

Richard M. Golden



ENCYCLOPEDIA OF
WITCHCRAFT
THE WESTERN TRADITION

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THE WESTERN TRADITION

Volume 1, A–D

Richard M. Golden, Editor



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FOREWORD

The *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition* is an indispensable resource at the dawn of the third millennium. Above all, it provides reliable answers to satisfy the sharp curiosity of our contemporaries, who are surrounded by an atmosphere that is softly but strongly tinted with magic—the magic of dreams, of successful books such as *Harry Potter*, and of innumerable films and television series featuring witches, werewolves (**lycanthropy**), and **vampires**. This new work will be both necessary and extremely useful in bringing order to an often incomprehensible flood of information and misinformation and providing meaning for a vast river of symbols, emotions, and ideas that carry some truths but also a great many errors. It will also help readers locate the elements of truth within the vast **literature** devoted to diabolical sensationalism by distinguishing between hysterical fantasy and historical truth, enabling them to understand better the ways in which magic and witchcraft have left a profound cultural imprint on today's Western world.

Moreover, this encyclopedia appears at an appropriate moment to fill a huge void. In its breadth of subject matter, its international and collective character, and its completeness, it has no equivalent. A few dictionaries of diabolism and magic exist in various languages; in 1959, for example, **Rossell Hope Robbins** published the 570-page *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. But until now, no multivolume survey, bringing together contributions from 172 specialists representing twenty-eight countries, has ever been attempted. Like Denis Diderot's famous eighteenth-century *Encyclopédie*, this work offers mature collective wisdom about the topics it surveys. The time has finally come to consider carefully and seriously the greatest enigma of Western civilization between the 1420s and 1750: the **executions** of witches, whose flamboyant traces still haunt our imaginations in both Europe and America. We know today that there were not 100,000

executions, as **Voltaire** claimed, but barely one-third as many. Most of them occurred within the boundaries of present-day **Germany**, and most witches died in western Europe between 1560 and 1630.

Witchcraft and magic are universal human phenomena; they can be found on any continent at any time. However, only the West has ever burned great numbers of witches, after legally constituted **trials** that were approved by political authorities and fully accepted by established churches. Women generally constituted around 80 percent—at times more—of those accused and condemned, although there were exceptions to this rule in places such as **Finland** or the French province of **Normandy**. This astounding imbalance between the genders makes the mystery even more impenetrable, because at that time, witchcraft (along with **infanticide**) became the female capital crime par excellence; generally, women accounted for only a very small minority of all defendants in courtroom trials, rarely exceeding 20 percent.

The past is not dead. It weighs on those living today—and not just in vivid sensations that remain deeply embedded in our memories or in museum collections such as those at **Salem**. It endures more subtly through the impact of strong images, which I prefer to call cultural matrices, that carry their symbolic baggage from century to century. One of the most powerful of these images, the great European enigma of the witch at the stake, drives this encyclopedia. No one person can resolve this enigma in such a short space. I simply want to direct readers' attention to some paths of research and give them a desire to sample this work in the same way that Voltaire tried to guide readers of his *Dictionnaire philosophique* (Philosophical Dictionary, 1764): Here also, one article refers to another, and readers can best absorb their ultimate meanings by linking together multiple entries.

The problem at the heart of these volumes is enormously complicated, and no single answer or approach can resolve it. But like any great question, it can be simplified by seeking its most basic core: The **witch hunts** were so terrible and so intense that simply retelling their history reveals something fundamental about the mentality of the western Europeans who conducted them. And without any general consensus among historians for explaining the persecution of witches, I hope to enrich its significance by placing it among the formative myths that slowly but profoundly shaped the cultural and social foundations of early modern Europe.

Attempts to explain the persecution of witches have multiplied since the end of the witchcraft trials. Obviously, the judges and most other people believed purely and simply that witchcraft demonstrated the unleashed power of the **Devil**, a kind of prelude to the **Apocalypse**; in their eyes, the witches constituted a secret society of deviant devil-worshippers, paying homage to Satan and fornicating with him at their **Sabbats**. Those who dared to express doubts on this topic, as **Johann Weyer** did, were few. The eighteenth-century *philosophes* tried to eradicate such **superstitions** by talking about madness or, more cleverly, about diabolical suggestion; skeptics such as **Daniel Defoe** argued that the Devil had no physical power but simply insinuated his venom into human minds. Nevertheless, a residue of **demonology** has survived at various intellectual levels; it ranges from today's abundant overtly satanic literature to historical accounts and theological discussions, with each genre serving the specific needs and cultural conventions of its special audience. Until 1960 (and sometimes later), the dominant explanation in the Anglo-Saxon world came from the works of the Egyptologist **Margaret Murray**, who saw the witches' Sabbath as a very real but secret ceremony demonstrating the clandestine survival of a cult of a pre-Christian horned god. Without going that far, **Carlo Ginzburg** followed a parallel path when investigating the *benandanti* of Friuli and suggested, unconvincingly, that **shamanism** profoundly influenced the witches' Sabbath.

A major turning point occurred in the 1970s. Influenced by events such as opposition to the Vietnam War or the French student uprising of 1968, some researchers followed smoke signals from the Devil's grass (cannabis or peyote) and explained the experiences of witches as **hallucinogenically** induced dreams. Others took more novel paths. In **France**, **Robert Mandrou** explained the end of witchcraft persecutions long before the **Enlightenment** through increasing **skepticism** among the ruling classes. In **England**, **Alan**

Macfarlane and **Keith Thomas** built an anthropological model, in which witches were often accused of casting **spells** on people who had previously refused them charity. For these British scholars, neighborhood and a sense of guilt seemed more important than the Devil, whose presence was never elicited through **torture**, as it was on the Continent. A response followed quickly from **H. C. Erik Midelfort**, who used massive statistical information from an epicenter of persecution in **southwestern Germany** to build a highly useful model describing the variations in witchcraft persecution within a region where confessional rivalry appeared to multiply witch burnings. With youthful enthusiasm, I devised a two-sided **acculturation** model, using witchcraft trials from the Spanish-ruled **southern Netherlands**. One part merged the British/anthropological explanation with a then-fashionable type of Marxism, stressing that the richer inhabitants of villages encouraged their overlords to persecute poorer residents by offering to pay the costs of witchcraft trials. The other part described how confessional churches and emerging absolutist states targeted witches as prime and particularly dangerous transmitters of an outdated oral culture, heavily charged with what these authorities called superstitions. My model proved too schematic to apply successfully throughout Europe, but it contained some still-valid elements, including an explanation for the predominance of women among witches.

While the effervescent intellectual climate of the 1970s led to some intellectual collisions, other researchers working in the Jura region, **Scotland**, the Spanish **Basque Country**, and **New England** patiently collected information that enabled us to gain a better overall grasp of the dimensions of the witch hunt in some widely scattered places. However, too much archival work of the 1970s was carried out in parts of western Europe other than Germany—the “mother of so many witches,” in **Friedrich Spee's** evocative phrase. A major revival of interest in witchcraft trials occurred in West Germany only after 1980, when the amazing collection made by the Nazi *Hexenkommando* finally came to scholars' attention. Subsequently, this material has been used to shape some fresh and persuasive interpretations of the phenomenon in its heartland, most prominently **Wolfgang Behringer's** correlations between climatic disasters, famine, and major witchcraft persecutions.

The years since 1990 have marked a new stage in the journey down this long road. Several general accounts of the witch hunt have been published, usually without privileging any single interpretation. Even the outstanding **Lorraine-based** investigation empha-

sizing quarrels within villages (Briggs 2001) offers “many reasons why” when trying to explain witchcraft persecutions throughout Europe. But if a historian’s most fundamental task is to establish some hierarchy for the information he or she provides, then a multiplicity of explanations, each of roughly equal weight, ultimately remains unsatisfactory. Moreover, some recent developments have significantly clarified our knowledge of this topic, including works highlighting the idea that witchcraft persecution had a center with several peripheries, the specificity of **demonic possession** in convents such as **Loudun** and its hidden connections to witchcraft prosecutions, and especially the fundamental importance of **gender** for comprehending this theme.

The **geography** of witch hunting now seems clear: The phenomenon was centered in the German-speaking **Holy Roman Empire** (plus **Switzerland**). This core region also produced the **Protestant Reformation**, pioneered the system of confessionalism, and endured Europe’s bloodiest religious war until 1648. But there were also various types of “witchcraft peripheries,” three of which should be noted in particular. Most of Protestant northern Europe, apart from **Scotland** and northern **Sweden** after 1668, seems to have been relatively immune to extensive witch hunting; one exceptionally prosperous region, the United Provinces of the **Netherlands**, abandoned witch hunting much sooner than any other area. Another little-affected region comprised the solidly Catholic lands of southern Europe (**Spain**, **Italy**, and **Portugal**), where Inquisitions avoided putting witches to death, and France, whose appellate courts permitted relatively few executions for this crime. Finally, eastern Europe constituted a very different sort of periphery. There, trials and executions of witches occurred much later than in western Europe, but they were confined to Latin Christianity; **Orthodox** Christendom remained almost entirely impervious to this phenomenon, and **Islamic** regions were completely so.

It is abundantly clear that witch hunts were very unevenly distributed throughout Europe. The heartlands of witchcraft persecutions lay mostly in parts of west-central Europe, which were sharply disputed between Protestants and Catholics between 1560 and 1630, and there were later prolongations in eastern Europe during the post-1650 Catholic reconquest and in a few overseas colonies such as New England. Major outbreaks of witchcraft trials were distributed widely among both Protestants and Catholics during the apogee of confessionalization, but few obvious subpatterns emerged along confessional fault lines. Europe’s

very worst witchcraft **panics** tended to cluster between 1585 and 1630 in Germany’s Catholic **ecclesiastical territories** (principalities), especially those, such as **Cologne**, ruled by electoral prince-archbishops. Meanwhile, the most intensive (per capita) and regular (per annum) witchcraft trials in western Europe afflicted the Protestant **Pays de Vaud**. The best general rule one can discover is a negative correlation: The lay judges who burned most of Europe’s witches were usually the furthest removed from the centers of political power in major monarchies such as France or Spain.

The theme of witchcraft probably requires the sort of multilayered approach pioneered by Fernand Braudel (Braudel 1980). At the short-term or “conjunctural” level, we must identify the local circumstances: Sometimes, the most serious outbreaks of witch hunting were prompted by climate changes and harvest failures, and at other times, they were triggered by the actions of unusually zealous judges, among them **Pierre de Lancre** or **Henri Boguet**. At a multigenerational intermediate level, they developed against a background of prolonged confessional rivalry and strife, which seems to have been most intense in the Holy Roman Empire. The lion’s share of the prosecutions occurred in regions ruled by Catholics, who, in one sense, had a head start because the **papacy** had apparently endorsed the ***Malleus Maleficarum*** (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) a century before the worst outbreaks began; after the Council of Trent, **Jesuits** including **Juan Maldonado** rediscovered and emphasized the profound links between **heresy** and diabolical witchcraft. The purely Catholic phenomenon of demonic possession in nunneries led to some spectacular dramas: For example, at least two nuns from the convent of the Verger in Artois were burned as witches around 1614 (Muchembled 2003a, 250–263), after which Catholic authorities made a much stronger separation between witches and “possessed” women.

At the deepest, long-term level of explanations for witchcraft, the subject of gender relations in Europe between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries—and beyond—deserves very close attention, not just because books on the subject seem to multiply, giving one the impression of a passing fashion, but also because if the overwhelming majority of convicted witches were women, it is impossible not to ask why. Back in the 1970s, a few male scholars, myself included, made timid allusions to this problem, without attracting much attention. Only recently has feminist scholarship emphasized the strongly feminine character of the crime of *lèse-majesté divine* or treason against god—and some current defenders of this approach have not

improved its credibility by talking about “gynocide” or grossly exaggerating the **numbers** of women killed for this crime at a time when religious massacres, not to mention famines and **plague**, truly decimated European populations.

My own reading of European cultural and social history in the early modern period suggests a slow and subtle modification, at the very deepest level, in the relationship between the sexes. The onset of witchcraft persecution at the end of the Middle Ages, which has been analyzed less thoroughly than its peak, coincided with what feminists describe as the development of a “paternalist-misogynist” model. One might just as easily call it a reinforcement of masculine privilege, an attempt to confine women more strictly than before within the bounds of “propriety,” meaning, first and foremost, the control of their sexual impulses. Except for a handful of princesses and fashionable courtisans, women of that period were subjected to a more intensive and intrusive surveillance of their sexual behavior, which was insistently defined as naturally malevolent and sinful. Any woman found guilty of disposing freely of her own sexuality suffered extreme consequences. Extramarital sexual activity enhanced a man’s reputation, but it invariably had tragic consequences for any woman unlucky enough to be caught concealing her pregnancy; for example, in France, following a royal edict of Henry II in 1557, women were fifteen times likelier to be executed for this crime than burned as a witch in the vast district of the *Parlement of Paris*.

Moreover, only during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did the consensus of European thinkers agree that a **pact with the Devil** could not be broken. Instead of the famous medieval miracle of **Theophilus**, who outwitted the Devil, the dominant motif became the pact of Dr. Faustus (**Johann Georg Faust**), who was eternally damned (Muchembled 2003b). Although both Theophilus and Faustus were men, the consequences of the change weighed overwhelmingly on women. The ultimate metaphor became the one-sided and unbreakable pact between an old woman and the Devil, confirmed not in writing but by an act of sexual intercourse, which male authors and judges invariably described as painful.

Of course, no single explanation can cover a phenomenon so important, so spectacular, and so terrifying as witchcraft persecution, which has left indelible traces on Western civilization. But we must not shrug our shoulders in defeat or retreat behind a confusing multiplicity of causes. In fact, European witchcraft between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries offers an excel-

lent terrain for attempting a total history, at every level from local to global. The *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft* thus comes at the right time to shine a spotlight on many things, especially two notions that have been too often neglected recently: first, the essential role of Christianity in encouraging the persecution of witches, and second, the reinforced legal subordination and surveillance of women in early modern European society. The evidence for both phenomena is so overwhelming that they have all too often remained hidden in plain view, obscured by multicausal approaches and thus minimized by even the best specialists. The deepest reason for this neglect probably lies in the ways in which great cultural myths usually work: They touch essential matters but without drawing attention to them because a myth that is too easily understood has little effect on any given society.

I believe that Western witchcraft from the 1420s to around 1750 carried the cultural baggage of one of our greatest myths: male supremacy, powerfully reinforced at that time by a religious ethic that placed increasing emphasis on a man’s duty to supervise his female companions, whose cold and damp natures were inclined toward evil and were dangerous for the collective salvation of humanity. A witchcraft trial involved a woman, frequently widowed or otherwise unsupervised by male kin, who was accused of giving herself—in both body and soul—to the Devil. This fact cannot be understood without setting it in the religious context of that age, as different confessional churches rivaled each other in increasing supervision over the female **imagination** (including a stronger indoctrination of **children**). Burning a witch in public concealed a veritable forest of symbols, the most essential being the relationship between genders. The idea of the evil woman was one of the most fundamental Western myths until the eighteenth century—and beyond. Myths die hard. Imaginative cinematographers such as Alfred Hitchcock or David Lynch re-created an image of the dangerously perverse blonde, capable of the very worst sexual transgressions, closely resembling the figure of the witch punished by early modern European males.

Have we reached a crossroads? In this millennium, the social and cultural importance of Christianity is declining at an accelerated rate in Europe, although much more slowly in the United States, while in both places, women are increasingly demanding their place in the sun. After more than five centuries, the myth of the witch as the sexual slave of Satan, eating babies and raising hailstorms, seems to be disintegrating. Radical and profound mutations in gender relations, including marital relations and **family** values, have surely played a

major role in this disintegration. When civilizations shift at their deepest levels, fundamental myths shift with them. In both Europe and the United States, now safely insulated from infant mortality and food shortages, the old myth of a happier life after death is increasingly challenged by the contemporary myth of immediate and total individual gratification: I want it here, I want it now, I want it all . . .

For anyone seeking reliable information about this basic Western myth, the *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft* provides exactly that: We have it here, we have it now, and we have it all.

—Robert Muchembled
Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton
October 2003

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Note: Words marked in bold refer to the encyclopedia's entries.

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INTRODUCTION

Witchcraft is a topic of enduring interest for a variety of reasons. Many and probably most human societies, from primitive bands through civilizations, have practiced and still practice forms of witchcraft (and its close relations magic and religion) and/or believe in the concept of a witch, defined as someone who uses supernatural means to cause harm or misfortune. When beneficent as well as malevolent power is subsumed in the definition of witchcraft, then the concept of witchcraft is universal, historically and geographically.¹ For societies or segments of societies that mistakenly believe only “the Other” employs witchcraft, the topic may have interest as an entrée into the minds and behaviors of the backward, the superstitious, or the ignorant. Witchcraft, a part of the occult, fascinates, perplexes, and offers vicarious experience with the dark, deadly, and dangerous. Thus, in Western civilization, some skeptical Romans, medieval and early modern peoples, and the transoceanic societies that comprise the contemporary West have expressed their feelings of superiority as well as their fascination and fear of witchcraft, perceived to be joined to its Siamese twin, evil. The perception of witchcraft can function to mark cultural and religious boundaries, to label or cleanse a society of the socially and/or the religiously indigestible, and to distinguish the good from the bad, offering a partial theodicy to cope with humankind’s Hobbesian lives.

All topics are on the scholars’ table, although they do not always realize the seemingly endless varieties of approaches and subjects—hence, historiography and spectacular alterations in scholarship that can often bewilder those more comfortable with static knowledge and with understanding through faith in authority. Our comprehension of perceptions of witchcraft—historically and culturally—and witchcraft itself changes temporally and geographically. The *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition*, approximately six years from conception to publication, reflects these

fast-paced changes in research, knowledge, and approach. Indeed, in editing the 757 entries, I found that articles often had to be reworked because contributors did not and frequently could not know results of new research that has appeared in a wide variety of languages and that subsequently has been incorporated into different entries.

Scholars, to be sure, have studied witchcraft across the planet and from prehistory to the present. However, since the eighteenth century, arguably more research on witchcraft (and related subjects) has been done in the West than elsewhere. Such research and writing has taken place in Western societies, spread now over the world, because the West is where the more than two dozen democracies exist and thus where relative freedom of expression and research is possible. The twenty-eight nations represented by the 172 contributors to this encyclopedia are all in the West—and not only because the volumes deal with the Western tradition. An encyclopedia of witchcraft that covers the globe would doubtless have Westerners as the overwhelming majority of contributors.

Witchcraft interests the academic world partly because it is extraordinarily interdisciplinary: Anthropologists, ethnologists, folklorists, historians, linguists, philosophers, political scientists, sociologists, and scholars of literature, medicine, religion, and theology have contributed to this encyclopedia. The central focus of the encyclopedia is the European witch hunts that occurred between the early fifteenth century and the late eighteenth century. These centuries encompassed those developments that make the Western witchcraft experience unique: the emergence of the so-called cumulative concept of witchcraft and the prosecution of upwards of 100,000 people for witchcraft, most of them for diabolical witchcraft—meeting with the Devil (sometimes at Sabbats, which witches usually

traveled to by flight), signing a pact with the Evil One, and subsequently working *maleficium* (harmful magic) in a revolt that aimed to topple Christian civilization.

Many scholars have come to the period of the witch hunts to investigate persecution and religious intolerance, linking the pursuit of witches in the “persecuting society” that was late medieval and early modern Europe to the maltreatment of Jews, lepers, homosexuals, and those Christians labeled as heretics by other Christians. In fact, there was little persecution of diabolic witches, for those prosecuted as serving the Devil did not (and could not) do so. There is absolutely no evidence of a devil-worshipping sect in late medieval and early modern Europe, but empirical evidence, of course, is irrelevant to faith (or prejudice). Yet diabolic witches, like the Islamic Ottoman Empire entrenched in southeastern Europe and often expanding into central Europe, instilled great fear in Latin Christendom as threats that could literally destroy Christian society. Somewhere between 35,000 and 50,000 accused witches were executed or lynched; we will never know the exact number. Anyone, even a pope, could be accused as a witch, though in this, as in all of life, probability counted: People were more plausibly denounced as witches if they were women, related to another accused witch, old, single, and possessed of a quarrelsome reputation. But there was no certain safety; many entries in the *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft* detail exceptions to the familiar image of the witch and note the urban and high social status of some of those executed. Given these fears, superimposed on the omnipresent structural threats of hunger and cold, scholars have lately wondered why many more witches were not killed. After all, the numbers of individuals who were institutionally or extralegally killed as witches pale in comparison to the millions of victims of twentieth-century genocides.

The issue of the persecution of women as witches has attracted feminist scholars (not to mention Neo-Pagans) to the topic, and they have significantly increased our knowledge of gender relations and sexuality, even though women were not prosecuted simply for being women, unlike Jews victimized for being Jews, lepers for having leprosy, or homosexuals for behaving as homosexuals. Nevertheless, the prosecution of thousands for concluding a pact with the Devil, kissing his anus, flying to his Sabbath, and having frigid and painful intercourse with him explains much of the attraction of the subject of witch hunts because the prosecutions and the lynchings were of people judged guilty of an impossible crime. While Jews, heretics, and homosexuals were guilty of being Jewish, heretical, and

homosexual—common enough states and sometimes chosen voluntarily—no one can meet or mate with a concept such as the Devil. Thus, scholars have sought to understand the exotic, neurotic, and erotic mind-sets of Europeans, so seemingly different from those among our contemporaries influenced by the Enlightenment.² Along with trying to comprehend the mental structures of Europeans in the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries, historians and others have researched legal, political, social, and cultural systems in order to explain the playing out and representations of early modern belief systems.

The *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft's* entries investigate the origins of the beliefs and practices of the early modern witch hunts; thus, many entries, certainly important in their own right, cover antiquity (the Hebrew Bible, Greece, and Rome); primitive Christianity; and the Early, central (High), and late Middle Ages. Some articles provide comparative perspectives (for example, “Africa, Sub-Saharan,” “Native Americans,” and “Islam”), but this is definitively not an encyclopedia of worldwide witchcraft, which would have required many more entries and would have taken several more years to finish. I dismissed the idea of such an encyclopedia because it would have turned the focus away from Europe’s witch hunts, leaving several peripheries in search of a core. This encyclopedia excludes modern witchcraft, except for entries necessary to understand the period of the witch hunts (such as “Nazi Interest in Witch Persecution,” “Halloween,” and “Contemporary Witchcraft [Post-1800]”) and for coverage at the end of some entries of the modern West.

There are diverse types of entries: biographies, elements of folklore, religion and theology, art, music, film, literature, theater, gender and sexuality, law, politics, institutions, and geography (cities, regions, states). The geographic entries usually include the dates of the first and last witchcraft trials and executions, the total number of accused witches executed, the gender of the accused or executed, and the population (in order to measure the intensity of prosecutions). However, the sources necessary to provide these types of information may not be extant, and the sources available do not always answer the questions scholars pose; thus, many entries could not incorporate all these data. There were inevitable limitations to the list of entries: Some subjects or areas have not been researched; for other topics, I could not locate contributors. To give one example, there are several entries on drama (England, Spain, and so forth), but other regions did not find their contributors.

The starting point for this encyclopedia was Rossell Hope Robbins's 1959 *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. This magnificent, single-authored work reflects the scholarship current in the 1950s, is Anglocentric, and, as we know currently, is often incorrect. Research on the age of the witch hunts has rendered Robbins's encyclopedia obsolete, but it remains useful as a source of some factual information and as a good read. Subsequent encyclopedias in English have been less ambitious than Robbins's. The *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition*, however, contains both broader coverage geographically and historically on the witch hunts and more entries than any previous encyclopedia or dictionary of witchcraft. For instance, it more than triples the number of entries in Robbins's *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*, which, moreover, omits most of Europe behind the Iron Curtain. Rosemary Eileen Guiley's *Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft* (1989) has 416 entries, but it offers as much if not more on modern witchcraft as on the era of the witch hunts. Two fine recent works are also limited by size and by being single-authored: Michael Bailey's *Historical Dictionary of Witchcraft* (2003) has brief entries on fewer than 200 pages, while William E. Burns's *Witch Hunts in Europe and America* (2003) is less than one-fifth the size of our *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition*, and does not have its range of entries.

Robbins's 227 entries provided the starting point for the six members of our editorial board and for me as editor. We then went to indexes in major books on witchcraft and compiled a list of possible entries, from which we selected those we thought appropriate. We added other topics. Finally, many contributors suggested entries. In actuality, the selection of entries continued while time permitted. Like early modern political absolutism, the encyclopedia seemed always to be in the making.

Germany, known famously as the heartland of the witch hunts, is the subject of the most entries (both geographical and biographical)—127. There are 70 entries covering England and Scotland; 62 on France; 50 on Italy; 24 on the Iberian Peninsula; 20 on eastern and southeastern Europe (Poland, Russia, Hungary, the Balkans, Slovenia, Croatia, Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania); 20 on Austria, present-day Liechtenstein, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia; 18 on today's Low Countries; 17 on Switzerland; 17 on Scandinavia (including Iceland); 15 on the Americas; 2 on Ireland; and 1 on Malta. There would have been additional entries on eastern Europe and some other of Europe's islands had I been able to locate scholars to make those contributions.

While the bulk of entries covers the late Middle Ages and early modern Europe, the idol of origins will be appeased by the 25 entries on antiquity and 17 on the Early and High Middle Ages. These numbers significantly underplay the scope of the coverage of the periods prior to the witch hunts because numerous thematic and geographic entries discuss the ancient and medieval background.

Beyond exploring the subject matter contained in the entries, readers of the *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition* should appreciate the type of questions scholars now ask about the field of witchcraft studies, see what areas recent scholarship has examined, and hopefully perceive what topics and areas still need to be researched. This encyclopedia is very much a product of the first years of the twenty-first century; many cities and regions in the West need to be explored, new sources consulted, and coverage of wide-ranging topics expanded beyond the scope of a single scholar's expertise. The encyclopedia reflects the areas of expertise of its contributors, who (without false academic modesty) represent most of the leading experts in the Western world professing this specialization. Of course, solid experts on a subject in one geographic area, say France, England, or Germany, were often reluctant to venture beyond those boundaries to make entries truly Continent-wide. Their reluctance is understandable, given the explosion of contemporary scholarship, the difficulty in keeping abreast of research in any topic, and the rightful and well-considered hesitation of academics to discuss areas in which they lack significant knowledge grounded in their personal research. One can contrast this humble realization of limitations with the eagerness of talking heads, movie stars, politicians, "the person on the street," letter writers to newspapers and magazines, and random citizens to offer opinions on just about any subject, regardless of their knowledge. A truly ignorant person is one who does not know his or her own ignorance.

This encyclopedia has great value not only in showcasing witchcraft scholarship at one point in time but also in allowing anyone to compare rather quickly the skills, approaches, methodologies, and contributions of most of the best witchcraft scholars in the West. Such comparison was previously possible only through great and time-consuming efforts, if at all. It is my hope that the *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition* will bridge the gap between scholars and the general public by making the vast scholarship on witchcraft readily accessible. This encyclopedia offers a means for enjoyment, a singularly instructive (if mostly pessimistic)

exploration of the human condition, and a milepost for our successors to see where they can now advance the field of witchcraft and witch-hunt studies.

—Richard M. Golden

Notes

1. Ronald Hutton, reviewing recent anthropological and historical studies on witchcraft, has constructed a model of a witch that has the following characteristics: a person who employs nonphysical means to bring misfortune or injury; harms neighbors or kin, not strangers; reaps social disapproval; works within a tradi-

tion; and can be opposed by others. Hutton did not consider “good” witchcraft, which is discussed in numerous entries in the *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft*. See his “Anthropological and Historical Approaches to Witchcraft: Potential for a New Collaboration?” *Historical Journal* 4, no. 2 (2004): 413–434.

2. While witchcraft scholars do not discuss the possibility of the Devil’s existence in history (at least in this encyclopedia), polls in 2004 indicated that 70 percent of Americans believed in the Devil and that 78 percent believed in angels. See *Dallas Morning News*, July 3, 2004, G1.

A

ABERDEEN WITCHES

One of the fullest collections of sixteenth-century Scottish source material relating to witchcraft, the Aberdeen shire records, cover a period from 1596/1597 to 1598 and contain a commission (authority to hold a trial), documents from pretrial investigations, formal indictments (*dittays*) listing the charges against various individuals, and the confession of one accused male. An entry in the Aberdeen burgh accounts tells us that executing two of the women cost £7. 14s. 0d., roughly speaking the equivalent of nine days' wages for a mason and his boy at the same period. Despite what is often said, the incident was almost certainly not set off by the publication of James VI's witchcraft treatise, *Daemonologie* (Demonology, 1597), which was probably published after the prosecutions started.

The charges against those concerned, who included men as well as women, were varied. The Wishart family, living in Aberdeen, consisted of Janet, married to John Leis, one son (Thomas), and three daughters (Elsbeth, Violet, and Janet). There were thirty-one charges listed in Janet Wishart's dittay. These included hens dropping dead, cows falling sick, humans contracting illness, unexplained and frightening noises in a house, and prolonged attacks by a dog that entered someone's bedroom. Janet Leis was further accused of raising storms, inflicting diseases that ended fatally, and being able to foretell the future. The period covered by the accusations was twenty years and more. Thomas Leis, described as a common witch and sorcerer, was imprisoned with his mother. The Devil came to the window of their cell and told them to deny everything in court. Meanwhile, he and his sister Violet collaborated in a magical operation to banish an evil spirit from a house. For this, Violet had to go to the city gallows at midnight, cut down the corpse hanging there, remove parts of the body, and burn the rest. Janet Wishart was convicted of eighteen of the thirty-one charges against her and executed. Execution of witches in Scotland took place by strangulation, after which the dead body was burned, and the person's movable goods were confiscated. Thomas, too, was executed. The rest of the family was banished.

Most of the accused came from elsewhere in Aberdeenshire. Helen Fraser had twice been charged

with charming by a session held under the auspices of the Kirk, as the national church of Scotland is called, before she came to a criminal trial. Charges there alleged magical cures, love charms, and inflicting death upon humans and animals. Isobel Cockie killed horses by touching them. Marjorie Mutche destroyed cattle and made people sick. Both were also accused, with others, of dancing with the Devil. Andrew Man, however, was different from the rest. He claimed that he had a sexual relationship with the fairy queen and had several children by her. In return, she gave him the gift of foreknowledge and the ability to cure almost any kind of illness. Andrew also had highly unorthodox religious views and spoke often of his attendant spirit Christsonday—not a familiar in the English sense, but an angelic companion. (This spirit was also claimed by another of the accused, Marion Grant.) Like many of the others, Andrew was convicted of some of the items on his dittay and acquitted of others. He too was executed.

Twenty-three women and two men were executed for witchcraft during this episode. Six others, five women and one man, were acquitted altogether, and in the case of three of these, the principal witness against them was arrested and charged with malicious prosecution. The use of torture is recorded in only one case, and its use in that case may have been illegal. Over thirty others were formally named as witches, but we do not know what happened to them subsequently. It is difficult to know why this series of prosecutions broke out when it did. There was a constant undertow of magical dealing in society as a whole during the medieval and early modern periods. Local tensions and fears might easily reach the breaking point at any time and burst into a flurry of witchcraft charges, with each suspect being encouraged to name her or his accomplices. Individuals within the church or state might also feel called upon to initiate witchcraft proceedings for personal, religious, or political reasons. It may be no coincidence that between 1596 and 1597 violent confrontation was seen between James VI and the Kirk over who should govern whom. It is fruitless, however, to seek a single explanation for any outbreak of witchcraft prosecution; what is clear is that the role of torture in witchcraft trials in Scotland has often been overplayed.

Witches were also brought to trial in Aberdeenshire, as elsewhere in Scotland, during the seventeenth century, under different religious, social, and political circumstances. Modern scholarship strongly suggests that each episode of witchcraft, wherever it happened, needs to be studied as a discrete, local event before attempts are made to relate it to outbreaks elsewhere.

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART

See also: FAIRIES; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; SCOTLAND; SORCERY.

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ACCULTURATION THESIS

The concept of acculturation has been employed to tie in witchcraft persecutions with allegedly fundamental changes in European culture. The term *acculturation* began its life when anthropologists coined it to describe the effect of Western culture on the American Indians; later it was applied to other cultural relationships between so-called "advanced" and "primitive" peoples. It implies a model of cultural change in which a dominant culture appears in an aggressive role, operating through a mixture of direct force and seduction to induce major changes in a subordinate culture. The scheme has naturally been influential among historians seeking to understand witchcraft persecution, because one possible explanation for this phenomenon is as an attack on vital aspects of popular culture. In practice, attempts to apply the idea directly have not proved very convincing, but it has generated some valuable insights into the broader context in which both beliefs and persecution might flourish.

In the 1970s the model was applied to early modern Europe, most notably by the French historian Robert Muchembled, to describe an allegedly all-pervasive form of modernization. He linked the development of the state, religious reform, and socioeconomic trends, then sought to describe a cultural revolution in which older forms of popular culture were repressed and fragmented. Lawyers and clerics appeared as the main agents of this change at the local level, with the village elites cowed or shamed into a rather half-hearted compliance. Muchembled laid out the theory in a distinctly schematic fashion in a 1978 book, later translated into English as *Popular Culture and Elite Culture in France, 1400–1750*. In later works, such as *L'Invention de*

l'homme moderne (The Invention of Modern Man) and *Le Temps des supplices* (The Time of Tortures), he modified his original position substantially. It is regrettable that these more sophisticated and plausible versions of the modernization thesis have remained little known outside France, in comparison with a first statement with which the author has made his own dissatisfaction plain. In terms of the Catholic Reform movement more generally, the extensive writings of Jean Delumeau represent a similar interpretation, with pastoral techniques built on fear allegedly instilling powerful feelings of guilt among ordinary believers.

Where witchcraft persecution is concerned, Muchembled has always insisted that so widespread a phenomenon requires a large-scale European explanation, that it cannot be adequately dealt with through a series of piecemeal local analyses. Alongside Christina Larner, he has proposed a crucial link to processes of state formation, themselves a prime example of modernization, and has naturally embraced Heinz Schilling's thesis of confessionalization (the alliance of religion and state to reform morals and impose social discipline) as an additional support for his view. The most formal expressions of his arguments about witchcraft can be found in *Le roi et la sorcière* (The King and the Witch) and in his contributions to the collective volume he edited, *Magie et sorcellerie en Europe du Moyen Age à nos jours* (Magic and Witchcraft in Europe from the Middle Ages to the Present, 1994), where there was some discordance with his own coauthors.

In practice, the acculturation model requires extensive qualifications and exceptions in order to achieve a plausible match with the historical record. It has to be recognized that the most powerful centralizing monarchies in early modern Europe, in France, Spain, and England, saw relatively low rates of persecution, with the higher authorities tending toward skepticism and looking to control judicial irregularities. Muchembled argued that persecution was highest in regions agitated by religious divisions, or where less effective rulers faced determined local resistance when they sought to increase their power. He drew attention to several important writers around the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth, such as Jean Bodin, Martín Del Río, Henri Boguet, and Pierre de Lancre, to establish a theoretical link between concepts of sovereignty and the campaign against witches as the ultimate enemies of both divine and royal power. Many of these points are well taken, but so many exceptions and counterexamples remain that the specific force of the argument is greatly weakened. It is only through the use of some impressive rhetorical tricks and elisions that a multicausal model incorporating many local variables can be presented as if it were a powerful unified interpretation.

Ultimately, the acculturation model has been very heavily modified, as historians have found more and

more examples in their detailed studies of the process that the French historian Roger Chartier called appropriation. This was the tendency for different subgroups to adapt orthodoxies to their own purposes, frequently subverting them in the process. The effect of this work has been to change our picture of acculturation, so that it now looks like the history of a heroic failure rather than the history of a brutal success in imposing elite views on the masses. In addition the clear division between elite and popular has increasingly come to appear as a misdescription of a much more complex reality. The process of change in early modern Europe did include a trend for educated minorities to define themselves against the popular, but this is better seen as the progressive internal division of a shared culture, rather than as the clash of two distinct cultures. The effort to impose new standards of belief and behavior on the people at large can then be seen as a secondary effect of changes that were primarily directed toward the internal concerns of the elites. Above all, they were striving to distinguish themselves from their inferiors by asserting their own superiority, a point well made by Muchembled. What can also be said is that for many sophisticated observers at the time, as well as for later historians, witchcraft persecution looked alarmingly like a surrender to popular belief rather than an attack on it; it is the protection rather than the persecution of suspected witches that alerts us to a real clash of cultures, when some lawyers and clerics attacked the whole way of thinking that sustained belief in witchcraft.

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See also: LARNER, CHRISTINA; MUCHEMBLED, ROBERT; *PARLEMENT OF PARIS*.

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ACCUSATIONS

Although many thousands of people were convicted and often executed as witches across Europe, most people who were suspected of practicing witchcraft were never brought to trial. Most available historical sources greatly underreport people in this category, simply because no trial ever ensued. It is quite unusual for scholars to possess large amounts of evidence about the total number of people who were formally accused of witchcraft in any particular region. In this respect, the best available evidence comes from places as widely scattered as the archbishopric of Trier, the Canary Islands, and Massachusetts, and from legal systems as different as those involving German district officials, the Mediterranean Inquisitions, and English colonial authorities. But each of these extremely diverse systems tells a similar statistical story. In each instance, anywhere from one-third to one-seventh of the people formally accused of witchcraft were eventually arrested and put on trial (in the Salem panic of 1692, the ratio was less than one in three). Many additional scraps of evidence about “accomplices” seen at the witches’ Sabbats lie buried in the preserved confessions of numerous continental witches. But most law codes and demonologists required at least three such denunciations before an arrest could be made without other corroborative evidence, and these rules seem to have been generally observed.

A huge list of “accomplices” named by confessing witches was compiled in the archbishopric of Trier around 1590, during the first true mass panic in the Holy Roman Empire. It was the first of many similar lists drawn up during nearly every major witch hunt in Germany, and several minor ones, until the 1630s. Known as the “Musiel Register,” it is now available in a critical edition (Votmer and Weisenstein 1996). It includes most—but certainly not all—names of accomplices identified by 306 people executed as witches between 1586 and 1594, primarily from the district of St. Maximin, where Claudius Musiel was a high official (*Schultheiss*), active in witch hunting from the mid-1580s until he became governor (*Amtmann*) in 1594. On average, each witch offered about 20 names of accomplices; one man named 150 of them. Overall, the “Musiel Register” included, about 6,300 denunciations against almost 1,400 people living in almost a hundred different villages.

Some accusations were obviously taken far more seriously than others. The “Musiel Register” put crosses in front of some names, but not others. Parallel lists identify more accomplices named by some of the confessing witches, but these names were omitted from the register, for reasons we will probably never know. However, the vast majority of these 1,400 suspected witches, even most of those with crosses in front of their names, were never arrested for witchcraft by

Musiel or his successors. One name, cited eight different times as an accomplice seen at Sabbats, often with copious details about what went on there, was certainly never put on trial—it was Musiel himself, who did not personally compile this register (Voltmer and Weisenstein 1996, 70, n. 228).

Throughout the worst German witch hunts, when over 90 percent of all witchcraft trials ended in executions, the pattern observable at Trier continued to hold: Most people named as accomplices by confessed witches were never brought to trial—although the ratios were seldom as low as the one in five suggested by the “Musiel Register.” Two long lists of people denounced as witches in December 1628 from the small territory of Mergentheim in southwestern Germany reveal that barely one-fourth of them (77 of 301) were ever put on trial (Midelfort 1972, 147–148). Even among the 17 people named on a separate list as being most often denounced as witches, 4 were apparently never tried.

At the opposite extreme from the major German hunts stood a few very small places where most accusations resulted in witchcraft trials and executions. In the very worst scenarios, about half of those accused of witchcraft were tried and executed. A recent study of nine Alsatian hamlets in the Vosges Mountains counted 174 people accused during the 1620s, with at least 83 executed (Thurston 2001, 111). The worst known example comes from Gollion, a tiny Swiss village of 50 households that was terrorized by its unusually zealous and sadistic overlord. Between 1615 and 1631, almost 40 adults were accused of witchcraft in this village; over two dozen of them were burned, while only one was released after trial (Taric Zumsteg 2000, 153). Incomplete trial records identify another 12 villagers in Gollion who were accused as accomplices but never arrested; the only person fortunate enough to be released after being tried was accused again within a year, but she was not tried a second time. Such situations, fortunately, were extremely rare.

With regard to the ratios between accusations of witchcraft and arrests for witchcraft, the major Mediterranean Inquisitions offer remarkable materials for comparison with the major German witch hunts. More than 20,000 witches were burned in Germany and fewer than 50 by the Mediterranean Inquisitions. The proceedings in the Mediterranean regions resembled those that resulted from the German panics to the extent that few of the people denounced to the Inquisitions as witches were ever brought to trial. An extraordinarily well-documented example comes from the Holy Office tribunal for Spain's Canary Islands, where illicit magic was by far the most frequently denounced type of heresy (Fajardo Spinola 1992). Here a total of 2,808 denunciations against 1,245 people, scattered across three centuries, resulted in only 200

full-scale trials for *hechicería* (witchcraft) and no executions, although one woman was lynched in 1691 after performing her public abjuration (Ibid., 470–472). In the second half of the seventeenth century, when about 80,000 people lived in these islands, over 4 percent of the entire adult population were sufficiently upset about being bewitched that they formally denounced someone to the Inquisition for witchcraft. However, the ratio of 7 persons accused of practicing witchcraft to each person tried for practicing witchcraft was even lower in the Canaries than in Trier's “Musiel Register.” Evidence from the Portuguese Inquisition confirms this impression: In the 1740s, the tribunal of Coimbra recorded 1,420 denunciations for illicit magic, but arrested only 87 people on such charges (Paiva 1997, 208–209). Information from branches of the Roman Inquisition in Friuli or Siena, for example, suggests a similar situation, with hundreds of accusations of *maleficium* (harmful magic) resulting in extremely few full-scale trials (Di Simplicio 2000).

In common-law regions employing accusatory procedure, including England and America, most people suspected of practicing “white,” or harmless, witchcraft were never brought to trial. Because prosecution was expensive for accusers in common-law courts (unlike German courts or the Inquisitions, where the state paid all prosecution expenses), and convictions (which could enable an accuser to recoup the cost of a trial) were far from certain, even people vehemently suspected of practicing harmful witchcraft often escaped prosecution. Some of the best evidence on this score comes from the well-documented Salem Village witch hunt of 1692, in which 185 people were publicly accused as witches, but fewer than 60 of them were actually put on trial (Thurston 2001, 117).

Lack of evidence usually makes it impossible to measure how often people were suspected of witchcraft but not put on trial in most parts of Europe. Our closest approximation probably comes from suits for defamation, which existed throughout Europe, but seem to have been relatively more frequent in places like England or Sweden. Unfortunately, little comparative work has yet been done on this problem.

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See also: EVIDENCE; EXECUTIONS; ST. MAXIMIN; TRIALS.

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ACCUSATORIAL PROCEDURE

Accusatorial procedure is the system of criminal prosecution in which persons acting in a private capacity or as representatives of the community formally initiate a criminal action and undertake its prosecution. Jurisdictions that employed accusatorial procedure generally did not experience the same intensity of witch hunting as those that used inquisitorial procedure.

During the Early Middle Ages, accusatorial procedure was the dominant form of prosecuting crime, both in the secular and ecclesiastical courts. At that time it possessed four main features. First, criminal cases were initiated by a private accuser, that is, by the victim of the crime or his kin, acting in a private rather than an official capacity. Second, this private person actually prosecuted the crime by engaging in a contest against the accused party. The contest often took the form of an ordeal, in which the accused was subjected to a test that would indicate guilt, such as holding a hot iron for a period to see whether the flesh was burned. Alternatively the two parties could engage in a duel, known in England as trial by battle, in which the victorious party was vindicated. Yet another alternative, which likewise did not involve a systematic examination of the evidence, was compurgation, in which the accuser and the accused solicited neighbors who would swear to their honesty. Third, the entire procedure, from the original accusation to the conclusion of the trial, was conducted publicly. Fourth, the person who brought the charge was liable to prosecution if the innocence of the accused was proved. According to the law of the *talion*, which had been used in ancient Rome, the accuser's punishment in those circumstances would be the same as the accused would have received if found guilty.

Between the thirteenth and the sixteenth centuries, many continental European countries abandoned accusatorial procedure and adopted inquisitorial procedure in its place. According to inquisitorial procedure, criminal actions were initiated and prosecuted by judges or officers of the court on the basis of rumor or reputation, rather than by a private accuser. Criminal proceedings became secret, and the judge assumed a much greater role in the process, interrogating witnesses and determining guilt on the basis of a systematic, rational evaluation of the evidence. A person could still initiate a criminal action by making a private accusation against a person suspected of a crime, but the liability of the accuser was reduced to a fine, the amount of which was offered as a surety at the time of accusa-

tion, and in many jurisdictions the liability of the accuser was entirely eliminated. Even more important, the state superintended the entire process of accusation and assumed responsibility for the prosecution if the accuser dropped the charges or reached a settlement with the person accused.

In those jurisdictions that did not introduce inquisitorial procedure, the accusatorial system underwent a significant transformation. The determination to prosecute crime more effectively and the abandonment of the ordeal after the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 led these countries to introduce new methods for determining guilt, all of which relied more on human judgment than had the ordeals. These methods also reflected a European-wide recognition that crime was a concern to the entire community, not simply a dispute between parties. The main change was the assumption of the accusatorial role by representatives of the community. In England this reliance upon local elites to initiate a criminal action developed into the jury of presentment, later known as the grand jury. Likewise, the determination of the guilt or innocence of the accused was entrusted to another group of neighbors, who became the trial jury. Other European countries, such as Scotland, Sweden, Denmark, and Hungary, also continued to use a modified form of accusatorial procedure. In all these countries the prosecution of crime retained the adversarial character it had acquired earlier in the Middle Ages. In these countries the proceedings continued to be held in public, and judges continued to exercise only limited control over the prosecution of the crime. At least in theory the accuser still acted as prosecutor. Those jurisdictions that continued to employ accusatorial procedure introduced some of the features of inquisitorial procedure, such as the taking of written depositions before the trial (in England), and the debating of the relevancy of the charges to the libel (in Scotland), but these newly acquired features did not alter the fundamental accusatorial character of the process.

Accusatorial procedure generally made it more difficult for courts to prosecute and convict witches than did inquisitorial procedure. As long as the principle of the liable accuser was in effect, potential accusers were reluctant to bring charges against their neighbors. Even more important, courts using accusatorial procedure lacked the power to initiate criminal proceedings against suspected witches, to interrogate them, or to declare them guilty. Conversely, inquisitorial procedure, which allowed the court to bring charges on the basis of rumor or ill fame and which allowed judges to interrogate witches directly, was especially designed to prosecute crimes like heresy and witchcraft. The most intense witchcraft prosecutions took place in those countries where courts utilized inquisitorial procedure.

Inquisitorial procedure facilitated the prosecution and conviction of witches, but accusatorial procedure could achieve the same results. Judicial authorities might have been hampered in their ability to prosecute witches on their own initiative, but when the community wished to take action against witches, they had the necessary tools to bring formal charges and secure convictions. In England up to 500 witches were convicted and executed, on the basis of indictments issued by juries of presentment, and convicted by trial juries composed of lay judges. In Scotland, where the accusatorial system of criminal procedure resembled its inquisitorial counterpart in a few more respects, the results were far more devastating. Somewhere between 1,000 and 1,500 Scottish witches were convicted and executed between 1550 and 1727. In Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Hungary, all of which resisted the adoption of inquisitorial procedure, the percentage of witchcraft cases ending in executions corresponded roughly with that for Scotland. Moreover, as witchcraft prosecutions declined, those countries that employed accusatorial procedure found it more difficult to bring an end to prosecutions. When the men who controlled the judicial machinery of the state decided that witches could no longer be proved guilty at law, the communities did not always agree with those officials and continued to bring charges against their neighbors. Popular witch beliefs and accusations continued well into the eighteenth century, and accusatorial procedure facilitated popular pressure to bring witches to trial.

As witchcraft prosecutions were coming to an end, and as the courts began to view witchcraft accusations with suspicion, judges contemplated the reintroduction of the principle of the liable accuser, which had been one of the main features of accusatorial procedure during the Middle Ages. In 1716 Hermann Meinders, a Prussian judge, recommended to King Frederick William I that individuals no longer be allowed to use the accusation process against witches unless they would first agree to be subject to the law of the talion. Meinders complained that most witchcraft trials were the product of personal hatred, envy, and revenge. In Meinders's view, the miscarriages of justice that had become common in witchcraft cases could be attributed to the malice of private accusers, not the procedural abuses of judges who investigated the crime and interrogated the accused. His recommendation provided further evidence that the medieval form of accusatorial procedure made it difficult to prosecute witches.

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See also: ACCUSATIONS; ENGLAND; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); ORDEAL.

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ACQUITTALS

Scholars writing about witchcraft trials have often been imprecise when describing the fate of many thousands of accused witches who were tried but not convicted. Some such instances occurred everywhere throughout the age of witch hunting. The legal systems under which people were tried for witchcraft varied widely across Europe, and the term *acquittal* applies properly only to systems such as that of the common law in England in which juries either acquitted or convicted defendants. But the overwhelming majority of European witchcraft trials—and almost all of those taking place outside England, Scotland, and Scandinavia—occurred in Roman law courts, which did not use juries and ignore the term *acquitted*.

In order to bring a clearer focus to this problem, it is necessary to establish the different levels of punishment to which persons accused of witchcraft could be subjected, and also to recognize the difference between an acquittal at common law and releasing a prisoner in a Roman law court. Continental judges often released prisoners accused of witchcraft without physical punishment but without employing any legal terms that can be correctly translated as "acquittal." The schema proposed here, nevertheless, for purposes of simplification, assumes a functional equivalence between acquittal under common law and release under Roman law. It is based on the increasing degree of physical discomfort and deprivation of freedom endured by the large numbers of people accused of witchcraft but not sentenced to capital punishment.

- A. Persons formally accused of witchcraft but never arrested.
- B. Persons tried for witchcraft and released without further punishment at the local level.
- C. Persons tried and convicted at a local level, but eventually released without physical punishment by an appellate court.

- D. Persons forced to undergo some form of torture (almost always in Roman law courts) on charges of witchcraft, but who endured it successfully and therefore “purged” themselves of the accusation without further punishment.
- E. Persons neither fully convicted nor discharged, but given intermediate forms of punishment, most commonly temporary or permanent banishment.

ACCUSED BUT NOT TRIED It is likely that most people formally accused of witchcraft were never arrested, even during the worst major German witch panics where official “acquittal rates” among those who were tried rarely reached 10 percent. For instance, in the small German territory of Mergentheim, only 10 of the 136 people arrested as witches between October 1628 and February 1631 were eventually released. In some localities, the situation could be even worse; the 4 percent “acquittal rate” (1 of 26) in the tiny Swiss village of Gollion from 1615 to 1631 was lower than that at Mergentheim (Taric Zumsteg 2000, 70–71). However, the most important difference between these situations is that barely one-fourth of everyone accused of witchcraft were put on trial during the Mergentheim panic, whereas two-thirds were arrested during a cycle of six small-scale persecutions at Gollion.

At Gollion, five men fled before they could be arrested. Frightening an accused witch into leaving her or his community was an easy victory for the local enemies of the accused. It frequently saved them the time and expense of a formal trial, which might not even lead to a conviction. In many cases, flight was temporary, and the accused person returned as soon as relatives or friends assured them they were safe from arrest. If such people did not return after several months or a year, local authorities sometimes prosecuted them. However, they tended to prosecute in absentia only those suspects who left behind sufficient assets to make confiscation profitable. In the agricultural villages of western and central Europe where most witch hunts occurred, such cases were uncommon; flight entailed destitution and vagabondage, especially difficult for older people.

TRIED AT LOCAL LEVEL BUT NOT CONVICTED Across Europe, historical evidence is usually less abundant at this level than at upper-level, appellate courts. Nevertheless, randomly preserved documents about two dozen prisoners from the very first major witch panic, in the Swiss Alpine district of Valais (1428–1436), suggest that suspected witches were almost as likely to be released as to be burned; a thick dossier explains how a widow survived two trials for witchcraft, including one bout of torture, without any official punishment (Ostorero, Baglioni, and Tremp 1999, 74–75; Strobino 1996). Elsewhere, enough

evidence survives to offer some useful glimpses into some widely varying situations in both common law and Roman law Europe.

Rare indeed were regions where most witchcraft trials ended without punishing the accused, but scattered examples can be found. In the small Calvinist principality of Sedan in eastern France, quite unlike neighboring areas, 15 of the 18 witchcraft trials held before 1607 ended by liberating the accused without punishment (Dupont-Bouchat 1978, 127, 132). In the great imperial free city of Augsburg, at this time possibly Germany’s largest city, almost two-thirds (64 of 101) of all witchcraft trials between 1581 and 1653 ended by releasing the accused, and only three prisoners were burned (Behringer 1997, 43). In Ostrobothnia, a Swedish-speaking district in western Finland, local courts acquitted 57 percent of the 152 people tried for witchcraft; however, these trials were held relatively late, between 1665 and 1685 (Heikkinen and Kervinen 1990, 335). If about one-fourth of the 932 witchcraft trials in the Kingdom of Hungary ended without punishment of prisoners (Klaniczay 1990, 222), we must again realize that most of them also occurred after 1660. More common were situations like Calvin’s Geneva, where only 15 percent of the 321 witchcraft trials between 1536 and 1660 ended by liberating the accused. However, records of acquittals and releases seem to have been even less common in many other places. Or they might happen quite late. For example, Scotland’s Court of Justiciary, an agency of the central government but not an appellate court for witches, approved the executions of a dozen witches as recently as 1678, but then reversed its record by acquitting 19 of the 20 witches the court examined over the next six years (Larner, Lee, and McLachlan 1977, 42–46).

Local courts throughout Europe avoided putting people on trial for witchcraft unless they were reasonably certain of obtaining a conviction. This explains why one frequently encounters “acquittal rates” far below 10 percent in many different locations in western and central Europe. If no conviction resulted, whoever prosecuted them—either an individual or local officials, often both—had wasted a great deal of time and money during a perceived emergency. In the duchy of Lorraine, which has some of the most extensive local financial records in western Europe, local officials mentioned witchcraft trials that ended with releases only when they expected (often in vain) to have their legal expenses reimbursed, as they almost invariably were whenever witches were convicted. Outside times of intensive witch hunting, there were usually strong counterincentives against beginning a possibly unsuccessful prosecution for witchcraft at the local level. Even when they did occur, trials ending with liberation of the accused were seldom recorded; we often learn about such prosecutions only because the accused witch was

subsequently rearrested and convicted, with some mention of a previous arrest included in the final summation.

CONVICTED AT LOCAL LEVEL BUT ACQUITTED OR RELEASED ON APPELLATE LEVEL In both common law and Roman law Europe, the largest share of known cases where accused witches were released without physical punishment occurred in these situations. The explanation for this phenomenon is twofold. First, these courts were physically and psychologically far removed from local village environments where most witchcraft trials originated; appellate courts existed in order to correct the shortcomings of undereducated local magistrates whose sentences they were reviewing. Second, appellate courts, staffed with high-ranking and relatively well-paid state functionaries, were far more likely to preserve at least some of their records than were most local court systems.

With respect to the Anglo-Scandinavian regions, one may truly speak of “acquittals,” and the historical record is encouraging. Almost everywhere, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, acquittals for witchcraft at such midlevel courts outnumbered executions. Much northern European evidence comes from such judicial bodies as the English Assizes, or appellate courts at the county level in Denmark, or the regional and national level in Scotland. Each sample includes hundreds of witchcraft cases scattered over several decades. At the Danish County Court of Jutland, almost half of all seventeenth-century witchcraft trials ended in acquittals (Johansen 1990, 350). Even in Scotland, infamous for several brutal witch hunts between the 1590s and 1660s, the kingdom’s upper-level courts acquitted many seventeenth-century witchcraft defendants. Assize courts on England’s Home Circuit were considerably more lenient than the Danes or Scots, acquitting 56 percent of the 474 people whom they tried for witchcraft between 1563 and 1700 (Sharpe 1997, 111). Every appellate court system in northern Europe ended up releasing large numbers of suspected witches, although each of them also confirmed many death sentences for witchcraft.

How different were things on the Roman law Continent, with an inquisitorial rather than accusatory system and authority to employ torture? Not surprisingly, in a system where defendants were presumed guilty, instances of outright release at the appellate level of prisoners charged with witchcraft were generally far less common than in northern Europe. Nevertheless, some continental appellate courts released a sizable share of prisoners charged with witchcraft. For example, in the Lutheran duchy of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, ruled by a reputedly ferocious prince, almost half of the 104 witchcraft trials recorded between 1590 and 1620 ended with the liberation of

prisoners or the dismissal of charges (Schormann 1977, 47–50). In a nine-year sample (1608–1616), the Hofrat, the highest tribunal of the Roman Catholic duchy of Bavaria, similarly released almost half of its 200 arrested witches (Behringer 1997, 53–54). Farther west, the *parlement* (appellate court) of Spanish-ruled Franche-Comté freed 26 percent of its 700 prisoners accused of witchcraft between 1590 and 1666 (Rochelandet 1997, 63).

The most important case is, of course, the *Parlement* of Paris, the chief judicial body of France, whose appellate district covered about half of Europe’s largest kingdom and encompassed approximately 10 million people in about 1600. Here the painstaking work of Alfred Soman shows that almost 30 percent of the 1,123 people in appealing convictions for witchcraft between 1564 and 1640, including 15 percent of those appealing a death sentence, were released without any physical punishment. After 1610, the percentage of prisoners charged with witchcraft who were released rose to almost half, 47 percent (Soman 1978, 34–36). Europe’s most prestigious secular court compiled an early and remarkable record in this respect, even before it enforced a system of automatic appeals in all witchcraft cases around 1624.

During the kingdom’s final major witchcraft panic in 1643–1645, other French appellate courts surpassed the Parisian record of releasing prisoners. By then, the *Parlement* of Toulouse, France’s second-largest appellate court, also required automatic appeals of all witchcraft trials, and the results were extraordinary. Almost two-thirds of the 641 prisoners convicted of witchcraft whom it judged on appeal during this panic were either dismissed or released provisionally because of inadequate evidence; most of the remainder were ordered banished, usually for five years or less (Vidal 1987, 518, 520, 522).

“PURGED” CHARGES BY SURVIVING TORTURE Understandably, this category often includes only a small portion of people tried for witchcraft in Roman law regions. Every government in the Holy Roman Empire that burned large numbers of witches employed torture so unscrupulously that extremely few imprisoned witches ever survived it. In present-day Saarland, for instance, only 11 of 331 imprisoned witches earned their freedom this way (Labouvie 1997, 44–45). An “acquittal rate” of less than 10 percent invariably means that official imperial rules and limits on torture prescribed in the Carolina Code (*Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*), the famous imperial law code of 1532 (which was not obligatory or binding on the thousand autonomous governments in the empire) were being ignored or circumvented through various legal ruses.

However, places in the empire that observed these limits scrupulously ended up releasing a significant

share of their arrested witches. In the Austrian Alpine province of Vorarlberg, ruled by the Habsburgs and thus quite careful about following the rules of the Carolina Code, about one-third (47 of 142) endured torture without confessing and were therefore released (Tschalkner 1992, 212). In the Swiss canton of Fribourg, prison registers enable us to observe the results of torture applied in full but precise legal measure to suspected witches. Here, most prisoners did not confess under torture: If 21 men confessed and 24 successfully purged the accusations by withstanding torture, women did even better, with 28 confessing under identical methods of torture and 51 successfully surmounting it (Monter 1976, 106–107).

The chances of a prisoner to “purge” charges through withstanding torture therefore varied considerably, not only from one district to the next, but even within a particular district, depending on whether or not a major witch hunt was occurring. For example, over one-fourth (35 of 124) of the prisoners accused of witchcraft in the most heavily afflicted district of the duchy of Lorraine managed to regain their freedom in this manner (AD Nancy, B 8652–8742).

To the north, in two contiguous districts (Mirecourt and Dompain), only 8 of 50 prisoners tortured on charges of witchcraft during a 1629–1630 witch panic withstood it, whereas during the previous thirty years, two-thirds of all prisoners tortured on charges of witchcraft in these same districts (28 of 42) had purged the accusations by successfully enduring torture (AD Nancy, B 7065–7145 [Mirecourt]; B 5497–5573 [Dompain]).

PARTIAL CONVICTIONS AND BANISHMENTS In many European regions there were only two normal outcomes of a witchcraft trial, conviction or release; intermediate solutions were relatively uncommon. Nonetheless, almost every court system in western Europe made occasional use of such punishments as exile or banishment, when suspected witches had not been fully convicted, but the evidence against them seemed too great to allow them to return home unpunished. A few cities employed banishment extensively against accused witches. For example, in Augsburg, Germany’s largest city, one-fourth of the 101 people tried for witchcraft between 1581 and 1653 were banished (Behringer 1997, 43). Calvin’s Republic of Geneva clearly preferred this intermediate punishment; here, only seven of almost a hundred suspected witches who endured torture without confessing were freed, while nearly all the remainder were banished. Although relatively few rural regions seem to have followed this practice, suspected witches were more often banished than liberated in two Walloon provinces of the Low Countries, Namur and Artois. Usually, it was the other way around. If, north of Geneva, the Catholic free city

of Besançon showed comparable instincts, banishing most of those tried for witchcraft who were not executed (Monter 1976, 79), in the surrounding province of Franche-Comté, liberations outnumbered banishments for witchcraft by 182 to 105 (Rochelandet 1997, 63).

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: ACCUSATIONS; APPEALS; CAROLINA CODE; COURTS, INQUISITORIAL; COURTS, SECULAR; *PARLEMENT OF PARIS*; ROMAN LAW; TRIALS.

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ADY, THOMAS

Thomas Ady's *A Candle in the Dark: or, a Treatise concerning the Nature of Witches and Witchcraft: being Advice to Judges, Sheriffs, Justices of the Peace, and Grand Jury Men, what to do, before they passe Sentence on such as are arraigned for their Lives, as Witches*, was published in London in 1656 and reissued in 1661 as *A Perfect Discovery of Witches. Shewing the divine Cause of the Distractions of this Kingdome, and also of the Christian World*. The book, usually cited under its original title, is regarded among English witchcraft historians as a major work of skepticism.

Ady is an obscure figure, who is not known to have published any other work. He was almost certainly the Thomas Ady who matriculated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, in 1624, earning his MA in 1631. His *Candle in the Dark* was a well-constructed and fluent book, showing an unrelentingly skeptical line against witchcraft. In his preface, Ady made it clear that he anticipated considerable hostility to his arguments, comparing his struggle against entrenched belief to that of David against Goliath. Yet he claimed (perhaps fictitiously) that he had talked his ideas through with acquaintances, and that he was generally able to convince them of the problems with scriptural references to witchcraft. Interestingly, Ady at this point suggested that if convinced of the bankruptcy of supposed scriptural references, believers would then either fall back on Jean Bodin "or some such popish vain writer," or cite such cases as the Lancashire trials of 1612, or else claim that they had heard witchcraft narratives "credibly reported from men of worth and quality." Ady dismissed all these tactics as "monstrous impossibilities" and stressed the centrality of scripture (Ady 1656, 5).

At the beginning of the work, Ady asked where scriptural justification could be found for many of the existing notions about witches and witchcraft. Thus, Ady asked, among other queries, where scripture said that witches were able to kill or cause disease or injury, where it was written that witches had imps that sucked at their teats, where scripture justified the swimming test, and, perhaps the most crucial question, which caused problems for all demonological writers, where the scriptural references were for the satanic pact. He then addressed the problem of translation, going back to the original Hebrew texts and also reviewing what he regarded as the best Latin translations, notably those of Junius and Tremellius. He used a technique already familiar among skeptical writers, demonstrating that

the rendition of scriptural terms as "witch" in English is a mistranslation, and hence the "witches" of the Bible, and the scriptural passages dealing with them, have no relevance for witches as they were understood in seventeenth-century England.

Ady agreed with Reginald Scot (whom he frequently cited with evident approval) that the witches in the Bible were simply cheats. Later in the work he lambasted Roman Catholic writers, whom he called "popish blood-suckers" (139), and also criticized English demonological writers. For example, he dismissed Thomas Cooper, author of a witchcraft tract published in 1617, for having fallen into "popish" errors, as well as John Gaule and George Gifford, even though he gave them rather more polite treatment. Interestingly, William Perkins's demonological tract caused Ady considerable problems. He apparently found it hard to believe that such a great Protestant theologian could advocate witch hunting, and made a number of rather fanciful suggestions about the origins of the work, supposing variously that it was a copy of some Catholic tract that Perkins had among his papers with the intention of refuting it, or that it had been planted in Perkins's study after his death as part of a Catholic plan to discredit him.

Ady's work is important in reminding the modern reader that it was possible to hold a thoroughly skeptical line about witchcraft after 1650 without recourse to modern rationalism. Ady was clearly a convinced Protestant, who regarded the witch beliefs of his period as a massive mistake that depended upon a faulty understanding of scriptural texts and that perpetuated much because of the massive ignorance of the Roman Catholic Church. His book was dedicated to "the Prince of the Kings of Earth," Jesus Christ, in the hope that enlightenment about witchcraft would spread through his influence; Ady added a second dedication to "the more judicious and wise, and discreet part of the clergie of England."

JAMES SHARPE

See also: COOPER, THOMAS; ENGLAND; GAULE, JOHN; GIFFORD, GEORGE; PERKINS, WILLIAM; SCOT, REGINALD; SKEPTICISM.

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AFFAIR OF THE POISONS (1679–1682)

The greatest court scandal of the reign of Louis XIV of France erupted in the fall of 1678 after Nicolas de la Reynie, lieutenant general of the Paris police, received word of a plot to poison Louis XIV. La Reynie's subsequent investigation uncovered a criminal magical

underworld with clientele who extended from the bottom to the very top of the social scale. The inquiry further suggested that a score of Louis XIV's female courtiers, including his official mistress Madame de Montespan, had purchased poisons to rid themselves of their rivals and commissioned ceremonies of love magic in their attempts to win the affections of the king. While La Reynie's investigation eventually exonerated Madame de Montespan from the crime of poisoning, he concluded that she had probably participated in a series of demonic conjurations, or amatory masses, intended to maintain her hold over the king.

Louis XIV's initial response to the growing scandal was swift. He immediately appointed a special judicial commission to try all suspects implicated in the affair, regardless of rank. By 1682, when the king finally dissolved the *Chambre de l'Arsenal* (named after the building in which the commission met), its judges had investigated over 400 of his subjects, sending 36 to their deaths, 4 more to the galleys, and 34 others into exile. Nevertheless, approximately 60 suspects were never tried at all; Louis XIV considered their testimony regarding his mistress's patronage of the notorious sorceress La Voisin too inflammatory to be heard even by his handpicked judges. These suspects were instead placed in solitary confinement, usually in remote fortresses, for the rest of their lives.

While bringing the Affair of the Poisons to a close, Louis XIV issued a royal edict, the first of its kind in Europe, that restricted the sale of poisons. The edict further declared all magical practices to be fraudulent and ordered anyone who claimed to perform "so-called acts of magic" to be banished from his kingdom. Louis XIV, in effect, forbade his subjects to believe in magic at the same time that he inaugurated state regulations on "controlled substances."

The members of the criminal magical underworld that Louis XIV sought to eradicate peddled spells for almost every conceivable desire. While charms that promised success at the gaming table or balms that protected one in battle proved popular, Parisians sought out love magic beyond all else. The city's sorceresses therefore offered their clients an extensive range of love charms that can be grouped into three general categories. The first included potions composed of such substances as menstrual blood, cauls, and Spanish fly, which were believed to possess supernatural properties as aphrodisiacs.

Rituals of love magic, held over a potion to increase its strength, fall into the second category. Invoking heavenly aid to fulfill the client's desires, these ceremonies drew upon the common magical tradition of the Middle Ages and coopted the practices, imagery, and sacraments of the Catholic Church. Clients of La



Depiction of an amatory Mass held over the nude body of Madame de Montespan, a mistress of King Louis XIV of France. Montespan and others at court had been accused of poisoning and love magic. (TopFoto.co.uk)

Voisin, for example, commissioned rituals in which the sorceress lit candles that had been burned during a mass, intoned prayers to the Trinity in Latin, and then inscribed the names of the would-be lovers in wax before throwing them into an open flame to be literally and figuratively melted together.

The final and most potent category of love magic available involved elaborate demonic ceremonies, drawn from the medieval tradition of learned magic, celebrated with the assistance of a renegade priest. An ordained priest could, it had long been held, divert the sacerdotal power that allowed him to perform the miracle of the Mass for magical ends. The priests arrested during the Affair of the Poisons, however, confessed that they had developed a uniquely sacrilegious ceremony of love magic. Their amatory masses, celebrated over the naked stomach of a living woman, allegedly lured forth demons with the sacrifice of an infant for the purpose of establishing control over another's thoughts, emotions, and actions.

La Reynie's investigation into the Affair of the Poisons revealed not only the sacrilegious activities of the members of the criminal magical underworld, but their murderous ones as well. Would-be lovers seeking to rid themselves of rivals or spouses, he discovered, could hire Parisian magical practitioners to perform spells or rituals that promised to bring death to those who stood in the way of their passions. If murder by magical means failed, clients of Paris's sorceresses could readily purchase a variety of poisons, including hemlock, vitriol, and arsenic. However, the *secrè du crapaud* (secret of the toad, a solution allegedly composed of salt, arsenic, and toad venom) was reputed to be the most toxic and undetectable poison.

LYNN WOOD MOLLENAUER

See also: BLACK MASS; CLERICAL MAGIC; FRANCE; LOVE MAGIC; MAGIC, LEARNED; MAGIC, POPULAR; POISON; POTIONS; TOADS.

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AFRICA (SUB-SAHARAN)

Witchcraft in sub-Saharan Africa forms an interesting contrast to witchcraft in the West, and some of the scholarly work that has been done on African witchcraft

has influenced important scholars working on witchcraft in the West. Beliefs in witchcraft and the regular use of measures to diagnose and control its influence have formed a persistent element in sub-Saharan African cultures and societies. Missionary and governmental efforts to suppress them have proved largely ineffectual, and recent social changes, including increased urbanization, sometimes appear to have been accompanied by more popular anxiety about witches rather than less.

Anthropologists have studied African witchcraft intensively since the 1930s, when Edward Evans-Pritchard published his classic study on the Azande of the Sudan. Such work not only threw much light on witchcraft within Africa, but it also exercised considerable influence on perceptions of the subject in early modern Europe, especially through the works of Keith Thomas (1970) and Alan Macfarlane (1970). Evans-Pritchard firmly established what Max Gluckman (1960) called the "logic" of African witchcraft beliefs, superseding earlier notions that they represented a prerational mentality, and later work illustrated how such beliefs and accusations arising from them could be understood only in the context of the system of social relations in which they were embedded. It was also clear that witchcraft beliefs and accusations were a regular feature of everyday life in African societies, in addition to their heightened levels during more turbulent episodes of organized witch hunting, such as those in Zambia and Tanzania in the 1930s and in several areas since then (Abrahams 1985; Richards 1972; Willis 1970).

The term *witchcraft* has come under close scrutiny in Africa. In an extension of early modern European connections between witchcraft and the Devil, Christian missionaries and others have sometimes mistakenly used the word to refer to indigenous religious beliefs and practices in general, apparently on the assumption that the worship of any but the true god must involve the Devil to some degree. A narrower and more suitable approach stresses the believed mysterious power of human beings to cause life-threatening harm to each other by evil thoughts or the use of magical rites and substances. However, the fact that most European commentators do not believe in witchcraft, whereas it is a "fact" of everyday experience for many Africans, has caused some concerns, particularly with regard to the official legal systems of most colonial and postcolonial African states. Because legislation has been largely aimed at suppressing accusations rather than at witchcraft, many citizens of such countries consider their government to be the "witches' friend." In some places, such as the Maka area of Cameroon, a more positive legal approach to indigenous beliefs and practices has been adopted to deal with this problem, though there is evidence that relatively rich and influential individuals have sometimes turned this new approach to their

advantage by bringing successful accusations against less prosperous and allegedly envious villagers (Fisiy and Geschiere 1990, 2001).

It has also become clear that the single term *witchcraft* may not do justice to the diversity of beliefs in so many different cultures or even to the complexity of the concepts of a particular African society. For example, Azande distinguish between harm caused by psychic processes (*mangu*—glossed by Evans-Pritchard as “witchcraft”) and harm caused through the use of materia medica (which Evans-Pritchard calls “sorcery”). Zande *mangu* is typically inherited, and it is a purely psychic, not always conscious act, though nonetheless lethal unless counteracted. In contrast, “sorcery” is learned, conscious, and involves physical manipulation of materials. Comparable ideas are found elsewhere, for instance, an “evil-eye” power to harm by simply looking at a victim or harming victims by using their hair or nail cuttings. However, not all societies divide such different powers conceptually with the same sharpness as the Azande. In some cultures, individuals are believed to possess a general power to harm others—sometimes thought of as a “snake” in their belly—which may be manifested in different ways. This power is not always thought of as necessarily evil in itself. Sometimes it can be used for the public good, by respected elders against persistent wrongdoers, for example, but it is often seen as being used for evil, as a result of ambition, greed, or envy. In some cases, there is a gender division, with male witchcraft generally seen as positive, while that of women is considered reprehensible and evil. Sometimes “ordinary” day-witchcraft is distinguished from night-witchcraft, which is considered especially evil and deadly.

Sub-Saharan African witches are often said to have familiars—cats and hyenas are commonly cited, and owls are not infrequently associated with witches—but there is considerable variation on this and in beliefs about other details of witches’ activities. In an article originally published in 1951, Monica Wilson (1972) showed how such variation may also be connected with local social structures. Among the Pondo of South Africa, for instance, witches are said to work through a familiar—often a hairy creature known as *tikoloshe* with exaggerated sexual characteristics, but sometimes a baboon or cat or other animal. The familiar can transform itself into a sexually attractive person with light skin color and is always of the opposite sex to the witch, with whom it has sexual relations. Among the Nyakyusa of Tanzania, however, the main emphasis is upon witches’ lust for milk and meat, and they are thought to suck the udders of cows until they die and also to love human flesh. Wilson related these differences to the structure of local communities. Among the Nyakyusa, villages are made up of largely unrelated

neighbors with a strong ethical emphasis upon good neighborliness, including sharing food. Among the Pondo, in contrast, villages consist largely of groups of close or distant kinfolk among whom sexual relations are considered incestuous. Also, at the time of the study, they lived in a racially divided society in which interracial sexual relations were strictly forbidden. Again, unlike the Nyakyusa, they have a keen interest, in part through the possibilities of inheritance, in the maintenance of the well-being of each other’s herds. Wilson related the Pondo emphasis on sex to the forbidden sexual attraction between neighboring kinfolk and suggested that the light-skinned familiar symbolized the prohibition on sex between different racial groups.

Witchcraft beliefs in Africa commonly provide an explanation of misfortune, though not simply a mechanical one. While many Africans might claim that a person who was crushed beneath a falling granary was a victim of witchcraft, they are also clearly aware that the structure may well have collapsed as a result of termite damage to its supports. The question remains for them, however, why the granary collapsed at the time when the victim was sitting there, and witchcraft is commonly cited as the reason for this. The evil power of other persons is thus brought into account, though it is additionally recognized that a victim may have behaved in such a way as to antagonize the witch in question. In the modern West, such occurrences are usually seen as impersonal coincidences or “acts of God,” despite an increasing tendency to hold owners or builders legally responsible for negligence in such cases. The explanation of the event through witchcraft constitutes a part of African theodicy (the attempt to understand the presence and significance of suffering and evil in the world). However, there are usually limits to the customary use of such explanation. A potter whose pots regularly crack is more likely to be judged a poor craftsman than a victim of witchcraft. Similarly, pleas that criminal or other bad behavior is due to the bewitchment of the perpetrator are unlikely to be treated sympathetically.

The incidence of witchcraft accusations is rarely random. Cultural stereotypes of witches exist in most African cultures—people may assert that a witch is typically a woman or an old cripple (or both), or that witches typically have red eyes. However, with the exception of some victims of more general witch hunts, those accused may well not fit such stereotypes. In such cases, it becomes necessary to inquire into the relationship between victim or accuser and accused, because the accuser may be different from the victim; for example, a parent may bring an accusation on behalf of a bewitched child. Especially within the field of kinship and family ties, some relationships may be particularly subject to strain and more likely to be marked by

accusations of witchcraft. Competition for a husband's favor and for resources for their own children is a common feature of relations between the wives of a polygynist, and the jealousy of a childless co-wife may be particularly feared. Accusations of witchcraft are especially common in such cases, though not always as frequent as some men assert. Accusations are also common between certain cousins or between uncle and nephew in family systems where such persons are inevitably brought into competition and conflict by the nature of the ties between them. Max Marwick (1970) has suggested in this context that witchcraft accusations can serve for the observer as a gauge of social strains in certain structurally defined relationships.

Witchcraft is more likely to be a major concern in some kinds of social system than in others. Witch beliefs are not subject to strictly logical proof or disproof—even a fraudulent witch finder may still believe that there are others who are genuine—and Western notions of coincidence and accident do not offer a demonstrably more convincing explanation of misfortune. Such beliefs about the powers of human beings are held or abandoned not because they are demonstrably right or wrong, but because they make good or poor sense in the context of the believer's experience of social life. In a society where communities are tied to the land through agriculture, where many hands make light work, and where villagers are bound to each other by strong links of kinship or mutual dependence between neighbors, the idea that people may have power over each other's well-being makes much sense. Conversely, Paul Baxter (1972) has argued that in pastoral nomadic societies, where people are freer to move away from each other and from the tensions involved in their relationships, witchcraft fears and accusations are of relatively slight importance. In the same vein, evidence suggests that witchcraft fears and accusations tend to increase when scattered populations have been forced to live in more compact settlements, whether for protection against raiding or by governmental decree.

Despite the immense pain and disruption that they can clearly cause, African witch beliefs and accusations may also serve some useful functions. In societies where people are afraid to antagonize each other, high standards of interpersonal behavior and generosity may be maintained in an attempt to avoid being either accused as a witch or a victim of a witchcraft attack. Also, in situations where fission within kinship groups is fraught with tension but is structurally inevitable, accusations of witchcraft, with their implications of behavior which is beyond the pale and the opposite of that expected between kinfolk, may serve as a justifying catalyst in the process. More generally, the ascription of problems to the evil activities of witches can divert attention away from the structural problems of the social system onto the alleged evil of individuals.

A diagnosis of witchcraft is usually conducted by consultation of oracles or expert diviners. The familiar image of the all-powerful and evil African "witch doctor" is, however, largely a fiction of Western writers and filmmakers. Often the diviner, or witch doctor, is merely a member of a village community who has special skills. He (or she) may have been called into divining after a misfortune. This misfortune may be diagnosed as being sent by an ancestor who was a diviner, who thus indicates a wish for the descendant to follow the same path, and the future diviner would then be apprenticed to a practicing expert and eventually take on the role him- or herself. Much of the necessary skill may be learned less through formal instruction than through observation or claimed revelation in dreams. The diviner generally lives largely like other villagers, as a family man or woman engaged in the annual cycle of production. Only people living in fairly close proximity consult most diviners, but some gain special reputations and may receive visits from clients who live at a distance. In some special cases, a well-known diviner and ritual expert may be summoned from a great distance to provide help in the investigation of misfortune, or the protection of a new house from misfortune. Some even have international reputations. In some places, any death is usually followed by a diagnostic séance held by a group of local diviners.

Divinatory techniques vary widely from place to place. Poison may be administered to a chicken, and its reaction indicates the involvement of a witch and the witch's identity. Observations of the way in which bones or even sandals fall, or how objects move in stirred water, are common. So too is the examination of the entrails of a slaughtered animal or the configuration of the feathers on a bird killed for the occasion. Some diviners specialize in "smelling" out the information they require from a twig or other object obtained from the sick or deceased person or the person's representative. Ordeals involving exposure to boiling water or hot metal have also been historically reported from some areas.

Despite important local and historical variation, social and political change has always been a significant element in African life. New ideas about witchcraft and new techniques for diagnosing it and dealing with it have entered different areas at different times, and labor migration and urbanization, coupled with developing transport facilities, have facilitated their spread. Nonetheless, significant regional variations still occur. In Tanzania, for example (Green 1994), some southern areas have developed well-organized techniques and complex social institutions for identifying witches and for peacefully cleansing them of their witchcraft. At the same time, village vigilante groups, known as Sungusungu, have emerged in other areas of the country (Abrahams 1998, chap. 2; Bukurura 1994). These groups have devoted themselves to maintaining

order in the presence of perceived state inefficiency in this regard. Their main targets have been cattle theft and brigandage, on the one hand, and witchcraft on the other, and they have sometimes been responsible for maltreating and occasionally killing suspected witches. In the same region, a large number of more private murders, allegedly instigated in some cases by the relatives of suspects, have also been reported. The suspected witches are often older women, and many have fled to urban areas for protection. Slightly over 3,000 such witchcraft-related killings, mainly of women, are said to have occurred in the Shinyanga and Mwanza regions of the country (population ca. 3.5 million) between 1970 and 1988 (Mesaki 1994). Murders of suspected witches have also begun to reach high levels in South Africa, where they appear to be connected with political and economic tensions (Niehaus 2001).

In much of Africa, as elsewhere, witchcraft is said to be particularly associated with women. Such stereotypical perceptions of female witchcraft among the Nupe of Nigeria have been interpreted as expressions of male–female conflict in a society with a poor fit between women’s “ideally” subordinate position and the realities of their economic power; deep-seated psychosexual antagonisms may also be involved (Nadel 1954). On the basis of her research among the Gonja of Ghana, Esther Goody (1970) suggested a more general theory. Unlike men, Gonja women have no legitimate channels to express aggression, and attributing evil mystical power to them seems a corollary of this. Both arguments make sense in other areas of Africa, including Tanzania. Among the Nyamwezi, where witches are stereotypically women, female violence and aggression are strongly disapproved of. At the same time, men are uncomfortably conscious of the power that women wield in several contexts, including, significantly, the control of food, despite their jurally subordinate position in the household and society. Polygyny is also a source of anxiety for Nyamwezi men, both as a source of conflict between wives and as evidence, for some, that women must outnumber them. It may also be significant, both there and among other groups, that a common story of the origins of death ascribes it to conflict between co-wives (Abrahams 1994).

The persistence of African witchcraft beliefs, despite a wide variety of social, economic, and political changes, shows that such ideas are both deeply rooted and adaptable. New situations bring new uncertainties, anxieties, and problems in their train, and witchcraft beliefs continue, sometimes with a shift of emphasis or with new elaborations, to provide some explanation. Economic development with the inequalities that commonly accompany it, and even the greater impersonality of urban life and modern, bureaucratic institutions still provide favorable environments for powerful

fears that others may have both the motive and the witchcraft power to harm. Those who are successful sometimes fear the jealousy of others in an increasingly competitive world, and sometimes the successful themselves are believed to have enhanced their prosperity through witchcraft, for example, through bewitching others and using them as members of a secret zombie labor force. Some modern institutions may be feared as locations of witchcraft activity, as occurred in Uganda in the 1950s when there were reports that the Fire Service was involved in a mysterious and sinister trade in human blood. It appears at least initially that such persistence is at odds with arguments that tie belief in witchcraft to traditional social systems. The adaptability of such beliefs and the fact that most urban dwellers still have close structural and cultural links to rural communities are no doubt important factors here. It has also been suggested (Sanders 2001) that increasing involvement in an expanding commercial world, where everything imaginable appears to be for sale, tends to enhance the fear that those who seek the power to harm others can readily obtain it.

RAY ABRAHAMS

See also: ANTHROPOLOGY; EVANS-PRITCHARD, EDWARD; FAMILIARS; MACFARLANE, ALAN; THOMAS, KEITH.

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AGE OF ACCUSED WITCHES

Ask people to describe the typical victim of an early modern witchcraft trial, and most will probably reply that she was an old woman. Although relatively little research has in fact been done by historians on the ages of accused witches, the limited data gathered thus far suggests that there is an element of truth in the "witch as old woman" stereotype: In many areas, and particularly in the sixteenth century, women aged fifty and above were overrepresented among accused witches in relation to their proportion of the overall population in early modern Europe. Their greater vulnerability to accusations of witchcraft has been explained in different ways. Some scholars link it to the effects of menopause; some link it to older women's economic and marital status; still others see advanced age at the

time of trial primarily as a reflection of the fact that a woman often lived for many years in her community as a reputed witch before her neighbors accused her formally of witchcraft.

The idea that older women were somewhat more vulnerable to accusations of witchcraft than other age or gender groups tells us only part of the complex story of the reasons for and the targets of witchcraft accusation in the early modern period, however. A closer look at the data available on the age and gender of those tried for witchcraft shows that contemporaries were capable of imagining people of both genders and all ages as witches. The belief was that witchcraft was an evil art that could be learned by anyone, and witchcraft accusations could emerge from a wide variety of situations of social conflict between individuals or households. The age of an alleged witch was thus just one of a combination of factors, including gender, as well as social, economic, or marital status, that one must take into account when seeking to explain the vulnerability of specific individuals to witchcraft accusations. The overemphasis on the "witch as old woman" stereotype in witchcraft historiography has been shaped to a large extent by the work of such skeptical early modern demonologists as Johann Weyer and Johann Georg Goedelmann, who emphasized this stereotype as a means of criticizing the persecutory zeal of the witch hunters.

GATHERING AND PRESENTING DATA ON THE AGES OF ACCUSED WITCHES

Gathering data on the ages of accused witches is a difficult undertaking. Judicial authorities who tried alleged witches rarely recorded their ages; even during the seventeenth century, when recording ages became more common, it was not standard procedure. We can sometimes estimate a suspect's age from indirect clues offered in trial testimony, from references to the number of times they had been married, for example, or the number and marital status of their children, or the length of their reputation as a witch. This is very painstaking work, however, which helps explain why relatively little systematic research has been done on the correlation between age and vulnerability to witchcraft accusation. Figures published on this theme are usually based on suspects for whom age is known with the highest degree of certainty from trial records.

This approach can be problematic for two reasons. First, it probably skews the picture in favor of the youngest and oldest alleged witches, as their extremes of age were most likely to have been regarded as noteworthy by court scribes. Second, suspects of explicitly or roughly known age usually constituted only a tiny fraction of the total number of people tried for witchcraft in any particular area. For example, of the 314



Witches Dancing at the Sabbat, from Francesco Maria Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficarum* (A Summary of Witches), 1608. The elaborate clothing indicates that these witches were from a wealthy social group. (Art Archive/Dagli Orti)

people tried as witches at the Assize and Quarter Session Courts in Essex, England, between 1560 and 1680, Alan Macfarlane was able to establish the ages of only 15 tried in 1645 (all of whom were female): Two were aged forty to forty-nine, and the rest were fifty and above (Macfarlane 1999, 161). This small sample has been used to suggest that 87 percent of Essex witches were aged fifty and above (Bever 1982, 181). We cannot, however, be sure that the other 299 suspects (95 percent) tried in Essex had the same age profile as those 15 women, making such conclusions tentative at best. For the Jura region, the ages of witchcraft suspects were recorded reasonably frequently only in Geneva, yet William Monter concluded that the median age of sixty for accused witches in Geneva seemed typical of the rural Jura regions as well (Monter 1976, 122–123).

Although he did not categorise by gender, Bever (1982) used the figures in Table 1 to argue that women

aged fifty and above were particularly vulnerable to witchcraft accusations. However, when known ages of accused witches are sorted by gender and presented in narrower age-ranges (see Table II), we can see that, while middle-aged and older women were overrepresented amongst witchcraft suspects, female and males of all ages were vulnerable to witchcraft accusations.

Under 20	6	18	24
21–30	3	7	10
31–40	3	8	11
41–50	6	18	24
51–60	5	23	28
61–70	4	8	12
Over 70	3	6	9
Total	30	88	118

Table A-1: Ages and genders of 165 people accused as witches during the Salem witchcraft outbreak for whom minimal information is available (Demos 1970, 1315).

OLDER WOMEN'S VULNERABILITY TO WITCHCRAFT ACCUSATIONS: EXPLANATORY MODELS

Historians have offered various explanations for the overrepresentation of women aged fifty and above among accused witches in early modern Europe and America. Some have suggested that it was the lowly economic and social status of older women that rendered them more vulnerable to witchcraft accusations. In the early 1970s, for example, Alan Macfarlane and Keith Thomas argued that English witches were more likely to be older women because such women were more likely than other age-gender groups to be poor and thus reliant on their neighbors for material assistance. They were thus more likely to become involved in tension-ridden verbal exchanges over requests for assistance with wealthier neighbors, who were increasingly unwilling to give it because of increasing population pressure on resources during the early modern period. According to Thomas and Macfarlane, wealthier villagers might then use an accusation of witchcraft against a poor, old woman in order to legitimate their own lack of charity toward her and as a means of loosening the bonds of neighborly obligation that had traditionally existed within their community.

For Thomas, the poverty of older women was often linked to widowhood: Old, poor widows were most likely to be reliant on neighborly assistance and thus were at greatest risk of being accused of witchcraft. Erik Mdelfort also emphasized the significance of marital status in explaining a woman's vulnerability to witchcraft accusation. He suggested that widows (and single women) ran a higher risk of being accused of witchcraft because they lacked the social and legal protection a husband afforded; women who lived beyond the reach of patriarchal control were automatically regarded as suspect. Widows were also overrepresented among the women accused of witchcraft in the duchy of Lorraine, around half of the total (Briggs 2002, 228), and in the nearby Saarland region of Germany at 64 percent (Labouvie 1991, 173).

Other historians (e.g., Bever 1982; Roper 1994, 199–225) have argued that the life-cycle event of menopause, rather than (or in addition to) a woman's economic, social, or marital status, provided the crucial catalyst in rendering certain women more susceptible to accusations of witchcraft. Bever, for example, asserted that women aged fifty and above, because of the mental and physical changes experienced as a result of menopause, were more likely than other age-gender groups to display the hostility and aggression that their neighbors regarded as characteristic of witches. Increased irascibility of this sort was exacerbated in poor women, who suffered most from the socioeconomic problems caused by demographic pressure on resources. Lyndal Roper, however, argued that it was

not their behavior but their bodies that rendered postmenopausal women vulnerable to being perceived in this way, because their shriveled breasts and barren wombs were regarded with particular fear and loathing in early modern culture, which held fertility in extremely high esteem. The body of the postmenopausal woman was conceptualized by early modern medical theory as literally poisonous, because it no longer regularly expelled its supposedly poisonous menstrual blood. However, too little research has been done on its cultural perception and representation in early modern Europe to permit any firm conclusions.

OLDER WOMEN'S VULNERABILITY TO WITCHCRAFT ACCUSATIONS: LENGTH OF REPUTATION

The explanations for older women's vulnerability to witchcraft accusation discussed above may indeed apply in certain cases, but they can also be criticized on various grounds. The Thomas–Macfarlane explanatory model, for instance, implies both that the targets of witchcraft accusation were almost invariably old, poor women and that witchcraft accusations almost invariably arose from situations of social conflict in which a wealthier neighbor had refused a poorer one material assistance. More recent research done on witchcraft trials, however, has shown that accusations of witchcraft emerged from a wide variety of different conflicts within communities, and that the range of suspected witches was therefore much larger than the “poor old woman” stereotype suggests. In certain English, Swiss, and German communities, for example, accusations of witchcraft were not made by the wealthy against poorer neighbors, but rather by those of lower social and economic status against their wealthier neighbors. Such accusations expressed the envy felt by the less well off and offered a means to redistribute power within a community: In such cases, relatively wealthy, socially integrated, married women (and men) could become targets. Although poverty might, therefore, increase the likelihood of an individual's involvement in situations of social tension from which suspicions of witchcraft might arise, so might wealth, as well as a variety of other factors that had little to do with the individual's economic status.

Obviously, a very unpleasant strain of misogyny was directed against old women in the early modern period, but it is not clear if this resulted simply from a particularly negative perception of their bodies. It is also not clear how this misogyny became a direct “cause” of witchcraft accusations against specific older women. Moreover, it is by no means the case that suspected witches necessarily behaved in a hostile and aggressive manner, as Bever implied. Trial records show that many tried to conduct relations with their neighbors in as amicable a fashion as possible, although these amicable

social exchanges could be given a sinister meaning by neighbors who already feared the suspect as a witch. On the question of widowhood, the lack of a husband's protection did render a woman more vulnerable to a formal accusation of witchcraft by her neighbors. However, widowhood by itself was not enough to cause such an accusation, which would only be deemed plausible if the accused woman had already been involved in conflict-ridden social relationships with another household, or was already reputed a witch in her community. Many women who were formally accused of witchcraft once widowed had probably first gained their reputations as witches while married.

A growing body of evidence suggests that many people tried for witchcraft in early modern Europe and America had acquired reputations as witches many years before being formally accused. In Lorraine, the Saarland, Scotland, and the German city of Rothenburg ob der Tauber, for example, over half of the women tried for witchcraft had preexisting reputations as witches (Rowlands 2002, 178), and in the county of Lippe, such women constituted a majority of those accused of witchcraft (Walz 1993, 300–302). Some reputations for witchcraft apparently stretched back as far as forty or forty-five years; in Rothenburg, the average length of reputation as a suspected witch was around eighteen years (Rowlands 2002, 178). Women and men could acquire such reputations from a surprisingly young age through association with older reputed witches. Aside from being born into a family of reputed witches, someone might become the stepchild of a reputed witch, or a servant in a household of reputed witches, or marry into such a household, which would render such individuals potentially vulnerable to witchcraft accusations for most of their lives. Comparatively young women and men, especially biological children of reputed witches, could plausibly be accused of witchcraft.

As long as communities did not suffer large-scale witch panics, reputed witches could be tolerated within their communities for long periods of time. Their neighbors had a variety of nonlegal methods for coping with witchcraft and tended to see formal accusation as a last resort against a reputed witch—and reputed witches were rarely defenseless against their neighbors' suspicions. Moreover, a witch's power was believed to increase with age, perhaps peaking between the ages of 40 and 60, and may possibly have been linked to the cessation of childbearing for women. Women arrested for witchcraft were therefore often middle-aged by our standards or old by their standards, simply because their neighbors had waited years, or even decades, before deciding to take legal action against them. When the sources permit, historians investigating the connections between age and vulnerability to witchcraft accusation need to ask not only why someone was formally

accused of witchcraft at a particular point, but also when, and how, that person first acquired a reputation for performing witchcraft. Ideally, historians should also try to establish the ages of the accusers and witnesses who testified against alleged witches, in order to establish how often intergenerational conflict in families and communities played a role in witchcraft accusations.

A WIDE RANGE OF SUSPECTS: CHILD WITCHES AND MALE WITCHES

Too great a focus on women aged fifty and above as stereotypical witches overlooks the fact that women and men of all ages were prosecuted and convicted as witches during the early modern period. The wide range of potential witchcraft suspects can be seen both in Rothenburg ob der Tauber (Rowlands 2002) and in the adolescent-driven Salem witchcraft trials (see table A-I). This wide range of suspects should not surprise us: Witchcraft accusations could emerge from a variety of situations of social tensions between neighbors, while almost anyone could fall victim to an accusation of witchcraft forced from a suspected witch during interrogation under torture. Moreover, the belief that witchcraft was an evil art that could be taught by experienced witches to the as yet uninitiated was so flexible that it could be applied to a person of any age, gender, or social status, either in the role of teacher or pupil. This was why it was fairly easy for an individual to gain a reputation as a witch by association with a household containing others who were already reputed witches: The assumption was that the evil art of witchcraft would be passed on among the household's members. It was partly for this reason that the idea of child witches was taken so seriously by contemporaries: it made perfect, if terrifying, sense to imagine that children had been corrupted by adult witches.

Anxiety around the figure of the child witch increased dramatically during the early modern period as a result of the significant number of often voluntary confessions made by children and teenagers regarding either their bewitchment or seduction into witchcraft by older witches. The proportion of children involved in witchcraft trials increased significantly in the course of the seventeenth century in Germany, for example. Of the 133 suspects executed in the course of the *Zauberer-Jackl* (Sorcerer-Jack) trials in Salzburg between 1675 and 1681 (which constituted the last of the large-scale south German witch persecutions), two-thirds were under age twenty-one and over one-third were fifteen years of age or younger (Schindler 2002, 238). The fact that most of these youngsters were boys also reminds us that males as well as females were vulnerable to witchcraft accusations in early modern Europe. The proportion of men accused of witchcraft varied greatly throughout Europe, ranging from a meager 5 percent

in the bishopric of Basel to 92 percent in Iceland; according to Rolf Schulte's figures, the average percentage of men tried for witchcraft in early modern Europe was around 30 percent (Schulte 2000, 86). In Germany it was 24 percent, with the proportion of men tried for witchcraft increasing in the seventeenth century, particularly in Catholic areas (Schulte 2000, 81, 88–89).

Although little research has been done on the correlation between age and vulnerability to accusations of witchcraft among men, the available samples (Demos 1970; Labouvie 1991; Rowlands 2002) suggest similarities between the genders: If men of all ages could plausibly be accused of witchcraft, those aged fifty or above seem overrepresented in proportion to the overall male population. As was the case with older women, older men could become vulnerable to witchcraft accusations for a variety of reasons: because they were poor and had to beg, or on the contrary because their wealth excited envy; because they were antisocial, particularly quarrelsome, or verbally aggressive; because they were married or otherwise related to suspected witches; or because they had subverted communal norms in any number of ways and contexts. Like accused female witches, they too often had long-standing reputations within their communities for practicing witchcraft.

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See also: ACCUSATIONS; BODY OF THE WITCH; CHILDREN; FEMALE WITCHES; GENDER; GOEDELMAHNN, JOHANN GEORG; MACFARLANE, ALAN; MALE WITCHES; MELANCHOLY; MOTHERHOOD; PERSONALITY OF WITCHES, SALEM; SALZBURG, PRINCE-ARCHBISHOPIC OF; SKEPTICISM; SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF WITCHES; THOMAS, KEITH; WEYER, JOHANN.

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AGOBARD OF LYONS (CA. 779–840)

Auxiliary bishop, then archbishop of Lyons (816–835, 837–840), Agobard was a politically active cleric and theologian during the reign of Louis the Pious (814–840), and his treatise against the belief that hail and thunder could be made by skilled humans is a frequently cited example of Carolingian clerical skepticism in the face of popular belief and practice related to witchcraft.

In 815 or 816, Agobard encountered a group of people near Lyons who were planning to execute three men and a woman who, their captors claimed, had fallen out of a ship in the clouds. The ship and its crew, they said, came from a land called Magonia, spreading hailstorms that destroyed the local crops and then, after negotiations with intermediaries paid by the local farmers whose crops had been damaged, taking the crops and sailing away. Agobard described the episode in his treatise *Against the Absurd Belief of the People concerning Hail and Thunder*. In an appendix to the treatise, Agobard criticized another belief that enemies of Charlemagne had spread a magical dust across the fields, killing cattle. Agobard was concerned about the widespread prevalence of the general belief that natural disasters could be caused or repaired by human agency rather than by God alone. But his perspective is that of the critical outsider; nowhere does he describe the entire belief system, traces of which he discovered in the case of the weather makers from Magonia.

Agobard was also addressing a topic of common concern in Carolingian Europe, in which cereal agriculture and pastoralism lay at the base of the economy and the failure of one or both had widespread consequences. People also believed that natural phenomena were caused by human agency. There is a considerable legal and penitential literature from the period prohibiting not the belief in but the practice of various kinds of weather magic, either causing natural disasters or taking action to prevent them when others caused them. There is earlier evidence of such beliefs and prohibitions in Roman literature as well as in sixth- and seventh-century Visigothic legal collections. A major theme in the work of Agobard and his contemporaries was the discrediting of certain

kinds of power that people believed to exist and that some people professed to possess. Reforming clerics dismissed as superstition those kinds of power that they wished to discredit. Although Agobard used rational arguments against belief in the weather makers and grain thieves of Magonia, he used these only instrumentally, in an attempt to impose a new religious orthodoxy that reserved certain kinds of power for God alone and regulated access to that power through the Christian clergy by means of special prayers and liturgical rituals. God, too, might exact his vengeance by sending storms or pestilence, and the prayers and rituals of clergy might also mitigate divine vengeance. From the ninth century to the present, Christian liturgy has contained particular prayers and ceremonies for aid against natural disasters.

Agobard also complained that the money paid to people who defend crops and animals against weather makers was taken from tithes that should have gone to the Church. Several scholars have suggested that the belief and practices condemned by Agobard were being used to avoid the often heavy exactions of grain from peasants by clerical and lay lords, by concealing harvested grain and claiming that it had been destroyed or taken by the alien weather makers.

Read carefully, the unusual and dramatic episode recorded by Agobard throws light on contemporary aspects of the Carolingian rural economy, peasant beliefs and practices in the face of an increasingly normative kind of Christianity, and the mind of a reforming cleric during a period of acute sensitivity toward the need for reform and energetic attempts to enforce it.

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See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; *INDICULUS*

SUPERSTITIONUM ET PAGANARUM; WEATHER MAGIC.

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AGRARIAN CRISES

Agrarian crises reveal the interdependence of meteorological disaster, subsistence crises, and popular demand

for witch hunting. Agrarian societies are extremely responsive to agrarian fluctuations, the difference between annual harvests depending on the climatic conditions. During the medieval and early modern periods, European society was largely agrarian. Around 1600, only capitals like Istanbul, Naples, Venice, Milan, Paris, and London counted more than 100,000 inhabitants; even major commercial centers like Amsterdam or Lyons were smaller. In the Holy Roman Empire, the largest imperial free cities, such as Augsburg, Nuremberg, and Cologne, had merely 40,000 inhabitants. Most English towns had less than 4,000 inhabitants, and the same was true for France, Germany, and Spain. Except for parts of the Netherlands, the Rhineland, and northern Italy, less than 10 percent of the population was living in towns; rural life dominated throughout Europe, and the larger towns depended on food supply. At the same time, yield ratios on grain sown were low; shortfalls in production were sometimes caused by war, but more frequently by problems in the agrarian sector. A decline in agrarian production posed the greatest danger to this kind of subsistence economy.

In 1935, Wilhelm Abel first defined *agrarian crises* as periods characterized by a sharp drop in agrarian output and consequently in feudal rents, by desertion of individual farms or even entire villages, and by a steep decline in prices for farmland. His definition was modeled on the major crisis of the fourteenth century, when European population numbers collapsed under the impact of the Black Death, the return of the bubonic plague after more than 700 years. Abel’s definition, however, conflates two entirely different phenomena: a crisis in production and a crisis in consumption. It is true that an enormous crisis affects both consumers and producers, both townsfolk and villagers, both landlords and peasants, in a vast downward spiral. But in short-term crises, known to economic historians as *crises de l’ancien type* (crises of the old kind) (Labrousse 1933)—just the opposite is the case. Crop failure causes an increase in prices, but only those who have to buy food (day laborers and urban craftsmen, e.g.) suffer, whereas producers and sellers of agrarian products (lords, peasants, and merchants) benefit from the situation.

Short-term crises therefore increase social tensions within the society by creating poverty, malnutrition, and diseases among consumers and abundant wealth for producers and distributors. Because malnutrition makes people more vulnerable to certain kinds of diseases (for instance, typhus, tuberculosis, influenza, and possibly smallpox), the longer the food shortage lasts, the more vulnerable consumers become. Some age groups, primarily small children or old people, are more likely to be affected by high mortality than others. It makes sense to replace the term “agrarian crisis” by “subsistence crisis,” because those who benefited from

the hardship of others were obviously not part of any crisis, except insofar as highly infectious diseases like bubonic plague also endangered even the well-fed, or the bitterness soared until the lower classes turned rebellious or even revolutionary.

In agrarian societies like Old-Régime Europe, as we have seen, subsistence crises were ordinarily triggered by harvest failure, which in turn was most often caused by climatic anomalies: central Europe, for example, experienced an increasing number of years, during the period of the Little Ice Age of prolonged winters, late frosts, cold and wet summers and autumns, early snowfall, and severe winters. In these years, the wine harvest was endangered, and so was the harvest of cereals. Wine turned sour, and the amount of grain available to eat fell far below normal levels. The proverbial “daily bread” was in danger; the specter of hunger and epidemic diseases frightened the average household. Because weather determined the harvest, climatic anomalies triggered questions about causation—“who did it”—in a society lacking the concept of contingency. This was particularly the case in the 1480s, the 1560s, the 1580s, and the 1620s (Behringer 2004).

The resumption of witch hunting in the 1560s was accompanied by debates about weather making, because this was often the single most important charge against suspected witches, especially in central Europe. Trial records show that while individual “unnatural” accidents resulted in individual accusations of witchcraft, in cases of “unnatural” weather and collective damage, entire peasant communities demanded persecution. Unlike individual accusations, which usually triggered trials against only individual suspects, such collective demands for persecution—when accepted by the authorities—often resulted in large-scale witch hunts. The links among meteorological disaster, subsistence crisis, and popular demand for witch hunts were apparent in the largest witch hunts of sixteenth-century Europe, affecting regions as widely separated as Switzerland, Scotland, electoral Trier (Kurtrier), and Lorraine in the later 1580s, or even more clearly with the largest wave of witch hunting of the seventeenth century, which occurred between 1626 and 1630, mainly in ecclesiastical territories of the Holy Roman Empire, and was the climax of European witchcraft persecutions. Short-term subsistence crises reinforced and exacerbated some long-term developments, such as the rising tension between an increasing population and decreasing yield ratios during the “long sixteenth century.” At times and places when the witchcraft persecution climaxed, social tensions may have been similar to those in the fourteenth century, when famine and epidemics ravaged European societies, with social insecurity accompanied by spiritual uncertainties and all kinds of anxieties. In this sense, witch hunting can be interpreted as part of the scenario discussed under the

commonly used heading “Crisis of the seventeenth century.”

The mechanisms detected in the background of witch persecutions—the search for mystical causation of unusual hardship in an agrarian society—can be applied not only to all massive witchcraft persecutions in traditional Europe, but also to large-scale persecutions in Africa, Asia, or America. European society, however, found an escape from the misery of agrarian crises. By the sixteenth century, its economic life was already molded by the mechanisms of early capitalism, and its trading links had already created what Immanuel Wallerstein called a European “world system.” The increasing frequency of agrarian crises created a rising demand in food supply in urban centers, and the merchant class managed to develop trade links with more remote agrarian zones like the Baltic, or even North America. Improvements in shipping and storage enabled these capitalists to supply grain from these remote areas, as soon as price increases made it profitable. Therefore the upper echelons of the European society usually profited directly from subsistence crises, while entire regions like the Netherlands, where the international grain trade from the Baltic was based, became virtually independent from traditional agrarian crises. The agricultural revolution of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as well as the invention of insurance companies, made these urbanized centers of northwestern Europe less vulnerable. Yield ratios were increasing slowly from the seventeenth century, primarily in parts of Italy, England, and the Netherlands, which became virtually independent from agrarian fluctuations. It does not seem coincidental that these were the same areas where the witchcraft paradigm first lost its grip on the minds of the people, and where witchcraft trials were terminated first.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES; ENGLAND; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; ITALY; LITTLE ICE AGE; NETHERLANDS; PLAGUE; SCOTLAND; SWITZERLAND.

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**AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM,
HEINRICH CORNELIUS (1486–1535)**

A dominant magical thinker of the Renaissance, Agrippa was constantly cited (positively and negatively) along with Paracelsus for the next two centuries as a founder of magical philosophy. Erasmus thought him learned, and Juan Luis Vives called him “the wonder of letters and literary men” (Nauert 1965, 323). François

Rabelais lampooned him as “Herr Trippa” in his *Tiers Livre*. Christopher Marlowe’s demonic Faust also cites Agrippa, and even in the nineteenth century, the black dog in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s *Faust* derives from a legend about him. Although modern scholarly opinion of Agrippa’s work has been predominantly negative, Agrippa’s skeptical and magical thought had a major influence on later Renaissance philosophy, from John Dee and Giordano Bruno to Michel de Montaigne and René Descartes.

LIFE

Born in Cologne in 1486 to a family of the minor nobility or upper bourgeoisie, Agrippa received the *magister artium* at the University of Cologne in 1502, a university he later criticized. Between 1507 and 1509 he traveled in France and Spain, and also formed or joined a secret society of students of the occult.

Late in 1509, Agrippa visited Johannes Trithemius; shortly thereafter, Agrippa sent him the juvenile draft of *De occulta philosophia* (On Occult Philosophy), of which Trithemius largely approved. Agrippa also lectured on Johannes Reuchlin’s Kabbalistic *De verbo mirifico* (On the Wonder-Working Word) at Dôle, but was denounced as a “judaizing heretic” (*Opera* 2.509). In 1510, Agrippa was in London, where he studied the writings of the apostle Paul with John Colet and began a commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, now lost. Agrippa spent most of 1511 to 1518 in northern Italy serving Emperor Maximilian, but also teaching Plato’s *Symposium* and the Hermetic *Pmander* (Shepherd of Men) at Pavia.

In 1518, Agrippa became legal advisor to the city of Metz. Here he became embroiled in a witchcraft trial, his extraordinary legal efforts leading to the acquittal of an accused woman. After living next in Cologne, Geneva, and Fribourg, Agrippa moved to Lyons in 1524 as physician to Louise of Savoy. Unfortunately, they disagreed intensely, Agrippa being offended by Louise’s demands for astrological prognostications. When Louise left in 1525, the royal treasurers stopped Agrippa’s salary, and in 1528 he took a position in Antwerp with Margaret of Austria.

In September 1530, Agrippa published *De unitate* (On the Vanity of the Arts and Sciences). Concerned about the work’s orthodoxy, Margaret had it sent for secret review to the Faculty of Theology at Louvain, who denounced it in March 1531. In early 1531, Agrippa published Book 1 of *De occulta philosophia*, dedicated to Hermann von Wied, archbishop-elect of Cologne, where Agrippa moved the next year. Here he began the process of publishing the complete work, which the inquisitor of Cologne soon denounced as heretical. When the final version of *De occulta philosophia* appeared in 1533, Agrippa had moved to the archbishop’s capital at Bonn.

Then, suddenly, Agrippa vanished from the historical record—no correspondence is extant, and his last years remain almost unknown. According to his student Johann Weyer, Agrippa took a third wife, repudiated her in 1535, traveled to Lyons, where he was briefly imprisoned by French King Francis I, and died that same year in Grenoble.

After his death, stories of Agrippa’s traffic with demons began circulating, leading to his reputation for black magic. In one story, an anonymous boarder entered Agrippa’s study, read aloud from a mysterious book, and was killed by a demon. Agrippa returned and commanded the demon to enter the corpse, making the unfortunate man appear alive; the possessed body then appeared in public, diverting suspicion. Stories about Agrippa’s dog, a demon in disguise, resurfaced in the Faust stories as a form taken by Mephistopheles; Weyer remarked that the dog was a pet, named Monsieur, which Weyer himself often walked.

WORKS

Agrippa was a prolific writer of orations, treatises, and letters. Most important among his many minor works were *Declamatio de nobilitate & praecellentia foeminei sexus* (Declamation on the Nobility and Preeminence of the Female Sex, 1529), which argued the theological purity and superiority of women; and *De triplici ratione cognoscendi deum* (On the Threefold Way of Knowing God, 1529), based on Agrippa’s 1509 lectures on Johann Reuchlin, which argued for a Christian synthesis of pagan philosophy, Kabbalah, and Christian theology.

Agrippa’s two greatest works were undoubtedly his *De incertitudine et vanitate scientiarum et artium* (The Uncertainty and Vanity of the Sciences and Arts, known as *De unitate*, 1530), a scathing satire on knowledge and its professors, from theologians to magicians to whores; and his *De occulta philosophia libri tres* (Three Books on Occult Philosophy, 1531–1533), a monumental attempt to synthesize all magical knowledge into a coherent whole.

DE INCERTITUDINE ET VANITATE SCIENTIARUM ET ARTIUM

Agrippa’s best-known work was a major statement of Pyrrhonist skepticism, at times gracefully written, at others heavy-handed and inelegant. The book was extremely influential for later thinkers, notably Montaigne, Descartes, and even the young Goethe. It has been compared to Nicholas of Cusa’s *On Learned Ignorance*, to praises of the ass such as in Apuleius’s *Golden Ass*, and especially to Erasmus’s *Praise of Folly* (1509). Erasmus himself commented positively on *De unitate*, although he considered it too vicious and disapproved of Agrippa’s war upon monks.

After a satirical letter to the reader listing everyone criticized and what they will think of the author,

Agrippa moved on to 102 chapters, each of which gave a brief account of a particular art and then attacked its professors. The work ended with a lengthy discussion of the word of God as the sole certain truth and an encomium of the ass.

De vanitatè's argument was not simply that all knowledge was worthless, as has sometimes been maintained, but rather that no knowledge can have value unless guided by faith. *De vanitate* belonged to the skeptical and satirical reformist literature of the period; Agrippa's main contribution to this literature was his early use of Pyrrhonist skepticism and his comprehensive survey of all human knowledge. Because of its antiecclesiastical bent, *De vanitate* has sometimes been interpreted as Protestant, but there is no evidence for such sympathies in Agrippa.

DE OCCULTA PHILOSOPHIA LIBRI TRES As its title indicated, Agrippa's masterpiece was divided into three books: Natural Magic, Mathematical Magic, and Religious or Ceremonial Magic. Natural magic here included magnetism, signatures, and other odd natural properties of objects, as well as those objects' astrological ascriptions; mathematical magic comprised geometry, proportion, harmony, numerology, *gematria* (numerology of Hebrew letters), sigils, and the like; ceremonial magic included everything from meditation to ecstasy to prophecy to ritual demonology.

Its nearly 200 chapters predominantly contained discursive lists of data, with occasional more theoretical discussions, usually buried within longer chapters. This structure made the work as a whole seem incoherent; in fact, however, *De occulta philosophia* was a subtle, erudite, and complex presentation of a magical philosophy that if practiced led the magician to a kind of intellectual mystical union with God.

It was in *De occulta philosophia* that Agrippa most clearly demonstrated his iconoclasm. Not only did he cast aside the traditional division between natural and demonic magic, but he even suggested that ritual invocation of demonic forces might be necessary to legitimate natural magic. His opinion of alchemy was equally confusing: *De occulta philosophia* ignored the issue, apart from occasional general remarks in a mostly positive vein, although his *De vanitate* presented an extended and devastating assault on the art, which nonetheless hinted at the possibility of a legitimate and even supremely valuable alchemy.

This apparent disagreement pointed to a constant difficulty in scholarship on Agrippa, an inability to find coherence between *De occulta philosophia* and *De vanitate*. In a way, the solution was simple: where *De vanitate* argued that knowledge was worthless in the absence of faith in Jesus, *De occulta philosophia* attempted to link all philosophical knowledge to Christian revelation, thereby transmuting the search for knowledge into a magical exploration of divinity.

Agrippa was a philosopher and magician of considerable originality and importance. *De occulta philosophia* remains a landmark work in the history of magical thought, while *De vanitatè*'s influence on later generations of skeptics can hardly be dismissed. Despite the unpleasant legends and general aura of charlatanry which still adhere to his name, Agrippa must be recognized as one of the key figures in the occult Renaissance.

CHRISTOPHER I. LEHRICH

See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; DEMONOLOGY; FAUST, JOHANN GEORG; GRIMOIRES; KABBALAH; MAGIC, LEARNED; MAGIC, NATURAL; OCCULT; RITUAL MAGIC; SKEPTICISM; TRITHEMIUS, JOHANNES; WEYER, JOHANN.

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AITKEN, MARGARET

The “great witch of Balwearie (in Fife),” as Margaret Aitken was known, became the single most important figure in the great Scottish witchcraft panic of 1597. Accused of witchcraft, she tried to save herself by claiming an ability to detect other witches by looking in their eyes; she may have been responsible for hundreds of deaths.

A contemporary chronicler, Patrick Anderson, described the 1597 panic:

Much about this tyme there was a great number of witches tried [found] to be in Scotland, as the lyke

was never heard tell of in this realme; specialle in Atholl both of men and women ther was in May att one convention upon a hill in Atholl to the number of 2300 and the Devill amongst them; a great witch of Balwearie told all this and said she knew them all weill enough And what marks the Devill hade given severallie to everie one of them. Ther was many of them tryed by sweiming in the water by binding of ther two thumbs and ther great toaes together for being thus casten in the water they fleded ay above. (Anderson n.d., 2: fol. 266v).

A second source of information, Archbishop John Spottiswoode, wrote an ecclesiastical history in the 1620s. In 1597 he was a parish minister in Midlothian, but already involved in national affairs.

She [i.e., Aitken] was so readily believed, that for the space of three or four months she was carried from town to town to make discoveries in that kind. Many were brought in question by her delations, especially at Glasgow, where divers innocent women, through the credulity of the minister, Mr John Cowper, were condemned and put to death. In end she was found to be a mere deceiver (for the same persons that the one day she had declared guilty, the next day being presented in another habit she cleansed), and sent back to Fife, where first she was apprehended. At her trial she affirmed all to be false that she had confessed, either of herself or others, and persisted in this to her death; which made many forthink their too great forwardness that way. (Spottiswoode 1847–1851, 3:66–67)

The collapse of Aitken's career was linked to a proclamation of August 12. The chronology thus suggests that Aitken was exposed about August 1. Since "for the space of three or four months she was carried from town to town," this must have begun some time in April. Aitken's initial success inspired local imitators: one Agnes Ewing was active in detecting witches in her native Kirkcaldy and elsewhere in Fife.

The Aitken affair was notable for the subjection of witchcraft suspects to the water ordeal. No reference to the swimming of Scottish witches has yet been found for any other period, but the evidence for 1597 is clear. Anderson's account was corroborated by King James VI's *Daemonologie*, published later in 1597, which mentioned the water ordeal along with pricking for the Devil's mark as tests for witchcraft.

These distinctive proceedings suggest that a special commission, using special procedures, was established to carry Aitken around the country. James evidently took an interest in the commission and approved of its activities. He may even have pressed later for its special procedures to be adopted by statute. But once Aitken

was exposed as a fraud and executed, the trials ended abruptly. The proclamation of August 12 cancelled many trial commissions and announced that new commissions would be issued only to three or more commissioners jointly, in order to prevent abuses. The issuance of the proclamation did not stop the panic—prosecutions continued into October, with the king's support—but it marked an important stage in its decline.

An act of parliament in December created a commission to make recommendations about acceptable evidence in witchcraft trials. There was disagreement on the subject between the king, who hoped to legitimize Aitken's testimony, and the general assembly of the Church, containing leading ministers who in August had protested against the use of one witch's testimony to convict others. The commission never reported. Meanwhile, there were public recriminations in Glasgow. The presbytery made John Morrison do penance for circulating a written libel containing Aitken's depositions, which had slandered the ministers as responsible for the executions. The presbytery did not claim that the executions had been justified, but that they were the ministers' fault. Witch hunting had backfired, and nobody wanted to take responsibility.

JULIAN GOODARE

See also: DEVIL'S MARK; EXPERIMENTS AND TESTS; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; PRICKING OF SUSPECTED WITCHES; SCOTLAND; SWIMMING TEST.

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AIX-EN-PROVENCE NUNS

The case of Madeleine Demandols de la Palud, which opened late in 1609 and concluded with the execution of Father Louis Gaufridy in April 1611, was one of a number of widely reported and discussed cases of demonic possession in France in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century. The earlier cases of Nicole Obry and Marthe Brossier, which reflected the tensions of the French religious wars, as well as group possessions in Germany and Italy, had already made this aspect of the Devil's work well known to the French public. However, this case introduced an important new element into the possession–exorcism scenario with important implications for future cases.

Madeleine, a young woman from a noble Marseilles family, was a nun in the Ursuline convent in Aix-en-Provence. She had a history of depression and

emotional problems, and was diagnosed as possessed early in 1610. Other nuns became possessed as well. Madeleine and one of her colleagues, Louise Capeau, soon accused Louis Gaufridy, a parish priest in Marseilles and friend of the Demandols family, of being a witch and causing their possession. Madeleine also accused Gaufridy of taking sexual liberties with her.

Because attempts to exorcise her in Aix did not go well, she was transferred to papally controlled Avignon, where she was put into the hands of the local Grand Inquisitor, Sebastien Michaelis. He was a recognized expert on witchcraft, having published an account of his experiences in a large-scale prosecution of witches in the Avignon area in 1582. He brought her to St. Maximin in Provence to the grotto where, local legend had it, Mary Magdalene had lived. Large crowds attended the public exorcisms held there.

In February 1611, the *Parlement* (sovereign appellate court) of Provence arrested Gaufridy. All this time, Madeleine continued to accuse him. He was subjected to degrading treatment and eventually confessed to gross sexual misconduct, blasphemy, and witchcraft.

Jacques Fontaine, Professor of Medicine at the University of Aix, examined Gaufridy for the Devil's mark during his interrogation. Fontaine found several of these incriminating marks on Gaufridy, providing important evidence against him. Fontaine then published a short treatise arguing that the Devil's mark was one of the best ways to detect witches. Although not much had been published on the Devil's marks, according to Fontaine, he asserted that they were widely believed in by the general public and that these views were undoubtedly of divine inspiration. He stated that any good physician could easily distinguish between ordinary scars and the Devil's mark and that only a willing and knowing witch could be marked.

These claims, as well, of course, as Gaufridy's confession, led to his execution in Aix-en-Provence on April 11, 1611. The exorcist Michaelis soon published a massive *Admirable History* (1614) of his triumph over the magician who had caused Madeleine's possession, making the case widely known and mentioned in many works and correspondence. It provided a clear model for the even more famous 1634 case in Loudun involving the priest Urbain Grandier.

JONATHAN L. PEARL

See also: AVIGNON; BROSSIER, MARTHE; DEVIL'S MARK; EXORCISM; FRANCE; OBRY, NICOLE; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; WARS OF RELIGION (FRANCE).

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ALBIZZI, FRANCESCO (1593–1684)

Originally as an assistant judge and after 1654 as a cardinal, Albizzi was a major figure in the Roman Inquisition whose published views on witchcraft expressed those of the papacy. After the early death of his wife (with whom he had several children), Albizzi, who had legal training, joined the clergy; he entered the Roman curia's diplomatic service in 1628 at Naples, and was soon entrusted with supervising the Catholic Church's business dealings. His first encounter with witch hunting, which Albizzi still remembered decades later, occurred during a journey through Germany in 1636 and 1637 while serving in the diplomatic mission in Cologne: "innumerable stakes had been erected outside the walls of several villages and towns, attached to which, poor and exceedingly pitiful women had, as witches, been devoured by the flames" (Albitius 1683, 355 § 179).

After returning to Rome, Albizzi made his reputation as one of the Roman curia's hardline opponents of Jansenism, considerably influencing its rejection under popes Innocent X (1644–1655) and Alexander VII (1655–1667). A strong advocate of papal sovereignty and supremacy, Albizzi refuted Venetian attempts to interfere in the Church's jurisdiction and Spanish demands for a veto at papal elections. In 1654, he became a cardinal. Subsequently, Albizzi played an important part in the Vatican's decision to rescue fifteen children facing execution in a witch hunt in the Swiss canton of Graubünden and bring them to Milan. This experience, among others, led to the church's decision in 1657 to publish its instructions for witchcraft trials (hitherto available only in thick manuscript handbooks) as a brochure, which was then distributed to Catholic authorities, particularly those outside Italy in Switzerland or Germany.

Cardinal Albizzi's views on witchcraft appeared in the first volume (*De inconstantia in iure admittenda vel non; When is Inconsistency Permissible in the Law, When Not?*) of an extensive canonical work, published in 1683 under a fictitious place and publisher. His comments about witches in this "unofficial" book reflected contemporary Vatican positions, sometimes illustrating them with examples based on his own experiences. From a dogmatic viewpoint, Albizzi (like his Jesuit predecessors Adam Tanner and Friedrich Spee) was conservative: To claim that harmful spells are unreal was heretical. Witches' ability to fly and the witches'

Sabbat were also possible, but extremely rare. He also believed in the reality of witches' stigma (the Devil's mark), but admitted that serious opinions to the contrary existed within the Inquisition.

Like the Roman Inquisition, generally, Albizzi was very cautious about evaluating evidence surrounding the offense of witchcraft. Before assuming a harmful spell as a person's cause of death, physicians first had to be able to exclude natural causes. As an assistant judge, he had seen many cases of alleged spells, which the consulted doctors almost always attributed to physical illnesses.

Albizzi claimed that local clerics were considerably likelier to believe in witchcraft than Roman authorities: "Since the evidence of *Corpus delicti*, which must be fully proven, especially in cases of infanticide and harmful spells with alleged fatal results, has been violated by [local officials] responsible for witchcraft trials, the Suprema [the Holy Office in Rome] has had [its] directions printed for the instruction of the judges and has supplied these to them in circular letters" (Albitius 1683, 350).

Albizzi also sharply criticized the practice of building chain trials from statements of alleged participants in Sabbats: "The Suprema has established several times, especially in 1594 and 1595 [. . .] that the witches who swear they have seen specific persons at the witches' Sabbat, should not be believed to their detriment, as it is regarded as illusion. Hence, the practice of the secular and clerical courts in Germany has always been rejected, according to which a witch hunt can be started simply because a single witch claims she has seen others at the Sabbat, and that she can be found guilty if two witches claim the same; Father Tanner objects to this practice in a commentary devoted to this matter, and an unknown author, a Roman theologian, in the book *Cautio Criminalis* [. . .] [A Warning on Criminal Justice] printed in Rinteln in the year 1631" (Albitius 1683, 355 § 177–178).

Cardinal-inquisitor Albizzi was indeed acquainted with the Rinteln first edition of Friedrich Spee's *Cautio Criminalis*, although its author remained unknown to him. He had also discussed Germany's witch hunts with Christina, ex-queen of Sweden, who had resided in Rome since 1655. She told him that her 1649 edict had largely stopped witchcraft trials in Bremen and Verden in northern Germany. She and the cardinal agreed "that what the witches confess comes as a result of their uterine state [*ex effectibus uterinis*] or diabolical pretences" (Albitius 1683, 355 § 180).

Albizzi also mentioned Rome's opposition to Inquisitor Pierre Symard's witch hunt in Franche-Comté in 1659: "The Inquisitor of Besançon had . . . surrendered several men and women into the arms of worldly justice, whose trials would later be considered invalid and unjust by the Suprema; therefore, they were

released as innocent and the inquisitor was dismissed" (Albitius 1683, 355 § 179).

RAINER DECKER;

TRANSLATED BY JONATHAN STICKNEY

See also: DEVIL'S MARK; EVIDENCE; FRANCHE-COMTÉ; GRAUBÜNDEN (GRISONS), CANTON OF; INQUISITION, ROMAN; ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH; SKEPTICISM; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; TANNER, ADAM.

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ALCHEMY

Alchemy is the art of manipulating the hidden powers of nature in order to achieve a number of different physical effects. These effects may be simple, such as gilding or staining or producing chemical changes in certain materials; complex, such as producing the reddish powder known as the philosophers' stone, which will transmute a metal considered to be low-ranking in nature's hierarchy into one thought to be of higher rank, the most notorious example being the attempt to change lead into gold; or medicinal, such as the endeavor to produce a liquid called "the elixir of life" (from Arabic *al* = "the," and *iksir*; from the late Greek *xerion*, "powder to be rubbed into wounds"), which will cure all ills and prolong human life. In later times there was added to these another possible operation, the spiritual transformation of the alchemist together with (or even instead of) the transformation of the materials experimented on.

Almost from the start, alchemical writings were full of technical terms and shrouded in complex metaphors and symbols that rendered their practical meaning impenetrable to all men who had no master to guide them. (There were female alchemists, but not very many.) The reason for this secretiveness was that alchemy was believed to be both a privileged and a dangerous art, which must not fall into the hands of the unlearned or unworthy. The Jesuit Martín Del Rio said bluntly that alchemy was an occupation for the rich, not the poor. Charlatans—and there were many—took full advantage of this knowledge to dazzle and fool their clients. But serious alchemists—and there were, and still are, many—practiced the art with an almost religious intensity. Alchemy, moreover, is not exclusively a



Two alchemists working, from an early sixteenth-century woodcut. (Fortean Picture Library)

Western art. Both India and China have their own long alchemical traditions, and both Islamic and Jewish scholars also explored and developed the art in important ways.

THEORY

Like any other manipulators of nature, alchemists worked with the four elements from which everything was constructed: earth, air, fire, and water. The aim was to change the proportions and combinations according to which these were naturally composed, in order to effect fundamental changes in the composition of the material with which the alchemist was working. Each element had certain characteristics that make it easier or more difficult to change, according to their mutual affinities or lack of rapport. Thus, earth is cold and dry; air is hot and moist; fire is hot and dry; water is cold and moist. Fire and air are therefore in tune with each other because they share the same quality of “hotness,” whereas earth and water are both “cold.” Everything is undergoing a slow process of change through natural “cooking,” or concoction by different degrees of heat. The alchemist can speed this process by subjecting his material to physical operations that will reduce it to its essentials, change one element into another where necessary, and recreate this altered matter as the new form he desires.

Basically, alchemical theories depended on Aristotle. However, they included a crucial idea from works

attributed to the eighth-century Sufi scholar and alchemist Jabir ibn Hayyun, known in the West as Geber, and the eleventh-century Arab physician and scholar Ibn Sina, known as Avicenna. These scholars claimed that in addition to material elements, there were philosophic elements, namely “sulphur” and “mercury,” neither being the substance usually indicated by its name. To these was later added a third basic principle, “salt” (again, not the physical substance of that name). From about the thirteenth century onwards, these became what Paracelsus (Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim) called the three first things in any alchemical process.

The typical alchemical process took the following general form, although there are wide differences in the various accounts over the centuries. First the alchemist took his basic matter (*prima materia*)—and what this was (dew, horse dung, etc.) varied considerably according to alchemical treatises—and purified it. This stage was called “blackening,” as the matter broke down and degenerated. Next, the resulting material was separated into its constituent parts and joined together again in altered form. This stage, in fact, consisted of several steps, as the material was subjected to a series of operations including purifying, heating, distilling, and fixing, each sequence repeated as many times as necessary. Changes in the color of the matter indicated whether or not the operation was proceeding successfully. From black to white to red were agreed by everyone. Others added intermediate stages, green and yellow and blue, including a brilliantly colored stage known as “the peacock’s tail.” Because these procedures involved such concepts as “exalting” and “ennobling” the material, it is easy to see how the notion arose that the alchemists themselves might undergo spiritual changes while engaged on what they called the Great Work.

APPARATUS

Alchemical procedures needed special apparatus. The *athanor* was a furnace shaped like a tower, heated by charcoal, and intended to maintain a constant heat. Its heating action was often referred to as “incubation,” and so the apparatus was sometimes called “the house of the chick.” The *balneum* was supposedly invented by an early Jewish alchemist, Maria the Prophetess, and consisted of a basin surrounded by heated water—hence the *bain-marie* (the French term for a double boiler) of modern cookery. The *alembic* was either a kind of still or (more properly) the head of a still that conveyed vapors to a receiver. The shape of other vessels mainly connected with distillation reminded people of animals or birds; hence, there was a “pelican,” a “stork,” and a “bear.”

HISTORY

Alchemists claimed an ancient heritage stretching back to Adam himself, and fathered their art (as well as many of

their writings) on such figures as Moses, King Solomon, Albertus Magnus (ca. 1200–1280) and Ramon Lull (ca. 1235–1316). In fact, Western alchemy seems to have emerged from Hellenistic Egypt—hence its name, *al-kemīa*, “the Black Land,” referring to the dark soil of Egypt—from which came collections of chemical recipes such as the Leiden and Stockholm papyri. During the Early Middle Ages, alchemy evolved into a genre of medical, culinary, technical, and magical anthologies known as Books of Secrets. Many alchemical texts reached the medieval West via Arabic scholars. The contribution of Geber and Avicenna has already been noted, and to these names should be added the ninth-century Al-Razi (Rhazes) whose works illustrate the immense range of laboratory equipment available to the alchemist.

Thereafter, a huge alchemical literature was generated in both verse and prose, much of it exquisitely illustrated but concealed in language that was purposely difficult to comprehend. Several stages of the process, for example, were described as the marriage, copulation, and death of a king and queen. The art remained popular throughout the Middle Ages and the early modern period, with rulers great and small keen to hire the services of alchemists, in the hope of adding substantially to their own riches. Inevitably such materialistic expectations encouraged charlatans who provided matter for literary exposure in, for example, the Canon’s Yeoman’s Tale from Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, or Ben Jonson’s play, *The Alchemist*.

An important secret society, the Rosicrucians, grew out of the notion of spiritual as opposed to practical alchemy, announcing itself in 1614 by a manifesto, *Fama Fraternitatis* (Account of the Brotherhood). They claimed that their brotherhood had been founded by a fourteenth-century German monk, Christian Rosenkreutz, the discovery of whose tomb had released all kinds of secrets that might now benefit humankind. A second manifesto, *The Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz* (1617), announced its alchemical basis even more openly. Whether the secret society ever really existed remains open to scholarly debate.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, alchemy became a popular diversion in many European courts, as alchemists were invited to demonstrate their art in front of noble spectators who tried to catch them out in fraud. Specimens of transmuted gold from some of these demonstrations exist in various European museums. Finally, in the twentieth century, there was a continuation of practical interest in alchemy. The Frenchman Jean Dubuis, the Czech Vladislav Zdobílek, and the Englishman Archibald Cockren are only three of the best-known examples. Many other contemporary practitioners exist in both Europe and North America. The spiritual side of alchemy was explored in several books by the Swiss psychologist Karl Jung, who saw a parallel between the world of

alchemical symbols and preternatural dramas, and the dream world of his patients.

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART

See also: DEE, JOHN DEL RIO, MARTÍN; MAGIC, LEARNED; OCCULT; PARACELSUS, THEOPHRASTUS BOMBASTUS VON HOHENHEIM.

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ALCIATI, ANDREA (1492–1550)

Although the Italian jurist Alciati, one of the foremost legal authorities in the sixteenth century, discussed witchcraft only marginally, his undisputed prestige made his selectively skeptical opinion a significant element in the debate on the reality of the crime. While convinced of the existence of evil sorcery, he argued that the Sabbath was a delusion created by the tricks of the Devil and by the imagination of those who believed they participated in it. Alciati was among the very first to call for the medical treatment of the supposed witches, predating Johann Weyer’s views by several decades.

Born in Milan (or maybe in Alzate, near Como) in 1492, Giovanni Andrea Alciati (or Alciato) studied law between 1507 and 1514 at the universities of Pavia and Bologna, earning his doctorate in civil and canon law in 1516 at the University of Ferrara. He enjoyed a brilliant career as professor in the universities of Avignon, Bourges, Pavia, Bologna, and Ferrara, soon becoming the most prestigious jurist in Europe. Favored by kings (Francis I of France, Philip II of Spain), praised by Desiderius Erasmus, he renewed legal studies in the light of humanistic principles, and also composed the most successful book of emblems (*Emblemata*, 1531). He died at Pavia in 1550.

Alciati’s first encounter with witchcraft dates from 1516 or 1517, when he was asked for advice on the actions of an inquisitor who had reportedly burned

more than a hundred witches “in the subalpine valleys.” Many of them, wrote Alciato in book 8 of the *Parergon iuris* (On the Accessory of Jurisprudence; first edition, which includes book 8, dated 1544), “seemed to need cures based on hellebore rather than on fire” (“helleboro potius quam igne purgandae”: Alciati 1557–1558, 2:406). He conceded that some witches really had renounced God and killed infants by means of spells: The judge should sentence these women to death because their crimes had been committed “not in dreams.” But there were also women accused simply of having danced under a tree in the Valtelline (Valtellina, a valley in northern Lombardy) and having attended a Sabbat (“ludum”). Firmly skeptical on this point, Alciati rejected the opinion of the “most recent theologians” (from Thomas Aquinas to Silvestro Prierias and Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola), who thought that the Devil really transported witches to the Sabbat, while demons in their shape remained in bed with their husbands. Explicitly following the tenth-century *Canon Episcopi* and the “mainstream opinion of the jurists,” Alciati believed the Sabbat to be simply an illusion created by the witches’ deranged minds. These persons should be treated with peony (likely its seed), a remedy Pliny the Elder suggested for the mentally disturbed; but because they are all poor ordinary women (“pauperes et foemellae omnes sunt”; Alciati 1557–1558, 2:407), they lacked the means to be cured.

The author’s universal fame made this passage a strong argument for skeptics. Johann Weyer, in fact, quoted a long excerpt of it in his *De praestigiis daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils, 1563) in support of more lenient treatment for women accused of witchcraft. An echo of Alciati can also be found in Michel de Montaigne’s *Essays* (1580), where the author recalled meeting a group of detained witches, to whom he would have “prescribed rather hellebore than hemlock” (Montaigne 1958, 792). Meanwhile, the advocates of persecution of witches sought to undermine the validity of Alciati’s statement. Jean Bodin, in his *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (On the Demon-Mania of Witches, 1580), suggests that the Italian jurist’s skepticism on the reality of the Sabbat had been dictated by his displeasure with the excessiveness of an inquisitor in Piedmont. Martín Del Río, in his *Disquisitiones Magicae libris sex* (Six Books on Investigations into Magic, 1599), blames Alciati’s “wrong” ideas on the uncertainties still surrounding the issue of the Sabbat at the beginning of the century, and claims that not only the opinion of theologians, but also that of other learned men and the confession of the witches had since proved its reality.

Alciati also mentions witchcraft briefly in his *Commentaria* on papal decretals (1538), arguing that accusations of participation in the Sabbat should not suffice to condemn a witch, because the whole matter is the product of demonic illusions. On this point, his

ideas closely resembled those of Giovanni Francesco (Gianfrancesco) Ponzinibio, a contemporary fellow jurist who also stressed the illusory nature of such demonic gatherings, and claimed the superiority of canon and civil law against the pretensions of theology with respect to this issue.

MATTEO DUNI

See also: *CANON EPISCOPI*; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; MEDICAL THEORY; MEDICINE, MONTAIGNE, MICHEL DE; PONZINIBIO, GIOVANNI FRANCESCO; SABBAT; SKEPTICISM; WEYER, JOHANN; WITNESSES.

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ALLOTRIOPHAGY

The term *allotriophagy* refers to the practice, particularly common to girls and young women who claimed to be bewitched, of regurgitating a variety of objects, such as pins, nails, and feathers. Onlookers often were led to believe that witches with the connivance of the Devil had inserted these things into their bodies. Allotriophagy (oddly omitted from the *Oxford English Dictionary*) derives from Greek words meaning “to eat” and “strange.” Medical dictionaries define it as “a depraved appetite.”

The practice, which could strike awe into bystanders, illustrates the tendency of persons claiming to be bewitched to duplicate behavior that they had learned was associated with such a condition. Skeptics on occasion were able to expose frauds, but such exposures, of course, fell short of demonstrating conclusively that others displaying similar behavior were not authentically bewitched.

The first English exposure of trickery took place in 1574 when Agnes Briggs and Rachel Pinder, eleven and

twelve years old, were discovered inserting pins into their mouths and then claiming, when they spat the pins out, that they had been bewitched. They had to stand before the preacher at St. Paul's in London and acknowledge their deceit.

Thirty years later, in 1604, Anne Gunter sneezed, vomited, and voided pins, and pins were said to have exuded from her breasts and fingers. She was dispatched to the home of Henry Cotton, bishop of Salisbury. He marked the pins in his house, and later identified them as the ones that Anne vomited. She confessed the fraud. Edward Jordan, a physician who conveyed details of the ruse to King James I and thereby reinforced the king's emerging doubts about claims of bewitchment, had suspected her duplicity.

A variety of ingenious explanations were offered to explain allotriophagy. The sixteenth-century German physician Johann Weyer found no traces of hard or angular substances in the stomachs of those saying they were bewitched before they vomited such materials, nor any trace of food on what they regurgitated even if they had eaten recently. Weyer concluded that the Devil, with astonishing quickness so that the human eye could not follow his motions, placed the objects in the mouth of the bewitched person, who never actually swallowed them.

The highly credulous Peter Binsfeld, the suffragan bishop of Trier, declared in 1591 that the Devil put people to sleep, inserted objects through a hole he made in their body, and then closed the hole. Ignatius Lupo Da Bergamo, an Italian inquisitor writing in 1648, asserted that the Devil introduced such materials into a body as powder and then recomposed them as they were discharged.

In more recent times, the swallowing of an astounding variety of articles has been reported in cases of severe mental illness. A pathological swallower was found to have ingested 258 items, including a three-pound piece of metal, 26 keys, 3 sets of rosary beads, 16 religious medals, 9 nail files, and 88 assorted coins. Inmates in women's prisons also have been reported to engage in orgies of swallowing safety pins and pieces of glass as well as batteries and bedsprings.

Most episodes of allotriophagy said to be produced by witchcraft were probably bogus. Persons palmed or otherwise secreted the materials in their mouths and then regurgitated them. The act nonetheless had a powerful impact. In a famous 1696 Scottish case, eleven-year-old Christian Shaw displayed the wide array of behaviors associated with bewitching: rigidity, fits, delirium, pantomimes of fighting off invisible enemies, and a stomach that expanded and contracted like a pair of bellows. She spat out balls of hair of various colors which she said had been thrust down her throat by devilish assailants and vomited straw, cinders, coal, and hay. Based on Shaw's actions and testimony, six persons were burned to death for witchcraft while a sev-

enth was found hanged in jail, supposedly by the Devil.

Today, allotriophagy is often referred to as *pica*, a term derived from the Latin word for magpie, a bird known for its voracious and indiscriminate appetite. The primary emphasis is on the eating of strange substances, not their regurgitation. The syndrome is most commonly diagnosed in women, though both genders and all groups provide some cases. The cause of pica, medical texts note, is poorly understood, though the most common explanation links it to a deficiency of iron in the body. Zinc deficiencies, mental retardation, developmental delays, and genetic factors also have been blamed for pica.

GILBERT GEIS

See also: BEWITCHMENT; BINSFELD, PETER; CHILDREN; DECEPTION AND MAGIC; DISEASE; GUNTER, ANNE; JORDEN, EDWARD; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; SCOTLAND; WEYER, JOHANN.

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ALSACE

Generally neglected by twentieth-century scholars, the history of witchcraft in Alsace remains very much a work in progress. Still 70 percent German-speaking, even though it has belonged to France for most of the time since the late seventeenth century, this region included many different governments during the age of major witch hunting in the Holy Roman Empire. Much of southern or Upper Alsace belonged to the Austrian Habsburgs, as did the large northern *Landvogtei* (district) of Hagenau in Lower Alsace. The prince-bishop of Strasbourg, who usually resided at Saverne, was a major landholder in the center. Alsace included many small autonomous fiefs, both noble and ecclesiastical, some of which conducted a hundred or more witchcraft trials. It also contained ten self-governing imperial free cities. Some of these cities, like Strasbourg, owned several rural villages, and all ten conducted some witchcraft trials; Strasbourg conducted trials in at least nine different years between 1630 and 1644.

In all probability, in Alsace there were many fewer witch burnings than in the German state of Baden-Württemberg, which lay directly across the Rhine;

nevertheless, witch hunting here had a long and gruesome history. Heinrich Kramer, the Alsatian-born author of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), reported witch burnings here in the 1470s and 1480s, and there were scattered trials in the earlier sixteenth century. During the peak of witch hunting in western Europe, almost a thousand people were executed for witchcraft in Alsace between 1570, when burnings were recorded at Séléstat (Behringer 1995, 154), and the campaigns of the Thirty Years' War, which devastated much of Alsace in the 1630s. All major Alsatian governments recorded numerous witchcraft trials. The Austrian capital at Ensisheim, which supervised the large southern Sundgau region, recorded about 90 witch burnings in the half-century before 1622, while the northern Habsburg center at Hagenau saw almost as many (Reuss 1898, 106). The smaller southern *vogtei* (administrative jurisdictions) of Thann recorded 152 of them during the same period (Behringer 1995, 154).

Scattered evidence suggests that Upper Alsace and the thinly populated western mountains held more witchcraft trials than its northern parts; the eastern edge of the Vosges, from Saverne south to Thann, seems to have been badly afflicted, with some exceptionally heavy concentrations in the wine-growing regions between Obernai and Colmar. As in Baden-Württemberg, several of the worst Alsatian episodes seem to have happened between 1615 and 1630. Governments of various sizes were affected. At Saverne, capital of the prince-bishop of Strasbourg, 15 witches died in 1614–1615 and 19 more after 1628 (Reuss 1898, 107). In the nine villages of the Steinthal in the Vosges, ruled by the princely house of Veldenz, more than 80 witches were burned in the 1620s (Thurston 2001, 104–116). Farther south, the prince-abbot of Murbach burned 54 of his subjects in 1615, and another 17 witches died at nearby Guebwiller between then and 1623 (Reuss 1898, 106).

Individual villages in Upper Alsace burned sizable numbers of witches. At St. Hippolyte, a wine-growing village owned by the dukes of Lorraine, eighteen witches died between 1617 and 1622 (AD Nancy, B 8917–8918); the even smaller village of Gerstheim, near the Rhine, burned 19 of them in two months in 1630 (Reuss 1898, 106–107). Larger towns produced even larger numbers of witches, particularly during the 1620s; Hagenau, for example, burned 21 witches in three months in 1627. Two centers of Jesuit presence in Alsace, Séléstat, and Molsheim, compiled the province's worst records after 1620 (Klaits 1982, 156): the first convicted at least 90 witches between summer 1629 and February 1642; the second recorded more than 100 witchcraft trials in its "Blood-Book" (*Blutebuch*) between 1620 and 1625 (Schaeffli 1993).

After the Thirty Years' War ended and much of

Alsace came under French control, witchcraft trials resumed in some places. A valuable survey of witch hunting in Alsace after 1640 counts almost 100 people accused and 64 executed as witches, overwhelmingly in areas not under French control (Klaits 1982, 154–155). The two final large persecutions, in 1659 and 1671–1673, occurred in Protestant villages; the Protestant metropolis of Strasbourg sentenced a witch to death as late as 1660. Although Louis XIV, who then governed all of Alsace, had reputedly decriminalized witchcraft in 1682, his regional appellate court—created in 1658 and normally unconcerned with witchcraft—upheld and implemented a death sentence for witchcraft, while also reducing a second death sentence and releasing three other prisoners (Klaits 1982, 161–163).

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: BADEN, MARGRAVATE OF; LORRAINE, DUCHY OF; STRASBOURG, DIOCESE OF.

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AMSTERDAM

Very few people were ever executed for witchcraft in Amsterdam, and such trials had already ended here in the 1560s. All of them occurred when the municipal government was controlled by the so-called "sincere Catholic faction," which came to power after a group of Anabaptists had attacked Amsterdam's city hall in May 1535, hoping to turn the town into an annex of the New Jerusalem their coreligionists had founded a year earlier in the German town of Münster. Prior to this attack, some members of the governing oligarchy had shown sympathy for the Anabaptists. But because these oligarchs had failed to keep the Anabaptists under control, the central government in Brussels forced this group to leave office. The new magistrates were chosen because they claimed to be true Catholics.

In 1578, a Protestant faction replaced them when Amsterdam joined the revolt against King Philip II of Spain.

In December 1541, a woman named Engel Dirckdr was arrested on suspicion of witchcraft. The aldermen dispatched two members, Joost Buyck and his brother-in-law Sybrant Occo, to The Hague to ask advice of the court of Holland and Zeeland. Occo was well acquainted with modern demonology. As a law student, he had visited Ingolstadt in 1529, when several trials took place there and in nearby places. In Amsterdam, his father was the representative of the famous trading house of the Fuggers, who provided a steady stream of information about events throughout Europe. In 1526, Jacob Cornelisz van Oostanen, an artist living next door to the Occo family and employed repeatedly by them, made a painting depicting Saul's visit to the witch of Endor, a work clearly influenced by the south-German artists Albrecht Dürer and Hans Baldung Grien.

The court in The Hague referred the two aldermen to the town magistrates of Utrecht, which sent two specialists to Amsterdam who successfully broke the defendant's will. On January 10, 1542, Engel Dirckdr was burned on Amsterdam's main square. A year later Amsterdam again employed one of these specialists to help interrogate a woman. In her case, the judges concluded that she was not a witch, but was guilty of counterwitchcraft, for which crime she was banished. They put the cunning man (a practitioner of beneficent magic) who had accused her in the pillory, had his tongue pierced, and banished him also.

A first cluster of trials occurred in 1555 when four women were executed. In February, a maidservant, Meyns Cornelisdr of Purmerend, was arrested. Her dossier is almost completely preserved. She told her interrogators that about twenty years earlier two cats had appeared to her and had danced round her paw in paw. Since then she had been harassed by specters and demons who threw her off the stairs and stole her savings. At one point the Devil had appeared to her in the form of a handsome young man wearing a velvet Spanish hat and a silver sword, asking her to become his lover and offering her money. When she refused, he attacked her and tore her clothing into pieces. He disappeared but returned after seven years, when he forced Meyns to accept him by cutting the sign of her confirmation out of her forehead. After the aldermen decided to torture her in order to discover whether she was not only the Devil's mistress but also a witch, she finally confessed witchcraft. She was sentenced to the stake and executed a few days later. That same year, a mother and her two daughters were also burned.

In the next nine years, only one trial took place. In 1560, a woman was banished; she had been accused of witchcraft, but had convinced the aldermen that she

had procured the magical utensils found in her house in order to ward off attacks from one of the witches who had been executed in 1555. The trials resumed in 1564, when international political problems blocked trade with the Baltic and England. Only one trial took place in Amsterdam, but at least three and probably five or more women were executed in a region directly north that was economically dependent upon Amsterdam. In the city, a delirious woman was arrested who had raved about the Devil during an attack of fever in the town hospital. She was arrested and confessed under torture that she had caused several shipwrecks and other calamities. One of the ships she reputedly destroyed belonged to her own brother. To do so she had flown with the devil to a large meeting of demons and other women that had taken place high in the air above a strait through which all ships to or from Amsterdam had to pass. Together they had raised a huge storm. Her execution was the last in Amsterdam; afterwards, all trials there ended in acquittals.

Six executions among a population numbering about 30,000 in the 1560s are not very many. Amsterdam's magistrates were anything but overzealous witch hunters. They did not show great zeal in suppressing heresy either; in this respect, even the "sincere Catholic faction" often neglected instructions from the central government in Brussels. The city magistrates found it difficult to prosecute religious dissenters from their own communities as long as these fellow citizens caused no public trouble. In matters of witchcraft, the Catholic faction had its own reasons for caution: Twice, their political opponents had used witchcraft accusations to weaken their position. In 1547, Marie Holleslooten was accused by a cunning man named Jacob de Rosa, who acted at the instigation of a man belonging to the faction that had been driven from power ten years earlier. Marie's two sons and her son-in-law Sybrant Occo were prominent members of the ruling Catholic faction. Of course, she was never indicted and even managed to get De Rosa convicted despite his flight. In 1548 he was caught in the province of Gelderland, and at the request of Marie Holleslooten, the provincial court sentenced him to be flogged and banished.

Almost two decades later, Marie's daughter Jacoba Bam was accused. Members of the city council sympathizing with the rapidly spreading Calvinist movement orchestrated the charges. In 1566 a large number of children from the Amsterdam orphanage were possessed by demons. The orphans repeatedly divulged secret decisions of the city council. Presumably they received their information from members of the city council who wanted to undermine the ruling oligarchy. The orphans also did all sorts of things that were thought to be impossible for normal human beings. Finally they climbed up the bell tower of the city's main church and shouted that they would come down only

after Jacoba Bam had been burned at the stake. Of course the magistrates did not comply with their demand and declared that Jacoba was innocent. They did arrest another woman, who was released when she refused to confess despite undergoing torture. The orphans were then separated from each other and lodged with private families, after which the tumult ended. Both incidents taught Amsterdam's "sincere Catholic" magistrates that witchcraft accusations could be turned against them.

After 1578, Amsterdam officially became a Calvinist city, but its magistrates soon allowed freedom of worship not only to other Protestant denominations but also to Jews and Catholics, who were only expected to be discreet. Priests who exorcised bewitched or possessed people in private remained untroubled. The fear of witchcraft did not disappear among the population, but only rarely did it lead to public incidents like the lynching that occurred in 1624, when a group of young men used a tax riot to drag a reputed witch out of her home and throw her into one of Amsterdam's many canals, then prevented attempts to rescue her and kept her under water until she drowned. Cunning folk could, however, still be prosecuted, and occasionally one of them was put in the pillory and banished. In this regard there was little difference between the Calvinist magistrates and their pre-Reformation predecessors.

HANS DE WAARDT

See also: ANABAPTISTS; CUNNING FOLK; NETHERLANDS, NORTHERN; NETHERLANDS, SOUTHERN; PROTESTANT REFORMATION.

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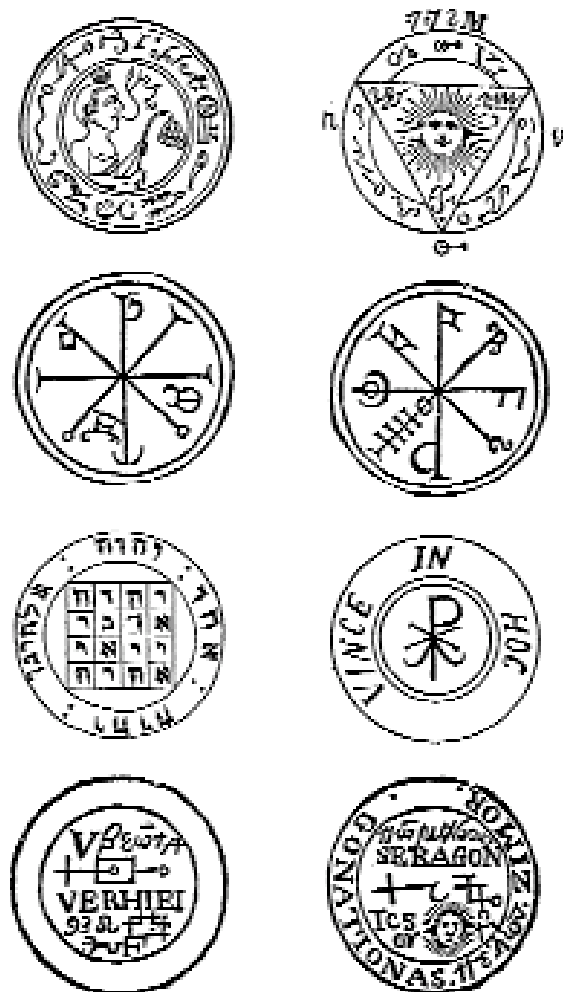
AMULET AND TALISMAN

The terms *amulet* and *talisman* are roughly synonymous, and the basic definition can be simply stated: an object, or group of objects, natural or manufactured, with magical powers, usually protective. Amulets and talismans are related to witchcraft in that they may be created, activated, or sold by witches, or used by witches in rituals. Possession of amulets could therefore be incriminating in witchcraft trials.

The English word *amulet* derives from Latin *amule-tum*, which denoted a variety of protective magical objects (see, for example, Pliny's *Natural History*, 29.26 and 30.24, respectively, for apotropaic bat and dog's gall as antidotes to poison). The word *talisman* was unknown in classical literature but is thought to have been used first in Spanish (the usual etymology is Arabic *ṭilsam*, from late Greek *telesma*, an initiation, a

consecrated object). In most European languages, both terms have commonly been used interchangeably both in popular and scholarly literature. Attempts to establish a distinction (e.g., an amulet is a protective talisman worn somewhere on the body; or an amulet is an object with inherent magical powers, whereas a talisman is an object that has been endowed with magic power by some magical or demonic process or ritual; or a talisman is an amulet bearing a magical inscription) have not met with general agreement. In common usage, the word *charm* (from Latin *carmen*, "incantation"), which originally meant "incantation," may be used in the sense of "amulet."

The lack of a precise definition is old. A contemporary French translation of Andrea Alciati's Latin emblem book (*Emblemata*, 1531) gave "contre-poison de Venus" (i.e., "counterpoison," or antidote), for "amuletum Veneris" in the original. Some writers, such as the German Jesuit and scholar Athanasius Kircher in



Amulets and talismans are objects with magical powers, and they provide protection against harmful magic, witchcraft, disease, the evil eye, demons, and fairies. (TopFoto.co.uk)

the seventeenth century, have used the word *amuletum* for an artifact such as a ring, seal, or gem that bears an inscribed or engraved sigil (a magical inscription or character, such as a pentagram or astrological figure), or an inscription or figure inscribed in a manuscript (e.g., in *grimoires*—magicians’ manuals for invoking demons—and other books of learned magic). These are, however, more commonly called talismans, especially if employed for a malefic purpose.

The belief that objects can have magical powers of attraction, repulsion, protection (especially from diseases, malefic magic, demons, fairies, witches, or the evil eye), healing, and conferring great strength, wisdom, wealth, invisibility, or success and general good luck, is probably common to all cultures, and ranges from folkloric to high magic, as the object involved ranges from a simple root to an elaborate and costly engraved gem. Such objects may be worn or placed near the person or location for which protection is desired (houses, fields, cradles), or they may form part of a magic ritual. Amulets, which are natural objects, draw their power either from the special conditions under which they are collected (e.g., at midnight, midsummer, in a cemetery) or from rituals (e.g., in Christian communities, by secreting them on a church altar). Commonly, amulets are thought to derive their power from a blessing by a cleric, or a spell by a witch, or by demonic assistance. In many cases the imagined effect of the amulet depends on the association of ideas (magnets attract, locks hold fast, keys open, knots cause impotence, teeth protect from toothache, cowrie shells and stones with holes resemble genitalia and are recorded both as fertility charms and as protection against the evil eye and witches). Amulets are often worn around the neck, sometimes more than one together, possibly sealed in a small bag; some may be worn on the head or arm.

The objects to which amuletic or talismanic powers may be attributed cover a wide range; the most common objects fall into certain basic categories. Widely used are minerals, such as gemstones (for which there is a very long history of supposed amuletic virtues), crystals, stones with natural holes and curiously shaped stones, coal, magnetite, meteorite, quicksilver, fossils, and graveyard dust. Animal amulets may be whole animals (e.g., toads, bats, snakes), eagle talons and bear’s claws, cowrie shells, pearls, coral, fish, wolves’ teeth, narwhal (“unicorn”) horns, bones, cauls, and parts of human bodies taken from graveyards. The most common vegetable amulets are various plants and roots with supposed magical properties, such as the nine or twelve herbs gathered on St. John’s Day, and amber.

Artifact amulets include knots, nets, red threads, belts and girdles (especially for pregnant women), keys, locks, knives, spoons, bells, coins, iron nails, horseshoes, scarabs, engraved gems, rings and seals (with or

without inscriptions or figures), and mirrors. This category includes items of religious practice: crosses, relics, medallions, icons, incense, church candle wax, blessed water, pendants such as the Hamsa or “hand of Fatima” (daughter of the Prophet Mohammed)—an amulet with an incised shape of a hand, with an eye in the middle, widely used in the Middle East and North Africa as protection from the evil eye, now much promoted in the West by jewelers and traders in “magical” goods—blue beads, and miniature figures of all kinds attached to neck pendants or charm bracelets.

Amulets may also be texts: prayers, apocryphal works such as the *Sunday Letter*—also known as the *Letter from Heaven* or the *Jerusalem Scroll* (Ryan 1999, 300–301), quotations from the Bible or Koran, diminishing spells such as ABRACADABRA, the SATOR/AREPO magic square, charms, or medical formulas, which may be worn, or eaten if written on paper or on foodstuffs such as bread or apples.

The commercial production of amulets and trading in them, widespread in the early twenty-first century, has a history going back to classical antiquity at least; for example, Egyptian scarabs have been found in medieval grave goods in Scandinavia and northern and eastern Russia.

In the West, the wearing or other use of amulets has been regularly condemned as a harmful superstition from ancient Roman law to Christian canon law (both Catholic and Orthodox). It is also forbidden in Islam and Judaism, but is just as prevalent in communities practicing those religions as it is in the Christian or pagan worlds. In the period of the European witchcraft trials, this condemnation was important. Because the possession of items that were, or could be, seen as amulets was probably almost universal, anyone making an accusation of witchcraft did not have to look far to find some supporting evidence.

WILLIAM RYAN

See also: CHARMS; EVIL EYE; GRIMOIRES; INVOCATIONS; MAGIC, NATURAL; MAGIC, POPULAR.

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ANABAPTISTS

Anabaptists, members of the most radical of the sixteenth-century reformation movements, rejected fully the Catholic sacramental system, and were mercilessly persecuted until the revival of major witch hunting around 1560. Arising in 1525–1526 out of the movements of social protest and religious reform of the early Reformation that also sparked the German Peasants' War of 1524–1525, Anabaptists initially hoped to reform society in complete conformity to the gospels, insisting especially on baptizing adults instead of infants. Many described pedobaptism as a baptism in the Devil's name. In 1529, the imperial Diet of Speyer declared rebaptism a capital crime, making conviction of suspected Anabaptists much easier.

The Anabaptist movement's presumed association with rebellion seemed confirmed by the Anabaptist Kingdom of Münster, Westphalia (1533–1535), which not only defended itself by force of arms, but also adopted community of goods and eventually polygamy. After Münster's fall in June 1535, almost all Anabaptists, including Mennonites, Swiss Brethren, and Hutterites, openly rejected any form of political activity and violence. Even so, the supposed connection between heresy, sedition, and sexual license led many authorities, including Emperor Charles V, to secularize heresy trials and hunt Anabaptists down as threats to public order, thereby setting important precedents for subsequent witch hunts.

PERSECUTION OF ANABAPTISTS AS A PRECURSOR TO THE WITCH HUNTS

It is estimated that over 2,000 Anabaptists were executed across Europe between 1525 and the 1560s, many of them burned at the stake. Catholic princes proved the harshest persecutors; most Protestant princes and magistrates preferred exile to executions for recalcitrant Anabaptists, although Zwinglian Bern and Lutheran Saxony proved exceptions in this regard. These waves of persecution nearly eliminated Anabaptism in several regions, although some groups survived by going underground or finding refuge in more tolerant regions such as Moravia. The worst persecution in the Holy Roman Empire and Switzerland occurred in the 1520s and 1530s, while the Habsburg government of the Netherlands continued its program of bloody suppression much longer, executing hundreds of Anabaptists well after mid-century. With the start of the war of independence against Spanish dominance (ca. 1566), those provinces and cities siding

with the Dutch Republic immediately ended heresy persecution, although the southern provinces, which remained largely in Spanish hands, continued to execute Anabaptists, along with other religious dissidents, into the 1590s, when witch hunting became fashionable. Other regions ceased serious persecution of Anabaptists around the time that they began hunting witches.

Meanwhile, revived concerns about secretive, nocturnal gatherings of Anabaptists in the 1550s and 1560s may have contributed to fears of conspiratorial witch Sabbats. In the County of Wiesensteig, the first major Reformation era witch hunt in 1562 was immediately preceded by the discovery of a large, nocturnal forest meeting of Anabaptists in neighboring Württemberg. In this respect, Anabaptists and witches shared a common fate, acting as scapegoats for the punishment that God seemed to be meting out to Europeans for their sins. In the Anabaptists, the authorities found heretics who openly rejected their original baptism, who met at night in fields or woods, and who seemed to allow women considerable religious authority. There was some projection of beliefs about Anabaptists onto witches, particularly with respect to the connections between heresy and sedition, nocturnal meetings of heretics, and the rejection of "Christian" baptism. After the growth of Anabaptism, diabolical rebaptism became a much more prominent element of witch confessions, and the concept of the witches' Sabbat generally became more believable. Many writers, in fact, viewed the rise of Anabaptism and other reform heresies as precursors of diabolical witchcraft, which was seen as the Devil's final, apocalyptic assault on Christendom.

ANABAPTIST ATTITUDES TOWARD WITCHCRAFT

Prior to the crushing of the Anabaptist Kingdom of Münster in 1535, many Anabaptists cultivated an intense apocalypticism and paid attention to visions and wondrous signs, while simultaneously condemning Catholic devotion to saints and sacramentals (such as holy water) as superstitions, describing the consecrated Host as mere baker's bread and pedobaptism as a Devil's bath. After the deeply disillusioning destruction of their New Jerusalem, however, most Anabaptists renounced the visionary aspects of their past and became intensely wary of ecstatic forms of religious experience, preferring instead a strict biblicism.

Having suffered horribly at the hands of the authorities as supposed agents of the Devil, Anabaptists became understandably skeptical of efforts to revive fears of diabolical conspiracies and witchcraft. In keeping with their intense anticlericalism, Anabaptists characterized Catholic priests and Lutheran pastors as the true sorcerers, and they understandably viewed the

state church and governmental authorities who persecuted them as the ones in league with Satan. Their rejection of transubstantiation and of Catholic ritual as magical nonsense led them to associate belief in diabolical witchcraft with Catholicism.

When witch hunting became popular again after 1560, no known Anabaptists published works supporting the activity, and a few spoke out against it. Most Anabaptists simply ignored the event, seeing it as merely one more oppressive effort of state churches to enforce conformity of belief and practice. A few attacked belief in diabolical witchcraft indirectly, by sharply reducing the importance of the Devil in their theology at a time when other Protestant and Catholic theologians were increasing it. In this way, Dutch spiritualists and Mennonites became the most important Anabaptist critics of witch persecution. As early as 1540, the spiritualistic Anabaptist David Joris had diminished the Devil to little more than the inner vices of individuals and was already condemning fears of witchcraft and the Devil. Menno Simons (ca. 1496–1561) wrote little on the subject, although he too minimized the Devil's power, emphasized human responsibility for evil, and condemned infant baptism as an anti-Christian ritual and "bewitching sin."

Anabaptists elsewhere in Europe, however, have left few hints of their opinions about witchcraft. This is not surprising, for their main concern was to survive as a godly remnant in a hostile and persecuting society. If nothing else, the authorities' fixation after 1560 on witches provided Anabaptists with some relief from the severe persecution that marked their early history.

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See also: APOCALYPSE; HERESY; JORIS, DAVID; MENNONITES; NETHERLANDS, NORTHERN; NETHERLANDS, SOUTHERN; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; WIESENSTEIG, COUNTY OF.

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ANGELS

Throughout the history of religion there has been a belief in spiritual beings or powers linking our world to some transcendent realm. In the Western world, spiritual beings of this kind that are seen as good are called angels, while those that seem evil are known as demons or devils. Although it may seem paradoxical, testimonies and confessions given at the time of the great witch hunts sometimes contain references to the presence of angels, in addition to witches and Devils, at the witches' Sabbat. Naturally, at that time, the presence of heavenly beings could be explained as a trick of the Devil. Given, however, the principle of contrariety that characterized the conception of the world—that is, the belief that good and evil presuppose one another—it is perhaps not entirely surprising that angels appear in these stories.



The Guardian Angel, by Pietro da Cortona. In the West, good spiritual beings, angels, stand in opposition to evil spiritual beings, demons. People supposedly had guardian angels and guardian demons (sometimes known as familiars). Authorities often had difficulty discerning between the two. (Araldo de Luca/Corbis)

The word *angel* derives from the Greek word for “messenger.” Therefore, it relates more to the function fulfilled by the spirit than to the nature or essence of the spirit: what angels do is more important than what they are. In the Jewish and Christian traditions, their primary function has always been seen as performing God’s will and also as enabling human beings to establish contact with him. Furthermore, they can assist human beings through special favors and services. Executing the divine will sometimes means that they intervene in the lives of humans to reward, punish, or save them. Many angels are believed to act as guardians to entire nations or to individuals, particularly children. They also guide the souls of the deceased on their journey to the afterworld. Their presence emphasizes the importance of remarkable events, and they proclaim great news, such as the birth of people of great significance.

Although the function that angels fulfil has been of primary importance, a great deal of attention has also been paid to their characteristics. Regarding their appearance, the dominating picture has been of a figure with human features and with wings, which symbolize the angels’ heavenly nature. The Bible describes different sorts or categories of angel, such as archangels, cherubim, and seraphim. Beside those, angel-like beings are found in various other shapes in folklore, for example, as nature spirits such as fairies.

In the early modern period, theoretical discussions regarding angels and their relationship to witchcraft were usually part of more general discussions of all things heavenly or demonic and the difficulty involved in correctly distinguishing between different categories of spirits. We also find occasional references to angels in trial records. In the 1590 case against Anna Absalons, at Bergen in Norway, her maid testified that her mistress rode on her servant’s back to a meeting of witches. The meeting dispersed when a man in white appeared and struck the group of witches with his staff, declaring that God had not given permission for such a meeting (Alver 1971, 97; Levack 1995, 208–209). This angelic figure appears somewhat unexpectedly in the story.

However, other cases from the same time establish even clearer connections between the accused and “angels” and help explain why angels could sometimes be found at the witches’ Sabbath. Men and women with special spiritual gifts and abilities that they used for healing were believed to be in close communication with angel-like spirits. Chonrad Stoeckhlin, a shepherd from the Bavarian Alps, claimed in 1587 to be accompanied by a guardian angel on his spiritual journeys (Behringer 1998, 17). In northeastern Italy, people known as *benandanti* (do-gooders, who were often healers) claimed in 1580 that angels summoned them and that their souls then went out to combat witches. In 1580 Paolo Gasparutto gave an account of a shining golden figure that had appeared to him during the

night and commanded him to go out as a *benandante* (Ginzburg 1985, 9).

The clearest references to angels are found later, in the large-scale witchcraft trials in Sweden in 1668–1676, centered in the village of Mora. Some scholars believe that these persecutions were based on distortions by the authorities of a religious revival movement. The accounts are full of religious references similar to those found in Christian visions and legends. Blåkulla, the place where the witches met for their Sabbath, is not portrayed in a totally negative manner; the overriding first impression is of a merry peasant feast. Only after the children confessed in court that they had been forcibly abducted to Blåkulla did their stories emphasize the negative aspects of the experience. They explained that, fortunately, there were angels standing by to save them when the horror reached its culmination. The children were then rescued and taken to the safety of the angels’ chamber, and sometimes even delivered to their homes by these beings. In the security of the angels’ chamber, the children sang hymns and said their prayers in a proper, God-fearing manner. However, these heavenly beings are by no means homogenous. Sometimes, they refer to “the white man,” and there are even a few references to black angels. The children also claimed to have been protected by white birds, lambs, and other children. Occasionally, the children even met God, Jesus (who appeared as a fifteen-year-old youth), or deceased relatives.

Throughout sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe, these stories of angels met with skepticism from both lawyers and clerics. In the sixteenth century, Stoeckhlin was burned, and the *benandanti* came to be seen as witches. Swedish authorities found it strange that angels protected children from eating unsuitable food at the Sabbath, but not from fornication with devils. The food that the children were offered was really transformed abominations such as reptiles or excrement, but the children always discovered this in time, thanks to angels who appeared at the right moment to prevent them from tasting the food. Certain features in the appearance of some angels were also suspicious. They wore “linen clothing, short jackets and tight, short breeches; others were clad in long white robes and bore white hats with black brims.” Moreover, they had “claws on their feet, hairy knees and also claws on their hands” (Sörlin 1997, 137). These latter features were reminiscent of Satan’s practice of appearing as a heavenly angel in order to seduce careless people.

The Lutheran authorities concluded that the angels who had “helped” the children were in fact demons. The official explanation of witchcraft was that God had given Satan a free rein in retribution for the sins of the people. It was thus the duty of Christian leaders to employ all possible measures to avert God’s wrath and avoid further satanic visitations. Through the efforts of the authorities, Satan would be routed, the witches

would be justly punished, and the children saved. The children saw it differently. They had not been abducted to Blåkulla to be saved by angels, but to save others. They claimed that the angels had commanded them to denounce the witches. God had allowed the children to be abducted in such large numbers in order to increase their credibility in their task of witnessing against the adults who flew to Blåkulla. Moreover, the children claimed that, should the authorities neglect to make a serious investigation and mete out punishment, great hunger and famine would ravage the land.

Introducing angels was, however, not a particularly dramatic addition if one considers the sort of place Blåkulla was. In his autobiography, Bishop Jesper Svedberg (1653–1735), the father of Emanuel Swedenborg, tells of a dream that he had as a thirteen-year-old (in 1666), a dream with a setting that was strikingly familiar. He thought that he was in a beautiful open place. There he saw a house with two rooms, joined by a little hall where Jesus was standing dividing up the souls of the dead into the blessed, who passed through the door on the right, and the damned, who were shown to the door on the left. Svedberg was shown both rooms. The room on the left was reminiscent of Blåkulla after the children confessed in court and its true, dark nature emerged. The room to the right was similar to the angels' chamber. It was light, shining white, and filled with people praising the Almighty in the highest. Blåkulla and the angels' chamber seem to represent places to which the souls of the dead make their journey. Thus the children who introduced angels into their Sabbat stories were simply opening the door on the right to the angels' chamber. A skeptical account from this time tells, with Protestant irony, how people who had been dead for many years were seen in both the white room and in the cauldron in the great hall of Blåkulla, "so now the locations of both Purgatory and Hell have been found, which must interest each and every curious person" ("On the White Angels at Blåkulla," anonymous, quoted in Sörlin 1997, 147)

PER SÖRLIN

See also: BENANDANTI; BLÅKULLA; DEMONS; FAIRIES; MORA WITCHES; STOECKHLIN, CHONRAD; SABBAT; SWEDEN.

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ANHORN, BARTHOLOMÄUS (1616–1700)

A late Swiss defender of the belief in the reality of witchcraft, Anhorn published a voluminous work about many different aspects of magic, called *Magiologia*, at Basel in 1674.

Anhorn was born on January 16, 1616, in Fläsch, a small village in Graubünden (or Grisons), the son of the local minister of the Reformed Church. His grandfather, Bartholomäus Anhorn the Elder, was a reformer, a historian, and a minister.

In 1632, Bartholomäus the Younger completed his studies in Basel, which he had begun in Zürich four years before. In 1634, at the age of eighteen, he became minister of Grüşch and Seewis in the valley of Prättigau. Soon afterwards he moved to the parish of Hundwil (Appenzell-Ausserrhoden). From 1637 to 1649 Bartholomäus worked as a pastor in the city of St. Gallen, where he was soon granted citizenship. He was promoted to city minister in 1638.

After encountering some problems in St. Gallen, Anhorn moved to the German Palatinate in 1649. Eleven years later he tried unsuccessfully to return to St. Gallen. Finally, in 1661 he was granted the parish of Bischofszell in Thurgau, where he wrote, following the publication of several other works, his most important book. Anhorn's *Magiologia* is subtitled *Christliche Warnung für dem Aberglauben und der Zauberey* (A Christian Warning Against Superstition and Sorcery). In the following years he published numerous further writings, mainly sermons for funerals and other occasions, as well as works on ecclesiastical history. Anhorn's writings not only offer proof of his wide reading and enormous erudition, but also reveal his tendency toward distortion and spitefulness.

Although Anhorn was elected in 1676 to a higher regional ecclesiastical office, he had to leave the mixed confessional city of Bischofszell two years later under pressure from Roman Catholic episcopal officials, who condemned him for acting too aggressively and polemically against the town's Roman Catholics. Thereupon, Anhorn moved to Elsau (east of Winterthur), where the octogenarian finally died on July 6, 1700. He had traveled to Holland and England, and three wives had borne him thirteen children.

Anhorn's *Magiologia*, printed at Basel by Johann Heinrich Meyer in 1674, comprised about 1,200 pages, including the register. The author understood his book as an antidote to contemporary society, which he saw as dominated on one hand by atheism and Machiavellianism and by superstition and sorcery on the other hand. Reacting to his disapproval of atheism, Anhorn tried to defend the belief in the effectiveness of magic and witchcraft against skeptics. In this context, he opposed their

reports of experiences. For Anhorn it was quite out of the question to understand witch flights only as an illusion; he was convinced of the real physical movement of witches through the air, guided by the Devil. In such matters, as well as in the case of witches' Sabbats, his position was based on confessions made during witchcraft trials and on the doctrines of theologians, jurists, and physicians.

Concerning witchcraft trials, Anhorn rejected various practices that he considered superstitious, such as water tests, cutting off all hair, or judging someone to be a witch on the basis of inability to shed tears. The fact that someone was denounced as a participant in Sabbats was not sufficient evidence to him, because the Devil could assume the shape of innocent people. He encouraged judges to resort to preaching as the best way to make the criminals confess, but he also recommended torture. However, he demanded caution here too, because torture could also overcome innocent people due to their physical condition. Nevertheless, torture was effective in discovering truths that would otherwise remain hidden. With torture, however, it was necessary to proceed very carefully and to have sufficient other evidence of the crime. For the correct use of torture and correct legal procedure, Anhorn referred his readers to the Saxon jurist Benedict Carpzov, a supporter of extremely rigid procedures against witches. Like Carpzov, Anhorn regarded a pact with the Devil as a crime to be punished by death, even if the accused had not caused physical damage through sorcery, and he ignored objections that witches were weak old women, unable to defend themselves against the seduction of the Devil, or suffering from melancholy illusions and therefore not to be held responsible.

MANFRED TSCHAIKNER

See also: CARPZOV, BENEDICT (II); FLIGHT OF WITCHES; TORTURE.

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ANIMALS

The roles of animals in sorcery and witchcraft beliefs are extremely varied. Sometimes demons take the shape of animals, sometimes the witches and sorcerers have the alleged ability to transform either themselves or their souls into animals. Furthermore, animals played a very important part in witchcraft accusations. Witches were often tried for allegedly having bewitched domestic animals such as cows, poultry, pigs, and geese. Casting a disease on cows and stealing their milk were frequent accusations. England and Scotland invented the concept of a demon in animal shape, the familiar, a sort of assistant. The popular books about an apprentice sorcerer, J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* and its sequels, obviously included this concept.

FAMILIARS

The terms *familiar*, *familiar spirit*, and *imp* reflect an almost exclusively English contribution to the theory of

witchcraft. Continental handbooks rarely discussed the concept; for example, Heinrich Kramer's infamous *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) offers no instructions concerning familiars for judges interrogating witches.

The belief was that the Devil, having made a pact with the witch, gave her a low-ranking demon in the shape of a small domestic animal to advise her and perform for the most part small malicious errands—though some errands included murder. A witch might also inherit a familiar from another witch. The little creature was in constant attendance on its mistress (male witches rarely kept familiars), who was responsible for its care and feeding. The animal servant must therefore be distinguished from the occasional visitations of the Devil in the guise of a small animal, such as a dog, cat, goat, or owl.

Reginald Scot in his *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) first used the term *familiar* in this restricted sense. From that time on, English reports were packed with imps (apparently seen as the evil equivalent of guardian angels) to explain and illustrate the presence of supposedly diabolical creatures found in houses or farms to assist the witch in performing *maleficium* (harmful magic). The witchcraft statute of 1604 made it a felony to have a familiar. This obsession with familiars remained mostly confined to England and Scotland, where they are mentioned in numerous trial records, especially those related to Matthew Hopkins, England's great seventeenth-century witch hunter. A witch could have several familiars; Elizabeth Clark, Hopkins's first victim, confessed to having five of them. Familiars followed English colonists overseas, and one finds them in early American witchcraft trials. Outside of witchcraft trials, more benevolent familiars served English "cunning folk," the village wise men and women who were magicians or healers. These familiars helped diagnose illnesses and the sources of bewitchment and also helped to find lost objects and treasures. Magicians conjured them in rituals, then locked them in bottles, rings, and stones. The famous magical thinker Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim was even rumored to keep a familiar in the shape of a black dog.

METAMORPHOSIS

Since ancient times, witches, sorcerers, and magicians have been believed to transform themselves and other humans at will into animals, birds, and even insects. The concept of metamorphosis, to give this kind of transformation its technical name, was accepted in antiquity. The following well-known examples all have important applications for later European witchcraft. The sorceress Circe transformed Odysseus's companions into pigs. In Arthurian legend, both the sorceress Morgana, King Arthur's sister, and the famous magician Merlin were able to transform their enemies into animals. Two millennia later, some European witches

were believed to do the same. In Hungarian witchcraft accusations, the witch's victims were turned into horses and bridled, or struck with a bridle, a narrative element favored in folk legends.

Apuleius of Madaura's widely read *Golden Ass* illustrated some important details of the night-flight (*transvection*) concept. The sorceress anointed herself with a magic salve and transformed into an owl. The curious protagonist Lucius, who was watching the spectacle, was eager to experience the same metamorphosis, but used the wrong ointment and changed into an ass. Apuleius himself was subsequently charged with sorcery. His notion of night flight reappeared in the tenth-century *Canon Episcopi*: Women riding on certain beasts reputedly traversed great distances under the leadership of the heathen goddess Diana. The belief in night flights, with the participants either riding on animals or transformed into animals, was rejected as superstitious at that time, but afterwards it was often reported, in confessions and by witnesses, that witches smeared themselves with certain ointments to become cats or other animals before flying to the Sabbat. Transvection became integrated into the full-fledged witchcraft concept by the fifteenth century, and those witches who used hallucinogenic drugs surely believed in the flight, if not in the transformation.

In his *Eclogue* 8.64-109, Virgil mentioned herbs with which he claimed to have seen someone transform himself into a wolf. In the age of European witchcraft trials, transformation into a wolf became the most feared type of metamorphosis. Man-eating wolves that terrorized villages reinforced links between werewolves and witch beliefs.

During the early modern period, it was sometimes believed that witches transformed themselves into beasts in order to torment their victims. It was not uncommon to find witnesses testifying that accused witches had appeared before them in animal form, transforming themselves not only in order to torment their victims, but also to escape captors. In various trial accounts, witches were alleged to appear in the guise of almost all small animals and birds. This transformation was believed to serve the practical purpose of allowing the witch-animal to crawl unseen into a room; behind this belief lurks the ancient concept of the soul wandering about in the shape of a small animal, a bird, a butterfly, or a snake. Often witches became pigs, or despised black or three-legged animals; but one also finds a witch described as becoming a bear, bee, goat, lizard, duck, owl, fly, fox, goose, hen, dog, cat, beetle, raven, toad, cow, mouse, rat, moth, horse, seal, spider, wolf, wasp, or weasel. Riding on a human being in animal form was another characteristic element in European witch beliefs and remained one of the most typical motifs of witch legends.

The most common transformations were into cats, dogs, and hares. Isobel Grierson was burned at

Edinburgh in 1607 for entering a house in the form of a cat, a common allegation in Scottish trials. Cats hold a very important place in sorcery, principally black cats, which were, and still are, regarded as demons incarnate or transformed witches. It is on this latter count that in recent centuries peasants all over Europe slaughtered black cats, in order to destroy the witches they accused of having bewitched them.

Despite the folk belief in the ability of transformation, demonologists disagreed on the topic. Jean Bodin and Joseph Glanvill accepted metamorphosis, whereas Heinrich Kramer and many subsequent demonologists (including almost all Protestant authors) followed St. Augustine's concept that they were demonic illusions.

SHAMANISM AND WITCHES' ANIMAL DOUBLES

In shamanism and individual totemism, the notion of metamorphosis, or shape shifting, is essential. Shamans are held to be able to transform themselves into their guardians, which are often animal spirits. The transformation is generally believed to be a spiritual one, rather than an actual physical transformation, although something close to a physical transformation is suggested by the fact that stories are told of shamans who are actually killed or wounded while lying in trance when the animals to which they have transformed themselves are killed or wounded. The life of the animal is bound to the life of the shaman, just as the life of the animal who is a guardian spirit is bound to the life of the shaman. This concept of the guardian spirit is strongly tied to shamanistic initiation, and transformation into the so-called animal-mother is reached by employing some ecstatic technique (Buddruss 1987, 45-78; Paulson 1968, 138).

