkin, a Spirit in *The Witch*, descends onto the stage and then ascends with Hecate. Not only withes and spirits descend at the Blackfriars, deities such as Jupiter, Ariel and Juno in Shakespeare's late plays also descend. But whereas Hecate flew in *The Witch* from the start, Shakespeare's witches in *Macbeth* only start flying in textual terms in the second Quarto of William Davenant in 1674.³⁶ Peter Hall argues that Blackfriars most likely 'dictated the aesthetic of these late plays, with fables more "Gothic" (i.e. more extreme), containing more music, more spectacle, and more emphasis on the *way* the thing is done rather than *what* is done'.³⁷ There is no doubt that the King's Men could stage the performances of the supernatural entities on stage successfully after they took over Blackfriars and adopted flying machinery such as a raising-and-lowering apparatus. In Jacobean plays such as *The Witch*, *The Tempest* and *Cymbeline*, and Elizabethan plays performed on the Jacobean stage, such as *Dr. Faustus*, witches, demons, spirits and deities all have the power of flight. Spirits or demons also convert themselves into different animals on stage as in *The Late Lancashire Witches*, and *The Witch of Edmonton*, and witches command demonic music as in *Dr. Faustus*.

Most of the witchcraft plays were performed by the company of the King's Men at the Blackfriars. The Lord Chamberlain's Men had taken the title of the King's Men in 1603,

³⁵ Lily Bess Campbell, *Scenes and Machines on the English Stage during the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1923), p. 120.

³⁶ William Shakespeare, *Macbeth, A Tragedy: with all Alterations, Amendments, Additions, and New Song*, ed. by William Davenant (1674), 1-60 (p. 3). See also Christopher Spencer, *Five Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), p.4.

³⁷ Quoted in Roger Warren, *Staging Shakespeare's Late Plays* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990) p. 18.

honouring James I's accession.³⁸ The company performed several tragicomedies, mostly by John Fletcher, the house playwright who worked with the company after Shakespeare.³⁹ Smith identifies twenty-five plays as the property of the Chapel-Revels Children and as having been performed at Blackfriars. He also names one hundred and twenty-one Blackfriars plays of the King's Men.⁴⁰ Therefore, the King's Men could perform a large number of plays when they leased the Blackfriars.

1.3 Structure of This Thesis

The chapters of this thesis are not in chronological order, but are instead thematically related. Each chapter investigates several plays, some of which are ordered by genre rather than date, while others are grouped together according to the main theme of the chapter. The date of composition of some plays examined here is still not clear, making a chronological ordering problematic. The structure of this thesis allows investigation into comparative evidence from different theatrical movements concerning the existence of flying machinery on the Jacobean stage.

Chapter Two addresses the important question of the role and purpose of stage directions in printed texts, discussing whether the stage directions in the plays that the thesis investigates were originally written by the author himself or were revised or supplied by editors, scribes or members of the theatre companies. It also considers the question of whether stage directions for the supernatural entities effect the genre of these plays. The remaining chapters of this thesis consider the question of whether advances in technology at the private theatres led the company players, scribes or the authors to alter or revise the original stage directions due to the demand for popular entertainment and to suit with the taste of the theatre-goers of this period.

³⁸ Andrew Gurr, *the Shakespearean Stage 1574-1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 23-4; and Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars*, pp. 194-5. See also Keith Sturgess, *Jacobean Private Theatre*, p. 28.

³⁹ Irwin Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars*, p. 130.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 214-18. See also the details in Richard Hosley, 'A Reconstruction of the Second Blackfriars', in *Elizabethan Theatre*, ed. by Galloway, pp. 74-88.

Chapter Three examines two Blackfriars witch plays, Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (1606) and *The Late Lancashire Witches* (1634) by Thomas Heywood and Richard Brome. The primary focus is on early performances of *Macbeth*, stage directions in Jacobean and Restoration productions of the play, and whether *Macbeth's* witches flew or not in the earliest text. Stage directions will be considered in the entrances and exits in the two plays. In *The Late Lancashire Witches*, it is important to consider the stage direction of the scenes when the witches fly over the stage and summon the devil, which is the most spectacular feature of this play. As we shall see, *Macbeth's* witches start flying after being revised by William Davenant (1674) and *The Lancashire witches, and Tegue O Dively the Irish-Priest* by Thomas Shadwell (1681).

Chapter Four mainly examines witchcraft at the Blackfriars production of Middleton's *The Witch* (1609-16), and two later plays of Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (1610-1611) and *Cymbeline* (1611). It was probably in Middleton's play that witches first flew at the Blackfriars and then the witches in the other plays were made to follow this. I look at the flying material and stage directions in *The Witch* alongside the later plays of Shakespeare, and investigate the evidence for whether flying machinery existed when these plays were staged at the Blackfriars. This chapter examines whether the descent and ascent scenes of the supernatural characters are as originally written by the writer or not, and what this might indicate about stage conditions. The roles of the witches and their activities influencing the characters of the play and its genre are investigated alongside the advanced technological abilities of the Blackfriars.

Chapter Five turns from Blackfriars witchcraft to witchcraft at Court. It examines Ben Jonson's *The Masque of Queens* (1609) in comparison to John Marston's *The Wonder of Women, Tragedy of Sophonisba* (1604-6). *The Masque of Queens* was performed at Court but *Sophonisba* at Blackfriars. It could be argued that theatrical tastes at court may have had an influence on playhouse practice. However, a distinctive feature of both works is their exploration of the nature of witchcraft through music and dance, the authors being concerned with the representations of witches' festivities. In *The Masque of Queens*, music plays a major part as the hags make their entrances and exits from the

stage and to hell. In *Tragedy of Sophonisba*, I examine the way the entrances and music of this play were performed by youths alongside the dramatic techniques of the play, such as the stage action and the entrances and exits followed by music. In sum, I explore how the writers dramatize the visual spectacle of their witches on stage, how these plays represent witchcraft and how their witches fit in with their work.

Chapter Six examines plays both Elizabethan (Christopher Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* (1594), Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1588-92)) and Jacobean (Barnabe Barne's *The Devil's Charter* (1607) and *The Birth of Merlin* by William Rowley (1622)). This part of the thesis considers these plays in the light of my witchcraft study for their staging of supernatural entities such as male witches, magicians, and dragons. What binds all these sorcerer plays together is that they all feature dragon(s) controlled by a magician. This chapter investigates the stage directions of the dragons in making their exits and entrances, what role they have in the plays, and how they affect the character of the drama. It also discusses the character of the sorcerers with regard to the kind of rituals and magic they make.

Chapter Seven examines *The Witch of Edmonton* by William Rowley, Thomas Dekker and John Ford (1621), *Mother Bombie* by John Lyly (1594) and *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* by Thomas Heywood (1604), in order to shed light on another type of witch, namely the cunning woman on stage. Unlike the earlier plays considered in this thesis, these plays are based on English, rather than Continental, witch-lore. The three protagonists live in the suburbs and resort to witchcraft in order to make their living. I examine the differences between Mother Sawyer, Mother Bombie and the Wise Woman: how they appear on stage as hag-like or local cunning women, whether they fly or not, and what their differences are from witches.

Chapter Two: Stage Directions: From Page to Playhouse

Stage directions are a new research area among scholars of early modern drama. 'Stage direction' is a term that invites the reader of a play to imagine the written dialogue as dramatic action staged in the theatre. Stage directions can be remnants of a text used for performance, or equally, they may be put in after performance, to evoke action for readers. In other words, they may survive from original guidance notes to performers to direct their movement, or their purpose may be to recreate that movement in the reader's imagination. Stage directions - for instance, 'exit', 'enter', 'descend', and 'above' - are susceptible to revision and to error. The stage directions in Shakespeare's early modern editions can be of both types, both 'fictional' and 'theatrical'. In more recent editions, editorial policy can partly shape how the reader imagines, say, *Macbeth* taking place both on stage and in Scotland at the same time. Stage directions in modern editions are often printed in square brackets to indicate alterations and additions. This is designed, as Jowett puts it, 'to highlight the problem in staging and invite the reader to consider possible alternatives to the words enclosed within them'.¹ In this chapter I will analyse the meaning and status of stage directions in printed texts. The main focus will be on whether the stage directions in these surviving texts, are written by the author himself, the theatre scribe, members of the theatre companies, or later editors, paying particular attention to the early texts of Middleton's *The Witch* and Shakespeare's later plays as evidence of performance practice.²

2.1 Types of Early Texts used by Theatre Companies and the Playwrights in the Early Performances

Some of the dramatists sold their plays to playing companies who then produced three different kinds of manuscript. First, there was a 'book', the author's 'foul papers' (his first

¹John Jowett, *Shakespeare and Text* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 155.

² The discussion of stage directions in these plays as later interpolations in modern editions will be found in chapter 4. However, the issues of stage directions as evidence of performance practice and later interpolations, in association with witchcraft, of the other plays of this thesis will be in the later chapters.

complete draft) which was used by a company's 'book holder'. A 'book holder', prompter or stage manager is someone who supervises rehearsals and prompts. 'Foul papers' or 'Fair papers' (clean copies), produced by the author himself could later be given to a scribe to transcribe before printing. However, during the Renaissance period, most of the plays were only written for performance and not intended for publication. Second, there was a 'plot' which, 'mounted on a card, was kept in the tiring house and which listed the players required for each scene'. Third, there were the 'parts'; actors of early modern theatre never received the whole text of the plays in which they were to perform, but only parts of the whole text.³ The company of players did not want multiple copies of a full text in existence in case they fell into the hands of the rival companies and printers. Laws of copyright did not exist to protect intellectual property at that time.

Some plays seem to have been printed from prompt copies rather than from the manuscript as it left the author's hands. The copies of some of Shakespeare's plays came from actors' reconstructions but some came from the theatre company's prompt-books since his plays do not survive in manuscript. Take, for instance, the three early texts of *Hamlet*: the 'bad' Quarto of 1603 (Q1), the second Quarto of 1604-5 (Q2), and the Folio of 1623 (F).⁴ It is believed that Q2 was set from an authorial manuscript printed during Shakespeare's lifetime, and presumably upon his consent Q1 was displaced by Q2.⁵ However, it is thought that 'F' originated in a manuscript (either directly or via a corrected copy of Q2) that had served as the play-house prompt-book. This manuscript is a fair copy made either by an independent scribe or by Shakespeare himself.⁶ Thus, Q2 and F are substantially similar. However, the most recent scholarship shows that each of the three early texts has a case to be considered 'authentic', even though Q1 is significantly

³ For information about 'parts', see Simon Palfrey and Tiffany Stern, *Shakespeare in Parts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p.1.

⁴ For information regarding different types of texts and editions, see Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), p. 338.

⁵ William Shakespeare, *The Arden Shakespeare Complete Works*, ed. by Richard Proudfoot, Ann Thompson and David Scott Kastan, 3rd series (Walton-on-Thames: Nelson, 1998), p.12.

⁶ Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography*, p. 341.

different from Q2 and F, and again Q2 and F are also different from each other.⁷ Stern defines a 'good' quarto as an authoritative text which may have originated in a Shakespeare's rough draft ('foul papers'); in a scribe's neat copy of a Shakespeare's draft; or in a playhouse manuscript used for prompting. A 'bad' quarto is not an authoritative quarto since it contains a text so muddled and confused that it is judged not to have its basis in a straightforward authorial text.⁸ All the printed plays from the First Folio are 'good' since some of them seem to have come from foul papers and some from scribal manuscripts. Some others may have come from prompters' books.

As Gaskell points out, a manuscript does not necessarily represent the text the author wanted to be read. Thus, most of the authors expected 'their spelling, capitalization, and punctuation to be corrected or supplied by the printer, relying on the process to dress the text suitably for publication, implicitly endorsing it when correcting proofs'.⁹ The King's Men lost their stock of manuscripts in the fire that burnt down the Globe Theatre in 1613.¹⁰ No theatrical manuscripts of plays by Christopher Marlowe, Thomas Kyd, George Chapman, and John Webster are extant.¹¹ Therefore, this thesis depends on printed texts rather than manuscripts because none of the manuscripts of these plays exist, except in the case of *The Masque of Queens*, which is investigated here. None of the manuscripts, foul or fair, of Shakespeare's plays have survived, except *Sir Thomas More*, though manuscript plays by other playwrights do exist.

There is no clear evidence that Shakespeare was concerned with the appearance of his plays in print, although Palfrey and Stern argue that he certainly intended to publish (in the sense of 'broadcast') his texts in part form. The part perhaps was 'the only unit of

⁷ William Shakespeare, *The Arden Shakespeare: Hamlet*, ed. by Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, 3rd ed. (London: A & C Black, 2006), pp. 91-93. For more details about Q1, Q2, and F, and the relationship to each other, see the same book, pp. 74-85.

⁸ Tiffany Stern, *Making Shakespeare: From Stage to Page* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 46.

⁹ Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography*, p. 339.

¹⁰ Marion Harry Spielmann, *Studies in the First Folio: Written for the Shakespearean Association, in Celebration of the First Folio Tercentenary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1923), p. 75.

¹¹ W.W. Greg, *Some Aspects and Problems of London Publishing between 1550-1650* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), pp. 11-12. Most of the surviving manuscripts relate to plays performed by the Lord Admiral's Men.

the text designed to be examined, mediated upon, enacted – and interpreted’.¹² Most of the early dramatic texts were incomplete until they were staged. However, the idea that Shakespeare did not only write plays for performance in the playhouses has long been entertained by critics. Greg does not think that Shakespeare, in his later days at least, wrote for the stage only: ‘the length of some of his pieces, which must always have rendered their complete performance difficult, suggest that he had some sort of publication in mind’.¹³ However, Erne argues that many of Shakespeare’s printed plays exhibit a dual identity since ‘they do not appear to have been meant for performance before undergoing abridgment and adaptation for the stage’.¹⁴ Stanley Wells argues that early modern printed plays reflect the business of theatre: ‘Shakespeare wrote, not as a dramatist whose work would be completed at the moment that he delivered script to the company for which it was written, but as one who knew that he would be involved in the production process’.¹⁵ Because Shakespeare was a sharer in the company of the King’s Men, he was on hand to clarify his intention or see to necessary revisions to their texts. However, the dramatist was not always available to modify his own plays. Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* is a well-known case in point. The First Folio includes two witch songs which were taken from Middleton’s *The Witch*. *The Witch* was written in 1609-1616, perhaps after Shakespeare had ceased to be active as a writer. Therefore, *Macbeth*, as it appears in the First Folio, should perhaps be considered as a revival play performed at the Blackfriars after Shakespeare’s death.

2.2 The Role of the Scribe in Early Texts

Some of Shakespeare’s Folio plays appear to be based on texts transcribed by a professional scribe rather than the author himself. O’Callaghan defines a professional scribe as someone who worked professionally for patrons, or the book trade, and who

¹² Palfrey and Stern, *Shakespeare in Parts*, p.2.

¹³ W. W. Greg, *The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare: A Survey of the Foundation of the Text*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), p. viii.

¹⁴ Lukas Erne, *Shakespeare as a Literary Dramatist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 219.

¹⁵ Stanley Wells, *Re-Editing Shakespeare for the Modern reader* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), p. 57.

tended to produce specialist texts. Scribes also produced manuscript texts on a commercial basis, such as parliamentary speeches and proclamations, for instance, which were copied and sold at stationers' shops alongside printed legal texts.¹⁶ Sometimes the identity of the scribe is uncertain, if his name is not recorded in the title page. The poet and scribe Ralph Crane (1589-1632) was, in the words of T. H. Howard-Hill, one of 'the most prominent literary scribes of the first part of the seventeenth-century and was a significant agent in the transmission of plays written by several major Jacobean playwrights'.¹⁷ Crane's contribution can be inferred from printed traces in the First Folio, which show evidence of other hands at work: the Folio versions of *The Tempest*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Measure for Measure*, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* were evidently set from a professional scrivener's transcript, supplied by Crane.¹⁸ Besides these plays, Howard-Hill re-assesses Crane's authorship in the First Folio and argues that *The Winter's Tale* also drives from a Crane transcript, and *Cymbeline* and *Othello* are newly attributed to Crane's transcription as well.¹⁹ Howard-Hill's view has gained currency among more recent critics. E. A. J. Honigmann also discusses the matter of Crane's hand in the First Folio and supports Howard-Hill's tentative ascriptions of the copies of some Folio plays to Crane. He advances Howard-Hill's argument of Crane's involvement in preparing the copy of some other Folio plays, such as *Othello* and *2 Henry IV*.²⁰ Crane also helped in preparing other transcripts in both literary and theatrical contexts, such as the copy of Middleton's *The Witch* (transcribed 1624-5) and the theatre playbook of Fletcher's and Massinger's *Sir John Van Olden Barnavelt* (1619).²¹ From their attribution to the King's Men, the manuscripts of Middleton's *Women Beware Women* and *The Witch* must both

¹⁶ Michelle O'Callaghan, 'Publication: Print and Manuscript', in *A Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture*, ed. by Michael Hattaway (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2000), pp. 81-94 (p. 83).

¹⁷ T. H. Howard-Hill, 'Crane, Ralph (fl. 1589-1632)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* Online 2004, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6605>, accessed 27 April 2012> [Accessed February]

¹⁸ *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, ed. by Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988), p. xxxv. Jowett also lists Shakespeare's comedies as transcribed by Crane including *The Tempest*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Measure for Measure*, and *Comedy of Errors*. John Jowett, *Shakespeare and Text*, p. 3.

¹⁹ Howard-Hill, 'Crane, Ralph (fl. 1589-1632)'.

²⁰ E. A. J. Honigmann, *The Texts of Othello and Shakespearean Revision* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 165-168.

²¹ John Jowett, *Shakespeare and Text*, p. 82.

have been written by Crane. He was responsible for supplying several other copies of King's Men plays to publishers. Some of the First Folio's key phrases, especially with respect to stage directions, for example 'Enter' and 'Exeunt', belong more to the scrivener, Crane, than to the author, Shakespeare. His stage directions were full of entrances and descriptive detail. For instance, in *The Tempest*, the stage directions read 'Enter several strange Shapes' (III.iii.1534) and 'Enter Ariell, loaden with glistering apparel, &c' (IV.i.1869).²² Most of the more elaborate stage directions here are probably non-authorial and show every sign of having been heavily rewritten by Crane. Crane also copied a number of collaborative plays the stage directions of which were added by the King's Company bookkeeper, such as Fletcher's and Massinger's *The Prophetess* and *The Spanish Curate*, and Fletcher's and Rowley's *The Maid in The Mill*.²³ Early printed play texts were thus not the work of only one hand but many, since most of them were collaboratively produced. One might even claim that the theatre scribe has part authorship in a printed text through his interventions in it, by changing the sense or imposing his own preferences on the presentation of stage directions.

2.3 Shakespeare's First Folio 1623

The First Folio was published by two members of the King's Men, John Heminge and Henry Condell, and they tried to collect all Shakespeare's plays exactly as they stood, down to the last detail (they stress the closeness of the texts in the Folio to what is called on the title page the "True Original Copies"). However, this can hardly be taken to apply equally to everything he wrote, to *Troilus and Cressida* and *King Lear* as much as *The Tempest*, say, or *The Winter's Tale*.²⁴ The First Folio does not contain all that Shakespeare wrote. It lacks both the non-dramatic works and one of the thirty-seven canonical plays, *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, nor does it present us with the most satisfactory text of all the remaining plays.²⁵ Sixteen plays, especially the late ones listed in the First Folio, had not

²² William Shakespeare, *The Norton Facsimile: The First Folio of Shakespeare*, ed. by Charlton Hinman (London, New York, Sydney and Toronto: Paul Hamlyn, 1968), p. 31.

²³ Howard-Hill, 'Crane, Ralph (fl. 1589–1632).

²⁴ *Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, ed. by Wells and Taylor, p. xiii.

²⁵ Shakespeare, *The Norton Facsimile: The First Folio of Shakespeare*, pxi.

appeared in print before and so the First Folio is our only text for these plays. The Folio cannot be considered as an accurate representation of the original manuscripts because half the plays of the period probably involved more than one dramatist as an adaptor, collaborator or co-author. If it is 'original copy', it means that it originated directly from the author's 'foul papers'. The Folio plays were ultimately taken from foul papers, but not immediately. According to Greg, 'True Original Copies' points to the 'fair copies' of Shakespeare's 'foul papers' from which the prompt book would emerge after annotation licensing'.²⁶ Foul papers produced by Shakespeare himself would be given to scribes to transcribe before printing. For instance, Quiller-Couch and Wilson argue that the printed copy of *The Tempest* in the Folio set from author's manuscript which had served as a prompt-copy in the theatre. They also add that 'the condition of the folio text appears to show that *The Tempest* MS. had seen many changes before it reached the printer's hands'.²⁷ The changes are mostly made in stage directions, punctuation, and act and scene breaks. Each of the first four plays printed in the Folio -*The Tempest*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *Measure for Measure* along with *The Winter's Tale*- were transcribed by Crane who was employed to transcribe papers in the theatre's possession.²⁸ In short, the above Folio plays were transcribed by the scribe (Crane), and finally printed by Heminge and Condell in 1623.²⁹ In sum, the Folio is a distinctive copy because it includes adjustments, act breaks, music cues and alterations for revivals performed at the Blackfriars. Crane's work demonstrates some of the attributes of a modern textual editor in that he paid special attention to stage directions in several Folio plays.

The shaping of Shakespeare's texts over centuries of editing has altered the way they are presented as theatrical artefacts. As Spielmann points out the acknowledged

²⁶ W. W. Greg, *The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare: A Survey of the Foundations of the Text*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), p. 1.

²⁷ *William Shakespeare: The Works of Shakespeare*, ed. by Arthur Quiller-Couch and John Dover Wilson (Cambridge: At The University Press, 1921), ii, p. 79. See also E. K. Chamber's 'The Integrity of "The Tempest"', in *Shakespearean Gleanings* ([London]: Oxford University Press, 1944), pp. 76-97.

²⁸ William Shakespeare, *The Complete Works*, ed. by Wells and Taylor (1988), p. xxxv.

²⁹ Spielmann assumes that since Heminge and Condell collected the Folio and they were players at the Globe Theatre, the Folio might come from the Globe, and it was playhouse material which had been used for performance. Marion Harry Spielmann, *Studies in the First Folio*, p. 55.

editing of Shakespeare did not start until the eighteenth century, and those who edited Shakespeare were not all scholars but they were interested in the theatre.³⁰ Eighteenth-century editors paid attention to clarifying Shakespeare's texts though making act and scene divisions, correcting punctuation and writing lists of characters. None of Shakespeare's plays 'printed in his lifetime has any dedication, epistle to the reader, list of characters, scene locations, notes or act or scene divisions'.³¹ The motivation of modern editorial interventions, in altering or adding stage directions, is to provide greater clarity and a smoother reading experience. Early readers may not have required this clarification as they were only concerned about poetic passages in reading, whereas modern readers are more concerned about how the play was performed on stage. Perhaps it is because early readers knew how the theatre of the time worked, whereas modern readers need more prompts. The editions, by amplifying the stage directions of the early texts, help readers to visualize how the play was performed. Wells argues that the editor needs to 'identify points at which additional directions, or changes to those of the early texts, are necessary to make the staging intelligible'.³² Because the stage directions in some of the early texts are misleading or absent, modern editors tend to amend and interrelate them.

The First Folio's act divisions may be at least partly influenced by performance in Blackfriars. The King's Men performed most of Shakespeare's plays at the indoor Blackfriars and the plays needed act breaks because the candles needed to be trimmed several times during the performance. However, this was not so in outdoor playhouses, such as the Globe, and as Stern notes, 'plays written before 1609, to be performed at the Globe only, simply have scene-breaks, and would have been enacted straight through without pause'.³³ Globe plays restaged at the Blackfriars needed to be revised by having act breaks, and also by adding music scenes to fill the gap between the acts.

³⁰ Marion Harry Spielmann, *Studies in the First Folio: Written for the Shakespearean Association, in Celebration of the First Folio Tercentenary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1923), pp.170-171.

³¹ Stanley Wells, 'To Read a Play: The Problem of Editorial Intervention', in *Reading Plays: Interpretations and Reception*, eds. Hanna Scolnicov and Peter Holland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 30-55 (p. 34).

³² Stanley Wells, *Re-Editing Shakespeare for the Modern Readers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), p. 68.

³³ Stern, *Making Shakespeare: From Stage to Page*, p.30.

2.4 Stage Directions in Print and Performance

It is not only in Shakespeare's plays that stage directions have been changed or revised by the author or theatre scribe. For instance, Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* exists in two forms: the first (the A text), dated 1604, may derive from provincial performances, and its stage directions do not call for any actors above the stage or aloft in the playhouse, the 'Heavens'. The B text, however, printed in 1616, derives from performances in a fully-equipped London playhouse. The stage directions reveal that the Devils 'aloft' watch Faustus on the stage below as he conjures and later prepares for death.³⁴ Most of the alterations of the stage directions might presumably be made at the request of the playing company or according to the capacity of the playhouse. The theatrical manuscript was a site for textual intervention by the scribe. The stage manager or the scribe did not just stage the words they found in a play text, but 'they cut and amend to give their production a shape which may be dictated in part by the forms and pressures of their time'.³⁵ However, authorial stage directions may sometimes remain unaltered.

Stage directions will be considered in plays performed at the Blackfriars by the King's Men later in the thesis. I examine what changes were made to the texts after the King's Men leased the Blackfriars. *Macbeth* in the First Folio has different stage directions in some scenes compared to still later editions of the play. As Marsden has remarked, the adaptations of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in 1664 and *The Tempest* in 1674 'took full advantage of the technical possibilities for staging intricate productions, augmenting Shakespeare's depiction of the supernatural with new scenes of witches flying and spirits descending'.³⁶ *Macbeth*'s witches could now fly and the three Apparitions could descend after the Hecate scene, songs and dances were added to the text by William Davenant in 1674.³⁷ *The Tempest* was also adapted by Davenant and Dryden in 1667 and again by Thomas Shadwell in 1674.³⁸ After their alterations to these plays, witches and spirits were

³⁴ Michael Hattaway, 'Playhouse and the Role of Drama', in *A Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2000), p.135.

³⁵ Michael Hattaway, *Hamlet* (London: MacMillan Publishing Ltd, 1987), pp. 15-16.

³⁶ Marsden, 'Spectacle, horror, and Pathos', p. 175.

³⁷ The detail is in chapter three.

³⁸ Christopher Spencer, *Five Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), pp.17-20. See also Marsden, 'Spectacle, horror, and Pathos', p. 189.

made to fly on stage, presenting a new and highly entertaining spectacle for audiences. Alterations were made in most of the witch plays in order to entertain the Restoration spectators and meet their developing tastes.

Modern editors take responsibility for correcting punctuation and spelling in order to make staging as intelligible as possible.³⁹ Editors attempt to modernize the early printed texts through changing spelling which is a serious scholarly task. For instance, the three witches in *Macbeth* are spelled the 'weird sisters' in modern editions, but they are 'wayward' and 'weyard' in the First Folio. For example, in Act 3, scene 1, all the witches sing and dance around the cauldron:

The wayward Sisters, hand in hand,
Posters of the Sea and Land,⁴⁰

However, it is 'the weird sisters, hand in hand' in all the modern editions. Taylor argues, in his important essay 'Inventing Shakespeare', that 'every time an editor emends a text he is, to an extent, reconstructing its author in his own image'.⁴¹ The major and well-known modern editions that modernize the spelling are New Cambridge, Arden, Riverside and Oxford. They also alter stage directions where it was necessary for example in *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest*.

Stage directions help readers to envisage the action, but only if they understand the nature of the editorial intervention. Moreover, it is the editor who decides what the reader is enabled to imagine: theatrical representation or represented fiction. The original stage directions in Shakespeare's play texts cause the reader to envisage the represented fiction instead of the theatrical representation. In reverse, the added stage directions allow the reader 'visualize the theatrical representation instead of the represented fiction'.⁴² In order to present them for reading rather than performing, modern editors

³⁹ See John Pitcher, 'Why Editors Should Write More Notes', *Shakespeare Studies*, 24 (1996), 55-62 (pp. 58, 60), and Stanley Wells, *Modernizing Shakespeare's Spelling* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 31.

⁴⁰ First Folio, *The Tragedy of Macbeth*, p. 132.

⁴¹ Gary Taylor, 'Inventing Shakespeare', *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, 122 (1986), 26-44 (p. 26).

⁴² Lukas Erne, *Shakespeare's Modern Collaborators*, (London: Continuum International Publishing, 2007), p. 80.

treat the early texts in both ways, as both theatrical and literary artefacts. Editors could turn these printed early play texts into a surrogate performance through their additional stage directions.

The stage directions added in modern editions are used to narrate incident and report events in order to demonstrate the action of the play. We may see them as acting in an analogous way to the method used in Brechtian theatre, in which a narrator is used to present a variety of point of views and perspectives on the action. Stage direction is also given as one of the dramatic techniques of Brechtian theatre during the action especially at the beginning of each scene,⁴³ making the audience socially active by speaking the stage directions out loud where necessary. The critical attitude of the audience is more developed when they are directed alongside with the characters on stage. Stage directions also keep the audience alert and prevent them becoming emotionally involved with the actors on stage. This makes the audience and/or the reader as a critical observer focus on the meaning of the events being acted out rather than becoming attached to the actor.

As Brecht's use of stage direction highlights, stage directions can act as the third person in telling the reader or audience what happens next or narrating what is going to happen. In print, stage directions in the First Folio tell a narrative of the changing dramatic styles of the seventeenth-century; if a text is not provided or edited with stage directions, then it is left to the reader themselves to interpret their understanding of the play. Sometimes editorial comments and additions appear in italics inside square brackets which show the role of the scribe or editor, and serves for continuous alterations and additions. The use of square brackets shows interventions by the editor. In the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, stage directions in square brackets were rarely used. The use of square brackets in stage directions was not a convention in the 1620s. However, William Davenant used square brackets after he revised *Macbeth* in 1667:

⁴³ See further information regarding Brechtian theatre in Eleftheria Rania Kosmidou, *European Civil War Films: Memory, Conflict, and Nostalgia* (New York: Routledge, 2013), pp. 130-133.

[The Ghost descends.]

(1674 Quarto, p. 3)⁴⁴

Unlike the First Folio or the Quarto of 1673, the stage direction in the second quarto specifies that the ghost descends, not simply enters (III. iv). Another stage direction is more specific about the stage technology:

[Machine descends.]

(1674 Quarto, p. 40)⁴⁵

A machine also descends (for the flight of the witches in the song of “Come away”) in the second quarto (III. v). Hecate and the other witches enter and depart by means of a flying machine. It is clear that when Davenant revised *Macbeth*, for the stage in 1667 before it was printed in the 1674 Quarto, he added ‘flying for the witches’, which is almost certainly an interpolation derived from *The Witch*.⁴⁶ This stage direction ‘[Machine descends]’ cannot be found either in the Quarto of 1673 or in the First Folio.⁴⁷

Blackfriars dramatists also used more spectacular stage directions in the scenes of descent, ascent, entrances and exits. Middleton’s Hecate and Malkin fly according to Malone MS 12 (Bodleian Library, Oxford, 1625). O’Connor points out that Crane had prepared *The Witch*’s transcript two years after the First Folio.⁴⁸ The title of the play in Malone 12 is “A Tragi-Coomodie, called the Witch; long since Acted, by his Ma^{ties}. Seruants

⁴⁴ William Shakespeare, *Macbeth, A Tragedy: with all Alterations, Amendments, Additions, and New Song*, ed. by William Davenant (1674), p. 35.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 40.

⁴⁶ Anthony Harris, *Night’s Black Agents: Witchcraft and Magic in Seventeenth-century English Drama* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980), pp. 153-172 (p.160).

⁴⁷ William Shakespeare, *Macbeth: A Tragedy*, ed. by William Davenant (London: 1673), 1-67 (p. 38); William Shakespeare, *William Shakespeare: Comedies, Histories and Tragedies* (1623), p. 143.

⁴⁸ Marion O’Connor, ‘*The Witch*’, in *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture: A Companion to the Collected Works*, ed. by Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), 995-1009, (p. 995).

at the Black-Friars, written by Tho. Middleton”.⁴⁹ Howard-Hill argues that Crane’s undated transcript of Middleton’s *The Witch* was probably written after the Shakespeare folio copy, but before *Demetrius* and *Enanthe*.⁵⁰ Howard-Hill is compelling among the recent critics regarding the transcriptions that Crane prepared including *The Witch*. According to the dedicatory epistle of Malone MS 12, it seems that the authorial manuscript went missing:

As a true Testemonie, of my readie Inclination to your Service, J haue (meerely
uppon a tast of yo^r . desire) recouered into my hands (though not without much
difficultie) This (ignorantly-ill-fated) Labour of mine.⁵¹

Only the titles of the two Middletonian songs, ‘Come away, come away’ and ‘Black Spirits’, are given in *Macbeth* in the First Folio. This might suggest that that no copy of *The Witch* was available when the editors prepared the First Folio in 1623 or it might relate it to the intellectual property regime which applied only to printed texts at that time.⁵² Therefore, 1625 is a reasonable date for Crane’s preparation of the copy of *The Witch* (although the play itself was not printed until 1778).⁵³ The date of the composition of *The Witch* is unclear, however, Logan and Smith suggesting that it may have been written sometime between 1609 and 1616.⁵⁴ *The Witch* was undoubtedly performed during the contemporary scandal when Lady Frances Howard was divorced from the Earl of Essex in September 1613, and then married the Earl of Somerset in December of the same year. The date of the play is uncertain, but the title-page tells us the play was ‘long since Acted, by his Ma^{ties}. Seruants at the Black-Friars’. The King’s Men started working at the Blackfriars in 1609. Therefore, for the purpose of this thesis I am assuming an early date of 1609. *The Witch* can be seen as evidence for the advanced physical capacity of the

⁴⁹ Thomas Middleton, *The Witch: A Tragi-coomodie, Called the Witch* (Louvain: Librairie: Ch. Uystpruyst, 1945), p.1.

⁵⁰ T. H. Howard-Hill, ‘Crane, Ralph (fl. 1589–1632).

⁵¹ Middleton, *The Witch: A Tragi-coomodie*, p. 3.

⁵² For a discussion of these two songs see Chapter 3, pp. 53-55.

⁵³ Middleton, *The Witch: A Tragi-coomodie*, title page.

⁵⁴ Terence P. Logan & Denzell S. Smith, *The Popular School: A Survey and Bibliography of Recent Studies in English Renaissance Drama* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1975), p. 69. See also Stephen Orgel, ‘A Critical Edition of Thomas Middleton’s *Your Five Gallants*’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Michigan, 1961), p. 5.

Blackfriars, which could deploy more stage effects during the staging of the play in 1609. Wickham argues that *The Witch* was performed by the King's Men and that Middleton knew that the private houses supplied musical intermissions before and during the performance of the plays, and that this is the reason why Middleton wrote *The Witch* for the King's Men at Blackfriars.

In *The Witch*, a hut (within which stage-hands operated the machinery for 'flight' or descents on to the stage, and where they produced thunder and lightning effects)⁵⁵ is used in the song of 'Come away, come away', when Malkin, a spirit like a cat, descends onto the stage for the first time. Malkin and Hecate 'fly' (III. iii) in Malone MS 12:

*A Spirit like a Cat descends.*⁵⁶

Malkin descends in the lifting machine (see fig.1 & 2).⁵⁷ After the Cat has descended to the stage, Hecate, the most elaborate aerial witch, ascends from the stage and flies with the spirit (III. iii):

*Hec. Going up.
Now I goe, now I flie,
Malkin my sweete Spirit, and I.
Oh what a daintie pleasure 'tis
to ride in the Aire
when the moone shines faire
and sing , and dance , and toy , and kiss;*⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage 1574- 1642*, p. 88.

⁵⁶ Middleton, *The Witch: A Tragi-Coomodie*, p. 43. Similarly, the stage direction in the following editions is: [*A Spirit like a cat descends*]', (III.iii.49); *The Works of Thomas Middleton*, ed. by A. H. Bullen, 8 vols (New York: AMS press INC, 1964), V, 354-453 (p.416). ([*Malkin*], *a Spirit like a cat descends*); Peter Corbin and Douglas Sedge, *Three Jacobean Witchcraft Plays: The Tragedy Sophonisba, The Witch, The Witch of Edmonton* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1986), pp. 85-142, (p. 121).

⁵⁷ Figure one shows the author's visualization of the equipment derived from Sabbattaini's sketch, in chapter XLV of Sabbattaini's 1638 handbook for scenes and machines, in which a cloud descends from the stage to the middle of the stage with a person on it, (for details regarding Italian architecture Nicola Sabbattini and designer Inigo Jones see chapter 5, p. 149); John A. Mckinven, *Stage Flying, 431 B.C. to Modern Times* (Illinois: David Meyer & Magic Books, 2000), p. 29. However, Malkin descends with a noise of musicians, not cloud, which was provided in the theatres in order to drown out the creaking sound made by the pulleys and ropes used to draw the car, throne or chariot. Some plays used thunder and lightning instead of music for the same effect, making the sound of the devices inaudible to the audience. Thus, music was used as a means of creating pauses between scenes as well as to drown out the creaking sound of the flying machine.

⁵⁸ Middleton, *The Witch: A Tragi-Coomodie*, p. 43. Again the stage direction is Hecate flies with Malkin in all editions: HECATE [*going up*] Now I go, now I fly, (III.iii.61); *The Works of Thomas Middleton*, ed. by A. H. Bullen, p.417. (Going up [with Malkin]); Peter Corbin and Douglas Sedge, *Three Jacobean Witchcraft Plays*, p. 121.

Hecate says 'now I go, now I fly', which suggests that she does not simply exit the stage walking, but 'flies' with the spirit. Malkin's descent and the ascent of Hecate in *The Witch* (Act 3, scene 3) resemble the descent scenes of Jupiter in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* (1611) (Act 5, scene 5) and Juno in *The Tempest* (1610-11) (Act 3, scene 3). Malkin, Jupiter, and Juno all descend from above, and the structure of these scenes matches the arrangements at the Blackfriars playhouse.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ See chapter four for details regarding stage directions in *The Witch*, *The Tempest*, and *Cymbeline* in modern editions, pp. 119-129.



Fig. 2 Malkin descends in the lifting machine onto the stage (III.iii.1344-1346)

In *Cymbeline*, Jupiter descends in the First Folio (1623), the stage direction reads:

Jupiter descends in Thunder and Lightning, sitting vppon an Eagle. hee throwes a Thunder-bolt. The Ghostes fall on their knees.

(First Folio, p. 394)⁶⁰

This stage direction probably belongs to Ralph Crane, who seems to have edited stage directions in some Folio plays in the way in which Shakespeare intended some of his most spectacular scenes to be staged in the playhouses. Crane's additions to stage directions by adding phrases and words as well as omitting them, and his additions to stage direction tended to be more elaborate and descriptive. Thus, Crane does not simply indicate Jupiter's entrance (he 'descends'), but narrates the manner in which he does so, allowing the reader to imagine his descent rather than just reading it.

Ascents and descents of deities from and to the stage heaven, as Gurr states, were matters of spectacle: 'the earlier plays tended to allow their gods to walk on like any mortal; the first of Shakespeare's gods to fly in was Jupiter on his eagle in *Cymbeline*'.⁶¹ Nosworthy argues that normally the gods descended in an ordinary chair, technically termed a 'throne', but the present direction, 'descend', suggests that more elaborate devices were at this time being exploited.⁶² Shakespeare probably wanted Jupiter to descend rather than simply enter but at the time when the play was written, the Globe was not as technologically developed as the Blackfriars. The stage direction supplied by Crane probably meant something like 'suspended' above (see fig. 3).⁶³ Another possibility is that, when the stage direction reads 'descends', there may be the influence of the Blackfriars here. Although Simon Forman did not record that *Cymbeline* was performed at

⁶⁰ William Shakespeare, *William Shakespeare: Comedies, Histories and Tragedies* (London, 1623), p.394.

⁶¹ Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage*, p. 174.

⁶² William Shakespeare, *The Works of Shakespeare: Cymbeline*, ed. by J. M. Nosworthy (London : Methuen, 1955), p. 166.

⁶³ This figure shows that how deities were suspended above, but they did not descend to the stage. In this drawing, different modes of stage flying are shown. For instance, 'Mercury is suspended from a winch on a travelling "sled"; one cupid is hung directly from a winch; a chair for a god's descent is also hung from a winch'; Mckinven, *Stage Flying*, p. 30.

the Blackfriars, since the King's Men used both the Globe and Blackfriars as seasonal playhouses, it is more likely that *Cymbeline* was performed at the Blackfriars as well in the winter and thus Jupiter might probably 'descend' to the stage rather than 'suspended above'. The First Folio stage directions seem to reflect Blackfriars practice rather than Globe performances. Beckerman observes that 'in *Cymbeline* instead of Jupiter, Diana appears but does not descend. Nor did the god Hymen in the last scene of *As You Like It*'.⁶⁴ This is because technology such as flying machinery was not available at that time. Brockett argues that by 1606, Jones had 'suspended' eight dancers on a cloud machine that moved from the upstage to downstage in the Court Theatre.⁶⁵ Not only the public theatres but also the courtly theatres did not have sophisticated technological devices for free flying of the supernatural characters during the performances, but they only had a kind of simple machine for suspending them in the heavens. For example, courtly spectacularism is exploited by Ben Jonson in *The Masque of Queens* (1609), when supernatural ascents and descents were common. Ben Jonson's masquers also used thrones and chairs for their entrances and exits, but neither his masquers nor his hags were made to fly at Whitehall.⁶⁶

Smith argues that the Chapel-Revels Children had machinery for flights at Blackfriars, but they were only used in two plays, Chapman's *The Widow's Tears* (1613) and *Cupid's Revenge* (1612-1613) by Beaumont and Fletcher. Richard Burbage leased Blackfriars to the Chapel-Revels Children in 1597. However, no evidence shows that the Blackfriars had any flying machinery before it was possessed by the King's Men in 1609. Smith also states that no descents were staged during these years at the Globe, but that the Globe may have had the apparatus necessary for flights.⁶⁷ Smith's definition of such apparatus could include a 'suspended' flight machine in the heavens (see fig. 3), which does not make the supernatural characters actually descend or fly freely. In other words,

⁶⁴ Beckerman, *Shakespeare at the Globe*, pp. 93-94. See also Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse*, p. 238.

⁶⁵ Oscar Gross Brockett, *History of the Theatre*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1977), p. 187.

⁶⁶ See chapter five for details about stage directions in Ben Jonson's *The Masque of Queens*, pp. 147-154.

⁶⁷ Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse*, pp. 237-8.

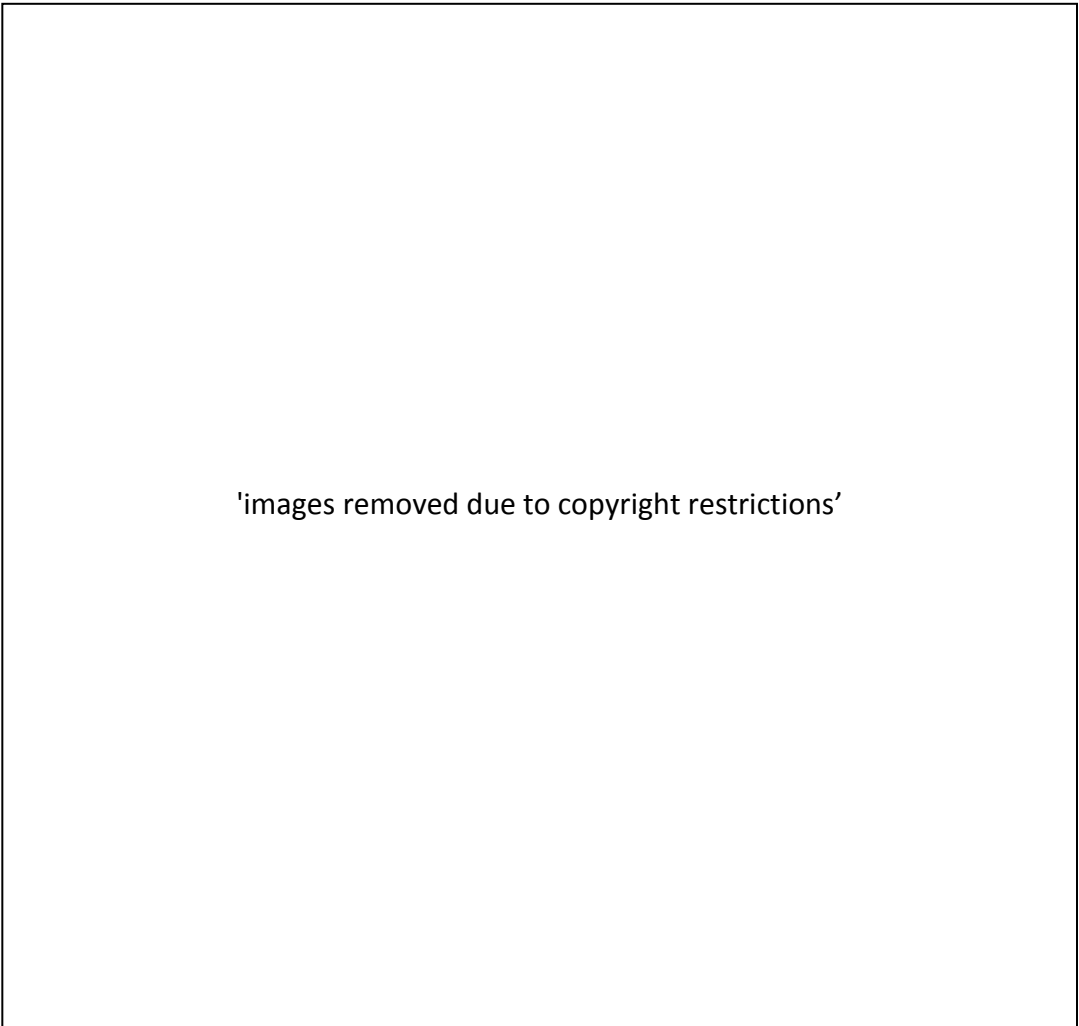
in any of Shakespeare's pre-Blackfriars plays, the stage direction does not call for a flight, but simple entrance. Hattaway argues that a 'crane ... could have been used for spectacular descents like that of Jupiter in *Cymbeline*'.⁶⁸ Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest* were staged at the Globe for a long time, but as has been said, Jupiter and Ariel do not descend in practice; Jupiter remains suspended above and Ariel simply enters. Other dramatists also used the effects of flying in their supernatural scenes. In plays by Thomas Heywood, *The Brazen Age*, *The Golden Age*, and *The Silver Age*, Simonson argues that Jupiter and Juno also flew on clouds amid thunder and lightning.⁶⁹ However, Simonson does not mention when or in which playhouses these plays were staged. Regardless of which playhouse in which they were staged, it is very likely that both Juno and Jupiter were suspended above, rather than actually made to descend onto the stage, as no documents show that flying machinery ever existed in any theatres prior to the Blackfriars.

The Globe probably had a simple mechanism with a gear to hoist actors and equipment from the stage up to the 'heavens' and vice versa, but Jupiter in the First Folio is required to 'fly', not simply 'descend'. Jupiter later did fly on the stage when *Cymbeline* was performed at the Blackfriars by the King's Men as Blackfriars provided the opportunity for a wider range of theatrical effects through its stage-machinery, intimate atmosphere and artificial lighting. As Allardyce Nicoll recognised many years ago, in plays produced between 1608 and 1620, there was a tendency to introduce a more spectacular kind of performance than had been common in earlier years, and masque-like elements became incorporated into Shakespeare's plays, such as the shepherds in *The Tempest*, the supernatural apparitions in *Macbeth*, and the eagle-borne Jupiter in *Cymbeline*.⁷⁰ The descent and ascent of supernatural characters became familiar on stage after 1608, and the King's Men staged those plays which had flying scenes for the audiences who were more interested in the spectacular.

⁶⁸ Hattaway, 'Playhouse and the Role of Drama', p.141.

⁶⁹ Lee Simonson, *The Stage Is Set* (New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1963), p. 219.

⁷⁰ Allardyce Nicoll, *The English Theatre: A Short History* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1936), p. 71.



'images removed due to copyright restrictions'

Fig. 3, an image of 'How to Lower a Person Onto a Stage without a Cloud so that He May Immediately Walk and Dance' (McKinven, 30)

Jupiter's descent can be compared to that of Juno in *The Tempest*. In the First Folio, Juno descends with Ceres in her chariot:

**Bids thee leaue these, & with her soueraigne grace, *Juno*
Here on this grassie-plot, in this very place *descends.*
To come, and sport: here Peacocks flye amaine :**

(First Folio, p. 14)⁷¹

The stage direction here is, 'Juno descends', not enters. Smith suggests that 'Juno probably does not enter in flight'.⁷² Jowett likewise argues that

descends does not necessarily, or even usually, indicate a descent to the stage. There was, on the contrary, what has been called "the convention of floating deity", whereby the deity would be expected, upon appearing from the heavens, to remain suspended in the air rather than to come down to the stage.⁷³

Jowett does not mention how Juno remains 'stationary' but in a position of 'the convention of floating deity'. The word 'descend(s)' would not usually be taken as indicating a descent to the stage unless this was specified. However, in modern editions like Orgel's, the stage direction reads [*Juno's chariot descends to the stage*], [*Ceres joins Juno in the Chariot, which rises and hovers above the stage*] (IV. i.102-106).⁷⁴ According to Orgel's assumptions, Juno descends in a chariot on to the stage itself, meaning that she is not suspended in mid-air.⁷⁵ Here, Orgel leaves the reader in no doubt regarding Juno's descent, encouraging the reader to envisage the spectacle of this scene. Orgel's

⁷¹ Shakespeare, *William Shakespeare: Comedies, Histories and Tragedies*, p.14.

⁷² Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse*, p. 416.

⁷³ John Jowett, 'New Created Creatures: Ralph Crane and the Stage Directions in *the Tempest*', in *Shakespeare Survey Volume 36: Shakespeare in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Stanley Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 107-120 (p. 116).

⁷⁴ William Shakespeare, *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Tempest*, ed. by Stephen Orgel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 177. See also John G. Demaray, *Shakespeare and the Spectacles of Strangeness: The Tempest and the Transformation of Renaissance Theatrical Forms* (Pennsylvania: Duquesne University Press, 1998), pp. (157-158).

⁷⁵ *The Tempest* by Orgel, p.2.

interpretation does not reflect early modern staging conditions, it depicts a more advanced technological feat than would have been possible at the Globe.

In *The Tempest*, 'enter' may mean simply that the character walks onto the stage, or it may mean that they 'descend'. In *The Tempest*, Ariel (an airy spirit) enters and then vanishes. In the First folio the stage direction is simply

***Thunder and Lightning. Enter Ariell (like a Harpey) claps
his wings upon the Table, and with a quaint device the
Banquet vanishes.***

(First Folio, p. 13)⁷⁶

According to the above stage direction, Ariel enters and does not descend. Jowett argues, however, that Crane keeps 'enter', and adhering to the more extended and fluid scene unit of stage practice.⁷⁷ Crane keeps 'enter', which is presumably what was written in Shakespeare's foul papers. In the Arden edition likewise, Ariel simply enters but does not descend.⁷⁸ However, in several other modern editions, Ariel 'descends to the stage as a

⁷⁶Shakespeare: *Comedies, Histories and Tragedies*, p. 13. Similarly, in the Facsimile edition, Ariel simply enters and does not descend (III. iii): '*Thunder and Lightning. Enter Ariell (like a Harpy) claps his wings upon the Table, and with a quaint device the Banquet vanishes*'. *The Norton Facsimile: The First Folio of Shakespeare*, (p. 31).

⁷⁷ Jowett, *Shakespeare and Text*, p. 84.

⁷⁸William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, ed. by Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd 1999), p. 238. In *The Works of Shakespeare: The Tempest*, ed. by Morton Luce (1938), Ariel enters like a harpy (III.iii.51) and Juno also simply enters, not descends (IV.i.105), which is opposite the lines 'her peacocks fly amain:/ Approach, rich Ceres, her to entertain' (IV.i.73-4). In *The Works of William Shakespeare*, ed. by Henry Irving and Frank A. Marshall (1890), VII, 'Enter ARIEL like a harpy' (III.iii.52), and *Enter Juno* (IV.i.92), pp. (216, 218). See also *Shakespeare in Twenty Volumes: The Winter's Tale and The Tempest*, ed. by Sidney Lee, VIII, p. (75, 85). Sturgess, in *Jacobean Private Theatre*, argues that 'Juno descends' and one might expect here, 'a throne descent, winched down from above with the Juno actor on board', p. 92. The stage direction in the new Variorum edition of Shakespeare is Ariel simply 'enters' (III. iii) but Juno 'descends' (IV. i), *The Tempest*, ed. by Horace Howard Furness, (London: J. B. Lippincott, 1892), IX, pp. (181, 204). The stage direction also is 'Ariel enters' (III. iii) but 'Juno descends' (IV. i) in the Arden Shakespeare, second and third editions of, *The Tempest*, ed. by Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan; Again Ariel 'enters' and '[Juno's car begins to descend]' in *The Complete Works of Shakespeare: including a bibliography and general Introduction, Glossary and Index of Characters*, ed. by Charles Jasper Sisson (London: Odhams, 1953), pp. 2-27 (pp.19-21).

harpy' and 'Juno appears in the air'.⁷⁹ The stage directions here suggest the supernatural movements of spirits and deities. They are also different in that the former gestures to stage business, while the latter suggests a fictionalised imagining (she 'appears', but we are not prompted to think about how this is achieved, technologically). Jowett argues that in the late twentieth century *The Tempest* became a test case for current ideas about editorial procedure.⁸⁰ Sometimes stage directions are different in print (stage directions already written in the printed texts) from practice (stage directions while it is given during performance). For example, in print, Crane kept 'enter', but it was altered to 'descend' by post-Restoration editors.⁸¹ In practice, Ariel probably descends rather than simply enters at the Blackfriars just like Malkin and Hecate in *The Witch*.⁸² Moreover, Orgel says that Ariel simply enters and does not fly but, 'he may have done so at the Blackfriars or the Globe, but not at Court'.⁸³

The first recorded performance of *The Tempest* was at the Banqueting House in 1611, on the occasion of the union of Princess Elizabeth (King James I's daughter) to the Elector Palatine, and then at the indoor Blackfriars. The Banqueting House was always used as the scene of celebrations and royal performances. A building set in a garden, it was highly fashionable in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and Inigo Jones was commissioned to design and decorate its stage scenes. In terms of the presentation of spectacle and the descents involved in *The Tempest*, Jowett points out that it is very unlikely that the Banqueting House possessed any concealed flight machinery and that Ariel and Juno were therefore lowered to the stage by the 'cloud' type of machine or descend by way of steps. However, both the Blackfriars and the Globe possessed the suspended flight machinery to stage the more effective descents in *The Tempest* (see fig.

