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The Severed Hand in Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*

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With the ascendancy of cultural studies, the purpose and significance of source study in literary criticism has become less certain. At the time that R. W. Dent wrote *John Webster's Borrowing* in 1960, he declared that the purpose of source study is to "gain not only a more accurate but also a more complete view of Webster's [—that is to say, the author's—] creative process."[1] But for us today the author, although far from "dead," is no longer the exclusive object of study or concern; rising in importance are the cultural transactions or "circulating social energies," as Stephen Greenblatt put it, that produce textual meaning.[2] Given these present concerns, source study needs to expand its object from a restricted preoccupation with the author and move to accommodate as well pertinent discursive contexts that produce fresh understanding of literary texts in their social embeddedness.

The example I propose to treat begins as a long-standing problem of source identification in Webster criticism: the origin or context for the "dead man's hand" episode in the first scene of the fourth act of *The Duchess of Malfi*. In this scene, Duke Ferdinand, the young Duchess's erratic, highly volatile twin brother, punishes his sister for secretly remarrying after her first husband's death. Having enveloped the Duchess in total darkness, Ferdinand determines to terrify her with a series of mental tortures that begins with his presenting (what the Duchess discovers to be) a dead man's hand:

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[FERDINAND.] I come to seale my peace with you: here's a hand,
To which you have vow'd much love: the Ring upon't
You gave. *gives her a dead mans hand.*
DUTCHESSE. I affectionately kisse it.
FERDINAND. 'Pray doe: and bury the print of it in your heart:
I will leave this Ring with you, for a Love-token:
And the hand, as sure as the ring: and doe not doubt
But you shall have the heart too: when you need a friend
Send it to him, that ow'de it: you shall see
Whether he can ayd you.
DUTCHESSE. You are very cold.
I feare you are not well after your travell:
Hah? lights: oh horrible!
FERDINAND. Let her have lights enough. *Exit.*
[*Enter Servants with torches.*]
DUTCHESSE. What witch-craft doth he practise, that he hath left
A dead-mans hand here?
Here is discover'd, (behind a Travers;) the artificiall figures of Antonio, *and his children; appearing as if they were dead.*[3]

Pertinent in fixing the cultural context of the passage is, as we shall see, the Duchess's anguished reaction, which I also cite:

There is not betweene heaven and earth one wish
I stay for after this: it wastes me more,
Then were't my picture, fashion'd out of wax,
Stucke with a magicall needle and then buried
In some fowle dung-hill.
(IV.i.60–4)

Having watched his sister closely, Ferdinand exults, explaining to Bosola and thus to the audience that the bodies are pieces of artifice, prepared in wax:

Excellent; as I would wish: she's plagu'd in Art.
These presentations are but fram'd in wax,
By the curious Master in that Qualitie,
Vincentio Lauriola, and she takes them
For true substantiall Bodies.
(lines 109–13)

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The main source for Webster's tragedy is, of course, Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*, but it does not treat the subject of a dead man's hand, or for that matter Ferdinand's framing of the wax images and his subsequent affliction with lycanthropy.[4] Webster's first comprehensive scholarly editor, F. L. Lucas, relying on Charles Crawford, traces the source of this torture scene to Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*, observing that the "scene with the dead hand and the mock corpses recalls . . . the pretended executions of Philoclea and Pamela in the sight of those dearest to them in *Arcadia*, III.—with the difference however that Sidney's attempts to be terrifying are painfully ineffective."[5] But a perusal of the *Arcadia* reveals that while Sidney presents a mock spectacle of corpses and pretended executions, nowhere does a dead hand appear as part of the spectacle.[6] Subsequent studies by Gunnar Boklund and O. Brückl confirm that Sidney's *Arcadia* is a source for *The Duchess*, but again neither can adduce evidence to explain the dead man's hand.[7]

Addressing this gap, Dent recalls Mario Praz's belief that Webster was indebted to a story by Herodotus ("Tale of Rhampsinitus") in which a thief escapes but leaves "a dead man's arm in the grasp of his intended captor."[8] David Gunby's critical edition of *The Duchess* repeats this suggestion but is not impressed with its plausibility, for as Dent himself had observed, quite correctly, "there is no evidence that Webster was in any way familiar with Herodotus," and "the resemblance is slight."[9]