In most regions of the witchcraft trials of early modern Europe, the most significant variations of the physical or spiritual alter egos of witches were a variety of animal shapes. The "proof" that an animal was more than a mere cat, or whatever shape the witch took, was that the same injuries inflicted on the animal's body reappeared on its human counterpart, providing another parallel with the concept of a totemistic guardian animal. Some sources maintained that, during executions, flames could not touch the witch as she attempted to escape in the form of a toad, her alter ego. However, when the toad was killed, the flames would destroy the witch. (Observed in Styrian witchcraft trials; Byloff 1929, 119-121.)

A rich variety of "witch animals" were reported to occur throughout Europe, Africa, and Asia, with many regional differences and varying prevalence among animal types. The belief in a guiding and helping animal of diabolical character has permeated both the writings of the educated who have believed in witchcraft and

shamanism and seen the hand of the Devil in them and popular belief from medieval times until now.

CHRISTA TUCZAY

See also: AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM, HEINRICH CORNELIUS; ANIMISTIC AND MAGICAL THINKING; APULEIUS OF MADAURA; AUGUSTINE, ST.; BEWITCHMENT; CATS; CUNNING FOLK; DEMONS; DOGS; ENGLAND; FAMILIARS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; LYCANTHROPY; METAMORPHOSIS; SABBAT; SCOT, REGINALD; SHAMANISM; TOADS.

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ANIMISTIC AND MAGICAL THINKING

Popular beliefs about witchcraft reflect many of the ideas found in the religions of nonliterate peoples. These popular beliefs are characterized by a dualistic worldview, in which everything in the material world has its double in a nonmaterial soul world. Accordingly, the soul of a witch could travel around, leaving the body behind like an empty shell, and when the witches on their out-of-body expeditions "ate" flesh of their victims, it was not their actual flesh but the "soul" of their flesh; however, this form of eating sufficed to make their victims sicken and die. A similar concept lay

behind the narratives told about sixteenth-century Italian witches, of animals being eaten and later restored from their bones and skins, just like the goats drawing the cart of the god Thor, which frequently were eaten and afterward restored from skin and bones (Bertolotti 1979). Such ideas contain an element of shamanism; but because witches used no shamanistic techniques to prepare themselves for their soul journeys, it seems preferable to call it *animistic thinking*—without the context of a belief in the evolution of religion in which the nineteenth-century anthropologist Edward B. Tylor elaborated the term *animism*, designating a "primitive" stage of religion with belief in spirits inhabiting the surrounding world of natural objects and phenomena (Lessa and Vogt 1958, 11–13).

Another fundamental concept was the witch's power, which was seen as at once her strength and her weakness. If a cow had been bewitched so that its milk had become full of blood, the traditional remedy was to boil some of the bloody milk and then spill it over the red-hot hearth. The guilty person would then be scalded all over her body. Or one could take some of the spoiled milk and sprinkle it over an anthill: The ants would then go and torment the witch terribly. Behind both cases lay the idea that the victim was permeated with the witch's power, and what harmed the victim could be made to backfire on the witch. This power or force had no name but was closely associated with "envy," which in popular tradition was not just a bad feeling but a dangerous magical force that acted involuntarily; one must never get into a state where one felt envy. On the other hand, "luck" was not an abstract concept in popular tradition; it was something concrete. Depending on whether people had luck with their horses, sheep, pigs, geese, or corn or milk production, they were said to have "horse luck," "sheep luck," "pig luck," "goose luck," "corn luck," or "good milking." In Danish dialects, words meaning "benefit," "crops," or "the good" were used synonymously with "luck," and in a witchcraft trial from 1670 a smallholder's wife was accused of taking "the good" from her neighbors' milk, with the result that the milk, even at the best season of the year, was so bad that not even pigs would drink it.

Luck was furthermore a finite asset, or "limited good." In the trial of a cunning woman (a practitioner of beneficent magic) from Jutland in 1610 it was stated that she "swept luck from one to another," and therefore bore the nickname "Anne Sweeping-woman" (Henningsson 1991, 20). Interestingly, Ireland's first recorded witch, Alice Kyteler, in 1324 "swept the streets of Kilkennie" around twilight, "raking all the filth toward the doore of her sonne William Outlaw, murmuring to herself, 'To the house of William my sonne / Hie all the wealth of Kilkennie towne'" (Davidson and Ward 1993, 81–82). Around 1680, a rich ship owner in

the Jutland town of Ebeltøft was said to have “seven men’s luck,” which explained why there were so many poor people in the town (Henningsen 1991, 20). Misfortune and accidents were often explained as the loss of one or several of the above-mentioned kinds of luck, which had been taken away by the witchcraft of envious people. Archaic beliefs of this sort, more in agreement with the religions of nonliterate people than with the rationality of early modern European intellectuals, continued to exist in popular culture into the twentieth century.

GUSTAV HENNINGSEN;
TRANSLATED BY JAMES MANLEY

See also: ANIMALS; KYTELER, ALICE; POPULAR BELIEFS IN WITCHES; SHAMANISM.

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ANTHROPOLOGY

The treatment of witchcraft commonly ranks among the most successful accomplishments of the functionalist school of British social anthropology, founded by Bronislaw Malinowski but achieving its richest formulation under the guidance of Edward Evans-Pritchard and Meyer Fortes. This approach argued that most aspects of social life helped to maintain the social group. The practice of witchcraft, then—or more precisely, a society’s acceptance that individuals practiced malevolent magic and could be accused and punished for doing so—had to be understood, from this perspective, as an activity that helped the group function more effectively.

The work that came out of this school (Middleton and Winter 1963; Middleton 1967; Marwick 1970; Douglas 1970) suggested that the cultural system of witchcraft accusation works as a “social strain gauge,” as Marwick put it. In the societies these anthropologists studied (usually African), people were more likely to accuse other people of being witches when their relationships became socially strained, although they did so only if they had experienced some misfortune, like death or illness, that could be attributed to witchcraft. These accusations helped to make private tensions public and enabled the community, in effect, to manage them before they deteriorated into violence. For the

most part, these scholars pointed out, such accusations did not, in fact, lead to the death of the witch: Instead, those accused were more likely either to move out of the community or to behave with greater circumspection. Indeed, in many communities, people risked being called witches if they were selfish, withholding food or drink from passing strangers, or had acquired more wealth than others.

Middleton’s study of the Lugbara was a classic example of work in this mode. The Lugbara were an East African society, based when they were studied in Uganda and the Congo. They were primarily cultivators, using roughly three kinds of fields: fertilized fields near their home for “demanding” crops like sorghum; unfertilized fields farther from the house under a system of shifting cultivation for a variety of crops; and irrigated high fertility fields for sweet potatoes, maize, sugarcane, or bananas. These divisions were important, because there was a presumption that a man should have fields of equal types and equal fertility for each of his wives, and there was a relatively fixed relationship between the number of wives in any group and the extent of that family’s territory. The basic social and political unit was the family cluster, a collection of adult men, their wives, and their unmarried children, each with separate huts but under the general authority of the genealogically senior male of the group. This man was not only the senior authority in the group, but also the primary intermediary between the living and the dead and the most important officiator in the ancestor cult (the primary form of religious worship). He was thought to maintain his authority by invoking the dead and by so doing sending illness to those who disobeyed a husband or a senior kinsman.

Witches, men or women who caused sickness when motivated by envy or jealousy, were thought to exist in Lugbara communities. They would strike when they passed a house and were not invited in for dinner, or not offered beer; they might envy a man who seemed to own more than another man, or whom they thought to be at the center of all eyes. Wise people avoided such risks—but they also understood that witchcraft was an improper use of power, while the elder of the family cluster used his magic appropriately, as an expression of his authority.

The rub, Middleton argued, was that the invocation of a ghost took the same form as a witch’s invocation to send illness. The most common pattern for witchcraft accusations emerged as a family cluster grew in size and its demand for land increased. As young men matured, they began to need more land and to express more independence. The elder would invoke the ghosts to keep them in line—and when a member of their family fell sick, the community would first understand this as an appropriate expression of the elder’s need to keep control. At first, Middleton argued, public opinion sided with the elder. But as the group grew, public

opinion could shift, seeing the elder as inappropriately demanding more power than he ought, and might label him a witch. When this happened, the younger man who made the accusation might well leave the cluster, taking his family and others with him and seeking more land elsewhere. As a lineage grew, it became increasingly unmanageable, both ecologically and politically. Lugbara witchcraft accusations both expressed the tensions inherent in this inevitable but disturbing process and helped to make it work more efficiently.

This analytic approach became the hallmark of the British functionalist approach to witchcraft, which understood witchcraft accusations as expressions of social tension that indicated the kinds of serious pressures within the group. Anthropologists (in particular Mary Douglas) argued that accusations were clustered in areas of ambiguous social relationships, either because such relationships were usually competitive and unregulated or because a new and anomalous group had emerged. Where social relations were well defined and tensions could be easily resolved, witchcraft accusations were uncommon, a conclusion supported both by classic ethnography and by quantitative analysis of accusation patterns. The possibility of accusation, however, had a normative effect on behavior.

British functionalist anthropology has had a profound influence on the study of early modern witchcraft in America as well as in England, although less so on the study of witchcraft in continental Europe (Middelfort 1972; Cohn 1975). Perhaps its most famous application was through the work of Keith Thomas (1971), in a magisterial analysis of the emergence of the English witchcraft trials, but a similar influence can be seen in Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum (1974), in Thomas's student, Alan Macfarlane, and others. These historians pointed out that fantasies about witchcraft were common in agrarian societies, including medieval Europe. In such fantasies, witches were creatures, often women, who flew at night, ate human flesh, violated moral precepts about fertility and sexuality, and practiced malevolent magic on those they envied. Although such ideas had existed in an officially Christian peasant society for centuries, few people had been killed until the late medieval period, when such folk beliefs were overlaid with an account of a specifically Christian evil, in which the so-called witch became bound to the Devil and participated in Satanic masses. Hundreds of witches were hanged in England and thousands burned elsewhere in explosions of anxiety as they were located, tried, and executed. Thomas and Macfarlane explained the salience of witchcraft accusations in England as reflecting an unresolved conflict between the neighborly conduct required by the ethical code of the old village community and the increasingly individualistic behavior that accompanied the economic changes of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The classic anthropological literature on witchcraft produced another famous book that proposed an argument different from those discussed above: Evans-Pritchard's *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic Among the Azande* (1937). Witchcraft seemed to pervade every aspect of the Azande's world in the southern Sudan. Witches were thought to exercise their power unconsciously, without ritual or speech, and when a misfortune occurred, the Azande often attributed it to the unintentional malice of a person who might not even know what he or she had done. If the misfortune was significant and the victim still suffering, he looked around for those who might bear a grudge against him, and consulted a "poison oracle" to determine who it was. (He also consulted the oracle to determine whether misfortune would occur if he embarked upon a journey.) This poison oracle was a chicken that was fed a quantity of poison. Whether the chicken lived or died provided the answer to the client's question. Having determined the witch, an intermediary (if necessary) approached the accused aggressor, who then "blew water" over the wing of the chicken that died in naming him witch and asserted his good intentions toward the harmed man and his determination to "cool" the witchcraft in his belly.

Evans-Pritchard argued that concepts about witchcraft in Azande society played the role that the concept of chance played in his own: They explained the peculiarity of events. The man died when a rotten granary fell upon him: He died because the granary was rotten, but why he should happen to be under it when it fell—that was due to witchcraft. Evans-Pritchard insisted that apparently strange statements made by members of a different culture did not imply that their mental capacities were similarly strange. In fact, he says that he had no problem living as if witchcraft and magic existed when living among these people. This approach became part of a philosophical and anthropological debate between two positions, one that held that magical practice was based upon mistaken belief (the intellectualist position: magic is a pre-scientific form of explanation and action) and another that explained away the magic by showing how little it had to do with explanatory belief (the symbolist position: magical symbols are really expressions of anxiety or some other emotion, not an attempt to explain or alter reality). Arguments about apparently irrational belief took the Azande case as their template from that point on.

More recent work within anthropology carries forward both of these lines of discussion. Tanya Marie Luhmann (1989) presented the ethnography of a group of middle-class English people who called themselves witches and magicians, describing the ways by which apparently reasonable people came to hold such apparently unreasonable beliefs. Peter Geschiere (1997) described the way witchcraft remains a visible presence

in modern Africa (in Cameroon) as a response to modern political reality. Although the great functionalist studies—as well as that of Evans-Pritchard—were set in colonial Africa, whose European overlords had decriminalized witchcraft, anthropology continues to explore witchcraft in the postcolonial world, hoping to inspire other fields that also seek to understand this occult but irrepressible phenomenon.

T. M. LUHRMANN

See also: ACCUSATIONS; AFRICA (SUB-SAHARAN); DOUGLAS, MARY; ENGLAND; EVANS-PRITCHARD, EDWARD; GHOSTS; MACFARLANE, ALAN; MALINOWSKI, BRONISLAW; THOMAS, KEITH.

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ANTICHRIST

The Antichrist is a negative figure of Christian mythology, a demon-like fiend in human form, both the adversary (anti) of Christ and his forerunner (ante), as he will appear immediately before the latter comes back into this world to judge the quick and the dead at the end of time. Though there is little or nothing in the way of a direct link between Antichrist and witchcraft, the renewed focus on this fiend in human form in the late Middle Ages and early modern period can only have encouraged the fear of the Devil's power that lay behind the witchcraft trials.

THE LEGEND

What one may call the medieval standard tradition about Antichrist can be summarized as follows:

Antichrist is to be born in Babylon as the fruit of an incestuous relation in the Jewish tribe of Dan. Already in his mother's womb, bad spirits will have power over him. Magicians and sorcerers will bring him up. Grown up, he will persuade the Jews that he is the longed-for Messiah. However, many Christians will also adore him as God and receive his sign on their bodies. Those who do not follow him will be cruelly persecuted. For three and one-half years the fight between this monster and the true Christians is to endure, while the strange races of Gog and Magog, the Red Jews, even the Amazons, arrive from the ends of the earth to help the Antichrist. Finally, he will kill the prophets Enoch and Elias, whom God has kept in reserve in Paradise for this eschatological struggle. For the very same span of time (or sometimes for thirty-two years), the adversary of Christ will then be allowed to reign over the world. At the end, when Antichrist will try to lift himself into heaven, Jesus or the angels will throw him down into hell.

The basis of the Antichrist tradition was, of course, biblical. In the letters of John (1 John 2:18–22; 2 John 7), the enemies of Christ's teachings were called Antichrists (plural!). Paul did not use the term *Antichrist*, but he expected a great opponent of Christ to appear before his second coming (2 Thess. 2:3–12). Exegetes declared that the false messiah and the false prophet spoken of by Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew (Matt. 24:5, 11) was the Antichrist, identifying him also with the seven-headed apocalyptic beast from the sea (Rev. 13, 1–10).

Until the central Middle Ages, it was almost exclusively theologians who dealt with this figure, and they did so in Latin treatises, the most important of which was the *Libellus de Antichristo* (Booklet on Antichrist), a "biography" of Antichrist written by the Benedictine abbot Adso of Montier-en-Der about 954. Most later writings on this mythical personage, such as the works of the virulent reformer of the canons Gerhoh of Reichersberg (twelfth century), the prophetic theologian of history Joachim of Fiore (about 1200), and the enthusiastic Dominican preacher Vincent Ferrer (1350–1419), were based on Adso's treatise. From the twelfth century onwards, however, more and more laymen were confronted with this figure; Antichrist plays quite a remarkable part in the new vernacular literature written for them, such as the *Linzer Entekrist* (Linz Antichrist, twelfth century) and similar Middle High German pious works, or the *Tournoiement Antéchrist* (The Antichrist's Tournament, 1234–1240) by the French poet Huon de Méry, describing an allegorical battle between God and the monster.

The late Middle Ages saw the heyday of Christian obsession with this figure. Numerous theologians published treatises about him; the less orthodox ones such as Arnaud de Villanova, the famous Catalan master of medicine (d. 1311), discussed the forbidden theme of

the date when he might appear. In several European states, a number of theatrical representations of the Antichrist legend could be seen. In 1604, the relevant traditions were collected into a single extensive work, *De Antichristo libri XI* (Eleven Books on Antichrist) by the Dominican Tomás Malvenda, a collaborator of the Roman Index of Prohibited Books. The Catholic preacher Dionysius von Lützenburg wrote one of the most voluminous elaborations of the myth, the romance-like *Leben Antichristi* (Antichrist's Life, 1716). As late as 1916, the Low German poet Karl Wagenfeld revived these medieval traditions with his epic *De Antichrist* (The Antichrist).

The legend of Antichrist was also transmitted through painting and xylography, especially in manuscripts of the Apocalypse and commentaries on that text. From the twelfth century onwards, we find illustrated lives of Antichrist inserted into religious-didactic picture books such as Herrad of Landsberg's *Hortus deliciarum* (Garden of Delights, late twelfth century), the Welislaw Bible (ca. 1350), and the printed *Vita Antichristi* (Life of Antichrist) of 1472. Among the numerous Reformation images equating Antichrist with "popery," the works of Lucas Cranach remained unrivalled. Several Gothic fresco paintings of Antichrist have been preserved. At Karlstein near Prague, the main castle of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV, Antichrist appears in antithesis to this sovereign; in the dome of Orvieto, Luca Signorelli integrated Christ's opponent into his depiction of the Last Judgment (1504).

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, several famous authors from Russia to Portugal used Antichrist as a metaphor for the materialistic worldview, including Dostoyevsky in *The Brothers Karamazov* (1879–1880), Russia's Vladimir Solov'yev in *Kratkoi powesti ob antichriste* (A Tale of the Antichrist, 1899), Portugal's António Duarte Gomes Leal in *O Anti-Cristo* (The Antichrist, 1884–1886); Sweden's Selma Lagerlöf in *Antikrists mirakler* (The Miracles of Antichrist, 1897); and Germany's Joseph Roth in *Der Antichrist* (The Antichrist, 1934). Friedrich Nietzsche's *Der Antichrist* (The Antichrist), however, written in 1888, remains the most radical transvaluation of the Christian tradition. Criticizing this religion because of its detachment from the world, Nietzsche did not hesitate to proclaim himself as the "superhuman" Antichrist. In Catholic regions, many nineteenth-century folktales have been recorded that described Antichrist with a wealth of odd details.

ANTICHRIST AND POLITICS

Again and again, the figure of Antichrist has been employed to defame political opponents. It is difficult to decide how far those who called their enemies by

such a name were indeed convinced that the Biblical prophecies had now been fulfilled, and how far they used this reproach merely as a convenient propaganda weapon. A catalogue of all the persons and groups in public life that have been suspected to be the incarnated Antichrist would fill a sizable book. Let us mention only the Holy Roman Emperors Henry IV and Frederick II, both of whom the papacy called Antichrist during their struggle for supremacy within Western Christianity. The famous liturgical *Ludus de antichristo* (Play of Antichrist, ca. 1160), the first play to bring this character on the scene, also showed clear political implications, as the Germans triumphed over the French and reformers within the Church were attacked. Later, John Wyclif in his treatise *On Christ and his adversary Antichrist* had an easy task identifying the pope with Antichrist, simply contrasting the lifestyle of Jesus with that of his successor. Both Hussite and Lutheran polemicists subsequently adopted this tactic. The Schmalkaldic Articles of 1538, Luther's official confession of faith, equated the papacy and Antichrist (2, 4). In the same year, the German humanist Thomas Naogeorg published his allegorical drama, *Tragoedia nova Pammachius* (The New Tragedy of Pammachius). Its protagonist, Pammachius (i.e., Antichrist), stood for the papacy, which, during its long history, succumbed to such typical vices as abuse of power and immorality. In the nineteenth century, it suffices to note that Napoleon Bonaparte's less educated Christian opponents identified him with the apocalyptic antihero.

ANTICHRIST AND MAGIC

It seems that Antichrist never appeared in confessions made by people accused of witchcraft, nor did he appear in any recorded magical formulas or incantations. Nevertheless, in the texts that purported to tell the story of his life, he was regularly depicted as a kind of sorcerer, whose success was based on the magical tricks he played. In the aforementioned *Ludus*, the German emperor was the only Christian ruler who triumphed over Antichrist, but eventually even he was convinced by his miracles. For example, Antichrist made the roots of a tree flower, brought the sea on the top of mountains, caused snowfall and hail, changed day into night and night into day—all proofs of his magic powers, through which many were seduced into believing him to be the real messiah.

Therefore, occasionally connections were drawn between Antichrist and other sorcerers. The historian Adam of Bremen (late eleventh century) imagined Norway to be full of soothsayers, augurs, sorcerers, and enchanters, as well as other satellites of Antichrist (*History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*, 57 [55]). Heinrich Kramer's infamous *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) also

compares the “miracled” wrought by demons to those done by Antichrist (1.1.9). Many early modern experts, including the Jesuit Martín Del Rio, reckoned that an increase of sorcery and witchcraft was one sign of the approach of the Apocalypse and of Antichrist. Nevertheless, direct references to Antichrist in connection with witchcraft were only peripheral in nature.

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See also: APOCALYPSE; BIBLE; CRANACH, LUCAS; JESUS; MILLENARIANISM.

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APOCALYPSE

In Christianity, the expectation of the world’s end coming soon created a complex of fears and hopes, often called apocalypticism. Its major components may be evoked by the key words Antichrist, millenarianism (or chiliasm), second coming (*parousia*) of Christ, and Last Judgment. Connections between the fear of the apocalypse and witchcraft are rather marginal. It is possible, but has not been proved, that apocalypticism did play a part in the rise of the witch persecutions.

The biblical basis for Christian eschatology was supplied mostly by the prophecies of Daniel, supplemented by such New Testament texts as the Revelation of John and several statements of Jesus in the Gospels, especially in Mark 13. He himself expected the end of times would occur soon after his death, when the divine would descend to earth (Mark 9:1). After this prophecy

failed to happen, a complex theology of “the last things” was created and dogmatized during the following centuries. On a popular level, a tradition of (mostly fifteen) signs of the approaching final catastrophe was developed. As the Bible often underlines the impossibility of knowing the exact time of the Last Judgment, traditional Christianity existed in an ambience of fear, which grew more acute during specific crises (e.g., the much discussed “terrors” of the year 1000 or 1033, the years of the Black Death around 1350, the appearance of Halley’s comet in 1531, etc.). During the religious crisis of the sixteenth century, the most intensive apocalyptic fears were probably seen, clearly perceptible in such events as the Anabaptist movement at Münster in 1534–1535, but also manifested in learned theological writings, especially those of Martin Luther. Apocalyptic currents reappeared during the religious wars of the seventeenth century and even in the epoch of Enlightenment, and have continued to reappear in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. It goes without saying that some people interpreted the two world wars as the beginning of the Apocalypse. Apocalypticism has, however, been eliminated from the teachings of the main Christian churches because of the usually insignificant place eschatological expectations left to the hierarchies, so that this tradition has become restricted to fringe Protestant sects or denominations such as the Shakers, Latter-day Saints (or Mormons), Seventh-day Adventists, and Jehovah’s Witnesses.

As one of the signs appearing before the end of the world would be the apostasy of many Christians (Matt. 24: 4–6.), it was certainly logical to interpret the rise of the witch-“sect” as a token of the approaching Apocalypse. Therefore, Heinrich Kramer, in the *Apologia*, which he prefixed to the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), put the persecution of the “heresy of the witches” into the eschatological context of the “twilight and evening of the world,” characterized by an increase of human wickedness (16). The Devil, argued the Dominican inquisitor, knowing he had but little time left to do evil, had recently seduced many people, mainly females, into perpetrating works of sorcery. The Lorraine witch-prosecuting judge Nicolas Rémy, in his treatise *Daemonolatriae* (Demonolatry, 1595), saw the current conflict between witches and demons, on the one hand, and judges such as Rémy and Christianity generally, on the other hand, as the battle of evil against good that would usher in the Second Coming. John Stearne, the English witch hunter, in *A Confirmation and Discovery of Witchcraft* (1648), wrote “For it is undeniably true, that there was, is, and shall be Witches, till Christs conquest there spoken of, agreeable with that in *Revel.* 20.1, 2, 3(60).” While other witchcraft theorists had similar views linking the heresy of witchcraft to the approaching

Apocalypse (e.g., Abbot Johannes Trithemius in his *Liber octo quaestionum* [The Book of Eight Questions, 1515] for the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I), this connection seems to have remained mostly theological speculation, without becoming a concrete stimulus to the persecutors of witches.

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See also: ANTICHRIST; MILLENARIANISM; TRITHEMIUS, JOHANNES.

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APPEALS

Almost everywhere in Europe, appellate courts were responsible for slowing the pace of witch hunts, although they lacked the audacity or legislative authority to bring them to an end. There were no appellate court systems operating in the Alpine regions where witch hunting began in the fifteenth century, but it did not take long before an appellate court first intervened in a witch hunt: in 1447, the recently restored *Parlement* (sovereign judicial court) of Toulouse revised some sentences passed in 1444 at Millau in northern Languedoc. Here, as later, the appellate court's primary purpose was to censure miscarriages of justice by overzealous, partisan, or corrupt local justices. Often, as in this instance, the court intervened too late to save the lives of many accused witches (three women had already been burned and two others had died, probably after being tortured), but they practiced damage control; the woman who made the appeal had her conviction overturned, and a corrupt judge and notary at Millau were suspended from their offices and fined heavily.

The most far-reaching intervention by a fifteenth-century appellate court was undoubtedly the

overturning of many verdicts from the famous series of witchcraft trials known as the *Vauderie d'Arras* (because these trials were directed at the heresy called *vauderie*, "Waldensianism," seen as associated with witchcraft) by the *Parlement* of Paris (sovereign judicial court, with jurisdiction over approximately one-half of France) in 1491, more than thirty years after the original events, when almost everyone directly involved had died. The rehabilitative decree of the Paris court was read out with great pomp at the very spot in Arras where the original sentences had been pronounced; the heirs of the prosecutors were fined and ordered to erect a memorial cross on the spot where the witches had been burned. Obviously, appellate justice could not raise wrongly convicted witches from the dead, but it could and did improve their posthumous legal status and restore their family's reputation. By the following century, during the most intensive phase of witch hunting, appellate courts began to intervene in time to save the lives of accused witches.

During the most intense phase of witch hunting, systematic intervention by appellate courts began in 1576, when, after a few notable scandals, the Kingdom of Denmark required that all local-court sentences in witchcraft trials be automatically submitted for review to upper-level county courts. The history of appellate-court intrusions ended almost two centuries later, with Maria Theresa's interventions in her Hungarian kingdom. She finally issued an order forbidding further witchcraft trials in 1766, after the royal appeal court had overturned a series of local sentences against witches and acquitted all defendants during the previous decade (Klaniczay 1990, 235, n. 41). These effective interventions are the positive side of the picture; the negative side is that the ordinary witchcraft prisoner's chance of gaining access to some form of appellate justice was generally remote, just like an ordinary prisoner's chance of gaining access to the Supreme Court in today's United States.

Nowhere was the role of appellate justice in limiting damage from witch hunting more important than in France, which was Europe's largest kingdom and boasted a network of appellate courts (the *parlements*), that were responsible for correcting judicial errors among the approximately 20 million French subjects. Although an appellate court system also existed for the Holy Roman Empire, within whose spacious borders the vast majority of executions for witchcraft occurred, it was tragically unable to imitate the success of the French in curbing the excesses of local witch hunters. In northern Europe, using customary law, every appellate court system reduced punishments in most of the witchcraft convictions it heard, although none of them ever managed to stop prosecutions (or even executions) for witchcraft entirely. The British Isles, including the Kingdom of Scotland, lacked appellate courts in the

technical sense; however, itinerant judges appointed by the central government managed to have much the same effect of greatly reducing, although not eliminating, executions for witchcraft. There is no comparable history of appellate-court intervention in Mediterranean Europe, largely because the various state-run Inquisitions filled their essential function of removing most witch hunting from the control of local zealots. What all these systems—the Inquisitions, itinerant judges in the British Isles, the Roman law appellate courts in France or Germany—shared was a far more rigorous attitude than most local courts toward what constituted admissible evidence of witchcraft and therefore provided satisfactory legal proof of a defendant's guilt.

One finds several instances, starting in 1593 when the High Court (Hooge Raad) of the province of Holland quashed a witchcraft indictment and effectively ended prosecution in the heartland of the United Netherlands, in which appellate court intervention indirectly brought witch hunting to an end. Elsewhere in Europe, subsequent interventions by appellate courts were responsible for stopping witch hunting at least temporarily. In 1676, for example, firsthand interrogations by top-level judges in Sweden's capital finally brought an end to a long-running panic that had intermittently terrorized several of the kingdom's northern provinces for eight years; however, Sweden's Court of Appeal subsequently upheld a few death sentences for witchcraft, until a smaller panic erupted in the 1720s, whereupon it not only overturned every lower-court sentence but also punished the principal accusers.

In the French legal system, people arrested for witchcraft who managed to reach their appellate court (*parlement*) frequently saw their sentences reduced. Even its most severe branch, the *Parlement* of Rouen in Normandy, released 20 percent of its 270 prisoners charged with witchcraft, even during its most intensive phase of witch hunting between 1580 and 1622, and reduced the sentences of another 25 percent. When one looks elsewhere in the French appellate system, these figures increase. But it must not be forgotten that, in France as elsewhere, many prisoners failed to take advantage of the opportunity to appeal a death sentence for witchcraft. In the only sixteenth-century French local witch hunt for which we possess a complete trial dossier, only two of the five men sentenced to death chose to appeal to the *Parlement* of Paris, which in this instance upheld both condemnations (Jacques-Chaquin and Préaud 1996).

Despite this particular incident, the meticulous and painstaking research of Alfred Soman (1992) enables us to appreciate how Europe's most prestigious secular court, the *Parlement* of Paris, compiled an early and remarkable record in reducing punishments for witchcraft. The *Parlement* of Paris, with a *ressort* (jurisdiction)

that covered almost half of France and encompassed nearly 10 million subjects, was consistently skeptical when evaluating evidence about witchcraft. Although Jean Bodin's famous *De a démonomanie des Sorciers* (on the Demon-mania of Witches, 1580) enjoyed many editions, translations, and imitations, it never convinced the *Parlement* of Paris to regard witchcraft as an "exceptional" offense that justified otherwise unacceptable methods of proof. Instead, the Parisian judges took vigorous action in 1588 to quash illegal witch-hunting methods in northeastern France, not far from the place where Bodin worked as a royal prosecutor. They intervened again in 1601 by arresting the hangman of Rocroi, a notorious witch finder responsible for the deaths of more than 200 people; although only eight of his victims were French subjects, the *Parlement* ordered him to the galleys for the rest of his life. They subsequently intervened in the same region in 1623 by punishing local judges who approved the custom of "ducking" witches, and followed up in 1624 by ordering that all condemnations for witchcraft throughout their vast district be automatically appealed to Paris (Soman 1992).

Although Europe's premier secular court had condemned over a hundred people to death for witchcraft or magic between 1568 and 1625, this figure represents less than one-fifth of the death sentences appealed to it for such offenses. It ordered 58 such executions between 1587 and 1610, but never more than six in a year. Between 1611 and 1620, its ratio of executions for witchcraft fell to only 4 percent of cases appealed, while one-sixth of such defendants were released without punishment (Soman 1992, II, 35). (This was the time when Pierre de Lancre, a judge at the *Parlement* of Bordeaux, similarly failed to persuade his skeptical colleagues to change their approach to witchcraft cases, despite publishing two books on the subject.) Apart from one extremely late incident, the *Parlement* of Paris stopped sentencing witches to death after 1625, exactly when it also required that all witchcraft trials be appealed before it. As Soman has emphasized, this date marked the de facto decriminalization of witchcraft in the Kingdom of France.

During the final French witch panic, which affected much of southern and eastern France between 1643 and 1645, other appellate courts had adopted the Parisian practice of automatic appeals in witchcraft cases, although they still imposed a few death sentences. In some ways, the *Parlement* of Toulouse compiled an even more impressive record than Paris during this episode, releasing almost two-thirds of the 641 accused witches whom it judged during this period, banishing most of the remainder, and confirming only a handful of death sentences (Vidal 1987, 520, 522). In these years, it actually sentenced more people to death for lynching suspected witches than for practicing witchcraft.

Another smaller French appellate court, the *Parlement* of Dijon, behaved in a similar fashion during the same panic: it executed exactly 3 of the 114 convicted witches it judged between 1643 and 1645, while reducing the overwhelming majority of lower-court rulings and subsequently investigating numerous cases in which accused witches had been lynched.

Appellate justice also played a role in moderating witch hunting even in that political labyrinth, the Holy Roman Empire. The newer imperial aulic court, or *Reichshofrat*, sitting at Vienna since 1559, complemented the empire's original appellate court, the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court), sitting mostly at Speyer since 1495. Like other major European courts, the *Reichskammergericht* insisted on clearer standards of proof than those used by local witch hunters, and it invariably opposed abuses of torture. No general assessment of its overall record on witchcraft trials has been attempted until recently (Oestmann 1997), because its archives, unlike those of the *Reichshofrat*, were dispersed long ago to almost forty different locations (Schormann 1991, 157–166; 1992). Although witchcraft trials made up less than 1 percent of the *Reichskammergericht's* caseload, this court intervened in these trials more often than previously believed, and its rulings had some positive effects. For example, when a goldsmith's wife in a small Alsatian town sued her overlord, the bishop of Strasbourg, at Speyer in 1620 for illegally arresting and torturing her daughter, the emperor gave the bishop four weeks to send him a report on this subject. Although the lawsuit dragged on, her daughter was released a few months later; the goldsmith sold his house eight months after that and moved to Protestant Strasbourg. After the mother finally withdrew her suit at Speyer, she refused to pay any of the legal costs in their former home (Schaeffli 1993, 35–39). Other Alsations were still appealing to the *Reichskammergericht* against charges of witchcraft as late as 1661.

The greatest weaknesses of the *Reichskammergericht* were that it was distant, expensive, and cumbersome for nonexperts, although it probably saved the lives of some very ordinary plaintiffs. Contrary to its reputation, it could make rulings surprisingly swiftly in witchcraft cases (Oestmann 1997, 520); but its decisions could be impossible to enforce. For example, in 1611 a plaintiff from the duchy of Sachsen-Lauenburg appealed to it, but his mother was convicted and executed before it could nullify her trial. Even highly placed plaintiffs suffered similar consequences. In 1627, during the worst of Bamberg's witch hunts, the episcopal chancellor traveled to Speyer in order to protect his wife and daughter, who had been arrested for witchcraft; he returned with a ruling to liberate them, but they had both been burned in the interval. The furious bishop immediately imprisoned the chancellor and his son (who had also gone to Speyer), tortured

both of them on the basis of accusations made by his wife and daughter until they confessed, and burned them as well. Three years later, an appeal to the *Reichshofrat* by the city of Nuremberg on behalf of a prominent refugee from Bamberg, followed by three imperial orders and pressure from the College of Electors, culminated in the evocation of all Bamberg's witchcraft trials to the emperor in 1631. Bamberg's bishop protested vigorously, but no longer dared imprison witches in the special prison he had built for that purpose.

Next year, the *Reichskammergericht* sharply censured the elector of Cologne when ruling in favor of a plaintiff accused of witchcraft, but it could not curb Cologne's "extirpation" program. The *Reichshofrat* was not asked to intervene in Ferdinand's electorate until 1639, when its actions proved as decisive there as they had in Bamberg. Only ten days after learning of Vienna's decision, Cologne flatly refused a local petition to renew witch hunting. Such examples suggest that the newer imperial appellate court could act with somewhat greater effect than its predecessor, but it had different shortcomings. Because the *Reichshofrat* had been created in order to arbitrate disputes between autonomous imperial governments, individual subjects could not appeal to it directly against witch hunting zealots. In order to involve the *Reichshofrat*, the imperial free city of Nuremberg had to bring a formal complaint against the bishop of Bamberg, or the free city of Cologne had to bring a similar action against the archbishop-elect of Cologne. Moreover, because the emperor was a partisan Catholic, Protestant governments were often reluctant to appeal to it. But each appellate court did what it could to curb the worst excesses of witch hunting in the empire.

The peculiar history of how a small Alpine district, nestled between the Swiss Confederation and Austrian Vorarlberg, became the principality of Lichtenstein, illustrates how appellate justice could still play a decisive role in the history of witch hunting in the Holy Roman Empire. Witch hunting began in Vaduz around 1648. This first hunt ended in 1651, but an even more severe burst of witchcraft trials erupted there a quarter-century later. By 1680, nearly 300 people—approximately one-tenth of the entire population of the county of Vaduz—had been executed as witches since 1648. When prominent families among the count's victims (whose confiscated properties helped pay his huge debts) complained to Habsburg officials in Tyrol, Emperor Leopold I appointed the prince-abbot of Kempten to investigate their accusations. Supported by the University of Salzburg, the prince-abbot successfully pressed charges of extortion and sadistic tortures in witchcraft trials against Franz Karl von Hohenems, the count of Vaduz, before the *Reichshofrat* in Vienna. In 1684 the aulic appellate court declared him deposed.

His accuser, aided by soldiers from the Tyrolean government, thereupon captured the count of Vaduz and kept him prisoner at Kempten until Franz Karl died sixteen years later. At that time, his lands were forfeited to his accuser. After the count's death, the prince-abbot sold Vaduz to the distinguished Austro-Moravian house of Lichtenstein with the blessing of Emperor Leopold I, who raised it to a *Fürstentum* (principality) in 1712. The house of Lichtenstein has ruled in Vaduz ever since, outlasting even the Austrian Empire. Thus a late and unusually brutal Alpine witch hunt and a Viennese appellate court helped to create one of the smallest sovereign states in contemporary Europe.

All appellate courts had the right to increase as well as reduce the punishments decreed by local courts. Appeals could be made *a minima* by the prosecution as well as by the defendants if prosecutors found the original sentence overly lenient. Moreover, appellate court judges were completely free to revise a sentence in any manner they wished, without explaining their reasons. The *parlement* serving the Habsburg province of Franche-Comté, for instance, sentenced to death just over half (53 percent) of the accused witches it judged, compared with 83 percent in seignorial courts and 74 percent in lower-level *bailliage* courts. Nevertheless, the *parlement* actually increased the severity of lower-court sentences in about 10 percent of the witchcraft cases it judged (Rochelandet 1997, 66–67). Henri Boguet, a regional judge in Franche-Comté, reportedly asked his publishers to stop reprinting his 1602 demonology when he sought to be promoted to the province's *parlement*, a goal he finally achieved shortly before his death in 1619. Seven years earlier, that court had revised three of Boguet's final four decisions in witchcraft trials; although two death sentences were overturned, one sentence, which had been appealed by Boguet's prosecutor, was actually increased (Monter 1976, 70, 74). In these cases, as in almost everything else ever done by any appellate court in revising witchcraft sentences, we lack any precise explanations for their decisions.

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See also: ACQUITTALS; ARRAS; BODIN, JEAN; BOGUET, HENRI; BURGUNDY, DUCHY OF; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; NORMANDY; PARLEMENT OF PARIS; REICHSHOFRAT; REICHSKAMMERGERICHT; SWEDEN; VADUZ, COUNTY OF.

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APULEIUS OF MADAURA (B. CA. 125; FL. CA 155–60)

Apuleius authored the seriocomic romance dealing with magic and shape shifting, the *Metamorphoses* (better known as *The Golden Ass*), as well as the *Apologia*, Apuleius's speech to a Roman court in his own defense against charges of practicing magic. In different ways, these two works offered considerable information about ideas of popular and learned magic in late antiquity, and they influenced later European thought about these subjects, and thus, of course, European thought about witchcraft, after being edited and translated in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Born at Madaura (in modern Algeria) in Roman North Africa, Apuleius was well educated at Carthage and Athens (in Athens, possibly by a nephew of the great biographer Plutarch) and became interested in philosophy, natural science, and magic. Little is known of the details of his life, except for Apuleius's falling ill at the home of an old school friend, Scinius Pontianus, in the town of Oea, near Alexandria, being nursed back to health by the friend and the friend's widowed mother, Aemilia Pudentilla, and later marrying Pudentilla. The marriage, the death of Scinius Pontianus, and other complications arising from Apuleius's inheritance of the estate led to some of Pudentilla's relatives laying a charge of magic against Apuleius and to a trial before the proconsul Claudius Maximus at Sabratha in North Africa. In Roman law, the penalty for the crime of which Apuleius was accused was death. The *Apologia* was a revised version of his speech to the court in his own defense and offered an extensive and important survey of learned and popular ideas of magic in the mid-second century Roman world. The *Apologia* told that Apuleius had inherited and wasted considerable wealth, had long been interested in philosophy and scientific experimentation, and regarded the accusations against him as inspired by



Apuleius of Madaura's romance, *The Golden Ass*, informed early modern ideas of magic. Here Lucius observes a witch rubbing ointments on her body in order to fly, and he is then transformed into an ass. (TopFoto.co.uk)

jealousy and based on his accusers' misunderstanding of philosophy and natural science.

Apuleius's best-known work was his *Metamorphoses*, popularly known as *The Golden Ass*. Although Apuleius borrowed much of the plot from earlier writers, his own literary and intellectual skill created a remarkably popular novel. It told the tale of a lazy young man named Lucius, whose fascination with magic, particularly erotic magic, while on a journey to Thessaly, long reputed to be a center of magic and sorcery by the Greeks, led to his transformation into an ass and a series of seriocomic adventures before his return to human shape under the auspices of the goddess Isis. The final book told of Lucius's initiation into the cult of Isis; it has been interpreted as a serious meditation on religion, and the entire work as a figurative autobiography of the author, because it was narrated in the first person by the character Lucius. *The Golden Ass* also contained other tales of magic, including the religious fable of Cupid and Psyche, which obviously fascinated both Apuleius and his audience, because it was no less a figure than St. Augustine who transmitted the popular title of the work, *The Golden Ass*.

Apuleius and his wife eventually settled in Carthage, where he lectured on philosophical subjects. Some of

his talks were collected in two works, *Florida* and *On Plato and His Dogmas*. These and other works, including the treatise *On the God of Socrates*, make Apuleius an important representative of the philosophical movement known as Middle Platonism, but his interest in magic certainly equaled his interest in philosophy.

Early Christian thinkers, including St. Augustine, were highly suspicious of Apuleius, considering him a wonder-worker, particularly when they read *The Golden Ass* in conjunction with Apuleius's philosophically religious works, although other Christians regarded at least the Cupid and Psyche episode as an allegorization of the soul's development. *The Golden Ass* was translated by Ermolao Barbaro in the fifteenth century and printed frequently in that century and the next, often with illustrations that echoed sixteenth-century concerns, thus turning the second-century philosophical comic romance into a justification of contemporary ideas of sorcery and witchcraft. This translation, print, and illustration history made *The Golden Ass*, with several other works of Roman antiquity, an important reference in Renaissance discussions of witchcraft and sorcery.

EDWARD PETERS

See also: AUGUSTINE, ST.; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; HORACE; METAMORPHOSIS.

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AQUINAS, ST. THOMAS (CA. 1225–1274)

This Dominican monk and professor of theology, the greatest thinker in that form of medieval theology known as Scholasticism, ranks among the most significant authorities affecting the origins, formation, and perpetuation of the early modern image of witches. As with some other prominent theologians, it is important to distinguish between his intentions and later interpretation of his works. Thomas lived and taught at a time when witchcraft prosecutions were unknown, but when the foundations were partly laid for the future criminalization of witchcraft. The evolution of a standardized ecclesiastical legal system (known as the Inquisition), which Rome had been shaping since the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, played an important role in gradually creating a systematic classification and persecution of various types of heretics.

Scholasticism was particularly concerned with systematic theology. All branches of contemporary theology were cross-linked to form a network of traditional requirements, permitting cautious advancement. Aquinas was not alone; all dogmatic systems had to grapple with the issues of demonology and magic within a vast spectrum of possible interpretations. Thus the significance of Thomas Aquinas resides less in his particular statements about demonology or magic than in his new theological approach and its philosophical background, based on his interpretation of Aristotle. This background is particularly obvious in Thomas's relationship to his teacher Albertus Magnus (Albert the Great), who was considered not only a universal theologian, but also an expert in all fields of science, including the borderline between empirical science and magic. One can assume that Thomas was acquainted with the whole spectrum of magical practices, so far as they were known in academic circles. Of course, Thomas's theological background included the fourth-century Church Father St. Augustine and his statements on demonology, particularly to the extent to which these acquired legal status through Gratian's *Concord of Discordant Canons*, known as the *Decretum* (1130), or formed the foundation for the study of theology in Peter Lombard's *Sententiae* (1148–1151). As a result, Thomas's *Commentary on the Sentences of Peter*

Lombard offers an important source for resolving certain issues.

The subject of demonology was, of course, also dealt with systematically in Thomas's *Summa Theologiae* (*Summa of Theology*) (1.1, Q.51 f.). It is particularly interesting that Aquinas considered demonology within the context of his doctrine of angels. He approached problems on a purely ontological level, in relation to the doctrine of creation, with no reference to practical life. On the other hand, *The Summa Theologiae* and other works also discussed individual issues concerning witchcraft and magic, and these were later consolidated to form certain lines of argumentation. His view of *maleficium* (harmful magic) was traditional, but he added the detailed notion of an *impotentia ex maleficio* (impotence from evildoing) (*Commentary on the Sentences*, Bk 4, D. 64, Q. 21, Art. 3), one of the questions that was later discussed intensively in relation to the impact of witches. In accordance with Augustine's doctrine of demonology, he assumes the real possibility of sexual relations between demons and humans. In his *Scriptum super libros sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi* (*Commentary on the Sentences of Master Peter Lombard*) and *Summa Theologiae* (I, Q. 51, Art. 3), Aquinas systematically formulated his doctrine of incubi and succubi and provides a plausible explanation: By nature, demons could not conceive children with humans, but they could take the form of a woman and absorb a man's sperm through a sexual encounter, then take the form of a man and inseminate a woman with the stored sperm.

The scholastic logic of this idea had fatal consequences in the future, as it implied "real" sexual relations between devils and humans. The same applied to the notion of men forming pacts with demons. Augustine's statements were made within the context of Greek and Roman demonology, but Thomas interpreted them in terms of scholastic and systematic theology, resulting in the idea of everyday social relations between humans and demons. In the light of the already ongoing systematic persecution of heretics, a transfer of this aspect of "reality" to supposed witches became relatively easy.

Thomas's theology did, however, contain certain aspects that clearly inhibited the outbreak of witchcraft persecution: For example, Aquinas (in agreement with traditional canon law) rejected the idea of humans being physically transported by demons, the issue that eventually led to the notion of witches flying; moreover, he was certain that harmful magic was possible only with God's permission (*permissio Dei*), and he gave no indication that superstitious practices should be punished or prosecuted as heretical. Nevertheless, his new methodology could be interpreted in a far more radical way, leading to a criminalization of magic. The interpretation of Aristotle that characterized his new

school of thought entailed an entirely new understanding of the causal interrelation between events in heaven and those on earth. Thomas's doctrine of causality attributed greater significance than previous philosophical and theological traditions, which were mainly Platonic, to the so-called *causae secundae* (secondary causes). Consequently, the late medieval doctrine of witchcraft could easily use Thomas's authority to emphasize not only the power of the Devil but also that of his servants, the witches. They reduced the *permissio Dei* from the original claim that nothing evil occurs outside of the divine will, to a general authorization from the divine for the actions of the Devil and his witches. The Devil, sorcerers, and witches became protagonists who were seen as acting independently and with effect. Thomas never expressed this development, but it is a logical consequence of his fundamental ideas.

Thus the tradition of Thomist theology is of particular interest. Venerated as the "Angelic Doctor," by far the most significant theologian produced by the Dominican order, Aquinas became the greatest authority of the papal Inquisition, which had already been primarily entrusted to the Dominicans during Aquinas's childhood. To what extent such Dominican inquisitors as Heinrich Kramer really found support in Thomas is irrelevant in this context; they used (or misused) his authority, thus associating Thomas's name with the whole aspect of witchcraft and the persecution of witches. Particularly during the Counter-Reformation of the late sixteenth century, the Roman Catholic Church officially considered St. Thomas (who had been far from the only recognized authority in the late Middle Ages) the most significant Catholic theologian. Consequently, it became extremely difficult for Catholics to argue against any of Aquinas's positions affecting demonology.

Thus it is not surprising that, after the era of witchcraft trials ended, essential elements of Aquinas's doctrines concerning witchcraft and demonology were maintained by Catholic theology far into the nineteenth century, aided by the fact that in 1879 Pope Leo XIII declared Thomas Aquinas to be the "normal theologian" for Catholics. In the German *Kulturkampf* (culture war) and its disputes about witchcraft, Thomas Aquinas suffered a fate similar to Martin Luther: The confessional opposition degraded him to a propagandist of relentless witch persecution, which was of course historically untrue. Despite any precise implications for individual issues, Thomas Aquinas's statements remain essentially theoretical and lack any direct relation to the subsequent persecution of witches.

JÖRG HAUSTEIN;

TRANSLATED BY HELEN SIEGBURG

See also: ANGELS; AUGUSTINE, ST.; DEMONOLOGY; DEMONS; DEVIL; DOMINICAN ORDER; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; GRATIAN; INCUBUS

AND SUCCUBUS; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; KRAMER, HEINRICH; LUTHER, MARTIN; *MALEFICIUM*; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC.

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ARAGON

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, many different authorities prosecuted the offense of witchcraft in Aragon (in Spanish, Aragón). In addition to seigniorial justice and so-called "popular justice" (lynchings performed on the margins of legality), the three most active judicial institutions were those of inquisitorial, episcopal, and royal justice.

The Holy Office, known as the Inquisition, created especially for the eradication of heresies in the thirteenth century and restored within the crown of Aragon in 1483, based its persecutions upon accusations of apostasy, because it was supposed that the implicit or explicit pact that every witch must have made with the Devil implied an abjuration of the Christian faith. Despite the Inquisition's reputation for cruelty (owing primarily to the "Black Legend," the defamatory depiction of the Spanish national character), however, trials for witchcraft became fewer and fewer in Aragon as the sixteenth century wore on, until they all but disappeared. The last condemnations to death for witchcraft pronounced by the inquisitorial tribunal of Zaragoza took place as early as 1535, against two women from villages situated in the Pyrenees. Inquisitorial skepticism as to the reality of the *maleficia* (evil acts, harmful magic) attributed to witches grew

after the famous proceedings in Logroño in 1610, when the rationalist intervention of the “witches’ advocate” Alonso de Salazar Frías provoked a decisive turn away from further prosecutions for witchcraft by the Holy Office throughout Spain. This shift reflected the interests of an institution whose principal concern was not so much to investigate mentalities as to control groups considered dangerous from a sociopolitical viewpoint. Given the increasing disbelief among the inquisitors about the reality of crimes attributed to witches, these soon began to be considered as minor questions that would reasonably have belonged to the *ordinario*, the ecclesiastical judge who represented the local bishop.

Episcopal tribunals in Aragon, on the other hand, increased their prosecutions for witchcraft and other forms of superstition in the last decades of the sixteenth century, along with prosecution of other behaviors considered fundamentally irreligious and threatening to proper supervision of the faithful, including common-law marriage, homosexuality, usury, and acts of physical aggression against the clergy. This disciplinary turn coincided with the imposition of other decrees approved at the Council of Trent and copied by provincial synods throughout Spanish territories. The Kingdom of Aragon was divided into seven dioceses (Zaragoza, Huesca, Teruel, Jaca, Barbastro, Tarazona, and Albarracín). Each had its own episcopal jurisdiction, which was delegated to the so-called *Vicario General*, who performed the functions of judge in the name of the bishop, as did such other episcopal ministers and officials as the *Visitor* (a judge delegated in places where he made an annual visit), the fiscal procurator, the public defender (*el abogado de Pobres*) and various notaries, bailiffs, constables, or jailers. Like the Inquisition, episcopal judges used procedures based on canon law in search of evidence. They required the presence of many witnesses, for the prosecution as well as the defense, and, frequently, they ultimately suspended cases for lack of evidence. When the defendants were declared guilty, the sentences were usually light and consisted principally of paying the costs of the proceedings, and sometimes exile or flogging.

Unlike the relative benignity displayed by its ecclesiastical judges with regard to witchcraft, Aragon’s secular tribunals, whose jurisdiction was confined to a municipality or region, pronounced summary judgments based on statutes that constituted authentic “states of exception” to the laws of the realm and were designed to prosecute certain kinds of criminals (such as witches or bandits) on the social margins of a particular jurisdiction. Thus, although the laws of Aragon prohibited the application of torture, the secular tribunals authorized it without limit for such “exceptional” offenses. Though Aragonese law required a formal accusation before a criminal trial could begin, secular tribunals allowed the opening of “exceptional” trials at the simple

will of the judge. He could convene such trials on festival days, at any hour of the day or night, at any place of his choosing, with or without the presence of legal counsel. Under “exceptional” procedures, the liberty of an Aragonese secular judge reached such extremes that he could even pass judgment without bothering to begin a trial. Most extraordinary of all is the fact that a judge who presided in accordance with newly minted laws about “exceptional” offenses could (and was in fact obliged to) apply them retroactively—that is, against defendants who had broken these laws before they existed.

These local magistrates regarded witchcraft as primarily a problem of public order against which it was considered necessary to fight in the most expedient way possible. True “witch hunts” in Aragon took place exclusively in small mountainous and isolated settlements. Because of the extreme rapidity of this method (many victims were hanged before legal proceedings against them had even begun) and because only a few widely dispersed local records have been preserved, we know little about local justice. However, we do know that women were the primary victims of secular prosecutions in Aragon. This was partly due to prosecutions that were not based on real deeds (as opposed to those carried out by ecclesiastical courts, or for that matter “exceptional” justice carried out against Aragonese bandits), but even more to the need to find a scapegoat, someone who could be blamed for all sorts of misfortunes and who could be sacrificed with impunity. In Aragon, as elsewhere in Europe, women, considered since antiquity the living incarnation of evil, perfectly personified diabolical dealings.

Despite the unevenness in our recorded evidence, we may divide Aragonese witchcraft prosecutions into two major categories: prosecutions for witchcraft (*brujería*), which included some mention of collective participation in witchcraft and an implicit pact with the Devil, and prosecutions for sorcery (*hechicería*), in which, rather than some demonic power of the accused, certain forms of conduct or practices considered superstitious were prosecuted. Witchcraft prosecutions constituted a minority, mostly because they were mainly initiated by local secular judges and the records have been lost—or they were never even convened and conducted as formal trials.

Most of the prosecutions for which the records have been preserved concerned defendants accused of evildoing by their neighbors because of certain quarrels or conflicts, or defendants who were authentic “magical professionals,” that is, men and women paid to resolve the problems of their clients; prominent among these professionals were those who specialized in curing ill health, divination of future events, location of treasure or lost objects, and, above all among women professionals, seduction of a desired man.

Aragonese witchcraft prosecutions enable us to establish a clear delimitation between masculine and feminine magic. Men dedicated to magic, as well as necromancers and a few members of the clergy, often came from southern France (or at least had contacts beyond the frontier). They were almost always associated with literate culture in general and in particular with *grimorios* (*grimoires*—magicians’ books for invoking demons), which they brought from neighboring France. On the contrary, the women devoted to magic tended to have much more humble backgrounds. The majority were illiterate, prostitutes or procuresses, often from Mediterranean coastal regions, and their methods were heavily influenced by the remnants of Morisco culture, long established in the Aragonese region.

MARÍA TAUSIET;

TRANSLATED BY THOMAS SIZGORICH

See also: COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; COURTS, INQUISITORIAL; COURTS, SECULAR; FEMALE WITCHES; FERRER, DOMINGA (“LA COJA”); INQUISITION, SPANISH; MALE WITCHES; SALAZAR FRÍAS, ALONSO DE; SPAIN; VICENTE, JOAN.

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ARDENNES

Several witchcraft trials are recorded from the Ardennes region (which includes parts of present-day France, Belgium, and Luxembourg), ruled by various territorial lords during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The southwestern part of the region was characterized by a large number of unofficial lynchings of witches. Because few records from the Ardennes have survived, we do not know how many trials and executions for witchcraft took place. The figure of 20,000 executions, given in the older historiography, is certainly a complete exaggeration. Moreover, the history of the witchcraft trials from the region as a whole has not yet been comprehensively researched.

Although nearly all the inhabitants spoke Walloon, a French dialect, the Ardennes region was fragmented

politically, juridically, and religiously in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Its northwestern part included the prince-abbey of Stablo-Malmédy, which belonged to the Holy Roman Empire and therefore used the 1532 imperial criminal code, the Carolina Code (*Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*). The largest state in the Ardennes region was the duchy of Luxembourg, a province of the Spanish Netherlands. In Luxembourg, legal procedure followed the criminal ordinances issued by the central Habsburg government in Brussels, supplemented by ordinances from the provincial administration in Luxembourg. The southern Ardennes included the duchy of Bouillon, divided after 1559 into two autonomous ministates: a small portion (including the town of Bouillon) under the prince-bishop of Liège and the southern principality of Sedan under the dukes of Bouillon. The southwestern area of the Ardennes belonged to France. In Bouillon, the ducal council supervised criminal legal procedure, while the French part of the Ardennes answered to the distant *Parlement* of Paris, the most important court in France.

Except for the principality of Sedan, whose rulers were Calvinist until 1635, the Ardennes region was Roman Catholic, but also fragmented religiously. Stablo-Malmédy belonged to the diocese of Liège and thus to the archdiocese of Cologne; the eastern administrative districts (*Propsteien*) belonging to Luxembourg formed part of the archdiocese of Trier, while the western administrative districts belonging to Luxembourg as well as the duchy of Bouillon formed part of the diocese of Liège. The French-owned Ardennes territory was subject to the archbishop of Reims.

Every territory and lordship in the Ardennes held witchcraft trials, and each subregion offered special particularities. In the northeast, large-scale witch hunts affected the prince-abbey of Stablo-Malmédy after 1585: at least 30 people from the villages of the prince-abbot had been executed for witchcraft by 1638. The sensational trial of Jean del Vaux, a monk from Stablo, who was suspected of having poisoned many of his fellow monks by means of witchcraft, began in 1592. Initially pursued by the Church authorities, it ended with his beheading in 1597. In his extensive, extremely detailed, and largely voluntary confession, the monk claimed to be a pupil of the (in)famous Dietrich Flade of Trier, and Del Vaux accused more than 200 other people of being witches. The wave of trials that resulted from his confessions and accusations lasted until 1598, when Stablo’s territorial lord, the prince-abbot Ernst of Bavaria, who was also prince-bishop of Liège, issued a decree prohibiting people from defaming others as witches. The Jesuit Martín Del Rio discussed the case in his well-known demonological treatise, *Disquisitiones Magicae libri sex* (Six Books on Investigations into Magic, 1599/1600). Stablo-Malmédy endured another cluster of witchcraft trials in the 1620s, when Aegidius

Dormael, a judge renowned for his severity as a witch hunter, pursued allegations of witchcraft against several prominent people in Stablo, including mayors of the town. A few of those accused of witchcraft managed to bring countersuits before the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court) in Speyer, alleging that due legal procedure had not been observed in their trials. Aegidius Dormael's brutal and corrupt machinations emerged all too clearly from the *Reichskammergericht* records: He pursued witchcraft trials primarily in order to increase his own power and to make a financial profit.

In the eastern and central Ardennes, the exact number of witchcraft trials and executions in the duchy of Luxembourg remains in doubt, although historians agree they were numerous. Marie-Sylvie Dupont-Bouchat (1978) presented the following statistics for witchcraft trials in the Walloon-speaking administrative districts of the Ardennes region that belonged to the duchy of Luxembourg; the statistics are based on regional account books that are unfortunately incomplete and thus provide only a partial picture of events. In Bastogne between 1550 and 1670 there were only 13 recorded trials with 2 executions; Chiny-Etalle recorded 26 trials with 16 executions between 1509 and 1670; and there were 23 trials and 11 executions recorded in Virton-Saint-Mard between 1518 and 1645. No reliable figures exist for the La Roche district. In the German-speaking district of Arlon, on the other hand, there were 39 trials between 1553 and 1687, all but one of which ended in execution. While these statistics are based only on the account books of the relevant *Proposteien* (administrative district) and omit the trials that took place in the legally autonomous lordships of the duchy of Luxembourg, they show a clear contrast between the relatively scattered and mild persecution of witches in the Walloon-speaking districts and the much larger-scale witchcraft trials that took place in German-speaking districts and lordships.

The theory that witchcraft trials occurred with particular severity in small lordships is supported by the events in the lordship of St. Hubert-en-Ardenne. Although part of the duchy of Luxembourg, it retained legal autonomy and thus could try witches without any external supervision. With only a few exceptions, the 21 witchcraft trials in St. Hubert-en-Ardenne took place during the rule of Abbot Nicolas de Fanson between 1611 and 1652 (Dupont-Bouchat 1999). A former pupil of the Jesuits, filled with counter-reforming zeal, Fanson was an enthusiastic champion of Tridentine reforms. Convinced that St. Hubert was infested with adulterers, demonically possessed people, and witches, Abbot Fanson wanted to establish a new moral order in the territory during his lengthy rule. All transgressions that were regarded as violations of the new Counter-Reformation order were policed with severity: blasphemy, sorcery, soothsaying, and sexual

offenses. Violations of sexual norms also became evidence against people suspected of witchcraft. During the peak of the witch persecution in St. Hubert between 1615 and 1630, witchcraft trials also increased in two neighboring territories, the duchy of Bouillon and the Luxembourg district of Bastogne. The inhabitants of St. Hubert-en-Ardenne had already been sensitized to the alleged activities of the Devil even before the seventeenth-century witchcraft trials, because the abbey was a well-known place of pilgrimage, where people possessed by the Devil went to be exorcised, and where those who had been bitten by wolves (or allegedly by werewolves) or who suffered from rabies and epilepsy came to be healed. In the late sixteenth century, Peter Binsfeld, the suffragan bishop of Trier, had dedicated an edition of his demonology to Abbot Jean Balla, who ruled St. Hubert between 1585 and 1599. Counter-Reformation influences affected other nearby territories in the Ardennes region as well as St. Hubert-en-Ardenne. A lengthy economic crisis increased the fear of witches, whipped up further by the activities of the Jesuits, who constantly warned against the destructive power of the Devil in sermons and catechisms.

In the southern Ardennes, only a few trials (the number is still unknown) took place in the principality of Sedan under its Huguenot dukes (De la Marck and La Tour d'Auvergne) before they turned Catholic in 1635. Meanwhile, in the northern part of the duchy of Bouillon (including the city of Bouillon), which had belonged since 1559 to the prince-bishop of Liège, Catholic officials recorded 73 trials (Dupont-Bouchat 1978), but only 15 executions (21 percent) between 1564 and 1685 (Bodard 1964). However, the parts that belonged to the Kingdom of France were characterized by many unofficial lynchings of witches (Soman 1988). Here, the *Parlement* of Paris tried to assert its legal authority in the face of opposition from local officials. Because the *parlement* maintained a relatively restrained approach toward the legal treatment of witchcraft, the local inhabitants resorted to a series of lynchings against suspected witches. Perhaps as many as 300 people were drowned or burned in this part of the Ardennes and in the neighboring French territory of Argonne without proper trials.

RITA VOLTMER;

TRANSLATED BY ALISON ROWLANDS

See also: BINSFELD, PETER; CAROLINA CODE; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; FLADE, DIETRICH; FRANCE; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); LUXEMBOURG, DUCHY OF; LYNCHING; NETHERLANDS, SOUTHERN; PARLEMENT OF PARIS.

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ARRAS

The series of witchcraft trials and appeals known as the *Vauderie d'Arras* began in this Burgundian city in 1459 and ended in Paris in 1491. The trials actually lasted less than a year, from November 1459 until October 1460; the appeals process, however, extended over thirty years. From this well-documented series of trials and appeals emerged our most complete description of late medieval witchcraft anywhere in Europe, including material on the connection of witchcraft with heresy via the Waldensians. Religious, social, economic, and political factors all played roles in the *Vauderie d'Arras*. Despite the sensation caused by the events in Arras, their subsequent influence on the development of witchcraft beliefs, practices, and prosecutions was soon overshadowed by the appearance of the German-based *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), by Heinrich Kramer.

The trials at Arras stemmed from a Dominican chapter-general held at Langres in ducal Burgundy earlier in 1459, attended by the inquisitor of Arras, Pierre le Broussart. One event then taking place at Langres was the heresy trial of a hermit formerly from the county of Artois, with Arras as its capital. Armed with the names of other heretics gathered at Langres, le Broussart returned to Arras determined to root out the menace. The crimes with which the defendants were charged were known collectively as *Vauderie* (because these trials were directed at the heresy called *Vauderie*, “Waldensianism,” seen as associated with witchcraft) and the criminals themselves as *Vaudois* (Waldensians). Whether or not the confusion between Waldensianism and witchcraft was deliberate, by this time the defini-

tion was fixed: The Waldensians were heretics, and their practices were witchcraft. A manuscript copy of Martin Le Franc's *Champion des Dames* (The Defender of Ladies) made at Arras in 1451 already incorporated the witchcraft–Waldensian–Vaudois confusion. In a marginal illustration two women were shown flying, one on a broomstick and the other on a staff, while the rubrics said “des Vaudoises” and “passe martin.” (The latter referred to the eve of Martinmas, November 11, a time when witches traditionally held their assemblies). While other contemporary tracts were devoted to condemning Waldensians as heretics, descriptions of their practices were now attributed to witchcraft.

The first arrest was made on November 1, 1459, the Day of All Saints. Four vicars-general, acting in the absence of the bishop of Arras, Jean Jouffroy, began the proceedings. Jacques du Bois, the dean of Notre Dame d'Arras, who quickly took charge, soon joined them. The second person arrested was Jean Lavite, a well-known local painter and poet, on February 25, 1460. Lavite was soon forced to confess and incriminated many others. Six more people were arrested by early April, including Huguet Amery, formerly in the service of Bishop Jouffroy. While the four vicars-general grew uneasy with the way events were unfolding, Pierre le Broussart and Jacques du Bois, now joined by the suffragan bishop, the Franciscan Jean Fauconnier, forced them to continue.

On May 8, a general assembly of the clergy of Arras decided the fate of seven of the eight prisoners (the other having been found hanged in his cell the previous night). On the following day, Jean Lavite, five women, and the body of the dead prisoner were led to a high scaffold that had been erected in the courtyard of the episcopal palace; only Huguet Amery, who was resisting torture, was not present. The inquisitor's sermon repeated all of the charges: these *Vaudois* flew to their assembly in the woods, where they found the Devil in the form of a man or an animal and adored him; then they spat upon the cross; then after feasting they engaged in the sins of sodomy and buggery, plus others that the inquisitor dared not mention before innocent observers. Amid considerable unrest in the crowd, six of the defendants were sentenced to die at the stake. Meanwhile, ten more people were arrested.

A further round of arrests, beginning on June 22, 1460, reached the city's rich and powerful, including two wealthy citizens and Payen de Beaufort, a nobleman. While these new prisoners were being interrogated, the previous group was prepared for the second *sermo generalis* (general sermon) on July 16. Seven more victims were sent to the stake, although two were spared and imprisoned. The citizens grew restive, but that very evening another series of arrests began; one of the town's richest men, Antoine Saquespée, was arrested after dark and conducted to prison. On the following

day two more arrests were made, while three other men fled as far as Paris. After this, only two more people were arrested on accusations of *Vauderie*, one on July 27 and the last on August 13.

With some wealthy and powerful men now behind bars, the prosecutions took a new turn. Relatives of the prisoners launched appeals to their overlord, Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy, who summoned an assembly of scholars in Brussels. Although they reached no conclusions, Duke Philip sent the first herald of his Order of the Golden Fleece to observe the proceedings in Arras and quell any rumors that the duke favored them. Inquisitorial zeal waned after the Brussels convention, yet a third *sermo generalis* was held on October 22, 1460, where the Seigneur de Beaufort was sentenced to prison and fined an enormous sum, most of which was earmarked for Duke Philip's proposed crusade against the Turks. Of the two others arrested with Beaufort, one was sentenced to prison, the other to the stake as a relapsed heretic. Finally, after withstanding torture, Huguet Amery was sentenced to thirty years on bread and water—in absentia, after he had escaped from jail. During the final months of 1460, the remaining prisoners were released after a series of formal hearings.

The effect of the trial of Waldensians in Arras was immediate. Sources, using the words *sorcherie* (sorcery) and *Vauderie* (Waldensian heresy) as synonyms, describe witchcraft trials in the French-speaking southern regions of the Burgundian Low Countries in a similar way. Thus, at Nivelles, a woman was banished in 1459 on suspicion of being a *Vaudoise* or *somière*. Sorcery became intertwined with fifteenth-century demonology, which now included the pact with the Devil and his sect of worshippers. Short-term effects of the trials at Arras also included the initiation, in 1460, of large-scale inquiries about possible witches at Tournai, Douai, and Cambrai, and the publication of books (most notably by Johann Tinctor) and the preaching of sermons about the new dangers of the conspiracy of the Devil and his servants, the witches.

Even before the trials ended, appeals were made to both ecclesiastical and civil authorities. The success of several appeals had a calming effect on the citizens of Arras, and popular opinion soon placed the inquisitors on the defensive. Popular ballads attacked those who had fostered the trials, especially Jacques du Bois, Jean Fauconnier, the vicars-general, and their lawyers. Although ruled by Burgundian dukes, the province of Artois fell under the appellate jurisdiction of the French *Parlement* of Paris (sovereign judicial court, with jurisdiction over approximately one-half of France), which began an official review of appeals from Arras on May 21, 1461. Political and diplomatic considerations influenced the appeals; they concentrated on judicial procedure, not on the substance of the charges, although the *parlements'* official records also contain considerable

details about them. In 1468, the plaintiffs received a favorable decision from the *parlement*, but it could not be enforced. This finally happened in July 1491, over thirty years after the *Vauderie d'Arras* had begun. Only one of the original victims of the tragedy remained—the extremely durable Huguet Amery.

GORDON ANDREAS SINGER

See also: HERESY; JACQUIER, NICOLAS; LE FRANC, MARTIN; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; NETHERLANDS, SOUTHERN; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; TINCTOR, JOHANN; *VAUDOIS*.

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ART AND VISUAL IMAGES

An iconography and visual language for witchcraft developed in the last decade of the fifteenth century and the first decade of the sixteenth. It was primarily the work of Hans Baldung Grien and other south German artists, apparently stimulated by the increasing attention given to this subject in proceeding decades in treatises, sermons, and other literary publications. Experiments in printmaking by artists and the inclusion of woodcuts in the new print media by printers eager to attract a broader readership also played a key role in the visual elaboration of this new subject. Although witchcraft scenes were also depicted in drawings and paintings, the overwhelming majority of images produced prior to the seventeenth century were prints. Through frequent reproduction, these images served initially to link witchcraft to themes of sexual and moral disorder, and from the mid-sixteenth century they emphasized the dangers witchcraft posed for a Christian society. From the later seventeenth century, such images frequently became an object of parody and ridicule because of growing skepticism concerning witchcraft beliefs.

Few images of magic, sorcery, and witchcraft have survived before the 1490s. A gradual demonization of sorcery, which laid the basis for a new iconography of witchcraft, can be found in images of milk stealing in many fifteenth-century wall paintings in northern German and Scandinavian churches, and also in the appearance of the "new vice" of sorcery, as in the second redaction (1355) of the popular allegory of Christian life by Guillaume de Deguileville, *Pèlerinage de la vie humaine* (Pilgrimage of Human Life). In the English verse translation of this work by John Lydgate (Pilgrimage of the Life of Man, 1426), a character called Sorcery was depicted as learning her craft from

the Devil as part of a group of women shown preparing ointments and herbal potions with sieve, mortar, and pestle. Sorcery was also directly linked to the Devil through its identification with the Waldensian, or *Vaudois* heresy. In Flemish miniatures of the late 1460s and early 1470s from three French versions of the *Contra sectam Valdensium* (Against the Waldensian Sect) by the Cologne theologian Johann Tinctor, Waldensians were shown worshipping the Devil in the form of a goat and riding animals, brooms, and other implements through the sky. This association was consolidated later in the century by illustrations of the so-called witch of Berkeley being carried off by the Devil on a black horse in the five editions of the *Nuremberg Chronicle* published between 1493 and 1500.

A radically new iconography of witchcraft began with a series of six woodcuts, which appeared in more than twenty illustrated editions of Ulrich Molitor's *De laniis et phitonicis mulieribus* (Concerning Witches and Fortunetellers, 1489) before 1510. It would be difficult to exaggerate their importance for the iconography of witchcraft. The same scenes were recycled numerous times with only slight changes. They included witches laming a man with a poisoned arrow, embracing a devil, riding a wolf or sticks through the sky, enjoying their meal and conversation in the countryside, and creating a hailstorm around a cauldron. The significance of this last scene, which achieved considerable prominence through its reproduction as a title page in at least seven cases, was that for the first time witchcraft was represented as the group activity of women gathered around a cauldron.

During the first two decades of the sixteenth century, such south German artists as Hans Baldung Grien, together with Albrecht Altdorfer, Albrecht Dürer, Hans Schäufelein, and Urs Graf, successfully consolidated and extended the new iconography of witchcraft. This iconography found its most influential form in Baldung's 1510 single-leaf, chiaroscuro woodcut, usually entitled *Witches' Sabbath*, but more appropriately called *A Group of Witches Around a Cauldron*. The woodcut was critical in establishing the image of women gathered around a cauldron as a widely recognizable visual code for witchcraft. Baldung borrowed the key image of the witches' night ride from Albrecht Altdorfer's pen-and-ink drawing of 1506, *Witches Riding Animals Through the Air*, and the idea of witchcraft as social, political, and religious inversion from the earlier engraving of his master, Albrecht Dürer, *Witch Riding Backwards on a Goat* (ca. 1500). Baldung's image of a group of witches seated within a triangle of forked sticks also established the cooking stick as one of the most common signifiers of witchcraft, especially among German artists, for the next century and beyond; while his emphasis on the naked bodies of witches and sexual

allusions in the cooking of sausages helped emphasize the sexual and gender threat of witchcraft as fundamental to its link with moral disorder. Baldung continued to develop such ideas over the next three decades, and his images continued to be influential throughout Europe for the next century and more.

The many copies produced by German artists over the following decades demonstrated contemporary interest in Baldung's work. The most significant image modeled on his work was a woodcut, probably designed in his workshop and first published as an illustration to a collection of sermons by the Strasbourg cathedral preacher, Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg, entitled *Die Eneis* (The Ants, 1516). It depicted a witches' night ride with strong sexual overtones, and helped consolidate Baldung's sexual interpretation of witchcraft, achieving widespread circulation in five different editions of Joann Pauli's popular work, *Schimpf und Ernst* (Humor and Seriousness, 1522). Different versions of this woodcut continued to be reproduced until the 1580s, as title pages to works by Johann Weyer, Reinhard Lutz, Ulrich Molitor, Paulus Frisius, and Abraham Saur.

Key elements from Baldung's iconography were quickly incorporated into the witchcraft images of artists in Germany and also beyond. A woodcut by a former fellow apprentice in Dürer's workshop, Hans Schäufelein, *The Evils of Witches*, which included riding witches and cauldrons, was published in the 1511 edition of Ulrich Tengler's *Der neu Layenspiegel* (A New Mirror for Laymen), a revision of Tengler's 1509 *Layenspiegel*. Two woodcuts featuring cauldrons were included in the second (1518) edition of Thomas Murner's *Narrenbeschwörung* (The Exorcism of Fools), to illustrate the relationship between sorcery and sexual desire. A woodcut depicting milk stealing by sorcery in Geiler's *The Ants* also featured a cauldron among the expected iconography. The 1526 painting by the Dutch artist, Jakob Cornelisz van Oostsanen, *The Witch of Endor*, made a radical break from traditional representations of the biblical story by including a group of witches around a grill, seated on goats, cooking sausages and drinking. Lucas Cranach used the imagery of naked witches brandishing cooking sticks and distaffs while riding animals through the sky in his four *Melancholia* paintings (1528–1533), in order to represent a night procession of witches and spirits, the so-called Furious Horde of popular Germanic folklore, and identify the powers associated with the melancholic imagination as diabolical.

Why Baldung and his contemporaries developed such a strong emphasis on a gendered and sexual understanding of witchcraft remains unclear. It has been suggested that it was the result of humanist interest in the classical world rather than a response to contemporary concerns about witchcraft. But more research is necessary to

explore the links between witchcraft images and contemporary discussion concerning not only witchcraft, but also related themes such as gender, the body, cosmic order, and diabolical agency. It needs also to be recognized that this new iconography did not wholly displace older traditions of depicting sorcery as the work of an individual. The Augsburg artist, Hans Burgkmaier, chose an old and hunched female figure with a devil on her shoulders to represent the “black arts” in a woodcut he completed ca. 1514 for the book project, the *Weisskünig* (The White King). The most widely disseminated representation of witchcraft in the sixteenth century was a woodcut condemning healing by sorcery, which was created by Jörg Breu and first published in Johann von Schwarzenberg’s *Memorial der Tugend* (Memory Prompts to Virtue, 1534). The woodcut featured individual healers of both genders as representatives of witchcraft, while also introducing a small yet significant visual cue of a spewing cauldron and hailstorm.

By the second half of the sixteenth century, images of witchcraft had significantly increased in number and also changed in emphasis. Its centers of production moved north, with Flemish and Dutch artists playing a greater role. The new emphases can be usefully grouped under seven headings:

1. *The crimes and punishments of witches.* Such images fed the market created for sensational news in the later sixteenth century. Erhard Schoen and Lucas Mayer from Nuremberg, Lucas Cranach the Younger from Wittenberg, and Georg Kress of Augsburg were just a few of those who created these visual news reports of witchcraft. Broadsheets also satisfied the sixteenth-century interest in providential signs. The Swiss pastor, Johann Jakob Wick, between 1560 and 1588 gathered an extremely rich collection. Among the mass of correspondence, reports, pamphlets, and broadsheets, his collection also included many colored pen drawings that Wick inserted into his texts; more than twenty of these depicted the crime of witchcraft. For Wick and his readers, they were visual signs of the terrible state into which a sinful European Christendom had fallen; witches were instruments of the Devil in his unrelenting struggle against Christ’s church.
2. *The long history of witchcraft.* In the 1560s, Pieter Brueghel the Elder created two very influential drawings that depicted the struggle between the apostle James and the ancient magician Hermogenes. In 1565, they were engraved by Pieter van der Heyden, and subsequently copied or adapted by later artists. Witchcraft, represented by riding women and a series of belching cauldrons, was simply one of the many diabolical arts over which this pagan magician was believed to have exercised control. The longer history of witchcraft was also

stressed when artists depicted such classical sorcerers and witches as Palaestra, Me roe, Pamphile, Medea, or Circe. These ancient figures sometimes took on such characteristics of contemporary witches as wild hair or the riding of domestic instruments, as in the woodcuts of the Monogrammist NH for the 1538 German translation of *The Metamorphoses* (or *The Golden Ass*) of Apuleius of Madaura; at other times, they reflected contemporary discourse about the witch’s power as diabolical or sexual, as in the many images of Circe produced for editions of Ovid, Virgil, or Renaissance emblem books. The witch was also given a biblical past, primarily through illustrations of the story of the necromancer or witch of Endor (1 Sam. 28:3–20). Jakob Cornelisz van Oostanen radically changed the traditional iconography of this subject by inserting elements from Baldung’s work into his painting of 1526. Then, in Wittenberg in 1572, the subject was included for the first time in a Luther Bible, in a woodcut probably by Johann Teufel, which was meant to encourage secular rulers to eliminate witches from their territories. Illustrations in Bibles continued into the eighteenth century, with the emphasis firmly on the figure and techniques of the witch.

3. *A link to non-Christian peoples in the present.* In the *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus* (History of the Northern Peoples), a richly illustrated and immensely popular account of Scandinavian culture by the Swedish archbishop Olaus Magnus, first published in Rome in 1555 and often republished in various European languages, a series of woodcuts depicted Scandinavian magic and sorcery and imputed them to the power of the Devil. One woodcut even presented the well-known, and by this time also frequently illustrated, story of the witch of Berkeley, in order to highlight the relationship between the pagan sorcerers of Scandinavia and the witches of Christian Europe. A similar relationship was created between contemporary witches and the Indians of the New World. The Dutch artist, Crispin de Passe, in a late sixteenth-century engraving based on a design by his Flemish collaborator, Martin de Vos, depicted Amerindian cannibals and European witches as children of a common father, Saturn, the planetary god whose rule was based on violence, namely the castration of his father and the devouring of his children. Witches were thereby identified as savage and alien, and could be more easily imagined as castrators and cannibals. Surviving prints of the same subject by Henri Leroy and Jan Sadeler the Elder suggest that the comparison enjoyed considerable currency.
4. *Witches as savage and cruel.* The Dutch artist, Jacques de Gheyn the Younger, who created a large number of drawings of witchcraft in the first decade of the

seventeenth century, exemplifies this tendency. His witches cook up body parts, suck blood from a child, disembowel a male cadaver, and nail a frog to the floor. They represent a theater of cruelty analogous to contemporary images of cruelty and atrocity associated with religious conflict, martyrdom, and the colonization of non-European peoples, and reflect the more brutal and uncompromising values of confessionalized Europe, whereby the different Churches aligned with the state to control all aspects of religion and daily life. In the 1608 edition of Francesco Maria Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficarum* (A Summary of Witches), the most profusely illustrated witchcraft treatise published, one finds among the largely routinized images of witchcraft a new image of two witches basting a child they are roasting over a fire. Violence was certainly a part of witchcraft imagery earlier in the century, nowhere more powerfully than in a large engraving by Agostino Veneziano, usually entitled *Lo Stregozzo* (The Witches' Procession, 1518–1530?), which depicts a wild female figure crushing the life out of small children at her feet. But from the 1550s, and especially from the 1590s, such violence became more frequent and intense. The Flemish artist, Frans Francken the Younger, who painted at least six immensely complex scenes of witches' assemblies in the first decade of the seventeenth century, always included graphic references to the violence of witchcraft, whether through dismembered body parts, or in the case of his Vienna painting, through the decapitation of a victim.

5. *The stereotype of the witch as an ugly crone with sagging, dried-up breasts.* The predominant image of the witch as a postmenopausal figure who denied life and nurture marked a significant change from the sexually seductive figure of the early sixteenth century. This shift was a direct consequence of the emphasis on the witch's cruelty, and probably also marked the influence of the literary stereotypes created by the new demonological treatises. The younger, attractive female figure did not wholly disappear, as is clear from the work of such artists as Frans Francken the Younger, David Teniers the Younger, Matthäus Merian the Elder, and Adrian Huberti. But younger female figures remained exceptional, often the center of attention by a group of older women who prepared them for the night ride and demonic copulation.
6. *Witchcraft as a mass phenomenon characterized by vast Sabbats.* The earliest surviving illustration of a witches' Sabbat is a drawing from Johann Jakob Wick's collection that illustrated a text of 1570. The number of witches depicted was small and the range of their activities limited, just as in a title-page woodcut to the 1591 Munich edition of the



Hans Sebald Beham's Three Witches and Death depicts the charged sexuality/pornography (note the robust nudity and the right hand of the middle witch), the ultimate effect of the working of magic (death), and the social and moral disorder personified by witches and witchcraft. (Hexen: Analysen, Quellen, Dokumente. Directmedia Publishing GmbH: Berlin, 2003)

Tractatus de Confessionibus Maleficorum et Sagarum (Treatise on Confessions of Witches and Sorceresses, 1589) by the suffragan bishop of Trier, Peter Binsfeld. But just two years later, in 1593, an unknown artist produced a detailed engraving of the various Sabbat activities said to have occurred in the diocese of Trier as an illustration to an Erfurt pamphlet by Thomas Sigfridus. This image depicted large numbers of witches engaged in varied activities, including dancing, playing music, feasting, drinking, preparing potions and powders, riding animals and various implements, and cavorting with demonic partners. The engraving marked the beginning of a new iconography of the Sabbat and was reproduced in slightly different versions over following decades. Sections of it were also copied, not least by the Nuremberg artist Michael Herr, who designed a vast and spectacular witchcraft scenario that was etched by Matthäus Merian the Elder in 1626. This work influenced the woodcut that

accompanied the various editions of Johann Prätorius's work (1668) on the mountain known in Germany as the Blocksberg, and other copies and versions into the eighteenth century. Another famous Sabbat to exercise considerable influence was the 1613 etching by the Polish artist, Jan Ziarnko, used to illustrate the work of the French magistrate, Pierre de Lancre.

7. *Witches' assemblies indoors*. The moving of witches' assemblies from the wild forest landscapes indoors is especially marked in the work of David Teniers the Younger, the Dutch painter who became the most prolific illustrator of witchcraft scenes in the mid-seventeenth century. Probably influenced by Pieter Brueghel, Frans Francken, and also by de Gheyn, who began to locate some witch scenes in domestic interiors, Teniers succeeded in domesticating the activities of witches as no other artist before him. As in the paintings of his later copyist, Jacques Aliamet, and other artists such as Jaspar Isaac, Teniers's witches gather in kitchens, around chimneys and hearths, where they engage in their evil rituals. They appear as everyday figures within the familiar domestic space of the household, which was fundamental in this period to the proper functioning of church and state.

From the mid-seventeenth century, an increasing number of voices began to be raised against the credulity of witchcraft beliefs, and trials for witchcraft became fewer or even ceased in western Europe. Satire, parody, and ridicule began to be expressed more frequently in witchcraft images. The Neapolitan artist, Salvator Rosa, for instance, created a series of eerie witchcraft tableaux in Florence during the 1640s, filled with horror, parody, and burlesque. A French printmaker, Jean Grépy, directly ridiculed witchcraft in an etching (possibly based on a lost painting by Bartholomäus Spranger), which illustrated the 1710 edition of the comic parody by Laurent Bordelon, *L'histoire des imaginations extravagantes de Monsieur Oufle* (The Story of the Extravagant Imaginations of Monsieur Oufle). It was not only Bordelon's fool (in French, *le fou*, whence Oufle) whom Crépy had in his sights; his etching was also a visual parody of Ziarnko's Sabbat of a century earlier. His countryman, Claude Gillot, another early eighteenth-century artist influenced by Bordelon's work, also produced a significant parody of a witches' Sabbat, relegating such beliefs to the world of fantasy and illusion. Likewise, William Hogarth's brilliant satirical cartoon of 1762, *Credulity, Superstition and Fanaticism: A Medley*, represented witchcraft as a puppet manipulated by a preacher-puppeteer.

After the mid-eighteenth century, much witchcraft imagery had abandoned the traditional discourse of witchcraft. Artists as varied as Johann Heinrich Füssli,

Francisco Goya, Félicien Rops, Anton Wiertz, Alfred Kubin, and Ernst Barlach used witchcraft to explore other topics, such as the artistic imagination, superstition and enlightenment, decadence and eroticism, nature and destiny. As belief in witchcraft disappeared, the fantasy witches of popular literature and film began to proliferate.

CHARLES ZIKA

See also: APULEIUS OF MADAURA; BALDUNG [GRIEN], HANS; BERKELEY, WITCH OF; BODY OF THE WITCH; BORDELON, LAURENT; BREU, JÖRG THE ELDER; BRUEGHEL, PIETER THE ELDER; CANNIBALISM; CAULDRON; CIRCE; CRANACH, LUCAS; DÜRER, ALBRECHT; ENDOR, WITCH OF; FRANCKEN II, FRANS; GEILER VON KAISERSBERG, JOHANN; GHEYN, JACQUES DE; GOYA Y LUCIENTES, FRANCISCO JOSÉ DE; GUAZZO, FRANCESCO-MARIA; HAIR; HERMOGENES; HOGARTH, WILLIAM; *LAYENSPIEGEL*; MAGNUS, OLAUS; MEDEA; MOLITOR, ULRICH; PRÄTORIUS, JOHANNES; ROSA, SALVATOR; SABBAT; SATURN; STICKS; TENIERS, DAVID, THE YOUNGER; TINCTOR, JOHANN; *VAUDOIS* (WALDENSIANS); ZIARNKO, JAN

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ASTROLOGY

As late as the mid-seventeenth century, astrology played a role in helping those who feared they might be victims of witchcraft. In some areas, it still does. Astrology is literally defined as the “word of the stars,” as distinct from astronomy, the “law of the stars.” Thus, while astronomy deals primarily with the measurement of the stars’ positions, and hence with their motions, astrology is concerned with the significance that human beings attach to those celestial movements in relation to their own affairs. The discipline of astrology is thus so broad that it is often necessary to talk of “astrologies” rather than of one monolithic astrology to which all astrologers subscribe.

The fundamental philosophical debate in astrology distinguishes belief in real planetary influences, which themselves may be conceived as either physical or metaphysical in nature, from an astrology of “signs” and “omens” in which a divine force communicates with humanity via the stars. An additional debate pits an astrology in which the stars reveal a predetermined future against one in which the future is negotiable, either because planetary influences are only tendencies or because the omens sent by the gods may be withdrawn if suitable supplications are made. A common distinction in the Middle Ages distinguished “natural astrology,” in which the planets might be the cause of general influences (for example, Mars causes heat, while the Moon brings rain) from “judicial astrology,” in which an astrologer uses a horoscope (a map of the heavens at a particular moment) to make specific judgements about particular events such as wealth, health, family happiness, and professional success. Judicial astrology is divided, in turn, into four branches, genethialogy (modern natal astrology; the interpretation of birth charts), revolutions (modern mundane astrology; the study of history and politics), interrogations (modern horary astrology; the use of horoscopes to answer precise questions), and elections (the selection of auspicious moments to inaugurate new enterprises). In its simplified form, using only the Sun and Moon, electional astrology provides the rationale behind most religious calendars, including the Jewish, Christian, and Islamic. Although most astrological texts since classical times have dealt with the interpretation of celestial alignments, the practice of astrology has frequently involved the active manipulation of the future. From this is derived an astrological magic, including the creation of planetary amulets at auspicious

moments, which survived in the West until the Renaissance, when one of its prime advocates was Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim.

HISTORY

Complex systems of astrology developed independently in three regions: in central America, perhaps as early as two thousand years ago; in China, probably in the first millennium B.C.E.; and in Mesopotamia (modern Iraq), prior to 2000 B.C.E. (the form from which Western astrology is derived). The earliest fragments of astrological tablets in Mesopotamia date back to ca. 2200 B.C.E., and the first complete set of omens, based on the planet Venus, occurred in the so-called Venus Tablet of Amisaduqa of ca. 1646 B.C.E. Assyrian emperors made extensive use of astrologers. Their patronage stimulated further innovation: The modern twelve-sign zodiac appeared in the sixth century, and the first known birth chart dates to 410 B.C.E. Encouraged by the conquests of Alexander the Great in the 330s, the techniques of Mesopotamian astrology spread east to India and west to Egypt, where they fused with Egyptian religion and Greek philosophy (especially Plato and Aristotle) and mathematics to create an astrology that is both philosophically and technically recognizably modern. By the first century C.E., we can recognize all the competing philosophical distinctions outlined above, including astrologies that favored signs or influences, materialism or spirituality, and predestination or freedom of choice. We also see the introduction of daemons, supernatural entities that St. Augustine confused with demons. A combination of the collapse of the Roman Empire and literacy in western Europe, and hostility from Christianity in Eastern Europe and the Near East, then moved its focus to Persia and India. The Islamic rediscovery of ancient learning led to astrology’s reintroduction to the Near East and Moslem lands in the Mediterranean. From there it was reintroduced into western Europe in the twelfth century and became an accepted part of alchemy, medicine, and political prognostication. Its application to individual lives always remained controversial, however, because of the suspicion that it denied the freedom to make moral choices and hence to achieve salvation. A further influx of Greek mystical material (Plato and the *Corpus Hermeticum*) in the fifteenth century reinforced astrology’s credibility. There was, however, substantial scholarly criticism of astrology in early modern Europe, together with attempts to reform it, notably by Jean Bodin and Johannes Kepler.

By the late seventeenth century, astrology had lost its credibility in educated circles in the West. The ancient tradition has continued unbroken until the present day in India, while in the West it survived initially only in popular almanacs, partially recovering in the early

twentieth century under the aegis of the Theosophical Society and the New Age movement.

ASTROLOGY AND WITCHCRAFT

Keith Thomas noted that astrology and witchcraft are essentially rival explanatory models, because to suspect one's neighbor of a malign influence was to rule out possible astral causes (1971, 757). Although there was no reason that a witch might not be the intermediate agent of some misfortune which had a celestial origin, Thomas described a client of the astrologer Richard Napier in 1635 who "feared he was bewitched *or* blasted by an ill planet," as if the two possible causes are mutually exclusive. Because astrologers were frequently consulted by clients who believed they had been bewitched, they were obliged to create tests to ascertain this: The sixteenth-century English astrologers Richard Saunders and Joseph Blagrave asserted that astrology offered the only certain means of discovering witchcraft. The surviving casebooks of William Lilly, who acquired an international reputation in the 1640s–1660s, contain well over fifty cases of suspected witchcraft, twenty-three of which date from 1654 to 1656, the highpoint of Cromwellian rule in England (Thomas 1971, 756–757).

An astrologer testing for witchcraft would most likely cast an "interrogation," a horoscope set for the moment of the asking of a question such as, "Is the subject bewitched?" If the subject was sick and witchcraft was the suspected cause, an alternative would be to cast a "decumbiture" (literally, "lying down"), a horoscope set for the moment that the diseased individual took to their bed. Lilly, whose 1647 text *Christian Astrology* provided the first major compendium of medieval astrology to be published in English, set out the rules for establishing whether witchcraft was a cause of illness or distress, advising on treatment and assessing whether it might be overcome (Lilly 1985, 56, 250, 464–466, 640–642). In the horoscope, witches were indicated by the "twelfth house," the sector of sky immediately above the eastern horizon, and by the planet ruling the sign of the zodiac in which the house cusp (its beginning, in this case its uppermost point) was placed. For example, if the uppermost point of the twelfth house was in Leo, the ruling planet would be the Sun, Leo's "ruling planet." Lilly defined six rules for the positions of house rulers in which he had "found more certain (the) suspicion of Witchcraft." For example, if the twelfth house ruler was in the sixth house (i.e., immediately below the western horizon), witchcraft was likely. Saturn and Mars were likely both to reveal the presence of witchcraft and indicate the subject's vulnerability to it, while Venus and Jupiter might suggest the opposite. Only five of the horoscopes in Lilly's casebooks included a judgment, and all of those were negative.

Other astrologers are known to have diagnosed witchcraft. For example, in 1654, Christopher Hall, the

Norfolk astrologer, declared that the cause of a client's disease was one of three witches in her home village. Thomas noted that the very existence of such astrological work confirmed the existence of witchcraft at a time when its reality was openly challenged (1971, 757). Lilly certainly believed that "people are troubled with witches . . . in many places of this Kingdome" (1985, 465). The same applied to astrological palliatives: If witchcraft had not been believed to be real, then there could be no reason for such remedies. These treatments, which could be adapted for cattle, were not explicitly astrological but worked according to the principles of sympathetic magic. For example, if the horoscope established the presence of witchcraft, then it might be overcome if a tile from the witch's house was heated in a fire, then had the urine of the bewitched person poured on it, and was finally returned to the fire until it was very hot.

Although such practices had disappeared by 1700, at least from educated circles, the twentieth century saw a number of interesting developments. In the United Kingdom and the United States, most contemporary Wiccans pay great attention to the Moon as the embodiment of the mother goddess, in a conscious evocation of what are believed to be ancient traditions, and some also study the psychological astrology that has developed, largely under the influence of the theosophists and the psychologist C. G. Jung. Meanwhile, in Latin America, where belief in witchcraft is strong, astrologers are still consulted in cases of suspected witchcraft and in some instances still use the traditional rules.

NICHOLAS CAMPION

See also: AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM, HEINRICH CORNELIUS; ALCHEMY; AMULETS; BODIN, JEAN; CARDANO, GIROLAMO; D'ANANIA, GIOVANNI LORENZO; DIVINATION; KEPLER, JOHANNES; MOON; PARACELUSUS, THEOPHRASTUS BOMBASTUS VON HOHENHEIM; SYMPATHY.

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AUGSBURG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY OF

Few other towns offer a documentation as rich as the imperial free city of Augsburg. The sheer number of handwritten and printed chronicles, the quality of court records (*Urgichtenakten*, *Strafbücher*), council minutes, account books, tax records, and other sources

render it almost impossible for any capital punishment between 1400 and 1800 to escape scholarly attention; between 1580 and 1650, when witch hunting climaxed in central Europe, the documentation is virtually complete, and all court trials can be studied in detail.

Founded by the Romans in 15 C.E., Augusta Vindelicum became the capital of the Roman province Raetia secunda. The inhabitants became Christians in the third century, and the cult of the female martyr St. Afra survived the Dark Ages. When bishops were again recorded in the eighth century, they had become lords of the town. However, the Holy Roman Emperor Friedrich I Barbarossa stripped them of their legal rights in 1167, and already in 1250 the citizens rose up against their bishop in an insurrection. Augsburg became an imperial free city, and adopted its own law in 1276. With its favorable legal position, and a location midway between Venice and Antwerp, Augsburg became an attractive business center, and in the early sixteenth century Jakob Fugger of Augsburg was considered the wealthiest banker in Europe. Emperor Maximilian I was ridiculed as burgomaster (mayor) of Augsburg, because he enjoyed her riches so frequently. His successor Charles V held his most important imperial diets there, at which the Protestants defined their belief (in a document known as the *Confessio Augustana*) and secured Lutheranism's legal recognition at the Peace of Augsburg in 1555. However, later in the sixteenth century, Augsburg's textile industry declined, while its bankers and patricians joined the landed nobility of neighboring territories, or became lords or even princes themselves, like the Fuggers.

Although Augsburg became central to the European postal communication system, the last imperial diet was held here in 1582. A city of about 40,000–50,000 inhabitants around 1600, its population declined sharply during the Thirty Years' War as a consequence of severe epidemics in the 1620s, 1630s, and 1640s. At the same time, the export industries lost their markets and never recovered after the war. Although Augsburg remained an important place for printers, artists, and silversmiths, with roughly 20,000 inhabitants in the second half of the seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth century, it had lost its former importance. In 1806, Bavaria sacked the imperial free city.

From the 1520s, Augsburg was a biconfessional town, mainly Protestant, but with a Catholic minority supported by the bishop, the dukes of Bavaria, and the Habsburg emperors. Despite the confessional frictions, Augsburg remained throughout the sixteenth century a town of urban civility, relatively tolerant of religious dissidents and Jews, and moderate in its attitude toward *crimina excepta* (the excepted crimes).

The frequency of witchcraft accusations closely followed the ups and downs in neighboring territories. In 1590, when witch hunts were conducted in Bavaria, the

prince-bishopric, and the Fugger lordships, Augsburg tried eight women, and in 1590–1594 witchcraft trials climaxed with no less than twenty-one court cases. However, although witchcraft and sorcery were prosecuted persistently, with roughly two court cases per year, the judges (*Strafherrn*), deputies of the town council, considered none of these “witches” dangerous. Rather they were treated as stupid members of the underclass, and sometimes their interrogations resemble ethnographers' interviews, leading the scholar Lyndal Roper to develop in 1994 the idea that witchcraft trials were generally based upon negotiations between the accused and the judges. Despite scores of trials, which provide detailed insights into the local magical underworld, throughout the sixteenth century nobody ever received capital punishment for witchcraft in the imperial free city of Augsburg. The authorities knew about the “witches,” but witchcraft was only prosecuted on demand from neighbors, who were usually as deeply involved in sorcery as the accused.

The mood in Augsburg changed as radically as the economic situation following the Thirty Years' War. In 1625, for the first time, the town court condemned a woman to the stake, mainly because of the accusations of her young daughter, who claimed to be a child witch. This case was quite extraordinary, and Augsburg did not respond to the waves of mass persecutions throughout the region in the later 1620s. It was only after the war that urban self-confidence collapsed. The quality of the documentation declined as much as the education of the city's lawyers and theologians. Even Protestant superintendents like Gottlieb Spitzel were by then ready to conduct exorcisms; he reported approvingly one of the most scandalous local witchcraft trials, and compared it to contemporary events in Sweden and New England. Although there were far fewer witchcraft trials after 1650, even in correlation to the declining population, the number of capital punishments rose sharply. Between 1654 and 1699 no less than sixteen witches were convicted and executed, all of them female, and many of them either child witches, or accused by young girls. It cannot be confirmed, however, that lying-in-maids were particularly targeted, as Lyndal Roper claimed from the case of Anna Ebelerin in 1669. Nor can it be proved that incestuous fantasies or sexual deviance played a major role, as Roper claimed from the case of Regina Bartholome in 1670.

Augsburg trials gained particular notoriety through contemporary media hype from the local printing industry, but the city's upsurge in witch executions fits well into the regional pattern of declining imperial free cities seeking refuge in finding scapegoats. Whereas Catholic territories and even the persecuting prince-bishoprics became more cautious after the Thirty Years' War, Protestant imperial free cities like Nuremberg or Memmingen started executing witches

in considerable numbers. Only around 1700 did they suddenly stop such executions, presumably due to changes in the education of the Protestant elites, who increasingly did their legal studies in the Netherlands, or at Halle and Göttingen, were influenced by the philosophy of Christian Wolff, and reacted to the antiwitchcraft trial campaigns of Christian Thomasius.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: BAVARIA; CHARLES V; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; FUGGER FAMILY; HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); MAXIMILIAN I, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; NUREMBERG IMPERIAL FREE CITY; THOMASIIUS, CHRISTIAN.

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AUGSBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF

The prince-bishopric of Augsburg played an important role in the history of witchcraft, because witch hunts in this territory sparked witch hunting in the larger region in the 1580s, serving as a model for neighboring lordships and the duchy of Bavaria. The diocese of Augsburg was founded in the fourth century, belonging to the archdiocese of Milan. After the collapse of the Roman Empire, the Christian cult survived in the region; with the rise of the Frankish empire, Augsburg became subject to the archbishops of Mainz. When the citizens of Augsburg acquired the status of an imperial free city, the city's bishops had to retire to their landed property, stretching from the river Danube to the Alps. They tried to form a territorial state, the prince-bishopric of Augsburg, whose capital was no longer Augsburg, but Dillingen on the Danube, the bishops' new residence, although the bishops' see, cathedral, and cathedral chapter remained in the imperial free city. The prince-bishops of Augsburg were early Counter-Reformers, with the University of Dillingen, founded in 1544, serving as a bridgehead of Jesuit education. In 1600, and again in 1800, the prince-bishopric had roughly 100,000 inhabitants. In 1803 it was sacked by Bavaria.

It is not coincidence that Prince-Bishop Otto Truchsess von Waldburg (ruled 1543–1573), who had studied in Tübingen, Dole, Padua, Bologna, and Pavia, and had joined the papal diplomatic service, witnessed the first serious witchcraft trials in this territory. He was a pioneering Counter-Reformer, ardently supporting the Catholic hard-liners at the Council of Trent. He founded the first post-Reformation Catholic university, and invited the Jesuits to serve as teachers. Waldburg appointed Peter Canisius as his councilor; as cathedral preacher in Augsburg, the famous Jesuit, beginning in

1563, amazed his audience with incredible stories of a witches' conspiracy. Suspicions of witchcraft flared up under the next bishop, Johann Egolf von Knöringen (ruled 1573–1575), who was sick throughout his short time in office, and the first two witches were executed at Dillingen in 1575. Under Prince-Bishop Marquard vom Berg (ruled 1575–1591), another ardent Counter-Reformer, witchcraft trials remained endemic; they reached a first climax between 1586 and 1592, when witch hunts shook the southern district courts.

Curiously enough, a local witch finder, Chonrad Stoeckhlin, sparked these large-scale persecutions. His confessions, obtained by illegally severe torture in 1586, enabled the district judge of Rettenberg-Sonthofen to investigate several dozen suspects. The persecutions spread to neighboring districts of the prince-bishopric, creating the most extensive witch hunt ever in the region, with more than 100 victims, 68 in the district court of Markt Oberdorf alone, and dozens more in the district of Schwabmünchen. The populace supported these witch hunts because of a series of unfavorably cold and wet years, when crops were damaged and mortality soared. The government had to hire foreign hangmen and construct new prisons in order to have sufficient capacity for this large-scale hunt. Part of this wave of persecutions was the famous case of Walpurga Hausmännin at Dillingen, a midwife held responsible for the bishop's death. Local printers utilized her case, which the Fugger newsletters also reported. Midwives, however, were not the main targets of this campaign, but rather women working in the food industry, such as innkeepers. Except for Chonrad Stoeckhlin, the witch finder, all the victims (i.e., over 99 percent) of this persecution were female.

Local judges were largely in charge of this persecution, but some legal supervision came from the bishop's court council (*Hofrat*) at Dillingen, although its intervention was obviously not obligatory. The records kept by this council reveal that these lawyers were literally borrowing from the German translation of Jean Bodin's famous *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (on the Demon-Mania of Witches, 1580), because they used the term *Hexenreichstag* (Imperial Diet of Witches) invented by Bodin's Strasbourg translator Johann Fischart. Concerning the mechanism of witch hunting, a local observer concluded that first the prosecutors arrested ugly women, then prettier ones, then wealthy innkeepers, concluding that if they continued to hunt witches, they would eventually have to use golden chains for the nobility. However, it served as a warning that, in 1587, a member of the Dillingen patriciate, Margarethe Kellerin, was executed for witchcraft. In this region her case was quoted as a precedent, alongside the spectacular execution of Dr. Dietrich Flade in Trier.

The authorities seemingly became more cautious afterwards. But witchcraft trials flared up repeatedly in

the prince-bishopric, providing a source of continuous concern for such neighboring territories as the imperial free city of Augsburg and the duchy of Bavaria. As the debates within the Dillingen court council demonstrated, the atmosphere under Prince-Bishop Heinrich V von Knöringen (ruled 1599–1646) was hopeless, in that the councilors were unable to put aside their stereotypes. Unlike Bavaria, there were no objections in principle to witchcraft trials, although, like the Bavarian council, this one was split between a moderate and a more zealous faction. In fact, the prosecution of witchcraft slowed, and the prince-bishopric did not participate in the witch hunts of the late 1620s, despite a particularly unfavorable climate, crop failures, and war. Although a general inquisition was launched in 1629, and witches were punished in several ways (sometimes with banishment), there were no executions. During the later seventeenth century there were few witchcraft trials, which seems particularly strange, because witchcraft then became a major issue among the region's Protestant imperial free cities. In the eighteenth century, however, the picture was reversed: Protestants stopped executing witches, while there was another upsurge of trials in the prince-bishopric, with several executions in the 1720s. Reports of a very late execution in 1766 cannot be confirmed in the sources; the last execution apparently occurred under Bishop Joseph von Hessen (ruled 1740–1768), when Barbara Zielhauserin was executed in Dillingen in 1745. Overall figures are difficult to estimate, but the number of executions in the prince-bishopric of Augsburg probably approached 200.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; AUGSBURG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY; BAVARIA DUCHY OF; CANISIUS, PETER; FISCHART, JOHANN; FLADE, DIETRICH; HAUSMÄNNIN, WALPURGA; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); LITTLE ICE AGE; STOECKHLIN, CHONRAD; TRIER, ELECTORATE OF.

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AUGUSTINE, ST. (354–430)

A prime authority for the doctrine of witchcraft that developed in the later Middle Ages, Aurelius Augustine was the most influential, wide-ranging, and independent of the Latin Church Fathers. The effects of his teaching can be traced throughout the Middle Ages, during which he was undoubtedly deemed the most authoritative among the Church Fathers. His works and ideas—including his comprehensive reflections on demonology—were reviewed extensively by all the

Protestant reformers and by the Jansenists, continuing his influence into the modern period.

The first major reason behind his extraordinary influence was the understanding of demonology in late antiquity. Augustine's rhetorical training and teaching experience provided him with an excellent knowledge of classical Latin literature. In this context he acquired insight into classical demonology, which distinguished between gods and demons and between good and evil demons. To approach the issue of the origin and effects of evil in the world, the pagans made qualitative distinctions; Augustine's reflections begin at this point.

A second and probably more important aspect stemmed from Augustine's youthful inclination toward Manichaeism. Manichaeism emphasized a strictly dualistic view of the world, classifying all events in light of the polarity between good and evil forces. Even after his conversion to Christianity, Augustine's views on this issue remained ambivalent. He undoubtedly disapproved of the Manichaean enmity against the world and thus its rejection of the divine creation as described in the Hebrew Bible, but the issue of good and evil in the world remained largely unresolved. Obviously, as a Christian bishop Augustine was a vigorous advocate of monotheism. However, his statements on the effects of the power of evil can easily be, and have been, misinterpreted.

Passages and quotations from Scripture form the third source for Augustine's understanding of demonology. Since no Biblical doctrine of demonology existed, Augustine employed these texts more to support convictions and ideas borrowed from classical literature and Manichaeism than to create a new theory. He also used Biblical texts to reflect about individual elements of demonology.

When considering Augustine's position in the history of witchcraft and witchcraft trials, a strict distinction must be made between Augustine himself and his subsequent influence on theology. During his lifetime, Augustine never had to confront the issues that led to witchcraft prosecutions in the late Middle Ages. His reflections were made when the expansion of Christianity was still limited, even though it was the state religion. Background remnants of classical pagan beliefs and other, mainly Middle Eastern, cults and religions (e.g., Manichaeism) were officially prohibited but still alive, and popular Christianity was not yet fully developed.

Most of Augustine's work must be understood in the context of his time and background, particularly his most famous work, *De civitate dei* (On the City of God). This appeared from 416 to 422, after the Visigoths had sacked Rome in 410, to refute the assertions of "heathens" that the fall of Rome was a consequence of the empire's rejection of the Roman gods. In response, Augustine developed a doctrine of demonology

based on Scripture (e.g., Ps. 96:5: "All the gods of the peoples are idols"), in which the demonic nature of the Olympian gods was exhibited systematically (*De civitate dei* 8–10). Augustine argued not only that the religious practices of the heathen (sacrifices, worship, and pagan festivals) implied the worship of demons rather than of the one true god, but also that in general, any classical conception that could accommodate or approve the existence of Jupiter or any other Roman god must be condemned as superstition and worship of false gods.

It was crucially important that Augustine never doubted the existence of demons. Heathen gods really did exist; their identity was compared to that of angels; but unlike angels, they sought glory for themselves rather than God. Pagan cults had arisen whenever demons claimed man's reverence, whether in a temple of Jupiter in Rome or of Zeus in Athens. Although it was not his intention, Augustine implicitly attributed a certain rank to demons, which they had not previously held. The overall conception of *De civitate dei* allowed demons to play a decisive role in the relationship between the *civitas diaboli* (city of the Devil) and the *civitas dei*, which were presented as contending with each other. Augustine created a dualistic impression, even though he strove not to. Instead of the evil spirits, which were driven out sporadically in the New Testament, he depicted a Devil, with followers and a hierarchy that borrowed its nomenclature from the classical pantheon and that was in direct conflict with the body of Christ, the Catholic Church. The apocalyptic fears and expectations in the age of the witchcraft trials found substantial backing in Augustine's ideas.

Augustine did not linger in the cosmological realm, but turned his attention to the relationship between these demons and their prince, the Devil (a hierarchical classification that was obviously possible without great reflection), and humans. He developed a plausible system with far-reaching consequences, based on the ontology of late antiquity and his own notions about the divine act of redemption: Demons are noncorporeal beings who are present in time and space. Being eternal, they have at their disposal a high cognitive perception and senses that enable them to learn and react more quickly than corporeal humans. In brief, they possess sufficient knowledge and capabilities to enable them to accomplish acts that men could plausibly but falsely interpret as miracles. They employ this knowledge to induce man to revere them (their final goal). In *De divinatione daemonum* (On the Divination of Demons, 406), Augustine eventually assumed a contractual relationship between humans and demons. He saw this contract as based on the fact that a person either purposefully sought contact with a demon through some specific ritual that the demon had communicated to him or her (*pactum explicitum*) or, from foolishness or curiosity, unconsciously communicated with a

demon through a certain act (*pactum implicitum*). Augustine developed an actual "sign theory," which, by analogy to the Christian understanding of the sacraments and godliness, explained the relationship between the will, the rite, and the result. Just as Christians confirm their covenant with God through prayer, sacraments, and worship, so do the "heathen" confirm their covenant with false gods (i.e., demons) through signs, words, and invocations, or unconscious gestures.

Augustine's theology of demonology eventually became authoritative within a context entirely incongruous with the context in which he developed it. Through early medieval mediators (e.g., Isidore of Seville), Augustine's central statements on demonology found their way into medieval legal texts like Gratian's *Decretum* (Concord of Discordant Canons, known as the *Decretum*, 1130), and of course into the standard dogmatic work of Peter Lombard (*Sententiae*, 1148–1151). Against the background of the High Middle Ages, Augustine's idea of the two *civitates* (cities) could be applied to over half a millennium of struggles between the established Christian religion and all kinds of dissenters and heretics. The abstract battle between Augustine's two realms was relocated into real life and interpreted in terms of a battle between the Church and witches. In addition, further aspects of Augustine's theology were reinterpreted: His remark that women are able to conceive children with the half-god Pan and "Sylvans" (*De civitate dei* 15, 23) became a standard citation for the real possibility of intercourse with the Devil; his opinion that backsliders could be brought back to the Church by force, expressed in an entirely different context, affected Church practice in the late Middle Ages and early modern times.

On the other hand, certain retarding aspects can also be found in Augustine's work. Close scrutiny of his argumentation about God's work of redemption reveals that he believed that any work of demons was ultimately possible only with God's authorization. Augustine never fully resolved the issue of magic and witchcraft in relation to God's mysterious purpose and the arbitrary acts of sorcerers and witches. Obviously, he never mentioned the central medieval notion of witches flying, nor did he specifically relate demons to gender. Up to the Enlightenment, the reality of demons and the whole preternatural worldview supported by Augustine's weighty arguments, were hardly questioned. Thus with regard to the history of witchcraft prosecutions, the differences between Augustine's intentions in his lifetime and his posthumous historical influence seem particularly significant.

JÖRG HAUSTEIN;

TRANSLATED BY HELEN SIEGBURG

See also ANGELS; APOCALYPSE; BIBLE; CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DEMONOLOGY; DEMONS; DEVIL; GRATIAN; ISIDORE OF SEVILLE; MANICHAISM.

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AUSTRIA

With perhaps 1,900 executions in territories containing some 2,000,000 inhabitants, Austria experienced relatively moderate prosecutions for witchcraft. Less a state than a collection of principalities acquired over several centuries, the Austrian Habsburg hereditary lands (*Erblande*) constituted an informal union of central European territories. They were largely autonomous political units, such as the Bohemian and the Hungarian monarchies added by the Habsburgs in 1526 and the Burgundian and Spanish territories, acquired by the house of Habsburg in earlier years. All Austrian lands belonged to the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation (to which the Habsburgs gave a long string of *elected* emperors), but remained distinct territories within it.

The core of the Austrian hereditary lands included several principalities situated along the Danube River. “Austria” (Österreich) proper included two duchies, Upper and Lower Austria (Ober- and Niederösterreich). To the south, “Inner Austria” (Innerösterreich) included three contiguous duchies: Styria (Steiermark), Carinthia (Kärnten), and Carniola (Krain), while the smaller prin-

icipalities of Gorizia and Istria extended to the Adriatic. To the west lay the Alpine county of Tyrol (Tirol). West of Tyrol was the county of Vorarlberg, part of “Further Austria” (Vorderösterreich, or die Vorlande), which included approximately a hundred scattered enclaves in Swabia (Schwäbisch-Österreich; the oldest ancestral Habsburg lands) and the territories of Sundgau, Breisgau, and Freiburg farther west. Although parts of the Austrian Republic today, neither the archiepiscopal principality of Salzburg (separating the eastern and western hereditary lands) nor the territory of Burgenland (in the far west of the Hungarian kingdom) belonged to early modern Austria, although they had significant political, social, and cultural ties to it. On the other hand, not only does Swabian Austria now belong to Germany (with a bit of Vorderösterreich now in France), but also the former Habsburg duchy of Carniola, part of Carinthia, and the southern third of Styria now belong to Slovenia.

The central feature of Habsburg rule over the hereditary lands was that it had a different constitutional basis in each. Each land was governed through traditional rather than centralized institutions, bringing each into a purely dynastic union with the others. Having a limited sense of shared purpose, every individual land preserved its own identity, political forms, legal system, and administrative practices. Thus, most lands had their own estates and territorial diets, along with separate laws, privileges, and customs, all confirmed by succeeding Habsburg rulers.

Given this diversity, witchcraft trials throughout “Austria” were a mixed lot. Each territory, along with Salzburg and Burgenland, experienced such trials, but they tended to ebb and flow with changing circumstances. Some territories saw many persons accused, others relatively few. For example, Swabian Austria experienced some of the worst witch hunts, like some nearby territories in southwestern Germany. Trials in Styria were also relatively numerous. However, in most modern Austrian territories—Vorarlberg, Tyrol, Carinthia, Upper and Lower Austria, as well as Salzburg and Burgenland—the numbers of trials remained limited, despite occasional instances of large-scale witch panics involving dozens or even hundreds of accused witches.

COMMON THEMES

It is difficult to generalize about witchcraft trials throughout the Austrian lands, but some common themes emerge—although exceptions must also be kept in mind. First, most trials remained rural affairs. Some notorious trials occurred in major urban centers, at Innsbruck (Tyrol), for example, in 1485–1486, conducted by Heinrich Kramer, the notorious author of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486); at Vienna (Lower Austria) in 1583; and most notably at Salzburg, from 1675 to 1681. Likewise, the

vast majority of trials involved the prosecution of one or perhaps a few individuals. Most accused witches came from the lower levels of society; a large number were socially marginal individuals such as vagabonds or shepherds, though occasionally even nobles and clergy found themselves under investigation and sentenced to death. Especially in Swabian Austria and Vorarlberg, accused witches were usually women, but further east relatively high percentages of men were accused: 39 percent in Styria, for example. Except at Salzburg, execution rates tended to be higher among women than men. Few children were tried for witchcraft (or even involved directly in witchcraft investigations) in the Austrian territories, but several cases in Styria and Lower Austria illustrate that young girls were not immune. On the other hand, large numbers of adolescent boys were tried and executed during the notorious *Zauberer-Jackl-Prozesse* (Sorcerer-Jack—Trials) episode in neighboring Salzburg.

Austrian trials include accounts of magical activities common throughout Europe, and their records suggest that court personnel usually introduced such diabolical elements as pacts with the Devil and the witches' Sabbat. Initial accusations were frequently made by neighbors of the accused and involved such simple *maleficia* (evil acts, harmful magic) as causing illness, destroying crops, or starting fires. Summoning bad weather seems especially prominent. Most trials emerged when judicial administrations were able and willing to prosecute people on the basis of such commonplace magical beliefs. Their subsequent interrogations of suspected witches inquired about diabolical activities such as pacts or sexual liaisons with the Devil or attending Sabbats. Particularly common in larger trials, this development was visible even in smaller trials involving mostly female suspects. Trials of male suspects, whose relations with the Devil tended to be business-related rather than sexual, often introduced a diabolical element through suspicions of host desecration. Thus, most trials emerged from the nexus of commonplace magical beliefs, on the one hand, and judicial administrations able and willing to prosecute people on the basis of those beliefs, on the other.

Although several late medieval witchcraft trials in Austrian territories took place in ecclesiastical or inquisitorial courts, the vast majority were conducted by secular authorities, in accordance with Charles V's Carolina Code (*Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*, 1532) or later territorial codes promulgated expressly for the Austrian hereditary lands. In addition, accompanying Catholic reform after the Reformation, a worldview emerged in which witchcraft became one of many threats to church and state. Although no Habsburg ruler ever pursued witchcraft trials with excessive zeal, provincial Austrian law codes and police ordinances occasionally established direct links between prosecuting witches and political-religious values of seventeenth-century baroque Catholicism. Later, the enlightened eighteenth-century Catholic Maria

Theresa took steps to end witchcraft trials before her son Joseph II decriminalized witchcraft entirely.

STATISTICS

No detailed analysis of witchcraft trials based upon an exhaustive examination of source material has yet appeared covering all Austrian hereditary lands. An old work (Byloff 1934) remains the most complete survey; despite some strengths, its approach is impressionistic and its documentary base incomplete. Since then, systematic analyses have appeared for a few Austrian lands, most notably Swabian Austria (Dillinger 1999), Vorarlberg (Tschaikner 1992), and Styria (Kern 1994, 1995). For other hereditary lands, some work has been done on individual trials, or short series of trials, but our knowledge of the course of events in Tyrol, Lower and Upper Austria, Carinthia, and Carniola remains tentative. The same applies to Salzburg (not ruled by Habsburgs) and Burgenland (part of the Hungarian kingdom).

Except for a few scattered early trials, most Austrian witchcraft trials occurred between 1550 and 1750. Save for Swabian Austria and Vorarlberg, they peaked during the second half of the seventeenth century, well after most of western Europe. In some Austrian areas, prosecutions accelerated after 1580 and initially peaked around 1620, declining throughout the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). The number of prosecutions increased dramatically between roughly 1670 and 1690, particularly because of a large number of trials in Styria and Salzburg's *Zauberer-Jackl* trials. Trials declined once again after 1690, leveled off to a few per year by 1720, and disappeared by 1750, after Salzburg's last trial ended. Estimates of the total number of witches tried in Austrian territories (including Swabia) range from 1,700 to considerably higher (Byloff 1934, 159), while a more recent estimate suggested a total of around 1,900 witchcraft executions (Behringer 2000, 61, 66).

One must still examine the courses of witchcraft trials in each Austrian territory, because they vary greatly. From well-researched regions (Swabian Austria, Vorarlberg, Styria) emerge data unlikely to be revised significantly. For Swabian Austria, some 788 victims (90 percent women) of witchcraft trials have been estimated, roughly 80 percent of them in the county of Hohenberg (Dillinger 1999, 353–357). In Vorarlberg, after two women were tried for sorcery in the late fifteenth century, at least 166 people were tried in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with at least 105 executed, 80 percent of them women (Tschaikner 1992). In Styria, around 300 trials took place, involving at least 879 individuals. Of the 757 suspects whose sex is known, 463 were female (61 percent), 294 male (39 percent). At least 312 witches were executed, many of them in southern regions now in Slovenia (Kern 1995, 165–167). In other Austrian territories, only limited source material has been explored; much remains to be

done, and incomplete data permit only rough estimates (Valentinitsch 1987). For Lower Austria, we have records from 47 trials involving 120 people, two-thirds of them women (Raser 1989, 17–25); for Upper Austria, 35 known trials involved about 100 individuals, 77 percent of them men. From Burgenland, records of 13 trials have been found, involving fewer than 50 individuals (76 percent female). To the south, in Carinthia, 116 trials involved about 300 people (57 percent male). In Carniola, very fragmentary source material reveals only 12 trials in which 35 people, almost exclusively women, were executed (Vilfan 1987, 293). All told, nearly 500 persons were tried for witchcraft in territories found in present-day Slovenia, which includes areas that had once belonged to Styria, Carinthia, and Carniola. Farther west, in Tyrol, 72 trials involved perhaps 200 accused, 72 percent female (Dienst 1987, 286–289), while in neighboring Salzburg, which experienced at least 43 trials, the numbers were a good deal higher because of the notorious *Zauberer-Jackl* trials and related trials between 1675 and 1690 that involved at least 198 suspects and 138 executions. Of those executed, only 36 were women; 46 were adult men, the remaining 56 being adolescent boys between 9 and 16. Thus, roughly 59 percent of the individuals tried in Salzburg were men, a figure skewed by the exceptionally high number of male suspects tried in the late seventeenth century (Byloff 1934 *passim*; Dienst 1987, 286–299; Vilfan 1987, 293).

WITCHCRAFT AND THE LAW

Official policy toward witchcraft in Austria underwent several permutations during the medieval and early modern periods. The eighth-century *Lex Baiuvariorum* (Law of the Bavarians) prohibited the destruction of crops through *maleficiūm* (harmful magic) in Bavarian settlements, including the Austrian Alps. Earlier in the century, Pope Gregory II had informed his nuncio at the Bavarian court to forbid forms of oneiromancy (dream-interpretation), augury (the reading of portents), and the use of magical formulas, as well as soothsaying and the casting of lots. At the end of the century in 799, the Bavarian Synod of Reisbach decreed that investigations should proceed against those involved in soothsaying and weather magic. Early medieval prohibitions produced few known trials. Nonetheless, medieval sources (court records, chronicles, and customs) from later centuries in these Habsburg patrimonial lands indicate that both the nobility and municipal authorities occasionally punished harmful magic. As late as 1499, Maximilian I's penal code for Tyrol did not mention sorcery as a crime, although his 1514 ordinance for Lower Austrian courts prohibited it. Similar inconsistencies characterize much of the late medieval period.

Important changes in both the codification of law and the court system during the fifteenth and sixteenth

centuries dramatically increased criminal prosecutions for sorcery. A long process of centralizing, standardizing, and codifying the territorial laws of various Habsburg Austrian territories reflected the increasing influence of Roman law throughout continental Europe. After 1532, Charles V's imperial penal code, the Carolina Code, provided a legal basis for prosecuting harmful magic. In 1544, Archduke Ferdinand I issued a general mandate for his Lower Austrian *Erbländer* (including Styria, Carinthia, and Carniola along with Lower Austria, but excluding Upper Austria) calling for the arrest and trial of sorceresses and female fortunetellers.

The first territorial prohibitions against sorcery, explicitly codified, date from Archduke Charles II's 1574 Styrian penal code, modeled on the Carolina Code, and his 1577 police regulations for Styria. This code addressed sorcery and illicit magic in four relatively short sections. Two additional sections very briefly established sorcery as a capital offense by linking it to blasphemy and promised magistrates further police regulations in the future. These six sections were far more detailed than previous medieval customs, but mostly prescribed procedures magistrates should adopt, rather than defining the crime of maleficent sorcery, and they offered no detailed statements of witchcraft theory. At the same time, however, connections between the government's overt religious concerns and its exercise of justice emerged clearly in the duchy's 1577 police regulations, which established the religious nature of sorcery by linking this crime with blasphemy and enlisting all Styria's public authorities in a crusade against crime, immorality, and sin. Blasphemy and sorcery constituted crimes to be punished by secular territorial courts.

Later witchcraft decrees, issued by Ferdinand II for all Austrian hereditary lands in 1633 and by Ferdinand III for Lower Austria in 1656, contained similar Counter-Reformation rhetoric about sorcery. Ferdinand II's 1633 *Tugendsambe Lebens-Führung* (Guide to Virtuous Conduct) often copied previous Styrian regulations. Sorcerers and their accomplices were to be tried and punished in accordance with article 109 of the *Cardina*—which called for death by burning in cases involving genuine harm. Neither the Devil nor the diabolical nature of the three activities listed was explicitly mentioned. Despite their rhetoric of religious reform, Austrian prohibitions against sorcery ignored the “cumulative” concept of witchcraft until 1656, when Ferdinand III's *Land-Gerichts-Ordnung* (Territorial Court Ordinance) for Lower Austria (by then distinct from the Inner Austrian lands) explicitly mentioned the Devil and included questions about his role.

Ferdinand III's 1656 code represented the culmination of authoritarian religious reform in Habsburg Austria, in defense of orthodoxy and judicial reform. Its

sixtieth article, discussing the prosecution of sorcery, filled several pages. It repeated the basic procedures of earlier witchcraft statutes, but added detailed references to witches' assemblies, diabolical pacts, and the Devil's mark. It instructed magistrates to search suspects for objects described by demonologists: "magical objects such as oils, salves, evil powders, magical boxes, oats infested with bugs, human bones, magical lanterns, or wax dolls with nails stuck through them; or Hosts, crystals, mirrors for divination, written pacts with the Devil, books of sorcery, and similar things." It also mentioned other signs of diabolical magic, previously absent from official Habsburg legislation on sorcery: the witches' Sabbath, sexual relations with the Devil, flight, and apostasy. For the first time, the 1656 ordinance prescribed an inquisitorial method designed to produce complete and detailed accounts of suspected activities of witches. Section four of Article 60 instructed magistrates to inquire if the accused had made a pact with the Devil. It then listed over forty highly specific questions, in twenty subsections, designed to elicit information sufficiently precise to allow a magistrate to diagnose witchcraft. However, the article also distinguished those who practiced "genuine sorcery" through diabolical means, and who must be put to death by fire or sword, from mere "soothsayers, those who said superstitious adjurations, and card-dealers," who—if little harm was done—should be fined and exiled.

Throughout the Habsburg hereditary Austrian provinces, witchcraft trials peaked after the promulgation of article sixty of Ferdinand III's 1656 *Land-Gerichts-Ordnung*. The timing of these trials corresponds well with a model of the witch-hunting phenomenon that divides Europe into a central region and various peripheral areas away from the core. According to this center-periphery model, trials began the earliest, were the most severe (in terms of size, numbers, level of panic), and ended soonest in a core area centered on southwestern Germany and the Rhineland. Moving away from this area, into the "periphery," trials began much later, did not become as intense, and tended to last well beyond the European-wide high point between 1580 and 1640—sometimes far into the eighteenth century. In the western Austrian lands (Swabian Austria, Vorarlberg, Tyrol), most witchcraft trials occurred before 1650, while, excluding Styria, the eastern provinces (Upper Austria, Lower Austria, Carinthia, plus Salzburg) experienced more trials afterwards. In Styria, most witchcraft trials and over three-fourths of accusations against individuals occurred after 1660 (Kern 1995, 123, 167), thus placing Austria geographically in "peripheral" east-central Europe. The pattern of relatively higher numbers of trials after 1650 becomes even more extreme as one moves farther east in the Habsburg crown-lands to Bohemia and Hungary, where few trials took place before the end of

the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648), and their high point occurred only in the years following 1680.

As R. J. W. Evans remarked, "there is evidently a good fit [between witchcraft trials and] the Habsburg Counter-Reformation" (Evans 1979, 406). The correlation between Ferdinand III's 1656 decree and a measurable increase in the number of witchcraft trials in the eastern Habsburg lands (Austria, Bohemia, Hungary) suggests a link between the consolidation of baroque Catholicism and increasing pressure on suspected witches. It must be emphasized, however, that there was no directly causal relationship between Ferdinand III's code and the spread of trials for witchcraft—particularly in Lower Austria, the only province directly affected by this code, where 52 of 69 known trials occurred before 1656 (Raser 1989, 17–25). Moreover, in Lower Austrian witchcraft trials for which sufficient documentation is currently available, elaborate diabolical magic rarely appeared; most cases involved only charges of simple sorcery entailing such minor punishments as fines and time in the stocks. Thus, Lower Austrian trial records reveal diminishing concerns with diabolism after 1656. Of course, legal codes never account for the prosecution of alleged crimes, because they must be interpreted and applied by magistrates familiar with the specific circumstances of each particular case.

In a legal opinion of October 8, 1679 to the Lower Austrian government, Archduke Leopold I provided an excellent illustration of exercising princely discretion. This ruling applied directly to only a single case involving four suspects who had not yet been put to death, but it set clear precedents. While upholding the reality of witchcraft, confirming its status as a particularly reprehensible crime, and justifying its continued prosecution in Lower Austria, the ruling explicitly prohibited types and instruments of torture outside the customary law of the land (in this case, the bed of nails), and, more significantly, it also required magistrates hearing witchcraft cases to forward all preliminary decisions as well as final judgments to the Lower Austrian Government for review. The Lower Austrian 1656 code contained no such clause in its article on witchcraft, and Leopold may have wanted to remove authority from individual judges in favor of his government. In this ruling, Leopold ordered the release of four "still living" female prisoners, who had already undergone considerable torture, with their honor restored; the accusation of one girl was deemed "unmerited." Although ending the sufferings of these women, this ruling in no way undermined the general belief in the real dangers of sorcery. Ten years later, Leopold signed a general order for suppressing Gypsies in Upper and Lower Austria; it threatened particularly harsh treatment for those who practiced sorcery.

Throughout the Austrian lands, the discretion exercised by provincial magistrates in actually trying cases and government officials in frequently reviewing and

deciding them ultimately proved decisive for the actual course of witchcraft trials. Their numbers, the number of accused, and the number of executions suggest that the attitudes visible in Ferdinand III's 1656 Lower Austrian code probably stimulated an increased awareness of witchcraft theory among government officials and judges. Elsewhere in Habsburg Austria, Styrian trial records contain both direct references to the code and traces of its shaping influence during interrogations. Although the code remained inapplicable in Styria until 1721, judges and officials frequently cited it alongside precedents from Roman law, the *Carolina*, and the Styrian penal code. Still, it exercised no direct causal effect, because it did not introduce diabolical understandings of witchcraft. The Lower Austrian code's true significance was to represent the full creation of "cumulative" witchcraft beliefs among a great majority of policymakers throughout the Habsburg lands.

Yet the Habsburg archdukes never expressly used witchcraft trials to strengthen their own political positions or baroque Catholicism in their lands. Instead, for at least a century after the 1570s, their decrees created an ethos (though not an all-pervasive one) among government officials that construed witchcraft as one of many potential threats to good order, the Roman Church, and the dynasty. We have no evidence that any of the archdukes zealously prosecuted suspected witches, but much evidence that eradicating witches was one of the state's responsibilities.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, fears of witchcraft began to dissolve among Austrian officials. This trend appeared clearly in the decline in the number of eighteenth-century trials throughout the Austrian lands, although trials continued in the eastern Habsburg kingdoms of Bohemia and Hungary. By mid-century, the government of Maria Theresa began taking steps to eliminate such trials. In 1766, the empress issued a government patent entitled *Artikel von der Zauberey, Hexerey, Wahrsagerey, und dergleichen* (An Article on Sorcery, Witchcraft, Divination, and Similar Activities) for all of her hereditary lands. Paradoxically, the patent both affirmed and denied the reality of magic. One decree highlighted the "special attention" state officials must give to distinguishing between "true" and "false" magical deeds. It called upon judges to determine if the accusation before them came from fraud, madness, or mere superstition, or if it represented genuine sorcery or witchcraft. The latter must be sent to a higher court, where another magistrate would make the same determinations. Ultimately, the code made clear, only the empress herself would decide cases of "genuine" diabolical activity.

But the patent also replaced state interest in eradicating witchcraft with state interest in eradicating superstition. In some sense, the patent remained similar to earlier prohibitions of witchcraft: If earlier codes saw magic as a threat to good order, this one saw supersti-

tion in a similar light. Its sections describing popular ignorance and credulity made this clear:

It is a well-known fact at present, however, how the mania of sorcery and witchcraft was grossly exaggerated in earlier times. Moreover, its basis was founded on the inclination of the simple and common populace toward superstitious things. Stupidity and ignorance—as the springs of astonishment and superstition, and from which gullibility without regard for truth or falsity emerges among the common people—have further promoted such things. All such incidents, which cannot be immediately comprehended and which originate only from natural consequences, actions or forces (even such natural events as thunder-storms, animal diseases or human illnesses, etc.), are attributed to the Devil and his agents, particularly the sorcerers and witches, etc.

These notions of untold diabolical hordes were implanted from age to age, even impressed upon children still in the cradle with terrifying stories and tales. Thereby this mania generally spreads, growing stronger and stronger, even corrupting genuine judicial standards to a large degree when settling cases of that sort. (Kern 1999, 171)

This article broke dramatically with earlier witchcraft legislation, because its overall effect was the suppression of witchcraft trials. Nonetheless, it resembled previous laws against witchcraft through the state's overt attempts to control the beliefs and activities of its subjects. With Joseph II's thoroughgoing reform of Austrian criminal law in 1787 and 1788, witchcraft ceased to be a crime in the Habsburg territories. But although the resulting Universal Law Code on Crimes and Their Punishments (*Allgemeine Gesetzbuch über Verbrechen und deren Bestrafung*) and Universal Ordinance for Criminal Courts (*Allgemeine Kriminalgerichtsordnung*) eliminated statutes against sorcery and witchcraft, magical beliefs remained a significant part of court proceedings for years to come.

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See also: AUSTRIAN WESTERN TERRITORIES; BOHEMIA; CAROLINA CODE; GERMANY; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; HUNGARY; INNSBRUCK; JOSEPH II, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MARIA THERESA, HOLY ROMAN EMPRESS; RUDOLPH II, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; RURAL WITCHCRAFT; SALZBURG, PRINCE-ARCHBISHOPRIC OF; SLOVENIA; TYROL, COUNTY OF; VIENNA; VORARLBERG.

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AUSTRIAN WESTERN TERRITORIES

The western possessions of the Habsburgs consisted of two parts: the older Outer Austria (Vorderösterreich), including the territories of Alsace, Breisgau, Hagenau, and Ortenau, today in eastern France and Baden-Württemberg; and Swabian Austria, namely Hohenberg, Nellenburg, the Landvogtei Schwaben (Royal Province of Swabia), and Burgau, today in Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria. The Habsburg archduke of Tyrol and his government at Innsbruck administered all these territories. Vorderösterreich had its own government in Ensisheim in Alsace, whereas each of the Swabian Austrian territories was directly controlled by Innsbruck.

Although the Habsburg territories were homogeneously Catholic, the Church had hardly any influence on the witchcraft trials. Accepting the Carolina Code (*Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*, 1532) as a guideline,

the Innsbruck government was reluctant to persecute witches. In 1637, it promulgated a detailed procedural instruction for witchcraft cases that combined influences of the Carolina with Adam Tanner’s criticism of witch hunts. The conflict between the critical government and local witch-hunting groups was a salient feature of the witchcraft trials in the Habsburg territories. As their administrative structure was weak, local officials and the councils achieved a maximum of autarchy by not drawing the government’s critical attention to their witch hunts. When the victims of persecutions finally attracted the Tyrolean government’s attention early in the seventeenth century, that government ended the mass persecutions in the county of Hohenberg with a number of legal and administrative reforms. However, in Vorderösterreich, the persecutions were only stopped by the general breakdown of law enforcement during the Thirty Years’ War.

More than 1,100 trials took place in Vorderösterreich between 1479 and 1751, with the most severe witch hunts coming in the 1570s and 1620s. (All statistical data are found in Dillinger 1999, 93–96 and Schleichert 1994, 219–220.) Overall, about 85 percent of the defendants were women; about 80 percent of both male and female culprits were executed. Meanwhile, Swabian Austria witnessed a total of more than 520 witchcraft trials between 1493 and 1711. The first severe persecutions took place in 1530–1531 and 1558–1559, with the vast majority of accusations made between 1583 and 1605. Here, 90 percent of the defendants were women, and 79 percent of the female but only 51 percent of the male defendants were executed. Whereas all other parts of Swabian Austria experienced moderate witchcraft persecutions, Hohenberg witnessed severe witch hunts; 80 percent of all witchcraft trials in Swabian Austria took place in Hohenberg, although less than half of the region’s total population lived there.

In these areas, popular imagination had accepted the demonological stereotype and turned traditional fairy and ghost legends into witchcraft narratives. In fact, the driving force behind Swabian Austria’s and especially Hohenberg’s witch hunts was the peasant population. In Hohenberg, the villagers, especially winegrowers, demanded witch hunts from the authorities. Unlike other parts of Swabian Austria that enjoyed a more favorable climate or did not engage in viticulture, Hohenberg suffered from a rapid decline in wine production at the end of the sixteenth century, for which witches were supposed to be directly responsible. In contrast, the Landvogtei Schwaben benefited from the popular cult of Weingarten monastery that centered on the protection of vineyards against bad weather. This cult, supplemented by an unorthodox trade in blessed amulets, made it possible to deal with weather crises and witchcraft anxiety without having recourse to the courts.

The aggressive demands of the Hohenberg peasantry encountered no resistance from the councils of the rural towns. Although town councils in all other Swabian Austrian territories were smaller and staffed exclusively by the local elite, Hohenberg town councils had many members and were open to the middle class, which suffered directly from the economic crisis. In areas where the population had comparatively little interest in witch hunts, such attempts as there were to prosecute witches were rejected by town councils that feared social unrest and legal difficulties. In Hohenberg, the coalition between the council elites and the majority of the rural population forced reluctant local officials to take action against supposed witches. Denunciations by accomplices, especially by child witches, were considered serious evidence. Because of their ill-defined borders, Nellenburg, the Landvogtei Schwaben, and Burgau suffered from constant trouble, and they had become part of a close-knit communicative network of conflicts, complaints, and control that obliged them to be in close contact with the critical Habsburg government. Hohenberg, however, was comparatively isolated.

Persons in permanent conflict with their families or neighbors, as well as foreigners, poor people, and criminals, were suspected as witches. Members of the upper class who had violated the social consensus through corruption, careerism, or profit seeking were also accused of witchcraft: The rich, often male witch was the dominant figure in the Sabbath imagination. As such persons often were the agents of the Habsburg government, the witchcraft trials, largely led by members of the older local elites, became a means and a form of traditionalist localism.

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See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; ALSACE; AUSTRIA; CAROLINA CODE; GERMANY, SOUTHEASTERN; GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; LITTLE ICE AGE; POPULAR PERSECUTION; TANNER, ADAM; TYROL, COUNTY OF; WARFARE.

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AUXONNE NUNS (1658–1663)

In 1644, Burgundy experienced its final epidemic of rural witchcraft; fourteen years later, the nuns of Auxonne provided the final example of a demonically possessed convent in France. The case shared numerous features with previous ones from Aix, Loudun, and

Louviers: the nuns in all these cases (except at Louviers) came from the same order, the Ursulines; all were young and daughters of good families; all were exorcised unsuccessfully for several years; the exorcisms were spectacular, drawing large crowds; accusations of witchcraft were leveled against local residents; and all the cases had an impact on the entire kingdom. Whereas priest-sorcerers were blamed for causing the possessions at Aix and Loudun, nun-witches were accused at Louviers (Mother Françoise de la Croix and Madeleine Bavent) and at Auxonne (Barbe Buvée). Quite unlike the previous affairs, the Auxonne possessions encountered disbelief among a majority of the judges; in this sense, it marked a turning point in the history of the treatment of witchcraft in France, heralding (but not causing) the decriminalization of 1682.

The affair began in 1658, when about fifteen nuns from the Ursuline convent in Auxonne claimed they were haunted by demons; at first, with numerous exorcisms by chaplains inside the convent, the situation was kept secret. Only in 1660 did the inhabitants of Auxonne learn the truth about the possessions, when the epidemic first spread beyond the convent walls and affected the townspeople. Public exorcisms took place in the parish church, laywomen were sentenced to banishment by local judges, and two of them were even massacred by the population.

In October 1660, one Ursuline, Barbe Buvée (Sister Sainte-Colombe), much older than her possessed sisters, was indicated by the mother superior as being responsible for these disorders. Accused publicly, during a religious ceremony, of magic, witchcraft, and infanticide, she became a target of violence from other nuns and was chained inside a specially constructed convent prison. At the request of Buvée's family and other critics of these procedural irregularities, the *Parlement* (sovereign judicial court) of Dijon intervened. An investigation committee under judge Bénigne Legoux went to Auxonne, carried out nearly eighty interrogations, made evaluations, and concluded that the possessions were bogus. The *parlement* ordered the release of Barbe Buvée, who had been transferred to Dijon. Meanwhile, the spectacle of the exorcisms drew huge crowds from all over the kingdom to the parish church in Auxonne. A new investigation commission, created by the *Parlement* of Paris (sovereign judicial court, with jurisdiction over approximately one-half of France) at the request of the municipality of Auxonne, arrived at the opposite conclusion from the previous commission and asserted the reality of the possessions. While the *Parlement* of Dijon officially restored the reputation of Barbe Buvée, the intendant (royal agent in the provinces) Claude Bouchu named two more investigative commissions; the first concluded that the possessions were fraudulent, the second upheld their authenticity.

These mutually contradictory developments and dissensions largely reflected rivalries between various influential families in Auxonne, as well as the conflict between the intendant and the *parlement*.

After several new judicial developments and a succession of lawsuits between the intendant and the *parlement*, the royal council intervened and transferred the dossier to the *Parlement* of Paris, which preferred to bury the case. The epidemic of possessions quickly died down after the nuns had been transferred to other convents and the exorcisms ended.

BENOÎT GARNOT; TRANSLATED BY KARNA HUGHES

See also: AIX-EN-PROVENCE NUNS; BROSSIER, MARTHE; CONVENT CASES; EXORCISM; LOUDUN NUNS; LOUVIERS NUNS; MANDROU, ROBERT; POSSESSION, DEMONIC.

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AVIGNON

Located on the Rhone in southern France, Avignon and its surrounding region, the Comtat Venaissin, belonged to successive popes from the fourteenth century (when they resided there) until the French Revolution. Avignon's key officials, including its governor (a papal legate) and archbishop, were directly appointed by and responsible to Rome; even its Holy Office belonged to the Roman Inquisition.

Although Avignon was not directly involved in the French Wars of Religion, the late sixteenth century saw intense religious controversy and violence in this region. After the conclusion of the Council of Trent (1563), Avignon and the Comtat became a regional flagship of Tridentine Catholicism, led by a devoted new archbishop and by the Jesuits, who became well established and very influential.

The area around Avignon had recorded only one trial for witchcraft in the first half of the sixteenth century, in 1506. But between 1581 and 1583, a witchcraft panic swept the Comtat Venaissin. It is impossible to explain its causes, but a few factors coincide in an interesting way at this point. In 1581, a serious outbreak of plague occurred. At the same time, a temporary peace calmed the region's religious conflict. The Jesuits,

dispersed by the plague, traveled to the countryside around Avignon to carry out a Catholic reconversion mission in areas that had seen serious penetrations of Protestantism. It is very possible that the intimate connection between heresy and the Devil, described by some important French Jesuits, played a significant role in the witchcraft panic that soon developed in this atmosphere of crisis and crusade.

The first two suspects were accused near Carpentras in June 1581, and one of them was executed six months later. From there, accusations spread to several villages in the area. By September 1582, the papal legate wrote to Rome that he had twenty accused witches imprisoned in Avignon. Ecclesiastical authorities dominated the entire legal proceedings, including investigations, interrogations, torture, and judgments. This is not surprising in a territory under direct papal rule, but it is very different from the way these cases were handled in neighboring France, where *parlements* (sovereign courts) had sole control over serious cases. At Avignon, inquisitors played a strong role in these cases, as experts and advisors to ecclesiastical and secular judges. The vice-inquisitor in these cases was Sebastien Mchaelis, who thirty years later became a central figure in the famous Gaufridy-Demandols case in Aix-en-Provence and wrote an account of it that cemented his reputation as an authority on witchcraft.

In November 1582, fourteen accused witches were executed (Michaelis later wrote that eighteen witches went to their deaths). Several of those accused were punished more mildly, or were released. This marked the end of executions, though accusations continued for some time thereafter. Although a few sporadic accusations and executions occurred in the following decades (1607 seems to have been the last), the wave of executions of 1582 was the crisis point for this region.

This brief panic involved an unusually large number of trials, at least for France. It probably was the most serious persecution of witches in France until Pierre de Lancre's foray into the Basque country in 1609. Like most other large-scale witchcraft trials in ethnically French areas, the restraining hand of a *parlement* was not present, and neither was the restraint of the Roman Inquisition, which adopted stricter rules about witchcraft later in the 1580s.

JONATHAN L. PEARL

See also: AIX-EN-PROVENCE NUNS; FRANCE; INQUISITION, ROMAN; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); LANCRE, PIERRE DE; PANICS.

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B

BADEN, MARGRAVATE OF

After 1535, Baden became divided between the houses of Baden-Baden and Baden-Durlach, which together executed a total of 281 witches. While the Protestant margravate of Baden-Durlach held only occasional witchcraft trials in the second half of the sixteenth century (6 victims), the Catholic Margravate of Baden-Baden experienced large witch hunts from 1560–1580 (44 victims) and especially from 1625–1631 (231 victims) (Schneider 2004, 215, 217–218). This difference is hard to explain, as religious opinions offer only one probable reason: The attitudes of the authorities influenced the methods they used in witchcraft trials. Only in Baden-Baden was denunciation by accomplices accepted as sufficient justification for torture, leading to its large witch hunts from 1625–1631. Baden's first witchcraft trial occurred in 1552, and the last trial and execution in Emmendingen in 1669.

MARGRAVATE BADEN-DURLACH

This margravate has very few documented witchcraft trials, just those in Pforzheim (1552), Prechtal (1562), Badenweiler (1570), and Hachberg (1579), none of which incited more extensive forms of persecution. In these trials, 9 women were accused of witchcraft. Of these, 6 were condemned to death and executed, 1 was put under surveillance; the fate of the remaining 2 women is unknown (Schneider 2004, 215). The last and probably only trial in the seventeenth century took place in Hachberg; 1 woman was found guilty of witchcraft and executed (Ibid.).

There are few written records of Baden-Durlach's trials. The only well-documented trial occurred in 1552, when 3 women were accused of witchcraft (Ibid.). These sources show a very cautious attitude of the authorities toward accusations of witchcraft. For example, after their preliminary investigation against an honorable widow who had been denounced by a woman already convicted, the margrave's councilors applied to the faculty of law at the University of Tübingen for guidance. Of specific concern was the question of whether the denunciation was itself sufficient reason to put the accused under torture. The Tübingen jurists denied that it was, and one supposes that the Baden-Durlach authorities followed this opinion. Only one year later,

Margrave Karl II of Baden-Durlach, upon coming into power, made sure he had the support of the Tübingen jurists for a policy of restraint in conducting witchcraft trials. Above all, these jurists emphasized that when torture was applied, procedures had to adhere to the regulations of the Carolina Code (the imperial law code, *Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*, 1532), and that denunciations were insufficient justification for the use of torture.

MARGRAVATE BADEN-BADEN

The first wave of persecution in Baden-Baden took place during the Bavarian regency for Margrave Philipp II. Until 1577, approximately 26 women had been found guilty of witchcraft and executed in the districts (*Ämter*) of Baden-Baden, Rastatt, Bühl, Steinbach, and Frauenalb. Afterwards, under Philipp II's reign, another 18 women from the districts of Rastatt, Baden-Baden, and Kuppenheim were put to death in 1580 (Schneider 2004, 217). This first witch hunt was characterized by the central authorities' control over all proceedings. Random prosecutions by individuals were strongly discouraged. Yet without the desire of the people to hunt down witches after making connections between crop failures or sicknesses and witchcraft, many accusations would have been left unspoken.

From 1594 to 1622, during the occupation of Baden-Baden's core areas by Margrave Ernst Friedrich of Baden-Durlach, no witch hunts took place. The situation changed, however, after Margrave Wilhelm of Baden-Baden succeeded in winning back his sovereignty in 1622. Only four years later, the largest witch hunt in the history of the Margravate Baden began. Between 1626 and 1631, at least 244 persons from the districts of Rastatt, Baden-Baden, Steinbach, and Bühl were accused of witchcraft; 77 percent were women, which corresponds with the average numbers in the Holy Roman Empire. Of these 244 people, all but 13 were condemned to death and executed; 2 were exiled, and 11 proclaimed not guilty (Schneider 2004, 218).

In this wave of persecution, it was a critical factor that a single denunciation sufficed for arrest and torture. Even appeals to the highest court in the empire (the *Reichskammergericht*, the imperial chamber court)

could not convince Margrave Wilhelm and his councilors to return to more traditional procedures. Contrary to customary legal procedures, these witchcraft trials were not headed by lower officials, but by a councilor whom Margrave Wilhelm had specifically appointed to this task. This way, the authority that had to be applied to for permission to torture was already present. The fact that merely the signed confessions (*Urgichten*) had to be presented to the Margrave speeded proceedings considerably.

Our sources offer few clues to explain what caused the end of this witch hunt in the fall of 1631. The ruler's readiness to bring alleged witches to trial seems to have lessened, and official accusations of witchcraft became fewer. Margrave Wilhelm recalled his councilors and left the last witchcraft trials in the hands of local officials. Then, in January 1632, Swedish troops moved in and temporarily rendered witchcraft trials impossible.

CORINNA SCHNEIDER;

TRANSLATED BY MAIKE LINDER

See also CAROLINA CODE; GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; *REICHSKAM-MERGERICHT*.

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BALDUNG [GRIEN], HANS (1484–1545)

Hans Baldung [Grien] produced more images of witchcraft than any other sixteenth-century artist and was instrumental in establishing a new iconography that influenced its visual representations for over a century. Baldung was a south German painter, printmaker, and stained glass designer who spent most of his life in Strasbourg. From 1503 to 1507 he was an apprentice in Albrecht Dürer's Nuremberg workshop, where he adopted the nickname "Grien" (green). In



Hans Baldung Grien's Witches' Sabbath, but better entitled A Group of Witches around a Cauldron, 1510. (Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Art Resource)

1509 he returned to Strasbourg, married, acquired citizenship, became a master in the guild of goldsmiths, painters, printers, and glaziers (known as *Zur Steltz*), and established his own workshop. Baldung designed woodcuts for more than a dozen Strasbourg printers and received numerous commissions from the bishops of Strasbourg and Basel, the upper Rhenish nobility, wealthy Strasbourg families, and ecclesiastics. His works included religious and classical subjects, portraits, and heraldic designs, as well as such relatively novel themes as death, sexuality, and witchcraft.

Baldung's first and most critical image was a 1510 single-leaf woodcut, usually entitled *Witches' Sabbath*, but more appropriately called *A Group of Witches Around a Cauldron*. It was designed with the use of several blocks in differently colored tones, in order to create its richly layered, chiaroscuro effects. The central scene depicts three naked women in an eerie forest setting, grouped around a cauldron and symbolically united by a triangle of forked sticks. They are engaged in a ritual offering and focus their attention on a cauldron

billowing thick clouds of vapor. On the ground lie the instruments with which these women carry out their witchcraft: a convex mirror used for entrapping demons, a brush employed in rubbing on salves, a bundle of animal hair, and a bone commonly used in acts of sorcery. On the left, sausages are hanging over a forked stick and roasting on the fire; above a witch rides backwards on a goat, using her cooking fork to carry a small pot, her hair flying and legs spread-eagled, as though to emphasize the link between her destructive and sexual power. Baldung's woodcut proved critical in establishing the image of a group of women gathered around a cauldron as a widely recognizable visual code for witchcraft. For him, witchcraft was inextricably linked to women's bodies and women's labor. Baldung also developed the link between witchcraft and inversion: seen in the backward ride on the goat, or in the ladle and cauldron of the ritual offering, which replace the traditional accoutrements of male priestly ritual. The phallic sausages have been seen as alluding to witches' powers of castration and their appropriation of male power. And the wild, flying hair of his witches add to the general sense of moral disorder.

Although Baldung's adopted city of Strasbourg saw few witchcraft trials until the 1570s, the intense cultural life of this printing center promoted much discourse on the subject of witchcraft during his time there. In 1499 a Franciscan moralist and later critic of the Reformation, Thomas Murner, published his *De phitonico contractu* (Concerning the Witches' Pact). In 1508 Strasbourg's most popular preacher, Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg, delivered several Lenten sermons on the subject, which were published eight years later under the title of *Die Emeis* (The Ants). By 1510, seven editions of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), by Heinrich Kramer, had been published in the Holy Roman Empire, if not at Strasbourg itself. And through their common patron, Baldung was also likely to have known about the two works on witchcraft by the learned Abbot of Sponheim, Johannes Trithemius.

Baldung's 1510 scene may well have been suggested by a chiaroscuro drawing of 1506 by his fellow south German artist, Albrecht Altdorfer, while the backward ride of the witch on the goat was clearly modeled on a Dürer engraving completed between 1500 and 1507, which Baldung must have seen as an apprentice in his workshop. Baldung's images of witchcraft were further developed and disseminated in a series of intimate chiaroscuro drawings (on tinted paper with white ink highlighting) that were completed in 1514–1515 when he was in Freiburg im Breisgau fulfilling a commission to paint the cathedral's high altarpiece. Two drawings in particular, one now in the Louvre at Paris and the other in the Albertina at Vienna, were modeled on the iconography and composition of the 1510 woodcut.

Both depicted a trio of witches as the central scene, their naked bodies and streaming hair complementing the seething cauldron and its vapors. In the Louvre drawing, Baldung's central motif was a sacrificial offering, probably a parody of a priestly mass; the cauldron was replaced by a witch's body, and from its gas the witch lights a taper; the phallic sausages now occupy center stage. In the Albertina drawing, the focus is on the relationship between witches' trances and sexual pleasure, with suggestions of masturbation and orgasm.

Witchcraft was also strongly linked to the sensuality of female bodies in Baldung's other works. In a chiaroscuro drawing of 1514, which survives in a workshop copy inscribed with new year's wishes, virtually all reference to malefic activity has been removed, and the witches' bodies and wild hair are choreographed to create a wild and erotic display. Another chiaroscuro drawing of 1515, usually entitled *Witch and Dragon*, exemplifies contemporary interest in the erotic. It depicts sexual intercourse between witch and devil in the form of cunnilingus, while Baldung plays with the ambiguities of the body's orifices and the Devil's capacity to assume male or female form. In Baldung's only painting of witchcraft, *The Weather Witches* of 1523, two nude female witches communicate their sexual independence through their assertive poses and self-confident gaze. The wild weather they have unleashed is seen overhead, and a small demon in a flask probably represents its source. But the bodies of the witches themselves are also the source of upheaval, their disordered sexuality revealed by Baldung's use of visual cues such as a cross-legged stance, a fiery torch held high by a putto who is probably a demonic offspring, the wild hair flying out in contradictory directions, and the goat on which one of the women sits and which she ever so hesitantly reveals. As in his earlier images, the power of witchcraft oscillates between sensual attraction, seduction, and destruction.

Baldung's final image of witchcraft, a woodcut produced one year before his death and entitled *The Bewitched Groom*, differs markedly from his previous work. The focus is not on the witch but on the victim, the apparently lifeless body of a groom lying on a stable floor, his left hand near a currycomb and his right hand loosely holding a forked stick. The witch is now an old and clothed female figure, much closer to traditional representations of sorcerers than the iconography that Baldung developed thirty years earlier. Yet Baldung still alludes to her sexual powers by the breast that falls loose from her clothing and the flaming torch in her hand. The coat of arms hanging askew on the wall has been widely believed to refer to Baldung's family, which suggests that the groom represents the artist himself. The forked stick demonstrates that he has been bewitched, and his foreshortened body with its codpiece as focal point, identifies the bewitchment as

sexual. The horse positioned immediately above the groom's head, which with piercing eye and a swish of the tail displays its anus, also identifies sexual bewitchment as the subject. This woodcut has sparked numerous readings: It has been seen as an allegory of anger, a story of shape shifting, a version of traditional tales of a robber knight abducted by the Devil, Baldung's dream of his own death, and an embodiment of the artist's fears of his unbridled sexual appetites. Yet its creative power seems all the greater because it is so difficult to give it a single reading.

The four different copies of Baldung's 1510 woodcut and the five copies of his drawings that have survived demonstrate the considerable contemporary interest in Baldung's work. But it was a woodcut of 1516, modeled on Baldung's 1510 work and probably a product of his workshop, that proved the most important for the dissemination of Baldung's new iconography. It first appeared as an illustration in the two editions of Geiler's *Die Emeis* (1516 and 1517) and then in at least five different editions of Johann Pauli's collection of moral tales, *Schimpf und Ernst* (Humor and Seriousness). The scene depicted a group of three women—two of them naked and holding up flaming vessels, a third dressed and riding a stool—engaging in a wild and seemingly sexual ride. Versions were reproduced starting in the 1560s, as title pages to works by Johann Weyer, Reinhard Lutz, Ulrich Mblitor, Paulus Frisius, and Abraham Saur; the key elements of Baldung's iconography were later incorporated into the witchcraft images of such artists as Jakob Cornelisz van Oostanen, Lucas Cranach, and Jacques de Gheyn II.

CHARLES ZIKA

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BALDUNG [GRIEN], HANS; CAULDRON; CRANACH, LUCAS; DÜRER, ALBRECHT; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; FRISIUS, PAULUS; GEILER VON KAYSERSBERG, JOHANN; GENDER; GHEYN II, JACQUES DE; GOAT; HAIR; IMPOTENCE, SEXUAL; MOLITOR, ULRICH; SABBAT; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC; STICKS; STRASBOURG, DIOCESE OF; TRITHEMIUS, JOHANNES; WEATHER MAGIC; WEYER, JOHANN.

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BALEARIC ISLANDS

Despite the widespread practice of popular magic, only three accused witches were executed in the Balearic Islands. Conquered by the Catalan King James I, the Balearic Islands belonged to the Crown of Aragon from the early thirteenth century and became part of Spain under the Catholic kings, although its 100,000–150,000 inhabitants retained some legal and political autonomy until the eighteenth century. No records document witchcraft and sorcery practices in the Balearics until 1458, when the Majorcan Inquisition sentenced a man and a woman, accused of invoking and worshipping the Devil and of giving him their souls, to die at the stake. In January 1483, a Majorcan episcopal edict, subsequently confirmed in February 1499, punished *sortilegio* (sorcery, spell-casting) with excommunication.

Records become slightly more plentiful after the Catholic kings brought the new Spanish Inquisition to Majorca in 1488. In 1499, a woman was burned to death on charges of having invoked demons. Afterwards, others accused of dealing with infernal powers were only sentenced to reconciliation; for example, a knight of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem in 1502; a woman in 1513; a man in 1531; and a woman as late as 1675. Their punishments included fines, exile, and lashes, sometimes the galleys, but never the death penalty. However, this handful of cases does not represent what was actually occurring here in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Two different sources now in the Inquisition section of the Archivo Histórico Nacional (Madrid) help us measure witchcraft crimes in those two centuries. A *Relación de Reconciliados y Relajados* (Register of Reconciled and Relaxed), which the inquisitor José Hualte sent to the Supreme Council of the Inquisition in 1693, covers the years 1488–1691; but it does not include crimes against morality, including those perpetrated by witches and wizards, which were always considered minor offenses. Far more useful is the *Relaciones de causas de fe de la Inquisición de Mallorca* (Register of the Trials of Faith of the Inquisition of Mallorca [Majorca]). They provide plenty of information, although only those from 1579–1617 have been published. The period is too short to offer a precise picture

of the Inquisition's persecution of illicit magic in the Balearic Islands. Of its 519 cases, only 35, or 7 percent, fall into this category; 14 defendants (40 percent of this sample) were men, a rather high proportion. The total number of cases for the period 1615–1700 was 783, out of which 138 were sentenced for witchcraft or sorcery (Contreras and Henningsen 1986, 119).

A third source is an anthology of superstitious prayers for benevolent magic, mixing invocations to saints with the most bizarre esoteric rites full of eroticism and greed, as well as reflecting the simple desire to recover one's health. Besides its seventy-two prayers (all obtained from seventeenth-century Inquisition trials), the anthology contains a description of each liturgy used by the officiating witch. Each prayer has important textual differences, even those addressed to the same saint (Riera i Montserrat 1979).

The Majorcan Holy Office did not begin transcribing such prayers until the seventeenth century. The most popular saints among Balearic witches were St. Helen (fifteen invocations), St. Anthony (seven invocations), and St. Martha (four invocations). No one else, including Jesus and his mother, was invoked more than twice. It is interesting to notice the evident parallelism between the magic practices on the Balearic Islands, as prayers addressed to saints as mediators seem similar to those used by witches on mainland Spain. Probably, the most active witches in the Balearic Islands were foreigners, even Gypsies, who were perceived as more gifted than the locals.

The eighteenth century offers less information than the seventeenth century, although there is evidence that the Holy Office of Majorca punished two women and one man for witchcraft in 1708, and two more women in 1724, with the aggravating circumstance that they were recidivists. In 1769, a young woman was imprisoned under the accusation of searching for hidden treasures.

Besides the Inquisition, diocesan bishops tried to control the opaque world of illicit magic. Practically all Majorcan synods of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (none were held in the next two centuries) emphasized that the sins committed by *sortilegi et incantatores* (sorcerers and enchanters) should be reserved to the bishop, and not absolved by ordinary confessors. In the final synod, summoned by Bishop Pedro de Alagón in 1692, the first chapter of title 18 was devoted to *sortilegi* and ordered that anyone using spells to cure the sick will be excommunicated. It stigmatized such ignorant people as “pravos homines et simplices mulierculas suae salutis immemores” (wicked men and silly women forgetful of their salvation). This text reveals in passing that much of the Balearic population remained attached to magic practices as they had been two centuries earlier, and were still reluctant to denounce such magicians despite clerical anathemas.

Undoubtedly, most white or black magic practiced in the Balearic Islands never reached either the inquisitors or the episcopal courts, but instead remained unpunished, protected by an impenetrable complicity between the sorcerer and his or her customer.

FRANCESC RIERA I MONTSERRAT

See also: ARAGON; INQUISITION, SPANISH; MAGIC, POPULAR; SPAIN.

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BALKANS (WESTERN AND CENTRAL)

In South Slavic regions under Ottoman rule there were no institutional witchcraft trials similar to those in western and central Europe, nor did the central authorities deal with the problem of witchcraft. Accusations, however, often shaped by traditional beliefs and oral customary law, were frequent among the common people and the local authorities.

The western and central Balkans include the ex-Yugoslav republics (Bosnia, Serbia, Montenegro, and Macedonia) as well as Albania and Bulgaria. Before the coming of the Ottoman Turks in the fifteenth century, Bosnia formed the borderland between the Catholic and Orthodox worlds in the Balkans. While the countries unconquered by the Ottoman Turks (e.g., Croatia) turned toward Latin Europe, the lands under Ottoman rule (the Balkans), mostly populated by Orthodox Christians, experienced a different turn of events.

During the early modern period, despite being ethnically diverse and divided by their official religion, traditional societies in the Balkans shared several common archaic beliefs and everyday practices. Although there were no witchcraft trials in the judicial meaning of the word, a strong shared belief in the existence of witches produced sporadic witch hunts, almost always in connection with natural disasters and from time to time characterized by mass hysteria. Some forms of legislation reflecting witchcraft beliefs can be found in both oral traditions and customary laws of the region. Witches were accused of killing children and cattle, of spreading disease, and of causing crop failures. Almost exclusively, elderly women were accused, interrogated, and sometimes punished according to “old customs.” There are almost no data about such persecutions before the seventeenth century, and the last executions in this region occurred in such mountainous regions as Montenegro in the second half of the nineteenth century.

HISTORICAL, ETHNIC, AND RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

Due largely to their geography, characterized by impenetrable mountains, the Balkans in the early modern period continued to preserve a complex variety of cultural and ethnic groups. Because the creation of late medieval Christian states (e.g., Serbia) was disrupted by the Ottoman conquest between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, the entire Balkan region inhabited predominantly by Orthodox Christians never experienced institutional and juridical witch persecutions. This fact can be explained by a variety of causes, including the following: strongly preserved archaic beliefs, the development of Orthodox Christian theology; an underdeveloped state and juridical system; and a social structure of predominantly peasant and shepherd societies. Under Ottoman occupation, these Christian populations found themselves ruled by a central government with different political, cultural, and religious values. Nevertheless, the Christian population (with a very strong pre-Christian cultural substratum), who were organized in villages, clans, or tribes, preserved their own customary laws, implemented by the local chieftains or councils of elders. Therefore, Ottoman authorities rarely dealt with the problem of witchcraft; in fact, there are literally no institutional and juridical regulations nor any written documents about witchcraft trials from the Balkans. The only exception is the Principality of Transylvania (today part of Romania), which, although a vassal state of the Ottoman Empire, managed to preserve its inner autonomy. With a local governing class largely composed of urban Calvinist Hungarians and Lutheran Saxons, Transylvania presented a completely different cultural pattern from the central Balkans—and recorded numerous witchcraft trials, starting in the late sixteenth century.

Everywhere else in the mountainous western and central Balkans, despite the cultural and religious differences between ethnic groups, older and deeper cultural layers (and sometimes even ethnic kinship) united the Muslim population with their Christian neighbors. For that reason, even in places with a high percentage of Muslims (e.g., Bosnia or southwestern Serbia), the witchcraft persecutions conducted by local “Turks” differed little from those of their Christian neighbors.

The absence of any record of witchcraft accusations in the Balkans until a later date than in the lands to the north and west may not, in fact, mean that no such accusations were made, given the complete absence of documents of any kind from the earlier period, primarily because of constant unrest in the Ottoman borderlands. Because there were apparently no institutional trials, it seems that the documented persecutions represent the variations of popular witch lynchings practiced in other parts of Europe. The specific circumstances of social and economic underdevelopment of this region (its very late modernization) enabled longer survival of its societies based on oral tradition; understanding the oral “legislation” of these societies might help with the reconstruction of other older cultural layers lying beneath the educated tradition of western Europe.

THE FIGURE OF A WITCH

Although widespread, the belief in witches never became a dominant belief system throughout the Balkans; it coexisted with more archaic beliefs in fairies and other supernatural beings (Pócs 1989). In this region, the figure of a witch differed geographically from area to area. In Habsburg-ruled northwestern Croatia, what is known about the witches called *coper-nica* strongly resembles what is known of the Austro-Hungarian *Zauber* (from whom their name derives), with wizardry and weather making as dominant characteristics. Farther southeast, the main characteristics of the “witch” were different: the Dalmatian *striga* (from Italian *streggha*) preserved more archaic characteristics, being much more connected with killing children. Further to the east, from the Dalmatian hinterland through southern Bosnia and alongside the Dinaric Alps, the witch resembled a nocturnal demon that sucks blood from children or cattle. The remains of a demonic type of witch were also preserved in some parts of the Balkans as a belief in *mora* (etymologically related to *nightmare*), creatures who steal the life-giving liquids (blood and milk) from a sleeping victim during the night.

In general, in the western and central Balkans a witch often bears the name *veštica* (with many variations of the term), basically meaning the “one who is able, the one who knows.” This use of the term might be explained, at least on an etymological level, by its pre-Christian and perhaps shamanistic origin.

Regardless of its origins, data from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries show that the prevailing idea of a witch was a woman who attacked sleepers during the night (whether some evil spirit left her body to make the attack or she did it herself), causing them either death or sickness. There was also widespread belief that the witch could turn into an animal or change her size so that she could pass through very small holes in order to attack her victims. The witch, as a mixture of evil spell caster, weather-controlling expert, and night-stalking demon, was most often accused of killing children and cattle. Because most of our data come from the mountainous regions populated by pastoral societies, it is understandable that almost all witchcraft accusations would involve attacks on humans and livestock, the two fundamental sources of life.

The data show that Balkan-area executions were far less frequent in regions where more archaic beliefs about fairies were better preserved. As a supernatural being, the fairy could not be persecuted, while a witch, a human being who integrated traditional fairy activities (e.g., causing bad weather), simple sorcery, and the demonic characteristics of a classical Greek-Roman *strix* (screech owl; term used for "witch"), presented an ideal scapegoat. The witch, who was almost without exception an elderly woman, could be made responsible for a broad range of natural disasters. Religious and ethnic diversity also affected witchcraft accusations. Constant unrest and war threats, along with permanent tensions between the ruling Muslims and subject Christians as well as between different ethnic groups, provided a sociological and psychological background in which a great number of evil deeds were constantly attributed to the "other side." Muslims often accused Christian women, while both Christians and Muslims accused Gypsies and Vlachs (an ethnic group of Romanian origin). Rich ethnological material shows the existence of strong prejudices among Christians about Muslims as practitioners of magic and sorcery (as well as vice versa). People in the Balkan borderlands sometimes believed that the "Turks" (as Muslims were called, whatever their ethnic origin) could turn into wolves or become vampires. Despite these divisions, sources occasionally mentioned Christians accusing their own women and surrendering them to the Turks to be executed. One such example is a trial held in Trebinje (eastern Herzegovina) in 1846, during which local Christians subjected 73 women to an ordeal before willingly surrendering 11 of them to the Turks to be executed (Maksimović 1979, 220).

PROCEDURE AND PUNISHMENT

The common belief was that witches were in the first place elderly women from the local neighborhood who could be recognized by such natural features as the evil eye, moustaches, hairy legs, and the like. Because of

beliefs that witches could turn into some kinds of animals, people often burned butterflies, birds, or cats, hoping to detect the witches afterwards by their burns or scars.

Along with these personal methods of identifying witches and everyday practices, in periods of major disasters the most common interrogation method was the swimming test (the cold-water ordeal), which was considered to be one of the "old customs." After a serious disaster (a massive death rate among children or an epidemic), a group of accused women were brought to a river or lake and thrown one by one in the water with their hands tied. Those who did not sink were considered to be witches. Data about individual trials are quite rare, but there are several examples of interrogations of entire groups, sometimes including all the elderly women from the area. One of the better-documented trials comes from Eastern Bosnia, conducted by Smail-aga Čengić, the *muselim* (a high Muslim official, a type of clerk acting sometimes as a judge) of Gacko, in the 1830s. According to one of the witnesses, all the elderly women from the area were brought to Lipnik, the tower of the *muselim*, where they were put to the ordeal in the local stream. Two Christians and one Gypsy woman would not sink; and, after being accused of killing the children, they were burned with a searing hot horseshoe. Interestingly, one of the participants stated that "the disaster (dying of the children) stopped immediately" (Lilek 1894, 470). Another similar trial was held in Trebinje in Eastern Herzegovina in 1857. In that case a large number of Christian women who were put to ordeal did not sink, so the local Muslims wanted to stone them. On this occasion, the families of the accused barely managed to save their lives, but they had to take an oath before the local monastery that they "will never eat children again" (Vrčević 1884, 13).

The fire ordeal was applied in some executions in Serbia as late as the beginning of the nineteenth century. In some cases, women were set on fire in order to make them confess their witchcraft; if they would not confess, they were simply burned to death. It seems that this method rested on the widespread belief that a witch who confessed her witchcraft lost her powers (the belief that a witch who confessed her witchcraft in public would lose her powers was also connected with the idea that confession in church could deliver the witch from the evil spirit that she was born with). Therefore, accused witches were sometimes burned not primarily in order to torture or kill them, but to remove their evil powers. From the existing data it can be stated that fire was used in various forms as an interrogation method as well as a measure of punishment, but it was applied only in Serbian cases from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Such frequent (although it is hard to speculate about the numbers) and extremely late (beginning of the nineteenth century) burnings can

probably be explained by what has been called the periphery effect (the time lag between the diffusion of cultural developments from the European core to the periphery, in this case from the witch hunts in the Holy Roman Empire to the Balkans) and the growing central European influence in nineteenth-century Serbia. Such cases were reported from central Serbia during the first revolt against Ottoman rule (1804–1812). The leader of the rebellion, Đorđe Petrović (who had previously spent some time in Hungary), ordered a woman accused of witchcraft to be burned alive in the village of Žabari soon after 1805; about the same time, a local chieftain, Antonije Pljakč, burned an old woman in the village of Kraljevo.

In mountainous areas farther south (e.g., Montenegro, Albania) no such burnings were reported. However, until the second half of the nineteenth century, the customary laws in the mountainous Dalmatian hinterland and in some parts of Bosnia preserved a kind of “hot-water ordeal,” in the form of having the accused witch remove a piece of hot steel (usually a horseshoe) from boiling water. Although there are no data about actual witchcraft trials using this ordeal, it is reminiscent of some other persecutions that mention punishing witches with a searing horseshoe.

The oldest and most widespread way of executing witches in the Balkans was by stoning them and throwing them into pits. Punishment by stoning predates Ottoman rule. The fourteenth-century code of the Serbian tsar Dušan, whose terminology strongly resembled the contemporary Byzantine legal system, ordered that “magicians should be punished according to the law of the ancient Fathers,” in other words, by stoning, the practice found in the Hebrew Bible (Radošić 1950, 54). But the code’s connections with popular customs of stoning witches five centuries later have not been satisfactorily explained. The practice of stoning is especially well documented in eastern Bosnia, Montenegro, southern Serbia, and Albania, mountainous regions with prevalently tribal social systems. According to some witnesses, stonings took place sporadically even in the second half of the nineteenth century.

In highland tribal societies, an accused woman was sometimes released if she could bring a group (usually five) of her clansmen or other influential men to swear to her innocence. This practice, sometimes considered a legacy of older Slavic traditional laws, did not help widows and other socially unprotected women, who became ideal scapegoats and were often executed.

Along with such cases of following customary laws, there were also cases of pure lynching where literally no procedure was used. Such episodes occurred in Serbia around 1810, for example, when some women were shot or cut with knives without any interrogation.

Accusations appeared even in the second half of the nineteenth century; at that time, however, except for isolated highland areas, the penalties were less severe than a century earlier. Sources mention only flogging and beating; this change seems to have been the result of the introduction of legal penalties for prosecuting witches.

OFFICIALS AND THE LAST PROSECUTIONS

Witchcraft accusations in the Balkans, unlike those in central Europe, lacked any institutional support from either state or church. Available sources indicate that Ottoman authorities paid little attention to the problem of witches and also suggest that the higher Orthodox Church officials disagreed with the practices of their flock. Although we have little early information on this matter, in regions where executions occurred in the eighteenth century and later, high Orthodox Church officials opposed the practice. For example, in 1795 Metropolitan Peter I of Montenegro forbade “the ones who participated in the stoning” to take part in liturgical meetings and accused them as “deliberate killers”; another high Orthodox Church official, Archimandrite J. Pamušina, claimed that stoning had been “allowed by Ottoman judges as well as some ignorant priests” (Pamušina 1867, 52). It is possible that parish priests, often local people without higher education, sometimes participated in the brutalities and superstitions of their flock.

In Bosnia, the Austrian occupation in 1878 definitively abolished the already dwindling use of customary law. According to contemporary observers, the last ordeals took place in eastern Herzegovina after 1850. In Serbia, witches were occasionally interrogated by water and fire ordeals even after the criminal code of 1810, which forbade “searching for witches, and killing women,” took effect. However, some sporadic cases occurred even later, for example at the village of Brda in Kosovo, where Ottoman police officers almost beat to death four women accused by their neighbors of witchcraft. In some remote regions of Montenegro witches were still stoned even after the 1860s. Although the following of traditional methods (in the Balkans, distinctions between a “lynching” and a “trial according to customary law” remain problematic) definitely ceased during the nineteenth century, a few cases of killing women accused of witchcraft occurred even in the twentieth century.

TRPIMIR VEDRIŠ

See also: CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST 1800); CROATIA; EXECUTIONS; FAIRIES; FOLKLORE; HUNGARY; HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, WITCHCRAFT; ISLAMIC WITCHCRAFT AND MAGIC; LYNCHING; NIGHTMARES; ORDEAL; ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY; POPULAR PERSECUTION; SWIMMING TEST.

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BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF

The infamous reputation of this Catholic principality of the Holy Roman Empire for intensive witch hunting is justly deserved; Bamberg's witchcraft trials developed into some of early modern Germany's most savage persecutions. Abundant legal records have been preserved, primarily in the cathedral city's library, the Staatliche Bibliothek Bamberg, and the wealth of surviving primary source material makes it possible for historians to determine the extent of the territory's witch craze with some accuracy.

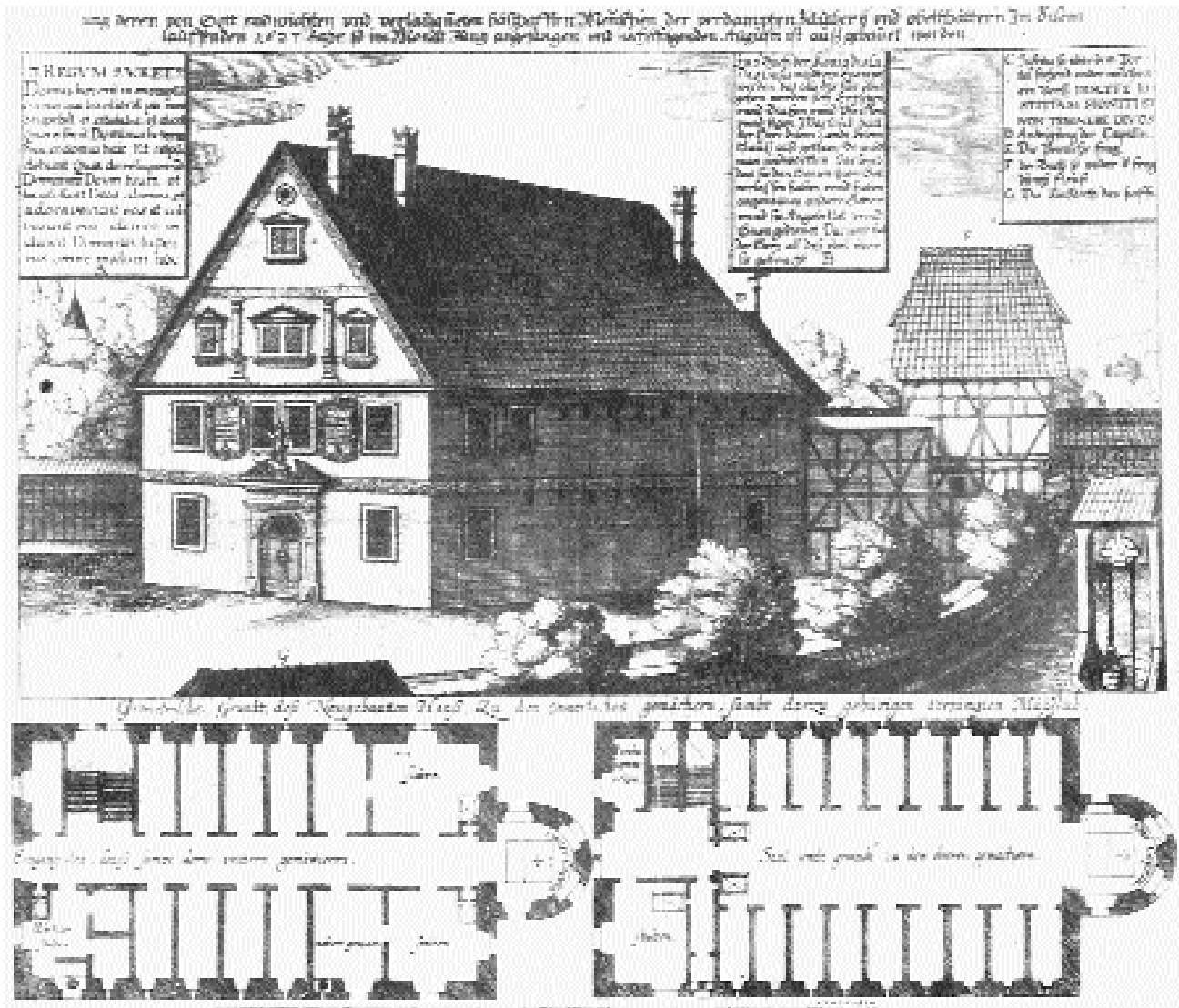
Bamberg's first known trial, in 1595, already contained specific allegations of demonic witchcraft, instead of the traditional offense of harmful sorcery (*Zauberei*). The defendant, Margaretha Böhmerin, admitted under torture that she had engaged in sexual intercourse with the Devil, promised him her soul, and attended a witches' meeting. She was executed; but no prosecutions followed until 1612–1613, when a small panic broke out that resulted in fifteen arrests. Between 1616 and 1619, a more intensive series of prosecutions took place, with at least 155 persons tried for participating in demon-worshipping witch sects (Gehm 2000, 57, 69).

A new spate of persecutions erupted during the 1620s, when many other ecclesiastical territories also

staged massive witch hunts. Between 1626 and 1630, approximately 630 persons were imprisoned at Bamberg on witchcraft charges, and most were condemned to death. Like other large witch hunts in southern Germany, the tendency to focus on poor, elderly, quarrelsome females, traditionally most apt to be considered witches, became much less marked as the search for greater numbers of suspected witches gathered momentum (Midelfort 1972). Under these circumstances, accusations were made against many atypical suspects, such as burgomasters and town councillors. The bishop's own chancellor, Dr. Georg Haan, was among those executed. Haan's arrest was mainly due to his desire to reform the increasingly irregular judicial procedures used to detect the bishopric's witches. Like his illustrious predecessor Dr. Dietrich Flade of Trier, Dr. Haan learned that questioning trial procedures was a dangerous undertaking and could lead to charges that obstructors of persecution were themselves witches, protecting their secret demonic coconspirators.