⁷⁹ In both *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works* (2005) and William Shakespeare, *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, ed. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, 2nd ed. (Oxford: University Oxford Press, 2005), the stage direction is as 'Ariel [*descends*] like a harpy' (III.iii.51) and 'Juno [*appears in the air*]' then '[*Music. Juno descends to the stage*]' (IV.i.72.101).

⁸⁰ Jowett, *Shakespeare and Text*, p. 126.

⁸¹ The editors believe that the altered stage direction represents the authors' intended text. They intervene in the text by omitting and making unauthorized alterations for the sake of regularity and conformity. Philip Gaskell, *From Writer to Reader: Studies in Editorial Method* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), pp. 1-5.

⁸² Nick De Somogyi, *Macbeth: The Tragedy of Macbeth* (London: Nick Hern Books, 2003), pp. xxx-xxxi.

⁸³ *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Tempest*, ed. by Stephen Orgel, p.2.

3).⁸⁴ The Blackfriars not only had suspended flight, but also stage-machinery for free flight, and was therefore able to let Ariel descend, and not simply enter.⁸⁵ However, Crane still assigned 'enter' to Ariel, and it is obvious that the Blackfriars had already adopted flying machinery (1609) by the time Crane intervened in the stage directions of the Folio plays. When staged at the Blackfriars, Juno descends to the stage in a chariot. It seems that throughout his later tragicomedies, Shakespeare considered the conditions of the Blackfriars. Lavin relates the change of Shakespeare's methods and style of writing plays to the physical arrangement of Blackfriars which was a major factor in his taking a new direction in his art.⁸⁶ The King's Men required a new style and dramaturgy as the dramatists were catering for a new audience with sophisticated theatrical tastes. This is why the stage directions in some of Shakespeare's plays were changed during his lifetime by himself or after his death by editors and scriveners in order to offer a new theatrical taste and also meet with the advanced technological and physical capacity of Blackfriars.

The majority of the plays that incorporated flights were performed at the Blackfriars and probably at the Globe also, since the Globe was well-equipped in comparison to other public playhouses.⁸⁷ All this means, however, is that the Globe had a simple kind of mechanism to allow actors to descend and ascend, but did not have machinery for free flying. For example, in *Antony and Cleopatra* (1606-1607), Antony is hoisted up to Cleopatra and then dies in her arms (IV. xv):

They heave Antony aloft to Cleopatra.

(First Folio, p. 363)⁸⁸

Antony is lifted by a simple gear rather than flying machinery. Indeed, Shakespeare appears to play deliberately on the crudity of this technology as part of Antony's undignified end after his botched suicide, by comparison with Cleopatra's carefully stage-

⁸⁴ John Jowett, 'New Created Creatures: Ralph Crane and the Stage Directions in *the Tempest*', p. 115.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

⁸⁶ J. A. Lavin, 'Shakespeare and the Second Blackfriars', in *The Elizabethan Theatre*, ed. by David Galloway (London: Macmillan, 1973), iii, pp. 66-81, (pp. 69-70).

⁸⁷ Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse*, p. 238.

⁸⁸ Shakespeare, *William Shakespeare: Comedies, Histories and Tragedies*, p. 363.

managed death. Flying machinery became one of the innovations of the King's Men when they possessed Blackfriars. McMillin argues that the majority of the technical effects were available in the commercial theatres, however, there is no evidence for his claim that

the movable scenery, perspective views, and other staging effects that become possible once the potential of artificial lighting is exploited were practiced by anyone at the Blackfriars and the other private playhouses until about 1635-40, after Middleton's death⁸⁹

More supernatural spectacles were staged at that time once the physical abilities of the theatres were advanced. It can be said then, that a significant change occurred in the methods and style of Jacobean playwrights including Middleton and Shakespeare once the King's Men took over the Blackfriars in 1609. For instance, Shakespeare's *Macbeth* was staged differently when it was performed at the Globe and then at the Blackfriars, where the play offered a different spectacle to its audience. *Macbeth* is, unsurprisingly, the play out of those mentioned here that is most revived, and the play and its stage directions have been altered according to the whims of dramatic fashion.

⁸⁹ Scott McMillin, 'Middleton's Theatres', in *Thomas Middleton: the Collected Works*, ed. by Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 74-87 (p. 87).

Chapter Three: Witches before Flying

This chapter examines Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (1606), and *The Late Lancashire Witches* (1634) by Thomas Heywood and Richard Brome, and considers in detail the witch scenes in both plays and their stage directions during their entrances and exits. The witches in the Jacobean *Macbeth* of the First Folio, do not explicitly fly in the stage directions. However, they do in the Restoration *Macbeth*, namely in Davenant's second Quarto (1674). The question to be raised here is: what evidence is there in the pre-Restoration *Macbeth* that the witches flew? In order to explore this, we must consider what performance spaces were used for *Macbeth* in the Jacobean period.

Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, and Heywood and Brome's *The Late Lancashire Witches* form an interesting comparison since they were both revised by other writers. *The Late Lancashire Witches* has not received as much scholarly attention as the other witch plays discussed here. Therefore, as a comparative study, this chapter will also discuss the joint authorship of Heywood and Brome in *The Late Lancashire Witches* and the stage directions of the witch scenes. Although it seems that the witches did not fly in Heywood's and Brome's version, there is evidence that the stage directions called for flight in *The Lancashire Witches* (1681), Thomas Shadwell's later version. A further illuminating comparison between these plays is that the creatures we are considering here are sinister figures in *Macbeth* but comic figures in *The Lancashire Witches*. The audience can see that the three Weird Sisters enter the stage and then vanish into the air, but do not see them fly.

3.1 Shakespeare's *Macbeth*

The Tragedy of Macbeth comes sixth in the list of Tragedies in Shakespeare's First Folio. The text of *Macbeth* was taken from a prompt-book,¹ and it was not entered in the stationers' books, nor printed, until 1623.² St Clair suggests that it was due to their

¹ Shakespeare, *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, ed. by Wells and Taylor, p. xxxv.

² William Shakespeare, *The dramatic writings of Will. Shakspeare, with the notes of all the various commentators*; *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, p. 379.

representation of political usurpation that '*Antony and Cleopatra*, *Julius Caesar* and *Macbeth* were among the Shakespearean plays that were not printed in Shakespeare's life time'.³ *Macbeth* consists of five acts, and presents a similar dramatic progression to Shakespeare's other tragedies. The tension rises in the first half of the play (Act 2), reaching a climax in Act 3 before falling in the second half with the hero's declining power (Act 4), finally ending with the downfall of the hero in Macbeth's death (Act 5).

The supernatural characters, which are discussed in this chapter, are the Three Sisters, Hecate and the other witches. The three Weird Sisters have a major role in the play, but not Hecate and her fellow witches. The focus here is on the witches' activities and their influence upon the non-supernatural characters in the play. The chapter examines the way they enter and exit the stage both before and after the Hecate additions which were appended to *Macbeth*. Furthermore, it explores whether the Hecate scene was written by Shakespeare or whether it was interpolated into *Macbeth* by someone other than Shakespeare on the occasion of a theatrical revival.

3.2 Early Performances of *Macbeth*

We know that *Macbeth* was first performed between 1605 and 1606, two years after the accession of King James I, when there was a great demand for new entertainment involving witches among the theatregoers.⁴ The accession of King James made Shakespeare's *Macbeth* 'commercially viable and creatively attractive', and because of the plague in 1606 (which had closed the theatres) and economic necessity, may have led the King's Men to present *Macbeth* at Court first.⁵ *Macbeth* was also performed at the Globe on the 20th of April, 1611; Dr Simon Forman recorded one spectacular effect that does not appear in the extant text (Act 1, scene 3):

³ William ST Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 143.

⁴ William Shakespeare, *William Shakespeare: Macbeth*, ed. by Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen (London: The Royal Shakespeare Company, 2009), p. 6.

⁵ William Shakespeare, *The New Cambridge Shakespeare: Macbeth*, ed. by A. R. Braunmuller (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 8-9. The aerial gyrations of the witches in Jacobean drama were generally comic in effect and dramatists after the succession of James I tried to stage witchcraft practices in the theatres in order to satisfy their new audiences' demand for ever more sophisticated visual spectacle.

In Mackbeth at the Glob, 16jo, the 20 of Aprell [Sat.] there was to be obserued, first, how Mackbeth and Bancko, 2 noble men of Scotland, Ridinge thorowe a wod, the[r] stode before them 3 women feiries or Nimphes (...) ⁶

‘Riding’ on horseback, as noted by Dessen and Thomson, ‘occurs in plays performed at the Globe, before *Alarum for London* and after *The Late Lancashire Witches* and the original performance of *Macbeth*’. ⁷ Forman only recorded three witches, did not mention Hecate and gave no reference to flying. Forman calls them ‘feiries or Nimphes’, which is significantly different. It suggests that their costume was not necessarily hag-like, whatever Macbeth’s words suggest. The audience may have amused by the visual spectacle of the witches since they are not sinister figures, and their gender is recognizably female and had a feminine appearance. Nosworthy argues that the three Sisters turned into “‘secret, black & midnight hags” with choppy fingers, skinny lips and beards’ in 1612 under the influence of the Court Masque. ⁸ According to Nosworthy, there is not only a revision in the presentation of the three Sisters in 1612 but Shakespeare also added the figure of Hecate, (Act 1, scene 3, 43-7) as it was (Act 4, scene 1, 48-9) if that scene figured at all in the original. ⁹ The Hecate scene and the two songs were probably inserted into the Folio text of *Macbeth* after the King’s Men performed *The Witch* at the Blackfriars and employed instrumentalists to provided musical intermissions before and during performances. ¹⁰ That said, Shakespeare’s original trio of witches did not fly. ¹¹ Nosworthy also argues that there is a certain correspondence between Shakespeare’s and Middleton’s use of magical ingredients which belongs to Shakespeare’s revision of 1612 in

⁶ Quoted in *Macbeth*, ed. by Kenneth Muir (London: Methuen, 1962), p. xv.

⁷ Ibid., p. 388. Such a staging, riding on a horseback, was more likely performed in an outdoor playhouse. Although, a horse appears in Act 5, Scene 5 in the Cambridge Latin play *Ricardus Tertius* by Thomas Legge, which was performed in St. John’s college in 1580. In *Macbeth*, the title character and Banquo are riding through a wood when three women ‘feiries’ or ‘Nimphes’ appear.

⁸ J. M. Nosworthy, *Shakespeare’s Occasional Plays: Their Origin and Transmission* (London: Edward Arnold, 1965), p. 43.

⁹ Ibid., p. 43.

¹⁰ Glynne Wickham, ‘To Fly Or Not To Fly’, p. 179.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 175.

which Shakespeare wanted to convert *Macbeth* into a tragedy of spectacle.¹² Nosworthy does not account for Shakespeare having retired to Stratford-upon-Avon in 1611, some years before his death. His dramatic career was over, and his last play *The Tempest* was written in the same year. It is likely that Shakespeare himself did not have a hand in inserting the Hecate scenes into the Folio text of *Macbeth*.

Although Nosworthy's opinion on Hecate's interpolation in *Macbeth* is different from other contemporary scholars, he believes that Middleton had no hand in *Macbeth* and that Shakespeare is the sole author and reviser, the purpose of his revision, being 'to make the play conformable to the newly prevalent taste for spectacle and melodrama, as sponsored by Beaumont and Fletcher'.¹³ He thinks *Macbeth* was a result of royal command and a hasty assignment. Fraser criticizes Nosworthy's belief that Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth* hastily under the influence of royal command in 1606 while he was preoccupied with *Antony and Cleopatra*. He revised *Macbeth* around 1612, and in this revision, the three nymphs or fairies reported by Simon Forman in 1611 turned to three hags, under the influence of Jonson's *Masque of Queens* and Middleton's *The Witch* (which also supplied two songs, the flying machine, and the cauldron).¹⁴ Smidt agrees with previous scholars that, Shakespeare revised his occasional plays for use at the Globe, 'cutting, augmenting, and altering as required in each case, and that he even originally wrote them with a thrifty view to a double use, private and public'.¹⁵ In contrast, Nosworthy as well as his reviewers, Fraser and Smidt, fail to mention that the Middleton material appeared after *The Witch* was staged around 1616 by which time Shakespeare had retired. At this point he was no longer active in his career to revise his productions. It seems more likely then, *Macbeth* was revised, for entertainment purposes, not by

¹² Nosworthy, *Shakespeare's Occasional Plays*, pp. 42-44.

¹³ Russell Fraser, review of 'Conceptions of Shakespeare' ed. by Alfred Harbage; 'Shakespeare's Occasional Plays: Their Origin and Transmission' ed. by J. M. Nosworthy. p. 59.

¹⁴ Russell Fraser, review of 'Conceptions of Shakespeare' ed. by Alfred Harbage; 'Shakespeare's Occasional Plays: Their Origin and Transmission' ed. by J. M. Nosworthy. *Renaissance Quarterly*, 20 (1967), 57-61 (p. 59). See also Ernest Schanzer, review of 'Shakespeare's Occasional plays: Their Origin and Transmission', ed. by J. M. Nosworthy. *Review of English Literature*, 18 (1967), 62-64 (p. 63).

¹⁵ Kristian Smidt, review of 'Shakespeare's Occasional plays: Their Origin and Transmission', ed. by J. M. Nosworthy, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 18 (1967), 190-191 (p. 191).

Shakespeare himself but by the King's Men Company. As a result, the alterations made to the play, including the addition of the Hecate scenes and the new spectacle of flying witches reflect the cultural climate of a period in which belief in witchcraft was increasing.

There is another potential explanation for these conditions. Anne Lancashire argues that if the added witch songs and dancing come from Middleton's *The Witch*, 'might they not have been interpolated into *Macbeth* not only for their theatrical effectiveness but also for their political notoriety?'¹⁶ Lancashire thinks that because of *The Witch*'s political connections, namely the 1615-16 Overbury murder trials and convictions, the play was suppressed and the King's Men carried on, 'keeping the witch scenes in the public eye through use of their songs and dancing in another King's Men play not without its own political overtones'.¹⁷ However, this political reading ignores the fact that witches were in vogue in the 1610s. Thus, a more straightforward explanation is that the King's Men wanted to enhance the role of the witches in Shakespeare's play for entertainment purposes.

As Gary Taylor aptly puts it, the Hecate scenes 'clearly require efficient and quiet flying machinery' and 'such machinery was clearly available at the Blackfriars'.¹⁸ The flight of the witches in the Hecate scenes may not have been staged at the Globe as it was not as well-equipped with flying machinery as Blackfriars.¹⁹ In other words, pre-Blackfriars *Macbeth* did not have the Hecate scenes, but after the play was adapted, the Hecate scenes were added and then staged at the Blackfriars. After 1608, the plays were artfully contrived to suit the conditions of Blackfriars Theatre.

¹⁶ Ann Lancashire, 'The Witch: Stage Flop or Political Mistake' in *Accompanying the Players: Essays Celebrating Thomas Middleton, 1580-1980*, ed. by Kenneth Friedenreich (New York: AMS Press, 1983), pp. 161-181 (p. 174).

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 74.

¹⁸ Middleton, *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture*, p. 384.

¹⁹ See example, William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* by Braunmuller, p.256. T. J. King argues that such machinery might not have been required in a variety of plays and might not been available in the majority of playhouses. T. J. King, 'Shakespearean Staging, 1599-1642', in *The Elizabethan Theatre*, ed. by David Galloway, 3 vols (Don Mills: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1973), pp. 1-13 (p. 11); Irwin Smith believes that Blackfriars had a kind of effective apparatus for descending and ascending actors and equipment; Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse*, pp. 414-418. See also Wickham To Fly Not To Fly?', p. 175. And Beckerman, *Shakespeare at the Globe*, p. 94.

3.3 The Witch scenes in *Macbeth*

The Witches appear in Act 1, scenes 1 & 3, Act 3, scene 5, and Act 4, scene 1. The witches in *Macbeth* vanish and dispel once they make prophecies to Macbeth and finish casting spells on him (Act 1, scene 3). The question here is why Hecate has been inserted into *Macbeth*? A likely answer is that Hecate and her crew's presence on stage offered a kind of magic show, and it may also reflect a taste of the elite Jacobean audience. Briggs points out that witchcraft, 'is rather decorative than realistic' in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Jonson's *The Masque of Queens* and Middleton's *The Witch*.²⁰ This may be correct for *The Masque of Queens* and *Macbeth*, although not for *The Witch*, which had political and social ramifications to its witchcraft scenes (as we shall later see). Jonson's hags are presented with spectacular costumes and effects, and he concentrates more on witches' festivities. However, Jonson and Shakespeare are somewhat similar in the way they represent their hags 'primarily through words' rather than machines or technological effects. Shakespeare uses language to convey their diabolic nature to a greater extent than either Middleton or Jonson do, conjuring up their physical movements through description. When Macbeth and Banquo speak of them, he uses visual 'verbs' to describe the departure of the witches who 'hover through the fog and filthy air' (I.i.10), 'vanish into the filthy air' and have 'melted as a breath into the wind' (I.iii. 78-80).

The sudden disappearance of the witches is suggested even as the method of their departure is indicated. Their abrupt vanishing or melting is achieved through one of the doors into the tiring-house rather than through flying machinery, i.e. free flight. Macbeth comments on the sudden departure of the witches to the air when he converses with Lenox:

LENOX. What's your Grace's will?

MACBETH. Saw you the Weyard Sisters?

LENOX. No my Lord

MACBETH. Come they not by you?

²⁰ Rossell Hope Robbins, review of 'Pale Hecate's Team' ed. Katherine M. Briggs', *Renaissance News*, 16 (1963), 28-30 (p. 29).

LENOX. No indeed my Lord.

MACBETH. Infected be the Ayre whereon they ride (IV.i.149-157)

This line, 'Come they not by you?', indicates that the Weird Sisters depart, not through a trapdoor, but through one of the doors into the tiring-house, the same door through which Lenox then enters. This makes sense of why Macbeth might expect Lenox to see them coming 'by' him.

Shakespeare makes use of the theatrical resources at his disposal. Elsewhere, to dramatize the visual spectacle of the witches and Hecate, Shakespeare makes use of the heavens. It seems that the witches in *Macbeth* are also located in the heavens since Hecate 'sits in a foggy cloud' (III.v.37). 'A foggy cloud' here might possibly mean 'a theatrical "machine" that lifted the actor from the stage'.²¹ However, this song belongs to the pre-Folio *Macbeth* before it was revised. There is no evidence of any kind of smoke machine in existence before *Macbeth* was written (1606). Harris argues that when the spirit summons Hecate in *Macbeth*, 'the flying machinery was concealed in folds of light drapery, a device that was used extensively in the masques to achieve such effect'.²² As in traditional Greek drama, 'Hecate is taken up in the cloud, i.e. a stage car, drawn up on pulleys, and concealed by billowing draperies',²³ in order to intervene in the natural order. Another suggestion of Harris regarding how *Macbeth's* witches flew is that, 'the Sisters climbed up stepladders leading from the yard into which the stage projected'.²⁴ Before the Kings' Men leased the Blackfriars, the Weird Sisters probably made their entrances and exits through the mechanized trapdoor. The mechanical trapdoor is a more plausible method for the Sisters to ascend and descend the stage in case no flying devices were available. All the departures of the witches are accompanied by thunder and lightning effects, which are used to drown the creaking sound of the trapdoor as well as masking their descent.

²¹ Shakespeare, *Macbeth* by Braumuller, p. 186.

²² Harris, *Night's Black Agents*, p. 170.

²³ Muir, *Macbeth*, p. 101.

²⁴ Harris, *Night's Black Agents*, p. 162.

It seems that in the cauldron scene the main trap was used to raise the three Weird Sisters to gather around the cauldron. Once the cauldron was removed in the stage, music was provided in order to disguise the noise of the mechanized trap:

Why sinks that cauldron, and what noise is this? (IV.i.106)

The Weird Sisters create the Apparitions (demonic spirits) and summon them. The entrance and departure of the three apparitions may be through the mechanized trap as well as the show of the eight kings. However, if *Macbeth* was performed at Greenwich or Hampton Court, the Sisters' entrance may have been made through a curtain similar to that probably used in the Masque as traps would not have been available in these performance spaces.²⁵ There was at least one trap door situated in the main stage in most of Elizabethan theatres, through which, as Harris notes,

actors and properties could rise and descend by means of a mechanised structure operated by ropes attached to windlass. Some of these traps were capable of carrying two or more actors simultaneously and ascents and descents could be achieved with considerable rapidity.²⁶

In the Cauldron scene, three apparitions also descend from the heavens to tell Macbeth about his future. Then Hecate calls the witches all to dance with music and then vanish to the air. The ghost also descends after the alteration is made (see stage directions in the Restoration *Macbeth*, p. 64), but in the folio text of *Macbeth* simply 'enters':

enter the Ghost of Banquo, and sits in Macbeth's place (III. iv)²⁷

The Ghost of Banquo rises at his feet and it seems that Banquo's ghost rises on a trap. The three apparitions possibly also rise up through a stepladder, or trap. The three weird Sisters and Hecate appear and hover over Macbeth. These ascents and descents were

²⁵ Ibid., p. 168.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 152.

²⁷ Shakespeare, *William Shakespeare: Comedies, Histories and Tragedies*, p. 141.

made through traps in early performances but they might have been done through flying on wires at the Blackfriars by the King's Men with the help of musical instruments.



Fig. 4 Image of the three Sisters if they flew into the stage by a chariot.

Scholes's view of the Hecate scene highlights the association between Shakespeare's use of music and the supernatural. His supernatural entities such as fairies, witches and sometimes ghosts, were especially associated with music.²⁸ For instance, there is a hidden music when Hecate is summoned in the song 'Come away' and the audience does not know where this mysterious music comes from. In the other scene

²⁸ Percy A. Scholes, 'The Purpose behind Shakespeare's Use of Music', *Proceedings of the Musical Association*, 43rd Sess. (1916-1917), 1-15 (p. 2).

when Hecate orders the witches to sing 'Black Spirits', Macbeth appears. In short, through this device of hidden music, Shakespeare produces a sense of the weird and uncanny in the mind of the audience. As Scholes writes, 'it is music that prepares the mind of the audience for ghostly happenings',²⁹ as for example in *Julius Caesar*. Not only music but also thunder and lightning, Harris states, 'almost invariably marked the appearances on stage of supernatural phenomena'.³⁰ Harris is sceptical on the question of whether *Macbeth's* witches flew, and argues that 'although free-flying devices were available in the Banqueting House and other settings for the masques and entertainments, these were almost certainly not installed in any of the public playhouses until after the first performance of *Macbeth*'.³¹ In the first performance of *Macbeth* at Court and/ or the Globe, the witches did not fly, and no Hecate scenes existed in the text. Therefore, no stage directions called for flight of the witches. However, these Hecate materials do appear in the Jacobean *Macbeth*.

3.4 *Macbeth* in the First Folio: Stage Directions in the Jacobean *Macbeth*

Using few stage directions, Shakespeare gave actors the opportunity to add a personal touch to the play rather than being restrained by authorial directions. According to one recent study of stage directions, Vickers and Dahl argue that 'dramatists wrote "literary" directions, reflecting the story line, which the company scribe converted into "theatrical" ones'.³² Dramatists may have sent their plays with their lack of stage directions to the company scribe, but these 'literary' directions were altered and transcribed according to the physical characteristics of the playhouse where the performance was to take place. The actors 'parts' were already supplied with theatrical stage directions.

I have already discussed how the Hecate materials were added by the King's Men Company into *Macbeth*, however what I will investigate here are the stage directions of

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 4-5.

³⁰ Harris, *Night's Black Agents*, p. 151.

³¹ Ibid., p. 160.

³² Brian Vickers and Marcus Dahl, 'All's Well that Ends Well: an attribution refuted', London University: School of Advanced Study, <<http://www.ies.sas.ac.uk/about-us/news/all%E2%80%99s-well-ends-well-attribution-refuted>> [accessed 10 July 2012], p. 3.

Hecate and her crew in the Jacobean *Macbeth*. Albright, noting that Hecate, a new witch, or witch-master, (Act 3, scene 5, and Act 4, scene 1) was spliced into Shakespeare's *Macbeth* by someone other than the playwright, points out that in both scenes 'Hecate is associated with music: the stage directions instruct the witches to perform songs, 'Come away' at the end of Act 3, scene 5, and 'Black Spirits' at Act 4, scene 1'.³³ However, it is obvious that, as Albright says, these songs can be found in Middleton's *The Witch* and in the Davenant version of *Macbeth* (1663-4, published 1674).³⁴ Davenant rewrote *Macbeth* for the Restoration stage, adding new stage directions to the text. Fiske shows the places in the play where Davenant added scenes or made textual alterations to *Macbeth*. He states that, 'in a shortened version of Hecate's speech, several witches descend in a machine and sing "Come away", after which Hecate gets into the machine and is carried up into the sky' (Act 3, scene 5).³⁵ The stage direction, in the First Folio is: '*Enter Hecate and the other three Witches*' (Act 4, scene 1).

Similarly, in the First Folio, the stage direction of the witches when they meet Hecate is: '*Thunder. Enter three Witches, meeting Hecate*' (III.v).³⁶ In another scene the witches again enter (IV.i.):

Thunder. Enter the three Witches, meeting Hecat.

(First Folio, 142)³⁷

Shortly afterwards, the stage direction about forty lines further on (IV.i.) is:

Enter Hecat, and the other three Witches.

(First Folio, 144)³⁸

³³ Daniel Albright, 'The Witches and The Witch: Verdi's *Macbeth*', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 17 (2005), 225-252 (p. 228).

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 228.

³⁵ Roger Fiske, 'The "Macbeth" Music', *Music & Letters*, 45 (1964), 114-125 (p. 114).

³⁶ Shakespeare, *Comedies, Histories and Tragedies* (1623), p. 142; William Shakespeare, *the Norton Facsimile*, p.750.

³⁷ Shakespeare, *William Shakespeare: Comedies, Histories and Tragedies* (1623), p. 142.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

The first song of 'Come away' in the First Folio is added as (III.v):

Musicke, and a Song.
Hearke, I am call'd : my little Spirit see
Sits in a Foggy cloud, and stayes for me.
Sing within. Come away, come away, &c.
I Come, let's make haft, thee'l soone be
Backe againe.
Exeunt.

(First Folio, 143)³⁹

However, the whole song of 'Come away' is given in both the Quarto of 1673 and 1674.⁴⁰

The second song is 'Black Spirits' (IV.i)

Musicke and a Song. Blacke Spirits, &c.
2 By the pricking of my Thumbes,
Something wicked this way comes:
Open Lockes. who euer knockes.

(First Folio, 144)⁴¹

In short, the name of the song is only given in both the First Folio and the Quarto of 1673.

However, in the 1674 Quarto, the whole song is given. After the three Apparitions and the show of eight kings, the witches disappear with music (IV.i):

³⁹Shakespeare: *Comedies, Histories and Tragedies* (1623), p. 143.

⁴⁰ William Shakespeare, *Macbeth: A Tragedy*, ed. by William Davenant (London, 1673), 1-67 (pp. 38-39); William Shakespeare, *Macbeth, A Tragedy: with all Alterations, Amendments, Additions, and New Song*, ed. by William Davenant (1674), 1-60 (pp. 39-40).

⁴¹ William Shakespeare: *Comedies, Histories and Tragedies* (1623), p. 144. In the Quarto of 1673, the name of the song is only given; William Shakespeare, *Macbeth: A Tragedy*, ed. by William Davenant (London: 1673), pp. 41-42. However, in the 1674 Quarto, the whole song is given; William Shakespeare, *Macbeth, A Tragedy: with all Alterations, Amendments, Additions, and New Song*, p. 42.

welcome pay. Musicke. The Witches Dance, and vanish.

(First Folio, 144)⁴²

The same song of the 'Black Spirits and White' can be found in both Davenant's *Macbeth* of the 1673 version and the First Folio of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. In both texts, only the first two words of the song are given.⁴³ However, the whole first and second songs are given in Davenant's 1674 version, (Act 4, scene 1).⁴⁴ St. Clair has argued that the first Shakespeare texts may have been affected by the intellectual property rights which applied to printed texts until the mid nineteenth century. However, as St. Clair continues,

there is no intellectual property right either in manuscript or in performance, such as the singing of a song, the oral delivery of a sermon or lecture, or the performance of a play, even although such performances might have been transmediated from a printed text or from a manuscript.⁴⁵

Because of the two witch songs in *Macbeth* and *The Witch*, it has been assumed either that *Macbeth* was written by Shakespeare in collaboration with Middleton, or that *Macbeth* was adapted by Middleton or the King's Men Company. According to St Clair, the fact that only the first line or two of the song was printed in *Macbeth* was due to intellectual property issues; if the whole song was not printed, then it did not infringe upon another person's intellectual property (copyright law did not exist in the period, but

⁴² William Shakespeare: *Comedies, Histories and Tragedies* (1623), p. 144; the Norton Facsimile, p. 752.

⁴³ See 'The Tragedy of Macbeth' in William Shakespeare, *William Shakespeare: Comedies, Histories and Tragedies* (London, 1623), 131-151 (p.144). And Davenant's *Macbeth: A Tragedy* (London, 1673), 1-67 (p. 41). Hazelton Spencer, 'D'Avenant's Macbeth and Shakespeare's'. *PMLA*, 40 (1925), 619-644 (p. 624).

⁴⁴ Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. by Davenant (1674), p.42.

⁴⁵ William ST Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 150.

one could still be punished for pirating other people's published writing). That said, *The Witch's* songs may have pre-existed both plays. I do not find St. Clair's argument plausible because the matter here is not about copyright law or breaching another person's intellectual property, but it is about the physical abilities of the playhouses where both *Macbeth* and *The Witch* were performed. The songs could be only performed successfully at the Blackfriars since it was not only about singing and dancing, but it was about visual spectacle as well, such as flying Hecate with the Spirit and the other witches.

Through the cross-references to both Middletonian songs, Stern argues that *Macbeth* is shorter than any other Shakespearean tragedy which 'seems to be a cut-down version of a lost, longer text; its reviser may well be Middleton, who was himself a playwright for the King's Men'.⁴⁶ It seems that songs were not written directly into the play text during Shakespeare's time. Stern argues that 'the pieces of paper on which songs were written were commonly kept outside plays as well as (and sometimes instead of) in them'.⁴⁷ This means that the written song can be easily lost while the play text survives. However, I do not agree with Stern's argument since no evidence available in any pre-Jacobean witch plays included these songs. Therefore, Middleton was the pioneer to use these Hecatean songs. Wickham aptly argues that after the successful staging of Middleton's Hecate scene and the songs, this experiment became the standard prompt-copy for all subsequent revivals of the play. Therefore, its spectacular elements such as the songs, the flying machines and the dance were added to fit *Macbeth*. Moreover, these spectacles were added to the Folio *Macbeth* by the time when Hemmings and Condell came to publish the First Folio in 1623. This thesis is in agreement with Wickham's idea that the songs and all the Hecate material were definitely not added by Shakespeare himself as he had already retired by the time *Macbeth* was revised, but are taken from Middleton's *The Witch* and appended to the Folio text of *Macbeth* by the King's Men. These witch scenes in Middleton's *The Witch* were specially written as a response to the recent scandal of the Somerset family in 1616, making it likely that these songs did not

⁴⁶ Stern, *Making Shakespeare: From Stage to Page*, pp. 60-61. See also *The Arden Edition of the Works of William Shakespeare: Macbeth*, ed. by Kenneth Muir (London: Methuen, 1951), p. xxxii.

⁴⁷ Stern, *Making Shakespeare: From Stage to Page*, p. 117.

pre-exist in either play, and secondly, that these songs needed a technologically-advanced playhouse in order to stage the flight of Hecate and Malkin during their singing. In short, the stage directions call for a flight in the two songs. Therefore, the pre-Jacobean playhouses were not able to stage these kinds of spectacular elements at that time until the King's Men possessed the Blackfriars in 1609.

3.5 Stage Directions in the Restoration *Macbeth*

The Restoration *Macbeth*, an adaptation of the play produced by William Davenant probably in 1663-4, revised the Folio text into a tragedy of spectacle. The Restoration *Macbeth* offers the modern reader an understanding of the age in which it was produced, and about how theatres were used by adapters and company players: how they could increase the number of new patrons and popularity for theatre and the revised plays. After the long-enforced closure during the Civil War, the theatres in London reopened in 1660. Most of Shakespeare's plays were drastically revised and made to fit the new theatrical conditions of this period. However, while the classical taste always demanded purity of dramatic type, the popular demand was for spectacle. Therefore, opera, which was completely new to England, and masque were the outcome of progressing spectacle in the playhouses in the second half of the seventeenth century. As a result, one can see that both histories of stage spectacle and of theatrical architecture are interlinked.

The revived version of Shakespeare by Davenant was popular at that time due to his addition of music and spectacle in the witches' scenes. Schafer points out that 'Davenant worked for the King's Men in 1630s, and it is thought that he used a playhouse copy of *Macbeth* as the basis for his adaptation'.⁴⁸ Davenant died in 1668, and his first Quarto was published in 1673, with the second one following in 1674. Davenant's *Macbeth* can be considered as the most well-known of the adaptations as he tried to show the new court and audience of Blackfriars theatre a more up-to-date version of Shakespeare's plays which met the demand for spectacle.

⁴⁸ Schafer, *The Witch*, p. xv.

Wickham argues that 'Hecate continued to fly, sing and dance throughout the reign of Charles I, for it was upon this nucleus that Sir William D'Avenant [sic], assisted by Henry Purcell, embroidered the next major variation on the original theme'.⁴⁹ Regarding the two songs, Evans argues that it seems highly probable that Davenant derived them from some earlier prompt-copy of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.⁵⁰ However, Evans ignores the fact that these songs needed flying machines and a sophisticated playhouse in order to be staged since Hecate and the Cat fly while they are singing. If the full words of the two songs were in any earlier prompt-copy of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, they would have been in the Folio *Macbeth* as well.

Shakespeare's *Macbeth* was acted in a semi-operatic version in 1663, whose 'flying' witches proved extremely popular with audiences of that time and afterwards, however this version was not printed until ten years later.⁵¹ This version featured goddesses, spirits and witches who intervene in human destiny which were used to rouse pity and terror in the audience. These scenes were conducted with the aid of machines, presenting spectacles when strange wonders were performed, as for instance, when a group of witches were made to fly over the stage under roaring thunder and lightning, and Hecate's descent in a chariot. Clark argues that, 'Davenant was obliged by law to revise Shakespeare's original, whether he wanted or not. But in any case after 1660 Shakespeare's plays were preferred in adapted versions'.⁵² Clark also argues that the theatre in 1660 was very different from that of 1642, and that 'it was not only words and phrases that needed changing for Shakespeare's texts to satisfy the cultural needs of a new age'.⁵³ This is because in the 1660s and afterwards, witchcraft was used for entertainment purposes and as a subject of pantomime and fantasy, and alterations were made in order to meet with the tastes of the new theatre-goers. Davenant can be

⁴⁹ Wickham, 'To Fly Or Not To Fly?', p. 180.

⁵⁰ *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. by G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1974), pp. 1306-1342 (p. 1341). See also Tiffany Stern, *Documents of Performance in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 139.

⁵¹ Spielmann, *Studies in the First Folio*, pp. 166-167.

⁵² Sandra Clark, *Shakespeare Made Fit: Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare* (London: Everyman, 1997), p. xlii.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. xlii.

considered as a pioneer who initiated the popular lust for spectacle. The change was not only in revision of plays, but the performance space also changed, with performances mostly taking place in the private, indoor, playhouses which were intimate venues with artificial lighting and a proscenium-arch stage.

Different stage directions were written for the entrances and exits of the witches in the two quartos. Here, I consider the stage directions in Act 1, scene 1, Act 1, scene 3, Act 3, scene 4 and Act 3, scene 5. In the second Quarto of 1674 the stage direction (Act 1, scene 1) is:

-[Ex. flying.]

(1674 Quarto, 1)⁵⁴

However, the stage direction in the 1673 Quarto and the First Folio is:

[Exeunt.]

(1673 Quarto, 1)⁵⁵

In the second quarto the three witches also enter the stage flying (I.iii):

*Thunder and Lightning.
Enter three Witches flying.*

(1674 Quarto, 3)⁵⁶

However, the stage direction in the 1673 quarto and the First Folio states that the witches simply 'enter', not 'flying':⁵⁷

Thunder: Enter the three Witches.

⁵⁴ *Macbeth*, ed. by Davenant (1674) p. 1; Spencer, *Five Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare*, p. 38.

⁵⁵ *Macbeth: A Tragedy*, ed. by Davenant (1673), p. 1. First Folio, p.131.

⁵⁶ *Macbeth*, ed. by Davenant (1674), p. 3. See also Spencer, *Five Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare*, p.4.

⁵⁷ Shakespeare, *Macbeth: A Tragedy*, ed. by Davenant (1673), p. 3; First Folio, p. 132.

In the stage direction in the second quarto the Ghost descends, not simply enters (III.iv)

[The Ghost descends.]

(1674 Quarto, 3)⁵⁸

However, the Ghost does not descend either in the quarto of 1673 or the First Folio:

Enter Ghost.

(First Folio and 1673 Quarto)⁵⁹

Even more interestingly, the second quarto specifies the following for the flight of the witches in the song of 'Come away' (III.v):

[Machine descends.]

(1674 Quarto, 40)⁶⁰

Unlike all the previous stage directions I have discussed, this one explicitly names a 'machine'. This provides internal proof of the advance of technological abilities in the playhouse in which this play was performed. It is likely that a chariot has been used for their descent. It is clear that Davenant revised *Macbeth* in the 1674 Quarto and added flying in order to meet with the taste of Restoration theatre-goers, which is almost certainly an interpolation derived from *The Witch*.⁶¹

Albright argues that *Macbeth* was beginning to move towards opera as 'the witches not only want to fly, but also want to sing; they need to push the play into the dimension of music theatre, just as they sail through the unroofed theatre building to the height of the moon.'⁶² He also points out that it is 'the witches who motivate the opera

⁵⁸ Shakespeare, *Macbeth, A Tragedy*, ed. by Davenant (1674), p. 35.

⁵⁹ Shakespeare, *Macbeth: A Tragedy*, ed. by Davenant (1673), p. 35; First Folio, p. 142.

⁶⁰ Shakespeare, *Macbeth, A Tragedy*, ed. by Davenant (1674), p. 40.

⁶¹ Harris, *Night's Black Agents*, p.160.

⁶² Albright, 'The Witches and The Witch: Verdi's *Macbeth*', p. 229. See also *Macbeth*, ed. by Braunmuller, pp. 268-274.

lurking near the surface of the drama'.⁶³ Popular demand for a variety of stage spectacle became possible through developing the spaces of theatres as well as adapting new machines and equipment. John Downes, prompter at the Dorset Gardens Theatre, recalls a late-seventeenth century performance of *Macbeth* (although he does not give the date of this performance):

The Tragedy of Macbeth, alter'd by Sir William Davenant; being drest in all it's finery, as new Cloath's, new Scenes, Machines, as flyings for the Witches; with all the Singing and Dancing in it; the first Compos'd by Mr. Lock, the other by Mr. Channell and Mr. Joseph Priest; it being all Excellently perform'd, being in the nature of an Opera, it Recompenc'd double the Expense; it proves still a lasting Play.⁶⁴

This important evidence suggests that 'flyings for the Witches', like the 'Clothes' and 'Scenes', are new. It is likely that they flew on a chariot (see fig. 4) rather than by a free-flying wire (see fig. 5). Downes also writes in his description of the production of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* that five new plays were acted there before *Macbeth*'s adaptation by the Duke's company at the Dorset Gardens.⁶⁵ This 'new and sumptuous house was opened on November 9, 1671'.⁶⁶ Dorset Gardens was used for operas and plays demanding sophisticated staging.⁶⁷ In other words, one can say that Dorset Gardens was used as a theatre for popular entertainment; one also notes in this respect Downes's final point that the play was financially successful.

3.6 Pepys' Response to *Macbeth*

Pepys's assessment, as a witness in the audience, of Davenant's version of the play at the Dorset Gardens, provides further important evidence about how audiences responded to the Restoration *Macbeth*:

⁶³ Ibid., p. 229.

⁶⁴ John Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, ed. by Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume (London: The Society for Theatre Research, 1987), p. 71.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 33.

⁶⁶ Spencer, 'D'Avenant's *Macbeth* and Shakespeare's', p. 620.

⁶⁷ Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, p.42.

[November 5, 1664]: with my wife to the Duke's house to a play, *Macbeth*, a pretty good play, but admirably acted.

[7 December 28, 1666]: to the Duke's house, and there saw *Macbeth* most excellently acted, and a most excellent play for variety.

[January 7, 1667]: to the Duke's house, and saw *Macbeth*, which, though I saw it lately, yet appears a most excellent play in all respects, but especially in divertisement⁶⁸, though it be a deep tragedy; which is a strange perfection in a tragedy, it being most proper here, and suitable.

[April 19, 1667]: Here we saw *Macbeth*, which, though I have seen it often, yet it is one of the best plays for a stage, and variety of dancing and musique that ever I saw.⁶⁹

Pepys praises the play for its being excellent in all respects and for variety, especially in 'divertisement'. Although *Macbeth* was a 'deep tragedy', clearly it perfectly met the tastes of the Restoration theatre-goers after being adapted in a spectacular fashion. The Hecate additions were in this way a strange presence in a play which was after all a tragedy, but it satisfied the new tastes of the spectators. Davenant presented a pantomime show of Hecate and Malkin to the Restoration audience, and also 'improved' Shakespeare's language through modernization.⁷⁰ By the time that Davenant's *Macbeth* was performed, belief in witchcraft was not very strong compared to the period when the Jacobean version of the play was staged.

It is obvious that the use of stage entrances and exits of the supernatural characters, of thunder (sometimes with lightning) and music as an accessory of divinity, of the change of scenes, and using 'machines', were all characteristics of the Renaissance stage. In general, the techniques of stage scenery and theatrical architecture in England and on the Continent developed from the first half of the seventeenth century onwards. Moreover, the number of theatres also increased in the same period. However, I would argue that a taste for theatrical spectacle developed in the second half of the seventeenth century. One can observe how the stage directions in witchcraft plays tell a narrative of

⁶⁸ 'Amusement', *Oxford English Dictionary*.

<<http://www.oed.com.ezproxy3.lib.le.ac.uk/noresults?browseType=sortAlpha&noresults=true&page=1&pageSize=20&q=divertisement&scope=ENTRY&sort=entry&type=dictionarysearch>> [Accessed May 2012]

⁶⁹ Quoted in Spencer, 'D'avenant's *Macbeth* and Shakespeare's', p. 621.

⁷⁰ Spencer, *Five Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare*, p.1.

the changing dramatic styles of the seventeenth century. The stage directions in some plays were changed as the technical abilities of the theatres developed and new machines became available, including flying machinery, mechanical trap doors and lighting techniques. More advanced backstage machinery facilitated the movements of the supernatural characters on stage. Stage directions which began as simply 'enter' were changed into 'descend' in performance because of major changes in the technological progression of the theatre. Theatrical practice informed playbook writing, as scribes, member of theatre companies and then later modern editors altered stage directions for the supernatural characters to make their exits and entrances.

3.7 *Macbeth*: Stage Directions in Modern Editions

The stage directions of the Three Sisters and Hecate in modern editions are to some extent different from the early ones. In the Arden Shakespeare edition, the stage directions of the witches are similar to that of the First Folio, as are the songs. Muir does not change any stage directions and keeps 'enter' and 'Exeunt' in the entrances and exits of the witches. However, he uses square brackets in signalling the stage directions.⁷¹ Sisson admits that Act 3, scene 5 and Act 4, scene 1 are both interpolations in *Macbeth*. Hecate descends to and ascends from the stage. The stage directions inserted by Sisson in the first song read:

Thunder, Enter Three Witches. Hecate descends
[Music and a song within, Come away,
*Come away, &c. Hecate ascends.]*⁷²

Enter Hecate, with Three Other Witches.
[Music. The Three Other Witches sing,
*Black Spirits, &c. Exit Hecate.]*⁷³

In contrast, only the first line of this song is given in the First Folio. The editions of Rowse, Kittredge and Tyrone Guthrie's follow that of the First Folio; only the first line of the songs

⁷¹ *The Arden Edition of the Works of William Shakespeare: Macbeth*, ed. by Muir, pp. 2-163.

⁷² *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, ed. by Sisson, p.985.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 986.

are given and the witches simply 'enter'.⁷⁴ However, the whole songs are given in Wells and Taylor's edition. The stage direction in the first song is exactly as in *The Witch*. Wells and Taylor put in the same stage direction here because they believe that these songs belong to Middleton and they consider him as the co-author of the Folio *Macbeth*:

[Spirits appear above.] *A spirit like a Cat descends*

After Hecate anoints the Cat, 'she ascends with the Spirit and sings'. By the end of the song, the stage direction reads 'Exeunt into the heavens the Spirit like a Cat and Hecate'.⁷⁵ In Bell's edition, only the whole first song is given but not the second one. The stage direction before Hecate ascends to the heavens reads:

[*symphony, whilst Hecate places herself in the machine.*]⁷⁶

However, some editions print the whole songs as in the second quarto of Davenant. For instance, in Charles Kean's and Wells's and Taylor's editions, the stage directions are similar to that of *The Witch* when the Spirit like a cat descends and then ascends back to

⁷⁴ *The Annotated Shakespeare: Complete Works Illustrated*, ed. by A. L. Rowse (London: Orbis Books, 1978), iii, 412-465 (pp. 445-447). *Sixteen Plays of Shakespeare: with Full Explanatory Notes, Textual Notes, and Glossaries*, ed. by Kittredge (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1946), 853-962 (p. 878). *William Shakespeare: Ten Great Plays*, ed. by Tyrone Guthrie (London: Paul Hamlyn, 1962), 406-447 (pp. 430-431). In the following editions the only first lines of the two songs are given: *The Works of Shakespeare*, ed. by Howard Staunton (London: Routledge, Warne & Routledge, 1869), iii, 466-525 (pp. 498-501). *The Works of William Shakespeare: gathered into one volume* (Oxford: Shakespeare Head Press, 1934), 858-884 (pp. 873-874). Arthur Symonds, 'Macbeth', in *The Works of William Shakespeare*, eds. Henry Irving and Frank A. Marshall (London: Blackie & Son, 1889), v, 333-430 (pp. 384-385). A New Variorum edition of Shakespeare: *Macbeth*, ed. by Horace Howard Furness (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1873), ii, pp. 190-204. *Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, ed. by Dorothy McMillan (Glasgow: HarperCollins Publishers, 1994), 1049-1078 (pp. 1067-1068). *The Complete Works of Shakespeare* (London: Strand, 1864), 674-692 (pp. 685-686). *William Shakespeare: Macbeth*, ed. by M. R. Ridley (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1935), pp. 63-68. *William Shakespeare: Macbeth*, ed. by G. K. Hunter (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967), pp. 102-106. *The Tragedy of Macbeth*, ed. G. B. Harrison (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1937), pp. 72-76. *The BBC TV Shakespeare: Macbeth*, ed. by Peter Alexander (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1983), pp. 66-68. *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. by G. B. Blakemore Evan (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1974), 1306-1342 (pp. 1328-1329).

⁷⁵ *The Complete Oxford Shakespeare: Tragedies*, ed. by Wells and Taylor (London: Guild Publishing, 1987), iii, 1307-1334 (pp. 1323-1325)

⁷⁶ *William Shakespeare: Bell's Edition of Shakespeare's Plays*, ed. by John Bell, 8 vols (London: Corn market Press, 1969), i, 1-71 (pp. 45-47).

the heavens with Hecate.⁷⁷ This shows how modern editors have adapted the Folio text, and the effects of their decision in expanding the text are to show more of the visual spectacle of the witches on stage. The witch scenes, after being adapted, operate more for comic or satirical purposes and were designed to satisfy the tastes of the audience. Each one of *The Witch*, *The Masque of Queens* and the Restoration *Macbeth* were performed more often during the Royal occasions.

There are several plays thought to have been adapted by Thomas Middleton in the Folio, including *Macbeth* and *Measure for Measure*.⁷⁸ *Timon of Athens* is also considered to be a collaboration between Middleton and Shakespeare. It has also been argued recently that Middleton either adapted or had a hand in Shakespeare's *All's Well That Ends Well*. Laurie Maguire and Emma Smith claim that Middleton was co-author of *All's Well* especially in terms of 'orthographical preferences'.⁷⁹ However, Vickers and Dahl do not support Middleton's claims to co-authorship in *All's Well*. Dahl further argues that 'there appears to be substantial other evidence to confirm the original whole ascription to Shakespeare, thus the onus of proof for Middleton's hand must lie with the disintegrators'.⁸⁰ On the other side of the argument, Gary Taylor believes that *Macbeth* was re-written or added to by Middleton, and argues that the evidence of casting and verbal parallels in *Macbeth* suggest that Middleton was the co-author.⁸¹ According to John Jowett, Middleton only introduced the songs into *Macbeth*, but Davenant extended Middleton's songs by preserving the Hecate scenes and developing the play further

⁷⁷ William Shakespeare: *The Complete Works: Original-Spelling Edition*, ed. by Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 1101-1128 (pp. 1117-1119). *Macbeth*, ed. by Charles Kean (London: Corn Market Press, 1970), pp. 60-65.

⁷⁸ Jowett, *Shakespeare and Text*, pp. 42-43, 90-91.

⁷⁹ Vickers and Dahl, 'All's Well that Ends Well: an attribution refuted', 1-9 (p.7).

⁸⁰ Marcus Dahl, 'A New Shakespeare Collaboration? All's Not Well in the data', University of London: School of Advanced Study, 1-23 (pp. 2-3). See also Marcus Dahl, Marina Tarlinskaya, and Brian Vickers, 'An Enquiry into Middleton's Supposed "adaptation" of *Macbeth*', University of London: School of Advanced Study, 1-37.

⁸¹ *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture: A Companion to the Collected Works*, p. 390. See also Gary Taylor and John Jowett, *Shakespeare Reshaped 1606-1623* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

towards becoming an operatic piece.⁸² This approach makes sense because Middleton wrote as freelance for the theatre companies, and during 1613-1621 wrote most of his plays for the King's Men. Thus, once Middleton had introduced his Hecate scenes, and they were staged successfully by the King's Men, this undoubtedly led the King's Men to provide these additions to *Macbeth* through the assistance of the Blackfriars' flying machinery and musical instruments. In short, the Middleton material in *Macbeth* can be considered as a result of later revision, not of the original composition.⁸³

Macbeth's witches are not the only evidence that witches did not fly in the earliest texts and only did so after Davenant's adaptation of the play. *The Late Lancashire Witches* is another example which shows that its witches did not fly from the beginning, but later were made to fly after being refashioned by Shadwell. In *The Late Lancashire Witches*, it is important to consider the stage direction of the scenes when the witches fly over the stage and summon the devil, which is the most spectacular feature of this play.

⁸² John Jowett, 'From Many of Your Companies: Middleton's Early Reader', in *A Companion to the Collected Works: Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture*, ed. by Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 286-327 (p. 294).

⁸³ Erne, *Shakespeare's Modern Collaborators*, p. 2.



Fig. 5 Image of the three Sisters if they flew into the stage through free-flying wires)

3.8 The Late Lancashire witches

As in the other plays mentioned above, Thomas Heywood and Richard Brome's *The Late Lancashire Witches* (1634) also exploited public interest as well as the dramatists' interest in the controversial subject of witchcraft. This play was first performed by the King's Men at the Globe in 1634. Before I come to the discussion of authorship, I would like to consider the source of this play. To capitalise on a current public affair, Heywood and Brome drew the source of their play from the court documents of a trial of 1612⁸⁴ in which twelve people from the Pendle Hill area of Lancashire were condemned to death for practising witchcraft on the Lancashire moors. Another trial in London in 1633 involved certain women from Lancashire who had been tried for witchcraft and were sent to London to be imprisoned. Some scenes in this play are about the depositions between witnesses and defendants in the case.⁸⁵

Seventeen women were found guilty of witchcraft and four of them were sent to London, Margaret Johnson, Mary Spencer, Frances Dicconson and Jennet Hargreaves. These four women were arrested and accused of witchcraft in Lancashire on 24th March 1634 along with sixteen other women. The main four witches in the play are Mall (Mary Spencer), Gilian (Frances Dicconson), Meg (Granny Johnson) and Mawd (Jennet Hargreaves). In the main plot of *The Late Lancashire Witches*, Mr. Generous finds out that his wife, Mrs. Generous, is the leader of some witches. After she transforms herself into the shape of a cat, she is then arrested and brought to justice by her husband. In Act two, in order to get Squire Generous's favourite wine, Mall takes Robin (Generous's servant) to London on a magic steed. Mall is known to be a witch as she bewitches a pail and makes it move of its own accord. In Act three, the witch-infested wedding of both Seely's servants, Lawrence and Parnell takes place at Seely's house. Squire Generous rebukes Robin for lying that he gets his wine from London. Then, Squire Generous tells Robinson

⁸⁴ At this trial, Alice Nutter was found guilty with some others and is source for the character Mrs. Generous in the play. However, the boy, the witches and the incidents concerning witchcraft belong to the trial of 1634.

⁸⁵ Robert Grant Martin, 'Is "The Late Lancashire Witches" a Revision?', *Modern Philology*, 13 (1915), 253-265 (p. 253). See also Wallace Notestein, *History of Witchcraft in England from 1558 to 1718* (Washington: The American Historical Association, 1911), pp. 146-158; Montague Summers, *A History of Witchcraft and Demonology* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1926), p. 295.