The source I propose to put forward comes from another direction, not literary high culture but popular contemporary culture—and its subject is witchcraft. The text is Henry Boguet's *Discours exécrable des sorciers*, first published in 1590, and the relevant episode is the principal part of its forty-seventh chapter, "*De la Metamorphose d'homme en Bestes & specialement des Lycanthropes, ou loups-garoux*" ("Of the Metamorphosis of Men into Beasts, and Especially of Lycanthropes or Loups-garoux"):[10]

> Il sera bien à propos d'adiouster icy ce qui est aduenu en l'an 1588. en vn village distant enuiron deux lieues d'Apchon és hautes montagnes d'Auuergne. Vn Gentilhomme estant sur le vespre és fenestres de son chasteau voir passer vn chasseur de sa cognoissance, il le prie de luy apporter à son retour de sa chasse. Le chasseur poursuyuant son chemin le long d'vne pleine fut attaqué par vn gros loup, contre lequel il delascha vn coup d'arquebuze sans le blesser, ce qui l'occasionna de ioindre

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le loup qu'il saisit par les oreilles, mais en fin estant las il se depestra du loup, & se reculant mit la main à vn grand coutelas de chasse qu'il portoit duquel il frappa le loup, & luy abbatit l'vne des pattes qu'il reserra dans sa pouchette apres que le loup eut prins la fuite, & puis se vint rendre au chasteau du gentil-homme à la veue duquel il auoit combatu le loup: Le gentil-homme le prie de luy faire part de sachasse, Ce que le chasseur voulant faire & pensant tirer la patte de sa pouchette, il tire vne main qui portoit à l'vn des doigts vne bague d'or, que le gentil-homme recogneut estre à sa femme Ce qui le fit quelquement mal soupçonner d'elle, & estant entré en la cuisine il trouue sa femme qui se chaussoit ayant son bras sous son deuancier, lequel il tira, & recogneut qu'elle auoit la main couppee Surquoy le gentil-homme la prent par rigueur, mais aussi tost, & mesme apres que sa dextre main luy eut esté confrontee elle confessa que ce n'estoit autre qu'elle qui auoit forme de loup attaqué le chasseur, & fut du depuis bruslee à Ryon Ce que ie sçai par le rapport d'vn personnage digne de foy, qui passa par la enuiron 15. iours apres que la chose fut faicte Voila quand à la figure de loup, que les hommes prennent.[11]

[Here it will be relevant to recount what happened in the year 1588 in a village about two leagues from Apchon in the highlands of Auvergne. One evening a gentleman, standing at the window of his château, saw a huntsman whom he knew passing by, and asked him to bring him some of his bag on his return. As the huntsman went his way along a valley, he was attacked by a large wolf and discharged his arquebus at it without hurting it. He was therefore compelled to grapple with the wolf, and caught it by the ears; but at length, growing weary, he let go of the wolf, drew back and took his big hunting knife, and with it cut off one of the wolf's paws, which he put in his pouch after the wolf had run away. He then returned to the gentleman's château, in sight of which he had fought the wolf. The gentleman asked him to give him part of his bag; and the huntsman, wishing to do so and intending to take the paw from his pouch, drew from it a hand wearing a gold ring on one of the fingers, which the gentleman recognised as belonging to his wife. This caused him to entertain an evil suspicion of her; and going into the

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> kitchen, he found his wife nursing her arm in her apron, which he took away, and found that her hand had been cut off. Thereupon the gentleman seized hold of her; but immediately, and as soon as she had been confronted with her hand, she confessed that it was no other than she who, in the form of a wolf, had attacked the hunter; and she was afterwards burned at Ryon. This was told me by one who may be believed, who went that way fifteen days after this thing had happened. So much for men being changed into the shape of wolves.][12]

As a proposed source for *The Duchess*, Boguet's narrative is more specific in its relationship to Webster's text than the *Arcadia* since Boguet treats a cut-off hand bearing a wedding ring in an explicit relationship to lycanthropy, a context we know Webster introduced into his tragedy via at least one other French text as translated by Edward Grimeston in 1607, Simon Goulart's *Admirable and Memorable Histories . . . of Our Time.*[13] Boguet's narrative is also far more proximate to Webster's time, and pertinent, than Herodotus's tale and more precisely parallels the iconography of Webster's tragedy. The only defect in designating Boguet as a source is that despite Webster's strong attraction to Continental sources, he usually resorted to them in translation.[14]

