THE MAGIC PLAY AS A DISTINCT TYPE IN ELIZABETHAN DRAMA

A THESIS

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By

BRIAN BEATTIE

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Approved for the Major Department

Charles R. Walton

Approved for the Graduate Council

PREFACE

Scholars who have provided detailed tracings of the development of the numerous types of English drama have pointed out a preponderance of the occult that appeared in a cluster of plays written between 1588 and 1611. This use of occult, more particularly of the magician and of the manner of his performance affecting the themes and plots of these particular plays, has apparently received only a limited attention.

In lieu of the status of scholarship surrounding this important subject, I have chosen to examine a group of plays which, because of the dominant role of the magician therein, I designate as the Elizabethan magic plays.

I wish to express my appreciation to Dr. Charles E. Walton for his kind assistance and untiring effort in the direction of this study and to Dr. June Morgan for her patient assistance in the criticism of the manuscript.

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Emporia, Kansas

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
PREFACE	. . . . .	iii
I.	A STUDY OF THE MAGIC THEME: DESCRIPTION AND DEVELOPMENT.	1
II.	THE ELIZABETHAN BLACK MAGIC PLAYS	13
III.	THE ELIZABETHAN WHITE MAGIC PLAYS	28
IV.	THE TEMPEST: AN ADVANCEMENT OF THE MAGIC THEME	46
V.	AN ANTECEDENT TO THE ELIZABETHAN MAGIC PLAY AND CONCLUSION	57
BIBLIOGRAPHY	. . . . .	62

CHAPTER I

A STUDY OF THE MAGIC THEME:

DESCRIPTION AND DEVELOPMENT

The magic theme in English drama reached a high point in its development in a number of plays written during the latter years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I.[1] Both tragedies and romantic comedies are included in this so-called series which began with Christopher Marlowe's The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus (1588) and ended, perhaps, with William Shakespeare's The Tempest (1611).[2] An examination of these plays, which include the anonymous The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune (c. 1582), Robert Greene's The Honorable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay (c. 1589), another play of unknown authorship, John of Bordeaux (c. 1590), Anthony Munday's John à Kent and John à Cumber (1589), and Thomas Dekker's The Comedy of Old Fortunatus (1599), reveals a striking predominance of the magic theme.[3] In fact, English drama

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

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

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

before the late sixteenth century had experienced some significant use of magical elements. For example, English miracle and mystery plays abounded with supernatural beings in the form of angels and demons.[4] These supernatural devices, including the later ghost, were merely decorative in function and served only as superficial attributes.[5] Whitmore notes that, as the drama progressed, the English treatment of magic (and the characters of supernatural beings necessary to it) became more free, eventually culminating in the kind of drama represented by the group of plays previously alluded to. In them, magic, or the occult, and the associated supernatural traffic took on a new and most important role, becoming the theme and the intrinsic force within the plot.[6] Without the presence of the magician and his magic trade in these plays, one finds that these works have no support for their structure. Obviously, proper execution of the magic acts, whether good "white" magic or evil "black" magic, required the services of a magician, usually the principal character.[7] This combination of magic theme and magician character, peculiar in obvious

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[4] C. E. Whitmore, The Supernatural in Tragedy, p. 203.

[5] Ibid., p. 9.

[6] Loc. cit.

[7] E. F. Benson, "Magic White and Black," The Spectator, CLII (1934), 613.

force to the six plays under consideration, distinguishes them from other Elizabethan dramas considered as distinct types and, thus, enables one to designate them hereafter in this study as "magic plays."

To refer to the "magic play" as a separate development of Elizabethan drama immediately necessitates definition. First, the word magic requires individual attention. Magic, a form of occultism, is an art of producing effects with the assistance of mysterious forces in nature or supernatural beings.[8] The magic play, whether comedy or tragedy, whether treating of white or black magic, possesses a number of identifying features. The good angels, bad angels, and demons who entered into English drama in the mystery and miracle plays were retained as a popular supernatural feature of the late sixteenth-century magic play. Indeed, Marlowe's The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus contains aspects of all three.[9] For example, his Good Angel reflects the earlier plays when he urges, "O Faustus, lay that damned booke aside / And gaze not on it least it tempt thy soule." (I.i.97-98) The virtue character of the older morality plays also appears in Faustus to plead, ". . . leave this damned Art / This Magicke, that will

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[8]J. P. Arendzen, "Occultism," The Catholic Encyclopedia, XI, 197.

[9]All quotations from Doctor Faustus in this study are from W. W. Greg (ed.), the B text of Marlowe's Doctor Faustus.

charme thy soul to hell." (V.i.1813-1814) Furthermore, Marlowe characterizes Virtue as an Old Man. His advice and that of the Good Angel are consistently countered by the words of the Bad Angel, who invites Faustus to continue ". . . in that famous Art." (I.i.101) Furthermore, numerous devils or demons appear throughout this play, but the one most dominant is, of course, Mephistophilis. Besides acting as one of Faustus's tempters, Mephistophilis reflects the roles of Shrimp in Munday's John à Kent and John à Cumber and Ariel in Shakespeare's The Tempest, i.e., he is the magically endowed assistant of the magician.[10]

Lesser devils of the "celestial" domain were frequently used in these magic plays, appearing, for example, in Doctor Faustus in a dumb show (I.ii.471) to demonstrate the advantages to be gained through magic; in Greene's play, Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, in which Friar Bacon causes a devil to torment Miles, the lazy servant (V.ii.1964-2026); and in the anonymous John of Bordeaux, when Friar Bacon employs the devil, Asteroth, to carry the likeness of Selimus, the Turk's son, away to the "depe." (219)[11] In addition, figures from Greek mythology

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[10] Joseph T. McCullen, "Dr. Faustus and Renaissance Learning," MLR, LI (1956), 13.

[11] All quotations from Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay in this study are from J. Churton Collins (ed.), The Plays and Poems of Robert Greene. All quotations from John of Bordeaux are from W. W. Greg (ed.), The Malone Society Reprint of John of Bordeaux.

were conjured up, as in the case of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, when the German magician, Vandermast, conjures Herculese, or a spirit resembling him. (III.ii.1181) In The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune, Greek gods and goddesses serve as a kind of chorus, offering an explanation of the lover's dilemma.[12] Satyrs perform as musicians throughout John of Bordeaux and call for the body of Fortunatus in Dekker's play. (II.ii.328) Occasionally, spirits also assume the shapes of other creatures. For example, in The Tempest, they appear as hounds and dogs (IV.i.255) to pursue Caliban, Trinculo, and Stephano.[13]

Another feature of the magic play derived from earlier English drama resembles the masque, most completely evident in The Tempest in the prominent masque-like mood of ". . . music, dance, and spectacle."[14] Within this play, the masque reaches its splendor in the marriage celebration of the classical figures, Iris and Ceres. This masque emphasizes Prospero's talents as a magician, which he himself describes as "Some vanity of mine art." (IV.i.41) Furthermore, Old Fortunatus, like The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune, has a masque-like

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[12]Tucker Brooke, The Tudor Drama, p. 180.

[13]Thomas Marc Parrott, Shakespearian Comedy, p. 393.

[14]All quotations from The Tempest are from George Lyman Kittredge (ed.), The Complete Works of Shakespeare.

quality throughout.[15] Here, the morality personages of Fortune, Vice, and Virtue appear in a supernatural atmosphere which is beyond the control of the magician. Indeed, Fortune has the ultimate control over the magician and, thus, sentences him to ". . . die when th'art most fortunate." (II.ii.241) Jupiter, Fortune, and Venus in The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune are ushered in with the proper musical "triumphes" of brass, string instruments, and drums, but appear at intervals to assume control of the princely lovers, despite Bomelio's best efforts.[16]

In many forms, buffoonery appears in all of these magic plays. Even Faustus, who is, perhaps, the most serious and tragical of these magicians for his renouncing of his God, uses his magical abilities to win worldly fame, often appearing as a prankster.[17] On this point, Shakespeare's Prospero is in direct contrast to Faustus, for Prospero performs no magic, unless it fits a preconceived pattern. For example, the situations that he creates for Stephano, Caliban, and Trinculo are designed to lead them to their eventual reform.

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[15]All quotations in this study from Old Fortunatus are from Fredson Bowers (ed.), The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker, I. All quotations from The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune are from W. W. Greg (ed.), The Malone Society Reprint of The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune.

[16]Brooke, op. cit., p. 180.

[17]McCullen, op. cit., p. 14.

as evidenced by Caliban's words, ". . . I'll be wise hereafter / And seek for grace . . . ." (V.i.294) Thus, his magic is performed only for a definite purpose. In addition, a wide variety of tricks, amusing dialogue, and antics are found throughout these magic plays within the adventures of some of the magicians, of various other characters of high and low stations, and of the fools or jesters. A comprehensive report on the types of buffoonery to be seen might better be the subject of a separate study. May it suffice here, to note that the majority of the examples of buffoonery in the magic plays serve as comic relief, although some are didactic in nature.