(Miller's son) not to allow his wife to use the gelding again. As a result of refusing her the gelding, she then changes him into a horse and rides him to the witch banquet.⁸⁶

Enter Mrs. Generous, with a Bridle.

Mrs. Robin. *Rob. I Mistrresse.*
Mrs. Quickly good Robin, the gray Guelding.
Rob. VVhat other horse you please Mistrresse.
Mrs. And why not that?
Rob. Truly Mistrresse pray pardon me, I must be plaine with you, I dare not deliver him you ; my master has tane notice of the ill case you have brought him home in divers times.
Mrs. O is it so, and must he be made acquainted with my actions by you, and must I then be controll'd by him, and now by you ; you are a sawcy Groome.
Rob. You may say your pleasure. *He turnes from her.*
Mrs. No sir, Ile doe my pleasure. *She Bridles him.*
Rob. Aw.
Mrs. Horse, horse, see thou be,
And where I point thee carry me. *Exeunt Neighing.*

(III.ii)⁸⁷

Act four contains the witch banquet as it is described by young Robinson. Gillian arrives with the boy whom she has captured during a hunt, and after he is held prisoner by the witches, Gillian turns him into a horse and flies off the stage with him. Mrs Generous also arrives at the banquet with Robinson. The rest of this act is about the discovery of Mrs. Generous's being a witch. Act five stages a fight between young Robinson and the devil. The play covers most of the witches' typical activities such as the Sabbath-meeting of witches during the night, witch banqueting and the transformation of witches from humans into animals such as horses and cats. The witches are summoned to London and are medically examined by physicians and midwives for witch-marks.

⁸⁶ Thomas Heywood and Richard Brome, *The Late Lancashire Witches*, ed. by Laird H. Barber (New York and London: Garland, 1979), pp. 70-107.

⁸⁷ Heywood, Thomas and Brome, Richard, *The Late Lancashire Witches: A Well Received Comedy* (London, 1634), no page number is given.

Heywood and Brome dramatized the news of the day through the common report which provided accurate information about the witch trials. However, Clark argues that Heywood and Brome did nothing to 'decrease the popular fury against witches in general, but in this particular case there were rumours of a royal pardon when the play was written, and more than a suspicion of the *bona fides* of the two chief witnesses for the prosecution'.⁸⁸ It is not my aim in this part of the chapter investigate all of the play's scenes. Instead, I will focus on the witch scenes and especially their theatrical effects of flying on stage after being revised by the scribe. The main plots are assigned to Heywood's authorship and the sub-plots to Brome's. In general, after the play was revised, some scenes have been interpolated while some of them were omitted.⁸⁹ My focus will be more on when the witches of *The Late Lancashire Witches* started flying on stage.

3.9 The Co-Authorship of Heywood and Brome in *The Late Lancashire Witches* and the Stage Directions of the Witches

According to the title page, *The Late Lancashire Witches* was 'a well received Comedy, lately acted at the *Globe* on the *Bank-Side* by the King's Majesties actors, written by Thom. Heywood and Richard Brome'.⁹⁰ In Act 6, scene 1, Generous gestures to the summer weather when he remarks that: 'to sunder beds; but most in these hot months/ June, July August, so we did last night'.⁹¹ Heywood was an actor in the Queen's Company and wrote plays for the same company in 1633.⁹² He then transferred his service to work for the King's Men when he was writing *The Late Lancashire Witches* in 1634.⁹³

⁸⁸ Arthur Melville Clark, *Thomas Heywood: Playwright and Miscellanist* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1931), p.242.

⁸⁹ The discussion of this has been analyzed in both articles by C. E. Andrews, 'The Authorship of Lancashire Witches', and Robert Grant Martin, 'Is "The Late Lancashire Witches" a Revision?'.
⁹⁰ Thomas Heywood, *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Heywood*, 6 vols (New York: Russell & Russell, INC, 1964), iv, 165- 260 (p. 167).

⁹¹ Thomas Heywood, *The Witches of Lancashire*, ed. by Gabriel Egan (London: Nick Hern Books Ltd., 2002), p. 75.

⁹² Otelia Cromwell, *Thomas Heywood: A Study in The Elizabethan Drama of Everyday Life* ([Hamden, Conn.]: Archon Books, 1969 [c 1928]), p.13.

⁹³ Martin Robert Grant, 'Is "The Late Lancashire Witches" a Revision?', *Modern Philology*, 13 (1915), 253-265 (p. 263). See also Cromwell, *Thomas Heywood: A Study in The Elizabethan Drama of Everyday Life*, p. 27.

It has been argued that the play was written by Heywood, but was revised by Brome. Andrews makes the important point that as well as adding and introducing some new scenes, Brome also changed the names of the witches and spirits throughout the play, and also added the prologue and epilogue and probably the song for Act two.⁹⁴ However, Martin concludes that the play was written in 1634 and was a collaboration by both authors. However, Martin fails to account for the time when the play was produced and the time when Heywood was active in his career with the Queen's Company. Andrews argues persuasively against collaboration in revision by referring to the proof that Heywood was still writing for the Queen's Company in 1633 when *The Late Lancashire Witches* was produced by the King's Men, the company for which Brome was writing in 1633-1634. In short, Andrews denies that the scenes assigned to Brome are based directly on the witch trial that occurred in 1633. Therefore, the witch scenes might probably belong to Heywood rather than Brome. Cromwell succinctly states that Heywood in all likelihood wrote the witch scenes but Brome may have composed the songs.⁹⁵ Stern shows that Brome had signed an agreement with 'Queen Henrietta's Men in July 1635 to come up with prologues, epilogues, revised scenes and songs for revivals, so will naturally have thought of all such sections as discrete entities anyway'.⁹⁶ Brome altered and interpolated some scenes in *The Late Lancashire Witches* but made no changes to stage directions when the witches enter and exit the stage. The stage direction, in *The Late Lancashire Witches* by Heywood and Brome, in (Act 2, scene 1) is:

Enter 4. VVitches: (severally.) (The Late Lancashire Witches)⁹⁷

⁹⁴ C. E. Andrews, 'The Authorship of Lancashire Witches', *Modern Language*, 28 (1913), 163-166 (p. 165).

⁹⁵ Cromwell, *Thomas Heywood*, p. 184.

⁹⁶ Stern, *Documents of Performance in Early Modern England*, pp. 156-157.

⁹⁷ Thomas Heywood and Richard Brome, *The Late Lancashire Witches: A Well Received Comedy* (London: 1634). The stage direction is the same in Thomas Heywood and Richard Brome: *The late Lancashire VVitches. A well received Comedy, lately Acted at the Globe on the Bank-side, by the Kings Majesties Actors* (London, 1634)

Again the witches simply enter, but do not fly in Act 4, scene 1, where the stage direction reads:

Enter all the Witches and Mal, at severall doores.

‘Severall doores’ can be taken as good evidence of the precise manner in which the witches are directed to ‘enter’: the witches simply walk onto the stage at the Globe. All the supernatural characters, such as witches, Spirits, Mrs. Generous and Mall again enter and do not fly (Act 5, scene 1):

Enter Mrs. Generous, Mall, all the Witches and their Spirits (at severall doores.)

Heywood and Brome’s witches do not fly; their feet are firmly on the ground in all the scenes. Although the witches here transform their familiars into horses in order to transport them to the Sabbath feast, it seems that Robin and Robinson do not actually ride as no stage directions call for their riding. They simply enter through several doors. The writers may have intended to denote flying through the words of the conversation between Moll and Robin, and Mrs. Generous and Robinson, rather than flying machinery. However, the stage directions of the witches in some scenes read ‘fly’ when the play was refashioned and altered by Thomas Shadwell 1681.

3.10 Stage Directions in Thomas Shadwell’s *The Lancashire Witches*, and *Tegue O Dively the Irish-Priest*

The Lancashire Witches, by Thomas Shadwell, was very probably sourced from Heywood and Brome’s *The Late Lancashire Witches*. Shadwell’s *The Lancashire Witches* was first performed in 1681 and published in 1682.⁹⁸ Marsden argues that the political comedy of Shadwell’s *The Lancashire Witches* combines ‘a conventional romantic comedy with

⁹⁸ Thomas Shadwell, *The Lancashire-Witches, And Tegue O Dively The Irish-Priest: A Comedy Acted at the Duke’s Theater* (London, 1682), (page cover).

virulent anti-Catholic satire, setting a group of energetic witches against an idiotic Irish priest and the foolish neighbours who support him'.⁹⁹ Shadwell imitated William Davenant when he successfully altered *Macbeth* by adding new scenes, machines for making witches fly and new clothes for the actors. Shadwell also wanted to introduce similar theatrical effects in *The Lancashire Witches* for the Bank-side or Blackfriars audience. One of the special theatrical spectacles of this play is the scene in which the witches fly over the stage and summon the devil. Shadwell in his preface to *The Lancashire Witches* says:

The bounds being then so narrow, I saw there was no scope for the writing of an intire Comedy (wherein the Poet must have a relish of the present time;) and therefore I resolved to make as good as entertainment as I could, without tying myself up to the strict rules of Comedy; which was the Reason of my introducing of Witches.¹⁰⁰

Through his preface, Shadwell admits that his comedy was influenced by operatic spectacle and the reason for his introducing of the witches was to make the play as entertaining spectacle as he could. This is similar to the late seventeenth century performance of *Macbeth* when Downes records that *Macbeth* was performed with 'new Cloath's, new Scenes, Machines, as flyings for the Witches; with all the Singing and Dancing'.¹⁰¹ Shadwell borrowed various incidents from the earlier play by Heywood and Brome, but he also refashioned the witch scenes in order to entertain the audience by giving a new theatrical twist to the old play. Shadwell's Mother Demdike, who resembles the Dame in *The Masque of Queens*, belongs to 1612. However, the other individuals, such as Goody Dickison, Mal Spencer, Mother Hargrave and Meg belong to the alleged witches who were accused of sorcery in 1633. There is evidence in the play that Clod is magically flown into a tree-top and the performance of the aerial power of the witches is celebrated in the following songs:

⁹⁹ Marsden, 'Spectacle, horror, and pathos', p. 175.

¹⁰⁰ Thomas Shadwell, *The Lancashire-Witches, and Tegue O Divelly The Irish Priest: A Comedy acted at the Duke's Theatre*.

¹⁰¹ See p. 68.

Song. 1.

What joy like ours can mortals find?
 We can command the Sea and Wind:
 All Elements our Charms obey,
 And all good things become our prey;
 The daintiest Meat, and lustiest Wine,
 We for our Sabaths still design.
 'Mongst all the great Princes the sun shall ere see.
 None can be so great, or so happy as we.

2.

We Sail in Egg-shells on rough Seas,
 And see strange Countries when we please;
 Or on our Beesoms we can fly,
 And nimbly mounting to the Sky,
 We leave the swiftest Birds behind,
 And when we please outstrip the Wind:
 Then we feast and we revel after long flight,
 Or with a Lov'd Incubus sport all the night.

3.

When we're on Wing, we sport and play,
 Mankind, like Emmets, we survey;
 With Lightening blast with Thunder Kill.
 Cause barrenness where e're we will.
 Of full revenge we have the power;
 And Heaven it self can have no more.
 Heres a health to our Master the Prince of the Flier,
 Who commands from Center all up to the Skier.

(Shadwell's *The Lancashire Witches*, 26)¹⁰²

This shows that the witches 'fly' to the sky accompanied with the effect of thunder and lightning. The witches are in the heavens and rule in the air. The physical power of the witches is manifested in their ability to 'fly', which they practice as a seductive fantasy when they ride to the Sabbath on their brooms. Downes describes Shadwell's *The Lancashire Witches*, acted in the autumn of 1681 at Dorset Gardens, as

a kind of Opera, having several Machines of Flyings for the Witches, and other Diverting Contrivances in't: All being well perform'd, it prov'd beyond Expectations; very Beneficial to the Poet and Actors.¹⁰³

The flight of the witches and the new songs give a theatrical experience for the audience equivalent to that of the revived *Macbeth*. Records of performances of *The Lancashire Witches* in the seventeenth century are plentiful. There were advertisements for a number of performances of the same play which focused on the entertainment of the

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 26.

¹⁰³Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, pp. 80-81. See also Lily B. Campbell, *Scenes and Machines on the English Stage during the Renaissance*, p. 266.

witches and their visual spectacle, for instance, on 10th August 1704 at Drury Lane.¹⁰⁴ On 1st July 1707,¹⁰⁵ *The Lancashire Witches* was performed with Bullock as Teague O'Divelly at the Haymarket by the Summer Company, and the same performance was repeated on 25 July and announced as 'acted there but thrice; with all the risings, sinkings and flyings of the Witches, as they were originally performed'.¹⁰⁶ This kind of advertisement title assured playgoers that the play would be staged with these supernatural spectacles as a prominent feature, further evidence that Restoration playgoers were interested in operatic spectacles and magical shows. Summers also gives various dates for performing *The Lancashire Witches*: on 29th October 1707 at the same theatre and on 2nd June 1708 at Drury Lane by the Summer Company (but no cast recorded). It was performed on 2nd and 3rd August 1711,¹⁰⁷ as recorded in *The Spectator*, at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane by the Majesty's Company which was carefully revised: "with all the original decorations of scenes, Dances, and Musick; the Witches Songs being all new set, and new Dances compos'd proper for the Occasion". It was again advertised in *The Spectator* that Shadwell's *The Lancashire Witches* would be performed on 26th May 1712, this time it advertises 'the original Decorations of Scenes, Dances, Risings, Sinkings, and Flying of the Witches' with both musical songs and instrumental music.¹⁰⁸ This advertisement here promised its viewers that the play would be staged with some new spectacles featuring the witches. Stage machinery in Restoration theatres was an area of intense competition in performance of these witch plays. This is because Restoration spectators were more intrigued by the startling new effects made possible by advanced technology. The play was also performed on 4th July 1723, at the benefit for Widow Bowen and Widow Leigh.¹⁰⁹ It was performed on 13th May 1724 at the benefit of Chetwood Prompter,¹¹⁰ and its last

¹⁰⁴ John Genest, *Some Account of the English Stage from the Restoration in 1660-1830*, 10 vols (London: HE.E. Carrington, 1832), ii, p. 301.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 373.

¹⁰⁶ Thomas Shadwell, *The Complete Work of Thomas Shadwell*, ed. by Montague Summers, 4 vols (London: The Fortune Press, 1927), 86-188 (p.93)

¹⁰⁷ Genest, ii, p. 482.

¹⁰⁸ Shadwell, *The Complete Work of Thomas Shadwell*, ed. by Summers, pp 93-97.

¹⁰⁹ John Genest, *Some Account of the English Stage from the Restoration in 1660-1830*, 10 vols (London: HE.E. Carrington, 1832), iii, p. 106.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

recorded performance was on 30th October 1727.¹¹¹ During one performance of the witches in flight, Summers states that, an 'accident happened, because of the ignorance of the workers in the machinery, the Fly broke, and Mr. Morgan (who flies on the back of the witch) with a Witch fell together but neither of them were much hurt'.¹¹² This evidence suggests then that the flight of witches was not easy to achieve on stage, and this may be the reason that some dramatists, such as Heywood and Brome, did not rely on technology to perform their miraculous and supernatural scenes, or there may not have been sufficiently advanced technology at the second Globe for staging these magical spectacles. These reasons might account for the fact that these writers do not use stage directions for the descent and ascent scenes.

The stage directions of the witches and the names of the supernatural characters in *Shadwell's The Lancashire Witches* are different from Heywood and Brome's. In the first song the witches fly away laughing in thunder and lightning (l.i):

I canno see my hont. *
 Oh the Dee'l, the Dee'l,
 help! help! this is Mother
Demdike, help, S'flesh,
 what munn I do? I canno
 get dawn, 'fwawnds Ayft
 be clemd an I stay here aw
 neeght.

* One of the Witches flies away with
 the Candle and Lanthorn, Mother
Demdike sets him upon the top of
 a Tree, and they all fly away
 Laughing.

(*The Lancashire Witches*, 12)¹¹³

In the songs of Act 2, the witches fly over the stage and summon the devil, which is the most spectacular scene in this play. The witches seem to enjoy their flight when they mount into the sky, recalling Hecatian songs in both *The Witch* and the revised *Macbeth*. They all sink and vanish after they dance and sing:

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 199.

¹¹² Ibid., p. 96.

¹¹³ Shadwell, *The Lancashire-Witches, and Tegue O Divelly The Irish Priest: A Comedy acted at the Duke's Theatre*, p. 12.

*Or on our Beesoms we can fly,
And nimbly mounting to the Sky,*

And

*Heres a health to our Master the Prince of the Flies,
Who commands from Center all up to the Skier.*

(*The Lancashire Witches*, 26)

They do not only fly when they sing but Moll Spencer bridles Clod and then flies away with him to Madge's invitation. The horse here is Clod whom Moll Spencer asks to carry her where she wants (Act 3):

*Mal. S. a Horse, Horse, be thou to me,
And carry me where I shall flee.*

*She gets upon him,
and flies away.*

(*The Lancashire Witches*, 40)

This extract is very similar to the charm written by Heywood when Robin refuses to get the grey gelding for Mrs. Generous. In response, Mrs. Generous immediately bridles Robin and drives him to the meeting of the witches:

Horse, horse, see thou be,
And Where I point thee carry me.¹¹⁴

In another scene, Tom Shacklehead hears a noise of women in the air and Clod assures him that it is witches. The stage direction here is (*Witches above*) (Act 4). Tom shoots M. Spencer and she falls down with a broken wing. This time Clod puts the Bridle upon her and says:

¹¹⁴ Borgman gives more detail about the similarities and differences between Heywood and Brome's *The Late Lancashire Witches*, Thomas Shadwell's *The Lancashire Witches*, and Ben Jonson's *The Masque of Queens*. Albert S. Borgman, *Thomas Shadwell: His Life and Comedies* (New York: Benjamin Bolm, INC, 1969), pp. 194-199.

*Horse, Horse, be thou to me.
And carry me where e're I flee.*

He flies away upon her.

(*The Lancashire Witches*, 56)

Again at the end of the play, the Spirits also fly when the servants enter the stage with candles (Act 5):

*Their men taking up the Candles, the
Spirits fly away with 'em.*

(*The Lancashire Witches*, 65)

There are many new stage directions in the play by Shadwell which cannot be found in *The Late Lancashire Witches* by Heywood and Brome. It is obvious that Shadwell takes most of the incidents of the play from Heywood and Brome. However, he can be considered as sole author of the new stage directions he provided in the witch scenes. The play was performed at the Blackfriars once it was refashioned and revised by Shadwell, and like Davenant's *Macbeth*, it deals more with the vulgar and farcical aspects of witchcraft.

During the time that Heywood and Brome's *The Late Lancashire Witches* was written, witchcraft mania was increasing and some witch-hunts and hangings occurred in English history. In contrast, by the time that Shadwell's *The Lancashire Witches* was performed, belief in witchcraft was fading and witches were more in vogue as a source of satire. In spite of this, the witches in both *The Late Lancashire Witches* and Shadwell's *The Lancashire Witches with Tegue* are a part of comic relief in the plays because they feast, dance and sing, banquet, and transform humans into animals. The writers treat witchcraft intolerantly, as all of the witches are executed by the end of each plays. Witchcraft is then depicted here in a comedic way, even as it was taken seriously by others in the period. As

in Middleton's *The Witch*, witchcraft here permeates the whole play and it is not a minor part of the plot. *The Late Lancashire Witches* was performed eighteen years after Middleton's *The Witch* by the same company, the King's Men. Unlike the classical witches of *The Witch*, *Sophonisba* and *Macbeth*, *The Late Lancashire Witches* like *The Witch of Edmonton* is about English and contemporary witchcraft belief as its source is drawn from trial records. The stage direction of '*thunder and lightning*' does not accompany Hecate's entrances, as this theatrical effect is designed to evoke the feeling of horror and fear; Middleton's witches are comical and carnivalesque. Similarly, no '*thunder and lightning*' effect accompanies the entrances of the witches of *The Late Lancashire Witches*. Again, this is because both plays are designed not to frighten the audience, but to present witches as entertaining, part of a fantasy world. Their activities are similar to those found in *The Witch*: Middleton's witches are able to cause impotence, indulge in feasting and dancing, and transform themselves and their familiars into different animals. Unlike Middleton's *The Witch*, the witches of *The Late Lancashire Witches* do not make spells out of magical ingredients, and do not have control over the weather. Similarly to Middleton and Shakespeare's Hecate, Mother Sawyer, Doctor Faustus and Erictho, the witches of Heywood and Brome have familiars in order to transport them to their Sabbath feast and in return they allow their familiars to suck their blood. A coven here is also dramatized in which the witches fulfil their desires.

Unlike all the other plays that have been investigated in this thesis, the witches of Heywood and Brome have second identities: Mrs. Generous has a husband and Moll Spencer is a sweetheart to Robin. Another example, Master Doughty falls in love with one of the witches during his searches for them, after they had made trouble at the wedding feast. Besides this, the witches here are not portrayed as old women; on the contrary, the witches are young and sexually attractive. For instance, Whetston blames those who bully him for the claim that his mother is a witch:

WHETSTONE. I doe not say as Witches goe now a dayes, for they for the most part are ugly old Beldams, but she was a lusty young Lasse, and by her owne report, by her beauty and faire

lookes bewicht my Father. (I.i)

This context shows that Whetstone's mother is not old like Hecate, Mother Sawyer, Mother Bombie and the Wise Woman of Hogsdon. Her beauty can seduce men. This young witch figure is used here to replace the old hags and beldams like those in the plays mentioned here. Not only is Whetstone's mother young, but Moll Spencer also has a lusty appearance; like Mrs. Generous, she also seduces Robin. Beauty as a feminine power here is used to abuse men and control their power. The witches also do not commit infanticide or terrorize their neighbours and relatives, but they are busy feasting and conducting their rituals. One can say that a new theme of hunting occurs here when the witches hunt the adults and make their familiars transport them for their Sabbath feast. The idea of transporting witches from one place to another is mentioned in Chapter Four. Some contemporary sources believe that the witches' soul is transported from one place to another whereas others believe that their soul and body together are transported from one place to another. The witches of this play have the ability to transform themselves and their familiars into animals and make them subservient to themselves socially and sexually. In other words, the witches have dominant power to subdue men and make them obedient to their orders. This created the possibility for a very effective and entertaining spectacle, designed to inspire laughter and amusement in the audience. Stage directions in some scenes call for music through which the witches begin to dance:

Musicke selengers round

As they begin to daunce, they play another tune, then fall into many (I.i)

Again they are dancing and entertaining with music before the banqueting takes place. In other words, witchcraft and comedy again come together, although the witches cannot survive by the end of the play. Shadwell's witches appear more comic than Heywood and Brome's as his witches also fly off the stage with their familiars.

In conclusion, this chapter has shown how witchcraft became part of the theatrical spectacle in Restoration versions of two early seventeenth-century plays, and this has wider implications for how drama was transformed at a more general level during

this period into a more spectacular medium. Furthermore, these comparisons show how Davenant and Shadwell adapted the original texts of *Macbeth* and *The Late Lancashire Witches* especially the witch scenes for the purpose of satire and to meet the tastes of the audience of Blackfriars. The two revised plays offered a more ambitious spectacle than the original ones, and this study has shown that Restoration audiences were more interested in the comic effect of the witch scenes. By the time the two plays were revised, belief in witchcraft was dwindling, and dramatists attempted to make the staging of flight as eye-catching as possible through advanced technology in order to present the flight of the witches in a comical and highly entertaining manner. Besides being comic and theatrical, the witches of the plays mentioned here evoke through the community of young, powerful, sexually-attractive witches anxieties associated with feminine power, the subservience of men and lack of independence. As well as being comical, these witches could also manipulate men through the power of their sexual relations.

Chapter Four: Flight on the Jacobean stage

This study is concerned with the historical and theatrical aspects of Middleton's *The Witch*. Among the questions it will address are which sources Middleton drew on for this play, and to what extent his witches differ from those in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. This chapter also considers the question of whether the treatment of witchcraft in Middleton's *The Witch* belongs to the English or the Continental tradition. While the historical circumstances of witchcraft ideas are important for an understanding of this play, this chapter will demonstrate that questions of genre and visual spectacle are equally important; especially it will argue that the play's comedy and its visual aspects are mutually dependent. In raising the issue of why the play is categorized as tragicomedy, I examine how comedy and technology come together in this play. Finally, this chapter explores how the play would have worked on stage, and especially how the witchcraft scenes would have been staged to create a theatrical spectacle: what props, or other staging devices were needed, and how these were adapted during the Renaissance period.

The question is also raised here as to when the machinery for staging flying witches came into existence, and whether the stage directions of the supernatural scenes in *The Witch* and some of Shakespeare's later plays, *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest*, were originally written by the actual authors or scrivener. Building on the general discussion of stage directions in chapter 2, this chapter examines differences in stage directions for supernatural characters between early modern and contemporary editions of the above plays.

4.1 Middleton and his theatrical context

Middleton as a playwright wrote several plays and worked with different companies. During Middleton's lifetime several pieces of his work were publicly burned and

condemned at Paul's Cross, and banned by the Privy Council.¹ Middleton started writing plays as a freelance playwright: he was not tied to working for one company. He began to accompany the players of the Blackfriars during the War of the Theatres.² During his early work, Middleton wrote plays for the Admiral's Men at the Fortune in 1602-03 and then for Paul's boys between 1603- 1607, followed by one or perhaps two plays for the Children's company at the Blackfriars.³ He wrote both tragedy and comedy for these companies. Some of his comedies, which were contemporary satires, were performed by children's companies which specialised in these plays and were renowned for their splendid costumes.⁴ They also could 'act with a charm and a grace that often made them more attractive than their grown-up rivals'.⁵ However, because they performed Chapman's *Conspiracy* and *Tragedy of Charles, Duke of Byron*, an order was made forbidding them from putting on plays, and thus the King's Men took over the Blackfriars.⁶

After Middleton wrote plays for the Children's Company at Blackfriars, he moved on to the Lady Elizabeth Company and later the Kings Men. However, some of his plays were still staged by the Admiral's Men at the Globe. The King's Men moved from the Globe to Blackfriars, using Blackfriars as a 'winter house' and the Globe as a 'summer house'.⁷ The King's Men performed *The Witch* at Blackfriars alongside Shakespeare's late plays such as *The Tempest* (1610-11) and *Cymbeline* (1611). Taken together, these plays suggest that the King's Men Company had an interest in staging plays with scenes of supernatural spectacle in them during the second decade of the seventeenth century, it is likely that Middleton wrote *The Witch*, a play dealing with the supernatural power of witches, in order to better suit the speciality of the King's Men and the technology of the private theatre of Blackfriars and in doing so to further his career.

¹ Gary Taylor, 'Thomas Middleton: Lives and Afterlives', in *Thomas Middleton: the Collected Works*, ed. by Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), pp.25-58 (p. 25).

² MacMillin, 'Middleton's Theatres', p. 38.

³ Ibid., pp. 76-7.

⁴ Ibid., p. 77.

⁵ Joseph Quincy Adams, *Shakespearean Playhouses: A History of English Theatres from the Beginning to the Restoration* (Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1960), p. 207.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 220-22.

⁷ Ibid., p. 225.

Although not all of Middleton's plays were published during his lifetime, six of them were *The Roaring Girl* (printed in 1611), *Masque of Heroes* (1619), *The World Tossed at Tennis* (1620), *Measure for Measure* (1623), *Timon of Athens* (1623), and *The Witch* (transcribed in 1625?).⁸ The latter was transcribed by Ralph Crane into a small quarto-seized manuscript.⁹ Crane named "Tho. Middleton" in his scribal transcript *The Witch*, Malone MS 12, on the title page and below Middleton's dedicatory epistle but we are not sure whether Middleton ever saw this manuscript, or inserted its table. Bullen thought that the manuscript of *The Witch* was recovered from the King's Men Company at the Blackfriars, through the dedicatory epistle of Malone MS 12 that he wrote to Thomas Holmes.¹⁰ Thomas Holmes worked with the King's Men at the Blackfriars and was a close friend to Thomas Middleton.

4.2 *The Witch*: an introduction to the play

Through the dedicatory epistle – 'Witches are (ipso-facto) by y^e Law condemn'd, & y^t onely (I thinck) hath made her lie so-long, in an imprisond-Obscuritie'¹¹ - Middleton's *The Witch* seems to have been composed, if not performed, at an earlier period, and the play was written before the dedication. However, the play was probably suppressed for legal or censorship reasons. Samuel Johnson and George Steevens argue that the dedication was added to the play soon after 1603 when the act of King James against witches passed into a law.¹² The play was acted by his Majesty's servants who had been before in the service of the Queen, but Middleton dedicated *The Witch* in the time of King James. This suggests the play was written earlier than 1616 as some critics relate the date of this play

⁸ Gary Taylor, 'The Order of Persons', in *A Companion to the Collected Works: Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture*, ed. by Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 31-79 (p. 52). Some works have only recently been assigned to Middleton as possible collaborations, and Shakespeare is the named author (*Measure for Measure*, and *Timon of Athens*), see chapter 3, p. 72.

⁹ Jowett, 'From Many of Your Companies: Middleton's Early Reader', p. 295.

¹⁰ Middleton, *The Works of Thomas Middleton*, ed. by Bullen, p. 355.

¹¹ Middleton, *The Witch: A Tragi-comodie*, p. 3.

¹² Samuel Johnson and George Steevens, *William Shakespeare: in Twenty-One Volumes* (London, 1813), ii, p. 343.

to the contemporary scandal of Lady Howard and the Somerset family (1613) and the Overbury poisoning trial in 1616.¹³

The play consists of three basic plots: the first concerns the relationship between a husband and wife, Antonio and Isabella, and Sebastian (previously contracted to Isabella). Having been falsely informed that Sebastian has been killed in the wars of Italy, Isabella has married Antonio, yet Sebastian reappears and persists in his attempt to win his fiancée back. This plot seems to be a response to the real divorce of Lady Frances Howard in 1613 and the Overbury poisoning trial in May 1616. Lady Frances Howard married Robert Devereux, the Earl of Essex, in early 1606 and then, after the annulment of the marriage, was married to Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, at the end of 1613.¹⁴ The relationships of Carr, Howard and Devereux are similar to those between the characters Sebastian, Isabella and Antonio in *The Witch*. Middleton recasts the characters in the mould of the contemporary scandal in the first plot of *The Witch*. However, the character of Francisca (Antonio's sister, who loves Aberzanes and is secretly pregnant) resembles Frances Howard and dominates the second plot. One can find name resemblance between Frances and Francisca. She is the same age (sixteen) as the countess, when the Earl of Essex returned from France and tried to consummate their marriage. The popular image of Howard is linked to Francisca in terms of sexual morals. Francisca is pregnant like Frances Howard: the Overbury murder trial was delayed because of her pregnancy and her daughter, Anne, was born in December 1615. The third plot is dominated by the Duchess, who seeks revenge upon the Duke, and is followed by her plot to dispose of her agent, Almachildies. The Duchess consults Hecate for poison to kill the Duke first (since he humiliates her by drinking a toast with a cup which was made from her own father's skull) and then Almachildies (the Duchess plots with him to kill the Duke but the plan is not successful). However, the audience discovers that neither the Duke nor Almachildies dies. This plot is taken from the Italian *Florentine History* of Niccolo Machiavelli. In this story,

¹³ See chapter 2, p. 37, for a discussion of the date of composition of the play. See also Terence P. Logan & Denzell S. Smith, *The Popular School*, p. 69. See also Stephan Orgel, 'A Critical Edition of Thomas Middleton's Your Five Gallants' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Michigan, 1961), p. 5.

¹⁴ Marion O'Connor, 'The Witch', in *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works*, ed. by Taylor and Lavagnino (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 1124-64 (p. 1124).

Rosamund, the daughter of the King of Lipdes, Comundus, attempted revenge upon her husband, Alboinus. This was because Alboinus insisted that she drank toasts from a cup which was made of Comundus's skull, and out of it used to carouse in memory of that victory. Rosamund consulted with Almachildies, a noble Lombard, to kill Alboinus in return for admitting him by night to her chamber. Almachildies agreed to murder Alboinus but the plan was not successful and finally he fled to Longinus at Ravenna.¹⁵

Diane Purkiss argues that the story of Frances Howard can be found in *The Witch* in the scene with the cunning woman, Anne Turner, the woman whom Howard allegedly consulted with about keeping her husband impotent, in relation to Middleton's Hecate. Sir Thomas Overbury was a very close associate and advisor to Robert Carr, however Carr quarrelled with him, believing him to have had an illicit relationship with his wife Lady Frances. Overbury died on 14 September 1613, four months after being arrested and imprisoned in the Tower at the request of Lady Frances' family and James I. Initially his death was considered natural but it was later thought to be an act of poisoning. Rumours of the poisoning and murder of Overbury by Carr and his countess spread among the public. Lady Frances Howard was accused of consulting with cunning women and men to cause her husband's impotence and obtaining the poison used to murder Overbury. In the Essex divorce case, there was another cunning woman named Mary Woods, who cozened Frances Howard by taking a jewel in exchange for poison. A witness named Isabel Peel was also involved in the case and gave evidence that Mary Woods deceived a number of women into believing that she was able to cause their husbands' impotence. Thus, they were accused of these alleged crimes and condemned to death. However, they both received royal pardons.

It has also been suggested that *The Witch* was inspired by the success of the entertainment in Jonson's *The Masque of Queens* (1609)¹⁶, which was performed for the first time in Whitehall Palace. Indeed, some critics argue that the witches' dances in both *Macbeth* and *The Witch* were inspired by the witches' dance in *The Masque of Queens*.¹⁷

¹⁵ *The Works of Middleton*, ed. by Bullen, pp. 353-4.

¹⁶ F. P. Wilson, *The Witch* (Britain: The Malone Society Prints, 1948 (1950)) p. vi.

¹⁷ See Corbin and Sedge, *Three Jacobean Witchcraft Plays*, p. 17; Harris, *Night's Black Agents*, pp. 83-6.

The three writers all utilised a cauldron scene in which witches dance and sing around a cauldron during their magical rites. The cauldron scene in the three plays also serves the purpose of presenting the portrayal of witchcraft rituals to the audience. There is still doubt over whether Middleton was primarily inspired by *Macbeth* (1606) or *The Masque of Queens* (1609). It is possible to say that Middleton drew most directly on Jonson, but that during the time Middleton wrote *The Witch* the King's Men were able to perform Hecate scenes (flying witches) at Blackfriars in the later years of 1609, as part of a revived version of *Macbeth* at the playhouse.

Middleton's witches adhere to Simpson's definition of a witch as being a, 'member of a secret sect of Satan-worshippers who meet regularly and practise ritual murder, cannibalism and sexual orgies.'¹⁸ Moreover, characteristically such a witch can fly by night and ride on strange animals. Hecate in Middleton's *The Witch* works through the aid of the devil, has several sexual orgies and flies in the night (Act 1, scene 2). Middleton's Hecate is thus recognisably a witch of the traditional type. She is female, poor and old, as she succinctly reveals in her words foretelling her death to her son Firestone:

Thou shalt haue all when I die; and that wilbe
Ev'n just at twelue a Clock at night, come three yeare (I.ii. 256-257)¹⁹

Middleton's witches are not scary and do not have a serious effect on the family affairs of those outside their own circle. They aim to satisfy their own lusts by sleeping with visitors, succubi and their own offspring. In *The Witch*, as well as in *Macbeth*, the witches do not involve themselves with the other characters as a result of their own plot, but they work according to the request of the characters who visit them.

In Act 1, scene 2, the witches introduce themselves to the audience through their speech. Hecate has conversations with her minion Stadlin, Sebastian, her son Firestone and with Almachildies. Hecate's familiar spirits enter the stage; Malkin, a spirit like a Cat,

¹⁸ Jacqueline Simpson, 'Witches and Witchbusters', *Folklore*, 107 (1996), 5-18 (p. 12).

¹⁹ Wilson, *The Witch*, p.11.

and the others carrying meat with a list of magical ingredients. After their conversations, the scene continues with the presence of the witches' cauldron and then their festivities:

Appear to our sight then ev'n leeke
A russet-Moale, vpon some Ladies cheeke.
When hundred Leagues in Air, we feast, and sing,
Daunce, kisse, and coll, vse everything (I.ii.210-213)

These types of activities, such as feasting, singing, dancing, kissing and embracing also characterise Ben Jonson's hags, and their adventures are similarly described in festive terms. Middleton directly reuses the same vocabulary used earlier by Reginald Scot: 'They seeme to be carried in the aire, to feasting, singing, dansing, kissing, culling, and other acts of venerie, with such youthes as they love and desire most.'²⁰ By describing these activities, Middleton presents to the audience a comic portrayal of the supernatural, especially when the witches confront the audience with unexpected revelations and reversals of fortune. Middleton borrows several further items of vocabulary from Scot concerning the witches' activities and the ingredients they use with some devilish names.²¹ Having used Scot's *The Discovery of Witchcraft* as a source for his play implies scepticism on Middleton's part about the truth of witchcraft (King James ordered every copy of Scot's book to be destroyed as he disagreed with its sceptical viewpoint).²² However, clearly Scot's text remained influential: Middleton, Shakespeare and Jonson all drew on it for the depiction of their witches and witch scenes in their plays.

4.3 Witches in *The Witch* and *Macbeth*

Both *Macbeth* and *The Witch* reflect a period in time when belief in witchcraft and the practice of witch-hunting were very strong.²³ They were both written in the same reign but have subtle and telling differences in their approaches to witchcraft. The witches of Middleton are only seen at night, as we have seen, the witches of *Macbeth* often

²⁰ Reginald Scot, *The Discovery of Witchcraft* (New York: Dover publications, 1972), p. 105.

²¹ See pp. 106-107.

²² Frank Robert Donovan, *Never on a Broomstick* (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1971), p. 169.

²³ Albert H. Tolman, 'Notes on *Macbeth*', *PMLA*, 11 (1896), 200-219 (p.208).

appear in the context of thunder and lightning. In another scene after Macbeth has been made king and Lady Macbeth queen, the three witches meet Hecate, and Hecate tells the spirits to

Get you gone,
And at the pit of Acheron
Meet me i'th' morning. Thither he
Will come to know his destiny. (III.v.14-17)²⁴

However, in the same quotation Hecate is going to spend the night 'unto a dismal and a fatal end' (III.v.20-21). Then she orders the other witches that the great business should be done before noon:

Great business must be wrought ere noon.
Upon the corner of the moon
There hangs a vap'rous drop profound. (III.v.21-23)

Like Middleton's Hecate and witches, *Macbeth's* Hecate and witches also go riding at night:

[Spirits and Hecate]
O what a dainty pleasure 'tis
To ride in the air
When the moon shines fair,
And sing, and dance, and toy, and kiss. (III.v.58-61)

The witches mentioned in both plays complete their activities and make their charms in the moonlight. Night time is the traditionally appropriate setting for these evil characters, as night time or darkness both hides and complements the evil nature of the witches. As Briggs observes, 'black witchcraft is the magic of sterility; the moon's waxing time has always been counted the time of growth, and the moon's eclipse therefore would be the

²⁴ William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. by A. R. Braunmuller (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 185.

time of complete negation.'²⁵ Accordingly, Hecate and the Spirits in both plays are not entirely evil since they ride in the air and do the other activities when the moon is shining, but not when the sky is quite dark. However, they are still considered as creatures of darkness or night because they do not make their charms in daylight. What can be said here is that Hecate and her fellow witches do not appear entirely evil when compared with the Weird Sisters, and the Hecate materials added to the play operate as an entertaining interlude within the play.

The similar times of day when the witches appear in both plays is clear, but there remain several other differences between the portrayal of the witches in the two plays. For instance, Middleton's *The Witch* is set in 'Jacobean' Italy, mirroring an element of satire about witch belief and practice both in Jacobean England and in the Roman Catholic societies of Middleton's period; the witch scenes are concerned with the way the witches use their charms and achieve *transvection* (flying for some thousands of miles in the air at midnight by using a kind of ointment). In *Macbeth*, the witches are prophetic, making prophecies about the characters of Macbeth and Banquo. Moreover, their predictions come true by the end of the play: their prophecies lead to Macbeth's murder of Duncan, as well as the deaths of Banquo and his son. By contrast, the spells of the witches in *The Witch* do not always work.

Approaches to gender also differentiate the two plays. The gender of the witches in *Macbeth* is ambiguous. At the beginning of the play, Banquo is confused by the three sisters having beards and is unable to decide whether they are earthly or supernatural creatures and whether they are women or men:

What are these,
So withered, and so, wild in their attire,
That look not like th' in habitants o' th' earth
And yet are on't? Or are you aught
That man may question? You seem to understand
By each at once her choppy finger laying

²⁵ K. M. Briggs, *Pale Hecate's Team: an Examination of the Beliefs on Witchcraft and Magic among Shakespeare's Contemporaries and His Immediate Successors* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962) p. 80.

Upon her skinny lips. You should be women,
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
That you are so. (I.iii.37-45)

Here, the physical ambiguity of the witches evokes a shift from order to disorder and confusion. Their physical appearances indicate masculine players rather than feminine, which reminds us that the roles of the witches were played by males (boys) at that period. However, the gender identity of the witches in *The Witch* is obvious; they consist of women and one man, Firestone. Whereas, *Macbeth's* Hecate does not have a child, Middleton's Hecate has a son that assists her in making spells. This shows that Middleton's witches are recognizably female and have a feminine appearance.

Furthermore, *Macbeth's* witches' physical appearance is described as being threatening and uncanny. They are not sexual, and are part of the tragic scenes, influencing the actions of the play to some extent. Middleton's witches also appear to be scary and horrific when Sebastian remarks of the appearance of Hecate: 'my horrors are so strong and great already/ That thou seem'st nothing. Up and laz not! (I.ii. 119-120). Despite their horrific appearance, though, they operate in the play for entertainment and comedic effect. In other words, they are objects of humour rather than horror, and unlike *Macbeth*, are also always sexually driven. The witches are part of the comic scenes and they do not try to influence the actions of other characters: they do not appear to others unexpectedly, but instead occupy a passive role, allowing people to come to them.

4.4 Hecate in both *Macbeth* and *The Witch*

In *The Witch*, Hecate's activities include flying, conducting the witches' covens, cooking dead infants, as well as a number of other things that witches were believed to do, such as casting spells, melting wax images and dancing around the cauldron. Elizabeth Schafer rightly notes that the witch scenes are entertaining, 'visually impressive, and there is a powerful dramatic tension produced by the juxtaposition of the wild, fantastic and funny

witch scenes with the moody, troubled and murderous court scenes'.²⁶ The witch scenes provide a mocking commentary on the court scenes which evoke parallels with the affairs of the Somerset family. Hecate's appearance is fearful, although no information is provided about her costume when she enters with her fellow witches. Later, at the end of act three, as Hecate and her fellow witches prepare for flight, Hecate enters the stage to join her familiar spirit cat, Malkin, to go riding in the air.²⁷ Audiences would have been impressed by the visual staging of Hecate and Malkin flying in the air. This visual witch scene ridicules all such beliefs that witches had power over the natural order in early modern England. The witch scenes also condemn the corrupt society of early modern England as a whole instead of focusing on specific individuals.

In order to understand how Middleton treats questions of supernatural power and agency and depicts his witch characters, it is helpful first to consider how Hecate operates in Shakespeare's play. One of the supernatural powers used in *Macbeth* is the witches' ability to summon the mighty goddess of destiny: Hecate. In Act Three Scene Five, she is seen as the leader of the Weird Sisters and complains that the three sisters have excluded her from their meeting with Macbeth:

FIRST WITCH: Why how now, Hecate, you look angrily?

HECATE: Have I not reason, beldams, as you are,
Saucy and over-bold? How did you dare
To trade and traffic with Macbeth
In riddles and affairs of death?

And I the mistress of your charms
The close contriver of all harms,
Was never called to bear my part (III.v.1-8)

Hecate then continues that Macbeth will come to her and that she knows about his destiny through the charms and spells she makes. Macbeth will also see apparitions through Hecate's charms:

Meet me i'th'morning . Theither he

²⁶ Elizabeth Schafer, *The Witch: Thomas Middleton* (London and New York: A and c Black, 1994), p. xxvi.

²⁷ See chapter 2, pp. 38-39, for a discussion of the flying of Hecate and Malkin in the air.

Will come to know his destiny
Your vassals and your spells provide,
Your charms and everything beside. (15-18)

In the end of this scene, Hecate also reveals an important aspect about Macbeth's destiny, namely that he believes that he is untouchable, a conviction which ultimately leads to his downfall:

And, you all know, security
Is mortals' chiefest enemy. (32-33)

One can say that Hecate has a major influence upon the other witches in the play and this is why she is the goddess of witchcraft. The addition of the Hecate scenes changes the nature of the witches' intervention. A. C. Bradley pointed out that the witches in *Macbeth* 'are not goddesses, or fates, or in any way whatsoever, supernatural beings. They are old women, poor and ragged, skinny and hideous, full of vulgar spite (...).'²⁸ He then argues that Macbeth was tempted solely by himself since he speaks of their supernatural soliciting but they did not actually solicit this. They merely foreshadowed his future in announcing his three prophetic titles. However, one can see that in the contexts presented above, Hecate makes charms and spells in order to reveal Macbeth's destiny and tells him about his future downfall.

The other witches are named as "the Weird Sisters" who are 'creatures of an elder world', Tolman notes, and they cannot be questioned by Macbeth.²⁹ Muir argues that the Weird Sisters are not in fact witches, but demons or devils in their human form: 'whether one considers them as human witches in league with the power of darkness, or as actual demons in the form of witches, or as merely inanimate symbols, the power which they wield or represent or symbolizes is ultimately demonic.'³⁰ Although Muir takes *Macbeth's* witches as actual demons, but they do not have a pact with the devil or their familiars. In other words, no demonic pact is seen in *Macbeth* and they are classed as English village

²⁸ A.C. Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy* (New York: Palgrave, 1992) pp. 289-299.

²⁹ Tolman, 'Notes on *Macbeth*', p. 211.

³⁰ See Curry cited in Kenneth Muir, *The Arden Shakespeare: Macbeth* (London: Methuen, 1951) p. iiv.

witches; they are not demons and devils, but witches. In contrast to Muir, Purkiss argues that the witches in *Macbeth* are in fact witches, rather than simply uncanny old women. The language of their speech 'is marked off from that of the other characters in a manner which insists on their iconic status and also on their difference from the human.'³¹ Purkiss's concentration is on the type of language that the witches use, rather than their activities. The language of the witches is different from the language typically used by the other characters of the play, and they also speak differently when speaking among themselves from the way they speak to Macbeth.

In *Macbeth* the witches are hag-like, since Banquo describes them as 'withered' and 'wild' in their attire (I.iii. 40). In *The Witch*, Sebastian refers to Hecate as a hag: 'That I may never need this hag again' (I.ii.179). In another scene, Firestone refers to Hecate thus: 'I am sure they'll be a company of foul sluts there tonight' (III.iii.16). Firestone uses the word 'slut' to address the witches, which means a slovenly or lewd woman in the early modern context.³² The word 'hag' and 'beldame' can be found in almost all the witch plays. The characteristics of Hecate are borrowed from witchcraft treatises, namely that she is old, lewd, dependent, and has fellow witches. Both Hecate in *Macbeth* and *The Witch* appear to commit crimes and their crimes take place during their magical rites and Sabbath. However, they still form the comic part of the play.

4.5 The Witches' Sabbath

This topic is important for my discussion of the plays because one can learn about the crimes and infanticide the witches commit, and the pact they make with the devil during their Sabbath journey. Witch-Sabbath occurs in *The Witch*, *Macbeth*, *The Late Lancashire Witches* and *Sophonisba*. However, it is not practised BY the witches of other plays, such as *The Witch of Edmonton*, *Mother Bombie* and *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon*. The time that witches traditionally were thought to hold their meetings to worship the devil was called the Sabbath. During this ceremony they made pacts and partook in sexual orgies

³¹ Purkiss, *The Witch in History: Early Modern and Twentieth-century Representations*, p. 210

³² 'Slut', *Oxford English Dictionary*,
<http://www.oed.com.ezproxy4.lib.le.ac.uk/view/Entry/182346?rskey=WonOsL&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid> [Accessed June 2011]

with the devil and others such as succubi and incubi. Briggs quotes the critical view of the French judge Pierre de Lancre on the purpose of the witches attending the Sabbath, which was to:

Dance indecently, to banquet filthily, to couple diabolically, to sodomize execrably, to blaspheme scandalously, to pursue brutally every horrible, dirty and unnatural desire, to hold as precious toads, vipers, lizards and all sorts of poisons; to love a vile-smelling goat, to caress him lovingly, to press against and copulate with him horribly and shamelessly.³³

Similarly in Middleton's *The Witch*, nearly all the activities above take place between the witches. Hecate and the other witches are dedicated to the devil either for their own interest or instead for those (the other human characters in the play) who consult with them, resulting in a compact with the devil. They also possess familiar spirits such as toads, bats and cats, and allow these familiar spirits to suck their blood. The pact between a witch and the devil takes place followed by a Sabbath, or some days after, the devil directs the witch to a meeting with the other witches. Rosen describes the differences between making a pact in England and Scotland: 'in England, blood sucked by a "familiar devil" in animal form was the simple and only form of pact till the mid-seventeenth century. In Scotland, he baptized the witch with blood from the mark which he bit or pinched into her flesh'.³⁴ The devil always marked the body of the witches with a privy mark. The witches confessed that the devil licked them with his tongue in some secret part of their body before he became the witches' servant. The marks generally were made under the hair in some part of their body and could not easily be found. The witches did not confess until the devil's mark was found, particularly when all their hair was shaven off each part of their body.³⁵

The witches were persecuted for heresy if any pact or any physical signs of one were found during their confession. Thus, according to the church, any kind of magic or sorcery was considered as heresy. It was believed that heretics could be men, women or

³³ Cited in Robin Briggs, *Witches and Neighbours: The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft* (London: HarperCollins, 1996), p. 32.

³⁴ Barbara Rosen, *Witchcraft* (London: Edward Arnold, 1969) p. 17.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.194.

children, but most were women. In early modern England, sorcery was normally identified with heresy. Heresy was associated with demons and with the practise of using supernatural power to kill instead of giving life. In *The Witch*, the witches are clearly not innocent characters, since they confess themselves that they have committed crimes. Their untroubled admission of murder, particularly infanticide, pushes the boundaries of the comic mode in which they usually appear. Hecate and her fellow witches are seen to have committed a crime when Hecate says: 'And fetch three ounces of the red-hair'd girl/ I killed last night' (V.ii.55-56). In *Macbeth*, the witches also appeared to have committed a crime when a witch says: 'Nay, here's three ounces of a red-haired wench' (IV.i.58). Hecate sounds nonchalant in her casual reference, whereas the witch in *Macbeth* is more sinister. In *The Witch*, the shock comes from the fact that her reference to (very) recent murder is off-hand; in *Macbeth*, it seems to me that the horror is in the fact that the 'wench' is reduced to an 'ingredient'. The witches in both plays use a common source as an ingredient in casting spells. Middleton's Hecate talks about infanticides when she procures a charm to lead Almachildies to a sudden death:

Leave all to me, and my five Sisters, daughter:
 It shall be convoid in at Howlott-time
 Take yo^w no Care; My spirits know their Moments,
 Rauē, or Screich-owle never fly by the' dore
 but they call in- (I thanck 'em;) and loose not by't
 I give 'em Barely, soakd in Infants-Blood
 They shall haue *Semina, cum Sanguine*,
 Their gorge crambd full, if they come once to o^r house.
 We are no Niggard. (V.ii.1973-1981)

In making a spell in order to fly into the air, Hecate gives Stadlin the dead body of a child in her abode and instructs him to boil it well and preserve the fat. This is another example of infanticide by the witches:

HECATE, There, take this vn-baptized-Brat:
 Boile it: preserve it the ffat:
 You know 'tis precious to transfer
 Our 'noynted fflesh into the Air, (I.ii.200-203)

Thus we can see that despite the fact that the witches are not seen as innocent creatures since they commit infanticide, they still form a comic part of the play. This is because Middleton's witches seem to be more interested in having sexual relationship with animal familiars and the devil than anything else, see my discussion below of their overt sexual behaviour. In contrast to this, *Macbeth's* witches commit a crime but form a tragic part of the play.

4.6 English and Continental Traditions of Witchcraft in Middleton's *The Witch*

Although Middleton's *The Witch* belongs to the English tradition of witchcraft rather than Continental witchcraft, one can also find notable resemblances and similarities with Continental beliefs about witches' behaviour. Therefore, one should take all the characteristics of Middleton's *The Witch* into consideration such as whether they have familiars or not for their demonic help, the ingredients they use for their charms, the power they claim to have and use against people and animals, their place in the community and several other characteristics.