While real, this defect is not decisive. First, to judge from its publication history, Boguet's *Discours exécrable* became a succès fou. After its original publication in 1590, it was republished in 1602, whereupon it caught on and was published twice in 1603, once in 1605, twice again in 1606, then once each in 1607, 1608, 1610, and 1611.[15] These dates, in their various issues and editions, suggest the wide availability of the *Discours exécrable* at just the time when Continental ideas of witchcraft were pouring into England, with the result that witchcraft pamphlets, trial accounts and other witchcraft material teemed from English presses.[16] Second, Webster could have had recourse to the *Discours exécrable* in one of these numerous editions at just the time when he began composing *The Duchess* in 1612, finishing it in 1613–14.[17] Boguet's book is also just the kind to which Webster was particularly drawn—civic, judicial, and historical works.[18] Boguet was himself a prominent "Grand Juge," and his work is very much the product of his judicial experiences.[19] Despite the book's popularity, or perhaps contributing to it, the Rev. Montague Summers, an editor of a 1929 English translation of Boguet's *Discours exécrable*, explains that "no treatise" outside of the

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Malleus Maleficarum was "more authoritative," syncretic, or carefully compiled.[20] It is also possible that the source material we find in Boguet did not make its way directly to Webster via the *Discours exécrable* in print form. Boguet himself says he is relating a story told to him—"Ce que ie sçai par le rapport d'vn personnage digne de foy"—to which he then lends prestige by soberly recording the anecdote and then publishing it in a judicious, if not judicial way. Clearly, the story was circulating by word of mouth, and Webster could have had recourse to it in this way, for his use of the anecdote does not depend on stylistic matters, but on its sensational and grotesque iconic features—the severed hand with marriage ring, cut off not only in a context of witchcraft but also in the more specific context of lycanthropy, which is also Webster's. Thus, whether the *Discours exécrable* functions as a direct or an indirect source for *The Duchess*, it furnishes the best evidence we have ever had—far better than the putative sources of Sidney or Herodotus hitherto put forward—for establishing the context in which the dead-hand episode in Webster's tragedy should be read.

Having considered the narrative reported in the *Discours exécrable* as a source for *The Duchess*, we are in a position to consider its significance. Modern scholarship has established a strong relationship between act IV, scene i, and a general discourse of witchcraft. These linkages center, of course, on the Duchess's explicit question, "What witch-craft doth he practise[?]" (IV.i.53) and on her confession that the sight of her dead family

> wastes me more,
> Then were't my picture, fashion'd out of wax,
> Stucke with a magicall needle and then buried
> In some fowle dung-hill.
>
> (IV.i.61–4)

Lucas, Dent, and, more recently, Gunby have pointed to several discrete works, all published prior to *The Duchess*—Thomas Dekker's *The Whore of Babylon*, Ben Jonson's *The Masque of Queens*, and George Chapman's *Seven Penitential Psalms*—that illustrate a form of sympathetic magic in which a witch puts pins in poppets or fashions pictures out of wax to be placed in a dunghill in order to cast spells on others from a distance.[21] While these findings are literary, they are really rooted, it can be demonstrated, in tumultuous contemporary experience. Although not mentioned in the critical notes to Webster's tragedy, the sensational

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Lancashire witch trials took place in the same year that Webster had begun composing *The Duchess*, 1612. That trial featured rival families, both professing to practice witchcraft, and a love intrigue in which Anne Chattox's married daughter retaliated against the sexual advances of a member of the rival Nutter family by fashioning a clay picture of a Nutter woman.[22] During the trial one Elizabeth Sowtherns, alias "Old Demdike," explained to the magistrate how to take away a man's life by witchcraft: "make a Picture of Clay, like vnto the shape of the person whom they meane to kill, & dry it thorowly: and when they would haue them to be ill in any one place more then an other; then take a Thorne or Pinne, and pricke it in that part of the Picture you would so haue to be ill: and when you would haue any part of the Body to consume away, then take that part of the Picture, and burne it. And when they would haue the whole body to consume away, then take the remnant of the sayd Picture, and burne it: and so therevpon by that meanes, the body shall die."[23] All the witchcraft practices that the Duchess names in her distraught response to Ferdinand's mad revenge—the clay or wax images, the consuming or wasting away of the victim, and the victim's picture stuck with a needle or pin—also appear in this account, and repeatedly during the Lancashire witch trials of 1612.