Sudden crop failures significantly provoked Bamberg's severe panic of the 1620s. Although peasant demands that action be taken against sorcerers who had harmed their crops triggered prosecutions, the principal responsibility for unleashing the large-scale witch hunt rested with the ruling prince-bishop and his advisors; after all, the governing elite conducted these prosecutions. Bamberg's outbursts of witch-hunting activity occurred under the rule of the prince-bishop Johann Gottfried von Aschhausen (1609–1622) and especially under Johann Georg II Fuchs von Dornheim (1623–1633), nicknamed the "witch-bishop" (*Hexenbischof*).

Recently, historians have paid more attention to the personalities and general psychological profile of German rulers who displayed a keen interest in the extermination of witches. Such princes usually held a resolute faith, and they were especially receptive to the kind of pessimistic, sin-obsessed, dogmatic mentality often found among sections of the social elite from the late sixteenth century onwards—an era characterized by extensive religious conflict and political turmoil. Bamberg's early-seventeenth-century prince-bishops regarded it as a divine mission to cleanse their lands of any evils that threatened to undermine the godly states they were attempting to establish. As well as witchcraft, Bamberg's overzealous rulers were especially concerned with policing manners and morals, attempting to eradicate a whole range of their subjects' behavior that could be defined as deviant: clerical concubinage, for example, or prostitution, or intemperate immoral conduct during popular festivities. Witch hunting should, therefore, be related to the wider aims of these pious prince-bishops, particularly with their efforts to impose social discipline on



The notorious witch house in Bamberg, constructed in 1627 to hold 30 witches. Most of the approximately 630 witches imprisoned in Bamberg between 1626 and 1630 were executed. (TopFoto.co.uk)

their subjects and to inculcate conformist, authoritarian values.

In Bamberg, and in a number of other Catholic territories that witnessed mass trials in this era, the ruling princes were often advised and encouraged about matters of witchcraft by members of their court circle who were experts in demonological theory. Suffragan Bishop Friedrich Förner fell into this category; in 1626 he published a series of thirty-five antiwitchcraft sermons, helping to endorse and support his prince-bishop's persecutions. The suffragan bishop also provided Bamberg's ruler with aid of a more practical nature for his campaign against witches. It was mainly thanks to Förner's initiative that a special prison, the notorious Bamberger *Hexenhaus*, was built in the cathedral city in 1627 especially to house witches; the jail had room for about thirty prisoners. Suspects imprisoned in the

Hexenhaus were frequently given sadistic forms of torture in order to compel them to admit their guilt. The authorities tortured stubborn suspects by force-feeding them on herrings cooked with salt and pepper while depriving them of drink; by applying feathers that had been dipped in burning sulfur (*Schwefelfedern*) to sensitive parts of their bodies; by compelling them to kneel for long periods on the *Betstuhl* (a "prayer stool" fitted with piercing wooden pegs); and by confining such obstinate suspects as Jakob Krauss for nearly six hours in the *Bock* (stocks fitted with sharp-pointed pieces of metal).

Other German authorities, such as the governors of the imperial free city of Offenburg, utilized similar methods of torture. This city's council, as part of its program to discover witches, instructed a workman to make a spiked chair which could be heated, in order to

inflict the maximum amount of suffering on prisoners. Such brutal measures become more explicable if they are related to government adoption of particular judicial approaches to witchcraft. Bamberg's and Offenburg's judiciary concurred with the views of those demonologists who argued that ordinary procedures for determining guilt were not necessarily applicable in cases of witchcraft, because it was an unusually problematic offense, invariably perpetrated in secret. Many experts in demonology therefore maintained that witchcraft should be prosecuted as an extraordinary crime (*crimen exceptum*), a crime excepted from the usual legal procedures because it was so serious and frequently hard to prove. By resolutely following this advice, legal officials in some German states allowed a situation to develop in which the application of brutal, irregular methods to obtain confessions became standard procedure for detecting witches.

Bamberg established a special witch-finding committee (*Hexen-Kommission*) that was responsible for supervising and directing these prosecutions throughout the whole bishopric. The committee greatly facilitated the process of persecution. Its membership was mainly restricted to legal experts from the ruler's princely court-council (*Hofrat*) who were especially obsessed with the dangers of demonic witchcraft. Thus Bamberg's *Hexen-Kommission* included such jurists as Dr. Ernst Vasoldt, who frequently tortured suspects severely until they named scores of accomplices supposedly seen at witches' assemblies. This fanatical witch hunter left his mark not only on Bamberg's prosecutions but also on the contemporaneous witchcraft trials in Mergentheim. He was sent to this Catholic territory in September 1628, after the authorities had requested advice from Bamberg's prince-bishop on how to proceed further against recently discovered witches. Vasoldt's intervention in Mergentheim proved extremely productive in terms of suspects brought to the attention of the courts; by the time he left the area in December 1628, lists of over 140 denounced accomplices had been compiled (Midelfort 1972, 147).

It is indicative of the fanaticism of the prince-bishop, and the pro-witch-hunting lobby within the governing elite, that they did not experience the kind of crisis of confidence in the validity of the procedures in witchcraft trials that their counterparts in other German regions experienced after the "usual suspects" who fitted the old-woman witch stereotype had been exhausted. By 1628, witchcraft accusations in the episcopal city of Bamberg had started to gravitate significantly toward members of the social elite, but local authorities still persisted in searching remorselessly for more accomplices.

Some relatives of the growing number of wealthy imprisoned suspects complained bitterly about the judicial abuses perpetrated in the bishopric. They peti-

tioned Emperor Ferdinand II's *Reichshofrat* (imperial court) in Regensburg to intervene on their behalf. Eventually, the *Reichshofrat* responded decisively to the mounting criticisms of Bamberg's procedures; on June 12, 1631, it issued a binding imperial mandate ordering Bishop Johann Georg both to appoint a new president of his *Hexen-Kommission* and to undertake a complete revision of his panel of judicial experts within this committee. These measures were deemed necessary to ensure that jurists would, in the future, conduct prosecutions according to the orderly, regulated procedures prescribed in the 1532 imperial criminal code, the Carolina Code (*Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*). The prince-bishop had been outmaneuvered, and Bamberg's reign of terror finally reached its end. By the 1630s, the cultural climate of Counter-Reformation fervor and fundamentalism that characterized the worldview of such advocates of witch hunting as Bishop Johann Georg was falling from fashion.

ROBERT WALINSKI-KIEHL

See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; APPEALS; CAROLINA CODE; COMMUNAL PERSECUTION; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); FLADE, DIETRICH; GERMANY; MERGENTHEIM, ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORY OF; POPULAR PERSECUTION; *REICHSHOFRAT*; TORTURE; WITCH-BISHOPS (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); WITCH CRAZE; WITCH HUNTS.

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BAPHOMET

Baphomet is the name of an alleged demonic idol that the Knights Templar were said to have venerated, when King Philip IV of France collected evidence to destroy this rich military order (1307–1314). But at no time, in antiquity, during the Middle Ages, or in the early modern period, was any deity or demon called Baphomet venerated, nor did an idol of that name exist.

Although the question of idolatry was a standing item of the written interrogatories used against this order from 1307 to 1314, only a very few of the hundreds of enforced confessions mentioned Baphomet. If

the veneration of a “heathen” or “demonic” idol was avowed, that idol remained anonymous in most cases. Obviously, the name Baphomet was chosen because of the Templars’ connection with the Saracens, who, according to medieval Christian propaganda formulated in written sources from the late eleventh century onwards (especially in many *chansons de geste*), venerated an idol called Baphomet or Bafumetz. This word, however, though it sounds somewhat similar to the name of the biblical monster Behemoth (Job 40, 10–19), is nothing but a Provençal transmutation of Mahomet, as he was called, the founder of Islam, into a demonic idol. Idolatry had been a standard accusation against all non-Christian religions since the time of the apostle Paul, who often condemned it in his letters, as it had been condemned in the Hebrew Bible.

If the name Baphomet evokes some mysterious associations even in our days, this is due to a legend woven around it, which apparently originated with the German occult society Klerikat der Tempelherren (The Templars’ Clergy), founded in 1767 by the Protestant (but secretly Catholic) professor of theology Johann August Freiherr von Starck. The ritual one had to fulfil in order to be initiated into this Masonic-like group included worship before an altar with a statue of Baphomet. Many other more or less occult groups have claimed (and still claim) to be the true heirs of the murdered knights and similarly transmit the name Baphomet; the leader of the Ordo Templi Orientis (Order of the Temple of the East), Aleister Crowley (1875–1947), even called himself “almighty Baphomet.” Baphomet entered the learned world via the sophisticated but completely untenable speculations of a famous poet and orientalist, Joseph Freiherr von Hammer-Purgstall (1774–1856). In 1818, he published a study on the mysteries of this figure, in which he alleged Baphomet to have been part of the Templars’ secret teaching, which according to him was a form of heretical Gnosticism. The main part of his paper, however, dealt with the sculptures of a Romanesque church in Lower Austria, Schöngrabern, which he interpreted as a cycle of images representing the clandestine doctrine of the order.

Much more popular were the fabulous but trusted “confessions” and “revelations” of a group of late nineteenth-century French writers. In their works, one could read “records” showing that a group of Satanists adored Baphomet as a palladium, wherefore they were also known as Palladists. The idol of the Templars, they stated, had been secretly preserved through the centuries, together with the skull of the last Grand Master of the Templars, burned in 1314. The sect allegedly had its centers in Charleston, South Carolina, in the United States, and later in Rome. One author, C. Hacks (publishing under the name Bataille), described Palladist and Freemason lodges, including descriptions of the

caverns in the great rock of Gibraltar, where prisoners fabricated Baphomets. Such stories had considerable success, especially in Catholic circles, as they seemed to present useful propaganda for the Church’s fight against Freemasonry. But in 1897, the main writer on this subject, Gabriel Jogand-Pagès, alias Léo Taxil (1854–1907), declared that the whole thing had been a mystification without real background, making fun of the credulity of some high-ranking members of the Catholic Church.

To the best of current knowledge, Baphomet was an invention of medieval anti-Islamic and anti-Templar propaganda. Rediscovered in the eighteenth century, the name became associated with various occultist groups claiming to uphold clandestine Templar traditions. As recently as 1965, the French writer Pierre Klossowski received the *Prix des Critiques* (Critics’ Prize) for his novel *Le Baphome* (The Baphomet), the story of a boy in the center of homoerotic Templar rituals.

PETER DINZELBACHER

See also: IDOLATRY; OCCULT; SATANISM; TEMPLARS.

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BAR, DUCHY OF

Because of its exceptionally complicated political history, the French duchy of Bar (which contained more than 100,000 people around 1600) has yet to be studied as a separate unit, and its history of witch hunting has remained completely unexplored. Nevertheless, when contrasted with the larger duchy of Lorraine, Bar contains enough evidence to offer some useful lessons for historians of witchcraft trials in French-speaking Europe, confirming the importance of appellate tribunals and suggesting why many suspected witches were lynched in French-speaking Europe.

Beginning in the Middle Ages, the duchy of Bar, with its capital at Bar-le-Duc in eastern France, was always administered separately from Lorraine. The dukes of Lorraine owed feudal allegiance to the Holy Roman Empire for much of Bar, which after 1506 they had permanently joined to their larger duchy of Lorraine, lying directly east of it, but they also owed homage to the kings of France for a large share of Bar. Major legal differences separated Bar from Lorraine,

giving witch hunting a significantly different profile in each part of this federation. An extremely important division separated the *Barrois mouvant* (that area in the French sphere of influence), its southwestern parts (including the capital, Bar-le-Duc), from the rest of the duchy, known as *Barrois non-mouvant*. From the Middle Ages until France annexed the duchy in the eighteenth century, the *Barrois mouvant* remained subject to the appellate jurisdiction of the distant *Parlement* of Paris (sovereign judicial court, with jurisdiction over approximately one-half of France). In reaction, the dukes of Lorraine created an appellate tribunal for the rest of the duchy at the small town of St. Mihiel on the Meuse in 1571. The larger duchy of Lorraine never contained a true appellate court; the opinions of the *Change de Nancy* [central legal tribunal in Lorraine], where the famous demonologist Nicolas Rémy sat from 1576–1591, were advisory, although consulting them was obligatory. Its smaller twin, Bar, however, was divided between two such courts, one of them very famous and prestigious but hundreds of kilometers distant.

As with Lorraine, our information about witchcraft trials in the duchy of Bar comes almost entirely from financial documents. Although Bar-le-Duc's records were severely damaged by fire as early as 1697, and fewer than half of them survive, enough evidence remains to suggest a few significant differences between Bar and Lorraine. For example, the earliest witchcraft trials preserved from the duchy of Bar (three episodes between 1473 and 1475, involving fourteen arrests and eight deaths) always included interventions by episcopal inquisitors, a tradition that continued here until 1545. However, expenses for witchcraft trials in Lorraine (which begin in 1477) never included inquisitors.

No judicial records survive from the *Parlement* of St. Mihiel, and the overall survival rate from Bar's two dozen financial districts during the probable apogee of trials between 1580 and 1630 was under 50 percent. However, a general panic reached this duchy in 1582–1583, moving east from the processions of "White Penitents" in Champagne: In those years, 10 witches were executed at St. Mihiel and 8 more at six different places. Later, our evidence is randomly scattered. After a poor harvest in 1594, the nuns of Juvigny had 6 witches executed by 1596 (Rigault 1988, 3–9). Only once—at La Mothe, in 1608—we were more than 10 witches tried in one district in one year. Overall, there is evidence of about 100 witchcraft executions in Bar, suggesting a probable total somewhere around 200–250. Calculating recorded witchcraft trials per financial district per year, the overall average for the duchy of Bar from 1580–1630 (0.29 for 305 district/years) was only one-fourth of those from the central duchy of Lorraine in the same period (1.2 for 936 district/years).

Meanwhile, all known lynchings of witches occurred in Bar, the only part of the duke's lands that used appellate courts. More than a dozen homicides of suspected witches were officially pardoned by the dukes of Lorraine and Bar, including three cases before 1500. Although Lorraine was three times as populous, every episode of lynching suspected witches occurred in Bar, most of them in the part under Parisian appellate jurisdiction, the *Barrois mouvant*. Very few witches were ever convicted in these regions, probably because of the enormous cost of appealing a death sentence to distant Paris (this situation actually happened a few times). In 1603, in the tiny southern enclave of Châtillon-sur-Saone, financial records suggest extreme reluctance to torture and convict arrested witches, and a recorded ducal pardon from the same place in the same year suggests a readiness to lynch them instead.

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; LORRAINE, DUCHY OF; LYNCHING; *PARLEMENT* OF PARIS; RÉMY, NICOLAS.

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BARANOWSKI, BOGDAN (1915–1993)

Baranowski was Polish social and cultural historian, and author of a comprehensive survey of the witchcraft persecution, published in 1952, *Procesy czarownic w Polsce w XVII i XVIII w.* (Witchcraft Trials in Poland in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries), and other works on witchcraft. This work has been extremely significant, because subsequent historians have quoted Baranowski's statistics almost exclusively and repeated his explanation of the causes of the witchcraft persecution in Poland. The statistics he published of the number of deaths that happened as a result of the trials were taken from a French résumé, and Baranowski emphasized that these figures were an estimate. Despite this, they have become canonical among non-Polish-speaking authors of witchcraft studies.

Baranowski, the author of over 300 articles and 35 books, completed his first degree at Warsaw University, where he studied history and oriental studies. During that time he worked at the Central Archive of Old Records (Archiwum Głównie Akt Dawnych) and therefore had a thorough knowledge of Poland's central archival sources. During World War II, he was a member of the Home Army and took part in the Warsaw Uprising, one of the few to escape. After 1945 he

became a professor at the University of Łódź, where he taught until 1985. In 1988 he was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Łódź.

Baranowski estimated a total of 10,000 legally passed death sentences and 5,000 illegal deaths of both men and women (Baranowski 1952, 178). He based these figures on the territorial unit of Poland in 1952 (without Silesia), and reckoned 1,250 towns in Poland. He supposed that each town court tried an average of four cases for witchcraft during the period and sentenced two people to death from each trial. He then added to this figure of 10,000 death sentences, an arbitrary 5,000 deaths to reflect the illegal murders of people suspected of witchcraft, making a total of 15,000 deaths over the three centuries. In his opinion the peak of the persecution was between 1675 and 1725 (Baranowski 1952, 179), an opinion that has been borne out by other research. In 1963, Baranowski revised his figures down to a few thousand in the epilogue to the Polish translation of Kurt Baschwitz's work on witchcraft, *Czarownice* (Witches). Unfortunately, these more accurate figures have not been those usually quoted by subsequent historians.

Doubts have been expressed about the veracity of the original and much-cited figures, and they have not always been considered in the context of the varying geography of early modern Poland, which was substantially different from the postwar territorial boundaries of 1945. Despite the controversy over statistics, Baranowski's works provided references to many primary sources, and provided a good introduction to the subject. The majority of his references have been checked, but many was clearly inaccurate (Pilaszek 1998, 82). In short, Baranowski's conclusions in his main work was fine, but the statistics was not.

Baranowski adopted a multicausal approach to explaining the reasons for outbreaks of witchcraft trials. He saw them as the result of German influence, because the persecution appeared to have started earlier in the lands neighboring the German territories, and a German legal code, the Magdeburg Law, was used in many Polish towns. He also regarded the Roman Catholic Church as partially to blame. At the same time, Baranowski saw socioeconomic reasons behind the trials: He interpreted witchcraft as a means of revenge employed by otherwise powerless peasants against their masters.

Baranowski also published a collection of transcriptions of six trials for witchcraft from Kalisz between 1580 and 1616, as well as an article on a trial for love magic from Praszka and many other works on folklore and peasant culture in Poland. His work represented the first attempt to present a comprehensive portrait of the phenomenon of witchcraft persecution in Poland and as such remains the natural starting point for further research—especially if Polish and foreign

scholars use his revised estimates of 1963 rather than his pioneering estimates of 1952.

WANDA WYPORSKA

See also: POLAND; POZNAŃ; SILESIA.

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BASEL, COUNCIL OF

The Council of Basel (1431–1449) played a unique and important role as a center for the development and diffusion of the idea of witchcraft in Western Europe. The full stereotype of witchcraft, entailing not just harmful sorcery (*maleficium*) but also demonic invocation and devil worship, heretical gatherings, and apostasy, emerged in a clear form only in the first decades of the fifteenth century, and some of the earliest recorded witch hunts took place during these years in lands just south of Basel, in the diocese of Geneva, Lausanne, and Sion. Politically, most of these regions were under the dominance of the ducal house of Savoy, which enjoyed close connections to the council, to the extent that the council fathers elected its duke, Amadeus VIII (1383–1451; ruled 1416–1451), as anti-pope Felix V in 1439 (reigned 1439–1449). Given these proximities, and considering that Basel brought together a large number of churchmen from across Europe, it is perhaps not surprising that the council became a major center for the collection and codification of the new ideas of witchcraft emerging in the lands around the western Alps and the transmission of these ideas to the rest of Europe.

Several clerical theorists of witchcraft either attended the Council of Basel or were closely associated with the assembly in some way. Perhaps the most important of these men was the Dominican theologian Johannes Nider, whose long work *Formicarius* (The Anthill) contained the most extensive early accounts of witchcraft written by an ecclesiastical authority. Nider was an important member of this council from its inception until late 1434 or early 1435. Although he wrote the *Formicarius* after his departure from Basel, mainly in

1437 and early 1438 while he was in Vienna as a member of the university faculty, most of his accounts of witchcraft were set in regions of the western Alps, and he clearly collected these stories during his time in Basel. Another important author, Martin Le Franc, came to Basel as the secretary of Amadeus VIII (later Felix V) of Savoy, and was formally incorporated into the council in 1440. From 1440 to 1442, he wrote the long poem *Le Champion des Dames* (The Defender of Ladies), which contained an extended debate about witchcraft, here set in the context of the late medieval *querelle des femmes* (debate about the nature of women). Yet another critical early source on witchcraft, written probably in the mid-1430s, was the brief tract entitled *Errores Gazariorum* (Errors of the Gazars or *Gazarii* [Cathars—a common term for heretics and later for witches]). Although the author of this work remains unknown, its connection in some fashion to the Council of Basel appears strong, as both known manuscript copies of the tract exist within larger collections of material relating to the council.

In addition to theorists, several important persecutors of witches were present at the Council of Basel or, again, connected to the synod in some way. George de Saluces, bishop of Lausanne from 1440 to 1461, under whose overall direction numerous witchcraft trials were conducted, was present at Basel, and Ulric de Torrenté, the diocesan inquisitor of Lausanne from the 1420s who actually conducted many of these early trials, may have spent time at the council. The most famous persecutor of witches to emerge from Basel, however, was Nicolas Jacquier, who attended the council from 1433 to 1440. Later, as an inquisitor in northern France, he wrote an important treatise on witchcraft, *Flagellum hereticorum fascinariorum* (Scourge of Heretical Witches), in 1458.

Despite much circumstantial evidence that Basel was an important crossroads for the development and transmission of the idea of witchcraft, there is no evidence whatsoever that matters of witchcraft or sorcery were ever a formal concern of the council. Although Basel dealt extensively with the Hussite heresy, and even to some extent with the heresy of the free spirit, there is no record of even a single session being devoted to the problem of heretical sorcerers or supposed cults of witches. Nevertheless, at least some direct evidence shows that informal discussions of witchcraft were certainly taking place there. The story of Joan of Arc, burned at the stake the year the council began, was carried to Basel by delegates from the University of Paris. At the council, Johannes Nider heard the story, and, although charges of sorcery did not actually figure in Joan's final condemnation, Nider included her supposed traffic with demons in his *Formicarius* as an example of witchcraft.

MICHAEL D. BAILEY

See also: *ERRORES GAZARIORUM*; EUGENIUS IV; HERESY; HUSSITES; JACQUIER, NICOLAS; JOAN OF ARC; LAUSANNE, DIOCESE OF; LE FRANC, MARTIN; NIDER, JOHANNES; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; SWITZERLAND, TORRENTÉ, ULRIC DE.

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BASQUE COUNTRY

Basque country includes the Basque-speaking areas near the Bay of Biscay on both sides of the Pyrenees—the French department of Pyrénées-Atlantique and the Spanish Basque provinces and Navarre. Despite the central position of the Basque witchcraft trials in the history of European witch persecution, no scholarly overview of the subject exists. In particular, knowledge of the trials in the French Basque country is limited, because most archives have been lost. In the Spanish Basque country they have been preserved to a great extent, but remain far from adequately researched. The situation is best in Navarre, where material has been preserved from all three courts that prosecuted witches: the High Court of Navarre, the Pamplona Bishop's Court for Navarre with part of Guipúzcoa, and the tribunal of the Inquisition at Logroño, with jurisdiction that included all of the Spanish Basque country. The archives of the last of these courts were lost during the Napoleonic Wars, but its documents have been preserved in summary form in the so-called *relaciones de causas* (reports of cases) sent annually to the *Suprema* (Supreme Council of the Spanish Inquisition), now preserved at the Archivo Histórico Nacional in Madrid.

Inquisition sources for Navarre and the Basque provinces mention 410 cases between 1538 and 1798 against *supersticiosos*, which was the overall term used by the Holy Office for a wide range of “magical delinquents” from cunning folk, male and female (*hechiceros* and *hechiceras*) and learned magicians (*nigromantes*) to witches proper, male and female (*brujos* and *brujas*) (Henningesen 1993, 58, 71 ff.; Moreno Garbayo 1977, 117 ff.). Records also remain of several hundred cases from secular courts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and a score of cases prosecuted at the bishop's court in Pamplona between 1589 and 1728. From the latter two courts records also exist of several “witchcraft countersuits,” i.e., libel cases dealing with accusations of witchcraft or cases against witch hunters for assaulting innocent people. In the wake of the great Basque witch persecution of 1609–1611 the High Court of

Navarre, for example, sentenced some local officials to banishment for several years for abusing their power; the parish priest of Errazu was sentenced by the Bishop's Court to two months' confinement in the village church for acting as a self-appointed witch hunter and for withholding the sacraments from people suspected for witchcraft (Idoate 1978, 158, 166, 388).

By the fourteenth century, evidence exists of *maleficium* (harmful magic) trials in the Basque Country, both north (1393) and south (1329, 1332, 1370) of the Pyrenees. The accused, all female, were referred to as poisoners (*emponzoñadoms*), sorcerers (*faytillems* or *hechicems*), or evil herbalists (*herbolens malas*), but because they were also accused of infanticide and had to acquit themselves of the accusations through ordeals by fire, all these accusations probably reflected a popular belief in witchcraft (Lespy 1874–1875, 61; Idoate 1978, 245–248). The Basque word for witch, *sorguina*, first appeared in a libel suit from Pamplona in 1415, where two women were sentenced for calling another woman “sorguina, herbolera et faytillera” (Idoate 1978, 18). Not until almost a century later do we have reliable information about witch persecution in the Basque country: In 1466 the province of Guipúzcoa complained to Henry IV of Castile about the great harm being done by witches, but at the same time drew attention to the fact that there was nothing about witches (*sorguines y brujas*) in their ordinances, so it was impossible for local judges to prosecute them. This situation was promptly remedied by a royal ordinance of August 15 the same year (Orella Unzue 1983, 108–110). According to an old source, the first true witchcraft trial took place in Navarre in 1496, while the kingdom was still independent (Henningsen 2004, doc. 2.1).

According to the historian of the Inquisition, J. A. Llorente, the inquisitors for the diocese of Calahorra burned more than thirty witches in the town of Durango in Vizcaya in 1507. Recent research has cast doubt on this information (Monter 1990, 257), but since the trial of a woman who was burned by the Inquisition in the same place the next year has come to light, Llorente's information is hard to dismiss. The accused was a midwife from Munguia near Bilbao, and her trial mentioned the witches' Sabbath for the first time in Basque territory. María San Juan de Carón, as the woman was called, confessed to having given herself to the Devil Belcebub and having gone as a witch to his meetings and gatherings, where she had renounced Christianity, worshipped the Devil, and participated with other witches in the destruction of crops in the fields. In addition she had caused impotence in certain marriages and cast spells bringing illness and death on animals and people. She also said that the secular authorities had burned her mother as a witch “thirty

years ago,” that is around 1478 (Henningsen 2000, 355).

After the conquest of Navarre in 1512, the Inquisition was also introduced there, and although it was soon merged with the tribunal of Calahorra, its judges continued to call themselves Inquisitors of Navarre. It was, however, the newly established High Court of Navarre that took the lead in the witch hunting. In 1525–1526 a judge, Pedro de la Balanza, went on a punitive expedition against the witches in the valleys of Roncal, Salazar, and other places in northern Navarre, accompanied by twenty-five soldiers and an executioner. Balanza also made use of a local witch finder, a certain Graciana de Ezcároz, who on one occasion examined a group of 400 people. From these she picked out 2 men and 10 women on whom she had found the Devil's mark (Caro Baroja 1964). According to a specifically Basque notion, the witches could be known by a mark that the Devil placed in the iris of the left eye. In slightly older accounts one can read about a certain inquisitor, Avellaneda, who at about the same time gave an account in a letter to the constable of Castile of a similar punitive expedition, during which, among other things, he carried out an experiment with a witch, who after anointing herself with flying ointment flew out of a high window before the eyes of his soldiers (Caro Baroja 1964, 146). As several people have later demonstrated, though, this source was a forgery: There was never an inquisitor for Navarre by that name.

The secular trials of the 1520s included almost all the motifs that appeared in later Basque Sabbath narratives: the flying ointment prepared from flayed toads; the departure through the chimney of the house or open windows; the diabolical goat at the Sabbath, whom the witches must kiss below the tail; the eating, the dancing, and the fornication with the Devil; the return home before cockcrow; Wednesday and Friday as meeting days; the making of the witch powder to be strewn over the fields and of the deadly “green potion” (*potaje verde*), used to poison people (Idoate 1978, 23–57, 249–271). One special feature of the Basque witchcraft trials was the notion that the witches carried children and young people off to the Sabbath while they lay asleep in their beds, and thus recruited them to their evil sect. In other countries it was said that witches took their own children with them to the Sabbath, but the institutionalized abduction of other people's children to the witches' Sabbath is only known from one other place in Europe: the northern Swedish trials at the end of the seventeenth century, where the phenomenon was known as *barneföring*—“child-taking.” The Basque child witches first appeared at an *auto de fe* (auto-da-fé; literally, “act of faith”) at Pamplona in 1540 involving no fewer than thirty boys and girls aged ten to fourteen (Henningsen 2000, 356). They all came from the Salazar valley, where the secular authority

had instigated mass burnings in 1525, but thanks to the Inquisition they now all escaped with milder penitential punishments. Child abduction became a central element in the Basque witchcraft trials and continued to be so until well into the next century.

Basque witch persecution enjoyed strong local support. On several occasions we find Basque peasants in the Pyrenees taking up collections in their parish in order to raise the sum necessary to summon a commissioner from the High Court of Navarre to extirpate their witches (Henningsen 1980, 18). There is some uncertainty about the number of sentences at the secular courts of the Basque Country. As far as the Inquisition was concerned, the sentences ceased after new instructions were issued for witchcraft cases in December 1526. Because the tribunal in Calahorra now consistently demanded to have the witchcraft cases handed over to its jurisdiction, restrictions had also been imposed on the other two courts. From the subsequent period we know of only three witch burnings, all carried out by the secular authority in 1575 (Idoate 1978, 242, 328). During the great Basque witch persecution at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Inquisition's witch burnings were temporarily resumed. At an *auto de fe* in Logroño, where the tribunal had now moved, four men and seven women were burned, and as late as 1621 the local authorities of Pancorvo succeeded in burning four women and one man as witches (Henningsen 1980, 199, 388). After this, no witch burnings are known from the Spanish Basque Country.

Although there were witch persecutions all over northern Spain, it was the Basque events in particular that gave rise to the shaping of the Spanish Inquisition's witch policy. In January 1526, the inquisitors for Navarre sent four trials for review by the Supreme Council of the Inquisition, and somewhat later they were returned with instructions to obtain evidence for the accusations. The alleged offenses were to be examined in more detail to establish whether they had in fact taken place, and whether a natural explanation could be found instead of witchcraft (Henningsen 2003, 595 f.). Later that year, the Inquisitor General called a meeting of experts in Granada, producing the new instructions mentioned above on December 14; these instructions were later also sent to other tribunals. These new regulations were much concerned with ensuring that the rule of law should apply in witchcraft trials: They mandated, among other things, that no one could be arrested solely on the basis of accusations from other witches; that, when the inquisitors received people accused of witchcraft, they must consider whether the prisoners had already been subjected to torture by the secular court; and that, by interrogating other members of the household, they must find out if the people in question really had been away on the nights when they claimed

to have attended witch meetings, or had remained at home all night without leaving the house (Henningsen 2003, 597 ff.).

The Inquisition was influenced by the strict neoscholastic tradition at Spanish universities, which made it difficult for the Neoplatonist-inspired demonology of northern Europe to gain a foothold in Spain. One exception was the Basque country, where two inquisitors of the Logroño tribunal in 1609 came under strong French influence, leading to a brief return to witch burnings. After scathing criticism of this witchcraft trial by the third inquisitor of the tribunal, Alonso de Salazar Frías, the almost century-old practice of the Holy Office of not burning witches was reestablished. The new set of instructions of the Supreme Council in August 1614 (much of it written by Salazar) ensured that witch burnings definitively ceased at all Spanish Inquisition tribunals.

THE GREAT BASQUE WITCH PANIC

The phenomenon known as the Great Basque Witch Panic began on the French side of the Pyrenees, in the Pays de Labourd, where some nobles and a few urban authorities made reciprocal accusations of witchcraft in the course of their local power struggle. In 1608, two nobles sent a complaint to Henry IV, alleging that the number of witches had increased so alarmingly during the previous four years that no corner of the Pays de Labourd was free of them. A royal decree of December 10 appointed two councillors of the *Parlement* (sovereign judicial court) of Bordeaux, including Pierre de Lancre, to investigate the matter. Accompanied by a president of the *parlement*, Jean d'Espaignet, he was sent to Labourd with the authority to interrogate under torture and pronounce summary death sentences. On July 1 they embarked on this punitive expedition. Their commission expired in December 1609, but because of other duties the judges ended their campaign a month earlier. It is not known how many witches were burned that summer; all the original records are lost. De Lancre's book, which is our main source, states definitely that 3 priests and 8 other witches were burned, but other prisoners were later transferred to Bordeaux, where their trials continued for several years; a few further executions may have occurred (Henningsen 1980, 25). Inquisitor Salazar, who appears to have been well informed of the persecution in the Pays de Labourd (probably by the bishop of Pamplona, who was in contact with his French colleague, the bishop of Bayonne), alleged in 1612 that the French judges had burned over 80 persons as witches during their summer campaign (Henningsen 2004, doc. 12.72).

When de Lancre came to the Pays de Labourd, witch hysteria was already high. People watched over their children in churches at night to keep them from being taken to the Sabbat, and local authorities had already

imprisoned many witches. The principal instigator of this local witch hunt was the lord of Urtubie, Tristan de Gamboa d'Alzate, one of the two noblemen who composed the complaint to the king. We know that he imprisoned some old women on his own authority and extracted an account of all the witches in the neighborhood from one of them (Henningsen 2004, doc. 7.1). This account formed the basis for the letter to the king, and the special commissioners worked closely with him and his ally, the magistrate Jean d'Amou, during their punitive expedition to Labourd.

In December 1608 the witch panic spread to Urdax and Zugarramurdi, two Spanish villages on the northern side of the Pyrenees. The Inquisition immediately stepped in and had ten of the suspects imprisoned (Henningsen 1980, 52–57). After seven months of brainwashing in the tribunal's jail in Logroño, all of them confessed. Furnished with detailed information on the witches' rituals and the names of their accomplices, the second inquisitor of the tribunal, Juan de Valle Alvarado, traveled to the northern border, and in September he made contact there through the local clergy with the French witch commissioners and even had copies of some of their trials sent to him. Valle was convinced that he was dealing with a secret sect of witches, spread throughout this part of the Pyrenees, which simply had to be exposed. In Urdax and Zugarramurdi things went as Inquisitor Valle expected, but in the so-called "five towns" of the Bidazoa valley all was calm; not a single person reacted to the Inquisition's edicts calling for people to give themselves up. Only after the priests, on the orders of the inquisitor, had fulminated against the witches from their pulpits, describing the abominable rituals of the sect in full detail, did people ready to confess they were witches show up. About the same time, the witch hysteria spread from France along the coast to Fuenterrabía and San Sebastián, where soon scores of children reported that they were taken to Sabbats every night.

So far, the panic remained confined to the northern border regions; in all other districts under the Logroño tribunal, peace reigned until autumn 1610, when preachers were sent into the mountains to convert anyone influenced by this evil sect. Shortly afterwards, in November, an *auto de fe* was held in Logroño with the first 31 witches; 30,000 people poured in to hear the sentences and see the witches burned (Henningsen 1980, 184, 198–200). The preaching crusade and the *auto de fe* caused an explosive spread of the witch craze.

In each village the same pattern can be observed. The panic would begin with an outbreak of dreams. Large numbers of people, mostly children and adolescents, reported that they were taken to the witches' Sabbats at night while they were asleep in bed. Night after night they had the same dream of being fetched to the Sabbats; the dreams were so vivid that people could

hardly distinguish them from reality. After the child witches recounted their nocturnal adventures, the witch panic got under way. But the dreams did not lead directly to accusations; only some time later did the children choose to reveal who came to fetch them at night. In Aranaz, in northern Navarre, the children kept dreaming for several months, but the witch craze did not get started until a father had wormed the information out of his little son that it was the cowherd Iricia who took him to the witches' Sabbat. The father went straight to Iricia and, pointing a dagger at his chest, asked him why he had bewitched his son. The following day, another 30 child witches confessed that the cowherd had taken them to the Sabbat too. However, after the local agent of the Inquisition had sent the cowherd to Logroño as a prisoner, the children agreed among themselves that they were now fetched to the Sabbat by a sixty-year-old woman. When she too was arrested, the children accused another woman (Henningsen 2004, 216–218).

Everywhere in the Basque witch craze there were the same three components: indoctrination, a dream epidemic, and induced confessions. The villagers resorted to every possible form of torture to force confessions from people: Some were tied to trees and remained outdoors in the cold winter nights; others had to sit with their feet in water until it froze around them. The violence among the mountain villages of Navarre claimed several lives during the winter of 1610–1611.

By March 1611 the Holy Office had the names of 1,946 people who had either made confessions of witchcraft to local agents of the Inquisition or were under suspicion. Overwhelmed by such "mass apostasy," the Inquisitor General chose to declare an amnesty for all members of the witches' sect who gave themselves up before a certain date. Salazar, whose turn it was to go on a visitation, was sent off to receive these voluntary confessions, but was simultaneously ordered by the Inquisition Council in Madrid to obtain proof that the alleged witch sect actually existed. After an eight-month journey through the entire Spanish Basque Country, Salazar returned to Logroño with a journal of his visitation containing over 11,200 manuscript pages, including the records of the 1,802 cases he had dealt with during his journey (Henningsen 1980, 407, 437 n.). Of these, 1,384 concerned boys and girls under the ages of twelve and fourteen, respectively (Henningsen 2004, 266). Both of his colleagues were now eager to begin punishing those who had failed to turn themselves in. But to their extreme indignation, Salazar concluded in his report to the Inquisitor General that he had found no proof of a single act of witchcraft. On the contrary, his travels had confirmed his suspicion that the witchcraft trials his colleagues had begun six months before Salazar's appointment had been a huge mistake. After a tug-of-war in the tribunal

lasting several years, the case was decided by the Inquisition's Supreme Council, which fully upheld Salazar's contention. The sentences from the *auto de fe* were set aside, all current cases were suspended, and to avoid similar mistakes in the future, the instructions of August 29, 1614, were sent to Logroño. By now, though, the whole region had already fallen calm; as a local report said, "People are sleeping peacefully and there is no news about comings and goings to the *aque-larres*" (Henningsen 2004, 396).

A NOTE ON ETYMOLOGY

Aquelarre is the Basque name for a witches' Sabbat. The word is traditionally explained as a compound of *aker*, "billy goat," and *larre*, "meadow." But this etymology, which can be traced back to the printed report of the *auto de fe* in Logroño in 1610, from which de Lancre took and translated it, has been questioned in recent times. The Basque anthropologist Mikel Azurmendi has claimed that *aker* cannot lose its *r*, and therefore suggested that *aquelarre* derives from *alkelarre*, or "meadow with *alka* flowers." *Alka* (*Dactylis hispanica*) is a poisonous plant that can make cows ill when they eat it. Probably there was some translation error during the interrogations, which went through a Basque interpreter, so that what was originally the name of a place in Zugarramurdi where the witches were thought to assemble was misunderstood by the inquisitors as a Basque name for a witches' Sabbat. In sources before 1609, witches' Sabbats were called *ayuntamientos* (assemblies), *conjuntamientos* (associations), and *conventículos del demonio* (conventicles of the Devil), or *congregaciones del cabrón* (assemblies of the goat). The word *aquelarre* first appeared in a letter from the Logroño tribunal to the Supreme Council in Madrid, dated May 22, 1609, when the inquisitors wrote that they were gathering information about the *juntas y aquelarres* (meeting and witches' Sabbats) from the witches of Zugarramurdi. The next year, the inquisitors asserted that the word was unknown in the Basque language, but that it was a secret term used only by witches. The invented word quickly became widespread; despite some uncertainty about its spelling (*alquelarre*, *aquellarre*, *aquerrlarre*), *aquelarre* soon won the day and was later absorbed into Castilian as a Basque loan word (Henningsen 2000).

GUSTAV HENNINGSSEN;

TRANSLATED BY JAMES MANLEY

See also: CHILDREN; DEVIL'S MARK; INQUISITION, LANCRE, PIERRE DE; OINTMENTS; SALAZAR FRÍAS, ALONSO DE; SPAIN; SPANISH; VALENCIA, PEDRO DE; PANIC; SABBAT; WITCH CRAZE; ZUGARRAMURDI, WITCHES OF

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BAVARIA, DUCHY OF

Because Bavaria was a leading power of the Counter-Reformation, the traditional perception has been that the Bavarian princes also ranked among the most severe witch hunters. Leading demonologists like Martín Del Rio dedicated their demonologies to Bavarian princes. These were not, however, the ruling princes of Bavaria, but rather younger brothers, serving as prince-bishops in northern German territories like the archbishopric-electorate of Cologne, or the prince-abbey of Stavelot. As leaders of the German Counter-Reformation, the dukes of Bavaria between 1580 and 1760 usually managed to secure a cluster of bishoprics for their younger brothers, including the ecclesiastical territories of Cologne, Münster, Hildesheim, Osnabrück, Paderborn, and Liège, as well as the abbeys of Stavelot and Malmédy, and sometimes the dioceses of Freising and Regensburg—enough places to form a "Bavarian Bishops' Empire." Some of these territories, especially Cologne and Stavelot, saw extensive witch hunts. In Bavaria, however, there were fierce debates but no massive persecutions; only once did witchcraft

prosecution threaten to get out of control, but the threat was stopped immediately.

Among the territories of the Holy Roman Empire, Bavaria was a special case, because the Bavarians considered themselves a nation rather than subjects of a ruler. “Bavarians” were first mentioned by the Lombard historiographer Jordanes around 550 C.E., and some kind of ethnogenesis (defining themselves as a people with a common history and language) must have taken place under the rule of the Ostrogoth King Theodoric the Great (ruled 474–526), who tried to defend the northern boundaries of the Roman Empire (Noricum). This province was soon taken over by the Franks, and “Bavaria” emerged as a province of the Merovingian Empire. Under the Agilolfinger dynasty, Bavaria became an almost independent duchy, first under the Franks, later one of the largest states within the Holy Roman Empire.

By 1600 Bavaria was divided into four provinces (Munich, Burghausen, Landshut, Straubing) and organized in roughly 100 district courts. The duchy was elevated to a prince-electorate in 1623, when Duke Maximilian I managed to annex the Upper Palatinate. When it recovered from its losses during the Thirty Years’ War, Bavaria counted close to one million inhabitants. It became a kingdom in 1806, after having annexed Franconia and eastern Swabia, formerly the most fragmented regions of the Holy Roman Empire. The Wittelsbach dynasty, which ruled Bavaria from 1180, fell in 1918, when a revolution terminated the constitutional monarchy and the parliament decided to join the Republic of Germany. Bavaria occupies the southeastern part of present-day Germany, roughly within its boundaries of 1806.

In contrast to the conduct of the Wittelsbachs in their ecclesiastical principalities, developments in Bavaria deserve particular attention, because the duchy had gained a position of supremacy among the Catholic estates of the Holy Roman Empire. The Counter-Reformation ideology served Duke Albrecht V (ruled 1550–1579) in his struggle against a Protestant faction in the 1560s. After defeating the Lutheran nobility and driving out his Protestant subjects, he introduced the regulations of the Council of Trent, imposed religious uniformity, and gave the country’s university to the Jesuits. Ingolstadt became a breeding ground for Counter-Reformation politicians, and many who later became witch hunters (including almost all of Germany’s notorious “witch-bishops”) were educated there. Although Catholic renewal was begun at least in part for political reasons, it seems that Albrecht V, as well as his successor Wilhelm V (ruled 1579–1597), underwent genuine conversion experiences. With the “Cologne War” of the 1580s, Bavaria’s princes assumed leadership of the Catholic party in the Holy Roman Empire, institutionalized in the Catholic League by

Duke Maximilian I of Bavaria (ruled 1598–1651). The Bavarian Wittelsbachs were closely allied with the leaders of the French Catholic League: Duke Wilhelm married Renata of Lorraine in 1568, and in 1595 Maximilian confirmed this dynastic link through his marriage to Elisabeth of Lorraine, daughter of Duke Charles III, a would-be leader of the French Catholic League.

It hardly seems surprising that Bavaria joined in the great wave of persecutions that spread eastwards from Catholic League strongholds in Champagne and Lorraine in the late 1580s, because Jesuit theologians at Ingolstadt, including Peter Canisius, Gregory of Valencia, and Jacob Gretser, enthusiastically supported the persecutions. Their attitude seemed sufficiently coherent to create the perception of a uniform “Jesuit party,” with the dukes of Bavaria firmly under its influence. Nevertheless, the first wave of persecutions between 1589 and 1591 remained confined to just a handful of Bavaria’s hundred district courts, and it was stopped after only a few months, when the central government abruptly interfered with the main persecution in the district court of Schongau, which was partly autonomous and governed by Prince Ferdinand (1550–1608), a younger brother of the ruling duke Wilhelm V. The Schongau witch hunt with its 63 victims remained the largest ever in Bavaria; but there were also several smaller trials in other district courts in 1590, including both the capital at Munich and the university town of Ingolstadt, where 22 women were executed as witches (Behringer 1987, 436 ff.). The Jesuits suggested Peter Binsfeld and the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) as guides to interpret popular magic, and the remaining trial records demonstrate that this combination was an unfortunate one, because house searches indeed brought plenty of unguents and magical devices to light. Extensive use of torture fueled the trials in districts like Schongau and Ingolstadt. There was, however, some resistance from relatives, clergy, and magistrates, and a leading Bavarian lawyer, Dr. Kaspar Lagus, articulated his disgust. Altogether about 100 people—all of them women—fell victim to the witch hunts in Bavaria around 1590.

An analysis of Bavarian domestic policy reveals a power struggle lasting more than a generation, between two antagonistic factions with stable bases, disparaged by each other as *politici* (“politicians,” with Machiavellian overtones) and *zelanti* (zealots). The *politici* could be seen more appropriately as moderate politicians who tried to arrive at balanced judgements in the public interest, while the noblest aim of their rivals, the political hawks, was to promote the ideals of the Counter-Reformation. Most of the hard-liners of this faction, the *zealous ideologues*, were pupils of the first generation of Jesuits in Germany, as were the

witch-bishops of Franconia. In the Bavarian government they were represented by the chancellor of the court council, Dr. Johann Simon Wagnereckh (ca. 1570–1617), who, like his duke, had studied in Ingolstadt during the 1590 witch hunt, and whose ideological commitment compensated for his modest standing within Bavarian society. Similar motivations drove immigrants like Wagnereckh's ally Dr. Cosmas Vagh, a convert from northern Germany, and the secretaries of the privy council, Christian Gewold and Aegidius Albertinus (1560–1620). All of them kept in close contact with the Jesuit party, with Gregory of Valencia and Gretser, with the demonologist Del Rio, with the princely confessors and the Rhenish Jesuit Adam Contzen, as well as with the radical Jesuit court preacher Jeremias Drexel (1581–1638). Many "zealots" had experienced witch hunts during their education: Contzen, for instance, studied at the Jesuit College of Trier during Binsfeld's era; subsequently, at Munich, he maintained close contact with suffragan Friedrich Förner in Bamberg. Furthermore Gretser, Contzen, and Drexel dedicated their publications to prominent witch-bishops, such as Johann Christoph von Westerstetten in Eichstätt.

The social profile of the moderate politicians is quite different. Led by the chancellor of the privy council, Dr. Johann Georg Herwarth von Hohenburg (1553–1626), later chancellor of the Bavarian parliament, a group of councillors already articulated their opposition during the witch hunt of 1590. Herwarth was succeeded as privy chancellor by his ally Dr. Joachim Donnersberger (1565–1650). Unlike Wagnereckh, both came from urban patriciates, Herwarth from Augsburg and Donnersberger from the Bavarian capital, Munich. Both had received academic training at foreign universities, acquiring doctorates in France or Italy, and both had served as lawyers at the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court). The Herwarths were bankers, with Protestant branches in Augsburg, France, and England, while their Catholic branch entered princely service in Bavaria, eventually joining the landed nobility and becoming parliamentary leaders. Herwarth recruited officials from the Bavarian high nobility, as well as members of the imperial aristocracy, including members of the Hohenzollern and Wolkenstein dynasties. He personified an open Catholicism, maintaining international contacts even beyond confessional boundaries.

Herwarth supported the Protestant astronomer Johannes Kepler, for whom he found jobs at Graz in Inner Austria (Innerösterreich, the duchies of Styria, Carinthia, and Carniola, south of Austria proper) and subsequently at the imperial court of Rudolf II in Prague. In their long-standing correspondence, Kepler and Herwarth discussed scientific problems, and the Bavarian chancellor participated in the development of

the logarithmic tables. He also kept in close contact with radically skeptical Protestant jurists like Johann Georg Goedelmann, who not only denied that witchcraft was an "exceptional crime" (*crimen exceptum*), but also denied the reality of witches' flights and Sabbats. Goedelmann's publication on the legal procedure in witchcraft trials was translated into the vernacular during the witch hunt of 1590, which Herwarth had managed to curb in Bavaria.

These two parties clashed in 1600, when the zealots, thanks to the new government of Maximilian I, succeeded in launching an exemplary witchcraft trial against a family of vagrants. In an incredibly cruel trial, Wagnereckh and Vagh, backed by the Jesuit Gretser, extracted confessions, employing unlimited torture, with Del Rio's *Disquisitiones Magicae libri sex* (Six Books on Investigations into Magic, 1599/1600) literally on the desk. Unsurprisingly, these confessions resembled those of a monk from Stavelot three years earlier, used by Del Rio to describe the Sabbat. In July and December 1600, six people were burned alive at Munich in executions of unprecedented cruelty, accompanied by illustrated leaflets and printed songs (Behringer 1987, 442). Del Rio included some accounts of these trial records in subsequent editions of his demonology.

This episode was intended to signal the start of a general Bavarian witch hunt, similar to contemporary events in Mainz and Fulda. However, "cold and political Christians," (Behringer 1997, 230–320), as Wagnereckh labeled the privy councillors Herwarth and Donnersberger, managed to curb the persecution and to launch a political debate instead. Before further torture was conceded, the university had to consider the case, as the imperial law code known as the Carolina Code (*Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*, 1532) suggested. Surprisingly, the Ingolstadt law faculty, then dominated by Dr. Joachim Denich and Dr. Kaspar Hell, denied the legality of torture and sharply criticized the trial. Completely enraged, Bavaria's zealots suggested that the legal opinion had been commissioned by the privy council, requested more Jesuit control at the university (namely by Gretser), accused Dr. Hell of treason, and demanded further legal opinions. As a result, Duke Maximilian ordered reports from the universities of Freiburg, Bologna, and Padua, and, at the suggestion of the zealots, from two demonologists, Nicolas Rémy and Del Rio, as well as from two governments experienced in persecutions, Trier and Mainz. Predictably, Del Rio and Rémy supported the unrestricted witch hunt and accepted simple suspicion or denunciation as sufficient evidence for imprisonment and torture. However, the University of Bologna supported the Ingolstadt jurists, and even the governments of Mainz and Trier recommended caution, having become disillusioned with witch hunting by 1604.

Del Rio's opinion was taken very seriously, even leading to a correspondence between Del Rio and the duke's Jesuit confessor Johannes Buslidius, who demanded clarification on some points. Given the high reputation of Jesuits in Bavaria, Del Rio could only be trumped by another Jesuit. Now Herwarth played his final card: Adam Tanner, the famous Jesuit critic of witch hunts.

It is unnecessary to delve further into the details of this Bavarian power struggle, which lasted for more than a generation, and involved almost the entire political leadership and a good part of the spiritual elite. Bavaria's zealots continued to support their allies in other Catholic territories, but whenever they tried to launch a witch hunt in Bavaria, they failed. During the agrarian crisis of 1608–1609, they tried to exploit a panic in the small exclave of Wemding, less tightly controlled by the government in Munich. However, after a number of executions, the government became suspicious, intervened, and began an inquiry into the conduct of the trial, which soon led to the imprisonment and trial of the judge, Gottfried Sattler. The government decided to set an example by punishing his misconduct with the death penalty. The zealots in Munich fiercely opposed the sentence, trying to rally support among the ruling family and among the Jesuits, but the Ingolstadt law faculty twice confirmed the government's judgment. Sattler was decapitated in 1613, the first Catholic witch hunter to meet such an end, providing an important symbolic victory for the opponents of witch hunting. In his *Theologia scholastica* (Scholastic Theology, 1627, vol. 3, col. 1005), Tanner mentioned this capital punishment, together with the trial and execution of the Fulda witch judge Balthasar Nuss of 1618, another success of the Ingolstadt law professors. Both death penalties came to be extremely important because they proved that severe mistakes had occurred in Catholic witchcraft trials and that victims might be innocent. Borrowing their evidence from Tanner and Friedrich Spee, later opponents of witch hunting regularly referred to these cases.

Clearly Ingolstadt had become a bridgehead for the Bavarian moderates, whether lawyers or Jesuits. A younger Jesuit student of Tanner, Professor Kaspar Hell (1588–1634), was bold enough to challenge publicly the terrible witch hunts of Bishop Johann Christoph von Westerstetten in Eichstätt, attacking him so sharply that the Jesuit general, Mutius Vitelleschi (1563–1645), intervened repeatedly in favor of this dedicated Counter-Reformation prince-bishop and supporter of the Jesuit order. Bavarians knew only too well how to classify such Franconian events. But they did not need Tanner to enlighten them. Jesuits like Hell and Kaspar Denich were sons of Ingolstadt lawyers who had cut short the attempted general persecution in 1601, and their families were closely linked to such privy councillors as Dr. Kaspar Lagus. Some Bavarian "politicians," for instance court council chancellor Dr. Johann

Christoph Abegg, had relatives burned in Eichstätt. When Maria Richel, the wife of Dr. Bartholomäus Richel (1580–1649), chancellor of Eichstätt, was burned in 1620, Bavaria's privy councillors intervened to evacuate the rest of the family from the dangerous prince-bishopric, immediately appointing Richel vice-chancellor in Munich. Munich, the hothouse of Counter-Reformation Germany, became a safe haven for endangered Catholic politicians and their families. In 1628 the privy councillors offered a position to Chancellor Dr. Georg Haan of Bamberg, whose wife had just been burned. Haan failed to accept after the Bamberg government had assured the Bavarian prince-elect (from 1623) Maximilian that Haan was in no imminent danger. This proved to be a terrible mistake; the bishop ordered his execution a few weeks later.

In the late 1620s, when the witch hunts in the Franconian prince-bishoprics reached their climax, Bavaria's zealot faction succeeded in launching another local witch hunt in the exclave of Wemding, in the vicinity of Eichstätt, costing the lives of another 40 women (Behringer 1987, 451 ff.). At this point, Tanner included his opinion on witchcraft, designed twenty-four years earlier, in his textbook of moral theology, thus serving as an anchor for future Catholic theologians. Tanner also made the internal Munich discussions of twenty-four years ago public. When Friedrich Spee published his *Cautio Criminalis* (A Warning on Criminal Justice) in 1631, Tanner was the only important Catholic authority he could use who relentlessly denied the legality of witchcraft trials, without getting enmeshed in debates on the existence of witches.

After the Thirty Years' War there were few executions for witchcraft in Bavaria. The population had collapsed because of several severe mortality crises, but there was also some disillusionment about witchcraft trials, at least at the level of the central government in Munich under Duke Ferdinand Maria, as a legacy of these long-standing debates and of the cruelties in the prince-bishoprics. Later in the seventeenth century, however, the central government's grip on the provincial governments loosened, and the number of trials increased again. Two minor panics affected the district court of Haidau in Lower Bavaria in 1689–1692 and 1701–1702, when Capuchins fueled the local hysteria with exorcisms of possessed children, eventually provoking the extinction of whole families. In the early eighteenth century, a number of small panics were seen, although they were usually tolerated by the provincial governments. No less than 15 people, mostly young male beggars, were executed in the 1720s.

A final chain of trials conducted between 1749 and 1756 in the neighboring prince-bishopric of Salzburg affected the Bavarian provincial capitals of Burghausen, Straubing, and Landshut. In almost all of these cases, accusations by children triggered the trials. The last

Bavarian witch was an orphaned fourteen-year-old girl, Veronica Zerritschin (1742–1756). She confessed voluntarily that the reason for her possession was her theft of some hosts, which she had used for sorcery. The court found the hosts, which had visibly been used for sorcery, so there was undeniably a *corpus delicti* and sufficient circumstantial evidence to prove the suspicion. The girl provided extensive narratives of seduction by the Devil, the witches' flight and Sabbat, and harmful magic; she had also learned to act as a sorcerer and could recite a rhyming weather spell of twenty verses. The harm she claimed to have caused had indeed occurred, although her victims had not been aware of her witchcraft. The judge found the case difficult, because this culprit was still quite young and cooperated willingly. But if the court would not convict a confessing witch, it would never again convict anyone for witchcraft. Therefore, the girl had to be executed, as *a matter of principle*, as the judge indicated. Because Bavaria had seen so many late trials, there was good reason to take decisive steps against these reactionary forces. A group of enlightened lawyers and theologians convinced the prince-electors Max III Joseph (ruled 1745–1777) that a public debate was the appropriate means for intimidating the religious orders and their allies. This debate was launched in 1766 and lasted four years; contemporaries labeled it the Bavarian War of the Witches.

In retrospect, Bavaria serves as a striking illustration of the development of European attitudes toward witchcraft. During the Carolingian period, it received a comprehensive common law, the *Lex Baiuvariorum* (Laws of the Bavarians), containing sanctions against specific forms of harmful magic to horses and grain. There were, however, few examples of prosecution for death spells and love magic throughout the Middle Ages, including the later centuries when sources become more abundant. Clearly death penalties were always possible, but were rarely enacted then. When Heinrich Kramer launched his witch hunt in Innsbruck in 1485, Bavarian theologians like the abbot of Tegernsee articulated their disgust and tried to interfere. In the early modern period, witchcraft trials become more frequent, but rarely led to large-scale persecutions.

An extrapolation of recent research projected that approximately 1,500 trials for witchcraft or sorcery could be expected to have taken place in Bavaria, but hitherto fewer than 200 death sentences have been detected in the sources, and it seems unlikely that any large trials have escaped scholarly attention. Most of those executed died during the few large-scale persecutions and panic trials. But as far as serial analysis is concerned, much remains to do: Historians possess an ocean of sources, which they have so far only explored in part. There are expense records from virtually every district court (from the fifteenth century onwards), as well as from some central Bavarian prisons; there are

court council records (since the early seventeenth century), trial records, official reports, special files for witchcraft trials, legal opinions, official correspondence, diaries, travel reports, and publications of all kinds. Witchcraft generated debate, but did not really bother the majority of the ruling elite. An extensive piece of legislation on witchcraft, *Landgebott wider die Aberglauben, Zauberey, Hexerey, etc.* (Law Against Superstition, Magic, Sorcery, etc.), was enacted in 1612; reissued in 1665 and 1746, it remained in place until 1813, but was not designed to lead to witch hunts.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; BAVARIAN WAR OF THE WITCHES; CAROLINA CODE; CHILDREN; COLOGNE; CONTZEN, ADAM, SJ; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); EICHSTÄTT, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; GERMANY, SOUTHEASTERN; GOEDELMAHN, JOHANN GEORG; GREGORY OF VALENCIA; GRETZER, JACOB; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; INGOLSTADT, UNIVERSITY OF; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); KEPLER, JOHANNES; KRAMER, HEINRICH; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); MAXIMILIAN I, DUKE OF BAVARIA; NUSS, BALTHASAR; PAPPENHEIMER FAMILY; SATTLER, GOTTFRIED; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; TANNER, ADAM; WESTERSTETTEN, JOHANN CHRISTOPH VON; WILHELM V, DUKE OF BAVARIA; WITCH-BISHOPS.

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BAVARIAN WAR OF THE WITCHES

The final debates about witchcraft in Catholic Europe were launched after a scandalous public speech given by the Jesuit Georg Gaar on the occasion of a witch burning in Würzburg. In 1749 the seventy-one-year-old subprioress of the abbey of Unterzell, Maria Renata Singerin, was decapitated and her body burned at the stake. In the background were, as usual in cases of possession, the group dynamics of the female convent and a mentally disturbed person who voluntarily accused herself. The authorities felt considerable unease about her case, as many acknowledged her disability, but her conviction was finally declared to be a matter of principle, and the hard-liners gained their victory.

However, the reaction was quite unexpected: Italian intellectuals took this occasion to start a major debate about witchcraft. Abbot Girolamo Tartarotti, a member of the Imperial Academy of Sciences at Rovereto (then under Austrian rule), ridiculed the barbarian German Jesuit Gaar in his famous *Del Congresso notturno delle lammie* (On Nocturnal Gatherings of the Witches, 1749), in which he interpreted witchcraft as an illusion. More radical intellectuals were not satisfied, feeling that Tartarotti had still made too many concessions to the Christian interpretation of magic. Scipio Maffei from Verona published three thick volumes on the subject, *L'arte magica distrutta* (The Magical Art Annihilated, 1754), denying the existence of magic and therefore of witchcraft, and urging a complete halt to all trials. Unexpectedly, a Franciscan provincial, Benedetto Bonelli (1704–1783), led the conservative Italian clergy in trying to refute Maffei's arguments.

Soon afterward the debate returned to Germany, when the historian Jordan Simon, a former Augustinian hermit, defended Maffei's arguments in a massive book, *Das grosse Welt-betrügende Nichts oder die heutige Hexerey-und Zauberkunst* (The Great World-Deceiving Nothing, or Today's Witchcraft and Art of Sorcery, 1761). At this point the Catholic realms of the Habsburg and Wittelsbach dynasties were suffering from a struggle between court and country. As in Protestant Europe, the rulers generally dismissed witchcraft as unimportant or ridiculous; but the internal balance of power was complicated because the Jesuits were in control of higher education, the bishops controlled the book market, and the religious orders were held in high esteem by the rural population, over whom they exercised considerable influence. The greatest problems occurred in relatively autonomous provinces, mostly administered by the regional higher nobility, who (often in alliance with the religious orders and the populace) tried to maintain the witch paradigm. This stalemate exacerbated the developmental gap between Catholic Europe and the more developed Protestant societies. From the second third of the eighteenth century, the Austrian and Bavarian privy councils therefore began to develop strategies to force their reform programs into their domestic peripheries. In Bavaria, the central government had tried to discourage further witchcraft trials by decree in 1727, but another chain of trials began in 1749 in the provinces and lingered until 1756. The Austrian Empress Maria Theresa (ruled 1740–1780) intervened directly to curb witchcraft trials in present-day Poland and Slovakia in 1756, and in present-day Croatia in 1758, but a new wave of trials occurred in Hungary in the 1760s.

As in England, the fight against witchcraft trials became a lever to break the power of conservatism. In Bavaria, the enlightened Prince-Elector Max III Joseph (ruled 1745–1777) and his advisers engineered a blow

to the conservative clergy by inviting the Theatine father Don Ferdinand Sterzinger, a member of the Bavarian Academy of Science, to discuss witchcraft on the occasion of the prince's birthday, October 13, 1766. His "Academic Lecture About the Prejudice that Witchcraft Can Produce Effects" provoked a debate labeled by contemporaries as the Bavarian War of the Witches, which lasted about five years. It became one of the largest debates of the Enlightenment in central Europe, with contributors coming from all over Germany, Austria, Bohemia, Switzerland, and northern Italy. Sterzinger's intent was clear from the onset, because he labeled the belief in witchcraft a "common prejudice," a matter of "the common rabble" rather than of the educated (Behringer 1997, 359–380). While openly acknowledging his debt to Tartarotti, Maffei, and "Dell Osa" (Jordan Simon's pseudonym), Sterzinger was not yet ready to mention Protestant authors like Christian Thomasius, Balthasar Bekker, or John Webster, although obviously sharing their ridicule of the concept that spirits could assume corporeal form. When Sterzinger mocked the ideas of Martín Del Rio, his irony was directed against the Jesuits who still dominated the Bavarian university and secondary schools; this Jesuit preponderance had in fact prompted prince-electors Max III Joseph to create an independent Academy of Sciences just seven years earlier, in 1759. And it was indeed the members of this academy, for instance Peter von Osterwald, who had presumably commissioned Sterzinger's speech. At the occasion of the prince-electors' birthday, the conservatives were certainly present as well, and Sterzinger was sufficiently prudent not to question the authority of the Bible, or the Bavarian penal code.

Nevertheless, the conservatives understood very well that this was a political move, and that Sterzinger's speech had launched an attack on traditional Catholicism by the Catholic Enlightenment. Contemporaries reported on the unusually excited reaction throughout the region: "There was no palace, hut, nor cell, no matter how sleepy, which did not raise its voice with enthusiasm, as if it was now up to them to decide the issue" (Behringer 1997, 362). Discussions were conducted in cafes and beer-halls. Charismatic preachers prodded peasants in the countryside. In Munich, sermons were delivered against the free-thinkers, for instance by the Jesuits at the major Marian pilgrimage site Altötting, and by the episcopal hierarchy at Salzburg; the administrator of the Bavarian province of Straubing, a high-ranking nobleman, Franz Xaver von Lerchenfeld, also commissioned a refutation. Dozens of theologians from the capital (Augustinian hermits and Paulinian monks in Munich), Bavarian monasteries (the Benedictines in Scheuern and Oberaltaich), and those from various ecclesiastical territories (Benedictines in Salzburg, Premonstratensians in

Würzburg) began writing defenses. These defenses included some cumbersome dogmatic books with more than 250 pages, which could have been designed in exactly the same way 300 years earlier, like that of the Benedictine Beda Schallhammer from Oberaltaich.

Others came up with remarkably ridiculous arguments. The Benedictine Angelus März, from the abbey of Scheyern, argued that his monastery was selling about 40,000 *Scheyrerkreuzlein* (little cross-shaped amulets made of silver) all over Bavaria, Swabia, Bohemia, Austria, Moravia, Hungary, Saxony, and Poland, which were meant to drive off the witches, and therefore would suffer considerable economic loss if this trade was stopped artificially. Oswald Loschert, from the Premonstratensian monastery of Oberzell near Würzburg, who had participated in the trial against Renata Singer in 1749, likewise employed practical arguments. Enlightened luminaries may indeed have shared the fear of the theological conservatism that the Augustinian reactionary Agnellus Merz displayed in print in December 1766, but they were delighted to discover the silly arguments of some of their opponents.

In January 1767, the first mocking satire appeared in print: Andreas Ulrich Mayer, the chaplain of an Upper Palatinate nobleman, published it under the telling pseudonym of “Bocksberger,” indicative because it used the name of the mountain where witches were traditionally supposed to gather. If Mayer claimed that he “laughed himself to death over [these] hare-brained fantasies,” he still revealed his fears by writing that luckily his tract would not “find its way past the porter in the contemporary world of the great free-thinkers: otherwise one could still hope that witch-burnings, now forbidden—unfortunately—in all places, would greatly add to the confidence of the faithful and might begin again” (Behringer 1997, 370). From January to April 1767, another twelve polemic tracts fueled the Bavarian War of the Witches, including some literal satires. Meanwhile, the members of the academy started to use the recently founded magazine *Churbayrisches Intelligenzblatt* (Chur-Bavarian Intelligence Sheet) to review every new contribution in print and ridicule the efforts of the country bumpkins, whom they labeled as “learned fools,” “pedants,” “foxy scholars,” “learned ignoramuses,” or “bewitched brains.” One of the journal’s editors, Peter Paul Finauer, eventually refused to compose any more satires against the conservatives, because “they have suffered enough by having their works printed.” In 1767 the Viennese imperial councillor Konstantin von Kautz contributed a remarkable Latin dissertation, *De cultibus magicis* (On Magical Cults), which contextualized that Bavarian debate with earlier debates in both Catholic and Protestant Europe (Italy, northern Germany, the Netherlands, and England). On the anniversary of Sterzinger’s speech, the academic who had presumably engineered the

debate, Peter von Osterwald, gave the next speech, using the occasion of the prince-elector’s birthday to summarize the debate and to deliver the decisive blow. Osterwald blamed the “useless form of scholarship” conducted over the past centuries and pleaded for a new science governed by reason alone. Unsurprisingly, some enlightened participants in the debate later became directors of the Bavarian education system, replacing the Jesuits after their order was dissolved in the 1770s.

However, if Osterwald intended to terminate the debate, he failed. In November 1766, the imperial government in Vienna issued a decree in order to stifle further witchcraft trials in Hungary, and this event was widely debated within Bavaria. And the subject of witchcraft remained useful in political struggles. More and more satires were written; the academics ridiculed their opponents by themselves publishing additional stories of ghosts and witches, stories written, for instance, by Heinrich Braun, a former Benedictine of Tegernsee, or Beda Mayr, a former Benedictine of Donauwörth and future follower of Immanuel Kant. In 1768 legal reforms proposed by Osterwald were initiated: The ecclesiastical council was now controlled by secular lawyers, monasteries were taxed, and censorship was removed from ecclesiastical hands and given to secular censors, who immediately made it a weapon against reactionary theologians. All these reforms were intended to erode the position of the clergy and to promote secularism.

The Bavarian War of the Witches marked the victory of the Bavarian Enlightenment over the representatives of a surviving social system at a moment when such a victory was probable or even assured, given the protection of the prince-elector. Nevertheless, the debate was more than just a symbolic struggle, because the last stakes in central Europe were still very recent. It was widely regarded by contemporaries as a milestone in the history of the Enlightenment, because the Catholic south had caught up with Protestant Europe. Major authors of the period, for example the poet Friedrich Klopstock in Hamburg or Friedrich Nicolai in Berlin, displayed their interest, and many enlightened journals commented on the progress in the Catholic south. The imperial councillor von Senckenberg wrote approvingly from Vienna of his pleasure at the destruction of superstition in the empire, playing on the book title of Scipio Maffei. At the same time, however, the enlightened scientists in Bavarian monasteries, for instance the Augustinian canons at Polling, felt increasingly uneasy because they were caught in the middle between secular reformers and dull monks.

The contributors to the Bavarian War of the Witches overlapped with those who had been part of the earlier Catholic debate, some authors still having participated actively in witchcraft trials. Its contributors also

overlapped with those who took part in later debates about the exorcist Johann Joseph Gassner, who linked all diseases to witchcraft, and Franz Anton Mesmer (1734–1815), considered a luminary in Germany but a charlatan in France. To their annoyance and embarrassment, the defenders of witchcraft had to notice that they were now treated as the rearguard of a defeated ideology, in the same class as witches, jugglers, tellers of fairy tales, and madmen. But even during the reign of the enlightened Emperor Joseph II (ruled 1765/1780–1790), it took courage to defend the end of the witchcraft trials. The mendicant orders remained powerful even after the dissolution of the Jesuits, as can be seen from Johann Pezzl's (1756–1838) satirical novel *Faustin, or the Philosophical Century*. Many contemporaries interpreted the end of the witchcraft trials—this became quite clear at the end of the debate—as the victory of light over darkness, as one of the biggest successes of the era of Enlightenment and maybe in the history of humankind.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AUSTRIA; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); ENLIGHTENMENT; GASSNER, JOHANN JOSEPH; HUNGARY; INGOLSTADT, UNIVERSITY OF; MAFFEL, SCIPIO; MARIA THERESA, HOLY ROMAN EMPRESS; SIMON, JORDAN; SKEPTICISM; STERZINGER, FERDINAND; TARTAROTTI, GIROLAMO; THOMASIAS, CHRISTIAN; WÜRZBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF.

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BAXTER, RICHARD (1615–1691)

This prominent Presbyterian divine, prolific author, and widely influential preacher propagated the learned belief in witchcraft far longer and far more effectively than most of his near contemporaries. Baxter's fascination with witches, dreams, ghosts, and demonic possessions was not due to extreme credulity, but stemmed from his wholly rational desire to account for supposedly inexplicable phenomena and his need to underscore the peril that civil society faced from any inversion of the natural order. Consequently, the "devil's work [in] hurting and destroying" and the refusal of atheists, cynics, and modern Sadducees to acknowledge the efficacy of magic and malignant spirits attracted his particular censure (Baxter 1834, 51, 102, 107). "Sure it were strange," he wrote, "if in an Age of so much knowledge and confidence, there should so many score

of poor Creatures be put to death as Witches, if it were not clearly manifest that they were such. We have too many examples lately among us, to leave any doubt of the truth of this" (Baxter 1650, 261–262).

However, after the mid-seventeenth century, both England's judiciary and its social elites were requiring an ever-growing body of empirical proof before acting on allegations of witchcraft in their communities. As a result, Baxter was forced to move beyond simple citations of classical and Biblical sources to compile detailed eyewitness accounts of the devastation wrought upon innocent people by *maleficium* (harmful magic) in order to justify both prosecution of and belief in witchcraft. Thus, his works are crammed with first-hand accounts of apparitions, juvenile possessions (in which nails and pieces of flint were vomited up), and motifs drawn from rural folklore, like the "Corpse Candles" in South Wales, which were thought to presage an individual's death (Baxter 1834, 23–24, 31, 42, 45). Moreover, he also recorded evidence of the correlation between refusals of charity to the poor and immediate retribution through witchcraft. In this manner, a gentleman who refused to buy pins at the roadside was swiftly visited by a series of debilitating pin-pricks all over his body. Baxter also attempted to explain the location of witchcraft within the home and the fact that the damage done to property by magic was often quite petty by arguing that the corrupted spirits who worked on the vulnerable were themselves but "base spirits" and therefore more likely to be concerned with petty and greedy matters, centering around money, land, or revenge (Baxter 1834, 28, 90). Individuals, congregations, and ministers all sought out Baxter's advice and contributed valuable case studies to his archives because he was an acknowledged expert. Baxter believed that the detection of malignant spirits and operations of the Devil was a collaborative, rather than a solitary pursuit. His ideal was for a "godly" community of professionalized, specialist investigators to be permitted the authority to examine every case individually. This, he claimed, would rule out false or malicious claims and enable magistrates to detect and dispel evil spirits far more efficiently.

Well-educated and skilled in medicine, Baxter had witnessed his own cures hailed by country folk not as curing the symptoms of a disease, but as the casting-out of devils. Such simple superstitions troubled him deeply and strengthened his conviction of the need for specialist investigators. He recorded that even as he was writing in 1659, "I am put to dissuade a man from accusing one of his neighbours of witchcraft, because his daughters hath this disease, and cryeth out of her" (Baxter 1659, 184–185). Similarly, he could find no convincing proof for the efficacy of the touch of the English monarch in healing scrofula, known as the King's Evil, though he held a firm belief in the power and signifi-

cance of angels as messengers from God (Baxter 1834, 82–83, 97–100).

Baxter concluded that witches were far less dangerous to society than the invisible operations of spirits that corrupt us by encouraging pleasure, pride, and lust. Ultimately, Baxter managed to evolve a coherent argument for the existence of magic and witchcraft that continued to find some support among nonconformist communities into the nineteenth century, though by the time he died, the question of the reality and effectiveness of *maleficium* had moved to the outermost fringes of intellectual debate across most of Europe.

JOHN CALLOW

See also: DEMONOLOGY; ENGLAND; GHOSTS; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; PURITANISM.

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BEHRINGER, WOLFGANG (1956–)

Affectionately known to colleagues as the “witch master” (*Hexenmeister*), Behringer has been seminal in achieving international recognition for witchcraft studies as an independent field of historical research. Behringer was born and raised in Schwabing, the cosmopolitan university district of Munich, into a pedagogical family. While working part-time, he studied history, political science, and German at the Ludwig-Maximilians University of Munich, where he received his masters degree and, in 1985, his Ph.D. for a dissertation on Bavarian witchcraft trials under the supervision of the social and cultural historian, Richard van Dülmen. From 1991 to 1997, Behringer was a researcher and teacher at the universities of Augsburg and Bonn, simultaneously producing monographs on a freelance basis about several topics far removed from European witchcraft: the Thurn and Taxis family (founders of the imperial postal service), the almost equally venerable Lowenbrau and Spaten breweries, and the very modern Lufthansa. In 1997, the University of Bonn awarded him the *Venia Legendi* (authority to teach) for his *Habilitation* (a post-doctoral degree required in some nations for professional posting at a university) on the communications revolution in early modern Europe. He continued teaching at

Bonn until his appointment to a full professorship at the University of York. In 2003 he returned to Germany, accepting the chair of history previously held by his former mentor van Dülmen at the University of Saarbrücken.

Behringer’s dissertation, originally published in German in 1985, was translated into English by J. C. Grayson and David Lederer and published by Cambridge University Press in 1997 as *Witchcraft Persecutions in Bavaria: Popular Magic, Religious Zealotry and Reason of State in Early Modern Europe*. The German original has now gone into its third edition. This classic study reexamined an older treatment of the subject by Sigmund Riezler, incorporating considerable new information from a serial analysis of the seventeenth-century Bavarian Court Council protocols and the records of the infamous *H-Sonderkommando*, the Nazi group that researched archives for the persecution of witches.

Since 1986, Behringer has been a member of the Association for Interdisciplinary Witchcraft Research and coeditor of its monograph series. However, much of his seminal work has continued to appear in German and, like his work on communications theory or breweries, remains largely undiscovered by the English-reading public. For example, together with Swiss climatic historian, Christian Pfister, Behringer has energetically promoted research on the nexus between an ecological crisis lasting from 1565 to 1630, the so-called Little Ice Age, and related cultural phenomena such as confessional strife, social disciplining, suicide, and popular attitudes toward magic during the iron century. Some of his more significant book titles include his early study of Bavarian witchcraft legislation (1988); a widely used paperback collection of key documents and connected commentary on *Hexen und Hexenprozesse in Deutschland* (Witches and Witch Trials in Germany), now in its fourth edition; an extremely short but extremely meaty paperback called simply *Hexen* (Witches, 1998), which discusses worldwide witchcraft beliefs, persecutions, and publicity, and a richly annotated edition and new German translation of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), done with Günter Jerouschek (2000).

Among dozens of his other publications on the history and theory of early modern witchcraft, a few are available in English. They include Behringer’s brilliant monograph on nocturnal shamanistic ghost-riders who came to be thought of as witches, first published in German in 1994 as *Chonrad Stoeckhlin und die Nachtschar* and soon translated by H. C. Erik Midelfort as *The Shaman of Oberstdorf* (1998). They also include two brief statements of Behringer’s well-known theories about the connections between agricultural crises and the rise of mass witchcraft persecutions: “Weather, Hunger and Fear. The Origins of the European Witch

Persecution in Climate, Society and Mentality” and, more recently, “Climatic Change and Witch-Hunting. The Impact of the Little Ice Age on Mentalities.”

DAVID LEDERER

See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; HISTORIOGRAPHY NAZI INTEREST IN WITCH PERSECUTION; RIEZLER, SIGMUND.

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BEKKER, BALTHASAR (1634–1698)

A Dutch Reformed pastor influenced by Cartesian rationalism, Bekker became one of the most influential critics of belief in witchcraft and demonology in late-seventeenth-century northern Europe. His book, *De Betoverde Weereld* (The World Bewitched, 1691–1693), remained well into the eighteenth century one of the hallmarks of a tradition that prepared the way for the later Enlightenment rejection of belief in witchcraft and sorcery.

Born in 1634 in the northern Netherlands, Bekker was educated at the Universities of Groningen and Franeker, where he came under the influence of Cartesian ideas and thus also under the suspicion of conservative Reformed clerics. Bekker nevertheless was ordained a Reformed pastor and served several Dutch congregations before accepting a call to the ministry in the important city of Amsterdam in 1680. Here he developed his interest in witchcraft and sorcery, approaching these subjects from the fundamental perspective of questioning the nature and temporal power of the Devil and evil spirits.

Bekker’s interest in the Devil’s power began in 1688 when he wrote a commentary on the biblical Book of Daniel. He began to preach sermons on the topic, and friends urged him to expand his ideas into a book. Then Bekker read an account of an English witch at the time imprisoned in Beckington. He translated the account into Dutch and added his own commentary, which was quite skeptical of this supposed case of witchcraft. This short treatise became the foundation for Bekker’s further research into witchcraft and demonology, which led to the publication of his four-volume work, *The World Bewitched*.

Motivated in part by his Cartesian rationalism and in part by concerns regarding scriptural interpretation, Bekker rejected the operative role of the Devil in witchcraft and sorcery, undertook a wide-ranging critique of traditional beliefs regarding witchcraft and the Devil, and applied a method of biblical interpretation in harmony with his position.

The first volume of *The World Bewitched* provides an historical overview of popular opinion about spirits from antiquity to the present. Bekker argued that the roots of spirit belief lay in pagan antiquity, but these ideas had infiltrated the Catholic Church and had been perpetuated in the Christian tradition. Even his own Reformed doctrine was not free of such beliefs. But belief in the Devil and evil spirits, as well as in such things as fortune telling, sorcery, and witchcraft, were essentially pagan ideas founded upon ignorance, prejudice, and fear. According to Bekker, such ideas could be supported neither by reason nor by the Bible.

Volume two of his work was by far the most important, influential, and controversial. In this volume, Cartesian dualism influenced Bekker’s arguments. Following Descartes, he maintained that the material and spiritual worlds could not interact with each other (except in human beings). Thus spirits without bodies, such as the Devil, could have no effect on people. In fact, neither reason nor experience could prove that spirits without bodies even existed. Bekker did not deny God’s power to create such spirits, and he pointed out that the Bible did indeed prove the existence of both good and bad angelic spirits. His main concern, however, was with the Devil and evil spirits.

While reason could not explain how evil spirits could act on humans, the Bible testifies that the Devil did not in fact act on people on the earth, Bekker argued. Genesis told how the Devil and all of his evil angels had been cast by God into hell, where they were to remain chained for all eternity. How then, Bekker asked, could they wander the earth and torment people? Witchcraft and sorcery could not exist, he concluded, because the Devil was powerless on earth. But Bekker still had to deal with biblical passages that seemed, when taken literally, to speak of the earthly activities of the Devil.

In places where the Bible spoke of the Devil, Bekker contended that the Holy Spirit was merely accommodating its language to the limited intellectual abilities of the common people of biblical times who believed in evil spirits. When the Bible used the word *devil*, it was only speaking figuratively and really meant evil men or mortal enemies of God. When it used the terms *magician* or *sovereign*, it meant simple tricksters and frauds. To complicate matters further, later translators of the Bible, who themselves believed in the Devil and evil spirits, often mistranslated Greek and Hebrew words as “Devil” when they could have been more correctly rendered as “slanderer,” “enemy,”

or “opponent,” again referring to God’s mortal enemies. Bekker’s most difficult exegetical task was how to explain the various New Testament passages that spoke of spirit possession. According to the common interpretation of such passages, demons sometimes possessed people’s bodies, making them behave in strange ways or causing them terrible sickness, pain, or insanity. Drawing on the works of such earlier skeptics as the Dutchmen Johann Weyer and Jacob Vallick and the Englishman Reginald Scot, Bekker argued that these passages really describe cases of mental illness, again clothed in language the common people could understand.

In volume three of *The World Bewitched*, Bekker built upon his earlier foundations to reject all manner of witchcraft and sorcery as merely fraud and deception. Evil magic, conjuring, and fortune telling were supposedly done by people who had given themselves over to the Devil in order to use his power against others. But since it was clear that evil spirits could not have these kinds of interactions with humans, these magicians and witches were simple tricksters who seldom accomplished anything. The famous witch of Endor in the First Book of Samuel, chapter 28, was merely a ventriloquist, while other biblical stories of sorcery were really accounts of idolatry.

In volume four, Bekker argued that belief in the Devil, evil spirits, and sorcery was caused by ignorance and fear of the unknown, or by deception of the senses. Bekker then related a series of cases of supposed witchcraft, sorcery, and spirit possession, all of which, he asserted, had natural causes. People often faked spirit possession in order to make money, or else possessed people suffered from “melancholy” or physical illnesses. Bekker proclaimed other well-known cases of the supernatural, such as the miracle healing of Sir Kenelm Digby, the story of the bricklayer in Bolsward, the pied piper of Hamlen (usually spelled *Hamlin*), the devils of Macon and Tedworth, and the ghosts of Annenberg and Lausanne, to be frauds.

Bekker ended his work by decrying the cruelty and irrationality of witchcraft trials, arguing that foolish testimony had led judges to condemn innocent people. It was obvious, Bekker declared, that popular beliefs about sorcery and witchcraft were mistaken, because these things simply did not exist.

Despite the fact that trials for witchcraft had largely ended in the Dutch Republic almost a century before Bekker wrote, and despite the fact that by the 1690s many in the Dutch medical, legal, and intellectual professions shared Bekker’s views, *The World Bewitched* provoked an uproar within the Reformed Church. Its conservative wing, already angry with Bekker for many years because of his Cartesian views and exegetical position, rose against him with full force. His denial of demonic power contradicted Scripture, critics charged,

and would lead to a denial of belief in the divine mysteries and even to a rejection of belief in God himself. Bekker’s ideas were called heretical, scandalous, and slanderous to God. A long church process was started against him that ended by condemning his book, deposing him from the ministry, and even excluding him from Reformed communion.

Bekker’s ideas exerted considerable influence. *The World Bewitched* became an instant best seller, going through at least two printings in 1691, followed by several later Dutch editions. Bekker’s original publisher, recognizing the earnings potential of such a work, rushed the book to market even before the author had reviewed his entire text. It was soon translated into French, German, and English. Outside of the Netherlands, *The World Bewitched* had its greatest influence in Germany, where it could be found in many libraries, especially those of “enlightened” readers and collectors, far into the eighteenth century. Although it is an exaggeration to claim that Bekker almost single-handedly ended the witch persecutions in northern Europe, he was clearly a major figure among the late seventeenth-century authors who successfully opened the sustained assault on witchcraft and diabolical magic that the Enlightenment brought to completion.

ANDREW FIX

See also: DESCARTES, RENÉ; PALINGH, ABRAHAM; SCOT, REGINALD; SKEPTICISM WEYER, JOHANN.

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BENANDANTI

In 1966, Carlo Ginzburg published a study on the previously unknown *benandanti* (do-gooders) of Friuli. In Ginzburg's view, the beliefs of the *benandanti* seemed to constitute a folkloric anomaly at odds with the "classic" paradigm of diabolical witchcraft, while also offering the most fully documented instance in early modern Europe of how the Inquisition repressed popular culture.

At first, the *benandanti* confidently maintained that they were opponents of witches, defenders of the Christian faith, and protectors of crops and people in their communities. The most detailed confessions made by *benandanti* to the Inquisition represent an extended narrative sequence that can be summarized as follows. Born with the caul (amniotic sac), which they preserved, *benandanti* believed that they were predestined to play a distinctive role. When they reached adulthood, they began to leave their bodies at night on Ember Days in order to do battle against opponents, whom they called *malandanti* (evil-doers), or to visit the otherworld. In the form of smoke, mice, butterflies, or cats, or riding on supernatural goats, roosters, or cats, they traveled in ecstasy to gatherings of their fellows. Wielding such beneficent ritual weapons as branches of viburnum and stalks of fennel, the "military" *benandanti* fought to defend the harvest against *malandanti*, who were armed with stalks of sorghum or sticks of firewood. "Funereal" *benandanti* interrogated the dead about what would happen in the future, and conveyed this information to the living after the *benandanti* returned. The myth of their nocturnal journeys gave the *benandanti* a context and justification for their everyday healing practices.

Between 1574 and 1749, Inquisition tribunals in the dioceses of Aquileia and Concordia and in Venice conducted eighty-five proceedings against *benandanti* (Nardon 1999, 136). More than half of these were denunciations that the Holy Office did not pursue; the rest were summary or full-fledged trials on charges including the practice of therapeutic or harmful magic, abuse of the sacraments, and participation in the witches' Sabbat. In the fifteen sentences issued, punishments ranged from simple admonition to formal abjuration, imprisonment, and banishment. According to Ginzburg, some inquisitors ingeniously managed to equate the innocuous agrarian and otherworldly beliefs of the *benandanti* with the witches' Sabbat, an only remotely related and basically learned construction. By the mid-seventeenth century, when inquisitors had succeeded in eliciting from *benandanti* confessions of involvement in diabolical witchcraft, the myth of the *benandanti* disappeared.

Since the appearance of Ginzburg's book, anthropological studies of types, motifs, and narrative functions of popular beliefs in Friuli, Istria, and adjacent

German-language regions have shown that the beliefs of the *benandanti*, particularly those involving contact with the dead and therapeutic activities, survived (albeit with modifications) until a very few years ago. A recent investigation focused on the later trials of *benandanti* has revealed that therapeutic functions were central to the beliefs of the *benandanti*. Their myth assumed relevance in the society in relation to their curative practices, which increasingly incorporated ideas, such as exorcism, drawn from the matrix of ecclesiastical ritual. In this new perspective, the *benandanti* seem to have been primarily healers, exorcists, and opponents of witches, and only marginally witches and causers of harm. Thus Ginzburg's notion of the *benandanti's* gradual "psychological conversion" to the negative model of the Sabbat and black magic appears difficult to sustain.

Indeed, reexamination of the inquisitors' and episcopal vicars' mode of operation shows that rather than the *benandanti* becoming witches, it was the judges whose attitudes changed. Intent on demonstrating their formal heresy, the first inquisitor who interrogated *benandanti* in the late sixteenth century was interested in nocturnal battles, which lent support to such a contention. In contrast, his successors in the mid-seventeenth century were much more concerned with curative practices. Placing little emphasis on nocturnal battles, some particularly zealous inquisitors—inclined, despite the skepticism of many cardinals on the Congregation of the Holy Office, to believe in the reality of the witches' Sabbat—induced some *benandanti* to admit to being witches during their trials. Whether the defendants' real convictions changed, however, is doubtful and undemonstrable.

The richness and puzzling character of the documentation about *benandanti* furnishes excellent opportunities for studying the interactions between learned and popular culture, as well as enabling a confrontation between historical and anthropological methods and the sources that they employ.

FRANCO NARDON

See also: CAUL; FERTILITY CULTS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; FOLKLORE; INQUISITION, ROMAN; INQUISITION, VENETIAN; POPULAR BELIEFS, IN WITCHES; SABBAT.

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BENEVENTO, WALNUT TREE OF

Provincial capital of Campania, ancient Lombard principality, and part of the Papal States until 1860, Benevento is still legendary as a land of witches, who met under the walnut tree. For centuries it has been regarded as the principal location of Italian witches’ Sabbats, similar to Blocksberg (or Brocken) in Germany, Blåkulla in Sweden, and Mount St. Gellért in Hungary. Judicial records, demonological literature, and popular fables suggested Valtellina (Valtellina; Veltlin), Emilia, Val d’Adige, and Val Camonica as additional meeting places for Italian witches. No other place, however, could compete in notoriety with Benevento, the fame of which extended far enough to come to the attention of the celebrated demonologist Martín Del Río, who wrote of the *noce di Benevento* (Walnut Tree of Benevento) in his *Disquisitiones Magicae libri sex* (Six Books on Investigations into Magic, on 1599/1600) (Cocchiara 1980, 193). Echoes of the diabolical legend are found in the works of numerous late medieval and early modern Italian authors such as Agnolo Firenzuola, Giambattista Basile, Tommaso Garzoni, Francesco Redi, Ippolito Neri, Lorenzo Lippi, Gerolamo Tartarotti, Ludovico Antonio Muratori, and Gioacchino Belli, and in comedies by playwrights such as Pietro Aretino, Anton Francesco Grazzini, and Nicolò Piperno, who wrote and produced the play *La noce Maga di Benevento Estirpata da San Barbato* (The Magical Walnut Tree of Benevento uprooted by St. Barbato) in 1665.

Among the most interesting descriptions of the Sabbat was a nineteenth-century poem, published in Naples, entitled *Storia della Famosa Noce di Benevento* (History of the Famous Walnut Tree of Benevento). This work definitively established the central nucleus of the diabolical legend of Benevento: a “large snake” twisting around a walnut tree of “immense size,” “in the shadows of its leaves, the witches’ Sabbats take place, with the participation of a great number of witches, wizards, and devils from hell,” dedicated to “*far del male*” (practice evil), and “unapproachable by the profane, bound by Satan” (Cocchiara 1980, 188). Among the principal elements of the legend, the walnut tree (*Juglans regia*) represents a constant of Italian Sabbats. Numerous medieval testimonials from both learned and popular sources documented the tree’s evil

reputation. Medieval tradition derived its assumed toxicity from the etymology of its name, supposedly taken from the Latin verb *nocere* (to harm). Popular tales contributed to spread its sinister reputation, such as the account of the poor Umbrian who awakened paralyzed after napping under a walnut tree and was then miraculously healed by Saint Francis. In particular, the tree was said to have the power to infect the brain of any person who might carelessly fall asleep under its damp shade. In his *Quaestio de Strigis* (An Investigation of Witches, ca. 1470), Giordano da Bergamo claimed that under the shadow of the walnut tree by the “virtue of the Devil the witch’s humors can become mixed-up and her fantasy can create illusory images,” because “being so damp,” the tree is “well-suited to our brain, which is very damp” (Abbiati, Agnoletto, and Lazzati 1984, 82–83).

A sacred tree (not a walnut tree) worshipped by the Lombards of Benevento was mentioned in a work written after the ninth century, the *Vita Barbati Episcopi Beneventani* (The Life of Barbato, Bishop of Benevento). Bishop Barbato uprooted the tree after obtaining a promise from Lombard duke Romualdo to renounce the pagan cult in exchange for victory over the Byzantine army that besieged Benevento in 663. The pagan rite consisted of a competition testing the abilities of knights, who were required to gallop toward the sacred tree, grab a small part of a snake’s skin hanging from it, and then “superstitiously” eat the skin. In the next few centuries, the myth of the evil tree was grafted onto the traditions of this tree-worshipping cult according to a typical pattern in which Christians associated preexisting religious traditions with the Devil. However, not all scholars agree that the legend of the walnut tree is tied exclusively to a distorted version of this Lombard rite. Other indications suggest multiple sources for the legend; for example, the cult of the snake, an intercultural element spread throughout other areas of Europe, or the cult of Isis, a goddess particularly venerated in Benevento, where a magnificent temple was erected to her under the Roman emperor Domitian. An urn of the cult of Isis with a lid adorned with images of the sacred serpent, discovered in 1903, convinced some scholars that the Beneventans worshipped snakes through the cult of Isis, and that this tradition was bequeathed to the pagan Lombards.

Among the first to discuss the Beneventan Sabbats was Mariano Sozzini in a letter of 1420 to the humanist Antonio Tridentone. Also in the 1420s, St. Bernardino of Siena spoke in his sermons of the witches’ assemblies in Benevento, but without mentioning a walnut tree. In the 1428 trial of Umbrian healer Matteuccia da Todi, which was connected to St. Bernardino’s sermons, we find the first description of the Sabbat under the *noce di Benevento*, preceded by the nocturnal flying brought about by anointing with a

magic salve and by the recitation of a spell that, with slight regional variations, recurred frequently in other late medieval and early modern trials and is found in the popular saying, “Salve, salve / Send me to the noce di Benevento / Over the water and over to the wind / And over all bad weather” (Mammoli 1969, 31). From this point forward, in the minds of inquisitors and demonologists and of their victims, the legend of Benevento as a diabolical place was consolidated, combining elements from the mythical Lombard *sacra arbor* (sacred tree) and the sacred snake of the cult of Isis. In demonological literature, the work of distinguished papal theologian Silvestro Prierias concerning the *noce di Benevento* is particularly noteworthy (Abbiati, Agnoletto, and Lazzati 1984, 226). Echoes of the Campanian Sabbat can also be found in the *Tractatus de haereticis et sortilegiis* (Treatise on Heretics and Sorcerers), written around 1524 by Paolo Grillando, which referred to the Sabbat under the “extremely cold noce di Benevento” (Grillando 1592, 111–112).

However, the definitive systematization of this legend came from Pietro Piperno, author of *De Nuce Maga Beneventana* (On the Magical Walnut Tree of Benevento, 1634), subsequently translated into Italian as *Della Superstiziosa Noce di Benevento* (On the Superstitious Walnut Tree of Benevento, 1640). In this tract, a true and proper demonological work, the Beneventan medical examiner not only identified the sacred tree venerated by the Lombards with the evil walnut tree, but also tried to demonstrate that its Sabbats were a product of diabolical knowledge that could make it appear illusively at any moment (Piperno 1640, 96). Piperno claims that witches did not gather under the diabolical tree in their dreams, but *in corpore* (physically), and thereby advises secular and religious authorities to guard more attentively against such gatherings. Requests for greater penalties against superstitious acts did not result in local witch hunts, except for a series of perhaps as many as 200 trials, mentioned in later sources, that were dispersed in 1860, and an event in which three women were reportedly handed over to secular authorities in 1506 (Di Gesaro 1988, 385).

PAOLO PORTONE;

TRANSLATED BY SHANNON VENEBLE

See also: BERNARDINO OF SIENA; BLÅKULLA; DRAMA, ITALIAN; GRILLANDO, PAOLO; ITALY; PIPERNO, PIETRO; PRIERIAS, SILVESTRO; SABBAT; TODI, WITCH OF.

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BERKELEY, WITCH OF

The medieval story of a witch, or more precisely a sorceress, from Berkeley (Doucestershire) circulated widely in Europe from the twelfth to the sixteenth century. Probably of much earlier origin, the story was fully developed by William of Malmesbury, who included it in his *Gesta regum anglorum* (Deeds of the Kings of the English) of ca. 1142. William located the episode in 1065, just before his account of the Norman Conquest. He told the story as a warning that those who practiced sorcery with demonic assistance would find it impossible to protect themselves from the Devil's attacks at the time of death. The later popularity of the story was based on its clear message that sorcerers belonged to the Devil.

According to William's story, the Berkeley woman, whom he described as morally debauched as well as a practitioner of sorcery and augury, heard her pet raven chattering more than usual one day and believed it an omen that her own end was imminent. A message about the sudden death of her son and his family confirmed her belief. So she immediately took precautions to prevent the Devil from taking her body when death ultimately came. Summoning her remaining children, a monk and a nun, she confessed her demonic arts and entreated them that, when she died, they would sew her corpse in a deerskin, place it in a stone coffin, fasten the lid with lead and iron, and bind a stone to it with three massive iron chains. They should also arrange to have fifty psalms a night sung around her body for three nights, as well as three Masses a day for three days. Despite her detailed precautions, however, demons burst through the bolted doors of the church on the first two nights and broke two of the massive chains on her coffin. On the third night, the tallest and most terrible devil snapped the remaining chain like a piece of string and kicked off the coffin's lid. He then dragged the woman out of the



The Devil takes away the Witch of Berkeley, despite her precautions. Her story and hapless fate were well known in late medieval and early modern Europe. (TopFoto.co.uk)

church, laid her on the iron barbs projecting from the back of his black horse, and rode off out of sight, while the horrified onlookers heard the woman's pitiable cries.

William's *Chronicle* became a major historical work and was widely cited both in England and on the Continent. This story reappeared virtually word for word in the *Eulogium historiarum* (Eulogy of Histories), written in Malmesbury abbey ca. 1367. More importantly, it appeared in slightly abbreviated form in Vincent of Beauvais' *Speculum historiale* (Mirror of History), the third part of Vincent's massive medieval encyclopedia (ca. 1244–1260), which circulated throughout Europe in numerous Latin and vernacular manuscript versions. After 1473, printed editions began; there were eight circulating by 1546.

From the late fifteenth century, woodcuts also popularized the story. An illustrated summary—little more than a commentary on the accompanying image of diabolical abduction—appeared in the five editions of the *Nuremberg Chronicle* between 1493 and 1500, a work profusely illustrated by the Nuremberg workshop of Michael Wolgemut and Wilhelm Pleydenwurff. For eighty years, this image became a model for illustrators—with the woman naked except for her shroud, her frizzy hair a testament to her evil, her open mouth giving terrified cries, the horse with the iron barbs, and

the lead cover of the coffin mangled like a piece of cloth.

A similar summary and illustration appeared in the popular *Prodigiorum ac Ostentorum Chronicon* (Chronicle of Prodigies and Curiosities), compiled by Conrad Lycosthenes (Konrad Wolfhart) and published in Basel in 1557 in both Latin and German editions. In 1555, a full version of the story drawn from Vincent of Beauvais was recycled in the encyclopedic work by the Swedish Bishop, Olaus Magnus, *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus* (History of the Northern Peoples), first published in Rome and soon translated into Italian, Dutch, German, and French. In this case, the story supported the view that the Devil's work in pagan Scandinavia was similar to his activity in Christian Europe. Although this woodcut was somewhat more narrative in style, its main focus remained the violent reclaiming of a sorceress by the Devil.

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See also: ANIMALS; ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; DEVIL; HAIR; MAGNUS, OLAUS; SORCERY.

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BERMUDA

Between 1651 and 1696, the colony of Bermuda experienced twenty-one witchcraft trials and five executions, the largest number in English America outside of New England. Settled in 1612 and administered by the joint-stock Bermuda Company of London, the island took on a Puritan character as nonconformist ministers turned out of their benefices in London occupied Bermuda's parish churches. Fears of witchcraft and demonic influence were present from the start. Bermuda's second minister, Lewis Hughes, had supported the witchcraft claims of servant Mary Glover against her London mistress in 1602 and exorcised the girl. In 1623, the London company enjoined Bermuda's churchwardens to present "all Sorcerers, Inchanters, Charmers, Witches, Figure-casters or fortune-tellers, [and] Conjurers" to local courts for prosecution (Lefroy 1981, 1:320). Eleven years later, Governor John Winthrop of Massachusetts recorded that an unnamed

Bermudian minister exorcised a man “possessed with a devil” before his congregation (Dunn et al. 1996, 119).

Bermuda’s first witchcraft case was prosecuted in May 1651, when Jean Gardiner was accused of afflicting a mulatto servant woman. A female jury found a blue spot, or “mark of the Devil,” in Gardiner’s mouth, and she twice failed a water test in the sea, where she “did swyme like a cork and could not sinke” (Lefroy 1981, 2:602–603). Found guilty, she was hanged on May 26. A second woman, Anne Bowen, was accused at the same assize but acquitted, as were two more accused witches, planter Henry Ward and Elizabeth Middleton, in 1652. The next year, Middleton’s husband, John, a failed planter, was accused of malefic attacks on a Scottish indentured servant (probably a prisoner of war sent to Bermuda by Cromwell following the Battle of Worcester) while the latter was in the colony’s jail. After a host of suspicious marks were found on Middleton’s body and he failed a water test, he confessed that “I was a witch, wch I knew not before” (Lefroy 1981, 2:608). Before he was hanged, he implicated two other suspected witches, Alice Moore and Christian Stevenson, who were quickly tried, found guilty, and also hanged. Despite claims that there were additional undetected witches within the colony, Bermuda’s prosecutors prevented hysteria from seizing the island. Late the same year, Edward Brangman’s wife won damages from a neighbor who insinuated that she was a witch.

In January 1655, the *Mayflower* put into Bermuda with two English passengers strongly suspected of practicing witchcraft on the high seas, prompting another trial. Despite alleged past connections with Lancaster witches, Elizabeth Page was acquitted, but Jane Hopkins was not so lucky: She had several incriminating marks, was deemed guilty of conjuring, and was promptly hanged. Although several more men and women were accused of diabolically inflicting harm on livestock, property, and neighbors, Jane Hopkins was the last witch executed in Bermuda. In June 1671, Susan Cole was found guilty of “tormenting” Thomas Holt and sentenced to death, but Governor John Heydon pardoned her (Lefroy 1981, 2:630).

In total, four men and seventeen women, fifteen of them married, were accused (or defended themselves against informal accusations) of witchcraft. Bermuda appears singular in the weight it gave to accusations made by marginal members of society; enslaved black children, mulatto and Indian women, and Scotch-Irish indentured servants figured prominently among not only the victims but also the accusers in many witchcraft cases. The spate of cases in the 1650s had political causes. During the previous decade, Bermuda’s ministers and leading planters had bitterly divided over the issue of severing ties with England. The Separatists were exiled to the Bahamas in 1649, but returned to

Bermuda two years later amidst lingering tensions. The witchcraft trials of 1651–1655 allowed members of both groups to come together as jurymen to rid their island of demonic influences, facilitating a lasting rapprochement. Moreover, in 1651 Bermuda received Scottish war prisoners, with fresh memories of the massive witchcraft prosecutions in their homeland.

After 1671, Bermuda had no further convictions for witchcraft. Witchcraft of a different sort emerged in eighteenth-century Bermuda within the island’s slave population in a handful of accusations brought against slaves for attempting to poison or harm whites and other slaves by concealing suspicious mixtures about their houses or in their foods. Possibly linked to West African Obeah practices, poisoning scares broke out sporadically in the late 1720s and 1750s. The trial and burning at the stake of a mulatto slave, Sarah Basset, is confused in Bermudian lore with witchcraft, but the method of her execution was consistent with the *petit treason* against her master and mistress for which she was convicted.

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See also: SCOTLAND; SWIMMING TEST.

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BERNARDINO OF SIENA (1380–1444)

Franciscan friar, reformer, and saint, Bernardino was one of the most influential popular preachers of fifteenth-century Italy, second only to Savonarola. His many vehement, intransigent sermons and treatises against witchcraft, superstition, demonology, and heresy helped pave the way for the outbreak of witch hunts shortly after his death. Bernardino’s public instruction represented an important contribution to that gradual transformation within the collective European imagination that reshaped an inchoate body of disparate beliefs and vague notions regarding superstition, simple sorcery, pagan ritual, magic, and demonology into what has been called “The Classical Formulation of the Witch Phenomenon” (Russell 1972, 227), whereby the witch came to be understood

as a devil-worshipping, evil-working woman belonging to a massive, well-organized, international company of moral-social subversives who gathered regularly at Sabbats in remote parts of the countryside in order to engage in orgiastic rituals. Bernardino's sermons open an ample window onto what the Christian faithful believed about witches and their activities in an historical period for which written documentation is scarce. A vociferous adversary, as well, of Jews, sodomites, and religious dissenters, Bernardino was a conspicuous exponent of what R. I. Moore has termed the "persecuting society," the violently intolerant Christendom of the premodern era.

Born into a family of minor aristocracy in the Tuscan town of Massa Marittima, Bernardino Albizzeschi was orphaned of both parents by the age of six. At eleven he was sent to live with relatives in Siena where, hagiographic sources relate, he already began to show signs of his future sanctity. Child of wealth and social privilege, the pious and intellectually gifted Bernardino received the best education available in Siena; he began studying canon law, but discontinued it after two years. In 1400, the plague struck Siena, and Bernardino distinguished himself during the outbreak by his valiant, selfless service to its victims. In 1402, after a harrowing brush with death due to lengthy illness, Bernardino joined the Observants, the austere reform branch of the Franciscan Order. He soon rose to positions of authority within his order; he was offered the bishoprics of Siena, Ferrara, and Urbino, but refused all of them because he considered his primary role that of a preacher.

After a period of training and false starts, Bernardino's preaching career finally took off with a successful mission in Milan in 1417. From then until his death, he and his band of disciples and confreres crisscrossed northern and central Italy, preaching to ever growing masses of people. Bernardino's reputation wavered temporarily in 1426, when he was summoned to Rome to face charges of heresy for his "novel" cult of the Holy Name of Jesus. This Roman trial, however, resulted in the friar's acquittal and increased his fame. Bernardino resumed his preaching, writing, and social and moral activism until 1444 when, worn out by incessant labors, asceticism, and illness, he died in the Kingdom of Naples. Canonization followed, remarkably, only six years later.

Witchcraft and allied topics rank among the most frequent subjects of Bernardino's vernacular sermons (recorded live by scribes) and his manuscript treatises in Latin, the so-called *sermone latini*. Having encountered witchcraft or similar diabolical activity in nearly every place he visited, the friar condemned it as one of those especially heinous crimes for which God continually punishes states and kingdoms. He encouraged his audiences actively to seek out and destroy its practitioners. Among Bernardino's most important texts relating

to witchcraft are his sermons, "On the Three Capital Sins" (Siena; 1427), "Why We Must Not Believe in Fortune-Tellers and Diviners" (Florence; 1425), "On the Devil's Sowing" (*De seminatione daemonii*, 1423); and his treatises, *On the Cult of Idolatry* (*De idolatriae cultu*, 1430–1436) and *On the Army of Evil Spirits* (*De exercitu spirituum malignorum*, 1430–1444).

Bernardino's preaching and writing produced concrete, documented results, although never as radical as he demanded. After consultation with Pope Martin V, one mission in Rome concluded, he tells us in his Siena 1427 sermon, with a massive roundup of suspected witches and sorcerers, three of whom were eventually executed. Reports of this Roman episode were documented in contemporary Italian, Swiss, and German sources, thus confirming Bernardino's role in disseminating his antiwitchcraft hysteria. The preacher also played a crucial though indirect role in the witchcraft trial of Matteuccia Francisci, burned in Todi in March 1428; she had been arrested, as her extant trial record makes clear, because of local consciousness-raising by friar Bernardino. Another documented result of his influence was the promulgation of more severe laws against witchcraft and superstition in several of the towns he visited, including Siena, Perugia, and Todi.

FRANCO MORMANDO

See also: ITALY; SIENESE NEW STATE; TODI, WITCH OF

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BÉRULLE, PIERRE DE (1575–1629)

A leading figure of the French Catholic revival and a significant theorist of demonic possession, Bérulle (made a cardinal in 1627) is best known as the founder of the Oratorian order.

Trained at the Jesuit *collège* (secondary school) of Clermont and at the Sorbonne, Bérulle worked with some of the key spiritual figures of his day to implement major reforms of Catholic life in France's so-called "century of saints." Together with Madame Barbe Acarie, he helped establish in 1604 the order of Discalced Carmelites, on the model of St. Teresa of Avila's Spanish order. In 1611 he founded the Oratory of Jesus, for the training of priests. Bérulle encountered

cases of demonic possession several times in his career, most notably in the controversial 1599 case of Marthe Brossier, during which he defended Brossier and her exorcists from derision by providing a uniquely clear theological exposition of possession and exorcism.

A humanist mystic with a commitment to the humanity of Jesus, Bérulle wrote his first treatise in 1597, the *Bref Discours de L'Abnégation Intérieure* (Brief Discourse on Inner Renunciation). In June 1599, he wrote in defense of the demoniac Marthe Brossier and her exorcists. Militant Catholics had exorcised Brossier before Parisian crowds earlier that year, permitting her “demons” to harangue French Calvinists (Huguenots). In a time of religious division, such performances posed a threat to the implementation of Henry IV’s chief instrument for bringing about religious peace, the 1598 Edict of Nantes. Royal officials punished and humiliated Brossier and her exorcists, and the King asked one of his physicians, Michel Marescot, to satirize the exorcisms in print. Bérulle responded to Marescot’s jibes in a lively and highly learned defense of possession and exorcism, the twin texts *Traicté des energumenes, Suiuuy d’un discours sur la possession de Marthe Brossier: Contre les Calomnies d’un Médecin de Paris* (Treatise of Demoniacs, Followed by a Discourse on the Possession of Marthe Brossier: Against the Calumnies of a Physician of Paris). By defending the Brossier possession in print, Bérulle continued the learned rehabilitation of possession and exorcism in France that had begun with the 1566 story of Nicole Obry and the “miracle of Laon.” This trend arose out of the need of militant French Catholics to find public and spiritual, as well as military, ways to defeat the Huguenots. To protect himself from the royal displeasure that his friends had endured, Bérulle used the pseudonym “Léon d’Alexis” and had the works published in Troyes (his birthplace), without a royal privilege.

Bérulle’s *Traicté des energumenes* was a learned treatise, but his *Discours sur la possession de Marthe Brossier* had a vituperative edge. Together, the two works gave possession and exorcism increased credibility, endowing these largely performance-oriented phenomena with the authority of a clear, intellectually based theology. Bérulle worked within a humanist tradition, using mainly ancient texts to support his views; his originality lay in his view that the value of demonic possession and exorcism could be underscored by reference to the doctrine of the Incarnation. He sees demonic possession as the “shadow and idea of the singular possession which God took in our humanity in Jesus Christ: for in one [case] it is a god, in the other it is a demon, re-clothed by human nature” (Bérulle 1599, f. 38v). This argument paved the way for the increasingly respectable place of demonic possession in seventeenth-century French mystical life, lending dignity to a condition

often regarded as the result of the sufferer’s sin.

Bérulle argued that the doctrine of Incarnation also dignified exorcists. He maintained that the person of the exorcist was in a way an embodiment of the Catholic Church, the Church itself being the mystical body of Christ (as it is sometimes known). The Church provided “the living source from which flows forever the authority to remedy [possession]” (Bérulle 1599, f. 54r.). Within this framework, the exorcist’s position acquired a new significance: Christ cast out demons from the possessed in his time on earth, and his power was passed on to the Church that he both founded and embodied. Through the Incarnation, Christ elevated humanity to partake of the divine, and his power over demons was a signal aspect of his own divinity. It follows, Bérulle wrote, that “the illustrious title [of exorcist], which gives us jurisdiction above demons, is the appanage of our new dignity” (Bérulle 1599, fols. 54r–v). Bérulle then moved to a polemic point about the exclusivity of this role. Because the Church is Christ, Bérulle argued, no authority outside of the Church is appropriate to confront demons. In the highly charged political climate of the Brossier case, with church and state at loggerheads, Bérulle’s polemic thrust against the monarchy was clear.

Bérulle was involved in other similar, though less politically sensitive, cases. He was in the company of Madame Acarie when a young woman named Nicole Tavernier, who had ecstasies and made prophecies, spontaneously became “cured” of her apparent gifts. Bérulle concluded that Tavernier’s sudden change of behavior, her becoming “ignorant and idiotic,” meant that a demon had deceived her (Habert 1646, 97). Although Bérulle warned a superior in the Oratorians against involvement in cases of possession, his support of the possessed woman Elisabeth de Ranfaing in the late 1620s suggests his position relied on case-by-case judgments, rather than reflecting doubts over time. This mutability was something for which orthodox Catholic tradition provided by encouraging a degree of skepticism, but always allowing for true signs of God’s action.

SARAH FERBER

See also: BROSSIER, MARTHE; COTON, PIERRE; DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS; DUVAL, ANDRÉ; EXORCISM; OBRY, NICOLE; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; RANFAING, ELISABETH DE; WARS OF RELIGION (FRANCE).

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BEWITCHMENT

Bewitchment is the occult action or power by which a person is thought to come under a witch's malign influence. The process may be thought to involve a deliberate ritual action or spell, what modern social scientists generally call sorcery, or a spontaneous act or even just a malicious thought, which they refer to as witchcraft. The form or consequence of bewitchment is most often a physical malady in a person or animal, although infatuation, despondency, accidents, and bad luck are also often ascribed to bewitchment. The motive may be revenge, rivalry, envy, or arbitrary maliciousness. Potential cures include getting the witch to remove the spell, countermagic, and punishing the witch, and many societies that believe in bewitchment have specialists or semispecialists who help people identify who has bewitched them and cure the bewitchment. Belief in bewitchment is widespread, and fear of bewitchment was a far more important reason commoners in early modern Europe participated in witchcraft trials than concern about the Devil.

Modern social scientists most often ascribe the experience of bewitchment to some form of psychological displacement in which the “bewitched” person ascribes his or her own hostility to the witch to shift the burden of guilt in an interpersonal conflict, to gain some advantage in a dispute or competition, or simply to explain the source of some otherwise inexplicable misfortune. A more recent approach, cultural analysis, attempts to place the idea of bewitchment in the context of the culture's symbol system, seeing it as a way of narrating certain events and processes in terms of social relationships rather than mechanistic causation. Social scientists explicitly regard the belief in bewitchment as a misperception caused by some cognitive malfunction, while cultural analysts tend to be more agnostic, but it is also possible to interpret the concept of bewitchment as a recognition of the real potential for disturbed interpersonal relations to cause or contribute to physiological problems and other maladies.

CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES, AND COUNTERACTIONS

Bewitchment is thought to manifest malice. People who believe in witchcraft attribute various motives to witches, most commonly the desire to get revenge, an attempt to get an advantage in some competition, envy, or some unprovoked maliciousness, a perverse

pleasure in inflicting harm. The means by which witches are thought to bewitch include sorcery—ritual acts such as incantations, curses, symbolic gestures, use of potent objects, and preparation and administration of potions—and witchcraft—spontaneous acts like threats, scowls, and piercing glances, or even malicious thoughts that are harbored but not expressed. Although most of the time acts thought to cause bewitchment are overtly hostile, in some cases, apparently friendly gestures are taken to be methods of bewitchment as well.

The most common consequence of bewitchment is generally thought to be some physical malady. Sometimes the bewitched person has symptoms that seem directly related to the incident or suspect, such as paralysis of an arm the suspect touched or stomach cramps after eating the suspect's food, but such an association is not necessary. In fact, a wide variety of symptoms are ascribed to bewitchment, and the most common characteristic is not their specific nature, but that they come on unusually suddenly, they linger unusually, or they cannot be explained in any other way. Psychological problems like depression and suicide can also be ascribed to bewitchment, as can other personal problems, such as accidents and runs of bad luck, and so can problems with animals such as disease, a cow's inability to give milk, or a chicken's inability to lay eggs. Although problems caused by severe weather or with processes like churning butter and brewing beer can be thought to result from witches' spells, the term *bewitchment* is less likely to be used in these cases, because it has connotations of exerting a power over living things.

There are a variety of measures available to counteract bewitchment. People who suspect they have been bewitched may try some remedies on their own, or they may consult a specialist, an “unwitcher.” One type of cure for bewitchment is to get the witch to remove it, which can be achieved either by (re)gaining the witch's favor or by threatening the witch with retribution. Reversing a spell is one technique offered by unwitchers, who may also redirect it some other way, or offer some sort of more passive treatment. Reversing a spell is one form of punishment, but other forms may also have curative power. In tribal societies, this punishment may be informal violence or a communal decision to drive out or kill the witch, while in peasant societies this can also include calling in the magistrates. However, because the early modern authorities generally evinced strong interest only when some egregious harm had been suffered, their intervention was more useful for getting revenge or preventing future attacks than in effecting a cure; calling on them was often a sign that more effective countermeasures had failed.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE, CULTURAL MEANING, AND INTERPERSONAL PSYCHOPHYSICAL INFLUENCES

Since the Enlightenment, educated Westerners have assumed that bewitchment was impossible, so belief in it needed to be explained as some sort of psychological malfunction. Social scientists have explained it as a way of explaining otherwise inexplicable events or a way of displacing social tensions. These lines of reasoning are generally combined, so that either an inexplicable event happens and people search for a culprit along social fault lines, or else people's need to assign fault in order to redirect social tensions generated by other, real conflicts leads them to create a scapegoat for problems with real causes that are unknowable and uncontrollable. In this view, the concept of bewitchment kills two birds with one stone, giving people the illusion of control over the uncontrollable while justifying the victimization of social undesirables.

Another, more recent approach that grows out of semiotics and literary theory is to treat witchcraft beliefs as part of a symbol system in which bewitchment is an element in a culturally structured narrative. In other words, people construct a story of what is happening to them from the narrative elements supplied by their culture, and bewitchment is one of the possible stories that can be constructed to explain certain kinds of misfortune. The decision to pick this story rather than one of the alternatives, in this interpretation, is determined not by any reference to "actual events" (with an uncertain original existence and with remembered details that are subject to constant reconstruction), but instead by its psychological, social, and cultural meaning. The task of the interpreter is therefore to deconstruct the narrative to reveal what its different elements meant; bewitchment can thus be a way of talking about conflicts in women's space in one narrative, and a metaphor for the adolescent desire to freeze time to avoid adulthood in another.

Although cultural analysts generally claim to be agnostic on the question of whether bewitchment can actually take place, some take the more radical position that any concept of a reality beyond peoples' concepts is illusory, or at least unknowable, making bewitchment no more, as well as no less, real than any other narrative device. Even in more moderate cultural analysis, bewitchment is implicitly treated as unreal, just as it is explicitly treated as unreal in social scientific explanations. An alternative understanding has recently been proposed that, while still relatively undeveloped, seems worth considering. It has long been known that some ailments ascribed to bewitching can be caused by psychological processes, that they are examples of what has been known as psychosomatic disease. It used to be assumed that psychosomatics worked through some complex psychodynamics, in which a belief in witch-

craft and magic played an essential role by generating the fear that disrupted necessary physiological processes or set in motion damaging ones. In recent decades, however, medical doctors have abandoned Freudian-style psychodynamics in favor of the more straightforward effects of the stress response, the flight-or-fight reaction in which the body shuts down some systems and boosts others in preparation for a short, intense physical exertion. These physiological changes are useful in coping with a brief physical emergency, but damaging when prolonged. Bewitchment seems to be what happens when, during an interpersonal altercation, or because of some unstated antipathy, over or subliminal signaling between people triggers the flight-or-fight reaction in one, but in the claustrophobic context of a small community there can be no quick resolution to the danger signaled. Consequently, the person remains in the kind of prolonged state of excitation that becomes damaging to health. Although culturally determined postures and words certainly play a role in transmitting hostility and threat, noncultural physiological changes such as constricted pupils, tension in the facial muscles, and pallor or ruddiness may be at least as important in the process. Similarly, no specific belief in magic or an innate power of hostility is necessary for the stress response to be triggered or maintained, although again, cultural beliefs can contribute to the intensity of the reaction and shape the specific symptoms manifested.

This approach is not fundamentally incompatible with the other two, just as they are not fundamentally incompatible with each other. Social science illuminates the social situations in which interpersonal conflict culminating in bewitchment often takes place. Cultural analysis shows how people conceptualize the process, which can amplify, dampen, or channel it into specific forms. Psychophysiology explains the process by which most bewitchments take place, illuminating their internal dynamics and showing the boundaries of what can occur. Together these approaches provide a richer and more nuanced understanding than any one alone.

EDWARD BEVER

See also: CHARMS; COUNTERMAGIC; CURSES; DISEASE; EVIL EYE; IMAGE MAGIC; IMPOTENCE, SEXUAL; LOVE MAGIC; MALEFICIJUM; SPELLS; TOUCH, WORDS OF

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BIBLE

The importance of the Bible for the formation of witchcraft doctrine in Christian Europe is impossible to overestimate.

HEBREW BIBLE

The religion of ancient Israel was exposed to many influences of polytheistic religions, especially those of Egypt, Canaan, and Babylonia. Egypt was regarded as the country of magicians par excellence. The reception of foreign cults and the official syncretism that the prophets so energetically denounced in the time of the kings of ancient Israel was a reflection of this cultural influence. An entirely separate aspect of popular religious belief among the peoples of ancient Israel and Canaan was their concern over the existence of destructive demons. Sorcerers and magicians who could control these demons were sought after and feared. Biblical books claim that these demons had been heavenly beings who were overpowered by YHWH, or they constituted a pantheon of minor gods under YHWH (Ps. 29:1, Ps. 89:6–8). The most common terms for these creatures are "hairy demons or satyrs" (*šē'irim* and *šē'dim*). Among the names associated with demons are Azazel, mentioned as part of the ritual in which the high priest sends a goat into the desert as an expiatory sacrifice (Lev. 16:7–10), and Lilith, associated with unclean animals in Isaiah 34:14, who is better known from later rabbinic literature and is considered a wilderness-dwelling demon of the night who was a succubus and a "child-stealing" creature.

Several types of magic developed either to provide protection against this world of demons or to seek their assistance. Prohibitions against these forms of magic, which correspond roughly to black and white magic, were enumerated in several catalogs of vices in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Deut. 18:10–11; 2 Kings 21:6; Jer. 27:9). The passage in Deuteronomy is one of the most important; it mentions as practices of the native peoples that the people of Israel must not take up making a son or daughter pass through the fire, practicing divination (*qēsāmim*), and being an observer of times (*mē'ōnēn*, either an astrologer or a diviner who studies patterns in smoke or clouds), an enchanter (*mēnakhēš*), or a witch (*mēkaššēp*, feminine *mēkaššēpāh*). Other

terminology applied to magic practices included casting spells (*chōbēr*, *chāber*), from the Hebrew root for binding (*chābar*); consulting familiar spirits (*'ōb*, *weyid-dē'ōnī*); and necromancy (*dōēš el-hammētīm*). In the First Book of Samuel, divination (*qesern*) is compared to rebellion (15:23). In Jeremiah, the diviners and others are named together with false prophets, to whom one should not listen (27:9). Another form of magic was called whispering (*lachaš*), which means pronouncing spells. The term for sorcery and witchcraft, *kešep*, is related to the Assyrian word for witch (*kaššap*). In the famous magical competition between Moses and Aaron and the magicians of the Pharaoh, in which both sides changed rods into serpents, but the serpents of Moses swallowed those of the Egyptians, the magicians were called the wise ones (*qēsāmim*) and sorcerers (*mēkaššēpim*) (Exod. 7:11). *Chartōmim* (Exod. 7, 22; Dan. 1, 20) was another term used for magicians who made enchantments.

Familiar spirits and spirits of the dead (*yiddē'ōnī 'ōb*) are named together and associated with necromancy, because of the belief that the dead had occult powers and comprehensive knowledge. Therefore the spirits of the dead are described as whispering and murmuring (Isa. 8:19), their voices coming out of the earth (Isa. 29:4; compare 1 Sam. 28:7). In Leviticus we find this prescription: "A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit [*'ōb*], or that is a wizard [has a *yid'ōnī*], shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them" (20:27). Leviticus also reported these divine words: "And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits [*'ōbot*], and after wizards [*yid'ōnīm*], to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people" (20:6). In later times, *yid'ōnī* is no longer the spirit itself, but the soothsayer and the magician. In the Septuagint the term is often translated as *ēngastrimythos* (ventriloquist). The term *'ōb* suggests a connection (at least as one kind of explanation) with *'ab* (father), which would identify the spirits of the dead as the spirits of ancestors. The catalogs of prohibition were probably a reaction to the cult of ancestors, which was seen as inimical to the cult of YHWH.

The most famous witch in the Hebrew Bible, the witch of Endor (1 Sam. 28), who is never called a "witch" in the Biblical text ("witch" being a later Christian convention) was someone who consulted the dead, because she had an *'ōb*. She puts Saul in contact with the dead Samuel, and in the ritual she sees *elohim* (literally, "gods"; often translated as "God"). The King James Version of the Bible translated the passage thus: "I saw gods ascending out of the earth" (13). Women were regarded as more likely than men to practice sorcery (*kešep*). In Exodus, the death penalty is prescribed for the female witch (*mēkaššēpāh*) only (22:17 in the Hebrew Bible and the Septuagint; 22:18 in the

Latin Vulgate and in the King James version), although there is scholarly debate on this, whereas in Leviticus both man and woman are mentioned (St. Jerome's Vulgate translated the passage in Exodus using the masculine plural form: *Maleficos non patieris vivere* ("Thou shalt not suffer workers of harmful magic to live"). In the Talmud, sorcery was attributed to women; the Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin (67 a) claimed that Exodus 22:17 referred to men too, but that they were not mentioned because women were the main practitioners of sorcery. Only women were mentioned in the practice of making magical wrist ties (Ezek. 13:18). Yet another kind of magic, the evil eye, did harm. Proverbs contained an admonition not to eat the bread of someone who had an evil eye (23:6), but in this example the description might simply have meant "envious" (compare Ulmer 1994, 3).

The crime of sorcery was sometimes enumerated in catalogs of other vices. It was, for example, named together with sexual crimes and the oppression of the poor. Malachi condemned sorcerers, adulterers, perjurers, and those who oppressed employees, widows, fatherless orphans, and strangers (3:5). Similarly, Exodus mentions enticing a maid, lying with a beast, and sacrifices to other gods together with sorcery (22:16–23). The Mishnah (Sota 9: 23) says that fornication and sorcery destroy everything, while the Second Book of Kings mentions both the whoring and the witchcraft of Jezebel, mother of Joram (9:22). Such examples suggest that witchcraft was perceived in connection with deviant behavior.

It is also striking that sorcery and divination were very important in foreign policy: Sorcerers and diviners traditionally lived at courts in the ancient Near East. In Egypt, this kind of specialist often practiced sorcery and cursing against the enemy in wartime. This explains why the prophet Isaiah (3:2) announced that the Lord would take everything vital away from Jerusalem—bread, water, warrior, judge, prophet, the old—and included its diviner (*qosem*) and conjurer (*neḇōn lacha š*), and why King Manasseh was blamed for his political magic (2 Chron. 33:6; 2 Kings 21:6), or why Jeremiah associated false prophets, diviners, dreamers, enchanters, and sorcerers with a concrete foreign policy, speaking of them as assuring their king that his kingdom would not be subjected to Babylon (27:9). On the contrary, Jeremiah's political prophecy said that it was God's will that the Jews should become Nebuchadnezzar's subjects. In the Book of Nahum, Nineveh, the Assyrian capital city, was referred to as the well-favored harlot and mistress of witchcraft, who sold nations through her whoredom and families through her witchcraft (3:4). Overall, the political function of witchcraft seems to have been much more important in Biblical times than in the early modern European witch hunts.

According to the Talmud, the religious elite in Biblical times, the prophets, considered magic and witchcraft incompatible with the belief in YHWH and that belief in magic means denying the power of YHWH and those who serve him (Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 67 b). Certainly the passage quoted from Exodus above, usually translated "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (22:17), an extremely important text for the persecution of witches in early modern Europe, prescribed the death penalty for witches. They were stoned in ancient Israel, unlike in Assyria, where they were burned. An actual persecution of witches was mentioned in the First Book of Samuel in connection with the witch of Endor. Because Saul had the *ōbot* and the *yid'onim* driven out, the soothsayer of Endor was frightened when the king approached her (the term usually translated "witch" [*mēkaššēpāh*] was not in fact used in this passage). A post-biblical legend told that Simon ben Shetah had eighty witches hanged or crucified in the second century B.C.E. (Mishnah Sanhedrin 6:4); the passage named only women in general, but the implication was that they were witches.

Black magic had to be distinguished from permissible rituals. Those who merely played tricks to deceive the eye were not regarded as guilty in Jewish law, or so the Mishnah, which dates from approximately 200 C.E., in the post-Biblical period, asserted (Sanhedrin VII 11). The distinction of black magic (although the rabbis never used this term) from miracles, which were performed by a genuine prophet, was also important. Miracles were sometimes regarded as ambivalent because of their relation to magic; when Elijah asked God for a miracle (1 Kings 18:37), later interpreters claimed that Elijah had asked God that the miracle not be regarded as witchcraft (BT Berakhot 6 b). Simon bar-Yohai, a great rabbi and Talmudic sage in the second century C.E., opposed witchcraft, but he was a miracle worker, who could change men into a heap of bones simply by looking at them (the evil eye; BT Shabbat 33 b). When the first-century B.C.E. Rabbi Honi Ha-Me'aggel wrought a rain miracle, the sage Simon ben Shetah said to him: "if you were not Honni, I would ban [excommunicate] you" (Mishnah, Ta'anyot 3:4). Because rabbis performed magical rituals, some of them were said to practice witchcraft. They could force witches to undo the evil they had caused. Amulets—frequently using the tetragrammaton, the name of God—were often employed against black magic and demons by rabbis from antiquity to modern times. Thus rabbis, after the Hebrew Bible was codified, no doubt integrated into Judaism some practices they considered superstitious because they could not prevent them.

If Jewish magic had been generally under control in biblical times, it became stronger in the Hellenistic period and even more so in late antiquity, so that Jews

were regarded as the people of sorcerers par excellence (Trachtenberg 1939). Many Greek magical papyri contained Jewish elements. In the time of Jesus, Jews knew and developed the demonology of the Hebrew Bible. Their demons, led by Asmodeus and Lilith, dwelled in places of impurity, in the air, the desert, or in ruins. They worked mainly at night. They were Satan's servants, but God gave them their power. In *Jubilees*, an apocryphal book of the second century B.C.E., diseases were attributed to demons (10:10–14). Their human allies were less important than the demons themselves. Josephus, the Jewish general and historian of the first century C.E., recorded that King Solomon was regarded as a great magician, to whom God taught the art of banishing evil demons for the protection of humanity; Solomon composed formulas for conjurations to drive out such spirits. Josephus reported an exorcism he had observed himself, in which the spirit was drawn from the nose of an obsessed person with the help of a root suggested by Solomon; in order to prove that it had left the person, the spirit had to overthrow a water basin (Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 8:45, p. 594). The Talmud and many other Jewish works are full of magical practices that rabbis used as white magic. Later, the Kabbalah became the main domain of Jewish magic.

NEW TESTAMENT

In the New Testament, witches are not mentioned in discussions of magic, and women had no special place in its conception of magic, as they did in later times. New Testament terms for magician include *mágos* (Acts), *gōēs* (2 Tim. 3:13) and *pharmakeús* or *pharmakós*. In Revelation, this last term was connected with dogs, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters, and liars (22:15; compare Gal. 5:20). The *magi* originated in Medea; they interpreted dreams and omens and sold amulets. *Goēteía*, also mentioned by Plato, was connected with sophists, and *pharmakeús* probably referred to a shamanist rite (Symposium 202 e; Smith 1978, 70). The *gōēs* was the practitioner of a lower form of magic than the *mágos*. In Josephus, he was a cheat who promised, for example, to divide the Jordan River, defeat the Romans, or overthrow the walls of Jerusalem (*War* 2:261 ff.; *Antiquities* vol. 20, 97, 167 ff., 188; vol. 9, p. 440 ff., p. 478 ff., p. 490). The three magi who came to Bethlehem to see the child were viewed as positive characters, probably astrologers.

Magical rites were very common in the time of the New Testament. A practice associated with witchcraft was the evil eye. The author of the Gospel of Mark mentioned *òphthalmós ponēros* (evil eye) in association with thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, blasphemy, pride, and foolishness (7:22). The apostle Paul uses the term *fascination* in the Epistle to the Galatians: "Who has bewitched you?" (3:1). (The verb is *baskatnein*; Latin *fascinare*.) Most important in

the New Testament was the ability to send and drive out (*èkbállein*) evil spirits. The belief was widespread that every heavy blow of fate, every disease, was either caused by a demon or sent by a god. The deaf and dumb were also thought to be bound by a demon (Mark 7:35). The *defixio*, a magical rite often used in those days, was a spell written on lead tables and shards, intended to deliver someone to evil spirits. One of its aims was to cause love or hatred (the so-called dividers).

The focus of the authors of the New Testament was not on the people who sent these spirits, but on the spirits themselves and those obsessed by them. Jesus himself appeared as a great exorcist. The extent of his fame in this respect can be seen in the fact that his disciples tried to forbid a man to exorcise in Jesus's name, but Jesus did not allow them to do this (Mark 9:38 ff.; Luke 9:49 f). After Jesus' death, some wandering Jews, sons of a high priest, exorcised in the name of Jesus, but the demon overpowered them (Acts 19:13–16). Jesus's enemies saw him as a *magus* who drove out devils with the help of Beelzebub, or who had an evil spirit (Mark 3:22; Matt. 10:25; Matt. 9:34; John 8:48). Jesus's sighing in Mark 7:34 might refer to the notion that the obsessed, tormented by a demon, used to sigh, which can also be found in the *Papyri graecae magicae* (Preisendanz and Henrichs 1973–1974, 1:118–27). In a famous exorcism, Jesus did not order the demons he was casting out of a man to enter into swine, but when they begged him, he allowed them to do so (Mark 5:13). It may well have been that active sending would have suggested black magic. It was common to send spirits into a person in his food; thus Morton Smith (1978, 110) interpreted Jesus's giving of bread to Judas during the last meal before the Crucifixion (John 13:26–27) as a magical act designed to bring about possession by a spirit. When Jesus made a fig tree wither (Mark 11:12–14 and 20–22), the words he speaks correspond to spells in Greek papyri. The instruction he gave to his disciples about how to curse a town that did not make them welcome (Luke 10:10–12) also corresponded with then-current magical practices. In his healing, Jesus used only prayer, the word, laying his hands on a person, or saliva. If Jesus was said to be the resurrected John the Baptist (Mark 6, 14–15), this probably means that he was regarded as a necromancer who worked through John's soul.

The disciples also exorcised and healed ill people, using the oil often mentioned in magical texts (Mark 6, 12–13). They also fasted before performing exorcisms. According to Jewish tradition, Jesus learned his magic arts in Egypt. His miraculous healings have been compared to those of the first century C.E. Pythagorean miracle worker Apollonius of Tyana, who similarly drove out evil spirits and appeared to his followers as a divine man, but to his opponents as a charlatan

(Smith 1978). According to Smith, Matthew and Luke tried to tone down the magical elements found in Mark.

It would certainly be wrong, however, to reduce Jesus to the role of magician: Other scholars (e.g., Garrett 1989) have rejected Smith's interpretation of Jesus entirely; David Aune (1980, 1539) asserted that Jesus's magical activities should be subsumed under his role of messianic prophet. As Samson Eitrem pointed out, Jesus worked less through charms than through prayer, nor was he a thaumaturge with magical training (1966, 40).

We can conclude from the great number of magical deeds associated with early Christians that human beings were thought to be the cause of evil, but nevertheless healing practices concentrated on the demons themselves, rather than on persecuting those who had sent them. St. Paul also worked as an exorcist (Acts 16:16–17). When he preached in Ephesus, many who had formerly practiced magic converted. They brought their magic books, worth 50,000 pieces of silver, and burned them in public (Acts 19:19). There was one famous case of Paul himself practicing harmful magic: addressing him as a child of the Devil, he inflicted blindness on the *mágos* Bar Jesus (Elymas), who wanted to turn the proconsul away from Christianity (Acts 13:6 ff.). Paul addressed Bar Jesus as the Devil's child. Paul's "blackest kind of magic" (Smith 1978, 110) was to give over some people to Satan ("for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved"; 1 Cor. 5:5; also 1 Tim. 1:19 ff.). Simon Magus wanted to purchase their magical power from the apostles, and Peter cursed him for this (Acts 8:9 ff. and 18 ff.). Obviously, magic was not unusual among Christians, in a world where inimical groups often reproached each other with performing black magic. There were even Christian charms asking for revenge (Preisendanz and Henrichs 1973–1974, 2:224). All this illustrates that the New Testament was written in a magical context transmitted from Jewish sources and enlarged by Hellenistic influences. These developments proved to be very influential. In the late medieval and early modern periods, both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament were interpreted literally and so offered strong arguments for the existence of demons and witches and for the execution of the latter. Enlightened opponents of persecutions were confronted with the biblical texts.

RAINER WALZ

See also: ANGELS; *DEFIXIONES*; DEMONS; DEVIL; DIVINATION; ENDOR, WITCH OF; EVIL EYE; EXODUS 22:18 (22:17); GREEK MAGICAL PAPYRI; JESUS; JEWS, WITCHCRAFT, AND MAGIC; KABBALAH; LILITH; MIRACLES; MOSES; NECROMANCY; SIMON MAGUS; SORcery; SUPERSTITION.

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BIBLIOMANCY

The art of divination using the Bible or another sacred text is a subcategory of stichomancy, the art of seeking spiritual guidance through the written word, and was sometimes used to identify witches. In bibliomancy, passages found when the Scriptures are opened at random are believed to offer advice, disclose the future, or answer questions. Through such blind biblical selection, people have found relevant answers to personal and societal problems; many believe bibliomancy demonstrates the power of holy texts.

Similar divinatory practices have never been confined to Christians. Ancient Chinese culture used the *I*

Ching (The Book of Changes); Muslims opened the Quran for divinatory purposes; ancient Greeks used Homer's *Iliad* or *Odyssey*, Romans opened the Sibylline books or Virgil's works. In Christianity, the Bible became the only book used for divinatory purposes. Medieval Christians denounced divination with pagan books, but nevertheless sought answers for their questions from the Bible, even willfully altering the meaning of the Biblical texts encountered, if necessary.

Bibliomancy played a major role among clergy and laymen alike in early medieval times. This type of divination, known in Latin as *sortes*, was common in the Middle Ages. An elaborate example of a *sortilegium* (sorcery), the *Sortes Sangalleses* (sixth or seventh century), used a succession of dice throws to lead the inquirer through the texts. Christian authorities like Augustine, Jerome, and Gregory the Great opposed this superstition, and numerous Church synods denounced and prohibited *sortilegium* from the fifth century onwards. Charlemagne decisively forbade it in his capitulary of March 789. But church and state authorities fought in vain against this widespread and popular method of divination.

Folk belief could not be broken by force. Berthold von Regensburg, a famous thirteenth-century German preacher, attacked bibliomancy (also called thumbing) in his sermons. But Christians would never abandon the method; even St. Francis allegedly founded his order only after consulting the Bible three times in this manner. The Bible itself was looked upon as a magic object, and when put on a child's head, would bring about sleep. Reading the Bible to a pregnant woman would guarantee a safe delivery. In England, persons accused of witchcraft were weighed against the great Bible in church; anyone who weighed more than the Bible was guilty.

Even nowadays the custom still exists of opening the Bible at random on New Year's morning to learn the general topic of guidance for the coming year. Web sites on the Internet provide bibliomantic readings and a *Literary Book of Answers* to meet the needs of inquirers. On all occasions of importance one can ask God for guidance, such as before a journey or an important business meeting, on a church holiday, or after a christening to learn the future of the new Christian. Biblical oracles have been used to foretell death, interpret dreams, or determine guilt; bibliomancy has been especially popular during wars.

Among several known methods of bibliomancy, the thumb, the pin, and the key seem the most common. By the first method, the reader opens the Bible at random, and the verse the thumb points at will serve as an answer. People who were fond of precision chose the pin instead of the thumb and pierced through several pages. The very verse finally hit by the pin foretold the future. The key method was still used in Great Britain

in the nineteenth century. A key was put in the Bible. Pieces of paper containing the names of the accused were inserted in the hollow end of the key. When the paper with the name of the guilty person was inserted, the Bible fell from the grasp of the person holding it. A slight variant used for tracing a thief is to tie up the holy book and suspend it from a string. The key within the Bible is believed to point out the thief. By yet another method, when the Bible is attached to a piece of string affixed to the ceiling, and all names of the people living in a household are spoken aloud, the culprit's name is supposed to make the book turn. In German lands, people tried to learn the names of the witches who jinxed the cows by means of the turning book.

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See also: BIBLE; DIVINATION; ORACLES.

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BILSON BOY

In 1620, a twelve-year-old boy named William Perry, of Bilson (now Bilston), Staffordshire, accused a female neighbor, "Jone Coxe," of having bewitched him. Perry suffered from what were later called extraordinary fits and spasms, his urine appeared black, and he vomited straw, feathers, rags and crooked pins—a sure sign of witchcraft. Coxe was accused of sending a spirit into his body to punish him for not having returned her greetings one day. She apparently had a poor reputation in the neighborhood, was considered to have a testy temper, and was already suspected of being a witch.

Coxe's subsequent trial at the Staffordshire Assizes in August 1620 would have proceeded with very little notice had it not been for the interest King James I had taken in a witchcraft trial conducted at Leicester four years earlier. Nine women were hanged on that occasion, primarily on the testimony of John Smith, a boy about Perry's age. Shortly after, James had personally cross-examined Smith and denounced him as a liar, declaring that a terrible miscarriage of justice had occurred. It was undoubtedly an awareness of royal interest in such cases that led the assize judges, Sir Peter Warberton and Sir John Davies, to examine Perry's testimony with particular care. The trial began in

dramatic fashion, with Perry falling into violent fits as soon as Coxe entered the courtroom. There are, however, two contradictory versions of the court's verdict on the evidence they saw and heard. According to Richard Baddeley's 1622 account of the trial, Perry was found an unreliable witness and the case against Coxe was dismissed, but later accounts (Wilson 1653; *Second Part of the Boy of Bilson* 1698) stated that she was found guilty and sentenced to death, though she was later acquitted following subsequent revelations.

After the trial Perry was committed to the care of the bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, Thomas Morton (1564–1659). Perry was brought to the bishop's home, Eccleshall Castle, where he continued his pantomime, patently enjoying the attention and sympathy his supposed bewitchment generated. Morton and his secretary Richard Baddeley repeatedly questioned the boy and applied a series of tests. On various occasions Perry was given six lashes with a rod, had needles thrust into his toes and fingers, and burning candles thrust so near his eyes that they singed his eyelids. Perry seemed insensitive to such pain, which further bolstered the claim that he was truly possessed. But despite Perry's impressive display of resilience and cunning, his deceptions were ultimately revealed in two crucial ways. First, one day, when Perry thought everyone had gone to church, a servant who was employed to watch him through a spy hole saw him pour some ink into his chamber pot and place a piece of ink-soaked cotton under his foreskin. Second, he failed a standard theological test for diabolic possession, by responding incorrectly when passages of the Bible were read out in ancient languages.

Confronted with his imposture, Perry finally confessed. He stated that an old peddler of pots and glasses whom he had met on the road one day had coached him. Seduced by the prospect of not having to go to school, he began to simulate the behavior as instructed. His parents, who were Roman Catholics, were then persuaded to employ several recusant priests to exorcise the boy. Morton interpreted these events as a propaganda ploy by the Catholic community in the region to promote the benefits of their Church. If such a plan really existed, it backfired; Perry refused to be successfully exorcised. He enjoyed the attention too much, and his parents apparently received much-needed charity because of his predicament. On July 26, 1621, Perry revealed all this before the assizes at Stafford. He begged Coxe's forgiveness and was pardoned by the court. Bishop Morton subsequently had Perry bound out as an apprentice.

OWEN DAVIES

See also: BEWITCHMENT; CHILDREN; ENGLAND; EXPERIMENTS AND TESTS; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; POSSESSION, DEMONIC.

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BINSFELD, PETER (1546–1598)

Peter Binsfeld was suffragan bishop of Trier and a demonologist. Born at Binsfeld near Bitburg, young Binsfeld attracted the attention of Himmerod Cistercian monastery in the Trier region. The Cistercians accepted him as a pupil, even though he came from an insignificant peasant family. From 1570 to 1576, Binsfeld studied theology and philosophy at the Jesuit Collegium Germanicum in Rome, where he was consecrated priest and received a doctorate in theology. He became an ardent promoter of the Tridentine reforms. When Binsfeld returned to the Trier region, Archbishop Jakob III of Trier entrusted his protégé with the reform of Prüm Abbey, where he stayed until 1578. In 1578, Binsfeld was appointed provost of St. Simeon convent in Trier and nominated as suffragan to the archbishop of Trier. He received the prebend of Wasserbillig. In 1580, the Vatican confirmed Binsfeld as suffragan and made him vicar-general of the archdioceses of Trier. Further, he held office as vice-chancellor of Trier University in 1580, and as dean in 1582–1583 and 1587–1588. Binsfeld's personal letters reveal not only genuine zeal for orthodoxy but also dissatisfaction with his own achievements and world-weariness. He died in Trier during an epidemic in 1598.

DEMONOLOGY

In 1589, Binsfeld published in Trier the *Tractatus de confessionibus maleficorum et sagarum* (Treatise on Confessions of Sorcerers and Witches). Archbishop Johann VII had sought the advice of theologians at his university about the problem of the reliability of witches' denunciations; Binsfeld probably wrote his book to answer his patron's question. It has two parts: The first discussed the preconditions, possibilities, and limits of witchcraft; the second dealt with procedural problems in witchcraft trials.

The first part opened with fourteen *pmeludia* (preliminary thoughts) in which Binsfeld repeated the fundamentals of demonology: Witchcraft included heresy and harm done to innocents; therefore it was subject to both ecclesiastical and secular courts. He introduced the idea of God's permission and the doctrine of implicit and explicit diabolical pacts. Throughout his



Anonymous frontispiece from the 1591 German edition of demonologist Peter Binsfeld's Tractatus de Confessionibus Maleficorum et Sagarum (Treatise on Confessions of Sorcerers and Witches), 1589. The drawing buttresses Bishop Binsfeld's severe attitudes toward witches and witchcraft. Two witches fly on a goat and stick to the Sabbat, where another witch pays homage to the Devil, another causes a hailstorm, and one places a baby in a cauldron to cook. (Cornell University Library)

book, Binsfeld used both ideas extensively to bolster his arguments. Binsfeld's Devil was incredibly powerful: All magic was by definition demonic; in other words, all magic was witchcraft. Every effect with no obvious natural cause was likely to be caused by witchcraft, especially if the use of signs or letters was involved. The Devil's power to deceive the senses knew hardly any limits; even to pious Christians, he could appear in the shape of Jesus himself.

After the *praeludia* Binsfeld treated the *causae*, "pre-conditions," of witchcraft: the sinful weaknesses of individuals who fell prey to Satan's temptations, as well as the shortcomings of church and state. Binsfeld openly criticized the secular authorities' apparent negligence in persecuting witches as well as the ineptitude of priests and their sometimes unorthodox practices, regarded from his Tridentine point of view.

At the end of the book's first part, Binsfeld described the abilities of witches and devils. *Maleficium* (harmful magic), sexual intercourse between humans and demons, and the bodily flight of the witches were all real; the *Canon Episcopi* was irrelevant. (According to Binsfeld, that work did not deal with the witches of his own day but with some other heresy.) For Binsfeld, the witchcraft trials themselves proved that the flight and the Sabbat really took place. Witches, as well as those who sought

their help, had to suffer the death penalty. Binsfeld rejected confiscations, however, and criticized judicial irregularities that left defendants or their heirs penniless.

In the book's second part, Binsfeld first discussed the question of whether the denunciations of accomplices by convicted witches were reliable. It was the duty of judges to question witches concerning their accomplices. Witchcraft was a *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime), a crime so serious and extremely hard to prove that it was excepted from the usual legal procedures. Binsfeld therefore admitted children as witnesses—he was among the first to deal with this specific problem. He also stated that an inquisition might begin after a person had been denounced as an accomplice by only one convicted witch. If there were additional presumptions of any kind against a suspect, Binsfeld even stated that one denunciation sufficed for torture; two denunciations justified the use of torture even without further evidence. Although Binsfeld warned that the Devil could appear in any shape he chose, and therefore that people reportedly seen at a Sabbat might have been demons in their shapes, he argued that the persons denounced must be witches because demons could only assume the appearance of persons who have given them permission to do so. Binsfeld's argument was based on the axiom that God would never allow innocents to fall

victim to witchcraft trials. Suspects were not to be tricked into confessing, and penitent witches might receive the sacraments.

Binsfeld's book provided a theoretical basis and practical guidelines for witch hunts. Short, erudite, and well argued, it was reprinted in 1591, 1596, 1605, and 1623; German versions appeared in Trier, 1590, and in Munich, 1591 and 1592. In later editions, Binsfeld added various materials, mostly examples. In 1591, he also appended a commentary about magicians in general. After repeating his essential condemnation of all magic as satanic, Binsfeld examines the magical realm, using the *Codex Iustinianus* (the Justinian Code, as the great collection of Roman law done under the aegis of the sixth century C.E. Roman emperor Justinian was called) as his guide. Mathematics and astronomy were legitimate but were not to be abused for divination, which was vain and demonic. Alchemy was not per se magical but was highly questionable in both moral and intellectual terms. Love magic was a capital crime. All countermagic was forbidden.

Binsfeld also added more details about procedures at witchcraft trials. Even though he criticized negligent or overeager magistrates, his trust in torture and denunciations remained unshakable. He rejected ordeals, and held that the Devil's mark, deformity, or inability to shed tears should not be used as evidence. However, he accepted as evidence not only extrajudicial confessions and all *indicia* (circumstantial evidence) of witchcraft in the imperial law code known as the Carolina Code (*Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*, 1532), but also swearing, superstition, failure to defend oneself against accusations, and the suspect's apparent fear of arrest and condemnation. He added an appendix listing various ecclesiastical laws against magic.

In 1592, the theologian Cornelius Loos contradicted Binsfeld's book with the treatise *De vera et falsa magia* (On True and False Magic), in which he depicted witches as victims of dreams and illusions. Binsfeld became the driving force behind the ecclesiastical measures taken against Loos. His book was prevented from being published. Loos was arrested and had to revoke his theses in the presence of Binsfeld and the papal nuncio Octavio Frangipani. With Binsfeld's victory over his antagonist, opposition in German Catholic theology against witchcraft persecutions was silenced until the time of Adam Tanner in the early seventeenth century. Although Binsfeld failed to influence the secular legislation against magic in the electorate of Trier, he had considerable influence in Bavaria.

OTHER WRITINGS

Even though magic and witchcraft played almost no role in Binsfeld's numerous later publications, his book on witchcraft was in harmony with the rest of his work. His whole oeuvre centered on sin and discipline,

interweaving canonical and secular laws and promoting disciplinary measures. His handbook for priests, the *Enchiridion theologiae pastoralis et doctrinae necessariae sacerdotibus* (Handbook of Pastoral Theology and Doctrine Necessary for Priests, 1591) dealt with the theology of the sacraments, sins, the Decalogue, Church organization, and ecclesiastical law, as well as disciplinary measures and irregularities that prevented individuals from taking holy orders. His stress on discipline is obvious; christology and ecclesiology were neglected. His discussion of the First Commandment contained a lengthy and furious attack on magic and superstition reminiscent of Binsfeld's appendix to his book on witchcraft. In his *Commentarius theologicus et iuridicus in titulum iuris canonici de usuris* (Theological and Legal Commentary on Canon Law Regarding Usury, 1593), Binsfeld reviewed moral teachings as well as canonical and secular laws against usury, discussing profits and fair trade in general as well as the rules of international trade. Binsfeld allowed Jews to take moderate interest, as long as the state as a whole benefited from it. His dogmatic *Liber receptarum in theologia sententiarum et conclusionum* (Book of Sentences and Conclusions Accepted in Theology, 1593) dealt with the lost state of innocence, original sin and the perpetuation of sin, grace and free will, and justification and merits, as well as with the fate of the soul after death. Binsfeld discussed the canonical and secular laws concerning numerous kinds of injuries, damage, and restitution in the *Commentarius in titulum iuris canonici de iniuriis et damno dato* (Commentary on Canon Law Regarding Violations and Damage, 1597). Two of Binsfeld's works were printed posthumously by his Trier publisher, Heinrich Bock: *Commentarius in titulum iuris canonici de simonia* (Commentary on Canon Law Regarding Simony, 1604) and *Tractatus de tentationibus et earum remediis* (Treatise on Temptations and Their Remedies, 1611). The last work reintroduced the Devil as an omnipresent seducer who could corrupt anything that was seemingly good and attacked all the senses and functions of the mind.

JOHANNES DILLINGER

See also: BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; *CANON EPISCOPI*; CAROLINA CODE; CHILDREN; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; DEMONS; DEVIL'S MARK; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; GERMANY, SOUTHEASTERN; LOOS, CORNELIUS; *MALEFICIUM*; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC; TANNER, ADAM; TEARS; TRIER, ELECTORATE OF.

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BLACK MASS

Although this phrase has often been used extremely loosely to cover a multitude of bizarre rituals, in strictly technical terms a Black Mass is a sacrilegious imitation of a real Mass for purposes of illicit magic often in the service of witchcraft, performed by a properly ordained Catholic priest, preferably wearing clerical dress. Because only authorized priests can celebrate the Eucharistic miracle of a genuine Mass, only they can perform an "authentic" Black Mass. Supposedly, the Catholic Mass is said backwards, urine replaces holy water and water the wine, the cross is set upside down or trampled (or both), and noxious material or perhaps a black turnip or boot substitutes for the Host. Rarely is there any historical evidence that such actions actually occurred in western Europe.

Several partial approximations of the Black Mass occurred in Latin Christendom after the development of an "underworld of clerical necromancers" in the later Middle Ages (Kieckhefer 1989; 1997, chap. 7). Despite the abundance of lurid tales about witches' Sabbats, however, no surviving medieval document has yet been found that offers directions for performing a sacrilegious Mass for magical purposes. By the sixteenth century, fragmentary evidence about Black Masses, in the form of corroborated testimony from defendants obtained without torture, occurred in records of the Spanish and Roman Inquisitions. The most spectacular earlier examples of Black Masses were usually performed in order to find buried treasure. In 1586, the Sicilian Inquisition punished two priests and two students for conjuring the Devil by performing Masses in a cave, using three skulls and nine candles; on one occasion the priestly ringleader sacrificed a live dog, letting the blood drip into a burning dish while he recited a Latin prayer to Lucifer. The group had also sacrificed a goat, and on a third occasion two acolytes committed sodomy while a priest said mass, because, they said, "this sin was necessary in order to effect the invocation" (Henningsen and Contreras 1986, 103–104). In this instance, three defendants were sent to the galleys.

The Black Mass reached its most famous and fully developed form during the tumultuous scandal known as the Affair of the Poisons that took place in France from 1679 to 1682, during which accusations of witchcraft and the holding of Black Masses swirled around charges of poisoning and love magic. The largest documentary collection of evidence about Black Masses comes from the special court and the police investigat-

ing collaboration between aristocratic courtiers and the baroque Parisian descendants of those medieval clerical necromancers, a few of whom, like the abbé Guibourg, offered numerous titillating confessions about their sacrilegious Masses. Spurious accusations abounded and even reached King Louis XIV's mistress, Madame de Montespan, falsely denounced for attending Black Masses where newborn babies were sacrificed.

Although the Black Mass that ordained priests performed had a history until the time of Louis XIV, it had no future in the de-Christianizing Western world of the eighteenth century and beyond. Once blasphemy lost its power to shock and neither church nor state punished people for it, perverted religious rituals became banal. The Black Masses Sir Francis Dashwood, John Wilkes, and other members of the Hell-Fire Club performed in Medmenham Abbey in England in the eighteenth century aroused little public concern. The notorious Montague Summers (who claimed to be a Catholic priest, although no record of his ordination survives) performed probably the closest approach to a Black Mass in the twentieth century in 1916. Many such ceremonies were performed later in the century by another quasi-celebrity, Anton LeVey, founder of the Church of Satan, whose works (still in print) include directions for performing them; unlike Summers, however, LeVey never claimed to have been ordained (Medway 2001, 380–388). The difference between these examples suggests that, to a greater degree than Summers, LeVey inhabited a world where the Catholic priesthood had been marginalized. In a world where Satan has been thoroughly trivialized, Black Masses seem utterly irrelevant. Meanwhile, jaded sensation-seekers discussing animal and rumored human sacrifices and arguing about the reality of Satanic ritual child abuse in the contemporary Western world abusively multiply this phrase to mask the absence of the thing itself.

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: AFFAIR OF THE POISONS; SATANISM.

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BLACKSTONE, WILLIAM (1723–1780)

The leading English jurist of his age, Sir William Blackstone expressed a belief in the reality of witchcraft

while at the same time criticizing witchcraft trials. He was the first professor of English law at the University of Oxford, serving in that capacity from 1758 until 1766, and owed his fame mainly to his lectures on English law, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, published in four volumes between 1765 and 1769. The final volume deals with crimes. Unlike offenses that violated the rights or possessions of individuals, crimes were “public wrongs” committed against the entire community. Blackstone divided crimes into different categories, the first of which he labeled “offences against God and religion.” Within this category, which included apostasy, heresy, and blasphemy, he listed “witchcraft, conjuration, enchantment or sorcery” (Blackstone 1979, 4:60).

Like many eighteenth-century jurists and theologians, Blackstone admitted a belief in the reality of witchcraft, grounding his belief in the Bible. “To deny the possibility, nay, actual existence, of witchcraft or sorcery,” wrote Blackstone, “is at once flatly to contradict the revealed word of God, in various passages both of the Old and New Testament” (Blackstone 1979, 4:60). He cited the famous passage from Exodus, 22:18, “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live,” as the “express law of God.” He also observed that Roman law endorsed this condemnation, punishing with death not only witches but those who had consulted them. English laws had restated these Biblical and Roman condemnations, linking the crime with that of heresy.

Even though Blackstone believed in the reality of witchcraft, he did not approve of witchcraft trials. In this regard he took the same position as the eighteenth-century French jurist and *philosophe* Montesquieu, who in *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748) demanded great caution in the prosecution of magic and heresy, because even the most moral persons were vulnerable to suspicion on these grounds (Montesquieu 1989, 192). Blackstone claimed that the “ridiculous stories” told about witches and the “many impostures and delusions” involved in accusations of witchcraft would be sufficient to demolish all faith in such a dubious crime if the evidence of its reality were not also extremely strong (Blackstone 1979, 4:60). He agreed with the argument of Joseph Addison in *The Spectator* in 1711 that, although there was such a thing as witchcraft, one cannot place credence in any particular modern instance of it. Addison observed that it was the ignorant and credulous who often believed in these stories and that those accused of witchcraft were often people of weak understanding and crazed imagination.

Blackstone clearly disapproved of English statutes against the crime of witchcraft. On the basis of these acts, which he claimed were a source of terror to all old women in the kingdom, “many poor wretches were sacrificed thereby to the prejudice of their neighbors, and their own illusions” (Blackstone 1979, 4:61). Blackstone expressed considerable relief that in 1736

the British parliament had repealed the act of 1604, thereby putting an end to all executions for this “dubious” crime. In taking this step, he observed that Parliament had followed the wise example of Louis XIV, whose edict of 1682 ended most witchcraft prosecutions in France. The British statute of 1736 provided support for Blackstone’s argument that English law had undergone a considerable number of “improvements” over the course of the centuries (Blackstone 1979, 429).

BRIAN P. LEVACK

See also: DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; ENGLAND; ENLIGHTENMENT; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); LAWYERS; SKEPTICISM.

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BLÅKULLA

Blåkulla is the mythical site of the witches’ Sabbat in Sweden. The literal translation of the name is Blue (*Blå*, which in earlier times meant black) Mountain (*Kulle*). “The distant blue mountains” have traditionally been referred to as the home of trolls. Tales of Blåkulla and what took place there combined elements from many different sources. Nevertheless, the original material for the tales has a common basis in Scandinavia. Most of the testimony about Blåkulla derived from witchcraft trials, especially the infamous trials in Sweden from 1668–1676 that involved several thousand people, mostly children or adolescents. Ever since, the abduction of children to Blåkulla has been a recurring theme in Swedish tales of the witches’ Sabbat.

The name Blåkulla appeared first in a story of a miracle from 1410. The story related that a ship bound from Lübeck to Stockholm found itself in distress in the straits between Öland and the Swedish mainland (Kalmarsund), but was saved near a place called Blåkulla. This place, associated with dramatic events, was no doubt the island known as Jungfrun. In the mid-sixteenth century, Olaus Magnus, the last Catholic bishop of Sweden, referred to it as the place where witches gathered to practice their magical arts. There were references to Blåkulla elsewhere as a place name. A church mural from the late fifteenth century depicts witches flying to the Devil on a rake, a broomstick, and a baker’s shovel. From the end of the sixteenth century, Blåkulla was expressly mentioned in witchcraft trials, but the Blåkulla referred to in the major seventeenth-century witchcraft trials was no longer the island in Kalmarsund.

Either the witches' Sabbat took place locally, or people believed Blåkulla to lie in some distant mythical landscape to the northwest.

The Blåkulla story is a variation of the depictions of the witches' Sabbat from other parts of Europe. Trying to isolate aspects of these stories that are originally Swedish from those originating elsewhere is almost impossible, as is trying to trace the time of their adoption in Sweden. The provincial law of Västergötland from the thirteenth century mentioned women who, in the shape of trolls, made nocturnal flights. Western Scandinavian fifteenth-century sagas described people flying to gatherings. A notable difference between these sources and fourteenth-century manuscripts is that the later tales and sagas tended to depict flying as a means of gathering information or attacking fiends. However, there is insufficient evidence to indicate an independent development of a uniquely Nordic witches' Sabbat.

Swedish folklore had a mystic belief that people could be carried off or spirited away to a distant place or a nether region inhabited by trolls. People could even turn into trolls, either during their lives or after their deaths. The idea of witches' abduction of children bears a resemblance to the belief that trolls sometimes exchanged their own children for human children as changelings. Tales of this type were then combined with stories of heresy, consorting with the Devil, and the witches' Sabbat. In addition to this link between folklore and the witches' Sabbat, there is a further aspect worth considering, namely the connection between tales of Blåkulla and medieval visionary tales, with descriptions of hell that are clearly reminiscent of the descriptions of Blåkulla.

This varied background helps to explain the marked contrasts in the descriptions of Blåkulla during the wave of persecution in the seventeenth century. One can discern a transition from an initial, relatively bright stage in the Sabbat stories to one that is far darker and more depressing. Some children gave seductively beautiful descriptions of Blåkulla as a means of explaining how they were tricked. When they were interrogated about witches' activities, however, a less agreeable picture emerged. Thus Blåkulla could be both a beautiful place and an evil one where the witches gorged themselves, fought, danced backwards, and fornicated under the table in the banqueting hall. This contrast was reinforced when Blåkulla took on its true character of darkness, after the children had confessed in court. The children perceived the agonies of the damned in Hell, whose strangled voices could be heard from the boiling cauldrons.

PER SÖRLIN

See also: ANGELS; BENEVENTO, WALNUT TREE OF; CHILDREN; FOLKLORE; HELL; MAGNUS, OLAUS; MORA WITCHES; SABBAT; SWEDEN; WITCH FINDERS.

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BLOOD

In all pre-Christian Western religions, blood was extremely important as an offering to the gods. And long after Christianization, blood remained a central component in all kinds of magic, as it was and is in most non-European cultures. Ancient Jewish, classical, Celtic, and Teutonic peoples sacrificed hecatombs of animals and men because the supernatural beings craved blood. For example, in about 1230, Snorri Sturluson described the heathen Drontheim sacrifices as follows: "To this festival, all the farmers brought cattle and horses, slaughtered them and collected their blood in vessels. Staves were made, like sprinkling bushes, with which the whole of the altars and the temple walls, both outside and inside, were sprinkled over, and also the people" (Sturluson 1968, 94). Official Christianity condemned this use of blood along with other forms of heathen survivals; it possessed its own, more spiritualized blood cult in the form of the transubstantiation of wine into Jesus's blood during the Mass and in the veneration of many miraculous relics of the Holy Blood. The life-bearing power of blood is, however, so obvious that its application for magical purposes was often spontaneously reinvented. This happened in orthodox Christian surroundings, as, for example, at Crossen (near Frankfurt an der Oder) in 1481, when the sacristy was saved from fire by slaughtering a calf and pouring its blood onto the flames. But one cannot deny a possible continuation with some local pre-Christian fire magic.

Generally, blood has been seen as having power to heal as well as destroy, but also has become itself an object of magical manipulations. Among its positive uses, a widespread half-medical, half-magical tradition

stemming from antiquity claimed that leprosy could be cured with the blood of innocent children. The twelfth-century tale of Ami and Amile, found in many Latin and vernacular versions, narrated that after one of these two close friends became a leper, the other helped him by sacrificing his sons and washing him with their blood. According to another medieval legend, Alexander the Great was healed by bathing in his children's blood; the plot of Hartmann von Aue's famous story *Der arme Heinrich* (Poor Henry, ca. 1215) was also based on this assumption. The high esteem for the blood of executed criminals suggests that, later on, the magical side of the concept of blood began to prevail.

Black magic had always found many uses for blood. Necromancers employed it in order to summon the dead from the other world. The master narrative is Lucan's *Pharsalia*, book six, in which the witch Erichtho revived a soldier's corpse by cutting into its breast, draining the contents of its veins, and pouring in warm menstrual blood mixed with the most extravagant poisons. Thereupon his cold body quickened and began to prophesy. Later, Isidore of Seville, Heinrich Kramer, in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), and many other authorities mentioned the use of blood as a sign of superstitious necromancers and hydromancers, who usually required it as an offering for blood-loving demons. Magical handbooks like the *Clavicula Salomonis* (Key of Solomon, which dates from antiquity) prescribed using the blood of a black cock to inscribe on virgin parchment the symbols necessary to conjure ghosts. According to the court physician and university professor Arnold of Villanova (ca. 1300), inscriptions written in bat's blood under a man's bed could make him impotent, but sprinkling the walls with some blood from a black dog would provide an antidote.

The witch's pact with the Devil was supposedly written or subscribed with blood. Similar sanguine pacts were already mentioned in French and German thirteenth-century versions of the legend of Theophilus. Goethe's famous scene in *Faust* (taken from earlier versions of this legend) cannot be dismissed as poetical invention. Several sources offer rich details about such blood pacts, including the famous confession of Magdalena de Cruce [1487–1560], the "devilish abbess" of Cordova), or the even more famous 1634 affair of Loudun, where no fewer than three official copies of Urbain Grandier's pact with Asmodeus (two in Latin, one in French) are contained among the preserved evidence, although the bloody originals were taken to hell. More bureaucratic Austrian and Hungarian devils commanded their adepts to write their names with bloody characters in a black book. In a pious reversal of this rite, extremely devout baroque Catholics practiced self-dedications to the Virgin, written in blood; the famous mystic Veronica Giuliani

(1660–1727) dipped her quill in her own blood, running from the letters IHS (an abbreviation for Jesus, taken from initials of corresponding Greek words) that she had engraved into her bosom, thereby making herself the spouse of Jesus.

Since the twelfth century, a recurring accusation, lasting into the twentieth century in Europe, charged Jews with killing Christian children in order to perform superstitious rites with their blood. But the "blood libel" could also work in reverse. In 1784, two women were executed at Hamburg, accused of killing a Jew in order to use his blood in their sorceries. Late medieval witches were thought to have a predilection for sucking blood from small children, making the witch into a kind of vampire. This stereotype became so strong that even Joan of Arc was condemned as a sorceress who thirsted for human blood. Of course, blood became an essential ingredient in many unguents and philtres. In 1428, Matteuccia di Francesco, the witch of Todi, confessed to mixing the blood of children and owls in the potion she used to fly to the walnut tree at Benevento. Even worse, sorceresses also abused Jesus's blood. According to the celebrated Austrian preacher Abraham a Sancta Clara, witches pressed stolen hosts until they issued blood, then used the blood to raise thunderstorms. On the other hand, one part of the witch test consisted in pricking the body of the witch in order to see whether the wound would shed blood. If this happened, the witch could do no more harm, and the blood worked as a remedy against bewitchment.

From Biblical prescriptions of ritual purity and from ancient medicine, a firm belief in the special danger of menstrual blood had developed. It was not only a topic for learned treatises like Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim's *De occulta philosophia* (On Occult Philosophy, 1531, I, chap. 42), but also permeated popular belief. Women used this blood's toxic properties, as we learn from a French royal pardon of 1382, given to a wife who had tried to harm her husband by having him drink water into which a sorceress had boiled her bloodstained shirt. More often, women used their menstrual blood as a love potion. Already forbidden a millennium ago in such early penitentials as Burchard of Worms' *Corrector* (1015), this practice was mentioned again and again until the twentieth century. If used correctly, however, menstrual blood also had curative properties, as Agrippa von Nettesheim wrote. The ambivalent character of this fluid, both benevolent and destructive, seems obvious.

Finally, magical spells to stop bleeding were extremely frequent in folk medicine, frequently combined with the paradigmatic evocation of Jesus's redeeming blood. A typical formula, using a Norwegian source from 1777, runs: "Stand blood, stop blood, like Jesus Christ stood in Hell. And the three names of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Amen."

Sometimes such spells had to be written in blood. A late medieval German example, which could be multiplied, went: “If a woman’s menstruation lasts too long, she should write this name with blood: ‘on: on: on: inclitus milus’. This works.”

PETER DINZELBACHER

See also: AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM, HEINRICH CORNELIUS; BENEVENTO, WALNUT TREE OF; BURCHARD OF WORMS; FAUST, JOHANN GEORG; JOAN OF ARC; LOUDUN NUNS; NECROMANCY; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; RITUAL MURDER; THEOPHILUS; TODI, WITCH OF; VAMPIRE.

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BODIN, JEAN (1529/1530–1596)

Author of an extremely important and blood-curdling book on the evil nature of witches, Bodin’s *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (On the Demon-Mania of Witches, 1580) became a textbook for Europe’s legal profession, probably cited even more often than the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) for judicial practice in witchcraft trials. It was printed in twenty-three editions, including translations into German, Italian, and Latin, and the time of its popularity coincided with the worst persecution of witches in Europe.

One of the greatest thinkers in sixteenth-century France, Bodin was highly controversial in his lifetime, and his posthumous reputation remains somewhat dubious. He is regarded as a pioneer in education, economics, history, politics, and natural philosophy. Because the theology of his posthumous *Heptameron* displayed unprecedented tolerance and obvious ecumenical traits, scholars have depicted Bodin as a humane intellectual giant.

LIFE AND WORKS

Bodin was born in Angers, in midwestern France, in 1529 or 1530. He pursued his legal training in Toulouse during the 1550s. While there, Bodin wrote a book on educational methods, insisting on using French instead of Latin as the language of instruction. After leaving Toulouse, Bodin moved to Paris in 1562 to become a public attorney, an *avocat*, at the *Parlement* of Paris, a sovereign judicial court, with jurisdiction over approximately one-half of France. There he became involved in court intrigues at a time when France’s Valois dynasty was torn by armed conflicts between the Catholic and Protestant fractions of the French nobility. Bodin tried to find a solution to this bitter conflict between the Huguenots and the Catholics in his writings.

Like most of Europe, France also experienced sharp inflation along with its religious wars in the second half of the sixteenth century. In 1568, Bodin explained this mysterious rise in prices by showing a connection between imported precious metals and inflation, thus launching a quantitative financial theory based upon political economics. At about the same time, Bodin also published a *Method for the Easy Understanding of History*, which sharply diverged from contemporary opinions. Bodin’s view emphasized the necessity of a comparative approach to historical studies and stressed the decisive impact of such factors as climate, topography, and geography upon human behavior.

What has been hailed as Bodin’s most important work was published in 1576. His *République*, called in English *Six Books of a Commonwealth*, offered an analysis of political power in which the term *sovereignty* had central importance. Bodin tried to justify the need for a strong French monarchy, and his views on power and government provided ideological foundations for later autocratic growth. The remedy for domestic chaos was a strong central government that combined the exercise of power with the establishment of religious freedom. Bodin’s private religious views, developed in a dialogue that remained unpublished until the nineteenth century, were amazing in this age and have led some modern scholars to consider him as secretly Jewish. The monarch, according to these writings, should acknowledge all religious denominations.

Bodin died from the plague in June 1596 at Laon, a northern French town where he had served as royal prosecutor (*procureur du roi*) since 1587.

THE DÉMONOMANIE

Despite his exceptionally wide-ranging originality and humanitarianism, the same man wrote his second most popular book in order to attack witches and demons. His teachings on these subjects have bewildered his admirers for over 400 years. Many of them have tried to avoid discussing the book.

Because it struck at God, nature, and the social order, according to Bodin, witchcraft was the worst of all possible crimes. His main objective was to teach his fellow members of the legal profession how to fight such crimes effectively. But before Bodin could proclaim sorcery as an “exceptional crime” (*crimen exceptum*), the handling of which prosecutors could suspend ordinary rules of procedure, he first had to prove that witches and demons really existed. He tried to make demonology into a precise science. In a didactic manner, and with considerable intellectual arrogance, Bodin accused those who doubted the existence of witches of being atheists: such people were part of the same diabolical network as other sorcerers and should be burned at the stake along with them.

Bodin’s proofs for the existence of pacts with the Devil, the witches’ Sabbat, and maleficent sorcery began with his own experiences. Occasionally, he had sat in court and listened to the stories the accused witches had told. Their stories were based upon confessions that were not extracted by torture. Next, Bodin mentioned a large number of reliable officials from all across France who had told him frightful stories about the dangerous spread of sorcery. Then Bodin wrote of what he had found in the writings of his European predecessors concerning blasphemous witch Sabbats. His information from northern Europe about sorcery and Sabbats was in complete accord with similar stories from Mediterranean countries. To Bodin this proved that sorcery was a pan-European conspiracy against God and the public. To further convince his skeptics, Bodin could prove that the existence of witches and demons had thorough documentation in both the Scriptures and the works of the Church Fathers. His extensive use of biblical exegesis added weight to his arguments.

Nearly any means could legitimately be used when prosecuting crimes related to witchcraft and sorcery. Bodin, who had been educated in law, developed what were known as “exceptional” means by which to conduct legal proceedings in sorcery cases. Prosecutors could use surveillance, lies, provocation, or evidence from convicted criminals—all of which were normally prohibited in criminal cases. It was permissible to use the whole line of psychological and physical torture as well. Anesthetic marks left by the Devil could be found by poking needles into a suspect’s body. Other circumstantial evidence showed that it was difficult for witches to shed tears during interrogation; the Devil could tie witches’ tongues and thus prevent them from crying or confessing.

The procedures Bodin advocated became common in several European countries during the 1600s. Bodin cannot be blamed for the thousands of witches who were burned at the stake in Europe in the years when his *Démonomanie* was so widely read and cited. Nonetheless, he published his arguments at the right time and apparently fulfilled an urgent need; less origi-

nal French jurists, such as Nicolas Rémy, Henri Boguet, and Pierre de Lancre, imitated Bodin.

The notion of witches as an organized sect conspiring against church and state challenged both types of authority. The depiction of an organized, separatist, and satanic threat was central to Bodin’s demonological manual. When viewed in relation to his theory of sovereignty, which was meant to secure political conformity, a sect that aimed to encompass social disintegration had to be resisted by all means. Witches’ Sabbats turned the world upside down; they were construed as subverting all positive norms in politics, economics, and religion. Bodin’s cumulative description of the Sabbats made them sound similar to the growing peasant revolts in France at the end of the sixteenth century. The witch could be used—and was used—as a personification of revolt and divergent behavior. The belief that witches were all agents of the Devil occurred simultaneously with the implementation of an ideology based upon a paternal and central monarchy. Because of state consolidation, Bodin believed it necessary to prosecute those who impelled the breakup of the state by diabolical means. In other words, the ideological and divine legitimacy of state building rested on the existence of witchcraft. A powerful monarch, anointed by God’s grace, became the metaphoric archenemy of Satan. Thus there was an obvious inner connection between Bodin’s political interpretation of the 1570s onward and his theories on demonology from the 1580s, and the same was true of his religious tracts of the 1590s. In fact, one of Bodin’s major points was to show that all religious persuasions had something in common: the need to wage war on sorcery.

Although Bodin’s *République* was blatantly misogynistic, his evidence for witchcraft came more often from men than from women. French courts prosecuted more men than women for witchcraft when the *Démonomanie* was most popular. He can at least be exonerated from the charge that he attacked witchcraft simply because of his hostility to women. It can also be said as some palliation of his cruel demonology that at least he failed to influence the *Parlement* of Paris, his original audience; the *parlement* never viewed witchcraft as an exceptional crime.

The genre called political demonology saw a clear link between the body politic and the evil doings of demons. To this genre, witchcraft constantly invoked fears about destructive forces within the society, which threatened the safe integration of the body politic. Bodin’s teachings on sorcery can best be described as an extreme variant on the political demonology in which he seemed to lack the criteria for separating the truth from deception in his methodology.

RUNE HAGEN;

TRANSLATED BY MARK LEDINGHAM

See also: BOGUET, HENRI; DEMONOLOGY; DEVIL'S MARK; FRANCE; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; *PARLEMENT* OF PARIS; REBELS; RÉMY, NICOLAS; SABBAT; TEARS; WARS OF RELIGION (FRANCE); WEYER, JOHANN.

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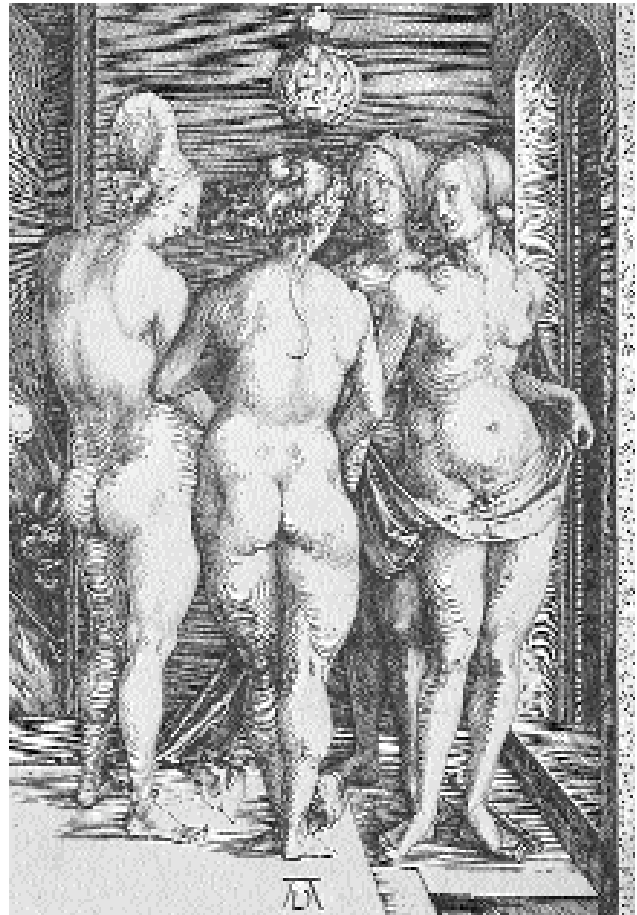
BODY OF THE WITCH

A source of fascination to many people in the early modern period, the bodies of witches, above all female witches—their form, responses, and capacities—provided proof in the eyes of many that witches were traitors to Christian society.

The modern image of the witch—a hunched, wrinkled old woman, with a hooked nose sprouting a wart—derived from both “nonfictional” and artistic representations in the period of witch hunting. This stereotype, even narrower than the artistic images of the early modern era, draws attention to the reductive perception that physiognomy betrays a person’s moral state. For early modern people, imagining visible and tangible differences between a witch’s body and those of other people was partly a response to the worst fears of witchcraft, connected to its secrecy. Fear of the hidden nature of witchcraft is a functional reason why the bodies of female witches preoccupied those who sought to condemn them: The features and capacities of the witch’s body in captivity would display for them what otherwise remained hidden. A female witch was convicted partly on the basis of what her body suppos-

edly housed and hid, which revealed the state of her soul and “proved” claims about the evil of which she stood accused. The witch’s body was thought to be physically distinctive because of her perceived inability to display normal reactions and imagined capacity to be transformed and transported in ways ordinary people could not.

The so-called Devil’s mark was a bodily index of witchcraft separating the legal treatment of witches from that of other criminals or heretics. This scratch or mark on the witch’s body had supposedly been made by the Devil as a token of ownership, and was held to be insensitive. The Devil’s mark betokened renunciation of the witch’s will; it was inscribed when one gave one’s soul to the Devil, providing a “text” that was the functional equivalent of a written pact. Demonic pacts signed by witches in their own blood were seen similarly as embodiments of the will. An English variant of the Devil’s mark was the witch’s mark, the hidden teat, reportedly used for suckling of the witch’s familiar. (The Jacobean play *The Witch of Edmonton*, adapted



Albrecht Dürer's engraving *Four Naked Women, or The Four Witches* (1497), depicts women who, while not as erotic as subsequent witches are portrayed in early modern art, still convey the sexuality of the Devil's servants and their pornographic appeal. (SEF/Art Resource)

from the story of Elizabeth Sawyer, a convicted witch who in 1621 confessed to suckling a familiar in the form of a dog, dwells suggestively on the presence of a teat.) Routinely, witches were stripped, shaved, and searched all over for marks, including—and sometimes especially—in their mouths, genitals, and anal area. They were also pricked once marks were discovered, to test for insensitivity.

While searches for the Devil's mark and the use of pricking tests have been legitimately described as forms of torture, official torture was used during trials "so that the witch's integral, diabolic personality might be stripped away by the application of pain to uncover the truth" (Roper 1994, 203). Torture was supposedly not employed as a form of punishment, but to make the accused confess to disavowing Christian baptism, and to succumbing, body and soul, to the Devil. Some works of demonology warned that witches might resist torture; and the very hiddenness and heinousness of their crime justified for officials the use of harsher torture than for other crimes. Moreover, judges, who believed that many witches could not or would not cry in their presence, feared that witches might use magic to immunize themselves against the pain of torture.

"Swimming" a witch was a form of "immanent" justice, similar to an ordeal. If the witch floated, she was guilty, because the "pure" water (like the holy water of baptism) rejected her. Unlike some other tests of witch's bodies, in this case, a normal characteristic condemned the suspected witch, whereas ordinarily her apparently distinctive capacities condemned her.

While generally not considered able to fly unaided, witches were believed to use magic unguents, applied for example to a stick, to fly to Sabbats. The image of witches as riders was readily sexualized, her transports becoming a metaphor for sexual ecstasy. Witches were also accused of shape shifting, the spirit leaving the bed in the form of a mouse, for example, with the body remaining a mere husk, a kind of diabolic dummy. Some witches, drawing on their own folk traditions, appear to have believed they really had these capacities: Friulian *benandanti* (do-gooders), who were mainly men, easily confessed to going out to their night battles "in spirit."