One of the distinctive evil characteristics of witches in this play is their sexual desire. Middleton uses the idea of sexual desire in the witches for the comic representation of the supernatural in the Jacobean era. It is obvious that Hecate has the role of succubus not incubus especially in the scene mentioned above between she and her son, and in the following scenes when Almachildies consults her:

ALMACHILDIES. Call you theis *Witches*?
they be Tumblers, me-thincks, very flat Tumblers.
HECATE. 'tis *Almachildes* : fresh Blood stirrs in Me
the man that I haue lusted to enjoy
I haue had him thrice in *Incubus* already. (I.ii.393-397)

Almachildies calls the witches 'Tumblers' which means entertainers in the *Oxford English Dictionary*.³⁶ Alongside the ideas of physical agility, there is a sexual connotation here (see 'tumble', v.9a 'To have sexual intercourse with. *slang*').³⁷ Hecate here implies that she has had sex with a devil in Almachildies' shape. Alternatively, it might also show the audience that Almachildies has been sexually subjugated to the witch Hecate and has a close relationship with her, especially when he accepts Hecate's invitation to dine with her (when he is drunk and brings Hecate a toad to make into a love charm for Amoretta). Moreover, Hecate also reminds Stadlin (another witch) that she is going to have the son of the mayor of Whelplie the next morning:

HECATE. Last night thou got'st the *Maio*r of *welplie*s Son.
 I knew him by his black cloake, lyn'd with yellow;
 I thinck thou'hast spoiled the youth: hee's but seaventeene,
 I'll haue him the next Mounting: away-in.
 goe feed the *Vessell* for the second howre. (I.ii. 217-221)

These examples of Hecate's relationship with the people around her are more evidence of English witch-lore. The English witches are visited by their customers more often than in Continental tradition. The other English witches such as Mother Bombie and the Wise Woman of Hogsdon and the witches in *The Late Lancashire Witches* are also seen by many characters. However, Harris argues that 'Hecate displays many of the sensational features that were more frequently applied to the European witch than to the English equivalent'.³⁸ He argues that Hecate and her fellow witches are creatures of the night, gathering their magic herbs and flying through the air. Hecate and her fellow hags have familiar spirits for demonic aids, such as cats, toads and bats. This feature of having familiars can be found in the traditional form of witch beliefs, in that the witches allow

³⁶ 'Tumbler', *Oxford English Dictionary*,
 <<http://www.oed.com.ezproxy4.lib.le.ac.uk/view/Entry/207355?redirectedFrom=tumbler#eid>> [Accessed August 2011]

³⁷ 'Tumble', *Oxford English Dictionary*,
 <<http://www.oed.com.ezproxy4.lib.le.ac.uk/view/Entry/207350?rskey=uldVNy&result=2&isAdvanced=false#eid>> [Accessed August 2011]

³⁸ Harris, *Night's Black Agents*, pp. 81-82.

them to suck their blood. In Middleton's *The Witch*, the witches allow their familiars to suck their blood:

STADLIN. There was a Bat hoong at my lipps three times
as we came through the woods, and dranck her fill.
old *Puckle* saw her. (III.iii.1287-1290)

Hecate also has sex with her animal familiars such as the Cat (I.ii.286-288). Having intercourse with an animal familiar is more representative of the European witch Sabbath rather than the English witch. Gibson states that the blending of demon-lover and animal is from the European Sabbath while there are a 'few English accusations of sex with man-shaped spirits (for example, *the most strange and admirable discoverie of the three Witches of Warboys* (London, 1593) or incest (*A true and just Recorde* (London, 1582))'. She also argues that the cat that appears later might be an unnaturally large animal.³⁹ However, Rosen opposes Gibson's idea by arguing that having a familiar was already 'common in popular English witch-belief as a privately-owned devil in animal form' and that a 'witch's pet was indeed proof of her witchcraft'. She also adds that having a familiar led to searches for the teat at which the witch supposedly nourished her familiar and 'this was already the popular English version of the mark, appearing in most trials after 1579 and from then on it was regarded by many judges as most important evidence for the prosecution'.⁴⁰ *The Witch* is most obviously based on English witchcraft but Middleton clearly adds some characteristics of Continental witches to the play, such as flying at night and sexual desire. I will concentrate on Hecate's familiars later in a section that deals with how familiar scenes would have worked on stage and how Middleton used certain effects for certain actions of the play.

Returning to Hecate's invocation, it is addressed to a list of the names of devils or unearthly creatures, which is also drawn heavily from Scot: 'Urchins, Elves, Hags, Satyrs, Pans, Fawns, Sylvans, Kitty-with-the-candlesticks, Tritons, Centaurs, Dwarfs, Imps, the

³⁹ Gibson, *Witchcraft and Society in England and America*, p.101.

⁴⁰ Rosen, *Witchcraft*, p. 23.

Spoorn, the Mare, the Man-l'-th'-oak, the Hellwain, the Fire-darke, the Puckle! Aab hur hus!'(I.ii.105-9). The last phrase with which Hecate concludes, 'Aab hur hus!' is a traditional charm against toothache, also borrowed from Scot.⁴¹ Middleton borrowed the names of devils from Scot and the names of two of Hecate's hags, Hellwain and Puckle, are also taken from this list of spirits. Scot combined a mixture of English, European and classical spirits together. Attempting to classify the familiar names, he stated that 'hags are female evil spirits; satyrs, pans, fawns, sylens, or silvans (a kind of satyr or a wood spirit), tritons and centaurs are all human-animal creatures from classical mythology; ... the mare is the nightmare; ...'⁴² Scot's and Middleton's use of all these different names for the devil, has the effect of ridiculing all such beliefs regarding what the witches were thought to be doing under any of the above mentioned devilish names. Moreover, Scot's intention in using such devilish vocabulary was to convince his readers of the unreality of such beliefs about witchcraft and magic in early modern England.

Along with the names of spirits, there are also some kinds of magical herbs used in Middleton's *The Witch* which are borrowed from Scot's *the Discovery of Witchcraft* such as, 'Chirocineta, adincantida/ Archimedon, marmaritin, calicia' (I.ii.161-2). Bullen notes that 'pythagoras and ademocritus' which are the names of great magical herbs and stones, 'whereof now both the virtue and the things themselves also are unknown'. As *Marmaritin*, 'whereby spirits might be raised: *Archimedon*, which would make one bewraie in his sleep all the secrets in his heart'. Moreover, there were other kinds of herbs, such as: *Adincantida*, *Calicia*, *Meuais*, and *Chirocineta*, 'which had all their seuerall vertues, or rather poisons.'⁴³ In another scene Hecate names several ingredients which are also borrowed from Scot:

Acontium, frondes populeus, and Soote,
yo^u may see that, he looks so back ' th' mouth
then *Sium*, a *Charum*, *Vulgaro* too
Dentaphillon, the Blood of a flitter-mowse,

⁴¹ *The Works of Middleton*, ed. by Bullen, p. 372.

⁴² Gibson, *Witchcraft and Society in England and America*, p. 102.

⁴³ *The Works of Middleton*, ed. by Bullen, p. 375.

Solanum Somnificum et Oleum (l.ii.226-230)

Here, Hecate names several ingredients to Stadlin such as ‘mountain parsly, poisonous aconite, or wolf’s bane, polar leaves, yellow watercress, myrtle, cinquefoil, bat’s blood, deadly nightshade “containing belladonna and with hallucinogenic properties”’, which were often thought by sceptics to be responsible for the flying fantasies of witches.⁴⁴ These named ingredients are used by the witches to make a kind of ointment in order to ease their flight in the air, and also to make their magical charms. The flying of witches during their Sabbath was popular on stage because it could offer a comic spectacle to the audience. Using the cauldron and the magical ingredients to make an ointment, Middleton’s Hecate and Malkin pretend to fly. This scene forms a comic part of the play and thus the play can be called tragicomedy.

4.7 Tragicomedy

Before defining tragicomedy, I want to explore why Middleton called his play *The Witch*, and why he positioned it within the tragicomedy genre. As this thesis has demonstrated throughout, plays about witchcraft and witches were popular in early modern England and, moreover, people were interested in flying witches and their dances. There are several witch scenes in the play, however the witch Hecate is not conspicuously the main character in it, so in calling his play after her, Middleton is drawing attention to one particular aspect of the play rather than the main, tragic elements of its plot in order to heighten its appeal to audiences. John Fletcher, in his *The Faithful Shepherdess*, defines tragicomedy as,

not so called in respect of mirth and killing, but in respect it wants death, which is enough to make it no tragedy, yet brings some near it, which is enough to make it no comedy, which must be a representation of familiar people, with such kind of trouble as no life be questioned; so that a god is as lawful in this as in a tragedy, and mean people as in a comedy.⁴⁵

⁴⁴Gibson, *Witchcraft and Society in England and America*, p. 100.

⁴⁵ *The Works of Beaumont and Fletcher*, ed. by George Darley, 2 vols (London: Edward Moxon, 1840), i, 264-287 (p. 264).

Although tragicomedy 'wants death' on stage, there is often an off-stage death in English versions of the genre, as in the case in Middleton's *The Witch* when Antonio falls to his death as he tries to find Isabella. Some characters are near to 'death' and some others are in danger of being sentenced to death for their crimes. Fletcher's remark on the representation of a supernatural power intervening in the plot as being 'lawful' or legitimate also tallies with this play. *The Witch* consists of three succeeding plots ranging from the lower-class characters (witches and servants) to the Duke and the Duchess' family. The noble family (perhaps modelled on the Somersets) forms the tragic nucleus of the play but the witches, spirits and servants occupy the comic part of the play.

The tragicomedy of Middleton and Shakespeare typically includes surprises, transgressions and disguises, and supernatural elements also abound, such as witches, goddesses and fairies. As Smith usefully states, 'Jacobean tragicomedy has an "essential comic design" (intrigue-ridden plots of romantic love) onto which is imposed a "burden of ... tragic implication," of emotional intensity and mental agitation.'⁴⁶ *The Witch* is a hybrid, with some plots dealing with romantic love among the characters as well as other comedic plots. The play reaches a conventionally comic end with the reunion of the two separated lovers, Sebastian and Isabella, although Antonio dies by the end of the play. Hermio announces Antonio's death when he is searching to find Isabella in Fernando's house:

a fearful, vnexpected Accident
brought death, to meet his fury: for my Lord
entering *Fernando's* house, like a raisd Tempest,
(w^{ch} nothing heedes but its owne violent rage)
blinded with wrath, and lelouzie, (which scorne guides)
from a falce Trap-dore fell into a depth
exceeds a Temples height: which takes into it
part of the doongeon, that falls threescore ffaddom
vnder the Castle. (V.iii.2057-2065)

The lord governor is pleased to hear this news and says that Antonio deserves his fate. All the scenes of the play emphasize human weakness and 'all dwell on the tragic irony that defeats human desires, all portray a dark world- less violent perhaps but scarcely less

⁴⁶ Logan & Smith, *The Later Jacobean and Caroline Dramatists*, p.15.

terrifying than the world of *The Revenger's Tragedy* and *Woman Beware Women*.⁴⁷ Antonio cannot survive by the end of the play and his adventurous desire results in his own downfall. Human desires are also depicted through the witches on stage. Schoenbaum argues that Middleton's witches are less interested in shaping men's destinies than in satisfying their own lusts by sleeping with 'visitors or succubi or their own offspring; their escapades reflect the persistent concern with sexuality that is to lead the dramatist, in his mature tragedies, into psychological explorations unattempted by his contemporaries'.⁴⁸ Middleton portrays the witches as creatures who are more interested in sex than anything else. This is one of the dramatic devices that the dramatist uses as a special effect to make the play a tragicomedy.

Middleton does not present and mediate morality to his audience in *The Witch*. He does not tell us what moral lesson we should draw, and it is remarkable- compared to Shakespeare, for instance - that many fundamentally corrupt and tainted characters not only survive, but thrive at the end of the play. The audience cannot find any perfect examples of chastity and honour in this play. For example, the Duchess plans to kill the Duke and then Almachildies but she is finally pardoned. The plot of two amoral and lewd characters, Francisca and Abberzanes, is neither comedy nor tragedy but a middle mood. This is because their plot is too disreputable to be considered tragedy and too unsociable for comedy. Although they both are from the middle class, they are pardoned by the end of the play. The characters of noble/aristocratic class are given this treatment, but rarely those of the middling classes. Francisca in some ways resembles Bianca in *Women Beware Women* (1612-1627), who is a mistress first and then becomes the wife of Francisco de' Medici. Abberzanes also resembles Lactantio (nephew of Lord Cardinal of Milan) in *More Dissemblers Besides Women* (1615) who has an affair with his mistress, Aurelia. The plots of these characters are comedy and tragicomedy too. In these plays, the four characters form parts of similar plots and turn the play into tragicomedy. The tragicomic conventions of this play also stem from Middleton's use of withheld information and surprise. Surprise

⁴⁷ Richard Hindry Barker, *Thomas Middleton* (New York and London: Columbia University Press and Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 92.

⁴⁸ Samuel Schoenbaum, 'Middleton's Tragicomedies', *Modern Philology*, 54 (1956), 7-19 (p. 9).

takes place because some scenes or actions take place offstage without the audience being aware of this. For instance, we suddenly learn that the Duchess is accused of adultery:

GOVERNORE, No, my Sword
shall neuer stayne the virgin-brightnes on't
With blood of an Adulteresse. (V.iii.2144-2146)

However, she denies being an adulteress and losing her honour to Almachildies (V.iii.2147-2150). She rebuffs the accusation of being an adulteress but the audience are not aware of this until this moment because when she blindfolds Almachildies and then takes off the bandage from his eyes, we see the Duchess say: 'say, thou must either die, or kill the duke;/ for one of them thou must do' (III.i.960-961). We are misled here as the audience because some of the actions occur offstage. For instance, the audience does not know whom Almachildies sleeps with while blindfolded because it takes place off-stage. However, Amoretta then announces on-stage that it is a hired prostitute and not the Duchess. Moreover, deceptions occur when actions take place offstage. This stage-whispering (the scene between Amoretta, the Duchess, Almachildies and Florida) can be considered as one of the techniques or devices that Middleton uses, as the audience is not informed about what takes place offstage.

Another device that pushes the play into tragicomedy is the withholding of information and disguising of it until nearly the end of the play in Act 5, scene 1. From the beginning of the play Isabella is not aware that Antonio has misled her with the false report of Sebastian's death in a fight, in order to marry her. However, when Sebastian disguises and names himself 'Celio' to keep Isabella in Fernando's house for a while, Isabella curses Antonio and says she would not find herself in such an unpleasant situation if Sebastian were alive:

Well: well, Sir,
I'll haue that Care, I'll not disease him much,
Tread you but lightly: oh, of what grosse falcehood
is Mans heart made of! had my first loue liu'd

and return'd saffe, he would haue by a light
To all Mens Actions, his faith shinde so bright. (IV.ii.1591-1596)

Isabella is being deceived here and (unlike the audience) does not realize that Celio is Sebastian until Act V. iii. Then she expresses her joy and disbelief. This kind of withholding and disguising of information can be seen to adhere to the tragicomic conventions of the play. This ending is found in both forms, tragicomedy and comedy.

Both Middleton and Shakespeare were influenced by the popular beliefs of that time. It is needless to speculate whether they believed such things themselves or not; what we can assert is that they recognized the dramatic potential and popular appeal of using supernatural and mythological characters in their works. By using goddesses Shakespeare gives licence to the audience's imaginations by showing mythical characters as having the same qualities and characteristics as humans. Both forms of supernatural beings - witches and goddesses - are here used to solve the problems of the play as well as categorizing the genre of the play. Shakespeare uses mythical characters such as nymphs, goddesses and fairies to resolve problems in the plots of his plays. The same concept occurs with the witches, but with the added significance that (unlike the classical gods) the idea that witches existed and possessed strange and dark powers had some currency. Middleton's witches are vulgar, ridiculous, ugly, distorted and sexually offensive. They do not harm the other characters, they only excite laughter without causing pain to anyone in the play. Both the creature types used by Middleton and Shakespeare (in his later plays) are supernatural and are used to form the comic element of the play. In addition to this, they included non-supernatural characters as well as illusions –witches, goddesses and nymphs- that refer to the supernatural beliefs of early modern society regarding the existence of superstitious power. The main difference between Middleton's presentation of supernatural power and Shakespeare's is that Middleton shows supernatural effects through technology in such a way as to engage with the audience. In contrast, Shakespeare expresses the supernatural element through words rather than technology.

The popularity of this genre in 1600s-1610s steadily increased. Plays with tragicomedy were fashionable and in high demand, especially at the Court. This was

related to the advanced system of elaborate machines and decors which were adapted for staging the miracle effects of the supernatural entities. Not only restricted to Middleton's work, tragicomedy dominated Shakespeare's later plays. The vogue for tragicomedy went into decline in 1640, and the popularity of tragedy came back into fashion afterwards. Blackfriars presented witchcraft in tragicomic modes as witchcraft mania was fading in this period, and the playhouses were more advanced technologically for staging supernatural spectacles of witches.

Along with tragicomedy, one can say that technology and comedy come together in *The Witch*. I have mentioned the actions of the actors who take part in categorizing the play as tragicomedy and argued that the witches form a comic part of the play, as through their supernatural effects on stage they provide exciting entertainment for the audience, even while more tragic events happen, such as Antonio's death. Thus, the technology and comedy work together in turning the play into a comic spectacle through the visual effects that were provided by the King's Men. In dramatizing these plots, Middleton required special features of the playhouses to stage the supernatural effects of the witches. For example, the spaces of the 'hut', 'heavens' and 'above' are extremely important in staging the witch scenes. With the advanced technical ability of the Blackfriars in adapting more elaborate machines, this made more supernatural effects on stage possible in terms of flying, descending and ascending of the witches and deities.

4.8 Flight in Middleton's *The Witch*

In this section I will focus on the playhouse where *The Witch* was staged, paying special attention to the witchcraft scenes. Early seventeenth-century and later evidence will also be examined to determine what alterations have been made in stage directions in particular scenes of the supernatural characters. This chapter asks the questions what kind of props, sound effects, and other staging devices (for example, the use of the balcony/ gallery and winch) were needed to stage these supernatural scenes, and how was witchcraft transposed into a theatrical experience. After all, Middleton made full use of the staging resources at his disposal, and this play is as much about spectacle as it is

about plot. Using Andrew Gurr's descriptions of the structure of private playhouses, especially Blackfriars, with the players of the King's Men, I will apply it to Middleton's *The Witch* in order to reveal which parts of the playhouse Middleton employed in his plots. Gurr describes how there was a balcony or gallery (sometimes called the 'tarras' in the seventeenth century), at the first gallery level in the tiring-house façade. Above the balcony or tarras, there was a cover or 'heavens' supported by two pillars raised up from the stage.⁴⁹ The 'heavens' and the 'hell' (the space under the stage) are religious terms which probably originated in the private houses.⁵⁰ The advantage of the heavens was that it protected the stage from bad weather conditions such as cold and rain, and it also provided a space from which to let things descend down onto the stage.

Upstage, there was a 'hut' or huts which were set on top of the heavens to provide the effects of lightning and thunder. The effects of 'flights' and descending onto the stage were also provided by the 'hut' through the stage-hands operating machinery. Private playhouses such as Blackfriars used candles for presenting night scenes. For instance, in the field scene Hecate and her fellow witches enter onto the stage, and she describes the brightness of the moon:

HECATE, The Moone's a Gallant, see how brisk she rides!
STADLIN, here's a rich Evening, *Heccat*. (III.ii.1278-1280)

In the indoor playhouses, there was a 'heavens' the underside of which was painted with a moon and stars.⁵¹ The majority of scenes with the witches take place at night, and the witches here descend again through the hut of the stage. The hut was also used for producing thunder and lightning effects. For example in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, the three Weird Sisters meet in thunder and lightning. In *Cymbeline*, Jupiter also flies down on an eagle through thunder and lightning onto the stage.⁵²

⁴⁹ Gurr, *the Shakespearean Stage*, p. 121.

⁵⁰ MacMillin, 'Middleton's Theatres', p. 81.

⁵¹ Gurr, *the Shakespearean Stage*, p. 121.

⁵² The effect of thunder, in both public and private playhouses, was presumably produced by 'bowling heavy balls of stone or iron along wooden troughs, supplemented by rolls on snare drums and kettle drums'. The

The equipment for the flying machines was usually set up in the hut. To ascend and descend from the heavens to the stage, one needed to use a wire or rope to fly down. Some playhouses had more than one hut which controlled the flight of the characters from the stage and the huts had enough space to accommodate the storage of eagles, chariots, cars, thrones and any other necessary equipment used for flights. No contemporary references offer a precise design of the second Blackfriars, but Wickham describes it as a large medieval hall known as the parliament chamber.⁵³ Although its precise shape and size are unknown, it has been estimated as having been about 66 feet long and 46 feet wide. In respect of scenic spectacle, one can say that the flight of Middleton's Hecate provides evidence that Blackfriars had flying machinery capable of making witches fly.

Concerning the technical possibilities of flying witches on stage, Middleton's witches in Act 3, scene 3 pretend that they can fly and make their journey at night with the help of a magic ointment. This ointment is used here to help the Cat to descend (III.iii.48) and to enable the ascent of both Hecate and Malkin back to the heavens. Reginald Scot asserted the belief that witches rode in the air, and provided evidence attesting to the popularity of this superstition:

*How witches are summoned to appear before the devill, of their riding in the aire, of their accompts, of their conference with the devil, of his supplies, and their conference, of their farewel sacrifices: according to Daneus, Psellas.*⁵⁴

This extract is about the flight or transvection of witches to the Sabbath or their Covens with the help of the devil. In *The Witch*, the congregation of the witches and their revelry at Sabbaths are elements of English witch lore but not the *transvection* of witches. The advanced technology of Blackfriars facilitated the congregation of the witches and their flight on stage. While witchcraft treatises focused on the flying of witches through

effect of lightning was probably 'produced by some sort of pyrotechnical device not fully understood'. Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse*, p. 144.

⁵³ Glynne Wickham, 'The Second Blackfriars', in *English professional Theatre, 1530-1660*, ed. by Glynne Wickham, Herbert Berry, and William Ingram (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 501-504.

⁵⁴ Reginald Scot, *Scot's Discovery of Witchcraft* (1651), 1-227, book III, ch. 3; p. 37.

ointment, the King's Men could stage this supernatural scene by the use of flying machinery. In Act 3, scene 3, the descent of Malkin is covered by Hecate's ointment and the noise of the machinery is covered by the off-stage choir in its turn:

Ther's one comes downe to fetch his dues
A kiss, a Coll, a Sip of Blood.
And why thou staist so long
I muse, I muse.
Since the Air's so sweet, and good.

The same flight scene in *Macbeth* was performed by the King's Men at the Blackfriars. Scot inserted an aspect of the Continental practice of witchcraft, that is, flying witches, into his demonological treatise. Moreover, he discusses the belief that witches fly through the air with the devil's assistance, and that they become the devil's servants in return for having the power to ride in the air. The devil warns the witches to appear in their assemblies at night, where the devil can understand whom they have slain. The devil leads them to fall dancing and singing and then makes them invisible in the air. The belief that witches needed a kind of ointment to enable them to ride and vanish into the air was very widespread in the early modern period. Scot also includes this belief in his book and states that people believe that witches use ointment for their transportation and other miraculous effects:

*Sundry receipts and ointments, made and used for the transportation of witches, and other miraculous effects: an instance thereof reported and credited by some that are learned.*⁵⁵

Reginald Scot and King James I in their demonological treatises focus on the belief of transporting of witches by the use of ointment and also on the diabolic nature of the witch as depicted in her physical behaviour. The Elizabethan and Jacobean witch on stage was presented as spectacular through her diabolical demeanour, embodying the characteristics mentioned in the learned demonological texts. Thus, the dramatists

⁵⁵ Reginald Scot, *Scot's Discovery of Witchcraft* (1651), 1-227, book X, ch. 8; p. 135.

consciously based their representations on the circulated information about witches, and dramatised into a stage performance the witch's behaviour for entrainment of early modern audiences. However, in Elizabethan theatres, the powers of stage witches were restrained from incorporating the Continental practices of witchcraft, such as transporting the witches, spirits, magicians and goddesses through the air and flight due to the lack of necessary stage machinery. Along with Scot, in his *Daemonologie* (1597) King James also discussed flying witches and the question of how witches were able to achieve their aerial journey with the aid of their spirits whether above earth or sea:

*What are the waies possible, wherby the witches may transport themselues to places far distant, And what ar impossible & mere illusions of Sathan And the reasons therof.*⁵⁶

The above extract and chapter heading says the belief that witches transport themselves from one place to another may be impossible. In *The Witch*, Hecate's minion, Stadlin seems to raise an actual storm, making hail and thunder, which originated from folk-tales since witches were believed to wreck ships by creating storms and thunder. One might think by way of parallel of the roughly contemporary play *The Tempest*, in which Prospero, the usurped Duke of Milan, as a magician conjures up a storm in order to cause the ship to run a ground. Both features of witches, such as, flying and sailing can be seen in Middleton's witches. James VI argued that witches were also carried swiftly from one place to another by the force of their spirit, which is their conductor, either above the earth or above the sea. In his opinion, witches are merely visible to each other while they are in the air but not to others. Middleton gives the audience some sense of the witches' role: they work as agents and are merely seen when they are busy fulfilling the wishes of the other human characters. Real human characters can exist everywhere but a 'witch' can only exist during the Sabbath when meeting with other witches.

We have seen that it was not only historians and monarchs who wrote about the witches' power and how they transported themselves, but playwrights also portrayed

⁵⁶ Ibid, book II, ch. 4; p. 37-8.

their transportation through speaking about flight in words or through stage effect. Middleton dramatises both the aids of ointment and spirit to help the transportation of Hecate. Similarly, ointment is also used in Jonson's *The Masque of Queens* for the transportation of the witches. One can find a similar theatrical and magical effect in both plays, *The Witch* and *The Masque of Queens*, when Hecate and Ate use the word 'anooint' to go riding. In *The Witch*, the result of anoointment by Hecate helps the descent of the Cat, as she descends before she flies: 'I will but 'nooint, and then I mount' (III.iii. 1342-1343). Similarly, Ate also anooints in *The Masque of Queens* before start flying:

Sisters, stay, we want our Dame;
Call upon her by name,
And the charm we use to say,
That she quickly anooint, and come away. (40-4)⁵⁷

In both plays anoointments are used to make scenic spectacles of transporting characters from the stage to the heavens or vice versa. For instance, Hecate is still on stage and anooints the Cat which helps to cause her to ascend back to the heavens: 'O, art thou come?/What news, what news?' (III.iii.1349-1350).⁵⁸ As Wickham states, 'from a theatrical standpoint this scene is cleverly thought out, eminently practical, and highly spectacular'. He also adds that 'verbally, visually, and no doubt musically, it meets the requirements of a second variation upon the original theme which has as its object the motorization of Hecate'.⁵⁹ Both the music and Hecate, through the visual spectacle of her flight to the heavens, are intended to impress the audience. The aerial journey of the witches and their comic activities are shown through technology and flying machinery. The witch dance and songs can be considered as primarily intended to provide enjoyable entertainment for the audience. During the Jacobean period, the managers of private playhouses encountered a newly elite audience which required and was interested in musical dances and songs. Theatre gave great consideration to the adoption of new instruments and machines at the

⁵⁷ Ben Jonson, *The Works of Ben Jonson*, ed. by Barry Cornwall (London: Routledge, 1859), p. 567.

⁵⁸ Wilson, *The Witch*, p. 58.

⁵⁹ Wickham, 'To Fly Not To Fly?', p. 178.

Blackfriars in order to impress the audience. Middleton used the technology of the stage to satisfy public interest in witchcraft, and he did not only intend to present witches as theatrical characters but also wanted the audience to engage imaginatively with witches and to play with their fears. In addition to this, he also used technology to show ‘supernatural’ effects to those who were curious about magic.

Stage direction is important here in showing the entrances of exits of Hecate and Malkin in Malone MS 12 compared to the modern editions. To solve deficiencies in stage directions, the modern editors use brackets to identify dubious action. To some extent, the use of brackets by the modern editors is to indicate a matter of individual interpretation for the deficient stage directions. Some early modern dramatic texts gave very few stage directions in their texts even at the entrances and exits of the actors. Therefore, the modern editors address their speech and gestures in square brackets to show the author’s intention. I mentioned earlier that Malkin and Hecate ‘fly’ (Act 3, scene 3) in Malone MS 12 and that the stage direction is:

*“A Spirit like a Cat descends” and Hecate “Going vp”*⁶⁰

Crane did not put stage directions in brackets when he transcribed *The Witch*. Modern editors do not actually add any words to the above original stage direction. Some put it into brackets, while others do not. O’Connor does not put the stage direction in brackets when Malkin descends: *A spirit like a cat descends* (see fig. 2) but she does when Hecate ascends above: (going up [with Cat]) (see fig. 6).⁶¹ However, modern editors use the same stage direction that Malkin ‘descends’, but in brackets. Dyce, Bullen and Havelock use square brackets in which to put stage directions:

*‘[A Spirit like a cat descends]’ and Hecate ‘[going up]’*⁶²

⁶⁰ Middleton, *The Witch: A Tragi-Coomodie*, p. 43. See the details in chapter 2, pp. 38-39.

⁶¹ O’Connor, *‘The Witch’*, p.1152.

⁶² Middleton, *The Works of Thomas Middleton*, ed. by A. H. Bullen, p.416; Havelock Ellis, *Thomas Middleton: The Best Plays of The Old Dramatists* (London: Viizetelly & Co., 1890), 115-195 (p. 166); Thomas Middleton, *The Works of Thomas Middleton, now First Collected: with some account of the author, and notes in five*

Corbin and Sedge use round brackets with the name of the Cat in square brackets:

‘([Malkin], a Spirit like a cat descends)’ and Hecate ‘(Going up [with Malkin])’⁶³

What is significant here is that in all the above stage directions the Cat ‘descends’ rather than walking onto the stage. The modern editors have not changed the original stage directions, which were provided by Ralph Crane, of the supernatural characters in *The Witch*. Corbin and Sedge distinguish the song, ‘Come away, Come away’, by layout and an italic script which is similar to that of MS Malone 12. When Hecate enters, she is always accompanied by ‘five sisters’, all of whom ascend the stage except Hecate:

STADLIN, all:
HECATE, Prepare to fflight then
I’ll over-take you swiftly.
STADLIN, hye- thee, *Heccat*:
We shalbe vp betimes
HECATE, I’ll reach yo^w quickly.
FIRESTONE, they’re all going a Birding to night: (III.iii.1325-1331)

It seems that all of the witches ascend, leaving only Hecate on the stage with Firestone to make the incantation. Here, one can note that an image of demon-assisted flight is presented by Middleton since he shows us the manifestations of Hecate’s aerial power in her ability to fly with her spirit. Cox advocates editions which explicate the performance, but writes a note and leaves the text as it is:

my suggestion is that editors reduce sharply or even eliminate completely the stage directions they add to early texts in place of stage directions in the text, this practice outlines staging options in the commentary notes, thus leaving text free of editorial interventions where stage directions are concerned while giving readers enough information to imagine various solutions to staging.⁶⁴

volumes, ed. by Alexander Dyce, 5 vols (London: E. Lumley, 1840), iii, 245-335 (p. 304); Wilson, *The Witch*, p. 58.

⁶³ Corbin and Sedge, *Three Jacobean Witchcraft Plays*, p. 121.

⁶⁴ John D. Cox, ‘Open Stage, Open Page? Editing Stage Directions in Early Dramatic Texts’, in *Textual Performances: The Modern Reproduction of Shakespeare’s Drama*, eds. Erne and Kidnie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 178.

In my opinion, the editors add stage directions to the early texts in order for readers to visualize what they take to be deficient stage directions, if that addition does not distort the dramatist's intentions. This is why some of the stage directions of early modern texts are written by the scrivener or members of the theatre companies. If not, modern editors add the stage directions in square brackets in order to identify dubious action. Furthermore, modern editors also altered stage directions because of the major changes in the technological progression of theatre. Stage directions in witchcraft plays either in the early texts or in the modern editions tell a narrative of the changing dramatic styles of a certain period.



Fig. 6 Hecate flies with the Cat (the one on the right) upstage (III.iii.1357-1371)

4.9 Flying in other plays of the period: Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest*

Malkin's descent and the ascent of Hecate resemble the descent scenes of Jupiter in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, and Juno in *The Tempest*. Malkin, Jupiter, and Juno all descend from above and the structure of these scenes matches the arrangements at the Blackfriars playhouse. Descents and ascents of deities from the stage heaven, as Gurr states, were matters of spectacle and he is probably right to assert that 'the earlier plays tended to allow their gods to walk on like any mortal; the first of Shakespeare's gods to fly in was Jupiter on his eagle in *Cymbeline*'.⁶⁵ In *Cymbeline*, Posthumus is surrounded by the ghosts of his family and Jupiter flies down on an eagle through thunder and lightning onto the stage (see Fig. 7):

JUPITER.

No more, you petty spirits of region low,
Offend our hearing. Hush! How dare you ghosts
Accuse the thunder, whose bolt, you know,
Sky-planted, batters all rebelling coasts? (V.iv.62-67)⁶⁶

In this mini-drama within *Cymbeline* Shakespeare conveys the powerful theatrical effect of taking the audience inside the dream of Posthumus. Jupiter appears to the audience at the balcony of the stage, and through his powerful speech tries to show the ghosts of Posthumus's family that their sufferings are not insignificant. Before ascending into the heavens, Jupiter gives the ghosts a tablet which they lay upon Posthumus's breast: 'This tablet lay upon his breast, wherein/ Our pleasure his full fortune doth confine' (V.iv.78-79)⁶⁷. This is followed by the ghosts thanking him before they vanish and Posthumus awakes up.

Cymbeline was not entered in the Stationers' Register, and not printed until 1623.⁶⁸ The same stage direction that Jupiter 'descends' in thunder and lightning is used

⁶⁵ Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage*, 2nd ed., p. 174.

⁶⁶ William Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*, ed. by Richard Hosley (New York and Toronto: The New American Library; London: The New English Library Limited, 1968), p. 153.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 154.

⁶⁸ Shakespeare, William, *The dramatic writings of Will. Shakspeare, with the notes of all the various commentators; printed complete from the best editions of Sam. Johnson and Geo. Steevens*, p.374.

by both early modern and modern editors. Jupiter descends in the First Folio, likewise in the modern editions.⁶⁹ Thus, modern editors do not make any changes in this stage direction. The only difference is that 'descend' may not always mean 'descend' onto the stage in practice, but only in print. The stage direction to 'descend' has a less obvious meaning in early modern editions, normally signifying that the character in question is suspended in mid-air. However, the direction to 'descend' in modern editions means 'descends' onto the stage, not only in printed editions, but in theatrical practice. Galloway argues that Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* calls for an elaborate descent when Jupiter descends to the stage. He also argues that 'there is some evidence for elaborate apparatus to 'fly' actors and large properties in the Italian theatre of the period, evidence for its use in the English there is meagre'.⁷⁰ Both the masque-like theophany at the end and the descent of Jupiter, Rowse argues, 'would have been for Blackfriars with its more elaborate scenic devices'.⁷¹ Stern argues that the descent scene of Jupiter from heaven on the back of an eagle and the riding prophecy he gives, 'mark a turning point in the play, as does Juno's heavenly entrance bless the marriage of Ferdinand and Miranda in *The Tempest*'.⁷²

⁶⁹ For a discussion of the stage direction of Jupiter in the First Folio See chapter 2, pp. 33-34. See Jupiter's descent in the modern editions in: *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, 2nd ed, by Taylor and Wells (2005), p.1213. *The Works of William Shakespeare*, ed. by Irving and Marshall (1890), vii, p. 137 (V.iv.92). *Shakespeare in Twenty Volumes: Pericles Cymbeline*, ed. by Lee, 7 vols (V.iv.92). *The Complete Oxford Shakespeare: Comedies*, ed. by Wells and Taylor, 2 vols (London: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 949. *The Works of Shakespeare*, ed. by C. H. Herford, 10 vols (London: Macmillan, 1899), iv, p. 237. *The Works of Shakespeare: Cymbeline*, ed. by Nosworthy (London: Methuen, 1955), p. 167. *The Complete Work of Shakespeare* (Oxford: The Shakespeare Head Press, 1934), p. 1093. *The Works of William Shakespeare*, ed. by William George Clark and William Aldis Wright, 9 vols (London: Macmillan, 1866), p. 279. *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, ed. by Cornwall, 2 vols (London: The London Printing and Publishing Company, [1875]), p. 244. *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, ed. by Sisson (p.1199). *The Annotated Shakespeare: Complete Works Illustrated*, ed. by A. L. Rowse (London: Orbis Books, 1978), iii, pp. 724-795 (p. 784).

⁷⁰ David Galloway, *The Elizabethan Theatre III* (Canada: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1973), pp. (10-11).

⁷¹ *The Annotated Shakespeare: Complete Works Illustrated*, ed. A. L. Rowse, p. 724.

⁷² Tiffany Stern, *Making Shakespeare: From Stage to Page* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 5.

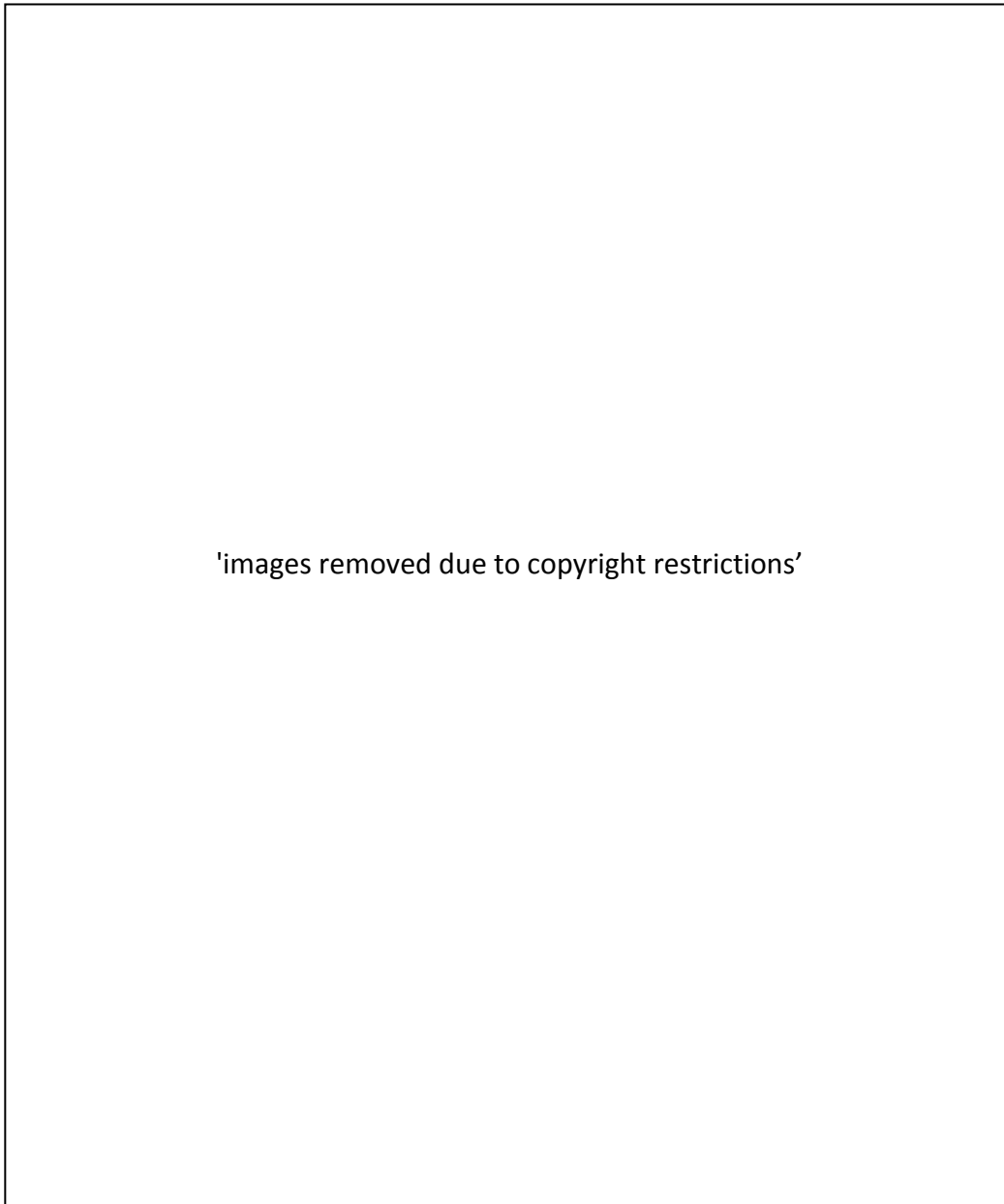


Fig.7 Image of Back Shutter and Sky Scene 3: A Wood and a New Heaven. Inigo Jones's design for Jupiter descending on an eagle, in Aurelian Townshend's Masque *Tempe Restored* (Inigo Jones, 478)

One can apply the same assumption to Juno in *The Tempest*.⁷³ Juno also 'descends' in the Folio⁷⁴, but this does not necessarily mean that she 'descends' to the stage in

⁷³ *The Tempest* is written in late 1610 and no records show its performance at the Globe but it was staged at the Banqueting House in 1611. However, Righter argues that it had been acted at Blackfriars with success as

practice, but only in print. Juno might 'descend' or 'enter' in modern editions. Similarly some modern editors, e.g. the new Variorum edition of Shakespeare, use the same stage direction that Juno 'descends'.⁷⁵ However, Juno simply 'enters', and does not 'descend' (IV.i.105), which is in opposition to the lines 'her peacocks fly amain:/ Approach, rich Ceres, her to entertain' (IV.i.73-4).⁷⁶

Ralph Crane was probably responsible for the rewriting of Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest*. His job was not only to copy the text, but as a scribe, his job was to 'make sense out of a confusing script, and that will have included added more punctuation, and perhaps, supplying obviously missing stage directions, such as exits'.⁷⁷ The printed play that Crane transcribed can easily be identified since he 'massed' or gathered all entrances at the top of the scene'.⁷⁸ Howard-Hill argues that massed entrances can be found in the stage directions of the five Folio comedies which are *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Merry Wives of Windsor* but not in *The Tempest* and *Measure for Measure*. The stage directions in *The Tempest* are more extensive and descriptive.⁷⁹

The descriptive stage directions of *The Tempest* were amplified by Crane, who transcribed the manuscript copy used by the printer.⁸⁰ According to Crane's stage

this theatre well equipped to provide the play with spectacle, stage machinery, music and atmosphere. Anne Righter, *The Tempest*, p. 23.

⁷⁴ See the details in chapter 2, p. 45.

⁷⁵ *The Tempest*, ed. by Furness, 9 vols, p. 204. *The Tempest*, ed. by Vaughan and Vaughan, 3rd series, p. 248. *The Tempest*, ed. Frank Kermode, 1st series (London: Methuen, 1954), p. 98. *The Tempest*, ed. by Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan, 2nd series (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2011), p. 270. *William Shakespeare: The Tempest*, ed. by Righter, p. 117. In both *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works* (2005) and *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works* (1988), ed. by Taylor and Wells, 2005, the stage direction is Juno [*appears in the air*] then [*Music. Juno descends to the stage*] (IV.i.72.101).

⁷⁶ *The Works of Shakespeare: The Tempest*, ed. by Morton Luce, (1938). *The Dramatic Works of William Shakespeare*, ed. by S. W. Singer, 10 vols (London: George Bell and Sons, 1884), i, p. 63. *The Works of Shakespeare*, ed. by Howard Staunton, 3 vols (London: Warne & Routledge, 1864), p. 33. *The Works of Shakespeare*, ed. by C. H. Herford, 10 vols (London: Macmillan, 1899), iv, p. 473. *The Complete Work of William Shakespeare* (Oxford: The Shakespeare Head Press, 1934), pp. 1153. *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, ed. by Cornwall, p. 25. *Sixteen Plays of Shakespeare: with Full Explanatory Notes, Textual Notes, and Glossaries*, ed. by Kittredge, (pp. 31-33).

⁷⁷ Stern, *Making Shakespeare: From Stage to Page*, p. 143.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

⁷⁹ T. H. Howard-Hill, *Ralph Crane and Some Shakespeare First Folio Comedies*, p. 79.

⁸⁰ Frank Kermode, 'The Tempest', in *The Arden Shakespeare: Complete Works*, ed. by Richard Proudfoot, Ann Thompson and David Scott Kastan, 3rd series (Surrey: Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1998), pp. 1069-1093 (p. 1069).

direction, Ariel simply 'enters' in the Folio.⁸¹ However, modern editors like Taylor and Wells change the stage direction: 'Ariel [*descends*] like a harpy'.⁸² They put 'descend' in brackets which indicates that it represents their interpretation of the deficient stage directions. In other words, they change the stage direction and place it in brackets to indicate the author's intention which might not be very clear in its original text.

Harris argues that Ariel 'adopts the form of Harpy but behaves in a Fury-like manner when he assails the consciences of the 'three men of sin' in Act 3, scene 3'.⁸³ Adams identifies that 'flight' is not mentioned when Ariel simply 'enters' in the Folio stage directions, but Ariel later 'descends' which can be considered as the first 'free flight' in the history of the English public theatre (see fig. 8). Thereafter, actors can 'fly' down from the heavens without any other apparatus than some sort of belt or harness (concealed beneath their costumes?) to which a wire was attached'.⁸⁴

However, Juno descends with Ceres dressed as peacocks. Ceres apparently descends before Juno when she says: 'Great Juno comes; I know her by gait' (IV.i.102)⁸⁵. Then Juno descends to the stage in time to the music and starts singing: 'Honour, riches, marriage-blessing' (IV.i.105-9). Jowett argues that Juno is lowered down on wires in a chariot and later perhaps Juno and Ceres together are 'rapidly pulled up to the heavens' when the spirits vanish. According to Jowett, Juno is lowered down to a 'stationary position in mid air' which is called 'the convention of floating deity'. Orgel assumes that Juno descends through adds a chariot in his stage directions.⁸⁶ After Juno and Ceres are joined, they sing: 'Earth's increase, and foison plenty' (IV.i.110-17). Prospero (a magician) tries to arrange an entertainment for the forthcoming marriage of his daughter Miranda and Fernando (Alonso's son) through using three entertainers (spirits) in the shape of

⁸¹ For a discussion of the stage directions *The Tempest*, by Ralph Crane, in the First Folio see chapter 2, pp. 46-48.

⁸² In both *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works* (2005), and *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works* (1988), ed. by Taylor and Wells, (2005), pp. (1236, 1182).

⁸³ Harris, *Night's Black Agents*, p. 36.

⁸⁴ John Cranford Adams, *The Globe Playhouse: Its design and Equipment*, 2nd ed. (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1961), p. 339.

⁸⁵ William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, ed. by Robert Langbaum (New York: The New American Library; London: The New English Library Limited, 1964), p. 101.

⁸⁶ Jowett, 'New Created Creatures: Ralph Crane and the Stage Directions in *the Tempest*', p. 116. See chapter 2, p. 45.

deities: Juno, queen of the gods, and Ceres and Iris who are goddesses of agriculture and of the rainbow. The spirits sing for the couple and then nymphs with reapers descend upon the Island, situated in the balcony, to dance with them. The spirits pretend to be dogs and wear huge masks, before Prospero and Ariel set them to hunt Stefano, Trinculo and Caliban. After completing her descent, Juno flies back into the air to supervise the dance of the spirits and nymphs. When they finish their dance, the spirits and nymphs vanish in the pageant with a strange and confused noise on the stage.

Between 1599 and 1642, plays that had a large number of props and props which were large in size. The descent and ascent of actors from the stage to the upper stage might not have all required flying machinery but instead used moveable staircases. The effect of this device of transporting the supernatural entities, such as Malkin, Jupiter, Ariel, Juno and Ceres, can be seen as one of the most powerful dramatic effects, besides the other techniques such as withholding information, masques and disguises, which form the genre of the play. Thus their action of descending and ascending create a kind of scenic spectacle intended to amuse the audience. This is because this device works in the comic part of the play to alight and fly the entertainers (spirits) back into the air to supervise the dance of the spirits and nymphs.

'images removed due to copyright restrictions'

Fig. 8 Image of Steven Mackintosh as Ariel in *The Tempest*, National Theatre, 1988 (Warren, Fig 11)

Supernatural entities, especially witches, are a subject of pantomime in the Restoration revivals and they operate as a dramatic device of entertainment and fantasy. *The Tempest* was also adapted by Davenant and Dryden in 1667 and again revived as an opera by Thomas Shadwell in 1674.⁸⁷ Shadwell's version was itself revived several times in the beginning of the seventeenth century. After their alterations to these plays, witches

⁸⁷ Spencer, *Five Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare*, pp.17-20. See also Marsden, 'Spectacle, horror, and Pathos', p. 189.

and spirits flew on stage and the spectators were entertained by the new visual spectacle presented by these supernatural abilities. These plays and its adaptations were revived to amuse the contemporary audience and to cater to audience tastes for entertaining spectacle. As farcical plays, they were popular hits at that time and were sure-fire successes in the theatre markets of the second half of the seventeenth century.

In later editions, modern editors also altered stage directions for the supernatural characters in relation to their entrances and exits. It is clear in *The Tempest*, (Act 3, scene 3), that Ariel like a harpy flies down from the heavens to the stage in thunder and lightning and later ascends by flying back. He claps his wings upon the table and then vanishes in thunder. However, Juno's descent is different from Ariel's because her car is seen in the sky before her descent to the stage begins. Juno appears when she is on foot and alights from the car at lines 101-102. The audience can see that the car still remains on the ground after discharging its passenger, Juno, from the heaven to the stage. The car is left on stage because, after this scene, the nymphs and reapers make a graceful dance and vanish in the pageant with a hollow and strange noise (IV.i.141). Thus, the car has a double use, first allowing Juno to descend and then the spirits to ascend to the heaven. In short, the car was the most attractive effect used for celestial flight in some Renaissance plays and here the car is especially used for scenic flight of Jupiter and Ariel. Sometimes, a vehicle or chariot was used for celestial flight of the goddesses and witches in order to simulate the imagined events in the mind of the audience. The flights in the majority of contemporary plays merely called for music and song while the players, spirits or witches descended and ascended. For performing flights scenes in the theatres, there were devices which supplied visual effects to the audience such as, the car and chariot, which held around two actors at a time.

4.10 Stage Machinery in the English Renaissance

The majority of the plays that incorporated flights were performed at the Blackfriars. Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest* were staged at the Globe for a long time. According to Dr Simon Forman's description of the revival of *Macbeth* at the Globe before

1611, there was not any mention of Hecate or of any witch that flew. Soon after, however, Shakespeare himself had already written scenes requiring Jove to ride an eagle in *Cymbeline* and Ariel to fly in *The Tempest*. Wickham argues that the Hecate scene was added to *Macbeth* shortly afterwards when Shakespeare had retired to Stratford.⁸⁸ Middleton knew that the King's Men employed instrumentalists to provide musical intermission before and during performances, that is why he wrote *The Witch* to be staged at the Blackfriars. Therefore, shortly after Middleton's initiative, there was nothing left to prevent the King's Men from applying the songs and dance to a subsequent revival of *Macbeth*.⁸⁹

The Children of the Chapel Royal first used the floor traps in some plays. The King's Men also used floor traps under the stage after the Children, but still the Children were the pioneers. The traps numbered either two or four, were small or long and were located in the mid-stage platform, on the corner of the stage, and sometimes under the inner stage. Generally, traps were large enough to hold four people and had a rectangle shape. Traps in the mid-stage helped to allow actors to ascend up from under the stage, while traps under the upper inner stage helped to make players 'disappear' into the air in mist. In Middleton's *The Witch*, Hecate needs to ascend and joins in singing with the other witches in the air. If *The Witch* was staged before the King's Men took over Blackfriars, Hecate might have ascended by a trap to the upper stage: '[going up] Now I go, now I fly' (III.iii.60).⁹⁰ Again, floor traps were used during the charm song about a vessel when Hecate calls her fellow witches: HECATE. 'Come, my sweet sisters; let the air strike our tune,/ Whilst we show reverence to yond peeping moon' (V.ii.84-5).⁹¹ In both extracts, it seems Hecate goes up through the mid-stage trap and disappears with her fellow witches into the air through the trap that is located under the upper inner stage. Traps may also have been used as a ladder, for instance in *The Tempest* (I.i) when the mariners enter wet and climb to the deck against a backdrop of thunder and lightning.

⁸⁸ Glynne Wickham, 'To Fly Not To Fly?', p. 180. See also Beckerman, *Shakespeare at the Globe*, pp. 93-94.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 179.

⁹⁰ Middleton, Thomas, *The Works of Middleton*, ed. by Bullen, p. 417.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 446.

In the very beginning of *The Witch*, the audience sees a banquet in the house of the Lord Governor, but the same stage space is then changed into the abode of Hecate. The actors had double roles and the boy actors had female roles as well. All of the theatrical devices and effects mentioned here required a differentiation to be made between the realistic theatre, that is the platform stage and fictional space, and between the characters and actors of the play. There is no doubt the King's Men could stage the performances of the supernatural entities successfully after they took over Blackfriars and adopted flying machinery for the supernatural effects. It can be argued that public demands made the King's Men add and develop supernatural effects to most of their plays after they performed *The Witch*. Moreover, this was also a product of the audience's receptiveness to the supernatural spectacle of witchcraft taking place on the stage: such a display must have made them wonder whether witches could fly and how they were able to. It can be argued that audiences were very interested in the supernatural effects and comic spectacle. The playwrights presented the supernatural power through technology both to entertain the audience and to engage with debates about witches' capabilities. The Blackfriars was technically more sophisticated in terms of ability to stage the visual spectacle of the plays. Its technical devices seemed to be designed in order to draw the attention of the audience. In addition to this, at Blackfriars it was not only music and songs that were performed by the King's Men but also short concerts before the plays started. Basically music and songs performed at the Blackfriars were used in pauses between the actions and to increase the emotion of the actions from the stage to the audience. However, the King's Men Company used fewer songs and music at the Globe in comparison to the Children at Blackfriars. Having performed lots of singing and dancing in the witch plays, the King's Men offered a new genre style, tragicomedy, to its Blackfriars audience, and these comical spectacles in the witch scenes drew the attention of the audience extremely successfully.

Chapter Five: Music and a “Spectacle of Strangeness”

This chapter examines Ben Jonson’s *The Masque of Queens* (1609), and *The Wonder of Women, Tragedy of Sophonisba* (1604-6) by John Marston, considering the topic of the nature and status of stage directions related to the hags in Jonson’s play, and how they make their entrances and exits from the stage and to hell. In *Tragedy of Sophonisba*, I examine the way the entries and the music of this play were performed by youths alongside the dramatic techniques of the play, and address the question of whether Marston’s hags flew or not while they scatter on stage to the accompaniment of the music. In sum, I explore how Jonson and Marston present the visual spectacle of their witches on stage, how Jonson’s masque and Marston’s play represent witchcraft and how their witches fit in this masque and play.

What binds Jonson’s masque and Marston’s play together is the use of music and dance through which the hags appear on stage. Both Jonson (in all the nine Charms - list of spells) and Marston (Act III. i & IV. i) explore the nature of witchcraft through music and dance: Jonson’s hags disperse on stage and the manner of their dance is full of a ‘spectacle of strangeness’ while Marston’s characters are led away to seduction with a musical accompaniment. In each play I will concentrate on the matter of authorship and the status of stage directions in the printed text, and whether the stage directions (only those involving the supernatural characters) in this masque and play were originally written by the author himself or were revised or supplied by editors.