Modern scholarship has made notable strides in linking the dead-hand episode to the folklore and practice of witchcraft. Muriel Bradbrook pointed to affinities between the severed hand and occult witchcraft practices in which fingers and hands were used as "charms" in folk cures.[24] More recently, Katharine Rowe, the first to undertake a comprehensive exploration of the dead-hands trope in her book, *Dead Hands: Fictions of Agency*, has examined the dead hand in terms of a *tradition* of spectacle-presentation, which Bradbrook herself invokes, called "Main-de-Gloire" or Hand of Glory, and she has linked Webster's use of the trope to witchcraft lore and practice.[25] In particular, Rowe invokes Francesco Maria Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficarum* (1608), where the Hand of Glory appears as a folkloric witchcraft charm, complete with a recipe for preserving and preparing the hand from an exhumed body, which the witch subsequently employed to cast a spell, usually putting its victims into a deep sleep.[26] She goes on to connect the Hand of Glory with the 1604 statute of James I forbidding the exhumation of bodies "or any other part of any dead person, to be employed or used in any manner of witchcraft, sorcery, charm, or enchantment."[27]

Salutary as these advances have been, they do not satisfactorily explain the context or specific features of the dead hand that

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obtain in Webster's tragedy. Although Rowe shows how the dead-hand motif emerges from folklore as a witchcraft "charm," a phrase she employs eight times in the course of her discussion,[28] Webster's use of that trope does not function as a "charm." Tellingly, no explanation has emerged among Webster's commentators to account for the fact that the severed hand bears a wedding ring, a point made three times in the torture scene and emphasized twice more in act I when the Duchess puts the wedding ring on Antonio's finger.

The tale Boguet relates helps us to integrate the severed hand into a discourse on demonic possession and, specifically, lycanthropy. In Boguet, the dismembered hand with a gold ring is the lurid physical and synecdochal manifestation and symbol—as it is in Webster—of the severing of the sacramental marital bond. The one difference is that Boguet's text makes explicit the link between this dismembering of the marriage bond and lycanthropy. That is to say, the husband in the tale has no idea that his wife has succumbed to werewolfism until he discovers the physical proof of it. In this narrative, lycanthropy bespeaks the sudden appearance of a demonic gulf separating forever the gentleman from the wife he thought he knew. Another way to look at this evidence is that lycanthropic possession is a madness that alienates husband from wife and brother from sister. This explanation leads us directly to the wooing scene of act I. After putting the wedding ring from her first husband on Antonio's finger, the Duchess embraces Antonio, refiguring by this gesture the circle of the ring and thus stressing her belief in a union so complete that "All discord, without this circumference, / Is onely to be pittied" (I.i.454–5). Her devout wish that heaven never permit violence to untie "this sacred Gordian [knot]" (line 463) articulates the bonding of two beings in a blessed marriage whereby they become one. Yet the anxious Antonio employs the tropes of witchcraft to describe the dangers of this match, for he sees "a sawcy and ambitious divell / Is dauncing in this circle" (lines 398–9). With similar foreboding, the Duchess's suggestion that Antonio lead her "by the hand" (line 478) to the marriage bed adumbrates Ferdinand's "tempest" of revenge (line 457) and his later attempt to exhibit the ringed hand as severed from the marital body.

The fact, moreover, that the hand in Boguet's narrative is initially identified as a wolf's paw and is subsequently shown to belong to the gentleman's wife foregrounds a second basic idea in the folklore of lycanthropy—the demonic, experientially inexplicable, transformation of the human into the bestial. The ico-

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nography of the ringed hand turned into a wolf's paw signifies the violent alienation of the self from its own proper nature—the very meaning of madness. It is therefore apposite that the torture scene initially suggests that the hand belongs to Ferdinand, Webster's incipient lycanthrope. In preparation for the horrors to come, Bosola advises the Duchess that her brother will visit her in the night, "kisse your hand, / And reconcile himselfe" (IV.i.26–7). Shortly after Ferdinand appears, his announcement, "I come to seale my peace with you: here's a hand" (line 42), again strengthens the Duchess's expectation that the hand will be her brother's. The prospect of the kiss upon the hand displays that part of Ferdinand's psyche that reaches out for reconcilement and is yet erotically obsessed with his twin sister. As Dale B. J. Randall's compelling study of the handclasp in contemporary iconography demonstrates, this "sign of union and reunion . . . but specifically . . . of marriage" was widely recognized throughout the culture, and so complexly conveys Ferdinand's own erotic fixations and incestuous wishes, as well as his repressed desire for sacramental union.[29]

But in a significant departure from the iconographically rich but straightforward tale Boguet relates, Webster identifies the ringed hand complexly and suggestively, not only with Ferdinand, but also with the man who has possessed the Duchess, Antonio. Immediately after the dumb show revelation of the bodies of Antonio and the children, Bosola asserts that the hand has been cut from her husband's corpse—"Looke you: here's the peece, from which 'twas ta'ne" (IV.i.55). Read iconographically, this purported severing of the ringed hand from the body exhibits Ferdinand's desire to revoke, untie, disassociate, his sister from a marital union he will not approve.