Bodies of female witches were also implicitly defined by what they lacked in a community context: They were generally different from those of their alleged female victims, most notably, parturient mothers and their babies. Recent anthropological and psychoanalytic theories have contextualized the witch's body in relation to the bodies of other women around her, showing her caught in the psychic crossfire of primal fears regarding infancy, nourishment, and community (Roper 1994; Purkiss 1996). The image of the witch as

"anti-mother" (Purkiss 1996, 100) reappeared in her use of food as a form of seduction.

The fact that witches were stereotypically women reinforced conventional beliefs and prejudices about female anatomy in general. In Christian tradition, women's bodies were twice defective: physically, because made from Adam's rib, and morally, because Eve's appetite, understood literally, dictated her moral choice. Humoral medicine argued that melancholy, which probably affected both genders in equal numbers, made women more susceptible to the blandishments of the Devil.

In this context, it is also important to recall that some supposedly natural attributes and stereotypes of female witches, and indeed of all women, equally served skeptical arguments against witchcraft and the reality of witches' confessions. In this light, the female body was still condemned, even when seen as the reason she was *not* a witch. For example, Johann Weyer suggested that frailty made women susceptible to diabolical delusions, and made them confess things of which they were incapable. The skeptical Reginald Scot registered something close to disgust at those humble female bodies, so unsuitable for the sublime enterprise of flight. "What an unapt instrument is a toothless, old, impotent, and unweldie woman," he exclaimed, "to flie in the aier? Truly the divell little needs such instruments to bring his purposes to passe" (Kors and Peters 1972, 318).

Martin de Castañega, while deploring the witchcraft in many magical practices, nonetheless dismissed the evil eye, accounting for it by reference to all women's bodies, understood naturalistically. "To give the evil eye," he says, "is a natural act and not witchcraft," arguing that during menstruation "if a woman should stare closely at a tender and delicate child, she would imprint on him . . . poisonous rays and distemper his body in such a way that he would be unable to open his eyes or to hold his head up. Even her breath could harm him, because it is harsh and smelly at that time, which is a sign of the corrupt and indigestible humors" (Darst 1979, 309). Castañega associated the power of the evil eye in old women with their physical decrepitude, and implied that their capacity to use this natural magic resulted from their malice.

Early modern artistic representations of witches articulated and perpetuated beliefs about witch's bodies, emphasizing their diabolical power and moral weakness. The typical witch was depicted as old, and often naked (to display her sagging breasts, a sign of depleted and supposedly repellent femininity), with flying hair (a code for errant and uncontrolled sexuality). The cauldron—itsself a perversion of female domesticity—also connoted a powerful, almost volcanic vagina. Alternatively, artists (notably Hans Baldung [Grien] and Albrecht Dürer) depicted witches as youthful and

sexually alluring, but as similarly suspect, morally. Dürer's famous backwards-riding witch exuded elements of masculine power, echoed most famously by the witches in *Macbeth*, of whom Banquo said: "You should be women, and yet your beards forbid me to interpret that you are so."

SARAH FERBER

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BALDUNG [GRIEN], HANS; *BENANDANTI*; CASTAÛEGA MARTINDE; CAUL; CAULDRON; DEVIL'S MARK; DÜRER, ALBRECHT; EVIL EYE; FAMILIARS; FEMALE WITCHES; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; GENDER; HAIR; MALE WITCHES; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; MELANCHOLY; METAMORPHOSIS; MOTHERHOOD; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PERSONALITY OF WITCHES; PRICKING OF SUSPECTED WITCHES; PSYCHOANALYSIS; SWIMMING TEST; TORTURE; WITCH'S MARK; WORDS, POWER OF.

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BOGUET, HENRI (CA. 1550–1619)

Boguet is best known as the author of a handbook for conducting witchcraft trials, the *Discours des Sorciers* (Discourse on Witches, 1602). The work's title page boasted of two things: first, that Boguet based his work on his personal experiences as senior judge of the lands of the abbey of St. Claude in southern Franche-Comté, near Switzerland, since 1596. Second, the book stressed

its practicality by including "the procedure necessary to be a judge in trials for witchcraft" (Boguet 1929, title page). Boguet's *Discours* was mildly successful. It went through a second edition in 1603, which was reprinted six times in France; a third edition, in 1610, added six of Boguet's legal opinions for other nearby courts on matters related to witchcraft.

When he first published his treatise, Boguet had tried barely a dozen witches. His first-hand experience eventually included judging 35 known witchcraft defendants, all of them put on trial at St. Claude between 1598 and 1609 (Monter 1976, 71). Overall, Boguet condemned four-fifths of them to death; he even sentenced 8 witches to the unusual punishment of being burned alive. Four other accused witches died in prison before he could complete their trials; in chapter 45 of his *Discours*, he explains that "Satan often kills witches when they are in prison or inspires them to kill themselves" (Boguet 1929, 130). Boguet's decisions apparently influenced the appellate judges of the province of Franche-Comté, to which his rulings were sometimes appealed. From 1599 until the second edition of his *Discours*, in 1603, they pronounced only 2 clear death sentences in 14 witchcraft trials; but over the next seven years, until its third edition in 1610, they sentenced over half of all accused witches (25 of 48) to death. Boguet's local reputation as an expert on witchcraft grew. In 1604, the imperial free city of Besançon, the largest town in his province, consulted him about a particularly difficult witchcraft case; this prisoner—and 5 more women in the next six months—were burned as witches at Besançon.

Like several other writers on demonology, Boguet also exercised his erudition on other topics. In 1604, he published a learned Latin commentary on the customary law of Franche-Comté at Lyons, and five years later he added a biography of his local patron, St. Claude. However, his work on witchcraft soon became an embarrassment rather than an advertisement for professional promotion. In the three years after the third and final edition of Boguet's *Discours*, the *Parlement* (sovereign judicial court) of Franche-Comté pronounced only 1 death sentence in 20 witchcraft cases; more significantly, early in 1612 the *parlement* overturned 3 of Boguet's final 4 decisions in witchcraft cases, releasing 2 women whom he had sentenced to death. Boguet's work was never reprinted after 1611, reportedly because its author requested that his publishers not reissue it. After twenty years as head judge at St. Claude, Boguet finally applied for promotion to Franche-Comté's *parlement*. Letters patent admitting him were signed in May 1618, but he actually sat on this bench for only two months before his death in February 1619.

Boguet's importance as a demonologist was not very great. His book was never translated into Latin, but his treatise did fill a market niche in France because it was relatively short and had a useful final section, a

“Manner of Procedure for a Judge in Cases of Witchcraft” in seventy brief articles. A few of its features seem specifically local. For example, Boguet’s first five chapters all connected to a single case involving an eight-year-old girl “possessed of five devils and later delivered of them” (Boguet 1929, 1) and the old woman whom he imprisoned in 1598 for casting this spell. In his fifth chapter, Boguet remarked that “every day in our town we continually meet with large numbers of persons who, for the most part, impute their possession to . . . sorcerers” (Boguet 1929, 10); these Savoyards often traveled many miles in order to be exorcised near the body of St. Claude. Boguet learned from his early investigations that it was even possible for one witch to send demons into the body of another witch (chap. 6). And because his first “star witness” was only eight years old, he also emphasized how deeply children could be tainted by witchcraft.

Another specifically local aspect of Boguet’s *Discours* was his discussion of werewolves (chap. 47). “The people of this country ought to know as much as any others about were-wolves,” he asserted, “for they have always been known here” (Boguet 1929, 140). The heavily forested and witch-infested Jura Mountains had indeed spawned an unusually intense preoccupation with werewolves in Boguet’s district; he mentioned pictures of three werewolves executed in 1521 that were hanging in a local church. Boguet began his discussion of lycanthropy by naming 4 witches (3 of them women) arrested in his first roundup of suspects in 1598, all of whom admitted that they had killed and eaten children while in the form of wolves, but he complained that 2 other admitted werewolves, a father and son, “were hurried too quickly to their execution” before they could provide him with useful details on this subject (Boguet 1929, 138).

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See also: CHILDREN; DEMONOLOGY; FRANCE; FRANCHE-COMTÉ; LYCANTHROPY.

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BOHEMIA, KINGDOM OF

Witchcraft and its persecution in Bohemia in the late Middle Ages and the early modern periods have not yet been systematically researched. Today part of the Czech Republic, Bohemia became a kingdom between 1198 and 1212. Although Bohemia was not formally part of the Holy Roman Empire, the Golden Bull of 1356

made Bohemia’s king one of the seven electoral princes who chose the emperor. The Bohemian crown (including Silesia, now part of Poland) fell to the Austrian Habsburgs in 1526; they governed it throughout the age of witch hunting. The number of victims of the witch hunt in Bohemia proven by sources may be provisionally estimated at roughly 400 (mainly executed). Considering the substantial losses of source material, particularly the records of the town criminal courts, the real number of victims of Bohemia’s witchcraft trials between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries could have been more than twice as high.

Bohemia’s first laws prosecuting magical spells date from 1092 (Prince Břetislav II), in connection with attempts to eradicate remnants of heathenism. In Bohemian law, the offense of witchcraft (sorcery) was defined for the first time in article O.II of the Town Code by Pavel Kristián from Koldín, which came into force in 1579. Detailed legal regulation of this offense was also promulgated in 1707, in the so-called Josephina, the criminal code of Emperor Joseph I for Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia. The papal inquisition operated in Bohemia with great intensity from 1318 up to the middle of the fourteenth century, when, especially in southern Bohemia, more than a thousand alleged heretics were burned at the stake. Bohemia adopted inquisitorial procedures by the fourteenth century, but used them for prosecuting serious criminal offenses; before 1650, there are practically no indications of their use in courts with authority over the whole kingdom. The first reliable data about persecution of practitioners of harmful magical spells date from the 1330s, but Bohemia has no records before the fifteenth century of any trials against such people. As a rule, Bohemian sorcery involved harmful magic, done mainly with the aim of poisoning people or cattle, causing illness, and causing damage to livestock or crops, as well as sometimes love magic. Apart from a few exceptions (including echoes from massive Silesian witchcraft trials in the 1650s), in Bohemia the offense of witchcraft rarely involved a compact with the Devil or participation in a witches’ Sabbat.

From the mid-fifteenth century until the 1760s, the primary base of Bohemian criminal justice remained the almost 400 town courts located in royal cities, patrimonial cities, and small towns. Municipal criminal courts heard the overwhelming majority of witchcraft trials in Bohemia between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries; partial exceptions were patrimonial courts and ecclesiastical (consistorial) courts. Other courts, including those with authority over the entire kingdom (Land Court, Chamber Court, etc.), judged sorcery cases only sporadically. In the 1680s, Bohemia acquired its first appellate court, the Court of Appeal in Prague, with authority over the whole kingdom, empowered to sanction all death sentences passed by all lower courts in the kingdom (particularly the town and patrimonial

courts). This court acquired the same authority over Moravia in 1700.

The first trials against sorcerers and performers of harmful magic spells occurred in Bohemia during the second half of the fifteenth century, as isolated cases. The first known execution of a witch took place in 1498, when a woman was burned for harmful sorcery in Kutná Hora; later in the same year, at least four women were burned in Prague for the same offense (Macek 1999, 77). By or before 1502, death sentences for witchcraft and poisoning were almost certainly passed at trials against an unknown number of men and women at Vysoké Mýto, a royal town in eastern Bohemia. Another witchcraft trial resulting in a death sentence was registered in the 1520s in the eastern Bohemian patrimonial town of Náchod. After the 1540s, the number of Bohemia's witchcraft trials and the number of death sentences passed increased gradually.

Apart from a few exceptions, Bohemian witch trials from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century were almost always individual in character; one can hardly speak of mass witchcraft trials. The most outstanding exception occurred in 1598, when a nobleman named Mkuláš from Bubna ordered a total of 21 women either burned at the stake or buried alive for witchcraft in the eastern Bohemian patrimonial town of Žamberk (in German, Senftenberg) (Šindelář 1986, 247; Lambrecht 1995, 304, 477). This case was the worst known mass witchcraft trial in the Czech lands of Bohemia and Moravia. Another exception is the series of witchcraft trials held between 1602 and 1617 in the central Bohemian royal town of Nymburk; altogether, 20 people were interrogated, with 10 of them (3 women and 7 men) sentenced to death and executed (Kreuz 1997, 130–159). Around 1580, an unknown number of witch trials and several executions also took place in the northern Bohemian patrimonial town of Chomutov (Germ. Komotau).

We do not know when the last death sentence for the offense of sorcery (witchcraft) was carried out in Bohemia, but it is highly probable that it happened sometime in the first half of the eighteenth century. The last person sentenced to death for witchcraft, the shepherd Jakub Polák from the village of Jistebnice in southern Bohemia, was freed through the personal intervention of the empress Maria Theresa in July 1756. Afterwards, no cases of legal persecutions for witchcraft or magical spells were registered in Bohemia.

PETR KREUZ;

TRANSLATED BY VLADIMIR CINKE

See also: MARIA THERESA, HOLY ROMAN EMPRESS; MORAVIA; SILESIA; ŠINDELÁŘ, BEDŘICH.

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BOHUSLÄN

Between 1669 and 1672, a series of large-scale witchcraft trials were held in the province of Bohuslän, in southwestern Sweden. By the time they ended, twenty-nine people had been executed, two had committed suicide, and fifteen more had died, often as a result of unsanitary prison conditions and torture (Svenungsson 1970, 327 ff.). More than fifty other individuals had been accused or interrogated. The term "witch hunt" is applicable here, as the dynamics of the persecution clearly stemmed from the methods used by the court, including a routine use of torture and ordeal by water (swimming test). As a recently conquered area on the periphery of the Swedish kingdom, Bohuslän was in a sensitive position, which may have caused the authorities to overreact. Equally, local conditions played a significant role. The witchcraft trials in Bohuslän displayed the same contradictory praxis that one observes after the outbreak of the infamous Blåkulla trials in northern Sweden. Despite the High Court's official policy of exerting strict control over the lower courts, in the case of these witchcraft trials they often accepted the procedures and decisions of the local courts.

Sweden had only recently, in 1658, annexed the province of Bohuslän from Denmark; Danish law was still in force, and, unlike Swedish law, it permitted the use of torture in certain circumstances. Torture was employed after conviction but prior to execution, as it was felt undesirable even for witches to go to their deaths without first confessing their sins and thereby gaining redemption. Danish law also stipulated, however, that testimonies forcibly extracted from convicted persons were not admissible as the sole basis for arraigning and convicting potential accomplices. These provisions would have had a dampening effect on the progress of the Bohuslän witchcraft trials, but they were both disregarded, and local praxis was applied instead. The accused were tortured prior to sentencing, and

witnesses other than persons already accused of witchcraft were not always produced in court. Because deviation from formal legal procedure was explicitly justified by local praxis, witchcraft trials had probably taken place in this region earlier. In the preliminary stages of the trials, Governor Harald Stake sanctioned the use of torture by allowing local authorities to act as they thought fit. In practice, however, both torture and water ordeals had been used in the hearings from the very beginning.

Though the use of water ordeals had fallen into general disrepute by the middle of the seventeenth century, in Bohuslän they were conducted frequently. Here, the relatives of a suspect occasionally conducted officially sanctioned water ordeals to spare a mother or wife the ignominy of being handled by the executioner, who was considered "unclean." Water ordeals finally became subject to a popular crisis of confidence when people began to suspect that the method did not represent a miracle or sign, but that in fact everyone would naturally float. Ordinary people began testing each other, although when questioned in court they were quick to claim that, in contrast to the official tests, no one floated. Both men and women took part in the unofficial tests, where the persons being tested occasionally even had their arms and feet crossed and tied together.

There was no real need for the courts to use torture to raise the issue of the witches' Sabbath or to extract the names of the initial participants. Local conflicts and rumors combined with the popular conception, also found in Denmark, that witches operated collectively when harming others, ensured that plenty of suspects were available for further examination. The Bohuslän witch hunt started with an accusation of *maleficium* (harmful magic). Its first accused witch committed suicide "at the instigation of Satan" by hanging herself in prison, thereby confirming her own guilt and proving that Satan was at work in the town of Marstrand.

Fairly soon a second suspect began to implicate others. Voluntarily and in reply to questioning, she accused two women and a number of their companions of using witchcraft to keep fish away from the local waters. Recently, a drastic reduction in the number of fish off the Bohuslän coast had struck local fishermen severely. The court felt obliged to investigate the matter further, questioning the woman closely about how she knew that the women named were witches and the exact circumstances of their activities. Accusations cascaded; imprisonment and torture followed, until a hundred suspects were involved and almost half of them died.

PER SÖRLIN

See also: BLÅKULLA; DENMARK; EXECUTIONERS; MORA WITCHES; SWEDEN; SWIMMING TEST; TORTURE.

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BOOKS

Books had a central place in producing the image and recording the practice of witchcraft. They were used in cases of witchcraft both as magical objects and as sacred texts, either to invoke or repel demonic power. The Bible was especially important, particularly to Protestants, because they believed that Satan responded to it violently, but other works of varying holiness, size, and cost were also influential. Manuscript books and scrolls as well as printed books were read and used, either as texts or objects, in a variety of ways and for a number of reasons. Books were perhaps the most important medium through which literate people learned the supposed behavior of witches and devils; cheaper and easily read printed materials, particularly pamphlets or woodcuts, spread stories about witchcraft to a wide range of semiliterate people over long periods of time. Books were used in possession cases and as tools of dispossession, as protective charms, as objects to bring harm and to cast spells, and as aids to discover witches or hidden treasure. Demonologists wrote many books to help find witches, justifying the existence of their crimes and the need for their persecution. They also wrote some books that proved influential in movements to end the prosecution of witchcraft.

The images of the witch and the book were related but fluctuating. Whereas the scarcity and expense of manuscript books in the Middle Ages gave books a quasi-magical image, stimulating stories in which witches or evil magicians used books to cause harm, books printed after the development of movable type were commonly called upon to repel witches. In the eighteenth century, when witches became figures of entertainment, and in the nineteenth and twentieth, when children's books displayed pictures of witches casting spells, books helped to develop and sustain certain stereotypes about witches.

WITCHCRAFT AND PRINTING

Movable type was invented only a generation later than the witches' Sabbath. A sixteenth-century story associated Gutenberg's innovative technology firmly with witchcraft. Faustus of Mainz, the story went, among the first to print a book, had stolen the invention and headed to Paris to sell printed Bibles and make a profit. There he was condemned for sorcery and only reprieved when he told the authorities of his discovery. As with many other technological inventions, including today's word processors, Satan, commonly considered a great scholar, was thought to have played a leading role in the invention of printing from movable type. Only

the propaganda of Martin Luther and the reformers, who hailed the invention as a work of God with which they could spread the truth against the Devil in the shape of the pope, changed this image. Thus Cotton Mather wrote in his *Wonders of the Invisible World* (Mather 1693, 17) that Satan was responsible for delaying the invention of printing for so long.

Books were important in the experience of witchcraft. Medieval necromancers had often been associated with manuscript “books of secrets,” a handful of which have been preserved. In Reformation Europe, the experience of witchcraft was increasingly described as beginning with a pact in which the witch signed a book, often in blood, committing her to Satan’s service in return for increased power. Many basic images concerning witchcraft involved inversions: Signing the pact in a book was a Protestant inversion of the traditional image of the names of the elect being written in God’s book, to be used when everyone was judged at the Apocalypse.

Many witchcraft defendants were accused of possessing and using magical books and papers, including those by Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim. Such heretical and seditious books, sometimes thought to have inherent demonic properties, could be burned along with their owners, as with Urbain Grandier at Loudun in 1634, because everything of his was believed to be demonic.

BOOKS AND IDEAS OF WITCHCRAFT

Books were important in spreading ideas about witchcraft. For those with a high degree of literacy, demonologies provided justification for witch hunting, and theological treatises demonstrated the urgency required in fighting the Devil. The most popular book of all, the Bible, and the aids for reading and learning its stories, showed the reality of the Devil and the importance of contemporary arguments about witchcraft. Printed demonologies occasionally influenced trials for witchcraft even across confessional lines between Protestants and Catholics, as at St. Osyth in England in 1582, where the official investigating witchcraft had apparently used Jean Bodin’s treatise, *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (On the Demon-Mania of Witches), first printed at Paris two years earlier. Demonologies also provided intellectual foundations upon which the edifice of the reality of witchcraft rested. Such internationally popular works helped account for many of the similarities in witchcraft cases.

At a more popular level, cheaper printed works, such as single-leaf woodcuts (enormously popular in Germany), broadsides and pamphlets such as Germany’s “devil books” (*Teufelsbücher*), spread stories of witches and witchcraft and the behavior associated with them across many parts of Christendom. Supposedly possessed young people sometimes learned

the recognizable symptoms of possession in this way, practicing symptoms they had read about from popular printed accounts, thus accounting for some remarkable similarities in behavior in seventeenth-century England. For example, a popular pamphlet of 1593 about the Throckmorton children in Huntingdonshire, *The Most Strange and Admirable Discoverie of the Three Witches of Warboys*, apparently inspired Anne Gunter, who simulated her symptoms of possession after reading it; in several other cases, the familiar spirits had the same names as in the pamphlet. Simultaneously, French-speaking nuns (and especially their exorcists) used printed accounts to copy symptoms of possession from the Mediterranean to Belgium.

After 1700, with literacy rates increasing throughout Europe, the abundance of printed material skeptical of witchcraft became significant in the decline of persecution, although it was offset by the proliferation of cheap guides for practicing magic.

HOLY BOOKS AS COUNTERMEASURES AGAINST WITCHCRAFT

We know that sacred books sometimes played an important role in countering witchcraft. Texts from the Quran, worn as amulets, protected Spanish Moriscos against witchcraft. For Protestants, the Bible was similarly thought to have properties that could render its user immune to the actions of Satan; an English clergyman told his parishioners that a Bible in the house would keep the Devil out (Thomas 1971, 590). Even particular parts of a sacred text had protective qualities. Some Catholic peasants wore the text of the Gospel of John around their necks to keep the Devil at bay, though demonologists such as Martín Del Rio found such practices demonic (Maxwell-Stuart 2000, 141).

Of course, reciting from sacred texts gave protection against harmful magic, or could be used to detect it. Biblically based countermeasures ranged from reciting particular passages like Exodus 22:18 (“Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live”) to repeating psalms against the Devil. Exorcists used the Book of Revelation to eject devils from the possessed. Reading the Bible among the family was among the few countermeasures recommended even by some Catholic demonologists (Bodin 1995, 147). For purposes of divination, Biblical texts were chosen randomly and then interpreted, although such popular practices were condemned by Protestant demonologists like William Perkins, who wrote that they “cannot be done without confederacy with Satan” (Perkins 1608, 107).

ANDREW CAMBERS

See also: BIBLE; BIBLIOMANCY; COUNTERMAGIC; CUNNING FOLK’S MANUALS; DEVIL BOOKS; *GRIMOIRES*; GUNTHER, ANNE; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PAMPHLETS AND NEWSPAPERS; PERKINS, WILLIAM; ST. OSYTH WITCHES.

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BORDELON, LAURENT (1653–1710)

This abbé, chaplain of St. Eustache in Paris, contributed one fascinating book to the literature of witchcraft and demonology. It was the first eighteenth-century book that dared to deal with the theme of witchcraft in a humorous and satirical fashion, and its use of illustrations about witchcraft was also remarkable.

Bordelon moved in the intellectual and noble circles of Louis XIV's Paris in the aftermath of the notorious "Affair of the Poisons" and the dawn of the Enlightenment. His literary output totaled more than thirty books, most of which were satires. Bordelon's works were popular enough to be translated into various European languages during the eighteenth century. His *La Langue* (The Tongue, 1705) was translated into English as *The Management of the Tongue*, or alternatively, as *Hints on Conversation*, and was republished frequently until the nineteenth century. Some chapter headings in *La Langue* give insight into Bordelon's humor; they include, "the babble," "the silent man," "the dissipater," "the opinionated man," "the promiser," "the instructor," and "the tongue of women."

Bordelon's contribution to the history of witchcraft literature was published in 1710 in both Paris and Amsterdam. *L'histoire des imaginations extravagantes de Monsieur Oufle: causees par la lecture des livres qui traitent de la magie, du grimoire, des demoniaques, sorciers . . .* (The Story of the Extravagant Imaginations of Monsieur Oufle, Occasioned by his Reading Books Treating Magic, the Demonic Arts, Demoniacs, Witches . . .) told the adventures of Monsieur Oufle—"oufle" being an anagram for "le fou," thus "Monsieur Le Fou" ("Mr. Crazy," or "Mr. Fool")—who believed firmly in all aspects of the occult, including witchcraft. Bordelon's Monsieur Le Fou encountered astrologers,

witches, werewolves, fairies, devils, and the like. *Monsieur Oufle* seems to have been an immediate success. It was reprinted several times in the eighteenth century, with French editions appearing as late as 1754; it was also translated into English and German as early as 1711 and 1712, respectively.

The edition published in Amsterdam in 1710, during the height of the Dutch controversy over the reality of the Devil, is most interesting because it contained an engraving showing Monsieur Oufle, accompanied by an allegorical figure of a Fool, attending a full-blown witches' Sabbath. The image, showing witches making storms, herding toads, eating infants, honoring the Devil, flying around, dancing, and having an orgy, was lifted directly from an earlier illustration by the Polish artist, Jan Ziarnko, that appeared in the 1613 edition of Pierre de Lancre's *Tableau de l'Inconstance des mauvais anges et demons* (Description of the Inconstancy of Evil Angels and Demons). This book by the great French witch hunter, Lancre, was by no means satire. Although—or because?—Lancre was still notorious for his persecution of witches in the Basque regions of France almost a century earlier, the Amsterdam publishers of *Monsieur Oufle* used Ziarnko's image to illustrate the ridiculous imaginings of Bordelon's character. The illustration in *Monsieur Oufle* was copied exactly from that of Ziarnko, with the only additions being the figures of the Fool and Monsieur Oufle. Such artistic transferences are not unusual in the history of witchcraft literature, but it is exceptional to find a print that was originally intended to horrify the reader with what witches "really" did being used a century later to amuse the reader of a raucous satire.

JANE P. DAVIDSON

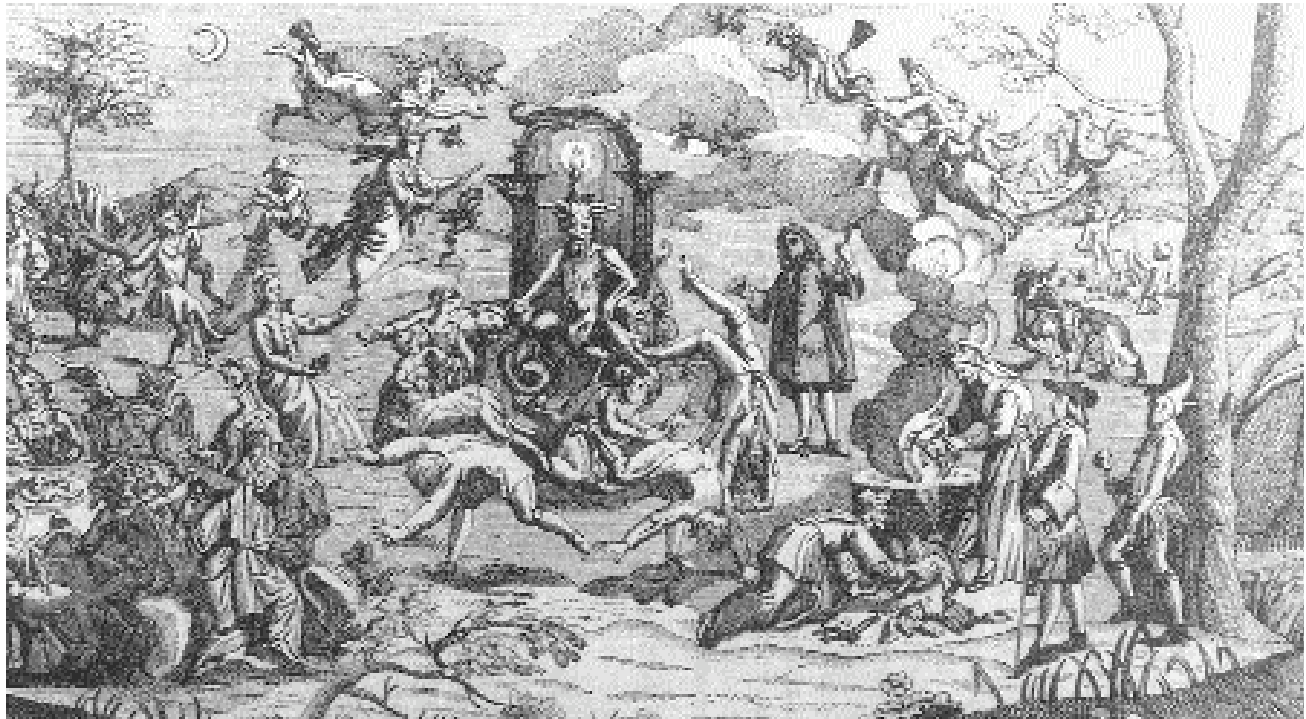
See also: AFFAIR OF THE POISONS; BEKKER, BALTHASAR; ENLIGHTENMENT; GRIMOIRES; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; ZIARNKO, JAN.

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BORROMEO, ST. CARLO (1538–1584)

One of very few saints with the responsibility for holding a significant number of witchcraft trials, Carlo Borromeo (canonized November 1, 1611) was born in Arona. As the youngest of his brothers, he was destined to pursue an ecclesiastical career. The unexpected election of his maternal uncle Cardinal Gianangelo de' Medici as pope in December 1559 marked a turning point in his life. Pius IV summoned his nephew to Rome and, despite his age, appointed him cardinal on January 31, 1560.



Laurent Bordelon's early eighteenth-century satirical representation of the witches' Sabbat that ridiculed Jan Ziarnko's 1613 depiction of the Sabbat. (Brian P. Levack, ed. *The Witchcraft Sourcebook*, 2004, p. 312)

Through nepotism, young Carlo soon became one of the richest and most prestigious members of the Sacred College. The decisive event of his dazzling rise was his appointment as administrator of the archbishopric of Milan on February 17, 1560. By December 1563, he had been consecrated archbishop of Milan, and made his solemn entrance almost two years later in September 1565. Once settled in the archdiocese, which he no longer left except for brief periods, Borromeo dedicated himself to the rigorous application of the Tridentine decrees. Because of his reform efforts, the pope created him *legatus a latere* (a papal nuncio, literally "a legate from the side" [of the pope]) in 1565. When Borromeo lost this privilege after his uncle's death, two subsequent popes, Pius V and Gregory XIII, granted him numerous privileges that other bishops did not possess.

Borromeo had an almost medieval idea of the relationship between lay and ecclesiastical powers, but above all he believed in the unlimited exercise of episcopal jurisdiction, not only over clergy, but in some measure also over the laity, and in well-organized pastoral activity. His position provoked some serious disagreements with the Spanish authorities who governed the duchy of Milan, as well as with the inquisitor at Santa Maria delle Grazie, whose jurisdiction he challenged not only in cases of heresy, but also in those concerning magic, witchcraft, and superstition, which he tried to arrogate to the archiepiscopal tribunal. Despite hostility from Spanish governors, competition with Dominican inquisitors, and weaker relations with Rome after the

election of Pius V, Borromeo never wavered in his radical reform activities or in his jealous fostering of episcopal jurisdiction.

Milan, in Borromeo's view, needed to become the model for carrying out reform in the universal Church, a goal to which the archbishop dedicated himself completely until his death. He remained convinced that in order to combat heresy, which was a very threatening reality in his diocese, he must dedicate his efforts to eradicating the scandals that served the enemies of Catholicism. The task required swift and radical action.

Borromeo was as relentless in his determination to punish anything related to magic and superstition as he was against Protestants. This was evident in the severe sanctions established in his 1568 decree *De Magicis Artibus, Veneficiis Divinationibusque Prohibitis* (On the Magic Arts, Poisonings, and Prohibited Divinations), renewed eight years later under the title *De Superstitionibus* (On Superstitions). It held that anyone who practiced the magical arts was to be considered, tacitly or expressly, an accomplice of the Devil. Penalties varied from five years of imprisonment for magicians to seven years imprisonment for causing a storm. He also harshly persecuted harmless popular superstitions inherited from an ancient, syncretistic religiosity (Farinelli and Paccagnini 1989, 81). Convinced as he was that all magic was diabolical, the archbishop saw the witch, defined as the servant of the Devil by the theological and juridical thinking of the day, as a central problem, and the extirpation of

witchcraft as essential to the reform of Milanese religion. Increasing persecution against witches therefore became one of the most significant aspects of his pastoral activity. In Lombardy, superstitions had been linked to diabolical knowledge since the late fourteenth century. Practitioners of magic and popular medicine were considered dangerous religious subversives. Only their eradication could restore divine order on earth and thereby reestablish the Catholic Church's primacy throughout the world. According to Borromeo, bishops were obliged to "exterminate the practitioners of witchcraft" (Farinelli and Paccagnini 1989, 82); to this end, he arranged for priests with knowledge of the diffusion of superstition to send suspects systematically to the archdiocese. These inquiries served as preliminaries to the true and proper persecution, which was conducted in person by the cardinal.

Especially famous was the case of some women from Lecco, who were accused of witchcraft by the archbishop's tribunal in 1569 and became the center of a sharp controversy between the archbishop and the presiding cardinal of the Roman Inquisition. The disagreement that arose on this occasion between Borromeo, who wanted immediate punishment, supporters of the accused witches, and Rome, which instead requested a more prudent conduct founded essentially on investigation as to whether any substantial facts underlay the accusation, represented a watershed in inquisitorial practices (Prosperi 1996, 373). The letters that Cardinal Scipione Rebiba (1504–1577) sent to Borromeo in the name of the Congregation of the Holy Office (the Roman Inquisition) represented, essentially, the moderate line on the subject of witchcraft, subsequently affirmed in Italy in the last decades of the sixteenth century and culminating about 1620 in the famous *Instructio pro formandis processibus in causis strigum, sortilegiorum et maleficiorum* (Instruction for Conducting Trial Procedures against Witches, Sorcerers, and evildoers).

Even after this harsh conflict with Rome, Carlo continued to persecute witches with extreme severity. In Roveto, in Val Mesolcina, in 1583, he personally conducted the arrest and trial of about ten men and women, including the local parish priest, all accused of diabolical witchcraft, against whom the ecclesiastical court eventually issued eleven capital sentences (Farinelli and Paccagnini 1989, 92–96). After Borromeo's death, his harsh line against popular superstitions continued to distinguish the Milanese archbishopric. Appointed bishop in 1595, Borromeo's cousin Federico also denounced and repressed magic in all its manifestations, including the simplest thaumaturgical practices. Federico's own claim to have had personal encounters with the Devil increased the climate of fear that resulted in nine capital sentences against witches in Milan between 1599 and 1630. Although not directly

involved with the trials on the same level as Carlo, Federico believed that such death sentences were justified because they were inflicted "justly" (Farinelli and Paccagnini 1989, 103). Federico was responsible for unrealized plans for establishing a place where, after serving their spiritual and judicial penalties, witches would be confined to ensure that the "bad seed" would be eradicated completely (Bendiscoli 1957, 298).

PAOLO PORTONE;

TRANSLATED BY SHANNON VENEBLE

See also: INQUISITION, ROMAN; ITALY; MILAN; ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH; SUPERSTITION.

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BOUCHER, JEAN (1548–1644)

One of the most violent Catholic preachers in Paris in the late days of the Wars of Religion, Boucher's many writings attacked the Protestant heresy and connected it to the work of Satan as well as linked it specifically to the growth of witchcraft.

Born into a well-connected bourgeois family in Paris, Boucher rose rapidly in the Church. He was a student in Paris during the famous witchcraft lectures of Father Juan Maldonado and the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre (1572). He taught at Reims, where he became rector in 1575. He returned to Paris, finished his doctorate of theology and became rector of the University of Paris. He was also the *curé* (chief parish priest) of St. Benoît, which became his platform for fiery sermons denouncing both Protestants and those *politique* (moderate) Catholics who were not supporters of the zealot cause. He did not hesitate to attack the French monarchy, reserving his special venom for Kings Henry III and IV.

Boucher was a founder of the Sixteen, the extreme group that dominated Paris in the name of the Holy League (the Catholic league, the extreme Catholic faction) in the late 1580s and early 1590s. He placed himself in the first rank in the armed procession of the League in 1590. In a city dominated by violent partisan preachers, Boucher stood out as particularly blood-thirsty. He was instrumental in drawing up a League party program for the meeting of the Estates General at Blois in 1588. This document included a good statement of the French Catholic zealot argument about the connection between Protestantism and witchcraft: "And because witches have a great affinity with heretics, and that both having the same father [the Devil] they have wasted and infected this poor kingdom . . ." (Pearl 1999, 88).

In 1594, when Henry IV finally occupied Paris, Boucher left the city with the retreating Spanish troops. He withdrew with them to the Spanish Netherlands, where he spent a half-century teaching and writing. Throughout his long career, Boucher poured out a stream of vitriolic political tracts, in which the Devil played a central role as supporter and benefactor of the Protestant heresy. Although not demonology strictly speaking, Boucher's work demonized heretics and attacked kings and judges alike for their lack of zeal in dealing with Protestants, witches, atheists, and magicians. He could only interpret their lack of zeal as coming from their alliance with the Devil. Boucher never accepted the sincerity of Henry IV's second conversion to Catholicism in 1593, seeing the Bourbon king as a follower of Calvin and thus a follower of the Devil. Boucher defended the Jesuits, who were blamed for Jean Chastel's 1594 assassination attempt on Henry IV and expelled from Paris. He pilloried those who opposed the Jesuits, especially the judges of the *Parlement* of Paris (sovereign judicial court, with jurisdiction over approximately one-half of France) as tolerant of heresy and punishers of good Catholics.

Boucher's most explicitly demonological work was published in 1624. It follows the well-established tradition of his former teacher Maldonado, being filled with references to the Devil and to his intimate connection to Martin Luther and Jean Calvin. Boucher tied the growth of heresy, infidelity, and atheism to the flourishing of evil beliefs of a sad century, writing that magic and witchcraft were "the horror of horrors, the crime of crimes, the impiety of impieties . . . the consequence of atheism" (Boucher 1624, 536). For Boucher, the source of this evil was clearly the teachings of heretics. He discussed specters, goblins, witches and their Sabbats, and judicial astrology, considering all of them as aspects of a world corrupted by the growth of atheism.

Throughout his long exile, Boucher could not have been pleased when he observed the French scene, since Louis XIII's government continued to tolerate

Protestantism and witchcraft prosecutions became rare; in the year he died, however, France's worst witch hunts erupted in Languedoc and Burgundy.

JONATHAN L. PEARL

See also: FRANCE; HERESY; MALDONADO, JUAN; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; WARS OF RELIGION (FRANCE).

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BOVET, RICHARD

In a 1684 publication, *Pandaemonium or the Devil's Cloyster* (Bovet 1951), Richard Bovet conflated an anti-Catholic Whiggish diatribe with a collection of stories from the west of England, traditionally known as the West Country, about witchcraft and poltergeists. Bovet came from a Somerset clan who had become prominent parliamentarians during the interregnum; afterwards, many of them participated in Monmouth's rebellion in 1685. Borrowing its title from John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, *Pandaemonium* adopted the agenda of the two most influential late-seventeenth-century English defenders of witches and spirits, Joseph Glanvill and Henry More, by attacking atheistic denials of spirits, using authenticated cases from the West Country to demonstrate their reality. But its underlying message was much more radical, in that it labeled popery and monarchy as forms of diabolic idolatry and presented the seditious Bovets as respectable and credible witnesses during the Tory repression of Whig radicals. Although its text showed little interest in promoting the prosecution of witches, another branch of the Bovets was involved in a case of witchcraft tried at Exeter in 1696, accusing Elizabeth Harner, or Hörner, of bewitching their daughters, one of whom had died.

Montague Summers identified the author of *Pandaemonium* as Richard Bovet junior, born about 1641 in Somerset, who matriculated at Wadham College, Oxford, in 1657, and the likely author of two later anti-Jacobite congratulatory poems (both reproduced in Bovet 1951), praising the defeat of the French fleet in 1693 and William III's escape from an attempted assassination in 1695. Both of these poems shared *Pandaemonium's* deep-seated anti-Catholicism and its tendency to uncover Jacobite conspiracies animated by devilish powers. But its author could be his father or uncle Richard Bovet senior of Bishops' Hull, near Wellington (Somerset) who, together with his brother Philip, was executed in 1685 for playing leading roles in Monmouth's rebellion. Both had been prominent

parliamentarians in Somerset, where Richard briefly became MP for Taunton in the 1650s: His purchases of sequestered property included a mansion at Cothelstone, outside whose gates he was hanged in 1685.

After the Restoration, “Colonel Bove t” (or Buffet) was associated with numerous plots, frequently hiding and then reappearing; Philip remained a significant local figure, but was refused the title of gentleman by the heralds visiting Somerset in 1672. The Bovets retained ties with such powerful radical families as the Carys, and possibly with the earls of Pembroke: The author of *Pandaemonium* located one case at what must be Wilton House, the seat of the earls of Pembroke, where Milton’s nephew also worked, which may explain the extravagant praise the author gave to “the learned and profound Mr John Milton” (Bovet 1951, 9). *Pandaemonium* also reported the “Demon of Spraiton” in Devon, the account of which was also published separately in 1683 by Thomas Malthus (who published one of the two 1684 editions of *Pandaemonium*) and probably edited by Bovet from a letter by one of the Cary family.

This story was also known to such Somerset natural philosophers around the Glanvill–More circle as Andrew Paschall, who lacked direct contact with the radical upstart Bovet; their version revealed the dissenting links of the family at Spraiton, which the Bovet versions omitted. Devonshire witchcraft trials, such as those at Exeter in 1682, were heavily politicized, with Whigs seeking to embarrass Tory judges, who were skeptical about witch hunting’s Puritan associations but unwilling to deny the reality of a statutory crime. In the early 1680s, witchcraft offered one of the few opportunities for the Bovets to express their anti-Catholic views, an opportunity the conspirator and perjurer Titus Oates also took in his *Devil’s Patriarch* of 1683, and to attack indirectly the Restoration court. Despite dedicating his book to Henry More and frequently invoking that author’s *Saducismus Triumphatus* as his model, Bovet was not using witchcraft to vindicate Anglicanism against both radical dissent and Catholicism. *Pandaemonium* was aimed exclusively against Catholicism; it made a devastating contrast between the decadent and licentious Restoration regime that replaced proper religion with idolatry and priestcraft and the implicit virtues of the period before the Fall. *Pandaemonium* fortified its hidden radical message by borrowing Milton’s title for the court of the Devil in hell, because Milton was a known opponent of the restored monarchy.

JONATHAN BARRY

See also: ENGLAND; EXETER WITCHES; GLANVILL, JOSEPH; MORE, HENRY; SOMERSET WITCHES.

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BRANDENBURG, ELECTORATE OF

The prosecution of witches in Brandenburg, one of the four lay electorates of the Holy Roman Empire, reached its high point before 1580, unusually early for any large region in central Europe. This Protestant territory, with a population in 1565 that was between 300,000 to 400,000, increasing to 570,000 by 1756, experienced no particularly severe waves of persecution, although there were several cases in which people of different ages, primarily women, were accused of practicing magic and were either tortured or killed.

Documents from local courts and written legal opinions provide the most important sources. The picture they offer, however, is not only sketchy, but also highly confusing because of the many courts that claimed jurisdiction. The courts obtained legal opinions from experts both in Brandenburg and beyond. Besides the University of Frankfurt on the Oder, the Brandenburg *Schöffentuhl* (bench of jurists) was the most important authority within the electorate to which cases were sent for assessment. For the period between 1548 and 1680, the *Schöffentuhl* files list some 269 requests from different areas of Brandenburg under the heading of “magic” (*Zauberei*).

Two regions of Brandenburg, Prignitz and Uckermark, have been studied in great detail. According to the *Schöffentuhl* files and other sources, at least 268 cases dealing with magic were tried at Prignitz, in northwestern Brandenburg, between 1509 and 1686 (Enders 2000, 610–622). The distribution of cases within this region was far from uniform: Only 107 of Prignitz’s 250 villages—and all but 1 of its 12 towns—were affected. Numbers for individual cities and villages also differ significantly (Enders 2000, 613). On one Prignitz estate, Plattenburg, roughly 40 cases of black magic came before the local court between 1559 and 1686. Of these, 10 resulted in executions, the last in 1635 (Peters 1998, 73). Another 40 trials were held between 1538 and 1697 in the Uckermark, another northern district of Brandenburg (Enders 1992, 270 ff.).

Brandenburg’s first known witchcraft trial took place in 1509. Persecution intensified after 1530, peaking in the third quarter of the sixteenth century. The number of trials fell in the seventeenth century, after the electors who ruled the area became Calvinist; there was a sharp decline in Brandenburg’s witchcraft cases during the most difficult period of the Thirty Years’ War. Legal activity resumed later in the war, though with less

intensity than during the sixteenth century, and finally abated in the late seventeenth century. Only a few cases are reknown in the eighteenth century. Roughly one-third of these legal opinions were issued between 1550 and 1580, with a corresponding number of recorded cases; this suggests that in Brandenburg, the persecution of witches culminated much earlier than in either Protestant or Catholic states in southeastern or northwestern Germany. On the other hand, Brandenburg's authorities executed more witches than their colleagues in another Protestant electorate, the Palatinate.

The second Prussian king, Frederick William I, put an end to persecution with his edict of December 13, 1714. He ordered that all witchcraft trials involving torture or death be submitted to him for confirmation. There are two subsequent cases on record, from 1721 and 1728, focusing on the charges of practicing magic and entering into a pact with the Devil. The first was dismissed, the second treated as a different offense, due to the changed legal view. In 1731, a last and unsuccessful attempt was made to institute legal proceedings for practicing magic.

In Brandenburg, cases usually centered on sorcery, and most suspects were accused of killing animals. Others were charged with poisoning people, killing unborn babies, spoiling food, or raising storms. Diabolism came relatively early to Brandenburg: Records going back to 1548 already include entering into a pact with the Devil and riding to the witches' gathering on the Brocken as additional offenses. The German term for witches, *Hexen*, first appeared here in the late sixteenth century.

In the earliest known case, five women in Perleberg in Prignitz were found guilty of sorcery and burned at the stake by order of the elector Joachim I. He had imposed the death penalty for the practice of sorcery, but recommended proceeding with care, as is shown by the city ordinance of Prenzlau dated 1515. The often incomplete court documents contain no precise information on the numbers of those tortured and killed. In many cases, the accused parties proved their innocence: in Hohenlandin in the Uckermark, one woman's accuser was burned in her place in 1552.

In most cases, it was the population that demanded prosecution of the suspected witches, in fewer cases the manorial lords or town authorities. In those places where the authorities believed in magic, there were more numerous trials and executions. Often the authorities simply gave in to pressure from the populace.

HEINRICH KAAK

See also: GERMANY, NORTHEASTERN; PALATINATE, ELECTORATE OF; POPULAR PERSECUTION; WARFARE.

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BRAZIL

Until 1822, Brazil formed part of the Portuguese empire. The Portuguese Inquisition did not establish a separate court in Brazil, but instead brought all major Brazilian witchcraft cases before its Lisbon tribunal; archives in Lisbon still hold the records from Brazilian witchcraft trials during three centuries of inquisitorial activities. There were two main periods of witchcraft prosecution: the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries on the one hand and the eighteenth century on the other. Whereas witchcraft accusations of the first period closely resembled contemporary Portuguese cases, those of the eighteenth-century reflected to a greater degree Brazil's colonial situation and the tensions of its slaveholding society. Although the Portuguese language (like Spanish) distinguishes between "witchcraft" (*bruxaria*) and "sorcery" (*feiticiaria*), the two terms were used interchangeably in the trials. No quantitative data are available for the whole period of inquisitorial prosecution, but there were apparently more witchcraft trials in Brazil during the eighteenth century than in either of the previous two centuries. None of the Brazilians tried for witchcraft were executed.

In Brazil, the Inquisition exercised control through a network of commissioners (*comissários*) and laymen. When accusations of witchcraft were reported to Brazilian commissioners, the defendants in the most serious cases were shipped off to Lisbon. During the Spanish occupation of Portugal (1580–1640), two inquisitorial visitations covered northeastern Brazil in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, resulting in several witchcraft trials. The third and last inquisitorial visitation reached northern Brazil in the 1760s, more than a century later, allowing comparison of the witchcraft accusations and underlying belief systems of the two periods. Witchcraft trials of the earlier period were characterized by a strong incidence of European witchcraft beliefs taken from both popular and demonological traditions. During the eighteenth century, however, elements from both native Brazilian

and African cultures became prominent in the configuration of witchcraft. A further significant distinction separated these two periods of witchcraft persecution: Most earlier witchcraft offenses were committed by individuals, but eighteenth-century witchcraft accusations were directed against groups of people, often of African descent, who were thought to be conspiring against their colonial masters.

At the core of the witchcraft trials of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was the sorceress or witch, a poor woman, specialist in love magic, divination, and magical healing. Her practices included magic potions and prayers to Catholic saints—Saint Mark of Venice, Saint John, or the Virgin—or to such cosmic forces as the Sun, the Moon, the stars, or the wind. She also invoked demons in order to obtain their help and use them as familiar spirits or servants. Witches were thought to have the ability to transform themselves into such animals as ducks, cats, or butterflies. Witches confessed that they could take people to distant places and fly at night. The destination of these witches' flights often lay in metropolitan Portugal, where they returned to settle the affairs of their clients.

Eighteenth-century magical practices centered more on relationships among the different cultural groups then living in Brazil. Especially among Brazilians of Amerindian and African descent, the use of protective magical amulets, so-called *mandinga* purses, had become widespread. Collective rituals of possession were also performed by Amerindians and Africans. The latter, named *calundus*, prosecuted by the Inquisition as witches' assemblies, eventually led to the formation of Afro-Brazilian cults that continue to thrive.

IRIS GAREIS

See also: AFRICA (SUB-SAHARAN); INQUISITION, PORTUGUESE; PORTUGAL.

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BRENZ, JOHANN (1499–1570)

Born in Weil der Stadt, Brenz became a prominent Lutheran theologian and Swabian reformer who made important contributions to witchcraft theory and legal practice in southwestern Germany. While studying theology at the University of Heidelberg, Brenz came into contact with the ideas of Martin Luther and soon became a follower, participating in the Marburg Colloquy in 1529 at Luther's side. From 1522 to 1548 he was pastor in the imperial city of Schwäbisch Hall, ranking among the most respected reformers. In 1548, during the Augsburg Interim, Brenz fled to become chief pastor of the most important church in Stuttgart, the Stiftskirche, from 1553 until his death in 1570, as well as the personal advisor to Duke Christoph of Württemberg. Brenz helped organize the duchy's reformed church along solidly Lutheran lines.

At Schwäbisch Hall, a severe hailstorm in 1539 inspired Brenz to deliver a sermon on the witch question. His *Homilia de grandine* (Sermon on Hailstorms), first published at Frankfurt in 1557 in both Latin and German versions, argued vigorously against the popular belief that witches' magical powers had caused the destructive hailstorm. Brenz interpreted natural disasters, harvest failures, and personal misfortune as the work of almighty God, who used them to punish sins and test pious believers like Job. The Devil functioned only when God permitted, and he therefore deceived his followers, the witches, by leading them to believe that they could cause storms or other kinds of supernatural harm through their magic. Brenz's position was close to that of Martin Luther, who always preached against popular fears of witches. Both regarded belief in a powerful Devil and evil-doing witches as an offense against the First Commandment, a superstition incompatible with Christian belief.

Brenz held that the Devil and witches were impotent and considered harmful magic to be a fantasy, but he regarded the crime of witchcraft as a spiritual offense (heresy) that should be punished. Basing his opinion on the Hebrew Bible (Exod. 22:18) and the *Lex de maleficis et mathematicis* (Law Concerning Magicians and Astrologers) of the Justinian Code, he maintained that the fall from God (apostasy), the pact with the Devil, and the intention to cause harm warranted death.

Similar evaluations of witch beliefs from a theological and providential perspective had already been formulated in southwestern Germany around 1500 by the Constance jurist Ulrich Molitor in his *De laniis et phitonicis mulieribus* (Concerning Witches and Fortunetellers, 1489), and by the Tübingen theologian Martin Plantsch. Dubbed the *Canon Episcopi* school

after the tenth-century legal ruling (Midelfort 1972), these scholars held a critical attitude toward individual aspects of the witch concept articulated in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), doubting in particular the reality of magic, but they nonetheless considered any attempt to practice magical arts—whether for good or bad purposes—as devilish.

Treating the pact with the Devil as a capital offense diverged from the imperial criminal code, the Carolina Code (*Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*, 1532), because its article 109 prescribed death only for harmful magic. Strongly influenced by Brenz, Württemberg's Sixth Provincial Law Code of 1567 was the first territorial law forbidding a pact with the Devil. Brenz firmly maintained the legality of burning witches in correspondence during 1565–1566 with the radical critic Johann Weyer, whose *De praestigiis daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils, 1563) argues that the witch offense was nonexistent, and portrays the burnings as a blood-bath of innocents.

In 1561, at the beginning of the great witch persecutions in southwestern Germany, Brenz wrote an expert opinion on witchcraft for a preacher at Waldenburg (Brecht 2000), advising the preacher to save the soul of a young woman who had concluded a pact with the Devil through spiritual council. Punishment of the act would be left to secular justice. The body would not be spared secular sanctions, but at least the soul would be saved from Satan's clutches and eternal punishment.

In a sermon in 1562, the Stuttgart preachers Matthäus Alber and Wilhelm Bidembach opposed the aggressiveness of the people and championed the orthodox Lutheran position on weather magic, holding that God alone was responsible, in the tradition championed by Brenz. Further, without questioning the punishment of witchcraft, they urged the secular authorities to proceed carefully and to conduct witchcraft trials strictly according to the *processus ordinarius* (ordinary procedure) of imperial law.

Johannes Brenz cannot be considered an opponent of the witch persecutions, because he unequivocally supported the death penalty for witchcraft. Nevertheless, his admonition that “it is better to leave ten guilty people unpunished than punish one innocent person” suggests that the Protestant position promoted a moderate conduct of trials that helped to prevent the outbreak of major panics like those that afflicted some nearby Catholic territories in southwestern Germany.

ANITA RAITH;

TRANSLATED BY EDWARD BEVER

See also: *CANON EPISCOPI*; CAROLINA CODE; EXODUS 22:18 (22:17); GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; LUTHER, MARTIN; MOLITOR, ULRICH; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PLANTSCH, MARTIN; WEATHER MAGIC; WEYER, JOHANN; WÜRTTEMBERG, DUCHY OF.

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BREU, JÖRG THE ELDER (1480–1537)

One of Augsburg's leading artists in the early decades of the sixteenth century, Breu's significance for European witchcraft rests on the fact that he produced the most widely disseminated image of witchcraft in the sixteenth century, even if he largely ignored the new iconography pioneered by such contemporaries as Hans Baldung [Grien]. Breu became a master and established a modest workshop in the city in 1502, gradually gaining important private, municipal, and imperial commissions over the following decades. His artistic production ranged over various media and included much work for a number of Augsburg printers.

Breu's woodcut was an illustration of healing by sorcery, which first appeared in 1534 in a work called *Memorial der Tugend* (Memory Prompts to Virtue), written by the Franconian diplomat, author, and supporter of the Reformation, Johann von Schwarzenberg. Printed in Augsburg by Heinrich Steiner, who often used Breu as an illustrator, it contained 129 illustrations by different artists. It was intended as a popular guide to a moral life and provided numerous examples of virtue from classical history and the Scriptures. Directed to a broad audience, it took the form of a picture book with short, often closely integrated, texts, drawing on the late medieval discourse of vice and virtue, a favorite theme of moralizing humanists.

The texts accompanying Breu's woodcut were meant to clarify the image and its message. The soldier in the left foreground, decked out in armor, helmet, sword, and stirrups, is charming a wound sustained by his horse; and the words printed above him read: “My word is embellished with holiness, so that your wound will neither hurt nor give you pain” (author's translation, here and below). On the right, a woman with flying hair that becomes enmeshed with a demon (thereby suggesting that she is a witch) makes a gesture of conjuration and casts a spell to relieve the pain in a man's

head. “Truly believe, my word is a magic spell,” she says, “so do I relieve you of the pain in your head.” And in order that viewers have no doubts that such magical cures were indeed the work of witches, Breu introduced a visual cue in the background: a spewing cauldron and a hailstorm. The primary aim of Breu’s woodcut was to communicate to the viewer that all forms of magic were forbidden, including white magic and Christian words used for healing. This was the function of the text below the woodcut. The second couplet left no doubt that both female and male healers were to be condemned, even when they used Christian words: “whoever believes in magic and sorcery / he will be deprived of Go d’s grace; / Place no trust even in good words / which are put to unchristian use.” Such magic provided an opportunity for the Devil’s mischief, from which serious sin and punishment must follow.

This woodcut became the most widely disseminated representation of witchcraft in the sixteenth century. This was especially the case in southern Germany, where Heinrich Steiner used it over and over again. Breu repeated it in the 1535 and 1540 editions of *Memory Prompts to Virtue*. In 1534, he also used it (minus the accompanying verses) in the first Augsburg edition of *Schimpf und Ernst* (Humor and Seriousness), the very popular collection of moral tales written by the Strasbourg Franciscan, Johann Pauli, and repeated it in the 1535, 1536, and 1537 editions. In 1537 and 1544 he reproduced it in a third work, the German translation of Polydore Vergil’s *De rerum inventoribus* (On the Inventors of Things). By the mid-sixteenth century Breu’s woodcut must have represented one of the most common ways in which German readers imagined witchcraft. In comparison to the new iconography of witchcraft developed by Baldung and others in the early sixteenth century, Breu’s depiction of individual and nongendered healing drew on an older tradition. Yet by introducing a number of “modern” visual cues, such as the flying hair, cauldron, and hailstorm, Breu was able to include even traditional white magic within Schwarzenberg’s condemnation of all magic as witchcraft.

CHARLES ZIKA

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BALDUNG [GRIEN], HANS; CAULDRON; CHARMS; CUNNING FOLK; HAIR; MAGIC, POPULAR; WEATHER MAGIC.

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**BROCHMAND,
JESPER RASMUSSEN (1582–1652)**

Brochmand was the foremost representative of orthodox Lutheranism in Denmark-Norway during its so-called golden age in the early seventeenth century and a leading advocate of the reality of diabolical witchcraft. Research on Danish sorcery has emphasized the orthodoxy of Brochmand’s demonological views. Unlike other parts of Brochmand’s dogmatics, they had limited influence; he tried to instigate a renewed witch hunt, but failed.

Born in Køge, Denmark, Brochmand studied theology, philosophy, and Greek at the University of Leiden in Holland. He became professor at the University of Copenhagen in 1610, serving several terms as its president. In 1639 he was made bishop of Sjælland, becoming the foremost representative of the clergy in the Danish-dominated territory of Oldenburg. Brochmand also served as a zealous tutor to the children of several high-ranking men, including Denmark’s king and chancellor, exerting considerable influence on his pupils. Often described as overly pessimistic, he was an ardent supporter of Church discipline and the betterment of the kingdom’s schools, and nourished a growing concern for the moral and religious state of Denmark-Norway.

Brochmand was the leading figure among the seventeenth-century Danish-Norwegian clergy, the champion of orthodox Lutheranism in its struggles against the papacy and crypto-Calvinism, and he eagerly participated in refutations of the Jesuits. Brochmand’s most important work, the *Universæ theologia systemata* (Universal Theological System) published in Copenhagen 1633, consisting of forty-nine parts in two volumes, argues for a diabolical interpretation of magic and sorcery. This book produced great acclaim for its author across much of Lutheran Europe; it became the most important Lutheran publication in Denmark-Norway, remaining required reading in dogmatics at Copenhagen’s institute of theology until the late eighteenth century.

His chapter on sorcery (vol. 2, chap. 19) provided an elaborate concept of demonology. In contrast to the rather moderate demonological views of Nels Hemmingsen, Denmark’s leading witchcraft theorist, Brochmand represented a more orthodox position. According to him, three causal factors explained the existence of witchcraft: God’s forbearance (divine consent), Satanic power (or demonic power), and mankind’s penchant to evil (human malevolence). Brochmand offered detailed depictions of how witches could fly rapidly through the air to remote places where

they indulged in debauchery. Pacts with the Devil, the nocturnal flights of witches, and their perverted Sabbats were all physical realities. Brochmand strongly detested magic of any kind and warned against visiting so-called holy springs, requesting the national clergy to supervise closely all instances of idolatry among the common people. His great collection of books included the works of such renowned Catholic demonologists as Martín Del Rio, Nicolas Rémy, and Peter Binsfeld.

As county governor of Finnmark, the northernmost outpost of the Danish-Norwegian realm, Jørgen Friis, a son of the kingdom's chancellor, conducted a massive witch hunt during the 1650s—shortly after the death of his childhood tutor, Jesper Brochmand. Under Friis, Finnmark's witch hunts were characterized by the standard demonological ideas of the European mainland, also found in Brochmand's works, including belief in witches' Sabbats and pacts with the Devil, all phenomena that Brochmand's pupil confronted in a region with a long tradition of persecuting witches.

RUNE HAGEN;

TRANSLATED BY MARK LEDINGHAM

See also: CHRISTIAN IV; DEMONOLOGY; DENMARK; HEMMINGSEN, NIELS; NORWAY.

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BROSSIER, MARTHE (CA. 1573–?)

Marthe Brossier was the center of a widely publicized demonic possession case in Paris in 1599. Her possession and public exorcism became a clear attempt to re-create the "Miracle of Laon" of 1566, which had provided an important propaganda victory for zealous Catholics in the early phases of the French religious and civil wars, which had just ended. But the Brossier case proved to be a fiasco, and it demonstrated the limits of

a faction's ability to use witchcraft as a political tool. The case also stirred up a noisy controversy over the authenticity and role of demonic possession.

Marthe Brossier arrived in Paris in the winter of 1599, having been diagnosed as possessed a year earlier, in her home village of Romorantin, near Blois. The Capuchins of Paris embraced her plight and began to conduct public exorcisms, to which huge crowds of novelty-seeking Parisians flocked. At this time, Paris, which had been a stronghold of the Catholic League only a few years earlier, was in an agitated state, with political tensions running high. Early in 1598, King Henry IV had issued the Edict of Nantes, legalizing Protestantism in France and establishing mechanisms for Protestants and Catholics to live side by side. Not surprisingly, there was strong opposition to this edict; the *Parlement* of Paris (sovereign judicial court, with jurisdiction over approximately one-half of France), though hostile to Catholic extremism, resisted the edict's passage into law until January 1599, when the king appeared in person to compel its acceptance.

Catholic priests, some of whom continued to reject Henry's claim to the throne, preached violent sermons against the edict. When Marthe Brossier was exorcised, her demon identified himself as the same Beelzebuth who had possessed Nicole Obry at Laon back in 1566. "Beelzebuth" echoed the message of these preachers, delivering strong sermons against the Protestant heresy and the Edict of Nantes.

The bishop of Paris, concerned with threats to public order, asked a group of Parisian physicians to examine Brossier to determine if she were actually possessed. One of them, Michel Marescot, wrote an account of his experience that is one of the most interesting works in this field. He and his colleagues examined Brossier, questioned her, stuck her with pins, and concluded that there was nothing supernatural about her condition. Marescot became convinced that Brossier was a fraud and that she or her exorcists were taking advantage of popular credulity. His conclusion was, "Rien du diable; plusiers choses feintes; peu de maladie" (Nothing of the Devil, much fakery, a bit of illness). Warning that exorcists should exercise much more caution before declaring people possessed by demons, Marescot stated, "Often melancholics, lunatics and bewitched people fool the exorcist, saying they are possessed by the Devil. These always have more need of the remedies of a physician than the ministering of exorcists." This could be an echo of the sentiments of the German skeptic and physician Johann Weyer.

Marescot's arguments angered those who clearly had hoped to capitalize on Brossier's exorcisms. A sharp response, written by Pierre de Bérulle, later a well-known cardinal, called Marescot "an impertinent and malicious Physician" who spread poisonous lies against the Roman Catholic Church (Pearl 1999, 50).

Bérulle defended the authenticity of Brossier's possession and the importance of exorcisms as the primary route in curing possession. At this point, Henry IV ordered the exorcisms stopped. Brossier was sent home, and traveled to Rome, where she enjoyed a brief celebrity at the papal jubilee of 1600.

Quickly translated into English, Marescot's book was soon used as evidence in English arguments over the handling of demoniacs and witches. In a French work published in 1621, Claude Pithoys mentioned the Brossier case as an example of the prevalence of fraudulent possession and the dangers of being fooled through too easy belief in their claims.

JONATHAN L. PEARL

See also: BÉRULLE, PIERRE DE; FRANCE; OBRY, NICOLE; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; WARS OF RELIGION (FRANCE); WEYER, JOHANN.

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BRUEGHEL, PIETER THE ELDER (CA.1525–1569)

A Flemish painter and printmaker, Brueghel is best known for his paintings and engravings representing the activities of Flemish peasants. Brueghel dealt specifically with the theme of witchcraft only in two of his late engravings. But in the late 1550s, Brueghel also created a series of engravings depicting the Seven Deadly Sins; these engravings do not deal specifically with witchcraft, but they offer superb representations of contemporary beliefs about evil and the demonic.

Brueghel's favorite genre was so commonplace in his work that it even earned him the appellation "peasant Brueghel," and some nineteenth-century writers even thought he was a peasant himself. In fact, Brueghel belonged to the upper-class society of Antwerp; he was a wealthy man with powerful friends in both the government of the Southern Netherlands and the Catholic Church. Just as Brueghel was not a peasant, his output also contained a number of themes besides peasant genres. He is remembered for landscapes and paintings of moral allegories, such as *The Flemish Proverbs*, *The Blind Leading the Blind*, and *The Beggars*, a scene that

shows beggars with mental and physical disabilities who are being ignored by a rich man. Brueghel also produced allegorical prints such as *The Big Fish Eat the Little Fish*.

Brueghel's stylistic debt to Hieronymus Bosch is clearly shown in his themes in those of his works containing occult subjects such as witchcraft and demonology. In his series on the Seven Deadly Sins, he imitated the painted table on this theme Bosch had created for Philip II of Spain. But Brueghel went much further with his engravings, showing a whole range of Bosch-like zoomorphic and anthropomorphic demons assisting humankind in committing the sins. The sins are depicted in landscape scenes containing structures and rock formations obviously derived from those of Bosch. Brueghel's drawings, from which these prints were made, exist today in several collections.

Brueghel's two engravings dealing specifically with the theme of witchcraft are *St. James and the Magician Hermogenes* and *The Fall of Hermogenes*. Both prints were engraved after Brueghel drawings in 1565 by the Antwerp printmakers, Pierre Van der Heyden and Jerome Cock. *St. James and the Magician Hermogenes* contains a scene of thirteen witches—the traditional number of a coven, if one counts Hermogenes among the witches. Brueghel showed witches performing typical activities, such as flying on broomsticks, preparing brews, causing storms, using a Hand of Glory (the pickled hand of a corpse, believed to have magical powers), and working within magical circles. While the title of the engraving is taken from the apocryphal life of St. James the Apostle, the visualization is that of the world of sixteenth-century witch beliefs. Brueghel even included witches' familiars in the forms of rats, toads, and cats. The companion print, *The Fall of Hermogenes*, showed the magician's demon cohorts turning against him at the behest of St. James. Hermogenes is caught up in a virtual whirlwind of demons. Included in that whirlwind is a broom-riding witch. These two prints make it quite clear that Brueghel knew well the writings of the demonologists of his day, as well as the folk beliefs about witchcraft.

Brueghel's occult themes had a considerable impact on later Flemish and Dutch artists. Among those who were influenced by his work were David Teniers the Younger, Jacques de Gheyn II, and Brueghel's two sons, Jan Brueghel and Pieter Brueghel the Younger. Pieter the Younger depicted so many occult motifs that he acquired the nickname of "the Hell Brueghel." Each of these artists used motifs of witchcraft or the demonic that were clearly derived from Pieter Brueghel the Elder. In the case of David Teniers, for example, witches, demons, and the Seven Deadly Sins became motifs that Teniers used throughout his oeuvre.

JANE P. DAVIDSON

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; GHEYN II, JACQUES DE; HERMOGENES; NETHERLANDS, SOUTHERN; TENIERS, DAVID, THE YOUNGER.

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BUIRMANN, FRANZ (CA. 1590–CA. 1667)

Commonly known as “the Witch-Seeker of Cologne,” court assessor at Bonn in the electorate of Cologne, Buirmann was responsible for the death of at least 300 people. He was known to exceed his authority in many cases. This tendency caused him reprimands by the government of the electorate; but due to his effective methods of witch persecution, he was repeatedly commissioned to investigate witches. Buirmann’s activity as a witch-hunting specialist began in 1629; his last such efforts date from 1647, although he still worked as assessor at the electoral High Court of Bonn for several years.

Buirmann was born around 1590 at Euskirchen in the duchy of Juelich. He registered at the University of Cologne in 1608 at the age of approximately eighteen years. Buirmann studied law, eventually obtaining doctorates in both secular and ecclesiastical law. On January 4, 1628, Buirmann was confirmed as assessor at the High Court of Justice of Bonn. In 1635, he married Katharina Walravens, the daughter of a wealthy Bonn family. His contemporary Herman Löher, who later published a book attacking witchcraft persecutions in the Rhineland, claimed that Buirmann, gaunt and ugly, could never have succeeded in courting a girl and therefore had to marry the daughter of a poor saltpetre digger. An American author (Gibbons 1931) used Buirmann’s alleged unattractiveness to explain his reckless actions against women, but Löher’s allegations were based only on rumor. Buirmann and his wife had at least two sons, Johannes, born in 1635, and Johann Adolph, born in 1636; one of them died in 1644. In 1652, Buirmann fathered an illegitimate son with a servant. The last evidence we have of Buirmann is that he sold a house in Bonn in 1667; the date of his death remains unknown.

As it is possible to trace the first witchcraft trials in Bonn back to 1628, it is reasonable to conclude that Buirmann was involved in witch cases from the beginning of his career as a court assessor in 1629. Between 1628 and 1630 these witch persecutions resulted in at least 50 death sentences. By 1630, Buirmann was considered as a specialist in witch persecution. Löher

described the methods Buirmann used; as assessor of the Court of Rheinbach, a small town near Bonn, Löher had watched him investigate accused witches in 1631 and 1636. Buirmann made extensive use of torture to force a confession from a suspect. When Christina Boeffgens, the widow of a local merchant, died under torture in Rheinbach, Buirmann convinced the assessors that the Devil himself had broken the suspect’s neck. Apart from Rheinbach, we have more reports about victims dying under torture in other places where Buirmann “worked,” always mentioning a broken neck caused by the Devil. Buirmann intimidated his colleagues by threatening to accuse them of sorcery themselves if they refused to cooperate. Several times he required warrants for somebody’s arrest without telling the assessors whom he wanted imprisoned. In this way, the oldest assessor of the Court of Rheinbach, Herbert Lapp, unknowingly sentenced himself to arrest and torture. He was burned together with Anna Kemmerling, the wife of the assessor Gottart Peller. As Löher tells us, Buirmann had tried in vain to seduce her beautiful sister. However, the story that Buirmann had this sister put under arrest and raped by the hangman’s assistant is a misreading of a passage in Löher’s book. Nevertheless, his reckless behavior and disregard of imperial law eventually led Buirmann into conflict with the electoral government. He was reprimanded and restricted to his duty as an assessor in Bonn for about five years.

In 1636, Buirmann reappeared as a witch commissioner at several places in the electorate of Cologne and even beyond. From 1636 to 1638, he was responsible for the death of at least 50 people in Siegburg, about 10 in Heimerzheim, and another 10 in the so-called Drachenfelser Laendchen (Drachenfelser Country). He murdered 135 people in Rheinbach and nearby villages. Together with the victims of Buirmann’s witch hunts in the preceding years, the number of people burned as witches or sorcerers under his authority comes to more than 300.

THOMAS P. BECKER

See also: COLOGNE; FERDINAND OF COLOGNE; LÖHER, HERMAN.

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BULLINGER, HEINRICH (1504–1575)

Apart from Johann Brenz, Heinrich Bullinger was the only prominent German Protestant who wrote a tract on magic and witchcraft, *Wider die Schwarzen Kuenst* (Against the Black Arts), first published after his death in the *Theatrum de Veneficis* (Theater of Poisoners [witches]) of 1586. As the successor to Ulrich Zwingli in Zurich and a contemporary of John Calvin, Bullinger was a leading representative of sixteenth-century Reformed Protestantism. He not only exercised considerable influence on its church policy, partly through his extensive correspondence (12,000 letters have been preserved), but also played an important role in shaping and communicating Reformed religious life and thought.

For two reasons, Bullinger's very brief tract is remarkably interesting. First, he discussed only *maleficium* (harmful magic) and diabolical pacts, without mentioning witches flying, holding Sabbats, or having intercourse with the Devil. Bullinger clearly belonged to the *Canon Episcopi* tradition that described some magical beliefs as superstitious, because he described magic and witchcraft as more illusion than reality. It is thus particularly surprising that Bullinger seemed to favor severe punishment for witches at the end of his tract. However, his statements are difficult to interpret. He merely quoted the relevant verses (e.g., Exod. 22:18) of the Hebrew Bible and referred to other legal authorities such as the imperial law. He let the reader decide for himself, but it is unclear whether or not this was merely a rhetorical device that allowed him to condone the execution of witches without doing so explicitly.

Bullinger's catechistic writings underline how difficult it is to interpret his statements on witchcraft and magic. In all his theological statements, he endeavored to stay as close to Scripture as possible, while using a broad knowledge of theological authorities to support his arguments. In the thirty-ninth sermon of his *Hausbuch* (House book), Bullinger addressed the problem of demonology. He implicitly adopted the medieval idea of demons as spirit-like beings, decidedly rejected anthropologizing Epicurean notions that would explain the Devil merely in terms of evil people, and repeatedly emphasized the difficulties of discussing demons and the Devil systematically on the basis of Biblical evidence. Interestingly, his sermon ended with a brief remark that, according to biblical presentations, witchcraft could be harmful only to unbelievers, while believing Christians remained immune. In this context, he stressed the necessity of divine permission (*permissio dei*) in all workings of the Devil. In sending illness and adversities, he wrote, God used the Devil as a teaching aid, not as an independent force. Thus, Bullinger concluded that Christians need have no fear of the Devil. Such a clear position was unusual in the sixteenth century.

Bullinger also approached the problem of magic in his sermons on the First Commandment and in his *Summa Christenlicher Religion* (Sum of the Christian Religion, 1556), where he mentioned *maleficium* and the pact with the Devil. He considered such Catholic practices as the worship of saints and idolizing elements of creation as violations of the First Commandment, paying more attention to these than to witchcraft, and added that any kind of superstition, including the worship of saints, was equal to a pact with the Devil. A pact with the Devil did not justify prosecution.

Bullinger's demonology and attitude toward witchcraft was strongly marked by a Calvinistic "disenchantment" of the world. He constructed no theory of demonology, and he did not see Christianity as endangered by a "witchcraft sect." His statement that the Devil and witchcraft could only harm unbelievers reduced the problem from a universal, apocalyptic battle between good and evil to a personal matter. On the other hand, his tract made it clear that even theologians who devoted little thought to witchcraft and magic could still sound quite severe in their attitude toward the punishment of witches.

JÖRG HAUSTEIN;

TRANSLATED BY HELEN SIEGBURG

See also: BRENZ, JOHANN; *CANON EPISCOPI*; DEMONOLOGY; EXODUS 22:18 (22:17); PROTESTANT REFORMATION.

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BURCHARD OF WORMS (CA. 965–1025)

Cleric of Mainz and later bishop of Worms (1000–1025), Burchard is best known as the author of the *Decretorum libri XX*, or *Decretum* (The Twenty Books of Decisions), a systematic (rather than chronological) collection of 1,700 canons compiled from earlier collections and the writings of the Church Fathers, which he completed in 1015. It provided one of the most successful and influential collections of canon law during the eleventh century and became a major source for later ideas about sorcery and magic.

An active and energetic churchman, Burchard reorganized the administration of the city of Worms. Widely experienced in ecclesiastical and imperial political life, he was appointed to his see by Emperor Otto III and knew the later emperors Henry II and Conrad II well. Burchard participated actively in contemporary ecclesiastical councils. He was dedicated to Church reform, especially in matters of the nature of the episcopal office, simony (the purchase of ecclesiastical office), and the relations between spiritual and temporal authorities. His canonical collection reflects both his experience and his ideals. Although Burchard's collection of canon law was authoritative only in his own diocese of Worms, it circulated widely elsewhere.

Book XIX of Burchard's *Decretum* is called the *Corrector*, or the *Physician*. It was a penitential, both a guide to confessors for assessing the sins of penitents and for imposing penance, as well as a list of tariff-based penitential practices. Penitentials had been very widely used throughout western Europe from the late sixth to the late eleventh century, before the emergence of more sophisticated penitential handbooks during the late twelfth century. Burchard's was the last, and one of the greatest of these, drawing on earlier Celtic and Anglo-Saxon penitentials as well as more recent collections, especially those of Halitgar of Cambrai (fl. 830, author of an important Carolingian penitential collection) and Regino of Prüm (fl. 906, author of an important collection of texts pertaining to ecclesiastical discipline). From Regino, Burchard took both the long and the short versions of the *Canon Episcopi* (a text that had first appeared in Regino's collection), which subsequently became one of the two or three key texts regarding magic and witchcraft in canon law. Written in the form of questions posed by the confessor to the penitent, it often circulated separately from the rest of the *Decretum*.

Book XIX, chapter 5, numbers 59–70, 90–104, and 149–181 dealt with magic and superstition. Numbers 70 and 90 was the short and long versions of the *Canon Episcopi* in the *Corrector* (both versions also appeared in the *Decretum*, the short in I:94 and the longer in X:1). The confessor's questions included the subjects of the practice of divination, therapeutic magic, weather magic, erotic magic, riding with other women at night with the goddess Diana, shape-shifting, preparing food for

ghostly visitors at night, the mutilation of the corpses of unbaptized children, and preventing the wakening of the unquiet dead. Many of the strictures listed by Burchard derived from much older sources, and it is not clear whether or not they reflected practices of his own day or were included simply for the sake of completeness. Others, however, did not occur in earlier collections and have been thought to reflect actual beliefs and practices of the early eleventh century. Comprehensively, all the relevant canons offered an exhaustive panorama of the concerns of a highly placed, pastorally minded, and extremely learned churchman in the early eleventh century. Ivo of Chartres adapted Burchard's collection a century later, and Gratian (later considered the founder of the science of canon law) used it extensively in the mid-twelfth century in his great collection of canon law, also popularly called the *Decretum*.

EDWARD PETERS

See also: *CANON EPISCOPI*; DIANA; DIVINATION; *INDICULUS SUPERSTITIONUM AND PAGANARUM*; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (MEDIEVAL); LOVE MAGIC.

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BURGUNDY, DUCHY OF

Apart from an isolated instance around 1470, when Burgundian ecclesiastical and secular authorities cooperated to burn three people for attending Sabbats, we have no evidence of fully developed witchcraft trials in this region until 1571 (Mandrou 1968, 155–156),

soon after this crime had reappeared in other French provinces from Languedoc to Normandy. All our evidence about the subsequent repression of witchcraft in Burgundy comes from the records of the *Parlement* of Dijon, the appellate court created in 1537 to cover the duchy of Burgundy. The picture of witch hunting that emerges from its records fits chronologically with general patterns in western Europe, but the severity—or rather lack of severity—shown by this relatively small French appellate court seems quite atypical. Even though it began systematically searching suspects for the Devil's mark in the early 1580s, it seems to have been even more lenient toward accused witches than its great neighbor, the *Parlement* of Paris, whose district surrounded it on three sides.

Apart from a gap between 1593 and 1611, we possess the Dijon *parlement's* rulings in criminal cases after 1581. Witchcraft generally occupied a very modest place, usually around 2 or 3 defendants per year, although witchcraft trials occurred almost every year until the mid-seventeenth century. Seigneurial judges had begun imposing death sentences for witchcraft by 1580, but the Burgundian *parlement* upheld only a few of them, starting in 1583. Throughout the entire period it was involved in judging witches, only once did the appellate court at Dijon pronounce more than 2 death sentences for this crime in a year. Overall, during fifty-one recorded years between 1582 and 1650, it sentenced only 6 men and 11 women to death for witchcraft, although it judged well over 200 who had been indicted for this crime (prorating the missing seventeen years gives an estimate of about two dozen legal executions approved by this court). In 1633, it examined 24 prisoners from Nantua, in the French Alps; all had been sentenced to death by a local judge, but the *parlement* upheld only 3 executions, including 1 carried out in effigy after a prisoner escaped. Two years later it took automatic control over every Burgundian witchcraft trial. The very next year, 1636, throngs of accused witches crowded the jail; although an old woman died in prison, none of these 36 prisoners were executed.

It is against this background that we must see this *parlement's* reaction when the last major witch panic in France struck Burgundy and the Ardennes in 1644 before petering out. It had been provoked by a severe hailstorm and late frost that ruined both the wine and grain harvests. This episode has been seen as a relatively early instance where a “junior” *parlement* imitated the example of Paris (Mandrou 1968, 385–390). It is, however, better understood in the context of the great Languedoc panic of 1643–1645; like Languedoc (and Essex in Puritan England at exactly this moment) Burgundy was afflicted by a local witch finder who spread this panic by identifying numerous suspects by looking carefully into the pupils of their eyes. When the Burgundian *parlement* finally got its hands on him later in 1644, it sent him to

the galleys. Although this *parlement* upheld the first 2 death sentences for witchcraft appealed to it in 1644, afterwards it approved only 1 of 13 other death sentences for witchcraft among over 100 imprisoned witches whom it judged between 1644 and 1646.

The court's monopoly of jurisdiction combined with its leniency toward accused witches caused considerable popular discontent. Burgundian villagers were accustomed to dunking accused witches to see if they floated. The Dijon *parlement* began investigating such illegal water tests in 1640, but could not prevent them from multiplying dramatically during the panic of June 1644. Worse still, the *parlement* uncovered at least nine instances during the mid-1640s where Burgundian vigilantes had lynched suspected witches, sometimes several at a time, usually with the complicity of village officials. Nearly all the ringleaders escaped. When the worst episode, at the village of Hully, was judged two years afterwards, only two defendants had actually been arrested: The *parlement* cleared a farmer accused of participating in the lynching of his wife, but sentenced another man to the galleys for life for his share in a collectively lynching of no fewer than 13 people. Twenty other defendants, including the village prosecutor and his son, escaped the *parlement's* clutches; half of them were sentenced in absentia to be hanged or broken on the wheel. Such episodes reveal both the depths of popular exasperation over the enlightened and skeptical attitudes of Burgundy's appellate judges and the looseness of their control over this province during a major witch panic.

A final defining episode in the Burgundian *parlement's* treatment of witchcraft came in the early 1660s with the well-known events at Auxonne. Outbreaks of demonic possession, apparently an outgrowth of the last major witch hunts after 1658 in neighboring Franche-Comté, afflicted the Ursuline nuns at Auxonne for many years (Mandrou 1968, 406–422). By 1660, exorcisms had produced the usual crop of denunciations against the witches who had caused their possession. The *parlement* at Dijon promptly reduced 4 death sentences based on evidence from exorcisms, banishing 2 women and freeing 2 others—although the 2 women whom it released were apparently lynched. A man, previously sentenced to death for witchcraft in 1645, was arrested next, but the *parlement* eventually released him in 1662. The possessed Ursulines and their exorcists meanwhile concentrated their accusations against one of the sisters, Barbe Buvée. Her arrest and trial became a cause célèbre, expanding into an elaborate power game that eventually pitted the intendant (royal agent) of Burgundy against the Dijon *parlement*, with both sides appealing to patrons at court. Buvée's case escalated up to the royal council, who finally handed it to the *Parlement* of Paris in 1664—which quietly buried it.

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: ARDENNES; AUXONNE NUNS; DEVIL'S MARK; FRANCE; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; LYNCHING; PANICS; *PARLEMENT OF PARIS*; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; SWIMMING TEST; WITCHFINDERS.

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BURNING TIMES

The Neo-Pagan community employs the term *Burning Times* to refer to the period in which those accused of witchcraft were executed. The term implies that all witches were executed by burning, but in the British Isles witchcraft to which it is supposed to refer, this was not true; only in Scotland were the bodies of witches burned, and then only after strangulation, and in England and Wales all witches punished with death were hanged. This fact alone exposes the falsity of the term's claims to historical accuracy.

The term *Burning Times* was first coined by the British pagan and founder of Wicca, Gerald Gardner, who claimed that it was a secret term for the witchcraft persecutions used in the British Isles by traditional pagans (i.e., witches) themselves. Gardner, who founded the first Neo-Pagan witchcraft coven in Britain in 1947, claimed the term came from a text he called *The Book of Shadows*, intended to serve as a ritual handbook for witches in his group, a volume that drew heavily on Margaret Murray's account of the witchcraft trials in early modern Europe. Gardner may or may not have claimed the book was ancient, but he bound it in antique leather and seems to have deliberately soiled the pages to give an appearance of age. The term *Burning Times* was part of a preface Gardner added, purporting to be written by a witch in the time of persecution and painting a colorful and entirely fictional picture of her fear and concern for others of her religion. Some of Gardner's followers, however, mistook *The Book of Shadows* for an authentic document, and it has been used widely in the writings of contemporary witches such as Starhawk. A fantasy narrative grew up around the notion of the Burning Times that described witches as gentle Neo-Pagan herbalists and midwives, hunted relentlessly by a power-mad and usually Roman Catholic clergy. This is still the commonest narrative of witchcraft in children's books and historical fiction; hundreds of examples could be cited. But there is no evidence that cunning women or accused witches

practiced herbal medicine more than other women in Europe; midwives were more often on the side of the interrogators than their victims, and the Inquisition and clergy were, as a rule, milder than the secular authorities when handling witchcraft prosecution. There is no evidence that early modern witches practiced a religion anything like that of contemporary witches; those arraigned as witches were Christians, not Neo-Pagans.

The use of the term *Burning Times* has had the odious effect of encouraging comparisons between the witchcraft prosecutions and the Holocaust (since *holocaust* means burnt offering), thus devaluing the latter. Such comparisons are without merit, but have been made with depressing frequency by some feminist historians, notably Mary Daly. These comparisons are misleading, primarily because there was never any attempt to murder all early modern women as there was by the Nazis to murder all Jews; indeed, except in rare instances, women were not singled out for prosecution during the period of the witch hunts. Moreover, the events were very different both in nature and in size. Historians now estimate that approximately 35,000 to 50,000 men and women died in the witchcraft prosecutions (there was no massive persecution), while upwards of 6 million people died in the Shoah. Attempts to compare or, worse, conflate the two events deny to each its true power to move and its right to our mourning and regret, as do fictionalizations that falsify the real and dreadful historical experiences of those who suffered. These fictions should not be shrugged off or excused.

DIANE PURKISS

See also: CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST 1800); EXECUTIONS; HISTORIOGRAPHY; MIDWIVES; MURRAY, MARGARET ALICE; NUMBER OF WITCHES.

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BURR, GEORGE LINCOLN (1857–1938)

Burr was one of the greatest early American historians of the European witchcraft prosecutions. Born in Oramel, New York, locally educated, and trained as a printer, Burr entered the new Cornell University in 1877 and graduated in 1881. He soon became both the private secretary and librarian of Cornell's president, Andrew Dickson White, and an instructor and examiner in modern history at the university.

White sent Burr to study in Europe, at Leipzig, Paris, and Zurich, from 1884 to 1886, as well to acquire books for White's library, which Burr later cataloged in

three volumes in 1889, 1894, and 1897. During his stay, Burr acquired the manuscript of the trial of Dietrich Flade for White's library; in 1886 he added the manuscript of Cornelius Loos's recantation. Burr spent another year in Europe in 1887–1888. Although he never took a doctorate (his research materials were stolen while in transit in Europe), Burr became a professor and held the chair in history at Cornell from 1892 to 1922. He was a popular teacher at Cornell until his retirement. His scholarly work was widely acknowledged, and Burr was elected president of the American Historical Association in 1916. He also served as White's assistant on the Venezuela–Guyana Boundary Commission in 1897. He wrote the chapter on the Carolingian revolution and Frankish intervention in eighth-century Italy for the *Cambridge Medieval History*, volume two (1913).

Burr engaged in an important scholarly controversy with George Lyman Kittridge of Harvard about the historical nature of witchcraft and magic, illustrated in Burr's essays "The Literature of Witchcraft" (1889) and "New England's Place in the History of Witchcraft" (1911). The former provided the most comprehensive study in English of the sources for the history of witchcraft in Europe and North America. Burr also edited *Narratives of the Witchcraft Cases, 1648–1706*, in 1914.

Burr's most important scholarship was devoted to the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century witchcraft prosecutions, chiefly those of Dietrich Flade and Cornelius Loos. Flade was the highest-ranking secular official ever executed for witchcraft; a few years later, Loos wrote a skeptical treatise *De vera et falsa magia* (On True and False Magic) and suffered terribly for his defense of Flade and his criticism of Flade's persecutors.

Besides his vast acquisitions and cataloging enterprise of the White Library, Burr's scholarship took the form of essays. His "On the Loos Manuscript" (1886) told the story of his discovery of the manuscript. One of Burr's greatest skills was his ability to track down manuscripts and rare books in both European libraries and bookstores; he offered some accounts of his successes in an essay on "A Witch-Hunter in the Bookshops" (1902). Burr knew the scribal hands of northern Europe in the sixteenth century better than anyone else in North America and better than most scholars in Europe.

Burr's most important and longest essay was a revision of his unwritten doctoral dissertation, "The Fate of Dietrich Flade" (1891), a vivid, scholarly, and entirely engaging account of the best-known witchcraft trial of the sixteenth century. The trial elicited contemporary opinions from Martín Del Rio and Peter Binsfeld about Flade, a jurist and high official in the government of the city of Trier and former rector of its university. Part of the case's importance derived from the judges' use of the testimony of persons convicted of

witchcraft, and part from the extraordinarily high social status of Flade.

Burr became a correspondent and friend of the other great nineteenth-century American historian of witchcraft, Henry Charles Lea. He also reviewed Lea's *History of the Inquisition of Spain* (1906–1908). From Lea's death in 1909 until 1928, Burr worked at editing Lea's reading notes, turning the project over to Arthur C. Howland in 1928; he wrote the introduction to Howland's edition of Lea's posthumously published *Materials Toward a History of Witchcraft* (1939), which appeared a year after Burr's death. Burr's long teaching and scholarly career at Cornell inspired his students and associates to publish a volume of essays in his honor in 1931.

EDWARD PETERS

See also: BINSFELD, PETER; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; FLADE, DIETRICH; HISTORIOGRAPH; LEA, HENRY CHARLES; LOOS, CORNELIUS; TRIER, ELECTORATE OF

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**BURTON, BOY OF
(THOMAS DARLING, CA. 1584–?)**

The bewitchment in 1596 of Thomas Darling, from Burton-in-Trent (Derbyshire), a notable instance of demonic possession among British Protestants, was described in what is now an extremely rare contemporary pamphlet.

In February of that year, the "Boy of Burton," aged thirteen, was taken to hunt hares in Winsell Wood by

his uncle, Robert Toone. They became separated, and after Thomas was found again and had returned home, he became ill, vomiting, showing signs of suffering from ague, and hallucinating, in particular seeing green angels and a green cat. The symptoms then developed into the type of fits and contortions that were so often attributed to witchcraft or demonic possession at that time; one of those observing his sufferings noticed that the boy gained relief when he stopped praying or reading the Bible. He suggested that witchcraft might be the problem, upon which the boy told how, when lost in Winsell Wood, he had met an old woman, whom he had offended by breaking wind in her presence and who had therefore cursed him.

Suspicion focused rapidly on Alice Gooderidge, aged about sixty. When she was called into the room where Thomas Darling lay, he went into violent fits, and tried to gain relief by scratching her, an activity with which she complied. A local justice of the peace was informed about the suspicions of witchcraft against both Gooderidge and her mother, Elizabeth Wright. Sir Edmund Anderson, one of the few English assize judges to declare himself in favor of the active prosecution of witches, eventually tried Gooderidge for witchcraft in the summer of 1597. Gooderidge was convicted, but probably sentenced to the lesser penalty of a year's imprisonment and four appearances on the pillory. We know that she died in jail.

Although relatively little known, the Thomas Darling case is of considerable interest in demonstrating how one of the standard models of English witchcraft was developing. It seems very probable that Darling's family moved in advanced Protestant circles. The pamphlet describing the case was couched in terms of a battle between God and the Devil, with young Darling's body serving as a battleground between the forces of good and evil. Young Darling's sufferings fit within the context of several cases in which an adolescent or young adult was supposedly the victim of witch-

craft. As was becoming usual in such cases, a large crowd of observers, among whom ministers were prominent, including a Mr. Hildersham from nearby Ashby-de-la-Zouch, witnessed the victim's torments. The pamphlet made it clear that they were hostile to the popish concept of exorcism, but nevertheless came to pray around him. John Darrell, the great Puritan expert on bewitchment and possession, also came to observe Darling. The "Boy of Burton" had obviously internalized a fair measure of religious teaching, and could interpret his sufferings in terms of bewitchment and of the work of the Devil. The incident demonstrates another peculiarity of English witchcraft in this period, namely the conflation of bewitchment and demonic possession. Darling told those around him when he was being attacked by the Devil, had dialogues with him, and, at one point, gave an account of being taken to see hell. Among at least some circles in England, witchcraft was clearly being seen as a more complex matter than mere *maleficium* (harmful magic).

Another interesting feature of this case was that about a year and a half elapsed between Darling's first becoming ill, with its consequent suspicions that he was bewitched, and the actual trial of his supposed tormentor. Over that long period, Alice Gooderidge, taken into custody on various occasions, was brought to confront the boy, who usually went into severe fits on seeing her. She was subjected to harsh psychological pressure, and on one occasion to something very like torture when she was forced to wear shoes that had been heated over a fire.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: BEWITCHMENT; DARRELL, JOHN; ENGLAND; EXORCISM; POSSESSION, DEMONIC.

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CAESARIUS OF ARLES (470/71–543)

Saint, bishop, administrator, preacher, and theologian, Caesarius contributed substantially to disseminating the views of such major Christian Church Fathers as Augustine and Ambrose on superstition and magic.

Born at Châlons in Burgundy (France) around 470, Caesarius served as bishop of Arles from 503 to 542. He earned a reputation as a popular preacher, whose brief, clear, and simple sermons abounded in images and allusions drawn from daily life in sixth-century southern Gaul. In his sermons, Caesarius discussed issues that included the principles of Christian morality, divine sanctions, hell and purgatory, classes of sinners, and the principal vices of his day (adultery, concubinage, drunkenness, neglect of Mass, love of landed wealth). Caesarius insistently and repeatedly deplored the survival of pagan and superstitious elements in the religious practices of his flock. His struggle against the survival of numerous forms of paganism that had only recently been overcome was difficult because, Caesarius asserted, the Devil, a fallen archangel, inspired the ignorance of the people.

Manifestations of the survival of pagan and superstitious cults included sacrifices made regularly at sacred trees and wells (possibly without believing in any real presence of a god or goddess at such locations); consultations with sorcerers and fortunetellers; singing and dancing in front of churches; making the sign of the cross before stealing or committing adultery; and belief in the powers of witches (*malefici*).

In one of his sermons (number XIII), Caesarius condemned a popular belief connected with the moon, whose magical character was already familiar in ancient cultures. The bishop complained that many of his so-called Christians wished to prevent the eclipse of the moon, which they considered a possible source of *maleficium* (harmful magic), by crying and shouting. Caesarius claimed that any such effort to change the course of nature decreed by God amounted to blasphemy.

Another element of pagan and superstitious belief was to be found in the special respect shown to the day dedicated to the sky god Jupiter (Thursday). Inspired by the Devil, says Caesarius, several men and women

did not work on that day, because they did not want to disturb its solemnity. The bishop considered this honor paid to Jupiter by ignorant and superstitious people to be blasphemous, because they did not respect the day of the Lord. Only severe penitence could bring them back to the Christian community.

Caesarius's sermons against magic and surviving pagan practices circulated widely, either because of their false attribution to St. Augustine, or because they were quoted in the work of later writers, including those of the popular genre of saints' lives. Caesarius was a master in depicting the vigorous Roman life of Southern Gaul, where Greek was still spoken in Arles and Asian merchants still frequented the delta of the Rhone. Thus his sermons offer a valuable source for the study of ethnology as well as the history of canon law, dogma, Church discipline, and liturgy.

DRIES VANYSACKER

See also: AUGUSTINE, ST.

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CAGNAZZO, GIOVANNI OF TAGGIA (OR TABIA) (CA. 1450–CA. 1520)

A Dominican theologian, Cagnazzo was active as inquisitor in northern Italy in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, notable for his zealous prosecution of witches. His widely read theological work, the *Summa summarum quae Tabiena dicitur* (The Summa of Summas, Known as the Summa of [Giovanni of] Tabia, 1517) dealt, among other issues, with the modern sect of witches and its horrendous crimes, and contributed to the escalating anxiety over diabolic witchcraft in northern Italy in the first three decades of the sixteenth century. His preoccupation with witches and their misdeeds, and his concurrent fascination with the supernatural experiences of living saints, were shared by other known members of the Dominican Congregation of Lombardy, to which he belonged.

Many biographical details about Cagnazzo's life remain unknown. Probably born around the mid-fifteenth century, he professed as a Dominican friar in Albegna in 1470 and arrived in Bologna around 1477. Having completed his theological studies, Cagnazzo taught in the Dominican *Studium Generale* (house of studies) in Bologna and was appointed dean of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Bologna in 1495, 1497, and 1508. He was inquisitor of Bologna for over twenty years (1494–1513) and also served as confessor to Duke Ercole I of Ferrara. At some point after 1513 he was summoned to Rome, where he may have served as inquisitor. He died in Bologna in the early 1520s.

In 1498, Cagnazzo was involved in the witchcraft trial of Gentile Cimitri (alias Cimera), who was eventually convicted and burned at the stake. Bolognese chroniclers and Cagnazzo's fellow inquisitor and demonologist Silvestro Prierias (Silvestro Mazzolini of Prierio) noted Cagnazzo's role in this trial. Cagnazzo was also present at Ferrara in 1500, and signed the certification attesting to the authenticity of the stigmata exhibited by Lucia Brocadelli of Narni. Heinrich Kramer, the Dominican inquisitor and author of the notorious *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), requested this certification. Cagnazzo may have become acquainted with Kramer, who visited Italy around 1500 and was in touch with Ercole d'Este regarding Lucia's mystical experiences.

Cagnazzo's only surviving work, the *Summa summarum*, was published at least four times from 1517 until 1602. Some of its alphabetically ordered entries dealt with witchcraft. The entries "Diana" and "Sors" (casting lots) expressed Cagnazzo's conviction that witches belonged to an organized heretical sect led by the Devil. In both entries Cagnazzo dismissed the contentions, based on the *Canon Episcopi*, that the witches' confessions of their fearful activities were only illusions, though he admitted that some might be illusory. He argued that the modern witches prosecuted by inquisitors in Lombardy and

elsewhere had nothing to do with the ancient cult of Diana, to which the *Canon Episcopi* referred. Relying on the *Malleus Maleficarum*, which he cited explicitly, Cagnazzo asserted that the sect of witches was a recent phenomenon and that inquisitors often heard testimonies of its existence and terrible crimes. He repeated Kramer's accounts of the bodily transportation of witches to places far removed from their homes in order to attend nocturnal meetings at which they worshipped the Devil, performed obscene, blasphemous rituals, and cause sickness or death in other humans through *maleficiū* (harmful magic). According to Cagnazzo, the severe danger that witches posed to Christian society justified inquisitors' attempts to prosecute and punish them harshly.

Cagnazzo's *Summa*, largely ignored by modern scholars, was among the first works published in northern Italy that relied on the *Malleus Maleficarum* to justify the persecution of witches. His discussion of the diabolic sect was, however, no mere repetition of the German tract. Whereas Kramer argued that witchcraft was essentially a female crime, Cagnazzo described the modern witches' sect as including both men and women. This characterization might reflect the high percentage of men among those accused in the witchcraft trials conducted in Lombardy and Emilia in the first decades of the sixteenth century. Cagnazzo also recounted testimonies given in those trials concerning the witches' assemblies, which he called their *ludus* (game), a term found in the writings of contemporary northern-Italian demonologists such as Bernardo Rategno of Como, Bartolomeo della Spina, and Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola.

TAMAR HERZIG

See also: *CANON EPISCOPI*; DIANA (ARTEMIS); ITALY; KRAMER (INSTITUTORIS), HEINRICH; LIVING SAINTS; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA, GIANFRANCESCO; PRIERIAS, SILVESTRO; RATEGNO, BERNARDO OF COMO; SPINA, BARTOLOMEO DELLA.

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CALVIN, JOHN (1509–1564)

The famous Genevan reformer remains one of the most influential figures of Reformed Protestantism, both in western Europe (France, the Netherlands, Scotland,

Switzerland) and in North America. Part of the second generation of reformers after Luther and Zwingli, this trained lawyer consolidated Reformed theology into a more comprehensive and systematic form in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1559). In addition, Calvin compiled almost complete expositions of nearly every book of Scripture.

Calvin's prominence in Reformed dogmatics and biblical exegesis conveys a sense of the significance of witchcraft and its prosecution, but the results are notably meager. Neither his *Institutio* nor Calvin's catechisms contained anything closely related to the issue of witchcraft. His biblical exegesis painted a different picture, by relating such texts as Exod. 22:18 and Deut. 18:10 ff. to contemporary forms of magic. Calvin asserted that witches did exist and, commenting on Deut. 18, that men also practiced sorcery. He did not, however, use these texts to develop any extensive doctrine of witchcraft. Although he believed that witches can in fact perform harmful magic, he concentrated his attention on forms of false worship related to magical practices. He attempted to classify all the practices listed in Deut. 18 as divination, that is, harmless magic, thereby reducing witchcraft to a mere illusion that the Devil employed to mislead and punish unbelievers. Calvin's approach to witchcraft diverged from his generally Augustinian views by rejecting any notion of demons as physically superior to humans. Along with some other Reformed theologians like Heinrich Bullinger, Calvin marked a way to "unbewitch" the world through a radical understanding of the *permissio dei* (permission of God): the Devil had no power of his own, but operated under the will and sovereignty of God. Calvin completely ignored such elements of the contemporary doctrine of witchcraft as the diabolical pact, sexual intercourse with devils, flying, and Sabbats.

For the Calvinist tradition, it is important that, in accordance with his strong theocratic claims on the lives of believers and his desire to create a "Godly republic," the Geneva reformer considered the death penalty to be appropriate for practitioners of magic, powerless though it may be. He supported this conviction with citations of biblical verses rather than legal traditions. Within the framework of sixteenth-century thought, Calvin's position on witchcraft and magic concentrated on the aspect of apostasy and its punishment, including physical punishment. Calvin's demonology suggested a way to reject a supernaturalistic view of the world, which became a main argument of early Calvinists opposed to witchcraft trials.

A twentieth-century psychoanalyst called Calvin an avid "witch-hunter" (Pfister 1947), sparking a refutation from a Reformed clergyman (Pfisterer 1957) concerning Calvin's personal participation in witchcraft trials in and around Geneva in 1545, when about a dozen "plague spreaders" accused of sorcery were tortured and

executed. There is evidence that Calvin was involved. But it is difficult in retrospect to prove that these death sentences were pronounced primarily on the grounds of supposed sorcery. The fact that Calvin supported the death penalty fits with his general severity in issues of church discipline rather than any particularly intense interest in persecuting witches, who were executed in Geneva well before, during, and long after his ministry (Monter 1971). As with other influential theologians, Calvin's position on legal punishments for superstition and idolatry must be distinguished from his theological position on witchcraft—which must, from a historical viewpoint, be classified as progressive and modern.

JÖRG HAUSTEIN;

TRANSLATED BY HELEN SIEGBURG

See also: BIBLE; BULLINGER, HEINRICH; EXODUS 22:18 (22:17); GENEVA; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; PURITANISM.

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CAMBRAI NUNS (1491)

This early case of mass possession in a convent offers many features that emerged later in the more famous scandals of the early modern era.

Two chroniclers, Jehan Molinet and Christiaan Massaeus, recorded a case of possession in 1491, which lasted four years according to Massaeus and seven according to Molinet. Several nuns of the large reformed Augustinian convent at Quesnoy-le-Conte (Le Quesnoy) near Cambrai displayed many symptoms typical of possession: they ran about like dogs, flew like birds, clambered up trees like cats, made grotesque faces and movements, uttered strange sounds, revealed other people's secrets, and made prophecies. The nuns said their devils were of the order of seraphim and had a hierarchy of princes, vassals, and servants.

Two local clerics, the dean of Cambrai and the Dominican prior of Valenciennes, came to the convent to exorcise the women; besides attempting to deliver the nuns from possession, they used the "devils" to satisfy their professional curiosity about the ways of their

deity. One asked the demons “if they had seen God in his essence” and was told that he had, “but not perfectly,” but enough to make him crave the sight evermore. Highlighting the ambiguous moral status of the possessed, a major theme of the early modern era, the priests also asked these devils, “Why do you not persecute men of war and others who live dissolutely, without troubling these poor nuns here?” The devils replied that they would not waste their time on people who were already theirs (Molinet 1889–1906, 484).

The clerics, joined by another Dominican and by the bishop of Cambrai, Henri de Berghes, met with only mixed success in their attempts to expel the demons. At one point the names of the women were sent to Pope Alexander VI, who read them out during Mass while promulgating the bull *In Coena Domini* (At the Lord’s Supper). Molinet reported that this technique proved unsuccessful—a rare admission of an apparently completely failed (although long-distance) exorcism, and more remarkably a failure by the pope himself.

In comparison to more famous later cases, it seems noteworthy that the Cambrai possession, long before the doctrinal challenges of the Protestant Reformation, included a small-scale diabolical derision of the host, a mode later made famous by Nicole Obry in 1566 during the French religious wars. Using the host to exorcise had been standard procedure since early Christianity, but the Cambrai devils mocked the doctrine of the “Real Presence” by chiming in unison, “Are you well armed? Have you taken the bread?,” but they nonetheless yielded to the spiritual force of the host and even preached that Christians ought to hold it in higher esteem. As in later cases, years of apparent failure to eliminate the devils allowed nuns to display their “obedience,” for example, by responding to the touch of a priest’s holy fore fingers to a nun’s silent and clamped mouth. However, this case had no polemical function; no crowds appear to have been involved, and local chroniclers merely reported it as notable.

Like other later stories, this one also had its tragedy. The convent’s afflictions were imputed to the sin of a forty-five-year-old nun, Jeanne Potière. She had voluntarily coupled with a demon that took the form of the convent’s former confessor, with whom (we are told) Potière had been in love. This accusation exposed Potière as a kind of witch. Though not explicitly accused of active *maleficium* (harmful magic) against her sisters, she was imprisoned, apparently to deliver the nuns from their demons. Molinet mentioned that Potière “died Catholically” shortly after she was imprisoned. Nonetheless, the sisters remained possessed for another four years.

This case was subsequently cited during the era of major possessions and intense demonological speculation. Martín Del Rio used it in his *Disquisitionum magicarum libri sex* (Six Books on Investigations into

Magic, 1599/1600) as an example of false prophecy (Book IV, ch. i, sec. ii), explicitly mentioning the miraculous power of the host and priestly fingers (Book VI, ch. ii, sec. iii, q. iii). Citing Del Rio, Pierre de Lancre, in *L’incrédulité et mescréance du sortilège* (Incredulity and Misbelief of Enchantment, 1622), used it to support his arguments against purely natural explanations for the symptoms of possession.

SARAH FERBER

See also: AIX-EN-PROVENCE NUNS; AUXONNE NUNS; CARPI, POSSESSION IN A POOR CLAIRE’S CONVENT; CONVENT CASES; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; EXORCISM; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; LILLE NUNS; LOUDUN NUNS; LOUVIERS NUNS; OBRY, NICOLE; PADERBORN, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; POSSESSION, DEMONIC.

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CAMPANELLA, TOMMASO (1568–1639)

A Dominican monk, late Renaissance magus, passionate astrologer, and utopian theorist, Campanella sought to reconcile Renaissance natural philosophy with a general reform of both the sciences and society.

Born at Stilo in Calabria, Campanella joined the Dominican order at the age of fourteen. He soon showed a deep distaste for the philosophy of Aristotle and his followers, preferring the new natural philosophy of Bernardino Telesio. His choice provoked outrage among Dominican defenders of Aristotelian and scholastic orthodoxy. In 1599, convinced by prophecies and astrological predictions that a period of profound social, political, and religious change was imminent, Campanella organized an anti-Spanish uprising in Calabria. An army sent by the Spanish government nipped the revolt in the bud. Accused of treason and heresy, Campanella narrowly avoided execution by feigning madness, but spent the next twenty-seven

years in prison in Naples. Finally released in 1626, he moved to Rome and then, in 1634, to Paris, where he died five years later.

Campanella wrote his most important works while in prison: first, his *Città del Sole* (City of the Sun), in which he outlined an ideal city based on communal ownership of both goods and women; second, the *Apologia pro Galileo* (Apology for Galileo), written in 1616, in defense of the right to abandon Aristotelian philosophy to read directly from the book of nature. In *De sensu rerum et magia* (On the Sense of Things and Magic), published at Frankfurt in 1620, Campanella expounded a vision of the natural world as a living organism, the individual parts of which have their own lives and sentience. Every natural entity, from rocks and plants to animals and the heavens, strives for its preservation and is endowed in varying degrees with “sense,”—the capacity to distinguish whatever helps maintain its life from anything harmful or destructive. In animal organisms, *spiritus* (spirit) is of primary importance: a vital warm breath, very rarefied and mobile, which gives rise to all passions and sensations.

Campanella based his conception of natural magic on these doctrines of *sensus* and *spiritus*. The magus knows the specific quality of the “sense” that inheres in all objects and can bring about changes and sensations in the “spirit.” He knows how to awaken the potentialities of life by suggesting food and drink, climates, sounds, and herbal or animal remedies that will increase the vital energies. He knows the secrets of generation and of ailments; he can explain strange phenomena such as premonitions in dreams. Thanks to the doctrine of *spiritus*, it is possible to understand the metamorphosis undergone by those bitten by a rabid dog or by peasants bitten by tarantulas: the changes derive from the fact that their vital regime has been modified by the spread in their organism of the *spiritus* of the animal that has attacked them. “Sense” remains in entities even after death, and their sensations, remaining latent in a sort of stupor, can be revived in certain circumstances. For this reason, the body of someone who has met a violent death bleeds in the presence of his murderer, and a sheepskin drum will break into pieces when a drum made of wolfskin is sounded. The “weapon salve,” believed to have the power to heal a wound when applied to the weapon that had caused it, owed its effectiveness to the fact that the air, which unites persons and actions even at great distances, communicates the healing from the weapon to the wound.

Campanella also wrote a treatise on astrology, published in Lyons in 1629 together with his small tract, *De siderali fato vitando* (Means to Avoid the Astral Fate), giving advice on remedies for avoiding negative astral influences. For anyone in a perilous situation, Campanella suggested shutting oneself up in a room to avoid all contact with “seeds” infected by the air outside

and purifying the air by sprinkling perfumes and by burning aromatic woods and herbs. In this closed and sequestered space, seven torches must be lit, standing for the two heavenly luminaries (sun and moon) and the five planets, symbolically reproducing the heavens. These pages described the astral magic recently performed by Campanella and Urban VIII when the pope believed that his life was in danger because of an eclipse in 1628 (Walker 2000).

GERMANA ERNST;

TRANSLATED BY MARTIN DAVIES

See also: ASTROLOGY; DOMINICAN ORDER; MAGIC, NATURAL; URBAN VIII, POPE.

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CANISIUS, ST. PETER (1521–1597)

A principal supporter of exorcism and witch hunting, Canisius presumably infected a whole generation of young Jesuits with these ideas, to the considerable displeasure of his superiors in Rome.

Born as Pieter Kanijs in Nijmegen in the Netherlands, Canisius became one of the leading protagonists of the Counter-Reformation in the Holy Roman Empire. In the nineteenth century, Pope Leo XIII called him “the second apostle of Germany after Boniface.” Canisius was beatified in 1864 and canonized in 1925.

After studying theology at Cologne, Canisius joined the Jesuit order in 1543, shortly after its creation, and he soon participated in the first session of the Council of Trent. After Canisius received his doctorate in theology at Bologna in 1549, the founder of the Jesuit order, Ignatius Loyola, sent him to the Holy Roman Empire. He served subsequently as a preacher and teacher in several places: Ingolstadt (1549–1552), Vienna (1552–1554), Prague (1555–1556), Augsburg (1559–1566), and Innsbruck and Munich (1571–1577). From 1556 to 1569 Canisius headed the fast-growing German province of the Jesuits. Under his enormously successful leadership, the Jesuit colleges at Munich, Landsberg, Ingolstadt, Innsbruck, Augsburg, and Dillingen became the central training grounds for new cadres of an emerging Catholic elite. Canisius was in close contact with almost all the Catholic princes of his period, particularly in Austria, where Emperor Ferdinand I sought his advice, and in the prince-bishopric of Augsburg, and in the duchy of

Bavaria, where he served as an advisor to two dukes, Albrecht V and Wilhelm V. Canisius was present at every important imperial diet and religious colloquy. His lasting legacy was his *Catechism* (first printed at Ingolstadt in 1556), the Catholic response to Luther's catechism. Canisius supported or reintroduced pilgrimages, the veneration of saints and especially Mary, with Marian Congregations as a new form of organized veneration.

Although he had been influenced by the *dewtio moderna* (modern devotion) in his youth, Canisius never became a practitioner of the spirituality of the Spanish founders of the Jesuit order. Rather, his burning zeal for the Catholic cause led to explosive action, at least partly inspired by millenarian expectations. When working on restoring Catholicism in the tiny Protestant lordship of Wiesensteig, Canisius became acquainted with the first massive witch hunts in the German southwest in 1562. In his position as cathedral preacher in the imperial free city of Augsburg, he promoted his ideas regarding the growing power of the Devil from the pulpit during the following months. To the annoyance of the magistrates, he managed to excite the rabble and to infect members of the urban elite as well. Canisius developed an intimate relationship with Augsburg's leading banking dynasty of the period, the Fugger family, whose daughters and maidservants seemed to be favorite targets of diabolical attacks.

Canisius developed public exorcisms into a major instrument of Catholic propaganda. News sheets reported the victories of the Jesuit champion, who managed to drive out tens of thousands of demons in one afternoon. However exciting these performances were to the general public in Germany, at Rome his Jesuit superiors were not at all impressed. They regarded Canisius's activities increasingly as an embarrassment. Because he was unwilling to comply with their repeated admonitions, they eventually decided to relieve this stubborn zealot of his position in the Holy Roman Empire, viewing him as a liability to the Catholic cause in one of the most sensitive areas of political struggle. The Jesuit General Diego Laynez transferred Canisius to one of the most remote corners of Switzerland, the Catholic canton of Fribourg (Freiburg), where he could cause no further embarrassment. The "second apostle of Germany" lived in this quiet backwater for almost twenty years until his death.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AUGSBURG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; EXORCISM; FUGGER FAMILY; GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); MILLENARIANISM; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; NETHERLANDS, SOUTHERN; SWITZERLAND; WIENSTEIG, COUNTY OF.

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CANNIBALISM

Cannibalism has become one of the fundamental characteristics of the witch in the popular culture of European societies. It marks the witch as "other" and signifies her relationship to all that is terrifying and taboo. It draws on widespread beliefs in many cultures that the practitioners of cannibalism acquire special power. While cannibalism was commonplace in demonologies from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, it occurred infrequently in visual representation.

The witch as cannibal occurred in several early accounts of witchcraft produced in western Alpine Europe during the late 1430s, such as Johannes Nider's *Formicarius* (The Anthill), Claude Tholosan's *Ut magorum et maleficiorum errores* (So That the Errors of Magicians and Sorcerers), and an anonymous treatise called *Errores Gazariorum* (Errors of the Cathars), which claimed that witches strangled children, removed their corpses from their graves after burial, and then cooked and ate them at their synagogues or Sabbats. Mixed with poisonous animals or even with liquids distilled from the corpses of those who had been poisoned, the fat or innards of children were made into ointments and powders used to bring illness or death to other human beings, or rubbed on staffs to help transport witches to their assemblies. A more detailed description occurred in Book 5, chapter 3, of Nider's *Formicarius*: unbaptized infants were ritually killed in their beds, as though from natural causes. The babies would then be removed from their graves, cooked until the flesh fell from the bones, and the liquid reduced to strengthen it. An ointment would be made from the solids, while the liquid was put aside to be drunk by those destined to be leaders of the sect. Nider's text also suggested that the ritual eating of children would help make the Devil appear.

Nider's account was incorporated verbatim into the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, Part II, Q. 1, chap. 2), thus achieving widespread dissemination. Unsurprisingly, later Catholic treatises by Jean Bodin, Francesco-Maria Guazzo, and Martín Del Rio accepted cannibalism as one of the crimes of witches. Another belief, also found in the *Malleus* and common in early Italian sources, claimed that witches drank the blood of the children they murdered. Found in Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola's 1523 dialogue *Strix* (The Witch), this tradition of vampirism was probably related to notions of witches as *lamiae*, the night-flying and cannibalistic harpies of classical literature.

Although Jacques de Gheyn produced a drawing of a vampire-witch biting into a child's neck around 1600,



Witches roasting and boiling infants, from Francesco Maria Guazzo's Compendium Maleficarum (A Summary of Witches), 1608. (Stapleton Collection/Corbis)

artists of the previous century generally showed little interest in cannibalism. Models for cannibalism were widely known, such as the child-devouring figures of Saturn, Jews, fools, and ogres, or the devouring hellmouth of Satan; but artists seemed content to hint at the cruelty of witchcraft through suggestions of cannibalism and dismemberment by scattering bones and skulls around witches' cauldrons. Only from the later sixteenth century, as witches become routinely depicted as older women, were children represented as innocent victims of these aggressive anti-mothers. This was especially evident in many of the images of Jacques de Gheyn, and in works by Frans Francken the Younger, Michael Herr, and Christoph Murer. Cannibalism was not depicted as anthropophagy, the actual physical consumption of a victim; but, as with many sixteenth-century images of Amerindian cannibals, this activity was suggested indirectly by depicting mutilated bodies and scattered limbs, or body parts prepared to be boiled. Only a few instances, like the 1613 etching of a

Basque Sabbat by the Polish artist Jan Ziarnko, dared to show a cooked child ready to be devoured by witches and devils at the Sabbat banquet.

CHARLES ZIKA

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BALDUNG [GRIEN], HANS; BODIN, JEAN; CAULDRON; CHILDREN; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; *ERRORES GAZARIORUM*; FRANCKEN II, FRANS; GHEYN II, JACQUES DE; GUAZZO, FRANCESCO MARIA; INFANTICIDE; LAMIA; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; NIDER, JOHANNES; OINTMENTS; PETER OF BERN; PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA, GIANFRANCESCO; POTIONS; SABBAT; SATURN; STICKS; TENIERS, DAVID THE YOUNGER; THOLOSAN, CLAUDE; VAMPIRE; ZIARNKO, JAN.

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CANON EPISCOPI

A ruling (*canon*), beginning with the word *Episcopi* (bishops), was first attested in the *Two Books of Synodal Causes* written by Regino of Prüm (ca. 840–915) in 906 and very likely created by Regino himself. The *Canon* was later erroneously attributed to the Council of Ancyra (Ankara, in modern Turkey), an ecclesiastical assembly held in 314, because Regino’s collection followed an authentic canon from Ancyra and was assumed to have come from the same source. Instead, the *Canon* appears to have come from two different earlier ninth-century texts that Regino combined. Regino’s work was a manual of canon law to be used in episcopal visitations of ecclesiastical establishments. It was requested by Regino’s archbishop, Radbod of Trier, and was dedicated to Archbishop Hatto of Mainz for use by him and his subordinate officials. It contains authoritative statements excerpted from earlier Church councils and works of the Church Fathers and bishops of Rome, applied to the practical questions that episcopal officials were expected to ask clergy and laity in their inquiries into ecclesiastical discipline. The *Canon Episcopi* became the most important statement in later Latin Christian canon law concerning sorcery and witchcraft, and occupies a central place in all discussions of the so-called witches’ Sabbat.

Book II of Regino’s collection dealt with the ecclesiastical discipline of the laity. Chapter 5: 42–45 dealt generally with “enchanters and sorcerers,” particularly in matters of illicit sacrifices, charms, or love magic. Chapter 5: 45 gave the “short version” of the *Canon Episcopi*, stating only that any woman who believed that she rode at night with demons was to be expelled from both parish and diocese. In Book II, chapters 354–375, Regino further elaborated on these, giving the “long version” of the *Canon Episcopi* at II, chapter 371. Although the *Canon Episcopi* was a single text, it appears to be a composite of two different ninth-century texts. The first part warned bishops that they were obliged to eradicate *sortilegium* (sorcery) and *maleficium* (harmful magic), which were invented by the Devil, and to expel the practitioners of these from their dioceses. The second part warned that there are women who believed that they ride at night across great distances with the goddess Diana and obeyed her

commands. Not only were they themselves deceived, but they had also led others into this belief, thus risking the salvation of more souls than their own. Preachers should teach that such beliefs were the result of demonic temptation and the demonic illusion that things that happened only in the imagination occurred in reality. Regino’s text contrasted these illusions with the true spiritual experiences of the prophet Ezekiel and the apostle Paul (2 Cor. 12:2–5). Regino’s central point was that there was no power except that of God, and that any belief that attributed the power of creation or of moral or physical transformation to any power than that of God was mistaken and heterodox.

Regino’s work applied only to the archdiocese of Trier, but some of its material, including the *Canon Episcopi*, was excerpted a century later in the similar work of Burchard of Worms, then a century after Burchard by Ivo of Chartres, and later in the twelfth century by Gratian, whose collection of canon law became the standard textbook for many centuries. Although sorcery played a small role in these works, the *Canon Episcopi* became the starting point for all later discussions of both diabolical sorcery and the witches’ Sabbat.

Canon Episcopi became especially problematic during the period of the formation of the classical image of the witch and the nature of witchcraft during the debates of the early fifteenth century. Then, its apparently categorical denial of physical transvection posed difficulties for those demonologists who firmly believed that witches did indeed fly at night on beasts, staves, or brooms (a 1450 manuscript of Martin Le Franc’s *Le Champion des dames* [The Defender of Ladies] contained the first known illustration of witches flying on broomsticks). The second version of the *Errores Gazariorum* (Errors of the Gazars or Gazarii-Cathars), written in 1438 or slightly later, insistently affirmed that such flight occurred in reality. Le Franc’s *Defender* denied transvection, however, by citing the *Canon Episcopi*, and Le Franc’s denial was supported by Johannes Nider’s agreement in the *Formicarius* (The Anthill, 1437–1438).

In the *Flagellum haereticorum fascinariorum* (The Scourge of Heretical Witches, 1458), Nicholas Jacquier, taking up an observation of Pope Alexander V in 1409, argues that contemporary witches were a new sect and that the *Canon Episcopi* therefore did not apply to them. Still, other demonologists, equally convinced of the reality and danger of witchcraft, adhered to the *Canon Episcopi* on the single point of transvection. The Spanish canonist Juan de Torquemada agreed with *Canon Episcopi*, but the biblical exegete Alfonso Tostado, citing the passage in Matthew (4:1–11) in which the demon transported Jesus through the air, stated that the gospel testified to such demonic power, that the *Canon Episcopi* referred only to a particular case, and that the illusion condemned by the canon was

only the women's belief that they flew with Diana. Ultimately, the text in Matthew served as a counterweight to the *Canon Episcopi* in the matter of transvection, but not in the unanimous opinion of all demologists.

Proving the reality of the Sabbat in later centuries required addressing the problem of the *Canon Episcopi*, and in this way the text took on new life in the fifteenth century and was debated until the late seventeenth.

EDWARD PETERS

See also: BURCHARD OF WORMS; DIANA (ARTEMIS); *ERRORES GAZARIORUM*; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; GRATIAN; HERESY; HOLDA; JACQUIER, NICOLAS; JOHN OF SALISBURY; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (MIEVEAL); NIDER, JOHANNES; SABBAT; SORCERY; TOSTADO, ALFONSO.

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CAPITALISM

Social stresses resulting from capitalism sometimes led to witchcraft accusations. Capitalism is an economic system in which production is organized by entrepreneurs employing wage labor, and wealth accrues to the entrepreneurs through profit. Capitalism grew significantly in parts of early modern Europe. It replaced feudalism in which production is organized by subsistence-farming peasants and self-employed artisans, and wealth accrues to landlords collecting rents.

Alan Macfarlane first made the link between capitalism and witchcraft accusations in 1970 in a detailed study of Essex, England. He identified a distinctive model of witchcraft accusations. A poor villager, typically an old woman, would come begging at the door of a prosperous neighbor. Traditional peasants felt solidarity toward the poor: one day that poor villager could be you. But the prosperous neighbor, with more modern capitalistic values, aspired to lift himself or herself above

the level of the peasants, and expected the state to relieve the prosperous of responsibility for the poor. So the neighbor sent the old woman away empty-handed; she left muttering unintelligibly, or even cursing openly. When the prosperous neighbor later suffered a misfortune, she remembered the denial of charity (for which the neighbor felt guilty) and assumed that the old woman had bewitched her neighbor in revenge. This model was adopted and incorporated into a broader framework of changing English values by Keith Thomas, who had supervised Macfarlane's PhD thesis. The model in which a witchcraft accusation is provoked by a denial of charity followed by misfortune is sometimes called the "Thomas–Macfarlane model."

Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum crafted a second model involving capitalism in their study of Salem Village in 1974. They showed that witchcraft accusations followed the pattern of the factions into which the village was divided. Some villagers, who supported the minister Samuel Parris, were attempting to maintain their traditional Puritan values against what they saw as more materialistic neighbors, linked to the burgeoning commercial world of nearby Salem. From within this pro-Parris faction, witchcraft accusations were directed against actual and symbolic members of the anti-Parris faction.

These two celebrated models thus present a contrast. In the English version, witchcraft accusations tended to come from supporters of emerging capitalism; in the New England version, they tended to come from its opponents. These were of course simply tendencies, and other more significant causal factors—not least a pervasive belief in maleficent witchcraft—were present in both cases. But witch hunting is best explained through complex models involving numerous factors; in these regions, capitalism can be recognized as one factor.

What of continental Europe? Scholars working on witch hunts there have been alert to the possibility of similar patterns of accusation, but they have not found them on any significant scale. There were certainly occasional cases of witchcraft accusations following a denial of charity, but most village quarrels that led to accusations were between social equals. Political factionalism was usually about other issues.

The most likely explanation for this at present might simply be that capitalism advanced at an uneven pace. Parts of England and New England advanced toward capitalism relatively early, but we do not know why such patterns of accusation did not seem to apply to areas on the Continent, especially the Low Countries, northern Italy, and parts of Lowland Scotland, where capitalism developed soonest during the period of witch hunting. As a force for socioeconomic transformation, capitalism was insignificant in much of Europe until after the period of witch hunting had ended. Venice, a decidedly capitalist place, saw little by way of witchcraft accusations, while the capitalistically

advanced and urbanized southern Low Countries (unlike the Dutch Republic) saw many. Thus the connections between capitalism and witch hunting are uncertain, although further research may uncover indirect links between witch hunting and the tensions of socioeconomic transformation. Augsburg, the largest capitalist location in the German heartland of witch hunting, offers an interesting case: witchcraft executions began there only after capitalist industry declined during the Thirty Years' War. Capitalism and feudalism are complex and controversial concepts that attempt to identify the key dynamic elements in society, while recognizing that society will always contain elements of different systems. Macfarlane went on to develop his ideas on capitalism—which he increasingly regarded as synonymous with “individualism”—in directions not always compatible with his witchcraft work. Simplistic socioeconomic explanations should be avoided, but sophisticated ones involving multiple and indirect causation should be encouraged.

JULIAN GOODARE

See also: AUGSBERG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY; ESSEX; MACFARLANE, ALAN; NETHERLANDS, NORTHERN; NETHERLANDS, SOUTHERN; NEW ENGLAND; PURITANISM; SALEM; THOMAS, KEITH.

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CARDANO, GIROLAMO (1501–1576)

A Renaissance philosopher and physician, Girolamo Cardano (Pavia, September 24, 1501–Rome, September 20, 1576) devoted many works to various fields of knowledge, from mathematics to astronomy and astrology, from medicine to natural philosophy. He narrated his life in a famous autobiography, including the death sentence of his firstborn son who was convicted of uxoricide. Cardano's *De subtilitate rerum* (On the Subtlety of Things, 1550) and *De rerum varietate* (On the Variety of Things, 1557) were his most famous works of natural philosophy. Published in the mid-sixteenth century, they became very popular but also aroused lively controversy both from philosophers who were faithful

to a strict Aristotelian orthodoxy and from ecclesiastical critics.

These two works were full-fledged encyclopedias in which the author described all possible aspects of reality with an insatiable curiosity and admiration, paying particular attention to the most rare and unusual phenomena. Cardano believed that rarities must be investigated with subtlety in order to grasp the links, analogies, and sympathies among the various parts of the world, which are interconnected like the parts of the human body. Cardano was very interested in the divinatory arts, such as geomancy, chiromancy, physiognomy, and metoposcopy, and in rare and strange natural facts, such as prodigious recoveries, enchantments, oracles, dreams, and apparitions of “monsters.” He considered unusual events signs and *ostenta* (portents). Comets, floods, and births of monstrous animals symbolized and announced specific events of man's world such as wars, plagues, or the death of princes.

Astrology played a central role in Cardano's thought. He wanted to purge this discipline from the superstitions of Arab authors and present it as part of natural philosophy. Ptolemy's *Tettabiblos* (Mathematical Treatise in Four Books) was his preferred text, on which he wrote an ample commentary. Cardano acknowledged that astrology is not a science with absolute certainty and exactitude like mathematics and astronomy, but nevertheless it is not a superstition. Instead, astrology is a conjectural discipline dealing with a changeable human and natural world, which advances probable judgments about future events in much the same way as medicine, the art of navigation, or agriculture. Astrology is based on the physical principle of the celestial influences: while they are apparent only in the sun and the moon, by analogy they can be attributed to all other celestial bodies. Cardano complemented his theoretical speculations on astrology with a large body of experimental findings by publishing a great variety of horoscopes; some referred to unknown people, others to such famous people as popes, princes, or men of letters. He was sufficiently audacious to write Jesus's horoscope. Even though earlier authors like Albumazar (Abu-Mashar), Albertus Magnus, or Cardinal Pierre d'Ailly had already dealt with this topic, Cardano's horoscope of Jesus created a major scandal and gave rise to charges of impiety. In the majority of cases, Cardano tended to attribute the prodigious events to natural causes, but he did not rule out completely the intervention of demons, although he admitted that he had no direct experience of them, unlike his father who said that he had seen and spoken with supernatural creatures.

Cardano tackled the problem of witchcraft in a lucid and acute manner both in *De Subtilitate* (chap. 18) and *De Varietate* (bk. 15, chap. 80). He identified the various natural, medical, and social factors that contributed to an understanding of the phenomenon

without resorting to any demonic intervention. The so-called witches were mostly old and poor women who lived in solitary places eating grass and roots. As a consequence, their nutritional deficiencies made them mentally weak and stubborn in maintaining the reality of impossible things. They became an easy prey to excesses of black bile and melancholic humors. This pathology fostered their deliria of omnipotence and their hallucinations, in which they imagined they took part in dances, feasts, and night flights. Cardano did not deny that the so-called witches were often impious and superstitious old women, and that sometimes they were even dangerous because they really could perform horrible crimes. He did deny, however, that they were able to undertake the exploits they purported to do by virtue of the demonic powers of which they flattered themselves. Cardano linked the origin of the Sabbath to the survival of ancient pagan rituals that became marginal and clandestine because of persecutions and prohibitions.

GERMANA ERNST;

TRANSLATED BY GUIDO GIGLIONI

See also: ASTROLOGY; DIVINATION; MONSTERS; PRODIGIES.

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CARO BAROJA, JULIO (1914–1995)

Julio Caro Baroja, a Spanish ethnologist, cultural historian, and painter, ranks among the unsung pioneers of recent advances in witchcraft scholarship. A nephew of the author and Nobel Prize winner Pio Baroja, he grew up in a highly intellectual circle. Despite interrup-

tions during the Spanish Civil War, he completed a master's degree in ancient history at the University of Madrid in 1940 and two years later obtained his doctorate in Spanish folklore. In 1943 Baroja became director of the ethnological *Museo del Pueblo Español* (Madrid). He conducted anthropological studies in the United States and Oxford in the early 1950s before doing fieldwork among the nomads of the Spanish Sahara. In 1957 Baroja resigned his directorship and during the next two decades he taught abroad, at Coimbra, Wisconsin, and Paris, and at Spain's national research council (*Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas*). In 1975 a chair of philosophical anthropology was created for him at the *Universidad del País Vasco*. Despite extensive university contacts, Baroja was a true individualist who followed no methodological school and trained no students; but he maintained an extensive international network of professional contacts and was extremely helpful in advising other scholars. By the end of his life, Baroja received many honors and prizes, and despite his shy nature, he became one of Spain's most celebrated personalities.

His extensive written work—entirely handwritten, as he ignored the technological advances of his time—comprised almost 600 titles. Baroja's work on witchcraft, especially Basque witchcraft, held an important place in this corpus. It was the theme of one of his earliest articles, "Four reports on Basque witchcraft," the most important being a manuscript at the Biblioteca Nacional (MS 2031) by the inquisitor Alonso de Salazar Frías, summarizing his reports on the Basque witch craze that he had submitted to the Spanish inquisitor-general in 1612–1613 (Caro Baroja 1933, 131–145). The skeptical mind of this inquisitor fascinated Baroja throughout his life. However, when he wrote his pioneering *The World of the Witches* (1961), with part two almost entirely dedicated to Basque witchcraft, he had still not located Salazar's original reports that had vanished after the American Henry Charles Lea found them at the beginning of the century in the State Archives of Simancas. Baroja's famous book, subsequently translated into several languages, demonstrated his extraordinary learning, which embraced everything from ancient history through medieval legend to Renaissance philosophy and incorporated a wide spectrum of disciplines: theology, anthropology, psychiatry, art history, and literary history. Eight years later Baroja published a fresh contribution to the history of Basque witchcraft, almost simultaneously with my article in English announcing my rediscovery of Salazar's papers in Madrid's Archivo Historico Nacional (Henningsen 1969, 266).

His other relevant works on witchcraft included the two-volume *Magical Lives and Inquisition*, with essays on cunning folk and learned magicians mentioned in the archives of the Toledo Inquisition (Caro Baroja

1967), and a subsequent collection on *The Lord Inquisitor and Other Bureaucratic Lives* with suggestive essays on typical inquisitors and on the atypical Martín del Río. In that volume, published just as the international renaissance in Inquisition studies was starting, Baroja unfortunately remarks that “we know all we wish to know about [the Inquisition’s] origin, organization, procedures, real and supposed errors against those under its jurisdiction, its victims and its end” (Caro Baroja 1968b, 17).

Baroja was probably the first scholar to combine the anthropological theory of African witchcraft with the study of European witchcraft. In his analysis of the field notes from interviews at the beginning of the 1940s with an old Basque peasant living close to his uncle’s house in Vera de Bidasoa, Baroja introduced Evans-Pritchard’s famous distinction between *witchcraft* and *sovereignty*, but reversed the terms in his translation: “*Hechicería* is what in English is called ‘witchcraft,’ that is, an evil art, essentially antisocial, which one gets to learn by apprenticeship. *Brujería* is equivalent to ‘sorcery,’ an ability to produce evil, which certain persons are born with” (Caro Baroja 1957, 8). Baroja has been criticized for his mistakes and superficiality, which was in fact closely related to the rapidity of his working method and his impressionistic way of writing; but his extensive authorship is so rich in thought, ideas, and original observations that one never finishes with it.

GUSTAV HENNINGSEN;

TRANSLATED BY JAMES MANLEY

See also: BASQUE COUNTRY; EVANS-PRITCHARD, EDWARD E.; HENNINGSEN, GUSTAV; HISTORIOGRAPHY; LEA, HENRY CHARLES; SALAZAR FRÍAS, ALONSO DE; WITCH HUNTS.

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CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*)

The Carolina Code was the criminal law code for the Holy Roman Empire, issued in 1532 during the reign of the Habsburg emperor Charles V, from whom it got its name. The *Constitutio Criminalis Carolina* remained the basic code of the empire, including official procedures for conducting witchcraft trials, for centuries. In its main parts, the Carolina Code contained rules of court procedures, into which were inserted definitions of crimes, mitigating circumstances like self-defense, accountability of defendants, and so on. In addition to the old accusatory trial, the Carolina Code dealt with inquisitorial trial procedures without determining the priority of the one over the other. The future belonged to the latter. Torture was sanctioned to extort confession, and the inquisitorial trial replaced the now-obsolete trial by ordeal, witness of reputation, and oath of purification.

The earliest efforts at reforming criminal law in the Holy Roman Empire date from the end of the fifteenth century when two imperial Diets or *Reichstage*, one held in 1496 at Lindau and a more important one two years later at Freiburg, elaborated a first draft. The ultimate version was modeled after the penal law of Bamberg of 1507 (*Bambergensis*), which is there fore called *mater carolinae*. Both codes are typical of so-called reception laws, because the modern *ius commune* (common law), that is, Roman canon law, was adopted in order to reform many traditional criminal law customs. As Winfried Trusen has convincingly determined, the authors of the *Bambergensis* must have been jurists such as Leonhard von Egloffstein and Sebastian von Rotenhan; the former prevailing opinion, which ascribed it mainly to Baron Johann von Schwarzenberg, must be modified. It took until 1532 for the last draft of the code to be accepted, when the resistance of three major conservative states was finally overcome by inserting the so-called *clausula salvatoria*, which sanctioned retaining old customs insofar as they were just.

Concerning witchcraft and sorcery, Article 109 of the Carolina Code followed Roman law with its distinction between harmful “black” magic and helpful “white” magic. Only those convicted of the former received the death penalty at the stake for heresy, whereas the second should be punished, if at all, less severely according to a juridical opinion. This article contained no evidence for the reception of demonological knowledge, disseminated by elaborations such as

Heinrich Kramer's *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) or similar theoretical literature. Indeed, its procedural rules gives a quite different impression. For example, Kramer's main types of circumstantial evidence reappeared in Article 44. Heading the list was how to proceed when harmful effects followed after having been threatened. Curses and swearing, very common when neighborhood squabbles degenerated into vendettas, carried the risk of being persecuted for witchcraft. The second type of evidence was close relationships with notorious and previously condemned sorcerers or witches, which could become a fateful assumption. A third type of evidence was the use of suspicious words, gestures, or objects. At the very least, a suspect of witchcraft had to be of ill repute in his or her community for being a sorcerer.

In practice, imperial jurisprudence and judicial decisions soon surpassed the restrictive wording of Article 109 and extended it to a more spiritualized concept, with the denial of God as the core element. The constitutions of electoral Saxony, issued in 1572, used the *clausula salvatoria* to broaden the scope of positive law into a much wider range of criminal persecution. Such examples show that the influence of the Carolina Code on the prosecution of German witches has often been overestimated; so, in a different way, has been Friedrich Spee's famous criticisms of 1632.

GÜNTER JEROUSCHEK

See also: ACCUSATORIAL PROCEDURE; EVIDENCE; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); ROMAN LAW; SPEE, FRIEDRICH.

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CARPI, POSSESSION IN A POOR CLAIRE'S CONVENT

In the mid-seventeenth century, a case of diabolical possession among several nuns in the convent of Corpus Domini at Carpi changed the way the Roman Inquisition treated such cases in female communities. This case was significant because the people involved, in and out of the convent, were eventually implicated in power struggles between ecclesiastical and state institutions, and finally, it affected the procedures of the Roman Inquisition's local tribunals.

The Pio family ruled the small Po Valley principality of Carpi for centuries. The family's political situation contributed in different ways to occasional conflicts in the small but lively city. The sensational cases of possession in the observant Franciscan convent of Corpus Domini of Carpi between 1636 and 1638 (only a few years after the well-known French events at the Ursuline convent of Loudun), emerged from a background of uneasiness created in the monastery following the acceptance (1608) and profession of vows (1611) of Eleonora d'Este, the daughter of Duke Cesare of Ferrara and sister of his successor, Duke Alfonso III.

The presence in the convent of this princess (and later her two nieces, Alfonso's daughters) greatly changed a convent that had prided itself on its devotional practices and its special cultivation of liturgical music, feast-days, and celebrations. It became a convent consumed by politics, divided between those loyal to the noblewomen of the Pio family and those who were not. The Este princess, now sister Angela Caterina, held the position of abbess from 1622 to 1629 and was again elected for the three years from 1633 to 1636. In this period, the cases of possession began. The first occurrence was in 1636 when Paolina Forni, the princess' companion, became so ill that medicine could not help her. She was therefore considered to be possessed. Alfonso III (who, after his wife died, had renounced his position as duke, became a Capuchin monk, and entrusted his daughters to his sister's convent for their education) invited exorcists to the convent to remove the evil spirits from the possessed. Such secular intervention in ecclesiastical matters provoked a reaction from Rome because the papacy had recently prohibited mixed jurisdictions.

The Roman Inquisition subsequently investigated all phases of this episode of possession through correspondence with the inquisitor of Modena. Jurisdiction over the convent belonged to the Franciscan order, but then passed (under Pope Urban VIII) to the archpriest of the Collegiata di Carpi. Duke Francisco I, the successor to Alfonso III (the Capuchin) and the nephew of the convent's governess (Angela Caterina), would not surrender his aunt for examination by the Inquisition. During the following years, the Observant Minorite friar, theologian, and preacher Angelo Bellacappa of Parma, who had been named confessor to the convent from 1633 to 1636 by Angela Caterina d'Este, played a significant role in an episode of possession.

The inquisition trial that shook the convent, and revealed the episodes of misbehavior and possession in 1636 and 1637, began with a denunciation to the inquisitorial vicar of Carpi made on April 24, 1638, by Fra Giovanni Battista Bignardi, the convent's current confessor. He told the vicar about participating in an exorcism of possessed nuns, during which he heard the devils address sister Dealta Martinelli as a witch, and also related that one of the possessed had accused

the confessor Bellacappa of solicitation during confession. After this declaration, Orazio Giudici, Carpi's inquisitorial vicar (a layman), interrogated the monks about the solicitation and also spoke with the nuns who were not possessed to confirm the accusation. Giudici questioned the other exorcists, who were convinced that there were evil spirits in the convent that had identified both Angelo Bellacappa and sister Dealta Marinelli, and that their wickedness was *ad amorem* (for love).

Informed in detail of these facts and about the local trials, Rome remained skeptical about the diagnosis of possession. In May 1638, the Holy Office ordered the inquisitor of Modena to conduct the investigation personally and to suspend all exorcisms. They also isolated sister Dealta Martinelli in a cell where no one could speak to her. The drawn out investigation continued with the arrest and interrogation of Brother Angelo Bellacappa. To Rome, the case became increasingly suspicious, as evidenced by the organization of the exorcisms, manipulated from inside by the head of the convent, supported on the outside by her brother and by their nephew, the duke. It is also noteworthy that all of the nonpossessed nuns were faithful servants of the princess; only Sister Martinelli openly disregarded the high status of Angela Caterina.

At year's end, the Roman Holy Office decided to suspend the investigation being performed by the inquisitor of Modena, and instead brought a new administrator to the cloister, someone with a different background and from a different region, the bishop of Adria, Germano Mantica. He immediately ordered a serious reform of the cloister, segregating the supposedly possessed nuns and prohibiting anyone from discussing the incidents. Mantica, acting as a special correspondent for the Holy Office, together with the inquisitor of Reggio, also had responsibility for resuming the investigation. At the end of January 1639, Rome closed the case, declaring it a case of "false possession" originating from "the strong experience of wickedness, and not [from] demons." Recognizing that the whole affair had been driven by "reason of state" and that it was necessary to close the investigation without branding the nuns as lunatics, the Holy Office told the inquisitor of Modena that "vehement suspicion of wickedness" was sometimes more convincing than actual possession; many times, Rome added, clerics had believed firmly that someone could be evil without recognizing their own power to harass or vex the inner spirit. The Vatican dealt with the false possession by removing the Franciscans from jurisdiction over the convent and by transferring sister Dealta Martinelli and her real sister, Ippolita Martinelli, to another convent. In the case of the possessed nuns of Carpi, the Roman Church applied the legal standards recommended in Cardinal Desiderio Scaglia's *Practica* manuscript

(ca. 1620) to guide inquisitors investigating cases of possession in convents and monasteries.

GABRIELLA ZARRI;

TRANSLATED BY JESSICA BOTHWELL

See also: CONVENT CASES; EXORCISM; INQUISITION, ROMAN; LOUDUN NUNS; POSSESSION, DEMONIC.

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CARPZOV, BENEDICT (II) (1595–1666)

One of the greatest and most influential German jurists, Carpzov has an unfair reputation as a cruel persecutor of witches. Carpzov was born into a famous dynasty of Saxon jurists at Wittenberg; his father, Benedict (I), was professor at the university and chancellor of electoral Saxony. On a formative grand tour through Italy, France, and England, the younger Carpzov became acquainted with new tendencies in jurisprudence, especially in sixteenth-century Italian literature. At Jena in 1616–1617, he heard lectures from a professor of law named Theodoricus, whom he often quoted in his later works.

Carpzov became a member of the famous Leipzig *Schöppenstuhl* (in upper German, *Schöffentuhl*), a kind of court of appeal to which the court of first instance was obliged to submit a case and, subsequently, to accept its decision. For a time he was simultaneously professor of law at Leipzig University and judge at a Dresden appellate court. Until his death, he remained a *Schöppe* (in upper German, *Schöffe*—judge) in Leipzig nearly without interruption. His main achievement lay in penal jurisprudence, about which he published his famous *Practica nova imperialis Saxonica verum criminaliam* (New Rules in Criminal Cases for Imperial Saxony) in 1635, which became influential even beyond the borders of the Holy Roman Empire.

Although today one stresses his forerunners, such as Matthias Berlich, Carpzov has been styled the founder of German criminal jurisprudence, and he was certainly the first German criminal jurist with a European reputation.

Carpzov has falsely been blamed for sentencing 20,000 persons to death for witchcraft. This persistent legend can be traced to an envious note from a certain Philip A. Oldenburger in 1675, and it is still sometimes repeated. Although most of the sources have been lost, surviving documents give no indication that Carpzov ever sentenced *anyone* to death in a witchcraft case. Even if it were possible that Carpzov cooperated in imposing 20,000 criminal sentences during his extremely long career as a judge, one must consider first, that those sentences were imposed collectively by Saxon judges. Moreover, they included not only death sentences—or other final sentences imposing lesser punishments like banishment—but also numerous acquittals, minor corporal punishments and fines, as well as great numbers of so-called “interlocutory” sentences concerning the admissibility of evidence to permit torture or to initiate a formal trial.

In his *Practica*, Carpzov argued for using severe procedures and punishments against witches in accordance with the electoral Saxon law of 1572. His examples included such Catholic authorities as Heinrich Kramer, Jean Bodin, Peter Binsfeld, Nicolas Rémy, and Martín Del Rio. With respect to admissible evidence, Carpzov advocated the use of such circumstantial evidence as the incapacity to shed tears, which had by then become obsolete in many other parts of the Holy Roman Empire, especially in the south. Yet there is some evidence that Carpzov interpreted his own explanations concerning depositions and the law of torture in a restrictive manner. Although he probably imposed few if any death sentences for witchcraft, there occurred a serious witch hunt in Saxony between 1655 and 1665, during Carpzov’s tenure on the bench (Wilde 2003).

GÜNTER JEROUSCHEK

See also: LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); SAXONY, ELECTORATE OF.

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CASAUBON, MERIC (1599–1671)

Son of the famous classical scholar Isaac Casaubon, Meric Casaubon contributed to the revival of witchcraft theory during the Restoration period in England. Born in Geneva, Casaubon emigrated to England at the age of twelve, where his father had already settled. He received his BA, MA, and DD (Doctor of Divinity) degrees from Oxford University and was ordained a minister in the Church of England.

Casaubon’s ideas regarding witchcraft developed gradually during the 1650s and 1660s. In *A Treatise Concerning Enthusiasm* (1656), Casaubon, a royalist during the Civil War, attacked the religious radicals who flourished during the revolutionary period because they attributed natural phenomena, especially medical disorders, to either divine inspiration or demonic possession. In this work, Casaubon did not deal directly with witchcraft, and he took a moderately skeptical position regarding the possibility of the Devil’s intervention in the world. Three years later, however, in his edition of the papers of the Elizabethan magician John Dee, who claimed to have had commerce with spirits, Casaubon declared that the Puritan saints and religious radicals of his day were in league with the Devil.

These allegations of witchcraft set the tone for Casaubon’s affirmation of the reality of witchcraft during the early years of the Restoration, most notably in his *Of Credulity and Incredulity in Things Natural, Civil and Divine* (1668), which was reprinted in 1672 under the title *A Treatise Proving Spirits, Witches and Supernatural Operations by Pregnant Instances and Evidences*. Casaubon’s intention in writing this book was not to promote the prosecution of witches, which was in decline in England during these years, but to counter the claims of atheists and those who denied the existence of spirits. He also used witchcraft theory to define the boundaries of the ideal Christian society. Demonologists had long claimed that witches abjured their Christian faith, and Casaubon used these traditional accusations against witches to condemn the schismatics and religious fanatics of his day. In this way he defended the political and ecclesiastical order of Restoration England, in which religion and politics, the sacred and the secular, reinforced each other.

Casaubon grounded his belief in the reality of witchcraft in a common-sense empiricism and the widely held assumption that the Devil worked through nature. His work found support in the writings of Joseph Glanvill, another Anglican clergyman, who in *Philosophical Considerations Touching Witches and Witchcraft* (1666) and *Saducismus Triumphatus* (1681) collected accounts of preternatural phenomena, including prodigies, poltergeists, and bewitchments, to counter the claims of contemporary Sadducees, who denied the existence of spirits. Unlike Glanvill, Casaubon, who was hostile to the claims of the new

science, did not invoke the authority of the Royal Society to support his argument. Casaubon's belief in witchcraft was challenged directly by John Wagstaffe, who in *The Question of Witchcraft Debated* (1669) claimed that witchcraft was a deception imposed on the people by politicians and men like Casaubon. His other famous opponent was the physician and religious dissenter John Webster, whose treatise, *The Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft* (1677), accused Casaubon of using the arguments of Roman Catholics and divine-right royalists to defend their views. The debate between the Sadducees and their opponents, which dominated later seventeenth-century demonology in England, Scotland, and New England, attested to the strength and endurance of the anti-Sadducean position articulated by Casaubon.

BRIAN LEVACK

See also: DEE, JOHN; DEMONOLOGY; ENGLAND; GLANVILL, JOSEPH; SKEPTICISM; WAGSTAFFE, JOHN; WEBSTER, JOHN.

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**CASSINI (CASSINIS), SAMUEL DE
(CA. 1450–POST 1510)**

A Franciscan theologian, born near Montferrat (Monferrato) in the mid-fifteenth century, Cassini wrote several works but is most famous for his criticisms of Girolamo Savonarola and for his work on witch hunting, where he attacked inquisitors as heretics and tried to stop them from murdering innocent people on the pretext of rooting out witchcraft. Samuel de Cassini entered the Order of Friars Minor in the Province of Genoa, studied theology at Paris, and then taught in the schools of his Order.

In his attack on Savonarola, *Invectiva in prophetiam fratris Hieronymi* (Speech Against the Prophecy of Savonarola, 1497), Cassini tried to show that Satan had seduced the Dominican, although the bulk of Cassini's essay was a polemic against the concept of prophecy. Cassini denied the ability of prophesying and forecasting, and outlined the threats Savonarola posed for naive people. He condemned the reformer's claim not in its essence, but in the form Savonarola desired, arguing that nobody can enact reforms without express papal agreement. Cassini's criticisms were not original and can be understood within the long history of polemics between

Franciscans and Dominicans. Moreover, some scholars consider his *Speech* a pamphlet in support of Ludovico il Moro's desire to attack Florence. Cassini was therefore criticized by Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola with a *Defensio . . . adversus Samuellem Cassinensem* (Discourse and Defense Against Samuel Cassini), to which the Franciscan replied with a work in 1498. In the same year, Cassini also published a *Quaestio de immortalitate animi* (Inquiry on the Immortality of the Soul), dedicated to Ludovico il Moro.

For our purposes, Cassini's most important work was his *Quaestio lamiarum* (Treatise on Witches), published in 1505, in which he analyzed some beliefs to destroy superstitious elements that corrupted the real essence of true religion. The overwhelming number of witches and trials impelled him to dispute such superstitious and widely held beliefs. Although Cassini never doubted the existence of demons, he directly opposed the opinions Heinrich Kramer (like Savonarola, a Dominican) expressed in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches). Cassini believed witches perform their evil deeds with the assistance of Satan, but he denied the pact as worthless. His argument was based on the concept of divine omnipotence that no one can contradict. The *Examen* was the first book to attack the identification of witchcraft as heresy, as defined in the papal bull *Vox in Rama* (A Voice in Rama, 1233). It is worth noting how strongly he affirmed the impossibility of a miraculous event to induce sins like witchcraft, because of his tendency to emphasize God's power. Cassini followed the *Canon Episcopi* in condemning the belief that women really fly at night; demons can deceive people, because their powers depend on the divine will. Hence, God cannot produce miracles against good men in order to satisfy evil men. Then Cassini pointed his finger at inquisitors, who, according to him, committed sin and even lapsed into heresy when they prosecuted charges against witches for deeds that Cassini held were fables. Because the *Canon Episcopi* condemned everyone who believed in those fables, such inquisitors themselves became heretics.

By adopting what he took to be correct scholastic theory, Cassini upheld the canonicity of the *Canon Episcopi* against all those who, like Nicolas Jacquier in 1458, had denied its value. After briefly summarizing his opinions, Cassini concluded that witches clearly did not exist and those who believed and prosecuted them were heretics. In fact, he suggested natural explanations for some events that demons could not perform. Then he devoted himself to defending papal authority against the conciliarists even in matters of witchcraft. The dispute between the Dominican and Franciscan orders spread to the demonological field. In 1506, Vincente Dodo (another Dominican) refuted Cassini in his *Apologia contra li difensori delle strie, et principaliter contra Quaestiones lamiarum fratris Samuelis de Cassinis*

(Apology Against the Defenders of the Witches, and Most of all Against the Treatise on Witchcraft Written by Samuel Cassini), to which the Franciscan replied the next year with his *Contra fratres Vincentius or praedicatorum qui inepte et falso impugnare nititur libellus de lamiis* (Statement Against the Dominican Vincente Dodo, Who Wrongly and Falsely Confuted the Book on Witches). In 1510, Cassini published a work against the Waldensians, *Victoria triumphale contra li errori de ualdesi* (Triumphal Victory Against the Errors of the Waldenses) and an *Expositio triplex librorum octo phisicorum Aristotelis* (Threofold Explanation of the Books on Physics of Aristotle). Afterward, his name and biography faded into obscurity.

MICHAELA VALENTE

See also: CANON EPISCOPI; DEMONOLOGY; DODO, VINCENTE; DOMINICAN ORDER; JACQUIER, NICOLAS; KRAMER (INSTITORIS), HEINRICH; MALLEUS MALEFICARUM; PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA, GIANFRANCESCO; PRIERIAS, SILVESTRO; VAUDOIS (WALDENSAINS).

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CASTAÑEGA, MARTÍN DE

A Spanish Franciscan friar and preacher in the province of Burgos, Martín de Castañega is known primarily as the author of the first tract on witchcraft and superstition printed in Castilian, titled *Tratado muy sotil y bien fundado de las supersticiones y hechizierias y vanos conjuros y abusiones, y otras cosas al caso tocantes, y de la posibilidad y remedio dellas* (A Very Exact and Well Founded Tract on Superstitions, Sorcery, Vain Incantations, Witchcraft, and Other Things Touching upon Such Matters, and on the Possibility and Remedies of the Same, Logroño, 1529). Although this was his only known work, and we know little about Castañega (he held office at a Basque convent as late as 1555), he remains an important figure in the history of witchcraft and superstition. He was the first to publish a tract on witchcraft in a vernacular language and displayed a prudent and tolerant attitude in a climate of increasing animosity toward everything associated with witchcraft and related forms of superstition.

It is probable that Fray Martín—who was called a “preacher of the Holy Office” although the Inquisition had once arrested him (Muro Abad 1994)—witnessed the 1525 witchcraft prosecutions by the Inquisition in Navarre; he claimed to have seen an old man reconciled for this crime at an *auto de fe*. In accord with the new

inquisitorial guidelines of 1525 about witchcraft, Castañega’s skeptical attitudes offered a sharp contrast with the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486).

Castañega dedicated his work to the bishop of Calahorra, don Alonso de Castilla, who in turn required his parish priests to own a copy of the *Tratado*. Fray Martín’s task was to distinguish, in clear and didactic form, what was licit from what was superstitious. However, despite its indubitable merits, Castañega’s tract was overshadowed by the appearance, in the following year, of a longer work treating the same theme, written by one of Spain’s most famous theologians, Pedro Ciruelo. Although Ciruelo’s work was thereafter republished at least seven times, Castañega’s tract, which was in some respects more rational and skeptical, was not republished until 1946.

Castañega drew his doctrinal inspiration from many sources, including the Bible, Pliny, St. Augustine, Isidore of Seville, Thomas Aquinas, Bede, and above all the famous chancellor of the University of Paris, Jean Gerson, whose *De erroribus circa artem magicam* (Concerning Misconceptions About Magical Arts) provided a reliable guide to such delicate matters as the question of superstition. Castañega used these authorities principally in the first part of his tract (chaps. I–XI), concerning the Devil and his powers. It was there that Castañega seemed to admit the reality of the demonic pact and the possibility that witches flew to their gatherings, or even the existence of demonic excrements (a parody of the Church’s sacraments). Notwithstanding all this, Castañega’s more relativist and skeptical second part was dominated by his insistence on the Devil’s multiple traps and the many apparently real phenomena that were actually only illusions to ensnare men.

The last thirteen chapters (XII–XXIV), dedicated to the practices and practitioners of sorcery rather than philosophical ideas concerning possibility or impossibility, demonstrated a modern mentality which, without denying the possibility of demonic worship or possession, tried to seek a natural explanation for every apparently extraordinary or demonic phenomenon.

MARÍA TAUSIET;

TRANSLATED BY THOMAS SIZGORICH

See also: CIRUELO, PEDRO; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; GERSON, JEAN; INQUISITION, SPANISH; MAGIC, POPULAR; SPAIN; SUPERSTITION.

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CATS

Cats remain a common representation of a witch's familiar and a widespread disguise of the Devil. Although ancient Greece and Rome, like Egypt, venerated cats as sacred, medieval Christianity distrusted them as unruly and lascivious animals. In the eighteenth century, shades of diabolization still burdened the reputation of this feline, nevertheless essential to the ecological balance of Old Régime Europe's agrarian economy. Torture of cats provided widespread popular entertainment throughout early modern Europe, but it is exaggerated to claim that ancien régime Europe witnessed any actual, long-lasting massacre of cats (Engels 1999). Interestingly, the phenomenon of trials against animals (locusts, rats) that by "virtue of Satan's obligation" were damaging victuals as grapes and grain shows a "frequency curve . . . similar to that of the witch trials, showing a maximum in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, . . . albeit . . . less frequent" (Dinzelbacher 2002, 410). But cats were not put on trial.

Medieval phobias about cats found an early expression in Guillaume d'Auvergne's depiction of Lucifer, who "may appear to his adepts and worshippers in the shape of a black cat or a toad, and is then kissed by them . . . under the cat's tail, . . . or on the toad's throat" (Bobis 2000, 198). The diabolization of felines seems closely linked with the fight against heresy. Pope Gregory IX's bull *Vox in Rama* (A Voice in Rama, 1233), attacking the "sect of the damned," depicted the horrible apparition to its novices and their masters "of a black cat about the size of an average dog, [that] descends backwards with his tail erect" (Kors and Peters 2001, 115–116), which everybody kissed on its hindquarters and adored. Two generations later, the crusading Order of the Templars was accused of doing this. In early fifteenth-century Rome, a cat was reported to have killed several babies until he was caught and blessed. He escaped but, because he was bleeding, left traces and was followed. He turned out to be an old woman, transforming herself into a feline and prolonging her life by sucking infants' blood.

The Dominicans played a pivotal role in consolidating the myth of the satanic cat as opposed to the faithful dog barking at heretics, an image found in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486).



Both witches' familiars and the Devil took the form of a cat. Here a witch, with her cat familiar at her feet, urinates on her broomstick while holding a book of charms. (Cornell University Library)

In such other important fifteenth-century texts as *Errores Gazarionum* (Errors of the Gazars or Gazarii—Cathars was a common term for heretics and later witches) or Martin LeFranc's *Le Champion des Dames* (The Defender of Ladies), which helped to revolutionize witchcraft in the 1430s, cats began to assume additional roles, appearing when witches performed their *maleficia* (harmful magic) and providing transportation to Sabbats. The witch's feline associates were also widely reported to accompany *maleficia* with satanic noises: Jean Bodin mentions their devilish howling in a 1565 Moravian witchcraft case (Bobis 2000, 216).

However, no general European common pattern governs the witch's feline companions. Lorraine

witches, for instance, were never transported by cats, but Alsatian witches were. In Lorraine, among approximately 375 individuals tried as witches between 1580 and 1630, “wolves appear in thirty-six cases, . . . cats in thirty-four, and dogs in sixteen” (Briggs 2002, 13). Most villagers believed in shape shifting, but because of St. Augustine’s vigorous and authoritative opposition to the idea, the matter proved embarrassing for demonologists. Nevertheless, Pierre de Lancre reported how witches changed into cats in order to kidnap babies from their beds.

Despite such baroque sketches as Jean de La Fontaine’s *Puss in Boots*, the status of cats was slow to rise. In the Sieneese countryside, in 1705, after a witch attacked a baby in bed, “the very morning when he passed away, it looked as if all the cats in the world were roaring around the house” (Di Simplicio 2003, 88). In the late 1730s, Paris saw a mock trial “complete with guard, a confessor, and a public executioner” staged by workers of a printing shop; half-dead cats dumped in sacks were pronounced guilty and strung up for bewitching their boss’s house (Darnton 1984, 81). Still, general attitudes were slowly changing; in 1727, François-Augustin Paradis de Moncrief’s *Histoire des chats* (History of Cats) attempted to reverse medieval prejudices. But black cats have remained part of a witch’s entourage in popular folklore.

OSCAR DI SIMPLICIO

See also: ANIMALS; DEVIL; DOGS; FAMILIARS; LYCANTHROPY; METAMORPHOSIS; SABBAT.

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CAUL

Since the classical era, a host of supernatural properties have been attributed to the caul, or amnion, one of the two membranes that form the amniotic sac in which a fetus develops in the womb. On rare occasions, an infant is born with this thin membrane covering the

shoulders and head. In medieval and early modern Europe, cauls were associated foremost with protection; wearing a caul as an amulet offered its owner the same protection that the caul had provided the developing fetus. It could therefore ward off the evil eye, prevent death by drowning, and protect one in battle. A caul might also confer preternatural eloquence, guaranteeing lawyers success in the courtroom and even rendering a possessor’s declaration of love irresistible to whomever heard it.

In countries from Iceland to Russia, infants born “with a veil” (France), “with a shirt” (Italy), or “helmeted” (Germany) were furthermore believed to have been marked out for an auspicious fate. The caul destined its wearer for fame and fortune, as the seventeenth-century French proverb “happy the man who is born with the caul” suggests. In some countries, however, such blessings depended on the color of the caul at birth. While a white or red caul usually indicated good fortune, an English child born with black caul faced a lifetime of accidents and misfortunes—unless the caul was torn up and administered to the child in a drink.

In some European countries, the good fortune conferred by a caul could be inherited or even purchased. One seventeenth-century English knight willed his caul (set in a jeweled case, no less) to his daughter, and then specified that it be passed along to her male descendants. In ancient Rome, as well as early modern Denmark, Iceland, France, and England, the magical qualities of the caul could be purchased. As Europeans believed that cauls protected and brought luck to those born wearing theirs, it seemed logical to conclude that a caul would offer such advantages to anyone who possessed one, whether or not it had been theirs at birth. Consequently, Roman lawyers procured cauls from midwives for enhanced eloquence; in France, Louis XIV’s subjects bought cauls to serve as gambling charms; and as late as World War I, English sailors bought and sold cauls through advertisements in the London *Times*, believing that they prevented death by drowning.

Cauls might also confer supernatural powers on their owners. In Yugoslavia, a black caul indicated that the child would become a sorcerer or witch, unless the midwife took the precaution of either climbing up to the rooftop to announce the child’s birth or bringing the child to the door of the house and declaring three times that no sorcerer, but a baby, had been born within. Areas as distant as Iceland and New Guinea shared the belief that clairvoyants were born in the caul. The peasants of the Friuli region in northern Italy, made famous by Carlo Ginzburg, believed that infants delivered wearing a caul were destined to become *benandanti* (do-gooders), setting forth in their dreams to do ritual battle against witches and wizards who sought to destroy the harvest. It was common for a *benandante* to

have as many as thirty Masses said over his cauldron to heighten its protective powers, for its magical powers could be strengthened if an ordained priest consecrated it. This belief was widely held across Renaissance Europe, where it was common practice to baptize infants with their cauldrons.

During the early modern period, cauldrons could also serve as powerful ingredients of love charms. A distinct branch of magic drew its coercive power from material produced during the reproductive process, including not only cauldrons but also menstrual blood, sperm, and even afterbirths. A woman in Renaissance Italy who added either powdered cauldron or menstrual blood to a would-be lover's food, for example, would find him inflamed with passion, just as a German man carrying his cauldron would never find his affections unrequited. Hippomane, also considered a potent love charm, was similarly generated during the reproductive process, although not the human reproductive process. The equivalent of an equine cauldron, hippomane was a small, black, round, fleshy mass, found on the forehead of a newborn foal. It had been sought after as a love charm since classical times, and its powers were testified to as late as the eighteenth century.

LYNN WOOD MOLLENAUER

See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; *BENANDANTI*; LOVE MAGIC; MAGIC, POPULAR.

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CAULDRON

A cauldron is the pot or receptacle in which witches cooked their brews. Witches used these concoctions, either in liquid or powder form, to carry out harmful sorcery and to create the ointment that they rubbed on sticks or their bodies to be transported to distant places. Cauldrons were usually displayed over a fire, although they sometimes appeared as vessels on the ground or were held up high, spewing out powerful vapors. Smaller pots were also depicted in the fork of cooking sticks or hung from those sticks by their handles, as witches transported them through the air.

The association of the cauldron with witchcraft in European culture is ancient, going back to the cauldron's traditional role in magic and sorcery in ancient Greek mythology. Medea rejuvenated Jason by boiling his body parts and boiled drugs in a cauldron to restore the youth of Jason's father, Aison. In Teutonic and Celtic mythology, magical potions including blood were also

boiled or mixed in cauldrons for purposes of regeneration, divination, or the gaining of wisdom. Brass cauldrons appeared in the early sixth-century Salic laws, which mentioned men who carried those used by witches. Cauldrons used for boiling witches' brews reappeared in Johannes Nider's early account of the witches' Sabbath in Book 5, chap. 3 of his *Formicarius* (The Anthill), written in the late 1430s. Nider's inclusion of Peter of Bern's evidence of witches boiling the bodies of children in order to make magical ointments and powders was then copied into the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, Part II, Q. 1, chap. 2) of 1486. From there, the skeptical Johann Weyer cited it in full in his *De praestigiis daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils) of 1563 (Book III, chap. 1), thereby entering the mainstream of witchcraft literature.

While literary accounts of witchcraft emphasized the powders and ointments created in this cauldron, visual accounts often highlighted the cauldron itself. This visual emphasis on the cauldron originated with the woodcuts used in the more than twenty editions of Ulrich Molitor's *De laniis et phitonicis mulieribus* (Concerning Witches and Fortunetellers) published between 1490 and 1510. The image of two witches dropping a cock and a snake into a belching cauldron, and thereby cooking up a storm in the sky above, featured as the title page woodcut in seven of these editions.

In his famous chiaroscuro woodcut image of witchcraft from 1510, Hans Baldung [Grien] made the cauldron the central element around which his trio of naked women gather. His cauldron rests on the ground as a closed vessel, from which billowing vapors escape when the lid is lifted. In other images, a witch holds the cauldron aloft, like the flaming vessels held by Venus. This is how it appears in several of Baldung's drawings from 1514, as well as in the influential woodcut, possibly from Baldung's workshop, which first appeared in the collection of Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg's sermons published in 1516 and 1517 as *Die Emeis* (The Ants). That cauldron motif influenced many later illustrations of witchcraft, adorning works by Paulus Frisius, Abraham Saur, and Johann Weyer, among others. By the first two decades of the seventeenth century, when the Dutch artist Jacques de Gheyn the Younger and the Polish artist Jan Ziarnko incorporated cauldrons into their graphic images of witchcraft, they ranked among the most common and easily identifiable visual codes for witchcraft.

In various scenes of witchcraft, the cauldron serves to identify witchcraft as a female activity by linking it to the female task of food preparation, and through the link between food and sex, to female sexuality. The cauldron also offers a visual alternative to the vase or vessel, which was commonly used in sixteenth-century illustration as a symbol of the vagina or female sexuality. The small cauldrons held aloft by young witches

allude to the flaming vessels and torches that are attributes of Venus. The cauldron represented a complex and multivalent symbol of the sexual power of witches' bodies, their destructive sorcery, their involvement in the horrors of infanticide and cannibalism, and their capacity to create unnatural and wondrous effects.

CHARLES ZIKA

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BALDUNG [GRIEN], HANS; CANNIBALISM; FRISIUS, PAULUS; GEILER VON KAYSERSBERG, JOHANN; GENDER; GHEYN II, JACQUES DE; INFANTICIDE; MALEFICIUM; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MOLITOR, ULRICH; NIDER, JOHANNES; OINTMENTS; PETER OF BERN; POTIONS; SABBAT; STICKS; WEATHER MAGIC; WEYER, JOHANN; ZIARNKO, JAN.

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CELESTINA, LA (1499)

Comedia o Tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea (Comedy or Tragicomedy of Calisto and Melibea), better known as *La Celestina*, tells the story of a procuress and enchantress. Its author was the Toledo native Fernando de Rojas, and the work was first published in 1499. Critics often consider *La Celestina*, written in dialogue form in imitation of humanist Renaissance comedies, as the first Spanish novel, and probably the first European novel as well. It related the story of the ill-starred love of a noble couple, alongside the parallel tale of the intrigues and love affairs carried on by young Calisto's two servants with local low-caste women (*mozas*). Celestina, an aged prostitute and specialist in every art and artifice of love, shared the underworld in which these servants move.

As was suggested in the subtitle appended to later editions ("containing, in addition to its agreeable and sweet style, many philosophical dicta and very necessary advice for young men, demonstrating the deceptions to be found among servants and enchantresses"), the work came to be seen as a denunciation of the dangers of amorous passion taken to its ultimate

consequences, especially if one trusted intermediaries to approach the object of one's desire. In this sense, magic played a central role in revealing the moral implications of the events in the story—especially with regard to a particular form of love magic practiced by enchantresses since antiquity. A dozen years earlier, the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) also spent several pages describing this form of magic and its supposed capacity to solicit such violent passion between enchanted people that they were powerless to exercise their own will. In this way, young Melibea, who at first rejected Calisto's amorous advances, fell madly in love with him after being seduced by Celestina, using a spell purchased by her suitor.

Celestina was described as an expert in her vocation, that of enchantment and procuring, with whom the law had previously dealt on more than one occasion. This fact has simply enhanced her prestige as a connoisseur of the secrets of love magic. She possessed a laboratory complete with the most varied ingredients with which to conjure her spells, equipped with a hangman's noose, a dragon wing, a bat's blood, and water from the first rains of spring (*agua de Mayo*). However, the most important ingredient for the spell to be cast upon Melibea was called "snake oil," a concoction of vipers cooked alive in a blend of wine and oil to refine the snakes' venom. The symbol of the serpent as representative of the Devil is clear, and the role of this animal also suggested itself in the entwined form of the oil-anointed yarn that Celestina managed to sell to Melibea. It was by means of this enchanted yarn that Melibea was subjected to a terrible passion that she later described as a sensation of "serpents eating my heart from inside my body."

The power of Celestina proceeded from her connivance with the Devil, as was demonstrated explicitly in her long incantation directed to the "master of the infernal depths" in which the enchantress urged the evil one to obey and grant her wishes. On this occasion she asked that Melibea buy the snake-oil-anointed yarn "and in such a manner . . . however much she sees him, so much more will her heart yield" and make her suffer "from a raw and powerful love of Calisto." Once during the spell Melibea met with Calisto and both were consumed by their desire, much to their mutual satisfaction. Nevertheless, their happiness immediately turned to ashes after the deaths of both of Calisto's servants, old Celestina, and, finally, the protagonists themselves, all of them victims of their own passions.

MARÍA TAUSIET;

TRANSLATED BY THOMAS SIZGORICH

See also: LOVE MAGIC; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; SORcery.

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CERVANTES (SAAVEDRA), MIGUEL DE (1547–1616)

Cervantes was a world-famous Castilian writer (born and died near Madrid), known principally for his immortal novel *El ingenioso hildago don Quijote de la Mancha* (The Ingenuous Gentleman don Quijote de la Mancha, Madrid, 1605–1615). It described the adventures and misadventures of an elderly Castilian nobleman who, inflamed by books full of tales of chivalry, decided to live out his fantasies in the midst of the seventeenth century, much to the surprise, admiration, and ridicule of those who witnessed his exploits.

One of the principal features of chivalrous novels was the belief that the world was bewitched, abounding with enchanted persons suffering varied torments or metamorphoses from which they were unable to free themselves unless aided by a hero. Don Quixote, as a faithful follower of the knightly tradition, believed himself to be constantly surrounded by enchanters and enchantments. These were, of course, presented only as figments of his imagination; the celebrated episode of the "sham enchantment" that closed the first part of the book was nothing but a trick to make the protagonist return home. Given the constant tension in this work between that which was imagined and that which is real, it was not surprising that references to magic, enchantment, and the powers of the Devil appeared throughout, offering an interesting panorama of beliefs with regard to such matters in Spain during its Golden Age (*Siglo de Oro*).

Cervantes's profound skepticism regarding everything related to the world of magic and, more concretely, to witchcraft, manifested itself still more directly in some of his other works, as the *Novelas Ejemplares* (Exemplary Tales, Madrid, 1616), *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda* (The Travails of Persiles and Sigismunda), and the two surviving dramatic pieces of the twenty to thirty that Cervantes is believed to have written between 1583 and 1587, *La destrucción de Numancia* (The Destruction of Numancia) and *Los ratos de Argel* (The Works of Argel).

Cervantes treated magic and witchcraft at greatest length and most densely in the *Exemplary Tales*, partic-

ularly in the *Novela y coloquio que pasó entre Cipión y Berganza, perros del hospital de la Resurrección, que está en la ciudad de Valladolid, fuera de la puerta del Campo, a quien comúnmente llaman los perros de Mahudes* (Tale and Colloquy That Took Place Between Cipión and Berganza, Dogs of the Hospital of the Resurrection, Which Is in the City of Valladolid, Outside of the Puerta del Campo, Commonly Called "The Dogs of Mahudes"), a work with a title that was often abbreviated as *The Colloquy of the Dogs*. It offered a profound study of the relationship between life and fiction, presented in a small but masterly dialogue between the two canine protagonists. Its theme was the autobiographical remembrances of Berganza, which were interrupted now and again by bits of philosophical commentary from Cipión. The dog Berganza, like the protagonists in picaresque novels, went through many masters, but the central episode of his life and the one that he described at greatest length was that which he spent with an old witch named Cañizares.

Here, speaking through the character of a dog, Cervantes expressed his own opinions concerning the reality of the flights and metamorphoses attributed to witches, as well as those concerning their attendance at the Sabbath and their pursuit of demonic powers—that is to say, concerning the reality–imagination debate that, during the same period, a good number of theologians were working to clarify. Cervantes has the old witch say, "Some are of the opinion that we don't go to these gatherings except in our imaginations . . . others say, rather, that we actually go in body and soul; and both opinions I hold, for my part, to be true. For everything which happens to us in fantasy happens so intensely that there is no difference when we really and truly go." Cervantes's own clear vision concerning so controversial a theme was left for the end of the novel, when the wise and discreet Cipión, referring to the witch Cañizares, said, "Her words have to be taken in a sense that I have heard is called 'allegorical'; their literal sense I would not care to speak."

Throughout his works, Cervantes repeatedly made clear his attitude about the power of magic: from the viewpoint of a faithful Christian believer, nothing can compete with the liberty of the individual. For him, enchanters and witches were nothing more than simple poisoners lacking any type of supernatural power. In *El Licenciado Vidriera* (The Glass Graduate), for example, a student was the target of love spells from a woman who nevertheless did not manage to win him. ("She gave Tomás one of those things they call a charm, believing that the thing she gave would force him to desire her; as if there were in the world herbs, incantations or words sufficient to force free will.") In *La inglesa española* (The English Spaniard), his skepticism with regard to spells caused him to affirm roundly that "they are nothing but

tricks and frauds.” In *The Labors of Persiles and Sigismunda*, witchcraft was presented as a device with the capacity to make one ill, but without the power to constrain free will; an evil permitted by God, its effects were only temporary, as love and honesty would always prevail. In *The Destruction of Numancia*, Cervantes’s character Ma rquino represented the necromancers typical of his era, just as in *The Works of Argel*, he introduced a Muslim spell-caster named Fatima who specialized in love magic; but his message remained the same: regardless of its paraphernalia, deceitful magic can do nothing when faced with virtue.

MARÍA TAUSIET;

TRANSLATED BY THOMAS SIZGORICH

See also: BEWITCHMENT; DEMONS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; SABBAT; SKEPTICISM; SPAIN.

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CESALPINO, ANDREA (1519–1603)

Cesalpino was demonologist and the author of *Daemonum investigatio peripatetica* (Aristotelian Investigation of Demons), a report to the archbishop of Pisa, who had consulted him about apparent mass possessions of nuns in a Pisan convent in 1574–1575. Cesalpino was also an Italian botanist, Aristotelian philosopher, professor of medicine at Pisa and Rome, and physician to Pope Clement VIII after 1592. Historians of science praise Cesalpino for classifying plants according to reproductive organs and for his theory of pulmonary blood circulation. Historians of philosophy appreciate his Aristotelian account of the relation between God and the soul.

Cesalpino disputed the idea, which he traced to Galen, that natural explanations adequately explain all ailments: “[Galen] fell into these absurdities because he did not believe there was anything divine or immortal in this lower world” (Cesalpino 1580, sig. B1r). Cesalpino demonstrated on Aristotelian grounds that natural causes, including astrological influence and the force of the imagination, cannot sufficiently explain disease. Rather, demons truly existed and could cause physical and mental ailments. Cesalpino’s defense of supernatural causation required that he refute the idea, worrisome to theologians since Thomas Aquinas, that Aristotle did not support the reality of angels and demons. This notion is erroneous, Cesalpino said:

Aristotle never opposed the reality of angels and demons, but considered them outside the natural realm, as Christians do. Aristotle neither ignored nor contested theological speculations of previous philosophers and theologians, from the Egyptians to Plato. Christians can learn about demons most reliably from biblical revelation.

Like Aquinas, Cesalpino did not accept demons on faith: he interpreted *maleficium* (harmful magic) and demonic possession as empirical evidence of demonic reality. The Pisan nuns exhibited symptoms that implied the presence of demons: speaking languages of which they were ignorant, fleeing sacraments, and rebelling against holy rituals. The nuns and others like them ardently desired to partake of sacraments and ritual, but felt a foreign presence inside them resisting anything holy (Cesalpino 1580, sig. F3r).

Maleficium forcefully demonstrated the reality of a supernatural causation, which, because it was evil, must be demonic. Without acknowledging his source, Cesalpino copied much of the final eleven of his fifteen chapters from the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), including its most grotesque anecdotes. He claimed that witches, generally either men of the lower classes or women, could teach scholars many things about demonic reality.

Cesalpino’s competitor in interpreting the Pisan possessions, as in much else, was the Pisan Platonic philosopher Francesco de’ Vieri, whose *Discorso intorno a’ dimonii volgarmente chiamati spiriti* (Treatise on the Demons Popularly Known as Spirits) reached similar conclusions about demonic reality. Vieri asserted that “Our faith is greatly augmented by witnessing possessed people and their liberation at the hands of the exorcist” (Vieri 1576, 73).

Both the physician Cesalpino and Vieri the philosopher stood in a tradition of writers reaching back to Aquinas. Disturbed by the idea that Aristotle opposed supernatural causation, they defended demonic reality by vindicating possession and witchcraft. Later exponents include Giovanni Lorenzo D’Anania (Anania), who, noting the skepticism of Epicureans and Peripatetics, asserted that “Philosophers and other experts among the ancients fought persistently over the question whether demons exist as something that God made in Nature, or rather as something that the human mind and inventiveness imagined for itself: nor was there ever any agreement among them” (Anania 1654a, 3; cf. Anania 1654b, 9). As a natural philosopher and physician celebrated for his very real and significant scientific discoveries, Cesalpino becomes a particularly ambiguous and interesting figure among early modern demonologists.

WALTER STEPHENS

See also: ANGELS; AQUINAS, THOMAS; CONVENT CASES; CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DEMONS; EXPERIMENTS AND

TESTS; GASTALDO, GIOVANNI TOMMASO; IMAGINATION; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC; SINISTRARI, LUDOVICO MARIA; TASSO, TORQUATO.

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CHANNEL ISLANDS

Politically English but culturally French until the twentieth century, the self-governing Channel Islands off the coast of Normandy comprised the most intensive witch-hunting zone anywhere in Atlantic Europe. Recorded executions for witchcraft began by order of the royal court of Jersey in 1562 and by order of the *bailli* (chief officer of a local royal court) of Guernsey in 1563, although indirect evidence suggests that a man had been executed there for witchcraft as early as 1550. Despite some gaps in their records, we know that its two principal islands, Jersey and Guernsey, which together contained less than two dozen parishes and fewer than fifteen thousand adults, put at least 167 people on trial for witchcraft between 1562 and 1661 and executed at least 90 of them (43 on Jersey, 47 on Guernsey).

Economically and culturally, the Channel Islands should be seen as an offshore extension of Normandy. Although they have been under English suzerainty since the Norman Conquest, the islands continued for many centuries to use the customary laws of Normandy, supplemented by local privileges. Until Elizabeth I's reign, their parishes belonged to the Norman diocese of Coutances. Norman witch beliefs can be traced as far back as the execution of Joan of Arc. One finds women born in Normandy who were banished as witches from both Guernsey (in 1619 and 1622) and from Jersey (in 1626 and 1649). They were more fortunate than a notorious fortuneteller from the tiny island of Alderney who moved to the mainland and was burned for witchcraft at Rouen in 1617; a pamphlet about her, *La devineresse d'Aurigny* (The Fortuneteller of Aurigny) was mentioned ten years later (Monter 1997, 579).