5.1 Jonson’s 1616 Folio and Authorship

In order to consider the ways in which the stage directions in *The Masque of Queens* direct the movements of Jonson’s hags, one must first examine the status of the printed text through which these stage directions are transmitted. *The Works of Benjamine Jonson*, printed by William Standby in 1616 in London, includes a collection of plays and poems and has a unique place in the history of printing, in its presentation of

dramatic texts in a single volume with its own aesthetic design.¹ Jonson was aged 43 when the 1616 Folio was printed and it was a turning point in his life; he was the first English writer for the stage who published his own collected works in folio.² Jonson was responsible for two general classes of revision in the Folio: he made changes in punctuation, spelling, capitalization, and italicization, as well as a number of added stage directions and many changes of word or phrase.³ However, it appears that Jonson did not supervise the printing of the section of the Folio which contains the masques and entertainments. Herford and Simpson argue that 'The [Folio] text of the entertainment and masques is often carelessly printed, and the Latin and Greek quotations in the notes are especially bad. Jonson cannot have read the proofs'.⁴ The exception is the *Masque of Queens* which, as Donovan notes, was printed from the holograph in the British Library.⁵

Building on the work of Andrew Gurr, Richard Cave compares the 1616 Folio of Jonson's *Works* with the 1623 Folio of Shakespeare's. He notes that while 'Shakespeare's plays were printed from copy that in various ways was designed primarily for actors' use', Jonson's were 'the product of careful editing, even rewriting and expansion, and designed for a readership'.⁶ Shakespeare was not responsible for revision and stage directions in the First Folio but Jonson was for his own Folio. This distinction is important here as it suggests that all the stage directions are written by Jonson himself. The stage directions are relatively few in Shakespeare's Folio. However, Jonson's are even fewer in number.

¹ Jennifer Brady and W. H. Herendeen, *Ben Jonson's 1616 Folio* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1991), p. 11.

² Sara Van Den Berg, 'Ben Jonson and the Ideology of Authorship', in *Ben Jonson's 1616 Folio*, ed. by Jennifer Brady and W. H. Herendeen (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1991), pp. 111-137 (p. 111).

³ Kevin J. Donovan, 'Jonson's Texts in the First Folio' in *Ben Jonson's 1616 Folio*, ed. by Jennifer Brady and W. H. Herendeen (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1991), pp. 23-37 (p. 25).

⁴ *Ben Jonson*, ed. by Percy C. H. Herford and Evelyn Simpson, 11 vols (Oxford: Clarendon, 1941), vii, p. 72. The text of both folios (1616 and 1641) seems to have been revised prior they were reprinted.

⁵ Donovan, 'Jonson's Texts in the First Folio', p. 36. The masques first printed in the Folio are *Prince Henries Barriers*, *Oberon*, *Love Freed from Ignorance*, *Love Restored*, *A Challenge at Tilt*, *The Irish Masque at Court*, *Mercurie Vindicated*, and *The Golden Age Restored* which contain 'no cast lists, few stage directions, virtually no descriptions of scenery, no mention of Jonson's collaborators'. Joseph Loewenstein, 'Printing and "The Multitudinous Presse": The Contentious Texts of Jonson's Masques', in *Ben Jonson's 1616 Folio*, ed. by Jennifer Brady and W. H. Herendeen (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1991), 168-191 (p. 186).

⁶ Richard Cave, 'Script and Performance', in *Ben Jonson and Theatre: Performance, Practice and Theory*, ed. by Richard Cave, Elizabeth Schafer and Brian Woolland (London: Routledge, 1999), 23-32 (p. 24).

One can find a very small number of bracketed stage directions which are printed in italics and set between the lines of the text and the surrounding dialogue.

Besides the 1616 folio, *The Masque of Queens* exists in an autograph manuscript (British Library Royal MS 18A xlv), a presentation copy to Prince Henry, and a quarto edition (1609) and both are derived from the same original.⁷ However, this does not mean that the original text did not undergo any revision. On the contrary, it underwent significant alteration before it was sent to print.⁸ Therefore, the quarto probably represents Jonson's final thoughts, and is adopted as the copy-text in the recent Cambridge edition.⁹ Regarding the title page, 'the Quarto title corresponds verbally with that of the holograph'.¹⁰ However, there are changes made in the description of the House of Fame: "'in the vpper part of wch were discovered the twelue Masquers" (1.361) is changed to "in the top of which" in the Quarto'.¹¹ This chapter considers why it was written and how it was staged at the Court.

5.2 Ben Jonson's *The Masque of Queens*

I will investigate how *The Masque of Queens* represents witchcraft and the position that witches or hags occupy in the play, in other words, how the witches fit in the play's plots, and how they are justified. Ben Jonson was commissioned by Queen Anne to write the masque with the designer, Inigo Jones, for herself and her closest companions at the Court in 1608-9. *The Masque of Queens* was danced in the Banqueting House at Whitehall on 2 February 1609.¹² It was written in honour of King James I and his eldest son Prince Henry (1594-1612). The masque can be considered as another art performance that the

⁷ W. W. Greg, 'Jonson's Masques: Points of Editorial Principle and Practice', *Review of English Studies*, 18 (1942), 144-166 (p. 147). The masques were first printed quarto, and then re-issued in the 1616 Folio except the autograph manuscript of *The Masque of Queens* which was specially written for Prince Henry in Jonson's clear and beautiful hand. Evelyn M. Simpson, 'Jonson's Masques: A Rejoinder', *Review of English Studies*, 18 (1942), 291-300 (p. 292).

⁸ *Ben Jonson*, ed. by Herford and Simpson, pp. 271-272.

⁹ Ben Jonson, *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, ed. by David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), iii, p. 287

¹⁰ *Ben Jonson*, ed. by Herford and Simpson, p. 275.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 270-271.

¹² Ben Jonson, *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, p. 283. Whitehall was a chief residence for the English monarchy, 1530-1698 (p. 301).

King's Men made their own through scenic spectacle. It became the favourite form of royal entertainment, especially after King James I came to power.

Masques were designed to impress the audience through their use of extravagant costumes and scenery. Court masques by Ben Jonson, as he asserted in his prologue, set out to be the mirrors of man's life.¹³ Masques by the great architect and designer, Inigo Jones, were meant to be 'nothing else but pictures with Light and Motion', achieved through a spectacular combination of costumes, decorations, music and dances.¹⁴ Jeffrey Mark argues that what makes 'the masque in its more mature development is the conception of the spectacle in the mind of the poet, the artistic machinery used - poetry, music, apparel, scenic effect, and dancing - being brought in as the situation demanded'.¹⁵ Essentially a collaborative effort, the costumes and the innovative machinery were Inigo Jones's while the rest of the dramatic devices were Jonson's himself. With his designer, Jonson used a *machine versatilis* (turning machine) which they had used in the earlier masques for the *Scena ductilis*, 'or system of sliding flats, which enabled the rapid change of scene as the antimasque of witches disappeared, to be replaced by the spectacle of the House of Fame'.¹⁶ The costumes of the queen and her fellow ladies were rich and elegant. Jones's scenic design was as important as Jonson's words. Jonson pleased with Jones's stage machinery as he wanted to stage his work as an occasional performance. Orgel argues that 'for Jonson, one of the most compelling aspects of Jones's theatre was the way it could make the stage's illusion merge with the court's reality'.¹⁷ Not only *The Masque of Queens*, but all of his other masques, are about the court. Jonson tries to show his art of poetry in the world of the court. Through his use of poetic language, Jonson attempted to convince his spectators of the visual splendour and attractiveness of the masquers. Jonson wanted to present his masque not only through poetic language, but to

¹³ Quoted in Stephen Orgel, *The Jonsonian Masque* (Cambridge and Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1965), p. 3.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁵ Jeffrey Mark, 'The Jonsonian Masque', *Music and Letters*, 3 (1922), 358-371 (p. 359).

¹⁶ Ben Jonson, *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, p. 283.

¹⁷ Stephen Orgel, *Ben Jonson: Selected Masques* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), p. 32.

engage the imagination of his audience to act on the visual appearance of his masquers and the grotesqueness of the antimasque.

5.3 Jonson's "Spectacle of Strangeness" and Witchcraft

In his introduction, Ben Jonson says that Queen Anne commanded him to 'thinke on some Daunce, or shew, that might praecede hers, and have the place of a foyle, or false- Masqu' (8-9).¹⁸ In response, he honours the Queen and presents twelve witches, 'not as a Masque, but as a spectacle of strangeness, producing multiplicitie of Gesture, and not vnaptly sorting with the current, and whole fall of the Deuise' (13-14). His twelve hags produce a variety of gesture through their dance and costumes. Jonson cast the performers, as he mentioned in his introduction, as '*A Celebration of honorable, true Fame, bred out of Vertue*'. The antimasque is embodied as eleven hags, with their Dame, who emerge from Hell accompanied by infernal music. As Diana Purkiss argues, the hags of *The Masque of Queens* do not only represent witchcraft but embody popular beliefs about witchcraft; they embody the '*Ignorance, Suspicion, Credulity, &c* of popular culture, and form an antithesis to the learned treatises from which Jonson quotes so liberally'.¹⁹ According to Purkiss, *The Masque of Queens* encourages its spectator to denounce popular definition of witchcraft and the devilish as the result of 'superstition and credulity'. Jonson quotes from the learned demonological treatise, King James I's *Daemonologie*, especially in the dance of the witches, and in the description of the devil-goat which is worshipped by the witches. The hags do not necessarily represent what they perform. On the contrary, for instance, they dance a 'dance of antic', back to back and hip to hip which is contrary to the customary manner of dancing. The antithesis of courtly dance is defined here through the antimasque dance. This subverts conventions of the masque, presenting an alternative aesthetic of darkness and strangeness. Dance was a means by which to draw aristocrats into the court masque. Jonson's antimasque dance shows the decorum of the dancing body (or the decorum of female movement) while also

¹⁸ Jonson, *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, p. 305.

¹⁹ Purkiss, *The Witch in History*, p. 202.

providing entertainment in the manifestation of grotesque figures which are the antithesis of Renaissance standards of beauty.

In respect of costume and props, Jonson offers his audience a different type of witch, far from those offered by Shakespeare, Middleton or Marston. His witches are '*all differently attired: some with rats on their head, some on their shoulders; other with ointment pots at their girdles; all with spindles, timbrels, rattles, or other venefical, making a confused noise, with strange gestures*' (21-23). 'Venefical' here means 'one who practises poisoning as a secret art; a sorcerer or sorcerers; a wizard or witch'.²⁰ Although Inigo Jones was responsible for '*the invention and architecture of the whole scene and machine*' (24),²¹ Jonson himself created the witches' properties: '*I prescribed them their properties of viber, snakes, bones, herbs, roots and other ensigns of their magic*' (25-26). These magical devices are found in traditional English witchcraft. Cutts argues that the antimasque of witches, which had been danced by the King's Men in *the Masque of Queens* at Court, having been successful, was subsequently utilized on the Blackfriars stage. He also argues that the antimasque of witches first inspired Middleton's *The Witch* and was then transferred to the revised text of *Macbeth*.²² Furthermore, the cauldron scene was repeated in some plays representing the witches making a sickening stew with a variety of similar ingredients that are read out over the cauldron. Both Shakespeare and Middleton were inspired by Jonson's *The Masque of Queens* to supply cauldron scenes in the revised version of *Macbeth* and *The Witch*. Shakespeare's contribution was the addition of having three apparitions rise up from the Cauldron (IV. i).

The masque is notable for its very high level of detail concerning witchcraft practices. Clark rightly argues that 'the completest presentation of the received opinions on witchcraft is Jonson's *Masque of Queens*, 1609, in which every detail is fully documented and substantiated by citations from the witch-lorists'.²³ Jonson took all the

²⁰ 'Venefical', *Oxford English Dictionary*, <<http://www.oed.com.ezproxy3.lib.le.ac.uk/view/Entry/222084#eid15964933>> [Accessed 21 February 2014]

²¹ Jonson, *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, p. 306.

²² John P. Cutts, 'Jacobean Masque and Stage Music', *Music and Letters*, 35 (1954), 185-200 (p. 193).

²³ Arthur Melville Clark, *Thomas Heywood: Playwright and Miscellanist* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1931), pp. 241-242.

information he used for the witch scenes and documented it in his footnotes. This provides evidence for the historians or scholars who wish to examine the predecessors of this kind of spectacle. Jonson took the idea of the witches from Shakespeare but he did not think of his witches as sorceresses as Shakespeare's did; his hags do not prophesy for the characters and do not conjure their familiar spirits compared to Shakespeare's witches. Rather, Jonson's hags create a scenic spectacle on stage when they exit or enter the stage through dancing via a mundane curtain. The curtains were made of painted cloth and were usually hung in front of the rear of the stage. Through the stage curtains, the rear stage would be revealed or hidden.

The dances of the anti-masque were similarly plotted to contrast with the masquers, and served here as "to make the spectators understand" the transformations and revelations that, dramatically, were the climax of the work, providing (as in *Neptunes Triumph*) not only a foil, but a medium and a means for the action'.²⁴ The anti-masque dances represent the movement of witches, and the ways in which they act and communicate. The dances are physically impressive and amusing, but function in a disruptive manner in the performance. Jonson's hags appear grotesque, their physical appearance naturally corresponding to their moral influence, an interpretation that would no doubt have been approved by one audience member: King James himself. With the entry of the hags, Jonson presents a spectacle in which his hags meet together for their coven, and sometimes they also disguise and mask themselves in their usual ceremony. Furniss argues that 'in most cases the antimasquers perform a burlesque or evil imitation of the true rites' and 'in *Queenes* the antimasque is a Witches' Sabbath in opposition to the pious gathering of the twelve noble queens to honour King James'.²⁵ The witches are gathered to honour the Dame but the masquers to honour King James. The witches attempt to conjure a storm to overturn King James and Anne. However, the comic point here is that King James combats the black magic performed by the witches, and the Queen, possessing this power, is able to thwart the evil charm of the hags through her dramatic appearance in the masque. Strout argues that 'the witches representing vice are

²⁴ Orgel, *The Jonsonian Masque*, pp. 118-119.

²⁵ W. Todd Furniss, 'Jonson's Antimasques', *Renaissance News*, 7 (1954), 21-22 (p. 22).

instantly vanquished by the sudden appearance of Heroic Virtue and the symbolic splendour of Queen Anne and her companions seated in the House of Fame'²⁶ (see fig. 13). The antimasquers were played by professional male players but act as feminine in the way they dance. Ideal courtly femininity is thus identified by the hags through its antithesis. In order to provide 'a spectacle of strangeness', Jonson uses twelve boys, in antic attire and a female figure, to dance in the habit of hags, the opposites to good Fame. It is from the antimasque of witches and their dance that 'the strangeness and beauty of the spectacle' arises (585).²⁷ It is particularly interesting that *The Masque of Queens* contains the representation of feminine power set against an alternative femininity, rather than masculinity. The popular culture of the hags is inferior to the high classical culture of Queen Anne especially in the spectacle when the Queens' carriages are drawn by the hags. In other words, the display of witches, with their 'sinister' look representing the evil power of witchcraft, is dispelled by Queen Anne and her fellow ladies of fame to celebrate the power of King James. The hags are intended to be taken as emblems of feminine disorder or 'otherness', and this is presented through costumes, and the incantation and spells which they recite in their singing.

5.4 The Costume of Witches and Masquers

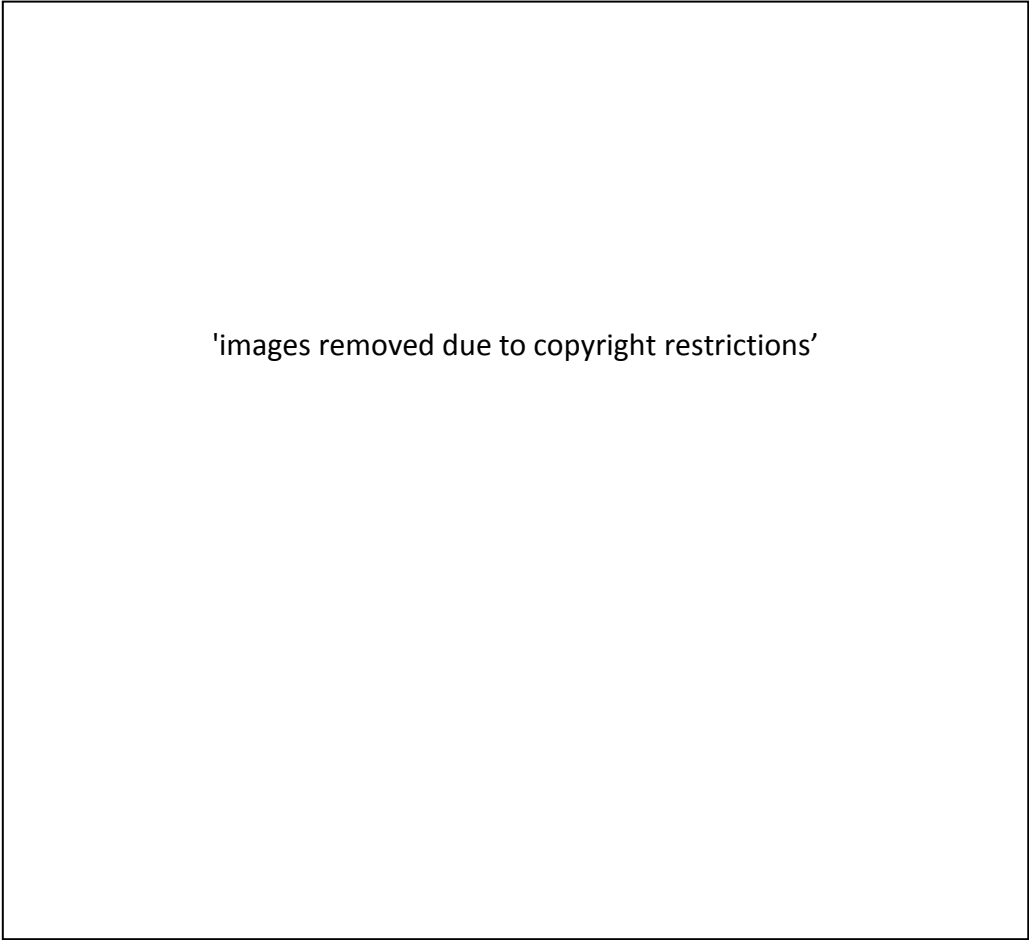
Costume as one of the staging techniques of the masque is used to draw the attention of the audience. The colour of witches' clothes was traditionally black. In terms of symbolism associated with colours, black traditionally represented 'the absence color- with darkness, constancy, gloom, woe, death', in contrast to the associations of 'white with purity'.²⁸ In addition to this, the types of costumes worn by witches in Renaissance drama, particularly in Middleton's *The Witch*, are significant. In *The Witch* (Act 1, scene 2), Middleton does not provide specific information to his reader about Hecate's costume and props when she enters the stage: '*Enter Hecate & other witches: (with properties, and habbits fitting)*'.

²⁶ Nathaniel Strout, 'Jonson's Jacobean Masques and the Moral Imagination', *Studies in English Literature*, 27 (1987), 233-247 (p. 238).

²⁷ Ben Jonson, *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, p. 329.

²⁸ M. Channing Linthicum, *Costume in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1963), p. 15.

However, by looking at the image of *Mistress Turner's Farewell to All Women* (1615), reproduced in Gary Taylor's *Thomas Middleton: Lives and Afterlives* (see fig. 9), we can see the costumes worn by Ann Turner and Lady Frances Howard, allowing us to visualize what Hecate and the Duchess, inspired by these real-life figures, may have worn on stage. In this image, Lady Frances Howard wears a long white-coloured gown with puffy sleeve's and a long headpiece flowing down along her arm. Ann Turner, in contrast, wears a long black cloak with a high, white starched frilled collar, a black scarf and black shoes. Although there is no any evidence in the text, but from this picture one could make the inference that Hecate wore a long black cloak with black scarf and shoes on. Nevertheless the costume of Ann Turner in this picture does not necessarily show the costumes of the witches since Ann Turner was not a witch but a 'cunning woman'. The similarity is the black colour. Her dress is also a long puffy gown and not an unshaped loose gown. The sorceress's costume was supposed to be a loose gown in black colour in order for them to look sinister and show their marginal status in society. Moreover, one might speculate on the Duchess's costume being that of a long, white-puffy sleeved gown with a headpiece (see fig. 9). This kind of dress in the sixteenth century reflected the status of aristocratic women, because women wanted their clothing to show and emphasise their attractiveness and display their status in society. In other words, clothes were a means by which women could express their status in society and their relationship to other people around them.



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Fig.9 an Image of *Mistress Turner's farewell to All Women* (1615) (Taylor and Lavagnino, 45)

The costume of Jonson's hags is simultaneously hideous and comic in performance. Unlike Shakespeare's and Middleton's Hecate, Jonson's Dame is '*naked-armed, bare-footed, her frock tucked, her hair knotted, and folded with vipers; in her hand a torch made of a dead man's arm, lighted; girded with a snake*' (77-79).²⁹ The Dame's costume is reminiscent of the Queens' dress. In other words, the witches' costumes stand for figures of transgressive femininity and the masquers for ideal courtly femininity. Jones chose this kind of costume for the Dame in contrast to the rich and beautiful costume of

²⁹Ben Jonson, *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, p. 308.

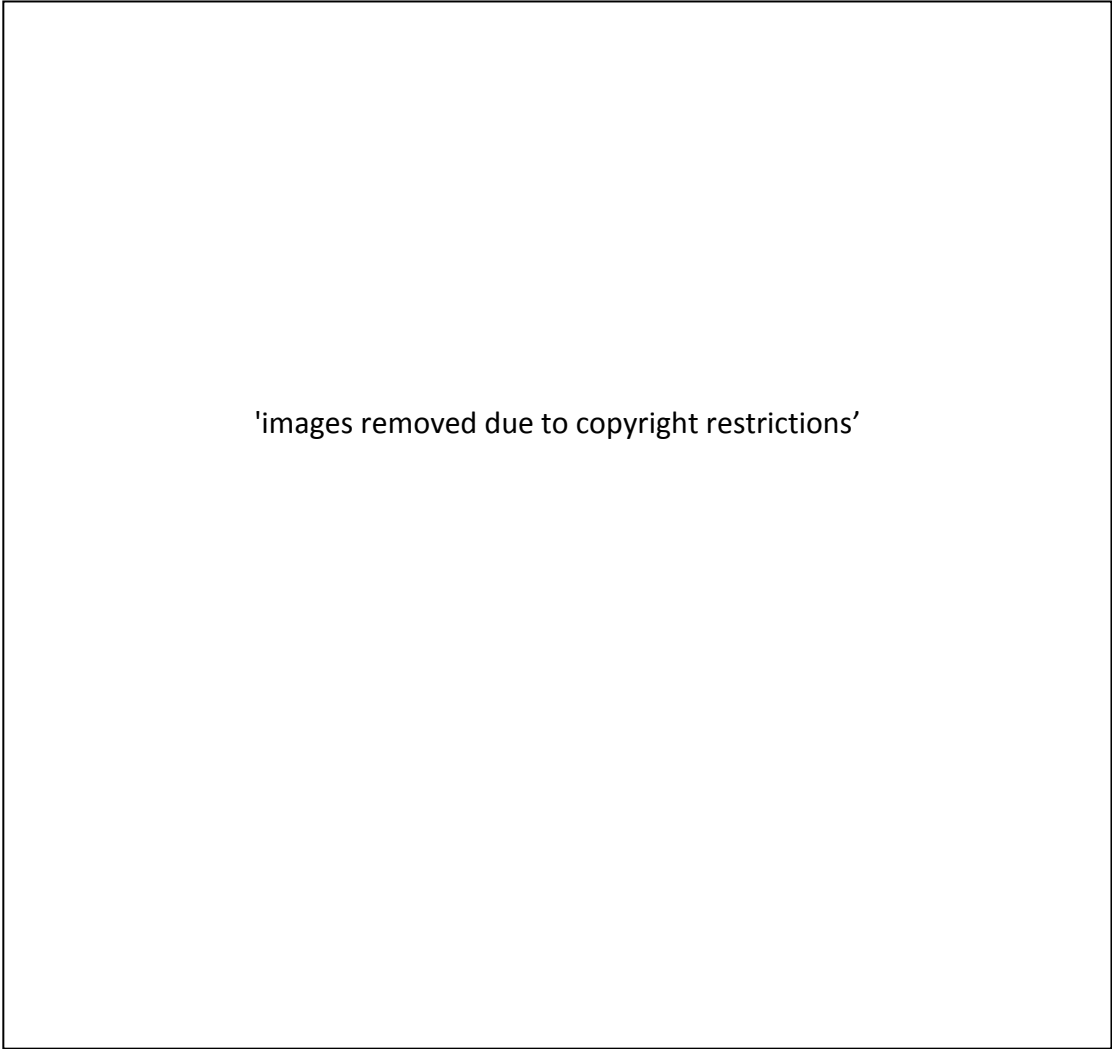
the masquers.³⁰ In the Renaissance period 'Strangeness' had other connotations, such as 'oddness', 'eccentricity' and 'peculiarity'.³¹ Jonson probably used 'strangeness' for 'odd'. Jonson wanted to show the hags as representing the opposite of the courtly courtesy of the masquers. There is also an aspect of 'wonder' to Jonson's concept of 'strangeness', as he wanted to present a supernatural spectacle through the antimasque of the hags for those who were curious about the wonder and mystery of magic. Corbin and Sedge argue that 'the full resources of music, dance and spectacle of the court masque, with the elaborate stage-machinery of Whitehall and extravagant costuming (...) gave Jonson an opportunity to demonstrate in the anti-masque the potential of witchcraft material to embody the concept of chaos and disorder'.³² Jonson reproduces the witches' Sabbath on stage and stylizes it into a formalized ritual. In contrast to Marston's *Sophonisba*, Jonson concentrates on the banquet and the honour given to the Dame rather than the mass sexual orgy that featured in the Continental witches' Sabbath. Both the anti-masque event and the masque event are used to demonstrate the concept of popular belief in witchcraft and at the same to provide an opportunity to the company to perform more witchcraft spectacles through the elaborate and sophisticated stage-machinery.

There is an idea of 'conventional beauty' in the visual appearance of the masquers and grotesqueness of the hags. The masquers look pale and light, dressed in rich and elegant clothes (see fig. 11 & 12), whereas the hags appear grotesque and alarming (see fig. 10). Besides these characteristics and appearances which are given to the masquers, the anti-masquers are by contrast more amusing. In other words, the respective appearances of the masquers and the hags present a contrast between ideal beauty and transgressive ugliness. The descent and triumph of the masquers can be considered as the climactic moment, whereas the secondary climax is in the grotesque dance of the anti-masque.

³⁰ For the description of the masquers' costumes see *The Masque of Queens*, lines (405-412).

³¹ 'Oddness', *Oxford English Dictionary*, <<http://www.oed.com.ezproxy4.lib.le.ac.uk/view/Entry/130412?redirectedFrom=oddness#eid>> [Accessed June 2013]

³² Corbin and Sedge, *Three Jacobean Witchcraft Plays*, p. 3.



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Fig. 10 Image of an Anti-Masque character-Grotesque figure (Inigo Jones, 816)

The costumes are used here for two different types of women: the grotesques (the hags) and the noble women of aristocratic society (the masquers). The costume worn in the masque became a colourful spectacle during performance in the royal courts and public theatres. One can say that Inigo Jones gave the masque its great popularity through the elaborate costume design he made for the masquers and the hags. The masquers were presented according to a courtly decorum. Jones did not have complete autonomy in designing the costume of the masquers, but had to consult with them for every detail. The final look of their outfit would be according to their taste and how they wanted to be shown. On the contrary, Jones could easily design the costumes for the hags and had

much more freedom in doing this. Jonson describes each character's elaborate costume in stage directions which shows Jonson's high poetic figuring of femininity in its antithesis.

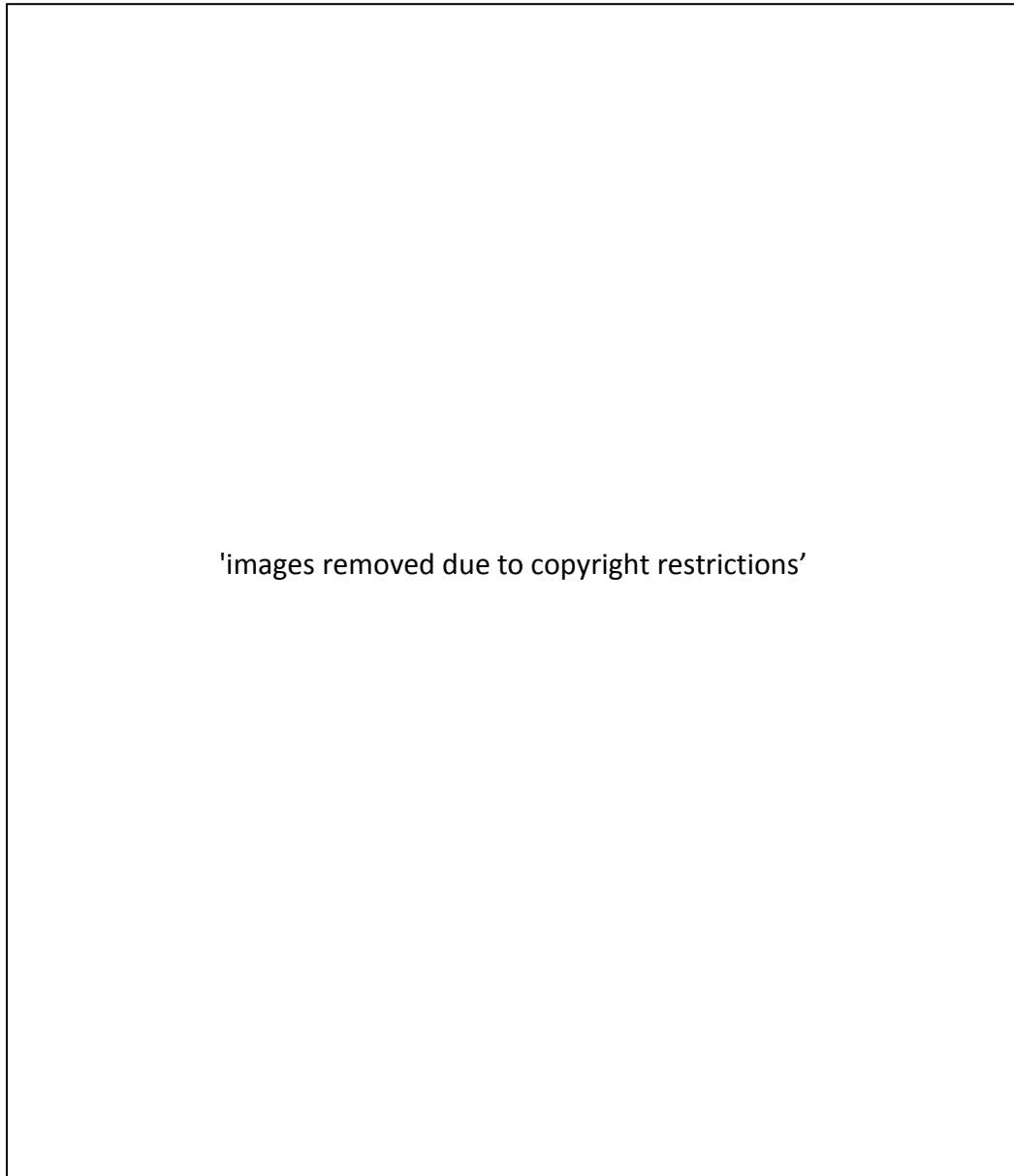


Fig. 11 Image of Masquers: Dress 1 designed by Inigo Jones (Inigo Jones, 720)

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Fig. 12 Image of Masquers: Dress 2 designed by Ingo Jones (Inigo Jones, 723)

5.5 Stage Directions of the Hags and Masquers

In *Macbeth*, the three witches and, in *The Witch*, the five witches are supervised by a witch leader, Hecate. In the *Masque of Queens*, the eleven witches are led by a witch leader, the Dame. The witches in Middleton's play fly, as do those in *Macbeth* (after the King's Men took over the Blackfriars and the interpolation of the Hecate scene in *Macbeth*), but they do not in *The Masque of Queen's*. Jonson has an entirely different style of dramaturgy in placing his hags on stage. *The Masque of Queens* shows a turn away from popular public theatre and audiences who were more interested in the colourful spectacle of masques. The stage directions of the masquers and hags show their costumes and the way they enter and exit the stage. Jonson's hags exit and enter the stage through dancing via an ordinary curtain:

His majesty then being set, and the whole company in full expectation, the part of the scene which first presented itself was an ugly hell which, flaming beneath, smoked unto the top of the roof (...) (15-16).³³

This stage direction is the signal that the entertainment begins when the monarch sits. The 'ugly hell' was a front curtain which had concealed the scene: 'the scene was painted on flats, and must have included a door or aperture through which the witches entered'.³⁴ However, Hag One says 'And the charm we use to say/That she Quickly anoint, and come away' (33-34), and Hag Eight says 'a purse to keep Sir Cranion in' (160-161).³⁵ In the witchcraft treatises all focused on the flying of witches through ointment, and 'anoint' here signifies the hag's magical power 'to confer the power of flying'.³⁶ Ben Jonson, like Middleton and Shakespeare, mocks the supposed power of 'ointment' but it is

³³ Ben Jonson, *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, p. 305.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 305.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 306 & 312.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 306 & 342.

nevertheless used as one of the theatrical and magical effects. In order to make their journey at night by the virtue of an ointment, Ate uses the word 'anoint' to go riding:

Sisters, stay, we want our Dame;
Call upon her by name,
And the charm we use to say,
That she quickly anoint, and come away. (40-4)

Here 'anoint' is used to make the audience imagine how it creates, with the help of magical power, scenic spectacles transporting characters from the stage to the heavens or vice versa.³⁷ However, the masquers descend on chariots. The stage directions read as follows:

*In the heat of their dance on the sudden was heard a sound of loud music, as if many instruments had made one blast; with which not only the hags themselves but the hell into which they ran quite vanished, and the whole face of the scene altered, scarce suffering the memory of such a thing. But in the place of it appeared a glorious and magnificent building figuring the House of Fame, in the top of which were discovered the twelve masquers sitting upon a throne triumphal erected in form a pyramid and circled with all store of light. From whom a person, by this time descended, in the furniture of Perseus, and expressing heroic and masculine virtue, began to speak (319-326).*³⁸

And after Heroic Virtue appears the stage direction reads:

Here the throne wherein they sat, being machine versatile, suddenly changed; and in the place of it appeared Fama bona, as she is described (in Iconology. di Cesare Ripa) attired in white, with white wings, having a collar of gold about her neck, and a heart hanging at it: which ORUS Apollo, in his hierogl. Interprets the note of a good Fame. In her right-hand she bore a trumpet, in her left an olive-branch: and for her state, it was as Virgil describes her, at the full, her feet on the ground, and her head in the clouds. She, after the music had done, which waited on the turning

³⁷ For further detail about the usage of anointment by the witches for their celestial flight see chapter four, pp. 115-117.

³⁸ Ben Jonson, *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, p. 317. See also *The Works of Ben Jonson*, ed. by W. Gifford, vii, 117-158 (p. 142). *The Works of Ben Jonson: With Notes, Critical and Explanatory, and a Biographical Memoir*, ed. by William Gifford (London: John Camden Hotten, [1872]), iii, p. 56.

of the machine, called from thence to Virtue, and spake this following speech (405-412).

'*Iconology*. Di Cesare Ripa' is an Italian manual, first published in 1593 and again a decade later, which includes a collection of allegorical figures and classical symbolism in alphabetical order. It is likely that Jonson drew some of his complex iconography from '*Iconology*' for *The Masque of Queens*. The descent of the masquers is a reference to Virgil's *Aeneid* Book II (178-180).³⁹ The stage direction in this context includes some technological terms, such as 'throne' and 'machine versatile'⁴⁰ through which the witches could have flown, but they did not. There is an explicit Italian influence here since Jonson refers to 'machine versatile' which also shows the technological achievement of late Elizabethan and Jacobean architecture. Classical Italian architecture was fashionable and in high demand in the English theatres. Jones and Jonson's architectural style was influenced by Andrea Palladio, Vitruvius and Sabbattini.⁴¹ Jones benefited from Palladio's splendid and stylistic design features which had a great effect upon English architectural neoclassicism. Architecture and poetry are significant for Jonson as he associates them with the idea of immortalizing heroic virtue. For example, Jonson describes the House of Fame as, '*a glorious and magnificent building figuring the House of Fame*' (see fig. 13). This shows a kind of architectural imagery in which Jonson demonstrates the greater

³⁹He is a Roman poet. The relationship of *The Masque of Queens* to Virgil is a relationship of likeness, 'the likeness to Virgil is ... by Jonson's alignment of himself as author with the poets depicted on the House of Fame, including Virgil, whose "support" of Aeneas/ Augustus is architecturally figured....' Jonson places himself in a line with the great epic poet, Virgil. Therefore, 'Virgil' is used here by Jonson to reproduce structures of authority. Margaret Tudeau-Clayton, *Jonson, Shakespeare and Early Modern Virgil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 140

⁴⁰ 'Machine versatile' means 'turning machine'.

⁴¹Inigo Jones made an informative trip to Italy where he learned about the Italian art and architecture. Jones introduced the Italian scenery and designs into Court Masques in England which was first exploited by Nicola Sabbattini, who was a Renaissance Italian architect and designer. Sabbattini describes contemporary theatrical techniques in his book entitled *Pratica di fabricar scene e machine ne' teatri*, (1638) meaning (Manual for Constructing Scenes and Machines in the Theatre). His book was considered the most influential work on stage machinery and spectacular tricks in Italian theatre in the sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century in which most of the early pantomimes were relied on. However, Sabbattini's work was late for the performance of the Jacobean witch plays. A variety of magical effects or tricks might have been possible on the Jacobean playhouse if Sabbattini's elaborate staging machinery was at hand at that period. It is worth looking at his work and what would be used in the Restoration performances.

versatility of poetry which suits with the decorum of the masque in honouring King James

I. After the House of Fame appears, the stage direction reads:

*At which the loud music sounded as before, to give the Masquers time of descending (429)*⁴²

In the Cambridge edition, the full description of the twelve masquers is given while they descend with music and each represents a famous woman from a variety of treatises published throughout the sixteenth century.⁴³ In the stage direction above one can notice 'descend' and 'chariot' in the entrance of the masquers. According to Bevington, Butler, and Donaldson, the masquers were sitting at the upper level of the turning machine: 'as it turned it revealed the figure of Good Fame, and, by hiding the queens, allowed them to descend unseen to take up their places in the chariots which brought them on stage through a door in the bottom of the structure'.⁴⁴ The speech of Good Fame allowed time for the descent of the queens while music covered the noise of the turning machine.

⁴² Jonson, *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, p. 322. See also *The Works of Ben Jonson*, ed. by Gifford, iii, p.61.

⁴³ Jonson, *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, p. 285.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 320.

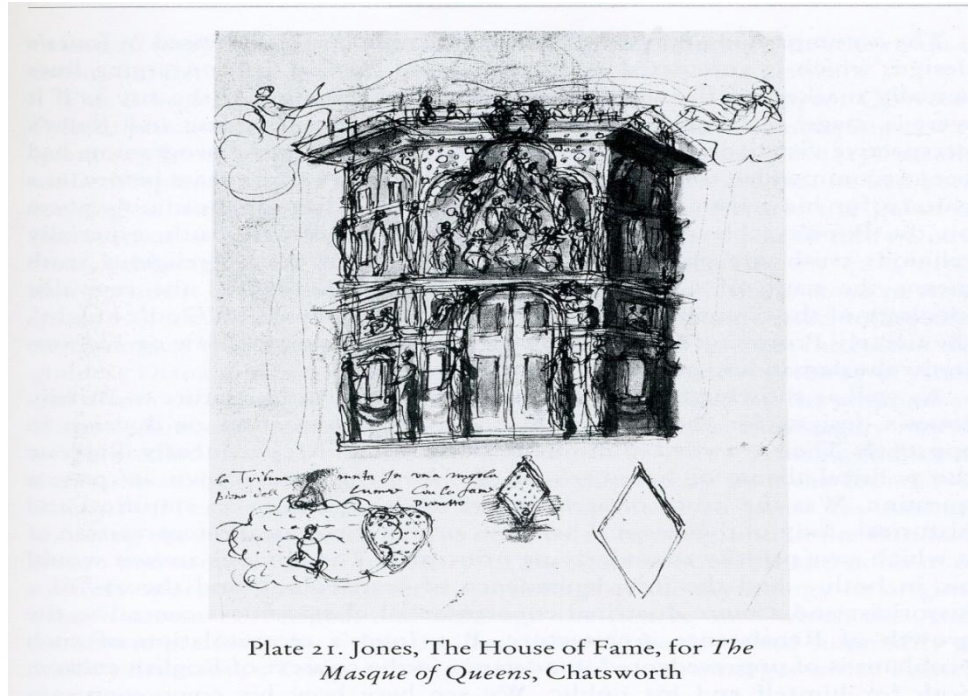


Fig. 13, an image of Jones's *The House of Fame* for *The Masque of Queens* (Peacock 73)

According to Orgel, the audience 'are moved into the world of the dance through the operation of Inigo Jones's machinery, and, judging from our one witness, they were quite conscious of what went on behind the scene'.⁴⁵ Jonson could produce the best masques with the assistance of Jones's machine versatile and this resulted in the humorous comedies. In the *Masque of Queens*, the 'bright Beuie' of masquers is revealed on a throne along with Heroic Virtue, 'who then descends to introduce them, making it clear that the brightness of the scene derives ultimately from him, as their fame is the result of their virtue'.⁴⁶ The masque's entertainment begins with the appearance of the monarch's seat on the throne. The masquers appeared in '*a throne triumphal erected in form a pyramid and circled with all store of light*' (324), whereas the hags appeared through an '*ugly hell, which flaming beneath, smoked unto the top of the roof*' (16-17). Gombosi argues that 'the masque proper starts with a spoken or sung presentation or in-

⁴⁵ Orgel, *The Jonsonian Masque*, p. 174.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 302. John C. Meagher, *Method and Meaning in Jonson's Masque*, p. 123. *The Works of Ben Jonson*, ed. by Gifford, vii, 117-158 (p. 142).

vocation, sometimes in the form of an incantation or transfiguration; after this the masquers, representing celestial beings, mythological persons or mere products of poetic fancy, descend from the upper stage, led by similarly motivated torchbearers, and dance their Entry or First Dance'.⁴⁷ The entrances of the masquers are usually accompanied by torch bearers and musicians and the masquers are introduced in a song by a mythological character. In performances of the time, Strout correctly identifies that 'the masquers descended from the performing area to join with the court in celebratory dances further reinforced the complacent notion that masques presented a dressed-up version of the actual, not a morally improving version of the ideal'.⁴⁸ Because the masquers' costumes and make up were richly designed by Jones, the audience did not need to imagine their figure only through Jonson's words, but visually the masquers appeared as real courtiers as well. Having performed *The Masque of Queens* at Whitehall can be considered as another aspect used by Jonson in order for his masquers to be seen as real by the audience rather than ideal. Masquers are first revealed on a throne in a cloud but then descend to the stage to dance. One can find a correlation between the dance and the order of nature in 'the heavens': the masquers appeared in the heavens and then descend in clouds to dance. The masquers descend in cloud and music while the hags appear from an ugly hell to a loud music.

Harris importantly argues that the Banqueting House possessed neither mechanical traps nor an extensive 'hell' area beneath the stage.⁴⁹ In the cauldron scene, the hags make spells and end their ritual with a dance and then vanish. However, the hags do not descend on a chariot to dance. The hags make their entrances and exits through the mundane curtain upon which a hell-mouth scene is painted. Thus, they do not fly because the devices enabling flight and mechanical traps were not available at that time; they made the scenic spectacles on the stage only through drawing the mundane curtain. In contrast to this idea, Coghill argues that the reason Jonson banished the hint of flying from his moral *Masque* for the royal entertainment was precisely because he heard about

⁴⁷ Otto Gombosi, 'Some Musical Aspects of the English Court Masque', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 1 (1948), 3-19 (p. 3).

⁴⁸ Strout, 'Jonson's Jacobean Masques and the Moral Imagination', p. 235.

⁴⁹ Harris, *Night's Black Agents*, p. 167.

Middleton's more popular and vulgar plan in *The Witch*, with Hecate's song and dance in the air, which he believed to be distasteful.⁵⁰ This argument depends on an earlier date for *The Witch*, which is by no means certain. In this case, according to Coghill, Jonson's witches did not fly not because of technical limitation but because he wanted to distinguish his dramaturgy from that of the popular stage and to avoid the charge of plagiarism. He took the idea of witches from Shakespeare, but did not think of his witches as sorceresses. Instead, he saw his witches as 'personifications, allegories, like something out of Prudentius, to present various moral turpitudes, which he names, such as ignorance, Credulity, Suspicion' (15-16).⁵¹ Shakespeare's Folio witches did not fly but his witches are presented more as sorceresses than Jonson's since they possess agency in the play to predict the future of the characters. None of Jonson's witches flew, despite the references in *The Masque of Queens* to hags riding on goats and in chariots at their coven. The eleven witches enter the stage and then Ate joins them and begins her invocation. Ate says to her fellow witches when they invoke Hecate to participate with them:

You, that have seen me ride when Hecate
Durst not take chariot, when the boist' rous sea, (195-196)

Another play of Jonson's, *Every Man in His Humour* (1616), provides significant evidence of the playwright's attitude to stage technology. In the prologue Jonson says:

Nor creaking throne come down, the boys to please;
Nor nimble squib is seen, to make afear'd
The gentlewomen, nor roll'd bullet heard
To say, it thunders; nor tempestuous drum.⁵²

This is particularly interesting in its rejection of stage special effects. There are other examples of Jonson's purported 'anti-populism', but this one suggests that Jonson saw

⁵⁰ Nevill Coghill, 'Macbeth at The Globe, 1606-1616 (?): Three Questions' in *The Triple Bond: Plays, Mainly Shakespearean, in Performance* (University Park and London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1975), pp. 223-39 (p. 229).

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 229.

⁵² *The Works of Ben Jonson: with Notes, Critical and Explanatory, and a Biographical Memoir*, ed. by William Gifford (London: Albert J. Crocker and Brothers, 1870), i, p.2.

flying or suspension as pandering to vulgar tastes, and thus that he may have avoided using the technology of flying machinery to stage the visual spectacle of his hags. By referring to the 'creaking throne', from the collection *Jonsonus Viribus* (1638), Jasper Mayne praises Jonson in that 'no hard plot/ Call'd downe a God t'untie th'unlikely knot'.⁵³ Jonson did not want to rely on the *deus ex machine* device to resolve his plots, and moreover perhaps that he avoided a literal 'calling down' of a 'creaking throne'. However, this assessment contradicts the evidence that, as Campbell correctly argues in his *Masque of Queens* Jonson was 'consciously experimenting with the *Machine Versatilis* (...) as well as with other stage mechanisms'.⁵⁴ Although he did not reject technology wholesale, then, he seems to have avoided making his witches fly because he did not want to be seen to be copying other playwrights' works or because he found flying hags vulgar and cheap spectacle. Jonson considered himself a playwright in the classical tradition and wanted to show the visual spectacle of his hags through words rather than technology. If we look again at the prologue, we can see that Jonson names 'creaking throne' alongside 'thunders', which might be taken as an attack on the clumsiness of stage devices and machinery for flying of that period; their noise distracts viewers from the effects of the drama. In *The Masque of Queens*, despite the references and elaborate stage directions of witches and masquers flying in a chariot, there is no evidence to suggest that they did fly. Neither the Banqueting House nor the Globe possessed any flying machinery, although it might have had the apparatus necessary for a kind of suspended flight above the stage (see fig. 3).⁵⁵

In sum, the collected evidences suggests that the hags enter and exit through a door or aperture painted on a front curtain concealed by the scene and the masquers are simply suspended above in their chariots. The reason that Jonson uses the word of 'chariot' in the stage directions of the masquers is to give the symbolic significance of the use of space. It also suggests the origin of the characters linked to their flying powers. The hags cannot be seen to come from above because that is the origin of heavenly virtue.

⁵³ Ben Jonson, *The Works of Ben Jonson*, ed. by W. Gifford, 9 vols (London, 1816), p. 382.

⁵⁴ Campbell, *Scenes and Machines on the English Stage during the Renaissance*, p. 171.

⁵⁵ See chapter 2, p. 47.

Instead, they enter and exit back to the '*ugly hell*'. The space of Whitehall here has been divided into two parts according to the status of the characters: 'heavens' or 'above' where the monarch and the queens (courtly high class people or aristocrats) appear from; 'hell' or 'down stage' where the witches (low class people) enter and exit from.

In *The Masque of Queens*, the hags appear on stage through music and dance through which Jonson explores the nature of witchcraft and spreads his hags on the stage. Music in *The Masque of Queens* helps the changes of the scenery and the movements of the masquers and hags. Ben Jonson is not the only Jacobean dramatist who includes music and dance in his play. John Marston is another whose hags make their exits and entrances through dance and music. Then music leads the characters into seduction as music is seen as a marker of evil in these plays. I have discussed here how Jonson's witches are linked to the hell from which they enter and exit the stage. Likewise, Marston's mythological characters are also linked to the same theatre space, such as 'hell', 'canopy' and 'vault'.

5.6 John Marston's *The Wonder of Women, Tragedy of Sophonisba*

John Marston's *The Wonder of Women, Tragedy of Sophonisba*, (1604-6) was first performed by the Children of the Revels in the Blackfriars. The investigation here will focus on the way the entrance and exit music of this play was performed by youths alongside the dramatic techniques of the play such as the stage action, the entries and exits scenes, dialogue and ritual. Concentration will be on Act Three when Syphax attempts to seduce Sophonisba by reporting that Massinissia is dead, and on the role of music in this play and how music and witchcraft come together. This investigation of *Sophonisba* is important as it shows how Marston uses the theatrical space of Blackfriars with the help of music to stage his supernatural scenes in comparison with Ben Jonson, and how witchcraft practises intersect with issues of staging conditions and theatrical trends.

5.7 An Introduction to the Play with its Performance and Authorship

Marston's *Sophonisba* is comparable to Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. It is a tragedy based on two dramatic elements: the military sources relating to the war between Carthage and Rome, and classical witchcraft which is attributed here to Erictho, the witch. In the play, Massinissa (king of the Massylii) falls in love with Sophonisba, the daughter of Hasdrubal and marries her. Massinissa and Hasdrubal are sent to war in Spain. Syphax (king of the Maseasyli, rival for Sophonisba with Massinissa) is defeated by Massinissa and Scipio (General of Rome). Syphax then allies his army with Scipio's and pillages Carthaginian territory. The Carthaginians take Sophonisba to Rome during the time that her father and Massinissa are absent fighting for Carthage. Massinissa offers a cup of poison to Sophonisba and asks her to die like a true Carthaginian princess as he cannot free her from the Romans.

The quarto edition and most of the other surviving copies give the full title as: 'The Wonder of Women Or The Tragedie of Sophonisba, as it hath beene sundry times Acted at the Blacke Friers. Written by John Marston'. The title indicates that the play was performed at the Blackfriars but it does not mention the name of the company who performed it. The text of *Sophonisba* appeared in print five times, once independently and four times in collections of Marston's plays. The first edition is a quarto printed in 1606 by John Windet; the second edition is an octavo containing six plays by Marston printed for William Sheares in 1633.⁵⁶ It is significant that *Sophonisba* derived from Marston's manuscript, since, as Jackson and Neill argue, 'each play of Marston's undoubted sole authorship seems to have been first printed from a manuscript in his own hand'.⁵⁷ *The Wonder of Women or The Tragedy of Sophonisba* was entered in the Stationers' Register on 17 March 1606 by Eleazer Edgar, five days after *The Fawn* had been entered.⁵⁸ However, Caputi argues that 'despite the Stationer's entry, *Sophonisba* was neither produced nor published

⁵⁶ John Marston, *John Marston's The Wonder of Women or The Tragedy of Sophonisba: A Critical Edition*, ed. by William Kemp (New York: Garland, 1979), p. 34.

⁵⁷ John Marston, *The Selected Plays of John Marston*, ed. by Macdonald P. Jackson and Michael Neill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. xviii.

⁵⁸ Anthony Francis Caputi, *John Marston: Satirist* (New York: Octagon Books, 1976), p. 269.

until the spring or summer'.⁵⁹ *The Wonder of Women* was first performed in 1605-1606 and published in 1606.⁶⁰ As a result of the contemporary scandal of *Eastward Hoe*, at that time the Queen's Revels Children had lost royal patronage. As Caputi argues the play was 'acted by the children after they had ceased to enjoy the Queen's patronage early in 1606'.⁶¹ It is important to note that the focus here is on stage directions (involving supernatural characters only) which were originally written by Marston himself rather than scribes, or members of the theatre companies. In addition to this, stage directions in this play are the same in modern editions and modern editors do not alter them.

Sophonisba is written entirely in verse, like the other Blackfriars plays, and is divided into acts and scenes. Ingram succinctly argues that 'the extravagance of the play is probably more obtrusive to the reader than the viewer'.⁶² This is persuasive because *Sophonisba* is not only theatrically effective, but its words and the action of the characters are as well. The play is also full of precise stage directions with a wealth of musical effects. The intention of this chapter is to explore these areas of the play in more detail, which have not so far been subject to thorough investigation by critics.

5.8 Witchcraft and Music in *Sophonisba*

In this play, Marston borrows a witch from classical tradition (Erictho, from Lucan's *Pharsalia*, Book VI) and adds to her depiction the beliefs and practices of the seventeenth century into the play. The Erictho scenes (Act 4, scene 1 and Act 5, scene 1) are central to Marston's argument. She is an emblem of lust and a lewd woman and has the power to deceive Syphax through the plot device of a bed-trick. In Act 4, Syphax is caught by the bed-trick and he sleeps with the witch Erictho taking her to be Sophonisba. Thus, Syphax

⁵⁹ Caputi, *John Marston: Satirist*, p. 269.