Time and place are conspicuously ambiguous in many of these plays. Exceptions occur in The Tempest, in which time is clearly accounted for, and in Doctor Faustus, with its mention of the twenty-four years in the agreement with the devil (II.i.500) and the later statement by Faustus, "Now hast thou but one bare houre to live . . . ." (V.ii.2037) Changes in setting are natural, the vehicle for travel being magic. Speed is also attributed to magic. Munday's spirit, Shrimp, for example, can dart anywhere in an instant. Prospero's Ariel is similarly endowed with traveling abilities. A somewhat slower traveling performer, however, is Fortunatus, who, for a time, travels through the air. The wishing hat, which he originally had stolen from the Soldan of Babylon, enables him to be transported through space whenever he wishes to be

". . . through the ayre / Transported in a moment." (II.i.87-88)

Changes in identity, or mistaken changes in identity, resulting from disguises or the magic process of "glamour," occur frequently. For example, Munday's John à Cumber assumes the appearance of John à Kent in order to fool Sir Griffin and Lord Geoffrey Powis. (7330[18] Later, John à Kent casts a "glamour" on the eyes of John à Cumber, causing him to mistake Sir Griffin and Lord Powis for the earls Morton and Pembroke. (1610-1618) A victim's change in identity occurs in John of Bordeaux, when Friar Bacon substitutes Vandermast's wife for an intended victim in a plot engineered by the German magician. (699)

Although much of the performed magic contributes to the spectacular aspects of these plays, the magicians seem able to conjure up anything, or the likeness of anything they wish. For example, in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, Bungay, without incantation, conjures up a golden tree. (III.ii.1169) Vandermast similarly evokes the likeness of Herculese, "Hercules, Prodie; Prodi Hercules!" (II.ii.1181) Friar Bacon conjures with a thought, be it spoken or silent. In John of Bordeaux, Friar Bacon conjures Asteroth and Rabsacke with a spoken order, freeing Bacon from imprisonment. (1133) Conjuring methods

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[18]All references to John à Kent and John à Cumber are from W. W. Greg (ed.), The Malone Society Reprint of John à Kent and John à Cumber.

vary from one magician to another. For example, Faustus and Prospero draw circles, while, on the other hand, either spoken incantations or silences serve the majority of needs. Magical devices for any of the magicians are not numerous. Whatever the devices, the magician is one of two basic types. Either he is essentially wicked and, therefore, resorts to black magic, or he is friendly, helpful and gentle, a magician in the white magic tradition.[19] Indeed, one might readily conclude that all friendly magicians were to be found in comedies, and those with unpleasant dispositions in tragedies. At least, this is a true observation with particular reference to magicians of lesser statures within these same works. For example, whoever possesses the magic purse and hat in Dekker's Old Fortunatus assumes the identity of the magician. Fortunatus and his son, Andelocia, along with Athelstane, Agripyne, Montrose, and Longaville, look to the purse to serve their greed and self-interests. Andelocia's brother, Ampedo, less worldly and more righteous, laments both the hat and the purse. His words, "Those vertuous Jewels . . . shall be consum'd in murdring flames" (IV.ii.133-136), indicate that he would destroy both pieces in the interest of humanity. Vandermast, the German magician, appears in both Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay and John of Bordeaux, bringing into each play a definite role

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[19]Benson, op. cit., p. 613.

of evil. His condescending attitude toward the learned men of England (". . . how that they be learned / It may be meanly, for ought I can heere" (III.ii.1098-1099)) is sufficient evidence to show that he is not of the same pleasant temperament and character of either Bacon or Bungay. Indeed, there are no doubts about Vandermast in John of Bordeaux. His plot to place the virtuous Rossalin in the arms of Ferdinand and his later responsibility in the imprisonment of Bacon attest to his being a black magician. Whether good or evil, these magicians owed their origins to foreign influences but found their place as main characters in the English magic play.

Prior to the opening of the Theatre in 1576, playwrights had been busily writing dramas agreeable to courtly tastes.[20] They had given ideas of magic and the supernatural a condescending attention, treating these subjects as had the Italians, with a low level of discrimination.[21] After the opening of the public theatres, however, it became fashionable for the young nobility to attend and mingle with the other classes; thus, playwrights undoubtedly realized that something other than Senecan tragedy was desired.[22] It was in this environment, beginning with Doctor Faustus, that the magician emerged as an

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[20]Ward, op. cit., p. 451.

[21]Whitmore, op. cit., p. 183.

[22]Ward, op. cit., p. 447.

important character in these plays which were most popular, because they exemplified the Elizabethan belief that the magical worlds of the supernatural and the earth were not completely separate.[23] Black magic, in particular, was feared. White magic, since it also involved the domain of the supernatural, was of doubtful friendliness or acceptivility to the Elizabethans.[24] Hence, the magic play answered a demand for a new type of drama in the public theatre. It appealed to a sense of the marvelous, aroused terror and spiritual dread, and, in the end, left its audience in an environment of mystery.[25]

Depending upon the play, the magician's origin significantly was either German or Italian, as revealed in many of the supernatural figures in these works. The native tradition, the real part of the magic play that was truly English, was reflected in the manner of the introduction and handling of the magician and the accompanying use of supernatural elements as unquestionably realistic characters of a secular drama. No longer were celestial beings to be treated as symbolic figures from the older religious plays.[26] Thus, the magic plays,

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[23]Thomas B. Stroup, "Supernatural Beings in Restoration Drama," Anglia, LXI (1937), 186.

[24]Whitmore, op. cit., p. 5.

[25]Felix E. Schelling, Elizabethan Drama, 1558-1642, I, 385.

[26]Whitmore, op. cit., p. 203.

depending upon the good or evil character of their dominant magician and his behavior, find their places in one of two categories, hereafter designated as "black magic plays" or "white magic plays." History notes the development of black magic before white magic, and such was the case in the development of the English magic play as first witnessed in Marlowe's Doctor Faustus, a black magic play.[27]

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[27]Benson, op. cit., p. 615.

CHAPTER II

THE ELIZABETHAN BLACK MAGIC PLAYS

"Black magic" implies a division in the magic arts. Frazer, although recognizing the existence of black and white magic, points out that the religious man, historically, has looked upon all magic as an abortive art.[28] The worlds of magic and science were in disagreement with religion, leaving limitless possibilities "open to him who knew the causes of things and could set in motion the vast and intricate mechanism of the world."[29] The progression of events, because of invariable laws, was always to be perfectly regular and predictable, completely omitting chance, accident, or fancy from the process of nature. The magician treated spirits or living persons in the same manner as he treated inanimate objects, with coercion. The magician felt that all beings, whether divine or human, were ultimately controlled by the same impersonal forces which controlled all things. Finally, however, it was the magician's operation, through use of the appropriate ceremonies, which governed the impersonal forces.[30] Religion, by contrast, assumed that there existed superhuman

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[28] J. G. Frazer, The Golden Bough, "Magic," I, 55.

[29] Ibid., p. 221.

[30] Ibid., p. 225.

powers (not possessed by a magician) which controlled nature and man. While magic and science insisted that the order of nature was rigid and invariable, religion maintained it to be quite elastic.[31] With such a basic disagreement, it naturally followed that in Elizabethan England, magic, in general, was suspiciously regarded as a black art, even though there existed many stories relating to help that had been received from the practice of certain magical rites. However, there were also many stories of harmful effects suffered from the practice of magic.[32] In this study, it is the dominance of harm or evil, as opposed to the dominance of help or goodness which separates the Elizabethan magic plays into the categories of white magic or black magic plays.

Whitmore points out that the dominant use of magical devices in Elizabethan drama came from the influence of ancient tragedy.[33] Black magic, as the most dominant motive, first appeared in English drama in Doctor Faustus.[34] Chambers assigns the writing of Doctor Faustus to the year 1588.[35] His date is questioned, however, by other scholars who base their opinions

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[31] Ibid., pp. 223-224.

[32] Arendzen, op. cit., XI, 199.

[33] Whitmore, op. cit., p. 176.

[34] Curt A. Zimansky, "Marlowe's Faustus: The Date Again," PQ, XLI (1962), 182.

[35] Chambers, op. cit., IV, 422.

concerning later authorship on the fact that the English translation of the German Faust-Buch was not available in England until 1592.[36] Supporting the earlier date, nevertheless, is the thought that Marlowe may have had access to the Faust-Buch before it was translated and assigned the title of The Damnable Life and Deserved Death of Doctor John Faustus. Chambers's dating of Doctor Faustus, and his date of 1589 for Greene's Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay place the entire list of magic plays in an acceptable order and point to Marlowe's drama as the first Elizabethan magic play, and, more specifically, as the first black magic play. Black magic, then, as the most dominant motive, first appeared in English drama in Doctor Faustus.

This play, a direct emulation of the earlier legend of the German magician, Doctor Faustus, wholly stresses the effects of black magic.[37] Marlowe's Faustus shows a nearly complete portrayal of the Renaissance religious interpretation of the magician.[38] Faustus rejects theology. Through his disputations, he misinterprets the Divinity and embraces magic, considered one of the most seductive manifestations of the

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[36]W. W. Greg (ed.), Marlowe's Doctor Faustus, p. 1.