The line also provides a firm link between Ferdinand's lycanthropic obsession with body parts and other sections of the play. In this respect Boguet's narrative corroborates a reading that makes sense of Webster's tragedy not only within a general discourse of witchcraft, but also the more specific discourse of lycanthropy, including the torture scene. By this reckoning, critics have been right to argue that the dissevered hand foreshadows Ferdinand's behavior in the fifth act, where he becomes an out-and-out lycanthrope, digging up graves and bearing the leg of a dead man on his shoulder. As we know, Webster embeds indications of Ferdinand's lycanthropic disease into the earlier portions of the text, associating the duke with the howling of wolves and the witchcraft of the mandrake root. The severed hand

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episode, we now see, conforms to and corroborates this larger body of evidence.

To sum up, Boguet's *Discours exécrable des sorciers* is a pertinent source for *The Duchess of Malfi*, important to our understanding of the reception of the tragedy as well as to Webster's authorial intentions. Specifically, the *Discours exécrable* provides our first concrete evidence for treating the "dead-hand episode" of act IV within a contemporary discourse on lycanthropy. This context, the source demonstrates, is not literary in the high-cultural sense (as are the proposed sources of Herodotus and Sidney), but in view of the Lancashire witch trials of 1612 and other contemporary engagements with witchcraft in England, intensely popular and topical. This finding also conforms with Webster's known use of Goulart's *Admirable and Memorable Histories*, his other, originally French source for Ferdinand's lycanthropy. In this context, as I have interpreted it, both Boguet's retelling and Webster's horrific staging of the severed hand bearing a wedding ring enact a communal anxiety that unseen agents from the demonic world will, through lycanthropic possession, sever the bonds that join husband to wife, indeed family member from family member. In respect to the person afflicted with lycanthropy, also in a sense a victim, both Boguet and Webster enact the spectacle of self-alienation and transformation, such that we witness, to use Boguet's words from the chapter title of the *Discours exécrable*, *"De la Metamorphose d'homme en Bestes & specialement des Lycanthropes, ou loups-garoux."* Such a conclusion indicates not merely that the author, Webster, following Boguet, intended this meaning, but also that many members of his audience would have read or interpreted the dead-man's hand episode apprehensively in this fearsome context of contemporary witchcraft and lycanthropic possession.

NOTES

[1] R. W. Dent, *John Webster's Borrowing* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1960), p. 32.

[2] Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1988), pp. 1–20. See also Michel Foucault, "What Is an Author?" in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. and intro. Donald F. Bouchard, trans. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1977), pp. 113–38.

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[3] John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*, in *The Works of John Webster*, ed. David Gunby, David Carnegie, and Antony Hammond, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995), 1:379–713, 535, IV.i.42–54; subsequent references to the play will appear parenthetically in the text by act, scene, and line number.

[4] William Painter, *The Palace of Pleasure*, ed. Joseph Jacobs, 4th edn., 3 vols. (London: David Nutt, 1890), 3:3–43.

[5] F. L. Lucas, in Webster, *The Complete Works of John Webster*, ed. Lucas, 4 vols. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin; London: Chatto and Windus, 1927), 2:178n35.

[6] See Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The New Arcadia)*, ed. Victor Skretkowicz (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), pp. 430–8.

[7] Gunnar Boklund, "Sidney's *Arcadia*," in *The Duchess of Malfi: Sources, Themes, Characters* (Cambridge MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1962), pp. 25–31; and O. Brückl, "Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* as a Source for John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*," *ESA* 8, 1 (March 1965): 31–55.

[8] Dent, p. 229.

[9] Gunby et al., eds., in Webster, *Works*, 1:680; Dent, p. 229.

[10] Henry Boguet, "*De la Metamorphose d'homme en Bestes & specialement des Lycanthropes, ou loups-garoux*," in *Discours exécrable des sorciers, avec une préface de Maxime Préaud* (Rouen, 1606; rprt. Marseille: Laffitte Reprints, 1979), pp. 258–96. This original date of publication is from the Rev. Montagu Summers, "Editor's Preface," in Boguet, *An Examen of Witches, Drawn from Various Trials of Many of This Sect in the District of Saint Oyan de Joux, Commonly Known as Saint Claude, in the County of Burgundy, Including the Procedure Necessary to a Judge in Trials for Witchcraft*, trans. E. Allen Ashwin, ed. Summers (London: John Rodker, 1929; rprt. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1971), p. xiii.