The witches' Sabbat, apparently unknown in England until the seventeenth century, appeared in the very first recorded trials from the Channel Islands. Guernsey's witches reportedly gathered at a high rock on the island's southwestern coast, overlooking a small Benedictine priory and chapel on the tiny islet of Lihou, and defiantly challenged the Holy Virgin with untranslatable chants of "*Que hou hou, Marie Lihou*" (Uttley 1966, 18). The early acculturation of the witches' Sabbat directly contributed to occasional clusters of executions in the Channel Islands—for example, the five witches burned on Jersey in 1585 and the eight witches burned on Guernsey in 1617. However, no true witch-hunting panic involving ten or more suspects ever erupted anywhere in these islands at any time; even when one notorious witch (Collette Dumont, Guernsey, 1617) confessed to attending a Sabbat with sixteen other men and women along with their familiars (thus proving that the Channel Islands borrowed witchcraft concepts from England as well as Normandy), but she could identify only two of them. Sexual intercourse with the Devil, another key feature of continental witchcraft (including Normandy by 1600) also seems absent from confessions by Channel Islands witches, who, in sharp contrast to Normandy, were overwhelmingly female.

The single most important explanation for the exceptional severity of witch hunting in the Channel Islands is that they were simultaneously part of continental western Europe and completely self-governing. Channel Islanders earned their living from farming and livestock as well as fishing, making them vulnerable to the same forms of agricultural *Maleficia* (evil acts) that afflicted neighboring Normandy. The two main islands have always emphasized their differences, as the names of two major breeds of cattle still attest. During the age of witch hunting, their legal systems also differed greatly. Jersey used an elaborate, multilayered system of criminal juries, while Guernsey preferred a more centralized system of trial by nine *jurats* (municipal councilors) under supervision from its *bailli*. Unlike England, both systems allowed the use of torture. Jersey, with a slightly larger population than Guernsey, apparently brought fewer accused witches to trial than its neighbor, but convicted and executed about two-thirds of such defendants. Guernsey, with a simpler criminal court system, brought many more accused witches to trial (102) but executed fewer than half of them. Unsupervised by trained jurists in appellate courts, the farmers and fishermen of the Channel Islands put more witches to death than even the most witch-ridden English county, Essex, with more than 100,000 people, and they executed as many witches as Normandy, with nearly a million adults.

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: ESSEX; FAMILIARS; NORMANDY.

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CHARMS

Charms are magical words, artifacts, chants, or incantations used to protect against or cure disease, or to counter witchcraft. Charms have been employed since ancient times. The etymology of the word, from Latin *carmen* or song, shows that in the Middle Ages it implied verbal formulas; in modern languages, it is more widely applied. There are spoken charms and those written on parchment, stone, wood, cloth, and so on, and sometimes worn on the body. There is a distinction between "charms" as traditional spoken formulas intended to bring good luck or good health and explicit prayers, which are "blessings." Items worn, carried, or displayed to bring good luck and success, or to avert misfortune and evil powers, are called lucky charms, or mascots. Certain objects used as healing charms are treated with special care and loaned out to those in need: for example, eaglestones were alleged to help women in labor, beads treated sore eyes, Irish stones and sticks helped against snakebites.

Another type of charm combines words with feats. The function of charms is very complex, because they are used to serve desires and purposes within every society: they can incite or ward off love; preserve virginity, but also enforce potency; and gain victory in war, making warriors invulnerable to defeat by enemies. In rural communities, charms can protect crops and farm animals, preserve food, and ward off parasites. Presumably, most charms function to preserve or restore health.

FORM AND FUNCTION

Generally speaking, in charms we can find elements of Christianity mixed with surviving elements of paganism, miracles, and magic: The Catholic liturgy joins folklore in a holistic view of the world where interdependent physical and spiritual realities intertwine. The distinction between a charm and a prayer was subtle; Christian charms often incorporated holy names or used phrases that were similar to those of the liturgy. A few charms came straight from the Bible, like one from Ezekiel 16:6, used to staunch bleeding: "And when I passed by you, and saw you weltering in your own blood, I said unto you in your blood, 'Live and grow up like a plant in the field.'"

More widespread were charms that recounted some pseudobiblical event, for example, Jesus miraculously stopping the flow of the river Jordan. A St. Peter charm was said to work against toothache and a St. George charm to ward off nightmares. All such cases assumed that the saint's power to resist or overcome some particular evil was available to heal the user. The formula contained words of command supposedly uttered at the original event, enhancing the healer's authority. Another charm to staunch blood was widely used in England, France, and Germany. A fifteenth-century English version illustrated the typical literary form of the charm, combining a reference to a biblical precedent for curing the sickness or injury with a petition that the sufferer will similarly recover:

When our Lord Jesus was done on the cross, Longinus came with his spear and pierced him in the side. Blood and water came out . . . through the holy virtue that God showed there. I conjure thee, blood, that thou come not out of this Christian man. (Robbins 1959, 85–86)

In the Early Middle Ages, a man named Adelbert claimed that the Archangel Michael had given him a letter from Jesus that had fallen from heaven. This was one of the earliest mentions of the so-called *Letters from Heaven*, a tradition of charms quite popular during the Middle Ages, lasting until the beginning of the twentieth century.

A charm known in many countries is among the few with pagan origins: It tells how to heal a horse's sprained leg with the words: *Bone to bone sinew to sinew vein to vein*. In an early medieval German version, it was Balder's horse that was hurt and the god Odin (Wodan, Wotan) who healed it. Here, and in many other cases, the crucial formula was made memorable by rhythmic phrasing, repetition in rhyme, or alliteration. A number of elaborate Anglo-Saxon and German verse charms have been preserved; a recent work (Schulz 2000) offered a scholarly edition of a corpus of German charms, the Dieterich Collection, made at the beginning of the twentieth century.

THEOLOGIAN AND DEMONOLOGISTS

Medieval Christianity encouraged the use of certain holy objects as charms. The most popular among them was (and still is) the *Agnus Dei*, a small wax seal bearing images of the lamb and the Roman emperor Constantine's flag. When blessed by the pope, it protected its wearer against many evils, including thunder, lightning, fire, drowning, or death in childbirth. St. Thomas Aquinas tolerated the use of amulets containing biblical texts, although he suggested refraining from it. The *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) offered seven rules to distinguish good

from wicked charms. A charm was approved if it contained no suggestion of any pact with the Devil; no unknown names; nothing that was untrue; no rituals except making the sign of the cross; no credence in the manner of writing, reciting, wearing, or using the charm; only phrases from the Bible in the original context; and assurances that the charm's efficacy depended entirely on God's will (Robbins 1959, 86).

However, some prayers used in exorcisms, or practices like the blessing of salt for animals, seem very close to pagan charms—especially to Protestant theologians, who regarded all charms as superstitious. Typically, William Perkins, in his *Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft* (1608), defined the charm as a spell or verse used as a signal to make the Devil work wonders.

CHARMERS AND CUNNING MEN, LEECHES

Medieval charmers possessed a large repertoire. Certain men and women were thought to have the gift of healing a specific disease or injury in humans or farm animals. For some the gift was inborn, but more often it depended on a secret verbal charm or ritual learned from an older healer, usually a relative who was near death. Each charm cured only one trouble, and most charmers knew only one or two. Another group owned a material object such as a snakestone, to be loaned when needed.

Medieval literature provided numerous examples of charms and devices for magical healing. The famous Hildegard of Bingen provided healing charms together with proper remedies. Various methods were used. Many charmers stroked the injured area after wetting their hand with their own spittle; others blew on it; for warts, simply looking at them or counting might suffice. All these actions might be accompanied by prayer or by verbal charms.

Cunning men used magic to combat the effects of witchcraft. The Church approved their use of Christian prayers and Bible verses as cures or protection against evil, but disapproved of the closely related practices of many folk healers. "White" witches used traditional charms to help heal evil spells, reinforcing the properties of their herbs or amulets; consequently, charms sometimes appeared as evidence in trials for sorcery and illicit magic. In this context, the Roman, Spanish, and Portuguese Inquisitions acted almost as ethnographers, recording with minute accuracy the spells and charms used by hundreds of practitioners of what the Holy Office condemned as "superstitious" magic. Protestant authorities, of course, were equally severe toward such untrained healers; for example, a charm recited to cure a bewitched person became prosecution evidence in a Lancashire witchcraft trial.

The professional charmer, though barely surviving in extremely remote rural communities or animistic cultures, has resurfaced and gained fresh momentum in

such sophisticated contemporary circles as the New Age movement.

CHRISTA TUCZAY

See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; ANIMISTIC AND MAGICAL THINKING; CUNNING FOLK; FOLKLORE; LANCASHIRE WITCHES; SPELLS.

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CHESAPEAKE

Belief in witches emigrated with the colonists from England to the North American colonies, but the accused witches of the Chesapeake differed from their Puritan New England counterparts. Whereas high numbers of accusations and executions occurred in the northern colonies, in the southern colonies, cases numbered fewer than forty (twenty-eight women, seven men, and two children) and involved few executions. Although belief in witches and legislation against witchcraft existed in the south, issues of survival and profit outweighed the need to identify, accuse, and try supposed witches, and acquittal was the usual outcome in these cases.

The first recorded witchcraft accusation in an English colony in North America occurred in 1626 in Jamestown. Joan Wright was accused of complicating a childbirth, prophesying, ruining crops, and bewitching animals. In this extremely rare case where the accused was a midwife, Joan's services were refused because she was left-handed, a supposed evil omen. Both the child and his parents fell ill soon after birth, and when the

infant died, suspicion fell on Joan, who was acquitted of the charges.

The first death associated with charges of witchcraft in the Chesapeake occurred at sea aboard a ship bound for Maryland in 1654. Panicked passengers threw Mary Lee, an elderly woman, overboard when bad weather threatened the journey. The storms did not abate with her death, and the crew and passengers were further plagued with sickness until the ship reached its destination. Two other women and a young boy suffered similar fates: Elizabeth Richardson (1658), Katherine Grady (1659), and Robert Charles (1662). When the ship on which Grady was traveling was plagued by violent storms, she was not thrown overboard but was hanged at sea. The report of her execution caused the captain of the ship to be called before the court in Jamestown to explain his actions. Chesapeake courts might convict and condemn a witch to death, as Maryland did with Rebecca Fowler in 1685, but they took a dim view of a ship captain acting as judge and jury.

These shipboard executions highlight in extremely concrete fashion that immigrants brought witchcraft beliefs across the Atlantic with them. Patterns in colonial America thus might be expected to match those that were occurring in England in the seventeenth century, with a high incidence of accusations against women and a focus on *maleficium* (harmful magic). Accusations in colonial America generally mirrored these trends, but varied regionally. As in England, the Devil was absent from most witchcraft cases in the Chesapeake and concern centered not on heretical behavior but on harm to people, crops, and animals.

On the other hand, the Jonah-like notion of pitching passengers overboard to calm the seas was unique to ships sailing to the Chesapeake. Moreover, several charges of “riding a person” are found in this area. This charge has European roots—cases can be found in England and in Scandinavian folklore—but was less common elsewhere. In addition to the riding charges, Virginia saw many suits in which plaintiffs sued to restore their good names after being called witches, following an act passed in 1655 by the General Assembly of Virginia that defined accusations of witchcraft as scandalous and slanderous. Unsubstantiated accusations could be punished with a fine of 1,000 pounds of tobacco.

Speech figured prominently in accusations as well as in slander suits. In one well-documented case, Eleanor Neale was accused of cursing her neighbor through fighting words and an ill tongue. Her case also illustrated a folk remedy, one of many in the Chesapeake, for dealing with witches: the victim found relief by nailing a horseshoe over his door and contriving to have Neale pass under it. The rest of the charges against Virginia witches were potpourri of allegations from harming

people or animals to prophesying. Only a handful of suspects, including the only documented case of witchcraft in North Carolina, were accused of using witchcraft to murder another person.

Accusations of witchcraft in the Chesapeake continued after 1700, with charges brought against a Virginia woman named Grace Sherwood for a variety of offenses, and against two Maryland women, but none of these women suffered severe punishment.

DIANA LAULAINEN-SCHEIN

See also: COUNTERMAGIC; ENGLAND; FOLKLORE; HERESY; *MALEFICIUM*; MIDWIVES; NEW ENGLAND; PURITANISM; SHERWOOD, GRACE; SLANDER; WORDS, POWER OF.

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CHILDREN

From newborns to adolescents, children played significant roles in witchcraft trials, but these roles changed over time, from victims to accusers. At first, very young babies were favorite targets of witches and were even eaten at some early witches’ Sabbats. The role of very young children as major victims of witches continued throughout the phase of intensive witch hunting, but older children began taking on an important role as accusers and witch finders during the sixteenth century. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, children below the age of majority were being imprisoned and punished for witchcraft in parts of Europe, principally for attending Sabbats. In the final stage of witch hunting, some adolescent accusers were punished for perjury rather than witchcraft.

The earliest descriptions of witches’ gatherings in the fifteenth century revealed three different ways that witches allegedly attacked very young children. An Italian method, popularized in the sermons of St. Bernardino of Siena and found primarily in Umbria, featured elements of vampirism, with witches in the form of large insects sucking babies’ blood. Almost contemporaneously, early Swiss Sabbats (which conflated stereotypes about witches with those about medieval heretics, including horrifying parodies of the Eucharist) included descriptions of cannibalism, with witches not only killing but also eating the

flesh of very young children at their diabolical assemblies. Other early witches were accused of simply killing children through malevolent spells, without resorting to either vampirism or cannibalism.

Both the central Italian vampirism tradition and the Swiss cannibalism tradition continued deep into the sixteenth century, particularly in more remote rural districts, but they tended to disappear from accusations and trial records after 1600. Meanwhile, the role of babies and young children as principal victims of witches' evil spells or *Maleficia* (harmful magic) continued to hold a central place in accusations in several parts of Europe throughout the 1500s, and continued long after 1600. In a world where child mortality was extremely high by today's standards, it was obviously impossible to attribute most infant deaths to witchcraft; but corroborative evidence, especially threats by older women, made many accusations seem viable.

Meanwhile, a sinister new development involved older children in the business of finding witches. It is first traceable among sixteenth-century Basques. During the great Navarrese witch hunt of 1525, the traveling judge took along "two girl witches who identify other witches"; with their help—he lined suspects up, and the two girls simply looked directly in their eyes—he eventually hanged about forty witches (Idoate 1978, 268). Afterward, such witch finders reappear with depressing regularity in Basque witch hunts; "the presence of young girls, always as accusers with identifiable targets, was almost inevitable," notes a leading historian (Idoate 1978, 64, 128–130, 134). Two girls, aged nine and ten, testified against their parents and neighbors in 1539. Even younger children of seven and eight appear to have begun another major witch hunt in 1569–1570, but this time the Spanish Inquisition finally persuaded them to retract their accusations; the same thing happened again in 1575, when a ten-year-old girl denounced her grandmother for taking her to a witches' Sabbath. Seventy years after the great hunt of 1525, yet another Navarrese girl, aged twelve or thirteen, became a professional witch finder. Little wonder, then, that a Basque parish priest had little difficulty in keeping forty child-witches between the ages of six and twelve in his home in 1609, or that the famous Inquisitor Alonso de Salazar y Frias listened to confessions from 1,384 child and adolescent witches during his visitation of Navarre two years afterward.

As major witch hunts swept across parts of western Europe after 1580, children played a significant role in helping to convict witches, because they could spontaneously and without torture identify people who attended witches' Sabbats, without themselves suffering the full legal consequences. In Germany, an eight-year-old boy became an important accuser when the first great outbreak of witch hunting began at Trier in 1585. Peter Binsfeld, the suffragan bishop of Trier, first

broached the issues of the credibility and punishment of underage witches who accused adults of taking them to Sabbats in his 1589 demonological treatise (Behringer 1989, 33–34). The boy's example was soon imitated elsewhere; for example, a boy of fourteen began a chain of accusations in the prince-bishopric of Augsburg that led to the deaths of twenty-seven women in 1589, and other juveniles subsequently provoked a major hunt at Ellwangen in 1611. Binsfeld's preoccupations with juvenile witches were soon shared by other demonologists, who surpassed the bishop's recommendation of whipping them; in 1595 his Lorraine colleague, Nicolas Rémy, raised the question of reducing the legal minimum age for imposing the death penalty on witches (Monter 1993). Meanwhile, in eastern France, where diabolical possession played a more important role in witch hunting, Henri Boguet began his 1602 demonology with the case of a bewitched eight-year-old girl who uncovered many witches and whom the judge found "as believable as if she were thirty or forty." But, he also felt impelled to defend his leniency in punishing a girl of fourteen who admitted attending a witches' Sabbath with banishment rather than death.

The earliest known case where a preadolescent witch actually received capital punishment occurred in Rémy's Lorraine. In 1603, a twelve-year-old boy was condemned to death for witchcraft and the sentence was carried out. Once this threshold had been crossed, judges in the same district sentenced a nine-year-old boy to death in 1606, but the duke postponed his execution, and he was sent home two years later. Something similar occurred on a far larger scale in the Southern Netherlands, where the seigneurial court of Bouchain sentenced thirty-two minors to death for witchcraft between 1611 and 1615, together with almost 100 adults. Thirteen minors were executed, the five youngest being hanged secretly, until the archdukes forbade further executions of underaged witches. However, three other child-witches were subsequently put to death after reaching the age of majority (Muchembled 1987, 210–211).

The single worst episode occurred during a major German witch hunt. Between 1627 and 1629, the 29 groups of witches executed at Würzburg included 41 minors and 119 adults. Two-thirds of the juvenile witches executed for attending Sabbats were boys, many of them students, including a nephew of Würzburg's prince-bishop. The victims also included "a young girl of nine or ten, and a smaller one, her younger sister." Soon afterward a "New Treatise on the Seduced Child-Witches" appeared in Electoral Mainz. After the great hunts ended, one still finds children and juveniles at the origins of smaller German witch panics, although the habit of putting young witches to death dropped sharply after 1630.

The main role played by children in English, Scottish, and New England witch hunts was as demonically possessed accusers of other witches. Child demons in England identified numerous witches as the cause of their afflictions in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The most famous of these demons were the five daughters of Robert Throckmorton, whose accusations led to the execution of three witches in 1593. In 1692 a group of teenage girls in Salem Village in Massachusetts initiated a major witch hunt when they identified a number of witches as the cause of their bodily fits and convulsions. Similar charges of witchcraft brought by an eleven-year-old Scottish demoniac, Christian Shaw, resulted in the execution of seven witches at Paisley in 1697.

A final twist to the question of what credit, if any, should be given to testimony by underage witches occurred during the great Swedish witch panic that began in 1668. Hundreds of children testified that their parents or neighbors had taken them off to large-scale Sabbats at Blåkulla. However, Swedish law disallowed testimony by anyone under age fifteen, and two witnesses were required to prove a defendant's guilt. On this occasion, Swedish judges arrived at an original way around this difficulty by weighing a child's testimony proportionately to his or her age, a boy of fourteen, for example, being worth half an adult, but a child of six or seven being worth a relatively small fraction; the fractions were then added until the sum reached two, whereupon the guilty person could be arrested. The panic lasted seven years and took close to 200 lives. Before it ran its course, it had generated 10,000 pages of testimony, much of it from juveniles. When it finally ended, the Swedish royal court judges sentenced a lad of thirteen, whose testimony had been instrumental in many arrests and convictions, to be hanged for perjury—a unique instance in the annals of European witchcraft.

Unfortunately, the sad story of the child-witch does not end there, or at Salem. For example, children were involved in a steadily increasing share of seventeenth-century witchcraft trials in the Duchy of Württemberg (Weber 1996, 103–104). Wolfgang Behringer has argued (1989, 39) that “in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries a large share of those executed as witches were children,” pointing not only to the notorious *Zauberer-jackl* (Sorcerer-Jack) trials at Salzburg, but also to cases at Freising and Augsburg as late as 1720; the last witches to be executed in Bavaria, in 1754 and 1756, were girls of fourteen (Behringer 1997, 350–352).

The disquieting story of children and diabolical witchcraft did not end in Voltaire's day, as contemporary Satanic ritual child abuse trials have shown. The sad events of recent decades have influenced some scholars to allege that participation in the phenomena of diabolical witchcraft involved abuse of people below

the legal age of adulthood. While verbal abuse of inferiors (whether workers, women, or children) was undoubtedly common in Western civilization, we have no direct evidence that the minors who identified adult witches (whether or not they were demonically possessed) were physically or sexually abused; and psychological theorizing cannot suffice to demonstrate the presence of such abuse. Instead, when seen in a long-term perspective, the history of witchcraft accusations and trials involved considerable abuse of vulnerable adults by manipulative adolescents and children, who because of their age escaped the legal consequences of their accusations.

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See also: BASQUE COUNTRY; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; BINSFELD, PETER; BOGUET, HENRI; CANNIBALISM; INFANTICIDE; LORRAINE, DUCHY OF; MORA WITCHES; NETHERLANDS, SOUTHERN; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; RÉMY, NICOLAS; SALEM; SALZBURG, PRINCE-ARCHBISHOPRIC OF; WITCH FINDERS; WÜRTTEMBERG, DUCHY OF; WÜRZBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF.

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CHRISTIAN IV (1577–1648)

King of Denmark-Norway from 1588 to 1648 (including the regency of chancellor Niels Kaas during the king's minority until 1596), Christian IV was a firm believer in witchcraft, but time and time again he appeared to be restrained by earlier Danish rules concerning witchcraft trials and by his own sense of

upholding the rule of law. The sixty years of Christian IV's rule coincided chronologically with Europe's most extensive witchcraft persecutions. Denmark was no exception to this trend.

Denmark's most famous incident of witchcraft occurred during his minority, following the arrival in 1589–1590 of the Scottish King James VI in the Danish capital of Copenhagen to bring his bride, Princess Anne, the sister of the king, back to Scotland. A heavy storm forced the Danish fleet to seek shelter under the Norwegian coast. Suspicion arose that witches had masterminded this incident, and trials followed in East Lothian and Edinburgh, Scotland, as well as in Copenhagen. The trials showed that witches in the two countries had worked together; the North Berwick witches had thrown a black cat in the sea, and witches in Copenhagen had put eggshells into the water to raise the storm. Thirteen witches were executed in Copenhagen, but no pervasive witch hunt was launched in Denmark, whereas James VI had even more witches executed in Scotland and wrote his famous *Daemonologie* (Demonology) in 1597 after this episode.

Although it was a well-known fact that the Sami of Finnmark in the northernmost part of Norway dabbled in witchcraft, it was not until 1609 that the king ordered all Sami involved in witchcraft punished by death. However, the letter to his governmental officers must be seen in connection with the thwarting of Russian and Swedish plans to expand their influence into Finnmark. At the same time, the Danish king struck at the external as well as the internal enemies of the Danish-Norwegian kingdom.

Throughout his entire reign, Christian IV was preoccupied with Denmark's strained relations with Sweden. In 1611 he wrote from his military camp during the Calmar War that the Danes had found a large number of wax images buried in the ground. The Danes supposed that the Swedes had resorted to witchcraft to destroy the Danish army.

The king was well aware when the small town of Køge was shaken by the execution of eleven witches in 1612–1613. After the final sentence, he ordered one of them transferred to the castle of Copenhagen to be tortured. The *Køge Huskors* (The Nuisance of Køge) became one of the most important preludes to the promulgation of the Witchcraft Statute of October 12, 1617.

In 1625 a woman was accused of obtaining a hair from the king as well as from his son in order to kill the king and lead his heir into a sexual relationship with a noblewoman the king disliked. After a High Court judge acquitted her, the king dismissed him and continued to call the woman a witch. However, he could not compel the Council of the Realm to pursue the case further.

During the next year, while waging war in Germany during the Thirty Years' War, the king remarked in a letter about a number of cases in Elsinore that there were too many witches, and the best thing would be to get rid of them once and for all—but he did nothing more about it. Memories of the Køge witches fourteen years earlier remained sufficiently vivid in people's minds that the woman who had been transferred to the castle of Copenhagen was mentioned during the Elsinore cases.

In 1642, in the most notorious Danish witchcraft trial, Christian IV inexplicably had the wife of an innkeeper, Ma ren Splids, brought to Copenhagen from the town of Ribe in Jutland to interrogate her—probably using torture, which was against Danish law—although she had been acquitted of the charges in her hometown. However, cases where Christian IV interfered personally in witchcraft cases were exceptional.

During Christian IV's reign, the Danish High Court judges acquitted approximately half of all accused witches. The king must have been aware of this high acquittal rate, as he took an active part in the King's Bench (Denmark's Supreme Court), where the judges consisted of the Council of the Realm and the king. Christian IV was *primus inter pares* (first among equals) and took a great interest in all cases. When an ordinary case of witchcraft came to the King's Bench in 1630, Christian IV was not present, and the Council had to try to reach a decision. Three of the eight members of the Council proposed to ask the king how to handle this case, which must be considered a remarkable suggestion, as the Witchcraft Statute had been passed only thirteen years previously. Finally, the Council reached an agreement to let the case rest, until the king could be asked. In 1631, in the king's presence, the woman was finally acquitted.

This case epitomizes the enigma of Danish witchcraft trials. Although Christian IV was a firm believer in witchcraft, and a strong advocate of persecuting the perpetrators, he apparently never contemplated changing the basic Danish legal rules toward an inquisitorial procedure, which would no doubt have lowered the high acquittal rate.

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See also: DENMARK; HAIR; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; NORWAY; WEATHER MAGIC.

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CHRONOLOGY OF WITCHCRAFT TRIALS

European courts prosecuted witches from the early fifteenth century until the late eighteenth century, but the great majority of trials took place in the closing decades of the sixteenth century and the first thirty years of the seventeenth century. The number of trials in the various courts that tried witches followed different chronological trajectories; a period of intense prosecution in one jurisdiction sometimes coincided with a period of relative inactivity in another. The reason for such different chronological patterns is that witch hunts often arose in response to social, economic, or political conditions that were peculiar to a particular area. Another variable was the degree of determination by local officials to prosecute witches. Zealous witch hunters were naturally more likely to burn more witches during their tenure than those who had doubts regarding the guilt of witches or the possibility of their crime.

Despite these variations, it is possible to chart the rise and fall of witchcraft prosecutions throughout Europe and colonial America in very general terms. Except in some areas of eastern Europe, where trials did not reach their peak until the eighteenth century, a few broad patterns emerge. Witchcraft trials gradually increased as the crime of witchcraft became more clearly defined in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, leveled off or declined during the first half of the sixteenth century, reached epidemic proportions in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and declined in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

EARLY WITCHCRAFT TRIALS, 1300–1520

Prior to the 1420s, the concept of witchcraft as a crime involving both *maleficium* (harmful magic) and devil worship was in the process of formation; therefore, it is problematic to speak of the prosecutions that took place during those years as witchcraft trials. Most such trials before the 1420s were prosecutions either for simple *maleficium* or for ritual magic. The trials that took place during these early, formative years can be divided into three shorter periods. From 1300 to 1330, most of the “witches” were ritual magicians who attempted to harm political rivals or to advance their careers. In the second period, from 1330 to 1375, the trial of politically related cases virtually ceased, but there were a substantial number of sorcery trials. Whether these trials were for simple *maleficium* or for ritual magic is difficult to determine, but in either case, the most noteworthy feature of the prosecutions is the absence of charges of diabolism. During the third period, from 1375 to the 1420s, not only did the number of prosecutions increase, but charges of diabolism also became more common, mainly in Italy. This development, which was facilitated by the adoption of inquisitorial

procedure in local courts, reflected the gradual assimilation of charges of diabolism to those of *maleficium* (Kieckhefer 1976, 10–26).

Beginning soon after 1420, the history of European witchcraft prosecutions entered a new and radically different phase. Not only did trials for sorcery increase in number, but also charges of diabolism were more frequently grafted onto them, and witch hunting began to assume the characteristics it maintained throughout the period of prosecution. During the 1420s, and 1430s, the full stereotype of the witch, complete with descriptions of the witches’ Sabbat, emerged, most notably in trials in the western Alps. For all intents and purposes, these fifteenth-century trials mark the beginning of the European witch hunt. It was during this period, moreover, that the first witchcraft treatises—most notably Johannes Nider’s *Formicarius* (The Anthill, written 1437/1438, published 1475), Heinrich Kramer’s *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), and Ulrich Mlitor’s *De laniis et phitonicis mulieribus* (Concerning Witches and Fortunetellers, 1489)—appeared. The publication of these works, which emphasized the diabolical as well as the magical dimensions of the witch’s crime, corresponded to an increase in the number of prosecutions.

THE PERIOD OF LIMITED PROSECUTIONS AND SMALL HUNTS, 1520–1560

At this point, the history of European witch hunting followed a somewhat surprising course. Instead of slowly accelerating and leading into the large panics of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the number of trials leveled off during the early sixteenth century, and in certain areas actually declined (Hansen 1901, 68–262; Foucault 1907, 297–306; Midelfort 1972, 201–202). This decline did not escape the notice of contemporaries. In 1516, Martin Luther claimed that although there had been many witches and sorcerers in his youth, they were “not so commonly heard of anymore” (Levack 1995, 186). As one might expect, there were some areas where Luther might have heard much more about witches during these years. There were a number of trials in the Basque country between 1507 and 1539; in Catalonia in 1549; in the diocese of Como and in other parts of northern Italy in the 1510s and 1520s; in northern parts of Languedoc between 1519 and 1530; and in Luxembourg, Namur, Douai, and other parts of the Low Countries throughout the first half of the sixteenth century. There also were occasional prosecutions in places like Nuremberg (Kunstmann 1970, 39–73), but it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the early sixteenth century was a period of relative tranquility as far as witchcraft was concerned.

This leveling-off or reduction in the intensity of witch hunting during the first half of the sixteenth century was reflected in, and to some extent possibly caused by, an interruption in the publication of witchcraft treatises and manuals. The *Malleus Maleficarum*, for example, while enormously popular between 1486 and 1520 and again between 1580 and 1650, was not reprinted between 1521 and 1576. Similarly, none of the other fifteenth-century witchcraft treatises found a market during these years. And after the publication of Paulo (Paulus) Grillando's (Grillandus), *Tractatus de Hereticis et Sortilegiis* (Treatise on Heretics and Sorcerers) in 1524, very little was written in support of witch hunting until the 1570s. In other words, if the production of witchcraft literature serves as a gauge of concern with hunting witches, there was definitely an early sixteenth-century gap, lagging a little behind the actual reduction in the number of trials. Instead of one continuous European witch hunt, there were really two separate campaigns: an early, geographically limited hunt in the late fifteenth century and a much more intense and widespread series of prosecutions in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

The lull in witch hunting during the early sixteenth century can be attributed both to the development of skepticism among the learned elite and to the preoccupation of both ecclesiastical and secular authorities with the confessional disputes and prosecutions during the Protestant Reformation. This period witnessed the spread of Renaissance humanism throughout Europe, and although the humanists failed to undermine the cumulative concept of witchcraft, they did attack parts of it as well as the scholastic mentality that proved receptive to it. For a brief period, the critiques of witch beliefs and prosecutions that one finds in the writings of men like Desiderius Erasmus, Andrea Alciati, Pietro Pomponazzi, and Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim, may have shaken the resolve of various authorities to pursue witches. Their insistence that magic could be performed naturally, without the aid of demons, and that witches were harmless creatures victimized by delusion had at least the effect of raising doubts about the practice of the crime. At the same time, Protestant Germany, especially through the work of preacher Martin Plantsch in Tübingen, developed a belief that God was directly responsible for many of the natural disasters like hailstorms that were mistakenly attributed to witchcraft. This early sixteenth-century skepticism found its most articulate and forceful expression in the work of the tolerant humanist physician Johann Weyer during the 1560s.

The role that the Protestant Reformation played in the early sixteenth-century reduction of witchcraft prosecutions was complex and problematic. There is little doubt that the combined efforts of the "confession-

alized" Protestant and Catholic Reformations did much to encourage witchcraft prosecutions in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Moreover, during the earlier years of the Reformation movement, the disputes between Protestants and Catholics (who considered each other heretics, but not the same type of heretics as witches) served to distract European elites from witch hunting. More specifically, the Protestant rejection of Roman Catholicism naturally led to a desire on the part of reformers to formulate their own theories of witchcraft rather than rely on the work of fifteenth-century Catholic demonologists and inquisitors. This rejection of Catholic witchcraft theory thus contributed to a decline in the demand for the older, fifteenth-century treatises. Finally and most important, the Protestant rejection of the Inquisition, its drastic overhaul of all ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and its transfer of much ecclesiastical jurisdiction to secular courts involved extensive alterations in the judicial machinery that was used to prosecute witches.

THE PERIOD OF INTENSE PROSECUTIONS AND LARGE HUNTS, 1560–1630

During the 1560s and 1570s there were many signs that Europe was poised on the threshold of a new outbreak of witch hunting, one that was much more intense and widespread than the initial assault of the late fifteenth century. In the southwestern German town of Wiesensteig, some 63 witches were executed in 1562, and during the winter of 1562–1563, the *parlement* (sovereign judicial court) of Toulouse heard on appeal about three dozen cases of witchcraft from the diocese of Couserans. A series of trials in the Low Countries offered further evidence that witchcraft was once again on the rise, as did the passage of witchcraft statutes in both England and Scotland in 1563. A number of small panics occurred during the 1570s in the wake of a serious agrarian crisis. The resumption of the printing of the *Malleus Maleficarum*, the appearance of Lambert Daneau's *Les sorciers, dialogue tres-utile et necessaire pour ce temps* (Witches, a Very Useful Dialogue and One Necessary for the Present Time) in 1574, and the refutations of Weyer's skeptical arguments by Thomas Erastus (1572) and Jean Bodin (1580) also signaled a renewal and an intensification of witch-hunting zeal.

Most European territories experienced the full force of the European witch hunt between 1580 and 1630. Large-scale prosecutions involving hundreds of victims occurred in scattered parts of western and central Europe, most notably in the diocese of Trier in the late 1580s and early 1590s, Scotland in 1590 and 1597, Lorraine in the late 1580s and early 1590s, the Pays de Vaud peaking in 1599, Ellwangen in the 1610s, and Würzburg and Bamberg during the 1620s. Without complete statistics, it is difficult to determine which

decade between 1580 and 1630 was the time of the most intense witch hunting. The 1580s seem especially bad in Switzerland and the Low Countries; the 1590s in the Low Countries, Scotland, and in many German territories; the 1600s in many other German states; the 1610s in Spain; while the late 1620s in Germany may well have been the worst of all.

This period of intense witch hunting between 1580 and 1630 was related, as both cause and effect, to the proliferation of witchcraft treatises. The well-known works by Peter Binsfeld (1591), Nicolas Rémy (1595), King James VI of Scotland (1597), Martín Del Rio (1599–1600), Henri Boguet (1602), Francesco Maria Guazzo (1608), and Pierre de Lancre (1612) were all written during these years, and a rapidly growing printing industry made them available to an increasingly large European reading public, which of course included virtually every man holding a judicial position. These treatises used evidence from very recent witchcraft trials to confirm the reality of witchcraft, deepen elite fears of the crime, and provide guidance for its effective prosecution.

The unprecedented intensification of witch hunting in the late sixteenth century reflected not only the resolution of learned doubt, but also the impact of both the Protestant and Catholic reformations. By this time, the Bible, with its literal death sentences for witches (Exodus 22:18), circulated widely in vernacular languages; preachers had heightened people's awareness of the immediacy of Satan; reformers had declared war on magic in all its forms; and the process of Christianization had helped to cultivate the feelings of both moral superiority and guilt that played such an important part in witch hunting. To make matters worse, the conflict between Protestantism and Catholicism on the one hand and between various forms of Protestantism on the other reached its peak, a development that reinforced a fear of the Devil and hostility toward witchcraft.

A final and perhaps decisive factor in the intensification of witch hunting in the late sixteenth century was the onset of one of the most economically volatile and politically unstable periods in European history. Between 1580 and 1630, Europe experienced unprecedented inflation, a series of harsh climatic changes, periodic famines (the worst coming in the 1590s), commercial depressions (especially in the 1620s), and a more general crisis of production. (Behringer 1995; Hobsbawm 1967). Real wages declined sharply, while the condition of the poor and unemployed reached critical proportions. These developments aggravated personal conflicts that often found expression in witchcraft accusations, and they also heightened the fears of many members of the ruling elite that witches were engaged in a diabolical campaign to cause dearth and famine to European communities.

THE PERIOD OF DECLINE, 1630–1770

The prosecution and execution of witches did not end in 1630, but entered a new phase marked by a general decline in the number of trials. There were notable exceptions to this pattern. In the Dutch Republic, the prosecutions came to almost a complete end shortly after 1600, while in Spain the Inquisition stopped executing witches in the wake of the great Basque witch hunt of 1609–1614. In France, the procedural measures introduced by the *Parlement* of Paris (sovereign judicial court, with jurisdiction over approximately one-half of France) resulted in a dramatic reduction in the number of executions by the 1620s, although France's greatest witch panics occurred in Languedoc between 1643 and 1645 and in Burgundy between 1644 and 1646. In England, prosecutions tapered off significantly after 1607, although the largest single witch hunt in English history occurred in 1645–1647, thus interrupting this period of decline. Scotland also experienced its last and largest witch hunt in 1661–1662, following a significant reduction in the number of prosecutions during the 1650s. These late witch panics in England and Scotland, as well as similar episodes in Sweden and Finland in the 1660s and early 1670s, make it more difficult to establish universal patterns of decline. Moreover, a few areas—Hungary (including Slovakia), Slovenia, Transylvania, Poland, Croatia, and New England—did not bear the full brunt of witchcraft prosecutions until the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century.

Nevertheless, in most of Europe, especially the core witchcraft area that included the Germanic territories, the Swiss cantons, and the predominantly French-speaking lands on the eastern borders of the French kingdom, the period from 1675 to 1750 was a time of contraction in the prosecution of witches. Those trials that did take place, moreover, usually involved only one or two defendants. It took some time, however, before *all* witchcraft prosecutions came to an end. Many courts discouraged prosecutions in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, but only seven European countries (France in 1682, Prussia in 1714, Great Britain in 1736, the Habsburg Empire in 1766, Russia in 1770, Poland in 1776, and Sweden in 1779) took legislative action either declaring that witchcraft was no longer a crime or seriously restricting the scope of earlier witchcraft laws. The limited number and late dates of those legislative acts, coupled with the determination of individuals to accuse their neighbors of witchcraft, explains why witchcraft trials, and even some executions, continued to take place well into the eighteenth century. In England, for example, the ability of grand juries to indict criminals and petty juries to convict them explains why the last execution took place in 1685 and the last conviction in 1712. In Scotland, where juries had less influence

on the outcome of the trials but where authorities were more inclined to allow charges to be brought against witches, such trials continued until 1722. In France, the royal edict of Louis XIV ended almost all witchcraft prosecutions, but failure of the edict to end acts of sacrilege and blasphemy allowed isolated trials until 1745. Within the German territories, a number of late executions took place, most notably in Würzburg and in Württemberg in 1749. The last execution in Europe occurred in the Swiss canton of Glarus (which was also the last territory to ban torture) in 1782. An execution in Poland, which occurred during a period of great political upheaval in 1793, was probably illegal.

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See also: DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; GEOGRAPHY OF THE WITCH HUNTS.

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CIRCE

A Greek mythological figure, Circe is the subject of the earliest extant witch portrayal in Western litera-

ture. She is found first in books ten to twelve of Homer's *Odyssey*, which achieved the form we know in the seventh century B.C.E., but had been shaped by centuries of oral tradition before that. She was given the epithet *polypharmakos*, "of many drugs" or "many spells," and the exceptional nature of her powers was conveyed in the ambivalent description of her as "goddess or woman." Above all, the syndrome of the abilities attributed to her requires that she be considered a witch, whether from an ancient Greek or modern Western perspective. Most striking were her animal transformations. She turned Odysseus's companions into pigs by feeding them a stew into which she has inserted her drugs, striking them with her wand, and issuing an instruction. The tame wolves and lions that surrounded her island palace may also have once been human victims; more poignantly, so may be the magnificent stag that Odysseus killed and ate.

Odysseus himself was preserved from porcine transformation by the herb *moly*, given to him by the god Hermes, which he either ingested as an antidote or carries as a protective amulet. These practices may be considered the first attestation of the notion of countering magic with magic. In due course Circe turned Odysseus's companions back into men by the different technique of smearing them with a lotion, and she also rejuvenated them in the process (cf. Medea's rejuvenation of Aeson in the seventh book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*). A number of her other powers were indirectly implied. She could mysteriously "unman" men by taking them to bed; this is most easily read as an ability to perform enslaving erotic magic. Such an ability was more clearly seen in Circe's doublet in the *Odyssey*, the nymph Calypso, who contrived to keep Odysseus sleeping with her, although his true love was for his wife Penelope. Circe was also adept at necromancy, furnishing Odysseus with instructions and supplies for his journey to the underworld and his consultation of the shades of the dead. In passing by Odysseus unseen, she demonstrated the ability either to teleport herself or to render herself invisible. Finally, she could control the elements by sending a favorable wind for Odysseus's voyage. Circe was portrayed as a beautiful woman, but her personality is inscrutable, as she switched instantaneously from predatory deceit to open friendship.

In later Greco-Roman literature, Circe was closely associated with Greek mythology's other great witch, Medea, usually said to be her sister, and with the witch-goddess Hecate, usually said to be their mother. In the fourth book of Apollonius of Rhodes's epic *Argonautica* (ca. 270–245 B.C.E.), we are told how Medea visited her sister, together with her lover Jason, for purification after killing her brother Apsyrtus. Here her island was described as populated by misshapen semitransformed



Circe, the witch in Homer's Odyssey, pours poison into a vase while waiting for Ulysses to arrive. Circe became the quintessential witch, a seducer of men who practiced love magic and metamorphosis. (The Bridgeman Art Library)

creatures, a description perhaps inspired by attempts to portray the process of transformation in ancient art (*LIMC* Circe nos. 5–26). Of particular note for the later Western tradition was Circe's appearances in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, published ca. 8 C.E. The fourteenth book of this poem told how she transformed Scylla into a monster with multiple dog heads by poisoning the pool in which she bathed, and an elaborate sequence related her encounter with Picus. Here Circe fell instantly in love with a young man whom she encountered while engaged in the characteristic witches' activity of gathering herbs. She separated him from his hunting companions by manufacturing a phantom boar and by controlling the elements to bring on darkness. But Picus rejected her, so she transformed him into a woodpecker with her wand and a thrice-repeated incantation. She changed Picus's companions by a different technique: Circe used her herbal powers to create the dark woodland suitable for the performance of necromantic rites, and then summoned up ghosts to enact the men's transformations into varied animal forms.

DANIEL OGDEN

See also: COUNTERMAGIC; HECATE; HOMER; LOVE MAGIC; MEDEA.

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CIRUELO, PEDRO (1470–1548)

A distinguished Aragonese theologian and mathematician of *converso* origin, born in Daroca (Saragossa), Ciruelo wrote the most influential and widely known Castilian-language tract about witchcraft and superstition: the *Reprobación de las supersticiones y hechizeries*

(Rebuke of Superstitions and Sorcery, Salamanca, 1530). It went through eight editions between 1538 and 1628 (Homza 2000, 183).

After completing his early studies in the humanities in Saragossa (Zaragoza), Ciruelo moved to Salamanca a round 1482 to study the liberal arts at its university, attracted by the fame of its professors of astrology and mathematics. In 1492 he journeyed to Paris, where he studied theology and taught mathematics for more than ten years. Returning to Spain, Ciruelo was named lecturer in Thomist philosophy at the university recently created in Alcalá de Henares by Cardinal Cisneros. Besides his work on superstition, Ciruelo also wrote an extremely popular vernacular handbook for parish clergy, the *Arte de bien confesar* (The Art of Confessing Well, 1514), which saw twenty-two editions by 1560, far outstripping its competitors in this genre (Homza 2000, 163). Ciruelo's didactic analysis of witchcraft and superstition thus constituted only one part of an extensive literary corpus, primarily in Latin; his ten works on various theological, philosophical, and scientific problems included the first book on mathematics printed in Spain. Having mastered Hebrew, he also made fresh Latin translations of several biblical texts between 1526 and 1537. In 1527, he participated in the great Valladolid conference about the orthodoxy of Desiderius Erasmus, where (unlike the majority) he endorsed Erasmus's opinions as often as he censured them (Homza 2000, 75).

Because Ciruelo's *Repbación* appeared only a year after the first Castilian-language treatment of the same theme by the Franciscan friar Martín de Castañega, *Tratado muy sutil y bien fundado de las supersticiones y hechizeries y vanos conjuros y abusiones, y otras cosas al caso tocantes, y de la posibilidad y remedio dellas* (A Very Exact and Well Founded Tract on Superstitions, Sorcery, Vain Incantations, Witchcraft, and Other Things Touching upon Such Matters, and on the Possibility and Remedies of the Same, Logroño, 1529), comparison of these two tracts, printed almost simultaneously in the same vernacular, is inevitable. Both authors expressed an identical objective, that of distinguishing in a didactic manner that which was licit and that which was illicit in a matter so confused as magic and superstition. Furthermore, their sources were practically identical, including the Bible, St. Augustine, Isidore of Seville, Thomas Aquinas, and, above all, Jean Gerson, chancellor of the University of Paris and author of another famous work against superstitions, *De erroribus circa artem magicam* (Concerning Misconceptions About Magical Arts). Both works avoided casuistry, and both emphasized that such apparently extraordinary phenomena as the flight or metamorphoses of witches might be attributed to tricks or demonic illusions, nothing but mere delusions of the senses. Both also censured the activities of the many healers or workers of charms and enchantments

(including many priests) who tried to fool people with their sophistry. Nonetheless, Castañega's work was quickly forgotten, while Ciruelo's book became the dominant discourse in the matter of witchcraft and superstition in sixteenth-century Spain, replaced in the seventeenth century by Martín Del Río's *Disquisitiones Magicae libri sex* (Six Books on Investigations into Magic, 1599–1600).

Ciruelo's *Repbación* was basically divided into two parts. The first is dedicated to the arts of divination, with the objective, according to Ciruelo, was to know what only God could and should know. The second part concerned itself with sorcery, with the objective was to seek in a brief time, and with demonic aid, certain benefits that only God could give. Among the arts of divination, the author especially condemned necromancy (which, although often performed by priests, included witchcraft), predictive astrology, recourse to ordeals or augury, in addition to numerous other forms of fortunetelling known from antiquity, including palmistry and dream interpretation. Among the various forms of sorcery, he condemned using spoken or written curses, charms, superstitious prayers, and the evil eye; above all, he denounced the activities of healers and exorcists lacking episcopal license, who, in Ciruelo's opinion, only sought to ensnare the innocent by pretending to do such things as conjure away storms or excommunicate insects.

MARÍA TAUSIET;

TRANSLATED BY THOMAS SIZGORICH

See also: CASTAÑEGA, MARTÍN DE; DEL RÍO, MARTÍN; ERASMUS, DESIDERIUS; INQUISITION, SPANISH; MAGIC, LEARNED; MAGIC, POPULAR; NECROMANCY; SPAIN.

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CLARK, STUART

Professor of history at the University of Swansea, Clark has written authoritatively on European witch beliefs

during the early modern period. An intellectual and cultural historian, Clark has devoted most of his career to the study of early modern demonologists. In a series of articles and essays, and most notably in his magisterial volume, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford, 1997), Clark has argued that demonology, rather than being an esoteric theological specialty, was part of the mainstream of early modern thought, intersecting with more general intellectual concerns about the scientific study of nature, the course of history, the maintenance of religious purity, and the nature of political authority.

Clark's most important methodological contribution to the field of witchcraft studies has been his analysis of the language of witchcraft, which he studies on its own terms rather than as perceptions of some external reality. Influenced by the work of linguistic philosophers like Ferdinand de Saussure, who view language as a system of signs, Clark rejects functionalist interpretations of witch beliefs because one need not seek external explanations for people's belief in things that already made sense to them. Clark's decision to study witchcraft theory as a "closed belief system with its own internal meanings" explains why his work remains almost entirely within the realm of early modern thought and is unconcerned with relating the ideas of demonologists to patterns of witch hunting.

Among the many challenges that Clark's work offers to conventional wisdom is his treatment of the relationship between science and witchcraft. In contrast to the traditional interpretation that the Scientific Revolution, and in particular the argument that seventeenth-century mechanical philosophy undermined witch beliefs, Clark has argued that demonology had the status of a science in its own right, and that the belief in a Devil who exercised power in the natural world was consistent with early modern scientific thought. For Clark, demonology was just one of many attempts made during the early modern period to explain the natural world. It involved the same type of empiricism that characterized the work of members of the Royal Society in England, where belief in witchcraft flourished in the late seventeenth century.

Unlike most other historians of demonological thought, Clark is not particularly concerned with either the origins or the decline of witch beliefs; his work lacks a strong diachronic dimension. This deficiency is more than compensated for by his analytical insights regarding a large body of writings covering the entire early modern period. His analysis of the intersection of witchcraft theory and politics illustrates the value of this approach. By emphasizing the sacerdotal, mystical, and charismatic aspects of early modern political authority over a long period of time, he shows how rulers and witches were thought of as being, in a sense, competitors for the same type of power. This approach

to political thought informs his discussion of a range of issues, including the immunity of magistrates to witches' power, the sacred duty of judicial authorities to prosecute the crime, and the relationship between royal healing and the cures performed by witches. In writing about the French judge and political theorist Jean Bodin, Clark argued for the compatibility of the political theory of absolutism expressed in Bodin's *République* (1576) with the witchcraft theory of the same author's *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (On the Demon-Mania of Witches, 1580) by exposing the religious dimensions to the former work and the political dimensions of the latter. Both works reflect the same view of absolute magistracy based on divine authority.

In addition to his major work on demonology, Clark has edited a collection of essays on the language of witchcraft and coedited with Bengt Ankarloo a comprehensive six-volume history of witchcraft and magic in Europe. He is preparing a book on visual paradox and visual reality that will include, among other things, a discussion of witchcraft, demonology, and apparitions.

BRIAN P. LEVACK

See also: BODIN, JEAN; DEMONOLOGY; HISTORIOGRAPHY; MECHANICAL PHILOSOPHY; SCIENCE AND MAGIC.

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CLERGY

A collective term for all ecclesiastics who have acquired the license to act as Catholic priests (both secular and monastic) or Protestant pastors. This entry first discusses the participation of members of the clergy in the theoretical preparation of the trials by promoting the belief in witches and drawing juridical consequences thereupon; then their practical involvement in witchcraft trials, both

as persecutors, helpers, and victims; finally, it addresses the problem of their historical responsibility. Given the absence of any general overview of this topic, the main conclusions are illustrated by only a few examples, each of which represents a vast amount of similar ones.

MIDDLE AGES

Before the twelfth century, deviance from the Catholic faith rarely disturbed learned clergymen in the Latin West, and neither did the crime of magic. Famous penitentials like the *Corrector* of Bishop Burchard of Worms contained ecclesiastical penances for sorcery; but they punished it rather mildly, and neither the ecclesiastical nor the secular authorities were interested in investigating such crimes. When the inquisitorial process began to be applied against the *crimen magiae* (crime of magic) in the central Middle Ages, a theoretical discussion began among theologians and canonists, especially after Pope Alexander IV ordered the inquisitors to occupy themselves actively not only with heresy but also with those kinds of divination and sorcery that—an elastic clause—might include heretical elements (1258–1260). This discussion, however, occupied only chapters within larger theological works, such as Thomas Aquinas's *Summa contra gentiles III* (Summary Against the Gentiles). Until the fourteenth century, nearly all authors still shared the view of the *Canon Episcopi*, explaining the nocturnal rides as mere illusions.

This situation changed in the first half of the fifteenth century, when the full witchcraft stereotype was developed; now many clergymen published on that subject, and Pope Innocent VIII sanctioned persecution. Most of the clerical theoreticians were Dominicans and had often been inquisitors: Nicolas Eymeric, Johannes Nider, Juan Toquemada the Elder and the Younger, Lope Barrientos, Jean Vinet, Nicolas Jacquier, Girolamo Visconti, Jordanes de Bergamo, and Rategno, Bernardo of Como. It seems that, during the Council of Basel, the Dominican convent functioned as a center for spreading the new witchcraft concept (as opposed to simpler conceptions of heresy and magic). A few Franciscan priests, like Bishop Alfonso de Spina, also discussed witchcraft; the secular clergy produced very few authors in this field, although Thomas Ebendorfer, a professor of theology and parish priest near Vienna, may be mentioned. The few clerical defenders of women against witchcraft included the canon Martin Le Franc, secretary of antipope Felix V.

Members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy led the earliest processes that qualify as witchcraft trials, namely those against Dame Alice Kyteler and Joan of Arc, even if based on political machinations. Soon, however, secular authorities took over this task. Occasionally, ecclesiastics actively prevented a persecution. In 1459, the bishop of Amiens refused to follow the inquisitor's wish

to investigate those persons who had been delivered to him under the same accusations as the “heretics” of the *Vauderie* (Waldensianism, but used to label witchcraft) of Arras. In 1486, Bishop George Gosler of Brixen stopped Heinrich Kramer from hunting witches in Tyrol, despite his papal license. And Guillaume Adeline, a prior and professor of the University of Paris, paid for his disbelief in the Sabbat voyages with life-long imprisonment.

EARLY MODERN PERIOD: CLERGYMEN WRITING ON WITCHCRAFT

The general belief in, and fear of, witches in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that led to huge numbers of trials was accompanied by a flood of pamphlets, tracts, studies, and other written materials, many of them by clerical authors, both Catholic and Protestant. Suffice it to point to such witchcraft theorists as Martín Del Rio, Joseph Glanvil, Meric Casaubon, and Sylvestro Prierias among so many others. Within the Catholic Church, the majority of clergymen expressing themselves in favor of the witch hunts were still Dominicans, now supplemented by Jesuits. However, a Franciscan provincial, Benedikt Bonelli (d. 1783), became one of the last defenders of Del Rio. The main Reformers, Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, and John Calvin, though publishing no specialized treatises on the subject, clearly approved of the witch hunts. Significantly fewer clergymen, notably the Jesuits Paul Laymann and Friedrich Spee von Langenfeld, the Theatine Ferdinand Sterzinger, the parish priest Cornelius Loos, or the Reformed pastor Balthasar Bekker, raised their voices in defense of suspected witches. However, the Roman and Spanish Inquisitions both showed a rather distanced and skeptical attitude to this question.

How did the clergy succeed in spreading their ideas about diabolical witchcraft among their parishioners? Though learned theological discussions were usually still published in Latin, numerous writings appeared simultaneously in vernacular translations, influencing popular imagery. To take a few examples: the Catholic suffragan Peter Binsfeld had his Latin *Tractatus de confessionibus malefactorum et sagarum* (Treatise on Confessions of Sorcerers and Witches), printed in 1589, translated into German two years later. The Calvinist theologian Lambert Daneau published his disputation on witches in 1573 in both Latin and French, followed by German and English editions. Niels Hemmingsen published his treatise in 1575–1576, in both Latin and Danish, and ten years later in German. The same is true also of publications by clerical authors inclined to disbelief in witchcraft and the necessity of its persecution. The Amsterdam pastor Balthasar Bekker already used his native Dutch to present *De Betoverde Wereld* (The World Bewitched, 1691–1693), soon translated into

German and many other tongues. However, in contrast to the Middle Ages, clerical authors increasingly felt competition from laymen, especially jurists and doctors, who published on the same subjects.

But the clergy had another and perhaps more effective way to spread their opinions, namely by preaching. Generally, many preachers intensified, or even kindled, their audience's interest in punishing heretics and witches. At executions, sermons were often given about the crimes that had been committed. A Catholic example would be the lectures by the Jesuit Georg Gaar before the stake of the burned Maria Renata Singerin (1749) that continued in the local cathedral; David Meder (1605) may be mentioned as a fanatic Protestant who preached against the "Devil's murder-children" and "milk-thieves."

EARLY MODERN PERIOD: CLERGYMEN AND THE TRIALS

An inexhaustible number of sources show the activities of both Catholic priests and Protestant pastors who engaged in the practice of witch hunting. The former, of course, dominated imperial ecclesiastical territories, where bishops and abbots possessed not only spiritual but also secular powers. In the bishopric of Bamberg, one of the centers of the persecutions, the suffragan bishop Friedrich Förner had a special witch prison, the *Hexenhaus*, built for the imprisonment and torture of the accused witches; within 34 years, 600 witches were burned according to official figures sanctioned by the archbishop. In 1657, Bishop Dietrich Adolph of Paderborn ordered a general inquisition in his territory to find persons guilty of sorcery. One could multiply such examples from nearly all ecclesiastical territories, both large and small. Among Protestant ecclesiastical functionaries, the famous preacher and playwright Thomas Naogeorgius offers an example. He kindled the fire in Esslingen by preaching against the witches whom he blamed for raising a devastating hailstorm in 1562, moving the population to such a degree that a reluctant city council was forced to start a wave of trials. In Scandinavia, the Danish bishop Peder Palladius (1503–1560) persecuted witches not only in preaching but also practically. He qualified everybody still using Catholic prayers as a witch not different from those who used magic. The notorious Swedish prosecution of children-witches in 1669 was only possible because it was demanded eagerly by ministers who insisted that children could not invent stories of the Sabbat. In 1692, two Puritan ministers of high reputation, the Mathers, father and son, stood at the center of events in Salem. When conflicts arose between the secular and the ecclesiastical hierarchy about the question of persecuting or not, it was usually the latter who insisted on further trials (for example, Rostock, 1660–1670).

It is more difficult to find instances of clergymen taking practical actions against the persecution of witches. Alonso de Salazar Frías, an inquisitor visiting Navarre in 1611–1612, did much to stop the wave of persecution raging there at that time. The Roman Inquisition issued some instructions prescribing its officials to proceed only in a juridically correct manner against persons accused of witchcraft. Cardinal Federico Borromeo even planned to found a hospice for converted witches, which he never realized. Later, those prince-bishops who integrated parts of the Enlightenment into their worldview had their officials stop further inquisitions, as did the secular princes.

Though secular authorities carried out the majority of the trials, priests participated in them both as exorcists and as confessors, sometimes even as associated judges. It is not clear how often the inquisitional procedure began with exorcists carrying out their rites in order to prevent the Devil from interfering on the delinquent's behalf. Confessors, however, seem to have been employed at nearly all trials. In the processes of the Holy Inquisition, the inquisitors, always being priests, could, and did hear the confessions of the accused. Official prohibitions notwithstanding, it is not true that clergymen left the office of torturer entirely to laymen; in 1256, Pope Alexander IV permitted inquisitors to absolve each other from canonical irregularities to give these priests the possibility to administer torture themselves or via their servants. In any case, priests were present in the torture chamber and directed the measures. Friedrich Spee told of confessors eagerly instructing torturers how to proceed with the best success (*Cautio Giminalis* [A Warning on Criminal Justice, 1631] 19, 26). But there were cases also outside the Inquisition: when accused of witchcraft, the senile subprioress of the nunnery of Unterzell near Würzburg, Maria Renata, was hit cruelly by the fathers to make her confess. A monk kindled the stake of Urbain Grandier, and Cardinal Richelieu, an ordained priest and a bishop, engineered the parish priest's execution. Even if such events seem to have been somewhat exceptional, it must be underlined that inflicting physical pain, especially flogging, was a common means of exorcism procedure, just as it was a common ecclesiastical penance, both being administered by the respective priest.

It is an open question of how many among the confessors performed nothing but their spiritual office. Secular authorities often used them to break prisoners down by asking the confessors to depict the eternal torments the accused faced in hell to make them avow their crimes out of this fear (cf. Spee, *Cautio Criminalis* 51). Nevertheless, some confessors tried to help those of the accused whose innocence seemed obvious. During the notorious Salzburg Zaubererjackl (Sorcerer-Jack) trials, which ended with the death of 124 "sorcerers" of all ages, a Capuchin father, Gerardus Pasendorf, tried to

save a girl of eleven and a boy of thirteen; but the judge appealed to the archbishop, who prevented further interventions of that kind.

Professors of theology were also members of the clergy. Often the authorities did not consult only specialists in criminal law, but also demanded theological and canonical expert opinion. This happened as early as the investigation in the series of witchcraft trials known as the *Vauderie* (Waldensianism, but used to label witchcraft) of Arras (1459–1460), when theologians from Cambrai had to study the acts. A much later example, among many, is the theological expertise that the University of Würzburg contributed to the condemnation of Maria Renata in 1749.

Did clergymen also become victims of witch hunts? There are indeed examples, but on the whole, they are atypical. Ordinarily, their social and juridical position exempted them from being accused, and especially from being tortured. The exceptions from this rule include cases where personal intrigues by members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy or the secular aristocracy played a part, as in the French trials against Louis Gaufridy of Aix-en-Provence, burned in 1611, or Urbain Grandier of Loudun, burned in 1634. Moreover, when a wave of persecution reached its peak, not even priests remained untouchable. The witch hunts at Cologne in the second half of the sixteenth century included victims from the priesthood, canons, vicars, and monks; on one day, 70 alumni (that is, future priests) were incarcerated by the prince-archbishop. Between 1588 and 1593, at least eight priests were put to death in the dioceses of Trier during the first great German witch hunt. In Münstereifel, two priests were accused by tortured witches, put to the torture themselves, and sentenced to capital punishment (1629–1630). That accused clergymen received incomparably more attention than civil victims is shown by the case of a parish priest of the diocese of Olmütz, Aloys Lauter, whom the prince-bishop would not have had executed until the pope himself had approved of the sentence (1680). Perhaps even more infrequent was the execution of a Reformed pastor; when George Burroughs, the ex-minister of Salem, was hanged, the consequence was a near revolt.

THE QUESTION OF RESPONSIBILITY

Over and over again it has been said that the historian's task was to write *sine ira et studio* (without anger and without bias). This indeed must be practiced when collecting and evaluating facts and figures, taking into consideration all kinds of pro and contra evidence. Nevertheless, where central moral issues are involved, taking a standpoint becomes inescapable. No one can write the history of slavery, torture, or mass destruction *sine ira*, with complete disinterest. Neither can that be

done concerning the question of responsibility for the witch persecutions; and one can hardly find any academic publication whose author does not betray, explicitly or implicitly, a personal judgment on that phenomenon.

It is probably not accidental that there seems to be no overview publication on the topic "clergy and witchcraft." In so-called "serious," that is, tendentiously-neutral historiography, the subject is not treated apart, because the involvement of the clergy with magic and witch hunting is taken as self-evident, basic knowledge. In the older writings by church historians from particular confessions, this theme was treated for a long time in an openly apologetic way. Especially during the time of the strife between church and state in nineteenth-century Germany, confessionally biased historians functionalized the theme for directly political purposes. However, in our more ecumenical and far more secular age, most recent publications tend to minimize or simply to conceal the role of the clergy in witch hunting. At the same time, anticlerical authors as well as some feminists generally depict the male clergy as malicious wrongdoers guided by only the meanest moral principles including voyeurism, sadism, and greed.

Evidence for the historical guilt of both individual clergy and the hierarchies of all confessions generally in both establishing and maintaining a theological system that worked as the theoretical (ideological) basis for the persecutions is absolutely overwhelming and therefore beyond any doubt. The fact that, in the early modern period, it was usually secular courts that dealt with witchcraft does not excuse the Churches, except the Anabaptists and perhaps the Greek Orthodox Church, because both the religious reasons for hunting down these women and men and the method, the inquisitorial process, had been shaped by clergymen and were continually approved by them. Those few priests who bravely fought against the persecution of witches must be contrasted with the much greater number of those who opposed all movements intending to end that tragedy. It is also beyond doubt that there were a few clerics seeking material gain and sadistic lust by participating in witchcraft trials (the first is most evident, for example, for the Cardinal Prince-Bishop Emanuele Madruzzo of Trent [d. 1658], the latter testified by Spee *Cautio Griminalis* 51). But this does not mean that most priests did not honestly believe in the necessity of saving souls by destroying those whom they thought induced innocent people to commit mortal sins that would lead them into eternal damnation. It is also clear that there existed clergymen whose involvement in the trials did cause them earnest inner conflicts; Spee's testimony about that is evidence enough.

Given the wide palette of theoretical attitudes and practical behaviors throughout the Christian confessions, and even among individual monastic orders in

Catholicism, we can only speak of one *collective* responsibility of the clergy, that is, in establishing and maintaining a demonological worldview, which formed the official background, making it possible to solve social conflicts and destroy enemies through the instrument of the witchcraft accusation. There is no doubt that the persecutions perpetrated by secular authorities during the early modern era were a late consequence of their obligation to execute punishments that medieval ecclesiastical law had prescribed against unrepentant heretics. “Who goads the authorities to the witchcraft trials?” asked the Jesuit Spee, and answered: “First and foremost the clerics and prelates . . .” (*Cautio Criminalis* 15). Like him or Bekker, a few individuals within the clergy would rebel against them, but none of the Churches as hieratic organizations played any role in ending the trials.

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See also: CONFESSORS; COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; COURTS, INQUISITORIAL; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DOMINICAN ORDER; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); EPISCOPAL JUSTICE; INQUISITION MEDIEVAL, JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY; PAPACY AND PAPAL BULLS; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; PURITANISM; ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; WITCH-BISHOPS, HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE.

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CLERICAL MAGIC

The phrase “clerical magic” does not denote a distinct branch of magic, but rather any spell, charm, or magical ritual performed by a member of the regular or secular clergy. Most clerics who were accused of dabbling in magic during the medieval and early modern periods were male (clerics probably comprised the largest

single group of men accused of practicing magic), Catholic, and participated in learned forms of magic. Ordained clerics made powerful magicians, many Europeans believed, because they could divert the sacerdotal power that allowed them to perform the miracle of the Mass to magical ends. While the judicial records of the period indicate that clerics were most frequently involved in necromancy or other ceremonies of ritual magic, they were also often found practicing forms of popular magic such as healing, love magic, and fortunetelling.

Ordained Roman Catholic clergy possessed sacerdotal powers that allowed them to function as mediators between the supernatural and the natural worlds. It was this access to the divine that enabled a priest to effect the miracle of transubstantiation, where by he transformed the Communion wafer and wine into the body and blood of Jesus. The logic of popular magical tradition dictated that a priest might also direct this unique power at will; by celebrating Mass over a magical charm, he was believed able to infuse the spell with sacerdotal power and thus activate it as he activated the miracle of the Mass. Sorceresses and magicians therefore commissioned corruptible priests to consecrate and thus strengthen a dizzying variety of charms. One French priest, for example, confessed that he had been hired to say Masses over a charm for winning at dice, over the dice themselves, over the rope with which a man had been hanged, and over a scrap of paper that, when ground to powder and scattered over someone, would cause him to fall passionately in love. A sixteenth-century Venetian priest admitted that he had written *hoc est enim corpus meum* (for this is my body—the Latin phrase that consecrates the Communion host) on leaves of sage, as well as on a Communion wafer, for a courtesan wishing to increase her lover’s passion for her. She planned to add the love charms to his soup. Similarly, clerics’ cooperation in magical rituals supposedly heightened the ceremonies’ efficacy. The very functioning of the business of early modern magic, in effect, had a sacral dimension that required priests’ participation in it.

Lay belief in clerics’ supernatural abilities may have been strengthened during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by the tenets of the Catholic Reformation. The Council of Trent, which met sporadically to define Catholic doctrine between 1545 and 1563, not only reaffirmed the claims of the Catholic Church to exclusive control over the sacred, but it also required regular attendance at Mass. This development brought an increasing number of Catholics to witness the weekly miracle performed by the priest. In seventeenth-century France, consequently, priests came to be regarded as capable of activating even personal prayers; if a priest read Mass or part of the liturgy over the head of a suppliant, it was believed that the suppliant’s petition to heaven would be granted.

As ordained priests made powerful magicians, early modern Europeans held, so too did they make the most capable of necromancers. The unique ritual powers that allowed priests to heighten the efficacy of magic charms or personal prayers also helped them to maintain control over the demons they summoned. Only if a necromancer triumphed in a contest of wills with these powerful and malign spirits could he compel them to carry out his desires, whether it be to win the love of a woman, cause bodily harm to an enemy, or reveal the whereabouts of hidden treasure. Some sixteenth- and seventeenth-century manuals of necromancy even specified that a priest's participation was necessary to the success of any demonic conjuration described within.

Priests, monks, and friars shared several experiences that may have made them likely candidates to develop a taste for demonic magic. Like all clerics, they had received some education and thus possessed at least a basic knowledge of Latin and a degree of familiarity with the rites of exorcism. While knowledge of Latin was certainly not limited to the clergy in early modern Europe, priests did possess both a facility of ritual forms and a command of ritual language that may have provided them with a sense of ownership over that vocabulary and therefore an affinity for ritual magic. Their education may also have introduced them to astrological images or other forms of magic. When coupled with access to the books of demonic magic that circulated throughout the period, such an education provided all the tools necessary to experiment with necromancy.

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See also: BLACK MASS; *GRIMOIRES*; MAGIC, LEARNED; MAGIC AND RELIGION; NECROMANCY; RITUAL MAGIC.

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COBHAM, ELEANOR (CA. 1400–1452)

This duchess of Gloucester became a central figure in the most spectacular of the treason-cum-sorcery trials among the English upper classes in the later Middle Ages. The daughter of Lord Cobham of Sterborough, Eleanor became the mistress, and after the dissolution

of his first marriage, the wife of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester (1391–1447), a man who combined a talent for power politics with a love of books and learning and a taste for debauchery. By 1440, however, Gloucester's fortunes had waned, and his attempts to charge the archbishop of York and Cardinal Beaufort with malfeasance during King Henry VI's minority provoked a counterattack from his enemies, in which allegations of witchcraft against his wife were a central plank. Gloucester was disliked for his power, and, among conservative churchmen, for his patronage of new scholarship, while his wife was disapproved of because of her previous status as his mistress.

Eleanor Cobham was charged with using sorcery to kill Henry VI, and to advance her husband's ambitions for the crown. Those accused with her included Margery Jourdemayne, known as "the Witch of Eye" (a settlement near Westminster), Roger Bolingbroke, whose confession probably first implicated the duchess in the affair, and Thomas Southwell. A canon of St. Stephen's Chapel in Westminster, Southwell was a man of considerable learning, an astrologer and alchemist who had enjoyed Gloucester's patronage. With assistance from Southwell, Bolingbroke allegedly attempted to compass the king's death by necromancy, while, quite apart from the other charges, Cobham was accused of capturing the duke's affections by the use of love potions supplied by Jourdemayne. Bolingbroke seems to have been a genuine sorcerer; his magician's paraphernalia, including wax dolls suitable for employment in image magic, were displayed at his trial. Jourdemayne was burned, either for heresy or treason; Bolingbroke was hanged and drawn-and-quartered for treason; Southwell died in prison; and Cobham was made to do penance and then subjected to permanent imprisonment, later on the Isle of Man, where she was living at the time of her husband's death in 1447.

The Cobham affair was typical of a number of such cases involving political elites that punctuated European political history in the high and late Middle Ages. These cases occurred in royal, princely, or papal courts that were locked into a long-term transition from being households to becoming formal seats of government. State officials, favorites, royal wives and lovers, courtiers, and servants all competed at court for power, wealth, advancement, and security. It is, perhaps, natural that accusations of sorcery should flourish in an environment where competition was fierce and the rules uncertain. That such cases could afflict the very top of the English political elite is further illustrated by the allegations of sorcery made by another duke of Gloucester, in this case the future Richard III, against Elizabeth Woodville, wife of the recently deceased king Edward IV, in 1483. At that time, Richard was trying, with the objective of their future elimination, to ensure the incarceration of Elizabeth's two sons, the rightful

heirs to the throne; to discredit the queen and her family generally; and to break the rapprochement between the Woodvilles and a faction led by Lord William Hastings. As part of his campaign, Richard, according to tradition, accused the queen dowager of withering his arm through sorcery. Another woman, Jane Shore, wife of a London goldsmith, was also involved. Shore had been mistress to Edward IV, and after his death achieved the same status with Thomas Grey, Marquis of Dorset (Elizabeth Woodville's son by her first marriage), and then with Hastings. Politically, she had given offense to Richard by acting as go-between in negotiations between the Woodville and Hastings factions. Richard's accusations against Elizabeth Woodville did not stick, but he had Jane Shore convicted of "harlotry" before the bishop of London's court, and confiscated her considerable fortune. She died in poverty in 1527.

Such cases remind us that witchcraft was not restricted to the peasantry, but that it was also a force in the elite politics of this period. Taking Europe as a whole, such cases served to spread ideas about witchcraft, and in particular to help elaborate learned theories of witchcraft in the later Middle Ages.

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See also: ENGLAND; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS.

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COLOGNE

Cologne refers both to a large imperial free city and to its surrounding territory, the so-called electorate of Cologne. While relatively few executions occurred in the city of Cologne, the electorate of Cologne became a center of the European witch hunts.

IMPERIAL CITY OF COLOGNE

With about 40,000 inhabitants, Cologne was one of the largest cities in Germany in the late Middle Ages. We know today that Jakob Sprenger, the prior of Cologne's Dominican monastery, was not one of the authors of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), although his name was connected with this handbook of witch hunting for centuries. Nevertheless, the new theory of witches as Devil-worshippers found its way to Cologne only two decades after the *Malleus* first appeared: in 1507, a certain Tringin von Breisig confessed all elements of this new doctrine under interrogation. She was not executed but expelled from the city. Throughout the sixteenth century, there were no death sentences for witchcraft in

Cologne and only a few arrests. The judges of Cologne's municipal high court remained skeptical about accusations of witchcraft. Even the first wave of persecutions in the surrounding territories in the 1590s did not change their cautious attitude.

In the seventeenth century, a new generation of High Court judges affected the treatment of witchcraft accusations. In 1617, the city's first death sentences for witchcraft were carried out against three women. This new mentality became the precondition for the city's major witch prosecution, which began on January 9, 1627, with the imprisonment of a patrician woman, Katharina Henot. In 1626, two nuns from the convent of St. Clara in Cologne had been suspected of being witches and were brought to Lechenich near Cologne. One of them, Anna Sophia of Langenfeld, confessed under torture that Katharina Henot was also a witch. The second nun, Franziska Henot, a relative of Katharina, was arrested in Lechenich on January 22, 1627. The trials against the nuns of St. Clara seem to have begun the rumors against Katharina Henot. She tried in vain to fight against spreading defamations by appealing to the vicar-general and to the archbishop of Cologne, but the Church refused to intervene. Katharina Henot was executed on May 19, 1627. By 1630, thirty-three other men and women had been arrested at Cologne under suspicion of witchcraft; twenty-three women and one man were executed.

The turning point of the persecution was the trial of Christina Plum. She openly accused members of the city council and other respectable notables of Cologne, until she was arrested herself. Under torture she confessed to being a witch and to have invented her accusations against prominent people. After Christina Plum's death, the uncertainty about the reliability of witchcraft accusations brought the outbreak to an end. Between 1647 and 1655, five more people were executed in the city of Cologne, including two children, but after these trials witchcraft prosecution ended in Cologne. The total number of known executions amounted to thirty-three between 1617 and 1655. The Jesuit Friedrich Spee, who had been in Cologne during its great persecution, was deeply upset by the witchcraft trials he witnessed there; however, his courageous book opposing the witch hunts, the *Cautio Giminalis* (A Warning on Criminal Justice) of 1631, had no visible influence on Cologne's city council.

ELECTORATE OF COLOGNE

The electorate was divided into three different parts: the *Erzstift* (secular part of the archbishopric, where the ruler—prince-bishop—was both the spiritual leader and the territorial lord) on the left bank of the river Rhine, the duchy of Westphalia, and the *Vest* of Recklinghausen. Around the year 1600, the electorate contained approximately 220,000 people—about

130,000 in the *Erzstift*, 73,000 in Westphalia, and only 18,000 in the *Vest*.

The first trials using the new witchcraft doctrines occurred in the *Erzstift* at the end of the fifteenth century. During the sixteenth century, many further trials were held in the Rhineland. Most of the witchcraft trials took place in the united duchies of Jülich, Cleves (Kleve), and Berg, which surrounded the *Erzstift* part of the electorate. This situation changed in the final decade of the sixteenth century, when the persecution of witches concentrated on the territory of the elector and archbishop of Cologne. The first persecution began in 1592, probably stimulated by the extensive trials and lynchings in the archiepiscopal electorate of Trier. In 1607, to preserve the territory of Cologne's archbishop from mob justice, the Court Council of the electorate proclaimed an edict regulating criminal procedure in witchcraft trials. Henceforth, the assessor's courts in his small towns and villages were required to use the help of an impartial lawyer whenever a witchcraft case exceeded their juridical knowledge. These lawyers, who normally came from the High Courts of Cologne or from the archbishop's court at Bonn, were called witch commissioners. The concept of decentralization, presumably created in order to guarantee fair trials for accused witches, became instead a terrible instrument of intensified prosecution. In many places, an alliance of witch commissioners, local landlords, and unscrupulous village officials led to an increased number of trials and a more extensive use of torture.

The promulgation of Cologne's new witchcraft criminal procedure did not cause an immediate increase of witchcraft trials. The first mass executions only occurred in 1616, in an isolated part of the territory in the Eifel. The great mass persecution in the prince-bishopric of Cologne started, just like in the city of Cologne, in 1626. The first chains of trials took place in villages bordering the Eifel hills, but within two years people were being executed for witchcraft throughout the *Oberstift*, the southern part of Cologne's Rhineland territories. In 1628, Elector Ferdinand of Wittelsbach renewed the witchcraft criminal procedure of 1607, and added confiscation procedures designed to preserve husbands and children from the loss of their property.

The number of trials decreased after Spee published his famous *Cautio Criminalis*; in some parts of the elector's territory, the witch hunt even stopped entirely. But between 1636 and 1638 a new wave of witch persecution broke out in several places. Elector Max Heinrich, who followed Ferdinand in 1650, decreed a new witchcraft edict, but apart from some distant isolated areas, no new persecutions were initiated. All in all, we can assume that in the *Erzstift*, the Rhineland part of the electorate of Cologne, at least 600 men and women lost their lives during these witch hunts. The persecution was concentrated

on the southern part of the electorate. North of the city of Cologne, in the so-called *Unterstift* (lower archbishopric), very few trials were held. One reason for this surprising phenomenon might lie in the different housing patterns north and south of the Rhineland. North of Cologne, the form of settlement changed from huddled village houses to widely scattered farmhouses. Further research will show whether this had an influence on the attitude toward witchcraft in each region.

The second major part of the electorate was the duchy of Westphalia, also called *Sauerland*. Although Westphalia had some degree of legal autonomy, the development of its witchcraft persecutions seems similar to that in the southern Rhineland parts of the electorate. Available sources reveal 915 witchcraft trials in Westphalia; considering the gaps in documentation, the total number of executions here must have exceeded a thousand. The first Westphalian witchcraft case took place at Werl in 1508, later than in Rhineland areas. However, while the prosecution in the Rhineland stopped by the mid-seventeenth century, witchcraft trials continued in Westphalia until 1732. The peak of the witch hunt here occurred between 1626 and 1632. As in the Rhineland part of the electorate of Cologne, special witch commissioners were deployed. One of them, Kaspar Reinhard, is considered to be responsible for the execution of almost 500 people. His colleague, Heinrich von Schultheiss, even wrote a handbook for witch hunters.

The history of the witch hunt in the third and smallest part of the Electorate, the so-called *Vest* of Recklinghausen, differed from the other two regions. Witchcraft trials began here in 1514 with the burning of eleven weather witches charged with raising storms. Greater persecutions followed beginning in 1580: at least twenty-three women and six men were executed in this year, and another eighteen people in 1581. Between 1588 and 1590, a second wave led to forty-five arrests, of whom twenty-one were executed, two died in jail, and one committed suicide. In the *Vest* and other parts of western Westphalia, the water test (swimming test) played a decisive part in demonstrating guilt or innocence. However, in Recklinghausen intensive prosecution ended in 1590. In the district of Horst, near the river Emscher, a last wave of trials can be found in 1609, but little *Vest* Recklinghausen, apparently avoided the terrible fate of most other parts of this region—the Westphalian *Sauerland*, the southern Rhineland *Erzstift*, or the city of Cologne—during the late 1620s and early 1630s.

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See also: BUIRMANN, FRANZ; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); EVIDENCE; FERDINAND OF COLOGNE; GERMANY, WEST AND NORTHWEST; IMPERIAL FREE CITIES; LÖHER, HERMAN; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; SCHULTHEISS, HEINRICH VON; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; SWIMMING TEST.

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COMMUNAL PERSECUTION

Communal persecution examines not simply the fact of witch hunting *in* villages, but *by* villages, that is, relying on communal structures, traditions, and organizations. It clearly indicates an extensive degree of popular participation with far-reaching consequences, raising further questions about its relationship to territorial and administrative politics, or about the significance of communal traditions in the context of witch hunts.

Recent German research has produced much evidence about the important role of popular demand for persecutions in wide regions of the Holy Roman Empire. A chronicle written in Trier around 1620 even labeled the persecutions ravaging the region some 30 years before as insurrections: “Because it was commonly believed that the witches were responsible for the sterility of the time, the whole country rose up in order to exterminate them” (*tota patria insurrexit in extinctionem maleficarum*). An ordinance issued by Trier’s archbishop in 1591 described this popular movement as a virtual social upheaval threatening his governmental prerogatives: “Unfortunately, the vice of witchcraft could not be eradicated by ordinary means. Instead, agitators were inciting whole communities, which then assemble conspiratorially in order to pass resolutions (*Verbündnisse*) close to sedition. As a result, great numbers of communal committees were set up, whose members run impatiently back and forth, thereby not only violating justice but also causing immense financial damage” (Scott 1832, cited in Rummel 1991, 26).

Since the Middle Ages, committees, either permanent or ad hoc deputations, were commonly used by village communities for negotiating with the authorities. In addition, rural deputations or *Landesausschuss* organized paramilitary units, mobilizing the male adults of a territory in urgent need of defense. In 1732, *Zedler’s Universal-Lexikon* offered a variety of meanings for the term but still emphasized its communal forms: “generally and especially, it refers to a certain number of people chosen to act in the name of the community.” In

his study on the communal basis of the Reformation, Peter Blickle (1992) mentioned such communal committees engaged on behalf of the new ideas.

Hence, communal traditions of organized self-help for urgent purposes probably fostered the idea that such deputations could also be created to defend village communities against the danger of witchcraft. Besides general communal tradition in the Rhineland, specific regional heritages may have prepared a more direct ground. Throughout the villages around Trier, the idea of legitimate self-help had long since been established by the institution of *herschaw* (*clamor forensis*), that is, a state of alarm leading to immediate collective action by communities belonging to *Herschaw*-districts. In 1588, these districts set up their own special committees to persecute witches. The earliest evidence from Luxembourg (1520, 1523, 1535, 1546) concerns suits brought forward by alliances between private persons and regular functionaries of village communities; the first trace of a general oath creating a formal committee in 1564 also comes from Luxembourg.

REGIONAL ROOTS AND DISPERSION

The close affinity between witchcraft committees and communalism (as defined by Blickle) suggests that such actions could have taken place in many regions of the Holy Roman Empire (there is scattered evidence from Brandenburg, the duchy of Münster, the county of Wertheim, the *Stift* [monastery] of Odenheim [Kraichgau], and the Austrian Alps). Political conditions, however, were not always favorable to *Ausschüsse*, even when they were favorable to witchcraft persecutions. Territories with strongly centralized and bureaucratic features displayed hostility to such communal activities on principle, especially in judicial matters. In general, the western parts of the Holy Roman Empire with their numerous territories of medium and small size were a stronghold of committees, notably the mountain regions of Eifel, Hunsrück, and Westerwald together with the valleys of the Rhine and its major tributaries (Saar, Mosel, Lahn, Sieg). In territorial terms, they included the electorates of Trier and Cologne, German parts of the duchy of Luxembourg, the counties of Nassau-Saarbrücken, Sponheim, Arenberg, Wied, Nassau-Siegen, Nassau-Dillenburg, and Sayn, not to mention numerous mini- and micro-lordships. Confessional allegiance had no influence on this phenomenon.

In general, committees represented either single villages, several villages together, or even entire districts. In the city of Trier, single committees installed by the individual guilds as well as a sort of super-committee pressured the electoral government into taking further actions against witches (Voltmer 2001). In villages, we find ordinary neighbors, sometimes officials, and even priests as members.

INAUGURATION AND FUNCTIONING

The basic reason to set up a committee to hunt and accuse witches was to avoid the risks connected with private suits. The principle of trial by accusation made plaintiffs personally responsible for their actions by putting themselves (or a guarantor) into prison. If the action failed, plaintiffs or their guarantors would have to pay all costs. Communal action setting up an accusatorial committee implied that the entire community would take over this responsibility; village members had to swear accordingly, after the assembly had voted to set up a committee. Thus, a formal *pactum* (pact) or *Verbündnis* was established. This ceremony drew heavily on archaic symbolism: villagers underlined their loyalty to the *pactum* by touching the court's mace (*Gerichtsstab*) or by promising solidarity to the mayor's hand. The oath might be sworn at a church altar; it could also be confirmed by everybody stepping forth and grasping the handle of a knife stuck into a table.

The whole situation was highly charged emotionally. Tensions were already high because of an agrarian crisis. Ongoing persecutions in the vicinity often intensified the desire for similar action, especially if members of their own village community had been identified as accomplices by confessing witches. Such incidents inflamed these scenes, as happened in the village of Zilshausen (Hunsrück) in 1595, when Jacob Daum, jolted out of bed by a nightmare, ran totally naked into the street yelling that his house was full of witches. The alarmed villagers assembled and proclaimed a committee that very night. Witnesses testified that such assemblies were tumultuous, filled with much agitation for persecution and even naming potential targets. Anyone who dared to dissent ran the risk of being accused of witchcraft. Though externally cooperative in terms of procedure and structure, the inauguration of witch-accusing committees was as tyrannical as what followed.

ATTITUDES OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENTS

Even princes and councils who favored witch persecutions were generally hostile to such acts of communal self-help. Official terminology used *by* as well as in addresses *to* the provincial council of the duchy of Luxemburg called such committees *monopoles* (monopolies) and *conspirations* (conspiracies). In an ordinance of April 1591, the council prohibited any communal action leading to their formation, notably the establishment of financial statutes. Notaries and lawyers were forbidden to accept commissions by these monopolies. Half a year later, the archbishop-elect of Trier issued a similar ordinance banning these irregular committees because of their seditious actions and similar abuses. But except in the duchy of Lorraine, these and similar attempts by various Rhineland governments had hard-

ly any effect. Clearly the aim of the Luxembourg ordinance was to weaken the persecution by limiting suits to individuals at full risk of their action. In turn, village monopolies simply covered their activities behind front-men who appeared at court as formal accusers, swearing not to act on behalf of a committee. The Trier ordinance of December 1591, aiming more at regulation than at suppression, suffered from inherent ambivalence: though declaring irregular committees illegal, it allowed communities to choose deputies as formal suitors in witchcraft accusations. Committees therefore continued to exist openly.

The biggest loophole was the committees' cooperation with notaries and lawyers and with local officials or lords eager to defend their reputations and rights against central governments. The combination of such secondary interests with the communities' desire for effective action integrated persecutions into a local milieu almost totally impervious to external intervention or inspection. Although central governments saw these lawyers and notaries as guaranteeing equity and justice in local procedures, they either let themselves be deceived by written evidence or, as Friedrich Spee correctly observed, ignored hints and even explicit complaints from victims about abuses. All attempts to discipline committees and their local supporters revealed continuous abuses, scandals, and failures. And by formally prohibiting membership in such committees to the jurors of village courts, governmental regulations made the former into potential opponents of the latter, creating scenarios best suited to provide new weapons for the hitherto unprivileged parties in village disputes over power, property, and honor.

COMMUNALISM?

Summarizing recent studies dealing with persecution by committees, Behringer (1989) concluded that such "democratic organization" of persecutions undermined older interpretations focusing on governmental input. These committees indeed offer reasons to revise some notions about how early modern states functioned. But communal persecution was in no way democratic. At best, it was cooperative in a contemporary sense, but even that only insofar as we do not confuse structure with content. Communalism, however, required both cooperative structure in action *and* a corresponding justification that defended the common man's rights against the other estates, especially against lords, bureaucrats, and sovereigns. In contrast to Dillinger (1999), who also sees communalism at the basis of village witchcraft persecutions, I would argue that what we see here is only formal external cooperation. In terms of content or justification, no argument has yet been found that draws directly on the discourse of communalism to defend the committees' activities. Finally, though witchcraft represented an external threat that

helped to legitimate community action, prosecuting witches was not a defense of the community as such against external social powers, but only of its individual members against individual enemies from within. Therefore, communal persecution necessarily took on the character of civil war, and the particular trials followed the tracks of preexisting village feuds.

WALTER RUMMEL

See also: GERMANY; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; POPULAR PERSECUTION; RURAL WITCHCRAFT.

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CONFESSIONS

Several thousand confessions by accused witches in trials have been preserved, primarily in archives but also in numerous printed texts (demonologies, pamphlets, and so on), after the cumulative concept of European witchcraft belief had been assembled by the early fifteenth century. There were so many because confessions were extremely important in Roman law. Considered the "queen of proofs," a confession almost inevitably formed the basis for a judicial conviction in continental Europe, particularly for an "occult" or hidden crime like witchcraft. Interpreting confessions constitutes a major headache for any historian of the subject. They are too numerous to ignore, but obviously impossible to accept at face value for one simple reason: confessions contained manifest physical impossibilities, such as flight to the witches' Sabbath or sexual intercourse with the Devil or demons. Some types of *maleficia* (harmful acts) found in confessions—for example, sticking pins in dolls to cause injury or death, or tying knots in a string to cause impotence—probably represent real deeds (indeed, sometimes we can be quite confident of this), while others—for example, sending demons to possess people's bodies or raising hailstorms—obviously do not.

One cannot raise a hailstorm by beating running water with a stick, but many women confessed to doing this. Nicolas Rémy (a notorious exaggerator) claimed to have seen 200 confessions of this particular crime; instances do appear in several early confessions from various parts of French Switzerland (Monter 1976, 151–155). It is easy to imagine villagers actually performing this gesture—a traditional way of doing laundry in many parts of the world. This detail suggests that many evil deeds reported in witches' confessions reflected real intentions, whether or not one accepts the witches' etiology.

Nevertheless, "stories with manifestly impossible features are not to be trusted in any particular, as evidence of what physically happened" (Cohn 1975, 115). Both the willingness of late medieval and early modern prisoners to make confessions replete with elements that were both empirically unverifiable and contrary to the laws of nature, and the propensity of judges to accept them uncritically derived from their general absence of any strong sense of skepticism about the workings of the cosmos. Such mythopoeic attitudes, which slowly changed (principally among the judges) as a result of the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment, accepted the daily intrusion of the supernatural into the



An accused witch is tortured by forcing water in his mouth. In some areas of Europe, especially in the Holy Roman Empire, courts legally employed torture to extract confessions. (C. Walker/Topham/The Image Works)

natural; miracles, wonders, demons, and angels made the impossible possible.

Because witchcraft was a secret crime, witches did not adopt outward signs of their beliefs, went about their nefarious activities unobserved, and left little trace of their actions except the results: murdered corpses, injured bodies, damaged crops, or sick livestock. Essential in identifying alleged witches, witnesses could provide information about the circumstances of such inexplicable harm, testify to the malicious words spoken by a reputed witch, and report rumors about specific individuals.

The secret nature of the crime, however, more often required authorities to concentrate on forcing the witch to confess his or her deeds. This was because in early modern jurisprudence, confession was regarded as the most certain proof of a crime, other than being caught perpetrating it, and much more reliable than witness testimony. To produce a confession effectively, European authorities, from the fifteenth century onward, frequently made witchcraft a *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime), exempting it from normal rules of judicial

procedure. In doing so they also turned the confession into a useful tool of witch persecution, as witch suspects were forced to name alleged accomplices.

Most witch suspects were either accused by their self-confessed victims or named by other witch suspects under duress. In continental Europe, where inquisitorial procedure was dominant, this meant that most of those arrested for witchcraft had to convince an interrogator that they were not witches. In Spain and Italy, where state-run inquisitions prosecuted most witchcraft cases, it was not generally regarded as an exceptional crime. Consequently, state-run inquisitions allowed defense lawyers (although their actions were heavily circumscribed) and rarely used torture to extract confessions. Suspected witches therefore stood a reasonable chance of being released with little or no punishment.

In other parts of Europe, such as Germany, secular courts tended to prosecute witchcraft. They denied access to defense lawyers and freely used torture. In numerous witchcraft cases tried by inquisitorial-style courts, the template for interrogation was an interrogatory list of questions to be put to the defendant about his or her crime. We have known for over a century that uniform confessions will result if a uniform series of questions is asked to all prisoners under torture. This procedure was used during the trial of the French Templars at the outset of the fourteenth century, long before witchcraft trials proliferated.

In some parts of early modern Germany, such as Eichstätt and Kelheim, the witchcraft interrogatory became standardized and was followed in all known sixteenth- and seventeenth-century trials. The lists often began with questions about the suspect's biography, but very quickly turned to questions about the suspect's character. The Eichstätt list included questions about the legitimacy of the defendant's marriage, whether he or she had fornicated with his or her spouse before their marriage, and whether superstitious objects were used at their wedding. All questionnaires also asked why the suspect thought he or she had been brought before the interrogators and how long the suspect had been in the vice of witchcraft. The tone of such questions clearly showed the suspect that the interrogators already believed him or her to be guilty because of testimony from him or supposed victims or accusations of complicity from other witch suspects. A suspect's only defense was to deny the accusation strenuously, but the interrogators had a series of threats and tortures at their disposal with which to break the suspect's resistance. They could threaten torture, bring the torturer and his instruments into the room, prepare the suspect for torture, and finally use it, moving from thumbscrews to the rack. Occasionally, the suspect would also be confronted with the testimony of others or even with his or her accusers in person, especially if they were also witch suspects. Priests, jailers, and others might also visit the

suspect in custody to induce him or her to confess or spy on others.

Torture proved the most effective means to make a suspect admit to being a witch and then construct a confession that would condemn the suspect and implicate others. In its complete form, a confession covered who had seduced the suspect into witchcraft and when; what he or she had to do to become a witch (promise him or herself to the Devil, have sex with him, renounce God and the saints, and promise to abuse the host and harm Christians); the names of the suspect paramours at the witches' Sabbats, of those whom seduced into the witch sect, and of other accomplices; and details of his or her activities as a witch (killing and injuring people, especially infants, harming their property, causing extremely bad weather, causing marital strife, and so on).

There are intimate connections between witches' confessions and the use of torture. In England and other regions that did not base their judicial systems on Roman law, no legal confession could be obtained through torture because torture was forbidden (except in cases of treason). However, these places also removed the need to obtain confessions, because juries could and often did convict prisoners on the basis of evidence of *maleficium* (harmful magic) provided by witness testimony. But most accused witches were tried under some form of Roman law, where, confession was a *de facto* (if not *de jure*) prerequisite for conviction. A careful survey of surviving confessions from the formative, fifteenth-century period of cumulative witchcraft underlines that many suspected witches confessed diabolism only after undergoing torture and insists that "the extent of the confessions appears to have been directly proportional to the length of the torture"; but it also points out that many accused witches confessed without undergoing any form of torture, that prolonged imprisonment often sufficed to elicit confessions, and misleading promises by judges—recommended, for instance, by the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486)—probably elicited even more (Kieckhefer 1976, 88–90).

If it is common knowledge that most witchcraft confessions were made under torture, it is much less well known that, under Roman law, a confession made under torture had no legal validity. Therefore, every confession had to be confirmed before the judges freely, that is, in a separate room and without the presence of torture implements. Few witch suspects took this opportunity to retract their confessions, because the usual consequence would be further torture until their confession was reasserted freely. In the context of early modern jurisprudence, the interrogators were frequently able to produce watertight confessions including the names of other members of the witch sect. A neatly written version (the one preserved in archives) was assembled for the official sentence. But confessions

were rarely made in an orderly or coherent fashion: it could take months of imprisonment and multiple interrogations to extract a legally satisfactory version. As the famous example of the Pappenheimers at Munich in 1600 shows, even a carefully drawn confession text, officially approved by high-ranking and highly trained judicial authorities, could still bristle with self-contradictions in addition to its manifest impossibilities (Kunze 1987).

Perhaps the fullest exploration of the intricate and occasionally unexpected connections between torture and witches' confessions during the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century apogee of western European witchcraft trials was made half a century ago by a Lorraine archivist who had read hundreds of them (Delcambre 1953–1954, partly translated in Monter 1969, 88–109). Avoiding the simple reduction of witches' confessions to products of leading questions put to accused witches under torture—there were no standard interrogation forms here—he stressed such things as the genuine religiosity of many uneducated village judges, who fully shared the widespread assumption among witchcraft suspects that torture was an ordeal that would reveal their innocence—thus, when they were compelled to confess, the defendants' expressions of guilt were more sincere, and more devout, than historians had usually assumed. In addition, Delcambre's argument that confessions frequently contained a considerable degree of sincerity explained many anomalies that cannot be reduced to simple effects of torture: for example, the sizable number of confessions made spontaneously before torture. Another large number confessed only part of their *maleficia* while denying others under torture. Interestingly, and counterintuitively, the most common pattern was to admit the more serious charge of casting spells against humans while stubbornly denying having done so against animals; one woman confessed that she "had no wish to put any animal to death, but only people." Even more surprisingly, other prisoners confessed only *after* withstanding torture successfully; one woman claimed she did so then "by a divine inspiration."

In England, where accusatorial procedure continued to dominate justice, confessions made during the investigations conducted by the magistrates prior to trial seem to have been freely given. The main exception to this would be the persecutions conducted by Matthew Hopkins, and one cannot discount the probability of pressure in other cases. However, it was not necessary to obtain a confession to prosecute a suspected witch successfully in England: the petty jury at the assize courts determined the verdict, based on the presentation of the examinations and investigations made by the magistrates. At any stage, the suspect might also avail him or herself of legal help. The English process led to a different type of confession, which tended to be shorter, omitting

descriptions of Sabbats and the events supposed to happen at them. Moreover, these confessions rarely implicated others in the crime and concentrated on one or two specific acts of harmful witchcraft, to which there were frequently witnesses. Most notably, perhaps, the Devil and his demons became conflated in some small domesticated familiar, such as a cat or a toad, that did the deeds requested of it by its mistress.

Perhaps the most famous investigation into the (un)reliability of witchcraft confessions was undertaken in the Spain of Don Quixote by Alonso de Salazar Frías, a maverick and skeptical judge and inquisitor, who not only considered witchcraft impossible, but who also attempted to disprove confessions made voluntarily. In an episode unique in the history of witchcraft trials, he persuaded his superiors in 1611 to conduct a series of “controlled verification experiments” on such confessions in the Basque country. In an exercise that diametrically reversed the witchcraft questionnaires in places such as Eichstätt, Salazar Frías prepared a fourteen-point questionnaire and put it to 108 confessed witches above the age of majority, attempting to *disprove* the guilt of people who had already admitted it (Henningsen 1980, 295–301).

Like Nicolas Rémy, Salazar Frías had heard and read several hundred confessions. Unlike Rémy, the majority of Salazar’s confessions came from people well below the minimum age for capital punishment and, more important, none of them came from people who had been tortured. Most important of all, Salazar Frías had become heavily prejudiced against the sincerity of every confession he heard before he began this series of experiments. And the results were interesting. He conducted three sets of experiments: one on the witches’ meeting places, one on the material corroborative evidence for witchcraft (which the Spanish Inquisition called *actos positivos*), and the last on outside witnesses to the witches’ exploits.

When it came to *actos positivos*, twenty-two jars of magic ointments containing witches’ salves, Salazar’s skepticism scored a ringing triumph. No confiscated jar contained anything with preternatural properties. Apothecaries and physicians fed the contents to dogs and found them completely harmless; one woman, a reputed witch, swallowed some of the contents in the presence of many witnesses with no ill effects. At least three witches now claimed they had concocted the stuff hastily to satisfy some priests who had threatened to have them burned unless they produced it; two of them gave their recipes—porkfat, water, wild plums, chimney soot, and scraps of kitchen waste.

Salazar’s third investigation checked out twenty-seven episodes involving specific acts of magic attested by people who were not themselves witches, and similarly found no corroborative evidence for any of them. But his second test on the meeting places for the witch-

es’ *aquelarnes* (Sabbats) proved more problematic, although Salazar conducted it with exquisite care. Nine groups from different towns in northern Navarre, each including four adult witches (who, Salazar stipulated, “must be chosen from among the most intelligent”) who had confessed attending the same *aquelarnes* and named the other three as accomplices, were carefully isolated before being taken one by one, under supervision, on different days at different times, to their supposed meeting place. There a notary asked them eight extremely precise questions about these Sabbats: did they travel separately or together, where the Devil sat, how they got home, and so forth. In seven groups, multiple contradictions emerged from previously homogeneous confessions by comparing notes. Some witches now flatly revoked their confessions, claiming they resulted from intimidation verging on torture. However, the groups from two towns, Ciga and Vera, remained in substantial agreement. But as Salazar’s apologist noted, “none of the original documents pertaining to this investigation are preserved,” and when the answers did fundamentally concur, “Salazar did not attach any great importance to them” (Henningsen 1980, 297).

Salazar’s whitewash could not quite erase these voluntary confessions. Witchcraft confessions cannot be read with the pseudoneutrality of treating them as simple examples of discourse: all too often, as at Eichstätt, they represent answers to standardized questionnaires given under torture. At the same time, they must also be read without undue condescension toward the people who made them, or even toward the scribes who tried to record them conscientiously. The issue of torture is ultimately a red herring. Most confessed witches (including those at Eichstätt, Salazar’s Basques, and Rémy’s Lorraine villagers) were post-Tridentine Catholics who understood the sacramental concept of confession very well. For present-day investigators of Satanic ritual abuse of children, be they trial lawyers, prosecutors, judges, or juries, any attempt to filter out the authentic elements of a confession dictated to someone else becomes extraordinarily difficult in the absence of corroborative evidence. When historians confront confessions by sincere Catholics who were themselves confronting possible eternal damnation centuries ago, identifying the authentic parts becomes even more problematic.

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See also: ACCUSATIONS; BASQUE COUNTRY; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; EICHSTÄTT; PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; ENGLAND; EVIDENCE; EXPERIMENTS AND TESTS; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; LORRAINE, DUCHY OF; MIRACLES; PAPPENHEIMER FAMILY; RÉMY, NICOLAS; ROMAN LAW; SALAZAR FRÍAS, ALONSO DE; SATANISM; TORTURE; WITNESSES.

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CONFESSORS

In the Catholic Church, confessors are all priests possessing the license to hear confession, to absolve from sins, and to impose a suitable penance.

When the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) obliged all faithful to confess at least once a year, if they did not want to be excommunicated *ipso facto*, the social position of the confessor was markedly heightened. By this decree, Pope Innocent III probably wished not only to intensify pastoral care in general, but also to install a means of exercising deeper control over minds in a period of dangerous religious deviance (Cathars and Waldensians). This forced people to scrutinize their consciences before speaking to their priest, a custom that deeply influenced the general mental attitudes of Europeans. In the political sector, royal confessors often wielded much power in kingdoms like France, Spain, or the Holy Roman Empire.

Of course, some confessors encountered among their penitents both people who told them about their magical practices, and bewitched people who informed them about the Devil's attacks against them. A few priests (for example, Thomas of Cantimpré, *Liber apium* [Book of Bees] 2, 56), wrote about these subjects, using anonymous confessions as source material. In witchcraft trials, other priests, mostly members of a religious order, especially Franciscans and Jesuits, had the task of hearing the final confessions of the accused and condemned. They often collaborated with the court by trying to induce the prisoners to tell their secrets, threatening them with the eternal tortures of hell,

which they had to expect otherwise. Friedrich Spee, a Jesuit whose own experience as a confessor made him write his famous book against the witch hunts in 1631, did not conceal the pains these expectations caused for the accused. Though confessors' participation is not documented for all witchcraft trials in Catholic territories, their presence must have been usual at least during executions, as in other criminal cases. Sometimes, confessors are mentioned as sharing the banquets that the members of the court held at the expense of the accused. A special situation characterized the tribunals of the Holy Inquisition, as their members were simultaneously "inquisitors of heretical depravity," judges, and confessors. Admittedly, the anticlerical stereotype of the confessor abusing his power must not be generalized, but ample evidence exists from within the clergy that sexual and financial malpractices were frequent.

The confessor's opinion was extremely important for the small number of Christians who experienced paranormal phenomena, as confessors were the first persons to decide whether the visions, apparitions, auditions, stigmata, and so forth, of their penitents should be considered authentic mystic manifestations or diabolical frauds. Therefore, Catholic theologians developed a special method of testing these persons, called discernment of (good and bad) spirits. Quite often, opinions concerning these women (and occasionally men) were divided, one party believing in their holiness, and another declaring them to be witches. Some confessors saved their penitents' lives by their positive statements, as did, for example, those of Dorothea of Montau (d. 1394) or Eustochia of Padua (d. 1469), even preparing their veneration as saints. Others convinced women with mystical experiences that these were only demonic temptations; in 1755, after years of saintly life, the nun Gesualda Forni was convinced by her confessor of the contrary and therefore declared herself a hypocrite before the inquisition of Udine. How this discernment of spirits worked in practice, we know from the example of Ursula Benincasa (d. 1618), who, during eight months, had to make daily confessions and submit herself to exquisite humiliations imposed by Saint Filippo Neri. After the Council of Trent, very often a female mystic could avoid being prosecuted for demonolatry only by responding to such tests with the most demonstrative pious humility.

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See also: CONFESSIONS; DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS; SPEE, FRIEDRICH.

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CONFISCATIONS OF WITCHES' PROPERTY

Skeptics have long believed—or rather, assumed—that “by the beginning of the seventeenth century, witchcraft had developed into a vested interest and an industry” (Robbins 1959, 15). In other words, confiscating the property of people condemned for witchcraft made witch hunting profitable for many European governments and thus provided an economic explanation for witch hunting. However, such skeptics never bothered to demonstrate this theory from the abundant financial evidence about witch hunts. The question was first investigated a generation ago for the largest witch hunts of southwestern Germany (Midelfort 1972, 164–178), with unexpected results.

In the laws of the Holy Roman Empire, where the vast majority of witchcraft executions occurred, confiscation was always problematic and almost never implied that the entire estate of someone executed for witchcraft went to the state. Of the twelve districts in southwestern Germany that executed the most witches, three never practiced confiscation. The two largest witch hunts, however, occurred in places that did: Ellwangen and Mergentheim. Large samples show clearly that both governments actually confiscated only a small share of the witch's estate; at Mergentheim, the average was only one-seventh (14 percent), and over half of all confiscations cost the dead person's heirs less than 10 percent of the estate. Similar investigations have been rare, but about a thousand scattered instances of confiscation in the rich fiscal records of the duchy of Lorraine essentially confirm these findings: the government's major goal was to recover the costs of a witch's trial and execution, if possible, without impoverishing the heirs. In a half-dozen instances where exceptionally wealthy people were burned as witches, thus guaranteeing a profit for the government, the duke of Lorraine simply awarded the windfall spoils of their confiscations to minor courtiers.

Outside the Holy Roman Empire, the Spanish Inquisition routinely practiced confiscations of personal property for anyone convicted of heresy. Especially in its early years under Ferdinand and Isabella, there were

numerous complaints that it deliberately targeted the richest converted Jews (often dead people) to confiscate their assets from their heirs. However, the Spanish Inquisition ordinarily exempted convicted witches from this provision. On one significant occasion, at Logroño in the Basque region (1609–1611), a tribunal petitioned successfully for the right to confiscate property from convicted witches. Four years later, Logroño's records revealed that the cost of the operation had been almost three times greater than the receipts; only three of seventy-seven convicted witches had enough personal property for confiscation to exceed trial costs, and over half of them left absolutely nothing that could be confiscated (Henningsen 1980, 381). It seems that confiscations proved unprofitable for witch hunters in systems using inquisitorial rather than accusatory procedures, which provided the vast majority of Europe's witchcraft trials.

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: BASQUE COUNTRY; GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; HISTORIOGRAPHY; INQUISITION, SPANISH; ROBBINS, ROSSSELL HOPE; WITCH HUNTS.

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CONRAD OF MARBURG (CA. 1180–1233)

A merciless inquisitor operating in the Rhineland in the early thirteenth century, Conrad of Marburg's reports describing widespread Luciferan (that is, devil worshiping) heresy were accepted by Pope Gregory IX (ruled 1227–1241), becoming the basis for the pope's decretal letter *Vox in Rama* (A Voice in Rama), which described a heretical cult worshipping the Devil. This document was an important source for later ecclesiastical authorities seeking to link heresy with diabolism and devil worship, and can be seen as a precursor of later descriptions of witches' Sabbats.

In many respects, Conrad was a shadowy figure. He was certainly a priest, and he may have had some association with a religious order, possibly the Dominicans or Franciscans, although the strongest evidence now suggests a slight association with the Premonstratensians. He, however, was most likely a member of the secular clergy. He had some level of university education. While certain scholars maintain that he was a papal inquisitor, indeed the first papally appointed inquisitor in German lands, the evidence is open to possible qualification. Many scholars argue that he was an episcopally appointed inquisitor who, after 1231,

received papal sanction and approbation for his actions against heretics, but not any formal appointment as a papally designated inquisitor.

Conrad's involvement with heresy may go back to 1224. Certainly by 1227 he seems to have been directing his own investigations into heresy; that year, a letter from Gregory IX encouraged Conrad in such pursuits. In 1231, Gregory became determined to initiate more systematic inquisitions into heresy in Italy, France, and German lands. He issued a letter to Conrad giving him official papal support to proceed as an inquisitor in German lands, mainly in the Rhineland and in parts of Thuringia. As an inquisitor, Conrad's methods were remarkably extreme. He was inclined to accept any testimony, however fanciful, and he appears to have been willing to sentence to death any suspect who did not offer at least some admission of guilt. Never active against witches or sorcerers of any kind, Conrad focused instead on the Cathar and mainly Waldensian heresies that actually existed in German lands at this time. He coerced extravagant confessions of devil worship from suspects and became fully convinced of the reality of numerous Luciferan heretics in the Rhineland. Many authorities recognized Conrad's fanaticism for what it was, and his activities aroused much opposition. The archbishop of Mainz refused to accept Conrad's accounts of Luciferan cults, for example, and urged him to moderate his activity, but to no avail.

Gregory IX, however, was convinced by Conrad's reports of heretical activity. His decretal letter *Vox in Rama* of 1233, addressed to the archbishop of Mainz and bishop of Hildesheim, presented a detailed description of a heretical sect gathering in secret to worship demons who appeared in various forms, first as a giant toad, then as a gaunt, pallid man with an icy touch, and finally as a large black cat. Novices in the sect were required to kiss each of these, either on the lips or hindquarters, to renounce their faith and swear loyalty to the sect and its demonic master. The pope also described the abominable sexual orgies in which these heretics supposedly engaged. Certainly this was not the first time a connection had been drawn between such diabolism and heresy. For example, one source described a group of heretics burned at Orléans in 1022 as participating in similar orgiastic and diabolic rituals, and there were other accounts of Luciferan heresy in German and Italian lands in the thirteenth century. Nevertheless, *Vox in Rama* marked an important step in the progressive demonization of heresy in the high and late Middle Ages that culminated in the notion of diabolical witchcraft.

Meanwhile, Conrad continued to operate without any apparent restraint, and in the face of much opposition. Eventually he went so far as to accuse a nobleman, Count Heinrich of Sayn, of heresy. A synod was held at

Mainz in August of 1233 to judge this case, and the charges were dismissed. A few days later, while returning to Marburg, Conrad was murdered, possibly by supporters of the count of Sayn or others opposed to his inquisitorial activities.

MICHAEL BAILEY

See also: GREGORY IX, POPE; HERESY; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; PAPACY AND PAPAL BULLS; SABBAT; WITCH HUNTS.

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CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST 1800)

Most histories of European witchcraft end with the last public witchcraft trials in the late eighteenth century. By 1800 the spread of new intellectual ideas and legislative developments led to the decriminalization of witchcraft across Europe, one of the odd exceptions being the belated repeal of the laws against witchcraft in Ireland in 1821. Yet despite the easing of educated concern over the continued existence and threat of witchcraft, the mass of the population continued to fear witches and considered them a serious threat to their lives and livelihoods.

The history of witchcraft after its decriminalization is, therefore, very much concerned with popular attempts to employ unofficial and often illegal forms of trial and punishment. Newspaper reports and legal records attest to the fact that across Europe people continued to try witches in a variety of ways, such as the water (swimming) test, which was employed quite widely in the Netherlands, Ukraine, and England during the first half of the nineteenth century. Severe physical abuse was also meted out to accused witches as a means of forcing them to remove the harmful spells they had cast. In Belgium and France the courts dealt with a number of cases of “grilling” or “burning” accused witches in or over a hearth to make them confess and “unwitch” their victims. One such event took place in Flanders in 1815 when a farmer and his wife, believing their daughter and cattle had been bewitched, seized a female neighbor they suspected, bound her, and shoved her into a fire to make her talk. Likewise in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century England, the courts dealt with many cases



An early nineteenth-century visit to a fortuneteller. Belief in and the practice of witchcraft persisted after the witch hunts and continues in the twenty-first century. (TopFoto.co.uk/HIP/Ann Ronan Picture Library)

involving scratching suspected witches to draw blood. The vigorous employment of such coercive violence sometimes led to the death of the victims. In the Flanders case, the suspected witch died a week later from severe burns, and in England an old woman named Ann Tennant died in 1875 after being badly wounded with a pitchfork by a villager who wanted to draw her blood. In some instances the death of suspected witches was intentional, and was seen by the killers and their sympathizers as a just sentence in the eyes of the community and God, if not the official authorities. In Russia in 1879 some 200 locals gathered to witness a suspected witch being deliberately burned alive in her house. Similar terrible cases can be found from across Europe during the nineteenth century.

Directly confronting suspected witches was by no means the only way of countering witchcraft in the absence of laws against it. The work of nineteenth-century folklorists and prosecution records provide a wealth of relevant information in this respect. Written charms and amulets were commonly worn or placed in houses and outbuildings to ward off witchcraft. A wide and diverse range of private counter-magic, spells, and rituals were employed to torment witches at a distance, or to compel them to appear at the homes of the bewitched to remove their spells. These were commonly based on sympathetic

magic, such as piercing crude dolls or images made to represent the witch; burning or boiling the hearts of bewitched animals, which would consequently cause the witch severe heart pains; cooking toads that were closely associated with witches; boiling black chickens alive, as was practiced in the Netherlands; and creating of witch-bottles. In England, examples of the latter dating from the nineteenth century are not uncommon. In 1848 a bewitched couple from the county of Somerset put some of their urine in an earthenware bottle along with some hobnails, and buried it under their hearthstone. The bottle symbolized the bladder of the suspected witch, who would suffer terrible pains as the bottle heated up and agitated the sharp objects within.

In many instances such practices were employed on the advice of cunning folk. The widespread popularity of these magical practitioners, and others who engaged in witch-doctoring during the nineteenth century, provides further confirmation of the popular fear and concern regarding the power and prevalence of witches in Europe in the years following the decriminalization of witchcraft. In Catholic countries, where the clergy, under certain conditions, still conducted exorcisms and used the healing powers of blessed objects such as holy water, the Church and its representatives continued to play an instrumental

role in the struggle against witchcraft, albeit often unofficially. The sensational French cases of witchcraft and possession in Cideville, Normandy, in 1850, and in the Alpine village of Morzine (Haute-Savoie), a few years later, highlight the various ways in which Catholic clergy were bound up with popular concerns over witches. The drama in Cideville, for example, began after the local priest criticized a parishioner for consulting a cunning man. When the latter was later arrested, it was thought in the village that the priest had reported him to the police. Not long after, two boys in the care of the priest began to exhibit the symptoms of witchcraft.

Yet, there is no doubt that from the early twentieth century onward the fear of witches became less intense and less pervasive. Across Europe, as the nineteenth century progressed, inexorable urbanization, mechanization, developments in transportation, the opening of global markets, and other broad economic factors slowly but surely changed the social and cultural experiences of millions of people. One aspect of this process of change was the reduced need to explain misfortune in terms of witchcraft. Better state welfare provision and the development of personal banking and insurance, particularly in the farming sector, lessened the financial impact of livestock losses and ill health. Improvements in sanitation and medicine reduced the spread and impact of a wide range of once prevalent contagious diseases. The decline of domestic production of cheese, butter, bread, and beer in the face of industrial-scale manufacturing further reduced the scope for suspicions of witchcraft to arise. Because of such changes, and other interlinked developments, fewer and fewer witches were created through the accretion of suspicion and gossip, and so witches became increasingly redundant as communal scapegoats.

But the pattern of witchcraft's declining social relevance across Europe has yet to be fully explored and is little understood. What is certain is that it was highly variable. In England, by the 1930s, witchcraft ceased to be a significant concern, even for a minority of the rural population. In many other regions of Europe, however, the fear of witches continued well beyond that time among a large minority of the population. To underline the seriousness with which some people continued to fear the threat of witchcraft since World War II, one need only consider a series of witch-related shootings in France. In 1948, for example, a farmer of Saint-Maurice-du-Désert, near Domfront, shot his neighbor dead and seriously injured another who he believed had cast a spell on his animals by making the sign of the cross the wrong way whenever he passed his property. Around the same time, across the border in Germany, the work of Johann Kruse, an ardent campaigner against the belief in witchcraft whose schoolteacher mother had been persecuted as a witch,

revealed a continued widespread popular concern regarding witchcraft. Furthermore, in parts of France, Germany, Greece, and Spain, researchers have recorded a vibrant traditional discourse regarding witchcraft during the last few decades of the twentieth century (Blécourt 1999; Favret-Saada 1980; Sebald 1978).

Because the popular witchcraft discourse had become largely redundant in England and America by the early twentieth century, anthropologists and ethnographers turned to African, Pacific, and South American societies to study the dynamics of witchcraft, and so from the 1920s, academic interest in contemporary witchcraft shifted away from Europe for several decades. From the 1970s onward, however, there was a growing recognition by anthropologists that there was still plenty of scope for studying witchcraft in Europe. In particular, the research by Favret-Saada on the witchcraft discourse in the Bocage (hedged farming landscape) of western Normandy, France, provided a timely corrective to all those—historians and anthropologists included—who had consigned European witchcraft to the past. Favret-Saada became immersed in a world of accusations and insinuations involving bewitched pigs and humans, witch doctors, fortunetellers, local politics, and religious devotion.

The history of witchcraft in the modern era is, however, not just about the decline or continuation of traditional belief in witches; it is also concerned with the origins and growth of contemporary Neo-Pagan witchcraft. While the popular belief in witchcraft waned during the second half of the nineteenth century, a significant renewal of interest in ritual magic began among western Europe's middle classes, born of a fusion of mystical freemasonry, early-modern occult philosophy, interest in recently deciphered Greek and Egyptian magical papyri, Eastern mysticism, and Western spiritualism. In France the influential works on ritual magic and tarot reading by Eliphas Lévi (Alphonse Louis Constant [1810–1875]), and the publications of the spiritualist Allen Kardec (Hippolyte Rivail [1804–1869]) and Papus (Gérard Encausse [1865–1916]), were at the forefront of what can be described as the occult revival. It was in England, however, that this new melting pot of esoteric magic and interest in the arcane took root most vigorously. It was in England in 1865–1866 that the *Societas Rosicruciana* was formed by a small group of erudite Masons with a keen interest in ceremonial magic. The society was the seed from which grew the more famous Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, and later, the English branch of the *Ordo Templi Orientis*, headed by the infamous Aleister Crowley. Membership of these various groups was tiny, but some members published translations of rare magical texts and created rituals and initiations that would have a strong influence on the development of Wicca and modern witchcraft. English and

German enthusiasm for the mystical writings of Madame Blavatsky (1831–1891) and her Theosophical Society also did much to encourage a more interventionist and imaginative engagement with supernatural forces, which fed into the general reawakening of intellectual occultism.

These occult societies of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries provided the textual resources and organizational inspiration for the Neo-Pagan witchcraft movements that emerged after World War II. Yet the linking of the Neo-Pagan witches of the present with those labeled witches in the historical record, which underpins the postwar concept of modern witchcraft, was very much influenced by the work of someone who was not a practicing occultist: the Egyptologist and folklorist Margaret Murray. In two books, *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe* (1921) and *The God of the Witches* (1931), Murray (mis)used early-modern trial records to construct the theory that those persecuted as witches in the past were adherents of a secret pagan fertility religion centered on the worship of a horned god. While the basis of Murray's theory was easily undermined by experts on the history of witchcraft who highlighted her crude and misleading use of historical sources, her "findings" were nevertheless taken seriously by some scholars, who gave her work an enduring veneer of respectability that facilitated the establishment of Wicca as a religion.

Wiccans were the first firmly identifiable group of Neo-Pagan worshippers describing themselves as witches. Gerald Brosseau Gardner (1884–1964), a former customs official in Malaya who returned to England in 1936, founded the movement. From his active interest in folklore, spiritualism, Eastern mysticism, and freemasonry, and his enthusiasm for the theories of Margaret Murray and the activities of the *Ordo Templi Orientis*, he molded the history and structure of an ancient organized witchcraft religion. His ideas and claims were revealed in several publications beginning with the influential book, *Witchcraft Today*, published in 1954. Gardner alleged that in 1939 he had discovered and been initiated into a coven of secret pagan worshippers in the New Forest, Hampshire. The coven represented the last survivors of an indigenous fertility religion whose adherents were described as witches. Their secret knowledge had been passed on from one generation to the next orally, though key ceremonies were written down in a manuscript known as the *Book of Shadows*.

In subsequent decades, offshoots, schisms, and new formulations of pagan witchcraft emerged. The most influential group was that formed by Alex Sanders, who practiced "Alexandrian" Wicca. During the 1960s he broke away from Gardnerian Wicca, publicly declaring it to be bogus, and instead claimed for himself a true link with the ancient religion of the past through his

grandmother, who had passed on to him her own *Book of Shadows*. Sanders did not leave any significant body of work like Gardner, but two of his adherents, Stewart and Janet Farrar, went on to write a series of successful books beginning with *What Witches Do* (1971), that laid open the workings of Alexandrian Wicca in an accessible way. Around the same time Doreen Valiente, one of the founding members of Gardnerian Wicca, also produced a number of equally successful guidebooks such as *Witchcraft for Tomorrow* (1978). These publications were key to the impressive spread of Neo-Pagan witchcraft in the United States, Australia, and parts of Europe from the 1970s onward. As Ronald Hutton observed, "Wicca, is in fact the only religion which the English can claim to have given to the world" (Hutton 1999b, 1).

At the beginning of the third millennium, our understanding of what is meant by witchcraft in contemporary society is to a considerable extent determined by where we live, how we live, and personal belief systems. For some people in mainland Europe, witchcraft consists of a similar set of traditional beliefs and fears to those found in the records of the witchcraft trials of the early modern period. This conception of witchcraft is very much intertwined with Christianity. For others, witchcraft is a vibrant and growing alternative to the churches. It is a *religion* in itself, providing a new means of expressing religious devotion and spirituality. Whether it really has any direct connection with the witchcraft tradition of the past has become less important, with many Neo-Pagan witches now recognizing that Gardner's and Sanders's claims of ancient continuity are either bogus or unproven.

OWEN DAVIES

See also: ANTHROPOLOGY; BURNINGTIN CUNNING FOLK; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; HISTORIOGRAPHY; LYNCHING; MURRAY, MARGARET; SWIMMING TEST; TOADS.

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CONTRARIES, CONTRARIETY

Expressing the relationship of maximum opposition in Aristotelian logic, dichotomies were most often chosen by authors to establish and describe the difference between witchcraft and the normal world. In ancient philosophy and religion, and in early, medieval, and Renaissance Christianity, the cosmos, nature, and human relations were often said to be "composed of contraries," for example, those between the elements, the virtues and vices, Christ and Antichrist, men and women, and the contrasting social and political conditions of individuals.

Contrariety became especially prominent in Renaissance communication theory and therefore in all forms and levels of education. In both logic and rhetoric it was recommended as an especially effective strategy for persuasion. This gave rise to widespread forms of discourse based on antithesis and on the principle that contraries were best revealed when placed next to each other in a phrase, a sentence, or an entire argument. Moral values benefited most from this form of mental and linguistic patterning, good being best appreciated when set off against evil and vice versa. But there was little to which the principle could not be applied, and early modern authors in all fields took considerable advantage of this in exploring copious numbers of contraries and forms of contrariety in their writings.

An evil like witchcraft was easily assimilated to forms of thinking, speaking, and writing based on contrariety. The Devil and God were obvious contraries; so too were their servants. All the actions of witches and especially those associated with the Sabbat could be interpreted as contrary behavior, in the sense of being *contrary to* normal actions. In addition, since most contraries were related asymmetrically (good was better than its contrary evil), a form of behavior that suggested the opposite was also an *inversion of* normal actions. Contrariety became the governing principle, therefore, of both how witchcraft was conceived and how it was described.

There were three consequences for witchcraft belief. First, it drew considerable strength and credibility from the fact that witchcraft could be absorbed by a principle that was already thought to be of paramount importance in philosophy, religion, and social and political theory. Contrariety enabled writers intelligibly to construct and depict what was thought to be the most evil of all crimes by means of the concepts and the language of maximum difference. As a result, witchcraft continued to be thinkable for as long as the logic and rhetoric of contrariety continued to be rational communication strategies. Second, contrariety enabled witchcraft believers to argue that witchcraft *must* exist in the world, since without such an extreme form of evil, extreme forms of good would go undefined and therefore unacknowledged. The paradox of contraries is that, since they require each other, the negative contrary is as important as the positive. In this sense, witchcraft had a necessary role in human affairs and a purpose that was ultimately beneficial; it was required to complete the moral system. This was God's reason for allowing it to happen. As James VI and I, king of Scotland and England, wrote of knowing witchcraft: "there can be no better way to know God, then by the contrarie" (*Daemonologie*, Edinburgh, 1597, 55).

Third, the same paradox could have damaging implications in the context of skepticism about witchcraft. Those who were inclined to doubt witchcraft's objective reality were able to argue that it was, instead, a made reality—a product of the logic of contrariety, instead of merely its subject. Johann Weyer was to argue, for example, that in Catholic cultures witches were accused simply of doing anti-Catholic things—things *contrary to* Catholicism. For Protestants, such accusations clearly made no sense and could be ridiculed as ideological constructions. Eventually, in 1718, another skeptic, Francis Hutchinson, was able to turn the logic of contrariety completely against acceptance of witchcraft as an objective crime. Such a logic, he wrote, had created the absurd situation in which every society and culture saw witchcraft as simply the inversion of its own values. Witchcraft was no longer a necessary part of the objective world order; it had been

debunked as nothing more than a requirement of thinking in a certain way.

STUART CLARK

See also: HUTCHINSON, FRANCIS; SKEPTICISM; WEYER, JOHANN.

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CONTZEN, ADAM, SJ (1571–1635)

A major political thinker of Catholic Germany during the Thirty Years' War, Contzen's long acquaintance with religious and political conflict, plus first-hand knowledge of witch hunts, heavily influenced his consistently "zealot" opinions and actions.

Born in Monschau (a village in the duchy of Jülich near Aachen), he was acquainted at an early age with the religious wars raging across the border in the Netherlands, the struggles between Calvinists and Catholics in Aachen in 1582, and the effects of the Cologne War in 1583. Contzen attended the Jesuit College at Cologne in 1588, and then moved to Trier while a major witch persecution was taking place. He entered the Society of Jesus in 1591 and studied theology at the Jesuit academy in Mainz in 1599, where he witnessed more witch persecutions. In 1603 he was ordained a priest, followed by appointments in Cologne and in 1606 as professor of philosophy at the University of Würzburg. In 1609 he assumed the chair for biblical studies in Mainz formerly held by his teacher Nikolaus Serarius; from 1612, he also lectured on controversial theology, succeeding another mentor, Martin Becanus.

During his ten years at Mainz, Contzen published controversial theological tracts, gaining a reputation as one of the leading controversial theologians of his day. He directed his polemics mainly against Calvinists and the Reformed Church, which he blamed for obstructing religious reconciliation and peace in Germany. His anti-Calvinism formed the centerpiece of his most enduring work, *Politicorum Libri Decem* (Ten Books on Politics, 1620), which became required reading at Catholic universities and for Catholic rulers; it remained one of the most influential statements of Catholic statecraft in central Europe until the early eighteenth century.

Contzen set out a moral program to combat Germany's political crisis and to develop a Catholic state. He sought to integrate politics with Christianity, denying Machiavelli's claim that a ruler could not be a good Christian. Contzen's anti-Machiavellian attack on the "pseudo-politicians," also condemned Calvin's "pseudo-theology," which he claimed had caused chaos in Germany. The only solution was through strong government, with an all-powerful ruler, who should firmly preserve Catholicism and reintroduce it into newly converted territories through a balanced worldly and

ecclesiastical administration and an educational system to create a pious and disciplined populace. Moreover, Contzen was a pioneer in mercantilist theory, stressing the necessity of economic development as the way to state power. Like most theorists of the well-ordered police state, he emphasized the urgent need of taxation to fill the state treasury, essential for the creation of an offensive army consisting ideally of career soldiers, echoing the doctrines of Justus Lipsius. As a maxim of politics, he argued that the prince should always think in terms of the augmentation and consolidation of state power and do everything to increase it.

Contzen's program was very agreeable to Duke Maximilian I of Bavaria and the publication of the *Politics* probably led to Contzen becoming confessor to the Bavarian duke in 1623. In this position, Contzen gained intimate influence as Maximilian's chief political advisor and formed a zealous court faction of militant Catholics at Munich. He viewed the Thirty Years' War as a holy crusade, conducted for the honor of God, and played a major role in convincing Maximilian I to support the policy of Catholic restitution.

Like other Bavarian "zealots," Contzen took a hard line on witchcraft, thus provoking resentment from the moderate party at court. Thanks to Contzen's political rivals, who converted the Jesuit Adam Tanner to their view, no extensive witch persecution occurred in Bavaria even during the general peak between 1626 and 1630. Contzen lamented the lack of zeal for persecuting witches among Bavarian moderates, whom he derided as *politici*, which would ultimately lead to divine retribution. Contzen was in close contact with Friedrich Förner, the chief architect of Bamberg's witchcraft trials, and he congratulated Bamberg's bishop, Gottfried Johann Georg II Fuchs von Dornheim, for burning 600 people for sorcery: God will surely have mercy, Contzen wrote, for a prince working so ardently for his honor.

For Contzen, however, persecutions were not the only means to extirpate witchcraft. When he published a political novel in 1628, employing a legendary Ethiopian king to demonstrate his principles of government, he made it clear that the origins of sorcery lay in ignorance and a lack of proper education. Besides executions and public prayers, Contzen's idealized Ethiopian king also founded public elementary schools. Through literacy and public prayer, Ethiopian youth achieved true inner piety and thus helped root out sorcery.

When Contzen died in 1635, Maximilian's policies immediately shifted to moderation; Bavarian witch persecutions ended abruptly and the elector's imperial policy now sought conciliation with the Protestants. Maximilian's new confessor, Johann Vervaux, was also a Jesuit, but his policies were far more moderate and he mediated actively in peace negotiations.

ERICO. MADER

See also: BAMBERG PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; GERMANY; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); MACHIAVELLIANISM; MAXIMILIAN I, DUKE OF BAVARIA; TANNER, ADAM.

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CONVENT CASES

In early modern Europe, some famous witchcraft cases originated in nunneries. They seem to follow a fixed sequence: First, one or more nuns began to experience a kind of "psychosomatic" malaise (sometimes it became a true "epidemic" spreading throughout the convent); second, the disease was perceived as a demonic possession, which immediately involved an exorcist; third, during their exorcisms, the possessed nuns accused of witchcraft the persons whom they believed responsible for their possession; and, fourth using this evidence, both lay and ecclesiastical courts sometimes arrested and tried the presumed criminals. Convictions for witchcraft and *maleficium* (harmful magic) frequently resulted, until at the end of the seventeenth century an increasingly skeptical view of convent possessions persuaded the judges to view them as matters of mendacity or illness.

We do not know exactly how many cases of this kind occurred; the impression that they were numerous might be due to the echo and to the public debates which such episodes caused, especially in seventeenth-century France. Nor is it clear exactly when these episodes started to multiply. Among others, Gregory the Great (ca. 600), Hincmar of Reims (early ninth century), and Caesarius of Heisterbach (thirteenth century) mentioned possessed friars and nuns. However, these involved single individuals, in whom the possession re-

resented temptation by the Devil and the consequent punishment for surrendering to him; no human cause was thought to be responsible for the possession, with the partial exception of the possessed himself.

The first epidemics of demonic possession in nunneries, followed by accusations and trials for witchcraft, go back to the mid-sixteenth century and occurred in post-Reformation Catholic Europe. Johann Weyer, a German physician writing in 1563, reported at least four episodes of this kind; they occurred in the Cloister of St. Bridget, near Xanten (1550–1556); in the convent of Uvertet in the County of Hoorn (1551); at Kentorp, near Strasbourg (1552); and at the Nazareth convent of Cologne (1560–1564), respectively. Weyer used these cases (at least two of which ended with the death of the suspected witch) to show that all such malefices were the Devil's deceits, designed to confuse faithful Christians and to cause the death of the innocent presumed witches. Believing that disease might explain such cases, the Protestant Weyer protested strongly against Catholic remedies for possession (that is, exorcism), which he considered superstitious. This offers a first clue to the cases of witchcraft in convents: along with other highly publicized early episodes of demonic possession (for example, France's famous "Miracle of Laon," 1566), they were used as propaganda by Catholics to emphasize the efficaciousness of their sacraments and rites. This interpretation obviously applies to European areas, such as sixteenth-century Germany, the Netherlands, or France, where the conflict among different Christian confessions was very harsh.

However, the same cannot be said of some cases in Italy (Bologna, 1562–1563; Reggio Emilia, 1625; Piacenza, 1625; Carpi, 1636–1639) or Spain (monastery of St. Placido, Madrid, 1628). Our explanations here begin with the application of rules approved by the Council of Trent, which imposed on the nunneries a much stricter reclusion than before. When we also take into consideration the fact that in both Italy and Spain (as elsewhere in Catholic Europe), girls of good family who had no chance of getting married were obliged to take shelter in the nunneries, we can easily understand why there were so many strains and conflicts inside them. In Italy, however, at least since the first decades of the seventeenth century, the Roman Congregation of the Holy Office assumed a mild, cautious approach to the cases of demonic possession and witchcraft in the nunneries. Though never denying the existence of genuine possession in theory, Roman and Spanish authorities recognized the strong pathological and imitative components that such cases emphasized. Both Inquisitions, therefore, interrupted any legal proceedings based on exorcism and strictly forbade the exorcists to continue their work. Instead, they ordered that convents where such cases had occurred be provided with better confessors and

spiritual directors, and occasionally dispersed the possessed nuns among unaffected convents.

In seventeenth-century France, to the contrary, the nuns who accused their sisters or other ecclesiastics of witchcraft found influential persons willing to listen to them. Three famous cases are recorded: the Ursulines of Aix-en-Provence (1609–1611), the notorious case of the Ursulines of Loudun (1632–1638), and the hospital nuns of Louviers (1642–1647). At Aix, one sister who was possessed by the Devil accused Louis Gaufridy, her confessor, of sorcery; the *Parlement* (sovereign judicial court) of Provence sentenced him to death. At Loudun the same fate befell Urbain Grandier, a handsome and highly esteemed priest, but also much criticized in his town. Finally, the *Parlement* of Normandy sentenced to death the spiritual director of the nunnery at Louviers (since he was already dead, his corpse was burned); the same doom befell his vicar, while another nun hardly escaped the stake. Many overlapping explanations have been offered for these disconcerting events. First, constraint and sexual deprivation (as mentioned above): according to a psychoanalytical interpretation, the accusations of witchcraft represented the denial and projection of one's own sexual desires. Additionally, we should consider that the lengthy discourses by the possessed nuns during public exorcisms represented the closest approximations to female preaching permitted by the Catholic Church; generally speaking, the peculiar condition of a possessed person justified behavior that in a different situation would have been severely suppressed. Moreover, the accusations against confessors and spiritual directors emphasized the importance that these clerics had assumed in the post-Tridentine Catholic world and the dangers of nearness between nuns and confessors.

Nevertheless, high-ranking French courts condemned to death some prominent clergymen on the grounds of accusations drawn from exorcisms and other related evidence. A change of mentality among judges finally stopped such trials in France during the seventeenth century. After the Loudun and Louviers cases, the enormous publicity given to such events started a lively intellectual debate that eventually led to the disappearance of the crime of witchcraft by royal edict in 1682. A thorough judicial evaluation of the problem, therefore, was provoked through the outcry stemming from events in French nunneries.

Since comparative research in this field remains rudimentary, we do not know what happened in other parts of Catholic Europe. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, lay culture was increasingly inclined to consider possession as a real illness, until Freud's famous research labeled the demonically possessed of the previous centuries as hysterics. By that time, however, any connection between demonic possession and

witchcraft had disappeared and only the problem of possession remained.

GUIDO DALL'OLIO;

TRANSLATED BY CARLO DALL'OLIO

See also: AIX-EN-PROVENCE NUNS; CAMBRAI NUNS; CARPI, POSSESSION IN A POOR CLAIRE'S CONVENT; EXORCISM; FRANCE; FREUD, SIGMUND; GENDER; LOUDUN NUNS; LOUVIERS NUNS; *PARLEMENT* OF PARIS; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; WEYER, JOHANN.

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COOPER, THOMAS

Cooper was a demonologist, one of a number of seventeenth-century English clerics who identified the pact with the Devil as the essence of witchcraft. Like most demonologists, Cooper regarded witchcraft as one aspect of a much broader range of religious issues. We know relatively little about him, not even the dates of his birth and death. Cooper was born in London, educated at Westminster School and Christ Church College in Oxford, where he took his BA in 1590, subsequently adding an MA and an MD. He held a couple of clerical livings in Lancashire and Cheshire, and another subsequently in Coventry. Cooper moved to London in 1610, apparently supporting himself as an author.

Cooper's importance in the history of witchcraft lies in his book on *The Mystery of Witch-Craft: Discovering the Truth, Nature, Occasions, Growth and Power thereof: Together with the Detection and Punishment of the Same*. Published in 1617, it was dedicated to the mayor and corporation of the city of Chester and the justices of the peace of Cheshire. A major work of demonology, some 368 pages in length, it made an important contribution to a corpus of distinctively English demonological works, a series that had begun in 1590 with Henry Hollands *A Treatise against Witchcraft* and ended with Richard Bernard's *A Guide to Grand Jury Men with respect to Witches* of 1627.

Cooper's *The Mystery of Witch-Craft*, while demonstrating some peculiarities, lay firmly within this evolving English Protestant tradition of demonological works. He claimed to have been prompted to write it both by the general issue of witchcraft and by his knowledge of some recent cases. Indeed, he claimed to have been involved in a case of demonic possession by witchcraft at Northwich in Cheshire (almost certainly the possession of Thomas Harrison of 1601–1602), and also to have comforted the widower of a “Lady Hales” after she had been killed by witchcraft. Cooper was well aware of the Lancashire trials of 1612, and also mentioned suspicions of witchcraft at Coventry (where, according to one confessing witch, there was a “confederacie” of some sixty witches).

He couched his ideas about witchcraft in a conventional theological context. He saw witchcraft as being, among other things, a product of the superstition of the period; noting that the Lancashire witches had arisen in a backward part of the country, where right religion had not yet been sufficiently planted. Cooper saw the creation of an effective preaching ministry as the most effective way to prevent people from falling into the Devil's snares. Toward the end of his book, Cooper devoted sections to excoriating “the atheisme of these times,” the widespread contempt of God's word, the “idolatorie and false worship of this present age,” and other problems caused by the imperfect state of religious observance in England.

Cooper's treatment of witchcraft was essentially similar to that advanced by other English writers of the period. He defined witchcraft as “a wicked art serving for the working of wonders by the assistance of the devill, so farre forth as God in justice shall permit” (Cooper 1617, 47). Cooper saw the satanic pact as central to witchcraft; like other writers, he interpreted the pact as an inversion of God's covenant with his people. Again, like other British Protestant authors, he expressed hostility to cunning folk and countermagic and disapproved of divination, including fortunetelling and astrological predictions. He based his interpretation of witchcraft entirely on Scripture, making little or no reference to other demonological writers or to any recent

examples of witchcraft, apart from those few instances already mentioned. (However, Cooper made extensive and unacknowledged borrowings from William Perkins's *A Discourse of the damned Art of Witchcraft*.) The book struck a responsive chord: a second printing appeared in 1622, under the title of *Sathan transformed into an Angell of Light . . . Emplified [sic] specially in the Doctrine of Witchcraft*.

Cooper's views on witchcraft need to be placed in the context of his other writings. He wrote about a dozen tracts on religious and related matters. His weightiest work appears to have been his devotional treatise, *The Christians Daily Sacrifice*, which had reached 532 pages by its third edition in 1615. Other titles by Cooper included a piece of patriotic propaganda, *The Churches Deliverance . . . in remembrance of the wonderful Deliverance from Gunpowder-Treason* (1609). Cooper's final tract, published in 1620, discussed murder, focusing on a recent homicide in Suffolk.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: DEMONOLOGY; ENGLAND; LANCASHIRE WITCHES; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; POSSESSION, DEMONIC.

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CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC

The concept of witchcraft that evolved in western European Christianity between about 1400 and 1700 differed in two ways from definitions in other cultural contexts. First, the power to perform magical harm (*maleficium*) did not always originate with the witch. In learned witchcraft, but not necessarily in the popular tradition, it came from a demon that assaulted the victim according to a formal agreement or pact with the witch. Second, the notion of pact presumed face-to-face encounters between the demon and the witch, usually at the beginning of their relation (the moment of temptation), and at intervals thereafter. Thus, the question of how angels and demons appeared to humans, and whether they needed bodies to do so, was a major concern of writers on witchcraft in this period.

Demons habitually perpetrated *maleficia* (evil acts) invisibly, and in theory needed no bodily presence to do so. But because they appeared to witches, and interacted with them corporeally, witches were imagined as having privileged sensory information (especially visual and tactile, but also auditory and olfactory) about demons. Moreover, by 1500, witches and demons were usually accused of congregating at mass meetings, where they engaged in various activities that presupposed the bodily presence of demons: feasting, dancing, and various rituals, including the presentation of initiates to the Devil “in person.” Because such interactions

were described according to norms of purely human social interaction, Western Christian witchcraft displayed an obsessive attention to the corporeality of demons.

KINDS OF EVIDENCE

Human–demon interaction was analyzed in juridical terms, as a question of human guilt, provable by the witches’ “confessions,” and conserved in writing. Trial procedures and penalties for witchcraft began from the assumption that interpersonal contact with demons was real and possible: evidence of corporeal interaction was therefore evidence of guilt. (Some defendants were executed merely for attending Sabbats, not for harming their neighbors.) However, even the earliest writers on witchcraft sought to corroborate trial evidence with more philosophical proofs. Provability of human–demon interaction had implications that were epistemological (how do we know what we think we know?); ontological (are angels and demons “real” in the same way that humans are?); cosmological (what is the world really like?); and theological (if angels and demons are not demonstrably real, can we assume the reality of the immortal human soul? If demons are not real, what is the origin of evil?).

PREHISTORY OF DEMONIC CORPOREALITY

The problem of demonic corporeality reflected apparent contradictions in the Bible. Certain passages implied an opposition between spirit and flesh, causing many theologians to define demons as beings with no bodily dimension. The influential writings of pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (sixth century C.E.) supplied extra-biblical, philosophical support to the incorporeal definition. Other Bible passages portrayed interactions that required the corporeality of angels and demons, their existence in a physical dimension, external to the human mind.

Pagan philosophers from Plato through Apuleius and Porphyry had defined *daimonia* ontologically, as a species of beings midway between humans and gods. Plato’s *Symposium* averred that humans and gods never interacted directly, but only through the mediation of daemonic *aggeloi* or “messengers.” In the *City of God* (8.14–10.32), St. Augustine redefined daemons morally as irredeemably evil “demons,” and identified them with the fallen angels mentioned in Jewish and Christian Scripture. Despite radically redefining the character of daemonic beings, Augustine did not contest the Neoplatonic notion that they had by nature an immortal body. Augustine declared that humans should not envy the demons’ “better” bodies; rather, we should understand that true excellence was moral and recognize our potential superiority through redemption.

Demonic corporeality did not seriously preoccupy Western Christian thinkers until Peter Lombard (d. 1160), whose *Four Books of Sentences* explored “Whether angels have bodies, as has seemed to some writers, with whom Augustine seems to agree” (book 2, distinction 8). Lombard and his commentators gradually revealed demonic corporeality as a thorny ontological problem.

Thomas Aquinas supplied the definitive solution to the problem in his *Summa theologiae* and elsewhere. Angels and demons, said Aquinas, are spiritual creatures, pure form without matter, and thus have no God-given bodily dimension or presence. However, they can create virtual bodies by compressing air and vapors. When “animated,” these aerial statues can simulate any human corporeal activity so realistically that the artifice is undetectable. Good angels make such apparitions altruistically, to edify humans. Evil angels appear for spiteful ends, to tempt and ruin us with sin. Demons can copulate with human beings, and can probably create human children by artificial insemination. Bonaventure disagreed with Aquinas’s theory, asserting that angels and devils had bodies naturally composed of a superfine “spiritual matter.” However, like Aquinas’s angels and devils, Bonaventure’s were by nature imperceptible to humans, and would still have to assume a fictive body to signal their presence. Thus, Aquinas’s explanation prevailed among witchcraft writers (Keck 1998, 28–33; Stephens 2002, 58–86).

WITCHCRAFT TREATISES

Corporeal interaction between humans and demons had implications that fascinated and tantalized certain clerics into imagining a new heresy: witchcraft. By the 1450s, their treatises argued that heretics’ sworn confessions had removed any doubt concerning the reality of demons. From Nicolas Jacquier (1458) to the seventeenth century, witchcraft theorists exhaustively discussed human–demon corporeal interactions, especially sexual relations, as proof of demonic reality. Even the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), infamous to modern scholars for its cruel misogyny, declared that its primary goal was to demonstrate that demons were not imaginary.

Writing in the vernacular languages, authors from about 1580 to 1700 invoked witchcraft and ghosts to rebut “Sadduceeism” (the disbelief in angels, demons, the immortal human soul, and the resurrection), and its heinous consequence, atheism. Yet the earliest Latin witchcraft theorists had long before declared that corporeal interaction with humans proved that demons were real, and thus that Sadduceeism was untenable (Stephens 2002, 1–57).

Anxiety about the reality of spirits is traceable even earlier, in Thomas Aquinas. In several works Aquinas noted that some Aristotelians had no use for angels and

demons, and once he even admitted that Aristotle himself shared this prejudice. Aquinas retorted that Aristotelian principles could not account for phenomena such as demonic possession and necromancy: hence, demonic reality was vindicated. Witchcraft theorists would endlessly repeat this claim (Stephens 2002, 323–331).

Nonetheless, in isolated remarks outside his systematic angelological and demonological treatises, Aquinas conceded that some thinkers (presumably those same Aristotelians) claimed that demons existed only in the imagination of vulgar, unphilosophical people. And, Aquinas added, *since* these thinkers disbelieved in demons, they declared that *maleficium* was an imaginary category, born from ignorance of natural causation and the power of human imagination. To these objections Aquinas could only reply that demons were an article of faith (Stephens 2002, 318–321).

Owing to the enormous prestige of Aristotelian philosophy after Aquinas's time, Aquinas's few mentions of Aristotelian skepticism about demons had a vast social influence, greater in proportion to their bulk than his confident, systematic essays on angelic and demonic being. By the 1450s, precursors of the *Malleus Maleficarum* were repeating, expanding, and striving to improve Aquinas's refutations of Aristotelian skepticism by discovering the human accomplices of demons. Between 1516 and 1520, the overworked refutations provoked Pietro Pomponazzi to publish demonstrations that Scholastic theories of demonic reality, witchcraft, and the immortality of the human soul were contrary to the plain sense of Aristotle's arguments. Two extremely hard-line theorists of witchcraft, Silvestro Prierias and Bartolomeo della Spina, savaged Pomponazzi's work (Stephens 2002, 77–79, 358–363).

Physical interactions between demons and humans fascinated many thinkers who were not witchcraft theorists. Michael Psellus, an eleventh-century Byzantine, included a few pages about demonic corporeality in his *On the Operations of Daemons*. Thanks to Marsilio Ficino's Latin translation (Psellus 1497), the passage spread throughout humanist culture. Ficino's milder Neoplatonic daemonology did not prevent his Psellus translation from becoming an authoritative proof-text of witchcraft theory in the following two centuries for authors like Torquato Tasso or Ludovico Maria Sinistrari.

WALTER STEPHENS

See also: ANGELS; AQUINAS, THOMAS; AUGUSTINE, ST.; BIBLE; DEMONS; IMAGINATION; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; POMPONAZZI, PIETRO; PRIERIAS, SILVESTRO; SABBAT; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC; SINISTRARI, LUDOVICO MARIA; SPINA, BARTOLOMEO DELLA; TASSO, TORQUATO.

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COTON, PIERRE (1564–1626)

A Jesuit polemicist and mystic, court preacher, and confessor to kings Henry IV and Louis XIII, Coton was involved in several major French episodes of exorcism and possession. He belonged to a core group of influential early modern French Catholics—including André Duval, Benet of Canfield, Pierre de Bérulle, and Sébastien Michaelis—who promoted a cult of possession and exorcism. For Coton, demonic possession was a sign of holiness that existed on a continuum with other ecstatic religious phenomena. He was involved in the spiritual direction of numerous female mystics and demoniacs, and in the establishment of new female religious houses.

In his twenties, while studying jurisprudence in Milan, Coton was taken to visit a famous female mystic, Isabella Bellinzaga. This encounter appears to have led to his lifelong fascination with female devotees. Such women were a common preoccupation among post-Tridentine churchmen. The example of Saint Teresa, who had received support from many Spanish clerics, was a powerful force in France's so-called "century of saints." At Paris, Coton belonged to a group of religious enthusiasts including Duval, Bérulle, and Madame Barbe Acarie, a founder of St. Teresa's Discalced Carmelites in France. Coton was reputed to be a formidable orator: as preacher-ordinary to King Henry IV, he impressed visitors to court by giving impromptu sermons on royal command.

At the time of the controversial Marthe Brossier episode in 1599, Coton had been absent from Paris, because the *Parlement* of Paris (sovereign judicial court) had excluded Jesuits from the area of its jurisdiction from 1594–1603. Later, he helped restore exorcism in the capital, both as part of the Catholic revival and for courtly entertainment. In 1604, the queen, Marie de Medici, sought a replacement exorcist to treat a young possessed woman from Amiens, Adrienne Du Fresne; she had been exorcised at court by an Italian Ambrosian, who had returned to Italy. When the queen reportedly noticed that the woman's "demon" showed

signs of resistance in Coton's presence, she chose Coton to carry on this work. Skeptics in Paris and at court tried to embarrass Coton publicly in 1605 by publishing more than forty interrogations he reputedly held with DuFresne's percipient "Devil," about matters of theology and prognostication, including queries about whether or not King James I of England would convert to Catholicism. A minor diplomatic incident ensued, leading Henry IV to defend Coton to James, claiming that the published texts had been falsified by the enemies of Catholicism, and of the Jesuits in particular. DuFresne later returned to Amiens, however Coton's biographer claimed that her exorcisms had converted more than 500 Huguenots and induced over 10,000 general confessions.

Coton was a friend of the Dominican reformer, Sébastien Michaelis, the senior exorcist in the possession scandal at the Ursuline convent in Aix-en-Provence in 1609–1611. Michaelis's exorcisms there led to the execution for witchcraft of Father Louis Gaufridy in 1611. Coton, who had spent some time in Provence in the 1590s, was said—possibly retrospectively—to have known and disliked Gaufridy, seeing him as falsely pious.

Later, Coton actively supported the demonically possessed widow Elisabeth de Ranfaing in her attempt to set up a religious order in Nancy, while simultaneously cautioning her not to become too attached to her possessing demons. His major devotional book, the *Occupation Intérieure* (Inner Pursuit) of 1608, exercised considerable influence on the Norman mystic-demoniac, Marie des Vallées. The book describes something like the controversial "exchange of will" with God that Vallées undertook in order to bring herself closer to the divinity and prevent herself from sinning. When Vallées asked Coton about the validity of her contact with demons, which spurred her devotions, he replied that if she were fooled, it was nonetheless "good foolery." The history of Coton's activities and networks lends weight to the argument that historical trends can be shaped by the passions of a few individuals, as much as by a *zeitgeist*.

SARAH FERBER

See also: AIX-EN-PROVENCE NUNS; BÉRULLE, PIERRE DE; BROSSIER, MARTHE; DUVAL, ANDRÉ; EXORCISM; FRANCE; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; RANFAING, ELISABETH DE; VALLÉES, MARIE DES.

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COTTA, JOHN (CA. 1575–1650)

A Cambridge-educated physician who practiced medicine in the English town of Northampton, Cotta is best remembered for his treatise *The Triall of Witch-craft*, published in 1616. A second edition, amended and enlarged but containing no new important arguments, appeared in 1625 under the title *The Infallible True and Assured Witch*.

Little is known of Cotta's family background or early life. He was born in Warwickshire, entered Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1590, and obtained his medical degree in 1603. Soon after, he established a thriving practice in Northampton under the patronage and influence of Sir William Tate. He first aired his views on witchcraft in a chapter of his *Short Discoverie of the unobserved dangers of severall sorts of ignorant and unconsiderate Practisers of Physicke*, published in 1612, four years before *The Triall of Witch-craft*. He published nothing after 1625.

Cotta's major treatise appeared at a time when witchcraft prosecutions were declining, but when the clergy still made vigorous calls for a systematic campaign to root out witchcraft in all its forms. A succession of books written by such clergymen as William Perkins, Alexander Roberts, Thomas Cooper, and Richard Bernard, all warned of a serious threat to Christianity. Cotta broadly shared their viewpoint, calling witchcraft "this high treason against God" (quoted by Sharpe 1996, 83), and referred to Perkins's posthumous publication *A Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft* (Cambridge, 1608). Yet his complete acceptance of the reality of witchcraft was mitigated by his cautious council regarding the identification of witches and evidence required to prove guilt. Cotta found it "a hard and difficult matter to detect Witch-craft," and likewise difficult for wrongly accused persons to prove their "innocency" (Cotta 1616, 20). The trial of witchcraft had to be subject to the same standards of evidence "common unto all other detections of truth," with judgments "drawne and derived either from Sense or Reason, or likely probabilitie raised from both" (Cotta 1616, 23).

He was consequently dismissive of many popular beliefs and practices concerning witchcraft, even expressing skepticism about some methods of proof that his monarch, James I, had endorsed. Trial by water, for instance, although never formally recognized, was accepted by some judges as a valid proof of guilt. The result of witch swimming, Cotta argued, was "not alwayes the same; if not alwayes the same, then is it sometimes fayling; if sometimes fayling, then is it not infallible; if not infallible, then in no true judgement or justice to bee trusted or credited" (Cotta 1616, 107). Cotta subscribed to the view current in educated Protestant circles that nothing done by the Devil, either alone or through witches, was supernatural. Only God the creator had the power to work beyond natural laws.

Therefore, any means of detecting and curing witchcraft that did not operate according to natural principles were at best ineffective and at worst, satanic deceptions.

Like many of his medical contemporaries, Cotta considered cunning folk to be as pernicious a threat as witches. After all, they represented serious competition in the medical marketplace of early seventeenth-century England, as well as a social and moral danger. Such people were “swarming in this kingdom,” he complained. No one could fail “to observe the uncontroled liberty & license of open & ordinary resort in all places unto wise-men, & wise-women, so vulgarly termed for their reputed knowledge concerning such diseased persons as are supposed to be bewitched” (Cotta 1616, 60). He urged that those truly bewitched should seek the spiritual comfort of God and the medical advice of trained physicians.

OWEN DAVIES

See also: COOPER, THOMAS; CUNNING FOLK; ENGLAND; EVIDENCE; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; PERKINS, WILLIAM; SWIMMING TEST.

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COUNTERMAGIC

Most Europeans before the twentieth century, like most other people, lived in a world they assumed was permeated by magical forces that connected peoples' psyches to other peoples' psyches, to material reality, and connected both psyches and material reality to a variety of disembodied occult forces and entities ranging from local spirits through angels and the planets to God Almighty. This state of affairs could represent an opportunity, a chance to accomplish some purpose by manipulating these magical forces, and many people made such attempts occasionally, while some did so routinely. However, the same processes could work in reverse, making people vulnerable to malign influences from independent occult entities and other peoples' magic, in particular the *maleficium* (harmful magic) associated with witchcraft.

Consequently, a huge body of magical lore offered ways to counter these dangers. One basic approach was protective magic: spells, rituals, and objects thought capable of warding off malign influences before they could take effect. The other basic approach involved various means of countering baleful magical influences after they had started to work. The first approach included both passive defenses, like using magically potent objects as charms or amulets, and active precautions like spells, rituals, observance of taboos, and prayers. The second almost always involved active measures. A great deal of countermagic was conducted by ordinary people, either as precautionary measures within their daily routine or when they thought themselves under attack, but there were also in virtually every community specialist practitioners whom people consulted when they thought themselves victims of malevolent magic beyond their own power to counteract. A great deal of religious ritual, from Catholic processions to Protestant prayers and fasting, worked as a form of countermagic, defending against malign influences and supplicating God to effect cures. Clergy therefore constituted one type of countermagical specialist. This was particularly true in Catholicism, but even the stoicism Protestantism advocated was expected to help people ward off rather than simply endure evil. In addition, there were innumerable popular practitioners, “cunning folk,” who offered services like healing and finding lost objects, and “unwitching” was one of the most important. Preventive and curative magic played a central role in daily life; they were an integral part of popular culture, and offered an effective response to at least some of the problems against which they were employed.

HARMFUL MAGIC AND COUNTERMAGIC

Countermagic existed to counteract magical threats. These might include malign natural sources, like unfavorable conjunctions of the planets and unlucky days on the calendar, against which charms could be employed to alleviate their negative influence. More frequently, the danger to be countered came from purposive spiritual forces in the environment, like fairies thought to attack babies or women in childbirth, and against which elaborate precautions were generally taken. By far the most common magical danger, however, came from other human beings. Some people were known to employ magical rituals to advance their own interests and harm others, and many more were suspected of doing so. Other people were thought to exercise a baleful influence spontaneously, through harsh words, the evil eye, or just the negative force of their personality. The most common type of misfortune attributed to these sources was human illness and death; but impotence, untoward sexual attraction, accidents, harm to animals, the failure of domestic processes like churning butter, bad

weather, crop failures, and bad luck might also be blamed on evil magic.

Against these varied threats, people deployed a whole range of countermeasures. Some were not even magical, like appeasing a reputed witch with gifts or threatening one with physical violence to get her to remove a spell. Most ways of dealing with magic, though, involved other kinds of magic, and the first line of defense was protective magic, which included both passive and active measures. Passive measures included painting protective symbols on homes, barns, and other buildings, and hiding magically potent objects like “witch bottles” in or around them. Passive measures also included wearing amulets or charms containing magically potent objects or inscribed with magically potent words. Active measures offered a wide array of rites, including processions, rituals, observance of taboos, prayers, incantations, and spells. Catholics used religious objects and religious rites as protective measures within an explicitly religious context. Innumerable local traditions and popular practices among both Protestants and Catholics integrated rituals and beliefs based on Christian rites, symbols, and doctrines with customs rooted in their pagan past.

These various forms of protective magic were a ubiquitous feature of early modern life. A full catalog would involve thousands or even tens of thousands of items, but a few examples convey the range and variety of protective items and rituals. In Scotland, iron was thought to give protection from fairies, while in modern Greece it is supposed to ward off the bad luck seeing a priest brings. In the Basque Country, priests blessed cattle bells to protect the animals from the evil eye. In the Friuli region of Italy, people born with the caul dreamed on specific nights that they went out and battled witches to determine the fate of the harvest. In other parts of Italy, herbs of St. John carried at Corpus Christi were burned to ward off the demons held responsible for storms. Such examples could be multiplied endlessly because, as Hessian church visitors noted, “No man or woman begins, undertakes, does, or refrains from doing, desires, or hopes for anything without using some special charm, spell, [or] incantation.” (Clark 2002, 107).

Despite the widespread use of protective magic, malevolent influences were widely perceived in the pervasive incidence of disease, accidents, droughts, and other misfortunes that plagued early modern life. To be sure, not every unfortunate incident was ascribed to malign magic. Like most peoples who believed in magic, early modern Europeans were aware that most physical effects have physical causes, and suspected magic only when certain specific criteria were met, and when some circumstances or features of a misfortune indicated that a supernatural force was at work. For example, for illness to be ascribed to witchcraft, it generally fol-

lowed a hostile or unusual encounter and either came on suddenly, lingered, or presented symbolically significant symptoms, like paralysis in a limb that had been touched.

Very often, the first type of magical countermeasure was some form of divination to determine if magic was to blame for the misfortune, and, if so, who or what was responsible. While local traditions included different sources of malevolent magic like fairies in Wales and “house women” in Sicily, in early modern Europe the most common source was witchcraft. Once the nature of the misfortune and, where indicated, the identity of the agent responsible was established, there were several steps that could be taken. One was appeal or appeasement to get the agent responsible to remove the spell voluntarily. Another was to perform some ritual to suppress or break it. A third possibility was to shift it to someone or something else, which, in the case of witchcraft, could include turning it back on the witch herself. The possibility of turning the spell back on the witch was employed as a threat to get the witch to remove the spell, and this was accomplished on occasion through the threat or infliction of physical violence. A final alternative in the case of witchcraft, particularly after the mid-sixteenth century, was to take the accusation to the authorities. While this was not a particularly magical approach, it is worth noting that trials often contained an element of counter magic in the form of ordeals. Some popular tests like “swimming” were explicitly magical; the witch’s buoyancy was supposedly determined by her guilt or innocence. Even torture, which was used routinely in continental witchcraft trials, contained an element of magic, for while jurists justified it in rational terms, it was also related to medieval ideas about ordeals, in which it was assumed that God would give the innocent the fortitude to endure torment and not be falsely convicted.

CLERGYMEN AND CUNNING FOLK

While there were innumerable ways that people who believed they were the targets of a magical attack could counter it on their own, virtually every community in early modern Europe had specialist practitioners to whom the populace turned when self-help seemed insufficient. Clergymen were one such resource. One of Christianity’s original appeals had been the ability of its agents to defeat the magic of its pagan rivals, and the Catholic Church had traditionally provided a variety of counter magical services like blessing the fields before planting, or exorcizing demons from possessed people. However, Protestantism rejected these practices as superstitious, offering prayer and faith in God in their place.

Because of Christian ethics, even Catholicism could only offer a limited range of services compared to popular practitioners. These were variously referred to in English as wizards, cunning men, wise women, healers,

and unwitchers, but the term most commonly used by historians is “cunning folk.” As a group, cunning folk could be of either gender and offered services such as locating lost or stolen goods and missing persons and healing people and animals as well as countering malefic magic. Some undoubtedly performed *maleficium* (harmful magic) as well, for clients or on their own account. Any particular cunning person might specialize in one or several of these arts, or might offer a full range of services. Most practiced on a casual or part-time basis, but for some it was their main occupation. Some charged nothing for their services, some charged only if they were successful, and others took payment on a regular basis. The majority probably kept a low profile and operated on a very local level, but more than a few had widespread reputations that brought clients from many miles away. Most of their clients were ordinary villagers and townspeople, but it was no secret that members of the elite would patronize them at times. Most European states had laws against their practices, which were seen as impious and disobedient, with penalties ranging from fines to incarceration and even banishment, but support for the penalties was weak and enforcement was sporadic.

Cunning folk might offer charms and other protective mechanisms to ward off evil, but their main role in the area of countermagic was intervention once a magical attack was suspected. Typically the supposed victim or his or her family called in cunning folk to determine if magic was at work, who or what was behind it if it was, and implement the appropriate countermeasures. The means they employed generally came from local or regional magical lore, but they might have books as well, and they also had a certain latitude to innovate. “Cunning” today generally carries the negative connotations of an intuitive intelligence put to questionable ends, but as used for these practitioners it had the positive connotations of an intuitive intelligence supported by practical knowledge and seasoned by experience.

To satisfy their clients, they needed to know the signs that distinguished a malady that was amenable to cure by countermagic, be able to help the client identify a likely suspect, and conduct a persuasive ritual or prescribe an effective remedy. Furthermore, since they generally lived and worked at a fixed location, it was not enough to succeed with a single case; they continued to practice because they were able to gain and maintain a reputation for success over time within an established community. While some undoubtedly employed cynical shams, in general, the countermagic of a successful practitioner mixed mundane resources like knowledge of local social relations and medicinal herbs with the manipulation of cultural forms and expectations to tap psychological processes that brought peoples’ unconscious knowledge about their situation into awareness and mobilized psychophysical processes to promote health.

FUNCTIONS AND EFFICACY

Preventive countermagic enabled people to act more confidently in the face of the myriad dimly perceived threats life presented than they would otherwise. This confidence enhanced their probability of success both because action is more likely to lead to success than inaction, and because one person’s confidence influenced other peoples’ expectations, perceptions, and reactions. Furthermore, to the considerable extent that magic worked through psychological manipulation, preventive magic directly enhanced peoples’ resistance to negative influences. Similarly, curative countermagic had the ability to mobilize peoples’ psychological resources to counteract the effects of psychologically rooted problems. Like other magical cures, countermagic enhanced peoples’ ability to recover from illness, which is the misfortune most commonly attributed to malevolent magic. Recent medical studies have shown that the psychological posture most highly correlated with recovery is “a fighting spirit,” as opposed to “denial” or “stoic acceptance” (Hafen et al. 1996, 527). Thus, while some of the assumptions behind countermagic may be invalid, and the specific forms of belief may be explicable in terms of their sociocultural context, countermagic could act as a useful palliative, help avoid or overcome psychogenic problems, and foster the most effective psychological response to illnesses of all sorts—a power of particular importance in societies in which psychology is the most effective, if not the only, form of intervention available.

EDWARD BEVER

See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; CHARMS; CLERICAL MAGIC; CUNNING FOLK; DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS; DISEASE; DIVINATION; EVIL EYE; EXORCISM; FAIRIES; FEAR; FOLKLORE; MAGIC AND RELIGION; MAGIC, POPULAR; OCCULT; ORDEAL; SPELLS; SWIMMING TEST.

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COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL

Church courts—either inquisitorial or ecclesiastical—played a relatively small role in trying and executing presumed witches during the early modern period.

Church courts exercised jurisdiction over various organizational and disciplinary matters. Although ecclesiastical courts cannot decide doctrinal or liturgical issues, they seek to uphold the teachings and rites of the Church through the application of canon law—a system of regulatory norms requiring obedience in matters of religious hierarchy, discipline, and morality. The term “ecclesiastical courts” is usually reserved for tribunals associated with the Roman Catholic Church or the Eastern Orthodox Church and, since the sixteenth century, the Church of England, but other Protestant Churches developed roughly equivalent institutions. Within the Catholic tradition, ecclesiastical courts formed a hierarchy from episcopal (subject to the authority of a bishop), to metropolitan (subject to the authority of an archbishop), to papal (subject to the authority of the Roman pontiff). Notably absent from this list are tribunals associated with various inquisitions. Although such courts may be understood as ecclesiastical in a generic sense and all employed canon law, in fact they functioned quite differently: the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions had their own Supreme Councils appointed by their respective monarchs, while medieval and Roman Inquisitions were directly answerable to the Holy See.

Before the fifteenth century, episcopal courts tried the majority of the relatively few witchcraft cases. After the development of the witches’ Sabbath and a significant increase in the number of trials, inquisitorial courts took a much larger role. By the fifteenth century, secular courts already began to hear most witchcraft cases. This trend accelerated during the period of the major witch hunts between 1580 and 1640, by which time the courts associated with the institutional inquisitions had largely lost interest in prosecuting witchcraft as a demonic crime. However, most of the largest witch panics during this period occurred in the lands of several German prince-bishops, who were not only religious authorities but also secular princes. Almost no ecclesiastical courts (in the strict sense) were involved in these panics; representatives of these prince-bishops

conducted these witchcraft trials through their secular jurisdictions. Although these bishops’ Catholic zeal certainly encouraged their prosecution of witches, the absence of trials in many Catholic territories and the presence of trials in many Protestant lands usually led scholars to question the general significance of confessional identity to witch hunting.

MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN DEVELOPMENTS

Although canon law is rarely followed in modern secular societies, throughout the Middle Ages and well into the early modern period ecclesiastical courts claimed jurisdiction not only over the clergy and church property, but also over the laity in many criminal and civil matters related to sinful behavior. They also claimed jurisdiction over many things connected to the sacrament of marriage, including contractual obligations, legal procedure, and inheritance. A variety of ecclesiastical courts emerged to judge such cases. In earlier times, provincial councils acted as courts, especially when deciding important issues. Normally, however, the court of the archdeacon (an assistant to a bishop) and other inferior judges (deriving their jurisdiction from custom or specified privilege) supplemented the courts headed by the bishop’s Official (chief judge). Their decisions could always be appealed up as far as Rome (for example, Henry VIII’s divorce from Catherine of Aragon). Beginning in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the courts of vicars-general began to replace these earlier courts and brought their jurisdictions under episcopal, metropolitan, or ultimately papal control. In 1561, the papacy established the *Rota Romana*, a papal appellate court functioning as a collegiate body that replaced less formal means of hearing cases brought before the pope.

Developing along a separate trajectory, inquisitorial courts emerged out of the eleventh- and twelfth-century interest in the imperial law of ancient Rome as a particularly effective means to combat heresy. Adapting canon law, itself largely derived from the revived Roman law, popes and bishops used inquisitorial procedure—the placement of significant investigative, prosecutorial, and judicial powers in the hands of one judge or tribunal. Pope Gregory IX (1227–1241) first appointed such inquisitors, and numerous bishops did as well. The Middle Ages created both papal and episcopal inquisitors, operating outside the traditional system of ecclesiastical courts, and unlike them, capable of ordering secular authorities to carry out a death sentence. Subsequent popes expanded inquisitors’ prerogatives of and slowly extended their jurisdiction to include sorcery or witchcraft as either implicit or explicit forms of heresy. Royally appointed national inquisitions emerged in Spain and Portugal before the Holy See created a Roman Inquisition in

1542 and made it an official Congregation of the Church in 1588, creating an administrative department of the Holy See outside the system of ecclesiastical courts and claiming jurisdiction over the entire Church. Despite the fifteenth-century Inquisition's role in prosecuting witchcraft harshly, by the mid-sixteenth century the Spanish, Portuguese, and Roman Inquisitions showed little inclination to pursue accused witches and put them to death.

MEDIEVAL WITCHCRAFT TRIALS

Both ecclesiastical and inquisitorial courts pursued accused witches and magicians sporadically during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, particularly in France, northern Italy, and Switzerland. For example, an inquisitor tried a woman for magic at Le Mas Saintes-Puelles in 1245, but she convinced him she was guilty of no heresy. Later, an ecclesiastical court at Château-Landon tried a group of clerics and laymen for necromancy in 1323; an inquisitor in Florence condemned a man to death for magic in 1384; and two others were burned at Milan soon afterward. By the fifteenth century, the number of cases heard by inquisitors far outstripped the number tried by episcopal jurisdictions, but both lagged behind secular courts, which initiated mass round ups with suspects being brought in for questioning, sometimes by the hundreds—even though the diabolical aspects of witchcraft, the pact with the Devil, or attendance at a witches' Sabbat, became more prominent.

Significantly, continental secular courts increasingly imitated inquisitorial and ecclesiastical courts by adopting inquisitorial methods to deal with such "secret" crimes as sorcery or witchcraft. But they did so without incorporating some of the safeguards of canon law, thus permitting dramatic increases in numbers of trials and executions. Although the adoption of inquisitorial procedure represented a rationalization of medieval legal practices in many respects by providing stricter rules of evidence and standards of proof, it added a number of dangers as well: judges were empowered to arrest suspects without a formal accusation and to interrogate both suspects and witnesses secretly, using torture without supervision to force suspects to confess and name accomplices. In a sense, this process was a "necessary precondition" of the early modern hunts (Levack 1995, 69).

The transformation of witchcraft from an ecclesiastical into a secular crime was facilitated because sorcery had traditionally been understood as a "mixed" crime, both spiritual and temporal in nature. Any crime that represented a threat to the religious order also represented a threat to social order. Despite the important roles played by ecclesiastical and inquisitorial courts in early witch hunts, their significance within the larger phenomenon collapsed during the early modern period. Both Protestant and Catholic ecclesiastical courts con-

tinued to try individuals for "white magic" well into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but they treated it essentially as superstition and meted out light sentences.

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See also: COURTS, INQUISITORIAL; COURTS, SECULAR; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; EPISCOPAL JUSTICE; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; INQUISITION, PORTUGUESE; INQUISITION, ROMAN; INQUISITION, SPANISH; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; TRIALS.

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COURTS, INQUISITORIAL

Construed broadly, the inquisitorial courts included any legal forum employing *inquisitorial* procedure, in which investigative, prosecutorial, and judicial powers are vested in a single judge or tribunal. Ordinarily, such courts are distinguished from those following *accusatory* procedure, in which an aggrieved party brings formal charges against a suspect and takes legal responsibility for proving guilt, facing punishment for failure to do so. They are also contrasted to systems of justice employing jury trials, in which a defendant's peers play at least some role in determining guilt or innocence. More narrowly, inquisitorial courts have been associated with several Roman Catholic practices or institutions known to posterity as the medieval (or papal), Spanish, Roman, and Portuguese Inquisitions. All of them followed canon law and inquisitorial procedure in the prosecution of violators of the canon law and especially heretics, and they should not be confused with either secular or episcopal courts, which also used inquisitorial methods. Scholars have long recognized that, although church courts frequently pioneered the use of inquisitorial procedures during the Middle Ages when prosecuting heresy and sorcery, the institutional inquisitions convicted relatively few accused witches and executed a very small percentage of them. Nonetheless, inquisitorial procedure became extremely significant within trials for witchcraft, because numer-

ous European secular courts employed it in their criminal prosecutions of accused witches throughout the age of witch hunting. Thus, the vast majority of persons accused of witchcraft between the early 1400s and 1750 were convicted not by inquisitorial courts but by secular courts that followed inquisitorial procedure derived from Roman law and taught in every continental university since the eleventh century, together with the newer discipline of canon law, also derived from Roman procedures.

INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE

One characteristic of early modern courts using inquisitorial procedure was that sweeping authority was often vested in one individual or one tribunal. Courts following inquisitorial procedure exercised what we understand as distinct police, prosecutorial, and judicial powers that since Montesquieu have usually been divided among separate and independent public officials. Judges or magistrates employing inquisitorial procedure were responsible for initiating prosecutions (either on their own or in response to a complaint), investigating suspicious activities or circumstances, interrogating both suspects and witnesses (often through the use of torture), rendering verdicts on those whom they investigated, and sentencing offenders. In modern British and American eyes, this system has appeared especially vulnerable to abuse and excessive zeal. Many modern legal systems outside the common-law tradition of accusatory procedure still employ aspects of inquisitorial procedure to this day, while trying to establish safeguards against its potential for misuse.

In practice, inquisitorial procedure replaced forms of medieval justice that were not only accusatory but also often nonrational. Borrowing the prestige of Roman law, the inquisitorial system provided a more rational form of justice, independent of the status or abilities of the litigants or the judgment of God, revealed through ordeals, both unrelated to the evidence in the case. In theory, inquisitorial procedure introduced more reasoned approaches to evidence and established strict standards of proof, which could nonetheless be ignored or misapplied by judges. One of the procedure's key features was that plaintiffs no longer risked harsh penalties if they could not prove their case, a practice that had tended to keep frivolous complaints to a minimum.

While this feature revolutionized the way criminal cases were initiated, more significant was the officialization of the judicial process resulting from secular or ecclesiastical courts assuming all responsibilities, particularly the investigation of pertinent facts and the application of clear rules of evidence and proof when rendering verdicts. Most investigations entailed the interrogation under oath of all parties involved, both

suspects and witnesses, confronting them when they contradicted each other and torturing suspects (and occasionally witnesses) who seemed to be lying. Thus, the court established the facts of a case to its satisfaction before passing sentence. Most early modern Europeans regarded inquisitorial procedure as the best way to prosecute crimes, including concealed or hidden crimes for which no direct physical evidence or eyewitness testimony was available. Witchcraft was precisely the kind of secretive and spiritual crime for which legal authorities had designed such "exceptional" inquisitorial methods. Rumors of guilt and interrogation under torture replaced ordinary methods of gathering evidence; suspects confessed their own crimes and often named accomplices.

INSTITUTIONAL INQUISITIONS

As secular courts throughout Europe began reviving the basic tenets of Roman law in the eleventh and twelfth centuries (with the notable exception of England and, to some degree, Scotland and the Scandinavian kingdoms, where juries continued to play important roles in determining guilt), ecclesiastical courts were among the earliest to adapt its methods. By the early thirteenth century, Pope Gregory IX began appointing inquisitors to identify and eradicate heresy, thus establishing a new kind of inquisitorial court. These roving judges supplemented episcopal courts, which also adopted inquisitorial procedures. By 1252, Innocent IV authorized papal inquisitors to use torture during their investigations, a practice consistent with Roman law and recently reintroduced by some secular Italian jurisdictions to help convict notorious criminals suspected of perpetrating concealed crimes. Papal inquisitors used torture while investigating heretics, and, after some initial reluctance, began to use it against suspected witches as well. From a religious perspective, heresy and witchcraft constituted concealed crimes without peer.

Throughout the Middle Ages, papal appointment of inquisitors lacked any official institutional structure: there were inquisitors appointed directly by the pope, but no Inquisition. Moreover, the papal system had begun to unravel well before Europe experienced a significant rise in the number of witchcraft trials, and it collapsed with the breakdown of a unitary Western Christianity during the sixteenth-century Reformation.

Soon, better-organized successors took its place in southern Europe and Spanish America. The new Spanish Inquisition emerged under the authority of Spain's most famous monarchs in the late fifteenth century. It soon extended its operations throughout the Iberian kingdoms, including parts of Italy under Spanish rule, and in its overseas American colonies. A Portuguese Inquisition likewise emerged and maintained several autonomous tribunals. Finally, a new Roman Inquisition, under papal control and with a

well-organized infrastructure, was created in 1542 to combat the consolidating Protestant threat in Italy. In point of fact, however, its influence remained confined only to central and northern Italy, because slightly different versions operated in the lands of the Republic of Venice and in the Kingdom of Naples.

All three institutional inquisitions tried and executed exceptionally few accused witches. Although it would be a mistake to consider them benign (at times they acted harshly toward those they caught), it is important to note that by the mid-sixteenth century, their centralized authority, standardized judicial practices, and strict rules of evidence and proof were coupled with a generally skeptical attitude toward magic. They came to view witchcraft as sinful superstition to be corrected, rather than a real demonic threat to be eradicated. With a few exceptions, they tried to reconcile practitioners of magic with the Church, rather than order the secular authorities to execute them.

Although papal inquisitors ordered hundreds of suspected witches executed in the fifteenth century, in a sense there by paving the way for the far more numerous trials to follow, most recent scholarship on the early modern inquisitions suggests something else entirely. Before 1610, the Spanish Inquisition ordered about fifty persons executed for witchcraft. Thereafter it battled secular courts for jurisdiction (while expressing its skepticism) as Spain's secular courts executed perhaps 200 more between 1610 and 1625. Portugal's Inquisition executed only seven accused witches. And although executions occurred sporadically in alpine regions of northern Italy, apparently the Roman Inquisition ordered none after 1580 (Monter 2002, 13–14).

INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE AND TRIALS FOR WITCHCRAFT

While these centralized inquisitions may have been well regulated and skeptical, plenty of secular and ecclesiastical courts using inquisitorial procedure were not. In fact, many historians now believe, on the basis of more corroborating data, that well-organized, relatively centralized secular states (like these state inquisitions) conducted far fewer trials for witchcraft than loosely governed states, in which the absence of administrative oversight allowed some judicial officials to engage in zealous prosecution and execution of suspected witches. There can be no doubt that the prosecution of witchcraft in some areas was made far more severe by treating witchcraft as *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime, where ordinary rules of evidence and proof were suspended), by granting extensive authority to judges, by limiting the liability of accusers, by failing to apply carefully the rules of evidence and proof, and by using torture in interrogations—in short, by adopting inquisitorial methods. But for this very reason, it is necessary to balance any account of the inherent dangers of

inquisitorial justice against its potential to rationalize, and to render more fair, legal proceedings against criminal suspects. Inquisitorial procedure most certainly contributed to the trial and execution of many, but as historians are discovering, it just as easily led to the release of still others. And the faults of the accusatory system emerge clearly from a comparative map of per capita witchcraft executions across Europe, with Scandinavian averages exceeding those from Mediterranean Europe, and common-law southern England relatively less humane than Roman-law north-central France.

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See also: ACCUSATORIAL PROCEDURE; COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; COURTS, SECULAR; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; EVIDENCE; GEOGRAPHY OF THE WITCH HUNTS; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; INQUISITION, PORTUGUESE; INQUISITION, ROMAN; INQUISITION, SPANISH; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; ORDEAL; PAPACY AND PAPAL BULLS; ROMAN LAW; TORTURE; TRIALS.

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COURTS, SECULAR

The secular courts are any judicial forums convened by political authorities to adjudicate civil or criminal cases. In the Middle Ages and early modern period, secular courts were constituted by principalities (including kingdoms, duchies, counties, and so on) or municipalities (from villages and market towns to cities). Some exercised jurisdiction on behalf of higher political authorities; others claimed it in their own right. In addition, legal systems could operate under very different procedures from one principality or municipality to

the next. In other words, secular courts exhibited enormous variety, which reflected not only dissimilar types of secular states, but also numerous idiosyncrasies among polities of an essentially similar nature. Their wide variety makes generalization about secular courts difficult.

As sites for witchcraft trials, secular courts already rivaled religious courts in the fifteenth century. During the Middle Ages, most of them adopted inquisitorial procedure (placing police, prosecutorial, and judicial powers in the hands of a single judge) also employed by Church courts, deriving from a renewed admiration for the judicial methods and techniques of the ancient Romans. Well into the early modern period and beyond, most secular courts on the European continent followed the precepts of Roman law. (Scandinavian, Scottish, and especially English courts followed a somewhat different trajectory, one influenced by Roman law but still dominated by customary legal practices.) After 1550, secular courts became even more prominent in prosecuting witches, when they increasingly claimed jurisdiction over such matters in most states. (Spain, Portugal, and Italy remained exceptions to some extent.) These trends constitute part of an even larger political phenomenon that some historians call a judicial revolution.

In all of Europe, recent estimates suggest, roughly 75,000 trials led to the execution of some 35,000 to 50,000 accused witches. The vast majority of these trials took place in secular courts exercising inquisitorial procedures. Some recent scholarship suggests that the worst trials took place only in territories where judges operated with little or no institutional oversight, where judicial centralization remained incomplete. Other recent scholarship argues that judicial reforms were less important than local animosities and desires among the general populace in fomenting trials for witchcraft. In some places (for example, the electoral Palatinate), secular authorities actively discouraged the prosecution of witchcraft even while their legal codes listed it as a crime. Regardless, early modern *trials* for witchcraft, as distinct from contemporary *beliefs* in witchcraft, were inherently political events, usually conducted by officials representing a secular state.

MEDIEVAL CUSTUMALS

At first glance, medieval trials for sorcery and witchcraft conducted by secular courts share few common features, but they do reveal widespread belief in the reality of supernatural power among the populace. Although these cases involved a variety of magical practices (divination, charms, poisoning, image magic), causing different levels of damage (storms, injury, murder), with different levels of punishment (fines, exile, death), they demonstrated that magic was associated primarily with *maleficia* (evil acts), which threatened social order or

personal well-being. Medieval trials also illustrated relatively mild attitudes toward punishment and restitution. Usually they lacked any mention of the witches' Sabbat, although some contained elements suggesting diabolical intervention in *maleficium* (harmful magic).