[37]Schelling, op. cit., I, 387.

[38]T. M. McAlindon, "Classical Mythology and Christian Tradition in Marlowe's Doctor Faustus," PMLA, LXXXI (1966), 214.

devil.[39] Hence, the morality type of central idea takes over, becoming the struggle between good and evil for the soul of every human being, for whom Faustus is the embodiment.[40] Faustus's identity as a practitioner of black magic is well established in Marlowe's prologue, showing his preference for ". . . cursed Negromancy" above all else. Renouncing divinity, Faustus expounds upon the glories of magic, ending with "A sound Magician is a mighty god." (I.i.66-93) In these words, he likens himself to a type of religious man-god who, Frazer explains, is a being different from and superior to man, one who is supposed to become incarnate in the human body, his "fleshly tabernacle." By working miracles and uttering prophecies, this superhuman being displays his superiority to others.[41] The magical Faustus himself is to be incarnate in the body for a relatively short period of time, as evidenced by his twenty-four-year pact with Lucifer. (II.i.553)

Initially, Faustus's comment announces his intention to ". . . be a Divine in show." (I.i.32) This said, he immediately works to clearly establish his contempt for traditional studies and calls upon two well-known magicians, "The Germaine Valdes and Cornelius" (I.i.91), to instruct him in the black art.

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[39] Ibid., p. 216.

[40] Susan Snyder, "Marlowe's Doctor Faustus as an Inverted Saint's Life," SP, LXIII (1966), 565.

[41] Frazer, op. cit., p. 244.

Although Faustus looks up to Valdes and Cornelius for their superiority in magic, Schelling points out that, when they meet, Faustus remains the central figure. For all their strong words of encouragement for the pursuit of the black art, they merely perform the needed function for Faustus's basic education in magic, and remain themselves very "thin and unreal."[42] Faustus, equipped with the literature of the sixteenth-century magician which instructs in the use of the "Lines, circles, letters and characters" (I.i.78), draws the conjurer's circle, pronounces a lengthy Latin incantation, and is immediately confronted by Mephistophilis. Faustus commands him to appear as a Franciscan friar, because ". . . that holy shape becomes a divell best." (I.ii.254) At this point, Faustus's colorful conjuring ends. He learns, also, that Mephistophilis would have come on his initial rejection of God, without the necessity of the invocation. (I.iii.270-275)

Then, all of Faustus's subsequent conjuring is accomplished in an effortless fashion. To bring the spirits of Alexander and his paramour before the Emperor (IV.ii.1293-1301), Faustus merely commands, "Mephistophilis, away." To conjure grapes for the Duke of VanHolt and his wife, Faustus makes the same command. (IV.vii.1667)

The presentation of a portion of the magic in Doctor

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[42]Schelling, op. cit., pp. 387-388.

Faustus is similar to the staging of the English masque, thus partaking of a masque-like spectacle of mystery, as seen in the dumb show presented by the devils (II.i.471-474) in which they offer gifts of "Crownes and rich apparel" to Faustus, then dance before leaving.[43] One notes from Mephistophilis's explanation that this masque is intended to show what can be Faustus's through the practice of magic. Later, a more elaborate masque follows in Lucifer's presentation of the Seven Deadly Sins. Faustus participates in the masque (on orders from Lucifer) as he ". . . questions them of their names and dispositions." (II.ii.678-794)

Perhpas, Faustus's darkest moment as a black magician occurs when, despite the revolt of his own blood, he signs a pact with Lucifer, ending such action with his irreverent use of the words, "Consummatum est" (II.i.462), the last words of Jesus as recorded in the gospel of Saint John XIX: 5.[44] He adds to the horror of this act with his light-hearted reply, "Ay, take it, and the devil give thee good on't." (II.i.505)[45] Consistent with the criteria for the magic play, there is a comic side to Faustus. Brown observes this comic side,

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[43]Dieter Mehl, The Elizabethan Dumb Show, p. 69.

[44]Harry Levin, The Overreacher, p. 117.

[45]Joseph T. McCullen, "Dr. Faustus and Renaissance Learning," MLR, LI (1956), 12.

likening Faustus to the Italian mountebank for his performance in the scenes of buffoonery.[46] An example of this humor occurs when he and Mephistophilis visit the Pope's chamber. Here, Faustus asks to be made invisible to ". . . do what ere I please." (III.i.1027) After disrupting the Pope's dinner (III.ii.1045-1105), he rests briefly before continuing his joke, throwing fireworks among a group of friars. (III.ii.1125) His other tricks include fixing a set of horns upon Benvolio, who had expressed skepticism of Faustus's power (IV.ii.1333); selling a horsecourser a "bottle" of hay disguised as a horse (IV.v.1534-1538); and later shedding a false leg in order to frighten away the same furious courser. (IV.v.1562)

Bradbrook suggests that other scenes of magical jesting which do not involve Faustus's participation serve to reflect ironically upon his compact, when his student, Wagner, accuses the clown of being so hungry that ". ... he would give his soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton though it were bloud raw." (I.iii.348-349)[47] The clown denies this condition, replying that, before he would pay with his soul, the meat should have to be "well rosted." (I.iii.352) Other magical events include the Old Man as the medieval Virtue, the Good and Evil

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[46]Beatrice Daw Brown, "Marlowe, Faustus, and Simon Magus," PMLA, LIV (1939), 82.

[47]Muriel C. Bradbrook, Themes and Conventions of Elizabethan Tragedy, p. 155.

Angels, and Mephistophilis and his pranks seen in his changing the clowns into likenesses of a dog and an ape. (III.iii.1171-1177) Bradbrook explains the results of Faustus's magic as follows:

> His magic annihilated Space, but his bondage contracted Time; the last hour, as it closes in, shows him only where he is, and where in effect he had been living for four and twenty years.[48]

It was Faustus's magic which allowed him a control over others, and it was this same magic which led to his destruction.[49]

Thomas Dekker's Old Fortunatus, although it does not deal in magic as does Marlowe's The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, also must be classified as a black magic play. If the elements of magic, intrinsic in nature, are removed, the main supports for this play are also removed.[50] In a fashion similar to Doctor Faustus, the first part of Old Fortunatus, featuring the adventures of Fortunatus, described as "Black life" by Fortune (II.ii.243) serves as a kind of prelude for the more exciting exploits of his worldly son, Andelocia. One easily recognizes that, like Faustus's magic, used as unwisely as it was, this magic provided for Andelocia and Fortunatus a miserable end.

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[48] Muriel C. Bradbrook, English Dramatic Form, p. 153.

[49] Ibid., p. 154.

[50] Whitmore, op. cit., p. 9.

Chambers dates authorship of Old Fortunatus as 1599, adding that, although Dekker may not have been the author of the original Fortunatus plays, known to have existed in two separate parts as early as 1596, he wrote the Old Fortunatus as it presently stands, probably by combining the two earlier parts.[51] Chambers suggests, as well, that such a combining occurs in the scene of the death of Fortunatus and the masque-like scene (II.ii.307-328) as Fortune and the Satyrs, to the accompaniment of music, enter to take away the body.[52] Ristline thinks that Old Fortunatus foreshadows a definite tragic theme in the impending doom awaiting Fortunatus and, later, his two sons.[53] Nevertheless, the play has been designated as a romantic comedy.[54] Ellis-Fermor attaches to it the description of ". . . delightful descendant of the morality . . . the Bible history, the Elizabethan mask . . . ."[55] A connection, or direct line of influence upon Dekker's play from Marlowe's Doctor Faustus is pointed to by Ward, who contends that Dekker had made additions to Marlowe's play before

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[51]Chambers, op. cit., III, 291.

[52]Loc. cit.

[53]Frank H. Ristline, English Tragicomedy: Its Origin and History, p. 84.

[54]Schelling, op. cit., I, 404.

[55]Una M. Ellis-Fermor, The Jacobean Drama, p. 121.

beginning his own work on Old Fortunatus.[56] Dekker's own source, however, was the German folk tale, known to have been dramatized as early as 1553 by Hans Sachs, capitalizing upon the same ideas of magic.[57] Dekker's major change was the altering of the original concept of Fortunatus and Andelocia from one of heroism to one of moral gravity, a change which was accomplished by Dekker's addition of the characters of Virtue and Vice in their allegorical contention.[58] The possible connecting links between Marlowe's Faustus and Dekker's Fortunatus would probably lie in the Renaissance disapproval of Fortunatus and Andelocia for their practice of magic. The stern-visaged Fortune corresponds to Mephistophilis or Lucifer, and the added characters of Virtue and Vice serve much the same function as the Good and Evil Angels in Marlowe's play. Ampedo's role somewhat resembles that of the Old Man in Doctor Faustus.

A comparison of the two plays shows Dekker in Old Fortunatus operating on a different level than Marlowe in Doctor Faustus. In Doctor Faustus, the tragic appeal lies in the characterization of the magician; in Old Fortunatus, the appeal is shared equally by the characters and the bizzare

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[56]Ward, op. cit., II, 458; Schelling, op. cit., I, 404.