[11] Boguet, *Discours exécrable*, pp. 266–8.

[12] The translation is taken directly from Boguet, *Examen of Witches*, pp. 140–1. It has been pointed out to me that the clause, "il le prie de luy apporter à son retour de sa chasse" is not felicitously translated as "asked him to bring him some of his bag on his return" and might be better rendered as "asked him to bring him something upon his return from the hunt." Ashwin's translation of the chapter containing this anecdote in Boguet's discourse is also reproduced as "Of the Metamorphosis of Men into Beasts," in *A Lycanthropy Reader: Werewolves in Western Culture*, ed. Charlotte F. Otten (Syracuse NY: Syracuse Univ. Press, 1986), pp. 77–90; this passage appears on p. 80.

[13] Gunby et al., eds., in Webster, *Works*, p. 680. See also Simon Goulart, *Admirable and Memorable Histories Containing the Wonders of Our Time*, trans. Edward Grimeston (London, 1607), pp. 387–92.

[14] Dent, pp. 41, 47.

[15] Summers, in Boguet, *Examen of Witches*, pp. xiii–iv.

[16] 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. 27; Barbara Rosen, *Witchcraft in England, 1558–1618* (Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1991), p. 213; Marion Gibson, *Reading Witchcraft: Stories of Early English Witches* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 113–7.

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[17] Gunby et al., eds., in Webster, *Works*, p. 379; Alfred Harbage, *Annals of English Drama, 975–1700: An Analytical Record of All Plays, Extant or Lost, Chronologically Arranged and Indexed by Authors, Titles, Dramatic Companies and C.*, rev. eds. S. Schoenbaum and Sylvia Stoler Wagonheim, 3d edn. (London and New York: Routledge, 1989), p. 106. Lucas dates the play to 1613–14 (2:3–4).

[18] Dent, pp. 47–50.

[19] Préaud, "Avant-Propos," in Boguet, *Discours exécrable*, [pp. i–ii, i].

[20] Summers, in Boguet, *Examen of Witches*, pp. v–vi.

[21] Lucas, 2:178; Dent, pp. 230–1; Gunby et al., eds., in Webster, *Works*, p. 640n.

[22] Wallace Notestein, *A History of Witchcraft in England from 1558 to 1718* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1968), pp. 121–2.

[23] The prime source for the trials is the account by the assizes clerk, Thomas Potts, *The Wonderfvll Discoverie of Witches in the Covntie of Lancaster* (London, 1613). See the facsimile edn., *Potts's Discovery of Witches in the County of Lancaster*, intro. and notes by James Crossley (Manchester UK, 1845; rprt. New York: Johnson Reprint, 1968), sig. B3v. It is also cited with commentary in Edgar Peel and Pat Southern, *The Trials of the Lancashire Witches: A Study of Seventeenth-Century Witchcraft* (New York: Taplinger, 1969), p. 29.

[24] M. C. Bradbrook, "Two Notes upon Webster," *MLR* 42, 3 (July 1947): 281–94, 283–4.

[25] Bradbrook, p. 284; see Katherine Rowe, *Dead Hands: Fictions of Agency, Renaissance to Modern* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1999), pp. 97–104.

[26] Rowe, pp. 98–9.

[27] Rowe, p. 100. The citation of the statute of 1604 is from Russell Hope Robbins, *The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1959), p. 280.

[28] Rowe, pp. 98–101.

[29] Dale B. J. Randall, "The Rank and Earthy Background of Certain Physical Symbols in *The Duchess of Malfi*," *RenD*, n.s., 18 (1987): 171–203, 174. Ferdinand's madness and the incestuous feelings he bears for his twin sister have naturally attracted a good deal of psychological and psychoanalytic criticism. Among the most important of these is Lynn Enterline's "'Hairy on the In-side': *The Duchess of Malfi* and the Body of Lycanthropy," *YJC* 7, 2 (Fall 1994): 85–129, and (on Ferdinand's self-alienation and mad hunt for his own shadow) Giles Mitchell and Eugene Wright, "Duke Ferdinand's Lycanthropy as a Disguise Motive in Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*," *L&P* 25, 3 (1975): 117–23.

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