Some of our best evidence for a broad understanding of magic, sorcery, and witchcraft as threats to societal or personal well-being comes from late medieval or early modern customals. The products of manor, municipal, or even provincial assemblies meeting for judicial and political purposes, they catalogued traditional local legal "customs" of people under the administrative and judicial authority of a particular lordship. Although customals were collected and formulated by men with legal and administrative training, peasants and burghers attested to the authenticity of the customs they contained. They were probably the negotiated results of both seigneurial and peasant understandings of law. Customals clearly delineated threats to order, and they made identifying and eradicating them the responsibility of everyone, from individual peasants to appointed judicial authorities.

Most customals treated magic as one threat amonged many, and, more important, rarely defined what it entailed. Brief references seem to suggest that beliefs in sorcery were widespread, encompassing a whole gamut of loosely related activities identifiable as harmful magic, although sorcery was usually separated from diabolical crimes. Communities openly acknowledged their fears of *maleficia* and could take steps to punish perpetrators. Customals usually associated magic only slightly with diabolical intervention, and never with the witches' Sabbat.

THE JUDICIAL REVOLUTION AND WITCHCRAFT

By the late fifteenth century, judicial organization and practice witnessed the gradual replacement of relatively decentralized, communal legal orders with more bureaucratic and better-supervised arrangements derived from the precepts of Roman law. Professional judges and lawyers sought to implement more abstract forms of justice in well-defined court systems, following clearly formulated territorial law codes. These changes directly affected the prosecution of witchcraft.

In the late Middle Ages, ecclesiastical courts were concerned mostly with the diabolical or heretical aspects of magic, rather than *maleficia*, while the opposite was often true in secular courts. But from the late Middle Ages on, the threats to Christianity posed by heresy, apostasy, and witchcraft were also interpreted as direct threats to the political order. Various magical practices with both religious and secular elements fell under mixed jurisdiction; the prosecution of witchcraft (including its most diabolical forms) increasingly became a matter for state officials rather than Church

courts. Likewise, secular authorities supported elaborate police and administrative efforts devoted to its eradication. Although recent scholarship has challenged the priority of legal and administrative changes in understanding the course of witchcraft trials, emphasizing instead the local or popular roots of prosecution for witchcraft-related crimes, the notion of a judicial revolution cannot be entirely abandoned.

Changes in legal theory and practice during the early modern period created the necessary conditions for widespread witchcraft trials, if not outright witch hunts. During the early modern period, judicial systems throughout Europe depended predominantly on the centralizing state's de jure claims to, and de facto exercise of, abstract justice, rather than community-based, interpersonal notions of justice. As this transformation took place, the state established itself as the final arbiter of disputes between its subjects. Rulers and officials sanctioned and staffed courts that adjudicated disputes between parties. Now centralized, and rationalized, these courts simultaneously prevented local forms of retribution and encouraged making accusations to officials empowered to dispense justice according to new standards. These changes can be seen best through the numerous law codes promulgated by European territories in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Each replaced relatively vague medieval references to sorcery with clearer statements about the nature of the crime; they likewise established clear guidelines for its prosecution.

After this transformation from interpersonal to more abstract conceptions of justice, fears of harmful magic began to generate more accusations to officials and more responses from the increasingly elaborate official legal machinery. Magistrates adjudicated witchcraft accusations through their power to investigate, interrogate, intimidate, and torture suspects brought before them, while aggrieved parties no longer needed to pursue other responses to fears of the supernatural. Countermagic to undo the effects of spells, retaliatory magic against perceived enemies, and physical violence to achieve vengeance certainly persisted, but such activities could also draw unsympathetic attention from state officials. In fact, state officials dealt very harshly with perpetrators of unofficial punishments of presumed witches.

Criminal procedures during the late medieval and early modern periods began to reflect changing attitudes toward justice. The most striking feature of the move toward rationalization and abstraction was the increasing abandonment of accusatorial procedures in criminal cases by both ecclesiastical and secular authorities after the twelfth century. The inherently nonrational mechanisms of accusatorial procedures held both the accuser and the accused to the same standard of proof, understood essentially as the immanence—or better still, the divine intervention—of God, revealed

through an ordeal, oath, or compurgation in the absence of certain proof or a confession. Judges presided impartially (at least in theory) between two equal parties, the accusation being prosecuted by one and defended by the other. Judges could not investigate the legitimacy of accusations or seek to prosecute named suspects. The threat of punishment weighed equally on both parties, according to the Roman legal concept of *lex talionis* (law of the claw), which held that false accusers should be punished with the same penalty facing the accused if convicted.

In contrast, inquisitorial procedure granted a far greater role to investigative procedures and, ultimately, to human judgment, rather than divine intervention. This procedure did not preclude individual accusations, and in fact most trials conducted relied on them in an informal way. Presiding magistrates could also begin an investigation on the basis of reputation or public rumor, and thereby accusers could report on others, rather than accuse them in a strictly legal sense. No longer did the accuser act as prosecutor, for the inquisitor acted simultaneously as investigator, prosecutor, and judge. This dramatic change did not technically remove the threat of *lex talionis* for false accusations, but it had the effect of placing trained legal specialists on the accusers' side.

The most important innovation of the new criminal procedures was the means adopted to arrive at verdicts. Each phase of the case became an official act of the court: active investigation of the circumstances, formal interrogations of witnesses and suspects, the application of torture in the course of interrogations, the gathering of material evidence, the determination of the facts, the recording of all proceedings, and finally careful evaluation of all pertinent factors before reaching a decision and rendering a verdict. Inquisitorial methods could be abused, but the delegation of so much authority and discretion in the hands of a single judge was tempered by demanding standards for evidence and testimony, as well as clearly defined procedures for all phases of the investigation, including especially torture. But whereas the nonrational nature of accusatorial procedures (and especially the *lex talionis*) may have reduced frivolous accusations, inquisitorial procedures were very well adapted for prosecution of such an ill-understood, anxiety-producing, supernatural, and above all, secretive crime as witchcraft. Public ill repute or rumor sufficed for beginning an official investigation, and the use of officially sanctioned judicial torture to obtain confessions frequently led not only to guilty verdicts, but to additional accusations against others as well.

Throughout most of the Middle Ages, the existence of real fears of supernatural harm and the existence of real desires to eradicate those deemed responsible did not translate into witch hunting. Especially with the *lex talionis*, a judicial system based on interpersonal, retributive notions of justice and accusatorial procedures

prevented widespread accusations for witchcraft in most areas of Europe. Although Europe experienced a significant number of trials for both *maleficia* and diabolical witchcraft before 1500, and therefore before many substantial changes in legal procedures or much political centralization occurred, it is extremely important to note that during the European high point for witchcraft trials between 1580 and 1640, most of those changes were well underway. The judicial revolution enabled witch hunting of various kinds, shapes, and sizes in disparate regions of Europe. It did not cause any of them.

JUDICIAL CENTRALIZATION AND LOCAL DYNAMICS

Although developments associated with the judicial revolution clearly facilitated trying large numbers of accused witches, scholars have recently suggested that strong administrative oversight usually led to fewer witchcraft trials than those in loosely governed territories. Evidence for this claim can be found in the widespread differences among territories in which witchcraft was criminalized. Some experienced a great number of trials, while others had very few. In many jurisdictions, no trials for witchcraft occurred. Surviving records also show significant chronological fluctuation in the numbers of those tried and executed within particular jurisdictions. Decentralization and its resulting extension of individual prerogative to presiding magistrates seem to account best for these differences and fluctuations.

In the extremely fragmented lands of the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation, which (in its broadest definition) accounted for well over half of the total number of trials and executions in all of Europe, decentralization seems to account for the worst of the prosecutions. Within the German-speaking lands, for example, some trials took place in relatively well-governed states such as Bavaria or Austria, but the numbers of those tried and executed are slim compared to some of the worst witch hunts that took place in loosely governed territories elsewhere in the empire. The same observations may be made about relatively centralized monarchies such as England and France, where the worst trials usually took place in the absence of oversight, or about Italy or Spain, where well-organized inquisitions kept the prosecution of presumed witches to a minimum.

Most of the initiative behind trying accused witches came from various localities—in the form of popular pressure or from especially zealous magistrates—rather than from central governments, which were usually keenly aware of the destabilizing effects that accompanied witchcraft trials. The so-called “village witch-committees” (*dörfliche Hexenausschüsse*) of the German Saarland (similar institutions can be found elsewhere) seem to provide the best evidence of this kind of local

initiative in the absence of centralized oversight. Operating in the name of the village commune, these committees solicited accusations, conducted investigations, and generally contributed to an atmosphere of rumor and manipulation. They also placed significant pressure on judicial authorities empowered to render verdicts.

For these reasons, although it is tempting to propose a clear link between the judicial revolution, as well as the state-building of which it was part, and trials for witchcraft, the documentary record seems to suggest that the connection was partial at best. Where judicial reforms were most successful, careful oversight apparently mitigated the worst excesses of witch hunting, without eliminating them entirely. In contrast, where officials could pursue uncontrolled agendas, trials could become exceptionally numerous and large. Changes in legal practice and theory undoubtedly had a direct impact on the prosecution of reputed witches. After all, in the absence of secular prohibitions against magic and without a magistracy willing to prosecute practitioners, trials could not take place. Secular authorities viewed witchcraft as a threat to the political and social order, and even promulgated law codes and established judicial forums to eradicate it, but in the last analysis, their attitudes and actions offer only some of the reasons witchcraft trials took place.

EDMUND M. KERN

See also: ACCUSATIONS; ACCUSATORIAL PROCEDURE; COMMUNAL PERSECUTION; CONFESSIONS; COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; COURTS, INQUISITORIAL; GEOGRAPHY OF THE WITCH HUNTS; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); LYNCHING; ORDEAL; POPULAR PERSECUTION; ROMAN LAW; TORTURE; TRIALS.

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CRANACH, LUCAS (1472–1553)

A painter, engraver, and designer of woodcuts, Cranach's contribution to the visual representation of witchcraft rests on four *Melancholia* paintings done between 1528 and 1533 (in Colmar, Copenhagen, and in two private collections).

Cranach (named after the small town of his birth) spent the early years of his career in Vienna, then lived from 1505 until his death in Wittenberg, the capital of electoral Saxony. In 1507 he set up a large workshop, which achieved a prolific artistic output in panel painting, mural designs, and woodcuts. His work covered many subjects, including devotional and religious themes, individual portraits, scenes from the life of the nobility, mythological and moralizing subjects, and images promoting the Protestant Reformation. Appointed court artist by Elector Frederick the Wise, Cranach ranked among Wittenberg's wealthiest citizens, owning several houses and an apothecary, becoming a member of the city council from 1519 until 1545, and acting three times as mayor of the city.

The *Melancholia* paintings were completed in 1528 (private collection), 1532 (Musée d'Unterlinden, Colmar), 1532 (Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen), and 1533 (private collection). There is also a later sixteenth-century copy of the 1528 painting in the Museum of Fine Arts of Toledo, Ohio. All feature Melancholy as a winged female figure, sharpening or peeling a stick, and surrounded by items traditionally associated with melancholia. Cranach's paintings allude to the famous 1514 engraving of *Melencolia I* by his fellow German artist, Albrecht Dürer. Unlike Dürer's very positive, Neoplatonic emphasis on the role of melancholy in human creativity, Cranach expressed an older medieval tradition identifying melancholy with the vice of sloth. Cranach was heavily influenced by Martin Luther, who had described melancholy as "a bath prepared by the devil" (Koepplin and Falk 1974, 292). In Cranach's *Melancholia* paintings, diabolical spirits invade the melancholic imagination through a wild cavalcade of witches, located in a bubble cloud above the figure of Melancholy.

Witches are portrayed in similar ways through the series. Drawing on the iconography developed by Dürer, Albrecht Altdorfer, Urs Graf, and especially Hans Baldung [Grien], Cranach depicted almost all of

them as naked females, both young and old, riding a range of different animals: goats, stags, boars, horses, cows, a ram, a large cat, a dragon, a hound, and an owl. Other animals, including a cock, serpents, and toads, are also prominent. Cranach's witches drew on traditional folklore associated with nocturnal cavalcades or processions, sometimes referred to as the "Furious Horde." They are easily identifiable as witches because of their naked bodies and flying hair, their forked cooking sticks, distaff, and spindle (only in his third painting), and by the animal skulls hoisted on long sticks. Already in 1515, in an illustration created as part of his contribution to a lavish *Book of Hours* designed for the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian, Cranach had portrayed a flamboyantly garbed witch riding a wild, snorting ram with the same animal skull hoisted on a stick. An older woman with exposed, sagging breasts, holding a similar stick or banner accompanied this extravagantly dressed witch, probably meant to suggest a prostitute.

Cranach created quite different scenarios for his wild cavalcades, however, based on contemporary notions and traditions of disorder and alluding to the evil spirits that melancholy was believed to release within the imagination. The 1528 painting emphasized the violence and destruction associated with the folklore of the wild hunt. The 1532 paintings provided coded images of the sexual disorder and emasculation of witchcraft based on popular stories of the *Venusberg*, that sinful mountain paradise given over to carnal lust and the black arts, the site of female seduction and male delusion, also identified in some sources as the site of witches' assemblies. The 1528 and 1532 paintings also included visual references to the military destruction associated with folkloric traditions of the Furious Horde, but now likely to be understood in moral terms. The 1533 painting, with its inclusion of a sexually dissolute clergy, linked the disorder of witchcraft to Reformation critique of a disordered and sinful Roman Church. In all these ways, Cranach expanded the visual language of witchcraft and endeavored to make it topical and relevant.

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See also: ANIMALS; ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BALDUNG [GRIEN], HANS; DÜRER, ALBRECHT; FOLKLORE; HOLDA; IMAGINATION; LUTHER, MARTIN; MELANCHOLY; NIGHT WITCH OR NIGHT HAG; PEOPLE OF THE NIGHT.

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CRESPET, PIERRE (1543—1594)

Preacher and writer, Crespét addressed many religious themes and published *Deux Livres de la Hayne de Sathan et Malins Esprits Contre L’Homme* (Two Books on the Hatred of Satan and Evil Spirits Against Mankind) in 1590. His text provides an excellent example of the way that Holy League zealots used demonology to support their political position in the French Wars of Religion.

Born in Sens, Crespét spent his career in the Celestine order. He became the prior of the Celestine abbey in Paris and in that position was well known as an active preacher and devoted supporter of the Holy League during the religious wars. Like almost all his colleagues, Crespét used the pulpit as a platform for the condemnation of the spread of Protestantism, which he considered a Satanic heresy.

Starting from the cliché of this age that heresy was the work of the Devil, Crespét’s approach in his book was essentially historical. “Lucifer,” he stated, was “the first chief of the Heretics and Apostates . . . Never has the Devil left the Church of God in peace.” For Crespét, the heretics of his day—Huguenots—were the direct heirs of the heretics of the early and medieval Church, such as Arians, *Vaudois*, and Waldensians. He stated, for example, “The Albigensians committed the same insolences and cruelties as the Huguenots have perpetrated in France; blasphemed the Virgin Mary, massacred priests, pissed on the holy vessels, left their excitement on the sacred altars, renounced the Roman Church, condemned all the sacraments and broken images; in short we have seen all these cruelties revived in France, so that we know that this is the same demon who has agitated these (heretics) today as well as those in the past.” The rise of heresy was the work of the Devil. German soldiers in Coligny’s Protestant army, “to show that they are of Satan’s religion, use diabolical characters . . . around their necks as if these could preserve them from danger” (Crespét 1590, 47v, 66r, 179v).

Crespét was obviously agitated that the high courts of France did not take witchcraft very seriously as a criminal heresy. It was essential, he wrote, that the criminal courts deal severely with this horrible crime. “Judges are so blind that they deny that there have ever been witches . . . These judges fascinated and

bewitched by Satan cannot or do not want to discover such a corrupt and impious doctrine and mock those who show them the truth . . . either they are blind or they are themselves of the league and confederation of Satan, helping to strengthen his power.” The results of this official laxity were grave. Crespét argued, “Heresies tolerated with impunity have opened the door to the Devil to bring disorder to Christendom” (Crespét 1590, 115r, 233r). The sense of betrayal by French royalist judges and officials was common among zealot preachers and writers.

Through such themes as the identification of heresy with the Devil, the equation of Protestantism with ancient heresies and witchcraft, and the accusations of judicial complicity in aiding the Devil’s work, Crespét provides an excellent example of the way influential French Catholic writers sought to mobilize their readers to fight the spread of the new religion. Crespét died in 1594, as the Catholic League was crumbling, and its former stalwarts rushed to recognize Henry IV as king of France.

JONATHAN L. PEARL

See also: BOUCHER, JEAN; FRANCE; HERESY; *VAUDOIS* (WALDENSIANS); WARS OF RELIGION (FRANCE).

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CRIMEN EXCEPTUM

Crimen exceptum (the excepted crime) is a term of Roman law, later adapted to medieval and early modern European learned law, that designated a category of criminal offenses that were so serious and often so difficult to prove that they justify both irregular legal procedure—often summary—and also deserve neither Christian charity nor imperial *clementia* (clemency) in the matter of sentencing. Roman law is also emphatic that they are among the offenses that should never be pardoned.

The earliest and most serious of these crimes was treason, against the Roman people during the Republic and against the emperor during the Empire. In various late-imperial laws the number of these crimes varied from five to twelve, usually including homicide, adultery, treason, rape, and counterfeiting, but sometimes extending to the violation of tombs, incest, and poisoning. These offenses were perceived especially to threaten the very fabric of society. Later Christian legal thought, derived as well from Hebrew Scripture, also considered those offenses that threatened to call down God’s wrath on those peoples who did not prosecute the offenses vigorously.

Christian influence was also evident in imperial legislation regarding the testimony of otherwise inadmissible witnesses—women, those declared infamous, soldiers, and slaves—in cases of excepted crimes, when the testimony of convicted heretics was allowed against other heretics (the basis in later learned law of the admissibility of the testimony of witches about other witches). Christian influence also began the process of aligning new offenses with older ones, as occurred when the offense of simony (the purchase of ecclesiastical office) was aligned with treason. Although early Christian discipline generally did not extend further than exclusion from the community, the spread of Christianity and the problems of organizing large ecclesiastical communities led to reconsideration of criminal offenses within the community. As harsh as some of these were, St. Augustine argued that they were intended to be therapeutic, not vengeful nor retributive.

From the fifth to the tenth century, the laws of European peoples generally considered injury or offenses against personal honor in terms of dispute settlement rather than crime. But in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries, partly through the influence of the revived Roman law, both ecclesiastical and secular criminal law theory began to be articulated, although both contained strict procedural rules. Some thinkers identified sin with crime, and great sins with great crimes, while at the same time developing the doctrines of seriousness and notoriety, initially in clerical crimes, and later in all crimes. Heresy and idolatry in particular were aligned to theft, then to treason in the handbooks of criminal procedure that began to appear in the late thirteenth century. The category of the enormous crime permitted the execution of summary justice. Early modern continental thinkers also included blasphemy, prevarication, apostasy, and simony as excepted crimes.

A series of political trials in France around 1300 raised the question of crimes so great that they threatened the stability of the kingdom itself—including the crime of sorcery. When canon lawyers and inquisitors of heretical depravity questioned whether sorcery could be prosecuted as heresy, they decided that it could if it involved apostasy from the Christian faith and idolatry, the worship of a false god—in this instance, the demon. When the crime of witchcraft was formally defined in the first half of the fifteenth century, then, it clearly belonged to the category of excepted crimes, because it was considered part of a vast conspiracy against humanity directed by the Devil and therefore an enormous crime that threatened to bring down the wrath of God on those who refused to prosecute it, and because it was difficult to detect, requiring exceptional legal procedural rules. This was the standard argument in the handbooks of witchcraft prosecution, from the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches) in 1486, through the treatise *De la démonomanie des sor-*

ciers (On the Demon-Mania of Witches) by the jurist Jean Bodin in 1580. Against the excepted crime, Bodin argued, the judge may use secret accusations, the testimony of close relatives and accomplices, pretended kindness toward suspects, torture, and even lies about evidence. Bodin's definition of witchcraft as a *crimen exceptum* was challenged first by Johann Georg Goedelmann in 1592, by the earl of Dunfermline in Scotland in 1614, and by Ernst Cothmann and other German jurists in the 1620s. The refusal to consider witchcraft a *crimen exceptum* contributed to the decline of witchcraft prosecutions in the seventeenth century.

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See also: AUGUSTINE, ST.; BODIN, JEAN; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; GOEDELMAUN, JOHANN GEORG; HERESY; ROMAN LAW.

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CROATIA

Modern Croatia, which borders central Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Balkans, was divided politically after 1500 among the Republic of Venice, the Habsburg Empire, and the Ottoman Empire. It experienced very different histories of witchcraft trials in each part. Northwest Croatia (also referred to as Habsburg or continental Croatia) experienced an outburst of witch hunting from the early 1600s until the 1750s, much like Hungary (to which it had been joined since 1102) or most Habsburg possessions in east-central Europe. Meanwhile, the coastal parts and islands under Venetian rule remained almost untouched by this phenomenon. We know nothing about court trials from Croatian regions under Ottoman rule, although some witch lynchings apparently occurred here even after 1850.

The first indications of witchcraft occurred in several coastal Dalmatian statutes dating between 1214 and 1640. Most statutes were slightly older than their preserved versions and represented codifications of older traditions and customs. Although written in different time periods, they all shared similar perceptions of witchcraft, essentially treating it as a crime without diabolical implications. The Latin terms used—primarily *maleficium* (harmful magic), but also *herbaria* (herbal lore) or *ars magicalis*—were obviously borrowed from older Italian statutes, and clearly stated that the crime of witchcraft was mainly attributed to women, although there were also trials against male sorcerers. The most common punishment was burning



Witchcraft trials in Croatia, 1400–1758. (Courtesy Tripimir Vedriš)

at the stake, inflicted on second offenders; other recommended punishments included flogging, fines, and confiscation of property. Before 1500, only one witchcraft trial is known, at Šibenik in 1443.

On the other hand, the continental part of Croatia lacked any law codes, but held trials, beginning at Zagreb in the 1360s. These cases, and some later ones, showed elements of old Slavic accusatory court procedures being used in Croatia until the early seventeenth century. This means that the accused had an opportunity to clear herself by bringing to court a number of witnesses ready to swear to her innocence. The last recorded acquittal following justification of the accused occurred near Zagreb in 1622.

During the sixteenth century, new ideas from western Europe changed attitudes toward the crime of witchcraft in northwest Croatia, gradually replacing the older “irrational” system of providing evidence and justification by compurgation. These new attitudes eventually resulted in an increased number of trials, more severe punishments, more executions, and the use of torture in such trials. However, traditional methods of providing justification and the slow inflow of new theological and juridical opinions made the persecutions from this period less frequent, less systematic, and seemingly less severe.

THE PERIOD OF PERSECUTIONS (CA. 1600–1758)

Data about witchcraft trials along the Dalmatian littoral are extremely rare between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. When a young woman was accused of witchcraft at Ragusa (Dubrovnik) in 1556, the famous Jewish physician Amatus Lusitanus was

called in for assistance. Two other trials held in seventeenth-century Dubrovnik also showed that local judges did not know how to act in such cases, which suggests that they were indeed extremely rare. The witch craze never spread in these parts, perhaps because of local perceptions of some pre-Christian beliefs and practices. Women soothsayers and healers, called *vilenice* (plural, derived from *vila* = fairy) enjoyed great confidence among common people, and contemporary popular beliefs made a great impact on high culture of the period. In the works of Croatian poets of the Renaissance, we can trace a kind of syncretism between classical motifs and elements of popular culture: ordinary people were often idealized, and contacts between shepherds and fairy-like creatures were frequent and usually benevolent.

On the contrary, clusters of trials involving the complete panoply of diabolical witchcraft (pacts with the Devil, witches’ Sabbats, sexual intercourse with demons, and so forth) occurred in northwest Croatia in the early seventeenth century and reached a higher level of intensity there between 1698–1699 and the mid-eighteenth century. However, many of these elements had no background in traditional Croatian beliefs; and although some elements of “popular superstition” could mesh with imported theological and juridical terms, recent ethnological research suggested that more archaic perceptions of witchcraft, completely alien to diabolical witchcraft, were preserved in regions weakly influenced by western ideas.

Sources from regions under Ottoman rule (including Bosnia and Herzegovina) also mentioned some witchcraft trials, which, however, seem quite different from those in northwest Croatia. Some Bosnian trials dated from the second half of the nineteenth century and showed elements typical of traditional perceptions of witches. Trials conducted by nineteenth-century Bosnian Muslims, however, did not differ greatly from those of their Christian neighbors, whether Catholic or Orthodox. Everywhere “witches” were tried according to the “old custom,” that is, by the cold-water ordeal (swimming test); the usual punishments were flogging, stoning, drowning, or burning. Written records also suggested that accused witches could still clear themselves by swearing to their innocence.

STRUCTURE OF TRIALS IN NORTHWEST CROATIA

The accusation against the witch followed the inquisitorial procedures of Roman law. It would be brought by a *fiškal* (Lat. *fiscalis*), or public prosecutor. An investigation (*inquisitio*) followed, conducted by local officials or the responsible nobleman, who listened to testimony from witnesses under oath about the crime. Following this investigation, the *fiškal* made a formal accusation

and the authorities summoned the accused to appear at court. This was usually followed by arresting the accused witch and searching her house for magical or dangerous objects. In court, the prisoner was first interrogated alone and then confronted with the witnesses. If the prosecutor concluded that the evidence proved the probable guilt of the accused witch, she would be tortured, despite her denials of the accusation.

Torture was known in fourteenth-century Croatia, but rarely used in witchcraft trials before the seventeenth century and used regularly only after 1700. The interrogation procedures and instruments of torture, divided into categories from mildest to most severe, resembled those used in other parts of the Habsburg Empire. The most common included the thumbscrews (*compressio pollicum*), the strappado, the “Spanish boot” (*ocra hispanica*), the “horse” (*equulus*), and others. If a “witch” withdrew a confession given under torture, she was tortured again. Acquittals were very rare in this period (in 245 cases, only eleven of the accused were acquitted), and many accused women died during torture or soon afterward. Capital punishment was the most frequent sentence for witchcraft; “witches” were usually decapitated or strangled and then burned at the stake.

There are several reasons witchcraft trials multiplied from the end of the seventeenth century. By then, Croatian authorities believed that witches were a real threat to society and part of an international conspiracy against humankind. The second very important reason was that confessions obtained under torture raised new accusations, starting a chain reaction. In northwest Croatia, trial records give precise information about 245 accused witches. However, there was, in addition, mention (but not sufficient information) of a further 517 witches arrested owing to denunciations made under torture; from 1600 to 1650 there were seven such arrests; from 1650 to 1700, 198 arrests; and, finally, from 1700 to 1750, 311 witches were arrested on the basis of denunciations given under torture. It seems paradoxical that increasing witchcraft trials in northwest Croatia accompanied a vigorous expansion of cultural life and an improved school system: a Jesuit school was established in Zagreb in 1607 and in 1669 Zagreb University was founded. Such institutions educated an increasing number of noblemen and commoners, providing them with a better understanding of the theological and juridical notions of witchcraft. Seventeenth-century Croatian prosecutors were familiar with foreign demonological literature; the National University Library in Zagreb preserves many such works, including the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, printed in 1497), Nicolas Rémy's *Demonologia* (Demonology, 1596), an Italian translation of Jean Bodin's *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (On the Demon-Mania of Witches, 1592), and a

reprint of Martín Del Río's *Disquisitionum* (Six Books on Investigations into Magic, 1746). The Hungarian Jesuit Marton Szentivanyi exercised a significant influence on Croatian persecutions and court trials through his translation, *Praxis Criminalis* (Criminal Practice, 1687), of the Holy Roman emperor Ferdinand III's law code.

Numerous legal regulations, for example, the decisions of the synod in Trnava in 1611 or the provisions passed by the Croatian Parliament between 1609 and 1635, requiring all inhabitants of Croatia to participate in hunting witches, sorcerers, and poisoners (*strigas, sagas, et veneficas*), provided strong incentives for the diffusion of persecutions. In 1656, Emperor Ferdinand III decreed a code of criminal procedure for Lower Austria, used also in Hungary and Croatia because of the lack of a general criminal code.

The Catholic Church did not participate in witchcraft trials, except for some of its officials, who did so as feudal landlords. However, the Venetian Inquisition was involved in trials in 1443 in Šibenik that ended with the escape of the two accused women and in a dozen trials held in Venetia against Croats from Dalmatia and Istria. Most of these cases ended with acquittals.

As in Hungary, most witch hunting in northwest Croatia coincided with years of peace and with lulls in times of war. As in Germany, there was also a relationship between mass accusations and periods of crop failure and famine; this was even more the case with lynchings at the local level.

It is difficult to speculate about the total number of accused and executed witches for many reasons: many of the trial records are lost, not all of the towns kept precise documentation, and scholars have not researched all the records that do exist. Nevertheless, the existing data allow us to make some observations. We know of approximately 245 accusations for witchcraft in northwest Croatia from 1360 to 1758; 230 of the accused were women (94 percent). Of the 245 arrested, 145 were executed (59 percent). Of the 145 executed, 138 (95 percent) were women. Three women died in prison, 2 escaped, and 11 of the accused (7 women and 4 men) were acquitted. We do not know the fate of 84 of the accused, although it is very probable that most of them were executed. The age of the witches ranged from a 5-year-old girl to an 85-year-old woman, but most of the accused were middle-aged or older women. Most were peasant women, the unemployed, and the small town artisans, but there are also some noblewomen and one monastery prioress.

If the records from northwest Croatia are quite scarce, they are more so for other parts of Croatia. The Venetian Inquisition conducted some witchcraft trials in Istria. The last legal persecution took place in St. Vincent in 1632. In the community of Kastav, we know

two witches were burned, one in 1625 and the other in 1626. In 1716, a mass trial resulted in fourteen executions. Further to the south there are almost no records of witchcraft trials except for the one in Šibenik in 1443 (where two accused women escaped), a trial in Dubrovnik in 1556 (which ended in acquittal), and two other trials in Dubrovnik in 1660 and 1689 that resulted in the executions of two women. Presumably, there were more trials and executions, but sources are not extant.

It would be useful to measure the intensity of witch hunting in Croatia, but both the number of accusations and executions as well as the population of Croatia are quite uncertain. Long periods of exhaustion and destruction (since the fifteenth century), followed by great refugee crises, along with epidemics and constant warfare, slowed population growth until the 1880s. The first serious censuses were taken in the late seventeenth century for Dalmatia, and not before the middle of the eighteenth century for Croatia. By 1780, Croatia had approximately 1.5 million inhabitants. Witch hunting and massive witchcraft trials occurred only in northwest (Habsburg) Croatia, in the only area more or less untouched by the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century wars, whether the Thirty Years' War, the warfare between Venice and the Ottoman Empire, and Ottoman raids (which decreased significantly after the Ottoman defeat at Sisak in 1593 and the subsequent movement of the border eastward).

END OF TRIALS

Empress Maria Theresa, who enforced some precautionary measures in 1756 and 1758, is erroneously considered to have abolished witchcraft persecutions in Croatia. In fact, the empress personally intervened in only one trial, which ended by acquitting the accused woman, but Maria never formally abolished persecutions. However, afterward no Croatian court could conduct a witchcraft trial without the empress's permission—which she never gave. Her *Common Criminal Code* of 1768 confirmed belief in the existence of sorcerers and witches; it even allowed torture. However, her code strongly emphasized the need to take great precautions during trials to avoid sentencing innocent people. Together with the change of the intellectual climate in the second half of the eighteenth century, such measures produced the paradox that witchcraft trials ceased in Croatia without ever being formally abolished.

TRPIMIR VEDRIŠ

See also: BALKANS (WESTERN AND CENTRAL); DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; FAIRIES; HUNGARY; HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, WITCHCRAFT; INQUISITION, VENETIAN; *MALEFICUM*; MARIA THERESA, HOLY ROMAN EMPRESS; POPULAR PERSECUTION; SWIMMING TEST; WARFARE.

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CROSSROADS

The intersection of roads has a long history as a location imbued with magical, spiritual, and religious powers. In antiquity, crossroads were the dwelling place of the goddess Hecate, whose alternate names *Enodia* (The One at the Crossroads) and *Trioditis* (The One Worshipped at the Crossroads) indicate the connection. Similarly, in Rome, Hecate was called *Trivia* (Lady of the Crossroads). It is recorded that people placed "suppers" at the crossroads to supplicate Hecate, whose three-formed image was often found there. In antiquity, crossroads also became an area associated with ghosts, often the companions of Hecate. This development was likely the partial result of the custom of burying criminals "at a particular place where three roads merge outside the community" (Plato, *Laws* 9.873). In ancient Greece, unwanted babies were sometimes placed at crossroads, although this custom has a closer association with the consistent presence of passers-by rather than the connotations of death linked to such sites.

In Greek and Roman magic, crossroads became the site for certain practices. Pliny the Elder, for example, recorded that boiling frogs at a crossroads could cure fever (*Natural History* 32.113) while another spell

specified an ingredient obtained from the crossroads (Ibid., 36.256–36.264). Similarly, one spell from a Greek magical papyrus stipulated the burial of particular objects at a crossroads (Ibid., 1: 167–168). Such beliefs were also mirrored in other ancient cultures; the preeminent text of the *grimoires*, the Key of Solomon, written in Greek in around the third century C.E. but based on a Jewish tradition, stated that crossroads, particularly when visited late at night, were the preferred location for the performance of magic (*The Key of Solomon the King* 1989, 2.7).

In the early modern era, the continuation of antique modes of thought concerning crossroads was revealed in their general correlation with danger. This danger was manifested in the figures of ghosts, witches, sorcerers, demons, and the Devil, all of which were believed to frequent such junctions. The haunting of the crossroads by ghosts is explained by the practice of burying suicides at such locations, for they were denied a Christian interment, a practice common throughout Latin Christendom. The fact that executions were also performed at the meeting of roads further strengthened the connections between ghosts and crossroads. Such burials were apparently based on the assumption that the souls of suicides and criminals are restless, probably because they were denied burial in consecrated ground. So, by placing them at a crossroad, their spirits would become confused in their search for a proper resting place.

Traditions concerning the Devil's presence at the crossroads have a long history as illustrated by the story of Theophilus, a precursor to Faust. In the version of the story recorded by Gonzalo de Berceo (1195–1264) in *Miráculos de Nuestra Señora* (Miracles of Our Lady), Theophilus, through the agency of a Jewish sorcerer, made a pact with the Devil at the crossroads at midnight. Historical cases of accusations concerning such pacts also have early origins in terms of the witch persecutions; in 1324, the Irish witch, Dame Alice Kyteler, was accused of visiting the crossroads to meet her familiar and to offer sacrifices to him in the form of cockerels. Fairies, sprites, and other such beings were also believed to dwell at crossroads; the Welsh fairy Gwrach Y Rhibyn, a harbinger of death, was thought to begin screaming her prediction to the traveler she was following as he or she approached a crossroad or stream.

Contemporary scholarship has interpreted these traditional beliefs about the power of crossroads in part on the basis of the concept of liminality. In this view, the crossroad and such related places as entranceways or shorelines symbolize a liminal point or no-man's land; a place that is literally "nowhere," and which serves simultaneously as a transitional zone that presents one with options but no certainties. Doubts concerning such locations of limbo and decision-making were there by originally the objects of ritual procedures, such as the

propitiation of Hecate, who, in addition to her more frightening manifestations associated with her role as the goddess of magic and sorcery, was the goddess of transition—either of movement from one physical sphere to another, as evidenced by the movement through the crossroads, or in a more nonphysical or symbolic situation of transition such as that from life to death.

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See also: FAIRIES; GHOSTS; GRIMOIRES; HECATE; KYTELER, ALICE; THEOPHILUS.

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CUNNING FOLK

Cunning men ("wise men") and cunning women ("wise women") worked beneficent magic, notably healing and fortunetelling. They practiced herbal, humoral, and magical medicine, helped people select future spouses, locate buried treasure, identify thieves, and, through countermagic, protect against or undo the evil magic of witches.

Lodging a formal complaint against a supposed witch was only one way to get rid of maleficent sorcery. Simpler and cheaper preventive measures and home remedies and, if these were ineffectual, recourse to cunning folk, were probably used at least as frequently. Until now only little systematic research has been carried out regarding the numbers and practices of expert countermagicians. According to Reginald Scot, there were English parishes that counted among their inhabitants as many as seventeen or eighteen specialists who "could worke miracles supernaturallie" (Scot 1584, 4). Although in other parts of early modern Europe cunning folk may have been less numerous, it seems certain that their help was easily available, not only in the British Isles but also on the Continent.

Cunning folk differed considerably in social background and status, techniques, reputation, and the quality and origin of their talents. A main difference separated sedentary from traveling soothsayers. Cunning folk from the first category expected their clients to come to them; some only drew visitors from nearby, while others met with little trust among their immediate neighbors but were frequently consulted by people living farther away. Most sedentary cunning folk carefully avoided public exposure, as this could inspire the authorities to start an investigation into their activities, whereas traveling wizards often put on a

public show to draw potential customers. These mobile cunning folk had no interest in building up a stable group of clients.

Some cunning folk were quite poor, while others appear to have enjoyed a comfortable income. Jacob Jodoci de Rosa of Courtrai, for instance, whose conviction in 1548 in Arnhem by the Court of Gelderland Johann Weyer recorded in his *De Praestigiis Daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils) (Weyer 1991, 484), was clearly well off. According to his file in the court's archives, de Rosa was dressed in velvet and satin and adorned with gilded chains and a golden purse. He was well-educated and spoke several languages, including Latin.

According to legal theory and theology, the activities of cunning folk were tantamount to witchcraft. But because practitioners of beneficial magic were usually prosecuted less ardently than suspects of malicious sorcery, details about their practices generally cannot be found easily. It is therefore often difficult to assess their role and analyze their activities. Another complication is the fact that it was not really possible in the early modern period to agree on a definition of illegal magic. Around 1500, it was not uncommon for local courts to ask a specialist on magic to assist them in a witchcraft trial. After the Protestant Reformation, it became even more difficult to define the perimeter and content of cunning practices. Exorcism had always been part of the duties of Catholic priests, but in the eyes of Protestants this sacramental ritual provided yet another proof of the superstitious character of Catholicism. According to Protestant Reformers, praying and fasting were the only scriptural means to help victims of witchcraft or demonic possession, from which they concluded that there was no fundamental difference between Catholic exorcism and practices of cunning folk. But despite this drastic restriction on their pastoral duties, several Protestant clerics actually practiced as magical healers. The Buckinghamshire minister Richard Napier, whose healing activities have been analyzed in detail (MacDonald 1981), offers a good example of this type of clergyman, but he was certainly not unique, not in England and certainly not abroad. In Germany, for instance, numerous Lutheran ministers also practiced as exorcists. Definitions of cunning folk's practices therefore depended largely on the sociopolitical context. These activities were illicit and forbidden, but the question of whether a certain healer was or was not a cunning man ultimately rested on local political circumstances.

Because of their illicit character, these activities were far more flexible than canonical beliefs and rituals. The magical world view could be incoherent, but its adherents only rarely perceived this as a problem. As a result, the activities of cunning folk and the way in which they presented themselves to potential clients could be adapted without much difficulty to changes in the sociocultural context. In the eighteenth century, for

example, at a time when physics and natural science were held in high esteem, a cunning man could present himself as an extraordinarily gifted expert on the hidden laws of nature without the risk of being questioned about the empirical basis of his claim. Its chameleon-like character was actually one of the strongest elements of this unofficial set of beliefs and rites. This adaptive quality helps to explain the enormous regional variety in the practices of cunning folk.

One assumption, however, was common to all cunning practices: the conviction that there existed apart from the material, natural world another immaterial world, and that some humans were able to consult or even deploy the powers that dwelled in that nonnatural domain. For most people it was very difficult to establish contact with these extraordinary forces; but thanks to special qualities, cunning folk were able to cross the line between the two domains. These qualities were either innate or acquired after birth. It was often assumed that people who had been born under strange circumstances possessed extraordinary powers. In Friuli in northern Italy, for instance, the *benandanti* (dogooders; persons who had been born with a caul) were expected to fight witches in nocturnal battles at certain seasons of the year. The outcome of these combats was thought to be decisive for the quality of the harvest. Similar beliefs were found elsewhere in Europe. In the northern Netherlands (Dutch Republic), several cunning folk claimed to have been born with a caul and they were for that reason able to discern things that remained hidden from ordinary people.

People born by Caesarian were believed to have similar powers. For instance, a cunning woman from Hamburg, Tryn Jans, who was repeatedly convicted for fraud in the Dutch Republic during the 1620s, claimed that she had been cut out of her dead mother's body. As a result she could detect hidden treasures and was able to drive away—in exchange for a handsome fee—the ghosts that stood guard over these valuables. She also conversed with the dead and cured people of witchcraft. It is in that light no coincidence that in Shakespeare's tragedy *Macbeth* the tyrant could only be killed by Macduff who “was from his mother's womb untimely ripped” (V: 8, 81–82). Another example of the belief that a person born under strange circumstances had extraordinary qualities was the widespread idea in France around 1800 that the seventh son of a seventh son had special gifts enabling him to heal sick people.

Some cunning folk acquired their professional skills later in life. Because of their exorcistic abilities, Catholic priests were often asked to undo witchcraft, and even Protestants sometimes consulted them. But other professions were also associated with extraordinary powers. Throughout Europe, executioners were believed to be expert magical healers; in the Holy Roman Empire, skimmers, gravediggers, and soldiers

had a similar reputation. In normal life, that is, in the domain of nature, these people were professionally connected with death, but when they were active in the domain of magic, where the rules of nature are turned upside down, they were associated with the preservation of life. Just as parts of the bodies of dead people could be used for all sorts of magical purposes, so persons who were experts in killing people or in caring for the dying were seen as qualified magical healers. Herdsmen and gypsies were also widely believed to have access to the preternatural world. The south-German magical healer and occasional witch finder Chonrad Stoeckhlin, for instance, who was himself executed as a witch in 1587, was a professional cowherd. Gypsies were not only thought to be able fortunetellers, but it was also believed that they could drive away ghosts and heal witchcraft. In these cases it seems that this attribution of extraordinary powers resulted from their social marginalization in ordinary life.

In many respects the things cunning folk did copied the techniques of legal professions. Many of their rituals were clearly based on the rite of Catholic exorcism. With muffled voices, they read out long conjurations in a language that sounded somewhat like Latin. While doing so, they would repeatedly make the sign of the cross and call on God and his saints to attack a witch. Catholics and Protestants alike disapproved of such rituals, but they undoubtedly were Christian insofar as their starting points were the same as those at the base of the Christian faith.

Other cunning folk employed techniques that seem to rest on the same foundations as the axioms of humoral pathology, the classic medical theory of Galen and Hippocrates that was generally accepted in early modern times. In that system, bodily fluids like urine or blood were assumed to provide detailed information about a patient's condition and character. Cunning folk often closely inspected a sick person's urine, or a cow's milk, to find out if the illness was caused by witchcraft. To that end the fluid could be cooked. If it boiled over, the sickness had natural causes; but if it stayed in the pot, witchcraft was diagnosed. It was furthermore believed that the person of the witch could be attacked through bodily fluids. By adding specific ingredients like sharp pins or a living black cock to the boiling substance, the witch would feel forced to come, after which she could be compelled to undo the spell. Some cunning folk inspected the blood of a client, which they acquired by making small incisions in his skin. The blood provided information not only about the client himself, but also about his social network and its quality. In England witches were sometimes battered in order to cause a nosebleed or scratched on their faces to draw blood. Their blood was then used to heal their supposed victims. In the early seventeenth century, this belief was also present in the Netherlands. From such

evidence it can be concluded that the concepts structuring the practices of cunning folk were inextricably bound up with their cultural context.

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See also: *BENANDANTI*; BLOOD; CAUL; CLERICAL MAGIC; COUNTER-MAGIC; CUNNING FOLK'S MANUALS; DIVINATION; EXECUTIONERS; HAND OF GLORY; MAGIC, POPULAR; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; SORcery; SCOT, REGINALD; STOECKHLIN, CHONRAD; SUPERSTITION; WITCH AND WITCHCRAFT, DEFINITIONS OF.

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CUNNING FOLK'S MANUALS

Popular healers and fortunetellers claimed several sources of inspiration, such as fairies or angels; but after the rise of print culture in the sixteenth century, literature became an increasingly influential source. In a predominantly illiterate society, those who owned books

and manuscripts were popularly held to possess occult knowledge, and cunning folk made great show of their manuals to impress their clients. Surviving examples that were definitely possessed by “cunning folk” mostly date from the late seventeenth century onward, though we have good evidence for their use since the mid-sixteenth century. There were numerous cases of ecclesiastical and secular authorities confiscating and destroying such manuals, believing them to contain demonic rituals and pacts with Satan. In fact, some manuals were merely compilations of simple herbal remedies, astrological calculations, prayers, and charms, drawn from oral tradition and popular literature such as almanacs, chapbooks, German *hausvater* (housefather) books, the Bible, and other religious texts. Others, however, consisted of extracts from, or entire copies of, notorious works of ritual magic that contained instructions on how to conjure angels, demons, and spirits to find treasure or stolen property, procure love, and perform many other useful services.

Trial records reveal that throughout western and southern Europe the most influential sources of such magic were the *Fourth Book of Occult Philosophy* and the *Clavicule (Key) of Solomon*. The former, which was spuriously attributed to Cornelius Agrippa, first appeared in a Latin edition during the 1560s; over the next few decades, numerous manuscript versions circulated around Europe in Latin and vernacular translations. The even older *Clavicule* was one of several pseudo-Solomonic works circulating in manuscript in medieval Europe, and was particularly desirable for its instructions on treasure conjuration. In Germany, from the mid-eighteenth century onward, the apocryphal *Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses* became the most desirable possession for cunning folk, while in Scandinavia the *Cyprianus* was the basis for most of the *Suardeböcker* (“black books”) used by cunning folk. It is a great irony that in England Reginald Scot’s influential skeptical work *The Discoverie of Witchcraft*, with its disquisition on charms and conjurations, ranked alongside the *Fourth Book* as the most important basis for manuals.

With the massive growth in literacy and popular literature during the eighteenth century, many texts that had once been available only in manuscript form or at great expense became available to cunning folk cheaply. But as surviving manuals show, cunning folk copied the contents of these unprepossessing chapbook *grimoires* into manuscript books. The *Book of Secrets* compiled by an Alpine peasant around 1810, for example, contained dozens of extracts copied from the popular French chapbook *Admirables Secrets d’Albert le Grand* (Admirable Secrets of Albertus Magnus) (Monter 1976, 187–188). The process of transcription rendered the charms and conjurations more potent,

and the consultation of a manuscript presumably generated a greater sense of awe among customers.

The ways in which cunning folk used their manuals is not easy to assess. They obviously served as repositories of useful remedies and simple charms for practical application, but their importance was also symbolic. From the point of view of popular perception and reputation, which ultimately determined the success or failure of cunning folk, the possession of a manual was as important as its actual use. Regarding the arcane conjurations drawn from works of Neoplatonic magic, it seems likely that only a small minority of cunning folk employed these according to the long-winded preparations, consecrations, and fastings instructed in works like the *Clavicule*. Nevertheless, the hasty drawing of circles and pentacles on the ground, and the invocation of angels and demons, became a common part of the ritual theater of cunning folk’s trade. The words of adjuration, holy names, seals, and symbols copied into the manuals were also used to construct written protective charms, the sale of which provided a good income. Cunning folk’s manuals, then, played an important role in the popularization of high magic.

OWEN DAVIES

See also: AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM, HEINRICH CORNELIUS; CUNNING FOLK; GRIMOIRES; MAGIC, POPULAR; OCCULT; RITUAL MAGIC; SCOT, REGINALD.

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CURSES

One of the most common charges against witches was that they cursed people. A curse is a linguistic expression of the desire that misfortune befall someone, and it can take the form of a simple articulation of a malign wish or an invocation of the wrath of some god or spirit. Cursing appears to be a ubiquitous feature of human life, although the forms and presumed effects vary significantly. Early modern Europeans, like most premodern peoples, believed that curses could really cause misfortune, and their witchcraft accusations frequently included the charge that a suspect had uttered a curse

against an antagonist who then suffered some harm. Educated modern people, in contrast, use curses as a way of expressing their feelings without believing that words by themselves have the power to actually cause harm. Since the Enlightenment, educated opinion has held that any effects curses might have simply reflect people's belief in them, and that their primary importance to the person making them is in allowing the expression and venting of hostility. However, consideration of the role of psychosocial influences on health and in accidents suggests that beliefs about cursing build on, rather than originate, the power of hostile displays, and that cursing therefore has inherent potency rather than a merely derivative or palliative effect.

TYPES OF CURSES

Curses can be spoken, written, or simply thought. A curse can be as simple as a spontaneous shout or can entail elaborate, formalized wording embedded in a complex ceremony involving a special location, time, props, and non verbal ritual actions. Spoken curses can be made publicly or in secret. They can range from inaudible mumbles to sophisticated rhyming verses to incomprehensible mystical phrases, and can be combined with gestures, hostile facial expressions, and ritual activities. Written curses can be inscribed on metal, pottery, or other surfaces as well as paper; hidden to prevent counteraction or delivered to unnerve their target; supplemented by drawings or symbols; and intensified through mutilation or other ritual acts. Subvocalized curses are most likely to be fleeting thoughts, because rituals generally call for words to be spoken out loud, but they can be accompanied by gestures and expressions making manifest the anger articulated only inwardly.

Curses can be thought to come directly from a deity, but usually involve an unceremonious expression or formal invocation by a person. An invocation can be a public act by a priest or other religious leader, or a means of private vengeance by an ordinary person or hired specialist. Spontaneous expressions of hostility can be made with the intent to cause harm, to threaten harm unless certain conditions are met, to demonstrate the level of anger a person feels, or simply to vent.

THE HISTORY OF CURSES

Virtually all cultures appear to include some form of cursing, and evidence of curses can be found back to the beginnings of Western history. Ancient Mesopotamians and Egyptians employed a wide variety of techniques for cursing and countering curses, and the Hebrew Bible mentioned curses in a number of places. The ancient Greeks left numerous cursing tablets, metal plates on which curses were inscribed, and Greek myths and writings mentioned other, less

durable forms of cursing. The Romans made even more elaborate cursing tablets, and also employed a wide range of techniques. The tablets were used not only to get revenge, but also to gain advantage in love, business, lawsuits, petitions, and even sports. They were typically inscribed in secret and then hidden, but their existence was often suspected by rivals and enemies, and might be hinted at or proclaimed by the curser in order to heighten their psychological effect. Specialized practitioners offered many forms of cursing for pay, and were probably frequently involved in preparing tablets.

The use of cursing tablets apparently ended by the eighth century, presumably because of opposition from the Christian authorities, but other forms of curses continued. The Church used curses extensively to call down God's wrath on people who opposed Christianity's spread, ignored dictates, or stole its property. Both clerics and the laity used curses to strengthen and sanction contracts; laypeople and Church's many individual clerics used curses for private vengeance or gain despite theological objections. Throughout the Middle Ages, professional and semi-professional practitioners of magic included cursing among their services, and as the written body of learned magic increased during and after the twelfth-century Renaissance, a genre of elaborate ritual curses involving explicit and extensive invocation of evil spirits developed. While these necromantic rituals came from a cultural stream somewhat removed from popular magic, the two influenced each other, and the necromancers' practices reinforced the Christian authorities' fear that curses and other forms of malefic magic not only caused harm, but also involved an explicit alliance with evil supernatural beings.

CURSES IN EARLY MODERN WITCHCRAFT

The anthropologically oriented English historians Alan Macfarlane and Keith Thomas put cursing at the center of their influential interpretation of early modern witchcraft as a dynamic of charity refused, curse uttered, and misfortune suffered. Although accusations arose from many other situations, it is clear that cursing played an important role not only in accusers' fears, but also in some suspects' actions. Cursing was one of the most commonly reported forms of *maleficium* (harmful magic), and there is no doubt that it was actually practiced in some cases.

Early modern Europeans hurled curses routinely, even chronically, in interpersonal disputes, calling for the ruination or damnation of their antagonists with a viciousness that shocks modern sensibilities. In most cases, though, it seems clear that they did not expect their words to take effect and that they employed curses much as modern people do, to signal displeasure and

vent anger. Some women had reputations as habitually quarrelsome scolds, leading to the theory that witch suspects were simply such people who had the bad luck that their invectives were followed by some associated misfortune, making it seem that their curses had worked.

While some chronic scolds undoubtedly did develop reputations for witchcraft through this process, the German historian Rainer Walz found that witch suspects in the villages he studied were not prominent among the scolds and slanderers in judicial records. Instead it seems that some people were known as yellors, or verbal abusers, while others were suspected of more dangerous things. To some extent, these suspicions stemmed from the accusers' paranoia or guilt, but eyewitness reports, books of spells found by the authorities, and surviving curse tablets and parchments confirm that some early modern people employed curses both openly and in secret to harm others. Such curses included both simple threats and calls for retribution and elaborate rhyming spells. Some open curses were spontaneous, while others were delivered in premeditated confrontations, by themselves or in conjunction with gestures like kneeling and stretching the arms toward heaven. Curses performed in secret ranged from simple expressions of a desire for vengeance to complex spells spoken or written as part of elaborate ceremonies. While not every curse hurled in the heat of an argument was malefic, or the suspicion that a neighbor was secretly working malevolent curses was valid, fears that some curses were meant seriously and that some people cursed their neighbors privately were not unfounded.

Early modern commoners worried about the harm that could follow from curses, but popular culture was somewhat ambivalent about curses because it generally held that they were most often used by the weak against the strong and would only work if they were justified. The early modern elite, in contrast, was less concerned about the harm curses might cause, but was wholly opposed to them for moral reasons. Clergy and magistrates punished ordinary cursing as blasphemy and prosecuted malefic cursing more seriously because they understood its power to come from the Devil. According to Christian doctrine, demonic agency was required for a malefic curse to take effect, so the power to curse successfully was taken to be a sign of allegiance to the Devil.

THE POWER OF CURSES

While traditional cultures have generally believed that curses can cause harm, they have not necessarily held that every angry utterance has power, and they have had differing ideas about what makes curses work. Some cultures have ascribed a curse's effects to its or the curs-

er's intrinsic power, while others have assumed that it depends on some sort of spiritual intermediary, that is, that cursing is a form of supplication or invocation rather than direct causation. Early modern commoners appear to have believed that most curses would not take effect, but that some might. Popular explanations for this dichotomy focused on the inherent power of the curser and the curse, while elite theory explained it by reference to the curser's relationship to the Devil and the Devil's decision about how his interests might best be served.

Early modern theologians held that the Devil was needed for a curse to work, but they did not accept that he could actually cause supernatural effects because only God could transcend natural law and work true miracles. Enlightened opposition to witchcraft beliefs grew out of and elaborated this naturalistic orientation, beginning a skeptical tradition that explains most allegations of malefic cursing as forms of paranoid or guilt-ridden scapegoating, most alleged effects of curses as fallacious explanations for inexplicable misfortune, actual effects of curses as the products of belief in them, and actual attempts to curse magically as narcissistic confusion of desire with agency. Modern social scientists embraced this tradition in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, although some historians and anthropologists emphasized how belief in the power of curses could play a positive social role by inducing people to practice neighborly behavior. The anthropologist Stanley Tambiah focused attention on the expressive value of curses. None of these attempts to see value in belief in the power of curses challenges the basic assumption that they cannot do what they claim, however. Current understanding of the role of psychosocial factors in disease and accident proneness—that they are not mediated primarily by symbolic psychodynamics but by persistent activation of the fight/flight mechanism leading to chronic stress—suggests that the power of curses is rooted in their object's psychophysical reaction to the hostility they manifest, with their linguistic meaning and belief in their power acting as intensifiers rather than originators of this visceral effect.

EDWARD BEVER

See also: ACCUSATIONS; BEWITCHMENT; CHARMS; *DEFIXIONES*; DISEASE; IMPOTENCE, SEXUAL; INVOCATIONS; MACFARLANE, ALAN; MAGIC, LEARNED; MAGIC, POPULAR; *MALEFICIUM*; NECROMANCY; RITUAL MAGIC; SOCIAL CONTROL; SORCERY; SPELLS; THOMAS, KEITH; WORDS, POWER OF.

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D

D'ANANIA, GIOVANNI LORENZO (CA. 1545–CA. 1608)

A Southern Italian polymath (philologist, natural scientist, geographer, and theologian), D'Anania's works include a dissertation on the nature of demons and their occult operations. D'Anania lived in Naples for several years as a private teacher of the archbishop, Mario Carafa, but returned to his native Catanzaro in Calabria after the latter's death in 1576. His best-known work is probably *La universale fabbrica del Mondo, ovvero Cosmografia* (The Universal Structure of the World, or Cosmography, Naples, 1573, and Venice, 1576).

D'Anania's book about demons, entitled *De natura daemonum . . . libri quatuor* (Four Books on the Nature of Demons) was first printed in Venice in 1581 by Aldo Manuzio the younger. There followed repeated editions—Naples, 1582, and Venice, 1589. Long after his death, it was reprinted in Rome in 1654 and in Lyons in 1669, together with another of his works, *De natura Angelorum* (On the Nature of Angels) in an edition entitled *De substantiis separatis* (On Separated Substances), dedicated to Innocent X by the author's nephew Marcello D'Anania, bishop of Nepi and Sutri. The structure of its four books is very clear: The first contained a description of the origins of demons and their different types; the next explored their power over human beings; the third book described the things demons could do to people; and the final book told what demons could do with human help.

De natura daemonum reflects well the mental condition of the period, which ascribed many afflictions to supernatural causes and held that infinite numbers of demons were ever surrounding men, ready to work spiritual or material evils. D'Anania believed in the existence of celestial and terrestrial demons that were always at work to seduce men into sin and lead them to apostasy from God, tempting all through their prevailing weaknesses or passions and taking advantage of every favorable moment. Demons, according to him, could assume any shape, but their shapes had no substance. Their preferred activities were inflicting diseases that could not be cured by traditional medicine but only by saints' relics, and they could also raise tremendous tempests. Although most evils were attributable to demons, D'Anania stated there were four sources of human

misery: *natura* (nature), *ministerium* (ministry, occupation), *noxæ* (punishment), and *maleficium* (harmful magic). The first, *natura*, is attributable to the influence of the stars; *ministerium* occurs when God sends his angels to execute justice; *noxæ* occurs when God exacts punishment by giving power to evil spirits; and *maleficium* is sorcery exercised by wicked men with potions, herbs, ashes, animal blood, the venom of serpents, human nail parings, and the tongues, eyes, hair, and ropes of those who have been hanged; the sacrilegious use of sacred words and sacraments; and the like.

In his dissertation, D'Anania gave a full account of the Sabbat and its obscene rites. According to him, the Sabbat had been practiced in all ages, but it had so increased during his lifetime that, if the laws did not extirpate it with fire, it would spread everywhere. These nocturnal Sabbats he unhesitatingly pronounced as real, as he also did sexual intercourse between human beings and incubi and succubi. He stated that children had sprung from such unions, such as the ancient demigods and heroes or heresiarchs like Luther and Mohammed. D'Anania concluded his tract with a long catalog of demonic crimes done through sorcerers: tempests, floods, fires, sickness, and the like, all of which required human agency. In turn, astrologers and necromancers could only undertake their deplorable activities with the help of demons.

D'Anania's book was filled with examples from daily life; for example, he described showers of stones in the region of Vesuvius, and how fifty girls in an orphan asylum at Rome became demoniacs in a single night. His sources came from various epochs (Hebrew, Greek, Roman, and Christian) and many continents (Asia, Africa, Europe, and the New World).

DRIES VANYSACKER

See also: CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DEMONS; INCUBUS AND SUCCUBUS; SABBAT; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC.

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DANEAU, LAMBERT (CA. 1530–1595)

Lambert Daneau was a French Calvinist minister who published a short work on witchcraft at Geneva in 1574. Originally entitled *Les sorciers, dialogue tres-utile et necessaire pour ce temps* (Witches, a Very Useful Dialogue and One Necessary for the Present Time), it was followed immediately by a Latin translation with a title that explained Daneau's principal preoccupation rather more clearly: *Workers of Poisonous Magic, Once Called "Fortunetellers" but Now Popularly Known as "Witches."* In Daneau's eyes, witches distributed poison among their communities. They infected the air, the water, the grass, and thus rendered not only animals and humans sick, but even crops as well. Sometimes their poisons killed. Daneau thus saw witches mainly as subtle poisoners. Witches harmed people without regard for sex, age, or rank. The cause of their magical effects was concealed, so those effects were especially dangerous because they did not appear to be different from extraordinary effects produced by nature. Thus, Daneau accepted that witches could fly to the Sabbath because, he said, there was no natural reason such a flight could not be effected naturally. Regarding witches' "miracles," Daneau pointed out that Satan could not actually do anything except by natural means and causes. Therefore, if one wanted to know whether a witch's confession was reliable or not, one should ask whether she claimed to have done anything beyond the power of nature to accomplish. Similarly, Daneau did not claim that judges and advocates had any inherent, God-granted power to protect them against a witch's malevolent magic, and suggested that a witch became powerless once she was put in prison.

On the other hand, he asserted the reality of the Devil's mark, which he interpreted as a sign that the witch belonged to Satan as though she (or he) were a piece of his property. He maintained that a witch's presence at a Sabbath was no illusion (as many earlier and contemporary writers on witchcraft argued), but a real experience. Nor did Daneau lay any emphasis on the gender of witches. He did think they should be extirpated, and said that every judge should be given sufficient authority within his local jurisdiction to put such people to death. For witches' victims, Daneau had cold comfort. They could resort to legitimate medicines, he said, but otherwise they had to bend to the will of God, seeking only His help, and depending entirely on His providence.

BIOGRAPHY

Daneau was born into the provincial French nobility, and from 1553 to 1559 studied law at Orléans and

Bourges, where he obtained his doctorate. Falling under Calvin's influence, he went to Geneva in 1560, abandoning law for theology. Not long after, he was appointed a minister and sent into France to bolster the Reformed Church there. He quickly began to write voluminously, producing twenty-seven important works of varying length between 1573 and 1581 alone. His treatise on witchcraft belonged to the beginning of this fertile period. The range of his subject matter was extensive. Apart from witchcraft, he published works about games of chance, methods of interpreting Scripture, commentaries on St. Augustine and Peter Lombard, and various polemical works. In 1576 came his *Physice Christiana* (Christian Natural Philosophy), with its contemporary English translation, *The wonderful woorkemanship of the world*, indicating its principal import; it consists of a series of lengthily developed analogies between the processes of nature, the structure of the human body and its relationship with the soul, and the constitutions of households and commonwealths. In 1581 Daneau left Geneva, where he had been granted citizenship, in order to become a professor of theology at Leiden. Almost at once, he became embroiled in a conflict with the city's magistrates and left, thereafter filling a succession of appointments in Ghent, Orthez, and Castres. From 1583, when he published his most influential treatise, *Isagoge de Deo* (A Preliminary Essay on God), Daneau continued to produce theological works until his death, including a posthumously published book on Christian politics (1596).

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART

See also: CALVIN, JOHN; DEVIL'S MARK; POISON; SABBAT.

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DANZIG (GDAŃSK)

Culturally German but part of the Polish kingdom since 1454, the city long known as Danzig, and since 1945 as Gdańsk, was an important center of international trade, Poland's major port, and probably its wealthiest city during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Opulence, however, did not save Danzig from witchcraft trials. Between 1570 and 1660, about two dozen people were tried as witches and at least sixteen of them were executed.

Although the law code (*Ius Culmense*; in German, *Der Alte Culmische Recht*, "Old law for Kulm [Chelmino] City") used in Danzig since 1346 stipulated

burning alive as the penalty for witchcraft, surviving sources mention no such trials in the fourteenth century. After 1454, when the city obtained the right to issue its own statutes (*wilkierze*), no municipal edicts mentioned witchcraft. Meanwhile, ecclesiastical courts heard a few local cases. In 1477, an unnamed townswoman charged with practicing magic cleared herself and filed a countersuit for slander. In 1483, a woman was accused of bewitching cattle, but was found innocent; in 1497, a Danzig clergyman, charged with letting treasure hunters manipulate the Host, was acquitted.

A *wilkierz* introduced around 1500 punished those who caused injury to property by magical means. Although the bishop's representative protested, Danzig juries began to hear witchcraft trials after 1501. After the city became Protestant in 1526, all ecclesiastical protests were disregarded, despite a Polish law of 1543 giving ecclesiastical courts precedence in trying witches. By 1570, all cases of this type were tried by municipal courts. Later, after Danzig held its final witchcraft trial (1659), Poland repeatedly (1672, 1713, 1745) reserved witchcraft cases to Church courts.

The first trials held before the municipal court took place in 1501. Two women were arrested and tortured but refused to confess; the verdict is unknown. No further prosecutions were recorded until 1570, when two women were sentenced to the stake and burned; one had already committed suicide in prison. Thereafter, trials increased gradually. In 1571, Anna Brands was flogged and banished perpetually from the city for numerous offenses, including a charge of practicing witchcraft. Another woman was burned in 1573. This time, before the execution, her body was torn by red-hot pincers at four different public places in the city. In 1575, the first man, Hanss Schrecken, went to the stake together with his tools of magic; in an act of clemency, he was first beheaded. In 1577 accusations were raised against two wayfaring barber-surgeons. The burgrave (king's representative) in Danzig ordered them tortured, but the outcome is unknown. In 1579 doctors from Danzig accused a foreign healer of witchcraft, but he was acquitted. In 1582, a woman from a village under the jurisdiction of Danzig courts was attacked for witchcraft by the head of her local community. The evidence she managed to present to the court was so overwhelming that, although the files of the case lack their final pages, she probably succeeded in obtaining compensation.

In 1586, two more witches were burned. Jacob Jordan avoided burning in 1594 only because his other offenses, such as theft and escape from prison, were considered more serious. Anna Eggert was flogged and banished from the city in 1604 for deceiving people with magic. On one day in 1615 a double stake was erected for two women convicted of having entered

into a pact with the Devil. In 1639, two more women were executed by burning; one of them, who pleaded guilty and expressed remorse, was beheaded prior to burning. The same mercy was shown to Gręta Schriewen in 1640 before she was burned. In 1647, three were burned and one beheaded before being executed at the stake.

Gdańsk's final witchcraft trial took place in 1659. The accused was an eighty-eight-year-old widow, Anna Krüger. In her confession, she said she had learned witchcraft from her husband. She said that she had also bequeathed her soul to a devil named Klaus in return for the promise that she would receive a place in hell free of torment to indulge in pleasure. She was sentenced to be burned alive, but the executioner mercifully wrapped several sacks of gunpowder around her body to reduce her agony. A significant contribution to the ending of witchcraft trials in Danzig came from Mayor Gabriel Krummhausen, who appended to his correspondence with a French opponent of witchcraft prosecution the 1657 instruction from the Roman Curia ordering judges to exercise caution in evaluating witchcraft accusations and to refrain from torture in such cases.

In the general criminal statistics from Danzig between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, witchcraft accounted for less than 1 percent of all offenses. Even at its peak, in the second half of the seventeenth century, it represented only 1.3 percent of all crimes. About 90 percent of all cases involved women.

KRZYSZTOF SZKURŁATOWSK

See also: COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; EXECUTIONS LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); POLAND; PRUSSIA; TORTURE; TRIALS.

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DARRELL, JOHN (1562–?)

An obscure preacher, John Darrell achieved a brief notoriety when his involvement in cases of demonic possession attracted the attention of English ecclesiastical authorities at the end of the sixteenth century. Born in Mansfield around 1562, Darrell matriculated in 1575 at Queen's College, Cambridge, as a sizar, that is, a student who was effectively working his way through college as a servant to the fellows and the better-off

undergraduates. He took his B.A. in 1579, and then apparently studied law for a time before abandoning that calling to become a preacher. (It is doubtful that he was ever ordained.)

In 1586 he began a long career as what was, in effect, an exorcist when, back in Mansfield, he helped treat a seventeen-year-old demonically possessed girl, Katherine Wright. As so often, possession led to accusations of bewitchment, but a skeptical justice of the peace quashed the case against the woman who was named as Wright's tormentor, and Darrell disappeared from history for a decade. Then, in 1596, he was involved in another possession-cum-witchcraft case, involving a teenage boy named Thomas Darling. In this instance, a woman named Alice Gooderidge was convicted for causing young Darling's troubles through her witchcraft. Having by now obviously gained a reputation in such matters, in March 1597 Darrell was called to Leigh in Lancashire, where seven members of the household of a gentleman named Nicholas Starkey, most of them children or adolescents, were thought to be bewitched. This case too led to the conviction and execution of a witch, in this case a man called Edmund Hartley.

The next, and final, case involving Darrell began in November 1597, when he was called to Nottingham to help a supposedly bewitched teenage boy named William Sommers. Once again his arrival was followed by suspicions of witchcraft being leveled against a number of local women, creating a real danger of the outbreak of a witch panic in the town. Darrell's skill as an exorcist attracted considerable favorable attention from Nottingham's population, and he was appointed preacher at one of the town's churches. But the mayor of the town was worried by his activities and the prospect of a local witch craze, and the archbishop of York appointed a commission of inquiry to investigate the affair.

At this time, the Church of England was trying to steer a middle way between Roman Catholicism and extreme Protestantism, and possession and exorcism had become something of a political issue. The Church of England, like most Protestant churches, denied the efficacy of exorcism, but it had been shaken by several well-publicized exorcisms carried out in England by Catholic priests in the 1580s. Now, faced by over-enthusiastic treatment of the possessed by a Protestant preacher, the Church acted quickly. John Whitgift, the anti-Puritan archbishop of Canterbury, took an interest, and handed the case over to the like-minded bishop of London, Richard Bancroft. Darrell and his associate George More were imprisoned; Darrell was exposed as a fraud and imprisoned for a year. The affair, however, prompted a bitter pamphlet war, with Darrell and More defending their actions, while Samuel Harsnett, Bancroft's chaplain, handled the propaganda against Darrell.

Darrell's arrest and discrediting, although frequently ignored by mainstream church historians, serves to remind us that exorcism, possession, and witchcraft were occasionally important issues in the religious politics of the period. The Church of England's attitude to Darrell's involvement in the Sommers affair, and to a number of other similar cases around the same time, demonstrates how a decidedly skeptical attitude to such matters seems to have been common among senior churchmen, who were very concerned about controlling the treatment of those supposedly possessed. Conversely, the evident spread of Darrell's reputation, and the way in which his help was so avidly sought, shows the concern of those who felt that they or their families were possessed or bewitched in this period. They enthusiastically greeted exorcists like Darrell, who they thought could help them, not least by identifying the human agents who had presumably directed the demons into the bodies of the possessed.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: BEWITCHMENT; BURTON, BOY OF (THOMAS DARLING, CA. 1584-?); ENGLAND; EXORCISM; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; SKEPTICISM.

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DAUPHINÉ, WITCHCRAFT TRIALS IN

This Alpine province of eastern France, traditionally ruled by the dauphin, the heir of the French king (hence its name), witnessed one of Europe's earliest major witch hunts and produced the first brief treatise on witchcraft composed by a layman, Claude Tholosan, who conducted many of these trials.

Numerous archival traces enable us to follow the outlines of Dauphiné's witch hunt as it unfolded, primarily between 1424 and 1445, in the highest mountain valleys along the eastern border of this province adjoining the duchy of Savoy-Piedmont. The core of information comes from a thick fiscal register of over 500 folios, the *Quintus liber Fachurierorum* (Fifth Book of Sorcerers). It includes a lengthy list of property confiscated from Dauphiné's convicted witches up to 1445, which enables us to reconstruct 126 of their names, as well as, usually, their home village and the date of their trial, from the missing previous four volumes. It adds 29 sentences against other suspects, whose confessions add another 51 names. Perhaps more surprisingly, this fiscal register also includes a brief treatise about witchcraft written by Tholosan, a local judge who claimed to have tried more than a hundred criminal cases, some of which can be corroborated from other sources.

Although the *Quintus liber* is largely confined to high Alpine valleys in the diocese of Embrun and part of the

diocese of Turin belonging to Dauphiné, the preceding unpaginated fiscal register adds much miscellaneous information about witchcraft trials in other parts of fifteenth-century Dauphiné; it includes the region's only complete witchcraft trial containing denunciations by witnesses, which led to 6 deaths in 1458–1459 in the diocese of Grenoble. Dauphiné's local treasury records provide the names of 62 additional witches condemned between 1424 and 1446. All together, we have information about more than 350 witches in Dauphiné in the ninety years before 1511, including 52 trials or final sentences. This fund constitutes the richest regional archival stockpile ever found in fifteenth-century Europe.

The meticulous investigation of Pierrette Paravy (1993, 2:771–905) enables us to reach several conclusions on the basis of this evidence. First, Dauphiné's witches were, as later stereotypes insist, basically female and usually old: Women comprised two-thirds of the 287 suspects during the great witch hunts between 1425 and 1460 and nearly 90 percent by the early sixteenth century; only 3 of the 34 whose ages are known were under the age of 40. Second, their sentences were quite severe: In the diocese of Grenoble, 24 of 29 were condemned to death, and 13 of 16 in the diocese of Gap, though only 3 of 7 in the diocese of Vienne. Third, Dauphiné's witches included a minority of well-off people: In this depopulated and impoverished region, one-fourth of a sample of 140 convicted witches left estates of over 100 florins (the average trial lasted a month or two and cost around 20 florins). Fourth, despite Tholosan's xenophobic insistence that this plague had somehow come from abroad, only three of Dauphiné's witches (a German furrier, an Italian charlatan, and a Spanish beggar woman) were clearly foreigners. Apart from such quantitative information, it has also been noted (Russell 1972, 217) that at these Dauphiné trials, the devils resemble the "little people" of pre-Christian Celtic legends, and their various names (*Corp-diable*, *Griffart*, *Guli*) suggest mischief rather than terror.

Dauphiné's Alpine valleys also sheltered groups of Waldensian heretics, making them a target for inquisitors since the final third of the fourteenth century. The links between medieval heresy and early witchcraft seem unusually strong here, although for tactical reasons Tholosan did not emphasize it explicitly in his treatise, which was partly intended to establish the right of lay judges to try witches. It seems equally significant that Dauphiné's centers of witchcraft in the 1420s bordered the lands of Amadeus VIII of Savoy, a state that emerged as the epicenter of early European witchcraft during the Council of Basel (1431–1449), the time when Tholosan composed his treatise. It is also interesting that Dauphiné, like Savoy, experienced large numbers of witchcraft trials before the Protestant

Reformation, but extremely few in the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, during the peak period of persecutions in most parts of western Europe.

Perhaps most sinister is the observation, drawn from fiscal records, that Dauphiné's witches were often prosecuted enthusiastically by their neighbors, even in the 1420s. Two women arrested in one remote valley were taken to prison on mules, escorted by four men on horseback and five on foot; when they were returned to be executed, only five men were paid to escort them, because the villagers themselves furnished ten additional volunteers. In 1530 one official hired a posse of fifty-eight armed men to capture a witch in a remote spot near the Italian border (Paravy 1993, 2:805). In order to spare family honor, kinfolk occasionally asked for—and got—the special grace of secret executions for their relatives, but they never protested these judgments.

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: BASEL, COUNCIL OF; MOUNTAINS AND THE ORIGINS OF WITCHCRAFT; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; SAVOY, DUCHY OF; THOLOSAN, CLAUDE; VAUDOIS (WALDENSIANS).

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DECEPTION AND MAGIC

Most magic works through deception. Shamans use tricks to make their clients believe they will get better. Sorcerers frighten their enemies into thinking they are sick. Stage magicians entertain their audiences and charlatans scam their marks by tricking them into seeing things that do not happen, or not seeing things that do. Fortunetellers pretend to learn things through magic that they have discovered through other means, and oracles like Nostradamus speak in riddles that seem prophetic whatever happens. Amulets and talismans delude people into believing that they are protected from harm or that they will be lucky. Believers distort their own perceptions to see things that are not there, and their memories to forget things that were.

Medieval theologians recognized the relationship between magic and deception by styling the Devil both as the magician's master and as the ultimate deceiver. God could work true miracles, *miracula*, transforming reality outside natural processes, but the Devil could only accomplish *mira*, the appearance of such transformations, using natural processes and the power of illusion. By extension, saints and priests could perform miracles because God was working through them, but magicians could not because they derived their power from the Devil. St. Augustine, for example, denied that lycanthropes could actually transform themselves into wolves, while the tenth-century *Canon Episcopi*

pronounced that women who said they flew at night with the goddess Diana were victims of illusions. The pact, implicit if not explicit, into which magical practitioners entered with the Devil to gain their powers was itself a deception, because the Devil generally either did not deliver on his part of the bargain or arranged for the magician to come to a bad end. Even beneficent magic was a diabolical deception; the Devil only made it effective to lure people from the path of faith. Churchmen emphasized the deceptiveness of magic as a way of undermining heterodox beliefs.

On a more mundane level, popular practitioners ranged from cynical to credulous. Most probably fell in between, aware that some magicians were charlatans and that many magical practices involved deception, but convinced nonetheless that real magic was possible. The anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss discussed an example of this mentality, a Native American shaman named Quesalid who started out convinced that shamanism was fraudulent and ascribed his first success to his patient's belief in him, but became less sure of his skepticism as he gained experience and knowledge of competing practices. He found that his method worked when others had failed, and while he exposed many of his rivals as impostors, he took pride in his own successes, and regarded one other practitioner as a genuine shaman.

The basis for such ambivalence is that, as the first sentence of this essay states, most magic works through deception, meaning not simply that deception makes magic appear to work, but that deception can actually *make* magic work. Healers deceive their patients into imagining that they are getting better, and that imagining can actually help them to get better. Witches make their victims imagine they are getting sick, which cannot only make them feel sick, but can also make them more susceptible to somatic ailments. Diviners trick their clients into revealing things they know unconsciously but are not aware of, just as prophets "hear" voices telling them what they cannot apprehend through their ordinary cognitive processes. Oracles pronounce self-fulfilling prophecies; amulets give frightened people the confidence to act bravely. Deception has the power not only to make people misperceive reality, but also to change reality, for when people create an image of the world and then act on it, they warp reality toward the image. This process is not automatic nor is its power unlimited, but it can exert significant influence on human affairs.

The limits of the power and reliability of magical processes in the face of the extravagant claims made for them and their inherent reliance on deception, combined with the frequency with which these were used as a cover for cynical frauds, provoked much skeptical criticism by natural philosophers during the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. Furthermore,

as natural explanations were advanced to explain magical processes, the boundaries between the magical and the mundane shifted steadily until magic became a residual category containing only impossible phenomena, fairy tales, and delusions. Finally, skepticism about magic was one area of common ground materialists shared with the religious establishment, with which they were otherwise generally at odds. Consequently, early modern governments punished magical practitioners for both fraud and impiety, and educated opinion shifted from regarding magic as a source of occult power to considering it as simply a delusion.

EDWARD BEVER

See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; AUGUSTINE, ST.; *CANON EPISCOPI*; CUNNING FOLK; DEVIL; DIVINATION; ENLIGHTENMENT; LYCANTHROPY; MIRACLES; OCCULT; ORACLES; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; SCIENCE AND MAGIC; SHAMANISM; SKEPTICISM.

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DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, prosecutions and executions for the crime of witchcraft declined in number and eventually came to an end. The decline was marked by an increasing reluctance to prosecute witches, the acquittal of many who were tried, the reversal of convictions on appeal, and eventually the repeal of the laws that had authorized the prosecutions. By 1782, the last officially sanctioned witchcraft execution had taken place, and in many jurisdictions, witchcraft, at least as it had been defined in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, had ceased to be a crime. Individuals continued to name their neighbors as witches, and in some cases even took violent action against them, but they did so illegally and at the risk of being prosecuted themselves (as some were).

The reduction and eventual end of witch hunting occurred at different times in the various kingdoms and regions of Europe. In some countries, such as the Dutch Republic, the decline in prosecutions became evident by the end of the sixteenth century, while in others, like Poland, it did not begin until the middle of the eighteenth century. The length of time that the entire process took also varied greatly from place to place. In Scotland, for example, the initial reduction in the number of prosecutions was followed by more than fifty

years of trials, whereas in Franche-Comté and colonial Massachusetts, witch hunts came to an abrupt end only a few years after the courts started to discourage prosecutions. Even the legislation declaring that witchcraft was no longer a crime was passed at different stages of the process. In some kingdoms, such as Hungary and Prussia, the formal decriminalization of witchcraft preceded and was largely responsible for the end of witch hunting, whereas in Great Britain and Denmark it did not occur until long after the trials had stopped.

In most jurisdictions, the decline of witch hunting did not begin until those persons who controlled the judicial machinery became persuaded that many witches were being convicted and executed for crimes they had not committed. This realization usually arose in response to excesses in witch hunting in certain localities, such as Spain in 1611, Würzburg in 1627, England in 1647, Scotland in 1662, or Sweden in 1676. These excesses led judges and other persons involved in the hunts to criticize the ways in which the trials were being conducted. These critiques led in turn to the formulation and implementation of stricter procedural rules for the conduct of witchcraft trials, including greater restraint in the administration of torture and the application of more demanding standards of evidence. As a result of these judicial changes, trials of witches resulted in a larger number of acquittals, panics in which scores of witches perished no longer recurred, and courts became increasingly reluctant to initiate prosecutions.

The most clear-cut and decisive change in the judicial process was the tighter regulation of local justice by either central or superior judicial authorities. Local officials who operated with considerable—sometimes complete—independence from central state control conducted the most severe witch hunts in early modern Europe. The areas in which witch hunting was most intense over a long period of time were those jurisdictions in which central state power was relatively weak. This is one of the main reasons why most major witch panics took place in relatively small principalities and prince-bishoprics within the Holy Roman Empire. In those states with relatively strong central judicial establishments, the most serious witch hunts occurred in communities that found ways to ignore or circumvent state supervision of witchcraft trials.

The differences in judicial outlook between central and local authorities often resulted in deliberate efforts by judges from the central legal establishment to enforce stricter rules of criminal procedure, to demand that all prosecutions be warranted by central authority, to insist that all death sentences in witchcraft cases be reviewed on appeal, and to punish local officials who violated established procedural norms. These efforts were often sustained over a long period of time, and they did not always meet with success. Occasionally the

central authorities tolerated violations of their own high procedural standards. Ultimately, however, the state authorities that made such efforts succeeded in bringing about a permanent reduction in the number of prosecutions and executions.

The second reason for the decline of prosecutions was a rising tide of criticism of the use of torture, leading to a reduction in its frequency and ultimately to its abolition. In the sixteenth century, a few writers, including Anton Prätorius and Johann Weyer, objected to the administration of torture, but in the seventeenth century the critiques became more numerous and more passionate. Three of the most influential were written by Jesuits in German-speaking lands, Friedrich Spee, Adam Tanner, and Paul Laymann, all of whom claimed first-hand experience with the trials. From the Protestant side came works by Johann Meyfart, a Lutheran professor from Erfurt whose work betrayed a heavy reliance on Spee, and Johann Greve, a Dutch Arminian theologian who condemned the use of torture by Christians for any purpose whatsoever.

This body of work criticizing the use of torture continued to grow in the late seventeenth century, and three later works achieved fairly widespread circulation. In 1682 a Burgundian judge, Augustin Nicolas, wrote a closely reasoned assault on the practice. The second work, a dissertation by Meint Johan Sassen of the University of Halle, was published in 1697 and went into several printings, and the third, which also came from the law faculty at Halle, was a dissertation by Christian Thomasius. It drew heavily on the earlier works of Spee, Tanner, and Meyfart, but Thomasius also gave his treatise a distinctly Protestant flavor. A Pietist known for his anticlericalism, Thomasius argued in the manner of Greve that torture was an un-Christian means of extorting the truth, that it was never mentioned in Scripture, and that the papacy had used it to strike down its enemies under the pretext of heresy and witchcraft.

The third judicial change that led to a decline in the number of trials was the adherence to new and more demanding standards of evidence. During the seventeenth century, judges and legal writers throughout Europe showed themselves to be increasingly reluctant to accept the sort of evidence that was presented to them to justify the conviction and execution of witches. This caution led to the realization that the crime of witchcraft was extremely difficult, if not impossible, to prove. This conclusion was of incalculable importance in bringing witchcraft trials to an end. It led directly to the increasing number of acquittals that occurred in virtually all jurisdictions, and it also contributed to the ultimate realization that witchcraft as a crime could no longer be effectively prosecuted.

The skeptical attitude toward evidence in witchcraft cases, just like skepticism regarding the possibility of

the crime, was not completely absent in earlier periods of witch hunting. There had always been judges who demanded that proof of witchcraft be absolutely conclusive before proceeding to sentence. But whereas those early recommendations of caution were eventually ignored or contradicted, on the grounds that society needed to be protected, by the late seventeenth century they found more widespread and lasting acceptance. In this way an erratic pattern of witchcraft prosecution, in which courts oscillated between periods of intense prosecution and relative leniency, gave way to an enduring pattern of judicial caution and restraint.

Skepticism regarding the sufficiency of evidence in witchcraft cases took a number of different forms. It can be seen, first and foremost, in a growing reluctance among judges and legal writers to accept confessions, traditionally regarded as the queen of proofs, as sufficient proof of guilt. This skepticism was not restricted to those confessions that were made under torture; judges and lawyers seemed just as unwilling to accept at face value those confessions that witches had allegedly made freely. This skepticism arose mainly when the confessions had a high diabolical content, that is, when the witches had confessed to either a pact with the Devil or attendance at the Sabbat. By the late seventeenth century, judges were willing to accept confessions to witchcraft (or any other crime) only if such confessions were in no way extorted, if they contained nothing that was impossible or improbable, and if the person confessing was neither melancholic nor suicidal. The Danish jurist Laurits Nørregård, in urging the greatest possible caution in witchcraft cases, warned that the last thing an authority should do was to believe the accused person's own confession.

A second and even more frequent expression of judicial caution in the interpretation of evidence was based on the possibility that events attributed to supernatural agency might have had natural causes. This was particularly relevant to charges of *maleficium* (harmful magic), in which it was claimed that witches had inflicted harm by supernatural, that is, diabolical means. The skeptical response to such allegations, frequently adopted when lawyers defended witches against such charges, was that the act had natural causes, and that in order to convict a person of the crime, the possibility of natural causation had to be ruled out. Thus, in Spain, in the wake of the witch hunt of 1609–1611, inquisitors were instructed to inquire whether the maleficent deeds that witches confessed to, such as having killed children or destroyed crops, might have had natural causes. Inquiries of this sort became more and more common in later seventeenth-century trials. In Italy, inquisitors from the Congregation of the Holy Office insisted that in cases of infanticide by witchcraft, the physicians who had treated the children should examine the children to discover whether they could determine if the illness was

or *could have been* natural. The burden of proof was on the prosecution; all that was necessary to secure acquittal was evidence that natural causation was *possible*. In a number of trials in Scotland in the late 1620s, advocates for the witches went to great lengths to prove that *maleficium* might not have been the product of supernatural intervention. In securing the acquittal of a witch accused of murder by sorcery in 1662, Paul von Fuchs was content to show that the alleged supernatural cause of the disease that killed his victim could not be proved.

The question of whether afflictions had diabolical or natural causes arose in a particularly telling fashion in those cases of witchcraft that involved demonic possession. During the seventeenth century, witchcraft cases of this sort became increasingly frequent, especially in England and France. Demoniacs, very often women and children, identified witches as the cause of their possession, claiming that the witches had commanded demons to occupy their bodies and to afflict them with fits, contortions, and other forms of abnormal behavior. The question naturally arose how such symptoms should be interpreted. Those who did not readily accept a demonological explanation of the possession or claimed that it was fraudulent argued that the demoniacs suffered from a disease brought about by natural causes, such as hysteria. Once this possibility was introduced, courts found it difficult to convict witches for causing the possession. In 1697 the Scotsman James Johnstone observed that in France the courts had stopped trying witches in such cases because they could not distinguish possession from a natural disease.

Formal declarations by various countries in Europe that witchcraft was no longer a crime occurred after the prosecutions for witchcraft had slowed to a trickle or already come to an end. Before the beginning of the nineteenth century, witchcraft laws were repealed or significantly modified in only seven kingdoms: France in 1682, Prussia in 1714, Great Britain in 1736, the Habsburg monarchy in 1766, Russia in 1770, Poland in 1776, and Sweden in 1779. Only the last two kingdoms legislated a complete ban on witchcraft trials. The Polish statute, passed by the diet a year after a witch hunt in the village of Doruchowo had claimed the lives of fourteen women, forbade the prosecution of witches by all tribunals, including the court of the small town of Grabowo, which had conducted the trials at Doruchowo. The Swedish National Code of 1779 simply omitted the clause regarding witchcraft in the old Code of 1734, thus rendering prosecutions impossible.

The British statute of 1736 also bears most of the signs of a blanket prohibition of witchcraft prosecutions, since it repealed the English statute of 1604 and its Scottish counterpart of 1563. But by making it an offense to “pretend to exercise or use any kind of witchcraft, sorcery, enchantment or conjuration or undertake

to tell fortunes” on the pain of imprisonment for one year, Parliament failed to decriminalize all those activities that once marched under the broad banner of witchcraft (Levack 1999, 75). Prosecutions for conjuration under the statute of 1736 were rare, but they did occur, and the judges who charged grand juries continued to remind them that it was a crime to pretend to be a witch. This provision of the new witchcraft law was not repealed until 1951.

The French royal edict of 1682 achieved even less than the British law of 1736. It is true that the edict, just like the later British statute, referred to magic as “pretended,” possibly to offer protection against imposters. But as far as witchcraft prosecutions were concerned, it was far more qualified than the British statute. Designed in part to prevent a recurrence of the Affair of the Poisons, it left intact the death penalty for forms of magic that were overtly sacrilegious, and it permitted some prosecutions for *maleficium* that continued in France during the following decade. The same was true of the Habsburg law of 1766. While eliminating prosecutions in cases arising from fraud and mental illness, it nonetheless ordered the banishment of those who made pacts with the Devil and even allowed the possibility of the death penalty in cases of *maleficium* performed with the assistance of the Devil.

The least comprehensive of these laws was the Prussian edict of 1714, issued by King Frederick William I less than two years after his accession to the throne. This mandate was designed entirely to reform the criminal procedures used in witchcraft trials, so that innocent persons would no longer be tortured, forced to confess, and executed. Its concern with legal procedure reflects the influence of Christian Thomasius, the chancellor of the University of Halle, and indirectly that of Spee, upon whom Thomasius relied heavily in his work. The edict, which was to be proclaimed in local courts, demanded that all judicial decisions either to torture or execute witches be submitted to the king for confirmation before being implemented. This provision, which echoes French policy and anticipates that of the Habsburg monarchy, provides further evidence of the role played by central authorities in restricting witchcraft prosecutions. The law did not, however, ban witchcraft trials or even executions, although it did require the removal of all the stakes from the public places where witches had been burned. In 1721 Prussia abolished the death penalty in all witchcraft trials.

The formal decriminalization of witchcraft had little bearing on the decline in prosecutions, which was already well underway. The blanket repeals that took place in Great Britain and Sweden had no effect whatsoever on witchcraft prosecutions in those countries, because the last trial had long preceded the legislation effecting the change. The same could be said of the large number of states that repealed their laws only in

the nineteenth century. Even in those countries that passed witchcraft statutes before the end of the trials, the new laws had only a limited effect on the volume of prosecutions. The first of these laws, the French edict of 1682, probably prevented prosecutions in only a few outlying regions of the kingdom where trials were still taking place. The same could be said of Frederick William I’s edict of 1714, because prosecutions in Prussia had slackened considerably since the 1690s. The Polish law of 1776 affected only those isolated villages like Doruchowo where there was still pressure to prosecute. Only Maria Theresa’s law of 1766 seems to have led to a demonstrable curtailment in the number of trials and executions. Even then, however, witch hunting was taking place in only certain parts of the Habsburg monarchy, mainly in Hungary. In Austria, trials had long since ended, with the last execution occurring in 1750.

The more common pattern of decriminalization was the de facto cessation of trials, without any accompanying edict. This was achieved at different times in different places, but in most cases the very last trials occurred long after the decline in prosecutions had begun. In Germany, for example, the decline in prosecutions had begun in the 1630s, but many German territories held prosecutions well into the eighteenth century. Würzburg had its last trial in 1749, Bavaria in 1792, and Württemberg in 1805. In Spain, where the decline in prosecutions began in the early years of the seventeenth century, occasional trials took place until 1820.

BRIAN P. LEVACK

See also: ACQUITTALS; CONFESSIONS; EVIDENCE; LAYMANN, PAUL; MEYFART, JOHANN MATTHÄUS; PRÄTORIUS, ANTON; SKEPTICISM; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; TANNER, ADAM; THOMASIUS, CHRISTIAN; TORTURE; WEYER, JOHANN.

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DEE, JOHN (1527–1608/1609)

England's most famous magician, Dee was a scholar with an international reputation, and is now best known for his detailed record of the conversations he had with angelic or spirit beings via a number of mediums between December 1581 and 1588. These sessions produced a number of books that transmitted an angelic alphabet (later called Enochian), the language supposedly spoken by angels. They also provided instructions for making various pieces of magical apparatus, including the elaborate table that supported Dee's crystal ball, the medium wherein his mediums both saw and heard the spirits. The procedure for scrying was that Dee and his medium would retire to a private room where the crystal was set up. After praying for divine protection, Dee would sit in a corner with pen and paper, ready to record the medium's answers to his questions. Kneeling before the crystal, the medium proceeded to report whatever he saw and heard therein, with Dee asking supplementary questions as necessary. These sessions could be very long, and might be renewed day after day for a protracted period. Those spirits who appeared in the crystal included the archangels Uriel, Michael, and Raphael ("Medicine of God"), and an extraordinary spirit in the guise of a playful little girl called Madimi, whose moods were subject to terrifying change.

The contents of Dee's spirit record reveal a deep commitment to his own personal religious development, unflagging intellectual curiosity about the hidden secrets of creation, and an obsessive desire to understand them in order to use them for the betterment of humanity. Because he was generally unable to hear or see the spirits, Dee was obliged to depend on a series of mediums, of whom the most gifted and unscrupulous was Edward Kelley, also known as

"Talbot." It was from Kelley's intense but debilitating efforts at mediumship that Dee derived the contents of most of his angelic conversations.

After Dee's death, these came to light in a number of manuscripts. Some, which had been buried in a field, were published by Meric Casaubon in 1659 under the title, *A True and Faithful Relation of What Passed for Many Years between Dr. John Dee (A Mathematician of Great Fame in Q. Eliz. and King James their Reigns) and Some Spirits*. Then more papers came to light in a private house. A maid used these to line pie dishes and start fires until, in 1672, the papers came to the notice of Elias Ashmole, who transcribed but did not publish what remained.

In 1547, Dee became a founding Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, where he studied mathematics, a subject often associated with magic. On one occasion, he astonished the audience of a Greek play with a remarkable automaton that seemed to leap from the stage and fly in the air. Later he traveled considerably in Europe, where Gerard Mercator taught him much about cartography and navigation. Bringing this innovative knowledge back to England, he materially assisted the search for the Northwest Passage. From a decade of extensive traveling, he assembled one of the finest personal libraries in Europe, only to have some of his pupils and their associates loot it during his later absence. He and Kelley shared an interest in alchemy. Emperor Rudolf II, whose court attracted a great number of practitioners of every occult science, invited them to Prague in 1584. There Dee and Kelley continued their work with the crystal, which now showed a series of alchemical visions. The spirits also transmitted a number of doom-laden messages that left Dee both frightened and despondent. A personal meeting with the emperor went badly. Dee was suspected of being a spy, and so had to resume his travels. For a while, Kelley conducted alchemical operations alone, until he too fell from favor, was imprisoned, and finally disappeared. After the death of Queen Elizabeth I, Dee failed to attract her successor's patronage, and died in relative poverty and obscurity.

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART

See also: ALCHEMY; ANGELS; CASAUBON, MERIC; MAGIC, LEARNED; SCRYING.

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DEFIXIONES

Defixiones is the Latin name for ancient “binding curses” or the “curse tablets” that contained them, the parallel Greek term being *katadesmoi*. These curses were typically scratched on small, thin sheets of lead (*lamellae*) that were then folded or rolled up tightly, pierced with nails in a “sympathetic” gesture of binding or confusion, and entrusted to the dead for enactment. The earliest known examples, ca. 500 B.C.E. come from Selinus in Sicily, but they eventually flourished throughout the Greco-Roman world until the end of antiquity and indeed beyond.

Up to 2,000 examples have now been discovered, mostly written in Greek. The earlier ones, and the majority of them, consist of little more than lists of names, with or without adding such phrases as “I bind” or “I register.” By late antiquity, some tablets contained elaborate, extensive, and repetitive texts. These invoked, ghosts aside, a syncretistic range of gods and demons with names of Greek, Egyptian, Jewish, Near Eastern, or indeterminate origin. Some also appealed to *vores magicae* (words of power), not always easily distinguishable from demon names. The inherent magical power of writing and letters was freely exploited: Written lines or individual words or names could be reversed or confused in various ways, for sympathetic effect upon the victim; tablets were decorated with squares or triangles composed of vowels, with palindromes, or with “what are called” the “Characters,” letter-like symbols. Tablets could be illustrated with appropriate images, such as bound corpses.

Once manufactured, the tablets were activated through deposition, usually in a grave, and sometimes they were actually placed in the corpse’s right hand. Otherwise they could be deposited in sanctuaries of underworld gods, Demeter in particular, or in springs that could carry the tablet down to the underworld. Sometimes ghosts were asked to carry out the act of restraint themselves, appropriately, since any contact with them could be “deadening”; sometimes they were asked to act as messengers and to convey the curse request to the underworld powers; at other times the dead were used in a sympathetic fashion, exemplifying the condition that the curser wished to inflict upon the victim. The removal of a tablet from its place of deposition deactivated the spell. Victims could resist spells by wearing protective amulets or even place a binding spell of their own on the troubling curse.

Most of the extant curses that we can decipher may be classified into five broad types. Four of them are “agonistic,” deriving from situations of social competition.

The agonistic curses include litigation curses, which typically sought to bind the tongues of legal opponents in trials; sports and choral curses, designed to restrain rival competitors, notably, in the Roman era, chario-

teers; trade curses, the Athenian curses restraining rival shopkeepers and prostitutes being notable here; and erotic curses, which either restrained the powers of attraction of rivals in love (“separation curses”), or constrained the object of the curse-maker’s desire to surrender to his or (less frequently) her desire (“attraction curses”). The language used in these curses could be sexually crude. A fifth and more distinctive variety consists of “prayers for justice,” which often, but not always, used the explicit language of binding. These tablets, usually addressed to deities, sought revenge or restitution for some wrong, usually stolen property. A large cache of such tablets has been retrieved from the sacred spring of Sulis Minerva at Bath.

Figurative equivalents of the tablets are found in *kolossoi*, the ancient name for voodoo dolls, already being made in the Archaic period. Some thirty-eight groups of these have been discovered over a geographical spread roughly similar to that of the curse tablets. The dolls express the act of binding or confusion in their configuration: They may be bound hand and foot; they may be shut in tiny coffins; their limbs may be twisted; they may be mutilated, for example by decapitation, or transfixed by nails.

DANIEL OGDEN

See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; GHOSTS; GREEK MAGICAL PAPYRI; WORDS, POWER OF.

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DEFOE, DANIEL (1660–1731)

Defoe’s three book-length studies of the supernatural—*The Political History of the Devil*, *A System of Magick*, and *An Essay on the History and Reality of Apparitions*,

all printed in 1726 and 1727—all contained some discussion of witchcraft. His works reveal a mixture of skepticism and belief of the kind typical among people living in England during the Enlightenment who continued to believe in biblical teachings. During the same years he published these books on the occult, Defoe was also writing books on social and economic problems in England; but he was disturbed by the attacks upon traditional Christian doctrine by such deists as John Toland and Anthony Collins. The main concern of Defoe's works, then, was a defense of the spiritual and of the existence of a spirit world. The title of Defoe's book on apparitions was changed to *The Secrets of the Invisible World Disclos'd* when it was reissued in 1728. Defoe was primarily interested in witches and witchcraft as part of a larger system involving good and bad spirits, which he defended in opposition to the completely materialistic notions of some deists.

When writing in his Enlightenment mode, Defoe maintained that elderly women were often attacked as witches by those trying to rid the community of them or by those seeking personal advantage. He found such behavior despicable, remarking that merely being a widow over fifty-five was to invite charges of being a witch. He also exposed the hoaxes of those pretending to be practicing magic and ridiculed the gullibility of their customers. Defoe argued that the Devil, with whom witches supposedly dealt, was actually an invisible evil spirit, a powerful force operating in the world. He mocked the iconography surrounding witchcraft, from broomsticks to spells, as mere nonsense, and derided the notion that witches have any real power to foresee the future. Instead, according to Defoe, they were men and women obeying corrupt and evil impulses within themselves to call upon the Devil. Always willing to encourage wickedness, the Devil deluded them into believing they possessed powers that they did not have. Thus Defoe believed that there was a core of truth in the confessions of the Salem witches. At the same time, he saw that the method of obtaining evidence against the supposed witches was faulty and doubted the motivations of those making such accusations. Examining the various methods of detecting a witch in *The Political History of the Devil*, such as throwing the person in a pond to see if she would sink or swim or seeing if she was able to enter or depart from a house with a horseshoe over the door, Defoe called such processes "mock Pageantry" and "too simple to be believ'd" (Defoe 2003, 240).

Nevertheless, he found irrefutable evidence of witchcraft's existence in the ancient world in biblical passages warning against witchcraft, such as Leviticus 19:31 and 2 Chronicles 33:6; in the story of the witch of Endor (1 Sam. 28:7–25), he believed there was sufficient proof of how witchcraft was practiced, even if he thought that the spirit was not really conjured up for Saul by the

witch's powers and was unlikely to have been Samuel himself. As he remarked in his *System of Magick*, the sin of witches lay in "the Sin against Reason, against common Sense, the Ingratitude to their Maker, the open Insult of Heaven, the Venture of provoking that *Being* whose Power it insults" (240). He defined a witch in his journal, the *Review of the Affairs of France*, No. 90 (20 October 1711), as "One in Covenant with the Devil, and uses his help to deceive or hurt others." Yet even in this serious reply to a question about contemporary books on witchcraft, he could not avoid treating the subject with some mockery, applying the term "witch" to his political enemies.

Defoe's three books on the supernatural were very popular, each going into a number of editions during the eighteenth century. Two major nineteenth-century English novelists, Charles Dickens and George Eliot, each drew upon *The Political History of the Devil* in a variety of ways.

MAXIMILLIAN E. NOVAK

See also: ENDOR, WITCH OF; ENLIGHTENMENT; SKEPTICISM.

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DEL RIO, MARTÍN (1551–1608)

Del Rio was a Jesuit scholar who wrote one of the most influential treatises on magic and witchcraft, the *Disquisitiones Magicae libri sex* (Six Books on Investigations into Magic). It was divided into six books, which were first published in three parts between 1599 and 1600 and frequently reprinted thereafter. Book 1 discussed what was meant by "superstition," the various branches of magic (including divination), and alchemy, which Del Rio treated with caution but did not dismiss out of hand. Book 2 investigated the type of magic involving evil spirits, and answered such questions as how far magicians were bound by the laws of nature; whether sexual intercourse with spirits was possible, and if so, whether it could produce offspring or not; and whether evil spirits could actually cause the dead to appear to the

living. Book 3 had two parts. The first dealt with harmful magic—this was where Del Rio started to discuss witches in particular, along with people under the control of evil spirits—and the second described an enormous variety of superstitious practices. Book 4 reviewed prophecy and divination, along with the various ways of discovering a person's guilt or innocence in relation to a particular accusation. Here Del Rio criticized the practice of swimming suspected witches (the swimming test, or water ordeal) to determine whether they sink (innocent) or float (guilty).

Book 5 provided detailed advice for judges presiding over trials for maleficent magic. Del Rio reviewed the types of proof required to reach a verdict, and the strict rules governing the application of torture. Here he stressed the link between heresy and magic and noted that the crimes imputed to witches must not be regarded as fantasies. Book 6 gave similarly detailed advice to confessors, and described the ways in which suspect witches tried to elude confessing their practices, and the different remedies that may be used to counter maleficent magic. The book thus provided a complete review of the subject matter, and on its publication Del Rio quickly became an acknowledged expert on witches and their treatment, called on, for example, to give his opinion during learned controversies in Bavaria in 1601–1602 about the appropriate legal treatment of witches. After the book's publication, Del Rio took great pains to revise it and bring it up to date. Consequently, it had increased considerably in length by the time he died.

BIOGRAPHY

Del Rio was born in Antwerp in what was then the Spanish Netherlands on May 17, 1551, to a Castilian father and an Aragonese mother. His family was rich, privileged, and influential. Martín received an excellent education at Paris, Louvain, and Salamanca under some of the best teachers of the day, during the course of which he mastered several languages, including Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. His contemporary, the Belgian scholar Justus Lipsius, hailed him as one of the ornaments of their time. His first published books, commentaries on such classical authors as Seneca, Solinus, and Claudian, demonstrated his immense erudition. In 1574, he obtained his doctorate from the University of Salamanca; he tells us that he came into contact with popular magic during these years in Spain, and his *Investigations* contained several examples from this personal experience. His personal curiosity may have been stimulated even earlier by the Jesuit Juan Maldonado's influential lectures, which Del Rio heard while he was a student in Paris, and reinforced in Salamanca. He then returned to the Spanish Netherlands, but after a few years spent as councilor, then as governor-general and vice-chancellor of Brabant under Don Juan of

Austria, he decided to enter the Society of Jesus.

Returning to Spain, he became a novice in the Jesuit house in Valladolid on May 9, 1580. Thereafter, for the rest of his life, the society sent him to teach in various universities: Douai, Liège, Louvain (where he took his final vows in 1600), Graz, and Mainz. During this time, he published extensively, mainly works of theology or commentaries, although he also produced two histories, one of them a review of recent events in the Spanish Netherlands. He died in Louvain on October 18, 1608, after a long and exhausting journey back from Spain.

REASONS FOR WRITING THE INVESTIGATIONS

His huge work on magic and witchcraft and other occult sciences was not typical of his oeuvre, so it is not easy to say why he investigated the subject and expended so much effort and learning upon it. One reason probably had to do with the fact that western Europe was riven by theological disputes that both fueled and stimulated territorial wars. Both Catholic and Protestant witchcraft treatises played a notable role in the attendant intellectual bellicosity, and, throughout his *Investigations*, Del Rio emphasized that magic was closely allied to heresy. So through this work, Del Rio was making a major polemical contribution to the religious controversies of the late sixteenth century. During the 1590s, we find him discussing the Kabbalah with Jean van Helmont, and his interest in magic probably received a major fillip from the notorious case of Jean del Vault, a Benedictine monk from the Abbey of Stavelot, who in 1597 confessed to a relationship with the Devil and a career in maleficent magic stretching back almost the whole of his lifetime. Del Rio had access to the voluminous material produced by this trial and was able to discuss both this and other cases with one of the judges, Pierre Dheure, to whom he referred more than once in the *Investigations*.

DEL RIO'S VIEWS OF WITCHES AND POSSESSED PERSONS

Del Rio has often been regarded as a credulous bigot, but his attitude to all the occult sciences was actually quite sophisticated, although his opinions on witches were somewhat more traditional. All magic, he said, depended on a pact made between a human being and an evil spirit. The notion, propagated by many Catholic and Protestant writers, that the witches' flight to the Sabbath was an illusion was false; they really did anoint themselves beforehand and fly there. On the other hand, they did not really change their shapes. Any such transformations were the results of Satan's deceptive tricks, and in consequence, phenomena such as lycanthropy had to be regarded as pure illusions. Once the witches arrived at their Sabbath, they found Satan

presiding in animal form. They worshiped him in perverse and blasphemous fashion, often parodying the Mass, after which they banqueted (sometimes wearing masks), then danced before copulating with evil spirits. Each witch gave an account to Satan of the evil he or she had done since the last convention. If the Devil was not satisfied, he beat them fearsomely. Then he distributed powders and poisonous substances to enable them to carry out further harm in their communities. These substances, however, were not the only means whereby a witch might perform maleficent magic. Some also used herbs and ointments; and a witch's poisonous breath or even her words alone might be sufficient for her malevolent purposes.

Del Rio asserted that witches could be arrested even in church because their crime was so serious. But Satan could help them in prison, so precautions had to be taken and the accused brought to a speedy trial, although authorities had to be careful to avoid wrongful arrest and imprisonment. Those found innocent of the charges had to be acquitted. A plea of delusion, however, was no real defense; judges must bear in mind that witches were not often deceived about the reality of their experiences. Confessors were forbidden to reveal any admission of witchcraft they had heard during confession, unless they had the penitent's permission to do so or had also come by the information via another route. Physical signs of witchcraft, such as jars, ligatures, keys, feathers, and so forth, ought to be destroyed in order to undo the maleficence of the magic. Because people possessed by evil spirits exhibited physical signs, confessors were to learn from physicians how to recognize them. Exorcism would be successful in expelling evil spirits from the possessed, but it might take time to work. Confessors were to advise their penitents to steer clear of all forms of magic, because these were potentially very dangerous.

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART

See also: DEMONOLOGY; DEVIL; DIVINATION; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; MALDONADO, JUAN; MALEFICIJUM; SABBAT; SWIMMING TEST.

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DELLA PORTA, GIAMBATTISTA (CA. 1535–1615)

A Neapolitan and skeptical physician, Della Porta, in 1558, dedicated his book on natural magic, *Magiae naturalis, sive de miraculis rerum naturalium libri IIII* (On Natural Magic, or Four Books on the Miracles of Natural Things), in which he reported a famous experiment performed with a woman considered to be a witch, to the Spanish King Philip II. It was the start of a brilliant career: Della Porta became one of Europe's most influential and frequently cited natural magicians. He was a nonconformist who clearly found traditional Aristotelian theory unsatisfactory and substituted a dualism for its four elements. Della Porta's notion, central to the whole natural magical tradition, was that all natural effects proceeded from either attraction ("sympathy") or repulsion ("antipathy") (Clark 1997, 47).

In his *Magiae naturalis*, Della Porta tried to restore the significance of magic. It had no demonic origin, but instead offered an opportunity to explain the hidden causes of natural effects, knowledge underlying all scientific research. Natural magic thus became *naturalis philosophiae consummatio* (the consummation of natural philosophy), the highest level of human knowledge of natural effects. A magician connected such knowledge with the ability to reproduce observed phenomena.

Chapter 26 of Book 2 of Della Porta's first edition reported his notorious experiment testing the belief that witches induced flight by smearing themselves with an unguent. He hired a well-known witch who promised him information about her Sabbats. She turned everyone out of the room, but he watched through the crack of the door. He saw her strip herself naked and anoint herself thoroughly, first rubbing her skin until it was red, to open the pores, and then vigorously rubbing in the ointment. The somniferous drugs threw her into a deep sleep, from which she could not be aroused even by whipping. After regaining consciousness, she recited a long tale about crossing mountains and seas. According to Della Porta, her insistence on having traveled to a Sabbat proved that only dream experiences had actually occurred—dreams produced entirely by the natural ingredients in her ointment, abetted by the fact that such women ate only vegetable food such as beets, chestnuts, or greens. Della Porta provided the formulas for her ointment: Its active ingredients, mixed with infants' fat, included aconite, *eleoselnium*, *frondes populneae*, soot, *pentaphyllon*, bat's blood, and belladonna.

Reactions to this passage, spread all over Europe by sixteen editions in Latin, twenty in French, and two in Dutch, were severe. The skeptical German physician Johann Weyer cited it in its entirety in his *De praestigiis daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils, 1563) and in his *De lamiis* (On Witches, 1577). A more typical response came from the French demonologist Jean Bodin, who

called Della Porta a venomous magician and an instigator of popular witchcraft in Chapter II of Book 2 in *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (On the Demon-Mania of Witches, 1580). Della Porta soon removed the famous passage from his Italian editions. Nevertheless, he experienced difficulties with the Inquisition; the Neapolitan tribunal questioned him in 1586 about his astronomical judgements.

Della Porta worked for more than thirty years on a revised and extended version, which finally appeared in 1589. His new *Magiae naturalis* (On Natural Magic), in twenty books, concentrated on the origin of natural effects. Its goal was to bring the magic tradition to the same level as science. Optics (Book 17) and magnetism (Book 7) received elaborate attention; the work constituted an encyclopedia of knowledge, including botany, zoology, physics, chemistry, and alchemy. Its introduction refuted Bodin without naming him (referring to *Gallus quidam*, a certain Frenchman).

Della Porta subsequently prepared a third edition of his book. Hoping to avoid censorship, he dedicated it to Cardinal Federico Borromeo; but after the Congregation of the Index reviewed it, only three of its eleven projected books ever appeared: Book 4, *Liber medicus* (Medical Book), containing a list of remedies, mostly based on organic medicines, against all kinds of diseases; Book 5, *Criptologia* (Cryptography), describing ceremonial magic empowered by demonic intervention; and Book 6, *De mirabili numerorum potestate* (On the Wondrous Power of Numbers), about the quality and magical virtues of numbers in architecture, agriculture, music, optics, and astronomy.

For the rest of his life Della Porta struggled with the Inquisition to gain approval for the publication of his books. In 1592, when he tried to publish an Italian edition of his work on human physiognomy, the Inquisition stepped in. On orders from the Holy Office in Rome, the Venetian Inquisition halted the work's publication and forbade Della Porta, under pain of excommunication and a fine of 500 ducats, to publish anything without the express permission of the Roman High Tribunal. Della Porta maintained that, because demonic forces are natural, it is legitimate to investigate and even employ them, as long as one avoids the rituals adjoined to them. He believed that his research program would lead to a smashing of superstitions, not by persecution but by exploding the false beliefs surrounding the real, natural phenomena. The most convincing way to expose the fraud of demons, thought Della Porta, was to discover the natural truth behind the superstitions of popular magic and to demonstrate these by producing marvels naturally. Obviously, such a radical position on diabolism could never gain the Church's approval.

But Della Porta's advancing age, great fame, and obvious willingness to obey the Inquisition after the ban was

lifted in 1598 almost guaranteed him peace in his remaining years. As a lay brother of the Jesuits and a member of the Roman Accademia dei Lincei, he focused in his last years on comedies, military engineering, and agriculture, and he also perfected the camera obscura.

DRIES VANYSACKER

See also: BODIN JEAN; DRUGS AND HALLUCINOGENS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; MAGIC, NATURAL; OINTMENTS; SYMPATHY; WEYER, JOHANN.

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DEMONOLOGY

Demonology is the name given today to the field of knowledge dealing with the demonic aspects of witchcraft and other practices forbidden by early modern Christianity. More broadly, demonology concerns itself with all forms and expressions of demonism and is thus as old as the concept of Satan. More broadly still, it evokes any attempt to denigrate opposition or stigmatize deviance by presenting these as the worst forms of evil. Demonology had an important role in early Christian and medieval theological and ecclesiastical thought, for example in the writings of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas. But it flourished in particular from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries, alongside the witchcraft trials.

Classically, this field of study gave rise to "demonologies," works that explored and debated the complexities of witchcraft and allied subjects in a systematic and theoretical manner, providing guidance concerning what and what not to believe about them. Did witches have powers over the weather? Could they cause diseases and sexual impotence? Could they transform others or be transformed into animals? Were they physically transported to their Sabbats, and were these real events? How did demons assume human shape and act as

incubi or succubi? Could procreation take place between demons and witches? Could demons and witches predict the future? These were the sorts of specific questions that were standard concerns in early modern demonology, alongside more general questions about why witchcraft was so prevalent and what the churches and secular rulers of the period—as well as private individuals—ought to do about it.

The authors of this literature are now often called “demonologists,” but it is much more useful to think of them as theologians and churchmen, philosophers and moralists, lawyers and physicians—in other words, as intellectuals representing various disciplines and professions. When they wrote about witchcraft, they drew on the usual intellectual resources of the world of learning, especially its methods of discussion, and reflected its contemporary preoccupations. *Demonographer* was a term known in the seventeenth century (it was used in a hostile sense by Gabriel Naudé), but it is too restrictive to limit demonology to specialists. Witchcraft was discussed in far too many diverse contexts for demonology to be limited to one kind of writer or one kind of writing.

EARLY WRITINGS

The history of early modern demonology is partly one of how texts and their contents evolved over time. Textual accounts of witchcraft as a devil-worshipping cult began to appear from the 1430s. In them, witches were definitively associated with ritual dedication to Satan, the practice of infanticide and anthropophagy, the destruction of Christian society, and attendance at Sabbats. Single works on demonology multiplied from this point onwards, with titles like *Lamiarum sive Striarum Opusculum* (A Brief Work on Lamia or Witches), *Flagellum Maleficorum* (The Lash Against Those Who Commit Maleficia), *Quaestio de Strigis* (An Investigation of Witches), and *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches)—titles that indicate the development of a genre. From the outset, witchcraft was regarded as a controversial and difficult topic, about which many reservations and doubts might be expressed. Intellectuals invariably struggled to come to terms with it, and even those who came to accept its reality always knew that there were serious objections that had to be overcome.

Commonest of all were discussions of the tenth-century capitulary, the *Canon Episcopi*, which appeared to suggest that witchcraft was based on a demonic dream. If the canon applied to the new fifteenth-century witches as much as to earlier ones, it made their crimes illusory; but if the latest sect was unlike the previous ones, then the text could be disregarded. Questions like these were frequently asked in the period between Johannes Nider's *Formicarius* (The Anthill), dating from around 1437, and Bernardo of Como's *Tractatus de Strigibus*

(Treatise on Witches), written around 1510. The Franciscan Samuel de Cassini and the Dominican Vincente Dodo clashed over the canon's implications in the first decade of the sixteenth century, and another cycle to the debate occurred in the 1520s involving Paolo Grillando, who argued that Sabbats and Sabbat attendance were real and not the product of dreams and illusions, and Giovanni Francesco (Gianfrancesco) Ponzinibio, who took the opposite view.

THE PEAK PERIOD

From the 1560s onward, the literature of witchcraft entered a fresh phase. In the first place, skepticism regarding the reality of the crime became even more systematic. To the reservations based on the *Canon Episcopi*, the sixteenth century added various forms of more general doubt regarding witchcraft drawn from the writings of the philosopher Pietro Pomponazzi (notably his *De naturalium effectuum causis, sive de incantationibus* [On the Causes of Natural Effects, or of Incantations], 1556), the Italian lawyer Andrea Alciati, the Dutch humanist Desiderius Erasmus, and the French skeptic Michel de Montaigne. With the publication of the first version of Johann Weyer's *De praestigis daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils) in 1563, early modern skepticism about witchcraft found its first major voice. And twenty years later, a member of the Kentish farming gentry in England, Reginald Scot, took witchcraft skepticism even further by picking up Pomponazzi's arguments and giving demons no agency whatsoever in the physical world.

Second, there was the publication and republication of a far greater number of texts asserting the general reality of the crime and the need to eradicate it from European society. Such claims were still not always made uncritically; on the contrary, most authors opted for a middle ground between accepting too much and accepting too little. For example, they rejected aspects of witchcraft that contravened theological or natural philosophical rules, aspects such as metamorphosis, miscegenation, and the physical efficacy of curses. Even so, this still left plenty of scope for witch hating.

The best-known group of writings of this period comprised the books published by magistrates or judges in witchcraft trials, who wished to pass on their experiences and reflections to their legal colleagues and the reading public. From the French-speaking lands—based on trials in the duchy of Lorraine, in Burgundy, and in Labourd (the French Basque country), respectively—came monographs by Nicolas Rémy, Henri Boguet, and Pierre de Lancre. These texts offered the by now standard arguments concerning the full range of witchcraft issues—the act of apostasy, the powers of demons and spirits, *maleficium* (harmful magic), travel to the Sabbat and its ceremonies, banquets, and dances, sexual dealings between witches and devils, the

possibility of metamorphosis, and so on—while constantly citing individual cases purporting to come from the judicial archives. Even the legally trained Jean Bodin, who had little experience with any actual trials and whose demonology was vastly more abstract and philosophical, opened his *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (On the Demon-Mania of Witches, 1580) with the case of Jeanne Harvillier, executed at Ribemont in 1578. The largely unoriginal demonology published by James VI of Scotland in 1597 falls into the same category, originating in trials in Edinburgh in 1590–1591.

Protestant and Catholic clerical reformers who saw witchcraft through an evangelical and spiritualizing lens provided a further group of texts. In attempting to turn *maleficium* into a case of conscience, they played down the physical damage done by witches and saw their crime much more as an act of apostasy, a crime of which those who practiced counter-witchcraft might be equally guilty. Protestant writers in particular, men like William Perkins and George Gifford in England, thought that secular laws that stressed the doing of harm by witchcraft were, therefore, wide of the mark. This attitude meant that, while they often lamented the vengefulness of witchcraft victims and pointed to legal abuses and the convicting of innocent people, they would undoubtedly have strengthened the witchcraft legislation had they been able to.

In this sense, religious reform contributed to the belief in the reality of witchcraft and the pressures to prosecute it that developed from the 1560s onwards. The many Catholic intellectuals who wrote on witchcraft included prominent bishops, like the two suffragans Peter Binsfeld of Trier, whose demonology appeared in 1589, and Friedrich Förner of Bamberg, who published thirty-five sermons on superstition, magic, and witchcraft in 1625, and several prominent theologians, including Martín de Azpilcueta, Gregory Sayer, and Francisco de Toledo. Among the orders, the Dominicans had been prominent among witchcraft theorists from the beginning, but it was the Jesuits who contributed most in this later period, Juan Maldonado, for example, and, above all, Martín Del Rio. Such men were absolutely central to the intellectual strategy and direction of the Counter-Reformation, and they saw the spread of witchcraft throughout Europe as an inevitable accompaniment of Protestant heresy.

GROWING SKEPTICISM

The combined impact of all these publications must have been to encourage witchcraft prosecutions, or at least to justify and explain them. It is striking, for example, how the intensification of discussions of witchcraft in print from the 1560s onwards coincided with the opening of the key century of witchcraft trials. But if intellectual disbelief in witchcraft seems more muted in this period, it was certainly still an important option.

Many of Weyer's arguments were endorsed in Germany in the 1580s and 1590s, especially by Johann Georg Goedelmann, a law professor at Rostock, whose lectures on witchcraft appeared in 1591 as *Tractatus de magis, veneficis et lamiis deque his recte cognoscendis et puniendis* (A Treatise on Magicians, Poisoners, and Witches and How Properly to Identify and Punish Them). In Trier in 1593, Cornelius Loos, a Catholic priest and theologian who sympathized with Weyer, was also forced to recant what seems to have been a more extreme denial of the physical existence of devils.

Skepticism and opposition to witchcraft trials had come to take a variety of forms by this stage, including doubts about whether witchcraft was a crime for which any human agent could be held responsible. Criticism was directed at the evidence cited in support of the reality of witchcraft, including biblical texts in translation. Above all, the whole conduct of witchcraft investigations and trials came under attack, notably the use of torture. German opponents of witchcraft trials such as Adam Tanner, Paul Laymann, Friedrich Spee von Langenfeld, and Johann Meyfart reflected these various issues in their demonological writings. Each paid at least lip service to the possibility of witchcraft and thus of true convictions, while virtually ruling out guilty verdicts as unjust in the present legal circumstances. Spee's *Cautio Criminalis seu de Processibus Contra Sagas* (A Warning on Criminal Justice, or a Book on Witch Trials), published anonymously in Rinteln in 1631, and Meyfart's *Christliche Erinnerung* (A Christian Reminder), which appeared in Schleusingen in 1636, rank among the most passionate and eloquent denunciations of excessive religious zeal and barbaric legal procedures from this period. These authors thought that witchcraft trials, not witches, were demonic.

Outright demonological skepticism was much less clear-cut. It was much more difficult for critics to distance themselves intellectually from orthodox demonology than to attack trial procedures and investigative techniques such as torture. If restricted to the relative powers and responsibilities of witches and devils and the role played by trickery and delusion, the arguments could seldom be decisive, since no believer in witchcraft ever thought witches themselves had occult powers or denied that they could be deceived. In this way, negative arguments were already anticipated among the positive ones. The same was true of the naturalistic alternatives proffered for witchcraft phenomena. Because devils were acknowledged by all to be inside nature and natural causation, to give a natural explanation for witchcraft effects was not as damaging as it might now seem. To get rid of devils altogether, or at least remove their physical powers from the physical world, would certainly have delivered a knock out blow to the acceptance of witchcraft; but such a step was far too radical for most to take, because it was perceived as

opening the door to atheism. Across the European intellectual community, the aphorism voiced by the Englishman Henry More in 1653 held good throughout the seventeenth century: “assuredly that Saying was nothing so true in Politicks, No Bishop, no King; as this is in Metaphysicks, No Spirit, no God” (More 1653, 164).

Yet even if legal criticisms were easiest to mount and most effective overall, notable individual attempts to sweep witchcraft beliefs away by restricting or reconceptualizing the powers of demons multiplied in this final period too. In England, where Scot’s arguments fell into abeyance for about three quarters of a century, they were eventually taken up again by the physician Thomas Ady in the 1650s, by the one-time religious radical John Webster in the 1670s, and by Francis Hutchinson in 1718. By 1691, when Balthasar Bekker began publishing his complete repudiation of witchcraft, *De Betoverde Weereld* (The World Bewitched), it was possible for this Dutch Calvinist pastor to combine all the misgivings previously felt about miscarriages of justice and misreadings of texts with a radical demonology that left no place for a devil who made a mockery of Providence. The same was true of the total skepticism of the Prussian jurist Christian Thomasius, whose *De Crimine Magiae* (On the Crime of Magic) appeared in 1701. In a later work of 1712, his *Historische Untersuchung vom Ursprung und Fortgang des Inquisitionis Prozesses* (Historical Investigation into the Origins and Continuation of the Inquisitorial Trial), Thomasius even went so far as to demolish the very genre that was demonology by treating every one of its canonical texts as critically unsound.

TRIALS AND TEXTS

The relationship between texts about witchcraft and witchcraft trials remains elusive. It is easy to assume that the texts were preoccupied by the need to justify the prosecutions, and in the past demonology has been read almost entirely from this direction, as if this was the only interesting thing about it. Naturally, many witchcraft texts did originate either in specific episodes or in waves of prosecutions, provoked by reflection on or the desire to defend what had occurred in the courtroom. The demonologies by magistrates who acted in trials are obvious examples, as are the writings of Binsfeld and Förner, intimately related to the “super hunts” in Trier and Franconia that they helped to coordinate. Many adverse reactions to witch prosecutions, like those of Scot, Goedelmann, Spee, and Filmer, arose likewise in response to individual cases or longer episodes of witch hunting that struck these critics as grossly unjust.

There are also numerous examples of individual witchcraft texts being brought into play during the course of prosecutions, most often when lawyers sought

help with legal technicalities directly from professional manuals or indirectly from the legal faculties of neighboring universities in the form of what in Germany was called a *gutachten*. Many other general forms of guidance and advice could be found in demonologies, should judges and magistrates choose to consult them, as, for example, they were invited to do by the English preacher Thomas Cooper or by Pierre Nodé in France. For such reasons, modern historians have sometimes made demonology into one of the principal causes of witchcraft prosecutions, believing that its profile as a scholarly genre rose and fell exactly as they did in seriousness and frequency.

Yet discussions of witchcraft in print also had a life that was independent of the trials. They flourished in some contexts—in the Dutch Republic in the 1690s or in England on the eve of the repeal of the witchcraft legislation in 1736, for example—after prosecutions had long since ceased. They appeared in texts such as catechisms, guides to casuistry and the Ten Commandments, biblical commentaries, university dissertations, medical textbooks, and works of political theory, whose primary purpose had little or nothing to do with either encouraging or criticizing the legal process. And they were written by authors, such as Joseph Glanvill and Henry More in English philosophical circles after the Restoration, who showed little interest in apprehending and punishing witches. Throughout European natural philosophy, indeed, witchcraft excited a theoretical interest completely unrelated to the practice of witch hunting. Acknowledging these discussions—not overlooking, for example, that Thomas Hobbes entitled the last book of *Leviathan* “Daemonologie”—means locating demonology within its various intellectual contexts in a more open-ended manner.

INTELLECTUAL CONTEXTS OF DEMONOLOGY

Demonology was in fact embedded in the broadest intellectual and cultural developments of early modern Europe. A work like Del Rio’s ranged over a truly vast intellectual terrain that far transcended anything as focused as a witchcraft trial. Educated beliefs about witchcraft were not held in isolation but were dependent on other intellectual commitments, as well as on a whole series of social and institutional practices. This dependence was not just a matter of intellectual processes and styles of argument and scholarship—rather, it was a matter of substance. Demonology was linked conceptually to views about the workings of the natural world and the human body, the course of divine and human history, and the nature of religious, political, and legal authority. To accept witchcraft’s reality was, broadly speaking, congruent with particular ways of looking at such questions, and incongruent with oth-

ers. On many occasions, too, it seems that witchcraft was used as a kind of intellectual resource—a means of thinking through problems that originated in these other areas of life and thought and had little or nothing to do with the legal prosecution of witches. What witchcraft scholars are currently looking for in demonology has much to do with these various features, making it an unusually revealing guide to early modern intellectual and cultural values in general.

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See also: BOOKS; *CANON EPISCOPI*; DEMONS; INCUBUS AND SUC-CUBUS; SKEPTICISM.

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DEMONS

In Christianity, demons are malignant beings, usually invisible, who try to induce the faithful to sin and afterwards punish them eternally in hell. Though in the Latin sources *diabolus* and *daemon* were regularly used as synonyms, this essay will deal only with minor devils, and not their overlord, Beelzebub, Lucifer, or Satan.

A HISTORY OF DEMONS

Several traditions united to make these evil creatures a significant component of traditional Christianity. From the Hebrew Bible derive demons like Behemoth, Asmodeus, and Leviathan, which remained only names, except to the most learned demonologists. More important were some episodes in the New Testament, such as Jesus’s exorcism of the “legion” of evil spirits who entered into swine (Matt. 8:28–34; Mark 5:1–15;

Luke 8:26–33). This episode provided a scriptural basis for both the belief in demonic possession and the possibility of ritual exorcism. The medieval and postmedieval idea that hundreds or thousands of fiends molested many demoniacs obviously is backed by this example.

The *Interpretatio christiana* (Christian interpretation) changed the pantheon of classical antiquity into a coven of demons. What that meant in the Middle Ages can be learned by the poignant example of an antique sculpture of the goddess Venus, chained in the church of St. Matthew at Trier, which was stoned ritually as a heathen idol. Roman religion contributed only a few details to the picture of the demons, including some attributes of Faunus and a belief in incubi. Neither did the Church hesitate to transform all Celtic and Germanic deities into devils by the same mechanism. Although the survival of the main heathen gods in demonological disguise seems to have been rare, a charm was used against the demons of the night in fourteenth-century Silesia, naming Odin (Wodan, Wotan) and his army. Usually, the “little” goddesses, imps, goblins, trolls, and similar creatures continued to play roles as helpers in popular belief. Only the instrument of the *Interpretatio christiana* equated them with the lesser pagan deities of the Latin tradition and changed them into demons. The clergy characterized them as such, whereas for the people they remained friendly beings, if treated correctly. A good instance thereof was the creature called *dyabolus* by Brother Rudolph in his *De officio cherubim* (Concerning the Duties of Cherubim, 1235/1250). This “devil,” who inhabited a privy, possessed a horse and a goshawk and foretold their future suitors to local women in exchange for gifts and bathing.

In the Early Middle Ages, fear of such beings seems to have formed a component primarily of monastic spirituality. This changed during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when the example-stories of the preachers, pious vernacular literature, and sculptures and paintings of ecclesiastical art made the laity much more aware of the fiends’ actions and appearance. The demoniacs were considered the best proof of their existence, as we know from the Cistercian Caesarius of Heisterbach, author of an influential collection of exempla (ca. 1220). In the Catholic Church, many forms of mental illness were explained as possession by evil spirits.

Already in the High Middle Ages, but more frequently in the early modern period, theologians constructed systems of specialized demons, each of whom fulfilled a certain office. A Cistercian monk, Richalm of Schöntal (early thirteenth century), described the hierarchy of fiends dedicated to tempting monks as an exact but invisible copy of the monastic functionaries. There were a demonic abbot, prior, cantor, and so on, who



Demons and angels hover at a deathbed, ca. 1460. (TopFoto.co.uk)

encircled their targets like a thick cloud, continually causing cough, toothache, insomnia, inebriety, and so on. A later monk, Martin Luther, shared Richalm's imagination.

Despite some earlier discussion, the concepts of natural spirits and natural magic only began to complicate theoretical views about demons in a more serious manner in the age of Agrippa of Nettesheim and Paracelsus. In the sixteenth-century German literary genre of *Teufelsbücher* (devil books), semi-allegorical demons appeared to personify different vices: a *Hbsenteufel* (pants devil), inventor of new luxurious trousers; a *Saufteufel* (drinking devil), instigator of drunkards; a *Spielteufel* (gambling devil), who tempted people to play risky games for money, and so on. During the early modern epoch, scholars developed truly baroque systems of the society of demons, constructing complex hierarchies and integrating classical mythology (Pluto as demon of greediness, and the like). The Jesuits' religious theater and their sermons also brought common people into contact with these kinds of demons, before the Enlightenment ended their credibility.

The question of whether the phenomenon of demonolatry actually existed during the Middle Ages and the confessional period (sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) has found no generally accepted answer.

Cases like that of Gilles de Rais, the fifteenth-century French nobleman executed for invoking demons, practicing sodomy, and murdering children, or the preservation of conjuring books with prayers to demons prove that some people did try to make a pact with demons, though the vast majority of extorted confessions on that subject probably only mirrored the inquisitors' fantasies. Conversely, a few Christians, getting no response from God, indeed turned to his enemy for help.

Today, it is the common opinion of scholars that the demons described by witches in their confessions show, on the one hand, traces of popular belief, and, on the other hand, incorporate elements of learned theology acquired from sermons and the suggestive questions of the prosecutors. Whereas the latter components were more or less identical throughout Catholic Europe, being based on the standard Latin works of Scholastics, inquisitors, and demonologists, the former show certain regional differences. For instance, the Devil helping the witch to churn is a typical Scandinavian motif, whereas the animal-familiar imp seems to have been most frequent in England. That fiends could show themselves in the guise of animals, usually chthonic ones such as vipers or toads, but also dogs or cats, seems to have been a pan-European conception. Often the evil spirit changes appearance: The nun Magdalena Crucia (d. 1560), a once famous case, used to be visited by her devil Balbán in the form of an angel, as Jesus, as various animals, and as a handsome young man. This ability of the bad angels to show themselves in the form of good ones required the development of a theological analysis, called discernment of spirits. It was one of the reproaches used against Joan of Arc that she had not asked the ministry to apply this technique to the apparitions whose orders she obeyed.

Many demons, however, appear to have been confined to certain natural locations where they met with their human accomplices, often a wood, or an elevation in the ground. Neither was the place for staging of the Sabbath chosen randomly; it often corresponded to a "sacred" place of popular religion, like the famous Brocken, or Blocksberg, in Germany, or the walnut tree of Benevento in Italy. According to the minutes of the trials in Prussia, the witches apparently gathered at places that had had a cultic function for the Prussian population before its Christianization.

THE DEMONS' OFFICES

Demons were widely believed to be able to bring all sorts of ill luck on humans. In the ninth century, Agobard of Lyons condemned the belief that fiends cause thunderstorms and hail, but the official benedictions against tempests, used in all churches, show that his long remained a lonely voice, seconded successfully only much later by reformers and enlightened thinkers.

In the later Middle Ages, theologians became increasingly convinced that religious deviance and witchcraft must have been caused through collaboration between men and demons. Magic, it seems, had traditionally been practiced through the natural virtues inherent in special plants, stones, gestures, and the like, as well as through the mental powers of specially disposed individuals. The clergy construed magic, according to a formula deriving mostly from St. Augustine, as actions intended to bring those who performed them into contact with demons and to do harm with their help. The “classical” witch, the witch as she appeared in the imagery of the learned, could do nothing through her own energy, but had to rely on her demon’s power. Apart from helping to perpetrate magic and other crimes, the devils had an additional function, namely that of nonhuman sexual partners, in the form of incubi and succubi. It is clear that this function was mostly the projection of the inquisitors’ sexual fantasies, as the majority of accused women had to confess intercourse with their own *Buhlteufel* (demon lover), whereas male witches were seldom required to avow this aberration. Descriptions of demonic intercourse varied from occasional enthusiastic praise of the extrahuman lover’s erotic talents (very outspoken, for example, in the confessions of Gostanza, the witch of San Miniato, tried in 1594), to more frequent lamentations about their brutality and coldness (especially in the Basque records). Many theologians thought changelings were the fruits of such intercourse; Luther recommended their immediate and unquestioned killing.

Eventually, the most terrible task of the demons was the punishment of sinners in hell and (as many believed in spite of the official teaching) in purgatory. The Middle Ages produced a vast literature of otherworldly visions where one could study in detail the torments they prepared for the condemned. This genre influenced the abundant depictions of demonic actions in the underworld produced by ecclesiastical art from the twelfth century onward. What the demons did to their prisoners—flogging, boiling, smashing, and castrating them—was a combination of sadistic fantasies with equally sadistic corporeal punishments factually executed in accordance with criminal law. In this respect, the human-like figures of the demons offered an ideal screen for a socially accepted projection of aggressive individual and collective fantasies.

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See also: AGOBARD OF LYONS; ANGELS; BENEVENTO, WALNUT TREE OF; CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DEMONOLOGY; DEVIL; DEVIL BOOKS; DIABOLISM; DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS; EXORCISM; HELL; INCUBUS AND SUCCUBUS; JOAN OF ARC; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; RAIS, GILLES DE; SATANISM; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC; VISIONS.

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DENMARK

The first European kingdom to require legal appeals for all witchcraft convictions (1576), Denmark played a significant role in the history of European witchcraft. In 1080, writing to the Danish king, Harald, Pope Gregory VII warned against accusing women of causing changes in temperature, raising storms, or inflicting diseases on humans. During the next 400 years, sorcery was only occasionally mentioned in Danish sources, predominantly in legal texts. It was not until the early sixteenth century that cases of sorcery, defined as the ability of certain individuals to harm without the agency of the Devil, or witchcraft, involving a pact with the Devil or his assistants, reached Danish courts.

From the mid-fifteenth century, wall paintings with witches in many Danish churches all over the country testify to the fact that Denmark had become part of the European witchcraft tradition. It must be termed a witchcraft tradition, because the paintings reveal a clear and close connection between the witches and the Devil. The insignificant part played by the Devil during the subsequent trials thus provokes some surprise. It can be explained, however, as a consequence of the legislation enacted in Denmark beginning in the 1540s.

Almost all Danish legislation before the royal decree of 1617, beginning with twelfth-century provincial laws that mentioned sorcery only in connection with homicide, dealt exclusively with procedural questions. The only exception was Christian II’s so-called *landlov*, “law of the country,” from 1521; this law defined the

crime as *maleficium* (harmful magic), but we find hints of a notion of the Sabbath together with permission to use torture in order to elicit a confession. The typical accusatorial procedure used in Denmark was almost replaced by an inquisitorial procedure. This law code, however, was quickly repealed in 1522, when Christian II was expelled from the country.

Two paragraphs in a nationwide law of 1547, which was repealed in 1558, had procedural consequences for the next 150 years and was of utmost importance for the content of Danish witchcraft trials. One paragraph stated that the testimony of convicted thieves, traitors, and witches ought not to be used in court as evidence against other people. This meant, of course, that the high numbers of convictions based on chains of denunciations, known in countries using an inquisitorial procedure, were unknown in Denmark. The other paragraph stated that torture was not allowed before a death sentence had been pronounced; an accused witch could thus not be convicted through a forced confession. In 1576, yet another law was promulgated preventing mass trials. The Danish Council of the Realm had passed sentence on appeal in several witchcraft cases, finding the accused not guilty; however, at the time of the sentencing, the women had already been executed. To prevent similar occurrences, it was decreed that all guilty verdicts by the juries of local courts should be brought before a High Court for confirmation.

Not until October 1617 was legislation passed defining the material content of the crime of witchcraft. This decree distinguished between those who cured human beings and their property through supernatural means and those who made a pact with the Devil. The former were to be banished, but the latter were to be executed by fire. The decree lasted until the *Danske Lov*, the Danish Law Code of 1683, when minor changes in the law were carried through, at a time when witchcraft trials were on the brink of disappearing from Danish law courts.

The 1617 decree created a situation in which a comprehensive witch hunt seemed the next step, but ideology and legal practice did not mesh. The ideology hinged on the pact, but very few would voluntarily admit to having made a pact with the Devil; and the legislation of 1547 would not allow the use of torture before the accused had been convicted. Moreover, the High Court judges demanded two independent witnesses before they would pass a death sentence. As the Danish authorities never changed their legal system, Denmark never experienced mass witch hunts.

The actual number of trials in Denmark is unknown. Even the High Court records after 1576 are missing from most of the provinces. It was not until 1609 that these records were preserved, and then only for the province of Jutland. It ought to be stressed, however, that the records from Jutland are quite intact for most

of the remaining century. It can be calculated that 494 trials took place between 1609 and 1687, which was the year of the last known trial (Johansen 1990, 347). An extrapolation for all of Denmark does not seem feasible, because the distribution of trials in Jutland, although highly significant, was very uneven. Four areas in Jutland stand out: three with a very high number of trials and one with very few. In part of eastern Jutland, hardly any cases can be found during these almost eighty years. The kingdom's agrarian structure helps explain the geographical distribution of its witchcraft trials. Most Danish farms were centered in a village; but exactly in those areas most heavily plagued by trials, isolated farms were scattered across the countryside, creating a higher degree of fear. Additionally, the soil in these areas was often of poor quality, thus threatening the balance between agricultural surplus and deficit. The loss of a cow could be disastrous.

The chronological distribution also seems significant; almost 60 percent of the 494 trials took place between the promulgation of the 1617 decree and 1625. From 1625 until the early 1650s there was a slow but steady trickle of trials. After that date, the trials almost stopped until a final flare-up in the late 1680s. The rise in the number of trials during the mid-1680s was primarily due to a minor nobleman, Jorgen Arenfeldt, who at his manor court initiated more than half of the trials. The motives for his desire to prosecute witches are, however, unknown.

Denmark's legal system influenced this course of events, first in the low rate of witches sentenced to be burned by the High Court judges: Just under 50 percent suffered that fate. This rate is not surprising when compared with other European countries where verdicts were appealed to appellate courts. But the discrepancy between the percentage found guilty in the courts of first instance and the High Courts is amazing; nine out of ten accused were found guilty by the local courts; moreover, the High Court judges did not need a confession to sentence the accused to be burned. The fear of witches was thus manifest in local communities, but the High Court judges did not share the same fear. This did not mean that those whose lives were spared were acquitted. Almost all received an *absolutio ab instantia*, meaning that they were found not guilty until proved otherwise. The social consequences of this sentence must have been immense, as very few suffered a new trial. The disciplinary effects probably led them to act in such a way that their neighbors had no reason to waste time and money on new trials.

One feature of the Danish trials changed in the years immediately after the 1617 decree. As the High Court judges had to confirm all guilty verdicts from the juries of the local courts, several trials involving cunning folk were also appealed. The judges were in no position to confirm verdicts where the accused had confessed only

to “cunningness,” beneficent magic, and therefore returned such cases to the local courts with orders for new trials. But, apparently, no new trials took place, as the local population needed the cunning folk—and the High Court judges must have become aware of this fact. As early as 1619, they began a new practice of banishing cunning folk without requiring a new trial. In terms of sentence, banishment meant that a convicted healer had to leave the High Court district where she or he lived and go to another one. This attitude of the High Court judges was in accordance with the fierce attacks of prominent members of the Danish clergy against cunning folk. The royal historiographer and canon Anders Sørensen Vedel described in the 1590s how people were prepared to be cured by cunning folk, though they knew full well that the Devil had sent the cunning folk.

Most of the time, an accused person would have a long reputation for witchcraft, usually traceable back ten or fifteen years (in a few cases, forty to fifty years). During those years more and more suspicious occurrences accumulated, building up to a trial. One representative woman, over the course of eleven years, was accused of bewitching piglets (after her victim had refused to sell her one of his piglets); of maiming a hand (of a man who had shot at her dog); of the loss of a horse (belonging to the man who shot her dog, when it had chased his cattle); of the illness of a man (who had given the husband of the accused poor grain as wages); and of the death of sheep (whose owner complained that she had allowed her dog to chase his grazing sheep).

It is very interesting to note that, in many cases, it is possible to pinpoint the occurrence that led to a reputation of being a witch. A witness testified in court that her brother had told her six years previously how a woman had threatened him, because he had taken her heifer from his oat field. Shortly thereafter he died, and the minister testified at the trial that the woman had had a reputation of being a witch ever since.

Danish witchcraft accusations centered on two subjects: the death or illness of other people, and the death and sickness of farm animals, because almost 90 percent of the Danish population lived in the countryside.

In the situations leading to a bewitchment, Danish trials resembled those cases of “denied begging” that Alan Macfarlane studied in Essex, in which beggars were turned away and supposedly retaliated by laying a curse on those who had rejected their requests. One of the few vagrants (called the “Wild Sheep”) accused of witchcraft visited a farm asking for some mead at the time of the party being held celebrating a childbirth. The whole village was present, and she was denied the drink. Unwisely (but understandably) she said that their bees should produce no more mead, which turned out to be true. It is clear that the “Wild Sheep” would have expected at least a minimum of decent behavior at

this party, and it is equally clear that the hosts treated her the way they did because she already possessed a reputation for being a witch.

The typical Danish witch was a woman, married but past childbearing age. The preponderance of women among Danish witches can largely be ascribed to the fact that in quarrels, women were apt to curse rather than fight, and cursing was dangerous in a time of general fear of witchcraft. Their age must be attributed to the fact that it usually took a long time to build a reputation as a witch; because most women were married, so were most witches.

A development toward mass trials was thus on its way during the years after the 1617 decree; although denunciations by convicted witches alone could not be used as a reason for conviction, they could always be used to start a trial. In areas with many trials, we can find chains of trials slowly creeping across Jutland on the basis of denunciations; for instance, one starting in May 1619 in southwestern Jutland and ending fifteen months later 60 kilometers to the east.

One reason why Danish trials never reached mass proportions must be found in the lack of a widespread and shared notion of the Sabbath and the all-important role of the Devil. An idea existed of an organization among the witches, who met at specific places at specific times. The sexual themes of European mythology were sometimes suggested but never became the decisive element in these trials. The number of members in a coven varied, for instance, between eight and twelve.

Our most detailed description of a Sabbath was almost chaste in its content. Three other women had taught Anne Friiskone what to do when the coven met at the churchyard. She walked backwards around the church three times, denying her Christianity. Then she blew three times through the keyhole in the Devil's name, and the Devil appeared before her like a black dog, putting his sign on her forehead. Jørgen Simensen was the leader of the coven, Lars Krag the drummer, and Chresten Pedersen the piper. When they gathered for a dance at the churchyard, the witches brought beer and mead. At first they met in the church, where their “imps” were counted, they confessed what they had done, and Jørgen Simensen gave a sermon; sometimes he threw the chasuble over his head. However, Anne Friiskone never told the judges what she saw when he did it. A few times he had intercourse with one of the women in the church, but always with the same woman; we find no confession involving promiscuity.

The notion of the Devil's mark was vivid among the population, but an elaborate history only evolved slowly. It began in the court cases with the story of Anne “Sand,” who told how she was bitten in the thigh when she refused to participate in a bewitchment. Kirsten Ibsdatter later said that the coven met in Troms Church (in Norway), where its leader gave a sermon in Latin

and German, which she could not understand. Her imp, called Plett, put a mark on her stomach—which apparently was a bit too indecent, because she told the High Court that it was on her nose. Anne Giertsdatter crafted an elaborate story, telling how twelve persons had walked to the church in Hørby, where a beautiful “lad” greeted her. They asked her to blow through the keyhole and denounce her Christianity; when she turned around, the beautiful lad had turned into a black, bald dog. The Devil then put his mark on her forehead, where it was still visible. This slow process testifies to the fact that the notion of the Devil’s mark evolved during the trials and only took shape after the publication of the 1617 decree, when the trials grew in numbers.

Both theoretically and practically, Danish clerics did little to pursue witches. Indeed, the cessation of witchcraft trials originated in the frequent adherence of Danish ministers to early sixteenth-century providentialist explanations, such as those of the Catholic Martin Plantsch and the Lutheran Johannes Brenz, which emphasized that suffering came from God and not through the evil deeds of witches. Although Brenz was widely read in Denmark, it is likely that most Danish ministers were inspired by other theologians who drew on Brenz, such as Anders Sørensen Vedel and the bishop of Stavanger, Jørgen Ericksson. In his sermon on the Book of Jonah, Ericksson pointed out that adversity should never be attributed to the Devil or sorcerers, because it was God’s punishment for sins. In his third sermon on the ninetieth Psalm, Vedel wrote that sorcerers should not be given the honor of being thought able to cause death or disease, because man only suffered such afflictions through God’s providence. Vedel did not deny the existence of sorcerers, but he spiritualized the question of guilt, sin, and fate. It is hardly coincidental that Ericksson chose the Book of Jonah and Vedel the ninetieth Psalm as their points of departure. Luther had emphasized in his sermon on the ninetieth Psalm that under no circumstances should man link his misfortune or death to a demonic power. Similarly, in his commentary on the Book of Jonah, Luther had underlined that God visited man with all sorts of plagues and finally even with death.

In practice, even though the decree of 1617 had described witchcraft as primarily a religious crime, Denmark’s clergy displayed an extraordinary passivity in denouncing suspected witches. In 1623, a minister testified that a suspected witch had been notorious for witchcraft for more than twenty-one years, but he had never denounced her. Only one minister found it necessary to apologize for his inaction; he was well aware that a certain woman was notorious for witchcraft, but, as he pointed out, he was an old man. Evidently, the behavior of such ministers indicated that they had little desire to initiate trials; in many cases, they were in no

position to take action. The minister in Præstkær pointed out before the beginning of a trial that he had never heard of the woman being accused of witchcraft.

After Vedel, sorcery did not reemerge as a topic in subsequent Danish theological writings, whereas the spiritualization of the relationship between sin and adversity was extensively covered. During the first two decades of the seventeenth century, the spiritual nature of the relationship between sin and adversity was given only moderate attention by theologians, but from the start of the 1620s it became more and more dominant, coinciding with the growth of a pre-Pietist movement. During the Thirty Years’ War, when German Lutherans increasingly abandoned this tradition, seeing adversity as sent by Providence, several Danish ministers retained it. The minister on the island of Fur had been of the opinion that a woman had bewitched him, but a colleague praised him for following the example of Job and accepting his pain as a test from God.

The cessation of the Danish trials must be explained in this theological context, but the severe rebuke and the high fine the High Court imposed on Jørgen Arenfeldt for bringing innocent people to trial clearly taught prospective witch hunters that the Danish authorities had no intention of tolerating similar behavior in the future. The last official execution in Denmark took place in 1693, although the belief in witches did not disappear. There was a lynching in Northern Jutland in 1722. Not until 1866 was all witchcraft legislation repealed.

JENS CHR. V. JOHANSEN

See also: ACCUSATORIAL PROCEDURE; BRENZ, JOHANN; CHRISTIAN IV; DEVIL’S MARK; HEMMINGSEN, NIELS; MACFARLANE, ALAN; RURAL WITCHCRAFT; SABBAT.

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DESCARTES, RENÉ (1596–1650)

The influence of Descartes on the story of early modern European witchcraft was indirect but crucially important, because the highly influential worldview he developed left no room for witchcraft. Commonly called the "father of modern philosophy," René Descartes was one of the most significant intellectual figures of the seventeenth century, a reformer and innovator in natural science, mathematics, metaphysics, and methodology. Born in La Haye, France, in 1596 and educated at the famous Jesuit college of La Flèche, Descartes soon became dissatisfied with traditional Scholastic learning based on the teachings of Aristotle, and resolved henceforth "to seek no knowledge other than that which could be found either in myself or in the great book of the world" (Descartes 1972, I, 186). In his *Discourse on the Method* (1637), he recognized only mathematics among contemporary sciences as capable of producing reasons that are evident and certain; all others provided nothing but doubtful opinion. Descartes' consequent advice to knowledge-seekers was to take mathematics as their model, eschewing the traditional reliance on the teachings of authority in favor of an analytical method in which conclusions were logically drawn from carefully collected and properly verified premises. His own writings on science demonstrated this method in action: Descartes' physics and cosmology abandoned the metaphysical baggage of Aristotelian science and attempted instead a comprehensive explanation of terrestrial and celestial phenomena in purely mechanical terms. For Descartes, the physical universe was a structure governed by a set of universal natural laws that could be characterized in the language of mathematics.

Descartes wrote nothing about witchcraft, magic, or demonology, apparently deeming these subjects unworthy of notice. Unlike some other major figures of the seventeenth-century Scientific Revolution, Descartes had no belief whatever in the occult sciences (here he contrasts, for instance, with Sir Isaac Newton, who

retained a lifelong faith in astrology). Yet his indirect influence was great: Soon after 1700, Christian Thomasius praised Descartes for disturbing "the nest of scholastic fantasies" in which the evil of witch prosecution had been hatched. Descartes' silence was more effective in diminishing belief in witchcraft than the laborious refutations of many other writers. The Cartesian universe leaves room for God as its designer, but it admits no occult forces or properties of any other kind.

Although many of the details of Descartes' physical theories were later found to be erroneous, the mechanistic outlook of his thought had a far-reaching and irreversible influence on the subsequent course of scientific culture. Mechanism, which stresses natural laws as the ordering principles of reality, excluded earlier notions of a universe permeated by personal and spiritual forces. Once the world had become a machine, the phenomena of experience had to be explained in the quantitative language of physics rather than in terms of symbolic relationships, the *spiritus mundi*, or the struggles between good and bad angels. It was hard for the Devil to keep a foothold in such a world; such Cartesian thinkers as Nicolas Målebranche (1638–1715) turned to naturalistic psychology for explanations of such phenomena as "bewitchment" and "demonic possession," which had formerly seemed to demand demonological interpretation.

Nevertheless, in the first of his *Meditations on First Philosophy* (1641), Descartes' philosophical masterpiece, he introduced an evil spirit "not less powerful than deceitful" to serve in a strictly methodological role (Descartes 1972, I, 148). If we are to reconstruct our knowledge on firmer foundations, we first need to strip away our old assumptions and prejudices. Therefore, Descartes asked us to imagine that a *malin génie* (evil spirit) devoted his energies to making us believe falsehoods. It was possible, he speculated, that "the heavens, the earth, colours, figures, sound and all other external things are nought but the illusions and dreams of which this genius has availed himself in order to lay traps for my aedulity" (Descartes 1972, I, 148). It has been suggested that the inspiration for this famous thought experiment was the Grandier case at Loudun in the 1630s, but there is little need to look to any specific cause célèbre for its source. More than a thousand years of energetic speculation about the powers of the Devil stand behind the speculation of the *First Meditation*. However, as Descartes was careful to explain to a correspondent, the doubt raised by the demon fantasy was "hyperbolic" and not meant to apply in real life; the demon hypothesis was merely a device for loosening the grip of received ideas that needed to be reassessed (Descartes 1972, II, 266). Although Descartes would probably have conceded the impossibility of firmly disproving the existence of a

malin génie, there is no place in the Cartesian worldview for the operations of deceitful demons that created such fear in ordinary people and perplexity in the judges in witchcraft trials.

GEOFFREY SCARRE

See also: MECHANICAL PHILOSOPHY; SKEPTICISM.

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DEVIL

The Devil, traditionally defined as the personification of evil, is one of the most important elements distinguishing European and American Christian ideas of witchcraft from ideas of witchcraft in other cultures. The real terror and dread that many Christian Europeans and Americans, educated and uneducated alike, felt toward witches from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries was magnified by their conviction that witches were the willing servants of God's greatest enemy. The Devil, also often called Satan, had enormous cosmic power; he was seeking always and everywhere to ruin the divine plan for the world and specifically to wreck and undo God's plan for the happiness of humanity. The Devil's power, might, and hatred of Christ and Christians were demonstrated by divine revelation: Because God had revealed it in the Bible, it could not be dismissed without dismissing the authenticity of the Bible.

The belief that the reality of the Devil was an established fact is the master key to the whole question of alleged diabolical witchcraft. Under the Devil's leadership, witches strove to kill the body and destroy the soul of every Christian. Just as the Devil was able to change his shape in order to entice, intimidate, or allay doubts, so witches could make themselves appear to be normal and innocuous neighbors. Just as the Devil was the greatest of all liars, deceiving people into doing harm, so his followers, the witches, could deceive people and so ruin them. For European and American Christians from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries, a witch was a Satanist; witchcraft was equivalent to Satanism, a blasphemous war against Christ and against humanity. The devastating terror of witches and of their master, Satan, was deep, widespread, and genuine.



The Devil and his demons. (Topham/The Image Works)

PRINCIPLE OF EVIL

Most societies have not had an idea of one single principle or personage of evil. Some religions, such as Buddhism (which does, however, have a tempter spirit named Mara) regarded evil as an illusion to be overcome with enlightenment. Many societies, such as those of ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, attributed both good and evil to their morally ambivalent gods and goddesses. For example, the Greek Artemis (Roman Diana), was at once virgin, fertility goddess, huntress, and lady of the underworld. In India, Shiva both creates and destroys. Some societies, such as early India and Iran, posited warring powers of good and evil. A few societies believed that two supreme principles were constantly at war. Ancient Greek Orphism (a pre-Socratic blend of religion and philosophy) and some followers of Plato—especially the Neoplatonists of the third century C.E.—held that the two principles were spiritual (good) and material (evil).

The Zoroastrians, whose founder, Zarathushtra, lived about 600 B.C.E. in Iran, introduced the idea of two opposite and totally independent spirits or principles, Mazda and Ahriman.

Only in monotheistic religions has the idea of a single prince of evil been dominant. Evil is an inevitable logical problem in monotheism. If there is one god, then evil seems to limit either his power or his goodness. Monotheist religions have devised many ways out of this dilemma, one of which is to believe in the existence of a great power opposing good. The Devil has had many names, the most common being Satan and Lucifer. The word *Devil* comes from Latin *diabolus*, derived from Greek *diabolos*, a slanderer or accuser or adversary. *Diabolos* is a translation of the Hebrew *satan*, meaning someone or something obstructing the way. The names Belial, Mastema, and Semyaza also appear in the Jewish Apocryphal literature (200 B.C.E.–100 C.E.), but in the New Testament, which was written in Greek, the usual terms are *Satan* and *diabolos*.

THE BIBLE

The ancient Israelites distinguished between good and evil but without a clear idea of evil's origins. The Hebrew Bible, or Old Testament (composed over the period roughly 1000–200 B.C.E.), contains only vague and disparate ideas of the Devil: (1) *satan* appears as a common noun; (2) a vague concept of a heavenly court includes the *bene ha elohim*, “sons of God,” who were rather like minor gods more or less under the Lord's command yet able to sin against him (as in Genesis 6:5–6); (3) the *malakim*, messengers of the Lord, could be either creative or destructive; and (4) a spiritual personage named Satan, whose chief role is as the tempter and punisher, appears in the Book of Job.

The idea of the Devil as a powerful leader of evil spirits became greatly more prominent in the Jewish Apocalyptic literature, written at a time when the Jews were suffering oppression by the Syrians and then the Romans. Although this literature was not accepted by either Jews or Christians as biblical (that is, it was not considered revealed Scripture), it exerted wide influence on the New Testament and other early Christian writings. For the apocalyptic writers, the Devil controlled the rulers of this world, both the demons and the human evil-doers, but the good God would soon arrive, heralded by his Messiah, to destroy evil-doers and establish an eternal kingdom of justice and right. The use of the word *diabolos* to mean “the Devil,” the chief of evil powers, first appeared in the translation of the Hebrew Bible from Hebrew into Greek (the so-called Septuagint translation, ca. 200–50 B.C.E.). The term was then used, along with the name “Satan,” in the Greek of the New Testament.

The power of the Devil in the New Testament, as in Apocryphal literature, was immense, though he was ultimately doomed by the power of the Messiah, Christ. The New Testament writers had a sharp sense of the immediacy of evil. The conflict between good and evil was absolutely central to the New Testament. God became human in Jesus Christ in order to save us. What he saved us from was the power of the Devil. The Devil was God's adversary in the struggle for human souls and bodies waged between Christ and Satan. The Devil tempted Adam and Eve to original sin, and he continued to be effective in assaulting people by obsession (attacks from outside), by possession (attacking their souls from within), and, worst of all, by tempting them to pervert their free will by choosing evil over good. At the end of time, Christ would return to break the Devil's power and to establish the Kingdom of God.

CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN CONCEPT

Subsequent Christian writers emphasized the theme of the Devil's power to varying degrees, but in the first three centuries of the Christian era, when persecutions of Christians and Jews by pagans were frequent, the theme was prominently expressed in spiritual dualism. Spiritual dualism was the belief that two mighty spiritual powers struggle against one another for control of the cosmos. A spectrum of dualistic ideas pervaded Christianity at that time. On the extreme dualist end of the spectrum were sectaries known as Gnostics (from *gnosis*, “secret knowledge”). The Gnostics believed that only they knew the true meaning of Christ: namely, that he was a pure spirit sent from the invisible, spiritual, hidden God to save humans from their bodies. Some Gnostics (like the Zoroastrians) thought that the Devil was independent of the true God and almost as powerful. Since the true God hated matter and especially the human body, which kept the spirit imprisoned, the “God” of the Hebrew Bible was really the Devil.

Most Christians at the time held the milder view that Satan was the leader of rebel angels, whom Christ had already vanquished but who still exercised the remnants of their powers by trying to pull as many humans as they could down with them in their ruin. The milder view generally prevailed, but the Devil was nevertheless a figure of terrifying immediacy for the hermits and monks of the third to the sixth centuries, whose writings dominated much Christian thought in that period. The hermits and monks went out into deserted places to fight against the temptations of worldly affairs and the Devil. Satan tempted early monks such as St. Anthony (Egyptian ascetic and hermit) and St. Pachomius (Egyptian hermit) with visions of sex, wealth, banquets, and power—and when temptations failed, assaulted them with whippings, shakings, stench, and clashing noises.

Christian concepts of the Devil were distilled in the thought of St. Augustine, whose ideas on the subject became the basic, classical view for later Christians. In this view, the Devil is a great angel who was created by God both good and also with free will. Using his free will, he chose to serve himself rather than God, and he persuaded many other defiant angels to follow him; these fallen angels shared his evil will and became known as demons. The Devil is the commander of these demons and of all humans who choose to flout God's will. The Devil's greatest success was tempting the human race (represented by Adam and Eve) to choose their own will over that of God. Their "original sin" was atoned for only by the incarnation and passion of Christ. The Devil continues to assault us body and soul, yet he also is allowed by God to torment sinners in hell, so that Satan is at one and the same time a warden and a prisoner of the underworld. Though Christ is ultimately victorious, Satan will be allowed one last chance to destroy the world: his servant, a human ruler known as Antichrist, will lead his forces at the end of the world in a doomed effort to upset the divine plan and to ruin human happiness.

Such views prevailed in both Eastern and Western Christianity. For most Christians, this story was taken as explicit, real, immediate, and terrible. Fear of the Devil and of hell, rooted in Scripture and theology, was commonplace and magnified by popular legend, literature, and art. The Devil was seen as continually tempting humans. His trickery was all the more deceitful because he changed his shape at will: he often showed himself in attractive, appealing, or sympathetic form, although he could also intimidate human beings in the form of a dragon, serpent, goat, or giant; he could even make himself as small as the tiniest particle. He could appear as either a man or a woman, and though he generally presented himself as male, he could appear in the darkness to seduce either sex. Associated with night, darkness, cold, and the North, he was usually portrayed as black, but he might also be portrayed as red because of his connection with flame, fire, and heat. He belched flames from his mouth and nostrils. He was the ape of God, blasphemously mocking him (as in Dante, where Satan's three faces parody the Trinity). He emitted foul odors. His horns represented the power of the bull and the unrestrained lust of the goat; they were connected with the crescent moon and therefore with night and death as well as with power. He had a long tail, again symbolizing both animal strength and the penis. His wings symbolized his power over the air and his ability to move instantly from place to place. No one, anywhere at anytime, was safe from him. Nonetheless, this terrible being was frequently depicted as being tricked or fooled by clever humans, at times becoming a figure of comedy in folklore and on

the stage; making Satan a foolish object of humor was an effort to control or reduce his psychological terror.

THE LATER MIDDLE AGES AND REFORMATION

In the twelfth century, a current of strong dualism reappeared in western Europe, particularly among the heretics known as Cathars, who reprised the Gnostic idea that the devil was lord of all matter, including human bodies, and almost as powerful as his spiritual enemy, Christ. Orthodox Christians at the time, while rejecting such extreme views, nevertheless moved a bit in the direction of dualism, especially because the twelfth through fourteenth centuries were also a period when zealous popes and bishops were attempting to reform morals and education by imposing strict controls on society and labeling their opponents as demonic. As such views were not only drawn up and aired by theologians and ecclesiastics but also preached from street corners and in marketplaces, fear of the Devil had become stronger and more widespread by the fourteenth century than it had been for a millennium.

Renewed terror of Satan was one of the many causes of the accusations of witchcraft that spread from the late Middle Ages through the Renaissance and Reformation. The leaders of the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation, Martin Luther and John Calvin, changed nothing important about belief in the Devil; their theology on that subject was continuous with, and virtually identical to, that of the Middle Ages. By insisting upon a literal interpretation of the Bible, they underscored the reality of Satan. Luther believed that he had grappled with him personally. Protestants thus promoted the terror of Satan and were as quick to identify the Devil in the Catholic Church as Catholics were to see the Devil's work in the Protestants. Thus, the conflicts caused by the Reformation promoted heightened belief in Satan's might on all sides and encouraged accusations of diabolical witchcraft.

DIABOLICAL WITCHCRAFT

Fear of the Devil defined and delineated the character of European witchcraft in a unique way. For Christian Europe, unlike many other societies, such as those in Africa, witches did not have inherent magical powers, nor were the means that they used to attack people inherently imbued with such powers. Every supernatural power to harm and every means with which to do harm were granted to witches by Satan. Thus Western Christian society linked witches to heretics, Muslims, and (from the eleventh century) Jews as the enemies of Christ. These enemies of Christ, allied with the demons, were marching in a huge, dark, shadowy army against Christianity and every Christian soul. Indeed, the witches were deemed the worst of all the human enemies of Christianity.

For Western Christians, all witchcraft was diabolical—and diabolically deliberate. Other sinners might be unconsciously following the Devil, but witches were guilty of the staggeringly evil crime of consciously agreeing to help in his plan for the destruction of the world. When theologians defined witchcraft, they argued that nothing could be worse than the intentional choice to worship Satan in place of God. Nothing remotely resembling the widespread devil worship imagined by the enemies of witchcraft ever existed. In other words, diabolical witchcraft as defined by theologians and lawyers simply did not exist outside of their own minds.

At the center of the alleged diabolical witchcraft was the idea of a “pact,” a contract between the witch and the Devil in which the witch gave herself or himself to Satan in return for supernatural powers. The idea of a pact derived from ancient legends popularized from the ninth century about persons who signed a written contract with the Devil, often in order to procure ecclesiastical preferment. The ultimate, classical version of the pact was the widespread Faust legend, first published in 1587 and immortalized by two playwrights, Christopher Marlowe and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Pacts could be of two kinds: written, explicit contracts and implicit contracts. The accusation that an implicit pact had been made was a much more common and more effective tool of prosecutors, because no written or even oral evidence was needed to accuse a suspected witch of this crime. In an implicit pact, the accused witch did not have to have made a formal contract with the Devil: Malevolent supernatural acts (*maleficia*) were enough to demonstrate that the accused had enlisted in the Devil’s ranks and was therefore a witch.

Witches, it was believed, worshiped the Devil either singly or in groups, at meetings called Sabbats. The meetings of the alleged Satanists were considered a monstrous mockery or perversion of Christian liturgy and a defiance of civil law. The witches allegedly believed that Satan was the Lord, instead of Christ. The witches supposedly sacrificed children in parody of Christ’s sacrifice and ate human flesh in parody of the consecrated bread and wine of the Mass, or Eucharist. The Devil appeared at such meetings in the form of a man or an animal, usually a goat, which the witches worshipped. Another indication of the witches’ involvement with the Devil was the “Devil’s mark.” It was believed that when a witch made the pact with Satan, he left a mark on his new follower. Sometimes these marks were visible (as in the shape of a mole); more often, they were invisible and discovered only by pricking the victim: Any insensitive point on the skin was considered a Devil’s mark. The Devil aided his accomplices by helping them deceive investigators into believing them innocent. It was for this reason that the accused were frequently tortured into self-incrimination.

Belief in diabolical witchcraft has never diffused from Western Christianity into other cultures except insofar as those cultures have become Christianized. The idea of the Devil made little sense in religious traditions other than the monotheistic ones. The Devil cannot be abolished from Christianity so long as Christianity is based on the New Testament. Still, as belief in diabolical witchcraft declined in the later seventeenth century and virtually disappeared by the second half of the eighteenth, belief in the Devil diminished rapidly at the same time. The decline of belief in Satan was probably hastened by the discredit brought on it by the absurdity and wide civil upset caused by the witchcraft trials. But it was above all the scientific and philosophical revolutions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that diminished belief in both. Isaac Newton, René Descartes, David Hume, and Voltaire lived in a different world from that inhabited by St. Augustine, Luther, and Calvin. As belief in Scripture and in Christian tradition made way for belief in mathematics and empiricism, the Devil was increasingly marginalized.

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See also: ANGELS; ANTICHRIST; AUGUSTINE, ST.; BIBLE; CALVIN, JOHN; DEMONS; DEVIL BOOKS; DEVIL’S MARK; FAUST, JOHANN GEORG; GOAT; LUTHER, MARTIN; MANICHAISM; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; SABBAT; SATANISM.

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DEVIL BOOKS

Short, didactic, and often amusing tracts attractively printed and presented, devil books appeared as a popular new print product in Germany during the second half of the sixteenth century, as Protestant reforming movements encouraged a heightened awareness of human weakness in the face of the overwhelming power of sin and its instigator, the Devil. This growing consciousness of human turpitude and sinfulness made the Devil a metaphor for all evil as well as a means of chastising specific personal behaviors deemed unacceptable in the early modern community, with witchcraft, of course, as a prime target.

In these books, the Devil appeared as the demon responsible for appealing to and tempting human vanities, passions, and anxieties. These were portrayed as individual devils assigned to specific sinful behaviors, such as drinking, hunting, clothes craziness, money grabbing, gambling, witchcraft, conjuring, and destructive mental states like melancholy. In all, thirty-eight books have been identified as belonging to this special genre of early modern didactic writings. Devil books can be divided into three thematic groups: Some were tracts on moral sins and evil habits (“devils” of drinking, fashion, cursing, gambling, hunting, stinginess, sloth, arrogance, dancing, flattery, lying, swearing, and melancholy); others concerned matrimony and family (“devils” of marriage, women, domesticity, worry, servants); still others addressed demonology and church life (about heaven and hell, conjuring, necromantic devils, clever or learned devils, sacramental, plague, and perjury devils). Individual devil books were short tracts attractively printed in easily readable letters. The German word for “devil,” *Teufel*, usually appeared in their title, printed in black or sometimes in black and red. Some title pages of early modern devil books also boasted attractively produced woodcuts, most often presenting an appropriately fiendish-looking devil in the company of the people he is leading astray.

The Protestant theologian Andreas Musculus, who worked in Frankfurt an der Oder after 1541, wrote the first devil books. The prolific Musculus wrote several of

the most popular devil books, such as *Vom Hosen Teuffel* (The Pants Devil), satirizing male passion for dressing in increasingly elaborate trousers; *Wider den Fluchteuffel* (Against the Devil of Cursing), reflecting Protestant emphasis on controlling and disciplining social interactions; and *Wider den Ehe-teuffel* (Against the Marriage Devil), a tract about how men and women should conduct themselves to achieve a happy marriage. This last tract was especially successful because of its mocking description of a marriage where the woman “wears the pants” and the man, satirized as *Dr. Siemann* (She-man), becomes a woman. Johan Einhorn, who was also responsible for several accomplished and attractive title-page woodcuts, originally published Musculus’s tracts in Frankfurt an der Oder.

Between 1551 and 1604, the success of the genre led to the printing of at least 38 first editions by 31 authors, followed by 105 further editions. Individual print runs are estimated at 600 for first editions and 1,000 for second editions; individual devil books may have been printed in as many as 2,000 exemplars, thus reaching a significant number (one-fourth of all German-speaking families) of early modern readers and listeners. Because of the small format of the individual devil tracts, a high loss rate over the centuries must be assumed.

These individual devil books became a lucrative business for print shops in many German-speaking towns, particularly Frankfurt an der Oder, Leipzig, Eisleben, and Frankfurt am Main (which took the lead in devil book production during the last quarter of the sixteenth century). Most authors and printers of devil books lived in overwhelmingly Protestant areas. Encouraged by the rapid sales of individual devil books, in 1569 the Frankfurt am Main printer Sigmund Feyerabend collected twenty of them into a folio volume, the *Theatrum Diabolorum* (Theater of Devils). Following his first folio edition, Feyerabend produced a second and third edition of his *Theatrum* in 1575 and 1587/1588, respectively. The latter had sold out by the 1590s. Feyerabend’s decision to gather devil books in one big luxuriously produced volume was based on his own positive sales experience. He had sold 1,220 single devil tracts, among them 232 on marriage, 203 on gambling, 180 on cursing, and 151 on hunting. In spite of their rather steep price of three Taler, the folio editions of the *Theatrum Diabolorum* soon drove individual devil books out of the market. Feyerabend targeted such educated readers as scholars, pastors, and church officials. The title *Theatrum* was, at the time, quite modern and appealed to an increasing trend toward gathering large amounts of information into one encyclopedic volume.

The first edition of the *Theatrum* began with Jodocus Hocker’s *Der Teuffel selbs* (About the Devil Himself). Hocker was pastor in Lemgo; after his death from the plague, his colleague Hermann Hamelmann

completed this work. *Der Teuffel selbs* offered a systematic review of all the “horrible habits and sins caused by the devil in these bad times, when the world is about to come to its end.” The tract reviewed what was known about the Devil and all his minions’ nature from Holy Scriptures, past and present authors, and from human experience. Even though the title directed the reader’s attention to one devil, Satan, the text very quickly talked about many, “Von den Teuffeln . . . Ob Teuffel seyn” (Of Devils . . . whether there are devils). Hocker went on to discuss the devils’ names, their nature, their purpose, how they got their evil inclinations, and how they fell from grace. His readers learned where devils lived, how hell was organized, what it looked like, where it was located, and what kind of wonders devils could perform. Readers also found out about his minions, the witches, and what they were able to do; about the efficacy of their pact with the Devil; about witchcraft trials, including a discussion of the effectiveness and legal and moral ramifications of torture; about the perennial question of how and why the Devil tempted Christians so cruelly and relentlessly, and why God gave him permission to do so. Hocker’s devil tract continued to be popular into the seventeenth century, when many demonologies quoted it.

The devil tracts following Hocker’s introductory essay were directed against personal sins and bad habits. Quite popular among them was Ludovicus Milichius’s *Der Zauber Teuffel* (The Devil of Magic, 1563). A small section from it appeared in the anonymous *History of Dr. Faustus* in 1587. The title woodcut of a 1566 edition shows a Faust-like figure standing in a magic circle holding alchemical paraphernalia, while a demon presents a mirror to the necromancer showing the devil’s backside.

Heinrich Grimm (1960) did the most important and still unsurpassed research on the devil books genre, significantly broadening previous studies by Karl Goedeke (1886) and Max Osborn (1893). Between 1973 and 1983, five volumes of selected devil books were republished, with a general introductory volume yet to be done.

GERHILD SCHOLZ WILLIAMS

See also: DEMONS; DEVIL; FAUST, JOHANN GEORG; GERMANY; HELL; PACT WITH THE DEVIL.

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DEVIL’S MARK

Although fifteenth-century witchcraft theorists did not consider it a significant indicator of an accused witch’s guilt, the custom of searching suspects for an anesthetic scar or mark, reputedly made when the Devil sealed his pact with the witch, became a major feature of seventeenth-century witchcraft trials in many parts of the Continent and in Scotland. Much confusion attaches to the term in England, where “Devil’s marks” were unknown (except for Matthew Hopkins in 1645); instead, the British preferred “witch’s mark,” referring to an extra teat, or nipple, on a woman’s body that was reputedly used to suckle her diabolical familiars.

Few of the fifteenth-century writers about witchcraft, including Heinrich Kramer in his *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), had anything to say about a Devil’s mark. Although theorists who did mention the mark mostly refuted it, local judges in various parts of western Europe from Belgium to Italy had already begun shaving all body hair from suspected witches in order to discover hidden diabolical charms long before 1500. It was a relatively short step to have professional surgeons shave and search suspected witches in order to discover the place where the Devil had marked them at the time they had made their pact. This step seems to have been taken first in the original home of witchcraft theory, the lands formerly belonging to the duchy of Savoy.

We find successful searches for the mark by inquisitors in the vicinity of Geneva in 1534, and by Geneva’s newly Protestant authorities in 1537 and 1539 (Monter 1976, 157–158). In both Geneva and the neighboring Swiss canton of Vaud, a place that had mixed witchcraft with heresy for a century, suspected witches were being systematically searched for the mark by 1550, although the practice did not spread to other nearby regions, whether Protestant Neuchâtel or Catholic Fribourg, until a generation later. The Catholic demonologist Henri Boguet even chided the Genevans in 1602 for their excessive confidence in locating the Devil’s mark before convicting a witch; Devil’s marks, he said, were very difficult to find, being very inconspicuous, and the Devil usually erased them as soon as the witch was arrested (oddly enough, the great Protestant skeptic Johann Weyer expressed similar opinions about the transitory and even reversible nature of the witch’s

mark in the 1560s; it is equally noteworthy in this deeply confessional age, where the divide between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism was so deep, to find Boguet's Protestant neighbors in Neuchâtel saying similar things about the mark in their 1602 procedural code for judging witches).

Despite such hesitations, the practice of shaving and searching suspected witches for the Devil's mark was spreading rapidly across both Protestant and Catholic parts of western Europe, including Boguet's own province of Franche-Comté, by the late sixteenth century. In France, local judges were frequently shaving suspected witches or checking their marks in Berry and Normandy by the early 1580s; Boguet's regional Catholic predecessor, Nicolas Rémy, had no qualms about asserting that the Devil ordinarily marked witches in Lorraine and cited several local instances from the 1580s when discussing the matter in his *Daemonolatria* (Demonolatriy) of 1595 (Book 1, chap. 5). In Scotland, Agnes Sampson was searched for the Devil's mark during King James VI's first witch hunt in 1590–1591. In the great regional witch hunt afflicting southeastern Germany at the same moment, hangmen routinely probed suspected witches for the mark with needles, looking for places where the needles would cause no pain.

Although the great Mediterranean Inquisitions paid no attention whatsoever to the Devil's mark, Catholic laymen north of the Alps sought and found it. In Franche-Comté, they searched fewer than 20 percent of witchcraft prisoners for the mark, but they found it 144 times in 146 searches (Rochelandet 1997, 31). The greatest secular court in Europe, however, seems to have paid relatively little attention to verifying the Devil's mark. It had been found on fewer than one-fourth of the hundred witches the *Parlement* of Paris (sovereign judicial court, with jurisdiction over approximately one-half of France) sentenced to death, and only three of them, including two brothers in 1583, had their marks confirmed by the *parlement's* own surgeons (Soman 1993, 95–96). In fact, this court asked its surgeons to test suspected witches for the mark in fewer than 3 percent of all witchcraft cases appealed to it and apparently paid little attention to the results.

Matters were entirely different in Calvinist Geneva. If the great Parisian judges did their best to ignore the Devil's mark, the Calvinist Rome became obsessed with it; Genevan judges relied on professional surgeons to verify the Devil's mark in every major witchcraft trial after 1600 and made this a precondition for pronouncing death sentences (Monter 1976, 54–55). At first, the surgeons found the mark seven times in nine cases; then they encountered an extremely difficult case in 1622, in which they admitted a mark was "suspicious" but refused to make a positive identification. Afterwards, they found a Devil's mark only once in eleven searches,

and then only after making a second test and in such an ambiguous manner that Geneva's magistrates called in a surgeon from Vaud, who quickly verified it.

In the seventeenth century, Calvinist Scotland relied almost as much as Calvinist Geneva on finding the Devil's mark. As late as 1699, the Glasgow synod debated the value of having experts with "skill to try the insensible Mark" in Scotland's court of justiciary (Larner 1981, 112). Although several suspected Scottish witches voluntarily resorted to this ordeal in order to prove their innocence, the "pricking" was generally done locally, by persons far less humane and less medically astute than Geneva's surgeons; few escaped unscathed. Throughout French Switzerland, except Geneva, Devil's marks continued to be found in the 1660s and 1670s on the last witches sentenced to death.

Numerous scandals dogged seventeenth-century experts who searched for Devil's marks. The hangman of Rocroi, in the Ardennes, had positively identified no fewer than 274 marked suspects, all but 8 of them in the Spanish Netherlands, when French authorities arrested him in 1603, convicted him of fraud (he collected a fee for each positive finding), and sent him to the galleys. Although three villages in Franche-Comté paid heavy fines in 1618 for hiring a surgeon who claimed he had a commission from the provincial *parlement* to prick and summarily banish suspected witches, the practice continued here until inquisitor Symard's witch hunt in the late 1650s; the local physician who translated Friedrich Spee claimed in 1660 that the proof of "the so-called supernatural Marks" would soon be abolished "if one takes care to recognize the truth," and his prediction soon came true (Monter 1976, 164). The Spanish Inquisition, like its Roman counterpart, paid no attention to the Devil's mark; the tribunal of Barcelona arrested a professional witch finder and sent him to the galleys in 1621. In France, the *parlement* of Languedoc similarly arrested a few surgeons for abusively pricking suspected witches for the mark during the great panic of 1643–1644. Something similar occurred after Scotland's final major witch hunt, in 1662, when the kingdom's most famous witch pricker, John Kincaid, was exposed as a fraud, along with two minor prickers, "Mr. Paterson" and "John Dickson," both of whom turned out to be women in disguise (Larner 1981, 111).

Whereas the ordinary European Devil's mark could be found on men as well as women, this was impossible in England, where it took the form of an extra nipple to suckle familiars. Despite this peculiarity, the history of searching for the mark followed much the same chronology in England as on the Continent, becoming more frequent during the later sixteenth century and apparently reaching a statistical peak during the Matthew Hopkins witch hunt of 1645, in which 78 of the 110 surviving testimonies mentioned familiars and

thereby included many details about the resulting witch's marks (Sharpe 1996, 137). Like so many other aspects of English witch lore, this form of the witch's mark crossed the Atlantic to New England, where teams of matrons conducted searches for it (Demos 1982, 179–181). But once again, the chronology fit European patterns, since both types of searches for the mark had virtually disappeared by 1700.

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See also: FAMILIARS; GENEVA; PRICKING OF SUSPECTED WITCHES; RÉMY, NICOLAS; SCOTLAND; WITCH'S MARK.