[57]Chambers, op. cit., III, 291.

[58]Schelling, op. cit., I, 391.

episodes. The impending doom in the latter play gives neither Fortunatus nor Andleocia, the two magicians, the tragic interest inherent in Faustus.[59] Indicating development of the magic play in the direction of comedy, these two magicians are treated on a plane more in agreement with the Italian magician of commedia dell'arte. In Old Fortunatus, Andelocia and his father resemble lightly treated Italian magicians, performing tricks with the magic purse and wishing hat to serve their self-interests.[60] The characters of the commedia dell' arte were known to English playwrights of the sixteenth century as indicated, in the case of Dekker, by his reference to the Zany in his play The Whore of Babylon.[61] Sixteenth-century English dramatists apparently had an idea of the Zany, and Dekker shows him to be represented in both Fortunatus and Andelocia as simple fellows with foolish clown-like actions.[62] Although the characterization reflects the Italian influence, the magic itself comes straight from the German folk-tale and is very simple to initiate.[63] Though Fortunatus, at an early point in the play, says ". . . I still dance in this conjuring

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[59]Ward, op. cit., II, 458.

[60]Kathleen Lea, Italian Popular Comedy, II, 375.

[61]Ibid., II, 376.

[62]Ibid., p. 375.

[63]Chambers, op. cit., III, 291.

circle . . ." (I.i.18-19), there is no contemporary sixteenth-century magic involving the construction of a conjuring circle. Neither is a devil's compact made, although reference to such an agreement comes from Athelstane, the King of England. As he watches Andleocia's demonstration of the purse's dispensing of wealth, he comments:

> Hees a magician sure, and to some fiend,
> His soule (by infernal covenants) has he sold,
> Alwaies to swimme up to the chin in gold. (III.i.348-350)

The purse, from which the possessor always draws ". . . ten pieces of bright gold" (I.i.301), remains as the most widely used magic device throughout the play. Whether Fortunatus, Andelocia, or one of the lesser characters uses the purse or regards its use, these characters are easily recognized as being what Frazer describes as the "primitive magician."[64] Agripyne embodies the thoughts of Montrose, Longaville, Athenstane, Andelocia, and Fortunatus when, after she has stolen the purse from Andelocia, she says "I have found the sacred spring that never ebbs." (III.ii.357) She and Fortunatus, Andelocia, and others recognize the unending wealth to be magically gained by reaching into the purse. Like the primitive magicians, they recognize only this practical aspect and

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[64] Frazer, op. cit., p. 53.

never stop to analyze the principles behind their actions.[65] The characters in Old Fortunatus, unlike those in Doctor Faustus, never consider the scientific aspect of their magic. The one exception occurs with Fortune, the stern-visaged benefactor of Fortunatus, who looks with more intelligence upon the virtue of the purse. It is Fortune who, after Fortunatus has made his selection, tells him, ". . . thou wilt repent . . . thou hast despised Wisedomes divine embrace." (I.i.308-310)

Will-magic, a type popular in India, particularly with the Buddhists, also enters into Dekker's Old Fortunatus every time the wishing hat (stolen by Fortunatus from Babylon) is used. Leuba explains that will-magic concerns the belief that, through exertion of the will, a desired effect will be caused to take place.[66] In Dekker's play, the necessity for this firm resolve is explained by the Soldan of Babylon, ". . . this clapt upon my head, I (onely with a wish) am through the ayre." (II.i.86-87) Once wearing the magical hat, Fortunatus wishes he, ". . . were now in Cyprus with my sons" (II.i.108); and, moments later, he discovers the practical use of the hat when, upon arriving in their company, he announces, ". . . I am nothing but ayre." (II.ii.104)

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[65] Loc. cit.

[66] James H. Leuba, "Varieties, Classification and Origin of Magic," The American Anthropologist, XIV (1912), 355-356.

Effects of the supernatural upon the play are supplied by the presence of the morality characters of Vice, Virtue, and Fortune. Additional lesser characters of the supernatural forces accompany them in their masque-like appearances. Reminiscent of Faustus's speeches is Fortune's message to Fortunatus, "Thou hadst thy fancie, I must now have thy fate." (II.ii.240) A masque-like scene soon follows in which Fortune and a number of satyrs, in a dumb show and to the playing of music, come to claim the body of Fortunatus. (II.ii.328) Vice and Virtue, introduced into the play mostly through masque-like scenes, take only a slightly less active part than Fortune, as seen in their interaction with the mortals, particularly with Andelocia. Through him, Vice's apples are circulated to Agripyne, Montrose, and Longaville, leaving them adorned with horns which, when cut, "the more they grow againe." (V.i.6) Later, in the disguise of a French doctor, Andelocia removes the horns from the two courtiers (V.i.127), using fruit from the tree of Virtue. The apples, although another of the magical devices used in the play, are used later in V and do not demand the importance attached to the magic purse or the wishing hat. They serve only as a vehicle for Andelocia to regain the purse.

One other drama, The Devil's Charter, deserves brief mention in connection with the black magic play. Written by Barnaby Barnes in 1607, it is a tragedy concerning the life and

death of Pope Alexander IV.[67] In this play, magic, as used by Alexander, involves the idea of the devil compact.[68] Unlike Doctor Faustus or Old Fortunatus, this play apparently never gained much popularity, yet Whitmore finds the final scene loaded with "rubbish to tickle the groundlings."[69] Although called an unworthy successor to Doctor Faustus, it nevertheless shows a continuance of the Marlowe-Faustus influence. The lack of popularity of this play agrees with Whitmore's observations that there began in the mid-1590's, a movement on the part of both the playwrights and the public that is characterized by a change of interest with respect to the supernatural. After Doctor Faustus, plays with magic as the dominant theme appear to have moved steadily in the direction of comedy, the predominant mood of the white magic play.[70] Elizabethan playwrights now set aside the sense of defeat reflected in Marlowe's and Dekker's plays and assume a happier and more optimistic mood in writing The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune, Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, John of Bordeaux, and John à Kent and John à Cumber. It is this next group of plays, termed "white magic plays," to which this study now turns.

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[67] Chambers, op. cit., III, 214.

[68] Schelling, op. cit., I, 389.

[69] Whitmore, op. cit., p. 188.

[70] Ibid., p. 236.

CHAPTER III

THE ELIZABETHAN WHITE MAGIC PLAYS

As previously stated, both black and white magic were placed in one inclusive category in Renaissance England. From the standpoint of religion, Christianity did not embrace magic of either kind because of the magician's performing superhuman acts with the aid of certain powers exclusive of the Divine.[71] However, a confusion on points of religion and magic often occurred. Much of the peasant population believed that the priests possessed a secret and irresistible power over the elements. In particular situations, by uttering certain secret prayers reserved only for priests, critical dangers could be arrested or reversed. The priest's power, according to this belief, was extended to include winds, rain, hail, and fire (which was supposedly extinguishable at his will.)[72] Ellis-Fermor points out that an "anti-ecclesiasticism" existed in the late sixteenth century, and through Marlowe's leadership, the Elizabethan dramatists arrived early at a "uniform rejection of the element of religion."[73] These dramatists, in keeping with the Renaissance ideas of optimism, emancipation,

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[71]Arendzen, op. cit., p. 198.

[72]Frazer, op. cit., p. 231.

[73]Una Mary Ellis-Fermor, The Jacobean Drama, p. 8.

and humaneness, rejected Christian dogma to treat the idea of white magic as a virtue, a magic performed for the common good, or the good of particular individuals, including the magician.[74] Intent, again, remains as the determinant of white magic or black magic qualities in a play. In the previously cited black magic plays, the idea prevails of "good triumphs over evil," thus, categorizing magic as thoroughly evil. In white magic plays, again one finds "good" triumphing over evil forces, but the overall emphasis has now been changed. Here, "good" includes the acts of white magic performed by the dominant character, the benevolent magician. In each case, evil forces are represented in the main by an evil, black magician who always, despite his best efforts, loses to the white magician. West explains that the white magician first establishes an alliance with the "median spirits," the good angels, and through them, controls the evil and inferior spirits.[75] Black magicians, as seen in Faustus, first call upon superior devils and are, thus, placed in control of inferior demons. Unlike Faustus, the magician who practices white magic does not lose his soul to the devil

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[74]Lewis W. Spitz, "Occultism and Despair of Reason in Renaissance Thought," JHI, XXVII (1966), 465.

[75]The Invisible World, A Study of Pneumathology in Elizabethan Drama, p. 47, cited by Frank Towne, "'White Magic' in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay?," MLN, LXVII (1952), 11.

because he is "a seeker of devils" and not a consenter to them.[76] Whereas Fasutus and Fortunatus have received power that is entirely dependent upon previous agreements, Friar Bacon, John à Kent, Even Friar Bungay and John à Cumber, seem to have a contrasting, more natural command over the supernatural beings that they manipulate with relative ease, although there is always the possibility of their having made a compact of some type which is in force. In fact, the legendary Friar Bacon and John à Kent were both said to have made a type of agreement with the devil.[77]

In considering any of the white magicians named above, it is essential to note an influence of the day which apparently contributed heavily to their habits of conduct. This influence, more specifically, Italian methods of improvised drama, manifest in commedia dell'arte, came into a well-defined state of development in the sixteenth century.[78] Incorporating elements from other sources, including mythological spectacles, moral allegories, sacred plays, and the performance of the mountebanks, recognized commedia dell'arte began to be recorded by the

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[76] Loc. cit.