⁶⁰ John Marston, *The Wonder of Women or, The Tragedies of Sophonisba: As it hath beene Sundrie times acted at the Black Friars* (London, 1606)

⁶¹ Caputi, *John Marston: Satirist*, p. 270. See William Kemp, in his introduction to *John Marston's The Wonder of Women, or The Tragedy of Sophonisba*, analyzed all the work related to the "composition, press-work and proof-reading" of this Quarto. John Marston, *John Marston's The Wonder of Women, Or The Tragedy of Sophonisba: A Critical Edition*, ed. by William Kemp (New York: Garland, 1979)

⁶² Ingram, 'The Use of Music in the Plays of Marston', *Music and Letters*, 37 (1956), 154-164 (p. 157).

has the role of a succubus, and Erictho as a devil seduces men, using deceit in order to satisfy her lecherous desires.

As Peter Ure puts it, Erictho is 'not a "cunning woman" of the mother Bombie sort, nor an Elizabeth Sawyer, nor a daemon with a Christian and neo-Platonic ancestry like the Weird Sisters, but a goetist with affinities to Ovid's and Seneca's Medea'.⁶³ Erictho is the most disgusting and horrid figure in early modern drama. In Marston's description of Erictho, 'A loathsome yellow leanness spreads her face/ A heavy hell-like paleness spreads her cheeks' (IV. I. 97-122).⁶⁴ However, (unlike Ben Jonson's Dame), he does not give us any clue about what she wears. Reed describes Erictho as 'a monster shaped and exaggerated by the distorted brain of the author' and her language and some of her actions 'are so unnatural as to lack all verisimilitude'.⁶⁵ Reed here, in the phrase 'by the distorted brain of author', is referring to the Roman author Lucan rather than Marston regarding the characteristics of Erictho. Marston bases his dramatization of Erictho heavily on that of Lucan. For example, Lucan refers to Erictho's anger in the following extract:

Wroth was the Hag at ling's ring Death's delay,
And wonder' Hell could dare to disobey;
With curling Snakes the senseless Trunk she beats,
And curses dire at ev'ry lash repeats;
With magic Numbers cleaves the groaning Ground,
And thus barks downwards to th' Abyss profound, (Lucan, Book VI, 1103-1108)⁶⁶

Marston thus offers us a picture of a classical witch in Erictho who tricks the villain to satisfy her repulsive lust. In Erictho, we have some classical allusions such as references to the gods. Erictho is moreover different from the Hecate of both Middleton and *Macbeth*, Mother Bombie, and The Wise Woman of Hogsdon in that she is not visited by humans in the play requesting spells and incantations.

⁶³ Peter Ure, *Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama: Critical Essays* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1974), pp. 78-79.

⁶⁴ John Marston, *The Plays of John Marston: Edited from the Earliest Texts with Introduction and Notes*, ed. by H. Harvery Wood, III (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1938), ii, p. 46.

⁶⁵ Robert R. Reed, *The Occult on the Tudor and Stuart Stage* (Boston: Christopher Pub. House, 1965), p. 163.

⁶⁶ Marcus Annaeus Lucanus, *Lucan's Pharsalia*, translated into English verse by Nicolas Rowe, (London, 1614), p. 57.

As a stage witch, Erictho is depicted with eerie horror, being accompanied with music as she deceitfully seduces Syphax. In other words, Marston associates witchcraft with music in a bed trick scene. Music in the play supports the development of the plots and actions in general. For instance, music has a vital role in the bewitching of Syphax and leading him to have intercourse with the demon Erictho. The way the entrance music of this play was performed by children had an influence on the text.⁶⁷ Marston uses a number of other dramatic techniques beside his use of music, such as the technique of dumb-show, stage action, entrances and exits, dialogue and ritual. Dumb-show here acts as prologues and conveys information about the events and the characters to the audience.⁶⁸ Dumb show in Jacobean drama became increasingly associated with the Masque, though it was used in other ways. For example, Middleton in his *Chaste Maid in Cheapside* (1613) exploits dumb show with tragedy for the purpose of narrating events.

Marston was aware of both the ability of the child actors and the particular conditions of the private theatre since he added a note at the end of the Epilogues to *The Tragedy of Sophonisba*:

After all, let me intreat my reader not to taxe me for the fashion of the entrances and musique of this tragedy, for know it is printed only as it was presented by youths, and after the fashion of the private stage.⁶⁹

This shows Marston's full awareness of the conditions of the private theatre. There are numerous musical directions in *Sophonisba*. Marston included songs and music in his play for the audience of the private playhouse. Blackfriars as a private playhouse had adopted the custom of inter-missions between acts in the days of the Children of the Chapel, as evidenced by stage directions calling for entr'acte music, and sometimes dancing, in several of the Children's plays, notably including Marston's *The Wonder of Women*, or

⁶⁷ See evidence for this discussion in the following pages, 159-160.

⁶⁸ Pearn describes dumb-show as 'a part of a play which presents by means of action without speech an element of plot which would more naturally be accompanied by speech'. B. R. Pearn, 'Dumb-Show in Elizabethan Drama', *Review of English Studies*, 11 (1935), 385-405 (p. 385).

⁶⁹ John Marston, *The Works of John Marston: The Dutch courtezán. The fawn. The wonder of women, or, The tragedy of Sophonisba. What you will*, ed. by Arthur Henry Bullen (J.C. Nimmo, 1887), p.316.

Sophonisba, and Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*.⁷⁰ Marston wrote plays for the companies of the children of St. Paul and the Blackfriars. The children were also expert in singing the musical songs because they were recruited from the Cathedral choir.

In *The Masque of Queens*, music serves to disperse the hags who had been dancing to a diabolical 'strange and sudden music', and the manner of their dancing is full of 'a spectacle of strangeness'.⁷¹ Rather than being used to make the sound of the flying machines inaudible, Marston used music as a means to bewitch Syphax and have intercourse with Erictho (in the shape of Sophonisba), giving it a role in the plot. Ingram argues that the music in Marston's plays is generally regarded as a necessary evil: 'the action was often interrupted by a song no more significant to the character of his circumstances than the irrelevancies of modern musical comedy'.⁷² I disagree with Ingram's point of view because music is used here with a brilliant effect with the aim of easing sadness and melancholy, and moreover because music throughout the play serves an important purpose in the plot, being a sign of 'deception'. The music in *Sophonisba* is heavily instrumented, requiring a remarkably full group: 'cornetts, recorders, choir, organ and at least two other instruments, viz. treble viol and bass lute'.⁷³ Marston uses all these different types of instruments for different purposes in the plot. Music and dance were considered during the Renaissance period as efficacious to ease melancholy since it affects the mind and makes it nimble. Burton sums up his point of view regarding music when he says 'it is so powerful a thing that it ravisheth the soul, the Queens of the senses, by sweet pleasure (which is an happy cure) and corporal tunes, pacifies our incorporeal soul, and

⁷⁰ Irwin Smith, 'Their Exits and Reentrances', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 18 (1967), 7-16 (p. 7); Irwin Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse*, pp. 223-225. See also W. W. Greg, 'Act-Divisions in Shakespeare', *Review of English Studies*, 4 (1928), 152-158 (p. 155).

⁷¹ *The Works of Ben Jonson*, ed. by William Gifford, 3 vols (London: J. C. Hotten, [1872]), iii, 44-62 (p. 56). See also John C. Meagher, *Method and Meaning in Jonson's Masques*, p. 67. *The Jonsonian Masque*, ed. by Stephan Orgel, p. 137.

⁷² Ingram, 'The Use of Music in the Plays of Marston', p. 154.

⁷³ John Manifold, 'Theatre Music in the Sixteen and Seventeenth Centuries', *Music and Letters*, 29 (1948), 366-397 (p. 386).

rules it without words, and carries it beyond itself, helps, elevates, extends it'.⁷⁴ In *Sophonisba*, Erictho promises to conjure up the spirits with music to produce sensuous pleasure:

ERICTHO: Then when I shall force
The ayre to musicke, and the shades of night
To forme sweete sounds: make proude thy rais'd delight.
Meane time behold, a charm to reare
Whose potent sound will force our selfe to feare (IV.i, 177-181)⁷⁵

In this context, 'make proud the rais'd delight' signifies extreme pleasure, and is also strongly suggestive of sexual excitement. 'Proude' in the *OED* means 'sexually excited; lascivious',⁷⁶ and is clearly used as a piece of sexual innuendo here. A few lines later Syphax points out the change made by the music after the stage direction which reads, '*Infernal music, softly*':

SYPHAX: Harke, hark, now softer melody strikes mute
Disquiet nature: O thou power of sound
How thou doest melt me. Harke, now even heaven
Gives up his soule amongst us . . .
Harke: she comes. (IV. i. 201-205)⁷⁷

Erictho uses music in order to seduce Syphax and thus fulfil her own sexual desires. It is also by the power of music that Erictho transforms herself into the shape of Sophonisba. The stage direction before this conversation between Erictho and Syphax reads: '*A treble viol and a bass lute play softly within the canopy*' (IV.i).⁷⁸ The sound of the music comes from the canopy: a discovery space in the centre of the tiring-house where the sexual encounter takes place. 'Canopy' is one of the five words ('hangings,' 'arras,' 'traverses,'

⁷⁴ Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, ed. by Floyd Dell and Paul Jordan-Smith (New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1948), p. 479.

⁷⁵ Marston, *The Selected Plays of John Marston*, p. 459.

⁷⁶ 'Proude' adj, A.II, 7, b, *Oxford English Dictionary*,
<http://www.oed.com.ezproxy4.lib.le.ac.uk/search?searchType=dictionary&q=proude&_searchBtn=Search>
[Accessed 24th February 2014].

⁷⁷ Marston, *The Selected Plays of John Marston*, p. 460.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 460.

and ‘curtains’) that were used by the dramatists ‘to designate textiles used as furnishings on the Elizabethan stage’.⁷⁹ ‘Canopy’, according to Smith’s definition, probably means ‘a covering suspended over a throne or bed’.⁸⁰ In the above stage direction, ‘Canopy’ certainly means this kind of covering, something which is made clear in the following stage directions: ‘[Enter *Erictho* in the shape *Sophonisba*, her face veiled and hasteth in the bed of *Syphax*],’⁸¹ and in the end of the last scene ‘[*Syphax* hasteneth within the Canopy as to *Sophonisbas* bed]’.⁸²

5.9 Stage Directions in *The Tragedy of Sophonisba*

The elaborate stage directions, including some Latin, in *Sophonisba* seem to have been set from a holograph manuscript. Jackson and Neill argue that the stage directions provide evidence of ‘an author’s solicitude over the theatrical presentation of his play, and the prefatory matter (including the signed note “To the General Reader”) likewise points to the Quarto’s having been set from specially prepared holograph’.⁸³ The stage directions in all the Acts read ‘enter’ during the dances. For instance, in Act 1, scene 2, during the bridal ceremony the stage direction reads:

*Enter four Boys, anticly attired, with bows and quivers, dancing to the cornets a fantastic measure...*⁸⁴

This stage direction provides us with information about the costume of the players. ‘Anticly’ means ‘grotesquely’ in the *OED*.⁸⁵ Scott argues that the child actors in *Sophonisba* are not given ‘a grotesque or satire role, but a heavily stylized one which lends an added dimension to the gravity of the plot, in the manner of the emblematic figure of, for

⁷⁹ Smith, *Shakespeare’s Blackfriars Playhouse*, p. 32.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 343.

⁸¹ John Marston, *The Plays of John Marston: Edited from the Earliest Texts with Introduction and Notes*, p. 50.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁸³ Marston, *The Selected Plays of John Marston*, p. 397.

⁸⁴ John Marston, *The Wonder of Women or, The Tragedies of Sophonisba: As it hath beene Sundrie times acted at the Black Friars* (London, 1633).

⁸⁵ ‘Anticly’, *Oxford English Dictionary*,

<<http://www.oed.com.ezproxy4.lib.le.ac.uk/view/Entry/8575?redirectedFrom=anticly#eid>> [accessed 14th December 2013].

example, the Bayeux tapestry'.⁸⁶ Scott fails to consider the above stage direction which shows that the child actors look grotesque since they are dressed 'anticly'. These boys here are not the supernatural characters but their costumes are still creepy and weird. Marston used highly elaborate stage directions, for example, in the prologue ('Cornets sound a march') is used twice which shows that Marston was concerned with the aural impact of the play. Again in Act 2, scene 1, the stage direction during cornets reads:

Cornets. Enter two Ushers; Sophonisba, Zanethia, and Arcathia; Hanno, Bytheas, and Carthalon present Sophonisba with a paper, which she having perused, after a short silence, speaks.

Marston used these techniques as a device to handle spectacle especially in Act 2 scene 1, in the elaborate bedding ceremony. Similarly, in Act 3, scene 1, the characters simply 'enter' during the playing of cornets and organs. The stage directions read

Cornets and organs playing full music, enter under the conduct of Zanthia and Vangue, the solemnity of a sacrifice; which being entered, whilst the attendants furnish the altar, Sophonisba sings a song; which done, she speaks.

This Act concentrates on Syphax's attempts to seduce Sophonisba after it is reported that Massinissa is dead. Syphax summons up Erictho who promises him to gain Sophonisba by means of charms. After she makes the charms with the music played softly within the canopy, Erictho veils her face and enters in the shape of Sophonisba, heading to Syphax's bed. The act opens with 'Organ mixt with Recorders' which emphasizes Syphax's lustful speeches. The stage directions in Act 3, scene 1 read:

Ibe descends.

(*Sophonisba*, III.i)

⁸⁶ Michael Scott, *John Marston's Plays: Theme, Structure and Performance* (London: The MacMillan Press, 1978), p. 99.

Sophonisba (Erictho in disguise) descends and Syphax enters ready to go to bed with her. Syphax also descends after he seduces Sophonisba. The stage direction reads

She descends after Sophonisba,

(Sophonisba)⁸⁷

The stage directions are the same in Marston's *The Selected Plays of John Marston* and the modern-spelling edition of *Sophonisba* by Bullen: [*She descends after Sophonisba.*⁸⁸ Sophonisba, Erictho in Sophonisba's shape, descends under the vault into offstage space when she realizes that Syphax is approaching:

Descends through the vault

(Sophonisba)⁸⁹

Syphax also descends under the vault, not the heavens. The 'vault' is the rear-stage trap through which Sophonisba, Zanthia and Syphax descend and seemingly they go down some unseen steps. Unlike all the other witches studied in this thesis, the stage direction reads 'Infernal Music' during Erictho's entrance rather than *Thunder and Lightning* to signify supernatural activity.

Mehl observes, in *Sophonisba*, that 'stage directions are used much more frequently and consciously than in the work of many other dramatists to make the spoken

⁸⁷ Ibid., (III. I).

⁸⁸ John Marston, *The Works of John Marston*, ed. by A. H. Bullen, 3 vols (New York: George Olms Verlag, 1970), ii, pp. 231-316 (p. 281).

⁸⁹ Ibid., (III.i). Syphax "descends" through the vault in John Marston, *The Selected Plays of John Marston*, p. 448. "[*Descends through the vault*" in John Marston, *The Works of John Marston*, ed. by Bullen, p. 281. See also Corbin and Sedge, *Three Jacobean Witchcraft Plays*, p. 63. "He descends through the vault" in William Kemp, *John Marston's The Wonder of Women or The Tragedy of Sophonisba*, p. 99.

word more effective and expressive'.⁹⁰ The stage directions in the rest of the acts, Act IV and V, of the play read 'enter' and 'depart' when the characters enter and exit during the playing of the music. Thus, there is no evidence to show that the characters flew, but simply 'entered'. Therefore, it seems that the trapdoor was used for the entrances and exits of the characters especially Erictho. The witch Erictho does not 'fly' throughout the play either in the old or the modern editions. However, Marston made sure to explain, in a note appended to the Epilogues, the condition of the Blackfriars playhouse, since the musical interludes between the acts were well-established, being a tradition at the Blackfriars. *Sophonisba* was performed in 1604-1606 which was before the King's Men leased the Blackfriars in 1609. It may be that Blackfriars did not have the flying machinery to descend and ascend the supernatural characters for miraculous effects at the time the play was performed there. Or equally, Marston may not have been interested in making his supernatural characters fly. He may have only needed a curtain and a trapdoor to stage the supernatural scenes, and concentrated more on music to get the attention of the Blackfriars audience. Corbin and Sedge argue that 'Marston's boldness in the use of stage spectacle goes well beyond the creation of striking local effects, making full use of, and sometimes straining to the utmost, the resources of the Blackfriars'.⁹¹ Trapdoors act as both sudden exits and entrances. For instance, trapdoors were used when Erictho '*slips into the ground*' and Asdrubal's ghost rises out of the altar.

In conclusion then, Ben Jonson's hags did not fly in the original performances, but simply appeared from the 'hell' and exited back there. Although, this chapter has found that Jonson used some technical terms in stage directions suggestive of flight, such as 'throne' and 'fly', his Queens still were not made to 'fly' and were instead only suspended above the stage. Likewise, Marston's Erictho simply 'enters' and does not 'fly', and although there are stage directions call for her descent, she descends from the 'vault' and not the 'heaven'. Both dramatists represented their witches as grotesque, with more

⁹⁰ Dieter Mehl, *The Elizabethan Dumb Show: the History of a Dramatic Convention* (London: Methuen, 1965), p.123.

⁹¹ Corbin and Sedge, *Three Jacobean Witchcraft Plays*, p. 9.

music and dances being used to accompany their entries and exits rather than flying effects. On the whole then, these plays were more interested in witches' festivities, such as music, dancing and costume rather than in the Continental idea of flying witches such as in *The Witch*.

Chapter Six: Dragons on the Jacobean Stage

This chapter investigates a mixture of plays both Elizabethan (Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* (1594) and Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1588-92)), and Jacobean (Barne's *The Devil's Charter* (1607) and Rowley's *The Birth of Merlin* (1622)). This thesis considers these plays in the light of my witchcraft study since they also stage supernatural entities such as male witches, magicians and dragons. What binds all these plays together is having dragon(s) controlled by a magician. It is important to investigate the stage directions of the dragons in making their exits and entrances, what role they have in the plays, and how they affect the character of the drama. This study examines some sorcerer plays with special concentration on the character of the sorcerers, looking at the kinds of rituals and magic they make. Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, Barnes's *Alexander VI*, and Rowley's *Merlin* are male magicians and, each has a different role, being assisted by spirits or devils. I will investigate their role in each play and how they relate to witchcraft.

Dragons in each play offer a particular version of supernatural spectacle and work by the art of magic to assist the main characters to achieve their goals. I will argue that early modern devils were presented with regards to the violence they inflict on others. I will investigate the scene in the *Doctor Faustus* B text of 1616 of Faustus's cosmic flight and initial landing in Rome, when Mephistopheles (the Devil) appears as a fierce dragon, flying and spitting fire. Faustus sits on Mephistopheles as he pulls Faustus' chariot through the sky when he wants to learn the secret of astronomy. In *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* a dragon shoots fire and a spirit like a lion breaks a branch of a tree. However, Greene's dragon serves a different purpose from Marlowe's dragon: Greene's dragons represent the theme of nationalism whereas the theme of anti-Catholicism emerges through the use of the dragon by Marlowe.

In *The Devil's Charter*, in the scene when two devils ride upon a lion, a dragon is used by the King's Men for their royal patron James I on Candlemas night. The devils are used as a main weapon of intimidation by Alexander VI. Pope Alexander conjures up the

devil (Astoreth) to assist him in his attempt to climb to power. Similarly, the examination of *The Birth of Merlin* will primarily concentrate on the scene of the two flying dragons, Red (which represents the Britons) and White (the Saxons). The dragons' fight ends with the Red dragon's supernatural victory over the Saxon. Again the theme of English nationalism and a strong feeling of patriotism, as in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, are foregrounded here. This chapter takes a chronological approach in order to establish a dramatic development of the sorcerer in three theatrical modes—the tragic (*Doctor Faustus*), the comic (*Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, and *The Devils' Charter*), and the tragicomic (*The Birth of Merlin*).

6.1 Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*

Christopher Marlowe died at the age of twenty-nine and his *Doctor Faustus* is not known to have been performed before his death in 1593; the first recorded performance took place on 30th September 1594. It was first entered in the Stationer's Register on 7 January 1601.¹ The first edition, the 'A text', was published in 1604 (reprinted in 1609 and 1611) and the very different 'B text' was published in 1616 (reprinted in 1619, 1620, &c.). For many years, critics have referred to the 'A text' as a 'Bad Quarto' and the 'B text' as 'Good Quarto'. The so-called 'A-text' is shorter than the 'B-text'. Greg describes the 1616 'B-text' as 'better written', although he adds that 'it might perhaps be thought ineffective'. The 1604 'A-text' meanwhile is 'shorter and more theatrically forcible, but is inferior in style'.² Greg believes that the 'A-text' 'represents a report from memory of the play as first acted in London, shortened and otherwise adapted to the needs of a touring company and the taste of an uncultivated audience'.³ Jump also agrees with Greg that the 1616 quarto 'seems to stem independently from a fuller and more authoritative manuscript'.⁴ This view is not accepted by Bevington and Rasmussen however, who argue that the 'A-text' was 'set in type from an

¹ Christopher Marlowe, *Christopher Marlowe: Doctor Faustus*, ed. by Roma Gill, 2nd ed. (London: A & C Black, 1989), pp. xii-xiii.

² Christopher Marlowe, *Marlowe's Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus; a conjectural reconstruction*, ed. by W. W. Greg (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), p. vii.

³ Christopher Marlowe, *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus* (The University of Michigan: Clarendon Press, 1950), p. v.

⁴ Christopher Marlowe, *Marlowe: Doctor Faustus, a Casebook*, ed. by John Jump (London: MacMillan and Co Ltd, 1969), p. 149.

original authorial manuscript composed of interleaved scenes written by Marlowe and a collaborating playwright', and that the 'B-text' 'represents a version of the play which was extensively revised more than a decade after Marlowe's death'.⁵ Collaborative authorship was the norm in early modern England and plays were revised in order to offer more in the way of theatrical spectacles and popular entertainment.

Similarly, Gill does not accept Greg's theory, arguing that the A-text is the more original and the new parts of B (III.i, 90 ff.; ii; IV.i-vi; vii, 3 ff.; V.ii, 1-23, 85-130; iii) are the 'adicyones' for which Henslowe paid four pounds to two of his hack writers, Birde and Rowley, in 1602.⁶ 'Adicyones' means the additional material that was appended in the B text including the comic flight scene of Faustus. The additional materials require more elaborate staging, such as a balcony and a celestial throne. Evidence suggests that Samuel Rowley was Marlowe's collaborator, and after a decade both Rowley and William Birde wrote additional materials for the play. Halpern also concludes that Marlowe worked with a collaborator on *Doctor Faustus*.⁷ In terms of a theatrical perspective, Halpern argues that the Blackfriars theatre offered a better context for spectacle than did the Rose.⁸ This suggests that the 1616 'B text' was based on the demand of people for more spectacular effects commonly associated with popular entertainment.

As this thesis has shown, plays about witches and magicians were very popular in early modern England, and *Doctor Faustus* was clearly highly lucrative for the Admiral's Men at the Rose playhouse in London and became one of the most reprinted of all Elizabethan plays.⁹ The source for this play is taken from the German *Das Faustbuch* book published in Frankfurt by Johann Spies in 1587 and was first translated into English by P. F.

⁵ Christopher Marlowe, *Christopher Marlowe: Tamburlaine, parts I and II; Doctor Faustus, A- and B-texts; The Jew of Malta; Edward II*, ed. by David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. xxvii.

⁶ Christopher Marlowe, *Christopher Marlowe: Doctor Faustus*, ed. by Roma Gill (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1965), p. xv. It is also recorded in Henslowe's Diary that William Birde and Samuel Rowley made revision and "adicyons" to the B-text, for which they were paid 4 pounds by the theatre impresario Philip Henslowe in 1602. Philip Henslowe, *Henslowe's Diary*, ed. by A. Foakes and R. t. Rickert (Cambridge: C. U. P., 1961), p. 206.

⁷ Richard Halpern, 'Marlowe's Theatre of Night: "Doctor Faustus" and Capital', *ELH*, 71 (2004), 455-495 (p. 462).

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 475.

⁹ Christopher Marlowe, *Christopher Marlowe: Dr Faustus*, ed. by Roma Gill; revised with a new introduction by Rose King, 3rd ed. (London: A & C Black Publisher, 2008), p.vii.

London in 1592, as *The Historie of the Damnable Life and Deserved Death of Doctor John Faustus*.¹⁰ The first known performance of *Doctor Faustus* was on 30th September 1594 by the Lord Admiral's men.¹¹ In *Doctor Faustus*, the scholar Faustus gives his soul to Lucifer in return for twenty-four years of knowledge of black arts and pleasure. The play is a mix of tragedy with comedy and slapstick. In the farcical scenes between Faustus and Mephistopheles against the Pope, they disrupt the Pope's banquet after they fly to Rome. Marlowe was aware that attacks on and ridicule of the Catholic Church were popular fodder for entertainment among the theatrical audiences of protestant England while also capturing anxieties about the threat posed by foreign Catholicism.

This chapter explores the stage directions added for the Good Angel in scene thirteen in 'B text' which cannot be found in 'A text'. Several scholars have already presented the differences and likenesses between these texts. However, my study only focuses on the stage directions and the use of technology after the text was amended or changed. This study investigates the comic scenes associated with the riding in a fiery chariot. In his last appeal to Mephistopheles, Faustus says 'so high our dragons soared into the air/ That, looking down, the earth appeared to me' (III.i.70-71). Brockbank argues that Faustus 'touches the source material with a Simonian and Renaissance delight in flight and remoteness'.¹² The flight scene reflected the demand of the Renaissance audience as flying magicians and witches were fashionable at that time. This is why most of the plays on witches and magicians, such as *Doctor Faustus*, have a supernatural scene in which the main character flies.

Magicians and witches were invariably condemned for their tricks and demonic acts. However, the use of supernatural power in magic can be good or evil. Clark writes that a 'magician' was 'someone who sought to ascend to acknowledge of these superior powers and then accentuate their normal workings by drawing them down artificially to produce

¹⁰ Ibid., p. xxiii

¹¹ Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus: A- and B-texts (1604, 1616) / Christopher Marlowe and his collaborator and revisers*, ed. by David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), p. 48.

¹² Christopher Marlowe, *Marlowe: Dr. Faustus*, ed. by J. P. Brockbank (London: Edward Arnold, 1962), p. 49.

wonderful effects'.¹³ Faustus as a magician attempts to obtain the secret of astronomy and wants to exceed his natural capacities with demonic help. The magician acquires knowledge from the evil angel or unclean spirit when he tries to reveal some hidden or secret things in nature. Hence, the works of nature or seeking for natural power are associated with bewitchment and the world of witchcraft. Faustus is presented to the audience as an embodiment of anti-Catholicism, someone who does not care about the religious customs and hierarchies of Rome. He is curious to achieve knowledge of magic and to attain limitless knowledge on black art.

Ornstein argues that Faustus' arrogance, vanity and indulgence in the cardinal sin of pride leads the reader to see that his 'fall' is 'neither a simple moral degradation nor a conventional seduction from conscience and belief'.¹⁴ However, it is rather a moral education and discovery during which he is not degraded but humanized. Faustus as a learned man enters into a compact with Satan, just as characters do with the common witches in other plays, in order to obtain power and the knowledge of secret things. The difference between Faustus and female witches is that Faustus, unlike female witches, as a magician does not inflict harm (*maleficium*) by magical means. He also does not practise ritual murder, cannibalism or sexual orgies like female witches do. However, similarly to the female witches, he does fly and ride on strange animals and makes a pact with the devil.

The flight scene offers an element of slapstick comedy to the play and makes a comical history out of Faustus' rebellion. By the end of the play, Faustus' life comes to an end and even though the play is called a tragedy, the audience are entertained by the supernatural flight of Faustus when he is pulled by dragons. By doing so, Ornstein argues that Marlowe shares with his admiring contemporaries, such as George Chapman, 'the disenchanted vision of the aspiring mind-the knowledge that the Comic Spirit hovers over the Icarian flight of the self-announced superman'.¹⁵ A trick is used during Faustus's flight

¹³ Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 217.

¹⁴ Robert Ornstein, 'Marlowe and God: The Tragic Theology of *Dr. Faustus*', *PMLA*, 83 (1968), 1378-1385 (p. 1382).

¹⁵ Robert Ornstein, 'The Comic Synthesis in *Doctor Faustus*', *ELH*, 3 (1955), 165-172 (p. 172).

in order to disguise himself and not be seen. After Bonvolio (a knight) and his friends try to avenge the humiliation done to them by Faustus, Faustus also depends on magic and asks his devils to hurt them and grow horns on their heads. Faustus also has the power to deceive the Pope and his clerics and make himself invisible through the plot device of a trick. Marlowe has used both magical trick and disguising information here in order to adhere to the tragicomic convention of the play.

6.2 Stage Directions in *Doctor Faustus*

Marlowe's stage directions in both the 'A text' and 'B text', are not very elaborate and clear, and, modern editors have tended to add stage directions to help the reader imagine how the play was staged at that time. For example, certain stage directions, such as those at V.ii.1-25, 85-130 '*Thunder. Enter Lucifer, Beelzebub, and Mephostophilis [above]*'¹⁶, and [*Music while the throne descends*]¹⁷ are added by A. H. Bullen.¹⁸ There are two other stage directions which can be found in Bevington's and Rasmussen's edition in III.i.93-98 when the conversation occurs between Bruno and the Pope: [*He kneels in front of the throne*], and when the Pope ascends: [*A flourish while he ascends*].¹⁹ Again such stage directions (V.ii.100) cannot be found in the A-text but it is certainly in the B-text: *Music while the throne descends*.²⁰ The Old Man enters to persuade Faustus to repent and asks for God's mercy but Mephistopheles threatens Faustus to tear his body into pieces if he agrees. Faustus then blames Mephistopheles for his damnation. The Good and Evil Angels arrive as

¹⁶ Christopher Marlowe, *Marlowe's Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus*, p. 59.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 62.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. vi.

¹⁹ Christopher Marlowe, *Christopher Marlowe: Tamburlaine, parts I and II; Doctor Faustus, A- and B-texts; The Jew of Malta ; Edward II*, p. 211. See also Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus: A- and B-texts (1604, 1616)*, ed. by David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen, p. 236.

²⁰ Christopher Marlowe, *Christopher Marlowe: Doctor Faustus, 1604 and 1616* (Menston: Scolar Press, 1970), B-text. See also Marlowe, *Christopher Marlowe: Doctor Faustus*, ed. by Roma Gill, 2nd ed., p. 106. Christopher Marlowe, *Marlowe: Doctor Faustus*, ed. by Roma Gill, 3rd ed. p. 125; Marlowe, *Christopher Marlowe*, ed. by David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen, p. 242; Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus: A- and B-texts (1604, 1616)*, ed. by David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen, p. 281. Marlowe, *Christopher Marlowe: Doctor Faustus*, ed. by Roma Gill, p. 85. Christopher Marlowe, *Christopher Marlowe: Doctor Faustus*, ed. by Keith Walker (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1973), p. 77. Christopher Marlowe, *Marlowe's Doctor Faustus 1604-1616: Parallel Texts*, ed. by W. W. Greg (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), p. 287.

the stage direction shows that they descend and ascend through the throne. After ten lines the stage direction is [*The throne ascends.*]*Exit [Good Angel]. Hell is discovered.*²¹ Dr. Faustus, before his death, Harris argues, 'is shown the heavenly throne he might have occupied.'²² It is obvious that the stage direction is from the 'heavens' and that the throne is drawn up again after the good Angel laments. The throne here evidently stands as a symbol for heaven²³: The Throne of the Blessed (V.ii.1945-1946). Furthermore, the throne must have been large enough to have more than one in bright costume: 'In yonder throne, like those bright shining Saints' (V.ii.2013). After the Scholars leave Faustus (V.ii), Mephistopheles appears. However, it is not very clear whether Mephistopheles descends from the balcony or not: 'there is no direction to indicate it, but if not, Faustus must here become aware that he is being watched, and this seems unlikely'.²⁴ To have music during the descent of the throne might hint at the slow operation of the lifting machine. *Doctor Faustus* was performed at the Rose, built in 1587 by Philip Henslowe. The public playhouses did not have the capability to make descents and ascents at that time. The evidence of Henslowe's diary suggests that the use of a throne in the 'heavens' was not installed until 1595: 'item pd for carpenters worke & macking the throne in the heuenes the 4 of June 1595'.²⁵ Wickham concludes that the A-text does not need permanent 'heavens' supported by pillars and no throne with winch mechanism to be lowered or raised. However, it could have been performed on a raised and removable stage platform.²⁶ In terms of architectural reconstruction, Wickham also argues that 'the early play-houses were equipped with removable trestle-stages', and 'such stages would of themselves make floor-trap scenes an undesirable element within a play'.²⁷ In terms of theatrical building, the A-text was

²¹ Marlowe, *Christopher Marlowe: Tamburlaine, parts I and II; Doctor Faustus, A- and B-texts; The Jew of Malta; Edward II*, p. 242; Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus: A- and B-texts (1604, 1616) / Christopher Marlowe and his collaborator and revisers*, p. 282. Marlowe, *Christopher Marlowe: Doctor Faustus*, ed. Roma Gill, p. 86.

²² Harris, *Night's Black Agents*, p. 159.

²³ Marlowe, *Marlowe's Doctor Faustus 1604-1616: Parallel Texts*, p. 395.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

²⁵ Foakes, *Henslowe's Diary*, p. 7.

²⁶ Glynne Wickham, "'Exeunt to the Cave": Notes on the Staging of Marlowe's Plays', *The Tulane Drama Review*, 8 (1964), 184-194 (p. 186).

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

performed in a playhouse where it had 'above' and pillars. However, the A-text does not require 'above' since no stage direction calls for 'above' or 'heaven'.

Stage directions in the B-text add extensive material and thereby the supernatural characters make use of new theatrical spaces, such as 'above'. In V.ii.1 the stage direction is 'Thunder. Enter Lucifer, Beelzebub, and Mephistopheles [above]'.²⁸ '[Above]' is a modern editorial intervention. The B-text, in contrast to the A-text, calls for special effects and more exploitation of physical space. In the final scene of the B-text, 'a throne descends, presumably by means of machinery in the 'heavens', to tantalise Faustus with a glimpse of the indescribable bliss he has forfeited; he would have sat 'in yonder throne', the Good Angel tells him, whereas now 'The jaws of hell are open to receive thee' (V.ii.111-20)'.²⁹ When the stage direction reads 'the throne descends', it suggests that the operation of the lifting machine is slow and is included in order for the reader to imagine the action. The additions that both Birde and Rowley, whom Henslowe paid for revisions of *Doctor Faustus* in 1602, made are music, thunder, the usage of 'above', descents from the 'heavens', and departures from several doors. In another scene in A text Faustus confronts the devils and claims his success over them, 'Hence, hell, for hence I fly unto my God' (V.i.115).³⁰ This line suggests that a simple lifting technology might probably be used for his descent. The devil's position is in 'heavens' above and controls the world whereas Faustus's position is in 'hell' below.

The most impressive scene in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* is when dragons pull Faustus's chariot through the sky. In order to learn the secret of astronomy, Faustus travels through the heaven on a chariot pulled by dragons. A functional *deus ex machina* is, as a plot device, created through Faustus' eagerness in the study of astrology, by which his destiny is manipulated. Mephistopheles is the dragon by which Faustus travels to Rome. Mephistopheles appears as a fierce dragon, flying and spitting fire, to Faustus who loftily sits upon him. His travel takes him to Rome after he measures the coasts and kingdoms of the world. The original stage direction reads as follows:

²⁸ Marlowe, *Christopher Marlowe*, ed. by David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen, p. 239.

²⁹ Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus: A- and B-texts (1604, 1616)*, ed. by David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen, p. 45.

³⁰ Marlowe, *Christopher Marlowe*, ed. by David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen, p. 179.

Enter a Deuill.

(*Doctor Faustus*, 1616)³¹

In modern editions, a Devil enters on stage in the shape of a dragon: '*Enter a Devil [Mephistophilis, in the shape of a] dragon*' (I.iii.24).³² The word 'dragon' does not appear in the A-text as it does in the B-text. The 'dragon' in the 'B' text (I. iii. 246) might come out of the stage trapdoor which hints at a simple lifting technology.³³ Faustus practises black magic, and through the power of hell, he commands Mephistopheles to transform himself into a dragon first and then as a friar:

Enter a Devil [Mephistopheles, in the shape of a] dragon

I charge thee to return and change thy shape.

Thou art too ugly to attend on me.

Go, and return an old Franciscan friar;

That holy shape becomes a devil best.

Enter Devil [Mephistopheles]

I see there's virtue in my heavenly words.

Who would not be proficient in this art?

How pliant is this Mephistopheles,

Full of obedience and humility!

Such is the force of magic and my spells.

Enter Mephistopheles [dressed as a friar](DR FAUSTUS B-TEXT I.iii.22-31)³⁴

In the English Faustus book, chapter two, 'Faustus began againe to coniure the Spirite *Mephostophiles* in the name of the Prince of Diuels to appear in his likenesse: where at

³¹ Marlowe, *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus* (London, 1616), no page number is given.

³² *Doctor Faustus, A- and B-texts*, David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen, p. 194.

³³ See Leo Kirschbaum, 'Mephistophilis and the Lost "Dragon"', *Review of English Studies*, 21 (1945), 233-235 (p. 233)

³⁴ Marlowe, *Christopher Marlowe: Tambulaine, Parts I and II, Doctor Faustus, A- and B-Texts, The Jew of Malta, Edward II*, p. 194.

sodainly over his head hanged houering in the ayre a mighty Dragon'.³⁵ And in chapter nineteen, Faustus asks Lucifer if Mephistopheles can change his shape from a dragon into a friar: 'wherevpon came a fierce Dragon, flying and spitting fire around about the house, and comming toward Lucifer, made reuerence, and then changed himself to the forme of a Frier, saying, Faustus what wilt thou?'³⁶ Many of the early modern playwrights used different beasts into their plays such as dragons, lions, and eagles which evoked the beliefs of that time.

The dragon scene shows the most enthusiastic Protestant feeling. Marlowe uses a dragon in the scenes set in Rome on stage in order to present the theme of anti-Catholicism. Marlowe ridicules aspects of Catholic religious practice when Faustus teases the Pope by snatching his food and drink. This shows that instead of exchanging theological ideas, the Pope of the Catholic Church cares more about things to please his bodily appetites. Marlowe satirizes the Pope and his court, as agents of the Catholic faith, by making Faustus and Mephistopheles play practical jokes on the Pope and his clerics while invisible. Faustus and Mephistopheles mock the excommunication ceremony, purgatory, and other Catholic religious rites:

MEPHISTOPHELES. Nay, I know not: we shall be cursed with bell,
book, and candle.
FAUSTUS. How? bell, book, and candle; candle, book, and
bell;
Forward and backward, to curse Faustus to hell.
Anon you shall hear a hog grunt, a calf bleat, and an ass
bray,
Because it is St. Peter's holy day
Enter all the FRIARS to sing the dirge (III. i. 907-913).³⁷

The three items he mentions are used in the ritual of excommunication when someone is excommunicated from the Church: '(the bell is tolled, the Bible is closed, the candle is

³⁵ Philip Mason Palmer, Robert Pattison More, and Robert T. More, *Sources of the Faust Tradition* ([]: Ardent Media, 1966), p. 138.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

³⁷ Christopher Marlowe, *Christopher Marlowe: Doctor Faustus with the English Faust Book, Introduction and Notes*, ed. by David Wootton (Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 2005), p. 41.

extinguished)'.³⁸ Faustus continues mocking the Pope and his clergy. He calls the Catholic clergy by the names of hog, calf and asses. This might also mean that Faustus as a male magician has a supernatural power to turn the Pope and his clergy into the named animals. Then the Friars enter and sing a dirge, a type of funeral song. Faustus starts questioning about the nature of hell and salvation when he is at the heart of Church's power, Rome. In short, Faustus appears as a Protestant magician in the play but the Pope and his clergy are seen as venial and power-hungry. Marlowe includes a good deal of satire of the Pope and his court in order to make them appear ridiculous.

The *Doctor Faustus* A-text was a tragedy but the addition of the flight scene set in Rome in the B-text pushes it in the direction of tragicomedy, and revisions after the Restoration brought out further its comic potential. William Mountfort's *The Life and Death of Doctor Faustus* was first performed at the Queens Theatre in Dorset Garden and revised with new songs and dances. This production was first published in 1697 and performed in March 1686. Mountfort made this play into a farce by adding some comic material between the acts and with the humorous appearances of Harlequin and Scaramouche. The same stage directions can be found in scene of Hell, before the clock strikes eleven: 'Throne of Heaven appears; [ascend]; Hell is discovered; [descends]'.³⁹ Such stage directions cannot be found in the A-text but are certainly in the B-text. This Restoration adaptation is also tragicomedy, designed for a period in the late (1680-90s) when farce was more popular and more likely to be a hit with audiences compared to tragedy in the theatres. Mountfort made *Doctor Faustus* into farce for the contemporary audience since he had knowledge about the technical abilities of the Queen's theatre for staging magical effects. This production was again revived once when Mountfort was alive (1697) and again after his death in 1724.

By locating the flying dragon stage direction in the play, the 'flying dragon' was one of the most popular fireworks among gunners, magicians and alchemists throughout the sixteenth century. It was much in demand in the courtly festivals to convey the princely

³⁸ Ibid., p. 41.

³⁹ William Mountford, *The Life and Death of Doctor Faustus* (1697) (London: E. Whitelock, 1697), p. 25.

power. The dragons were usually ornamented as fabled and living monsters. These festivals were to construct national self-image, and were also influenced by the personality of the prince. The use of dragons in the festivals and exhibitions was to present princely power and authority. Werrett notes that 'Festivals featured firework-packed dragons atop castles or emerging from caves; dragons figured as great monsters in battle with other creatures or, most commonly, as 'flying dragon', sailing through the air exploding with sparks'. In Medieval drama, the dragon is seen as a monster that should be killed by the knightly hero. On the 23rd of April of each year, the English celebrated St. George's day: the legend of Saint George who slew a dragon. Since the fourteenth-century this day became the England's national day and St. George became England's patron saint. The dragon colour is green which represents the spirit of spring and George is a cultivator of land by the Greeks. The dragon also appears on the national flag of Wales, which is red, and was used in the coat of arms of Henry VII. Dragon on the Royal arms is intended to inspire action. All in all, dragon is used in the national occasions to demonstrate strong patriotic feelings. Early flying dragons were often figured with banners and sails flown in the air and attached to crackers or lanterns (see fig.14).

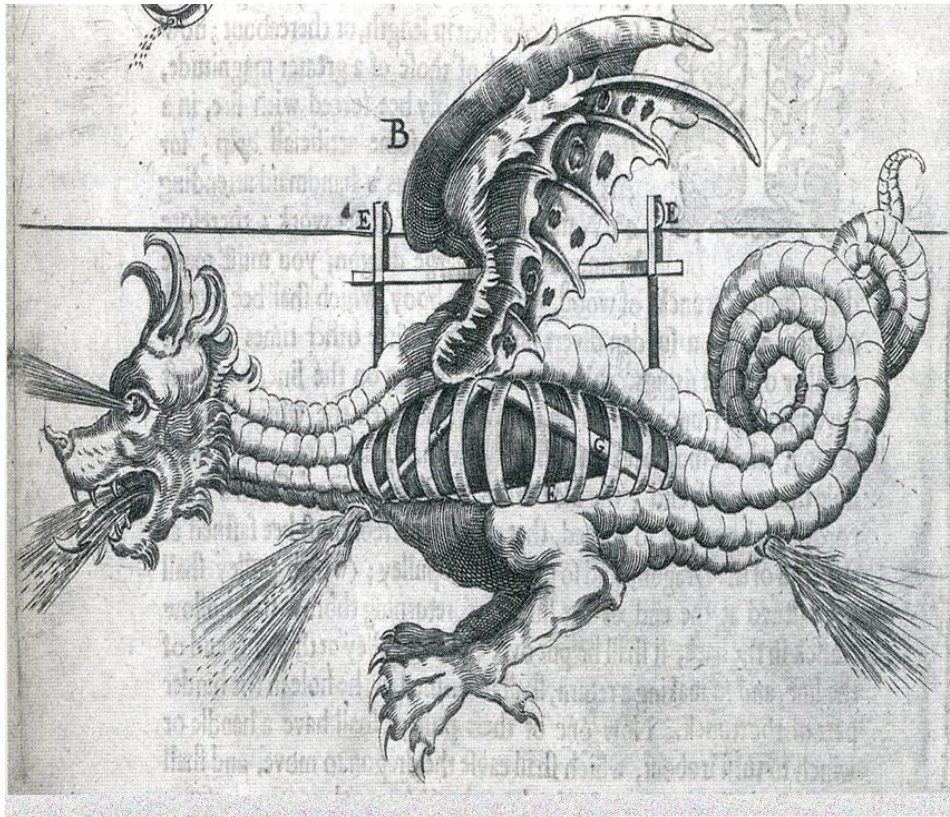


Fig. 14 Image of illustrating the “dragon on a line”, Edgar Smith Collection, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania Library. (Werrett, 51)

Not only are dragons and fireworks used in *Doctor Faustus* but weapons as well:

Faustus strikes the door, and enter a Devil playing on a drum, after him another bearing an ensign, and divers with weapons; Mephistopheles with fireworks. They set upon the Soldiers and drive them out. [Exit Faustus] (B- Text, IV. li.106)⁴⁰

Shooting fire and fireworks were a significant spectacle of early modern theatre. By the middle of sixteenth century, fireworks became one of the most spectacular elements of political celebration and theatre. Fireworks had a remarkable fiery effect in theatre to create a new genre of spectacle in presenting princely power and martial values to the audience. Simple fireworks, Werrett argues, were also added ‘to mystery plays and holy festivals at Christian religious sites, imitating the sound and appearance of celestial and

⁴⁰ Marlowe, *Christopher Marlowe*, ed. by Bevington and Rasmussen, p. 227.

meteoric scenes that mediated between heaven and earth'.⁴¹ The point here is fireworks would work in the open and roofed playhouses. The Globe theatre burned down in 1613 during a performance of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII* because of the sparks or wadding fell out of the cannon and ignited the roof of the theatre, firm evidence that fireworks were being used in the open air playhouses to create spectacular and curious effects.

Dragon-powered flight is not only narrated in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* B text but also in Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, but for a different purpose. It seems that Marlowe imitated Greene since both plays have some similar themes and events. Greene's hero is different from Marlowe's as he is a guiltless and benevolent magician. *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* deals with white magic in contrast to the black magic of *Doctor Faustus*.

6.3 Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*

The second play in this chapter is concentrated on Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1589)⁴², an Elizabethan play, especially the scene when a dragon shoots fire and a spirit like a lion breaks a branch off a tree. There was a great demand in 1588-9 for plays about magicians and spectacular tricks. People at that time were delighted in the dexterity of the supernatural mysteriousness of the magician and witches, and moreover there was a popular appetite for spectacles within such plays. Lavin argues that *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* is 'historically significant as the first successful Romantic comedy', and 'it is probably also the first English play in which a true double-plot (as opposed to a comic sub-plot) was employed'.⁴³ Greg assumes that Greene in writing his *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* followed Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*.⁴⁴ However, most critics agree that Marlowe followed

⁴¹ Simon Werrett, *Fireworks: Pyrotechnic Arts and Sciences in European History* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), p. 16.

⁴² Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, ed. by J. A. Lavin (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1969), p. xii.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. xxi.

⁴⁴ Greg, *Marlowe's Doctor Faustus: Parallel Text*, pp. 7-8, 10. And Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus: A- and B-texts*, ed. by David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen, p. 1.

Greene in writing *Doctor Faustus* and borrowed material from him.⁴⁵ The general tone of patriotism in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* suggests that the date of writing the play was after the victory of England over the Spanish Armada in 1588, although there is no definite date when the play was written.

The play was first printed in 1594 and was entered by Edward White in the Stationers' Register on 14th May of that year.⁴⁶ It was first performed at the Rose theatre in 1592 by the Lord Strange's Men. There are three editions of *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*: the first one from 1594 (probably from Greene's fair or foul papers),⁴⁷ the second edition of 1630, and the third of 1655. *The Honorable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* is one of four plays that Greene wrote wholly by himself and it is authenticated.⁴⁸ Henslowe's *Diary* shows that the play was revived for the court with a new prologue and epilogue by Middleton:

Lent vnto Thomas downton the 14 of dese3
1602 to paye vnto m^r mydelton for a prologe &
A epeloge for the playe of bacon for the corte
The some of.....} V^{s49}

The plot is based on the thirteenth-century Franciscan Roger Bacon who was known as a magician by his community. Prince Edward, King Henry VIII's son, attempts to seduce Margaret with the magical help of Friar Bacon and his friend Earl Lacy. However, Lacy falls in love with Margaret himself. Bacon shows Edward the love between Lacy and Margaret through his magical glass. However, by the end of the play both couples are married, Edward to Elinor of Castile and Margaret to Lacy. In the presence of both the Kings of England and Castile, and the German Emperor, Bacon wins a magical competition with

⁴⁵ Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, ed. by Daniel Sletzer (London: Edward Arnold, 1964), p. ix.

⁴⁶ Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* ([Menston]: Scolar Press, 1973), p. introduction note.

⁴⁷ Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, ed. by Lavin, p. xxxiii.

⁴⁸ Robert Greene, *The Life and Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Robert Greene*, ed. by Alexandre B. Grosart, 15 vols (New York: Russell & Russell, 1964), xiii, p. vii.

⁴⁹ Henslowe's *Diary*, p. 207. Robert Greene, *The dramatic and poetical works of Robert Greene & George Peele: with memoirs of the authors and notes*, ed. by Alexander Dyce (London: Routledge, 1861), p. 32.

Vandermast. With the assistance of another magician, Friar Bungay, Bacon creates an artificial brazen head made of brass, animated by the art of magic, as a protective wall around England. Both Marlowe and Greene brought late academic anxieties of the Elizabethan era into the stage and could make use of the written texts as their sources: the German *Das Faustbuch* and anonymous chapbook *The Famous Storie of Fryer Bacon*. Nonetheless, it took an inventive technique to translate these textual materials onto the commercial stage.

In terms of stage spectacle and theatrical effect, the scene when Bungay raises the golden apple-tree of the Hesperides guarded by a dragon shooting fire is dramatically impressive. Then Hercules appears in his lion's skin to take off the branches of the tree. In the first round, Vandermast defeats Friar Bungay: while Friar Bungay conjures up the tree and Hercules, a spirit is conjured up by Vandermast, which breaks the branches of the tree. In the second round however, Bacon defeats Vandermast and commands the spirit to transport Vandermast back to Germany. The stage direction of this scene in all the editions is the same:

*Here Bungay conjures, and the tree appears with the dragon shooting fire (ix.83).*⁵⁰

Lavin argues that 'one of the trap doors in the stage was probably used for this effect',⁵¹ as Vandermast says 'Raised Hercules to ruinate that tree/ that Bungay mounted by his magic spells' (ix. 132). Lavin means that the trap door from downstage was used to stage this scene.⁵² Seltzer also confirms that the scene when Bungay conjures the apple tree and dragon might have been performed over the trap door, on the main apron.⁵³ This play was performed at the Rose in 1592 and the public playhouses did not have the capacity to make descents and ascents at that time. One can be sure that a trap door was used in staging this scene. The historical dragon is used here to incorporate the theme of English nationalism. Simpson lists four general theories which are commonly proposed to account for dragon

⁵⁰ Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, ed. by Sletzer, p. 56. Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* ([Menston]: Scolar Press, 1973); Robert Greene, *The Life and Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Robert Greene*, ed. by Grosart, p.59; Greene, *The dramatic and poetical works of Robert Greene & George Peele*, p. 167; Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, ed. by Lavin, p. 56.

⁵¹ Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, ed. by Lavin, p. 56.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. Xx.

⁵³ Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, ed. Daniel Sletzer, p. 99.

legends: 'naturalistic' (arising from fossil finds, or from encounters with real but exotic beasts); 'mythological' (symbolizing chaos, destructive floods, or evil forces preventing access to life-giving waters); 'religious' (with particular stress on the Devil/Dragon identification in Christian iconography); 'historical' (the dragon as emblem of enemies using dragon-figures as battle-standards or ships' figureheads)'.⁵⁴ In this play the dragon is used as an emblem of enemies as the play portrays the war of 1588 between England and Spain which ended with the victory of the English. One of the most widespread themes in legend and Elizabethan stage is the dragon-fight. McNeir argues that 'the patriotic attitude of *Friar Bacon* is continued and extended in the sequel, in which the English magician-hero overcomes the foreign forces of evil of whom he is marched on their own soil'.⁵⁵ Most of the events in the play relate to Bacon's magical powers as he plans to protect England and avoids his humiliation of the German emperor, Vandermast. Friar Bacon has pride in England and expresses a nationalistic motivation when Dr. Mason asks him to reveal his art:

... I will strengthen England by my skill,
That if ten Caesars liv'd and reign'd in Rome,
With all the legions Europe doth containe,
They should not touch a grass of English ground.
The work that Ninus rear'd at Babylon,
The brazen walls fram'd by Semiramis,
Carved out like to the portal of the sun,
Shall not be such as rings the English strond
From Dover to the market place of Rye. (ii. 57-65)⁵⁶

Bacon's motivation is to defend England by making a protective wall around through his magical power in order to keep it from invaders, namely the Spanish Armada. Friar Bacon also assists Prince Edward with his love problem. Thus, the sorcerer Friar Bacon here through his magic, as functional *deus ex machina*, manipulates the events of the play and solves the problem of the play.

⁵⁴ Simpson, 'Fifty British Dragon Tales: An Analysis', p. 83.

⁵⁵ Waldo F. McNeir, 'Robert Greene and John of Bordeaux', *PMLA*, 64 (1949), 781-801 (p. 800).

⁵⁶ Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, ed. Daniel Sletzer (University of Nebraska Press, 1963), p. 13.