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DIABOLISM

Diabolism, the belief that some humans worship and serve the Devil, became the central reason behind mass witch hunting in the sixteenth century. The development of diabolism from the twelfth to the sixteenth century, although convoluted, can be loosely sketched as a process in which learned inquisitors and theologians transferred notions about diabolical conspiracies from Jews to heretics to witches.

JUDAISM, THE DEVIL, AND HERESY

Early Christians condemned the Jews, who refused to recognize Jesus as their messiah, as children of the Devil, leading to suspicions that Jews worshipped the Devil and were perhaps even demons in human guise. Medieval artists frequently depicted Jews with horns. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Christian preachers told stories about the ritual murder of Christian boys and the desecration of consecrated Hosts by Jews, suggesting that Jews required Christian blood to fulfill their diabolical rituals and prepare their magical ingredients. Denying that Jewish worship was directed to the same god they worshipped, many Christians postulated a mirror-image worship service directed to Satan instead, usually in the shape of a toad or cat.

As thirteenth-century Church leaders fought against the rising tide of dissident religious groups, especially Waldensians and Cathars, they readily transposed this

belief in Devil worship from Jews onto heretics. Their goal was to counteract the potential appeal and anticlericalism of heretical groups by demonizing them. Catharism proved to be a particularly useful target, since its proponents believed in a powerful god of evil, and inquisitors needed merely to twist that belief into a frightening portrayal of Cathars as worshippers of Satan.

A thirteenth-century German inquisitor, Conrad of Marburg, fixed the image of heretics as demon-worshippers in many inquisitors' minds. Conrad saw heresy as a great diabolical conspiracy in which heretics, appearances of piety notwithstanding, had made a pact with and secretly venerated Satan, symbolized by the noxious obscene kiss (the kiss of shame). After Conrad's assassination in 1233, Pope Gregory IX issued his bull *Vox in Rama* (A Voice in Rama) asserting the reality of the Luciferans. In short time, Waldensians were similarly accused of worshipping the Devil, and the idea that all heretics were secret devil worshippers became an established tenet of inquisitorial literature.

States as well as churchmen adopted such notions: In 1307, a fiscally desperate Philip IV of France had the Knights Templar accused of venerating the bust of the demon Beelzebub, renouncing the Christian faith, desecrating Christian objects, and performing the obscene kiss on the anus of the order's grand master at their secret meetings. More often, Jews became scapegoats for such conspiratorial fears. In the early 1320s, Philip V of France accused the Jews of hiring lepers to poison Christian wells, part of a conspiracy ultimately masterminded by Satan.

DIABOLISM AND THE SUPPRESSION OF MAGIC

Despite such charges of demonic service and worship, most educated people refused to believe that Satan could actually empower simple women to fly or perform magic. Instead, they supposed that the Devil had deluded simple-minded people into believing they had done these things—a position set out in a forged tenth-century decretal called the *Canon Episcopi*. However, those who believed they exercised such magical powers were still regarded as dangerous blasphemers who in some fashion worshipped the Devil rather than God. The thirteenth-century Scholastic St. Thomas Aquinas, for example, argued that all popular magic was effectual only through diabolical agency, and so inquisitors and judges began suspecting practitioners of illicit magic of diabolism.

Nevertheless, in 1258 Pope Alexander IV sought to restrict inquisitors from investigating magical offenses that did not involve consultation or worship of demons. Papal policy finally succumbed to the pressure to attack magicians as secret demon worshippers in 1320, after Pope John XXII became convinced that there had been a magical attempt to poison him. In 1326, the papal court listed many heretical magical

acts, which now included invoking or sacrificing to demons, making a pact with the Devil, and abusing the sacraments. Inquisitorial courts focused their efforts primarily on clerical transgressors, especially necromancers, and political enemies.

The first known trial for sectarian diabolical witchcraft occurred in 1324–1325 against Dame Alice Kyteler and several confederates in Kilkenny, Ireland. Concentrating on charges of *maleficia* (harmful magic), apostasy, and demon worship, their trial, like that of the Templars, was politically motivated and did not begin a general hunt for other demon-worshippers. Other trials of alleged Luciferans rarely included charges of sorcery, which remained restricted to political enemies or clergy. In no surviving trials before 1500 do we find the complete stereotype of a fully diabolized, night-flying, Sabbat-attending, cannibalistic witch.

THE VAUDERIE

These two types of accusations, sectarian diabolism and illicit magics, became fused around the turn of the fifteenth century. Several infamous cases of necromancy at noble courts, along with the continuing papal schism, wars, famines, and plagues that clearly indicated divine displeasure, led the University of Paris in 1398 to declare demon-assisted sorcery heretical, since it required a pact with the Devil. Mendicant preachers widely blamed demon-worshipping Jews, heretics, and other deviants for incurring divine displeasure, and trials of heretics increasingly incorporated sorcery and demon worship among the charges.

The Dominican Johannes Nider's treatise on sin, *Formicarius* (The Anthill), composed in 1437 and 1438 at the Council of Basel, mentioned some Swiss trials from the first decade of the fifteenth century of a sect of devil-worshipping sorcerers who devoured infants and performed *maleficia*. Simultaneously, deep in the French and Swiss Alps, both inquisitors and secular courts began systematically overlaying popular notions of magical, nocturnal assemblies onto their conception of the heretical witch synagogue.

Nider's efforts helped convince many judges and bishops of the existence of a massive diabolical conspiracy combining *maleficia* and Devil worship. Trials against alleged demonic witch sects gradually escalated after 1420, spreading through Swiss, French, and German territories. In 1486 a German Dominican inquisitor, Heinrich Kramer (Institoris), composed the most infamous witch-hunter's manual, the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches). It irrevocably linked *maleficia* to a diabolical sect and explained why women so often served the Devil. Even the moderately skeptical Ulrich Molitor, author of *De laniis et phitoniciis mulieribus* (Concerning Witches and Fortunetellers) of 1489, who argued that the *maleficia* of witches was

merely a diabolical illusion, affirmed that witches should still be treated harshly because of their devil-worship and apostasy.

THE REFORMATION AND DIABOLISM

With the start of the sixteenth-century Reformation conflicts, witch hunting declined considerably as courts concentrated on controlling more dangerous lay movements. Even though Martin Luther considered the spiritual bewitchment of heretics more dangerous than witchcraft, he believed that witches deserved harsh punishment for their apostasy. Reformers of all stripes pushed for the suppression of religious deviants, and the frightening image of demon-worshipping apostates proved long-lived. Such fears were reinforced by reports that many of the New World's native converts were secretly worshipping demons. The polemical conflicts of the Reformation era, moreover, escalated fears of diabolical conspiracies and divine punishment, as well as expectations of the apostasy and devil-worship expected to precede the Second Coming. Protestant and Catholic polemicists blamed each other for the sudden, apocalyptic rise in diabolical activities. Protestants associated belief in magic with Roman Catholicism, while Roman Catholics depicted Protestants as agents of the Devil, spreading doubt, heresy, and atheism, preparing the ground for diabolical witchcraft.

Mainstream propagandists saw Anabaptists and spiritualists as inspired, wittingly or not, by the Devil. Anabaptist refusal to baptize infants was frequently equated with sacrificing children to the Devil, and many Lutherans and Catholics feared that refusal to exorcise infants prior to baptism (Calvinists) or to baptize them at all (Anabaptists) would lead unerringly to an increase in diabolical activity.

THE GREAT WITCH HUNTS AND DIABOLISM

For both those who believed the diabolism of witches' confessions to be real and those who argued they were mere diabolical illusions, diabolical witchcraft remained a most serious crime. The presence in Europe of even a small number of blasphemous devil-worshippers was widely believed to provoke the wrath of God, evident especially after 1560 in an apparently increasing number of catastrophes, plagues, famines, and destructive storms. It became more necessary than ever to discover and remove the horrible blasphemers who were responsible. By now, most Anabaptists had been wiped out or driven underground. Other scapegoats had to be found, so there was a huge revival of the fifteenth-century stereotype of witchcraft as a demonic sect.

Ordinary people took responsibility for ridding their communities of troublesome and dangerous witches. Fear of *maleficia* was old and widespread, and natural disasters fueled fears of witchcraft, leading to increased

popular pressure for judges and rulers to act against alleged witches. Once in the courtroom or torture chamber, however, interrogators quickly turned the subject of questioning from harmful magic to diabolism. By the thousands, prisoners were compelled to confess to having made pacts with the Devil and joining a diabolical sect in which they flew to the witches' Sabbath, had sexual intercourse with demons, worshipped Satan (often symbolized by the kiss of shame), and plotted evil. Everywhere in Europe that witchcraft trials escalated into large-scale hunts, these diabolical elements became central in trials and in learned justifications. Every major witchcraft trial was a judicial effort to eradicate diabolism. Once belief in these diabolical elements declined among the learned, government leaders, and judiciary, the rationale behind mass trials disappeared, although concern about *maleficia* lingered for centuries.

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See also: ANABAPTISTS; APOCALYPSE; AQUINAS, THOMAS; CALVIN, JOHN; *CANON EPISCOPI*; CHRONOLOGY OF WITCHCRAFT TRIALS; CONFESSIONS; CONRAD OF MARBURG; DEMONOLOGY; DEMONS; DEVIL; GREGORY IX, POPE; HERESY; IDOLATRY; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; JEWS, WITCHCRAFT, AND MAGIC; JOHN XXII, POPE; KISS OF SHAME; KYTELER, ALICE; LUTHER, MARTIN; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MOLITOR, ULRICH; NEW SPAIN; NIDER, JOHANNES; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PARIS, UNIVERSITY OF; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; RITUAL MURDER; SABBAT; SATANISM; SUPERSTITION; TEMPLARS; *VAUDOIS* (WALDENSIANS); WARS OF RELIGION (FRANCE).

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DIANA (ARTEMIS)

The Roman goddess Diana has a long history of associations with the nocturnal practices of witches. As early

as the sixth century B.C.E., Diana was identified with the Greek goddess Artemis, the daughter of Zeus and Leto and the twin sister of Apollo. Known as a virgin who could be cruel and vindictive, she was associated with hunting and the moon. The second-century B.C.E. Roman scholar Varro said that in ancient times country folk would seek out solitary beasts and remote forests “under the leadership of Diana, so to speak,” (Varro 1619, 163) and the seventh-century encyclopedist, Isidore of Seville, in his *Etymologiae* (Etymologies, 8.11.56), proposed deriving her name from *duana* (from *duo*, “two”), because the moon appears during the day as well as the night. Diana's two earliest shrines were at Capua and Aricia, near Rome. At Ephesus, where St. Paul encountered her cult, she was worshipped as a goddess of fertility.

Diana was also associated and sometimes identified with the Greek and Roman goddess Hecate or the German goddess Holde, both of whom people identified with night and moonlight, the dead, and necromancy. A number of ecclesiastical texts also associated Diana with a shadowy figure, Herodias, whose identity is disputed, and with others, such as Bensozia or Perchta, whose provenance is equally obscure.

From at least the tenth century C.E., churchmen exercised themselves over a widespread belief that there were certain women who were seduced by Satan and his demons into believing that on particular specified nights they would ride upon beasts, covering great distances, in the train of Diana or Herodias, and that they did so because they had been specifically called to act as her servants. There was also another belief, equally widespread, that a ghostly throng of the dead, especially those who had died before their appointed time, could sometimes be seen or heard rampaging through the air—an association more appropriate, strictly speaking, for Hecate than for Diana.

This spectral hunt and Diana's band were not always kept apart in popular (or indeed learned) imagination. We find that the tradition of some such group headed by Diana, denounced in the text known as the *Canon Episcopi* (ca. 906), appeared over and over again in discussions and glosses between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries. A Veronese priest, for example, recorded in 1313 that many among the laity believed in the existence of a nocturnal society whose leader was Diana or Herodias. The tradition lived on in later sixteenth- and seventeenth-century texts, as early modern demonologists quoted it in support of their arguments about whether witches really flew through the air on their way to a Sabbath.

Skepticism, however, was not confined to the later period. The twelfth-century English bishop, John of



The goddess Diana linked to night, moonlight, and the dead; thought to lead a furious horde of witches on a nocturnal ride. (Tooke's Pantheon of the Heathan Gods, 1659)

Salisbury, noted in his *Policraticus* (The Statesman) that people were deceived by evil spirits into imagining that “Noctiluca” or “Herodias” summoned them at night to orgiastic feasts where rewards and punishments were meted out, and infants were sacrificed and eaten before being vomited up and returned unharmed to their cradles. “Indeed, it is obvious from this,” said John, “that it is only poor old women and the simpleminded kinds of men who enter into these beliefs” (John of Salisbury 2001, 78).

The penalties imposed by the Latin Church upon those who persisted in believing that these things were real rather than illusory were not particularly severe at first. Burchard of Worms prescribed one year’s penance on bread and water for those who flew with Holde, and two years for those who flew with Diana. But should anyone believe he or she could resuscitate the dead (as

John of Salisbury mentioned), the penance was increased to seven years.

Later on, however, as these legends about a divine queen and her hunting band started to blend with the fantasy of witches’ transvection to a Sabbat, the problem for the Church increased considerably. If the flights were diabolical delusions, the sufferers must be warned (which was, by and large, what the Inquisition tended to do). If, however, the flights were real, mere penance would not be enough. Diana’s “game,” as it was sometimes called, therefore became a factor in the development of the later witch prosecutions in Europe.

During the nineteenth century, Diana was incorporated into a new myth directly related to the emergence of *Wicca*, or modern witchcraft. In *Aradia* (1899), Charles Leland, an American journalist, suggested that Diana had sent her daughter Aradia to earth to teach witchcraft to outlaws from feudal oppression, thus making her the goddess of what Wiccans call “the old religion,” a fantasy the Egyptologist Margaret Murray strongly reinforced in the 1920s and 1930s.

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See also: BURCHARD OF WORMS; *CANON EPISCOPI*; CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST 1800); FLIGHT OF WITCHES; HECATE; ISIDORE OF SEVILLE, ST.; JOHN OF SALISBURY; MOON; MURRAY, MARGARET ALICE.

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DIONYSUS (BACCHUS)

Dionysus was the god of wine and intoxication in Greek mythology, honored by the Romans as Bacchus. His cult, which spread from the East and continued for half a millennium, originally showed him as the god of fertility and vegetation. Some scholars have mistakenly believed that a religion of witchcraft existed in late medieval and early modern Europe and that it was a successor to the Dionysian cult. After reaching adulthood, he was said to have roamed the world, accompanied by his tutor Silenus, satyrs, and bacchantes (female followers), spreading his invention, wine. A dying and reviving god with some sun-god attributes, he possessed the gift of prophecy; in Thrace, places of divination were associated with his name.

Euripides described the main features of his cult in his *Bacchae* (fifth century B.C.E.): bacchanalia, rituals

accompanied by mad dancing, Dionysian, or Bacchic, mysteries in which one can detect Orphic and Pythagorean influences promising a happy world after death. At the ecstatic nightly orgies of early Dionysian bacchantes in Thrace, groups of women led by men usually participated as escorts to Dionysus (his *thiasos*, “band of revelers”), assimilating themselves to a deity that assumed an animal shape (tiger, leopard, snake, donkey, goat) and possessed them. In other cases, they impersonated the maenads and satyrs escorting Dionysus. These orgies were characterized by wild dances and promiscuity. Certain interpretations claim that the bacchantes also performed a ritual killing of the child Dionysus, tearing to pieces their human sacrifices embodying the deity and eating them raw (*omophagia*). This practice is related to the myth that, as a baby, Dionysus was torn to pieces, boiled, and subsequently revived by Rhea.

From the second century B.C.E. onwards, the most widely known sequence of festivities within the Greek Dionysia came from Attica and had three crucial points, in December, December–January, and February–March. The essence of these festive rites (which played an important part in the emergence of the dithyramb and Greek drama) was a march carrying phallic symbols and chanting ecstatic choral songs, with a sacrifice performed as part of magical-religious metamorphosis-plays commemorating Dionysus’s death and resurrection.

In the Hellenistic age, this cult became public. Its followers organized themselves in groups called *speira*, or *spira*, which included military officials, kitchen heads, and wine masters. They organized banquets in caves—the cultic places of nymphs. Traces of these festive drinking binges survived as late as the ninth century C.E.; memories of these tamed orgies of Hellenistic Dionysia may have survived in Balkan narratives of feasts by “winter demons” or the movable feasts of witches marching from house to house and wine cellar to wine cellar. Several surviving sources from Thrace and Dacia describe organized marches and banquets of the *speiras*, which share many features with Bulgarian and Romanian groups of fairies: the “horse,” the “mute” who impersonates a policeman, and other typical characters return in dramatic plays for New Year and Carnival.

Some scholars (Nilsson 1911; Lawson 1910) saw modern Balkan survivals of ancient Dionysia in the masked rites of Greek, Bulgarian, and Serbian areas between New Year and Carnival, which include death-and-revival plays performed in the course of *kukeri*, *turca*, *koledari*, the battles of the dark and light (Turkish and Christian) groups, the fights between winter and spring, and the battles between two villages over fertility. Their rites enact the death and revival of vegetation; they employ the horse, goat, bull, and deer

masks of masked plays, and use sticks as phallic symbols. These rites, in midwinter and at Carnival time, approximately correspond to the dates of the minor village and the major urban Roman Dionysia and Saturnalia. Probably through conscious use of ancient literary sources, impersonations of Dionysus or Bacchus reappeared in Central European Carnival and grape harvest festivals, where clerical authorities banned invocations of Bacchus.

In the Balkans, Thracian Dionysia also survived in the Rosalia Feast, the most popular death feast of imperial Rome. Rosalia coincided with Anthesteria, a Dionysian festival of the dead. This was the time when the dead came to be among the living. In Thrace, connections between the cult of Dionysus and the cult of the dead remained strong. A period of the Rosalia week is still devoted to visiting the family dead and offering them treats in the Pravoslavnic part of the modern Balkans. Russian, Romanian, and Southern Slavic fairies bearing this name (*rusali*, *rusalki*) have a strong death-related character.

Certain features of Dionysus’s Thracian death-related cult may survive in the fairy mythology of the Balkans and in the possession rites practiced in Orthodox areas (*caľusarii*, *rusalia*), where ecstasy through music and dance played an important role through the *mainesthai* state, a possessed state of mind identifying with the deity. The same might be said of the possessed, ecstatic healing practice of fairy magicians who were snatched to the otherworldly sphere of fairies and who communicate with the fairy world. By the Hellenistic age, an essential component of Dionysian mysticism was being “joyously lost” in a heaven flavored with the pleasures of Aphrodite (Nilsson 1957). This heaven shares many features with the heaven of modern Balkan fairies.

ÉVA PÓCS;

TRANSLATED BY ORSOLYA FRANK

See also: FAIRIES.

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DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS

The term *discernment of spirits* refers to the various ways true manifestations can be distinguished from false, and has been especially important in assessing whether someone was believed to be possessed by the Devil or filled with God. *Discretio spirituum* was, in Catholicism, a personal gift, an institutional imperative, and a manner of assessing the authenticity of worldly manifestations of divine favor in individuals.

Catholicism is a sacramental religion, that is, it allows for direct and unexpected manifestations of divine power in the material world. Because such signs as the gift of prophecy, visions, or ecstasies, offer renown—for example, in the cult of saints living or dead—the Church requires those in authority to distinguish truly God-given signs from the work of devils, or human frauds.

Paul identified the capacity to discern one manifestation from another as a divinely bestowed grace (1 Cor. 12:10), and John wrote, “test the spirits to see whether they are of God” (1 John 4:1); but the Devil’s capacity to disguise himself as an “angel of light” (2 Cor. 11:14) has historically rendered this task of discernment difficult for Catholics. In the late Middle Ages, a time of strong mystical tendencies, the discernment of spirits became an especially pressing issue when inspirational figures—frequently women, such as Bridget of Sweden, Catherine of Genoa, or Joan of Arc, but also men, as, for example, Meister Eckhart and Savonarola—came to be venerated and emulated. In the case of women, the emergence of such figures aroused fears of female susceptibility to devils, linked with a deepening anxiety about the power of the Devil in the world. The central question was whose will was at work in any given case: God’s, the Devil’s, or a human being’s.

The most influential late medieval commentator, himself a notable mystic, was the French theologian Jean Gerson, the chancellor of the University of Paris. Gerson wrote two guides to this problem, *De Distinctione Verarum Visionum a Falsis* (On Distinguishing True Visions from False) in 1401, and *De Probatione Spirituum* (On Testing Spirits) in 1415, instructing Church officials in how to authenticate or invalidate claims to divine inspiration. *De Probatione* was written at the Council of Constance to address and implicitly to condemn the revelations of St. Bridget of Sweden. Gerson (who at the end of his life supported Joan of Arc) here drew attention to the supposed moral and mental weakness of women, said to make them more vulnerable to delusion and to the sin of pride. Clearly, though, the behavior of female aspirants reflected their marginal position in relation to the Church hierarchy, and the direct receipt of divine favors was often their only way of actively participating in spiritual life.

Many other theologians set down guidelines for spiritual discernment, from St. Augustine through such

medieval luminaries as Thomas Aquinas, Bernard of Clairvaux, and Richard of St. Victor, to Pierre d’Ailly, Ignatius Loyola, Domenico Gravina (d. 1643), and Giovanni Bona (d. 1674). Broadly, they concurred that discernment should be undertaken both for the purposes of self-examination and the examination of others, especially by spiritual directors and inquisitors. The principal guides were believed to be the inquirer’s own gift of discernment (acquired through inner knowledge or through holding a Church office), aligned with “art and science,” gained through experience and the study of theology. Judgment required knowledge of the circumstances in which the phenomenon arose (including ill health); of the credibility of the visionary, including his or her attitude to the phenomena being experienced; and of the nature of the manifestations, including whether such prophecies or revelations concurred with Church teaching. Because discernment worked to expose and eliminate personal pride, willingness to submit oneself to scrutiny became an indispensable mark of possible holiness.

St. Ignatius (d. 1556) focused on discernment within oneself. He described, for example, how experiencing an emotion, from its source in thought to its expression in feeling, helped one “little by little [. . .] to know the difference in the spirits that we are at work, one of the devil and the other of God” (Christian 1982, 103). The demonically possessed nun Jeanne Féry claimed that Mary Magdalene had visited her and explained how to discern the actions of good and evil spirits: “Good spirits when they arrive bring fear to the person, but when they leave, leave them full of joy and consolation. In contrast, evil spirits cause some apparent recreation when they arrive, and when they leave, the person is confused, perplexed, bewildered and ill at ease” (Buisseret 1586, fol. 19r). This example, of course, begs the question of the authenticity of the vision. Jeanne des Anges, the superior of the Loudun Ursulines, had a guardian angel that resolved the problem by telling her not to obey what it said unless it accorded with what her human spiritual director told her.

In this system, those most liable to be scrutinized were also potentially ideal people to discern: Thus, Madame Barbe Acarie, a French Carmelite mystic, discerned fraud in an ecstatic named Nicole Tavernier, but, following the example of St. Teresa, she had her own ecstasies scrutinized by churchmen. The problem of who could judge such gifted judges was particularly acute for women, especially those like Jeanne des Anges who were also exorcised for demonic possession. In 1599, Martín Del Rio interpreted false claims of divine favors as the product of witchcraft.

The discernment of spirits provides a basis for judging ecstasies, visions, and revelations and implies a hierarchy of holiness. Without it, validation of divine

inspiration by the institutional Church becomes impossible. Thus, discernment arguably remains crucial to the survival of Catholicism.

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See also: DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DEMONS; JOAN OF ARC; DEVIL; EXORCISM; FÉRY, JEANNE; GERSON, JEAN; JOAN OF ARC; LIVING SAINTS; LOUDUN NUNS; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; SKEPTICISM.

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DISEASE

Disease was by far the most common harm ascribed to witchcraft. In theory, witches can inflict many types of damage, but most suspicions in early modern Europe involved bodily dysfunction or death. The kinds of maladies blamed on witchcraft varied greatly, but in general they were maladies that seemed unusual and somehow linked to interpersonal conflict.

Explanations of how witches inflict bodily ailments vary from culture to culture. They include the idea that witches' spirits fly out at night and devour the spirits of their victims, that their words or gestures or touch or breath have an innate power to harm, and that they conjure spirits or use poisons against their enemies. In late medieval Europe, demonologists concluded that

the power of witches to inflict harm inherently involved the mediation of demons, so they must have concluded a pact with the Devil. During the early modern period, Europeans frequently suspected that their maladies resulted from others' malice. Changes in medical theory, more rigorous legal standards concerning proof of causation, and growing skepticism about confessions obtained through torture ultimately led doctors, jurists, and magistrates to prefer natural explanations for diseases over spiritual ones. The decline in witchcraft persecutions was thus intimately connected with the rise of modern medical materialism, which caused psychological influences on health and disease to be de-emphasized, not only in medical theory but in historical and anthropological understanding of witchcraft as well. Only recently have medical theory and social science begun to appreciate the full extent to which emotions and social relationships can influence health and disease.

WITCH-RELATED DISEASES AND CURES

Over 70 percent of the accusations against witches in Essex county, England, involved illness and death of people, and almost all the rest concerned injury to animals (Thomas 1971, 539). The proportion was not this high everywhere, for witches could also be blamed for bad weather and a variety of other problems; but disease—bodily maladies and death—nevertheless accounted for most suspicions and accusations elsewhere.

In early modern Europe, as in many premodern societies, many, although not all, diseases might be ascribed to witchcraft. Witches were only occasionally blamed for epidemic diseases, and diseases with clear and well-known symptoms were less likely to be blamed on witchcraft than diseases with etiologies that were unclear. Witchcraft could be blamed, however, for any disease that seemed somehow unusual, if it came on unusually swiftly, lingered unusually long, or presented other unusual symptoms, for it was the sense of strangeness that most strongly characterized accounts of disease attributed to witchcraft.

This sense of abnormality was strongly reinforced if, in addition to presenting unusual symptoms, the onset of the disease came at a time of some interpersonal difficulties, and especially if its symptoms seemed symbolically linked to the conflict. Witchcraft was not associated with any specific diseases, because it was concerned with another dimension of health and illness, social relations. Although practically any disease could be attributed to witchcraft in theory, in practice only a small fraction of all illnesses were blamed on it. The explanation is that a disease was seen as caused by witchcraft only if its symptoms meshed with the patient's social relationships in certain ways. Two conditions were necessary: Witchcraft was blamed if a disease

could not be fully accounted for by natural agents and if the patient had had an altercation or encounter that suggested a malign interpersonal influence.

Because of the primacy of social relations in diseases caused by witchcraft, cures similarly focused on social relationships. One approach was to try to get the suspected witch to remove the disease, either by reconciling with her (or him) or by threatening retribution. A second approach was to shift the disease to another person, or even transpose the illness back onto the person causing it. A third was to punish the witch, either through informal violence or by denouncing her to the authorities. Sometimes the afflicted person attempted these remedies, but more typically, popular healers, "witch doctors," or even specialized "unwitchers" performed this service. Most societies have such specialists, and they were common in early modern Europe.

HOW WITCHES CAUSE DISEASE

Explanations of how witches are supposed to cause disease vary from culture to culture, but basic to them all is the assumption that witches exert some sort of occult or magical power over the victim. The Dobu Islanders in the Western Pacific say that a witch's spirit leaves her body while she sleeps and steals the spirit of her victim. Similarly, the Nupi and Gwari in Africa say that a witch's soul roams about at night and eats the soul of her victim, causing the person to die of a wasting disease. The Pueblo of North America hold that witches send an insect, sharp object, or piece of flesh or shroud from a corpse into a person to cause disease; staring, the evil eye, is commonly thought to cause disease in South Asia. Early modern European popular culture believed witches possessed a variety of occult means for causing disease: dispatch of familiar spirits; pressure by the witch's own spirit on a sleeping victim; the evil eye; touch; uttered threats or curses; performance of ritual magic; and poisons.

Popular ideas about how witches caused illness were seldom very specific about the underlying mechanisms that made them work, but natural magicians, philosophers, and theologians constructed elaborate theories that connected magical actions to theories about health and disease. Galenic medicine, dominant since antiquity, emphasized physical bodily processes; but its notion that health depended on a balance of humors combining physical and emotional aspects, subject to environmental as well as internal processes, left some possibilities for spiritual and astrological influences. Renaissance Neoplatonic philosophy posited a living universe suffused with spirits that could affect the physical world, and its principle of sympathetic action supported popular notions of sympathetic cures. Simultaneously, late medieval theologians classified all agents of magic as demons, and concluded that anyone exerting an occult influence on health or disease must be in league with the Devil.

Although neither the populace nor most governments evinced much alarm about beneficent healers, demonology apparently heightened popular concern about the baleful influence of witches. This new ideology not only made people more likely to look for witchcraft as the cause of illness, but also increased their vulnerability to psychosomatic disorders provoked by fear of witchcraft. Apparently, it even affected the nature of people's symptoms, as they adjusted their reactions to disease to fit their cultural preconceptions.

THE ENLIGHTENED UNDERSTANDING OF WITCHCRAFT AND DISEASE

Symptomatology may have changed during the early modern period, not only when people in previously isolated regions began shaping their ailments to fit new, standardized models disseminated by witch hunters, but also when, later, they felt compelled to manifest increasingly extreme symptoms of bewitchment to justify accusations as the elite gradually disengaged from prosecuting witches. A growing skepticism in the elite about tortured confessions of *maleficium* (harmful magic) as well as about diabolism, together with new currents in medical thinking, combined to downplay the potential for magical influences. One crucial step, taken in Louis XIV's France in 1682, was the legal redefinition of poisoning as a purely material process, stripped of its traditional magical associations; another was the increasing propensity to regard psychogenic ailments as something other than genuine disorders imposed by external assaults. These currents of thought reinforced each other and blended with larger cultural trends in the eighteenth century to shape both medical theory and the retrospective understanding of witchcraft trials and witch beliefs. Although medicine never completely lost sight of the role of nonmaterial factors in disease, it dropped the idea that illness could be imposed by someone else's ill will, and the role of the patient's emotions in disease was long supported by little more than the pragmatic observations of country doctors.

Subsequently, the rise of psychosomatic theory made physicians and social scientists more aware of the extent and power of psychogenic diseases, and so hysteria and the power of suggestion became acknowledged as secondary aspects of witch beliefs, whose power depended on general cultural expectations and individual psychological vulnerability. In recent decades, however, psychosomatic theory has undergone a fundamental revision, replacing the old Freud-based psychodynamic model with an interpretation centered on the physiological effects of stress. Although it is still believed that intrapsychic tensions are sometimes somaticized, as postulated in classical psychosomatic theory, the new consensus is that physiological changes

that are adaptive in the short term but damaging when they become chronic are responsible for far more health problems. Such changes may cause discrete ailments, and they may also be contributing factors in maladies with additional causes. Internal psychological factors play a significant role in these processes, but environmental forces, including interpersonal conflicts, can have a far greater and more direct influence than earlier medical theories appreciated. Psychological factors, like witchcraft, affect a wide range of health problems, and include powerful environmental influences. These parallels do not reduce witchcraft beliefs to psychophysical theory, but they do suggest that witchcraft fears have a firmer basis than traditional enlightened understanding held.

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See also: BEWITCHMENT; COUNTERMAGIC; CUNNING FOLK; EVIL EYE; IMPOTENCE, SEXUAL; *MALEFICUM*; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; PLAGUE; POISON.

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DIVINATION

Many cultures that believe in witches employ divination to determine whether or not some particular misfortune was caused by a witch, and, if so, to reveal his or her identity. Divination is a broad category of magic that functions to learn otherwise inaccessible knowledge about the past, present, or future. It is practiced in most, if not all, human cultures, from simple hunting-and-gathering societies through all levels of agricultural society, including medieval and early modern Europe, to modern

industrial civilization. The kinds of knowledge sought can pertain to almost any human problem, from the identity of a petty thief or future spouse to the prospects of an empire embarking on war.

There are hundreds, probably thousands, of divinatory techniques, ranging from general-purpose oracles to specialized methods focused on a single type of concern. Divinatory techniques include the deliberate seeking of omens, observation of spontaneously occurring natural phenomena considered as portents of future events, and consciously induced prophecies, internally generated prognostications; but divination generally entails overt rituals with results that are interpreted to provide the desired information. Although anyone can undertake divination, many cultures have specialists who provide this service. Though modern social scientists reject the supernatural transmission of information assumed by people who believe in divination, they recognize that it serves numerous socially and personally useful purposes, facilitating choices and validating judgments, particularly when available information is insufficient for a rational decision. They tend, however, to emphasize the ways in which divination can be used to manipulate the credulous or blithely validate people's preconceptions, and by so doing they miss the more important point that when conducted properly, divination serves an important function by bringing into awareness knowledge normally kept unconscious by sociocultural or personal-psychological inhibitions.

PURPOSES

Divination can be used to gain information about or insight into almost any human situation. In modern usage it is most commonly associated with prediction of an individual's generalized future, "telling someone's fortune," which indeed has been a common use for it, through time and across cultures. Specific predictions about certain common topics, such as a person's prospects for love and marriage, career success, and longevity are usually included within such generalized fortunes, and often are the objects of more focused divinatory inquiries. Furthermore, divination can be used to answer more detailed questions, such as which of two or more courses of action to take, whether or not a specific endeavor will succeed, or when the auspicious time to start a project might be.

Though modern Westerners associate divination with personal fortunes, it has also played a more public, social role in other times and places. In tribal cultures and ancient civilizations, divination was often used in making communal decisions. In early agricultural societies, predictions about the weather and the harvest were a major focus of divinatory activity. Public use of divination continued in the West into Roman times, but the conversion to Christianity ended official employment of divination, since wanting to know the

future was contrary to Christian faith in God's providence, claiming to know the future implied a constraint on God's omnipotence, and some practices used in divination were suspected of involving demons. Nevertheless, kings and other public personages, along with ordinary people, commonly prayed to God for certainty about the best course of action, and they understood omens and prophecies to be legitimate indications of God's intentions.

On a more local level, divination continued to be employed informally for public purposes throughout medieval and early modern Europe. In particular, divination was frequently used to determine the guilt or innocence of suspected criminals, although by the early modern period it was seldom part of official trial procedures. In the Middle Ages, judicial ordeals were commonly used, in which a suspect's ability to prevail in combat or endure some torment was taken to signify innocence, and which may be considered a form of divination, since the outcome had no intrinsic connection to the question. In both the Middle Ages and the early modern period, more traditional forms of divination were often employed informally to identify thieves. Another form of judicial divination widely used in the early modern period involved "swimming" (that is, throwing a suspected witch in the water to see whether she [or he] would sink or float) to identify witches, although it was nearly always used outside official proceedings.

Other uses for divination were not focused on discerning guilt. Closely related to identifying thieves was locating stolen or lost property, and equally popular was divination to locate buried treasure or missing persons. Still other uses of divination included learning about the well-being of a distant loved one or the disposition of a competitor or potential ally, and obtaining information about some past event with current relevance. In short, though divination was most commonly used to address a fairly limited number of concerns about the future, it could be used to guide almost any vital decision a person had to make.

TECHNIQUES

The techniques by which divination is conducted are legion. Over 100 of them have been formally classified, including scapulomancy (inspecting animals' shoulders), dactyliomancy (using a finger ring), oneiroscopy (interpretation of dreams), chiromancy (palm reading), and necromancy (contacting the spirits of the dead). Supplementing these are a host of local and even personal techniques, some early modern examples of which include forecasting the weather by interpreting ravens' cries, foretelling the future by the croaking of frogs, and predicting the price of corn by watching what happened to grains placed on a hot hearth.

However, these innumerable techniques generally fall into a few broad categories. One is the interpreta-

tion of omens, spontaneously occurring natural phenomena ranging from weather events to animal behaviors to the features of a person's palm print to the day on which something occurs. Strictly speaking, paying attention to these phenomena is not a form of divination if they are observed and reacted to spontaneously, but it is if they are deliberately studied and systematically interpreted. Astrology, the prediction of the future from the positions of the planets and stars, is the best-known form of divination of this sort. Another type of divination involves certain forms of prophecy. In contrast to externally produced omens, prophecy depends solely on internal meditation. Like omens, prophecy can be considered a form of divination when it is nurtured deliberately through ritual preparation and conscious cultivation.

Most characteristic forms of divination involve the employment of rituals intended to generate results that will reveal the desired hidden information. These rituals fall generally into two major categories. The first includes rituals that create physical patterns or outcomes that the diviner then interprets; the second involves rituals in which the diviner gazes into a reflective surface and "sees" an image relevant to the issue at hand. In the early modern period there were innumerable rituals of the first type; examples include ordeals, the casting of dice or other lots, opening a book like the Bible and reading the first passage noticed, putting a drop of liquid from a pregnant woman's breast into water to learn by whether it sank or floated the sex of her unborn child, and interpreting the pattern of ashes, smoke, and, in the eighteenth century, coffee grounds to answer a specific question or discern a general fate. Other examples of physical rituals, employed particularly, although not exclusively, to identify thieves, included the "sieve and sheers" and "book and key," in which objects held by people who had been robbed moved when the name of the thief was spoken, and the practice of putting slips of paper with names on them in balls of clay and dropping them in water to see which unraveled first.

A method used to identify witches involved holding ceremonies designed to draw the guilty party, and then noting the first person to enter the house. The more limited range of "gazing" rituals usually utilized crystals, mirrors, sword blades, water, or polished thumbnails. Some rituals straddled the two categories, for instance, geomancy, in which the diviner gazed at a random pattern of dots to generate not an image but an answer. A few worked in other ways entirely, like necromancy, in which a spirit summoned by the conjurer simply divulged the desired information.

PERSONNEL

Divination does not inherently require any specialized qualifications, although forms involving books obviously

require literacy, and complex methods like necromancy might require training. A wide variety of techniques are available to anyone and are often used by ordinary people. Nevertheless, many societies, including Europe, since prehistoric times, have had specialized practitioners. In medieval, early modern, and modern Europe, these have included both local “cunning folk” and itinerant fortunetellers. The former might or might not charge for their services; the latter certainly did. Either might specialize in a certain form of divination or offer a variety of types, and might combine divinatory with other magical services as well. Many claimed to be able to detect witchcraft and identify witches; some specialized in this, and most who did either also offered ways to remove their spells or retaliate against them through similar magic.

BASES

In some forms of divination, the meaning of the outcome is self-evident, as when someone opens a Bible at random, or the “sieve and sheers” move when a particular suspect’s name is mentioned. In others, the meaning is prescribed by a written source, as when dice are cast and a book listing possible fates is consulted, or by tradition, as in the ritual to determine the sex of an unborn baby. The methods involving gazing clearly utilize the mind’s ability to construct a meaningful image by combining incoherent perceptions with subconscious expectations. Similarly, rituals involving the spontaneous interpretation of patterns appear to be techniques to bring unconscious knowledge into consciousness, and the use of devices like the “sieve and sheers” serve to trigger unconscious reactions. The austerities and ritual preparations that often precede divinatory activity would appear to serve a similar purpose, helping to induce an altered state of consciousness in which otherwise inaccessible knowledge can be brought into awareness. For those who do divination on their own account, the manifestation of knowledge in consciousness occurs directly; when specialists do it for someone else, the process involves a more complex process, in which diviners combine manifestation of their own knowledge and a subtle reading of the unconscious reactions of the client.

Of course, rituals relying on unconscious processes are subject to conscious manipulation, while rituals relating objective results to standard interpretations assume an occult connection between objectively independent events or processes. Furthermore, interpretations are often couched in ambiguous terms, so that whatever happens, they appear to have been correct (or any mistake was in how they were understood), and memories of successes tend to overshadow those of failures. All of these considerations have led social scientists to explain divination’s pervasiveness and persuasiveness in terms other than its validity. They emphasize that divination allows the questioner to ven-

tilate deep concerns, that it is often manipulated to validate preexisting knowledge or decisions, that it serves to bolster confidence in necessarily arbitrary decisions, that it justifies deviations from traditions or social norms, that it creates apparently disinterested resolutions of otherwise irresolvable disagreements, and that it provides authoritative support for otherwise mundane advice.

Granting the vulnerability of divination to manipulation and the truth of the points made by social scientists, it is nonetheless important to recognize that recent advances in neurological science tend to confirm that the human nervous system contains a great deal of knowledge not directly accessible by consciousness, and which cannot be rationally justified even when brought to consciousness; therefore, techniques that bring this knowledge into awareness in a legitimizing context have real value for people operating in a world of imperfect information and beset by both conscious and unconscious distortions of rational thought and discourse.

EDWARD BEVER

See also: ASTROLOGY; BIBLIOMANCY; COUNTERMAGIC; CUNNING FOLK; CUNNING FOLK’S MANUALS; MAGIC, POPULAR; NECROMANCY; ORACLES; ORDEAL; PRODIGIES; RITUAL MAGIC; SCRYING; SWIMMING TEST; WITCH FINDERS.

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DODO, VINCENTE (LATE 15TH–EARLY 16TH CENTURY)

An ardent believer in the reality of diabolical witchcraft and in the flight of witches (Lea 1957, I, 367), Dodo achieved significance from his debate with Samuel de Cassini (Cassinis), a skeptic of the ability of witches to fly, who attempted to stop witch hunting. Little is known about the life of this Dominican theologian, who lived in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries and became abbot of the monastery of Saint Thomas in Pavia. The dispute between Dodo and Cassini represents a fundamental clash of beliefs about

this topic in the first decade of the sixteenth century. Because Heinrich Kramer's *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) was not yet important, especially in Italy, Dodo's statements certainly reflect his personal views rather than external influences. Dodo wrote his *Apologia contra li defensori delle strie, et principaliter contra Quaestiones lamiarum fratris Samuelis de Cassinis* (Apology Against the Defenders of the Witches, and Most of All Against the Treatise on Witchcraft Written by Samuel de Cassinis), in order to refute some arguments about witchcraft that he claimed that Cassini had abused. Dodo followed the traditional scholastic method of explaining his opponent's arguments before refuting them, but he clearly exaggerated in asserting that Cassini supported the sect of witches. According to Dodo, Cassini held that no miraculous event can produce or induce sins, and so Dodo overthrew this theory. Also he felt fully justified in claiming, in rebuttal of Cassini's explanation, that the authority of the *Canon Episcopi* (the tenth-century ruling that maintained that supposed witches only imagined they could fly) applied only to a bygone situation, not the one in which they were living: The truth about witchcraft and its reality rested on factual evidence.

Neither Cassini and his allies nor Dodo and his allies wanted to encourage credulity and a lack of critical analysis of experience. They shared the view that no claim should be blindly accepted, since blind acceptance only encouraged religious charlatans. Instead, both authors tried to encourage a reformed and pure religion. Dodo, however, worried far more than Cassini about the increase in demonic actions, which he viewed as a threat to the whole natural and divine order of the world; he also castigated various forms of witchcraft as heresies.

When dealing with demonology, Dodo accepted the major versions, Platonic and Aristotelian, both of which accepted the reality of demons, concluding that demons can do anything. Beginning with brief accounts of the origins and the development of each belief, Dodo explored such topics as the demonic power to transport and to deceive men. He remarked that, in such circumstances, it was impossible to determine the correct reason for such supernatural deeds, and asserted that God allowed demonic powers in order to test humanity's faith and powers of endurance. Dodo situated the need to understand witchcraft within a far broader context, in which God's will was seen as remaining mysterious and obscure to men. Such statements constituted a textual application of Thomistic theory to demonology.

Throughout his controversy with Cassini, Dodo strongly defended the authority of the Dominican order; in fact, their quarrel exemplified the fierce polemic between Franciscans and Dominicans, and his treatise served to emphasize the superiority of the latter.

Dodo even asserted that Cassini lacked common sense. Moreover, he supported the inquisitors (who were nearly always Dominicans) against Cassini's attacks: The emergence and increase of witchcraft justified their power.

Their polemics continued. Cassini answered Dodo's confutation, to which the Dominican abbot replied with an *Apologia*. Dodo also composed another treatise, *Contra inectivam dicti Samuelis in doctrinam Sancti Thomae Aquinatis* (A Refutation of Cassini's Critical Statements on Saint Thomas's Doctrine), defending Saint Thomas against Cassini's attacks, using both logical arguments and the authority of respectable theologians; he concluded by accusing his enemy of heresy.

MICHAELA VALENTE

See also: AQUINIS, THOMAS; *CANON EPISCOPI*; CASSINI (CASSINIS), SAMUEL DE; DOMINICAN ORDER; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; JACQUIER, NICOLAS; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA, GIANFRANCESCO.

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DOGS

The dog has a long and diverse tradition as a symbol of witchcraft, the demonic, and the dead. The dog or jackal appears in ancient Egyptian art as the deity Anubis, a god of the underworld. Cerberus, the three-headed hound, guarded the gates of the realms of Hades. Dogs were traditional companions of Hecate, the Greek goddess of witchcraft. It is not surprising that medieval Christian demonologists used dogs, especially black dogs, as symbols for the Devil and witches. Witches' familiars could assume the form of dogs. Witches were also associated with wolves, and at times these two canines became confused in the popular imagination. For instance, there is a trial account from 1450 of a Swiss witch, Else von Miersburg, who was accused of riding on an enchanted wolf. But she was also known for riding on an enchanted dog. Ulrich Molitor's 1489 *De lamiis et phitonice mulieribus* (Concerning Witches and Fortunetellers), the first illustrated printed book on

witchcraft, contained stories of a witch who rode on a wolf's back and a discussion of whether witches could transmute themselves into animals such as wolves or dogs. It contains an illustration of a canine-witch riding on a pitchfork as well as of a witch riding a wolf.

The Devil could appear in the form of a black dog. Johann Weyer, the famous German sixteenth-century physician, wrote of this belief in his 1563 *De praestigis daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils). This book dealt with beliefs in witchcraft, magic, divination, and the like. It was also an early text on mental illnesses. Weyer is famous for his sympathetic comments concerning witches, who, he felt, were more likely just deranged elderly people and should be treated accordingly. Weyer studied with Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim, a man himself accused of sorcery. Agrippa kept a black dog, called Monsieur, which some believed was actually the Devil. The dog was supposedly Agrippa's assistant and also his succubus. Weyer noted that this was merely a dog, and not the Devil, and that such ideas as those concerning its diabolic nature "never cease to amaze me." He stated that the dog "would always lie between us on the table that Agrippa and I shared in our studies." He wrote, "He was truly a normal male dog" (Mora 113). Agrippa so loved his pet that it slept in his bed. Weyer wrote further about other dogs, not so benign as Agrippa's, that were thought to be incubi who tormented nuns. So, even if Weyer did not really believe in such tales, he was not above recording them. His text makes clear the sorts of beliefs that were popular in the sixteenth century.

If a witch's dog were not a demon, it still might serve as an assistant in harvesting mandrake roots. Special dogs, one could say the drug-sniffing dogs of their time, were believed to be able to locate and dig the root without coming to harm. The dogs were thought to be impervious to the poison of the plant and to its lethal screaming as it came from the ground. In another tradition, the one who drew up the mandragora root was actually killed. Dogs were therefore used as substitutes and were killed during the operation.

The dog also appears in renaissance and seventeenth-century art depicting witchcraft and the demonic. Pieter Brueghel the Elder's engraving of *The Sin of Lechery* shows copulating dog-devils. This print is one of a set of seven prints made under Brueghel's direction and from his original drawings of the theme of the Seven Deadly Sins. The print was engraved by Jerome Cock of Antwerp, but is considered Brueghel's work, as Cock was merely a technician working for Brueghel. Other demonic dogs appear in many works by Hieronymus Bosch. In the seventeenth century, the dog as a demonic creature was commonly seen in paintings by such followers of Pieter Brueghel the Elder as David Teniers the Younger and Cornelis Saftleven.

Although the notion of the dog as demon is not quite the same concept as that of the werewolf, it is clear that there was a blending of wolves with dogs in demonological literature and beliefs when it came to the supernatural nature of these animals. Witches could transmute into dogs or wolves. Witches might have familiars who were dogs or wolves. And werewolves might at times also be witches.

JANE P. DAVIDSON

See also: AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM, HEINRICH CORNELIUS; ANIMALS; FAMILIARS; MANDRAKE; SAFTLEVEN, CORNELIUS; TENIERS, DAVID THE YOUNGER; WEYER, JOHANN.

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DOMINICAN ORDER

The contribution of members of the Dominican order to the history of witchcraft is huge and lies mainly in two fields: their activity as inquisitors and their role in defining the nature of witchcraft.

The very beginning of the Dominicans as a religious order is linked to the growth of heresy in western Europe. Its founder, Dominic Guzman (1170–1221), was a Castilian priest who took part in the missions to convert the Cathars of Languedoc around 1206–1207. During this experience, he had found the Catholic clergy insufficiently prepared to confront the Cathar *perfecti* (the "perfect" ones, who served as leaders and priests). Soon after the crusade that battered the Albigensians (as the Cathars of southern France were called) in 1208–1209, Dominic gathered numerous disciples around him; they became the first nucleus of a new order, known as the Order of Preachers. Pope Honorius III officially approved it on December 22, 1217; in 1216 the former pope, Innocent III, had authorized Dominic and his companions to choose a rule. They adopted the rule of St. Augustine, adding a few articles in 1228 that mandated renunciation of private ownership of property and regulated their activity as preachers. Between 1239 and 1241 the canonist Raymond of Peafort, master general of the order, rearranged the text, giving it a shape that has remained almost untouched until the present.

From their earliest days, the Dominicans had women followers; the Dominican Sisters received their Constitutions in 1259 from Master-General Humbert of Romans. Similarly, the many laymen who had gathered around Dominic and his disciples were confirmed as a fraternity of Tertiaries (Third Order) in 1286. The first Dominican apostolic mission had been the convent of Prouille, in the diocese of Toulouse, where Dominic sent the women he had converted from Catharism. Soon after winning papal approval, the Dominicans spread their sermons beyond southern France; after Toulouse, Paris, Madrid, Rome, and Bologna became their principal centers. When Dominic died, his order was present almost everywhere in western Europe. Dominicans were divided into provinces guided by a master general, who deferred only to the pope. This direct relationship with the pope explains why, when Gregory IX decided in 1231 to institute an Inquisition in every diocese not subject to the local bishop, Dominicans seemed an obvious choice for these positions.

Although the Dominican Inquisition did not eliminate episcopal inquisitions, its role in the persecution of heresy was enormously important and was meant as an addition to the Dominicans' activities as preachers, instructing laymen in order to preserve them from heresy. Through the bull *Ille humani generis* of February 8, 1232, the pope assigned the *negotium fidei* (matter of religious orthodoxy) to the Dominicans, stating that all bishops must aid them unreservedly. On August 21, 1235, Gregory IX appointed a Dominican, Robert "the Bulgar" (so-called because he had once been a Cathar himself, and the Cathars were also called Bulgars), as general inquisitor for the entire kingdom of France.

The Dominicans received careful training in theology; many of them held positions in universities; their knowledge was useful both for preaching and for leading inquisitorial activities. Also, after 1220, each convent of the order was required to include a doctor (later often called *rector*), in order to guarantee a suitable cultural level. Convent schools could be attended both by internal friars and by clerics who lived inside the convent. Larger convent schools, able to give more complete education, were called *studia solemnna* (serious studies). Above the convent schools were the *studia generalia* (houses of studies). The first *studium generale*—and the main one, for a long time—was that of St. Jacques in Paris, which housed both Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas.

Their activity as preachers and inquisitors led many Dominicans to confront magical beliefs and practices. This is made clear in one of the first manuals for inquisitors, written by the Dominican friar Bernard Gui in the early fourteenth century, in which a chapter is devoted to those who worship the Devil. Similar interests were shared by several other Dominicans,

among whom the most prominent were the Catalan Nicolas Eymeric and two Germans, Johannes Nider and Heinrich Kramer, whose writings played major roles in shaping the concept of diabolical witchcraft in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

MARINA MONTESANO

See also: EYMERIC, NICOLAS; GUI, BERNARD; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; KRAMER, HEINRICH; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; NIDER, JOHANNES.

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DOUGLAS, MARY (1921–)

Douglas is an important member of the functionalist school of British social anthropology, in which Edward E. Evans-Pritchard has played a leading role, and which has contributed so much to the academic study of witchcraft. After studying with Evans-Pritchard, Douglas did her fieldwork in the 1950s among the matrilineal Lele in Congo. Later she taught at the University of London. Her work on social anthropology is based on Emile Durkheim's sociology, as Anglo-Saxon ethnology generally is, and the functionalist approach is central to her work, including her studies of witchcraft. This approach means that she sees a correlation between the structure of a society and its central ideas. In contrast to Max Weber, functionalists explain the individual from the society, not vice versa, since they believe that the mind of the individual mirrors the society. Her most detailed statement on functional analysis is in *How Institutions Think*.

Douglas applied functionalist explanations to witchcraft. According to her theory, outlined in *Natural Symbols*, cosmology and social structure are closely connected. Belief in witchcraft as an explanation of evil depends on specific factors. In order to show this, Douglas framed a grid of classifications, in which the vertical axis distinguishes between a shared and a private system of classifications, and the horizontal axis separates groups in which ego is controlled by other people's pressure from groups in which ego controls other people. Societies in which the shared classifications are highly developed, positions clearly defined,

and interpersonal rivalry less pronounced, generate no accusations of witchcraft. Evil (illness, accidents) is attributed to the sufferer: transgressions of taboos and sins explain the sufferer's fate. On the other hand, belief in witchcraft and accusations of witchcraft thrive in societies in which the shared classifications are weak and the pressure on the individual is high. Such societies have strong competition for status; villages are densely populated, and one cannot evade the pressures of society. The witch represents the opposite of usual life, negating the conditions and rules of the society in which s/he lives. Witchcraft accusations reflect that people depend on their fellow humans more than their individual nature. Douglas found support for this theory by comparing the African cosmologies and witchcraft beliefs of the Nuer and Dinka with the Anuak. Accusations of witchcraft, she pointed out, serve as weapons of attack against certain individuals. On the whole, witchcraft belief and accusations crystallize around the critical points of a social structure.

In *The Lele of the Kasai* (1963), based on her fieldwork, Douglas applied the functionalist approach. She showed that sorcery in this polygynist society is above all ascribed to old men and especially to diviners. Because the privileged status of old men enables them to marry young girls and force young men to remain bachelors, witchcraft beliefs here express the hostility between generations.

In Douglas's most famous book, *Purity and Danger* (1966), she connected the theory of witchcraft with a theory of the scapegoat. The impure, perceived as dirt, represents disorder. This state is ascribed to beings that do not fit into normal categories, the impure animals in Exodus, for example, or young people during their rites of passage, twins, and menstruating women. The archaic code of the taboo (distinguishing pure from impure) is connected with witchcraft. Witches and Jews are, like twins, people who are not temporarily but always in a state of impurity. They are "interstitial persons," and their threat to society does not depend on their personal characteristics, but on this status. So the scapegoat is explained by the code pure-impure. The horrible nature of the witch can be explained by the fact that a combination of blood, sex, and food is mostly used for the discrimination of persons and groups. This archaic code of the taboo (pure-impure) again allows for the comparison between leprosy and witchcraft (Douglas 1991) and is connected with the way various peoples understand witchcraft.

Douglas's most recent major work (1999) applied her theory of purity to the interpretation of Leviticus.

RAINER WALZ

See also: AFRICA (SUB-SAHARAN); ANTHROPOLOGY.

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DRAMA, DUTCH

The role played by devils and witches in early modern Dutch drama reflects the relatively skeptical perspective of the audience for which it was written. Until the development of professional theaters in the seventeenth century, the major performers of drama in the Low Countries (Belgium and the Netherlands) were the Chambers of Rhetoric, literary societies of artisans, merchants, and professionals whose productions appealed primarily to the urban middle and upper citizenry.

Compared to drama elsewhere, rhetorician plays became increasingly allegorical in nature, depending upon the vices and virtues for many leading roles. For example, in fifteenth-century scripts, the Devil was a frequent character, and he embodied all the vices. In the sixteenth century, the Devil faded from view as particular vices replaced him on stage. Many rhetoricians thus promoted an internalized, or spiritualized, conception of the diabolical.

THE DEVIL IN PRE-REFORMATION DRAMA

Early rhetorician plays reinforced lay devotion to Christianity while criticizing clerical abuses. Such mystery, miracle, and saint plays as *The Five Wise and Five Foolish Maidens* (*De V vroede ende van de V dwaeze Maegden*) or *The First Joy of Mary* (*Die Eerste Bliscap van Maria*) depicted Lucifer as the instigator of efforts to hinder the godly work of the protagonists. The dialogue between Lucifer and his minions provided both satirical humor and moralistic warnings. Rhetoricians also performed comedies, such as *The Entertainment of the Apple Tree* (*Het Esbatement van den Appelboom*), which tells of a farmer who possesses an Eden-like magical apple tree that captures all who climb into its branches in search of fruit. Among those caught are Death and the Devil, who are forced by the farmer and his wife to promise them another forty years of life devoid of evil temptations.

One of the most famous miracle plays is *Mary of Nijmegen* (*Mariken van Nieuweghen*), a saint's tale first dramatized around 1500. The protagonist, Mary, a young woman from Gelderland, is sent by her uncle, a priest and a sorcerer, to Nijmegen to buy supplies. Finding herself without lodgings at night, the frightened girl begs for help from either God or the Devil; the latter appears first as an attractive but horned man. He persuades Mary to sign a pact with him in exchange for knowledge of the seven liberal arts, although rejecting her request to learn necromancy as well (her uncle practitioner had likewise refused). The demon then demands that she change her name to Emma and promise never to make the sign of the cross. She and her demon lover tour the Netherlands, astonishing people with her knowledge. After seven years, the pair returns to Nijmegen, where they see the *Play of Masscheroen*, which portrays the eschatological defeat of Lucifer. When Emma seeks to break the demonic pact, the spurned demon raises her and then drops her from a considerable height. She soon recovers, and with her uncle embarks on a penitential pilgrimage to the pope, who grants a life penance of wearing massive iron rings. She becomes an extremely ascetic nun, and an angel ultimately releases her from her bonds.

In this popular play, Mary is a female Faustus, but not a witch. She makes a diabolical pact, renounces Christianity, takes on a demon lover, and amazes people with her knowledge; but there is no harmful witchcraft or Sabbats, and she is ultimately forgiven. This, the only Dutch pre-Reformation play to deal explicitly with diabolism, deviates considerably from the contemporary stereotype of witchcraft expressed in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (*The Hammer of Witches*, 1486).

DRAMA AND THE DEVIL DURING THE EARLY REFORMATION (TO 1566)

The distinguishing specialty of Dutch rhetorician drama was the *spele van zinnen*, “play of the senses,” in which allegorical virtues and vices (*sinnekens*) played leading roles. These became vehicles for sixteenth-century rhetoricians to condemn social ills or satirize clerical hypocrisy. While many rhetoricians promoted reform, Christiaan Fastraets, a Dominican of Louvain, sought to counteract reform propaganda by dramatizing the life of Saint Trudo. A stylistic throwback to fifteenth-century saint plays, this work shows the efforts of Lucifer and his demons, Baalberith, and Leviathan, to tempt the saint constantly foiled through the power of the priest and sacraments, thus proving Catholic clerical claims to supernatural power.

The much more popular approach to the Devil and magic in sixteenth-century Dutch drama was to allegorize them. Of the nineteen plays performed at the rhetorician competition at Ghent in 1539, only one—that of Brussels—contains anything like a devil in the

character of the “old serpent,” while all the others make do with vices. In fact, among eighty surviving religious scripts from the era of Charles V (1515–1556), only one play, the antiwar *Play to Perform in Times of War* (*Een spele te speelen in tijden van oorloghe*), contains a traditional dancing devil. Toward the end of this piece, a large globe is brought onstage, from which a gleeful devil speaks and dances. Even then, he remains invisible in the everyday world—which he rules during times of tumult.

More typical is Clodius Presbiter's *Human Spirit Deceived by the Flesh* (*sMenschen Gheest van tVleesch Verleyt*), a spiritualist play promoting inward-looking piety. This play too concludes with an image of the earth, this time showing the Devil and Flesh peering out from within as the risen Jesus rescues a soul, an allegory of the spiritual rescue of the human soul from flesh and evil. In many plays, the Erasmian-minded playwright Cornelis Everaert of Bruges criticized popular belief that demons caused humans to sin and instead blamed the individual's inner evil inclinations. Even in two pre-1568 Haarlem plays in which the dialogue between Lucifer and his diabolical minions looms large—*The Play of the Brewer's Guild* (*Het Spel vant Brouwersgilde*) and *The Play of the Great Hell* (*Het Spel vande Grote hel*)—the demons have become little more than rhetorical devices to satirize the peccadilloes of contemporary clergy and laypeople. In fact, unlike their colleagues in *The Play of Saint Trudo*, these demons prove useful for the Church by pointing out that humans are entirely responsible for their own choices.

No known plays from this period had sorcerers or witches as characters, and only two refer in any way to illicit magic. In an anonymous dinner play called *The Multiformity of the Deceit of the World* (*Die Menichfuldicheit des Bedrochs*), the vice Origin of Sins claims to have wares that he has found on “Lady Venus' mountain,” a mythical place thought to imbue visitors with magical powers. However, when Origin of Sins describes these wares, they become figures for various sins, stripped of magical attributes, acting instead as rhetorical tools to condemn a worldly clergy. Such sentiments critical of the clergy and popular magical beliefs were commonplace in upper artisan and merchant Netherlandish culture. The other reference to magic appeared in the Catholic Reynier vanden Putte's *The Incarnation of Christ* (*De Menschueringe Christi*) of 1534, in which he had an Anabaptist peddler say that he intends to inflict greater harm on the world than witches and sorcerers, an extremely inflammatory comment in this century of persecution.

DRAMA AND THE DEVIL DURING THE REVOLT (1568–1648)

After the revolt against Spain began in 1568, cultural and economic preeminence moved from the southern

to the northern provinces. In the south, the Spanish rulers closely censored literature and drama, approving only whatever accorded with Catholic doctrine and discouraging the use of Dutch, which they identified with rebellion. For their part, northern magistrates continued to sponsor vernacular drama, and many plays memorialized Dutch victories and promoted Calvinist Protestantism. Dutch playwrights readily identified the devil with their Catholic opponents. The Spanish authorities did, however, tolerate traditional saint stories, such as *Mary of Nijmegen*, which continued to be printed into the seventeenth century. It remained popular in the north also, although references to the Virgin Mary and the Catholic Mass were expunged. Most interesting for the purposes of this entry are the northern plays that featured the Devil or witches.

Not surprisingly, given the rising notoriety of the witch hunts, witches or sorcerers began to appear in a handful of plays from the end of the sixteenth and the early seventeenth centuries, including *King Balthasar* (*Coninck Balthasar*), written for a Hasselt chamber in 1591; Pieter C. Hooft's *Geeraerd van Velsen* (1613); Guillaum van Nieuwelandt's *Saul* (1617); Jacob Struys's *Syrus and Ariame* (1629); Jan van Swol's *Constantinus* (1630); and Johan Beets's *Daphne or Boschvryagie* (1630). All are based on biblical stories or ancient histories, and, as with Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, their witch scenes revolve around the desire of a ruler to discover his future by magical means. We will use the first two as examples.

King Balthasar recounts the story found in the fifth chapter of the Book of Daniel of the Babylonian king Belshazzar, who saw an apparition of a ghostly finger writing on a wall and who, after his sorcerers failed to interpret the writing, turned to the Hebrew prophet Daniel. In this dramatic version, two of the king's sorcerers resort to necromancy, conjuring up first Belial, who springs onto the stage amid thunder and lightning, but who is so terrified by the words on the wall that he prefers to die rather than read them. The second demon, Belsebub, also flees the stage, claiming that he has sat too long in hell and has lost his ability to read.

Hooft's *Geeraerd van Velsen* dramatizes the murder of Count Floris V in 1296 in the castle of Gerard van Velzen, who is its rather dark hero. In the play's third act, van Velzen sends his squire to consult Timon the Sorcerer to see if his plan to murder the count—whom he has imprisoned for having seduced his wife—will succeed. On the way, the squire tells what he has heard about spirits and sorcery and resolves that, despite his fear of dabbling in evil spirits, he will obey his lord's command. Timon introduces himself as one who "rules over spirits, ghosts and demons," who can raise the dead, find hidden treasure, and discern the future (1976, 95–96). When the squire puts Gerard's question to him, Timon uses various necromantic props to

conjure an evil spirit, which responds to the query with the words "He has thought well / what he has undertaken" (1976, 99). This the squire considers happy news, until he realizes that the term for "thought," *versint*, could also be interpreted as "to be mistaken." In other words, the spirit's statement, produced with such magical fanfare, is ambiguous.

The most famous Dutch drama involving the Devil is undoubtedly Joost van den Vondel's *Lucifer* (1654), a widely known work that seems to have influenced Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Vondel, a liberal Mennonite who converted to Catholicism in the late 1630s to promote his ideal of a universal Christianity, composed this work as a political allegory instructing Christian rulers to stop playing ambitious Lucifers and unite against the Turks. For Vondel, Lucifer is no longer the epitome of evil, but a tragic figure who rebelled against his lord only because he listened to the advice of an evil aide, Beelzebub.

Dutch dramatists, then, expressed a great deal of skepticism about the reality of magical endeavors and diabolical activity. From *Mary of Nijmegen* to *Timon the Sorcerer*, the magicians in Dutch plays are neither terrifying necromancers nor members of a diabolical female sect of witches. Instead, playwrights used demons as metaphors for human vices or as rhetorical devices for satirical purposes, and they stressed human responsibility for evil. This parallels, to a remarkable degree, the skepticism of many among the Netherlands' intelligentsia and magistracy toward both popular belief in magic and learned belief in a diabolical conspiracy that gripped their peers elsewhere in Europe.

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See also: DEVIL; NETHERLANDS, NORTHERN; NETHERLANDS, SOUTHERN; RENAISSANCE DRAMA, ENGLAND; SKEPTICISM.

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DRAMA, ITALIAN

Magic, especially in the form of witchcraft, through its enchantments, wonders, and spells, provided a source of inspiration for numerous Italian comic playwrights during the Renaissance and baroque periods. Outside the inquisitorial tribunals, the *veterum sapientia* (ancient science), often reduced to trickery, served as the background for the complex intrigues of romantic comedies.

Beginning with Niccolò Machiavelli's *Mandragola* (The Mandrake, 1518), in which a reference to the mandrake root (act 2, scene 6) is used by the protagonist Callimaco to signal his desire to lie with the beautiful Lucrezia, magic became a central element in numerous works. In *Il Negromante* (The Necromancer, 1520), by the well-known playwright Ludovico Ariosto, the protagonist Massimo brings a necromancer, Lachelino, really a master rogue, to cure his adopted son Cintio of impotence. An illness presumed to be the work of the Devil sets into motion the events narrated in Girolamo Bargagli's *La Pellegrina* (The [Female] Pilgrim, 1564), in which the protagonist Lepida pretends to be possessed by demons to avoid marriage. The protagonist of Giordano Bruno's *Il Candelaio* (The Candle-Bearer, 1582) is Master Bonifacio, a married man who is in love with Signora Vittoria. The gullible Manfurio, an amateur alchemist named Bartolomeo, and Master Bonifacio are swindled by a group of tricksters of various calibers. Bonifacio entrusts the magician Scaramurè with casting a spell on Vittoria that will make her fall in love with him. Interestingly, Bruno's play contains a reference to witches' ability to fly, a belief that the playwright attributes to Bonifacio, who thinks "co l'arte magica, facesse uscire Satanasso da catene, venir le donne per l'aria volando là dove piacesse a lui" ("by magical art made Satan escape from his chains, and made women come to him wherever he wished by flying through the air") (*Candelaio*, act 5, scene 20). There were also comedies dedicated to astrological influences, such as Giambattista Della Porta's *L'Astrologo* (The Astrologer, 1606).

The theme of witchcraft also became a feature of early modern Italian musical theater, particularly during the seventeenth century, where there are characters with magical powers, such as the magician Falsirena in *Catena d'Adone* (The Chain of Adonis, 1626), by

Domenico Mazzocchi, libretto by Ottavio Tronsarelli (but taken from Giambattista Marino's *L'Adone*), Armida in *Erminia sul Giordano* (Erminia at the Jordan, 1632) by Giulio Rospigliosi from Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* (Jerusalem Liberated, 1581; books 6–7), and Alcina in *L'Isola d'Alcina* (The Island of Alcina, 1728) anonymous libretto, by Riccardo Broschi, based on Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (Orlando Gone Mad, 1532). Demons and magical practices are also present in *The Andromeda* by Benedetto Ferrari and Francesco Manelli (alias Fasolo, 1637), in Ferrari's *La Maga Fulminata* (The Witch Struck by Lightning, 1638) and *Pastor Regio* (1640), in librettist Giovanni Faustini's and the composer Francesco Cavalli's *Virtù de' Strali d'Amore* (The Power of Love's Arrows, 1642) and *Ormindo* (1644), in *Ulisse Errante* (Ulysses Wandering, 1644) by Giacomo Torelli, and in Nicolò Fontei's (Fonte, Fonteio) *Sidonio e Dorisbe* (Sidonio and Dorisbe, 1642).

Darker descriptions of magical rites are found in such late-seventeenth-century works as *Carlo Re d'Italia* (Carlo, King of Italy, 1682), by Matteo Noris, which opens with a scene where "magical operations are performed on a corpse" (Fabbri 1996, 212), and the third act of *Rodoaldo Re d'Italia* (Rodoaldo King of Italy, 1685), by Tommaso Stanzani, which contains a scene that portrays necromancy in greater detail (Fabbri 1996, 212).

A recurrent character in several Renaissance works is the *vetula*, a term that could refer to a prostitute, a panderer, or a sorceress whose services were sought by a protagonist who knew that such women had the ability to arouse human vices. The prototypical character in this category is found in the *Tragicomedia de Gallisto y Melibea*, or *La Celestina* (1499), attributed to Spanish author Fernando de Rojas. In this comedy, analyzed by Spanish ethnologist and historian Julio Caro Baroja, the protagonist Celestina is described as an old townswoman witch, astute and experienced in every type of evil. Her practices derive from the realm of erotic magic and are based on the use of medicinal and poisonous herbs, but also diabolical ingredients such as the bones of the dead. In particular, she is depicted as a figure who represents the dangerous aspects of instinctual forces, challenging social norms and disturbing traditional male domination of the social and religious order. In this sense, the *vetula* shares with the witch the same license for diabolical activity, through both her unrestrained sexual activity and her knowledge of magic.

Celestina reflects a specific sixteenth-century social type that was not only Spanish but also Italian, as shown by the witchcraft trials conducted in Venice, in which the majority of the accused were prostitutes or ex-prostitutes (Milani 1996, 307), and the trials in Naples in 1588, at which one of the principal defen-

dants accused of witchcraft engaged in prostitution and pandering on the Sabbath (Romeo 1990, 6). This social type inspired Ludovico Ariosto's *La Lena* (1528), one of his most successful comedies. Its action centers on the character of Lena, a middle-aged procuress whose intrigues are tolerated by her husband Pacifico. Lena seems to view events with veiled rancor and resentment out of bitterness about the crudely materialistic character of relationships based only on convenience and personal interest, and she maliciously hopes that every business initiative of various characters will fail.

In *La Cortigiana* (The Obsequious One, 1525), Pietro Aretino also includes a *vetula* in his character Aloisia, whom we find mourning the death of her mistress, Monna Maggiorina. Aloisia exclaims dejectedly that people are burned in Rome for "not having done anything" (Act 2, Scene 6). Of particular interest is the list of items in Maggiorina's will, which included detailed descriptions of many of the *vetula's* professional tools, such as "equipment for distilling, waters for removing freckles and spots, and a clamp for pendulous breasts" (Act 2, Scene 6). Borrowing from Lucan, Aretino also describes Aloisia wandering in cemeteries "to remove fingernails from corpses," of her transformations into animals such as "cats, mice, and dogs," adding her nocturnal flights "over water and through the winds to the *noce di Benevento* (walnut tree of Benevento)."

Echoes of the Sabbath under the *noce di Benevento*, a legendary meeting place for Italian witches, also occur in the intermission of *La Gelosia* (Jealousy, 1550) by Anton Francesco Grazzini (alias il Lasca), in which the witches sing, "Running swiftly like the wind we go to the *noce di Benevento*." Much later, this legendary tree even became the focus of an opera, *La Noce Maga di Benevento Estirpata da San Barbato* (The Walnut Witch of Benevento Taken from St. Barbato, 1665), first performed in Rome in 1666. Its author, Nicolò Jperno, was the son of a medical examiner and historian who wrote *De Nuce Maga Beneventana* (On the Magical Walnut Tree of Benevento, 1634). This myth continued to inspire theater through the nineteenth century, particularly the successful ballet by Salvatore Vigandò, *Il Noce di Benevento*, with music by Franz Xaver Sussmayr, first performed at La Scala in Milan in 1812.

PAOLO PORTONE;

TRANSLATED BY SHANNON VENEUBLE

See also: BENEVENTO, WALNUT TREE OF; CARO BAROJA, JULIO; *CELESTINA, LA*; DRAMA, SPAIN; ITALY; MANDRAKE; MILAN; NAPLES, KINGDOM OF; NECROMANCY.

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DRAMA, SPANISH

In Spain, two major dramatic traditions evolved during the sixteenth century: the *auto sacramental*, a one-act allegorical religious drama, performed especially at Corpus Christi; and the *comedia*, a three-act theater play conceived for the secular stage. In both kinds of drama, magic could be involved in the action, and characters associated with magic, such as the Devil, witches, and sorcerers, appeared on stage. A significant difference between the Spanish *auto sacramental* and the *comedia* consists in the characters. As representations of abstract ideas, the *auto's* characters were personifications of concepts like human nature, sin, or innocence. On the other hand, the *comedia* dramatized actions of individual people, and generally employed magic in love intrigues. At the end of the seventeenth century, Enlightenment secular drama ridiculed belief in the power of sorcerers and witches as superstitions of backward people. Subsequently, magic on stage was understood as a kind of science, requiring special knowledge, but no pacts with devils. This new *comedia de magia* was at its height during the eighteenth and part of the nineteenth centuries.

Spanish Golden Age drama of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did not question the reality of witchcraft and sorcery, but magic played an ambivalent part on stage. In the same drama, witches and sorcerers could seem to possess great magical powers, but then might suddenly be presented as impostors with little or no capacity for magic. Sorcery, magical flights, and the Devil's pact could have different meanings according to the general theme of the drama. Religious drama of the *comedia* genre, such as Pedro Calderón de la Barca's seventeenth-century theological plays, classified magic as evil, representing diabolical temptation of the human soul. In the more popular tradition, for example in Lope de Vega's *comedias*, magicians were often famous figures from ancient mythology, and sometimes magic was related to the life of saints.

Dramas that presented sorcery and witchcraft in mythological times—great magicians from antiquity or saints who had been magicians before becoming saints—thus presented a different context than that of the author's or audience's, which was that of witchcraft

cases in early modern Spain. Nevertheless, some authors also took their inspiration from current beliefs and notorious contemporary cases of witchcraft or sorcery. In numerous comedias, magic had a burlesque character, especially in dramas that continued the tradition of Fernando de Rojas's tragicomedy *La Celestina* (1499). Like their famous ancestress (and like numerous defendants in inquisitorial trials), the protagonists—supposed relatives of the great sorceress created by Rojas—engaged especially in love magic. In a similar vein, the devil of the *comedia* was usually conjured in order to procure the love of a certain person or to unveil hidden treasures. A further *comedia* tradition, sometimes intertwined with these other types, discussed quite seriously the relationship between diabolical and natural magic.

In Enlightenment drama of the later seventeenth century, magic became a ridiculous delusion, featuring a supposed “sorceress” with no real magical powers who skillfully exploits the superstitious belief in witchcraft for her own benefit. This kind of drama created a new type, named *comedia de magia* (drama of magic), which flourished from the beginning of the eighteenth century through most of the nineteenth century. Its protagonists were magicians—male or female—mainly interested in pursuing their material or social benefit. Magic was now considered a sort of science; religious or theological problems were no longer a concern. The *autos sacramentales* coexisted with the secular drama through the whole period until 1765, when they were ordered banned because of their fantastic elements and the improbability of their stories. Although these dramas remained extremely popular, more educated Spaniards found much of their plots, with the prominent role of the Devil, completely anachronistic. In fact, *autos sacramentales* (unlike *comedias*) were still performed in the Age of Enlightenment just as they had been in previous centuries, even though the world in which the Devil and witchcraft had seemed such a frightening reality was long gone, at least among the educated.

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See also: CELESTINA, LA; ENLIGHTENMENT; LOVE MAGIC; SPAIN.

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DRUGS AND HALLUCINOGENS

Hallucinogenic drugs appear to have contributed to European witchcraft beliefs when the ecstatic experiences of a small but significant minority of people who used them were understood by late medieval demonologists and early modern magistrates to be evidence that witches flew to diabolic Sabbats, where they participated in a variety of fantastic and perverted activities.

Hallucinogenic drugs include several types of psychoactive chemicals that induce altered states of consciousness, generally involving distortions of normal cognitive processes, visual and auditory hallucinations, and vivid and frenzied dreams. Almost all natural hallucinogens are found in plants, and people in a wide variety of cultures have long used them as one method of inducing ecstatic trances in which they experience interactions with the spirit world. Europe contains a number of natural hallucinogens that some people in late medieval and early modern Europe apparently utilized to induce such altered states of consciousness. The biochemical effects of the active ingredients in one class of these drugs were probably a principal source for the idea that witches flew to Sabbats. Hallucinogenic drugs may also have contributed to the witchcraft persecutions in two more limited ways: accidental ergot poisoning may have, in a few cases, caused delusions and hallucinations attributed to demonic possession or bewitchment, and there is evidence that hallucinogens may have been used occasionally during interrogations to induce stubborn suspects to confess.

HALLUCINOGENS AND SHAMANISM

Ethnographic studies show that a wide variety of people around the world have consumed locally available hallucinogenic plants in order to experience their psychoactive properties. Furthermore, the purposes of their use are generally similar, and the experiences, while reflecting the diverse cultures of the people using them, share some fundamental commonalities. They are used to induce a trance state in which the user experiences direct participation in a dreamlike alternate “spirit” world where hidden or occult knowledge of the ordinary world is revealed, and human and natural processes can be influenced. The features experienced in this world are described in various ways, but they generally include a variety of nonhuman, nonmaterial, but conscious entities, which often appear in human, partially human, or animal form. They also commonly include a sensation of flight, and often convey insights into the nature and source of communal problems such as disease, conflicts, or natural disasters.

In some societies, use of hallucinogens is widespread, but in many societies, shamans specialize in entering the trance state and communicating with the spirit world. Not all shamans use hallucinogens, but many

do, and use of the hallucinogenic mushroom *amanita muscaria* was central to the Siberian shamanism that served as the archetype for ethnographers. These shamans' initiatory rite involves ingestion of the hallucinogenic mushrooms, the experience of death and decay, ascent to the spirit world, and interaction with spirits to acquire occult knowledge and power. There are interesting if merely suggestive structural parallels with the experience witches were believed to have: They applied hallucinogenic ointments, flew to a witches' dance, worshipped the Devil, and thereby acquired malefic powers.

EUROPEAN HALLUCINOGENS AND WITCHCRAFT BELIEFS

Priests in some ancient Near Eastern and classical Mediterranean religions appear to have used hallucinogens, and some early medieval Germanic peoples are known to have used *amanita muscaria*. However, while these mushrooms are found throughout Europe, they were not featured in hallucinogenic recipes contained in witchcraft literature, and there is little trace of them in trial records. Instead, various plants belonging to the *Solanaceae* family—nightshade or belladonna (*Atropa belladonna*); henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*); datura, or thorn apple (*Datura stramonium*), and mandrake (*Mandragora officinarum*)—figured prominently in these recipes, and ointments presumably derived from them frequently figured in trial documents. These plants contain the anticholinergic alkaloids atropine, hyoscyamine, and scopolamine, which interfere with the normal functioning of the nervous system by blocking the neurotransmitter acetylcholine. The chemical *bufotenin*, which is found in the skin secretions of the common European toad, is related, and toads are also mentioned in some recipes. These chemicals are extremely toxic, which is presumably why recipes called for them to be made into ointments to spread on the skin or mucus membranes. Even when such ointments are used, users experience powerful hallucinations and generally fall into a deep trance with vivid dreams.

These hallucinations and dreams are generally experienced as real in a way more profound than those produced by drugs like LSD; upon waking, users remain convinced of their reality. These effects were noted in several early modern accounts of experiments in which confessed witches were observed to anoint themselves, fall into a deep sleep, and awake convinced that they had flown to distant lands and experienced all sorts of adventures. Modern researchers who have created recipes contained in early modern texts and anointed themselves have sometimes experienced similar effects.

Some historians downplay or even deny these drugs any role in the history of witchcraft, pointing to the frequency with which unguents brought forward in trials were found to be inert, and suggesting that the learned

descriptions of experiments were merely literary exercises modeled on classical accounts. It is true that in some cases the suspects listed only benign ingredients in their testimony, but in most cases, reports that the unguents were inert mean little because they do not specify the means by which the potency of the salves was ascertained. Modern LSD research indicates that one type of test that is known to have been used for poisons, experiments on animals, would have been useless for hallucinogenic salves because of differences in body weight and metabolism and the fact that the drugs affect higher-order mental functions. Furthermore, some archival sources contain reports of drug-induced experiences that diverge significantly from the Sabbat stereotype, and some suspects were observed in trance states they later ascribed to drugs (Bever 1983, 261–262, 294–295).

Similarly, the objections to the human experiments described in the witch literature are also weak, since three different situations were described, one by the demonologist Johannes Nider and two by skeptical physicians, Andrés de Laguna and Giambattista Della Porta. Each differs substantially from the others and from classical accounts. For example, Nider and Della Porta said their witches agreed to anoint themselves, while de Laguna said he got the unguent from a pair of suspects and used it on a volunteer. Della Porta's witch and Laguna's volunteer fell into such deep sleeps that they could not be woken up even when beaten; Nider's witch woke up when she fell off the bench she was seated on. Differences in ingredients and proportions would account for these differences; literary imitation would not. De Laguna described how his volunteer's eyes dilated dramatically before she fell asleep, a detail consistent with the drugs' known effects (the name Belladonna, in Italian "beautiful lady," comes from the fact that women used small amounts to dilate their pupils to make themselves more attractive) that was not mentioned in the other reports. Della Porta mentions looking through a chink in the door as his "witch" disrobed and anointed herself, which is reminiscent of Apuleius of Madaura's account of watching through a chink in the door as a woman used an ointment to transform herself into an owl, but the classical author claimed he saw the woman physically transform and fly away, whereas Della Porta's point was that no physical event occurred. On balance, it seems that the accounts in the witch literature reported real events, and that some, although far from all, allegations and confessions involving hallucinogenic drugs in the trial records similarly reflected reality.

Use of hallucinogenic ointments does not mean that drug experiences explain the widespread belief that large numbers of people flew to a diabolic Sabbat, but it does suggest that some of its elements stemmed at least partly from reports of what people actually experienced

in these dreams. Specifically, the fact that the active alkaloids block the neurotransmitter acetylcholine in the peripheral as well as central nervous system would account for the feelings of dissociation and flight they induce, making the experience of flight more likely a product of biochemistry than of cultural suggestion. Similarly, the specific form of paraesthesia produced by scopolamine may be responsible for the sensation of growing hair or feathers, suggesting the commonly reported experience of turning into an animal. Other aspects of the hallucinations and dreams probably reflected the users' cultural milieu as well as their individual psychological dispositions. It seems likely, however, that such elements as copulation with strangers, feasting and revelry, and encounters with spirit figures predated and therefore contributed to late medieval demonology, although the diffusion of the demonology would have caused these particular dreams to be experienced more widely and in forms that conformed ever more closely to the stereotype.

Since scopolamine and hyoscyamine are often experienced as unpleasant, and they also make the user susceptible to suggestion, they were probably the basis for drugs that were occasionally administered to recalcitrant suspects (Sidkey 1997, 208). Such practices, though documented, were rare, and account for only a small fraction of recorded confessions.

Another drug effect that has been suggested as accounting for at least some witchcraft beliefs is ergot poisoning. But it is at most an explanation for particular instances to which general ideas about witchcraft arising elsewhere were applied. Ergot (*Claviceps purpurea*) is a fungus that grows on grains, particularly in cold, wet weather. It contains the alkaloids *ergine*, ergonovine, lysergic acid hydroxyethylamide, and, sometimes, *dlysergic acid diethylamide* (LSD). When consumed in bread, it can cause either gangrenous ergotism, known as St. Anthony's Fire, or convulsive ergotism, both of which cause delirium and hallucinations. The former causes a sensation of burning inside, dry gangrene, and the loss of fingers, toes, and even limbs, while the latter culminates in convulsions. Some symptoms of ergotism, particularly analgesia, *fornication* (the sensation of something creeping over or under one's skin), and spasms, correspond closely with characteristics of bewitchment or demonic possession, and there is occasional geographical and temporal correlation between some outbreaks of ergotism and reports of mass bewitchment in Europe. The witch panic at Salem has also been blamed on ergotism; but numerous objections have been raised to this theory, and even in the case of the much better founded European instances, the essential point is that ergotism may explain why some people in certain specific cases experienced symptoms they attributed to witchcraft or diabolic possession, but it does not explain why they attributed the symptoms to

them, or why people in the far greater number of cases unrelated to ergotism thought the Devil had possessed them or witches had caused them harm.

EDWARD BEVER

See also: APULEIUS OF MADAURA; DELLA PORTA, GIAMBATTISTA; DISEASE; ERGOTISM; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; MANDRAKE; NIDER, JOHANNES; NIGHTSHADE; OINTMENTS; SABBAT; SHAMANISM; TOADS.

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DUHR, BERNHARD (1852–1930)

This German Jesuit is one of several Catholic Church historians who sought to reevaluate the persecution of witches and its origins, arguing against Germany's dominant liberal Protestant historiography during the nineteenth-century Kulturkampf (culture war). Duhr joined the Society of Jesus in 1872, living in various European countries before settling in Munich in 1903.

In 1900, Duhr entered the long-standing debate on which denomination bore the greatest guilt in the issue of witchcraft trials. This was the same year his major work, *Die Stellung der Jesuiten in den deutschen Hexenprozessen* (The Jesuit Position in German Witchcraft Trials) was published by the Görres Society, then at the center of German Catholic cultural life.

Duhr's views had been preceded by those of two other Germans, Johannes Janssen and Johann Diefenbach, both of whom had attempted to lay the main blame for the excesses of the witch persecutions on the Protestant Reformation and its theological and social impact. Duhr justified his investigation by asserting that previous Jesuit studies had been overly biased in one or another direction. Duhr presented a huge amount of

information and sources extremely concisely, thus providing a solid foundation for any further examination of the attitude of the Jesuits and of the Catholic Church as a whole to the issue of witchcraft.

Obviously, the two opposed major representatives of the Jesuit order, Martín Del Rio and Friedrich Spee, who had taken opposed stands on witchcraft trials, assumed primary importance in Duhr's discussion. In his evaluation of these two, Duhr revealed both his greatness and his limitations: Without attempting to acquit the Jesuit order of all responsibility for promoting witchcraft trials, he imitated other late-nineteenth-century apologists in matters of guilt and responsibility. He also argued from an apologetic point of view in marginalizing Del Rio and Gregory of Valencia, both famous Jesuits, while attempting to categorize Spee, along with his predecessors Adam Tanner and Paul Laymann, as true, traditional Jesuits in their uncompromising opposition to witchcraft trials. On the other hand, he correctly accused his opponents of hastily labeling Spee a humanist outsider, while portraying Del Rio and other advocates of the trials as "typical" Jesuits. Duhr's main achievement was to bring relative impartiality to the historiography of the witchcraft trials at a moment of extreme polemics. Rather than painting a black-and-white denominational picture, he suggested a contextual understanding of the theory of witchcraft. Even Duhr, however, could not finally resolve the tension between Spee and his order.

Duhr's achievement can only be fully appreciated within the context of the situation of the Jesuits in the German Empire at the time he was writing, when they were in fact prohibited. Duhr's entire work can be seen as an apologetics for the Jesuit order, beginning with his *Jesuit Fables*, which saw its fourth edition in 1904. All his publications reflected his endeavors to convince the German public that the Jesuits deserved a place in the cultural and academic life of Wilhelmine Germany. Most of his liberal and anti-ultramontane critics argued that Duhr placed the Jesuit order and the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church toward controversial issues in an overly favorable light.

JÖRG HAUSTEIN;

TRANSLATED BY HELEN SIEGBURG

See also: DEL RIO, MARTÍN; GREGORY OF VALENCIA; HANSEN, JOSEPH; HISTORIOGRAPHY; LAYMANN, PAUL; RIEZLER, SIGMUND; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; TANNER, ADAM.

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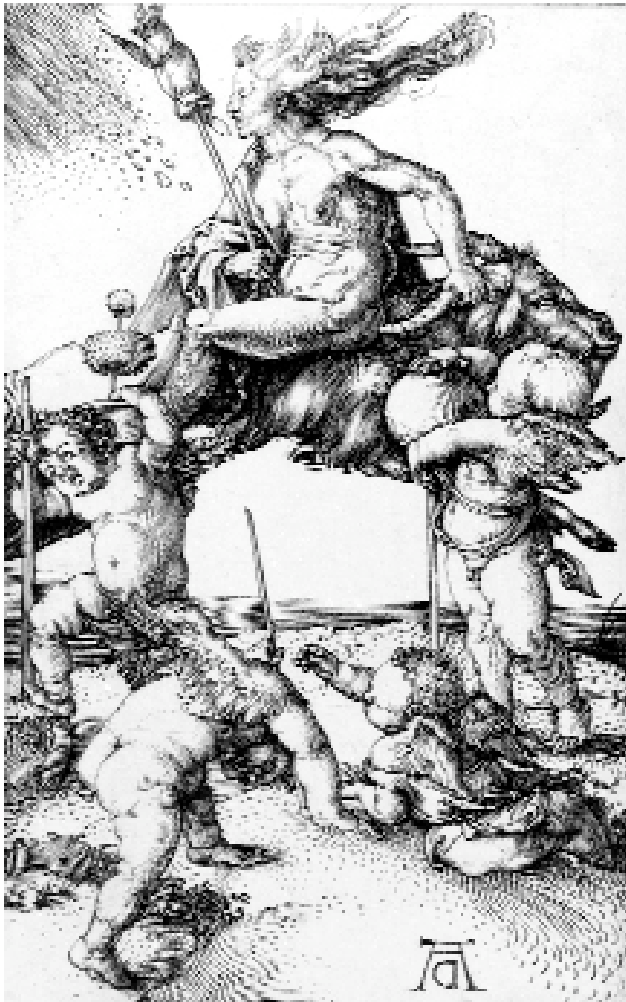
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DÜRER, ALBRECHT (1471–1528)

Dürer was a painter, printmaker, draftsman, and writer, whose engraving *Witch Riding Backwards on a Goat* (ca. 1500) exercised a strong influence on sixteenth-century witchcraft iconography through the work of Hans Baldung [Grien]. Dürer is generally considered the greatest of all German artists and an extraordinary innovator in the fields of printmaking (especially engraving), portraiture, and self-portraiture. Apart from his journeyman years in the upper Rhine region, two trips to Italy in 1495 and 1505–1507 (which shaped his approach to color, human proportions, and perspective), and travel to the Netherlands in 1520–1521, Dürer spent most of his life in his native city of Nuremberg. His high standing as an artist is demonstrated by the large number of commissions he received from the Holy Roman emperor Maximilian I after 1512; and by a life pension to oversee imperial artistic commissions, granted by Maximilian in 1515 and renewed by Charles V in 1520.

Throughout his entire career, Dürer completed only two images of witches, both of them engravings: *Four Naked Women* or *The Four Witches* (1497), and *Witch Riding Backwards on a Goat*. The central subject of the latter, a woman riding a goat and holding a spindle, soon became one of the stock representations for witchcraft in the sixteenth century. Wild flying hair and the hailstorm (in the left top corner) quickly developed into two common visual cues for witchcraft. Another critical iconographical contribution of Dürer was the association of witchcraft with inversion: His witch is shown riding backwards, her hair flies out in a direction contrary to all expectations, and even Dürer's monogram is reversed. The backward ride alludes to a medieval trope and cultural practice used as a form of punishment or mockery in cases of cuckolding or husband beating, cases in which the traditional sexual honor and order of the community was considered to have been overturned. Moreover, the goat was strongly associated with lust in the late Middle Ages, particularly in depictions of the seven vices. This association helps underline the sexual associations of Dürer's figure, as does her grasp of the goat's horn, once again a reference to cuckoldry and the overturning of sexual order. The nakedness of the witch may well reflect the influence of classical models.

The four putti below the riding figure are more mysterious and have eluded clear explanation. One carries a toy tree and stick; another balances a round vessel,



Albrecht Dürer's engraving *Witch Riding Backwards on a Goat*, ca. 1500, had an enormous influence on witch iconography, including such elements as the goat, the spindle the witch holds, the flying hair, the hailstorm, flying backwards, and the association of witchcraft with lust and sexuality. (Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz/Art Resource)

possibly a wine jar; a third performs a somersault; a fourth endeavors to take a stick from his fellow. These figures have been understood as personifications of the four elements or four seasons; or as attendants of a goddess of lust, similar to the winged putti associated with fifteenth-century Italian representations of the Priapus and Dionysus cults. The latter explanation would fit with Charmian Mesenzeva's understanding of the witch as modeled on the ancient figure of Aphrodite Pandemos, the earthly Venus and goddess of lust and night, of which a number of examples were extant in the late fifteenth century. Whatever the precise explanations, the putti underline the associations of witchcraft with sexual disorder and inversion. Likewise, the curious depiction of a goat with the tail of a fish or serpent may be an allusion to Capricorn, a figure closely

associated in the late Middle Ages with the planet-god, Saturn, who included magicians and witches among his "children." Interest in this engraving is demonstrated by six surviving copies, three prints and three paintings (one by Adam Elsheimer).

The presence of evil is clearly the subject of *Four Naked Women*. A monstrous devil, surrounded by flames and smoke, stands in a doorway, looking in at four naked women. Two are shown from the back and two face the viewer, while the skull and bone at the women's feet clearly suggest the presence of evil. The identity and activity of the group remains a mystery, accentuated by the sphere hanging overhead displaying the letters *O. G. H.*, which, like the figures themselves, have been deciphered in numerous ways. Although reminiscent of the Graces, the female figures have also been identified as the seasons, the temperaments, the elements, and as four witches. This engraving also aroused considerable contemporary interest: four copies were made over the next few years, and such later artists as Sebald and Barthel Beham reworked the scene.

CHARLES ZIKA

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BALDUNG [GRIEN], HANS; DIONYSUS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; GENDER; GOAT; IMPOTENCE, SEXUAL; MAXIMILIAN I, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; SATURN.

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DUVAL, ANDRÉ (1564–1638)

Leading theologian of the Paris Faculty of Theology (Sorbonne), friend of such luminaries as Pierre Coton, Pierre de Bérulle, and St. Vincent de Paul, spiritual companion and biographer of Barbe Acarie (Marie de l'Incarnation), who founded the French Discalced Carmelites, Duval was also involved in assessments of demonic possession, witchcraft, and charismatic spirituality. Appointed to a chair in theology at the University of Paris in 1597, Duval was a formative figure in the French "century of saints." Church and state officials regularly called on him to evaluate such phenomena as demonic possession or ecstasies, or to judge the orthodoxy of new books on these subjects.

Duval rarely avoided controversy. In the Wars of Religion, he had been a supporter of the militant Holy Catholic League, and he remained an ultramontane, who tended to side with pope over king in jurisdictional matters. Soon after joining the Sorbonne, Duval was among those who used Marthe Brossier's "demonic" anti-Huguenot exorcisms as evidence that God did not approve of the 1598 Edict of Nantes, Henri IV's new peace accord with the Huguenots. Those who supported the edict feared that Brossier and other exorcists might encourage fresh religious violence. Royal doctors engineered an unfavorable medical judgment that Brossier was a fraud, and the *Parlement* of Paris (the sovereign judicial court, with jurisdiction over approximately one-half of France) imprisoned her.

For Duval and his colleagues, such actions represented an unacceptable degree of royal power over the Church. To prevent exorcisms, they preached, was to deny miracles, and they claimed that Huguenot influence lay behind the *Parlement's* decision to suppress the exorcisms. Duval's criticism was sufficiently shrill for Duval and another priest to be charged by the *Parlement* with offending both court and king. Duval ("an otherwise learned man," the *parlementaire* Jacques Auguste de Thou noted; Congnard 1652, 10) got off with a reprimand.

Duval's next public statements on exorcism, in 1615 and 1618, concerned the controversial practice of interrogating the demons of the possessed in order to extract witchcraft accusations. Here he was more cautious. Consulted by officials in Valognes (Normandy) about the legitimacy of demonic testimony as legal evidence, Duval and two Sorbonne colleagues summarily rejected the practice: although the Devil can tell the truth, they held, he can never be trusted to do so. This response was published in a 1618 work by an Augustinian, Sanson Birette, *Refutation of the Vulgar Error Regarding Exorcised Devils*, with a letter of support from Duval. In his defense against witchcraft accusations made by the possessed nuns at Loudun, the priest Urbain Grandier later cited Birette's book. Ironically, in 1633, Duval signed a report giving qualified, but crucial, support for the authenticity of the possessions at Loudun. One of the principal exorcists there later invoked the Sorbonne's validation of the authenticity of the possessions in print. Duval's equivocation on the Loudun possessions was probably related to Cardinal Richelieu's influence over both the exorcisms and the Sorbonne theologians (Mandrou 1968, 318–322).

Duval's other statements about possession and witchcraft emphasize both diligence and the need for authority and discernment. In the 1620 case of Elisabeth de Ranfaing in the independent duchy of Lorraine, Duval and two colleagues rejected the use of diabolic testimony in the absence of other evidence, judging Ranfaing's

performances suspect because they lasted too long, "without syncope or interruption" (*Avis de Messieurs Du Val*, fol. 172r), arousing suspicion that the possessed woman was controlling the proceedings; their report also criticized some of the more flamboyant practices of the Lorraine exorcists as superstitious. In 1623, Duval appears to have been behind Sorbonne moves to condemn a book by the layman Jean le Normant about the possessed nuns of Lille, although two of his colleagues approved its publication. In 1625 Duval signed a joint response to a request from a court in Orléans for guidance about the realities of witchcraft and limits on the Devil's power. The authors of the response accepted several controversial forms of witchcraft, but urged judiciousness regarding claims made in this case by self-confessed witches. Duval's responses allow for many supernatural activities and signs, but also reflect a desire to qualify or limit his approval, sometimes for political reasons or to reassert the authority of the Faculty of Theology.

In his commitment to spiritual and mystical aspects of Catholicism, combined with a rigorous authoritarianism, Duval's attitudes resemble those of Jean Gerson, chancellor of the same faculty two centuries before, who addressed similarly vexing themes. Duval drew directly on Gerson's work, and like Gerson, he sought theologically rigorous arguments. But Duval's views, like Gerson's, were inevitably constrained by the political and polemical exigencies of his day. His career shows that good theological practice, like good case law, sometimes focuses as much on mustering authoritatively coherent views from within a canon as on arriving at a single constant version of the truth.

SARAH FERBER

See also: BÉRULLE, PIERRE DE; BROSSIER, MARTHE; COTON, PIERRE; DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS; EXORCISM; FRANCE; GERSON, JEAN; LILLE NUNS; LOUDUN NUNS; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; RANFAING, ELISABETH DE; WARS OF RELIGION (FRANCE).

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E

ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE)

During the early modern period, some of the numerous Holy Roman Empire's ecclesiastical territories experienced particularly severe witch hunts. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, witch burnings became so frequent in central Europe that we cannot localize the exact starting points of individual waves of persecution. Surprisingly, the most prominent ecclesiastical princes of the Holy Roman Empire, the three archbishop-electors, ranked among the most active witch hunters. However, their witch hunts were never related to their quality as spiritual lords of their dioceses or archdioceses, but were carried out in their capacity as secular rulers.

As a result of political developments of the late Middle Ages, these archbishops ruled over sizable secular territories, usually located within their dioceses but covering only a small share of each. For example, the archdiocese of Mainz stretched almost from the North Sea to Italy, but the prince-electorate of Mainz (*Kurfürstentum Mainz*, or *Kurmainz*), consisted of patches of land scattered across the middle of the Holy Roman Empire: a large portion in the Rhineland; another portion stretching east of Frankfurt into upper Franconia; a third patch in Thuringia around the town of Erfurt, where Luther received his university education; and further tiny particles of land elsewhere. Altogether *Kurmainz* was about 8,300 square kilometers with nearly 400,000 inhabitants, and generated around one million gulden of income annually. Prince-bishops usually came from the lower regional nobility and were elected by cathedral chapters.

The witch craze in Mainz started with about 650 burnings during the short reign (1601–1604) of Johann Adam von Bicken, a man of fragile health. Under his successor Johann Schweikhard von Cronberg (ruled 1604–1626), a powerful imperial politician, the persecution slowed, but another 361 people were executed as witches. Witch hunting reached its climax under Archbishop Georg Friedrich von Greiffenklau (ruled 1626–1629), when 768 witches were killed in just four years. All in all, about 1,800 people were legally killed as witches under the rule of these three archbishops.

The electoral archbishopric of Mainz may serve as an example for ecclesiastical territories more generally, because many severe witch hunts were conducted by ecclesiastical prince-electors, prince-bishops, and prince-abbots (and even one prince-abbess, at Quedlinburg). Perhaps the primary reason so many witches were executed in central Europe was the fact that these ecclesiastical territories lay at the core of the Holy Roman Empire. To put it another way, there were few ecclesiastical territories outside central Europe (one apparent exception, the state of the Teutonic Knights in Prussia, was secularized by the Hohenzollern dynasty in 1525 during the Reformation, long before serious witch hunting started). The prince-bishopric of Breslau in Silesia (now in Poland) saw a considerable number of witch hunts as well. In Italy, the Papal States largely escaped such persecutions, although a witch panic apparently occurred in the papal territory of Avignon in southern France.

Some infamous prince-bishops, the so-called *witch-bishops*, conducted the most terrible witch hunts within the Holy Roman Empire. In the 1580s, the archbishop and elector of Trier began the series of massive witch hunts in the Holy Roman Empire with a paradigmatic persecution. For the first time, witches did not come only from the lower levels of society, and the execution of wealthy citizens, noblemen, and clerics as witches became a hallmark of persecutions in ecclesiastical territories. The prince-electorates of Mainz, Cologne, and Trier; the prince-bishoprics of Bamberg, Würzburg, Eichstätt, Minden, Osnabrück, Augsburg, Strasbourg, and Breslau; the prince-abbey of Fulda, Stavelot, and Ellwangen; the imperial abbey of St. Maximin (close to Trier); the lands of the Teutonic Order at Mergentheim all were ecclesiastical principalities that proved particularly susceptible to major witchcraft persecutions.

Nineteenth-century Protestant scholars attributed these persecutions to Counter-Reformation zeal, and Catholicism generally. Recent research, however, has demonstrated that attributing responsibility for these witch hunts is more complicated. The electorate of Mainz, to return to our example, was one of many fragmented Imperial territories where state-formation failed. There are obvious reasons for such structural



Ecclesiastical territories in Central Europe (Holy Roman Empire), the center of witch hunting. (Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation, Oxford, 1996)

weakness: First, there was no continuity in office since ecclesiastical lands were not hereditary. Second, the bishops had considerable difficulties introducing reforms, one of their prime tasks as proponents of the Counter-Reformation. Moreover, the cathedral chapters that had elected them were irremovable and frequently pursued their own politics—they were dominated by interests of the regional nobility rather than the universal Church. Third, in Mainz, as in the electorates of Cologne and Trier, the regional nobility, the towns, and even the peasants retained considerable rights to self-government, and none lacked self-confidence. Taxation was difficult, and legal administration was decentralized and fragmented among competing jurisdictions.

These territories also experienced a most embarrassing conflict between the desire for religious reform and political reality. Because prince-bishops were temporal as well as spiritual lords, in theory, the process of confessionalization (the efforts of the different churches in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe to align with the state to control all aspects of daily life) should have been particularly easy. In fact, some prince-bishoprics were Catholic only in name, while most of the nobility, and a number of towns, like Erfurt, or portions of the citizenry, remained Protestant. One of the most famous laws of the empire, *cuius regio eius religio* (subjects must follow the creed of their ruler), introduced by the Peace of Augsburg in 1555, could never

be put into practice. Until the end of the sixteenth century, even members of the cathedral chapters remained Protestant. Some bishops had to accept Protestant councillors, because they found no able Catholics among their subjects and would not risk employing foreigners. As late as 1582, one of the empire's most prominent ecclesiastical princes, Gebhard II Truchsess von Waldburg, archbishop of Cologne, converted to Protestantism, a traumatic experience for the Catholic party. The nobility was split into a lower branch, subject to the princes, and a higher branch, subject only to the emperor, virtually independent, and organized in cantons. Both branches were closely interlinked by marriage and represented a powerful social stratum, particularly in Franconia, Swabia, and the Rhineland. Many Imperial Knights and many of the lower nobility were Protestants, so when the bishops tried to embark on the business of Counter-Reformation, they faced considerable resistance.

It was symbolic of the bishops' weakness that Balthasar von Dernbach (ruled 1570–1576 and 1602–1606), the prince-abbot of Fulda, an ecclesiastical territory almost as large as the neighboring prince-bishoprics of Bamberg and Würzburg, failed to reform his territory. To the great displeasure of his subjects, including members of the nobility who constituted his chapter, von Dernbach was among the first generation of ecclesiastical princes who tried to introduce the rules of the Council of Trent. Like other reforming princes, he tried to use the reforms to discipline his subjects, and to strengthen his state. According to the Peace of Augsburg, dissenting burghers, clerics, and nobles could be driven into exile, and local society could be reshaped by discipline and education, with the Jesuits serving as intellectual cadres supporting absolutist rule. The struggle against concubinage usually served as a means of disciplining the clergy, and particularly the cathedral chapter. The public whipping of concubines, one of the zealous abbot's reforms, was considered an insult by his noble canons, as well as by the citizens of Fulda, who had accepted these unofficial "marriages" of their daughters, which conveniently united the strata of local society. The opposition to Abbot von Dernbach was considerable, and came not merely from Protestants, but also from some leading Catholic families, who were slow to accept his new religious program. Supported by the prince-bishops of Würzburg, this opposition forced the abbot to resign. However, von Dernbach managed to regain his territory through a decision of the *Reichshofrat* (imperial aulic court). Back in office, he launched one of the fiercest witch hunts in the Holy Roman Empire. There were 276 victims in three years in a territory with fewer than 90,000 inhabitants. Only after the abbot's death did the persecution stop. Under the new abbot, the infamous judge Balthasar Nuss was imprisoned and, after years of a

behind-the-scenes power struggle, executed for his atrocities.

It is rewarding to explore the microstructures of these ecclesiastical territories. For example, the persecution at Fulda had links to three other large-scale persecutions: that in the lands of the Teutonic Knights at Mergentheim (1602–1606), and those in the prince-bishopric of Bamberg (1616–1619 and 1626–1630). Among those who triumphed with the resignation of Prince-Abbot Dernbach in 1576 was an influential citizen, Hans Haan. After the zealous abbot's return, Haan's wife Anna was among the first to be accused of witchcraft. The family's losing appeal to the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court) was one reason judge Nuss was put on trial and eventually executed for his severe abuses. Not even during the confessional age were witchcraft prosecutions meant to serve as instruments of political or religious power struggles, or of revenge. A contemporary report labeled the Fulda persecution as "unlawful, cruel and tyrannical" (Oestmann 1997, 438–446). But this does not end the story. Recent research suggests that the Chancellor of Bamberg, Dr. Georg Haan (1568–1628), was Anna Haan's son. Originally a councillor in the interim administration of Fulda before 1602, Haan later rose to become vice-chancellor of Bamberg under Johann Philipp von Gebsattel (ruled 1599–1609), a bishop who indulged in the Renaissance joys of loving music and women (he had at least six children). But in 1610 the Catholic League installed an ardent reform-minded bishop, Johann Gottfried von Aschhausen, who was already bishop of Würzburg. His new suffragan bishop, Friedrich Förner (1568–1630), who resembled the Trier demonologist Peter Binsfeld, began to form new alliances and immediately attacked witches. A witch hunt started in 1612, making Haan uneasy for more than one reason: he was probably the son of a suspected witch who was arrested about the same time that his wife's mother had been burned as a witch in the territory of the Teutonic Knights at Mergentheim.

Factionalism entered politics as proponents of the Counter-Reformation established their power. Förner found support from the former chancellor's son, councillor Dr. Ernst Vasoldt, now eager to serve as a Witch Commissioner. Their conflict climaxed in 1618. Haan had already indicated his distaste for such persecutions. When the Thirty Years' War began to cause financial problems, he sharply reduced the budget of the persecutors, thus ending the persecutions. The hard-liners had lost a battle. The situation changed again after the election of Bishop Johann Georg II Fuchs von Dornheim (ruled 1622–1633), another Catholic League candidate, whose election had been engineered by Förner. Haan remained in office, but his enemies began to undermine him. In 1625 Förner delivered a series of thirty-five sermons on magic and witchcraft

that he dedicated to the prince-bishop of Eichstätt, Johann Christoph von Westerstetten. The prince-bishop was a man who represented the fundamentalist type of Counter-Reforming ecclesiastical prince and was well known for his persistent witch hunting. He initiated a permanent state of persecution in his prince-abbey of Ellwangen from 1603 to 1612, leading to no fewer than 75 days of executions during which groups of 4–12 were burned. He then added another 60 group burnings in his prince-bishopric of Eichstätt between 1612 and 1636. Even if Westerstetten's reign resulted in only 240 executions at Eichstätt (Durrant 2002), he was still responsible for at least 550 burnings, including the Ellwangen persecutions—and in both cases, the witch hunts lasted exactly as long as Westerstetten was in power. Guided by Förner, the most prominent victim of Bamberg's final witch hunt was the leading local politician, the veteran chancellor Dr. Haan, who had served the bishops of Bamberg and the Catholic League for many years. Eventually the whole Haan family was burned at the stake.

In comparison to earlier large-scale witch hunts, a new rationale guided these persecutions. Grassroots witch hunts in places like Lorraine might last for decades, and therefore accumulated large numbers of victims. This new type of witch hunt, however, was started deliberately, gained momentum within weeks, and led to the burning of hundreds of witches within a few months. Even when these persecutions were not initiated from above, the authorities used them to gain popular support for centralizing their legal administrations. These persecutions were coordinated by a new type of judge, a direct representative of the prince, later called a *Hexenkommissar* (Witch Commissioner), whose prototype was the Fulda judge Balthasar Nuss. As at Trier in the 1580s, the Mainz persecutions of 1602 were driven by village committees, whereas the prince-abbot's friend in Fulda was responsible for the whole territory and could bypass the *Zentgerichte* (district courts) or even the central government, like a Spanish inquisitor. Prince-Abbot Westerstetten, who appointed two lawyers as commissioners for Ellwangen when he saw the chance to launch a witchcraft persecution in May 1611, adopted this effective model. Such commissioners developed a standard procedure to minimize outside interference and combine torture with denunciations. Superseding slow and traditional circumstantial evidence, they created the proverbial *witch hunt*, using minimal evidence to steer the trials and guarantee a maximum number of convictions. From Ellwangen, Westerstetten brought this type of witch hunt to Eichstätt in 1613, from which other Franconian bishoprics (Bamberg, Würzburg) adopted it in 1616. Many territories experienced political struggles in the 1620s over whether or not to appoint Witch Commissioners. Both sides, "zealots" and moderate

“politicians,” clearly understood the implications. If Bavarian politicians managed to avoid large-scale persecutions, a Bavarian prince, the archbishop-elect of Cologne, deployed Witch Commissioners to produce the largest number of victims anywhere in German-speaking lands.

Ecclesiastical principalities proved particularly susceptible to witch persecutions, but many ecclesiastical territories were only slightly afflicted, and some not at all. It seems worth emphasizing that most of the imperial abbeys avoided persecutions. None of the extensive monastic lands most closely associated with baroque culture, including some large prince-abbeys (Berchtesgaden, Buchau, Corvey, Ettal, Irsee, Kempten, Kornelimünster, Malmedy, Marchtal, Ohsenhausen, Ottobern, Prüm, Salem, Schussenried, St. Blasien, Ursberg, Weingarten, Weissenburg, or Zwiefalten), can be connected with any witch hunt, and some of them never had any witchcraft trials at all. Our perception has been distorted by a few sensational cases, like Fulda and Ellwangen, St. Maximin, or Stavelot. Many prince-bishoprics engaged in witch hunting, although we can also find a good number of examples to the contrary. Only a few trials occurred in the small prince-bishoprics of Speyer, Worms, Passau-Regensburg, Brixen and Trent, and a few took place in Münster, the largest ecclesiastical territory in the Holy Roman Empire, which moreover bordered on the archbishopric of Cologne and was even ruled by the same prince-bishops, Ernst and Ferdinand of Bavaria. Even where severe witch hunts took place, they were usually confined to only a few of the years between 1580 and 1640. We have already mentioned some factors that contributed to the potential susceptibility of ecclesiastical territories: structural weakness, the failure of state formation, the demand for persecutions from below, as well as the hardships caused by extreme climatic deterioration. We can add as causes the lack of medical care, social insecurity, and spiritual uncertainty from the competing confessions and tensions between official and popular religion. Of course, deficient infrastructures contributed to economic misery and underdeveloped institutions. Most of these factors operated in all monastic territories as well, and even in many secular lordships. So what made the difference?

One reason may have been that the political aspirations of prince-abbots were usually smaller than those of prince-bishops. Only a few, like Fulda or Ellwangen, embarked on state formation or confessionalization, thereby risking a power struggle with their estates or their subjects by forcing them violently into uniform belief. Some smaller prince-bishoprics, like Speyer or Constance, resembled monasteries in their leniency, and never aspired to state formation or forced their subjects into confessionalized Catholicism. Nor did these smaller prince-bishoprics systematically persecute

witches or heretics (Forster 1992). They experienced spiritual uncertainty, but only minor ideological stress. Furthermore, several prince-abbots, sometimes as a strategy for survival in areas where threats of rebellion, Protestantism, and secularization were imminent since the 1520s, developed particular kinds of social pacts, helping them alleviate social crises and providing their subjects, when necessary, with capital for investments. Monastic welfare systems became proverbial among the peasantry in southern Germany during the early modern period: *unter dem Kummstab ist gut leben* (life is good under an abbot's staff). Third (although for various reasons not yet well explored), at least some prince-abbots apparently had their own interpretations of the regulations of the Council of Trent. All prince-abbots of Kempten, for example, had concubines and children, as chroniclers in the neighboring Protestant Imperial City of Kempten meticulously and maliciously recorded. The abbots of wealthier territories were usually not zealots, and their attitude toward sin, like their attitude toward women, seems decidedly more relaxed than those of some Counter-Reformation bishops.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; COLOGNE; EICHSTÄTT, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; ELLWANGEN, PRINCE-ABBEY OF; FULDA, PRINCE-ABBEY OF; GERMANY; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; KEMPTEN, PRINCE-ABBEY OF; MAINZ, ELECTORATE OF; MARCHTAL, IMPERIAL ABBEY OF; MERGENTHEIM, ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORY OF; NUSS, BALTHASAR; ST. MAXIMIN, PRINCE-ABBEY OF; TRIER, ELECTORATE OF; WESTERSTETTEN, JOHANN CHRISTOPH VON; WITCH-BISHOPS (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); WÜRZBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF.

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EICHSTÄTT, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF

The *Hochstift*, or prince-bishopric, of Eichstätt in southern Germany comprised the part of the diocese ruled by the bishops of Eichstätt. Between 1590 and 1631, three successive prince-bishops—Caspar von Seckendorf (1590–1595), Johann Conrad von Gemmingen (1595–1612), and Johann Christoph von Westerstetten (1612–1637)—presided over three episodes of witch persecution: in 1590–1592 in the outlying districts of Abenberg and Spalt; and in 1603 and 1617–1631 in the capital, also called Eichstätt.

In these years, between 240 and 279 alleged witches were arrested, most (between 181 and 210) during the final episode of persecution. Almost all were executed or died in custody. About 88 percent of the victims were women. The Eichstätt persecutions were part of a wider regional program of Catholic reform and re-Catholicization. They took place in a time of agrarian crisis and increasing confessional and political tension that culminated in the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). Episodes of group persecution in the *Hochstift* were interspersed with isolated trials that continued an older local pattern of sporadic prosecutions for witchcraft, begun in the late fifteenth century. Before the first major episode broke out, there had been six executions for witchcraft between 1494 and 1562. An alleged witch was exorcised in 1582.

The origins of the persecution of 1590–1592 are unknown, but it coincided with conflict in the cathedral chapter over the election of a successor to Bishop Martin von Schaumberg, whose thirty years of rule (1560–1590) had been characterized by confessional tolerance and political stability. Two factions, one resistant to the changes decreed by the Council of Trent (1545–1563) and a younger reformist group led by Westerstetten, finally compromised over the election of Seckendorf, who was too ill to undertake his episcopal duties. The appointment of Gemmingen, a humanist unconcerned with reform, as Seckendorf's coadjutor in 1593 may have prevented further persecution. The accused witches of 1590–1592 were all female and came mainly from the local secular elite of Abenberg and Spalt, both of which were enclaves separated from

the capital by the territories of other rulers. The initial trials of this episode of persecution were cited as examples along with the case of Dillingen in the bishopric of Augsburg, in a 1590 opinion about the suppression of witches from the University of Ingolstadt sought by Wilhelm V of Bavaria. Afterward, between 1593 and 1602, cases against nine individuals accused of witchcraft or consulting with a wise woman were all resolved peacefully or dismissed entirely. Three dubious cases of witchcraft may have resulted in executions.

In another outbreak in 1603, twenty women, all of whom were residents of the town of Eichstätt and related to its secular political elite, were executed for witchcraft. (Their cases were not connected with those from 1590–1592.) Although members of the *Hofrat* (court council) conducted this episode of persecution, the outbreak may have been connected to a dispute within the cathedral chapter about introducing the Society of Jesus into the *Hochstift*. After his plans to invite the Jesuits to take over the local seminary were rejected, Westerstetten left the *Hochstift* in 1603 to become prince-provost of Ellwangen. There he began persecuting witches on a great scale a few years later. Of the ten or fewer cases of accused witchcraft between 1604 and 1616, including two slander suits brought before the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court) in Speyer, only three ended in execution.

Using fresh denunciations (no use was made of those from 1603), Eichstätt's witch persecution resumed in 1617 and lasted until 1631. It was conducted by an ecclesiastical witch commission, established by Westerstetten after his election as prince-bishop in 1612. The eradication of the heresy of witchcraft was part of Westerstetten's agenda to introduce Tridentine reform and re-Catholicize local Protestant territories. The persecution quickly moved from the countryside to the town of Eichstätt. The persecution focused not on accusations made by alleged victims of harmful magic, but on denunciations of accomplices made by suspected witches who were under interrogation. Because these suspects named friends and close neighbors as fellow witch-heretics, the accusations escalated among members of patrician households. In this process, more men were denounced than were arrested. That such a high proportion of women were among those arrested (about 85 percent) reflected the stereotyping by the Witch Commissioners. Opposition to the prosecutions proved ineffective, and the end of the persecution coincided with Westerstetten's prolonged stay in the Bavarian university town of Ingolstadt from 1630 to 1637.

Witchcraft trials also occurred at Eichstätt in 1723 and took place even as late as 1891–1892.

JONATHAN DURRANT

See also: BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); ELLWANGEN, PRINCE ABBEY OF; GERMANY,

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ELLWANGEN, PRINCE-ABBEY OF

The witchcraft trials in the princely prebend (*Fürstpropstei*) of Ellwangen, a small Catholic ecclesiastical territory in eastern Swabia, rank among the most significant in southern Germany during the early modern period. Both the number of victims (ca. 450) and the intensity of the juridical proceedings were exceptional. Only a few other ecclesiastical territories—the *Hochstifte* (prince-bishoprics) Würzburg, Bamberg, and Eichstätt, and the electorate of Mainz—experienced similar patterns of witch hunting. Ellwangen's witchcraft trials took place almost exclusively in the years 1588 and 1611–1618. In the first instance, between 17 and 20 people were executed, while over the second period, around 430 people were put to death. Almost 300 of them died in 1611 and 1612.

The main factor contributing to the advent of the 1588 trials in Ellwangen was the influence of witch persecutions in other territories and imperial cities in southern Germany, especially those occurring in the *Hochstift* Augsburg. As in many witch hunts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, people already imprisoned for witchcraft accused someone else of sharing in their crime and that person would then be arrested. An experienced executioner, Hans Vollmair from Biberach, who was also active in other witch hunts in southern Germany, conducted Ellwangen's juridical proceedings. Forms of torture were very severe in Ellwangen, severe enough to ensure that everyone who was tortured either confessed or died. The victims of the 1588 Ellwangen trials were almost all poor, older women who lived in the town. Later in the same year when younger people and members of the social elite began to be accused of witchcraft, the provost stopped the trials.

In the early seventeenth century, witch hunts became increasingly common in Catholic territories and cities in southern Germany, while in the same period Protestant authorities frequently rejected them. Ellwangen's major witch hunt of 1611–1618 was strongly supported by two provosts, Johann Christoph

I von Westerstetten (governed 1603–1613) and his successor Johann Christoph II von Freyberg und Eisenberg (1613–1620), both zealous representatives of the Catholic Counter-Reformation. Shortly after the witch persecutions began in April 1611, Provost von Westerstetten changed the juridical procedures of the trials. A special deputation dominated by two court councillors now supervised witch hunting, and people were tortured on the basis of a single denunciation by another prisoner. The prisoners—who now included men and women of almost every age and social status—were usually forced to confess that they had made a pact with the Devil, flown through the air, had sexual intercourse with the Devil, participated in witches' Sabbats, and perpetrated several *maleficia* (evil acts). Ellwangen's juridical procedures became a model for the witch hunts in Bamberg, Würzburg, and Eichstätt in the 1620s.

In 1618 the trials stopped for three reasons. First, witch persecutions had caused tremendous social and economic damage; merchants avoided doing business in the region for fear of the "witches" in Ellwangen. Second, the trials did not achieve their intended goal of eliminating natural catastrophes or disease, among other things, in this fight against the Devil's assistants. Third, the legitimacy of the whole process was called into question by the fact that many more people were denounced than could ever be brought to trial—the "supply" of witches far outran the capacity for their condemnation.

After the great Ellwangen witch hunt ended in 1618, only a few witchcraft trials took place in this princely prebend. Between 1618 and 1694, some fifteen people were brought to trial on charges of witchcraft, but only two of them were executed.

WOLFGANG MÄHRLE

See also: AUGSBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; CONFESSIONS; EICHSTÄTT, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; TORTURE; WESTERSTETTEN, JOHANN CHRISTOPH VON; WÜRZBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF.

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ENDOR, WITCH OF

The biblical story of the so-called witch of Endor is found in 1 Samuel 28:3–20, with two brief references in 1 Chronicles 10:13, and Ecclesiasticus 46:20. By the

fifteenth century the story began to acquire an overtly diabolical interpretation, with the “witch” representing the one scriptural example that could be used to sanction campaigns against witchcraft. Yet uncertainty remained about how to interpret this story of necromancy.

The Bible describes King Saul, facing a large Philistine army without assurances from God about the outcome of the imminent battle, visiting a female necromancer at the settlement at Endor. Because Saul himself had earlier been responsible for expelling all necromancers and wizards, he decided to visit the woman at night in disguise. When he asked the woman to reveal his future by conjuration, she demurred, fearing a trap to catch her for transgressing the king’s prohibition. But when Saul swore she would suffer no harm, she finally agreed.

The woman realized her visitor had to be Saul when she saw that she had conjured the ghost of Samuel. The king immediately bowed down in homage before the vision, described by the woman as an old man, rising from the earth wrapped in a cloak. But Samuel’s words were far from comforting. After rebuking Saul for disturbing his rest, he announced that because of his disobedience, God had abandoned Saul and given his sovereignty to David. Moreover, on the next day the Israelites would be defeated, and Saul and his sons would die. Saul was terrified by the prophecy, and, as he had eaten nothing the whole day, fell to the ground in shock. The woman finally comforted him by feeding him; she slaughtered her fattened calf and prepared some cakes. As the spirit prophesied, on the next day the Israelites were defeated at the battle of Gilboa, Saul’s sons were killed, and Saul committed suicide by falling on his sword.

From the time of St. Augustine, biblical commentators and theologians have provided very different explanations of the figure that appeared to Saul. Augustine himself oscillated between several views: it was the Devil, an apparition created by the Devil, a conjured human soul, a ghostly body, or Samuel himself. Peter Comestor discussed the question at length in the twelfth century. By the fifteenth century, works such as the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) cited Augustine and Thomas Aquinas to support their view that the figure represented a phantasm produced by diabolical illusion.

The process was reflected in visual representation from the twelfth century. Late medieval images focused on the interaction between Saul and Samuel rather than on the witch and her act of conjuration. A marked shift occurred with a miniature illustration in an early fifteenth-century Parisian *Bible historiale*. The witch is now positioned in the center, on her knees before Saul, while the apparition of Samuel stands behind her. The compact between the two is given great



The seventeenth-century Italian artist Salvator Rosa’s Witch of Endor, depicting the biblical witch conjuring up the ghost of Samuel on behalf of Saul. (Erich Lessing/Art Resource)

prominence, while a flying devil assures viewers that this is diabolical.

A 1526 painting by Jacob Cornelisz van Oostanen expresses this new biblical exegesis and provides a spectacular example of the integration of the biblical story with the new visual language of witchcraft. This work of turbulent movement and energy combines the image of a powerful female necromancer, seated in a magic circle, with a group of four witches modeled on compositions by Hans Baldung [Grien]. The latter are depicted seated around a grill, two of them on goats, cooking sausages, drinking, and possibly also making an offering. Wild naked females riding brooms and belching goats through the sky with a range of strange beasts complete the scene. The witch of Endor remains a necromancer, but has now come to be identified with the new group image of sixteenth-century witchcraft.

This identification is also reflected in a woodcut by Johann Teufel, first found in the 1572 Wittenberg edition of the so-called *Luther Bible* and reproduced in at least six subsequent editions. Teufel also includes paraphernalia of necromantic magic (burning candles, an altar, a magical circle, and crosses) not found in his

biblical source. The witch holds a long staff like a magician's ritual wand and prayer beads hang from her left arm, thus linking her necromantic practices to what pious Lutherans considered the abominable magic of Catholic devotion. In agreement with Luther's commentary, which identified the ghost as the Devil in Samuel's form, both the witch and Samuel were placed inside the magic circle to emphasize their close liaison.

Controversy concerning the nature of the witch and her conjuration continued. In 1563, Johann Weyer included a long discussion of the episode in *De Praestigiis daemonum et Incantationibus ac Veneficiis* (On the Tricks of Devils, Incantations, and Poisoners) (Weyer 1991, 127–133). According to Weyer, the figure that appeared was an apparition or specter in Samuel's image, an illusion created by the Devil, who simply made the specter obey this pythoness, as the Hebrew text called her, "an evil-doer or woman filled with the prophetic spirit." Refuting Weyer in 1580, Jean Bodin's *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (On the Demon-Mania of Witches) (Bodin 1995, 105) considered the woman a necromancer and therefore a witch; and on the basis of Ecclesiasticus 46:20, the figure she conjured was Samuel rather than the Devil. In 1583, Reginald Scot rejected both positions in his *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (book 6, chaps. 8–14), seeing the whole episode as an act of "cousenage" and "counterfeit," a series of tricks, disguises, and ventriloquy devised by the woman of Endor.

By the seventeenth century, the Devil's active and effective involvement in the events at Endor was widely believed. The King James and Geneva Bibles both described the woman as one "that hath a familiar spirit." This was understood to refer to animal familiars, the personal demons accompanying and serving contemporary witches. A graphic example occurs in a woodcut by the Swiss artist, Christoph Murer, in a Luther Bible published at Basel in 1625. The central focus of the image is a flask with a familiar spirit, held up by a witch in front of the figure of Saul, while the figure of Samuel remains in the background. The witch's necromantic techniques and paraphernalia (books, candles, vials, skulls, and bones) are emphasized in many seventeenth-century illustrations of the biblical text. Examples include a woodcut by Johann Jacob von Sandrart, originally published in a Nuremberg Luther Bible of 1641 and often reproduced; a woodcut of the Monogrammist VW from a Luther Bible of 1670; and a title-page etching by Andreas Frölich for Bernhard Waldschmidt's collection of twenty-eight sermons on the subject, published at Frankfurt in 1660. By the late seventeenth century, Endor scenes even included cauldrons, as in a Melchior Küsel 1679 adaptation of an earlier etching by Jan van der Velde, or a splendid cartouche by Joseph and Johannes Klauer, published at

Augsburg in 1748. Even without her paraphernalia, the witch frequently remains the dominant figure, as in the wonderfully eerie scene set among the graves of the dead in a Gabriel Ehinger etching of about 1670.

In parts of Europe where the witch hunt was limited or in decline, alternative interpretations focusing on the figure of Samuel remained strong. An important example is Joseph Glanvill's *Saducismus Triumphatus* (Sadducism Conquered), published posthumously in 1681 by his Cambridge Platonist supporter, Henry More. Glanvill's attack on what he called Sadducism, a denial of the spirit world, involved detailed consideration of this biblical story (Glanvill 1996, 296–317). Against Reginald Scot and John Webster, Glanvill denied that the events at Endor involved trickery or the appearance of the Devil. Rather, it was the blessed soul of Samuel himself that appeared, clothed in his "more pure Aerial or Aetherial Body." The focus of the accompanying engraving by William Faithorne is on Samuel, who is surrounded by a brilliant aureole, while the witch of Endor remains an observer on the perimeter. An Italian tradition, principally represented by a famous painting of 1668 by Salvator Rosa, similarly emphasizes the radiant presence of Samuel, as does the work of some Dutch followers of Rembrandt, such as Ferdinand Bol.

CHARLES ZIKA

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; AUGUSTINE, ST.; BALDUNG [GRIEN], HANS; BIBLE; BODIN, JEAN; CAULDRON; DEVIL; FAMILIARS; GLANVILL, JOSEPH; IMAGINATION; LUTHER, MARTIN; MAGIC CIRCLE; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MORE, HENRY; NECROMANCY; RITUAL MAGIC; ROSA, SALVATOR; SCOT, REGINALD; WEBSTER, JOHN; WEYER, JOHANN.

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ENGLAND

Although insufficient records survive for certainty, there is every indication that over most of the period of the

European witch persecutions, England enjoyed a low intensity of witchcraft trials, along with a low conviction rate among those who were brought to trial. Current estimates indicate that no more than 500 people were executed as witches in England, and the number may have actually been much lower. English witchcraft trials are very interesting, however, in that they demonstrate how witchcraft was treated by a unique criminal justice system. The numerous contemporary pamphlets describing witchcraft trials frequently provide the modern student with rich insights into what happened when accused witches and legal authorities met in the courtroom.

Although witchcraft was not a felony under common law until 1542, England in the late Middle Ages experienced its share of “treason-cum-sorcery” trials involving members of its political elite. Perhaps the most famous case of this type came in 1441, with the trial of Eleanor Cobham, second wife and former mistress of Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, the brother of King Henry V. Cobham escaped the death penalty, but one of her female associates was burned as a witch, while a reputed astrologer was hanged, and then drawn and quartered for treason. English monarchs thought themselves vulnerable to treasonous sorcery up to the reign of James I (ruled 1603–1625).

More prosaically, local court records contain scattered references to trials for witchcraft and sorcery. These references are too dispersed and insufficiently detailed to permit any detailed analysis of early witchcraft trials in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Most of the references survive in the records of ecclesiastical courts, which could only inflict light penalties. Our current state of knowledge suggests that many of the accused were “good” witches, local sorcerers, and cunning folk, rather than persons suspected of malefic witchcraft. Nevertheless, many aspects of witchcraft recorded in trial records from the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were familiar by 1500.

The legal position of witchcraft changed in 1542 with an act defining witchcraft as a felony (33 Hen. VIII, cap. 8). This was the most draconian of English witchcraft statutes, probably prompted by several witch scares in the preceding years, and also part of a general tendency to remove offenses from ecclesiastical jurisdictions. The act was repealed, along with other Henrician legislation, after Edward VI came to the throne in 1547. England had no secular laws against witchcraft until a further statute was passed in 1563 early in Elizabeth I’s reign (5 Eliz. I, cap. 16). This law, among other provisions, imposed the death penalty for killing humans by witchcraft, but allowed those who were convicted of harming humans or killing animals the lesser punishment of a year’s imprisonment and four sessions on the pillory for a first offense; a second offense of this type punishable by death. A further act

came in 1604 (1 Jas. I, cap. 12). The exact circumstances behind its passage remain obscure, although it is now accepted that the tradition attributing it to the direct influence of the newly arrived demonologist monarch is unfounded. The Jacobean statute eroded the possibility of lesser punishments on first offenses, included a clause intended to make keeping familiar spirits a capital offense, and, curiously, also made exhuming corpses for purposes of witchcraft a capital offense. This statute remained in force until 1736, when the Parliament of Great Britain repealed all English and Scottish witchcraft statutes (9 Geo. II, cap. 5).

As in many other European states, accusations of witchcraft in England could lead to trials in a number of courts. Ecclesiastical courts continued to exercise jurisdiction over sorcery and the activities of cunning folk, while a steady trickle of cases in which alleged witches sued their accusers for defamation also reached the church courts. Many church courts records have not yet been researched, but it is obvious that the level of prosecutions varied enormously from area to area. Hence, numerous presentments reached the Essex church courts between the early years of both Elizabeth I’s and James I’s reigns, but there were practically none in Wiltshire, and only a moderate number in Yorkshire. Church courts still inflicted only light penalties, and those whom they convicted of sorcery or witchcraft were, at worst, sentenced to perform a public penance.

Under secular law, witchcraft could be tried at county quarter sessions. Although a number of cases (including many that involved cunning folk) were tried before these courts, the growing reluctance of the presiding justices of the peace to try offenses that might result in the death penalty meant that few cases of malefic witchcraft were tried there. Witchcraft could also be tried as a criminal offense in borough courts that had rights of jail delivery. Several witches are known to have been tried and convicted before them, an extreme case being the thirty witches tried and fifteen executed in a local panic at Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1650.

The most important tribunals trying witches in England were the assizes. English counties were grouped into a number of circuits; twice each year, in January and around Midsummer, two judges were sent out by the government at Westminster to ride each circuit. Along with other business, they would try criminals held in the county jails, most of whom had been committed to prison by local justices. Two things should be noted about these judges. First, they were usually very senior men with extensive legal training and considerable experience, and thus very unlike the sometimes untrained judges who presided over witchcraft trials in many English boroughs. Second, there was a convention, usually observed, that an assize judge could not ride a circuit where he had his main residence

to keep judges away from local power struggles. Thus the judges who tried most English witchcraft trials were highly qualified, metropolitan-based outsiders.

Unlike most other European criminal justice systems, which generally followed Roman-law precedents, the English system involved trial by jury and did not use torture as a means of proving guilt in criminal trials. It should be noted, however, that jurors were frequently drawn from that same rural middling sort who were so often involved in prosecuting alleged witches, a situation that, on many occasions, worked to the accused's disadvantage. Despite the eulogies heaped on the jury system in the period, trial judges regularly gave juries a strong lead on what verdict to find. Certainly, by the mid-seventeenth century, assize judges were willing to aid witches convicted by juries toward reprieves or pardons.

Unfortunately, few assize records between the passing of the 1563 act and the mid-seventeenth century survive. Those that do are effectively limited to the Home or southeastern circuit of the assizes, encompassing the counties of Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent, Surrey, and Sussex. Using the surviving documentation, analysis of witchcraft indictments tried on this circuit reveal that between the first indictments (which in fact slightly predated the 1563 statute) and the last, which came in 1701 and resulted in the acquittal of a woman named Sarah Moredike, some 785 indictments involving 474 alleged witches were tried on the Home Circuit.

These indictments followed a marked chronological and geographical pattern: they rose in the 1570s, peaked in the 1580s, remained high in the 1590s, and then fell rapidly, with fewer than twenty indictments surviving from the 1630s. This evidence suggests that witchcraft trials were declining rapidly in England by this point, although after the Civil Wars began in 1642 there was a tremendous upsurge. Geographically, for reasons that remain unexplained, over half of these indictments, 464 (or 59 percent) involved inhabitants of the county of Essex. At the other extreme, the rural and somewhat isolated county of Sussex experienced only thirty-six indictments against sixteen alleged witches, of whom only one was hanged. Certainly, the chronological pattern of indictments owes much to the situation in Essex. In Kent, for example, the peak of trials appears to have come in the 1640s and 1650s.

The 474 accused witches tried on the Home Circuit enjoyed a very low conviction rate. Two hundred and nine of them were convicted; but of these, only half, 104 (or 22 percent of those indicted) were hanged. A further forty-seven (10 percent of those indicted) were sentenced to the lesser punishment of a year's imprisonment and four sessions on the pillory. The documentation does not give the fate of a few of those remaining, but we know that the judge either reprieved, pardoned,

or remanded a further forty after conviction. Additionally, seven women escaped execution because they were pregnant. The legal requirement that they should be executed after giving birth was rarely enforced at this time. Nearly two-thirds of the executions occurred in the period 1570–1609, and trials in Essex and Kent in the 1640s and 1650s were responsible for most of the remainder. It should be noted that English law executed witches, like other felons, by hanging rather than burning. Exceptions occurred when women killed their husbands by witchcraft, because murder of a husband was classed as "petty treason." A "mother Lakeland" for example, was burned at Ipswich in 1645 after being convicted for using witchcraft to kill her spouse.

The overwhelming majority of those indicted for witchcraft on the Home Circuit were tried for acts of *maleficium* (harmful magic). The 785 indictments detailed 794 specific instances of witchcraft, of which 36 involved trying to raise or deal with spirits (including familiars), while 10 others involved cozening through sorcery or related offenses. Conversely, there were 415 cases in which adults were killed or injured through witchcraft, plus another 161 where the victims were children, 164 where livestock or poultry had allegedly been harmed by witchcraft, and a further 8 where other types of goods or property had allegedly been damaged. Of the 474 alleged witches, 425, or nearly 90 percent, were women. The 10 percent of male witches were accused of a wider variety of types of witchcraft than were women; for example, many cases of cozening through sorcery involved accused males. On the evidence of the Home Circuit indictments, by far the most significant body of archival evidence relating to English witchcraft trials, malefic witchcraft was seen as an overwhelmingly female activity.

Other relevant bodies of court records, notably those for Middlesex and Cheshire, which enjoyed an independent jurisdiction over serious crime, show a very different pattern. Cheshire, whose Court of Great Sessions enjoys an excellent record survival rate, recorded only sixty-nine indictments for witchcraft, the last coming in 1675, with a small peak in the 1650s. Forty-seven individuals were accused of witchcraft; seven, all women, were sentenced to death. Sixty-three cases were tried at the Middlesex Sessions, all of them between 1574 and 1659, with minor peaks in the 1610s and 1650s. These cases involved forty alleged witches, thirty-five of them women, of whom seven women were hanged, the last in 1653. By that date, it is possible to reconstruct patterns of prosecution in other assize circuits, and these generally confirm the pattern found on the southeastern circuit. There was a general falling away of cases after a mid-century peak, with progressively fewer indictments each decade as the seventeenth century progressed, and very few convictions. As

far as we know, the last executions came in the southwest. Three women were hanged at Exeter in 1682, and another, Alice Molland, was sentenced to death there in 1685. If her sentence was carried out, she has the distinction of being the last person known to have been executed for witchcraft in England.

By the later seventeenth century, it was becoming obvious that assize judges were becoming increasingly reluctant to render convictions. It is doubtful that many judges entirely discounted the reality of witchcraft, but they had long since been aware of the problems of proof in individual cases. At some point before 1700, this awareness had become so deep as to inhibit guilty verdicts. Moreover, the broadening gap between polite and plebeian cultures in the later seventeenth century reinforced what was probably a preexisting attitude by judges. While they were unable to discount witchcraft as an abstract possibility, they regarded the folklore of witchcraft, which so often formed the basis of the accusations they tried and the evidence they heard in court, as the nonsensical superstition of the lower orders. Famously, that great hero of the English Common Law tradition, Sir Matthew Hale, convicted two witches at Bury St. Edmunds in Suffolk in 1662. Yet within a generation, another leading lawyer, Sir John Holt, was routinely directing juries to acquit at witchcraft trials. Indeed, in 1701 Holt presided over an important trial in which a young man called Richard Hathaway was tried and convicted for falsely accusing Sarah Moordike. A full record of this trial survives and shows Holt working very hard in his conduct of the trial, in particular, in his cross-examination of witnesses, to secure Hathaway's conviction.

English judges, like their continental equivalents, had always been aware of the difficulty of proving witchcraft, and many trials demonstrate how normal standards of proof were dropped in witchcraft trials. There was heavy dependence on hearsay evidence and the accused's reputation, and children were allowed to testify (perhaps most famously in the Lancaster [Lancashire] trials of 1612). Persons who were allegedly bewitched frequently went into witchcraft-induced fits when the accused came into court. The courts also admitted spectral evidence. The presence of the witch's mark, which according to English beliefs typically took the form of a teat from which the witch's familiar sucked the witch's blood, was also seen as conclusive proof. Courts regularly received evidence from groups of women searchers appointed by parish constables, justices of the peace responsible for the initial interrogation of suspects, or assize judges. Generally, judicial authorities were very nervous about popular "proofs" of witchcraft. They were especially hostile to the swimming of witches. As the seventeenth century progressed, some of the fuller accounts of trials given in pamphlets demonstrate an increasing circumspection

by judges running witchcraft trials, which were evidently regarded as an unusually problematic type of judicial proceeding.

The last trial known to have resulted in a conviction came in 1712, and provoked a pamphlet debate that, once again, included a full description of the trial. The case involved a woman called Jane Wenham from Walkerne in Hertfordshire, who had long been suspected as a witch. She was finally brought to court after she was accused of bewitching a servant girl named Anne Thorne. The case unleashed considerable local odium against Wenham, and the charges against her involved a number of locally influential people. The trial judge, Sir John Powell, was apparently extremely skeptical. He expressed dismay when Thorne went into allegedly witchcraft-induced fits in court, and he also bullied prosecution witnesses. One, a woman who claimed that she had been too poor to initiate court proceedings against Wenham for bewitching her child nine years previously, was asked sarcastically "if she had grown rich since." There is also a tradition, probably invented after the incident, that Powell, after hearing a witness depose that Wenham was able to fly, had cheerfully informed the court that there was no law in England against flying. The jury, possibly swayed by the weight of evidence provided in court by eminently respectable men, found Wenham guilty. Judge Powell gained a reprieve, however, and Wenham ended her days living on a local magnate's estate. The case, which among other things showed how witchcraft was now a matter of contention between Whigs and Tories (Wenham's eventual benefactor was a Whig), also demonstrated how deeply held the belief in witchcraft in England still was. Moreover, in light of Powell's performance, the case illustrates how completely judicial attitudes had hardened against accusations of witchcraft.

English witchcraft trials thus signify a number of characteristics: the low conviction rate, the high proportion of accusations against females, the prominence of incidents of *maleficium* in indictments, and the decisive input of increasingly skeptical judges. The absence of torture helped create this situation, although English juries were capable of convicting witches on evidence that would not have gotten the accused into the torture chambers of the better-regulated continental states. Perhaps more decisive was the fact that assize judges were experienced and well-trained men who were also, as the seventeenth century advanced, increasingly culturally distant from the context of village tensions and neighborly disputes that so often underlay witchcraft prosecutions. All this helped create an impression that in England, witch persecution was relatively low key and weak. It should be noted that the great exception to this conclusion, the mass East Anglian trials of 1645–1647 associated with Matthew Hopkins, flourished in large measure because of a temporary and partial weakening

of England's normal legal and local administrative structures.

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See also: COBHAM, ELEANOR; CUNNING FOLK; FAMILIARS; FEMALE WITCHES; HALE, SIR MATTHEW; HOLT, SIR JOHN; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; LANCASHIRE WITCHES; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); PAMPHLETS AND NEWSPAPERS; SWIMMING TEST; WENHAM, JANE; WITCH'S MARK.

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ENLIGHTENMENT

Historiography is generally very clear and certain on attitudes toward witchcraft in the Enlightenment—a term designating a period (ca. 1650–1800) of great intellectual activity in the cause of general education and culture, including emancipation from mere prejudices, conventions, and traditions. Whereas Satan had triumphed during the late sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth centuries in western Europe, and until the mid-eighteenth century in eastern Europe, conventional wisdom holds that his reign ended in the Age of Enlightenment. In the slipstream of a triumphant mechanical philosophy, intellectuals used their typical critical methods of reasoning to question the earthly power or even the existence of the Devil, and thus the powers of his preferred companions, the witches. Witchcraft was merely a vulgar notion, bred of ignorance and credulity. What had previously been attributed to devils and witches was now explained in terms of medical and psychological pathology, legal injustices, and superstition (Clark 1994, 788). The entry on *sorcellerie (magie)* in Diderot and d'Alembert's *Encyclopédie*, published in the 1760s and generally considered the bible of the Enlightenment, indeed sounds very skeptical: "a magical operation, shameful or ridiculous, stupidly attributed by superstition, to the invocation and power of demons." It defined "superstition" as "any religious excess," a product of fear, that is, the

antithesis of reason. David Hume's essay *Of Superstition and Enthusiasm* (1741) repeated the assertion that weakness, fear, melancholy, together with ignorance, were the true sources of superstition.

Recent studies, however, have shown that theories of witchcraft were far more robust—and not as mere signs of popular superstitious credulity—than this historiography acknowledges. Parallel to different degrees of Enlightenment, moderate (and surely not irreligious) and radical, there existed different degrees of Devil and witchcraft beliefs. For example, Ian Bostridge divided his analysis of the strength of witchcraft beliefs, a pattern he found all over Europe, into three groups: a small number of the credulous, prepared to believe almost any tale of witchcraft; a few skeptics who believed nothing; and a vast majority who repudiated some vulgar beliefs, but believed in the possibility of witchcraft and the veracity of some accounts of it.

The ideological importance of witchcraft was far too great among the elites of the Old Régime to be played down; in France, England, Spain, and the New World it was politically contested ground. If Father Benito Geronymo Feijoo became the critical mind in Spain (*Teatro Critical* [Critical Theatre, 1720–1759]), he still dared not deny the existence of witches. Hence Goya, as an enlightened artist, produced his *Caprichos* and *Pinturas negras* to satirize and condemn the dangerous inheritance of Spain's old regime (Bostridge 1997, 203–243).

DECLINE OF WITCHCRAFT PROSECUTIONS

By the mid-eighteenth century, the great European witch hunt was a thing of the past. Louis XIV promulgated official prohibitions of witch hunting in France in 1682, King Frederick William I in Prussia in 1714 and 1721, Maria Theresa in Austria-Hungary in 1768, and Stanislaw II Poniatovski in Poland in 1776. England and Sweden repealed their witchcraft legislation in 1736 and 1779, respectively. Nevertheless, the restriction on witch hunting did not necessarily imply the extinction of witchcraft as a legitimate belief, or even as a criminal offense. In France, for example, "it is certainly not the case that the 1682 ordinance represented a precocious triumph of French rationality, a first blast on the enlightenment trumpet" (Bostridge 1997, 231). The crime of witchcraft was redefined, but not abolished in statutory law until 1791. Even the *Encyclopédie*, in its entry on "sorcières" and "sorcières," took witchcraft theory relatively seriously; "to give credence too lightly to all accounts of this sort, or to reject them absolutely," it said, "are two equally dangerous extremes" (Bostridge 1997, 224).

Moreover, the decline of the prosecutions was gradual. In most states, after a period of severe prosecution came a period of sporadic trials and small hunts, and

then the end of executions and trials (Levack 1995, 250). In eastern Europe, large-scale witchcraft prosecutions began much later than in western Europe and lasted until the middle of the eighteenth century. In Poland, for example, diabolic theories, local (clerical) autonomy, and the unrestricted use of torture, were the ingredients of a large-scale witch hunt between 1675 and 1725. Even afterward, isolated prosecutions occurred in several places, for example, Sweden (1763), Kempten in southern Germany (1775), and, finally, the last legal one in Europe, at Glarus in Switzerland (1782).

The countries where witchcraft trials endured long after 1650 were those where belief in diabolism, inquisitorial procedure, and the use of torture persisted. The complete abolition of torture, for example, usually occurred only when authorities no longer believed that witchcraft merited the death penalty. As early as 1712 the German academic Christian Thomasius wrote powerful condemnations of inquisitorial methods, especially the use of torture, in witchcraft trials. Already several European jurisdictions had adopted stricter rules for both the application of torture and the admissibility of evidence obtained by it. Such was the case in Spain in 1614, in Italy in the 1620s, in some German principalities after 1630, and in Scotland in the 1660s. Torture was not abolished in Prussia until 1740 and only much later in such places as Saxony (1770), Austria (1776), the Habsburg Netherlands (1787), Switzerland (1803), or Bavaria (1806) (Levack 1995, 237–238).

LEARNED DISCUSSIONS

Skepticism regarding witchcraft and diabolism did not begin in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Many of the arguments offered were the same as those made by Johann Weyer, Reginald Scot, or Michel de Montaigne in the sixteenth century. What was new was that the skeptics' views were now widely accepted. The assertion that skeptics no longer posed a threat to religion, philosophy, or the social order (Levack 1995, 240) is very doubtful. All over Europe, a key argument in learned discussions on witchcraft during the Enlightenment claimed that denying the power and the existence of the Devil could easily lead to denying the operations of Divine Providence and even the existence of God. The English Methodist preacher John Wesley stated that "giving up witchcraft is, in effect, giving up the Bible," while the English jurist William Blackstone affirmed that "to deny the possibility, nay the actual existence of witchcraft and sorcery is at once to contradict the revealed word of God" (cited in Ankarloo and Clark 1999, 44). Hence, *De betoverde Weereld* (The World Bewitched, 1691–1693) by the Dutch pastor Balthasar Bekker provoked severe reactions. His relatively moderate Cartesian skepticism about the power of the Devil and his active engagement with

humankind generated an extremely violent polemic in France, England, and Germany, spawning dozens of pamphlets and books. Bekker was considered an extravagant freethinker or even an atheist.

A half-century later, a lively discussion about witchcraft and magic divided Italy after the publication of Girolamo Tartarotti's *Del congresso notturno delle Lammie* (On Nocturnal Gatherings of Witches) in 1749. Tartarotti's search for the genuineness of witchcraft from a historical viewpoint disputed a remark by Ludovico Antonio Muratori in his *Della forza della fantasia umana* (On the Strength of Human Fantasy, 1745) that witches had never existed. Contrary to Muratori's optimism about the absence of any witch beliefs at present, Tartarotti pointed to the ongoing beliefs and prosecutions in Germany. Moreover, Tartarotti believed in the historical authenticity of magicians who had all belonged to the intellectual world, men who intended to violate God's law by using demonic powers. No Catholic, Tartarotti claimed, could assert that the existence of the Devil was impossible. The reaction of Gianrinaldo Carli (1720–1795) on that scrupulous point of view of Tartarotti's was clear: he did not believe in the historical reality of magicians either: there was no difference between them and witches—they were both swindlers and had to be punished. When Scipione Maffei stated in 1749 that there was no consensus about the historical reality of magic, and that the magic of his days was "*un bel nulla*" (absolutely nothing), events in Germany contradicted him. On June 21, 1749, a nun, Maria Renata, accused of witchcraft, was decapitated and burned in the city of Würzburg. During her public execution, the Jesuit Georg Gaar preached against all intellectuals who protected witches and magicians by denying their existence and power. Such ideas, Gaar said, would ultimately lead to the denial of the Devil, the angels, and God.

Between 1750 and 1754, discussions of witchcraft involved many representatives of the Italian Republic of Letters: no fewer than fourteen intellectuals participated, including a theologian, Daniele Concina; a Church historian, Tommaso Maria Mamachi; a Franciscan, Benedetto Bonelli; a philosopher, Clemente Baroni; a Cartesian, Costantino Grimaldi; and an enlightened scientist, Paolo Frisi. Maffei finally ended it by demonstrating, in *Arte Magica annichilata* (The Magical Art Annihilated, 1754), that Tartarotti's theory of a difference between magic and witchcraft had no theological, philosophical, or moral grounds.

This Italian debate had repercussions in other Catholic lands, especially France. In 1751 Maffei's first book appeared in a French translation in Paris, alongside a re-issue of the critical dissertation of the Benedictine Father Augustin Calmet on the phenomenon of ghosts, revenants, and vampires in Hungary and Moravia. The libertine Lenglet du Fresnoy (1674–1755) published two

books on these subjects in 1751–1752. Voltaire reacted with typical sarcasm to such discussions in his *Prix de la justice et de l'humanité* (The Prize of Justice and Humanity, 1777), wondering if he was really living in the century of Montesquieu and Beccaria, since witchcraft was still defended; he condemned what had happened in Würzburg and in Provence (with the Jesuit Jean-Baptiste Girard and Catherine Cadière affair) as idiotic pieces of barbarism. In his popular novel, *L'histoire des imaginations extravagantes de Monsieur Oufle* (The Story of the Extravagant Imaginations of Monsieur Oufle, 1710), the theologian Laurent Bordelon poked fun at witchcraft beliefs and demonology.

Catholic Austria, especially Vienna, also held learned discussions, but they were mostly about “posthumous magicians and witches,” that is, vampires. In the 1750s, Moravia, Bohemia, and Hungary each experienced several cases of postmortem prosecutions: corpses of presumed vampires were exhumed, their hearts pierced, their heads shattered and burned, and the ashes dispersed to prevent their eventual return. The reaction of the enlightened Holy Roman Empress Maria Theresa was prompt: relying on the expertise of her personal physician, Gerard van Swieten, she decided to combat such superstitious acts and issued several decrees concerning witchcraft, magic, and vampirism between 1753 and 1756. Not long before, van Swieten's predecessor, Anton de Haen, had stated in his *De Magia* (On Magic, 1744) that witchcraft and magic with the help of the Devil existed and that witches really could fly, although innocent people were accused and executed during the witchcraft prosecutions because of the deceptive methods of justice. “The time has come to change jurisprudence,” as Konstantin Franz de Cauz concluded his elaborate dissertation, *De cultibus magicis* (On the Cult of Magicians, 1767).

In 1761, the year Tartarotti died, Italian enlightened ideas and tracts on the existence of witchcraft and magic were adopted by the Augustinian monk Jordan Simon. Using the works of Tartarotti and especially Maffei, he demonstrated the absurdity and impossibility of both witchcraft and magic (*Das Weltbetrügende Nichts* [The World-Deceiving Nothing]). Five years later, the Theatine Ferdinand Sterzinger declared in Munich's Bavarian Academy of Sciences that in these enlightened times one could not believe any more in witchcraft and that the so-called pact with the Devil was a mere fantasy. Like Italian Catholic intellectuals, he wanted reason to triumph over the Devil's partisans. It was the start of a real witch war in Bavaria; Sterzinger had to cope with attacks from an Augustinian, Agnellus März, and a Benedictine, Scheyern Angelus März, both convinced of the existence of witches and magicians. The Age of Enlightenment was far from witchcraft-free.

DRIES VANYSACKER

See also: BAVARIAN WAR OF THE WITCHES; BEKKER, BALTHASAR; BLACKSTONE, WILLIAM; BORDELON, LAURENT; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; GHOSTS; GIRARD, JEAN-BAPTISTE; GOYA Y LUCIENTES, FRANCISCO JOSÉ DE; HISTORIOGRAPHY; HOBBS THOMAS; MAFFEI, SCIPIONE; MARIA THERESA, HOLY ROMAN EMPRESS; MIRACLES; MURATORI, LUDOVICO ANTONIO; REVENANTS; SIMON, JORDAN; SKEPTICISM; STERZINGER, FERDINAND; SUPERSTITION; SWIETEN, GERARD VAN; TARTAROTTI, GIROLAMO; THOMASIVS, CHRISTIAN; TORTURE; VAMPIRE; VOLTAIRE; WESLEY, JOHN.

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“ENORMOUS” CRIMES

Strongly influenced by Roman law, the criminal law of late medieval and early modern Europe distinguished crimes by degrees of seriousness and accordingly assigned different legal procedures and levels of punishment. In ancient Rome, the major distinction was between private offenses and public crimes. Many centuries later the categories multiplied. It became possible to differentiate between slight and serious crimes, or between atrocious and extremely atrocious crimes, according to the various punishments established by law. The ultimate category was punishable by death by cruel means, subsequent confiscation of the culprit's goods, and legal disabilities charged against his descendants. At the same time, exceptions to normal legal procedures created a distinction between ordinary crimes and crimes of difficult proof, classified as *crimina excepta* (excepted crimes).

In cases of *crimina excepta*, torture was allowed even in the absence of strong evidence. Furthermore, witnesses could include convicted criminals, women, children, relatives, and accomplices—all persons whose statements were not normally acceptable as valid evidence. (It is worth recalling that inquisitorial

procedures recognized two forms of “perfect” proof: the confession of the culprit, which could be obtained through torture, and full agreement between two eye-witnesses publicly deemed “respectable people” who were not related to each other.)

During the medieval and early modern periods, witchcraft was considered an extremely atrocious crime and therefore a *crimen exceptum*, like *laesa majestas* or rebellion against human authority (conspiracy and treason) or against divine supremacy (e.g., heresy). These three legal categories, applied to many scandalous crimes that could cause harm to the wider public, soon produced the concept of the “enormous” crime, which required both extremely severe forms of punishment and extraordinary procedures.

“Enormous” crimes, as cataloged by jurists, generally included heresy, treason, counterfeiting, poisoning, incest, sodomy, bestiality, sacrilege, rape, infanticide, and, last but not least, witchcraft. In 1486, the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches), a manual written by the German inquisitor Heinrich Kramer, advocated the inclusion of witchcraft among these so-called “enormous” crimes (Part I, questions XIV and XVII). According to Kramer, witches, by making a pact with the Devil, became guilty of several major crimes (worship of absolute evil, contempt of God, apostasy, blasphemy, evil spells, sacrilege, infanticide, orgiastic intercourse), each of which deserved the cruelest punishment. Witchcraft was not only an enormous crime; it was the most horrible crime that any human being could commit. Witches deserved more extreme punishment than even heretics or infidels, because their willing submission to the Devil represented the most complete form of apostasy possible, prone to culminate in evil deeds against God and God’s creatures.

The witch’s alliance with demons thus stood out as a crime worse than any other that could be committed in the public sphere. If counterfeiters were immediately punished for forging false money, Kramer insisted, this should be all the more necessary for those who attempted to forge a perverted faith. Therefore, the rules of canon law, which allowed ecclesiastical courts to forgive or lightly punish a repentant heretic at his or her first trial, were not applicable to witches, who on the contrary deserved immediate capital punishment.

Although the great Mediterranean state inquisitions always refused to consider witchcraft an “exceptional” or “enormous” crime, and despite similar refusals from great appellate courts like the *Parlement* of Paris, many secular courts followed Kramer’s suggestions and relied on torture to obtain confessions and inflicted extremely cruel forms of capital punishment, both of which were justified by the “enormity” of this “exceptional” crime. In 1580, in the final pages of his *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (On the Demon-Mania of Witches), Jean Bodin stressed that a witch’s allegiance to the Devil constituted

an extremely serious crime, not only because it denied divine authority, but also because it rejected political authorities, who derived their legitimacy from God. Witchcraft thus implied rebellion and conspiracy against the divinely established order: it was *lèse-majesté divine et humaine*, said Bodin, treason against both God and the state. In his *Daemonologie* (1597), a Protestant king, James VI of Scotland, agreed with the great French jurist that witchcraft also constituted a crime against public order.

VINCENZO LAVENIA

See also: BODIN, JEAN; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (MEDIEVAL); *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; TORTURE.

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EPISCOPAL JUSTICE

One of the characteristic features of Western Christianity—the dualism of secular and ecclesiastical law—originated during the final centuries of the Roman Empire. In several sections of his Epistles, Saint Paul recommended that Christians solve their conflicts within their communities without asking the secular authorities for assistance. This recommendation encouraged bishops, from the first centuries of Christianity, to administer justice on a voluntary basis and without relying on secular laws. As an arbitrator to the disputes, accusations, and trials among parishioners, the bishop, whose legal functions were recognized by the Roman Empire only in 318 under the rule of Constantine, could assign punishments and settle controversies. With the passage of time, the episcopal courts’ responsibilities widened and came to include the ratification of pacts and the right to relieve people from sacraments. The use of excommunication became increasingly sophisticated as the Church enforced its policies and doctrines. Following the collapse of the Roman Empire, many areas remained exclusively under the jurisdiction of episcopal courts, which became the main point of reference for people seeking protection, hoping to settle a conflict, or wishing to collect the money owed to them. Clerical crimes fell exclusively under the jurisdiction of the episcopal courts. Together with his assistants, the bishop was also concerned with parishioners’ spiritual health. It was his duty to watch over the community and to remove and punish sinners

who provoked public scandal. According to the laws of the late imperial period, ecclesiastical courts were also partly responsible for dealing with religious offenses, while the punishments clerics imposed were carried out by secular courts. At the height of their greatest influence (from the seventh to the thirteenth centuries), episcopal courts watched over the clergy, dealt with beneficial matters, registered testaments, and ruled over property and matrimonial arrangements. They also punished usury, immoral crimes, scandals, and disobedience against religious ceremonial regulations, as well as sacrileges, offenses against the Church's jurisdiction, heresy, and superstition. When a bishop was informed that a person was publicly deemed a criminal (this could be indicated to him during his visits to parishes or reported as an accusation or complaint) and when this allegation was confirmed by sworn witnesses, he had the right to excommunicate this person and to impose public penitence. Until the end of the first millennium, public penitence was specified by special "rate books." The bishop's duty to fight superstition was vigorously endorsed by Church councils, leading to the composition of the famous *Canon Episcopi* in the tenth century, which cast doubt on the belief that witches could fly.

TWO COMPETITORS: SECULAR COURTS AND THE INQUISITION

Episcopal jurisdiction, exercised by judges called *officiaries*, was formally recognized in civil statutes and, more important, in canon law, codified in the twelfth century, which defined the purview of episcopal courts and the people falling under their jurisdiction (clergy, Church employees, pilgrims, orphans, and widows). Subsequently, European universities increasingly taught Roman law, which led to profound changes in the administration of justice, specifically in the treatment of "enormous" crimes against divine or human authority. Such crimes were investigated through the newly created inquisitorial procedure, which authorized investigations even in the absence of accusations and the use of torture to obtain confessions. The crimes were punishable by burning convicted individuals at the stake and confiscating their property. Inquisitors also had a duty to punish crimes whose repression had previously been a task for episcopal courts: simony, heresy, apostasy, superstition, and sorcery.

Two competing systems—secular courts (city, feudal, and princely) and the papal Inquisition—increasingly contested episcopal control over these crimes (and other crimes against public morality, such as blasphemy, usury, polygamy, sodomy, and sacrilege). The papal Inquisition began its activity (not everywhere, and without a centralized organization) during the third decade of the thirteenth century. Initially the Inquisition was not concerned with superstition and

witchcraft and did not provoke conflicts with episcopal courts, which it assisted (where its assistance was requested) in the struggle against heretics. Soon, however, conflicts between them—which were also conflicts between the regular and secular clergy—became overt, especially in southern France. Innocent IV (1252), Gregory X (1273), and Clement V (during the Council of Vienne, 1311–1313) insisted that inquisitors and bishops had the duty to assist each other, especially in the administration of torture, severe punishments, and burnings at the stake.

Subsequently, the competition between episcopal and inquisitorial courts grew as they quarreled about their respective competence over crimes of witchcraft and evil spells. Meanwhile, secular courts also sought to affirm their influence as a consequence of the growth of modern states. During the fifteenth century, as witch hunts became more and more widespread, juridical doctrine came to define witchcraft (as well as other crimes against public order, religion, and morality) as a matter of "mixed legislation." This meant that the secular authorities could prosecute witches for the physical harm and public scandal they provoked, whereas ecclesiastical tribunals prosecuted them on the basis of suspicions of apostasy and heresy. Neither system could claim exclusive competence over the matter. According to some jurists, trials were to be concluded by whichever court had initiated them. Others suggested that the accused should be moved from court to court and receive a double punishment: for maleficence (from the secular court), and for apostasy and abuse of sacred objects (from the bishops or the inquisitors).

During the fifteenth century, the papal Inquisition had firmly established its authority over matters of witchcraft, understood as heresy, and had limited the power of episcopal courts. Yet it chose to remain largely inactive, leaving the field to the competition between episcopal and secular courts. In some cases, the latter acted undisturbed. This tendency is particularly evident in France, where—thanks to an order of the *Parlement* (sovereign court) of Paris (1391), the Pragmatic Sanction (1438), and some decrees by Francis I—ecclesiastical courts had been stripped of many of their juridical powers by the first half of the sixteenth century. This included the right to investigate witchcraft, considered a crime of *lèse-majesté* in France and therefore falling within the competence of secular courts. However, the situation in southern France (Provence, Languedoc) was different. Here episcopal jurisdiction long maintained its strength, while the competition between episcopal and inquisitorial courts emerged strongly during a case of magical spells in 1523. By this date, witches were being burned at the stake all over Europe. Although responsibility for these crimes lay also with the papal Inquisition, which was once again active, especially in the territory of the Holy Roman

Empire and in northern Italy, secular courts mainly burned witches.

THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD: THE STRUGGLE AGAINST WITCHES AND SUPERSTITION

In Protestant regions, secular courts exclusively handled prosecutions for harmful magic. Ecclesiastical courts limped on in England, where Protestants retained an episcopal system, but their importance was greatly reduced. On the Continent, Calvinist consistories dealt with minor cases of magical superstition and continued to excommunicate sorcerers. Meanwhile, episcopal jurisdictions survived in Catholic areas but took very different forms. In Germany, bishops were also rulers of territorial states. Several were driven by extreme disciplinary zeal, and persecuted witchcraft in particularly bloodthirsty ways, albeit exclusively in secular courts that they controlled in their capacity as rulers rather than as bishops.

The situation was different in Mediterranean areas, where jurisdiction over witchcraft lay primarily with the Portuguese, Spanish, and Roman Inquisitions, especially after Pope Sixtus V's bull in 1586. Italy, too, had bishops obsessed with fear of the Devil (such as Carlo Borromeo, who approved two witch hunts in his archdiocese of Milan in 1569 and 1583); but, overall, the Roman Holy Office succeeded in claiming all formerly episcopal responsibilities for repressing illicit magic, and enforced a moderate line in witchcraft trials (the sole exception perhaps being Lucca). In the Papal States and in the Kingdom of Naples, the bishops acted as inquisitors, concerned exclusively with uprooting superstitions and combating healers, necromancers, and phony exorcists, who competed directly with the Church's sacral system. Even where the Inquisition's officials were distinct from the bishop's, they collaborated closely.

Episcopal trials continued to deal with cases of sorcery and superstition without implications of heresy (such as in the important battle against folk medicine). After the Council of Trent, synodal legislation also came to play a prominent role. In Portugal, bishops relied mostly on the system of visitations to discipline the faithful, sometimes applying procedures that differed from the Inquisition's and sometimes absolving repentant sinners privately (a practice used throughout Europe for over two centuries). The latter procedure was known as a pardon by "forum of conscience" and was accompanied by forms of salutary penance: prayers, charitable donations, and enforced catechism instruction. Somewhat distinct from common judicial procedures, this practice was based on a doctrine, according to which there existed specific categories of sins (reserved cases), that only bishops, priests, or judges specially instructed by the pope could absolve without

public attention. Generally speaking, the early modern age—and the areas where there was a strong papal hegemony—witnessed the transformation of episcopal jurisdiction into a part of a disciplinary system that integrated the Inquisition, confession, and pastoral care.

VINCENZO LAVENIA

See also: BORROMEIO, ST. CARLO; *CANON EPISCOPI*; COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; COURTS, SECULAR; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); "ENORMOUS CRIMES"; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; ROMAN LAW; WITCH-BISHOPS (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE).

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ERASMUS, DESIDERIUS (CA. 1467–1536)

Erasmus, the greatest of Christian humanists, a reformer, moralist, and satirist, believed that the practice of witchcraft was a danger. At the beginning of 1501, Erasmus desperately needed a new patron. The plague forced him to flee from both Paris and Orléans. He sought refuge in the Low Countries with his friend Jacob Batt, who suggested that Erasmus might win the favor of Antoon van Bergen, abbot of St. Bertin, by recounting a witchcraft trial he had heard about while staying in Orléans the previous year. Erasmus complied with Batt's idea, telling the following tale (Erasmus 1975, II, 5).

Having inherited a set of magical books and instruments from an elderly rural "sorcerer," an unnamed citizen of Orléans (who has never been identified) managed to purchase a consecrated wafer from "a starveling irreligious priest" and proceeded to involve his whole family in an act of Host desecration, of a type ordinarily leveled against Jewish rather than Christian communities.

While his young daughter pretended to stab at the wafer with a sword, her father performed a ritual mocking the Trinity, invoking the names of angels and demons in an attempt to summon the Devil. After three years of trying, he finally succeeded in his task; but despite promises of vast riches, he soon began to feel that he was being cheated. At last, the Devil supposedly told him that it was his own lack of education and failure to perform the correct rites that were preventing him from producing the mountains of gold that he desired. If he could persuade the prior of a nearby (also unnamed) monastery to help him, and embroil him in the Devil's scheme, then all would at last go as promised.

Accordingly, the man sounded out the prior and gradually took him into his confidence. Unfortunately for him, the priest was determined to win fame for himself by exposing this case of witchcraft. After the would-be magus had confessed everything he knew, produced the consecrated Host, and handed over all of his books to view, the prior alerted the royal constables and officials of the ecclesiastical court. Though the man was sentenced to life imprisonment eating only bread and water, his wife jailed for three months, and the young girl sent away to a convent, Erasmus felt uneasy over some details of the case. The girl appeared to be perfectly calm and unafraid of the risks that she had run, but her mother appeared to have been tormented each night by visions of a demon, and arose every morning bloody and bruised. To both Erasmus and his judges, the testimony of the father seemed confused and inconsistent.

Monks seldom emerge as heroes in tales by the author of the *Enchiridion*, even when writing to an abbot. And despite the attempts of later writers to portray Erasmus as a thoroughly modern figure, free from superstition or prejudice, Erasmus could still conclude, in his only lengthy reflection on subjects related to witchcraft, that "deep-eyed wickedness" such as that exhibited in this case made him "shudder cold" and merited the harshest punishments warranted by both Judaic and Roman law. Set against the contemporary career of Abbot Trithemius, Erasmus seemed to oppose necromancy every bit as resolutely as the Spanish Inquisition.

Given that he devoted all of his energies to trying to reform the worst abuses of the Church from within, upheld a traditional view of the efficacy of witchcraft that made him "shudder cold," and renounced the extremes of the Reformation, it seems ironic that Erasmus suffered the indignity of a posthumous excommunication and had all his works placed on the Index of Prohibited Books. It seems equally ironic that Johann Weyer, his great admirer and fellow enemy of necromancers, never mentioned this episode, although he used another example from Erasmus' correspondence to mock exorcisms (Weyer 1991, 444–445).

—JOHN CALLOW

See also: PROTESTANT REFORMATION; RITUAL MAGIC; ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH; TRITHEMIUS, JOHANNES; WEYER, JOHANN.

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ERASTUS, THOMAS (1524–1583)

Erastus is significant for the history of witchcraft because of his very early challenge to the medical theories expounded in Johann Weyer's *De praestigiis daemonorum* (On the Tricks of Devils). Best known as the putative father of Erastianism, the political theory of state control over the church, Erastus was primarily a physician who never advocated the "ism" attached to his name.

Given this man's unwavering lifelong devotion to Zwinglian theology and ecclesiology and the professional punishments he suffered precisely because of these opinions, it seems extremely ironic that some mid-seventeenth century English advocates of unconditional clerical subjection to state authority pasted the label Erastian on their doctrines; few historical figures have undergone such a thorough posthumous travesty. The historical Erastus, born Thomas Lüber in Aargau (Switzerland), who grecoized his name as a student at Basel, studied medicine in Italy for nine years before being named professor of medicine at the University of Heidelberg and personal physician to the elector-Palatine in 1558. His numerous and controversial writings involved theology as often as medicine. Erastus made his professional reputation as a vehement opponent of Paracelsian medicine, but also involved himself in ecclesiastical politics soon after arriving in the Palatinate; by 1560 he had a seat on the recently created Reformed Consistory and began publishing theological treatises by 1562. He opposed the Calvinistic version of church discipline promulgated by the elector. Because of his correspondence with medical colleagues known for their religious radicalism, he was apparently excommunicated, but reinstated by 1576. In 1580, the new, Lutheran elector-Palatine dismissed him from his Heidelberg posts for refusing to sign the Lutheran Formula of Concord. Erastus spent his final three years

on the faculty of the University of Basel. His reputation as an Erastian began with a posthumous refutation of his views on church discipline by Calvin's successor, Theodore Beza.

Like Johann Weyer, Erastus was a Protestant and a court physician for a major German prince—and neither man's employer approved of witch hunting. Although Erastus realized that Weyer disliked many things about Paracelsus, his major medical enemy, Erastus was unhappy with what he saw as Weyer's unjustifiably lenient stance toward female witches. Erastus doubted the medical validity of his colleague's use of melancholia to explain their phantasms and exculpate them from criminal guilt. Consequently, Erastus's *Dialogue* of 1571 constituted the earliest indirect attack on Weyer by a fellow physician and Protestant. It was nonetheless a relatively moderate criticism. Erastus claimed that Weyer was "moved by good intentions, although incorrectly" and that his real enemy here was (as usual) Paracelsus, who had praised witches for their skills. Erastus ended his *Dialogue* with the admission that "much wrong has been done to many women" in witchcraft trials by overly credulous use of their confessions. A thorough preternaturalist in his approach to magic, Erastus nevertheless accepted the existence of the diabolical pact and wanted witches punished for their apostasy, not for their purported *maleficia* harmful magic.

Erastus accepted many of Weyer's opinions and summarized Weyer's six principal arguments in a professional opinion for the magistrates of Basel (Erastus 1885, II:434–453). However, Erastus argued in his second *Dialogue* that Weyer had refuted none of his objections in his enlarged and revised version published at Basel in 1577, adding that law students "judged it the same way; much less do the theologians doubt [my position]" (Erastus 1885, II: 457). Erastus defended the mainstream medical position that melancholy was normally a male disease—an argument picked up shortly afterward with far more vehemence by the jurist Jean Bodin. Both Weyer's and Erastus's works were published together in 1579 in a combined French translation by Jacques Chouet in Calvinist Geneva (where several of Erastus's theological treatises had previously been published, including a defense of Girolamo Savonarola's diatribe against astrology).

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; MELANCHOLY; PARACEL-SUS, THEOPHRASTUS BOMBASTUS VON HOHENHEIM; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; WEYER, JOHANN.

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ERGOTISM

Ergotism is a disease caused by eating grain contaminated with the ergot fungus; the symptoms of ergotism include convulsions, paralysis, and delirium. These symptoms could have been regarded in early modern times as due to demonic possession, which in turn sometimes led the possessed person to accuse someone else of causing the "bewitchment." Ergotism, therefore, could conceivably have prompted some accusations of witchcraft. However, this theory must be treated with extreme caution. In most, and perhaps all, cases there are more convincing psychological and cultural explanations for outbreaks of demonic possession.

The fungus *Claviceps purpurea* infests mainly rye and flourishes in cool, wet summers. It can cause two forms of ergotism: convulsive and gangrenous. The symptoms of convulsive ergotism (the relevant form here) include contortions of the body, vomiting and diarrhea, ravenous hunger, crawling sensations in the skin, partial paralysis, and delirium. A psychologist (Caporael 1976) first claimed that the Salem prosecutions of 1692 were the result of ergotism among the "afflicted girls" who accused the witches, and suggested that ergotism could also explain many witchcraft accusations in Europe. Most historians have dismissed this theory, and few if any have endorsed it—though it has proved attractive among members of the public.

At best, the evidence for ergotism is weak. We have no medical case-records to give a rounded view of the afflicted persons' symptoms; usually only a few relevant symptoms are recorded, or even only one. Nor is there direct information on their diet. Proponents of the ergotism theory extrapolate from fragmentary data and make unsupported leaps of logic. Ergotism would normally be expected in late summer, but at Salem the outbreak began in December; so we are told that the people first ate the better grain and only got around to the infected rye in December. This seems plausible only until we consider that an outbreak in late summer would immediately have been used as proof of the theory.

Because most witchcraft cases did not involve demonic possession, arguments to prove ergotism by correlating rye consumption with the incidence of witch hunting are irrelevant; one would have to establish a correlation between demonic possession and

consumption of rye. Such a correlation can in fact be readily disproved: Russia, the heartland of rye cultivation, saw very little witch hunting, and hardly any demonic possession.

The theory cannot account for all outbreaks of apparent demonic possession, so psychological alternatives have to be examined. (Fraud too must be kept in mind, since there are some well-documented cases of possession and others probably went undetected.) For example, there was a mass outbreak of possession-associated behavior among adolescents in the Dutch orphanage of Horn in 1666. One after another they writhed, bellowed, and gnashed their teeth. Medical treatment failed, and so did prayer. Then the authorities removed the afflicted persons from the orphanage and distributed them among separate foster homes. Deprived of the stimulus of their group, all instantly recovered. The well-known possessed nuns of Loudun in 1634 were manifestly not cases of ergotism. Proponents of the ergotism theory have failed to show that there was anything distinctive about the cases where they allege ergotism. If some form of psychological explanation can and must account for many cases of demonic possession, can it not account for *all* of them?

The behavior of the possessed followed cultural norms in ways that do not necessarily lead us to regard the affected individuals as mentally ill. Possessed people were expected to contort their bodies, so they did. They were also expected to vomit pins—so several of them did, in much the same way. Contortions conform to (though they do not prove) a diagnosis of ergotism, but vomiting pins does not. At Salem and elsewhere, a correlation of seizures in the courtroom with the presence of the accused was reported; ergotism largely fails to explain this, though there is some suggestion of suggestibility in connection with ergot-induced hallucinations. The afflicted girls at Salem were sometimes reported to be perfectly healthy outside the courtroom—something hard to reconcile with ergotism. Psychological theories can also account for the afflicted girls' claims to have seen the specters of the alleged witches; ergotism usually causes distorted vision rather than the sight of distinct, but imaginary, objects.

Documented outbreaks of ergotism (especially convulsive ergotism, its more severe form) have usually affected entire communities. Demonic possession, by contrast, arose in individuals or among specific social groups: it particularly affected girls and young women between the ages of sixteen to twenty-five. Adolescents and young adults were not especially susceptible to ergotism; in fact, documented ergotism is heaviest among children younger than age fifteen. In Salem, a high proportion of the possessed were orphans—an occurrence susceptible to psychological, but not ergot-based, explanations. Proponents of the ergotism theory have offered no credible explanation for the overwhelming

preponderance of females, and this must be among its most serious weaknesses.

For the well-documented case of Salem, a diagnosis of ergotism must now be considered to have been disproved. Convulsive ergotism probably did affect some young women in early modern Europe, though firm diagnoses are impossible (other diseases could also cause convulsions or fits). Some diseased women may have been perceived as being possessed; but it is impossible to say which, if any, possession cases involved which disease. Usually, psychological and cultural explanations carry more weight. In the last analysis, the strength of the ergotism theory is also its weakness: it is difficult to disprove but impossible to prove.

JULIAN GOODARE

See also: DRUGS AND HALLUCINOGENS; LOUDUN NUNS; MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE WITCH HUNTS; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; SALEM.

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ERRORES GAZARIORUM

Errors of the Gazars was an anonymous treatise written around 1437 in the region of Val d'Aosta in northwestern Italy, probably by Ponce Feugeyron. Although its title was consistent with traditional descriptions of sectarian heretical beliefs, in this case those of the Cathars or Gazarii (by then a generic term for heretics, in Latin and Italian), the subtitle indicated the specific subject of the treatise: "those who have been convinced that they ride a broomstick or a rod"—that is, those who believed that they flew on these objects and attended the witches' Sabbat in the service of the Devil. Although its author only used the term *heretics* (who may have been equally male or female) and employed no contemporary Latin or vernacular cognates for sorcerer or witch, its date and contents make this treatise an important piece of documentary evidence for the early, formative stages of some of the components of the classical image of the witch. It was one of the two earliest texts that provided an extended description of what became the witches' transvection and Sabbat.

The treatise, with arguments that were based on earlier conventional descriptions of heretical rituals, confessions in recent trials for heresy and witchcraft, and indirect testimony, exists in two versions (recent editors suggested a third manuscript has been lost). One manuscript is at the Vatican (V, probably written in 1437) and the other at Basel (B, probably written in 1438 or shortly thereafter); the latter is a slightly expanded revision of the material in the former. Both manuscripts also contained materials from the Council of Basel, an important diplomatic and cultural event that brought together many of the personnel, ideas, and themes that shaped later concepts of witchcraft. The treatise also suggested an inquisitorial origin and some association with the Franciscan Order.

This short text—the combined Latin versions of both B and V filled only six printed pages in the most recent edition (Ostorero et al. 1999)—circulated widely, because of its brevity and its concise, systematic organization. The first nine of its eighteen sections followed the temptation, initiation, and ritual experiences of a single individual in the process of becoming a servant of Satan. The treatise addressed the flight to the Sabbat (which the author called the *synagoga* of Satan), the nature of the oath and demonstration of homage to the demon, the ritual banquet and attendant cannibalism, the sexual orgy, and the formal profanation of the Eucharist by the initiate. Its next three sections described the motivations of those who, once tempted, decided to enter the sect: vengeance against enemies, avarice, and lust. The remainder of the treatise discussed the motives for such a decision, made additional illustrative points, and concluded with a list of evils committed, including murder and cannibalism, supported by brief quotations from recent confessions by convicted witches.

Aside from condemning these activities as diabolical and heretical, the author of the treatise emphasized his opinion that such heretics must form a sect—that witchcraft cannot be regarded as a series of individual cases, but must be regarded as a conspiracy, an anti-church, whose danger lay precisely in its nature and its collective character. The figure of the demon in the treatise was virtually autonomous, if not quite an equally powered opponent of God. Other earlier and contemporary texts emphasized the importance of God's permission for the demon to act in this way, but the *Erroris Gazariorum* said little about divine permission.

Fully one-fourth of the text meticulously described the contents and manufacture of the unguents and poisonous powders used by the heretics. One line of progression of the text was the moral descent from mere indulgence in vices toward more and more abominable, inhuman transgressions, culminating in infanticide and cannibalism. Skillfully and concisely made, the treatise appears to have influenced the expanded detail of night flight and the ceremonies of the Sabbat found in

confessions before tribunals around the middle of the fifteenth century in western Switzerland and southeastern France.

EDWARD PETERS

See also: ARRAS; BASEL, COUNCIL OF; *CANON EPISCOPI*; FEUGEYRON, PONCE; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; HERESY; JACQUIER, NICOLAS; LE FRANC, MARTIN; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; STICKS.

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ESSEX

The English county of Essex, immediately northeast of London, enjoys a central importance in the history of English witchcraft. There are three reasons for this. First, for reasons that remain unclear, Essex, on the strength of surviving documentation, experienced more witchcraft trials than any other English county. Second, witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart Essex was the subject of an important study completed by Alan Macfarlane. Originating as an Oxford University D Phil thesis, it was published in 1970, providing a generally accepted model for English witchcraft until the mid-1990s. Third, possibly because of the county's proximity to London, Essex witchcraft trials became the subject of a number of pamphlets. Covering a chronological span from 1566 to 1645, they provide numerous insights into how witchcraft trials were conducted, the developing nature of witchcraft beliefs, and the ways in which witchcraft was portrayed in this genre.