[77] Some Old English Worthies, p. 280, cited by Frank Towne, "'White Magic' in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay?," MLN, LXVII (1952), 12.

[78] Winifred Smith, Italian Commedia Dell'arte, p. 27.

middle of the sixteenth century.[79] Annals indicate that Italian commedia dell'arte actors were in France in 1571, and Englishmen visiting the French court in that year were well pleased by these Italian professional actors and their type of comedy.[80] English players became acquainted with the commedia dell'arte, as evidenced by a scene in the Travailes of the Three English Brothers, in which an Englishman, Will Kemp, is asked to play a part in an improvised comedy.[81] Further proof of English familiarity with the commedia dell'arte is the fact that English audiences came to recognize the Italian personages in their Anglicized forms, including the mask of the doctor of the commedia dell'arte.[82] He was Doctor Gratiano, a magician whose antics ranged from an expression of serious emotions, to receiving the dead, curing lunatics, changing individuals into the likenesses of animals, and the furthering of romance.[83] Smith believes that Doctor Gratiano was undoubtedly influenced by the central figure of the "least respectable" of Italian acting groups, the mountebanks. These were wandering groups of

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[79] Ibid., p. 28.

[80] Lea, op. cit., II, 347.

[81] Ibid., pp. 381-382.

[82] Felix E. Schelling, Foreign Influences in Elizabethan Plays, p. 61.

[83] Lea, op. cit., I, 195.

players whose performances of songs, dances, jests, and acrobatics were looked upon as morally bad by civil and ecclesiastical authorities. These groups had as their leader a magician who was a "quack doctor," half-magician, who played on the superstitions of his audience in "long-winded nonsensical speeches about the more than natural qualities of his drugs" which he was offering for sale. This "magician-doctor" also took part in farces performed by the other players in the troupe.[84] It is the commedia dell'arte, however, which assumes much of the credit for providing a basic model of the magician as a main character to the English, leaving the details to be worked out by native English development.[85] Such development was required because commedia dell'arte was improvised and the minor details of the stock characters, including the magician, would change from day to day as would the plots of this drama. Thus, it is difficult to see in an English play the scenari on which it is based.[86] On the other hand, use of certain commedia dell'arte devices within the magic plays is readily apparent. Examples as found in The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune are the disguising of Bomelio, the self-styled magician, as a German doctor; and the situation of

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[84]Smith, op. cit., pp. 35-36.

[85]Lea, op. cit., II, 392.

[86]Edith Kern, "Beckett and the Spirit of the Commedia Dell'arte," Modern Drama, IX (1966), 262.

Bomelio's discovery of his long-lost son Hermione. In commedia dell'arte, and in the English white magic play, the magician, functioning as a main character, uses his magic to combine sensationalism, pathos, and comic relief, which leads to an eventual happy ending.[87]

The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune is mentioned in this section because of the numerous examples of harmless and somewhat helpful white, rather than black, magic. Published in 1589, although acted as early as 1582, it features what Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, John à Kent and John à Cumber, and John of Bordeaux do not; namely, an abundance of Greek gods and goddesses, who dominate the first and final acts and, as well, appear frequently throughout the play interacting with the lives of mortals, mostly with the lives of the princely lovers, Fidelia and Hermione, whose story constitutes the major plot.[88] Probably the presence of mythology marks it as transition drama from the morality play to the Elizabethan comedy or tragedy. The low comedy alone of Penulo and other servants tells of the play's antedating all magic plays, including Doctor Faustus.[89] Venus's and Fortune's alternating

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[87]Lea, op. cit., I, 196.

[88]Schelling, op. cit., I, 122.

[89]Ibid., II, 413.

successes, accompanies by musical triumphs, surround the confused activities of Hermione and Fidelia.[90] The play contains another mortal as one of the main characters. He is Bomelio, the banished nobleman, who lives in a cave and who, armed with his many books, attempts to behave as a magician, assuming the role of the white magician of ancient Egypt by invoking the highest gods to do his bidding, thus leaving the abusive Armenio struck dumb. (III.858-888) Bomelio's magic, including his spell cast upon Armenio, emerges as white magic because of the assistance it gives toward uniting Hermione and Fidelia. With the eventual burning of the magic books, accomplished by Hermione, the enraged Bomelio is left unwillingly without further power. (IV.iv.1500-1504)

The friendly, patriotic, and helpful white magician in Greene's Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay is, of course, Friar Bacon. Using The Famous History of Friar Bacon as source material, Greene's play, believed written in 1589, although featuring white magic, enjoyed as much popularity as the black magic drama, Doctor Faustus, which Collins says gave Greene his initial idea.[91] One notes a distinct difference in treatment of the idea of the compact between the white magicians and the devil when comparing Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay to John à

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[90] Ward, op. cit., I, 312.

[91] J. Churton Collins, The Plays and Poems of Robert Greene, II, 3.

Kent and John à Cumber and John of Bordeaux. John à Kent and the Friar Bacon in John of Bordeaux behave as if they have assigned no part of their souls to the devil, performing their magic without a sign of repentance. Just the opposite situation appears with the Friar Bacon in the 1589 play. Even though he performs his magic in the same way exhibiting the good-natured frame of mind, the death of two scholars who witness their father's fatal quarrel through the "glasse prospective" causes Friar Bacon to tell Friar Bungay ". . . it repents me sore that ever Bacon meddled in this art." (IV.iii. 1829-1830) Whitmore explains the death of the scholars as ". . . only a momentary shadow on the action, useful as a motivating factor for Bacon's repentance and his abandoning his enchantments."[92] This theory is, perhaps, strengthened by Ristline, who points out that the scholars who quarrel and die in Bacon's presence are secondary characters, and, thus, the tragedy does not take over as an important element of the play.[93]

A more important element in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, which is also the outstanding similarity between this play and the white magic plays, John of Bordeaux and John à Kent and John à Cumber, is the operation of the magical contest.

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[92]Whitmore, op. cit., p. 225.

[93]Ristline, op. cit., p. 79.

In each play, the white magician, whether John à Kent or Friar Bacon (as seen in Greene's play or John of Bordeaux), becomes involved in a magical contest with a lesser character, also a magician.[94] In each case, the contest is treated in a manner more closely analogous to comedy than tragedy. In Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, Bacon performs magic tricks for his own benefit or safety, as seen in II.ii when he "stays" the swords of Edward and his comrades in their sheaths. For the most part, Friar Bacon practices magic for the good of others, thus serving, in the words of Frazer, as a "Public functionary."[95] He enjoys, unlike the ambitious Faustus, the reputation of being an Oxford man and is described by Henrie as ". . . Frier Bacon, Englands only flower." (II.i.491)[96] Conjuring is no problem to Friar Bacon, and it usually takes place with no accompanying ceremony. His greatest effort involves a use of the Latin words, Per onmes deos infernales Belcephon (I.ii.288), to conjure the Henly Hostess and a devil to calm the questioning of the skeptical Doctor Burden.[97] Bacon

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[94]Whether John à Cumber is a lesser magician than John à Kent is debatable. The argument exists that John à Kent won out in the contest only because he enjoyed the advantage of his elf-like servant, Shrimp.

[95]Frazer, op. cit., p. 215.

[96]Italics are Greene's.

[97]Italics are Greene's.

continues to prove his magical abilities when he recognizes Prince Edward and tells him about the deception on the part of Lacie in courting Margret. (II.ii.568-578) Edward, to know more about the conduct of Lacie, enters Friar Bacon's cell, where ". . . tempers Frier Bacon many toies / Where in the devils plead homage to his words." (II.iii.617-619) Through a "glass prospective," Edward discovers Friar Bungay in the act of marrying Lacie and Margret. With apparent ease, he causes Bungay to be struck dumb and conveyed to Brazennose on the back of a devil. (II.iv.766-800)

Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay further demonstrate their magic abilities in the contest with the German magician, Vandermast. (III.ii.1163-1235) Bungay conjures a golden tree containing a fire-breathing dragon. (III.ii.1171-1172) Vandermast follows with "herculese, Prodie, Prodi Herculese!" (III.ii.1181) Herculese refuses to destroy the tree, saying "I dare not; seest thou not great Bacon heere? Whose frown doth act more than thy magicke can?" (III.ii.1226-1227) Herculese replies with "Bacon / Bindes me from yeelding unto Vandermast." (III.ii.1231-1233) The contest ended, Bacon orders Herculese to "Transport the German unto Hapsburg straight." (III.ii.1248)

One of the episodes from Greene's source concerns the attempt of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay to make the brazen head. The project which would have seen the head ". . . tell

out strange and uncouth Aphorisms, / And girt faire England with a wall of brasse" (I.iii.342-344) fails because of Bacon's servant, Miles. Disappointed, Bacon foretells the end of his career: "The fame of Bacon / Shall end and perish with this deep disgrace." (IV.iii.1749-1751) Obviously, the play is dominated by Bacon's magic. With his repentance for the use of magic and his promise to ". . . spend the remnant of his life in pure devotion, praying to his God," the play comes to a point of pleasant ending, so characteristic of the white magic play.