Similar to Doctor Faustus, Bacon is also seeking to escape damnation. Edd Winfield Parks and Richmond Croom Beatt interpret *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* as:

written to compete with Marlowe's highly successful *Dr. Faustus*. But the two plays are radically different, for Greene's comedy has only one tragic incident, and deals with "white" or harmless magic which may be indulged in without spiritual damnation, in contrast with the black magic of the tragic Faustus.⁵⁷

Friar Bacon does not, like Doctor Faustus, lose his soul, for he has not made an express compact with the devil.⁵⁸ Faustus cannot repent and he sees Christ's blood running in the sky on his last night. According to Christian belief, this blood stands for the sacrifice that Jesus made on the cross to open the path for humankind to repent their sins. However, Faustus fails to repent and even Christ's blood does not take him to salvation. By contrast, Friar Bacon repents and he does not need to see Christ's blood, 'it repents me sore/ That ever Bacon meddled in this art'. His realization makes him repent and he tells himself, 'end all thy magic and thin art at once'.

Knight argues that Friar Bacon refers to 'contemporary institutional preoccupations, but usually, rather than concentrating on institutions like the court, legal system, or church, Greene's concerns are for *educational* institutions'.⁵⁹ *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* does not only represent court power, but also the academic expertise of Greene himself during a royal visit to Oxford. He also interweaves his academic experience and English nationalism together. The satire here is in the dispute scenes between the Oxford friars, Bacon and Bungay, and the German Vandermast, especially during the appearance of a dragon shooting fire, the spirit of Hercules in a lion skin breaks a branch of the tree and, finally when Vandermast carried away on a tree. By representing this occasion at the Rose theatre, 'Greene brings the Niniversity *en fete* to the Bankside,' and 'irrelevantly showing that

⁵⁷ Quoted in Frank Towne, "White Magic' in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay?*, *Modern Language Notes*, 67 (1952), 9-13 (p. 9.)

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁵⁹ Sarah Knight, 'The Niniversity at The Bankside: Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*', in *The Oxford Handbook of Tudor Drama*, ed. by Betteridge and Walker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 355-370 (p. 356).

scholarly and royal dignity can always be undermined and interrupted'.⁶⁰ Greene presents his philosophical experience for the royal visit of Elizabeth I which offers a spectacular spectacle to the Bankside audience.

In contrast to the lengthy dialogue between the two friars, which has the potential to make the play static in feel, Greene uses the fire-breathing dragon to entertain the spectators through spectacular, colourful special effects. Dragons are physically manifested differently on Elizabethan stage compared to Medieval and Jacobean stages. John Dee (1527-1609) was the first person to design a clever stage-effect for Greek drama, Aristophanes' *Peace*, and made a giant beetle that could move from the air down to the stage. Tygaeus rides on the back of a giant dung beetle to the heaven in order to arrange peace for the Greeks. However, Marlowe and Greene's dragon is different from Dee's: Marlowe's dragon is Mephistopheles in devil's dress, and Greene's dragon is in models. This kind of costume allows the play to be more tight and lively. Their dragon enters and exits the stage through a trapdoor which demonstrates that the ability of the theatres to stage these technically-demanding scenes had improved by the 1580s.

6.4 Barnabe Barnes's *The Devil's Charter*

Like the previously discussed playwrights, Barnes in his *The Devil's Charter* (1607) also includes a most effective scene in which two devils ride upon a lion, or dragon. We learn from the title-page that the play is 'The Devil's Charter: A tragedy Containing the Life and Death of Pope Alexander the six. As it was plaide before the kings Maiejestie, vpon Candlemasse night last by his Maiejesties Seruants. But more exactly renewed, corrected and augmented since by the Author, for the pleasure and prays of the Reader'.⁶¹ Candlemas night refers to 'the date in the Church calendar devoted to warding off the powers of darkness through Christ, the light of the world – an appropriate date for the

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 359.

⁶¹ Barnabe Barnes, *The Devil's Charter: A tragedy Containing the Life and Death of Pope Alexander the six. As it was plaide before the kings Maiejestie, vpon Candlemasse night last by his Maiejesties Seruants. But more exactly renewed, corrected and augmented since by the Author, for the pleasure and prays of the Reader*, p. title page.

play's royal command performance'.⁶² In contrast to the plays already discussed in this thesis, Barnes uses the effect of dragons and devils for different purposes. They are used as a means of intimidation and represent the lust for power. The play is about Pope Alexander VI (1492-1503) in general and it also concentrates on the social dynamic of devils on the Jacobean stage. The play was entered in the Stationers' Register in October 1607 and was printed by 'G. E.' for John Wright. It was performed in 1606 by the King's Men at Court and was first published in 1607. Barnes borrowed the history of the Borgias from Guicciardini for his play using the English translation rather than the original Italian text. However, some of the incidents of the play are not found in Guicciardini as they are only the invention of Barnes himself, such as Lucretia's marriage with Francesco di Gonzaga, the murder of Gismond di Viselli by Lucretia and her own death at the hands of Alexander.

The Devil's Charter and Shakespeare's *Macbeth* are two plays that the King's Men staged in 1606-1607 in which they pay great attention to stage devilry. The play exploits contemporary anxieties in response to the event of the Gunpowder Plot (1605) and the accession of King James I who, as has already been discussed, published his *Daemonologie* some years earlier in 1597. After the accession of King James I, the King's Men staged plays which had themes of diabolism and witchcraft in order to take advantage of the monarch's deep personal interest in such subjects. Barnes uses the Devil as a response to old traditional beliefs associating the Devil with attributes of ambition and tyranny, such as we also find in *Macbeth*. Pope Alexander VI conjures up Astoreth to assist him in his climb to power.

In this play, Barnes investigates and anatomizes the role of intimidation in a variety of human relationships, both personal and political. For instance, there is sexual intimidation involving the character of Lucrezia Borgia (Alexander's daughter). In order to control her husband, Lucrezia uses sex and social class to destroy Gismond di Viselli; Lucrezia stabs him and pretends his death was suicide after forcing him to sign a note. Gismond is not the only victim of her sexual rapacity: so are both princes Astro and

⁶² Barnabe Barnes, *The Devil's Charter*, ed. by Nick Hern (London: International Shakespeare Globe Centre, 1999), p. vii.

Philippo, the Manfredi brothers. Cox argues that 'Barnes depicts Alexander as almost unsurpassed in intimidating strategies, both offensive and defensive'.⁶³ Alexander devotes himself to his children but at the same time he uses them as an instrument of policy in his own interest to improve his power. In order to defeat his rivals, Alexander thinks about making an alliance with them. The devils have relationships with individuals and lead them into intimidation. Thus, the devils are here used as a main weapon of intimidation by Alexander to defeat the Pope. The devils are used with demonic intimidation when Alexander poisons Baglioni (the devil poisons Alexander in the same way Alexander does to Baglioni). The devil kills Alexander by switching the glasses, and Alexander drinks the poisoned wine which was prepared by himself for the Cardinals.

The Devil in these plays is a major character. Barnes has two demons, Astaroth and Belchar: the first one is in the shape of a Pope and the second one is referred to as Protonotary. As we have seen, Marlowe also puts the Pope on stage in B text (III.i.26-27, 52, 64, 77). However, the Pope does not have power over Faustus and Mephistopheles. In *The Devil's Charter*, the term of the agreement between Alexander and the Devil is for two years and eight days. Through the signing of the contract with the Devil as the usual exchange, Alexander gets power and obtains the Papacy.

Regarding the entrance of Barnes's devils, before Rodrigo Borgia sits on a chair, a Monk conjures a dumb-show. Through a series of magical incantations, such as lightning and smoke, a 'devil in most ugly shape' appears whom Rodrigo does not like and whom he banishes because of his hideous form. Another devil has been conjured out of fire and brim-stone but Rodrigo still does not like him and he descends back. In the mist of thunder and fearful fire, another two devils with acceptable shape appear dressed in pontifical robes (they have the shape of human beings, such as Pope and protonotary) ascend and later descend:

A diuill in most vgly shape: from which Roderigo turneth his face, hee being coniured downe after more thunder and fire, ascends another diuill like a Sargeant with a mace vnder his girdle: Roderigod is liketh. Hee descendeth: after more thunder and fearefull fire, ascend in robes pontificall with a triple Crowne on his

⁶³ John D. Cox, 'Stage Devilry in Two King's Men Plays of 1606', *Modern Language Review*, 93 (1998), 934-947 (p. 938).

*head, and Crosse keyes in his hand: a diuill him ensuing in blacke robes-like a pronotary, a cornerd Cappe on his head, a box of Lancets at his girdle, a little peece of fine parchment in his hand.*⁶⁴

With respect to costume and props, Barnes also offers his audience a different type of devil from those offered by Greene and Marlowe. Barnes describes in detail his devils and which properties they have in their hands on stage. Alexander makes a pact with the Devil to obtain the power. The difference of their pact with the devil is that no blood is lanced out of Doctor Faustus's arm by the Devil whereas Alexander's blood is lanced out by the devil and his blood fills a bowl. Then the first devil drinks the blood, reflecting an aspect of Continental witchcraft belief. Witches were believed to give her blood to her familiar in order to maintain the pact made between them.⁶⁵

Alexander conjures up the devil (dressed as a king) with a red face who is riding on a lion, or dragon. There is a spectacle of thunder and lightning again accompanied with the devil's entrance. The stage directions read:

*Fiery exhalations lightning thunder ascend a King, with a red face crowned imperiall riding vpon a Lyon, or dragon: Alexander putteth on more perfume and saith. (IV.i)*⁶⁶

This supernatural scene is rich in stage spectacle and its elaborate stage direction gives the Kings' Men some leeway in special effects. Alexander asks to find the one who has murdered his son Candie. The devil disappears and a few lines later another devil descends with thunder and lightning dressed in a suit of armour:

*The diuell descendeth with thunder and lighning and after more exhalations ascends another all in armor. (IV.i)*⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Barnes, *The Devil's Charter*, no page number is given.

⁶⁵ For details see Rosen, *Witchcraft in England, 1558-1618*, p. 19.

⁶⁶ Barnes, *The Devil's Charter*, no page number is given.

⁶⁷ Ibid., no page number is given.

It may be presumed that a trap-door was used to stage the entrances and exits of the devils, since the play was performed at Court in 1606-1607, and the Court theatre did not have any flying machinery for staging the supernatural effects at that time.

The devils here are used as a dramatic device in Barnes's dramatizing of the lust for power, a theme which can also be found in *Macbeth* and *Doctor Faustus*. The pact which Faustus makes granting him special power and knowledge, requires him to submit to the Devil. Thus, Barnes, Shakespeare and Marlowe portray demonic involvement with human beings and how devils are intimately identified with the human lust for power. Shakespeare's use of devils on stage is more marginal though than that of Barnes and Marlowe. However, in all the plays mentioned above, the devil scenes motivate the plot by providing opportunities for sensationalism.

Barnes' use of intimidation in relation to the character of Lucretia is similar to Lady Macbeth of *Macbeth*. Lady Macbeth is an example of a malevolent mother when she calls to her demons 'come to my woman's breasts/ And take my milk for gall' (I.v.46-47). Denying her femininity, Lady Macbeth tries to conjure up evil spirits, and her diabolic malevolence motivates the plot in the murder of Duncan. In *Macbeth* the witches do not overpower Macbeth but only prophesy to him. However, the devils here overpower Alexander. Alexander uses the devils as a means of intimidation to defeat the Pope. Furthermore, *Macbeth's* witches are not a model of intimidation in relationships, but they work as an agent to destroy *Macbeth*. So, one can say that Barnes is inspired by Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in writing *The Devil's Charter* but *Macbeth* is a more traditional play than Barnes's. However, both plays are indebted to Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* as both protagonists, Macbeth and Alexander, of the plays depend on demonic assistance to aid them in climb into power.

The King's Men performed *The Devil's Charter* for their royal patron James I. I mentioned earlier that dragons had been used in the Elizabethan stage for the royal festivals and exhibitions in order to present princely power and authority (see pp.176-177). In Christianity, the dragon is a symbol of evil and is associated with Satan. Dragons and devils in the shape of armour are used as powerful creatures to guard a country. In

addition, the use of dragons, animated by magical art, in connection with political agitation, is used to control the social and religious pressures. In all the plays of this chapter, the dragons are under complete human control by which they gain their knowledge, power, and wisdom.

6.5 William Rowley's *The Birth of Merlin*

The fourth play to be examined in this chapter is *The Birth of Merlin* by William Rowley (1622), a play very rich in visual spectacle. Rowley includes varied types of visual effects, such as, disguising, magic and the spectacle of devils. This examination primarily concentrates on the scene of the two flying dragons and the magician Merlin.

The play begins with the story of Modestia (the daughter to the nobleman Donobert and sister to Constantia). Modestia is conflicted between her desire for a religious vocation and the social pressure she is put under to marry. In the second scene King Aurelius and his royal court are introduced to the audience. The British are excited by their victory over the Saxon. The King's brother Uter is missing and a Saxon representative is sent to attend court and to attempt reconciliation. The court is led by a Saxon princess (Artesia), with whom king Aurelius falls in love. In Act two, the Clown and his pregnant sister, Joan, are introduced. The Clown and Joan are searching for the father of the child (Merlin) in the forest. Prince Uter is also seen wandering in the forest. The Clown takes him as a potential husband for Joan. Aurelius and Artesia get married and Uter finds out Artesia is his sister-in-law and the new British Queen. Joan encounters her actual husband, who is in fact the Devil. The Devil calls Lucina and the Fates to look after Joan as she gives birth to Merlin, the Magician. Merlin, Joan and the Clown visit the place where King Vortigem (King of Britain) is building a castle. In order to avoid continual collapse, the Welsh must sacrifice a 'fiend begotten child'. Therefore, Merlin's visit to Wales makes them feel pleased and relieved. Merlin predicts Vortigem's defeat at the hand of Edol (Earl of Chester, and General to King Aurelius) and the British. The battle of the dragons, White

and Red, occurs which portrays Edol's victory. Merlin prophesies on a blazing star which is one of the most spectacular effects of the play. Finally, the British defeat the Saxons, Aurelius dies and Uter becomes the British King and Merlin, and is aided by Merlin.

The date of this play's composition is unclear. However, Dominik suggests that *The Birth of Merlin* was written in 1613-1615⁶⁸, as 'the period 1613-15 as the most likely chronological interval for Shakespeare's and Rowley's authorship of *The Birth of Merlin*, with special emphasis on 1615 as the most probable single year'.⁶⁹ The joke about 'Great Britains' (III.i.60) in which the Clown alludes to his own girth, has been considered to indicate a date after 1604 when James I proclaimed the union of England and Scotland under the title of 'grete Brytayne'.⁷⁰ Brooke argues that 'from the language and grammar ... it is clear that *The Birth of Merlin* was not composed later than the reign of James I; nor is it at all likely that it antedates James's succession'.⁷¹ The first known performance of this play was in 1622 at the Curtain theatre and it was published in a quarto in 1662, printed by Thomas Johnson for Francis Kirkman, and Henry Marsh. Despite the fact that the play is colourful and entertaining, it has not received much attention by scholars. Not only are devils and magic employed as spectacles in the play, but there is also the scene of the blazing star, which is one of the most elaborate special effects so far in any of the plays discussed here. Edol's victory is portrayed through a series of battles, culminating in a blazing star scene on which Merlin prophesies. The blazing star has a dragon's head inside it with two flaming flakes emanating from its mouth. Merlin prophesies that the dragon's head represents Uter, and the two flaming flakes of fire to east and west, his son and daughter. The stage direction reads:

'Blazing Star appears'.

PRINCE look Edol:

Still this fiery exhalation shoots

⁶⁸ Mark Dominik, *William Shakespeare and The Birth of Merlin* (Oregon: Alioth Press, 1991), p. 39.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 172.

⁷⁰ E. H. C. Oliphant, *The Plays of Beaumont and Fletcher: An Attempt to Determine Their Respective Shares of Others* (New Haven: Yale University, 1927), p. 406.

⁷¹ William Shakespeare, *The Shakespeare Apocrypha*, ed. by C. F. Tucker Brooke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1908), p. xlv.

His frightful horrors on th' amazed world,
See in the beam above his flaming ring,
A dragon head appears, from out whose mouth
Two flaming flakes of fire, stretch East and West.
EDOL And see, from forth the body of the star,
Seven smaller blazing streams, directly point
On this affrighted kingdom. (IV.v.2-9)⁷²

The shape of the blazing star is portrayed in detail. The blazing star presumably enters through a trap-door although its stage direction marks it to 'appear' leaving us with other possibilities open. The spectacle of the blazing star was a popular one at the outdoor playhouses. Rowley was aware of the dangers of fireworks in indoor playhouses. *The Birth of Merlin* was first performed at the Curtain and the title of the play claims that *The Birth of Merlin* was 'several times Acted with great Applause'.

In terms of collaboration and authorship, Robb argues that the play 'probably has a difficult history of revision, abridgement, and augmentation'.⁷³ The title-prescription claims that the play was written by both Shakespeare and Rowley. However, Campbell and Quinn deny the ascription of authorship of *The Birth of Merlin* to Shakespeare: 'there is nothing in the play to support the ascription to Shakespeare, and most scholars assign it to Rowley, with Thomas Middleton considered as a possible collaborator'.⁷⁴ However, I assume that the name of Shakespeare might be ascribed to the title of the play only for commercial reasons as Shakespeare's name carried much weight in 1662, unlike Rowley's. According to Dominik, the play is, overall, Shakespeare-and-Rowley'.⁷⁵ However, he fails

⁷² Joanna Udall, *A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition of The Birth of Merlin (Q 1662)* (London: The Modern Humanities Research Association, 1991), p. 171.

⁷³ Dewar. M. Robb, 'The Canon of William Rowley's Plays', *Modern Language Review*, 45 (1950), 129-141 (p. 139).

⁷⁴ O. J Campbell and E. G. Quinn, *The Reader's Encyclopedia of Shakespeare* (New York: Crowell, 1966), p. 71. Some other scholars also agree that the serious parts of the play have been written by Middleton. Howe would assign the various parts as follows: I, i, 2, Middleton. II, i, Rowley; ii, iii, Middleton. III, i, Rowley; ii, Middleton; iii, either might have written it; Iv, Rowley; v, either; Vli, Middleton. IV, i, first 135 lines, Rowley; remainder, Middleton; ii, iii, iv, Middleton; v, Rowley. V, i, Rowley; ii, Middleton. Fred Allison Howe, 'The Authorship of "The Birth of Merlin"', *Modern Philology*, 4 (1906), 193-205, (p. 205). However, some others ascribe the play to the great poets Beaumont and Fletcher after he compared the play to Cupid's Revenge, and he concludes that Rowley may have revived the play for a revival since his name was connected with the work by the publisher. William Wells, 'The Birth of Merlin', *Modern Language Review*, 16 (1921), 129-137 (p. 137).

⁷⁵ Dominik, *William Shakespeare and The Birth of Merlin*, p. 10.

to mention that Shakespeare had retired to Stratford upon Avon sometime around 1613 and his career was over in the theatre. In addition to this, Rowley also cannot be seen as Shakespeare's collaborator because Rowley did not join the King's Men until 1623.⁷⁶ However, Shapiro argues that 'neither the thematic nor the stylistic arguments for Shakespeare's co-authorship, detailed as they are, favour collaboration over imitation'.⁷⁷ Brooke, the most recent editor of *The Birth of Merlin*, supports this idea and says:

There is not a single poetic passage in *The Birth of Merlin*, which will justify for an instant the hypothesis of Shakespeare's authorship. The disjointed nature of the plot, moreover, the foolish and immature morality of the Modestia scenes, and the repeated appeals to the cheap make-shifts of sorcery and divination, stamp it as distinctively un-Shakespearian.⁷⁸

I can assume that the scene when the two flying dragons shoot fire is Rowley's own material. He was aware of the technical ability of the theatre to stage these supernatural scenes in the play. Rowley 'was an actor-manager intimately involved with the most important theatrical companies of the Jacobean age, and who in a few instances contributed to the authorship of plays that are recognized as masterpieces-hardly an inconsiderable achievement'.⁷⁹ All critics agree that Act five, scene one was written by William Rowley himself in which magic has a vital role in supporting the main characters. In other words, the comic parts of the play including the supernatural elements are assigned to Rowley only.

The entertainment in this play is centred in the battles of wit and magic which are similar to *The Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*. The play also includes other dramatic devices for entertaining the audience such as a devil, fighting dragons, a blazing star, and the birth scene with its dancing 'Anticks'. The most central event in the play is that of Joan's sexual

⁷⁶ Donald W. Foster, review of 'William Shakespeare and the Birth of Merlin', ed. by Mark Dominik; 'Shakespeare's Lost Play: Edmund Ironside', ed. by Eric Sams, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 39 (1988), 118-123 (p. 119).

⁷⁷ Michael Shapiro, review of 'William Shakespeare and "The Birth of Merlin"', ed. by Mark Dominik; 'Shakespeare's Romances and the Royal Family', ed. by David M. Bergeron; 'Patriarchal Structures in Shakespeare's Drama', ed. by Peter Erickson, *Modern Language Review*, 83 (1988), 945-947 (p. 945).

⁷⁸ Brooke, *Apocrypha*, p. xivi.

⁷⁹ Dominik, *William Shakespeare and The Birth of Merlin*, p. 30.

relationship with the devil which leads to the birth of the Magician Merlin. Merlin is a wonderful character throughout the play especially in his prophetic parts of the play. At the beginning of Act four, the characters enter with a Drum and then the fighting of the two dragons occurs. Regarding the dragon-fight (IV.i.2008), in the original staging the dragons were presumably represented by actors in dragon costumes and not models like that in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (I.1198), or firework-powered effects.⁸⁰ There are two dragons: the Red dragon represents the Britons and the White the Saxons. The two dragons Red and White fight and finally the White dragon drives off the Red. The significance of colour symbolism here is that the red colour stands for the British people in their wars against the Saxons; it also symbolizes blood and fire. Again the theme of English nationalism, as in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, emerges here. The red dragon is used here to protect the Britons against their enemy, the Saxons. These dragon scenes portray a historical battle between the Britons and the Saxons when the Briton army under Ambrosius Aurelianus defeated the Anglo-Saxon invaders. The stage direction reads as: 'Merlin strikes his wand. *Thunder and Lightning, two Dragons appear, a White and a Red, they fight a while and pause*' (IV.i.208)⁸¹. The next stage direction reads as: '*Thunder: The two Dragons fight agen, and the White Dragon drives off the Red*' (IV.i.2014).⁸² Merlin predicts to Vortiger that the white dragon will first overthrow the red one but that eventually the victory will be for the Britons:

VORTIGER The conquest is on the white Dragon part,
Now *Merlin* faithfully expound the meaning. (IV.I.215-216)

Udall argues that the dragons in *The Birth of Merlin* make their entrances through a trap-door.⁸³ In order to make the noise of the machinery inaudible while the dragons enter through the trap-door, the stage directions read first as: '*Merlin strikes his wand*', and the '*Thunder and Lightning*' before the dragons appear (IV. i. 252-254). Lucina and the Fates

⁸⁰ Harris, *Nights' Black Agents*, pp. 155-156.

⁸¹ Udall, *A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition of The Birth of Merlin* (Q 1662), p. 167.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p.167; William Shakespeare and William Rowley, *William Rowley 1585-1642?: The Birth of Merlin* (1662)

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

also enter through a trap-door after the Devil commands them, and their appearance is preceded by thunder: 'Rise, rise to aid this birth prodigious' (III.iii.14). The Devil here is in the role of incubus and is here to help with the task of Merlin. The devil is described in the stage direction as follows: 'Enter *the Devil in mans habit, richly attir'd, his feet and his head horrid*' (III.i.195). The description of the Devil in this stage direction conforms to the popular tradition of stage Devils. The use of the Devil as the father of magician, Merlin, is also traditional. Rowley offers a visual comic effect by displaying the appearance of the Devil who is meant to be Merlin's father. He teaches Merlin and advises him on some of his supernatural power. A throne with steps would appear to be in use at I.ii.139⁸⁴, when Aurelius 'descends' to greet Artesia.⁸⁵ Aurelius says: 'Most fair *Artesia*, see the King descends [*coming down from the throne*]'

In *The Birth of Merlin* the defeat of a foreigner is also portrayed in the play. For instance, the Hermit's supernatural victory over the Saxon (I.i) is taken as a symbol of divine intervention by Aurelius, and of witchcraft by the Saxons.⁸⁶ What I observe from this play is that Merlin and others who stand against Artesia always win. One of the popular themes in this play is the effect of lust on kings and their government. Furthermore, for example, Aurelius is bewitched (III.vi.133). After the stage direction reads '[*Exeunt Aurelius, Ostorius, Octa, Artesia, Toclío, Oswold*]', Edwin says: 'He's sure bewitch'. Aurelius is a victim of feminine witchcraft and his death is announced by Merlin as he was looking for the peace and stability of his country:

A King more good, the glory of our Lord,
The milde, and gentle, sweet *Aurelius*. (IV.v.58-59)

It is also through the power of Merlin's art that the two servants of the Devil are forced to flee (i.48). The supernatural victory of the Hermit upon the Saxons, which is addressed in (I. i), have a sign of divine intervention by Aurelius, and witchcraft by the Saxons. In other words, each party has some aids from supernatural powers: the Britons have Anselme, the

⁸⁴ Udall, *A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition of The Birth of Merlin* (Q 1662), p. 128.

⁸⁵ William J. Lawrence, *Pre-Restoration Stage Studies* (Cambridge: Mass., 1927), p. 319.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

Hermit and the Saxons have Proximus, a magician. The Hermit could humiliate Proximus, the Saxon wizard, but his final downfall is Merlin, who says to Proximus

Hast thou such leisure to enquire my Fate,
And let thine own hang careless over thee?
Knowst thou what pendelous mischief roofs
thy head,
How fatal, and how sudden?
PROXIMUS. Pish!
Bearded abortive, thou foretell my danger!
My lord, he trifles to delay his own.
MERLIN. No, I yield my self : and here before the King
Make good thine Augury, as I shall mine.
If they fate fall not, thou hast spoke all truth,
And let my blood satisfie the Kings desires:
If thou thy self wilt write thine Epitaph,
Dispatch it quickly, there's not a minutes time
'Twixt thee and thy death
PROXIMUS. Ha, ha, ha!

[A stone falls and kills Proximus. (IV. i.217-231)]

Through demonstrating his magic art, the Hermit predicts doom for Aurelius if he persists to marry Artesia and acts as a counsellor to Modestia. After the birth of Merlin, the hermit disappears and Merlin takes his place at the ruins of Vortiger's castle and displays his magical art until the end of the play. The death of Proximus is also caused by Merlin's means when a stone falls down on his head. Beside the art of magic, witchcraft is also is portrayed in the play. Rowley in *The Birth of Merlin* associates witches with spectacle. Lucina, Queen of the Shades, is summoned up as a supernatural midwife; the Devil calls on Lucina and the three Fates for their assistance:

Enter Lucina and the three Fates
Thanks, Hecate; hail, sister to the Gods!
There lies your way, haste with the Fates, and help,
Give quick dispatch unto her labouring throws,
To bring this mixture of infernal seed
To humane being; [Exit Fates.
And to beguile her pains, till back you come,

Anticks shall dance and Musick fill the room
[Dance
DEVIL. Thanks, Queen of Shades. (III. iii, 15- 22)

In the early modern period, the figure of the midwife or the 'wise woman' carried the stigma of witchcraft. Midwives assisted pregnant women to ensure the safety of them and their child. However, midwives were also accused of using their supernatural power to cause miscarriage and injury to women. Lucina (named after the Roman goddess of childbirth) has the role of a midwife and aids Joan when she gives birth to Merlin. However, Lucina answers to the name 'Hecate' and uses her 'Anticks,' 'dance', and 'musick,' to aid Joan in the process of delivery successfully, perhaps recalling Middleton's Hecate in *The Witch* who also appears with music and dances with her fellow witches. These words here Lucina utters label her as an alleged witch to the audience. The Christian church as well as criminal courts often condemned single women and healers as witches, even if they were not known as the village wise women. Wise women were considered healers, and would make up a medicine from herbs for the sick person to take, or make up a poultice to heal sores and aches and pains. Horsley argues that the evidence for the "cunning folk" or "wise women" in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries comes from England and the cunning folk of English countryside were the leaders and practitioners of the people's religion as well as their folk medicine'.⁸⁷ Cunning folk were also known by the name of wise-women, wise-men, conjurors and wizards. Cunning folk were mostly involved in the problems of theft, love magic, and sickness. They could also ward off evil spirits using charms, and cured those people and animals who were thought to be bewitched by witches. They also functioned as diviners to detect witches. Once people thought that were bewitched, they went to the diviners in order to suggest to them who should be accused. A number of cunning-folk were sentenced to death not because of being guilty of practicing harmful witchcraft but for magical practices such as revealing the identity of thieves or conjuring spirits.

⁸⁷ Richard A Horsley, 'Further Reflections of Witchcraft and European Folk Religion', *History of Religion*, 19 (1979), 71-95 (p. 78).

Male witches were called warlocks or wizards, for example Merlin, the wizard of Arthurian legends. The role of the magician Merlin is to acquire knowledge and wisdom in a short time. In *The Late Lancashire Witches*, the witches have the power of shape-shifting, and they can turn one into cats, rabbits, dogs and horses. However, in *The Birth of Merlin*, the art of magic is used in aiding the army, giving birth, and the transformation of Joan's character to good before her death. A series of magical acts also occurs between the Devil, Lucina and Joan:

JOAN. Oh, help me gentle son.

MERLIN. Fear not, they shall not hurt you.

DEVIL. Relievest thou her to disobey thy father?

MERLIN. Obedience is no lesson in your school;
Nature and kind to her commands my duty;
The part that you begot was against kinde,
So all I owe to you is to be unkind. (V.i.53-60)

The devil threatens Merlin thus, 'Ile blast thee, slave, to death, and on this rock stick thee <as> an eternal Monument', (V.i.60-62) but Merlin's power is greater and he is not afraid of the Devil as he threatens to punish him and enclose him in a rock. This contrasts with Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* where Mephistopheles prevents Faustus from repenting and threatens to tear his body into thousands of pieces if he does not obey his orders. Similarly, in *The Witch of Edmonton*, the Devil threatens to tear Mother Sawyer into pieces if she breaks the pact they made between them. Merlin as a magician is not only doing evil acts but he also announces that Stonehenge is going to be raised for his mother as a sepulchre as well as a monument. He thinks that his mother is worthy of a blessed resting place where no acts related to black magic and evil can intrude. This is because Joan will be purged of all evil before her death. Therefore, what Merlin tries to do for his mother represents the most conspicuous act of goodness which Rowley displays in the play. It is also with the aid of Merlin's magical power that his mother's character is changed and she is not a foil anymore for Modestia and Constantia.

In sum, this chapter has discussed stage directions of magicians, male witches and dragons in four plays. It has shown that these creatures were particularly interesting for

Elizabethan and Jacobean audiences since they were visually colourful and entertaining. The stage directions in the supernatural scenes in each play were given according to the staging condition of the theatres at that time. Only *Doctor Faustus* has two text versions and thus different stage directions, whereas the other three plays have similar stage directions in early and modern editions.

Chapter Seven: Witches Which Never Flew: Native Witchcraft and the Cunning Woman on the Stage

Before I discuss why this chapter is about native witchcraft and especially the cunning woman, I want to address the most important differences between English and Continental witches. 'Familiars' or 'imps', the servants of the witches who carry out their commands, are mentioned more often in the earliest English accounts. English witches are less sociable and more solitary compared with those of the Continental tradition; Continental witches meet in covens on the Sabbath, but there is little evidence for witches' Sabbaths in English witch trials. Dancing and feasting are also related to Continental witches. Sexual contact with demons (fornication with the devil) is related to Continental witches rather than English. However, there are English witches who make pacts with the devil (for example, Mother Sawyer). Although English witches are generally non-diabolical, the act of 'sucking' a witch's teat by an imp is mentioned more often in the English witchcraft accounts. Magic ointment and flying are Continental witch-beliefs when witches fly in the air or ride a broom. The belief that witches can transform into a hare or a cat is more a feature of the English witchcraft tradition, as is the belief that witches have control over the weather and raise storms. Forming pictures of their intended enemy from clay or wax belongs to the Scottish tradition of witchcraft and this was also practised in England: when witches throw their picture on the fire, then the intended victim gets ill or dies.¹

In early modern England cunning men and women (often older people on the fringes of society) became easy targets for gossip within rural communities. I will examine some figures of the cunning woman in this period and show how they appear in different senses: the cunning woman as a healer, nurturer, fortune-teller and domestic manager. Mother Sawyer, in *The Witch of Edmonton* by William Rowley, Thomas Dekker and John Ford (1621), complains of the community of Edmonton that she has been convicted

¹ See Keith Thomas, *Religion and The Decline of Magic*, p. (568, 679); James Sharpe, 'The Debate on Witchcraft', p. 656, and Ronald C. Sawyer, 'Strangely Handled in All Her Lymes', p. 461.

because she is 'poor, deform'd, and ignorant' (II.i.3).² Sawyer has been abused because she is old and ugly and does not have any means by which to make her living. She is physically portrayed as a contemporary English witch. However Sawyer is not a witch from the beginning of the play, and not presented as one until her community accuse her of witchcraft. After she realizes that there is nothing left to lose, she makes a pact with the devil and thus her identity changes from an old woman into a real witch. In John Lyly's *Mother Bombie* (1594), Bombie is a 'white witch' or 'cunning woman' whose mysterious power is used to help people, not to harm. In Thomas Heywood's *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* (1604), the Wise Woman pretends to be a cunning woman and skilled in fortune-telling, palmistry and curing diseases.

These three plays (*The Witch of Edmonton*, *Mother Bombie* and *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon*) are different from the previous ones considered in this thesis in that there is not any feature of Continental witchcraft in them. The three protagonists are drawn from English witch-lore, and they live in the suburbs and resort to witchcraft in order to make their living. Mother Sawyer, a traditional English witch, is portrayed as hag-like whereas Mother Bombie and the Wise Woman are English local cunning women. The witches do not fly and stage directions do not call for flight in the witch scenes; their feet remain firmly on the ground in all scenes. Cunning women are not the same as witches: they do not have a familiar, they tell fortunes and cure diseases, are benevolent, they do not hold covens on the Sabbath, do not make pacts with the devil in return for rewards and they do not act *maleficium*.

The chronological approach taken here is used in order to determine the dramatic development of the witches and cunning women in two theatrical modes—the tragic (*The Witch of Edmonton*) and the comic (*Mother Bombie*, and *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon*). This thesis has already investigated tragicomedies and tragedies. This study has also once examined the comedy of *The Late Lancashire Witches*. However, *The Late Lancashire Witches*, as has been discussed, was originally a tragicomedy but was changed into a comedy after being revised by Thomas Shadwell in 1681. In the previous chapters of this

² Thomas Dekker, John Ford, William Rowley, *The Witch of Edmonton* (1658), p. 14.

thesis, no comic witch play has yet been examined, only a comic sorcerer play, *The Devil's Charter*.

7.1 *The Witch of Edmonton* by William Rowley, Thomas Dekker and John Ford (1621)

The title page of *The Witch of Edmonton* shows that the play was published in 1658 and written by multiple authors: 'The Witch of Edmonton: A known true Story. Composed into a tragi-comedy by divers well-esteemed Poets; William Rowley, Thomas Dekker, John Ford, &c. Acted by the Princes Servants, often at Court, with singular Applause'.³ There is a record of its performance at Court in December 1621 during the Christmas festivities. The quarto was entered in the Stationer's Register on 21 May 1658 by Edward Blackmore: Entred for his Copie (vnder y^e hand of M^r Thomason Warden) a book called The Witch of Edmonton a TragiComedy by Will: Rowley &c'.⁴ The 1658 Quarto does not seem to come from the theatre in the possession of an actor. In other words, 'it was not prompt copy but instead autograph papers or a rather literal scribal copy preliminary to the prompt book'.⁵ *The Witch of Edmonton* draws upon a pamphlet *The Wonderful Discovery of E. Sawyer, a Witch* which describes the late execution of Elizabeth Sawyer of Edmonton (she was hanged as a witch at Tyburn on April 19, 1621)⁶ and the belief in witchcraft in general and *maleficium*. The play seems to have been performed later in the same year the event occurred.

In terms of authorship, the title page might suggest that there are more than three authors. Besides the three poets mentioned here, other writers, whose reputation would not have increased the popularity of the play, may have participated in composition, as *et cetera* was written after the name of the three playwrights. However, Gifford suggests that William Rowley may not even be one of the team but his name had been added by the publisher as a trick of the trade 'to accumulate a number of names in the title-page, to

³ Ibid., title page.

⁴ Thomas Dekker, *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. by Fredson Bowers (Cambridge: The Syndics of the Cambridge University Press, 1958), iii, p. 483.

⁵ Ibid., p. 485.

⁶ Thomas Dekker, *The Witch of Edmonton: A Critical Editions*, ed. by Etta Soiref Onat (New York: Garland Pub, 1980), p. 273.

catch as many readers as possible; and Rowley's was deservedly a very marketable name'.⁷ Both Dekker and Rowley were poets of considerable reputation in their day. Gifford is right that Rowley's name was popular at the time the play was published but this does not mean that he does not have a partial authorship in its composition. Indeed, most critics agree that Rowley had a hand in writing the play. Weber concludes that the scene between Frank, Susan, and Winnifride are from Ford's hand. The scenes of the intercourse of Mother Sawyer and her diabolical familiar seem to be in Dekker's style; and the scenes of Cuddy Banks and the Morris-dancers are from Rowley's hand.⁸ Here I will mostly investigate the scenes which were written by Dekker. It is thought that Dekker had a hand in writing Elizabeth Sawyer's scenes in the play.

The Witch of Edmonton, with Middleton's *The Witch*, as a contemporary English witch play was written when witch mania in England was increasing and witches enjoyed great popularity on stage. The play has two main plots. In the first, Frank Thorny, a young servant, secretly marries the pregnant Winifred, his fellow servant. However, her employer, Sir Arthur Clarington, takes advantage of Winifred. Frank's father wants his son to marry Susan, the daughter of a rich farmer, Old Carter, in order to solve his own financial woes. At the end, Frank runs away with Winifred, who is disguised as a man, and abandons Susan. Susan follows him but he stabs her. Finally, Frank is executed for his crime. In the second story, Elizabeth Sawyer, the 'witch' of Edmonton, makes a pact with the devil. The devil appears to Sawyer in the shape of a black dog (performed by a human actor) and sucks her blood in return for rewards. Her dog's name is Tom and only Sawyer and Cuddy Banks (the clown) can see him. Mother Sawyer is also executed for using witchcraft against her neighbours to kill their livestock and spoil their crops.

Through the role of Sawyer, Dekker portrays the poor condition of witches and shows how they were thought to live in sordid poverty in contrast to the wealth of the (male) sorcerer. Sawyer acts as a village witch who does real harm. In *The Witch of*

⁷ John Ford, *The Dramatic Works of John Ford: in two volumes, with notes critical and explanatory*, ed. by William Gifford, 2 vols (London, 1827), ii, pp. 557-558.

⁸ John Ford, *The Dramatic Works of John Ford: with an introduction and explanatory notes*, ed. by Henry Weber (London, 1811), i, pp. xii-xiv, ii, p. 399.

Edmonton, unusually the dramatists stress the popular belief of witchcraft through the conversation of the three dancers involved in the morris dancing:

YOUNG BANKS. (...) Have we e'er a Witch in the Morice?

FIRST DANCER. No, no; no woman's part but Maid-marian and the hobby-horse.

YOUNG BANK. I'll have a Witch. I love a Witch.

FIRST DANCER. 'faith, Witches themselves are so common now adays, that the counterfeit will not be regarded. They say we have three or four in Edmonton besides, Mother *Sawyer*.

SECOND DANCER. I would she would dance her part with us. (III.i.5-11)⁹

The first Dancer's joke about their ubiquity in English society may also be a witty allusion to their 'common' appearance on the English stage. The second Dancer's wish that Sawyer would dance with them seems to be a sexual innuendo (of the kind that, as we have seen, is often made in reference to contact with witches), in spite of Sawyer's advanced age, and dancing and feasting are two of the practises associated with witches. Sawyer is convicted by her community because she is poor and deformed, and she has also only one eye: 'Bless us, Cuddy, and let her curse her tother eye out. What dost now' (II.i.89-90); she also does not have anything to warm herself up, instead sometimes she must: 'Gather a few rotten sticks to warm me' (II.i.21). In many of the plays I have discussed in this thesis, witches are depicted as both physically repulsive and, simultaneously, as the objects of lust (presumably because they are sexually available); the witch here is depicted as someone poor, old, and deformed. The play may be seen not only to capitalize on the recent execution of Elizabeth Sawyer in Edmonton, but also to suggest the consequences of the social and economic abuses of vulnerable people, which are seen as the cause of women becoming witches. The play also condemns the English witch trials which depended on the evidence of the neighbours rather than on the witches' confessions (as in the Continental witch trials). Witchcraft accusations and prosecutions served to support the politics of patriarchy in early modern England.

The Witch of Edmonton includes another witch practice that is rooted in English popular beliefs, namely that the witches have a teat. A teat is a witch mark which is made

⁹ Dekker, Ford, Rowley, *The Witch of Edmonton* (1658), p. 26.

in Elizabeth's body by her familiar, the devil in the shape of dog, by sucking her blood. Reginald Scot claims that 'the Divell giveth to everie novice a marke, either with his teeth or with his clawis'.¹⁰ Sawyer is characterized as an alleged witch through her physical mark that her familiar sucked, found under her arm, as well as her act of *maleficium* (laming and killing children, blighting stocks and crops). Diane Purkiss points out that the shifting colour of the dog (Mother Sawyer's familiar, Tom), in *The Witch of Edmonton*, points to its unreliability and deceptiveness, signifying the instability of identity which is also 'emphasized by his curiously lengthy explanation of how he comes by bodies to use'.¹¹ The dog's body is seen to be used for deceit and ill-will since he equates himself with the devil theatrically:

I'll shug in, and get a noble countenance;
 Serve some Briarean footcloth-strider
 That has an hundred hands to catch at bribes,
 But not a finger's nail of charity (V.i.183-6)

In English witch lore, the concept of having a familiar, such as toads, cats, frogs and others, to serve witches or magicians was common in English witchcraft, and at trials witches were accused of being served by familiars.¹² The alleged witches were supposed to use their familiar's body for deceit and as a means of revenge and malice. Ashley calls Sawyer's pact 'malice for malice, the victim of the community turning upon it to wreak retaliation'.¹³ The devil-dog appeared as a result of Sawyer's desire for revenge: 'Ho! Have I found thee cursing? Now thou art mine own' (II.i.121). Elizabeth Sawyer desires revenge but at the same time she is afraid of giving up her soul. Therefore, she only agrees to make the pact with Devil after the Devil threatens to tear her into a thousand pieces. The dog sucks Sawyer's blood via her arm in return for rewards. Sawyer is still seen as malevolent although the evil acts are carried out by the Dog once he kills the cattle of Old

¹⁰ Scot, *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, book III, chapter 3.

¹¹ Purkiss, *The Witch in History*, p. 246.

¹² Corbin and Sedge, *Three Jacobean Witchcraft Plays*, p. 23.

¹³ Leonard R.N. Ashley, review of '*The Witch of Edmonton: A Critical Edition. Renaissance Drama Series*', ed. by Etta Soiref Onat and Stephen Orgel, *Bibliothèque d'humanisme et Renaissance*, 2 (1982), 476-479 (p. 478).

Banks by blighting the corn. The dog becomes Sawyer's familiar once she has made a pact with him by selling her soul and body. However by the end of the play Sawyer curses him as she realizes that the dog does not obey her: 'Out Witch! Thy tryal is at hand: / Our prey being had, the Devil does laughing stand' (V.i.75-76). This indicates more of Sawyer's anger when she is deserted by the dog.

One can draw a comparison between Elizabeth Sawyer's misapprehensions about her relationship with the dog and the situation of *Doctor Faustus*. Sawyer's dog, Tom, is similar to Doctor Faustus' Mephistopheles. Both familiars appear in the shape of a Devil for Sawyer and Faustus. Having a familiar like Tom is related to English witchcraft, but the pact Sawyer makes here with the dog is a feature of Continental witchcraft. Atkinson points out that repentance for Sawyer might still be possible because 'Faustus, although he has similarly sealed with his blood a pact with the Devil, is urged until the very last moment to repent and be saved'.¹⁴ He further finds that there is no doubt in Sawyer's ultimate fate: as 'she goes to her execution there is none of the forgiveness and reconciliation that accompany Frank and nobody expresses the conviction that she will achieve salvation'.¹⁵ However, Sawyer repents and condemns the Devil. An old man urges Doctor Faustus to repent which Faustus rejects, but no one urges Sawyer to repent. Finally, Mother Sawyer leaves the stage with difficulty and professes a new feeling of goodness in her repentance:

These Dogs will mad me: I was well resolv'd
To die in my repentance; though 'tis true,
I would live longer if I might; yet since
I cannot, pray torment me not; my conscience
Is settled as it shall be: all take heed
How they believe the Devil, at last hee'l cheat you.
OLD CARTER, Tha'dst best confess all truly.
SAWYER, Yet again?
Have I scarce breath enough to say my Prayers?
And would you force me to spend that in bawling?

¹⁴ David Atkinson, 'Moral Knowledge and the Double Action in *The Witch of Edmonton*', *Studies in English Literature*, 25 (1985), 419-437 (p. 432).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 462.

Bear witness, I repent all former evil;
There is no damned Conjurer like the Devil. (V.iii.41-51)

Faustus as a magician gains power by selling his blood to the Devil but in return, he has to pay the penalty for his bargain in a horrible death by the end of the play. Faustus's devilish contract is for the delight of power and knowledge, whereas Sawyer's contract with the devil is also for power to take revenge and work malice. Sawyer can be seen as malevolent since she takes revenge upon Old Banks and this happens as a result of her aggravation and evilness. If one looks at the social hierarchy of the play, Sir Arthur Clarington has the top position but countrymen and peasants occupy the middle, and the lower position is given to the witch, Elizabeth Sawyer, who had been feared and abused by her neighbours. Mother Sawyer's life is imagined by Dekker to be spent in a condition of sordid poverty. Similarly, Lyly's Mother Bombie and Heywood's Wise Woman are low-class figures, and serve their neighbours and relatives to make their living.

In *The Witch of Edmonton*, Elizabeth Sawyer's evil power blurs the borderlines between human, witch, and animal, her suckling familiar:

I have heard old Beldams
Talk of Familiars in the shape of Mice,
Rats, Ferrets, Weasels, and I wot not what,
That have appeared, and sucked, some say, their blood (II.i.102-5)

Then she calls her enemies sucking animals, when she says

this black cur
That barks and bites, and sucks the very blood
of me and of my credit (II.i.111-113)

Sawyer, as a witch, is depicted as a frightening female form through her tongue and her body. Young Cuddy Bab blames Tom for his wicked behaviour: 'to creep under an old witch's coats and suck like a great puppy! Fie upon't! I have heard beastly things of you, *Tom*' (V.i.173-174). Here the female body has been used in the context of anxieties surrounding the lactating body of the woman as a witch. Holmes gives the reason for the

preponderant numbers of women who were accused of witchcraft because they were 'the weaker sex, more easily seduced by satanic temptation. But the machinery in which they became involved, often at the instigation of men, was created, controlled, and ultimately discarded by the magisterial and clerical elite'.¹⁶ King James in his *Daemonologie* concentrated on the reason for the predominance of female witches and he asked what can be the cause that there are twenty women for every man involved in witchcraft: 'the reason is easie, for as that sexe is frailer then man is, is it easier to be entrapped in these grosse snares of the Deuill, as was ouer well proued to be true, by the Serpents deceiuing of Eua at the beginning, which makes him the homelier with that sexe sensine'.¹⁷ Men in early modern England had superior roles in religion and government above that of subordinated women. That is why the alleged witches were seen to seek out alternative, occult forms of power to protect themselves and in order not to be violated by male authority.

The Witch of Edmonton dramatizes the conflicts of both social and demonic power in Edmonton near London. The double actions of *The Witch of Edmonton* achieve a structural unity in the play through the theme of the knowledge of both good and evil. Elizabeth Sawyer is seen as a product of her society rather than being anomalous in it as she points out that she lacks knowledge of witchcraft and is only taught by her neighbours unintentionally:

Some call me Witch;
And being ignorant of myself, they go
About to teach me how to be one; urging,
That my bad tongue (by their bad usage made so)
Forespeaks their Cattle, doth bewitch their corn,
Themselves, their Servants, and their babes at nurse. (II.i.8-15)

Through her speeches, Sawyer admits that she does not have any knowledge of good or evil on witchcraft but falls in witchcraft through temptations and her ignorance. Corbin and Sedge argue that through Sawyer's opening soliloquy, the audience is invited to

¹⁶ Clive Holmes, 'Women: Witnesses and Witches', *Past & Present*, 140 (1993), 45-78 (p.77).

¹⁷ King James I, *Daemonologie*, II. V. 43-44.

‘respond to her with sympathy as a victim both of the devil’s wiles and the social prejudices of the community in which she lives’, and they argue that society predisposes the women to behave and feel in ways which expose them to the devil’s temptation if it does not exactly make witches.¹⁸ I agree that Sawyer becomes a victim of both her familiar devil-dog and the Edmonton community. However, this evidence is enough to make Sawyer a witch since she makes a diabolical pact with the devil. She acknowledges that she has a bad tongue as a result of the ill-treatment of the villagers towards her. Her gender identity is constructed here as a witch while she blames her neighbours and says:

Still vex’d? still tortur’d? That Curmudgeon *Banks*
Is ground of all my scandal. I am shunn’d
And hated like a sickness: made a scorn
To all degrees and sexes. I have heard old Beldams
Talk of Familiars in the shape of Mice,
Rats, Ferrets, Weasels, and I wot not what,
That have appeared, and sucked, some say, their blood.
But by what means they came acquainted with them,
I’m now ignorant: would some power good or bad,
Instruct me which way I might be revenged
Upon this Churl, I’d go out of my self
And give this Fury leave to dwell within
This ruined Cottage, ready to fall with age,
Abjure all goodness: be at hate with prayer,
And study Curses, Imprecations,
Blasphemous speeches, Oaths, detested Oaths,
Or any thing that’s ill; so I might work
Revenge upon this Miser, this black Cur
That barks, and bites, and sucks the very blood
Of me and of my credit. ‘Tis all one
To be a Witch, as to be counted one.
Vengeance, shame, ruin, light upon that Canker! (II.i.98-120)

In this context one can recognise a witch’s speech rather than a speech by an ordinary woman. She has learned from others about beldams, familiars, sucking blood, and making a pact with the black Cur, Tom, which barks and bites in order to take revenge upon the ‘Canker’, Old Banks. Her speech shows the audience Mother Sawyer’s understandable anger at being abused and beaten by her community. This leads her to desire to revenge

¹⁸ Corbin and Douglas, *Three Jacobean Witchcraft Plays*, pp. 24-25.

herself by provoking her familiar to appear and make the pact with him. Herrington argues that *The Witch of Edmonton* is based on the recent trial of Mother Sawyer, but 'handling the old hag, her temptation and submission to the Devil, her traffic with her dog-familiar, and all the hard facts of her life as a social outcast, with a sympathy unknown to the trials, and seldom found anywhere in the literature of the age'.¹⁹ Mother Sawyer shows herself as ignorant in that she does not have any knowledge of this devilish power and how to achieve it. She is a victim of both the social prejudice of her village on one hand, and the devil on the other hand. Mother Sawyer goes to the gallows as she is convicted of witchcraft, as is Frank. Mother Sawyer is hanged by the end of the play like the witches of Lancashire.

The cases of both Elizabeth Sawyer, *The Witch of Edmonton*, and the seventeen witches of Lancashire, *The Late Lancashire Witches*, are approached by many early modern writers in their pamphlet publications and treatises, and dramatists in their plays. Briggs argues that witchcraft was treated seriously but still decoratively by the Elizabethan dramatists, as well as in later plays like, *The Witch of Edmonton* and *The Late Lancashire Witches*, but by the end of the century scepticism had gained ground, and witchcraft relapsed into a 'subject for pantomime'.²⁰ I agree with Briggs that witchcraft in *Mother Bombie* is treated lightly. After that, during the reign of King James I, Shakespeare, Jonson and Middleton treated witchcraft seriously and playfully at the same time. As the century went on, the idea of witchcraft in *The Witch of Edmonton*, and *The late Lancashire Witches*, tends to aim towards realism, and documented cases as their source is drawn from particular court trials. However, the plays written by the end of the century are more a subject for pantomime. For instance, *The Lancashire Witches* by Thomas Shadwell (1681), focuses more on the entertainment of the witches and the visual spectacle they create for the audience. Similarly, in *Macbeth* in Davenant's second Quarto (1674), the witch scenes were refashioned in order to offer a more spectacular version of witches instead of giving them a haggish and sinister look.

¹⁹ Herrington, 'Witchcraft and Magic in the Elizabethan Drama', p. 483.

²⁰ Katherine Mary Briggs, *Pale Hecate's Team: an examination of the beliefs on Witchcraft and Magic among Shakespeare's Contemporaries and his Immediate Successors* (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1962), p. 221.

7.2 *Mother Bombie* by John Lyly (1594)

Witchcraft in the comedy of *Mother Bombie* is treated tolerantly compared to *The Witch of Edmonton*. Mother Bombie enjoys being a cunning woman and helping her community. According to the title page of the first quarto, the play is dated to 1594, 'Mother Bombie: As it was Sundrie times, plaid by the children of pawles', printed by Thomas Creede for Cuthbert Burby, 1594.²¹ However, Fleay dates *Mother Bombie* to 1588-9 or possibly 1589-90.²² The second quarto is dated 1598. The 'uncourtly' *Mother Bombie* has been neglected among the critics compared to Lyly's other plays. One cannot find a definite source for this play. The play evokes all the aspects of contemporary sixteenth-century life in England and particularly the day-to-day affairs of the small town of Rochester in Kent. Mother Bombie is portrayed as an English cunning woman, marginalized and exiled from town society but still successful.