Although Friar Bacon repented his use of magic in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, he appeared again as a main character in the white magic play, John of Bordeaux or The Second Part of Friar Bacon. The date and authorship as sometime after 1540 is not certain, and Greg suggests that the extant version is a shortened form of an original, longer text.[98] However, John of Bordeaux, if it is a sequel to Greene's Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, was obviously dependent upon the earlier play for its allusions, and probably was written soon after 1589.[99] Based on the idea of John of Bordeaux being a sequel to Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay and noting parallels that referred to other of Greene's plays, Greg says that Greene's

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[98] W. W. Greg (ed.), John of Bordeaux or The Second Part of Friar Bacon, p. vii.

[99] Loc. cit.

authorship is "probable."[100]

Friar Bacon in John of Bordeauy is again seen as a friendly, helpful white magician. His first speech directed to Frederick, the German Emperor, leaves the impression of a magician older than was Bacon in the previous play. He tells Frederick, ". . . desier of deeper skill mad me cast unto the Iermayne clime. Bacon is ould . . . ." (42-43) The dominant idea of the magic contest in John of Bordeaux appears in the conversation of the first scene. The German magician, Vandermast, initially recalls how, in an earlier magic contest in England, he had been defeated by Bacon and carried back to Germany on a "wherlwind." (36) Emperor Frederick pointed to Vandermast's lingering jealousy as a result of the earlier contest when he said, "I know it well that envie hath her splene . . . ." (37) Again, the story of love in intermingled with the magic. The constant love between John of Bordeaux and his wife, Rossalin, is troubled by Ferdinand, the lustful son of Frederick. Bacon's friendship with John of Bordeaux (48-59) early establishes an alliance eventually to be pitted against Vandermast and his evil associate, Ferdinand. (103-109) Bacon's superiority is revealed early in his gaining the crown, cap, and sword of the Turk Amurath. (170-240) Bacon's good nature, trickery, and sincerity were revealed in his

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[100] Ibid., p. xii.

having a devil, Asteroth, cast the Turk's son into hell. In reality, however, the victim was but a spirit in the likeness of Selimus, Amurath's son. Vandermast's evil magic succeeds in bringing about the discharge ane exile of John of Bordeaux. Thereafter, however, Friar Bacon controls the situation. For example, he commands the devil to disobey Vandermast's commands by substituting Vandermast's wife for the arms of Ferdinand in place of Rossalin, the wife of John of Bordeaux. (699) Bacon's devils free him from prison and, in turn, imprison Vandermast. (1166-1167) Bacon, then, exposes the evil plot of Ferdinand and Vandermast. Next, John of Bordeaux and Rossalin are reunited after Bacon, in a final show of magic, causes Vandermast to become mad, to be waited on by a devil for the remainder of his life. Bacon, then, triumphs over Ferdinand, who repents, to mark the final victory of good over evil by means of magic.

Friar Bacon's magic becomes increasingly a morally good magic in contrast to that displayed in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay by nature of the contest. In this latest play, there was no announcement of anything resembling a formal contest to assert magical supremacy. Bacon's efforts against those of Vandermast were necessary because of the German plot to destroy the character of Rossalin and, thus, to destroy her marriage to John of Bordeaux. Bacon's white magic suggests a close identity with Christianity. When the devils, Asteroth and Rabsacke, are called by Bacon to appear (1133), they do so,

but only to tell him of their intent to disregard his further commands: ". . . the hellish sperrite ar no mor at thy commaund . . . ." (1140-1141) Bacon, relying upon religious creed, overcomes with ease their attitude, saying, ". . . away presuming speright away thow has no power over a Cristan faith . . . ." (1144-1145) Earlier, he had told the troubled Rossalin, ". . . riteous god will never fayle the Just." (992) Through his expressions of his "Christian faith" Bacon commands the devils to convey Vandermast to prison, a move which emphasizes Bacon's unquestioned magical superiority. He, then, ends the play with a description of Ferdinand: ". . . . the Champion which the heavens have sent to prove me false . . . ." (1277-1278)

Anthony Munday's John à Kent and John à Cumber, of uncertain date, is also a representative of the white magic play.[101] Munday apparently conceived of his idea for writing the play from the magic contest in Greene's Friar Bacon and

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[101] John W. Ashton, "The Date of John à Kent and John à Cumber," PQ, VIII (1929), 227-232. Ashton says the date of 1594 for the writing of John à Kent and John à Cumber fully agrees with the idea that it was written for Strange's men as a play to compete with the Admiral's most popular play, Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay. Ashton points out, however, that John à Kent and John à Cumber may have been written as early as 1589, but cautions that this date is not likely because Munday was probably too busy with his secret service activities, which lasted until 1592. For additional discussion of dates of authorship for John à Kent and John à Cumber, see Celeste T. Wright, "Young Anthony Munday Again," SP, LVI (1959), 150-168.

Friar Bungay. However, the play, in content, is original.[102] Furthermore, Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay and Munday's play were both founded on popular traditions.[103] John à Kent appears to have been an actual person, who, like the legendary Bacon, "supposedly sold himself to the devil."[104] Comparing Munday's play with Greene's Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, one readily notes that they both make early mention of an approaching magic contest. Henrie and the Emperor speak of such competition (II.i.485-494) as does Mason (II.iii.818-822) when he says:

> To Frier Bacon, that he vouch this taske,
> And vndertake to counteruaile in skill
> The German, els theres none in Oxford can
> Match and dispute with learned Vandermast.

In Munday's play, the Scottish magician, John à Cumber (soon after arriving in England to serve the interest of Ranulph, Earl of Chester) announces an approaching contest: "Ile make no bragges, but we two Johns together, will tug for maistrie . . . ." (722-723) In John of Bordeaux, on the other hand, although a contest ensues between magicians, no such preliminary mention of competition occurs. It is apparent, then, that

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[102] Felix Schelling, Elizabethan Drama 1558-1642, I, 388.

[103] Ward, op. cit., VI, 432.

[104] Felix Schelling, Elizabethan Drama 1558-1642, I, 388.

John à Kent and John à Cumber, Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, and John of Bordeaux, although differing in the introduction of the magic contest, do feature the competition which, in the case of John of Bordeaux and Munday's play, has as its goal the uniting of princely lovers. One difference which requires attention, however, is found in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay when the action concerning the uniting of the lovers, Edward and Margret, is interrupted by various episodes, one of which is the abbreviated contest between Vandermast and Bacon. But it is the announced contest between John à Kent and John à Cumber, with its abundance of magic which makes it the best-developed white magic play encountered thus far. Both magicians in Munday's play are developed as main magicians, and after John à Cumber's arrival in England, they are constantly in competition with one another. Both magicians are self-confident and employ an elaborate system of magical tactics.[105] One example is seen in the disguises which begin early in the play when John à Kent assumes the characteristics of a weak, elderly hermit. (214) Later, John à Kent (when referring to John à Cumber) explains to Llwellen and Chester: ". . . he hath tane my shape, and you shall hear him speak, as he were John à Cumber." (1233-1234) Simple disguising is not enough for John à Kent, however. At last, to allow the weddings of Sidanen

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[105] Loc. cit.

and Marian, John à Cumber is charmed by his rival into permitting Powesse and Griffin (instead of Pembroke and Morton) into the chapel of Chester Abbey. John à Cumber himself eventually is aware of the trick, but not until the lovers have been safely wed. (606-610) Other elements of magic involve the four antiques (782-846) used as part of John à Cumber's trickery, and John à Kent's servant-boy, Shrimp, whose ability to fly and squeeze through small openings and play enchanting music enhances John à Kent's success.

One other feature of the magic contest in this play is the fact that, for the first time in any of the three plays cited in this section, the conquering magician is responsible for keeping the contest alive. For example, John à Cumber, in his first face-to-face confrontation with his adversary explains his presence:

> Is John à Cumber? then the same it is. In thy proud thoughtes John, did I heare thee say, thou wantedst one to thwart thy deep dessignes, layd cunningly to countercheck this loove, because it should not take successe so soone. And me thou namdste, freendly, or how I care not, heere am I now. (908-914)

Later, after John à Kent has apparently won out, John à Cumber asks, "I pray thee, John, shall we have one cast more?" (1462) John à Kent agrees: "So thoul't deale wyser than thou dids't before" (1463), and the contest continues.

Shrimp, John à Kent's servant-spirit, although already briefly discussed as a representative of magic, is of special

significance. Doctor Faustus's demon, Mephistophilis, endowed with special powers, is a direct representative of Lucifer, and Friar Bacon's man, Miles, is experienced in certain magical skills. But it is not until the writing of John à Kent and John à Cumber that an elf-like assistant to the dominant character of the magician appears. In this case, it is Shrimp, who, acting in mischief with his abilities, keeps his master, John à Kent, informed and aided to a point of reaching ultimate victory over his adversary. Shrimp has a parallel character, that of Ariel in Shakespeare's The Tempest, a play given special attention in the next section of this study.

CHAPTER IV

THE TEMPEST:

AN ADVANCEMENT OF THE MAGIC THEME

Chambers establishes 1611 as a composition date for The Tempest, observing that Greg identifies Shakespeare's text with Munday's John à Kent and John à Cumber.[106] Before noting the evidence in The Tempest which suggests Munday's play as a possible source, however, one should consider two other possible sources which Shakespeare may have used. First, Parrott suggests that Shakespeare may have read Strachy's account in Letter to a Lady, describing the 1609 wreck of the Sea Venture.[107] Further, according to Parrott's account, Shakespeare may have obtained his characters' names of Prospero, Alonso, and Ferdinand from his readings in Italian history and added to this information the marriage of Ferdinand and Miranda.[108] This marriage, symbolic of the uniting of Naples and Milan, could easily have been based upon a historical marriage which linked Bohemia and Sicily. By borrowing certain aspects from these sources and adding his own magic,

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[106] Chambers, op. cit., III, 489; IV, 32.

[107] Thomas M. Parrott, Shakespearian Comedy, pp. 392-393.

[108] Loc. cit.

Shakespeare, thus, may have built his story.[109]

On the other hand, Lea has suggested that Shakespeare did not invent his own plot for The Tempest.[110] Parrott apparently agrees with this view, as seen in his suggestion that a scenario from the Italian commedia dell'arte was the basis for Shakespeare's play.[111] In referring to The Tempest, Lea states that it appears to rely on the same dramatic materials common to the pastoral tradition of the commedia dell'arte.[112] In support of her contention, one notes that many of the same elements are found in both The Tempest and the scenarios of the commedia dell'arte. For example, there is the central situation of a shipwreck with the survivors landing on a lost island inhabited by a magician. This magician rules the inhabitants of the island with his magical powers, or, at least, by threatening to use them. His attendants are demons; he forsees the strangers' plots against him; and he ends the play by renouncing magic, after discovering certain relationships between himself and the strangers.[113] Lea, then, suggests that, instead of devising the plot of The Tempest independently of

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[109] Loc. cit.

[110] Lea, op. cit., II, 445.

[111] Parrott, op. cit., p. 394.

[112] Lea, op. cit., II, 443.

[113] Ibid., pp. 444-445.

the commedia dell'arte, Shakespeare, instead, worked with the framework of a scenario, expanding this basic material with other literary borrowing.[114]

Whether or not Shakespeare did use the Italian commedia dell'arte as a source for his play, there are possible indications that, for creating his magical servant-spirit, he may have relied, in part, on Munday's John à Kent and John à Cumber, because of the similarity evident in the impression of Munday's character Shrimp and Shakespeare's elf-like spirit, Ariel. Both were fast-traveling spirits who could become visible or invisible at their pleasure and travel with superhuman speed to distant points on an assignment. Shrimp, ordered by John à Kent to go to the "Castell" replies, "I fly, sir, and am there alreadie." (I.i.987) Ariel's similar abilities are dmonstrated when he tells Prospero:

> . . . I come.
> To answer thy best pleasure; be't to fly,
> To swim, to dive into the fire, to ride
> On the curl'd clouds. (I.ii.189-192)

A second likeness between the two magical spirits lies in the fact that both Shrimp and Ariel have the ability to play music that charms their victims to sleep. For example, Shrimp puts the two escorts of Sidanen and Marian to sleep, although

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[114] Ibid., p. 445.

leaving the women awake. (1154-1155) Ariel, playing solemn music (ii.i.190), lulls Alonso and Gonzalo to sleep, leaving Antonio and Sebastian awake. Several similarities exist in these two plays between other characters' comments about the music: in John à Kent and John à Cumber, Oswen says, "Either we follow it, / Or it guydes us." (IV.i.1103-1104) In The Tempest, Ferdidnand says, "Thence I have follow'd it, / Or it hath drawn me rather." (I.ii.393-394) Earlier in the same scene, Ferdinand, in wonderment, says of the music, "Where should this music be? I'th' air, or th' earth?" (I.ii.387) A similar statement is made by Oswen in John à Kent and John à Cumber, who says, "This sound is of some instrument . . . now here, now there, on eche side round about us." (I.i.1100-1102) These similar lines suggest that Shakespeare may have been mindful of Munday's play and, particularly, of Shrimp, whom he may have used as his model for Ariel. Prospero's elf-like servant, however, is much more fully developed in the drama than Munday's Shrimp, as evidenced by his frequent participation and mischievous personality.[115]

Welsford has shown that another general influence on The Tempest was the English masque. The influence of certain masques became apparent in the idea of the fairy isle haunted

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[115]John W. Ashton, "Conventional Materials in Munday's John à Kent," PMLA, XLIX (1934), 757.

by monstrous shapes and invisible spirits.[116] The Tempest throughout, is closely associated with music, dancing, and pantomime, in the same manner as these elements are used in the masque. For example, the mock banquet set before Alonso, Antonio, Sebastian, and others of the King's party is accompanied by much dancing and pantomime. Further, the first song by which Ariel lured Ferdinand to Prospero's cell is written on a dance pattern.[117] These scenes, masque-like in nature because of their involvement of mystically-shaped spirits and their strange business in an atmosphere of magic, contribute much in the way of magic to the play. The masque is evidence of Prospero's control of all magic on the island. It becomes most apparent as an essential element when Prospero summons the banquet scene (III.iii.19-20) and, later, the wedding celebration. (IV.i.59-138) The scenes are introduced by music reminiscent of the introduction to masque-like scenes in John à Kent and John à Cumber and The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune.

The dominant theme of magic is seen more completely in The Tempest than in the other black or white magic plays cited in this study. Whereas magic, by the magician (or magicians) has been the dominant theme throughout the other plays, this

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[116] Enid Welsford, The Court Masque, p. 348.

[117] Ibid., p. 337.

element is much more heavily stressed in The Tempest, with Prospero being the one primary motivator of the plot.[118] No other magician in any of the magic plays so completely dominates the action. In addition, and in contrast to other magicians, Prospero is always in full command of the events, all of which occur during the announced short period of four hours. Prospero, unlike Faustus, is seeking no world-wide sovereignty; and, unlike Friar Bacon, he is seeking no engagement in magical contests, nor is he helping to unite true lovers in the face of tyrannical influences. His objective is one of political advantage for himself--seeking to regain his throne as the rightful Duke of Milan.[119] In describing for his daughter, Miranda, the days when he formerly served as Duke of Milan, Prospero explains that Antonio did not dare to destroy him when the latter usurped his office, "So dear the love my people bore me." (I.ii.141) This statement serves to place Prospero in the identity of a white magician, seeking to regain his worldly title, not only for the sake of Miranda and himself but, also, for the people of Milan. Prospero is the personification of gentleness, although sometimes he must be harsh, as in his initial dealings with Ferdinand and his

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[118] Francis Neilson, "Shakespeare and The Tempest: Magic, Wizardry, and Witchcraft," American Journal of Economics, XVII (1958), 327.

[119] W. Rogers, The Ghosts in Shakespeare, p. 150.

conversations with Caliban.[120] This characteristic of gentleness is pointed up by the ease in which he carries out his plans and executes his magic. The raising of the storm, along with Ariel's instructions for treating the ship's passengers and crew, demonstrates an effortlessness and gentleness in Prospero's magic, as do these following words to Miranda: "Thou art inclin'd to sleep. 'Tis a good dullness. And give it away. I know thou canst not choose." (I.ii.185-186) His words immediately lull her into a peaceful sleep. Thus, Prospero exhibits a perfection in manipulating a wide variety of magical procedures. He plans and with Ariel's assistance, effects the tempest; he uses a kind of "staying magic," implemented by Friar Bacon in John of Bordeaux and Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, to keep Ferdinand from drawing his sword (I.ii.476); he casts victims into states of mental distraction, just as Friar Bacon did for Vandermast in John of Bordeaux; and he conjures spirits in a variety of shapes, all in keeping with other magic plays and Renaissance superstitions. The entire situation on the island, itself enchanted, speaks of magic under Prospero's control. He possesses a magical omniscience allowing him full knowledge of all things occurring on the island and at points even distant from there. Neilson suggests that, as a result of this insight, Prospero knows that Alonso's

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[120] Neilson, op. cit., p. 327.

ship has left Africa en route to Naples, because the King of Naples and Antonio are thinking and speaking about Prospero during the voyage.[121] By this same magical process, Prospero knows what is happening with the inhabitants of the island, as evidenced when he shows knowledge of Sebastian's and Antonio's plot to murder the King of Naples and Gonzalo.[122] With this magical omniscience and with other magical powers, Prospero operates toward righteous ends. Though he treats some of the inhabitants, including Alonso, Antonio, and Sebastian to periods of mental distraction, he erases these and restores their sanity as soon as this restoration fits into the pattern of his magic. The love story, as formed in The Tempest, is itself a product of Prospero's magic and somewhat different from the love stories to be found in the earlier magic plays. Ferdinand is the only qualified, or even partly qualified, contender for Miranda's love. The meeting of Ferdinand and Miranda, as well as their developing mutual love, is shown to be controlled by Prospero's magic when he makes the side comment, "It goes on, I see, / As my soul prompts it . . . ." (I.ii.418-419) Finally, Prospero's magic control is exhibited in his ability to create the spirits which he uses in great numbers in The Tempest. The "rabble" (Prospero's

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[121] Ibid., p. 326.