The plots are simply based on the idea that mischievous servants assist their young masters in marriage against their parents' wishes. The titular character denies that she is a witch, but a 'cunning woman'. The characters in the play consult her for advice and clairvoyance and she prophesizes the result of their situations. Like Hecate in *The Witch*, she appears not to have a significant effect on the characters, except when she convinces Vicinia to reveal her secret and this leads to the solving of the difficulties of the play. Her actions resolve the problem of those people who pursue love and happiness. The two lovers, Candius and Livia, the hero and heroine, are separated from each other by their fathers, who are only interested in making a profitable match. The two rich old men, Memphio and Stellio, want to arrange a marriage between their children Accius and Silena. Candius's father, Sperantus, wants his son to marry the rich Silena whereas Livia's father, Prisius, wants his daughter to marry the wealthy Accius. However, this foolish marriage is forestalled when Vicinia reveals that the two fools, Accius and Silena, are actually her own children whom she exchanged for Maestius and Serena, the old men's

²¹ John Lyly, *Mother Bombie*, (London, 1594), title page.

²² John Lyly, *The Complete Works of John Lyly*, ed. by R. Warwick Bond (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902), iii, p. 167.

real offspring, years ago. The two lovers can now legitimately wed since they are not related. Mother Bombie tells Serena that she and Maestius 'shall be married to morrow hand in hand,/ By the laws of God, Nature, & the land/ Your parents shall be glad, & give you their hande' (III.i. 40-42). By the end of the play, the characters realize that Mother Bombie has spoken truly and they praise her for the good works she does to them.

The play was written about ten years after the publications of Scott's *The Discovery of Witchcraft*. Witch mania in England was not at its height during the performance of this play. Unlike Hecate's spell-binding classical witch, Bombie is more seen as a fortune-teller. Serena calls Mother Bombie an

old cunning woman, who can tell fortunes, expound dreames, tell of things that
be lost,
and deuine of accidents to come: she is called the good woman, who yet never did
hurt (III.i.25-28).

The power of Mother Bombie as a white witch is detailed by Serena. White witches are seen to help society, as fortune-tellers and healers, and to bring good into the world. Bombie specifically defends herself against accusations of witchcraft:

SILENA. They saie you are a witch.
BOMBIE. They lie, I am a cunning woman. (II.iii.86-87)

Silena takes Bombie as a witch without understanding what she is being told. This suggests a reference to those cunning women who were accused of witchcraft and black magic in the trial records during Tudor times. However, Bombie insists on the distinction between these two types. Mother Bombie is again called one of the 'old hags' by Maestius when he says:

Content, sweet sister; and learne of me
hereafter, that these old sawes of such old hags,
are but false fires to leade one out of a plaine
path into a deep pit (III.i.56-60)

In this context, Lyly presents a societal accusation of witchcraft during the early Elizabethan period as well as Bombie's assertion of her innocence. What distinguishes her from the other alleged witches is that she does not use magical properties, such as herbs, spells, ointment, and incantation, for her mysterious gifts of divination. She rather can 'see' the future, reveal lost property and expound the meaning of dreams, and prophesy of accidents to occur. Bombie is consulted by Silena to give her clarification about her sexual status: 'I will know of the old woman whether I be a maid/ or no, and then, I must needs be a man' (II.iii.79-80). One can say that there is a joke here by Silena when she wants to know about her own femininity through Bombie. Bombie also is visited by Rixula: 'Nay, gammer, I pray you tell me who stole my spoone out of the buttrie?' (III.iv.147). In the final scene, Vicinia needs Bombie's assistance in recovery of lost children:

My heart throbbs, my ears tingle, my minde misgiues
mee, since i heare such muttering of marryages in Rochester. My
conscience, which these eighteen yeeres hath beene frozen with
coniealed guiltynesse, beginnes now to thawe in open greiefe. But
I wil not acuse my selfe till I see more danger: the good olde
Woman *Mother Bombie* shall trie her cunning vpon me: and if
I perciue my case is desperate by her, then wyll I rather preuent,
although with shame, then report too late, and be inexcusable. (V.ii. 1-8)

These characters visit Bombie to help and she does not take payment in return for her advice: 'I take no monie, but good words. Raile not if I tell true;/ if I doe not, reuenge' (III. iv. 182-183). It seems also she refuses payment for her services in III.i.47 and V.ii.1-27. Bombie is seen as a source of hope and comfort by the community of Kent even while witchcraft is suspected. Serena (III.i.25-28) and Memphio (V.iii.330-3320) take Bombie as a good wise woman who never hurts anyone, but Maestius suspects her supernatural power and distrusts her because of her hag-like state (III.i.56-60).

Bombie does not pursue financial gain as she does not take money for her services but still does not live in her community. The only reason she stands aloof from the social group is because of her hag-like appearance, old age, and supernatural powers. For

example, Maestius seeks her advice and responds to her while Bombie describes herself as:

MOTHER BOMBIE. The dame of the house!

MAESTIUS. She might haue said the beldam, for her face, and yeeres, and attire.
(III.i.33-35)

‘Beldam’ means ‘a loathsome old woman, a hag; a witch; a furious raging woman (without the notion of age), a virago’.²³ The servants are also afraid because of Bombie’s witch-like appearance that she will transfer them into non-human forms or apes:

HALFPENNY. Crosse your selues, look how she looks.

ROMIO. Marke her not, sheele turn vs all to Apes (III.iv. 86-87)

However, no transformation of human into animal takes place in the play. There is no devil familiar to aid Bombie and no witch accoutrements can be found in the play. Herrington argues that Mother Bombie is a portrait of an English type, a ‘benevolent “wise woman”, who, though accused of being a witch, denies it, and gives no evidence of trafficking with infernal powers’.²⁴ She is not allied with the forces of evil like Erictho, the Weird Sister, Mother Sawyer and Hecate. She also does not deceive her clients through her fake prophetic powers like The Wise Woman of Hogsdon for her personal gain. Bombie is also not engaged in prostitution and the disposal of unwanted and illegitimate babies like The Wise Woman of Hogsdon. Another difference between them is that Sawyer is not as social creature as Bombie and Heywood’s the Wise Woman, but a social pariah. Although Bombie and the Wise Woman do not have Sabbath meeting, their own clients are enough to make them social.

²³‘Beldam’, *Oxford English Dictionary*,
<<http://www.oed.com.ezproxy3.lib.le.ac.uk/view/Entry/17334?redirectedFrom=beldam#footerWrapper>>
[Accessed 7th September 2013]

²⁴ Herrington, ‘Witchcraft and Magic in the Elizabethan Drama’, pp. 472-3.

7.3 The Wise Woman of Hogsdon by Thomas Heywood (1604)

Heywood treats witchcraft in his *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* lightly. His witch, the Wise Woman, is comic and satirical and designed to suit the new fashion in contrast to his tragical witches in *The Late Lancashire Witches*. However, in both plays, Heywood presents a picture of some phase of contemporary English life. Not only do Mother Sawyer and Mother Bombie not make their entrances and exits through flying, but also The Wise Woman of Hogsdon does not fly. She simply enters and exits when she is summoned by her clients. The agreed year for the composition of *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* is 1604 but it was not printed until 1638. It seems that *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* was first performed by the Queen's Men at the Curtain theatre, the majority of the play's productions were likely made at the Red Bull,²⁵ to which Queen Anne's Men repaired probably in 1605.²⁶ Heywood used the same Latin motto, 'Aut prodesse solent, aut Delectare', under his name in *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon*, and for his several other plays, which suggests the authenticity of his works. The complimentary epistle written by Samuel King to Heywood also suggests that the authorship of the play belongs to Thomas Heywood only. The play claims to have been successful and popular on the title page: 'As it hath been sundry times Acted with great Applause'.²⁷ Here, I investigate the character of the Wise Woman and her activities as an alleged cunning woman, comparing it to the other plays I have already concentrated on.

The plot starts with the impostures of a fortune-teller. The Wise Woman does not resemble the classical nor Elizabethan black witch. As we have seen, Mother Bombie is white witch but the Wise Woman is a charlatan who pretends to be is a white witch for her personal gain. The titular woman pretends to have the ability to control the supernatural order. The play has three subplots, in which Second Luce, Luce (a goldsmith's

²⁵ Red Bull was one of the oldest and popular theatres in London, originally was an inn yard and converted into theatre during the reign of Elizabeth. Thomas Heywood, *The Best Plays of the Old Dramatists: Thomas Heywood*, ed. by A. Wilson Verity; with an Introduction, ed. by J. Addington Symonds (London: Vizetelly, 1888), p. xxxiii.

²⁶ Thomas Heywood, *A Critical Edition of Heywood's The Wise Woman of Hogsdon*, ed. Michael H. Leonard, p. 37

²⁷ Thomas Heywood, *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* (London, 1638), p. frontispiece

daughter) and Sencer (a conceited gentleman) disguise themselves. Chartley leaves his betrothed Luce and comes to London where he is married secretly to another woman of the same name. However, Luce follows him to London and by means of a scheme assisted by the Wise Woman, Chartley's secret marriage to the second Luce takes place in the dark. The intriguer characters who have a role in the scheming are the Wise Woman (chief intriguer), Second Luce, Luce, Chartley (a wild-headed gentleman), and Sencer. *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* is very well managed despite having complications in its plot between the two Luces, a young Lady and a young Chartley. Luce and the Wise Woman have a very good friendship. Lucy's father, Sir Harry (a knight), portrays the figure of a wise old man, and Sir Boniface is an ignorant pedant or schoolmaster. The pair of lovers are in complicated relationships: Gratiana (Sir Harry's daughter) and Sencer; Luce is married to Boyster (a blunt fellow) but then Chartley restored to her. Second Luce is disguised as Jack, the wise woman's boy servant. By the end of the play the three couples, Gratiana and Sencer, Luce and Boyster, Second Luce and Chartley all get married.

The Wise Woman has a low status in her community and is surrounded by credulous men and women, by which Heywood portrays both the virtues and the follies of English life. Gibbons argues that Heywood in writing *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* 'was capable not only of satirizing the typically ineffectual civil authorities, gullible or venal citizens, and wily rogues of his day but also of sustained literary reflection on the social challenges posted by the dynamic conditions of urban life in the seventeenth century'.²⁸ *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* is a comedy of English life, and, unlike some of the other plays discussed earlier, there are no murders and suicides. Heywood depicts an English domestic life and in particular the picture of the surface of London life. There is not a direct source for the plots of *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon*. Cromwell argues that the play is a clever comedy of intrigue, 'the centre of the action being the "wise woman" of Hogsdon (Hoxton), a charlatan whose prototype may well have been an actual London

²⁸ Daniel R. Gibbons, 'Thomas Heywood in the House of the Wise Woman', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 49 (2009), 391-416 (p. 392).

figure'.²⁹ Sawyer lives in Edmonton and the Wise Woman lives in Hoxton, both located in the suburbs of London. Mother Bombie resides in Rochester in Kent. Cunning women, witches, gamblers, and prostitutes live in the suburbs as it is the place free of city jurisdiction for their licentious behaviour. This is also why most of the theatres, gaming houses, pools and yards, and brothels were outside the jurisdiction of London. The three plays have an urban setting and thus the dramatists focus on middle- and lower-class concerns including witches, servants, clown, fool and cunning women. The play also shows the role of the theatre in shaping urban life through its manifestations of the changing spaces of the suburbs of London in the early modern era. For instance, the problems of the community's sexual and social economy get solved in the house of the Wise Woman. The cunning women, Bombie and the Wise Woman, occupy a central position in urban life. Her abode becomes a familiar and local place for her clients' illegitimate desires.

The Wise Woman assures the audience that she does not make any pact with the devil. The lower-class Wise Woman pretends that she serves her community in several ways by use of her power, such as finding lost objects, seeing the future, and diagnosing illness, in order to make her living:

Let me see, how many trades have I to live by? First, I am a wise-woman and a fortune-teller, and under that I deal in physic and fore-speaking, in palmistry and recovering of things lost. Next, I undertake to cure mad folks. Then I keep gentlewomen lodgers, to furnish such chambers as I let out by the night. Then I am provided for bringing young wenches to bed. And, for a need, you see I can play the match-maker" (III.i.993-1000).³⁰

She assures the audience that she is only a cunning woman by giving a resume of her different skills. The Wise Woman does not have a familiar spirit or a devil to aid her in her trades. The Wise Woman and Bombie do not perform *Maleficium*: since their intention is to help their surroundings, not to lame and kill children, blighting stock and crops.

²⁹ Otelia Cromwell, *Thomas Heywood: A Study in the Elizabethan Drama of Everyday Life* ([Hamden, Conn.]: Archon Books, 1969 [c1928]), p. 58.

³⁰ Thomas Heywood, *A Critical Edition of Heywood's The Wise Woman of Hogsdon*, ed. by Michael H. Leonard (New York and London: Garland, 1980), pp. 143-144.

The Wise Woman mentions the victim witches who were hanged because they had talent in different objects:

You have heard of Mother Bomby; and then there is one Hatfield in Pepper Alley, he doth pretty well for a thing that's lost. There's another in Coleharbour, that's skilled in the planets. Mother Struton, in Golden Lane, is for fore-speaking; Mother Philips, of the Bankside, for the weakness of the back; and then there's a very reverend matron on Clerknwell Green; good at many things. Mistress Mary on the Bankside is for 'recting a figure; and one (what do you call her?) in Westminster, that practiseth the book and the key, and the sieve and the shears: and all do well, according to their talent. For myself, let the world speak. Hark you, my friend, you shall take. [*She whispers.* (II.i)]³¹

The Wise Woman lists numerous traditional witches or disreputable practitioners with their specialists. Andreadis notes that the name 'Bombus' is listed in the 'Dictionarium Historicum & Poeticum' appended to Thomas Cooper's *Thesaurus Linguae Romanae & Britannicae* (1565), with the gloss, 'The name of a certain diuinour', and that a further seven references to a (Mother) Bungie, Bumbye, or Bumby occur in the course of the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.³² Reginald Scot in *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) mentioned Mother Bungie of Rochester in Kent, as an example of witches who were charlatans and did not have any supernatural powers. Lyly has presumably based his Mother Bombie on his knowledge of Scot's Bungie. Here, Heywood makes a joke based on audience's recognition of *Mother Bombie*. Mother Bombie is also referenced again in *The Witch of Edmonton* when Old Bank calls Sawyer: 'You see your work, Mother Bumby (IV. i).'³³ *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* was written ten years after *Mother Bombie* but *The Witch of Edmonton* twenty seven years. This shows the continuity of witchcraft on stage from the Tudor period until the end of Jacobean times, from the time that witch mania in England was on the rise until the time that it was at its greatest height. Alternatively, it might show at least a lot of stage repertories. The fiction of Mother Bombie becomes a real person to the audience through the allusion made in both plays. Here, there is a

³¹ Thomas Heywood, *The Best Plays of the Old Dramatists: Thomas Heywood*, ed. by A. Wilson Verity; with an Introduction, ed. by J. Addington Symonds, p. 266.

³² Quoted in Leah Scragg's *Mother Bombie*, p. 13.

³³ Thomas Dekker, John Ford, William Rowley, *The Witch of Edmonton* (1658), p. 45.

tendency to invite sympathy for Mother Bombie and her fellow witches by drawing attention to the misuse of the term 'witch' as an insult. Regarding her other contemporaries, the Wise Woman lists them and names the fields they specialize in. This context shows also the examples of supernatural arts in which the Jacobean witches specialized and for which they were consulted, such as casting waters, locating lost properties, the planets, prophesying, weaknesses of the back, acting as a general practitioner, and 'recting a figure' or astrology. Middleton, in *The Witch*, also casts his witches into different supernatural gifts: for instance, Hecate is skilled in bringing about the failure of marriage between the characters through causing impotence in man or infertility in woman and also has the power to fly at night with her familiar; Hoppo acts *maleficium* (kills the cattle and destroy orchards and etc.); Stadlin raises storms to wreck ships and a house. The Weird Sisters of *Macbeth* are skilled in prophesying, Faustus in astrology, Sawyer in *maleficium* and Erictho has skills in the weather, the heaven and the earth.

In contrast to the previous witches, the Wise Woman pretends to be skilled in fore-speaking, palmistry and curing diseases. However, it is not very clear to Second Luce how the Wise Woman can tell the future:

SECOND LUCE, 'Tis strange the ignorant should be thus fooled!
 What can this witch, this wizard, or old trot,
 Do by enchantment, or by magic spell?
 Such as profess that art should be deep scholars.
 What reading can this simple woman have?
 'Tis probably gross foolery. [Exit Countryman. (II.i)]³⁴

Second Luce, disguised in boy's clothes, has come to London to find out about her wayward love. She disbelieves the Wise Woman's skill and asks if she gains her mysterious power through enchantment or a magic spell. She discovers the fraud once she finds a job as the servant of the Wise Woman. The Wise woman gains her supernatural power only through tricks and illusions. Reginald Scot, in *The Discovery of Witchcraft*, also argues that

³⁴ Thomas Heywood, *The Best Plays of the Old Dramatists*, p. 266.

so-called cunning woman, conjurers, exorcists, witches, and other 'jugglers' were simply charlatans who gained their power by tricks, illusions, and the artful leading on of their clients. The Wise Woman resides in Hogsdon (Hoxton), the suburb of London, and is a fortune-teller for her neighbourhood, women and men. She is not loved by her customers. The Wise Woman is called witch, wizard and old trot by Second Luce. She is again called a 'witch', 'hag', and 'beldam' when she is confronted by Young Chartley:

See, here she is. How now, witch! How now, hag! How now, beldam! You are the wise woman, are you? And have wit to keep yourself warm enough, I warrant you.

WISE WOMAN. Out, thou knave!

SECOND LUCE. And will these wild oats never be sown?

[Aside.]

YOUNG CHARTLEY. You enchantress, sorceress, she-devil! You Madam Hecate, Lay Proserpine!

you are too old, you hag, now, for conjuring up spirits yourself; but you keep pretty young witches under your roof, that can do that.

WISE WOMAN. I or my family conjure up any spirit! I defy thee, thou young hare-brained- (II. i)

Young Chartley perhaps teasing the old actor who performs the role of the Wise Woman. This is perhaps because an older actor plays the part of the Wise Woman and thus cannot have a role as a romantic female. If she wanted to be sexually attractive, her role should have been played by a soft-voiced and complexioned young boy actor. The Wise Woman appears as a conventional rogue. She is entertaining and gets a reputation for accomplishing wonders. The Wise Woman's prophetic power is based on the knowledge given by the credulity of her clients. In other words, she performs the tricks through sheer knavery and the disclosures of her customers whom she visits before she predicts their wonders. For instance, she repeats back to them the information that she has already received by asking her clients about their problems, creating the illusion that she earned this knowledge through the art of magic:

WISE WOMAN. And where doth the paine hold her most?

COUNTRYMAN. Marry at her heart forsooth.

WISE WOMAN. Ey, at her heart, she hath a griping at her heart.

COUNTRYMAN. You have hit it right.

WISE WOMAN. Nay, I can see so much in Urine. (II.i)

The play also satirizes the gullibility and superstition of simple-minded folk who resort to the wise woman for their problems, and do not realise that they are being cheated. However, the Wise Woman admits that she does not have any contact with the devil when she practices her supernatural power. Boyster enters and asks:

Canst conjure?

WISE-WOMAN. Oh, that's a foul word! But I can tell you your fortune, as they say; I have some

little skill in palmistry, but never had to do with the devil.

BOYSTER. And had the devil never anything to do with thee? Thou look'st somewhat like his dam. Look on me: canst tell what I ail? (II. i)

Once again, sexual innuendo can be found here in the response of a man to a cunning woman, a further sign of the association between sexual immorality and their social position.

The Wise Woman gains her reputation not through magical power, but through manipulation of the fake skills she claims for herself. Thus, her identity as a witch is produced by her customers. In contrast to Mother Sawyer, she does not make any pact with the devil and does not threaten anyone, nor does she have a familiar devil to make a pact with and sell her blood. No coven of witches is depicted in each of *The Witch of Edmonton*, *Mother Bombie* and *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon*. Albert Tricomi argues that 'although exposed as a charlatan and a bawd of sorts, the Wise Woman resolves, in socially productive ways and despite her marginalised status, problems ensuing from illegitimate births and predatory gallants'.³⁵ In spite of being a fraud, the Wise Woman is a source of comfort and reassurance for the Hogsdon community as she has power in disposing of the illegitimate babies and facilitates for those who pursue love. Midwifery was also practised by the cunning or wise woman. Heywood presents satirically the Wise

³⁵ Albert H. Tricomi, review of 'The Stage and Social Struggle in Early Modern England', ed. by Jean E. Howard, *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 95 (1996), 113-115 (p. 115).

Woman only as a charlatan and no more than a fraud. This suggests that all the so-called witches are as false and fraudulent as she. *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* is more theatrical, Helgerson argues, 'where the charlatan wise woman is allowed to preside over the play's comic denouement and where a gentlewoman in boy's clothing successfully controls the action and achieves her desire'.³⁶ In other words, 'women employ theatrical practices to fulfil their desires'.³⁷ For instance, the Wise Woman has so many books whereas she can neither write nor read, but pretends to read in order to fool her clients: 'for to be ignorant, and seem ignorant, what greater folly?' (III.i.885-886). Therefore, she pretends to be a cunning woman for her own personal gain.

7.4 Genre and Stage Directions of these three Plays

The play is full of sexual innuendo and farcical word-play and several elements of archetypal pantomime. Withholding essential information from the audience, intrigue and deception by cross-dressing are the common dramatic devices that Heywood used for the plots of his comedy. One cannot find supernatural accoutrements in the play, such as flying witches, making a diabolical pact with the devil, the transformation of humans into animals and having a devil on stage. There are no classical motifs of witchcraft as elements of this comedy, but only simple intrigue and cross-dressing. There is also no evidence of the use of stage spectacle such as '*Thunder and Lightning*', in comparison to Hecate, and Mother Bombie, when she enters. She simply enters and exits. No stage directions call for her to fly: the Wise Woman appears on stage four times (in II. i, III. i, V. ii, and V. iv) and the stage direction each time reads as: *Enter the Wise-woman*.³⁸ The stage directions make clear that she is entering on foot rather than sitting on her stool when summoned.

³⁶ Richard Helgerson, review of 'The Stage and Social Struggle in Early Modern England', ed. by Jean E. Howard, *Comparative Literature*, 48 (1996), 383-385 (p. 384).

³⁷ Theodore B. Leinwand, review of 'The Stage and Social Struggle in Early Modern England', ed. by Jean E. Howard, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 47 (1996), 204-206 (p. 205).

³⁸ Thomas Heywood, *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* (London, 1638); Thomas Heywood, *A Critical Edition of Heywood's The Wise Woman of Hogsdon*, and Thomas Heywood, *The Best Plays of the Old Dramatists*.

Similarly, Lyly's Bombie does not fly, like the Continental witches. In the early editions, Mother Bombie simply enters when Silena crosses to her house and calls her (II.iii.91):

*Enter Mother Bombie*³⁹

Bombie also simply enters when summoned in the other early editions.⁴⁰ However, in the Revels edition, Leah Scragg assumes that, as the early editions imply, Mother Bombie is already seated upon her stool as her door is opened, witch-like in both posture and attire, rather than simply entering when summoned.⁴¹ According to Scragg the stage direction reads (II.iii.93):

[The door of the house opens to disclose]
Mother BOMBIE *[sitting on a stool]*.⁴²

This is because in the following lines Bombie asks Silena to hold up her hand but Silena holds it up too high for her to inspect. Bombie then says 'not so high'. This implies that Bombie is already seated on her stool rather than entering on foot. The stage direction again reads as *[The door opens to MOTHER BOMBIE seated on her stool]* in (III.iv.84) when she is visited by the servants, and when Vicinia summons her for the recovery of the lost children in (V.ii.11). However, such an interpretation of the stage business ignores the clear direction in the early editions that Bombie simply enters in the mentioned scene.

There is also no scene or stage direction to call for flight of Mother Sawyer. She simply enters and exits the stage, in what we can assume to be an unspectacular fashion. So, witch's flight as an element of comedy cannot be found in *The Witch of Edmonton*. The play offers a dramatic style of tragicomedy which is different from the tragicomedy of Middleton's *The Witch*. Flight is not one of Sawyer's activities as it is for Hecate. The flight of Hecate with Malkin is a comic part of the play, but this cannot be found here. Sawyer is in line with Bombie and the Wise Woman only in stage directions when she makes her

³⁹ John Lyly, *Mother Bombie*, (London, 1594), no page number is given.

⁴⁰ Lyly, *The Complete Works of John Lyly*, p. 91.

⁴¹ John Lyly, *Mother Bombie*, ed. by Leah Scragg (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), p. 38.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 104.

entrances and exits. As a traditional English witch, Sawyer simply enters in early editions and modern editions. She appears four times on stage in (II.i), (IV.i), (V.i), and (V.iii), stage direction in these scenes reads as: 'Enter Elizabeth Sawyer'.⁴³ It is not very clear whether she stands up or is seated when she is summoned by her customers.

Blackfriars presented witchcraft in tragicomic modes in which contemporary writers could engage and relate these texts to contemporary issues. *The Witch of Edmonton* is a tragicomedy-type whereas both *Mother Bombie* and *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* are comedy. Witchcraft has been treated lightly in them. Mother Bombie and the Wise Woman are comic and satirical and designed to suit the new fashion, compared to tragical witches in *The Witch of Edmonton* and *The Late Lancashire Witches*. The witch scenes in *Macbeth* (1606), *The Witch of Edmonton* (1621), and *The Late Lancashire Witches* (1634) comprise the tragic part of play while the witch scenes in *Mother Bombie* (1590), *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* (1604), *Sophonisba* (1605-1606), *The Masque of Queens* (1609), and *The Witch* (1609-1616), comprise the comic part of the play. All these plays offer us a picture of the English witch of that time through the aspects of her practice. This tells us that the forms of witchcraft treated in the late Elizabethan times (*Mother Bombie* and *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon*), and Jacobean times (*The Witch of Edmonton*) all differ subtly according to their historical context. The playwrights do not use Continental features of witchcraft in these mentioned plays such as aerial journey of witches during the night. Bombie and the Wise Woman survive by the end of the play, but not Mother Sawyer. Witchcraft in *The Witch of Edmonton* is more historically situated and the witch character is fated to die as she is a threat to her community. However, Bombie and the Wise Woman survive because Bombie uses her mysterious power not to harm, but to help. The Wise Woman also pretends to have prophetic power, but she does not, and still survives until the end of the play.

Witchcraft in *The Witch of Edmonton* is used as a subject of pantomime through the use of a familiar on stage. For instance, the transformation of a human being into an animal, Sawyer's familiar is a devil in the shape of a dog. The dog is black which symbolizes

⁴³ Thomas Dekker, John Ford, and William Rowley, *The Witch of Edmonton* (1658); Dekker, *The Witch of Edmonton: A Critical Editions*; Corbin and Douglas, *Three Jacobean Witchcraft Plays*.

evil and temptations, like Faustus's dog, and Hecate's Malkin in the cat's costume. The familiar dog helps Sawyer by killing Old Banks's cattle. The performance of the dog on stage is considered as a comic element of the play. Even so, the spectacle of 'thunder and lightning' accompanies the dog when he sucks Sawyer's arm: '[Sucks her arm, thunder and lightning'.⁴⁴ With the help of her dog, Sawyer causes her neighbour, Ann Ratcliffe (Old Ratcliffe's wife), to go insane and kill herself. Sawyer and Tom are also executed at the end. However, death is mentioned from the very beginning of the play, but this is not enough to override the comic elements of the play.

The genre of *Mother Bombie* is based on Roman models. The play, as a domestication of classical comedy in Roman style, is resolved by a classical device. The mayor of the provincial town involves himself in the events instead of a deity or monarch to solve the problems of the play. As in the tradition of early 'classical' comedies, Lyly uses each of the Hackneyman, Scrivener, Sergeant and Fiddlers of Kent in order to offer a more homely local taste to the play. However, the recovery of lost children and the confirmation of the identity of the characters which the plot is based on are drawn from Roman drama, especially Terence. The characters have Greek names, with the exception of Mother Bombie and one servant who have English provincial town names. One can say that this comedy includes classical figures, English landscape, sixteenth-century English cunning women and servants. As a work of farce, the play is full of love, tricks and masked identity. Bombie portrays a major role in this comic play and she manipulates the love plot. Each of the tricks and disguises are farcical elements of comedy. Besides these comical elements, four songs are sung by the simpletons, servants and fiddlers in (II.ii.164-183, III.iii.1-14, III.iv.42-61, and V.iii.64-84), but there is not any witch feasting and rite. No devil appears to offer a comic spectacle to the audience. Lyly shapes the urban life of Rochester through *Mother Bombie* as an early manifestation of a later fashion for witches on stage.

⁴⁴ Dekker, Ford, and Rowley, *The Witch of Edmonton* (1658), p. 18.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

This thesis has examined the witch scenes in Jacobean plays performed at the Blackfriars in comparison with some Elizabethan and post-Jacobean plays performed in various locations. I have investigated beliefs about supernatural power and especially witchcraft and witches' activities, and the presentation of stage directions in Jacobean witchcraft plays, and looked at comparative evidence from different theatrical environments concerning the existence of flying machinery on stage. The playwrights discussed here used witchcraft materials in their plays to tackle different issues or conflicts which existed during their own times. Where the witches of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* play a role in the shaping of Macbeth's destiny, *The Witch of Edmonton* and *The Late Lancashire Witches* give us the judicial spectacle of witch trials and witch-hunts. Where *Doctor Faustus* shows us a man who pursues magic to seek knowledge of hidden and secret things of nature, a pursuit that results in death, *The Witch* shows us a comical staging of witches who are never in any fear of being brought to trial and being tortured.

In each play, the playwright presents folk beliefs in witchcraft differently. *The Witch* and *Macbeth* (after revision) are similar in the way Hecate runs a coven, flies at night, casts spells and makes incantations by herbs, makes ointment for her flight through cooking dead babies, and has a familiar spirit. In *The Late Lancashire Witches*, witchcraft is used to condemn the recent notorious witch trial, Miss Generous runs a coven and the boy transforms himself into Goody Dicksion (a devil in the shape of a boy, and then the devil shape shifts and becomes a horse). The idea that Generous runs a coven is in line with Hecate and *Sophonisba*'s Erictho, but the idea of transforming into a devil and then an animal bears more resemblance to Mother Sawyer's black dog and to *Doctor Faustus*'s. In *Sophonisba*, witchcraft is not shown as more realistic compared to *The Witch* and *The Late Lancashire Witches*. This is because no classical influences are seen in *The Witch* whereas in *Sophonisba* there is some classical allusion with reference to the gods. *Sophonisba* was performed ten years before *The Witch*. Thus, *The Witch* shows the transition of witchcraft belief and the later attitude towards witchcraft in comparison to

Sophonisba. In Hecate's coven, she talks about herbs, ointment and flying, but Erictho does not. Hecate is visited by several characters whereas in *Sophonisba* we have only Syphax. Hecate seems a bit like a wise woman, but again she is different from Mother Bombie and The Wise Woman because she displays more Continental than English features. Bombie and the Wise Woman do not make a malicious pact with the devil and they are only skilled in palmistry, curing diseases, and second sight or telling the future and finding lost properties.

This study also argues that the tragic Mother Sawyer in *The Witch of Edmonton* is a native witch, who commits acts of *maleficium* (who lames and kills children, blighting stocks and crops). By contrast, the last two plays discussed, *Mother Bombie* and *the Wise Woman of Hogsdon* are also based on English witchcraft but they are comedies since Bombie and the Wise Woman do not have a contact with the devil and they do not have familiars to aid them. They also have nothing in common with either the black witch (the weird sisters of *Macbeth*) or the classical witch (Erictho). Sawyer, Bombie and the Wise Woman are examples of the Renaissance stage witch in which the themes of societal accusation of witchcraft and the assertion of their innocence are foregrounded.

One can notice significant changes in witches on stage after the seventeenth century. Later versions of these plays not only change the stage direction but also revise them and add more elaborate music and dances. *The Tempest* as an opera was performed at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane by Garrick in 1756.¹ In all the other eighteenth-century performances, *The Tempest* and *Cymbeline* were the subjects of operatic adaptation by adding more music and songs. Most of the revivals of the eighteenth-century were produced as operatic entertainments. However, *Cymbeline* was performed in 1761 Drury Lane by David Garrick in which he attempted to present a similar version of Shakespeare's

¹ Shakespeare, William. *The plays of William Shakespeare. With the corrections and illustrations of various commentators. To which are added, notes by Samuel Johnson and George Steevens. A new edition. Revised and augmented (with a glossarial index) by the editor of Dodsley's collection of old plays, Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, p. 35.

play rather than a new operatic adaptation by himself.² In Kemble's celebrated production of *Macbeth* in 1794, one can notice that Hecate with her fellow witches 'fly backwards', and 'new groups' are introduced in the play to 'personify the black spirits and white, blue spirits and grey'.³ In the eighteenth-century theatre, witchcraft beliefs were waning and witches were perceived as 'not fearsome but silly, comic, and ridiculous,' and 'the witches eventually achieved both respectful and terrific treatment' in nineteenth-century productions.⁴ Most of the plays were altered according to the whims of dramatic fashion. For example, the performances of Shakespeare's plays, *Macbeth*, *The Tempest* and *Cymbeline* continued well into the nineteenth century by adding new music and singing, the plays shared a similar pantomime outcome.⁵ One can say that the comedies are the ones for which most music and singing were written, but *Macbeth* as a tragedy also received musical adaptation since music was associated with magical effects regardless of whether plays were comedies or tragedies. In the nineteenth century, it seems that no lifting machine was used in the entries and exits of the witches, but they habitually entered and departed on free-flying wires.⁶ To enter or exit through free-flying wires made the character look more supernatural compared to a lifting machine, mechanical trapdoors, and gauze curtain. For instance, for the entrances of the Weird Sisters gauze screens might be used to convey this illusion to the audience in Samuel Phelps' staging of *Macbeth*, in 1844 at the Sadler's Wells in Islington. Here, that gauze curtain was used for the appearance and disappearance of the witches. Thus, two scrims, downstage and upstage, were employed:

² Issac Reed and Stephen Jones, *Biographia Dramatica, or a Companion to the Playhouse: Containing Historical and Critical Memoirs, and Original Anecdotes, of British and Irish Dramatic Writers*, 3 vols (London, 1812), ii, p. 149.

³ See Arthur Colby Sprague, *Shakespeare and The Actors: The Stage Business in his Plays (1660-1905)* (Cambridge and Massachusetts, 1948), p. 265.

⁴ See Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. by Braunmuller, p.29.

⁵ See the adaptation of *Macbeth* by Richard Leveridge in 1702, *The Tempest* by John Christopher Smith in 1755 and 1756, and *Cymbeline* by Thomas d'Urfey as *The Injured Princess, or the Fatal Wager* in 1682 and William Hawkins's *Cymbeline* in 1759.

⁶ See Harris, *Night's Black Agents*, pp. 153-171, 173-201, 196.

the scrims travel from the flies to below the stage, and, probably, in order that the Witches may appear and disappear gradually, not simultaneously. As I picture this scene the downstage scrim begins to descend, and when it is about one third down, the upstage scrim begins its descent. When both scrims obscure the stage, the Witches enter from the trap and take their places in tableau. By this time the downstage scrim is below the stage and the Witches can be seen faintly. In a second the upstage scrim also falls and the stage is clear. For the disappearance the scrims ascend in the same manner.⁷

Regarding the Hecate scenes, Weiner argues that the operatic presentation of Hecate is below in III. v:

Put lights down & thunder
Enter the Three Witches R
*Hecate descends down slote.*⁸

Hecate makes her entrance on a trap in (IV. I):

Heavy thunder. Pull check to raise Hecate
when third Witch is in front of cauldron.
*She exits the same way.*⁹

He then quotes Fontane's comment on the fourth scene about Hecate's appearance and her costume on stage:

the Witch scene in the fourth act is relatively poor. Hecate, a well-fed, plumpish woman wearing a Mary Stuart hat with a sparkling brooch on it, gives the impression of being a good deal less than demonic; and her singing, which is echoed by invisible spirit, borders on the comical.¹⁰

Hecate's performance on the modern stage might not be more attractive than that of Hecate on Jacobean stage, but she appears to be considerably less chilling. This might be related to the environment in which witchcraft beliefs were very strong, especially in the

⁷ Albert B. Weiner, 'Samuel Phelps's Staging of "Macbeth"', *Educational Theatre Journal*, 16 (1964), 122-133 (p. 124)

⁸ Ibid., p. 130.

⁹ Ibid., p. 130.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 130.

early part of the seventeenth century. In other words, the decline of belief in witchcraft in the modern era, from at least the eighteenth century onwards, is reflected in the diminished significance of representations of witchcraft on the modern stage.

In recent years, Shakespeare's *Macbeth* is, unsurprisingly, the play that is most often revived, and hence it is here that we see how witches are portrayed on the modern stage. Charles Spencer describes the production by Jamie Lloyd, performed at the Trafalgar Studios on 23rd February 2013:

There is no doubt however that the play creates a powerful atmosphere of evil, and there are many moments that conjure a palpable thrill of terror, not least the appearances of the witches, nightmarish creatures in sinister rubber gasmasks.¹¹

According to this, the witches are far more terrifying than fun which is in contrast to the Restoration images of witches who appear in almost all of the performances as funny, but not frightening.¹² Again, the performance directed by Eve Best at the Globe, 5th July 2013, is described as a 'terrifying production of *Macbeth*' by Spencer,¹³ whereas Tim Auld sees the performance as 'a fresh and intelligent' look at Shakespeare's 'awkward' play *Macbeth*.¹⁴ However, both reviewers fail to mention Hecate and the three sisters and their activities. It is not likely that the witch scenes are used to present any notably eye-catching spectacle to the audience in this performance.

Michael Billington is puzzled by the production directed by Rob Ashford and Kenneth Branagh at St. Peter's Church in Manchester, July 2013, with the striking appearances of the witches in the arches at one end of the nave.¹⁵ Sylviana Gold

¹¹ Charles Spencer, 'James McAvoy in *Macbeth*', *The Telegraph*, 23 February 2013, <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/theatre/theatre-reviews/9888291/James-McAvoy-in-Macbeth-Trafalgar-Studios-review.html>> [Accessed 23 December 2013]

¹² For example, the production of Davenant's *Macbeth* (1674) and Shadwell's *The Lancashire Witches* (1681).

¹³ Charles Spencer, 'Macbeth-at the Shakespeare's Globe', *The Telegraph*, 5 July 2013, <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/theatre/theatre-reviews/10159792/Macbeth-at-Shakespeares-Globe.html>> [Accessed 22nd December 2013]

¹⁴ Tim Auld, 'Macbeth, at Shakespeare's Globe', *The Telegraph*, 5 July 2013, <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/theatre/theatre-reviews/10162241/Macbeth-at-Shakespeares-Globe.html>> [Accessed 11th February 2014]

¹⁵ Michael Billington, 'Macbeth-review', *The Guardian*, Saturday 6 July 2013, <<http://www.theguardian.com/culture/2013/jul/06/macbeth-branagh-manchester-review>> [Accessed 22th December 2013]

describes a notably eerie and unsettling trio of witches in one recent production of *Macbeth* by Darko Tresnjak, at Harford stage, October 2013, as follows:

Weird sisters, indeed: they are grotesquely decked out in patchy tufts of gray hair (Brittany Hartman did the wigs), low-hanging bosoms and ragged black dresses (Suttirat Anne Larlarb designed the costumes). Their voices reverberate as if emanating from a faraway world. Fog drapes the stage and owls hoot, and the women scuttle about marking the floor with chalk.¹⁶

Their black costume and their grotesque appearance seem to resemble the 'spectacle of strangeness' of *The Masque of Queens*. Like Ben Jonson's hags, their images are eerie rather than horrifying. The witches here are shown in their manifestation as grotesque figures which are not far off from the types that appeared on the Renaissance stage. The director has still kept the perception of the witches as sinister and not transformed them into comic characters, a decision that stresses the otherworldly aspect of *Macbeth*.

Whereas these reviews of *Macbeth* lay an emphasis on costume and appearance, we find stage flight and ascents and descents of supernatural characters preserved more commonly in modern productions of *The Tempest*. For example, in the recent performance of *The Tempest* directed by Jemima Levick, at the Dundee Rep, July 2011, Ariel 'flies' with wings: 'More exasperating still is the moment in which Emily Winter's Ariel flies in wearing entirely incongruous wings which seem to be made (in the style of designer Ti Green's horrible set) of ragged plastic.'¹⁷ I have already shown that Ariel simply 'enters' in the First Folio but here he actually 'flies' with wings, probably (as is usual in modern theatre) on a wire. According to the reviewer, Ariel's plastic wings, not her flight, are entirely the incongruous of this scene. While a costuming decision may mar this scene's integrity, the review shows that the flight of supernatural entities on the present-day stage is still commonly accepted and enjoyed, at least in a Shakespearean production.

¹⁶ Sylviana gold, 'A Vigorous *Macbeth*, Swept up in the Darkness: A Review of '*Macbeth*', *The New York Times*, 11 October 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/13/nyregion/a-review-of-macbeth-at-hartford-stage.html?_r=0>, [Accessed 24th December 2013]

¹⁷ Mark Brown, '*The Tempest*, Dundee Rep, review', *The Telegraph*, 12 July 2011. <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/theatre/theatre-reviews/9325299/The-Tempest-Dundee-Rep-review.html>> [Accessed 23 December 2013]

By comparison, Nathan Brooker's review of Jeremy Herrin's *The Tempest* at the Globe (23rd April 2013-18th August 2013), describes the Ariel scene as an impressive spectacle both for its suggestion of flight and for its flightlessness. He says:

Propero's other minion, Ariel, is dressed and is played by Colin Morgan like some sort of exotic flightless bird. A little dim and peacock-like, Morgan's Ariel perfectly captures the male-female duality that the part is famous for, and when he bounds onto the stage towards the end of the play as an 8ft mythic eagle, the transformation is startling and impressive'.¹⁸

It seems that this production of *The Tempest* at the Globe is visually and spatially impressive as a theatrical experience to the audience, even though, in the tradition of the original Globe, Ariel does not literally 'fly' but simply enters the stage and exits. The director may have wanted the play to be staged as it was exactly printed in the Folio, or he may not have considered the use of flying machinery necessary.

In *Cymbeline* (dir. Mike Alfreds, Globe, 12 July 2001), one stage direction in present performances calls for the flight of Jupiter. Michael Billington notes for the Guardian that 'when Shakespeare demands that "Jupiter descends in thunder and lightning", an actor simply advances downstage, flings his arms skywards, and we accept his godliness'.¹⁹ His point is that many productions, particularly this one, do not show flight through technology anymore. Jupiter simply 'enters' and his feet are firmly on the ground. However, more recently Jupiter 'flies' on an eagle in another performance of *Cymbeline* (dir. Ivo Van Hove, Globe, 30 May 2012). This is a point of criticism for Lyn Gardner, who says that she would 'happily ditch the titter-generating flying eagle on which Jupiter delivers his message of hope for the despairing Posthumus in favour of performances that make you care for the characters'.²⁰ Her implication behind her dislike of this spectacle is that it is distracting and showy, a substitute for emotional impact. Although advanced

¹⁸ Nathan Brooker, 'The Tempest at the Globe Theatre', *Exeunt Magazine*, 23rd April 2013-18th August 2013, <<http://exeuntmagazine.com/reviews/the-tempest-4/>> [Accessed 24th December 2013]

¹⁹ Michael Billington, 'Cymbeline-Shakespeare's Globe', *The Guardian*, 12 July 2001, <<http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2001/jul/12/theatre.artsfeatures2>> [Accessed 26th December 2013]

²⁰ Lyn Gardner, 'Cymbeline-review', *The Guardian*, 30 May 2012, <<http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2012/may/30/cymbeline-review-barbican-ninagawa>> [Accessed 25th December 2013]

technology is available in most modern theatres to stage and change the supernatural spectacles, the audience might necessarily welcome spectacular features in a production of Shakespeare, finding it to conflict with the power of the dialogue.

Although less popular than Shakespeare's drama, *The Witch of Edmonton* has been revived in recent times. Lyn Gardner writing for the *Guardian* about *The Witch of Edmonton*, (dir. Simon Cox, Southpark, November 2000), observes that 'the Devil seems an immensely likeable cur' and seems 'less 17th century than completely modern. Evil is not innate, but merely takes its chance to flourish through the weakness of human nature and circumstance. It is like an old dog that suddenly views through the open butcher's door the possibility of a stolen bone'.²¹ The way Gardner describes the play, it seems that the play has still kept its English witch-lore root and no Continental characteristic or supernatural spectacle has been added to its plots and performance. The picture of the modern Devil is portrayed as harmless compared to the early modern Devil as there is no mention of the pact between him and Sawyer. The point here is that the Devil, and the witch Sawyer, are not as real as they were for the Jacobean audience, but fictional for the modern audience since the director cannot enable them to share the villagers' beliefs. In that case, the director does not appear to be interested in asking the modern audience to think deeply about Jacobean beliefs through his production. The twenty-first century audience might only take this play as a pleasant fairy-tale rather than as a portrayal of real belief in witchcraft in the Edmonton community.

The same play has been recently performed, (dir. Jesse Berger, Theatre at St. Clement's, 4th February 2011) in a production which Ben Brantley, (writing for *The New York Times*), describes as 'a fascinating and seldom-seen Jacobean drama, which has been given a sturdy, insightful production by the resourceful Red Bull Theatre company'. He continues to describe the main supernatural character the dog as 'the very Devil' who is

²¹ Lyn Gardner, 'The Witch of Edmonton at Southpark Playhouse', *The Guardian*, 18th November 2000, < <http://www.theguardian.com/culture/2000/nov/18/artsfeatures2>> [Accessed 28th December 2013]

both really 'creepy and sort of endearing'.²² According to Brantley, the play in this modern performance is 'homier and humbler than the usual Jacobean fare'. Regarding the entertainment level, "'The Witch of Edmonton'" is like a 17-century edition of the National Enquirer. But its portrayal of startlingly mixed motives and responses add a depth rarely found in tabloids'.²³ It seems that in Berger's version, no arrogant duchesses or swaggering, poison-wielding princes in Edmonton are found. He also gets rid of a festive subplot involving the Morris dancers in order to focus on matters of the heart. It seems that the director has kept the Jacobean stage directions of the play since there is no mention about the way how Sawyer enters and exits the stage with the dog. In sum, this play in this production was performed as more 'homely' compared to the other adaptations.

Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* has been popular over the past century. The play has been performed recently in several modern theatres.²⁴ Lyn Gardner (writing for *The Guardian* regarding the revival of *Doctor Faustus*, directed by Toby Frow at the Royal Exchange, Manchester, 14th September 2010) describes Marlowe's darkly comic tragedy as certainly a performance in which

Frow offers a gaudy spectacle, a merry dance towards oblivion that features angels and devils, the damned marching like chain-ganged prisoners, cosmic jokes and practical japes, puppets, a bit of circus and the odd conjuring trick. The Seven Deadly Sins are fat-bellied heads on tiny legs, there is much fun with decapitated heads and severed legs, and the entire show has the feeling of a Hieronymus Bosch painting.²⁵

²² Ben Brantley, 'The Witch of Edmonton: Black-Magic Woman', *The New York Times*, 4th February 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/05/theater/reviews/05witch.html?_r=0> [Accessed 28 December 2013], p. 1.

²³ Ibid., p. 2.

²⁴ For example, the play is being revived at London's Young Vic, Starring Jude Law, in 13th March 2002. Michael Billington, 'Carry on Doctor: It seems hopelessly outdated; it is definitely full of holes. So why is Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* getting yet another airing, asks Michael Billington', *The Guardian*, 13th March 2002, <<http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2002/mar/13/theatre.artsfeatures>> [Accessed 3rd January 2014]

²⁵ Lyn Gardner, 'Doctor Faustus', *The Guardian*, 14th September 2010, <<http://www.theguardian.com/culture/2010/sep/14/doctor-faustus-review>> [Accessed 2nd January 2014]

It seems that *Doctor Faustus* was performed with some colourful spectacles as Gardner mentioned above and the play sounds more like comedy than tragedy. I think the play demands spectacular staging in order to entertain the modern audience as it did an early modern one. The director does not only want to show the image of an Elizabethan magician and devils on stage, but to stage *Doctor Faustus* in as striking a way as possible in performance by offering more showy spectacles quoted above. In other words, the director's primary intention is perhaps not to attempt to bring the audiences' mind to the past and tell the story behind the play in which a magician sells his soul for the knowledge of astrology. Instead, he presents the play as something fictional rather than real, and sees it as 'pantomime show' and a piece of 'absurdity'. Writing for *The Guardian*, Brian Logan remarks that Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* (dir. Matthew Dunster, Globe, 24th June 2011) 'invites us to see theatre itself as an act of conjuring; or devilry, even'.²⁶ One can note that this production is different from the previous one since it is deadly serious, and the director tries to make the audience become involved with the world of witchcraft. By doing so, he wants to remind the audience about the Elizabethan and Jacobean playhouses which were places for witches, magicians and devils and people believed in them. Writing for *The Independent*, (*Doctor Faustus*, Matthew Dunster, Globe, 28th June 2011), Michael Coveney says of the climax that 'it's the greatest last scene in our drama, and the bells of Southwark Cathedral join the roar of aeroplanes and the smoke-filled auditorium as hell's demons spew forth a tribe of burning, bloody new-born babes'.²⁷ Michael Coveney describes a scene in which 'a pair of bat-winged dragons [...] transport Faustus and Mephistopheles'. This is referring to the last scene in *Doctor Faustus* B-text in the play when Faustus travels to Rome sitting on Mephistopheles's shoulder. Smoke is also used here to make the setting more supernatural and help with the disappearing of the supernatural entities. Regarding the latest revival (*Doctor Faustus*, dir. Colin Teevan, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Leeds, 28 February 2013), Lyn Gardner writes in *The Guardian*,

²⁶ Brian Logan, 'Doctor Faustus: Shakespeare's Globe', *The Guardian*, 24th June 2011, <<http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2011/jun/24/doctor-faustus-review>> [Accessed 3rd January 2014]

²⁷ Michael Coveney, 'Doctor Faustus, Globe Theatre', *The Independent*, 28th June 2011, <<http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/theatre-dance/reviews/doctor-faustus-globe-theatre-london-2303622.html>> [Accessed 3rd January 2014]

‘the third and fourth acts of Christopher Marlowe’s 16th-century play - long suspected not to have been written by Marlowe - are replaced by new scenes written by Colin Teevan, which updates the satire and place Faustus in our own world of avarice celebrity’. What distinguishes this new performance from Marlowe’s version is that the scene in which Faustus makes the pact with the Mephistopheles takes place backstage. Faustus is not the only one who sells his soul to the Devil: ‘bankers and media moguls casually sign on the dotted line. Even the Pope’s resignation gets a mention, and Lucifer pops up as a crooner.’²⁸ I think the production by Toby Frow and Colin Teevan sounds more like satirical comedy rather than tragedy since they add more colourful spectacles, satire and odd conjuring tricks. In these two modern performances, *Doctor Faustus* here is treated as a modern pantomime. Devils also appear as spirits to assist the magician. Marlowe presents Faustus as a learned academic, who is eager to buy knowledge of astrology at the price of his own soul. This knowledge of astrology which Faustus is seeking for is against the Christian background, and he makes a satanic pact with the Devil and undergoes repentance. However, *Doctor Faustus* as directed by Matthew Dunster resembles more closely Marlowe’s play rather than a modern production since he keeps the scenes as they are, and does not add comical scenes or spectacles to it. In other words, Dunster’s *Doctor Faustus* is still tragedy rather than Frow’s and Teevan’s comedy.

In short, one can note that the directors of the performances of these productions at modern theatres have used a wide degree of freedom to interpret the stage directions for the descent and ascent scenes. The flight of witches and magicians is easy now on stage and the directors can rely on technology to perform their miraculous and supernatural scenes. However, beside the fact that advanced technology is readily available nowadays in the theatres, this thesis shows that some modern directors still keep the same original stage directions in their revivals and attempt to show the play as it

²⁸ Lyn Gardner, ‘*Doctor Faustus*’, *The Guardian*, 28 February 2013, <<http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2013/feb/28/doctor-faustus-review>> [Accessed 3rd January 2014]. See also Dominic Cavandish, ‘*Doctor Faustus*’, *The Telegraph*, 28th February 2013, <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/theatre/theatre-reviews/9900640/Doctor-Faustus-West-Yorkshire-Playhouse-Leeds-review.html>> [Accessed 30th December 2013]

was, making no changes to the play. This is probably because flight (on wires) has become a rather tired spectacle, or is perhaps associated with pantomime rather than serious performances of plays.

Many of the plays examined in this thesis have not been revived in the last century, and at least a few have probably not been performed on the public stage since the early modern period. It is likely that *Mother Bombie* (1588-1590), *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1592), *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* (1604), *Sophonisba* (1605-1606), *The Devil's Charter* (1606), *The Masque of Queens* (1609), *The Witch* (1609-1616), *The Birth of Merlin* (1622), and *The Late Lancashire Witches* (1634) will continue to be primarily of interest to academics rather than the general public. That said, interest in the Jacobean theatre of the private playhouses may deserve renewed interest. The Sam Wanamaker Playhouse was opened on 15th January 2014, as a new Jacobean theatre, located on the Globe theatre site. An intimate and exquisite candlelit venue with several mysterious panels in the ceiling, the new playhouse will be an ideal setting for Jacobean witchcraft plays. Rowan Moore notes that 'the important element is the layout - the proximities of performers and audience, the flat stage embraced by galleries, and the absence of fly-towers or wings, which require the audience to conjure a scene not from scenery but from words and a few props'.²⁹ We are yet to see any flying machinery and wings in use but it is to be hoped that further revivals at the Sam Wanamaker playhouse and other modern theatres will allow audiences to experience once again 'the spectacle of strangeness' which flourished briefly at Blackfriars in the second decade of the seventeenth century, and which caught the imagination of Restoration playwrights.

²⁹ Review of *Sam Wanamaker Playhouse* by Rowan Moore, 12th January 2014, *The Guardian*, <<http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2014/jan/12/sam-wanamaker-playhouse-globe-review#start-of-comments>> [Accessed 20th January 2014]

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