[122] Loc. cit.

name for the spirits) appear in such disguises as Iris, Ceres, and Juno, as well as certain nymphs and reapers. Spirits in a variety of strange shapes, including those shapes of a unicorn and a phoenix, appear to set the banquet before the King's party.

Much of Prospero's magic is, or course, carried out by his chief spirit, Ariel ". . . which art but air." (V.i.21) As previously mentioned, Ariel enchants his victims with music and song to lead them across the island to Prospero's cave, as with Ferdinand in I.i, or with Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo in IV.i. Ariel is superhuman. As earlier shown, he can dart from one location to another, as seen by his actions following Prospero's command, "Come with a thought!" (IV.i.113) He can change shapes at Prospero's command. At one time, Prospero orders him to assume the shape of a sea nymph. (I.ii. 300) Later, he appears in the person of a harpy to make the banquet vanish before the eyes of the terrified Alonso and his company. Ariel also exercises his power of glamor over the shipmen. What they experience during the tempest convinces them that their ship is lost, when it actually is lodged "safely in harbour." (I.ii.226) Ariel and Prospero, in fact, exhibit some of the same powers. Both can become visible or invisible at will--remaining, if they wish, visible only to one another. Prospero, like Ariel, can induce sleep in others or awaken others from sleep. This ability is seen when he gently places

Miranda in a trance and, later, arouses her: "Awake, dear heart, awake! Thou has slept well." (I.ii.304) The impression is, however, that Prospero does not actually need Ariel. This fact is shown when he explains to Ariel that "It was mine art / When I arriv'd and heard thee, that made ope the pine and let thee out." (I.ii.291-292)

Rogers has described Prospero as an ideal magician, whose stature stems from the location--a lost, enchanted island, which complements his natural genius in magic.[123] The spiritis of The Tempest, unlike those in other magic plays (with the possible exception of Shrimp in John à Kent and John à Cumber) are not allied with the devil. They have no power over mankind, as evidenced by Caliban's homage to Stephano, "I will kneel to him (II.ii.122), or "I'll kiss thy foot. I'll swear myself thy subject." (II.ii.156) The spirits are powerless when confronted by the magic of Prospero. Rogers states that Prospero has made no pact with the devil, yet he carries out his magic with such perfection, poise, and gentleness, he is, of all the characters found in the so-called magic plays, the magnificent magician.[124]

In V.i Prospero remembers that his magic exists in a pattern to serve his political ends, and states, "Now does my

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[123] Rogers, op. cit., p. 152.

[124] Loc. cit.

project gather to a head. (V.i.1) He is referring to his magical power when he says, "My charms crack not, my spirits obey . . . ." (V.i.1) His final speech abjuring his "rough magic" (V.i.50) serves as a climactic reminder of his supremacy as magician. Shakespeare's play, The Tempest, because of its full treatment of magic, is considered the magic play at the height of its development, Prospero being the "apothessis of necromancy."[125]

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[125]Felix E. Schelling, Elizabethan Drama 1558-1642, I, 386.

CHAPTER V

AN ANTECEDENT TO THE ELIZABETHAN MAGIC PLAY AND CONCLUSION

A study of Elizabethan plays dominated by the magician also requires that some attention be given to the drama involving a witch as a chief performer of magic. In Harrison's Journal, one notes that witchcraft was a vital subject that was very much on the minds of the people of Renaissance England.[126] Following the time of Renaissance optimism, came a time of pessimism when Englishmen minimized the value of all human learning.[127] The elation that had given rise to the idea of the superhuman had passed. Left in its place was the idea of witchcraft, which demanded no respect for its art, as did the magic of Friar Bacon, John à Kent, or Prospero.[128] Soon after The Tempest was probably written, Thomas Middleton wrote a play, The Witch, dealing with the contemporary subject of witchcraft. In this work, Middleton demonstrates popular ideas on witchcraft in a number of the episodes. For example, his chief witch, Hecate, and her subordinates are coarsely characterized. However, they are Elizabethan in nature, as indicated

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[126] G. B. Harrison, An Elizabethan Journal, pp. 113-114.

[127] L. W. Spitz, "Occultism and Despair of Reason in Renaissance Thought," JHI, XXVII (1966), 464.

[128] Loc. cit.

by the names, "Titty and Tiffin, Suckin and Pidgen, Liard and Robin!" (V.ii.62-67) She and her companions practice the plying of waxen images--a form of "sympathy magic" to bring about the harm or death of an individual represented by the image.[129] Hecate, later, observes a ritual that calls for human remains to be employed in making an ointment, to be applied to the witch's body to ". . . transfer / Our 'nointed flesh into the air, In moonlight nights . . . ." (I.ii.16-17)

Middleton's treatment of the varieties of witchcraft in the play is vulgar, though colorful:

First Witch:	Here's the blood of a bat.
Hecate:	Put in that, O, put in that!
Second Witch:	Here's libbard's-bane.
Hecate:	Put in again!
First Witch:	The juice of toad, the oil of adder.
Second Witch:	Those will make the younker madder.
Hecate;	Put in--there's ounces of the red-hari'd wench.
Fire:	Nay, here's three ounces of the red-hair'd wench.
All the Witches:	Round, around, around, etc.
Hecate:	So, so, enough: into the vessel with it. There, 't hath the true perfection. I'm so light At any mischief! there's no villany. But is a tune, methinks. (V.ii.70-82)

The witch herself is the personification of evil. She is her happiest when plotting and carrying out such plans of wickedness. Middleton, in writing The Witch, apparently agrees with

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[129]Leuba, op. cit., p. 351.

Whitmore, who states that the goal of the English playwright was to make his production ". . . as vigorous, energetic, and lively as possible--gay or grave, as the varying circumstances might demand--but vivid always."[130] Nowhere in any magic play is there a magician or a witch more lively than Hecate.

The major difference between The Witch and the previously discussed white and black magic plays concerns the development of the role of the magician. In the magic plays, the dominant role is always assigned to the magician. In The Witch, Hecate and her sister witches hold prominent roles in approximately only one-third of the scenes; hence, they are exterior forces, active outside of the various plots of the play. It follows, then, that they are not as strong in function as are the magicians. Although the witches dominate particular scenes, the magician, in each of the magic plays, dominates the entire play.

Although the present investigation has not considered every Elizabethan play that deals in the supernatural, it has revealed that a block of plays, because of their treatment of magic, do stand apart from other drama written between the years 1588 and 1612. Elizabethan magic plays, to be labeled as such, must include elements of the supernatural, characters representing good angels, bad angels, and demons, use of

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[130]Whitmore, op. cit., p. 149.

masque-like scenes, and use of magical apparatus. Although certain characteristics of magic did appear, to some extent, in the early miracle and morality plays, the magic play as a distinct type did not evolve completely until 1588 with Marlowe's contribution, The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus. With Faustus as a precedent, other magicians began to appear as main characters in Elizabethan plays, as John of Bordeaux, The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune, Greene's The Honorable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, Munday's John à Kent and John à Cumber, Dekker's The Comedy of Old Fortunatus, and Shakespeare's The Tempest.

The general term of "magic" was soon divided into the two categories of "black" or "white" magic, depending upon the overall mood of the play, i.e., the motives of the main character who was, of course, the magician, and the comic or tragic qualities found in the play. Because of their inherent moods of defeat and pessimism, Marlowe's Doctor Faustus and Dekker's Old Fortunatus are placed in the category of black magic plays. On the other hand, those plays which conform to the Renaissance ideals of optimism, emancipation, and humanitarian beliefs are categorized as white magic plays. The major characters in The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune, Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, John of Bordeaux, John à Kent and John à Cumber, and The Tempest are all considered as white magicians who practice benevolence, eventually bringing about the triumph of

good over evil.

Prospero in Shakespeare's The Tempest, the magnificent magician, represents the height of the development of this character in the magic plays. He, himself, is a white magician who uses magic to bring about righteous goals, and discards his magical powers when these goals have been met. The Tempest, which includes all elements peculiar to this block of magic plays, represents the supreme development of the magic play.

A type of play labeled as the "witch play" (rather than being included in the same category with the true magic play) does embrace many of the qualities found in the magic plays. The witches, however, do not dominate the action of the drama as do the magicians; for this reason, the witch play is not included in the group of seven plays representing the dramatic type of Elizabethan drama referred to as the magic play. The seven plays named in this investigation have traced the Elizabethan magic play from its infancy, in Doctor Faustus, to its maturity, in The Tempest.

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