The importance of Essex in the history of English witchcraft trials was first noticed in 1929, in C. L. Ewen's pioneering survey of witchcraft trials in the records of the Home Circuit assizes. (The assizes were the courts before which cases of felonious witchcraft, as defined in the English witchcraft statutes of 1542, 1563, and 1604, were usually tried.) Between 1558 and 1650, these indictments survive from only one of England's six assize circuits, the Home or South-Eastern Circuit, covering the counties of Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent, Surrey, and Sussex (and even for

this archive, about a third of the relevant records have been lost). Ewen counted some 790 indictments for witchcraft surviving in the Home Circuit records, involving 513 persons accused of witchcraft, of whom 112 were hanged. Among these, 473 of the indictments, 299 of those accused, and 82 of those hanged as witches came from Essex. In other words, nearly 60 percent of all known indictments for witchcraft on the Home Circuit, and an even higher share of those persons subsequently hanged by that circuit's sessions, came from Essex.

Macfarlane's research deepened our understanding of witchcraft trials in the county. Following Ewen, he emphasized that the heaviest period of prosecutions in Essex was the 1580s, followed by the 1590s. Typically, Essex witches were not accused in mass prosecutions but were isolated individuals, occasionally drawn in twos or threes from individual villages. Indictments at the assizes dropped steeply in the 1620s and 1630s, although the great Matthew Hopkins witch hunts that began in Essex in 1645 created a new peak of indictments in the 1640s. Thereafter, indictment levels declined again, with the last Essex trial coming, a little precociously compared with the rest of the southeast, in 1675. The last known Essex executions for witchcraft had occurred thirty years previously in the Hopkins era. Overwhelmingly, the Essex witchcraft assize trials revolved around *maleficium*, doing harm by witchcraft, usually to humans or animals. As Macfarlane's figures emphasized, malefic witchcraft was overwhelmingly a female activity: over 90 percent of those accused as witches at the Essex assizes were women.

Despite the undoubted originality of his approach, Macfarlane built on Ewen's earlier researches in his analysis of assize trials. But he took a totally new approach by surveying records from other courts in the county. In particular, Macfarlane carried out a systematic analysis of ecclesiastical courts in Essex, notably those of the archdeaconries of Essex and Colchester. In Tudor and Stuart England, the ecclesiastical courts still had jurisdiction over various minor forms of witchcraft and sorcery; many cunning folk were presented before them, and several defamation suits involving allegations of witchcraft survive in ecclesiastical court records. Again, Macfarlane's analysis of these records demonstrates the peculiarities of Essex. He found over 200 relevant cases in the archives of its ecclesiastical courts, over half of them called simply "witchcraft and sorcery." Although there were minor peaks in these ecclesiastical cases in 1566 and 1608, the period of their busiest activity, as with the assize courts, lay in the 1580s and 1590s. Macfarlane further extended his research to a systematic analysis of Essex's quarter sessions and of court records from Essex boroughs with criminal jurisdiction. Although he found relatively few witchcraft cases, they helped him present a more complete picture of what

legal activity concerned with "witchcraft" looked like in the court records of one county.

Macfarlane's unusually rich Essex sources have also helped extend our knowledge of early modern witch beliefs. They contain much evidence about counter-magic, about informal methods of dealing with witches and witchcraft, and above all about cunning folk, those "good" witches whose presence was so important in early modern England. An indication of the importance of such matters had, in fact, already been provided in the late sixteenth century in a work by George Gifford (d. 1620), who was from 1582 minister at Maldon, a small port town in southern Essex.

Macfarlane's distinctive interpretation of the background to English witchcraft accusations drew on his analysis of Essex records. Briefly, he argued that such accusations were usually initiated by people living within the witch's community, the actual victims of the supposed witchcraft, rather than by a persecuting authority. He demonstrated that, characteristically, accusations were launched by richer villagers against poorer ones, and accordingly linked them to the socioeconomic changes affecting rural England in the period. He claimed the changes had altered relations between rich and poor and, more generally, perceptions of the notion of community. He argued that quarrels following refusals of charity by a future accuser to the supposed witch provided the essential context for witchcraft accusations whenever some misfortune fell on the refuser after these quarrels. Perhaps uneasy in his or her conscience about refusing charity, the victim of misfortune could now transfer his guilt: it was now the requester of charity who was breaking community norms by inflicting witchcraft, rather than the person who had refused to help his neighbor.

For over two decades, the "Essex model" as constructed by Macfarlane, dominated perceptions of early modern English witchcraft. More recently, albeit usually on the strength of inferior documentation, the universal applicability of this model to English witchcraft has been questioned. At the same time, Essex's remarkable predominance in witchcraft accusations in the southeast has never been adequately explained. The counties of Kent, Surrey, and Middlesex (the last of these outside of the assize system, but enjoying its own sessions that tried felonies) had populations comparable to that of Essex, underwent the same sorts of socioeconomic change as those that Macfarlane saw as central to Essex witchcraft accusations, and their court records survive in levels similar to those for Essex. Yet their levels of witchcraft prosecutions were vastly lower. Obviously, the history of witch prosecutions in Elizabethan Essex needs to be reopened, preferably by focusing initially on whether or not there was any propensity to prosecute among the county's elite.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: CUNNING FOLK; ENGLAND; GIFFORD, GEORGE; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; MACFARLANE, ALAN.

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ESTONIA

This small country, containing about a hundred parishes in the early modern era, participated in a regional pattern, an “eastern-Baltic paradigm,” of witchcraft and its persecution.

This meant that witchcraft in Estonia included many remarkably tenacious surviving pagan practices. It also means that witchcraft trials included very little diabolism (most of it was induced by leading questions under torture, which was legal here either before or after interrogation until the end of the seventeenth century); that its sorcerers were more often men than women; and that its local authorities relied unblushingly on ordeals by ducking (the swimming test) to detect witches.

Apart from the fact that Estonian sorcerers were much more likely to bewitch beer than milk (Madar 1990, 268–269), the major difference separating Estonia’s history of witchcraft trials from those in its southern neighbor Latvia was the fact that Lutheran Sweden ruled Estonia: its northern half since 1561, and its southern half after 1621. Most of modern Latvia fell within the sphere of Catholic Poland-Lithuania. Estonia became the only Baltic area not inhabited by

Germans to be seriously Protestantized. The Swedes founded the first (and for a long time, the only) university in the eastern Baltic at Tartu in 1632, primarily in order to train Estonia’s clergy in their struggle against “repellent idolatry.”

The Swedes were not very successful. The elaborate visitation carried out by Swedish authorities in 1667–1668 provides by far our clearest image anywhere in the Baltic of the extent that pagan practices persisted among the local peasantry: in parish after parish, they still made regular sacrifices at sacred groves and hills. Even during a visit in the late 1690s, which coincided with the last wave of witchcraft trials in Estonia, overt pagan “idolatry” was still identifiable in over a third of Estonia’s parishes, with elaborate ceremonies on Midsummer Eve (Kahk 1990, 280–282). If the sermons of their Swedish-trained clergy gave Estonian peasants a few notions about diabolism—it appears in about two dozen of Estonia’s two hundred witchcraft trials—local witches could not fly and never attended Sabbats. Defendants sometimes began with the Devil and then switched to pre-Christian fairies and wizards, whom they described much more vividly. It is also interesting to note that the Devil sometimes wore blue, a “German” (or Swedish?) color (Kahk 1990, 282).

STATISTICS

Laws against witchcraft appeared in various codes used in Estonia as well as other eastern Baltic regions. Here, as in neighboring lands, a few rather innocuous sorcery trials have been recorded from 1493 and 1526, with indirect evidence about sorcerers being burned around 1530. Evidence about witchcraft trials in Estonia remains sketchy in the sixteenth century, and nonexistent during the lengthy Livonian War (1558–1583). Trials resumed in 1588 when Estonia’s first recorded witch ducking occurred at Tartu (the defendant was a man). Trials increased considerably in the early seventeenth century. In Estland (northern Estonia), forty-one trials were recorded between 1615 and 1652; twenty-seven witches had been executed by 1636, although only five more followed before 1700. In North Livland (southern Estonia), divided into two court districts by Sweden after 1621, only four witches were executed at Tartu by 1699, but fourteen at Pärnu (Madar 1990, 260–263).

Estonian trials required accusatorial procedures and rarely involved more than one defendant: overall, we know of 140 trials held between 1520 and 1725 involving 205 defendants. Over 60 percent of them were men, and fewer than one-third of them were executed. Until 1630, only six men and twenty-three women were executed; afterward, only six women and twenty men (Madar 1990, 261, 267). Two cases still reached Estonian courts in the early nineteenth century.

MALEFICIUM

With their sturdy pagan background, Estonian peasant sorcerers cast many kinds of spells, using everything from fish (1669), strawberries (1633), crayfish (1651), or salt (1542 and 1642), although their preferred method was to cast spells on beer to infest their victim's body with worms or frogs. Estonia's sorcerers could become wolves or occasionally bears; interestingly, eighteen of its thirty-one werewolves, and even two of its three bears were women (Madar 1990, 270–271), although Estonia's sorcerers apparently had no "good werewolf" like the Livonian case of 1692 (Ginzburg 1983, 28–31).

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: LATVIA; LITHUANIA, GRAND DUCHY OF; LYCANTHROPY; *MALEFICIUM*; SPELLS; SWEDEN; SWIMMING TEST.

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ETHNOLOGY

Ethnology has usually studied "primitive" societies that are rather different from the society of the European witch hunt. They are segmentary societies with little or no social stratification, often based on kinship as their main structural principle. In such societies, magical rites play a much greater part than in complex stratified societies, which also use comparable rites, but at the same time begin to criticize them. Primitive societies explain evil (including evils caused by nature) as the action of ancestors who punish deviant behavior with illness and so on, through gods or sorcerers and witches. Such societies offer rich fields of witch beliefs.

The functionalist Anglo-Saxon school of ethnology, to which we owe most of the epoch-making works on witchcraft in primitive societies, is based on the work of Emile Durkheim. He saw religion as an expression of society as a whole, so that belief systems can be correlated with social structure. The cosmology/religion therefore expresses the fundamental structures of a society through various communication codes (Leach 1976).

Magic has an instrumental function, based on the belief that the surrounding natural and social world can be controlled by ritual practices, for example, by producing needed rain. Magic also has an expressive function, because its rites produce and symbolize the

cohesion of society. In such societies, nothing happens by chance (in theory); whatever happens is caused by certain powers. Good or bad luck are not due to chance, but to ancestors, spirits, or witches.

The main function of witchcraft beliefs is therefore to reduce contingency. This may lead to the notion that every death, even of old people, is caused by evil powers. Mary Douglas's theory of how evil is interpreted is a good example of the methods of the functionalist school. In societies where people live in close contact and are heavily interdependent, evil is attributed to envious neighbors as sorcerers or witches; societies with loose settlement structures and fluid groups tend to explain evil by natural spirits. Belief in witchcraft makes it possible to identify the cause of evil with a concrete person and to fight it. If a person shows envy, anger, or hatred in a transaction, an evil is attributed to her or him.

A further important function of witchcraft is to control deviant behavior, because people must refrain from deviant behavior to avoid being identified as a witch. Among the Nyakyusa, witchcraft beliefs function as "the main sanction for moral behaviour within the village" (Wilson 1951, 108). A further function is connected with this. Segmentary societies develop numerous mechanisms to prevent the development of social and economic inequality. Because the number of goods is regarded as constant and economic growth is considered impossible, the advantage of one individual is necessarily the disadvantage of someone else. That is why wealth is often concealed and leveling mechanisms work in many ways, for instance, by partitions of the kill after hunt or by gambling. Witch belief provides another such leveling mechanism by sanctioning good luck, that is, economic advantages.

A further function of witchcraft is to resolve conflicts between related persons or neighbors. Quarrelling about inheritance between brothers or about boundaries between neighbors may result in accusations of witchcraft, which lead to the end of the conflict. Here witchcraft accusations can win community support for one's case by making one's particular enemy into an enemy of the whole society. This leads to a further important function: the symbolization of evil. Some societies imagine the witch as a terrible monster practicing anthropophagy, "eating up" the person who the witch wants to harm by stealing inner organs. Here witchcraft often symbolizes the special dangers of a society, for example of seafaring among the Trobriands (Malinowski 1922). Other societies, like the Azande, see witches as rather normal people, with whom one may subsequently be reconciled after some evil deed (Evans-Pritchard 1937). This difference is important for the investigation of European witchcraft, because diabolical witchcraft with its doctrine of the Sabbath corresponds to the first type, and simple *maleficium* or

harmful magic to the second kind. This could also be compared to Evans-Pritchard's distinction between sorcerers and witches: The witch works by innate demonic power, while sorcerers use certain techniques.

Ethnographic contributions to the analysis of the role of women might also be helpful for understanding the European witch belief system. Even in such very primitive societies as the Baktaman, who have no elaborate kinship system (Barth 1975), the witch belief has a gendered structure—a man practices sorcery with the help of hair or textiles, a woman appears as a bird, attacking her victim with a stone axe and eating his or her flesh—the difference inverts actual gender roles in this society. In other societies, women sometimes attract attention to their underprivileged status by being obsessed or confessing to their witchcraft: this has been called “peripheral obsession” (Lewis 1989). But we also find societies like the Nupe in Africa, in which women are thought to be witches because they have a better economic status than men (Nadel 1954). The ethnological results remain unclear, and we cannot yet state that attributing witchcraft to women is universally dominant, or that they are more demonic figures than men. Witch beliefs may also be useful in achieving or securing political power. If rivals attack a chief's power, his positive magic power may be interpreted as witchcraft.

In the last decade, ethnologists have concentrated on the processes of decolonization and modernization. They argue more historically, interpreting increases and changes in witch beliefs as expressions of social crisis. The use of such belief systems for purposes of political power can be observed after World War II. In Cameroon, they could be used both ways (Rowlands and Warnier 1988). Political elites were suspected of witchcraft because they persecuted popular witch finders, while the elites feared that envious kin in their home villages were using witchcraft against them. This shows that the archaic leveling mechanism of witchcraft is still working. The strong belief in witches has changed the law. Whereas in the colonial system only accusers of witches were punished, now it is sometimes possible to accuse witches in the regular courts. In South Africa, this constitutes an attempt to end lynchings, which has cost the lives of many people recently (Harnischfeger 2000).

Though the Anglo-Saxon school analyzes the functions of witch beliefs, it does not neglect the possibility that these beliefs can become dysfunctional. This can happen if they cause more conflicts than they resolve, i.e., if they poison the social atmosphere through attributions followed by aggression. This warning against methodological blindness had already been given long ago (Winter 1963): Every function must be ascertained empirically.

RAINER WALZ

See also: AFRICA (SUB-SAHARAN); ANTHROPOLOGY; DOUGLAS, MARY; EVANS-PRITCHARD, EDWARD E.; GENDER; NATIVE AMERICANS; POPULAR BELIEFS IN WITCHES.

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EUGENIUS IV (1383–1447; POPE, 1431–1447)

Eugenius IV took a leading role in classifying magic and witchcraft as heresy. Born to a prosperous Venetian family, Gabriele Condulmaro became a canon of the church of St. George in Alga in Venice. His uncle, Pope Gregory XII, appointed him bishop of Siena in 1407 and cardinal in 1408. He attended the Council of Constance (1414–1418), became papal governor in the March of Ancona and in Bologna, and was elected pope in 1431. His pontificate was marked by his struggles with the Council of Basel (1431–1440) and with the antipope Felix V, the outbreak of the Hussite wars in Bohemia, his attempts to reunite the Greek and other separated Christian churches with the Latin Church, and his diplomatic sponsorship of the failed crusade of Varna in 1444. Eugenius IV, who once said that he regretted ever having left the cloister, was also a cleric of intense piety

with a demanding ideal of clerical and lay reform. This ideal underlay his concern with contemporary forms of dissent and heterodoxy, and conspicuously with various forms and practices of magic, divination, conjuring, and other forbidden arts. These concerns regarding magical practices appeared in his letters to inquisitors. They also appeared in his denunciation of Felix V, formerly Duke Amadeus VIII of Savoy, for having protected diabolical sorcerers in his duchy and used their wicked and diabolical arts to further his own aims.

Earlier popes had also expressed concern with, and sometimes fear of, diabolical sorcery from the late thirteenth to the mid-fifteenth century. John XXII (1316–1334) issued several letters on the subject; in 1409, Alexander V (1409–1410) had written to the widely traveled Franciscan inquisitor Ponce Feugeyron, concerning “new sects” formed by both Christians and Jews, some of which practiced sorcery, divination, invocation of demons, and other forbidden arts, urging the inquisitor to cooperate with local diocesan officials and the secular authorities to root out such repugnant superstitions. In 1434, Eugenius IV also wrote to Feugeyron, repeating Alexander V’s charges against Christian and Jewish magicians, diviners, and other practitioners of superstitious and forbidden arts.

In 1437, Eugenius wrote at greater length to all inquisitors of heretical depravity, noting that Satan had used such arts to deceive many Christians into joining his sect. Such people sacrifice to demons, adore them, and make a written or other kind of contract with them, gaining by this the power to commit evil deeds and be transported wherever they wish. They also cure diseases, perform weather magic, and sacrilegiously misuse sacred materials such as baptismal water, the Eucharist, and other sacramentals. They also shamefully desecrate the cross.

In March 1440, locked in dispute with his rival, the antipope Felix V, Eugenius denounced Felix to the Council of Basel for having tolerated and used the diabolical services of many men and women who are commonly called *stregule*, or *stregonos*, or *Waudenses*. The first two terms are cognates with the Italian term *strega*, or witch, and the third was an early instance of using the old name for Waldensian heretics to designate the heretical character of diabolical sorcery, whether magic or witchcraft. There is no evidence that Felix, when he had been Duke Amadeus VIII of Savoy, had done any such thing, although his secretary, Martin Le Franc, wrote a long poem, also in 1440, *Le Champion des dames* (*The Defender of Ladies*), in which the most recent arguments for and against contemporary beliefs about heretical sorcery and witchcraft were debated by a character who insulted women and one who defended them. The poem was an important example of literary misogyny and philogyny, a popular genre in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Eugenius IV’s concerns about heretical witchcraft between 1434 and 1440 were thus virtually identical to those of such other exactly contemporary texts as the *Errores Gazariorum* (*Errors of the Gazars or Gazarii* [Cathars—a common term for heretics and later witches]), the *Formicarius* (*The Anthill*) of Johannes Nider, the treatise of Claude Tholosan, and *The Defender of Ladies*, all of which dealt with the crucial early stage of the formation of the concept of a sect of diabolical sorcerers and witches.

EDWARD PETERS

See also: BASEL, COUNCIL OF; *ERRORES GAZARIORUM*; FEUGEYRON, PONCE; HERESY; JACQUIER, NICOLAS; JOHN XXII, POPE; LE FRANC, MARTIN; NIDER, JOHANNES; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; THOLOSAN, CLAUDE; *VAUDOIS* (WALDENSIANS).

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**EVANS-PRITCHARD,
EDWARD E. (1902–1973)**

Few scholars have exerted such deep and enduring influence on the study of witchcraft as Edward Evans-Pritchard. He began his work on the Azande tribe of the Sudan in 1926 as a postgraduate student, dedicating himself to producing a comprehensive anthropological study of that people’s system of social organization and its relation to their beliefs and practices about magic, witchcraft, divination, and sorcery. Between 1926 and 1930, he made three field trips to the tribe, sponsored and supported by the British colonial government, spending a total of twenty months recording, photographing, and interviewing the Azande about their views on witchcraft. The initial result was his doctoral thesis, “The Social Organization of the Azande of the Bahr-el-Ghazel Province of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan” (London School of Economics, 1927). Subsequently revised and expanded, it was published in 1937 as *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic Among the Azande*. His book advanced an extremely compelling theory of the sociology of knowledge and belief and drew an important distinction between the practices of witchcraft and sorcery.

According to Evans-Pritchard, witchcraft was an innate, internal power that some people inherited, in

exactly the same manner as genetic features were passed down from parents to children. However, witchcraft was only considered to be hereditary among ordinary Azande: princes and nobles had no such taint and could never be accused of the crime. Because of witchcraft's hereditary nature, a son could not accuse his father without admitting his own guilt. Witches were perceived as mean, rude, and grasping; they could cause harm, consciously or unconsciously, by a mere glance or malicious thought. Azande witches could harm other human beings, their animals, or their crops, without performing special rituals; their witchcraft required no interventions from supernatural beings to flourish.

By way of contrast, sorcerers had no innate ability to cause occult harm. They employed magical rites, such as chanting spells, or damaged something belonging to their intended victim, such as clothing, hair, or nail clippings, to transfer misfortune to the victim. Therefore, any Azande could become a sorcerer through learning, but it was impossible to become a witch except by birth. Consequently, the Azande evolved a complex system of beliefs in oracles, divination, magic, and leechcraft to detect and counteract the effects of witchcraft.

However, Evans-Pritchard noted that witchcraft accusations clustered together in areas of ambiguous social relationships. He found the Azande a clever and skeptical people who manipulated their oracles to sustain their existing social system and prevalent morality in a society that had experienced severe strain from Christian missionaries and the imposition of colonial military rule between 1905 and 1914. (Their population dropped from two million in 1870 to 750,000 by 1953.) Under intense pressures, accusations of witchcraft multiplied; the Azande might ascribe almost any misfortune to the occult malice of a neighbor or a former friend.

Since the late 1940s, the guiding motifs of his work—namely the differences between witchcraft and sorcery, and the function of misfortune in provoking accusations of the crime—have dominated most discussions of British witchcraft. Keith Thomas and Alan Macfarlane accepted Evans-Pritchard's findings and adapted his idea of social breakdown as a stimulus for fresh cycles of persecution by substituting the Protestant Reformation and England's Poor Laws for the impact of colonial rule and the introduction of Christianity. However, Evans-Pritchard's influence on the study of continental European witchcraft has been minimal. Although his stature as a canonical anthropologist and authority on African tribal societies remains high in a postcolonial world, Evans-Pritchard's ideas on the marked similarities between Azande and European witchcraft beliefs have largely faded from favor.

JOHN CALLOW

See also: AFRICA (SUB-SAHARAN); ANTHROPOLOGY; ETHNOLOGY; MACFARLANE, ALAN; THOMAS, KEITH.

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EVE

In some demonological treatises and other learned writings, Eve is described as the “first witch,” and women's tendency toward witchcraft is linked to their being “daughters of Eve.” This idea was built on misogynist notions that were very common in Christianity. The second-century Church Father Tertullian, for example, described Eve, and through her all women, as the “Devil's gateway.” Medieval and early modern writers set this connection within the context of demonology, and by the later sixteenth century the combination Eve/women/witch became a standard rhetorical device in sermons and treatises, requiring little explanation.

In the *Lectiois super ecclesiastes* (1380) of Johannes Dominicus and the *Preceptorium divinae legis* (Preceptor of Divine Law, 1475) of Johannes Nider, Eve's mental and physical weakness, lack of reason, talkativeness, and credulity were all seen as reasons she gave in to the serpent's wiles. These qualities are still to be found in women, argued these authors, which is why they are more likely than men to be influenced by demons. In his occasional remarks on witchcraft, Martin Luther agreed, noting, in a sermon on 1 Peter, “It is commonly the nature of women to be afraid of everything. That is why they busy themselves so much with witchcraft and superstitions.” In a sermon on the Ten Commandments, Luther commented, “Who can count all the foolish, ridiculous, wrong, senseless, and superstitious things that women deal in? From their mother Eve it has been natural for them to be deceived and made fools of.” And in a sermon on Exodus, he commented, “On witches, why does the law stress

women more than men? . . . Because of Eve” (Karant-Nunn and Wiesner-Hanks 2003, 231–233).

In the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), Heinrich Kramer similarly saw Eve as the first in a long line of female witches, though he emphasized her lust, seductive nature, and desire for power along with her weakness and foolishness. Eve bears full responsibility for the Fall, in his eyes, because she seduced Adam, causing him to forsake God. In the same way, women who give in to the power of the Devil are not to be pitied as mentally deficient, but feared as enticing and malicious. They hint that Eve’s relationship with Satan was sexual in nature, just like the relationship between witches and demons in their own day; this emphasis on female sexuality pervaded the *Malleus*, so it is not surprising to see it emerging in subsequent discussions of Eve and witchcraft.

In the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, linking Eve, women’s propensity to sin, and witchcraft became a common topos in sermons and witch literature in continental Europe, England, and Puritan New England. In the trial of Anne Hutchinson, for example, Cotton Mather accused Hutchinson of acting like both Eve and the serpent, seducing women and their husbands with her ideas “like a serpent sliding in the dark” (*Ornaments for the Daughters of Zion* [1692]).

Eve has remained a powerful figure in the contemporary witch movement as well. Though modern Wicca witches frequently emphasize the distinction between their beliefs and practices and those of Satanic witchcraft, they stand the *Malleus Maleficarum* on its head by claiming Eve as a positive role model, an independent woman who did not see herself as subservient or inferior to her husband.

MERRY WIESNER-HANKS

See also: FEMALE WITCHES; GENDER; LUTHER, MARTIN; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC.

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EVIDENCE

Central to all judicial proceedings against witches was the presentation and evaluation of evidence. The determination of what evidence was admissible in court and whether it was sufficient for conviction were subjects of controversy throughout the period of witch hunting. Rules regarding evidence varied from one jurisdiction

to another, and local communities often placed credence in evidentiary tests that were not acceptable to legal writers and authorities. In the late seventeenth century, skepticism regarding the admissibility and validity of certain types of evidence contributed to the decline of witch hunting.

Judicial rules governing the admission of evidence (the law of evidence) and those governing the determination of guilt or innocence (the law of proof) were more clearly defined in states that were influenced strongly by Roman law (*jus commune*) and followed inquisitorial procedure than in those states that used accusatorial procedure. In France, the German territories within the Holy Roman Empire, the Iberian kingdoms, and the Italian states, all of which adhered to inquisitorial procedure, rules prescribed how much evidence was required to begin a judicial investigation of a particular suspect (*inquisitio specialis*), to administer torture, and to convict the accused.

Roman law required that judicial decisions agree about what circumstances could legally provoke suspicion of witchcraft and arrests. The evidentiary requirements in this regard were relatively low, consisting of an accusation by an individual, denunciation by an official, or mere rumor. To administer torture, either the testimony of one eyewitness or certain amounts of circumstantial evidence (*indicia*), to which jurists assigned various weights, was necessary. Applying torture required an interlocutory sentence, which sometimes was granted by the law faculties of the universities or councils of sovereign princes. The evidence required for conviction, known as the Roman-canonical law of proof, consisted of either the testimony of two eyewitnesses or a confession. The necessity of obtaining the latter in cases of concealed crimes served as the main justification for torturing suspected witches.

During the most intense period of witch hunting, these rules regarding evidence were often relaxed on the grounds that witchcraft was a *crimen exceptum* (an excepted crime), to which the normal procedural rules did not apply. In many witch hunts in the Holy Roman Empire, courts accepted testimony from confessing witches—convicted felons, barred from testifying under ordinary rules—who had named the accused as accomplices. Without such evidence from confessing witches, the mass prosecution of witches in Germany would not have taken place. In some of the largest witch hunts, including those in Germany, in the Basque Country around 1610, and in Sweden after 1668, testimony from children, which was normally not admissible in criminal cases, was permitted. On a few occasions, such as at Loudun in 1634, courts even recognized “testimony” from demons speaking through possessed persons who were undergoing exorcism. The discovery of the Devil’s mark on the witch’s body—a spot that was

insensitive to pain and did not bleed—was usually sufficient to permit the judicial interrogation of the witch, although not in the Mediterranean inquisitions.

Rules that normally governed the application of torture were ignored in many witchcraft trials, also on the grounds that witchcraft was an excepted crime. Conviction on the basis of circumstantial evidence, including the inability of witches to shed tears and the occurrence of misfortune following the witch's pronouncement of a threat, was commonplace throughout Europe, especially in local courts. Central or appellate tribunals, such as the *Parlement* of Paris or the supreme tribunal of the Spanish Inquisition, where established standards of acceptable evidence were more rigorously enforced, often reversed these sentences.

In England, where courts followed accusatorial procedure, judges exercised far less control over the admission of evidence and the determination of its sufficiency for conviction. English judges could instruct juries, who determined the facts of the case and thus the guilt or innocence of the accused, regarding the evidence that had been presented in court, but juries could and did convict on the basis of circumstantial evidence. In 1608 the demonologist William Perkins, trying to establish continental standards of proof in the prosecution of English witches, enumerated various "presumptions" that would justify the examination of a witch and proofs that were sufficient for conviction. In 1652, the reliability of these evidentiary standards came under direct attack by Sir Robert Filmer in the wake of a witch hunt that took place in the county of Kent in that year. However, English juries continued to convict witches on the basis of circumstantial evidence until the late seventeenth century.

Local communities often relied on extra-judicial tests to acquire evidence of witchcraft and the identification of the malefactors. The most common of these popular tests was "swimming" the witch, a practice that derived from the medieval water ordeal that had been prohibited in 1215. Swimming tests took place in many regions of northern Europe, from the British Isles and France to Russia. In a few places, like Westphalia, before a suspect was permitted to undergo this test, she had to promise to confess if she failed. Authorities usually manipulated the test so that suspects would float, thus proving their guilt. The women who were tested in this manner argued that they floated because of their other sins, like adultery. The swimming test was unknown in Mediterranean regions but persisted in some parts of northern and eastern Europe until relatively recent times. It had no standing at law, and few demonologists (with the notable exception of James VI of Scotland) considered it a valid form of evidence.

Other popular techniques of securing evidence of witchcraft were, from a judicial viewpoint, likewise

considered superstitious and therefore prohibited by law. Many examples mentioned in Heinrich Kramer's *Malleus Maleficarum* (Hammer of Witches, 1486) were of this kind. Despite their illegality, they can nevertheless be found in later records of witchcraft trials. One popular test for witchcraft was to grill the hide of cattle that had died of a strange illness in the belief that the person who had bewitched the cattle would suffer from burns and come to the house where the test was performed.

In the late seventeenth century, the imposition of more demanding standards of evidence in witchcraft cases contributed to the decline in the number of convictions and executions. Little by little the realization occurred that the foundation of witchcraft trials consisted in prejudices, double-bind strategies, and self-fulfilling prophecies. The increasingly frequent employment of lawyers as advocates for accused witches encouraged adherence to these new standards. Skepticism regarding the sufficiency of evidence in witchcraft cases can be seen, first and foremost, in a growing reluctance among judges and legal writers to accept confessions, traditionally regarded as the highest standard of proof, as sufficient proof of guilt. This skepticism arose mainly when the confessions had a high diabolical content, that is, when the witches had confessed to either a pact with the Devil or attendance at the Sabbath. By the late seventeenth century, judges were willing to accept confessions to witchcraft (or any other crime) only if such confessions were in no way extorted, if they contained nothing that was impossible or improbable, and if the person confessing was neither melancholic nor suicidal.

A second and even more frequent expression of judicial caution in the interpretation of evidence was based on the possibility that events attributed to supernatural agency may have had natural causes. This was particularly relevant to charges of *maleficium* (harmful magic), in which it was claimed that witches had inflicted harm by diabolical (and thus supernatural) means. The skeptical response to such allegations, frequently adopted when lawyers defended witches against such charges, was that the act had natural causes, and that to convict a person of the crime, the possibility of natural causation had to be ruled out. In securing the acquittal of a witch accused of murder by sorcery in 1662, Paul von Fuchs only needed to show that the alleged supernatural cause of the disease that killed the witch's victim could not be proved. French courts stopped trying witches in cases of demonic possession in the seventeenth century on the grounds that they could not distinguish possession from a natural disease.

Skepticism regarding the validity of evidence against witches arose frequently in instances where a causal connection was alleged between the pronouncement of threats or the casting of spells and the occurrence of

misfortunes. The validity of the Devil's mark as a form of evidence also came under attack frequently after 1650 in many continental and Scottish jurisdictions (occasionally, as at Geneva, surgeons systematically failed to find it). In England and New England, the convictions of witches on the basis of spectral evidence (the testimony of victims that they could see the apparitions or specters of the witches who were causing them harm) also led to discrediting this form of evidence, especially in the wake of the Salem witchcraft trials of 1692.

GÜNTER JEROUSCHEK AND BRIAN LEVACK

See also: ACCUSATORIAL PROCEDURE; CHILDREN; CONFESSIONS; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; DEVIL'S MARK; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; LAWYERS; LOUDUN NUNS; PERKINS, WILLIAM; PROOF, PROBLEM OF; ROMAN LAW; SKEPTICISM; SPECTRAL EVIDENCE; SWIMMING TEST; TORTURE.

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EVIL EYE

The belief that harm, misfortune, or bad luck can be inflicted simply by looking at people or their property (especially if the look is envious), also known as "overlooking," has been found in many parts of the world. The belief spans from ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern cultures onward, and particularly in Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, India, and parts of Latin America and Asia, where the belief is still common. It is well attested in Latin literature, both classical and early Christian. In Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584, 37) the belief is imputed in particular to the Irish, Muscovites, and West Indians, but these may be simply the most barbarous people he knew. Some scholars accept a diffusionist explanation for the similarity of the belief in different cultures, with a possible source in ancient Mesopotamia.

The belief takes very many forms in different cultures, including the personification of the evil eye as a

kind of demon (as evidenced by some antique amulets), but among its more common characteristics are that such power may be exerted either inadvertently (by persons otherwise of good repute), or with malevolent intent. Its reputed possessors are anyone whose eyes are black, deep-set, protruding, squinting, or distinctive in some way (such as "double pupils") or who are otherwise of peculiar appearance. Its possessors include any witch, male or female; foreigners; and even priests (Pope Pius IX was thought to possess the *malocchia*, like a number of famous rabbis). In Orthodox countries, they even included a saint, the "unbenevolent" St. John Cassian, whose gaze blighted everything it fell upon. Signs identifying a person as having the evil eye are often the same as the reputed signs of a witch.

The evil eye can be blamed for almost any misfortune. Alleged objects of attack often include crops, livestock, weddings (with subsequent impotence or infertility), and babies and young children (in several areas, newborn infants are kept from the eyes of all but family, typically for forty days). Sickness or derangement may also be attributed to the evil eye. The alleged results of an evil eye attack closely resemble the alleged results of bewitchment involving an agent (spells, magic potions, etc.) or demonic attacks. Although evil eye and witchcraft beliefs often overlap, they are usually perceived as distinct.

Protection from, or countermeasures against the evil eye also take a variety of forms. Often these are the same as the protective measures adopted against other kinds of magical or demonic attacks: specific prayers, spells, herbs and roots (these vary widely depending on the region, but garlic is common), crosses, sign of the cross, relics, amulets (a vast range, depending on the region: blue beads, the "hand of Fatima," cowry shells, horseshoes, horns, red wool, salt, garlic, depictions of an eye), spitting (usually three times—a procedure known since classical antiquity), gestures such as the fig or horns, or employment of a witch or priest.

In its principal sense, the evil eye is closely associated with the belief that misfortune will result from tempting fate by expressing a hope or intention, or by injudicious praise (McCartney 1943). The safeguards and remedies, such as spitting, crossing fingers, and touching wood, are almost the same as for the evil eye. The evil eye may also be associated with beliefs about ill-omened meetings (e.g., with priests), for obvious reasons.

The most exhaustive examination of evil eye beliefs was made in several German studies (Seligmann 1910 and 1927). Some of the most important subsequent literature on the topic has been published in two collections of essays, one by anthropologists (Maloney 1976) and the other with a folkloric orientation.

WILL RYAN

See also: COUNTERMAGIC; FOLKLORE; MALEFICIUM; SPELLS.

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EXECUTIONERS

The executioners who were employed in early modern witchcraft trials were usually local professionals, salaried public employees. Throughout their careers, many of them never encountered magic or superstition at all; only a few burned large numbers of witches. From the executioner's point of view, the method of capital punishment employed in cases of witchcraft did not differ greatly from that used in punishing any other serious crime.

Although witchcraft was often regarded as a *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime), it was not necessarily treated exceptionally. Harsher forms of torture could be used against witches, but this was not inevitable. Occasionally, unusual forms of the death penalty like impaling were employed. Most of those sentenced were not actually burned alive (as the Carolina—the 1532 law code of the Holy Roman Empire—and other law codes demanded), but were beheaded or strangled before their corpses were burned. The execution of witches can thus be considered one form of capital punishment among others.

The professional situation of European executioners differed greatly from one state and judicial system to another. So far, the problem has attracted little attention among modern historians. In England, late medieval tradition prevailed, inasmuch as ordinary hangmen belonged to the lower classes and chose their profession rather than inheriting it. In contrast, German and French executioners had established the heredity of their profession by the middle of the sixteenth century. Most executioners succeeded their fathers or stepfathers, or married the widow or daughter of the former executioner. Their families formed geographically extensive marriage networks. Killing the condemned on the public scaffold had become a highly skilled profession. After serving a proper apprenticeship under his father's or a foreign master's supervision, a



Execution of three witches in Germany, 1555. Convicted witches on the Continent were regularly burned, often after having been strangled. (Fortean Picture Library)

young executioner would perform his first beheading witnessed and judged by the local legal authorities. A written confirmation of the so-called “masterpiece” testified that the candidate was qualified for the job. Apart from his practical skills, the perfect executioner should be loyal and discreet, leading an irreproachable life and behaving correctly toward everybody. He was expected to obey the authorities and function as a mere tool of justice, never acting according to his own estimation.

An executioner's professional activities consisted largely of piecemeal work. Every job carried out was paid separately according to a list of rates. Payments varied and were not always sufficient to support the officeholder and his family. For that reason, executioners often supplemented regular fees with additional funds from criminal investigations and the application of corporal punishment. Some imperial cities and other governments paid a basic salary in addition to such benefits as a rent-free house, land for gardening, and firewood in winter. Often executioners earned money from supervising local skinners, or employed their servants to collect and make use of dead animals or aged horses.

Until the mid-eighteenth century, when university-educated physicians secured a supervisory function over all other groups of healers and gradually drove them from the market, an executioner's best and most secure income resulted from combining a medical practice with his regular duties. Medical skills were so common among executioners that they became a professional requirement. Executioners usually looked after those who had been tortured, setting their dislocated joints and broken bones and bandaging their wounds; they also had to judge the physical condition of prisoners to decide the degree of torture possible. Their expertise made them detested competitors of other authorized medical practitioners. The medical skills of executioners, who practiced publicly and treated patients from various social classes, equaled those of barber-surgeons and bath-masters, who also treated external injuries. There was nothing “superstitious” about their medical knowledge, which was passed on in the family, rather than certified through an official examination.

Only the witch hunts of the last twenty years of the sixteenth century produced real specialists who were itinerants brought in to carry out investigations. Of these, the executioner of Biberach became especially notorious for his widespread activities between 1586 and 1597. Several studies have provided evidence for the trail of blood that Johann Volmar and his son-in-law Christoph Hiert left throughout an area extending over the small territories of the German southwest and into parts of Bavaria. As experts in magic, they were called in even when local executioners were available. They were usually called to the torture chamber if the employee responsible refused to apply sufficiently

strong methods of torture, or if he could not determine that the accused was a witch. In the witchcraft proceedings carried out by the masters from Biberach, several female suspects died as a result of torture or committed suicide.

The fact that the two often exerted decisive influence on the investigations is highlighted by one detail that occurred in every confession they enforced. Of those convicted, all those who had been tortured by Volmar said afterward that they had danced on the “Heuberg” at the Sabbath, although the concept of a central dancing place was not familiar to people in all their hometowns. Worse, Volmar trained many other executioners and their sons in how to carry out examinations for witchcraft, among them the later Bavarian expert in witchcraft, Johann Georg Abriel. The executioner from Biberach prepared special drinks based on holy water and herbs to test whether a suspect was a witch or not. Johann Volmar was also a recognized authority in finding and examining the Devil's marks. In many cases, Volmar's wife examined the women to respect their sense of shame. This consideration is a remarkable contrast to the exaggerated brutality of the torture.

Reconstructing the psychological profile of witch executioners nevertheless meets with some difficulties. It is impossible to decide whether Volmar, Hiert, and Abriel were fanatic believers in witchcraft, greedy professionals, or a dangerous mixture of both. The only hypothesis that should probably be excluded is individual sadism and a complete lack of scruples. On the contrary, in some cases, Johann Volmar entertained doubts about what he was doing. In August 1596, it was reported that he refused to torture Walburga Hoppenhans in Esslingen, because “er hab ouch ein seel, es sei nit kelblins sondern Christen bluott etc. er halt sie für khain ohnholden” (he, too, had a soul, it was not the blood of a calf but of a Christian, he could not consider her a witch) (Schmid 1994, 413).

Executioners had two main sources of profit from witch hunts. The larger part came from what they claimed for their travel expenses, rather than from what they received for torture or public executions. This gave an incentive to all executioners to work outside their home districts. In addition, legal authorities were generous enough at the beginning of a witch hunt to pay for expensive accommodations; unsurprisingly, we encounter whole parties of executioners in this context. Overall, however, there were limits to an executioner's income.

In the sixteenth century, executioners played a certain role in popular magic culture, linked to their involvement in punishment. Executioners were believed to be experts in identifying thieves or recovering lost and stolen goods; they could predict the identity of the culprit after effecting a magic ritual like the so-called *Siebdrehen* [spinning of the sieve]. Here the executioner

inserted a pair of scissors on the rim of a large sieve. He then drew a circle on the ground and placed pieces of paper with the names of the suspects on the outer edge. The sieve was placed in the center of the circle; the executioner and the victim of the crime then each gripped one handle of the scissors and set the sieve spinning. Whichever piece of paper the weight of the scissors finally pulled the sieve down on revealed the name of the guilty party. Executioners also sold charms and relics from poor sinners to individuals, although the authorities tried to stop such practices. An executioner's contract of employment frequently specified that he would never use spells or other magical or religious items. After the beginning of the seventeenth century, most executioners refrained from magical practices.

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TRANSLATED BY BRIGITTE FLUG

See also: EXECUTIONS; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; TORTURE.

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EXECUTIONS

Only about half of those tried for witchcraft in early modern Europe were sentenced to death. Most of these

condemned witches were executed by burning or by hanging. Other capital punishments were also used occasionally. In Russia, convicted male witches might be beheaded and female witches buried alive. How a convicted witch was executed depended on the laws of the territory in which she was arrested and the court by which she was tried. However a witch was executed, killing her might involve considerable costs. In Mergentheim in the early seventeenth century, the wood, chains, straw, and other costs incurred in the executions of witches amounted to about 1,615 gulden or almost 17 percent of the total court costs for witchcraft cases (Midelfort 1972, 177).

BURNING

The majority of witches executed on the Continent, especially in Catholic territories, were burned at the stake. They were punished primarily for their heresy, and obdurate heretics were condemned to death by fire. The purpose of burning was to eradicate any physical remnant of the heretic and to purify the community. Canon law permitted penitent heretics to be received back into the Catholic Church, and different interpretations of how to deal with penitent witch-heretics led to different patterns of experience in northern and southern Europe.

In northern Europe, where local courts tended to try witch suspects, secular authorities followed the advice in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) that penitent witches were still to be punished for their temporal crimes against their neighbors. The use of torture, leading questions, and unreliable testimony from witches and other accusers during the trials meant that most convicted witches were forced to confess to capital offenses, including murder, serious injury to people, and damage to property. In some territories, such as Eichstätt, penitent witches were beheaded before they were burned.

In southern Europe, where state inquisitions tried suspected witches, their alleged harmful magic was usually considered irrelevant or illusory. The lack of torture during the trial and the limitations placed on witness testimony meant that suspects rarely confessed to such activities. The focus was firmly on trying to correct wrong beliefs and suspects usually had to endure such lesser punishments as public penance, whippings, or banishment, rather than execution.

HANGING

In England, legal emphasis was far less on heresy than on the felonies committed by the suspected witch. Under the Witchcraft Act of 1563, a first-time offender could only be executed by hanging if she had committed murder. A suspect charged with injuring a person or damaging property a second time could be hanged. Unsuccessful witchcraft led to lesser punishments.

However, the Witchcraft Act of 1604 extended death in the first instance to those who injured persons or damaged crops by witchcraft and in the second instance to those who merely attempted to use witchcraft. Except during the witch hunt conducted by Matthew Hopkins in the 1640s, the lack of torture meant that witch suspects rarely confessed to felonies under investigation; instead, as in Scandinavia, juries convicted them. A witch suspect might come before the courts several times before being executed: Elizabeth Francis, for example, was tried in 1566, 1572, and 1573 before being hanged in 1579 for killing Alice Poole by witchcraft.

THE PROCESS OF EXECUTION

The process of execution varied from place to place. Most commonly, however, on the final day in court, after being tortured into confessing, the witch suspect, like all other felons, was required to confirm it freely without torture. Only through confession—the “queen of proofs”—could convictions be made. The convict was then legally sentenced to death.

Throughout much of Europe, early modern law codes like the Carolina of 1532 in the Holy Roman Empire prescribed three days between pronouncing a death sentence and the actual execution. The purpose of this interval was to allow the condemned person to reflect on her sin and make a spiritual confession if she were Catholic or, if Protestant, make her peace with God. At the end of this period, the convict was brought before a judge who then formally handed down the judgment. A public announcement of the judgment was also read to the spectators gathering to view the execution. The witch would then have a last meal, either with the judges or the executioner. After the meal, she would have been taken to the place of execution in a public procession consisting of her judges, the executioner and his assistants, local dignitaries, and priests.

At the place of execution, often outside the city walls, the executioner tied the witch to the stake or gallows. In the case of witches condemned to death by fire, the executioner and his assistants would set the fire. The witch was then killed. Where beheading had been authorized, the executioner performed this before tying the corpse to the stake. Finally the body or its remains had to be disposed of. Ashes were either scattered into a river or buried at some appropriate site (under the gallows or a crossroads). Hanged corpses could likewise be buried or left to rot on the gallows for a period of time.

JONATHAN DURRANT

See also: ACCUSATIONS; CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*); CONFESSIONS; CROSSROADS; EICHSTÄTT, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; EXECUTIONERS; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; INQUISITION, SPANISH; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); PAPPENHEIMER FAMILY; RUSSIA; TORTURE; TRIALS.

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EXETER WITCHES

In 1682, three women—two widows, Temperance Lloyd (sometimes Floyd) and Susanna Edwards, and the unmarried Mary Trembles, all from Bideford (Devon)—were tried and executed at the Devonshire assizes in Exeter. By that date, executions for witchcraft were rare in England, so the incident aroused considerable interest, inspiring three pamphlets and a ballad.

Evidence about the alleged witchcraft demonstrated the standard English pattern of accusations launched after supposed acts of *maleficium* (harmful magic), while searching the witches revealed witches’ marks in the form of teats in their “secret parts.” All three women confessed, and their confessions demonstrated how far diabolic elements had entered popular thinking about witchcraft at this late time. Thus, Temperance Lloyd confessed on March 14, 1682 to meeting the Devil in the shape of a black man, “about the length of her arm: and that his eyes were very big” (*A True and Impartial Relation*, p. 5). On the first occasion she met him, he tempted her to harm a woman named Grace Thomas, and on the second occasion he sucked from her teats, causing her considerable pain. In a subsequent confession, taken before a clergyman named Michael Ogilvy in the following July, she told how the Devil had tempted her by promising that she would live well, how she could change herself into the shape of a cat, and how she sometimes performed witchcraft through damaging a model of a child.

The case also showed a number of interesting features. Temperance Lloyd clearly had a long, well-established reputation as a witch. She had been tried and acquitted for witchcraft in 1671, and had been interrogated for another supposed act of witchcraft before the mayor of Bideford in 1679. But her trial also demonstrated that witchcraft had by this time become something of a political issue in England. The previous few years had witnessed a sharpening political crisis between England’s nascent Whig and Tory factions, heightened by fears of a “popish plot” aimed at subverting the English constitution and the Church of England, and there were fears that renewed civil warfare might break out.

By 1682, Charles II's government began to implement a reaction that involved attempts to clamp down on opponents of the regime, especially religious dissenters. The early investigations of these witches were carried out, apparently with some enthusiasm, by local authorities in Bideford, and religio-political strife within the town might have helped form a context for the accusations and for the decision to push ahead with prosecuting these women. Certainly a letter from Lord Chief Justice Sir Francis North, who was present at the trials, suggests that their executions were politically expedient: given the tremendous popular outcry against these three women, it was felt that executing them would both demonstrate the effectiveness of the official judicial system and help preempt a larger witch hunt fueled by popular Protestantism, which the crown was anxious to contain. Another member of the North family, remembering the trial at a later date, wrote that the executions were at least partially attributable to the nervousness of the presiding judge in the face of considerable popular pressure to convict.

It should be noted that the last witch known to have been executed in England, Alice Molland, was also sentenced to death at Exeter at the March 1685 assizes. However, we know little about the circumstances of her case, except that she was accused of bewitching three people.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: ENGLAND; WITCH'S MARK.

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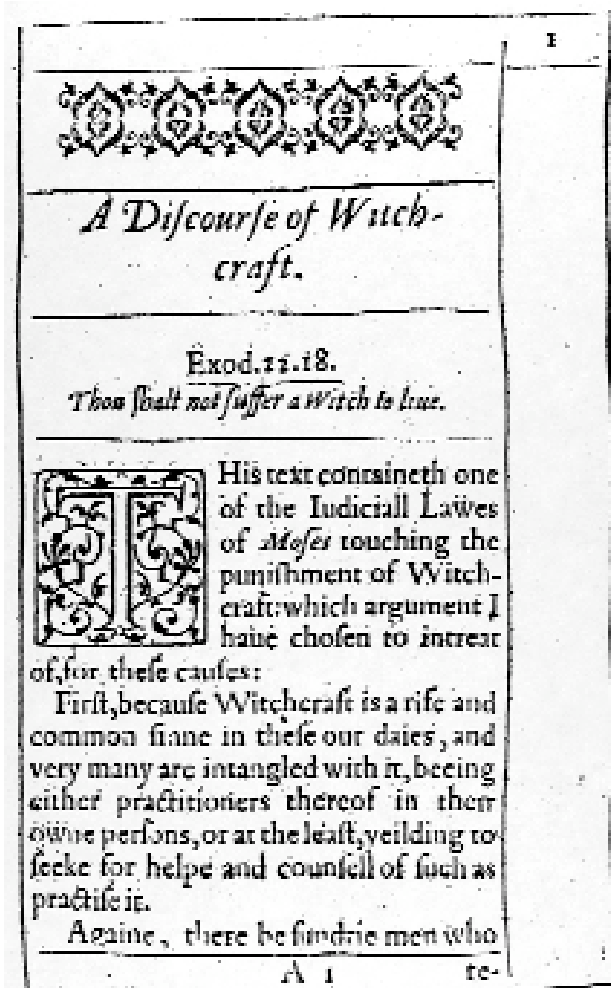
EXODUS 22:18 (22:17)

Contentious translations of this biblical verse (Exodus 22:18 in the Vulgate and in most Christian Bibles and Exodus 22:17 in the Hebrew Bible and in the Septuagint) have provided the justification in natural and divine law for the execution of witches. Translated in the long-standard King James English version of the

Bible as "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," it has frequently been quoted as offering Scriptural proof to justify death sentences in witchcraft trials. The translation has ignited many debates. The original Hebrew word is *mekascheph*, which has been generally taken to mean "poisoner." There is a degree of confluence and fluidity in the meanings of these terms, since poisoning was regarded as a separate crime but was often contingent on witchcraft or vice versa. However, there is an alternative interpretation of the word, in which it means a female who can effect change in material objects through the utterance of words. This definition corresponded more closely to the concept of a witch. In turn, this was translated as *Maleficos non patieris vivere* ("do not permit wrongdoers to live") in the Latin Vulgate. As Russell points out (1997, 32), *maleficus* (witch or wrongdoer) could also be understood as any criminal, although it came to denote a witch. *Maleficus* became the standard term for a witch, rather than other kinds of criminals, and the crime of witchcraft became known as *maleficia* (evil acts or evildoings). However, the term criminal or wrongdoer is still in evidence as a translation among sixteenth century codifiers of the law.

Divine and natural law decreed only one punishment for the *mekascheph* (poisoner/witch)—death. In gender-specific languages, the term came to be commonly translated as feminine. In German, it was considered to be gender-neutral until the so-called Luther's Bible of 1534 rendered the Exodus verse as *Die Zauberinnen soltu nicht leben lassen*, "Thou shalt not suffer a sorceress to live." In French, *La Sainte Bible* (Holy Bible) published in Lyons in 1566 similarly translated the term in a feminine gender, but added a note that it applied equally to men. Leopolda's Polish Roman Catholic Bible of 1561 renders the term in the masculine form (as in the Bible of 1577 and Wujek's Roman Catholic Bible of 1599), although Wujek's Bible also noted feminine forms in the margin. However, a 1563 Polish Protestant version, the Radziwill Bible, used the feminine form. Many experts attribute the choice of the King James Bible of 1611 to translate the word as "witch" rather than "poisoner" to the king's amply documented personal interest in witchcraft, although the choice might also have been influenced by the wording of England's relatively recent (1604) witchcraft statute.

As early as the sixteenth century, linguistic errors were pointed out. Because it was inherently dangerous to criticize the Bible's authority, criticism could only be made of the translation. The first and perhaps most famous exegesis came in 1563 when Johann Weyer disputed the translation of (pharmakeia—poisoner/sorcerer) as either "sorcerer" or the Luther Bible's German equivalent, *Zauberei*. He contended that the word *mekascheph* could also pertain to the magical



Page from George Gifford's *A Discourse of the Subtill Practises of Devilles by Witches and Sorcerers* (1587) discussing Exodus 22:18 (22:17), the primary biblical passage that justified the execution of witches in the age of witch hunting. (TopFoto.co.uk)

arts, as evinced by other Biblical passages. As the dispute continued, the scriptural foundations were analyzed more closely, especially as regards the translation of the terms *maleficia* and *veneficia* (poisoning/witchcraft). In Book 6 of Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584), the author points out that the Hebrew term is translated into Greek as **φάρμακὸν δὲκ ἐπιζώσεται** ("Do not permit a poisoner/witch to survive") and rendered in this work as *Veneficos (sive) veneficas non retinebitis in vita* ("Do not let male poisoners/sorcerers [or] female poisoners/sorcerers to remain alive"), which differs from the Vulgate. Other Biblical passages that pertain to magic or supposed witchcraft, such as Deuteronomy 18:10, 2 Chronicles 33:6, Jeremiah 27:9, Daniel 2:2, Malachi 3:5, or Acts 8 and 13, also employ different terminology in the Hebrew, Greek, and the Vulgate, thus creating further variations in commentaries. But, only the

passage in *Exodus* carried life-or-death implications for accused witches.

WANDA WYPORSKA

See also: BIBLE; ENDOR, WITCH OF; HERESY.

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EXORCISM

In Christianity, exorcism is defined as a rite employed to expel demons from objects, places, and the human body, usually consisting of prayers and blessings. Jesus performed numerous exorcisms and endowed his disciples and other believers with the capacity to exorcise in his name (Matt. 10:1, 8). As exorcism is held to be a miracle—a divine, not human, action—Jesus is the only person in Christian tradition held to have exorcised on his own authority. Early Christian proselytizers displayed their charismatic power by using exorcism in the conversion of pagans. Saints' relics have been used on or in the presence of the possessed, to confront demons. Exorcism became highly contentious in early modern Europe, amid hostility between Catholicism and the new Christian churches. It was used for successful propaganda, but fear of diabolical conjuring and the possibility of fraud also made the rite an object of suspicion and ridicule. For believers, exorcism can display visibly an individual's power over evil, and the rite still features significantly in the militant revivalist churches of the modern world.

THE AIMS AND MEANS OF EXORCISM

While common use of the word *exorcism* suggests merely expulsion of demons from the body, the word itself derives from the Greek word for adjuration, or placing on oath. In this sense, exorcism functions as a calling to account, most often expressed in the requirement that the Devil reveal his name, and identify the things that vex him most to make exorcism (as expulsion) easier for the exorcist. In practice, this ambiguity has at times become a *carte blanche* to override the aim of expulsion, leading to intense dialogues between exorcists and demons, or worse (from the point of view of skeptical observers) demonic monologues. Given this tension between exorcism as adjuration and exorcism as expulsion, the signs of successful exorcism have historically been bewilderingly imperfect. For while exorcisms are intended to represent the imposition of order on inherently disorderly demons, the conduct of exorcisms has often featured a marked degree of spontaneity and inventiveness, due to the mischief of the alleged demons, but also in order to serve the purposes of

proselytism. The risk in such behavior is that exorcists may be accused of mere conjuration, or witchcraft. Indeed, Jesus was accused of conjuring demons by the power of Beelzebub, prince of demons (Matt. 12:24, 27).

Devils are held to be spiritual entities; but in Christian belief, God can give devils permission to affect the material world, spreading their malice in a variety of ways. In Catholic tradition a wide array of protective rituals against lesser or potential diabolical incursions have long served as cornerstones of devotional and daily life, and are sometimes called minor exorcisms. Exorcism of the possessed, with which we are primarily concerned here, is called major exorcism. The most common exorcism of human beings, however, is that effected in the rite of Christian baptism. In this case, the catechumen is not held literally to be possessed, except to the extent that s/he is tainted by original sin. In the Reformation, Lutherans tended to adhere to some kind of baptismal exorcism, while Calvinists rejected it.

Catholic exorcism, like other so-called sacramentals, differs profoundly from the sacraments, which are held to be efficacious, regardless of the moral state of the person performing them. By contrast, the likelihood of success in exorcism has historically been understood as enhanced by the purity of the person performing the rite. And while members of the clergy tend to be the ones to perform exorcism, lay persons—even women and children—can in theory exorcise, should God reward their devotion by expelling a possessing demon. Even the collective prayers of the faithful may move God to perform this miracle. Since at least the third century, Catholic exorcists have been obliged to seek dispensation from a bishop to exorcise, the aim being to prevent cults developing around individual exorcists. The Catholic order of exorcist was until 1972 a minor order, second in the seven stages of ordination.

Many official forms of Christian exorcism of the possessed—such as prayer and fasting, and the laying on of hands—derive from biblical healing methods. In the Catholic case, cumulative accounts from canonical texts have historically encouraged a proliferation of licit exorcist techniques. Catholic ritual formulae for exorcism might entail the recitation of psalms and other holy writings, notably the Gospel of St. John, repeated signing with the crucifix and exhortation of the Devil to leave the body of the possessed. Breathing on the possessed, also found in the baptism ritual, is also sometimes used, and is intended to represent the Holy Spirit entering the possessed. The direct touching of the body of the possessed with church vestments, the Host or other relics has also featured historically, though not without controversy. Early modern exorcism manuals also considered the question of using violence against possessing demons, some authors being more attentive

than others to the human body through whom the devils were to be attacked.

The signs of apparently successful exorcism can vary greatly, and there is an undercurrent of uncertainty in exorcism that is theologically impossible to circumvent. Some examples of signs taken to indicate successful exorcism (as expulsion) include writhing followed by a calm or even comatose state and emetic exorcisms, with success seen in the spewing up of objects, or the emission of a foul odor, followed by a change in the state of the possessed. An oblique form of exorcism, attained through the exposure of magic charms, and which loosened the hold of a witch's spell, was common in the early modern period.

EXORCISM IN THE EARLY MODERN ERA

Because exorcism can be seen as a form of conjuration, it became controversial in the era of the Reformation. Late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Catholic authors, such as Martin de Castañega, Pedro Ciruelo, Desiderius Erasmus, and Heinrich Kramer (author of the *Malleus Maleficarum* [The Hammer of Witches, 1486]), saw exorcism as a mixed blessing for Catholicism, if not a downright embarrassment. Exorcism was linked to illicit magic, and exorcists were criticized for their reliance on externals, such as incantations and ritual objects. Critics also objected to exorcists cultivating personal reputations as healers, when theologically their power was null without divine action. The Protestant and Reformed churches took these critiques further, disparaging exorcism as papist magic. Biblical precedent nonetheless gave the rite an incontestable pedigree, and rather than advocating its abolition, reformers insisted on greater adherence to biblical forms. Biblical eschatology also played a major role in the interpretation of possession and exorcism by clerics of all confessions, who saw exorcism as both a literal and metaphorical enactment of humanity's battle with the Antichrist.

For Catholicism, conflict with the new Christian churches both intensified anxieties about exorcism, and gave rise to a boom in its use. While some priests pursued the pre-Reformation critique of exorcism as a form of magic, others performed public exorcisms to display to heretics the miracle-working power of the Catholic Church's priesthood and devotional paraphernalia. The possessed, many of them young women, performed as demons, responding to the force of exorcism by proclaiming the power of the Church. Indeed, a veritable epidemic of exorcism took place across Catholic Europe, as the rite was used to make conversions in times of confessional tension. A reliance on the material and magical aspects of Catholicism left exorcists and the possessed open to derision, however, and many accounts show skeptical onlookers testing the possessed

by using fake holy objects and waiting to fool the demon into a violent reaction. Such tests could be a public relations disaster for militant Catholics. Critics of church magic were able to undermine almost entirely the notion of divine power acting through ritual objects, when, for example, it was shown that holy water and ordinary water were readily interchangeable.

A new literature of Catholic exorcism manuals thus appeared across western Europe, designed to counterbalance skepticism by providing strict guidelines for the use of exorcism, rather than abandonment of the rite. Works by authors such as Girolamo Menghi, Valerio Polidoro, Pietro Thyraeus, and the new papal *Rituale Romanum* (Roman Ritual) of 1614, instructed clerics in how to identify the presence of devils, and showed how to fight them with legitimate spiritual weapons. While seeking to curb the perceived excesses of solo cult exorcists, the successful dissemination of new works seems to have contributed, paradoxically, to an increased use of the rite. This enhanced capacity among clerics was reinforced by an apparent rise in consumer demand from parishioners responding to official critiques of their homegrown superstitious remedies.

Most tragically, the early modern era saw a conjunction between the use of Christian exorcism to interrogate demons and an active belief in the evils of witchcraft. The resulting prosecution of alleged witches, effectively on the basis of demonic evidence, was highly controversial. Several cases in France, such as the execution of the priests Louis Gaufridy (d. 1611) and Urbain Grandier (d. 1634), saw theological battles arise over the limits of exorcism. Even those who believed strongly in the virtues of exorcism, such as the French theologian André Duval, objected to its use for the purposes of prosecuting witches.

EXORCISM IN PERSPECTIVE

The spirituality and altruism of the Christian message have often been at odds with militant, physical forms of proselytism—a tension underpinned by belief in the possibility of spirit acting in matter. Exorcism focuses these issues for Christians, as it has often been associated with an uncompromising religiosity, capable of underscoring the difference between God and his malicious adversary Satan through a visible battle in a human body. Accompanying this zeal has been a frequent perception among exorcists that the body of the possessed (often a woman) is no longer human, but totally in the sway of devils. Historically, this has sometimes led to the use of violence in exorcism, a situation exacerbated since the late twentieth century, as exorcism has become a favored medium among evangelical Christian groups (and among some non-Christians), who see the power to exorcise as the mark of a particular holiness. In several cases, death and injury have

resulted from extreme exorcist practices among these groups. More moderate, intellectualist versions of Christianity tend to be reflected in the often skeptical attitudes articulated by modern mainstream churches. Nonetheless, tensions as to the legitimacy of the rite still exist at the very top echelons of Catholicism, and this is unsurprising, given its history. In 2000, the Church's senior exorcist, Father Gabriel Amorth, asserted that John-Paul II had performed an exorcism on a young woman in St Peter's Square, but the Vatican instantly denied the claim.

SARAH FERBER

See also: AIX-EN-PROVENCE NUNS; CIRUELO, PEDRO; DARRELL, JOHN; DEMONS; DEVIL; DUVAL, ANDRÉ; ERASMUS, DESIDERIUS; JESUS; LOUDUN NUNS; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MENGHI, GIROLAMO; MILLENARIANISM; OBRY, NICOLE; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; SACRAMENTS AND SACRAMENTALS.

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EXPERIMENTS AND TESTS

Testing and experimentation were essential to discussions of witchcraft in early modern Europe and America. Because witchcraft was defined as a crime,

rules of evidence and judicial procedure were necessary to evaluate the truthfulness of accusations. Confessions and testimony by witnesses were vital for obtaining convictions, at least in Roman law. Both, however, could be unreliable: confession could be contaminated by dementia or fear of torture, testimony by envy or revenge. So the need for more trustworthy evidence was often felt.

Two tests for witchcraft had a long history: the swimming test and the Devil's mark. Swimming was related to a long tradition of judicial ordeals, ceremonies in which the defendant's (and often the accuser's) ability or inability to perform a task was interpreted as God's signal, revealing guilt or innocence. Before witchcraft mythology was consolidated, swimming had been used to test heretics, on the theory that water, the physical element of baptism, would "accept" innocent defendants and "reject" guilty ones. (Paradoxically, this notion placed the innocent at risk of drowning, because defendants' hands and feet were bound.)

Conversely, the Devil's mark was interpreted as a sign from Satan, a cryptic signature on the body of his human intimates, confirming his pact with them. Judicial authorities and witch finders intent on proof devised tests for discovering Satan's signatures on witches' bodies. Historically, these marks were related to the idea of the pact as a text; Caesarius of Heisterbach told (ca. 1225) of heretics who could not be burned until the Devil revealed that each heretic had sewn a copy of the pact under the skin of his armpit; the story was repeated in *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) (Stephens 2002, 406n.). Conceptually, marks were the contrary both of stigmata, like those that saints received from Christ, and the *character*, an invisible but literal sign left on the human soul by baptism, confirmation, and ordination into the priesthood. Applied only in England and dating from 1566, the test for the witch's mark, a teat or some sort of protuberance on bodies of witches that their familiars or imps (guardian demons) fed on, also proved to be evidence of the pact with the Devil.

EXPERIMENTS

Tests like swimming or pricking were practiced to decide juridical questions of guilt or innocence, although they depended on theoretical and theological presuppositions. Occasionally, actual experiments were undertaken to determine the objective reality of hypothetical interactions between humans and demons. While they might be invoked as judicial proof, their intent was primarily philosophical or scientific. Experimenters commonly tested the reality of witches' crimes by attempting to witness the moment when a demon would arrive in some physical form to interact with a defendant.

These experiments have a paradoxical history. They were not originally intended as proof of human-demon

interaction; the earliest recorded anecdotes (early 1400s) seem intended to disprove the possibility. They concern women who claimed to experience flying and orgiastic banqueting after anointing themselves with herbal unguents. Alonso Tostado (d. 1455) told of a woman who challenged her neighbors to a test because they refused to believe her stories of flying and feasting. By severely beating and burning her while she was unconscious, the neighbors convinced her that the experience was a dream. Johannes Nider (d. 1438) told a similar story in which a Dominican inquisitor witnessed a woman's failure and rebuked her for foolishness.

In these early stories, the experimental initiative came from the woman, not from her opponents; she was accused of delusion, not *maleficium* (harmful magic). Tostado never mentioned demons, while Nider implied that the woman was ignorant of interacting with a demon. Both authors agreed with the *Canon Episcopi* that such women were delusional, but modified it by attributing women's nocturnal illusions to hallucinogenic unguents. Tostado identified and analyzed anesthesia, calling it a natural force derived from certain plants. Paradoxically, both authors were early theorists of witchcraft. Tostado supported the concept of witches' physical transvection or flying; Nider asserted corporeal, face-to-face relations between witches and demons (Stephens 2002, 146–159).

Later theorists of witchcraft told similar stories but clearly regretted that experiments never confirmed demonic presence and the reality of witchcraft. In 1523, Bartolomeo della Spina told how a minor prince persuaded an inquisitor to perform an experiment witnessed by courtiers. A convicted witch was forced to anoint herself while everyone watched. They observed only the witch's nap. The prince and courtiers left convinced that witchcraft was a delusion, that inquisitors persecuted old women for imaginary crimes. Spina rebutted that the experiment demonstrated the presence of two devils, rather than none: one carried the woman away invisibly, the other counterfeited her sleeping form. God allowed this deceit to punish the nobles' presumptuous curiosity and the inquisitor's sinful acquiescence (Stephens 2002, 159–162).

To assert that witchcraft experiments sometimes worked, writers sought second hand empirical evidence. Witches were forced to confess anointing their naked bodies and being carried by demons on brooms, pitchforks, and so forth. Witnesses allegedly observed witches anoint themselves and fly away, then repeated the feat themselves, while remaining innocent of witchcraft or demonic pacts; the venerable tale of Lucius and Pamphile in Apuleius's *Metamorphoses* or *Golden Ass* (second century C.E.) was sometimes cited as historical evidence of this possibility. Silvestro Prierias (d. ca. 1527) claimed inquisitors commanded

children of eight to twelve years to dance “as they do at the Sabbat,” interpreting their “unnatural” movements as evidence of supernatural—that is, demonic—instruction (Stephens 2002, 166).

Subsequent experiments with ointments continued to support nondemonic pharmacological explanations. Johann Weyer repeated stories recorded by Giambattista Della Porta and Girolamo Cardano to oppose the idea of physical interaction between witches and devils. Della Porta tells one story closely resembling those of Tostado and Nider, assuming as obvious that it describes psychopharmaceutical hallucinations, not demonic encounters. Similar stories were repeated far into the eighteenth century. Ludovico Antonio Muratori told of an experiment from the early 1700s performed on confessed witches who had not used the ointment and were proved melancholic (Muratori 1995, 101–102). Girolamo Tartarotti repeated the standard anecdotes and referred his readers to “very many others.” Quoting Tostado’s experiment verbatim, he paired it with a late seventeenth-century case proving the same point through more elaborate procedures. A judge experimented on a woman accused of *maleficium* who believed that she flew to Sabbats at the great walnut tree of Benevento. The injuries she suffered refuted her claims while providing a milder punishment than execution for her “evil intentions.” But Tartarotti exposed the moralistic pretense, saying the judge also satisfied his own curiosity. Although witches’ Sabbat experiences were illusory, Tartarotti affirmed that Satan ordered witches to use hallucinogens, and defended the Devil’s reality (Tartarotti 1745, 108–109, 141–148).

The most extensive and renowned experiments on witchcraft phenomena were arranged by the skeptical Spanish inquisitor Alonso de Salazar, who helped end an epidemic of witch burnings in 1610. Yet repeated failure of witchcraft experiments probably convinced only observers whose will to believe in witchcraft was already weakened. Witchcraft proponents argued that absence of confirmation was not confirmation of absence.

Treatises were not the only source of speculation about experimentation. Sometimes trial transcripts show prosecutors performing tests on accused witches and demanding feats of them that sound suspiciously like experiments to determine the presence of devils (Stephens 2002, 104–105).

Attempts to verify demonic intervention empirically predated the early experiments mentioned by Nider and Tostado. Caesarius of Heisterbach recorded necromantic experiments with stated purposes to verify demonic reality. Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) had already proposed possession and necromancy as proof that demons were not imaginary (Stephens 2002, 323–324). Benvenuto Cellini left a vivid account of his

own experiments in necromancy at Rome in 1523. Christopher Marlowe’s *Dr. Faustus* (1604, 1616) experimented with necromancy to determine the reality of demonic interventions (including succubi), hell, and human immortality.

Numerous discussions of demonic possession and exorcism from 1400–1700 suggest that tests of possessed persons often served experimental motivations more than therapeutic ends. In *Malleus Maleficarum*, Heinrich Kramer recorded his systematic experiment on a possessed priest to verify the presence of a demon, bequeathing a causal connection between *maleficium* and possession to later witchcraft theorists (Stephens 2002, 322–356). Treatises such as Girolamo Menghi’s *Compendio dell’arte essorcista* (Compendium of the Exorcist’s Art, 1576) reveal endemic doubt and systematic experimentation. But once again, as with *maleficium*, experimental demonstrations of fraud in particular cases of possession could not invalidate the concept.

WALTER STEPHENS

See also: APULEIUS OF MADAURA; AQUINAS, THOMAS; BENEVENTO, WALNUT TREE OF; CARDANO, GIROLAMO; CONFESSIONS; DELLA PORTA, GIAMBATTISTA; DEMONS; DEVIL’S MARK; DRUGS AND HALLUCINOGENS; EVIDENCE; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MENGHI, GIROLAMO; MURATORI, LUDOVICO ANTONIO; NIDER, JOHANNES; OINTMENTS; PRICKING OF SUSPECTED WITCHES; PRIERIAS, SILVESTRO; SALAZAR FRÍAS, ALONSO DE; SPINA, BARTOLOMEO; SWIMMING TEST; TARTAROTTI, GIROLAMO; TOSTADO, ALONSO; WEYER, JOHANN; WITCH’S MARK.

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EYMERIC, NICOLAS (CA. 1320–1399)

Eymeric was known for his massive handbook for inquisitors of 1376, the *Directorium Inquisitorum* (Directory of Inquisitors). Born at Gerona in Catalonia, Eymeric entered the Dominican order in 1334, studying theology, philosophy, and canon law. He taught and preached at Barcelona by 1351. He became vicar of the Dominican province of Aragon in 1361 and inquisitor general of Aragon from 1357 to 1360 and again from 1365 to 1375. His zeal as an inquisitor often stirred up considerable resistance. In 1375, he was imprisoned and then exiled from Aragon

by King Pedro IV. Eymeric became Inquisitor General of Aragon once more, from 1387 to 1392, but was again exiled by King Juan I. Eymeric retired to Gerona in 1397, where he died two years later.

Eymeric wrote theological tracts, commentaries on Scripture, and many polemical attacks against both individuals (including Raymond Lull, Arnald of Villanova, and even St. Vincent Ferrer) and devotional movements. However, his most important work was the *Directorium*. It became the most widely used work of its kind, printed with extensive commentary by Francisco Peña in 1578, several times augmented and reprinted, and extremely influential until well into the seventeenth century. Eymeric's discussion of sorcery in the work is the most extensive of any of the early inquisitorial handbooks, far more detailed, for example, than in the better-known handbook by Bernard Gui, written in 1323/1324.

Eymeric's *Directorium Inquisitorum* was the fruit of many years of extensive theological study and practical experience as an inquisitor. He composed it toward the end of the fourteenth century, after a number of popes, kings, theologians, canon lawyers, and inquisitors had written extensively about the nature of diabolical sorcery and the jurisdiction over it of various tribunals, including those of the inquisitors of heretical depravity. Early in the century, a number of trials involving diabolical sorcery in one form or another, often in political contexts, had taken place. In the best known of these, that of the Order of the Knights Templar in the first and second decades of the century, many similar charges were made. During the long papal residence at Avignon from 1305 to 1378, a number of popes had also expressed increasing concerns about diabolical sorcery, particularly John XXII. Eymeric had written a short treatise on the subject of sorcery around 1359, which he may have reworked for the relevant part of the *Directorium*.

Eymeric's discussion of diabolical sorcery occurs in part II of the *Directorium*, questions 42 and 43. Question 42 deals with the jurisdiction over diviners and magicians by the inquisitors of heretical depravity, a question that had been hotly debated since the late thirteenth century. Eymeric distinguishes a kind of natural and nonheretical kind of divination—his example is palmistry—from the kinds of divination and magic that he thought required formal abjuration of Christian baptism (apostasy) and ritualized submission to demons (idolatry). Therefore, such activities fell well

within the jurisdiction of inquisitors of heretical depravity. In the forty-third question, Eymeric argues that the second kind of diviners and magicians paid *latría* to demons, the kind of honor that was appropriate only for God, as well as a lesser kind of veneration, *dulia*, that was appropriate only for the angels, saints, popes, and kings.

Eymeric goes on to describe the horrific rituals and practices that the demons require their servants to perform, the reasons these qualify as heresy, and allows for the possibility of abjuration, but also envisages the death penalty for those who either refuse to abjure or relapse into diabolical sorcery after they have abjured. He then cites a long list of authorities, including Scripture, St. Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Pope Innocent V, the *Canon Episcopi*, and several more recent papal decretals.

The significance of Eymeric's discussion of diabolical sorcery lies in his insistent linking of it with traditional and recently articulated ideas concerning the nature of heresy and its prosecution, as well as his categorization of both heresy and diabolical sorcery as forms of apostasy and idolatry, and therefore violations of the First Commandment and the greatest of sins. The extraordinarily wide circulation of the *Directorium* testifies to its wide appeal. As it circulated, Eymeric's ideas about diabolical sorcery circulated with it.

EDWARD PETERS

See also: AUGUSTINE, ST.; BAPHOMET; DIABOLISM; DIVINATION; DOMINICAN ORDER; GUI, BERNARD; HERESY; IDOLATRY; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; JOHN XXII, POPE; KYTELER, ALICE; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PAPACY AND PAPAL BULLS; PEÑA, FRANCISCO; TEMPLARS.

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FAIRFAX, EDWARD (D. 1635)

Known for his account of his daughter's bewitchment, Edward Fairfax was a member of one of the most powerful gentry families in Yorkshire. He married the sister of a leading government administrator in the north, lived at Fewston in West Yorkshire, and fathered four daughters (one of whom died shortly after birth) and four sons. He was a learned man, best known for his translation of Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* (Jerusalem Liberated), published in 1600.

Fairfax's connection with the history of witchcraft began on October 28, 1621, when his eldest daughter, Helen, then aged sixteen, fell into a trance in the family parlor for several hours. When she awoke, she claimed that she had been in the church of the nearby town of Leeds, hearing a sermon by the vicar, Alexander Cooke (the family had previously lived in Leeds: Cooke was a very forceful preacher, who also published a number of tracts against popish recusants). She continued to fall into trances and described visions when she emerged from them, behavior that gradually led her parents to believe that she was bewitched.

Her younger sister, Elizabeth, began to demonstrate similar symptoms, and eventually suspicions focused on six local women who were thought to be afflicting the Fairfax girls and another girl from Fewston, Maud Jeffray. Fairfax's account of his daughters' afflictions contributed to a body of narratives about the bewitchment of children and adolescents in English gentry households, which began with the Warboys affair. The visions that Helen Fairfax reported provide fascinating insights into the ways in which a devout young woman of the period envisaged God, the Devil, and witches. Helen frequently suffered afflictions imposed on her by specters of the women who were tormenting her, and her discourse shows obvious familiarity with contemporary witchcraft lore, especially that associated with familiars. The six women were eventually tried for witchcraft at York assizes in 1623, but were acquitted.

Fairfax recorded his daughters' sufferings in a lengthy narrative that has never received a full-scale modern study, although several manuscript copies of it circulated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. His account of his daughters' afflictions provides remarkable insights into an educated, and sincerely Protestant,

gentleman's reactions when his child was thought to be bewitched, and records the kind of sufferings and visions that a supposedly bewitched young woman from a godly background might experience. Fairfax also makes a number of comments about witches and witchcraft in his home region, which is relatively badly documented for witchcraft history. When his daughters were bewitched, he considered going to cunning men or using countermagic, such as scratching, but rejected these means as ungodly, and decided to resort to prayers and fasting, the theologically correct remedy. His narrative also shows that he was aware of classical references to witchcraft, and a number of recent cases.

The women suspected of bewitching Helen and Elizabeth were acquitted after trial, perhaps a surprise given Fairfax's family connections. Fairfax's account of their trial provides useful insights into the way English witchcraft trials were operating by the 1620s, and the degree of caution, verging on skepticism, with which the authorities were treating witchcraft by that time. Fairfax stressed how opinion in Fewston, including that of the vicar, was opposed to his attempt to prosecute his daughters' tormentors for witchcraft, while he was also surprised and offended by the attitude of the local justices of the peace and the assize judges when the six women suspects came to trial.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: BEWITCHMENT; CHILDREN; COUNTERMAGIC; CUNNING
FOLK; ENGLAND; FAMILIARS; WARBOYS WITCHES.

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FAIRIES

During the period of witchcraft prosecutions, many suspected witches throughout Europe claimed under interrogation to possess supernatural powers after their encounters with fairies. No modern scholar has undertaken a full study of this question throughout Europe. Partial studies ranging from classical Greece and Rome

to the British Isles, Sicily, the Alps, and eastern Europe, especially Hungary, suggest a Europe-wide series of conceptually related beliefs—though with considerable regional and local variations. Broadly, what is shared is a belief in fairies as a particular class of dead persons, or more accurately as a possible destination for the bodies and spirits of some of the dead. In particular, those who had died before their allotted span—murder victims, soldiers who died in battle, and women and babies who died in or shortly after childbirth—were likely to return as fairies. Feelings about these beings were ambivalent. Sometimes they were thought to protect their communities against darker supernatural powers, and sometimes to behave like fearsome vampires or revenants, preying on their neighbors and kin. Mortals could gain power over, or from, fairies most commonly either by giving them a baby or by having sex with them, but sometimes by temporarily becoming one of them, a process which often involved joining an airborne fairy ride. Those thus favored by the fairies received some or all of the characteristic supernatural powers of cunning folk: healing powers, the ability to find lost objects and buried treasure, and the ability to prognosticate. Others

regarded these powers, and their fairy donors, as simultaneously useful and dangerous in the community.

The fairies were—alarmingly, in the patriarchal cultures of early modern Europe—a matriarchy, and praise of Elizabeth I of England as “the fairy queen” acknowledges the exceptionality of this form of government. Moreover, the queen of the fairies was overtly sexual, often abducting young men for her sexual delight. More pertinent to women storytellers was her appetite for babies; rationalized later by folklorists as due to her own inability to bear children. The primal hunger for an infant spoke deeply to maternal feelings and ambivalence in women. This was especially true of the belief in changelings, the idea that the fairies stole a mortal child and left a fairy child in its place. Stories add that it was possible to get one’s own child back by making the changeling suffer, for example by burning it over a fire or by abandoning it in woodland for hours at a time. Such things may never have been practiced, but such stories, perhaps offering a popular explanation for Down’s syndrome children, express otherwise unspeakable rages and loathings of some mothers toward some children.



A fairy procession. Europeans believed that fairies comprised the dead who had returned to life, could be either benevolent or malevolent, and often gave powers to witches. (Images.com/Corbis)

When told by women, stories about fairies seem less a matter of wish-fulfillment than of fear of breaking the bounds set for them by society. It seems clear that under interrogation and during trials, cunning women often told the same story about their encounters with fairies that they had been using to explain their powers to clients. Like all magical healers, suspected fairy witches were often among the first to be accused during an outbreak of local prosecution. It may be that the English familiar, so puzzlingly alien to continental demonology, is a form of household fairy, or hob; several accused witches speak of their familiar as if it were a brownie, and a few speak of feeding them on milk, as brownies were fed. If so, it may be that fairy beliefs—or, given the fact of frequent prosecution, the failure of fairy beliefs—lie behind many more witchcraft trials than have so far been studied. More extensive studies of relations between folklore and witch beliefs are needed.

Fairy beliefs of the kind described above were gradually but patchily displaced by the creation of literary fairies—tiny, morally good or neutral, and comely, with minimal supernatural powers—in which few people ever truly believe. These figures were introduced by Shakespeare and promulgated by his contemporary Michael Drayton, and they later became key aspects of social satire. Yet even a late version of fairy beliefs like James Barrie's *Peter Pan* retains some of the folkloric sense of fairies' ambiguity, power, and connection with death. Even the faked fairies of Cottingley retain a connection with death through the spiritualist rhetoric used to describe them. (The Cottingley fairies, made out of shapes traced from a children's book, cut out of cardboard, and stuck on hatpins, then photographed by two teenage girls, were hailed as genuine by Arthur Conan Doyle and the Theosophical Society in 1922; they were welcomed by those who had recently lost family members in the Great War and were in search of reassurance; many other fairy sightings followed, and many people have written to me to say that they have really seen one.) Despite this, the modern fairy is anodyne and one-dimensional in comparison with her more complex ancestors.

DIANE PURKISS

See also: CUNNING FOLK; DEMONS; FAMILIARS; FOLKLORE; GHOSTS; HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, MAGIC; HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, WITCHCRAFT; MOTHERHOOD; REVENANTS; SCOTLAND; VAMPIRE.

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FAMILIARS

The familiar spirit was a private, and in many instances domesticated, demon usually taking an animal form, that a witch would keep to aid her in acts of *maleficium* (harmful magic). Future research may modify this assertion; but it now seems that the familiar, in its fully developed form, was very much particular to English witchcraft. Familiars seem to have been an integral part of Basque witchcraft beliefs, where toads played a part, but they seem less important than the familiar in England—and toads, unlike most British familiars, secreted real poison. Similarly, anthropologists occasionally report something like familiars among the witchcraft beliefs of the peoples they study, but these too generally seem less elaborate than the ideas about familiars current in early modern England.

However, the concept of the familiar in early modern English witchcraft has not been given thorough analysis, although both trial records and pamphlets about trials contain a wealth of detail, sometimes contradictory, about them. The concept already appears in the first English witchcraft-trial pamphlet, describing the trial of three Essex women in 1566. According to the pamphlet, one of them, Elizabeth Francis, confessed that she had learned witchcraft at age twelve from her grandmother, who made her renounce God and gave her a familiar, named "Sathan," in the shape of a cat. Here we have an indication of one possible function of familiars in English witch beliefs: although the demonic pact took a long time to enter English popular thinking about witchcraft, a familiar named "Satan" was clearly diabolical and functioned as a substitute for the Devil. This cat was reportedly fed bread and milk and kept in a basket. The cat could speak and was sent by Francis to perform acts of *maleficium*.

Another important element was present in this early pamphlet. Whenever the cat did anything for Elizabeth Francis, it required a drop of blood, which the witch provided by pricking herself. This notion developed fairly quickly into the idea that the familiar sucked blood from a witch's extra teat, the English version of the witch's mark. By the early seventeenth century, it was generally accepted that the mark would be on the witch's genitals or on her anus, thus adding a sexual dimension to the relationship between the female witch



A witch feeding her "familiaris" (imps), domesticated demons common to English witchcraft. Imps appeared as small animals or fantastical creatures. (Fortean Picture Library)

and her familiar. This functioned as a pornographic transference for the direct sexual intercourse with the Devil that characterized continental witchcraft.

Throughout the period of witchcraft trials in England (and long afterwards), familiars remained central to English witchcraft beliefs. The forms they took varied: they might be any simple animal. By the time of the Matthew Hopkins trials of 1645, familiars assumed a variety of shapes, sometimes taking on grotesque hybrid forms. Their names ranged from the very familiar to the totally fanciful. The way in which familiars were acquired also varied. Sometimes familiars were passed on by a relative, as with Elizabeth Francis in 1566, or were gifts from another witch.

There is also some possibility of regional variations in the strength of belief in the familiar. In this period, familiar spirits are mentioned most frequently in East Anglia and Essex, but apparently less often in such northern counties as Lancashire or Yorkshire. The witch's teat became central to "proving" that a woman was a witch, and hence, the role of the familiar became more important. These developments were almost certainly strengthened by the English 1604 witchcraft statute. Like its Elizabethan predecessor, it made invocation or conjuration of an evil spirit punishable by death, but added the death penalty for those who dared to "employ, feed or reward any evil and wicked spirit to

or for any intent or purpose." This addition was clearly directed at the keeping and using of familiars. Subsequently, women were occasionally indicted simply for keeping familiars, even without performing acts of *maleficium*.

Conversely, the familiar played a role similar to that of the Devil in tempting a woman to repudiate her god and serve the Devil; indeed, some confessing witches scarcely differentiated between the Devil and their animal familiar. A good example of this, also from a trial pamphlet, is provided by Elizabeth Sawyer, "The Witch of Edmonton," executed in 1621. In this case, the Devil first came to Elizabeth in the shape of a dog when she was cursing, swearing, and blaspheming. The dog assured her that he would help her revenge herself upon her enemies whenever she asked, in return for which he took her soul and her body. Sawyer sealed the bargain by allowing him to suck her blood a little above her "fundament," a continuation of this process resulting in the forming of a teat. She called the dog-devil "Tom," and would stroke its back, which made him wag his tail.

The familiar was thus a central element in English witch beliefs. At present, however, it is very uncertain where this concept, apparently well developed by 1566 but rarely mentioned in earlier English witchcraft cases, originated, and why it assumed such importance in

England but nowhere else. Some possible clues are provided by another 1566 pamphlet, describing the examination of a man named John Walsh before the episcopal court of Exeter. Walsh described how he had learned magical arts and acquired magical books from his previous master, a priest named Robert Drayton. He said that he also inherited a familiar from his master, which visited him in various animal forms, and sometimes as a man with cloven feet. When first given it by Drayton, Walsh gave the familiar a drop of his blood; but he usually rewarded it for services rendered (normally finding stolen goods) by feeding it a chicken or other live animal. He also told how to use toad familiars to help work magic. Walsh also claimed to be in touch with the fairies, and it seems obvious from some other early descriptions of familiars that there was an overlap in the popular consciousness between such creatures and familiars. Walsh, moreover, told how he would raise his master's familiar spirits by using spells that his master had taught him. Here we may have another clue to the origins of the concept. Were the familiars, so firmly lodged in popular beliefs, the folklorized equivalents of the spirits that necromancers like Drayton had been trying to raise for several centuries? More generally, writers from classical antiquity onward had imagined beings that were half animal and half demon, and it is possible that this tradition, emphasizing the reality of such beings, had entered folklore.

Belief in familiars remained a central aspect of witchcraft beliefs in England long after the end of the witchcraft trials. When folklorists began their investigations in the nineteenth century, they found that familiars, most frequently in the form of white mice, figured prominently in ideas about witchcraft. Now usually described as *imps* (or *niggets* in Essex), familiars were still thought to be passed on from one generation to another, as in 1566. Connected beliefs held that a witch lost her power if her imps were killed, and that a witch could not die until she found a relative who would take her imps. These beliefs, interestingly, were strongest in the eastern counties. There was an associated belief that witches kept toads, who performed many of the functions of the familiar, in the west country. In the north, folklorists found very little evidence of familiars, although in that region the beliefs in shape-changing among witches were stronger, establishing another facet of the witch's interface with the animal world. Thus the familiar, a concept with origins that remain so elusive, retained a central place in English witchcraft until the early twentieth century. The modern worldwide popular notion that the witch habitually keeps a pet cat is a remnant of this notion.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: ANIMALS; ANIMISTIC AND MAGICAL THINKING; BASQUE COUNTRY; BLOOD; CATS; DEVIL; DOGS; ENGLAND; FAIRIES;

FOLKLORE; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; METAMORPHOSIS; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC; TOADS; WITCH'S MARK.

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FAMILY

Family units, primarily in the nuclear household, then secondarily among extended kin, formed the basic structure of European society, so the family naturally played a vital if ambiguous role in witchcraft beliefs and practices. The classic misfortunes attributed to witches struck against families, most notably their children and their animals. It was therefore natural for suspicions to form at this level, before gossip spread into the wider community, and for family members to join together in action against the witch.

At the same time, there was a marked tendency for whole families to become suspect, which probably increased once persecution became endemic in specific localities. A significant number of accusations against men, in particular, can be seen as extensions of the reputation that first attached to their wives. Once a close relative, and especially a parent, had been executed, all family members could expect to have this remembered against them, and cited as if it amounted to a presumption of guilt.

In most of Europe it was normal to confiscate the property of a condemned witch, so children might also be reduced to extreme poverty. Unsurprisingly, many of the condemned seem to have left their native communities, although their dangerous reputations accompanied them to their new addresses. There appears to have been a notion of witchcraft as a craft that was learned, with parents corrupting their children, often under heavy pressure from the Devil. Children were allegedly taken to the Sabbath for initiation, a notion that helped to set up the pattern of denunciation by child witches found in some notable panics. There are numerous less spectacular instances where children told fanciful stories or claimed magical powers in such a fashion that they brought their parents under suspicion.

Families normally provided a considerable degree of protection for their members. Husbands are often recorded as threatening or conciliating those they feared might accuse their wives, or seeking damages from them for slander. Mothers often intervened to defend their children against other children or adults in

ways that led to lasting animosities or became the basis for witchcraft charges if illness or death followed a confrontation. Groups of village children also became the mouthpieces of local gossip, publically voicing suspicions their elders only expressed privately, and taunting others with the reputations of their parents. At a more mundane level, the elderly were expected to receive support from their children and kin rather than go begging. The vulnerability of older women to witchcraft charges clearly related to the fact that many became widows, and a significant proportion of these had no surviving children. Potential accusers would have been well aware of the ill will relatives of the convicted might feel toward them; they may also have been conscious that countercharges could be made against members of their own families. Reputations stretching back many years might therefore become far more dangerous once individuals had become both isolated and dependent on aid from the community. Such people occasionally seem to have played on the fears they aroused to extract more support from their neighbors, following a very high-risk strategy.

Tensions both within and between families are often perceptible from the legal records. A striking example can be found in the famous Salem Village episode, where family rivalries helped structure a complex pattern of accusations. There are German cases where envious younger men attacked leading male members of village communities by charging their wives with witchcraft. Discord between spouses could be blamed on witchcraft by third parties, although in extreme cases it might lead to direct accusations. Both the popular and the ecclesiastical rituals of marriage were thought to offer protection against various dangers, including the infliction of impotence by tying ligatures, although this widespread belief does not appear in many witchcraft cases. Marital troubles are another matter, because one of the most common reasons a woman gave for supposedly yielding to the Devil's blandishments was that she was in despair after quarrelling with her husband or being beaten by him. On other occasions women alleged that they were in terrible poverty because their husbands drank away their money and left the children hungry. These negative pictures imply a more positive ideal, and should not be taken as reliable evidence for the normal state of early modern family life. The witchcraft trials also contain much evidence for supportive attitudes, showing heavy expenditures of time and money caring for sick spouses or children. Many of the attitudes repeatedly expressed are quite incompatible with the dismal view of dysfunctional families that have been adopted by some incautious historians.

High mortality rates necessarily led to many broken families and remarriages; inevitably, problems with stepparents and stepchildren manifest themselves in the evidence, sometimes as motives for the hostility that led

to bewitchment. The same role might be attributed to disputes over inheritance, which often led to splits in the extended family network, or between parents and children. While it was very rare for suspicions within families to turn directly into formal legal proceedings, they quite often became known to neighbors and helped to create reputations. The frequency of infant mortality may have had more subtle effects, because it would have reinforced the tendency for siblings to believe that ill will toward the new rival for maternal attention was truly deadly, the kind of link between inner feelings and external effects that was a central constituent of witchcraft beliefs. Another set of tensions involved servants, whose relationships among themselves and with their employers were often uneasy. They might be accused of bewitching one another, or arguments about payment and treatment could be treated as the motive for a vengeful parent's magical assault on the family. At other times it was a servant who became the victim after turning away a beggar or running some errand for her or his employer, because the servant was the person in direct contact with the supposed witch.

Official doctrines attached great importance to the family as the framework for a well-regulated society, in which women, children, and servants submitted to patriarchal authority. Breaches of the rules were readily identified as signs of more fundamental disorder, yet wives in particular were often obliged to act with a degree of assertiveness that contradicted the theories. Whether marketing household produce, dealing with importunate neighbors, herding animals, or participating in group activities, they needed to be pertinacious in defending their household's interests. Their social role as prime creators and propagators of local gossip also threatened the passive stereotype. Housewives emerge from the record as rather assertive figures. In witchcraft cases, there are reasons to believe that housewives did not merely testify against suspects, but that they often spurred their menfolk into action against suspected witches whose labeling was largely the work of the female community. For some educated male commentators this was indeed an additional reason for skepticism when dealing with accusations they saw as irremediably tainted by feminine credulity and superstition. A women's household role might also help to shape the nature of charges, with suspected witches identified as threatening the housewife's basic duties of childcare and nourishment. Witchcraft often appeared as the polluting element that disrupted such everyday activities as making butter or spinning; the sufferers who found that practical efforts to put matters right were ineffective might well resort to countermagic, such as placing a red-hot piece of iron in the milk.

In their general assault on fertility of every kind, witches might well be seen as aiming to destroy the family as the center of reproduction. Their supposed

ability to penetrate into domestic space, whether as assertive unwelcome visitors or through shape-changing, gave dramatic expression to this threat. Confessions about the Sabbat sometimes explained how groups of witches sallied forth to snatch babies from their cradles by night, or to kill them. In more elaborate theories, it was supposed that the Devil wanted his agents to behave in this way to prevent the completion of the divinely appointed number of the just, thus delaying his own predestined fate at the Last Judgment.

At the popular level, the dominant fears were rather that households enjoying some modest level of viability might lose both property and status, or be unable to bring any children to maturity. Occasionally this pattern was inverted, in the sense that unusual economic success was attributed to witchcraft. The most common expression of such beliefs attached to dairying, with the idea that neighbors could somehow steal milk from other people's cows, surfaced at various points across Europe. In other cases the allegations simply involved the ability to produce exceptional quantities of butter or cheese. The most typical situation, however, was when some envious neighbor sought to disrupt a successful family, so it was natural that some of the most common forms of countermagic were designed to protect thresholds and prevent any incursions into the private world of the household.

ROBIN BRIGGS

See also: ACCUSATIONS; ANIMALS; CHILDREN; COUNTERMAGIC; FEMINISM; GENDER; METAMORPHOSIS; MILK; MOTHERHOOD; SABBAT; SALEM.

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FAMILY OF LOVE

A sixteenth-century religious group of Dutch origin, Family of Love included some who were skeptical of diabolical witchcraft, the reality of the pact with the Devil, and the existence of demons. The central ideas of

those associated with the Family of Love, also known as Familists, *Familia Charitatis* (Family of Charity), and *Fedeli d'Amore* (the Faithful of Love), the last name being used by a thirteenth-century literary current associated with Dante Alighieri, would have had obvious appeal to nondogmatic Christians. There are similarities between the Fedeli d'Amore and the *familia amoris* (Family of Love) persecuted in Milan in 1300–1302. The Familists held their meetings in secret and concealed their true beliefs while appearing to be orthodox Christians, both being types of behavior that many in early modern Europe attributed to witches.

They were followers of Hendrik Niclaes (1509–1580), a Dutch spiritualist and a wealthy merchant. In 1540, Niclaes had a revelation that induced him to found this sect. Niclaes was arrested in Münster for holding Lutheran views, and then went to Amsterdam, where he was suspected of being an Anabaptist, and then to Emden. His works were strongly influenced by the Radical Reformation, as well as the medieval Brethren of the Free Spirit and Erasmianism. Niclaes signed with his initials, H.N., also meaning *homo novus*, or *Helie Nazarenius*, a prophet of God.

As a group, the Familists practiced Nicodemism, dissembling their true beliefs while conforming to orthodox norms. Stressing righteousness, Niclaes thought that faith was meaningless without an imitation of Jesus's passion. Niclaes asserted and defended an internal liberty that allowed men to live peacefully and avoided confrontations through an emphasis on Christian ethical values. Prayer was also rejected, and Familists attached little importance to external sacraments or forms of worship. When accused of being Familists, they could claim their legal rights as God-fearing and churchgoing Christians. Familism on the continent appealed to humanists who found it a way of living freely. Some famous sixteenth-century people, including the printer Christophe Plantin, the mapmaker Abraham Ortelius (Ortelius), the neostoicist philosopher Justus Lipsius, and the Spanish humanist Arias Montano, joined this second Family of Love, adopting their leader's theories toward political troubles, practicing an external conformity and inward withdrawal that preserved both themselves and their individualistic religion.

England experienced a peculiar type of Familism. The standard view sees English Familism as the adaptation of a set of imported beliefs to existing patterns of English nonconformity (Marsh 1994) or as a kind of adulterated Niclaesism with Anabaptist roots (Hamilton 1981). Despite any "national" differences that the "Brotherhood of Love" took in England and in the Low Countries, its main aim everywhere was mutual assistance and protection. The Familists held their meetings in secret and hoped to convert new enlightened members. Here as on the Continent, the writings

of Nicolaes appealed to humanists who found in Familism a way of finding a freer spiritual life, but the Familists never spread their message beyond a tiny portion of society. Familists were never a major force, but they provided a source for other continental themes that influenced other later groups.

At the end of the sixteenth century, Familism disappeared in the Netherlands with the deaths of Nicolaes in 1580, Plantin in 1589, and Hendrik Jansen van Barrefelt after 1594. Most of its confraternities tended to Protestantism. In the Netherlands, a new movement, Arminianism, a moderate form of Calvinism, attracted similar individuals, while in England the birth of the Fraternity of the Rose Cross gathered in some ex-Familists (Hamilton 1981). While it is difficult to define the heritage of Familistic experience, it seems clear that the Enlightenment became the ultimate heir of that kind of thought. The underground culture of the Family of Love prepared the way for the Rosicrucian brotherhood, and in some ways for the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, the philosophical fraternity. Its heritage is found in its desire to cut through existing creeds, and in its claim of freedom to explore a personal mystical faith.

MICHAELA VALENTE

See also: ENLIGHTENMENT; SKEPTICISM.

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FAUST, JOHANN GEORG (CA. 1480–1540)

An almost mythical figure (*faustus* means the lucky one), Faust's dates of birth and death and even his Christian name remain in dispute (Johann or Georg?). However, the historical Faust was probably born at Knittlingen (southwestern Germany) and studied theology at the university of Heidelberg after 1507. He has left traces in local records at Erfurt

1513 and Bamberg in 1520, where Bishop Georg III acknowledged the importance of "Doctor Faustus" with a gift of 20 florins. The towns of Ingolstadt and Nuremberg expelled a "Doctor Faustus" in 1528 and in 1532, respectively, as a necromancer and sodomite. Faust's historical existence is beyond doubt. During his lifetime he was mentioned by Abbot Johannes Trithemius in 1507, by Conrad Mutianus in 1513, Abbot Kilian Leib in 1528, Joachim Camerarius in 1536, Philip Begardi in 1539, and by Philip von Hutten, writing to his brother Moritz from Venezuela in 1540.

Faust apparently sought the reputation of a Renaissance philosopher who was familiar with natural magic, but his negative image was already shaped by the ferocious attack of Trithemius in May 1506. The abbot, involved in a dispute with Faust near the imperial city of Gelnhausen, suggested that Faust had claimed to perform wonders superior to those of Jesus. In his demonology *Antipalus Maleficorum* (Testimony of Witches, 1507), Trithemius constructs Faust after the image of Simon Magus, the sorcerer in the *Acts of the Apostles* (8: 9–24) who aspired to supernatural power.

Because Trithemius was extremely well connected in both humanist and political circles, his enmity toward Faust was readily transmitted to prominent intellectuals of his day (Trithemius 1536, 312). The example of Dr. Faust was presumably used in sermons, since the proliferation of Faust narratives can hardly be explained otherwise. Already during Faust's lifetime, the constructed figure of "Faust" acquired characteristics from earlier magicians or figures like Theophilus who had made pacts with the Devil. Such authors as Martin Luther and Philipp Melancthon and various chronicles (for example, the *Zimmerische Chronik* or *Waldeckische Chronik*) referred to Faust as an almost mythical or legendary figure.

Folk tales of Faust remained popular in the mid-sixteenth century and were amplified with details borrowed from such better-known historical magician/scientists as Paracelsus or Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim, Johann Weyer's teacher at Bonn. Quoting Luther (and indirectly defending Agrippa), Weyer mentioned Faust as a magician who had a close relationship with the Devil. Johann Fischart, the translator of Jean Bodin's demonology, subsequently turned the tables by modeling Agrippa on the figure of Dr. Faustus, implying that Weyer was numbered among the Devil's minions. Like Fischart, most later sixteenth-century demonologists, including some opponents of witch beliefs, like Hermann Witekind in 1585, refer to Faust as a quintessential diabolical sorcerer.

By then Faust had become a literary figure. He already appeared, for instance, on the front cover of Ludovicus Milichius's *Der Zauber Teuffel* (The Devil of



Faust and the Devil make their pact. (Bettmann/Corbis)

Magic) in 1563, subsequently incorporated into the first edition of the *Theatrum Diabolorum* (Theater of Devils, Frankfurt am Main, 1569) and all later editions. The *Historia von D. Johann Fausten*, the first book purporting to describe Faust and his deeds, was printed in Frankfurt in 1587. The anonymous author assembles contemporary narratives on Faust, arranging them in chronological order, and placing the magician's compact with the Devil at the center of his story. By constructing Faust as a male witch, his moral was a warning about human curiosity, a deadly sin leading Christians to hell. The publisher Johann Spies threw this pamphlet, presumably compiled by a Lutheran author, on the market when the witch hunts in southern Germany first climaxed in the late 1580s.

The subject proved to be unusually successful even beyond Germany. The English writer Christopher Marlowe composed the first of many subsequent plays on the subject, *Dr. Faustus*, in 1588. There were numerous adaptations of the Faust legend during the early modern period. Long afterward it continued to inspire such famous authors as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Paul Valéry, Thomas Mann, and Michael Bulgakov, all of whom produced major adaptations that reached

international audiences. Inspired primarily by Goethe's masterpiece, the theme of Faust was subsequently spread through nineteenth-century operatic adaptations by such major composers as Giacomo Meyerbeer, Franz Liszt, and Hector Berlioz.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM, HEINRICH CORNELIUS; FISCHART, JOHANN; PARACELUSUS, THEOPHRASTUS BOMBASTUS VON HOHENHEIM; RENAISSANCE DRAMA, ENGLAND; SIMON MAGUS; THEOPHILUS; TRITHEMIUS, JOHANNES; WEYER, JOHANN; WITEKIND, HERMANN.

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FAVERSHAM WITCHES

On September 29, 1645, three women, Joan Williford, Joan Cariden, and Jane Hott were executed for witchcraft at Faversham in Kent (a fourth woman, Elizabeth Harris, was also investigated, but apparently not hanged). Although there is no direct link, the timing and content of these trials suggest that they were very strongly influenced by the mass witch hunts, presided over by Matthew Hopkins, which had broken out that summer in eastern England. Faversham was one of the English Cinque Ports, a borough with its own rights of jail delivery, and some of the irregularities that occurred during these trials probably resulted from their being presided over by the mayor and jurats of the town rather than trained judges. In particular, this is one of the few English witchcraft trials in which the swimming test was used with official approval. The trials should also be placed in their local economic, religious, and political context. In particular, there had long been ill feeling between Joan Cariden and Faversham's mayor, Robert Greenstreet—in 1635, when he had held the office previously, Cariden had cursed him in the course of a dispute. Joan Williford testified that Greenstreet had never prospered after that curse, and it is significant that his wife had died in the summer of 1645, shortly before these trials.

The Devil, sometimes in animal form, figured prominently in the confessions of the Faversham witches. Joan Williford told how the Devil appeared to her in the shape of a little dog and promised to help her revenge herself on her enemies. She then gave him some of her blood,

which he used to write the covenant between them. Elizabeth Harris repeated the story of the covenant written in blood, and confessed that she scratched her breast to get the blood she used. Joan Cariden told of a great meeting of witches at the house of a woman called Pantrey, at which the Devil sat at the head of the table. As ever, the Devil proved to be an unreliable friend. In a graphic image, Jane Hott told how when she underwent the swimming test, the Devil assured her that she would sink, that is, that she would be proved innocent. But she floated, and when she was in the water the Devil sat on a crossbeam and laughed at her.

The Faversham witches' confessions also included the standard matters of revenge and *maleficium* (harmful magic), but the intrusion of the Devil, the covenants written in blood, and the suggestion of a Sabbat are unusual, and demonstrate how English witchcraft beliefs were becoming diabolized in the mid-seventeenth century. In a well-documented case of 1586, Faversham had held another trial that led to the execution of a woman named Joan Cason. Here, too, the lack of legal training on the part of borough authorities affected her conviction, this time because they proceeded under the mistaken impression that they were convicting her on a noncapital charge.

Concentrating on the neighboring county of Essex has led to a relative neglect of scholarly study of witchcraft in early modern Kent (but see Gaskill 2000). Because Kent was home to the skeptical writers Reginald Scot and Sir Robert Filmer, witchcraft trials in this county may well show some peculiarities. Certainly, despite the numerous cases coming through the county's ecclesiastical courts in the early years of Elizabeth's reign, Kent never experienced such relatively high levels of endemic prosecutions as Essex in the late sixteenth century. However, they continued even longer in Kent: after the 1645 Faversham trials, Kent put eighteen suspected witches on trial in 1652, and six of them were hanged.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: DEVIL; ENGLAND; ESSEX; FILMER, SIR ROBERT; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; SCOT, REGINALD; SWIMMING TEST.

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FEAR

From the modern perspective, the world before 1800 seems to have been dominated by fear and anxiety; the very term "witch panic" suggests this. Scholars such as H. R. Trevor-Roper (1967), Denis Crouzet (1990), and especially Jean Delumeau (1978) have made much of the turmoil accompanying witch hunts and confessional conflict. It is often asserted that apocalypticism and millennial expectations were high in these societies and cultures, with people's lives deeply troubled by uncertainty. On one level this might well be true, but seeing fear as the paramount feature of the age would be as misleading as using tabloids and conspiracy theorists to characterize the modern age.

What role then did fear play in the Europe of 1400–1800? Clearly, there were numerous sources of concern for any community (especially urban environments). The response to witches and witchcraft was, in some ways, very different from fears of pestilence or warfare that periodically gripped such communities—but, in the long term, they were relatively similar. For example, fire in confined cities containing many timber buildings was a serious threat. However, people did not run howling into the night. Rather, they instituted regulations about the use of fire meant greatly to decrease its danger. In this they were largely successful and devastating fires (in an age without any real means to stop a fire once it had started) were remarkably rare. The danger of plague was very real and very present: most urban environments were swept by pestilence every fifteen years and nearly a quarter of the population carried away each time. Indeed, in western Europe's last outbreak (Marseilles in 1722), half the city's populace perished. Despite the horrific danger posed by plague, most people did not abandon their homes. Rather they developed extensive systems of monitoring, prevention, containment, and purification designed to lessen the frequency and virulence of plague outbreaks. While these were largely ineffective against the disease, they provided psychological immunization against the fear and panic accompanying a pestilential attack. Invasion and siege were also major threats, but these were, likewise, dealt with by practical and levelheaded means. Fortifications were built at tremendous expense. Citizens were drilled in defending the town. Preparation, as with fire and plague, was the watchword. And, in this context, preparation meant bureaucratic development and increasing governmental control over wide areas of private activity. Societies responded to those things that threatened and frightened them by preparing themselves against a future onslaught and ensuring that every defense possible was ready to bring into play.

The response to the fear of witches was, in one key way, very different from responses to fears of fire, pestilence, or warfare. Everyone agreed at every level of

society, that spirits, demons, and angels existed. There was no doubt that there were powers in the created world that lay beyond the material and natural, but which could be accessed and used by mortals. These powers and beings existed in the preternatural realm. While this belief no longer prevails throughout modern Western society, it is important to realize that our reactions to accusations of “Satanic” sexual abuse and programs or books that “promote” witchcraft and sorcery imply that these views are not so archaic as one might suppose. The important point, though, is the unanimity of belief about the ubiquity of the spiritual and preternatural in the early modern period. Such powers were everywhere and could be used. But, who could use them? By what means did an individual gain access to them? For what purposes were they being used? How might one guard against people using these powers? Clearly, bureaucratic and governmental responses were largely impotent. Powers beyond the natural were not subject to edicts and civil servants. They were invisible and dangerous.

WHO COULD USE THIS POWER?

There was universal agreement that the powers of the world inhabited by demons and angels were accessible to mere mortals. However, there was more than one way to make use of this power. The wise could, through study and piety, gain control over powers from this realm. These magicians and alchemists made use of these powers for good or ill. Dabbling in such things, even for the wisest and most pious, was extremely dangerous. There was always the potential to misuse these powers or to be seduced by Satan and his minions into delving too deeply and, thereby, coming under his control. The key point in the approach of the learned to these powers and this realm was the possibility of a mortal to use and maintain control over these dangerous, frightening powers. Such men (and they were almost only men) were feared and often fell under suspicion. Nevertheless, they offered the possibility of taming this region and its powerful forces by examination, experimentation, and the application of education and piety. Others, less learned and usually female, would also use these powers. However, their access to these powers differed dramatically. They did not gain entry into this realm by means of knowledge and piety but by seduction, delusion, and the renunciation of true religion for demonic worship. They were not in control of the situation; rather they were in the thrall of Satan because they had entered into a pact with him to serve him in return for magical power.

BY WHAT MEANS DID AN INDIVIDUAL GAIN ACCESS TO THIS POWER?

Thus, one might access these dangerous and frightening powers by means of careful training and piety, or by

blasphemy. In both cases, the use of magical powers or witchcraft was ideally suited to terrify people. One could not immediately tell if an individual had been dabbling in such things. One could not tell if they were in control or being controlled. Of all the things besetting pre-modern Europe and its colonies, these unseen forces were the most terrifying. Even regarding the use of magical powers by a learned man, there was always the very real possibility that the magician had been duped or seduced into becoming a tool of Satan. The greater the seeming success of the magician, the greater the malevolence of the witch, the more likely it was that Satan was the true master. For the less learned practitioners, access to this power focused on some of the key fears of this world: the demonic pact, the Sabbat, and Satan. In ritualized gatherings (stereotypically mocking or inverting normative Christian religious rites) the witches worshipped Satan, renounced Jesus, engaged in frenzied and immoral acts (such as sex with demons and cannibalism), pledged themselves to the Devil and evil deeds, and, in the end, submitted to (often sodomitical) sex with Satan and kissed his anus. This horrific gathering combined every fear and broke every taboo. It both disgusted and terrified—and, it has to be said, fascinated. The true evilness and fearfulness of a witch was evident not so much in the malevolent acts perpetrated by the witch but by the witch’s participation in these vile congregations. The fear of the Sabbat and concourse with Satan was both the fear of true unbridled evil and the horror of seeing evil run rampant.

HOW WAS THE POWER BEING USED?

A constant source of fear and anxiety was the inability to know with certainty where, when, or how magical powers were being employed. Every chance disaster or calamity might be a symptom of the use of magic or signal the presence of a witch. A passing glance, a muttered oath, or a sour relationship might involve the use of magic and witchcraft. The more annoying or disturbing an individual, the greater the possibility that his or (more often) her neighbors might suspect witchcraft. Most frightening of all, there was no real way to know that magic and witchcraft were being employed until it was too late, or without recourse to another practitioner of the same terrifying arts.

HOW MIGHT ONE GUARD AGAINST THOSE USING THESE POWERS?

Inevitably, the best defense was to denounce a suspected witch and to allow the courts to deal with the person. This was relatively infrequent and often ineffective. Many people were acquitted, or refused to leave if ordered banished. However, there is every reason to assume that the intervention of the state put the accused (and his or her behavior) on notice and greatly reduced fear in the specific community by showing that something was being

done. Over time, public authorities came to the conclusion that no conviction was legally justifiable. Once the state stopped being involved, prosecutions ceased though the belief in witches and magicians, and the fear of them, did not (nor has it). In effect, the unseen, underground danger that caused so much fear and panic had been joined in the realm of the largely unseen and underground by the fear of it.

What then did these societies and cultures really fear? The great dangers were not the obvious ones like war, famine, or disease. These were chronic, but could be dealt with (albeit with little actual success) by positive action. Real danger came from the unseen and the secret. Groups that met apart (Jews, Anabaptists, English Recusants) could be suspected of anything (cannibalism, sedition, sexual deviance). Individuals on the margin of society, individuals who seemed at odds with all their neighbors, the malevolent and mean-spirited, and the disturbed, were viewed as inherently suspicious and their every action and word open to multiple misinterpretations. Fear came from the unseen, the secret, and the magical.

WILLIAM G. NAPHY

See also: COMMUNAL PERSECUTION; DISEASE; MAGIC, LEARNED; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PANICS; PLAGUE; SABBAT; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC; TREVOR-ROPER, HUGH (LORD DACRE OF GLANTON); WARFARE.

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FEMALE WITCHES

The significance of witchcraft in the history of European and American women lies in the fact that

between 1570 and 1680 the overwhelming majority of those executed were women, some 71–92 percent (Monter 1977, 132). Witchcraft was the most important capital crime for women in early modern Europe. More women were executed for this alleged offense than for all other crimes put together. Estimates of the number of people accused and executed for witchcraft have been vastly reduced from earlier estimates, such as the ludicrous figure of nine million. Even Brian Levack's much smaller estimate of 110,000 witchcraft trials and some 60,000 executions (Levack 1995, 24–25) has been further cut by a third. Because many judicial records have been destroyed or are missing for much of western, southern, and eastern Europe, it is impossible to arrive at exact figures. Monter (2002, 13) estimates that approximately 35,000 witches were executed, 29,000 of whom were women, while other historians assert the number of witches killed to be higher, but surely not above 50,000. The epicenter of European witch hunting lay in the Germanic core of the Holy Roman Empire, where it is estimated that between 20,000–25,000 executions occurred.

During the early modern period, the stereotype of the witch was significantly altered. Where previously witches had possessed their own magical powers, now they were entirely dependent on the Devil, and they congregated at obscene Sabbats, where they worshipped the Devil and engaged in perverse antisocial activities: promiscuous sexuality; obscene dancing; and cannibalism, especially of children. The witches' Sabbat did not exist in the Middle Ages; it was an invention of early modern demonologists. In the view of some historians, it represented an increased fear of disorder and a prurient fascination with female sexuality. Historians question how deeply this new, learned stereotype of the witch as the Devil's disciple penetrated into popular culture, where a witch was still primarily thought of as performing harmful magic (*maleficium*); but it is generally agreed that witchcraft trials and the publicity accompanying them spread the new stereotype.

Most historians agree that poor, middle-aged, widowed, or single women were most likely to be accused of witchcraft, although younger women charged with sexual crimes (fornication, adultery, abortion, infanticide) were also targeted. In New England, female heiresses without male kin were prominent among the accused. However, it is important to note that in some parts of Europe, such as in Estonia, Iceland, and Russia, the majority of indicted and executed witches were men.

The question why women were disproportionately targeted as witches only became an issue in the 1970s with the rise of feminism and the legitimization of women's studies in academia. Earlier historians from



*Many poor women imprisoned, and hanged for Witches.
 A. Hangman. B. Bellman. C. Two Sergeants. D. Witch-
 finder taking his money for his work.*

Four English women hanged as witches, while other women mourn and male officials supervise. The witch hunter at the right is being paid for his work. (TopFoto.co.uk)

Wallace Notestein to H. R. Trevor-Roper failed to see anything unusual in the fact that witches were primarily women, concluding that witches were either “failed” women beyond the age of reproduction or hysterical and sexually deprived. Even after the 1970s, major historians of witchcraft continued to ignore the issue of gender, attributing the increase in witchcraft prosecutions variously to religious conflict, the growth of the nation-state, demographic changes leading to an increased number of single women, community tensions, emerging capitalism, and changes in the judicial system. Alan Macfarlane rejected sexism as a factor in Essex witchcraft trials, although 92 percent of the accused were women. Keith Thomas also excluded gender as a factor on the grounds that women were as likely to accuse other women as men. Macfarlane and Thomas did, however, discuss the economic and social changes that led poor, old women to be marginalized and resented in an emerging capitalist economy.

Although H. C. Erik Midelfort did not think the sixteenth century was unusually misogynistic, he acknowledged misogyny as a factor in witch hunts, but wondered why “women seemed . . . to provoke” it (1972, 183).

By 1977 there had been a sea change in witchcraft studies. Most historians recognized gender and gender conflict as important factors in witch hunts. William Monter concluded that witch accusations were sex linked and part of a campaign to control women’s bodies and sexuality. In 1981 Midelfort reversed his position and acknowledged that early modern witch hunts were accompanied by “a burst of misogyny without parallel in Western history.” During the 1980s and 1990s more direct correlations were made between witch and woman hunting. A number of historians argued that because of their close connection with folk medicine, folk magic, and popular religion, women were particularly vulnerable to witchcraft accusations.

A Sicilian fairy cult, the *donas de fuera* (women from outside), offers an example of the popular religious and magical beliefs associated primarily with women and interpreted by the Inquisition as heretical and demonic. The *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) considered midwives particularly likely to be witches, although this connection is not borne out in actual trial records (Harley 1990). More recent evidence suggests, however, that women who cared for newborn children were vulnerable to witchcraft accusations because of high mortality rates combined with an unprecedented emphasis on motherhood (Roper 1994, chap. 9; Demos 1982).

A characteristic of newly emerging political regimes and religious authorities was their demand for a high level of control and conformity. Fear of disorder was a prevalent theme in early modern thought, and historians have recognized the special place that “disorderly” women (prostitutes; women without male supervision; scolds) played in witch hunts. For male authorities, chaste, obedient, and, most important, married women were synonymous with a strong well-ordered state, while disobedient, rebellious women were suspect witches. Legal systems were increasingly used to punish wayward behavior (especially sexual) as well as wayward thought, and in this regard it is significant that witchcraft first became a criminal offense in the early modern period.

This fear of disorder reflected the very real disorders in the early modern European world, where religious wars, plagues, famines, peasant rebellions, banditry, and vagabondage were endemic, and new ways of thinking threatened established systems of thought. The climate of fear engendered by political, social, and intellectual turmoil led many people to embrace a pessimistic form of apocalyptic millenarianism, in which the Devil assumed a position of unparalleled importance. “Devil books” became a new genre of literature in Germany during the second half of the sixteenth century, and witches gained new prominence as the Devil’s most faithful and obedient servants. Millenarian and apocalyptic thought encouraged a black and white view of the world and the demonization of one’s enemies. Stuart Clark (1997) provides numerous examples of the way in which notions of “contrariety” come to pervade early modern thought in all its branches—physics, natural magic, medicine, psychology, ethics, politics, and theology. In his view, the polarity between the genders was so firmly established in the early modern period that demonologists and witch theorists had no choice but to view witches as women. Consequently, witch theorists and demonologists were no more misogynist or prurient than their male contemporaries. This view is seconded by Stephens (2002): witch theorists were not women haters, but tormented skeptics trying to resolve the conflicts in Christian doctrine about the

benevolence of God, the existence of spirits and souls, and the efficacy of the sacraments.

Clark and Stephens represent a new phase of witchcraft scholarship that has come full circle, minimizing the importance of gender conflict. The fact that women accused other women has been taken as evidence that witchcraft accusations were strategies used by women for their own purposes. While these offer welcome correctives to the view of witches as passive victims, it is also important to recognize the ways that women internalized patriarchal values. It is equally important to consider evidence of increasing misogyny and sexual violence against women during the early modern period and the way witch hunts reflected both.

The sixteenth century has been seen as one of the most bitterly misogynistic periods in Western history. Literary and fictional discussions of obstreperous, disobedient wives and illustrations of women attacking and killing men proliferated. While historians have argued that Protestantism enhanced the position of women, others see this as a factor promoting witch hunts. By granting women responsibility for their own salvation, by emphasizing their importance as spiritual leaders in the home, and by making marriage the norm for everyone, Protestantism increased male anxieties and exacerbated gender conflict. The idea that Protestant attitudes toward women contributed to witch hunts is significant in light of research documenting the lenient treatment of witches by the inquisitions. This leniency has been attributed to the fact that Catholic authorities, all male, devalued women to such an extent that even witches posed no threat.

While gender conflict is generally acknowledged as one of many factors in generating witch hunts, its role in the decline of witchcraft prosecutions remains problematic. Carolyn Merchant offers the most sustained effort of gender analysis in this regard. She attributes the end of witch hunts to the emergence of a new patriarchal, hierarchical, and scientific social order, which reduced disorderly female nature to inanimate matter and robbed middle- and upper-class women of their independent economic roles. With both nature and women tamed, the climate of fear and uncertainty in which the witch hunts flourished declined. The problem with this analysis is that the mechanical philosophy was not accepted until after the decline of witch hunts had already begun. Moreover, it was possible to subscribe to the mechanical philosophy and still believe in witchcraft. Furthermore, a number of historians reject the idea that women’s economic roles changed radically in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, suggesting that the decline was more gradual and began earlier.

A more persuasive argument for the decline of witch hunting is that it was the result of judicial skepticism. The acrimonious controversies of the Reformation and

Counter-Reformation period contributed to an increasingly critical attitude toward evidence and to the search for new methods of establishing truth. Judges and lawyers exhibited a growing concern with the credibility of witnesses and the probability of events. Judges did not stop hunting witches out of disbelief but because they no longer knew where to find them (Midelfort 1972, 6). At a certain point—a point usually reached whenever men became a significant portion of accused witches—the excessive nature of the witch hunts made magistrates and judges have second thoughts.

Although an analysis of the witch hunts in terms of gender cannot by itself answer the question of why witch hunts proliferated in the early modern period or why they ended, it has contributed significantly to a vastly more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of women's history in the early modern period.

ALLISON COUDERT

See also: APOCALYPSE; CLARK, STUART; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; DEMONOLOGY; DEVIL BOOKS; EVIDENCE; FEAR; FEMINISM; GENDER; HISTORIOGRAPHY; MACFARLANE, ALAN; MALE WITCHES; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MECHANICAL PHILOSOPHY; MIDELFORT, H. C. ERIK; MIDWIVES; MILLENARIANISM; MONTER, WILLIAM; MOTHERHOOD; NUMBER OF WITCHES; SABBAT; SKEPTICISM; THOMAS, KEITH; TREVOR-ROPER, HUGH (LORD DACRE OF GLANTON).

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FEMINISM

Feminism has done much to put the study of witchcraft in all ages on the historical agenda, and some of the finest work on witchcraft comes from feminist scholars. And yet some feminist scholars have fulfilled the worst apprehensions of their opponents by insisting on elevating political polemic over historical scholarship.

Feminism is not a single monolithic entity, but encompasses a diverse set of positions and ideas. A certain strand of feminism has unfortunately been responsible for systematically misleading and confusing the public on the subject of witchcraft. In English, this misguided narrative began with the American suffragette Matilda Joslyn Gage, who made the absurdly overinflated claim that 13 million women had died in the era of witchcraft persecution (a more plausible figure—including thousands of men—is somewhere between 35,000 and 50,000). Later feminists, particularly from the strand called radical feminism, identified strongly with the figure of the witch.

They were not the first people to use the witch politically. The witch/enchantress/sorceress had at first been glamorized by the combined efforts of Romantic and Pre-Raphaelite artists, who equated witchcraft and magic with sexual knowledge. They were the first to suggest that witches were in search of sexual gratification, and the witch/sorceress herself became eroticized. Later, poets and writers of the 1940s and 1950s, particularly Arthur Miller, used the Salem witchcraft trials as a metaphor for McCarthyism and hence for illiberal repression. Because everyone could agree that only silly superstitious persons could possibly believe in magic, the witchcraft prosecutions became a handy and very obvious metaphor for moral panic, false accusation, and injustice. Stigmatizing the persecutors of witchcraft as unnatural and even lunatic gave a comforting boost to modern self-esteem; it told a story of "our enlightenment" versus "their backwardness" that deformed attempts to understand exactly why the prosecutions had taken place at all. Instead, mainstream historians and amateurs sought bizarre explanations (such as the use of hallucinogenic drugs, ergotism, collective madness) to explain beliefs that had simply become symbols for all that was bad about the past. This could be generalized and often became an attack on organized religion, and particularly on the Roman Catholic Church, which was often said to be behind the prosecutions on the strength largely of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The

Hammer of Witches, 1486), which also stood for what was seen as an unacceptably superstitious past.

Women writers eagerly and uncritically accepted this almost entirely male creation of the witch as victim, and embraced it as a political and personal symbol. Anne Sexton began her personal appearances with an impassioned reading of a poem about herself as a witch flying sensually through the night. For Sexton, and for her contemporaries Sylvia Plath and Adrienne Rich, the witch represented untamed female sexuality, and hence, they assumed that the witchcraft prosecutions were aimed at controlling that sexual expression. This involved some complicity with less obviously protofeminist representations of witches' sexuality. Liberal representations of witches as sexual beings constrained by patriarchy were prone to collapse into the pornotrooping, the reduction to flesh, of witches as young, beautiful, and objects of desire by their interrogators in fiction and films such as *Witchfinder General* (1968) and *The Devils* (1970). Yet fundamentally the same narrative was adopted by Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English, who in 1974, at the height of radical feminism, argued that witches had been single, free-living midwives and herbalists disliked by the male medical profession for their knowledge of women's bodies. Their ideas were taken up by the Dianic or feminist pagan movement, which borrowed from Margaret Murray the notion that witches were pagans persecuted for their beliefs, and coupled that with the feminist narrative to create a composite figure of the witch as a sexual and empowered single or lesbian woman disliked by puritanical Christians and persecuted by the Church. A key figure among many in inscribing and promulgating this narrative was the witch Starhawk, whose literary ability made it very seductive to many women in and outside feminism. Marion Bradley absorbed her work in her rewriting of Arthurian legend as a story of Dianic witchcraft, *The Mists of Avalon*. There was never very much evidence to support any part of this narrative, and there is much evidence against it, but it continues to inspire reams of genre fiction for children and adults.

Because witchcraft was tarnished by contact with such popular and inaccurate histories, and because early academic feminist history tended to focus on nineteenth- and twentieth-century women, academic feminist historians neglected the witchcraft trials for some time. This meant that many accepted the explanation proposed by Keith Thomas and Alan Macfarlane for the witchcraft prosecutions, an explanation that did not address gender at all, but explained the witch figure in terms of class. This theory fitted well with early academic feminist historians' Marxist leanings, and spared them the embarrassment of engagement with what could be seen as a lunatic fringe of victims and madmen. However, as the place of feminist history within the discipline became more secure, feminist historians

felt able to risk tackling witchcraft, and the result has been a new burst of creative and important interpretations that take gender fully into account without embracing witches as naively as earlier popular feminist histories. More mature and sophisticated feminist work has sought to address the question of the gender of the witch in a nuanced and carefully conceptualized fashion, focusing especially on the question of why most witches in most areas were women, particularly in England. Some seek answers primarily in anxieties generated by the perceptions of the female body while others see the primary cause in women's relative powerlessness both socially and in the legal system. Still others stress psychoanalytic factors, especially the strains of motherhood and the relations between mistresses and servants, mothers and children. Recent feminist work has placed considerable emphasis on the fact that most *accusers* as well as the accused, were female. And, feminist scholars have been among those pointing out the relative neglect of the male witch-figure in historical accounts of the causes of witchcraft beliefs. There has been a fruitful dialogue between historians and literary critics in this area, with literary critics contributing the possibility that witchcraft was women's business because it ultimately came, and was perceived to come, from folklore and storytelling, which were primarily women's realms. Some of the best work of this kind has drawn, –judiciously, –on psychoanalysis as a theory of how the irrational desires of human beings come to permeate their acts and beliefs.

Feminists were drawn to the material because it appeared to contain so many women's stories. Now they have been among the first to discuss pamphlets and trial records as historical texts, and emphasize how difficult it is to reconstruct real people from such texts. They also began to call into question assumptions about the gender of witches by researching male witches. This indicates how very far feminist histories of witchcraft have come since the rather simpleminded tales of "gynocide" once in circulation. Male historians too are now much more interested in, and aware of, gender dynamics in witchcraft trials.

DIANE PURKISS

See also: ACCUSATIONS; ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BODY OF THE WITCH; BURNING TIMES; CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST 1800); DIANA (ARTEMIS); DRUGS AND HALLUCINOGENS; ERGOTISM; FEMALE WITCHES; FILM (CINEMA); GENDER; HISTORIOGRAPHY; MACFARLANE, ALAN; MALE WITCHES; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MILLER, ARTHUR; MOTHERHOOD; MURRAY, MARGARET ALICE; NUMBER OF WITCHES; PAMPHLETS AND NEWSPAPERS; PSYCHOANALYSIS; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC; SOURCES FOR WITCHCRAFT TRIALS; THOMAS, KEITH; WITCH HUNTS, MODERN POLITICAL USAGE.

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FERDINAND II, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR (1578–1637, RULED 1619–1637)

During Ferdinand's reign, more witches were burned in the Holy Roman Empire than anywhere else in Europe at any time. Although the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) had started during the reign of his predecessor Emperor Mathias (1557–1619, ruled 1612–1618), Ferdinand II set the stage for this first pan-European War, which eventually involved all major continental powers from Spain to Sweden, turning central Europe into an international battleground. The main reason for this escalation was Ferdinand's distinctive Catholic agenda and his readiness to overturn the privileges of the Estates of Austria and Bohemia. In particular, the scene was set with his later bold attempt of 1629 to re-Catholicize every ecclesiastical territory alienated by Protestant princes since 1555 in the Holy Roman Empire by decreeing the Edict of Restitution. Whereas foreign powers like England, the northern Netherlands, or France had been involved only indirectly in the first decade of the war, this deadly threat to Protestantism provoked the Swedish invasion, and subsequently French and Spanish intervention in Germany. At about the same time, the witchcraft persecutions climaxed.

Ferdinand, the son of Archduke Charles of Inner Austria (1540–1590) and his wife Maria of Bavaria (1551–1608), was born in 1578 at Graz in Styria. At the time of his birth—during the rule of his cousin, Emperor Rudolf II—he seemed unlikely to ever inherit anything other than a small part of Habsburg, Austria; his father's lands comprised roughly modern Slovenia plus the Austrian lands of Styria and Carinthia. From 1590 to 1595, Ferdinand was educated together with his Bavarian cousins, the future dukes Maximilian and Ferdinand, at the University of Ingolstadt, then dominated by two Jesuits, Gregory of Valencia and Jacob Gretser. The Jesuits at Ingolstadt introduced Ferdinand to witchcraft trials in 1590–1591, as they did his cousin Maximilian. After becoming archduke of Inner Austria in 1596, Ferdinand was the first Austrian ruler to introduce a rigid Counter-Reformation regime. In violation of his state's constitutions, all Protestants (including such celebrities as the astronomer Johannes Kepler) were exiled, while the internationally renowned demonologist Martín Del Rio became the most famous member of the Jesuit College at Ferdinand's capital in

Graz, which ran the recently founded university. Only because three of his cousins—emperors Rudolf, Mathias, and Archduke Maximilian—lacked legitimate sons (whether by coincidence or as a consequence of their rigid Counter-Reformation morals), Ferdinand was first elected king of Bohemia in June 1617, then king of Hungary in May 1618, and finally Holy Roman emperor in August 1619. After Ferdinand flagrantly violated the liberties of the Bohemian Estates in 1618, the estates decided to review their decision and elected instead the Calvinist prince-elect of the Palatinate, Frederick V, the son-in-law of King James I of England. Aided by the Catholic League headed by Duke Maximilian I of Bavaria, whose sister Maria Anna (1574–1622) had married Ferdinand, the new emperor crushed the Protestant armies in 1619 at the Battle at the White Mountain near Prague and soon introduced a rigid Counter-Reformation in Bohemia as well.

Despite Ferdinand's obvious zeal and inclination toward radical solutions, there is no evidence that he ever promoted witch hunts, either in Austria, Bohemia, or in the Holy Roman Empire. As they had under his Habsburg predecessors in Austria, Bohemia, or Hungary, the number of recorded witchcraft trials remained low throughout Ferdinand's territories, and the number of burnings even lower. Almost inevitably, there were a number of such trials; but since his vast estates, kingdoms, archduchies, duchies, earldoms, and lordships were only loosely connected and by no means comparable to a modern state with a central administration, it is impossible to argue that this suzerain stimulated any such persecutions.

Meanwhile, however, witchcraft persecutions climaxed in the Holy Roman Empire in the late 1620s outside the emperor's own territories. Many suspects and relatives of imprisoned "witches" fled to Prague and Vienna, the emperor's capitals, particularly from the Franconian prince-bishoprics, to rally support for their cause. There are no signs either that Emperor Ferdinand was interested in their cries for help, or that he discouraged imperial institutions from acting on their behalf. He may have learned through his second wife, Eleonora Gonzaga, princess of Mantua, that the Roman Inquisition was not interested in burning witches. The emperor's Jesuit confessor, William Lamormaini, was apparently disgusted by the persecutions, and several other imperial advisers and lawyers were embarrassed by the involvement of Catholic prince-bishops in such activities. The *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court) intervened in a number of prominent cases (e.g., Burckhardt, Cramer, Haan, Henot, Mahler) and threatened the worst persecutors, the prince-bishops of Bamberg, Cologne, and Würzburg, with sanctions if they failed to stop their witch hunts. The emperor neither supported nor prevented these interventions, and

may have appeared to his subjects as an *Imperator absconditus* (a “hidden emperor,” comparable to the seventeenth-century French philosopher Blaise Pascal’s hidden God, whose silence was frightening).

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; AUSTRIA; BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; BOHEMIA; COLOGNE; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; GERMANY; GREGORY OF VALENCIA; GRETSER, JACOB, SJ; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; INGOLSTADT, UNIVERSITY OF; INQUISITION, ROMAN; ITALY; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); KEPLER, JOHANNES; LITTLE ICE AGE; PALATINATE, ELECTORATE OF; *REICHSKAMMERGERICHT* (IMPERIAL CHAMBER COURT); RUDOLF II, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; SWEDEN; WÜRZBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF.

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FERDINAND OF COLOGNE (WITTELSBACH, 1577–1650)

Under Ferdinand’s rule as archbishop and elector of Cologne, more than 2,000 people were executed for witchcraft, but, while there is no doubt about his stern and rigid attitude toward witchcraft, Ferdinand’s degree of personal responsibility for the persecution of witches in his various lands is still debated. Ferdinand governed a group of ecclesiastical principalities in the northwestern Holy Roman Empire, some for more than fifty years. Besides the electorate of Cologne, his territories included the prince-bishoprics of Liège, Münster, Paderborn, and Hildesheim.

Ferdinand of Wittelsbach was born on October 7, 1577, the second son of Wilhelm V, Duke of Bavaria, and his wife, Elisabeth Renate. It was common practice that the younger sons of the duke pursued an ecclesiastical career. So Ferdinand received benefices in several cathedrals from the age of seven. From his childhood onward, he was very pious, and it seems that he never resisted his fate to become a churchman.

Ferdinand’s first encounter with the doctrine of witchcraft came in his school days. In 1589, at age twelve, he was sent to the Jesuit university in Ingolstadt, together with his elder brother Maximilian, the future duke of Bavaria, and his younger brother Philipp. His professor and tutor, the Jesuit theologian Gregory of Valencia, was a relentless proponent of witch persecutions who once brought Maximilian with him to watch the torture of an accused witch. Maximilian was so

impressed that, in 1591, when still a student, he participated in organizing witchcraft trials at Ingolstadt. Doubtlessly, Gregory of Valencia had a considerable influence on young Ferdinand.

At age eighteen, Ferdinand was elected coadjutor for his uncle Ernst of Wittelsbach, the archbishop of Cologne. Because of many other commitments, his uncle could not fulfill the requirements of his office as archbishop and secular ruler. After the war of Cologne (1583–1589), a religious conflict won for the Catholic side by Bavarian troops, the house of Wittelsbach had established de facto hegemony in the electorate of Cologne. Officially, Ernst remained archbishop until his death in 1612, but in reality his young nephew Ferdinand governed the electorate of Cologne. Operating at first under the strict control of his father, the duke of Bavaria, and of the papal nuncio in Cologne, Ferdinand tried to establish Tridentine reforms in his archdiocese, as well as in all the other prince-bishoprics that he soon acquired. Most of his actions in his fifty-five years of rule can only be understood in light of his deep Catholic faith and equally deep concern for its renewal and reformation. He maintained a strict anti-Protestant policy in all his territories and a firm control over all religious institutions.

The first years of Ferdinand’s government in the electorate of Cologne saw few witchcraft trials. The Court Council of Cologne, the highest governmental office of the electorate, was skeptical of the crime of witchcraft and tended to refuse petitions to prosecute witches, while Ferdinand’s attention was concentrated on Catholic reform and on restoring the finances that had been shattered by the war of Cologne.

In 1604, Ferdinand received a request from Bavaria to report about legislation and jurisdiction in cases of witchcraft accusations in the electorate. This request apparently provided the impetus for the coadjutor to require the Court Council of Cologne to formulate rules of procedure for witchcraft trials in the electorate of Cologne. But, for reasons that are not yet clear, the council took three years to promulgate a witchcraft criminal procedure. The 1607 Cologne witchcraft trial regulations, based on Emperor Charles V’s criminal code (the *Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*, or Carolina Code) of 1532, denied the *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime) theory and allowed torture only in the case of clear evidence of *maleficium* (harmful magic). Because such evidence was hard to find, two clauses were added: one was the identification of a person by a convicted witch (*Besagung*); the other was a Devil’s mark, found by pricking the suspect’s skin with a needle. A peculiarity of this procedure was that all local courts of justice were required to employ an impartial lawyer, called “witch commissioner,” whenever a witchcraft case exceeded its legal knowledge. The edict of 1607 was never printed, which helps explain why no great wave

of witchcraft trials followed the edict's promulgation. Ferdinand's influence on its formulation is uncertain. But it is certain that his attitude toward witchcraft had not changed from his early days as a student or as coadjutor after he succeeded his uncle Ernst as archbishop and elector in 1612, and in all the other prince-bishoprics that Ernst had held. But witchcraft trials in Ferdinand's territories remained unsystematic and rare.

In 1626, a great persecution wave started, which would cost hundreds of lives within six years. According to Gerhard Schormann (1991), Elector Ferdinand initiated the whole extirpation program by sending witch commissioners to the small towns and villages of his electorate for a systematic eradication of anyone suspected of witchcraft. Although there is no doubt that Ferdinand truly believed in the danger emanating from the witches, there is no demonstrable proof for any such program. It is more likely that Ferdinand did not initiate the great persecution wave of 1626–1632, but merely reacted to already ongoing persecutions. In 1628, complaints from the family members of condemned witches led to an order (copying the example of the electorate of Mainz), by which, after deducting the children's inheritance, only half of the remaining property of a condemned witch was to be confiscated to cover expenses for trial and execution. The witchcraft criminal procedure of 1607 was renewed and promulgated together with this confiscation order. Neither suggests an extirpation program by Ferdinand.

Unsurprisingly, given his background, Ferdinand took great interest in the process of juridical prosecution between 1629 and 1631. But afterward, we find a more cautious judgment in his deeds and thoughts. This might owe something to the appearance of Friedrich Spee's *Cautio Criminalis* (A Warning on Criminal Justice) in 1631, but it might also owe something to the fact that in the imperial city of Cologne, a certain Christina Plum accused Ferdinand of being a sorcerer. When the city council of Cologne tried to end its persecution wave with her execution in 1630, Ferdinand demanded to see the denunciations of other witches burned with her.

In the years following, smaller persecution waves or isolated witchcraft trials occurred in parts of the electorate of Cologne, but the huge numbers of victims (approximately 2,000) between 1626 and 1632 was never reached again. Wherever a witchcraft trial was initiated, Ferdinand did not try to stop it. But when, as in the prince-bishopric of Liège or the *Vest* Recklinghausen, the local interest of a territory or the mentality of the local judges and courts did not lead to a prosecution, Ferdinand accepted the attitude of the local authorities.

Ferdinand's attitude toward witchcraft never changed, but the apparent ambivalence of his deeds

shows that he did not initiate the witch persecutions in his territories but rather reacted to them. Claims about his attitude toward witchcraft diverge. But this is typical of Ferdinand, because similar contradictions can be found in his most important concerns, the repression of Protestantism and the reformation of the Catholic Church.

THOMAS P. BECKER

See also: BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; BUIRMANN, FRANZ; CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*); COLOGNE; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); GREGORY OF VALENCIA; INGOLSTADT, UNIVERSITY OF; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); MÜNSTER, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; PADERBORN, BISHOPRIC OF; SPEE, FRIEDRICH.

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FERRER, DOMINGA ("LA COJA")

An inhabitant of Pozán de Vero (Huesca), a village in the Aragonese Pyrenees, Ferrer was tried for witchcraft by both secular and inquisitorial courts in 1534 and 1535, respectively. Her fate exemplifies what happened to many other women from rural environments who were condemned to death throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by secular judges under the remarkably informal criminal procedures of the kingdom of Aragón. However, the inquisitorial documentation we possess (which includes both her previous secular trial and the extralegal statutes that provoked it) represents an extremely important source for Aragonese witchcraft. First, hers was the last known death sentence for witchcraft ever carried out by the Inquisition in Aragón. Second, the documentation describes her different interrogations under torture with unique precision and fidelity. This document provides our only clear evidence from Aragón where a witch confessed to having killed both people and animals as an accomplice of the Devil.

Once the prosecutor's petition was read, accusing Dominga of being an "evildoer, witch, and sorceress," she was stripped and submitted to a visual inspection (*ocularis inspectio*) to discover any marks made by the

Devil after concluding a pact with her. After inspecting the defendant, the local representatives of justice concluded that Dominga had three marks “like the track of a cat’s paw” in different parts of her body (right arm and knee, and left leg). The fact that she had no hair under her arms and that her skin there was “of a color like dark violet” was also considered suspicious. Finally, the judge ordered to test “whether or not tears come from [her] eyes . . . when she pretends to cry”; subsequently, it was cautiously noted that “no tear seems to come forth from her eyes” (Tausiet 2000, 224–225).

In view of Dominga’s refusal to confess to any of the crimes of which she was accused (principally the deaths of people and livestock), the judge decided to submit her to torture. Customary Aragonese law explicitly prohibited torture, and judges could not instigate trials without a formal accusation from a particular person. Nevertheless, Aragón permitted *desaforamientos* (i.e., juridical suspensions of ordinary procedure) for crimes considered exceptional, including witchcraft. In such instances, judges could order torture even without clear proof of any crime. A startled Dominga stood up and exclaimed, “How can it be that matters have gone this far, without anything having been proved!”

Before the torture began, Dominga was shown the *garrucha* (the strappado, whereby the victim would be suspended by a pulley, with a rope tying her wrists with her arms behind her back) to see whether she could be frightened into confessing some of the deaths attributed to her. This she did; but because she refused to admit that she was a witch and had made a pact with the Devil, she was then suspended from the *garrucha* with a stone tied to her feet. When she refused to confess everything the judges wanted, she was taken down. Then, as in an exorcism, her scalp was shaved, she was given holy water to drink, more holy water was sprinkled on her head, and she was given a clean shirt before being put once again on the *garrucha*. This time Dominga confessed everything the judges wanted: she belonged to a company of witches who, after smearing their armpits with certain ointments and riding on vine shoots, flew regularly to celebrate their Sabbat “in the vicinity of Tolosa” (i.e., Toulouse, in southern France) (Tausiet 2000, 226).

Certain of Dominga’s willingness to confess anything that the tribunal wanted to hear, the judge ordered her untied, dressed, and led to another room, where she could sit and warm herself by the fire. There her interrogation and confessions continued. Although everything Dominga subsequently said was conditioned by fear of renewed torture, her affirmations were now legally “outside torture” (*confessio ex tortura*).

Guided by the judge’s questions, Dominga’s descriptions fit closely with the demonological stereotypes common in northern Spain. The Devil resembled a man with horns; whenever somebody new attended the

witches’ gatherings, the person was presented before Satan as a vassal and the newcomer paid homage by kissing Satan’s anus. In her case, this act was completed by fornicating with the Devil, who took her and mounted her. The judge insisted upon asking her about the Devil’s virile member; she responded that it was “made of iron and very sharp” and that around the middle there was a palm with four fingers (Tausiet 2000, 227).

Despite such detailed confessions, however, and repeated pressure from the judge, Dominga still refused to admit that she had apostatized from God and taken the Devil as her lord, as the judges charged. At one point, she apparently lost her voice, so she was sprinkled with holy water and given holy water to drink. After this ceremony, Dominga began confessing that she had apostatized from God, and had trampled “a cross on the ground, in contempt for the Catholic faith.” After she named various accomplices, her judges continued her purgative ordeals; Dominga now began to acknowledge every accusation that had been formulated against her. By her own confessions, she had killed four or five goats, a woman, four infants and a two-year-old girl. Although her case was transferred to the Inquisition (which spared the lives of many other women convicted of witchcraft by Aragonese secular justice), next year the Holy Office ordered Dominga *la Coja* (“the Lame”) to be “relegated to the secular arm,” that is, given capital punishment (Tausiet 2000, 230).

MARÍA TAUSIET;

TRANSLATED BY THOMAS SIZGORICH

See also: ARAGON; COURTS, INQUISITORIAL; DEVIL’S MARK; EVIDENCE; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; KISS OF SHAME; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); PACT WITH THE DEVIL; SABBAT; SPAIN; TORTURE.

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FERTILITY CULTS

In the narrow sense, *fertility cults* is a term used by recent historical anthropological research to describe the rites (supposedly legacies of European shamanism) performed by fertility magicians to attain a state of trance. In a wider sense, it applies to any magical or religious rituals of traditional agricultural societies intended to ensure vegetative fertility.

CHANGE-OF-SEASON RITES

Since James Frazer, several anthropologists, folklorists, and historians of religion have associated various European agricultural rites with cults of dying and

reviving deities (e.g., the cults of Osiris, Adonis, and Demeter) presumably imported from the eastern Mediterranean region during the Hellenistic age.

These cults and myths associated the (re)birth of deities at the start of the agricultural year with the emergence of new vegetation from the underworld. Such change-of-season rites preserve traces of the cults of Hellenistic deities within a Christianized medium; for example, the widespread tradition in central and southern Europe of “Lucy’s wheat” (made to sprout in a dish during the period between Christmas and St. Lucia’s day and placed on the Christmas table) supposedly relates to Adonis’s garden. The growth of the sprouts forecasts the fertility and harvest of the coming year. Some scholars emphasize customs depicting the struggle of winter and spring, especially the carrying out of winter and bringing in the spring, which symbolically destroy winter, death, illnesses, or the old year: for example, the German *Todaustragen*, Polish, Czech, Moravian, and Slovakian *morena* and related forms; in the Hungarian *télkihordás*, usually held on the third Sunday before Easter, or on Palm Sunday, a decorated stick or straw man is removed from the village in a chanting procession before being thrown into the water or burned. Other rites symbolizing the struggle between the old and the new year through a ritual battle between two masked teams, or dramas of death and resurrection performed at the beginning of the agricultural year or during carnival (Serbian, Greek, Bulgarian *kukeri*, *kalandai*, *koledari*, Hungarian *borica*) also come under this heading.

WELCOMING RITES OF FERTILITY MAGIC OR PROCURING BLISS

Almost everywhere in Europe, at some time between the winter solstice and Carnival, groups of masked marchers disguised as demons, dead people, or animals engaged in fertility magic or expressed wishes for a good harvest and fertility. In most territories of the Latin Church, Carnival was the usual date for such rituals, while in Orthodox eastern Europe such rituals were ordinarily held around the winter solstice. Besides the dead or demons who supposedly bring fertility, masks depicting such animals as goats, bears, horses, or deer figure frequently. Groups of players, going from house to house, often performed magical rites specifically promoting the fertility of cereal crops (among the Rutens, Bulgarians, Romanians, or Hungarians) scattering grains in a farmer’s courtyard or ritually pulling the plough.

Spring or early summer rites of carrying a green branch, widespread throughout Europe, celebrate the birth of the new vegetation and symbolize the fertility of the coming harvest. The custom of erecting a decorated tree on May Day or at midsummer is well known, as is lighting a fire during the summer solstice, thereby

connecting the course of the sun with vegetable and animal fertility. The fertility aspect of lighting fires at the time of the winter solstice seems particularly clear in the rites of the Christmas log in the Balkans and in central Europe, which sometimes involves primitive methods of striking a fire and is often performed by the first male visitor of the new year.

RAIN MAGIC

Fertility rites connected with dew or water also occur throughout Europe, particularly around a spring or summer festival. Some rites of rain magic involve collecting dew or immersing in water on Whitsun or May Day, on St. John’s day, or on the day of the Russian Ivan “the Bathing” (*Ivan Kupala*). These rites are to ensure that rain brings fertility by collecting dew from other people’s land (the pasture of the neighboring village) or by bathing naked in lakes or rivers (which occasionally provoked orgiastic parties in some places in the Balkans).

DEATH SACRIFICES

Archaic images of the dead who support or protect living people abound in European mythologies: the dead return at the beginning of the year during special festivities and secure the well-being of the community in return for sacrificial offerings. Traces of such cults include offerings made at festivals surrounding the winter solstice (according to the Julian and Gregorian calendars: at St. Lucia’s day or in the period between Christmas and Twelfth Night) to the dead who visit at this time, to the unbaptized demons, or to non-Christian supernatural beings leading the host of the dead that survive in the mythology of several peoples (*Lucia/Luca* in central Europe, south-German and Austrian *Perchta*, Slovenian *Pehtra Baba*) and were often impersonated in masked rites. The dead presumably secured health, fertility, and prosperity for the coming year in return for sacrificial offerings of food (in the Balkans, bread-cakes put on the roof; in central Europe, the *lucapogácsa* or St. Lucy’s scone; in South Germany and Austria, *Perchtmilch* was offered; in northern and central Europe, food was put on the table for the dead during the night before Christmas). On these same festive days, all European peoples consumed foods suitable for fertility magic (grain meal, cabbage, pork, lentils, etc.) and baked symbolic sweet breads that could also be used for fertility magic or carrying out divination about the coming harvest, love, or death (e.g., St. Lucy’s scone, *Perchtmilch*, or poppy seed Christmas pasta). Certain features of the “good dead” survive in the fairy mythology of a death-related character in areas from the Balkans to Ireland or Scandinavia even in very recent times (e.g., Bulgarian and Serbian beliefs about fairies who appear in the spring and bring fertility.)

EUROPEAN SHAMANISM

The rites of so-called shamanistic magicians represent a special branch of European fertility cults. These rites may be connected to the cult of the “good dead,” the good fairies who guarantee agricultural fertility, Christian mythological beings, or the deities and demons of pre-Christian mythologies. Basic to these rituals are techniques of going into a trance and the related notion of the soul separating from the body. In other words, magicians use their ability for trance to fight soul battles in the other world in the interest of their own community. Shamanistic magicians were active in various parts of early modern Europe, and in some areas of central and southeastern Europe to the twentieth century. To ensure good weather and sufficient rain, and to avert hailstorms, shamans fought otherworldly battles against hostile demons. Similar to the Slavic types of magicians (South Slavic *kresnik*, *stuha*, *zduhaè*, *zmej*, western Slavic *chmurnik*, *p³anetnyk*) were the Italian *benandanti* in seventeenth-century Friuli and the Hungarian *táltos*.

A European agricultural shamanism was tied to agricultural cycles, while some features show a similarity to the myths and rites of deities that die and are resurrected. One type of agricultural shaman (usually male) was a weather magician who fought battles of the soul in the otherworld for good harvests and weather. This battling type was the classic perpetrator of the fertility cult. Magicians who were more predominantly female were initiated by groups of the dead or by goddesses of death and were usually involved in healing, clairvoyance, or treasure seeking. Each type of weather magician had a different guardian or calling spirit (good dead, storm demons, storm dragons, heavenly fiery eagle, such as the Hungarian *táltos*, Bulgarian *zmei*, Serbian and Croatian *stuh/zduhaè*, western Slavic *chmurnik*, *p³anetnyk*), the fairy queen, werewolf demons, well-intentioned dead, or werewolves who support their clan (Slovenian and Croatian *kresnik*, Hungarian *táltos*, another type of the *stuh/zduhaè*). Saint Elijah, angels, the Christian creator god, and Jesus appeared as “Christianized” guardian spirits. Another group of calling or initiating spirits was the demonic werewolf (who also took the shape of a dog, wild boar, snake, or dragon). This notion hints at the clear werewolf character of certain types of magicians, confirmed by magicians’ birth traits and marks. These magicians were often born from an animal ancestor (e.g., the Bulgarian *zmei* or certain types of the Hungarian *táltos* descend from an eagle, snake, or dragon father), and with animal traits (tail, wing, tooth, in snakeskin, as a snake, or with bristles, etc.). These werewolf magicians were believed to fight in the otherworld in an animal form corresponding to that of their calling animal spirit and to their birth traits (e.g., wild boar, eagle, dragon, snake, bull). In the otherworld, in the case of some Bulgarian and

Serbian types, the magicians’ guardian spirits were thought to fight alongside them.

It was also a common belief that magicians born in a caul possessed werewolf qualities (*benandanti*, Livonian magicians, *kresnik/krsnik*, one type of *zduhaè*). The caul seemed to play the same role as the “second skin” did in the werewolf’s ability to enter a trance. The enemies to be overcome in the soul battles included the dead who had snatched the grain or the rain, storm demons who brought hailstorms, and the storm dragon or the magic soul of the neighboring “foreign” tribe. The aim of the battles was to bring back the grain that had been carried to hell or to a cave in the underworld or to vanquish the storm souls or storm dragon and thus send away the hailstorm. The battles took place in the archaic otherworld of the storm clouds, accompanied by lightening, thunder, and other meteorological phenomena. *Stuhas* were thought to tear out huge trees during these battles in cooperation with the wind souls, and used these trees as weapons. *Zmei* took the form of fiery eagles or dragons and fired arrows of lightening at the demons bringing hailstorms. These usually tumultuous battles to retrieve the grain (e.g., featuring certain types of *zduhaè*, *táltos*, as well as the *benandanti* and Livonian magicians) took place during festivities at the start of the year or at the change of seasons (St. Lucia, Christmas, Whitsun, St. George’s Day, Midsummer) when other rites aiming to assure the harvest or the rain were as common as sacrificial death rites for fertility. Farming and household tools (baking shovel, coal drag, field broom, scythe, etc.) were used in these battles.

Certain types of shamanistic magicians were recorded as still active in the early twentieth century (particularly in Serbia and Bulgaria). These retained their important communal function in securing agricultural fertility: those Serbian villages that still had a *zduhaè* considered themselves lucky. At a storm’s approach, they would retreat to a quiet nook, fall into a spontaneous trance, and at the end of the storm awake, exhausted by the battle of souls.

ÉVA PÓCS;

TRANSLATED BY ORSOLYA FRANK

See also: ANIMALS; ANIMISTIC AND MAGICAL THINKING; *BENANDANTI*; CAUL; FAIRIES; HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, LYCANTHROPY; MAGIC; REVENANTS; SHAMANISM; *TÁLTOS*; WEATHER MAGIC.

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FÉRY, JEANNE (1584)

Jeanne Féry was a demonically possessed nun, at Monsen-Hainaut in the Catholic Low Countries.

Jeanne Féry was a *Soeurs Noires* (*Black Sisters*) nun of twenty-five, whose demons, we are told, promised her great gifts, but tormented her when she tried to withdraw from them. Her story was recounted in the *Histoire admirable et véritable des choses advenues a l'endroit d'une Religieuse* (*Admirable and True History of the Things Which Happened to a Nun*), a book proclaiming the efficacy of Catholic ritual healing. This case later attracted medical commentary in the nineteenth century from a colleague of Jean-Martin Charcot (Bourneville 1886), confidently describing the pathology he saw Féry as having experienced.

The *Histoire admirable* traced Féry's afflictions between April 1584 and May 1585, starting with her first visit to the archbishop of Cambrai, Loys de Berlaymont, who oversaw her spiritual and medical treatment. While under his care, Féry was subjected by demons to violent wailing and writhing, and to actual and attempted self-harm. At one point, she (through her demon) lashed out at the archbishop and she showed a tendency (diagnosed as diabolical) to dispute points of Church doctrine. Together with several other senior ecclesiastics, including the book's author, archdeacon François Buisseret, the archbishop supervised a period of intense engagement with Féry, including medical examination and treatments, physical

removal to the archbishop's residence, and searches for spiritual remedies including St. Gregory's water (into which Féry's head was plunged until she emerged spluttering), and the Eucharist. Féry was also put in solitary confinement. Buisseret's book emphasizes the great malice of demons, the many divine remedies for their attacks, and God's great mercy and providence. Its publication in Paris in 1586 coincided with the height of the French Wars of Religion, when Catholic zealots used rituals to maintain morale and win converts.

In this era, possessed women fascinated many senior churchmen, but Féry seems to have been an unusually compelling figure. Her story is underpinned by an acute sense of pathos: she reportedly gave herself to devils at age four in order not to feel the beatings she underwent at home. Much of the narrative depicts ecclesiastics substituting for her family: one exorcist became her "father," and the archbishop agreed to be her "grandfather." Féry appears to have received careful attention partly because a relative was Mother Superior of her convent.

For modern readers, Féry elicits more sympathy than many other possessed people. Her story features no scandalous accusations of witchcraft pursuing an execution; responsibility for her condition falls primarily on her father's neglect and abuse. The portrait of her family, while it reads compellingly, given modern awareness of child abuse, cannot necessarily be taken at face value: Church narratives at this time frequently emphasized the failure of the family unit in order to make convent life seem preferable. Yet the validity of such a claim by the Church was moot: religious vows could call for an especially austere lifestyle. The actions of exorcists, or indeed of doctors, in many possession cases make it hard to imagine that anywhere existed where true care for a troubled individual was given. And even beyond this, we are faced with the issue of sources: how can we assume, from a propaganda-oriented account that ends with a cure, that Féry's story took place as described? Moreover, the account considers Féry's reconciliation with the Church as the final sign of her cure, outside any improvement in her emotional life.

Féry seems an articulate but relatively powerless post-Tridentine Catholic woman. Not only were her views on doctrine trivialized by being demonized, but Féry's intellectual ability was also presented as coming from the Devil. The success of exorcism was claimed at one point when she was reduced to a childlike state in which she had to learn to read and write again. Féry internalized the apparent shifts in her intellectual capacities, and perhaps revealed her ambitions, when she wrote that "wicked devils" used their knowledge to make her like a god, then took her knowledge away from her. Against the vicissitudes of her misplaced trust in devils, the story sets the pacifying influence of Mary

Magdalene, who, Féry said, comforted her, and who at one point also spoke through her, when she was in ecstasy.

SARAH FERBER

See also: DEMONS; EXORCISM; FAMILY; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; PSYCHOANALYSIS; WARS OF RELIGION (FRANCE).

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FEUGEYRON, PONCE

An early fifteenth-century Franciscan Master of Theology, Ponce Feugeyron (also known as *Fougeyron*, *Frugeronis*, *Fergusonis*, *Fongerons*, or *Sengeronis*) was an inquisitor whose investigations successively involved Jews, heretics (especially Waldensians), and witches. He worked an area covering nearly all of southeastern France, from Avignon through the Dauphiné to the duchy of Savoy. Around 1437, he may have written one of the very first texts to mention the witches' Sabbat, the *Errores Gazariorum* (Errors of the "Gazarii," or Cathars, an omnibus name ascribed to heretics).

In a rescript dated August 1409, Pope Alexander V commissioned Feugeyron to proceed against Jews who taught the Talmud, against Judaizing converts, and against anyone who asserted that usury was not sinful. His mandate also concerned Christians and Jews who were reportedly inventing new sects with forbidden rites. The pope authorized him, with the support of local ordinaries, to persecute Christians and Jews who practiced witchcraft, divination, conjuration, and other magical activities. This was one of the most comprehensive

assignments ever entrusted to an inquisitor (Simonsohn 1991, 362). For such a large task, Feugeyron received an annual income of 300 florins to cover his expenses and those of his staff. His activities as inquisitor spanned almost thirty years; Popes Martin V in 1418 and Eugenius IV in 1435 renewed his mandate. Drawing attention to the existence of new sects of Jews and Christians practicing magic and witchcraft constituted a novelty. Although what is exactly meant remains unclear, it seems likely that the pope and the inquisitor feared some dangers, real or imagined, from such practices, even though they did not clearly imply the presence of demons. Twenty years before the elaboration of the witches' Sabbat, the idea of clandestine groups perpetrating nefarious deeds was gaining ground.

Feugeyron's activities against Jews led him into some excesses, and Martin V attempted to curtail him twice, in 1418 and 1421. Supported by Avignon's Christians, its Jewish community complained that Feugeyron targeted Jews and exceeded his powers. The pope ordered an adjunct to work with him in order to control Feugeyron (Simonsohn 1991, 362–363). With the support of Duke Amadeus VIII of Savoy, Feugeyron led a vast campaign in 1426 throughout Savoyard lands against Jewish books, especially the Talmud. After a long inquiry, the Jewish community was again permitted to use its books—after it paid 300 florins and struck out passages considered "heretical."

In 1433, Feugeyron was incorporated into the Council of Basel as procurator of the Franciscan province of Provence. Among others attending the council, he could have met the bishop of the Savoyard Val d'Aosta, George de Saluces (1433–1440). This prelate, who was transferred to the diocese of Lausanne in 1440, initiated the first witch hunts in Aosta and in the Pays de Vaud, both belonging to Savoy. In 1434, probably as a consequence of their encounter, George de Saluces established an inquisitorial tribunal and appointed Feugeyron to begin proceedings against a witch. This is approximately the time when the anonymous *Errores Gazariorum* was written in the Val d'Aosta. The treatise, one of the first to describe the witches' Sabbat, emphasizes the danger of new sects of devil worshippers who practiced nefarious rites and even cannibalism. Several arguments suggest that Ponce Feugeyron is its author. First, the same fears and anxieties run through the *Errores Gazariorum* and Alexander V's rescript of 1409; second, the treatise was composed in a region where Feugeyron exercised his activities. Moreover, both surviving manuscripts of the *Errores Gazariorum* have direct links with the Council of Basel, where Feugeyron was involved. Within thirty years, the dangerous new sects of Jewish and Christian magicians had been transformed into the phantasm of the witches' Sabbat (Ostorero 2002).

MARTINE OSTORERO

See also: BASEL, COUNCIL OF; DEVIL'S MARK; *ERRORES GAZARIORUM*; EUGENIUS IV, POPE; HERESY; LAUSANNE, DIOCESE OF; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; SABBAT; SAVOY, DUCHY OF.

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FILM (CINEMA)

Witchcraft has been treated extensively on film, although rarely from a perspective that privileges

historical accuracy. This discussion concentrates mainly on films made in the English-speaking world. This, of course, should not diminish the awareness that some excellent films with witchcraft themes have been made by filmmakers elsewhere. It is noteworthy, for example, that a French version of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, entitled *Les Sorcières de Salem*, directed by Raymond Rouleau with a script by Jean-Paul Sartre, was released in 1957, nearly forty years before the American movie adaptation of Miller's famous dramatic work.

Indeed, the nondocumentary movie probably nearest to historical accuracy was *Vredens Dag* (Day of Wrath), the product of the great Danish director Carl Theodor Dreyer. Dreyer made only fourteen films in a career that stretched between 1918 and 1964, but his movies are among the most intensely made ever, and *Vredens Dag* was no exception. Set in a Danish village in 1623, the film was cast as a tale of fear, superstition, religious bigotry, and interpersonal betrayal. The heroine is Anne, the wife of an elderly clergyman who has been involved in a witchcraft trial. She fell in love



Scene from Carl Dreyer's *Day of Wrath*, a Danish film that recounts the story of the Norwegian witch Anna Pedersdotter. (Palladium/Kobal)

with her husband's son and wished her husband dead. The old man died a little later, and Anne was accused as a witch by her mother-in-law and was subsequently burned. The story is based on that of Anne Pedersdotter Absolan, the wife of a Lutheran minister who was in fact executed in 1590. Obviously, Dreyer's reconstruction of the story, while attempting to catch the mood of the period, was not totally accurate, but it remains a moving and evocative piece of cinema. The film was released in 1943, when Denmark was under German occupation, and hence it is difficult not to read it as an allegory of Nazi rule. The standard British reference work on the movies, *Halliwel's Film Guide*, described Dreyer's great witchcraft film as a "harrowing, spellbinding melodrama with a message, moving in a series of Rembrandtesque compositions from one horrifying sequence to another. Depressing, but marvellous" (1990, 253).

Another film that dealt with an actual event and made at least some pretense at historical accuracy was Ken Russell's *The Devils* (1970). Based on Aldous Huxley's reconstruction of the Loudun affair, *The Devils of Loudun* it began by being history at one remove. The theme, as a number of reviews commented, allowed the director to indulge his taste for the outrageous and the camp, while it is also possible to trace a strain of misogyny in the film. Yet Russell's peculiar genius allowed him to capture in a wonderfully spectacular fashion the atmosphere of what a nunnery full of demonically possessed inmates must have been like, while the trial, torture, and eventual execution of Urbain Grandier (Oliver Reed in one of his best roles) was well handled. *The Devils* remains one of the most powerful cinematic representations of early modern witchcraft and demonic possession. In particular, the scenes depicting the possessed nuns conveyed the sheer chaos and terror group possessions like that experienced at Loudun must have engendered in reality, while if Oliver Reed's performance as Grandier was striking, no less was that of Vanessa Redgrave as Soeur Jeanne des Anges. It should not be forgotten, however, that Russell's version of the events at Loudun was preceded by nearly a decade by *Matka Joanna od Aniolow* (Mother Joan of the Angels), a retelling of the Loudun story in which Grandier and Jeanne des Anges were presented as characters whose repressed love led to supposed demonic possession and witchcraft accusations. The film, released in 1961, was directed by the Polish filmmaker Jerzy Kawalerowicz, and despite initially attracting the opprobrium of Poland's Catholic Church went on to win a Special Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival.

Curiously, given the play's popularity, no English-language cinematic version of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* appeared until 1996 (director Nicholas Hynter). Again, of course, it was Miller's version of

what happened at Salem that is laid before us, although, as with Russell's version of the Loudun affair, the movie of *The Crucible* presented some powerful images. The courtroom scenes were generally well handled, while Paul Scofield turned in an especially impressive performance as the judge presiding over the trials. Despite the film's attempt to meet the demands of historical accuracy, we are left wondering how far a movie dealing with a theme like witchcraft can ever provide a really satisfactory account of even a witchcraft episode as familiar as this one. The events at Salem provided the basis for an underrated TV movie, *Three Sovereigns for Sarah*, directed by Philip Leacock and again starring Vanessa Redgrave (1985), and they also formed the background for the older *Maid of Salem* (1937), in which a young woman accused of witchcraft was saved by her lover. The critical consensus is that its leads, Claudette Colbert and Fred MacMurray, saved this particular film.

Other films based on real historical incidents are comparatively rare. One, which has acquired cult status, is an older film, *Witchfinder General* (1968), directed by Michael Reeves, that retold the story of Matthew Hopkins. This is a powerful film, shot partly in locations where Hopkins actually operated, but its connection with historical accuracy was sometimes shaky, based as it was on a novel by Ronald Bassett. However, this is somewhat offset by a splendidly villainous Matthew Hopkins, played by Vincent Price, for whom a suitably robust demise was invented. The film was noteworthy for its air of brooding evil, which in particular created a wonderful sense of how this bout of witch hunting operated against a background of more general disruption. Although the English Civil War received little direct treatment in the film, we are constantly reminded that it formed a necessary backdrop to Hopkins's witch-finding activities. Another film using English witchcraft in a historical context, *The Blood on Satan's Claw* (director Piers Haggard, 1970) basically interpreted historical witchcraft as a fertility religion in the Margaret Murray mode. Other films on historical themes did have witchcraft references, among them *The Last Valley* (1970), an action-packed and intelligent movie set in the Thirty Years' War, and Ingmar Bergman's *The Seventh Seal* (*Det Sjunde Inseplet*, 1957), where the burning of a witch illustrated one of Bergman's central themes, the absurdities of medieval Christianity. And, although not strictly an historical movie, mention should be made here of the striking and detailed witchcraft scenes in Roman Polanski's 1971 version of *Macbeth*.

Whether in movies set in the remote past or those set in the present, witchcraft is a theme that lends itself to the horror film genre. Perhaps the most recent, and most hyped, film in this tradition has been *The Blair Witch Project*, directed by Eduardo Sanchez and Daniel

Myrick and released in 1999. This low-budget film followed three students who went into the Black Hills Forest of Burkittsville, Maryland, to film a documentary about the infamous Blair Witch, an old woman who lived in the woods and was accused of luring children to her home and killing them dreadfully. The students were caught up in the legend of the Blair Witch, and fell foul of her power, although the audience never catches a glimpse of her. *The Blair Witch Project* was, of course, preceded by a string of films that used witchcraft as a means of horrifying their audiences.

Starting with British productions, we note *Witchcraft*, directed by Don Sharp (1964), in which a family of witches revenged themselves on their enemies, and *The Witches*, a Hammer Film directed by Cyril Frankel (1966), in which a newly arrived village schoolmistress found herself surrounded by witchcraft. British horror movies using witchcraft themes also included adaptations of works by the once extremely popular thriller writer, Dennis Wheatley. Perhaps the best known of these, *The Devil Rides Out*, another Hammer Film (1967), failed to frighten, although *To the Devil a Daughter*, a joint British/German production (1975), at least had a pleasantly campy quality. Another British horror movie that is more likely to amuse than terrify the modern viewer is *The Curse of the Crimson Altar* (1968: director Dennis Lewis). Here the theme was one that cropped up in a number of films with witchcraft connections, the notion of the descendants of an executed witch wreaking vengeance on the descendants of her accusers. This was set in the fictional English village of Greymarsh, where the villagers annually celebrated the anniversary of the burning of Lavinia, the seventeenth-century Black Witch of Greymarsh. This film is memorable for the maladroitness of its attempts to weave in scenes depicting late 1960s permissiveness, and, more positively, for performances by Christopher Lee and Boris Karloff.

The U. S. film industry has provided some more solid horror, especially if we include two films on themes that, while not quite on witchcraft, were closely related to it. These are Roman Polanski's *Rosemary's Baby* (1968), in which a woman was impregnated by the Devil, and *The Exorcist*, directed by William Friedkin (1975), which portrayed demonic possession as vividly as any early modern possession narrative. More mundane witchcraft horror movies originating from the United States included *Halloween Three: Season of the Witch*, directed by Tommy Lee Wallace (1983), in which a malicious toy maker sought to use a forthcoming Halloween as an occasion for a takeover of the world by witches through the sale of magic masks made at his Santa Mira factory. Perhaps the most significant comment on this movie was that an Englishman, Nigel Kneale, wrote the original script, but subsequently requested that his name be removed from the credits.

Witchcraft as a theme for horror movies has not been, of course, restricted to Anglo-American productions. Indeed, one of the most successful films of this type was *Suspiria*, directed by the great Italian horror movie director Dario Argento and released in 1977. The film, set in a fictionalized Black Forest region in Germany, opened with the arrival of the central character, the young American woman Susy Bannion (Jessica Harper), at a storm-lashed airport. She was set to enter a famous dance academy in the area, but rapidly discovered that what she had in fact enrolled in was a witches' coven, presided over by Helene Marcos, a woman of Greek origins who was the academy's elusive head. The film, in the best horror traditions, flitted between the real world and an imagined Gothic one, the latter being adequately symbolized by the building in which the dance academy was based. This Gothic element (again as is so often the case with horror movies) lent an almost fairy tale quality to *Suspiria*, and one of the most sustained commentaries on the film, by Linda Schultze-Sasse, made much of how Argento's movie operated in a world that was like an inversion of a Disney story. The same author also argued that some passages of *Suspiria* could be construed as an allegory of fascism (Kinoeye, 2002). Whatever the value of these insights, it remains undeniable that this was a very powerful horror film, with a violent double-murder sequence at the film's commencement to set the mood.

If witchcraft has served as a central theme for horror movies, it has also, perhaps a little implausibly, done the same for comedies. René Clair directed the delightful *I Married a Witch* (1942), in which a Salem witch, played by Veronica Lake, and her father returned to haunt the descendants of the Puritans who had them executed, only to have the witch fall in love with one of them. The theme of love between a witch and a normal member of society also figured in *Bell, Book and Candle* (1958, director Richard Quine), in which a New York publisher (James Stewart) gradually realized that his new girlfriend (Kim Novak) was a witch. *Bell, Book and Candle* provided an essentially benign portrayal of a modern coven, interestingly enough in the same sort of way as many modern Wiccans would present themselves. One quasi-erudite reference to witchcraft history in this film was that the witch's pet cat was called Pyewackett, the name of one of the familiars featured in the Matthew Hopkins witchcraft trials of mid-seventeenth-century England. A better-known film among modern readers was a rather darker comedy, *The Witches of Eastwick*, directed by George Miller (1987). In this movie, the Devil (played with panache by Jack Nicholson) seduced, but was ultimately thwarted by, three divorced women (played by Cher, Susan Sarandon, and Michelle Pfeiffer). For the historian of witchcraft, one of the more enjoyable aspects of this film was that the Devil, just as early modern demonologists told us he

would, won all three women by tempting them with things they wanted desperately. The theme of a non-witch falling in love with a witch in the modern world was also explored in a likable French film of 1997, *Un Amour de Sorcière* (director Rene Manzor).

There have been some films based around witchcraft that almost defy categorization. One such film was *Baba Yaga*, a Franco-Italian production released in 1973 and directed by Carrado Farina. The central character, based on the heroine of a popular adult comic strip by Milan artist Guido Crepax, was Valentina (played by Isabelle De Funes), a fashion photographer. One night she met Baba Yaga (Carroll Baker), a mysterious older woman who gave her a ride home. A lesbian relationship developed between the two women, while a devil doll dressed in S&M clothing created mayhem. The film was an odd production, weaving together themes of witchcraft and lesbianism, with undertones of sadism, 1960s pop art and kinkiness, eroticism in general, and references to the earlier French avant-garde movies. Baba Yaga was, of course, the name of an evil witch of Russian folklore, among whose attributes was a set of steel teeth. Mention should also be made of Damiano Damiani's *La Strega in Amore* (The Witch in Love) of 1966, an erotic horror movie that placed witchcraft in a modern setting.

If witches figured in comedy, so did they in children's movies, including, of course, animated movies. Children can still be frightened by the very potent images of witches given in those two classic Walt Disney cartoon films, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) and *Sleeping Beauty* (1959). Children's films featuring witches and witchcraft have been too numerous to list, but mention must be made of *The Witches* (1990, director Nicolas Roeg), a superb adaptation of Roald Dahl's novel, and, of course, of the more recent adaptations of J. K. Rowling's "Harry Potter" books, although a purist might comment that what Rowling's novels and the film adaptations of them have been concerned with was the world of natural magic rather than that of witchcraft proper. But at the very least, these film versions of the Harry Potter books provided yet another reminder of the infinite adaptability of the witchcraft theme, which in this case was transported with remarkable success to the world of the English boarding school.

But no treatment of the theme of witchcraft in the children's light entertainment fields would be complete without a mention of that most successful of films, *The Wizard of Oz*. Directed by Victor Fleming, adapted from the book by L. Frank Baum, and released in 1939, *The Wizard of Oz* was most memorable for Judy Garland's performance as Dorothy Gale. But there was also a bravura performance by a relatively obscure actress, Margaret Hamilton, as the Wicked Witch of the West.

Besides the English-speaking cinematic tradition, others have produced a number of significant films on the representation of the witch. Indeed, perhaps the most remarkable film dealing with witchcraft as a historical phenomenon was a silent Danish movie, *Häxan*, directed by Benjamin Christensen, a key figure in the early Danish cinema, and released in Sweden in 1922. This film began with something like a lecture on the history of witchcraft, but then passed rapidly into a series of sometimes still very effective reconstructions, including what was (allowing for the quality of the special effects of the period) a compelling depiction of the witches' Sabbat.

Witchcraft has figured in a wide variety of cinematic productions in a wide variety of ways. It is a theme that continues alternatively to scare us, amuse us, and provide an occasional shiver of horror for our children. So far, however, there have been few films that have provided an accurate reconstruction of an historical witchcraft episode.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: LOUDUN NUNS; MILLER, ARTHUR; PEDERSDOTTER, ANNA.

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FILMER, SIR ROBERT (CA. 1588–1653)

Filmer presents historians of witchcraft with an apparent contradiction: conservative in his defense of monarchy, he seems provocatively modern in his attitudes toward the crime of witchcraft. After attending Trinity College, Cambridge, and studying law at Lincoln's Inn, he was knighted and served as Justice of the Peace in his native Kent. A virulent royalist during the English Civil War, he was imprisoned in Leeds Castle, near Maidstone, between 1643–1647. After his release, he published, anonymously, many polemical pamphlets; the last one, *An Advertisement to the Jury-Men of England Touching Witches*, was written shortly before his death in May 1653.

This pamphlet had been prompted by the harsh treatment of several people tried for witchcraft at the

Maidstone Assizes in July 1652. Although several were acquitted, others were pilloried and six women were sentenced to be hanged for causing the deaths of adults, children, horses, and cattle through diabolical magic. However, the fury of the mob, which demanded that those convicted should be burned rather than hanged, probably compelled Filmer to compose it.

He chose to attack the definition of witchcraft in the 1604 English statute, arguing that it put judges and juries in an unenviable if not impossible position, in trying to decide what differentiated a witch from a conjurer, an enchanter, or a sorcerer. Filmer chose two opposed authors—a Jesuit, Martín Del Rio, and a Puritan, William Perkins—for particular censure; they exemplified opinions “which ignorance in the times of darknesse brought forth, and credulity in these days of light hath continued” (Filmer 1653, iv). Clearly separating Hebrew witchcraft in biblical times from supposed manifestations of the crime in Stuart England, Filmer attacked the theological proofs for the existence of witchcraft. Although both Jesuit and Puritan agreed that the contract with the Devil was the defining act of the witch, neither could find any examples in the New Testament; Perkins could only find one unconvincing example in the Hebrew Bible (Psalm 58:5). Quoting Perkins’s own words, Filmer undermined the notion of the witches’ covenant with the Devil. Furthermore, he obliquely opposed applying the death penalty for the crime and denounced the notion that torture could possibly secure reliable confessions. According to Filmer, the Devil and not the witch should be the target for scorn, hatred, and vigilance of every good Christian, for “the Devill” was unable to work miracles; he was only “the worker of wonder, and the Witch but the Counsellor, Perswader, or Commander of it.” Thus, the witch was deluded “and onely accessory before the Fact, and the Devill onely principall” (Filmer 1653, 7). In English law at that time, an accessory to a criminal offense could be convicted only if the principal felon had already been charged and brought to justice. Because the Devil could not be brought, bound and gagged, into court, Filmer was not only mocking the notion of the reality and efficacy of witchcraft, but also attempting to establish that it was legally impossible to secure convictions for this crime within the conventions of existing common law.

Thus, although John Locke might have concluded that, in his political writings, so much “glib nonsense was never put together in well-sounding English” (DNB, 1908, VI: 1304–1305), Filmer deserves much credit for introducing both humor and withering cynicism into the scholarly debate on the nature of witchcraft. While his legal training served to pinpoint anomalies in the prosecution of this crime, his enthusiasm for scientific advance led him to declare that “it would pose Aristotle himselfe, to tell us every thing that can be

done by the power of Nature, and what things cannot, for there be dayly many things found out, and dayly more may be which our Fore-fathers never knew to be possible in Nature” (Filmer 1653, 8). Though Filmer’s voice was largely ignored and prosecutions for witchcraft continued in the short term, his profoundly skeptical views gradually dominated elite culture by the late seventeenth century, rendering the chances of a successful prosecution for witchcraft almost impossible throughout England.

JOHN CALLOW

See also: DEL RIO, MARTÍN; ENGLAND; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PERKINS, WILLIAM; SKEPTICISM.

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FINLAND

It was long believed that very few witchcraft trials took place in Finland, but this was not the case. Unlike many other countries where the number of accused witches has diminished greatly after recent detailed studies, in Finland the number of persons indicted for witchcraft and magic has increased considerably with every new study. Now we believe that probably over 2,000 persons were charged with such crimes between 1520 and 1750 (Nenonen 1992, 433; 1993, 83). Because the population of seventeenth-century Finland, which was then part of the Swedish kingdom, never exceeded much more than half a million inhabitants—at the end of the seventeenth century, before the Great Famine—scattered across a territory larger than the British Isles, where provincial centers were hundreds of kilometers apart, the number of those accused can be considered remarkable.

MYTHOLOGICAL TRAITS OF FINNISH MAGIC

Even when it was believed that few witchcraft trials occurred on Finnish territory, many tales circulated as early as the Middle Ages about the great power of witches and shamans in Lapland and Finland. Later, in 1555, a Catholic priest (nominally the last Catholic archbishop in Sweden) named Olaus Magnus Gothus spread these stories among Europe’s learned elite by publishing a book on the history and culture of Scandinavia and Finland, *Historia de Gentibus*

Septentrionalibus (History of the Northern Peoples). Since then the great fame of northern witches and shamans has been well established in literature.

The Finnish word *noita* (witch) originally referred to one who employed the technique of falling into a *lovi* (trance), or an ecstasy ending in fainting. The term *lovi*, which literally means a hole or a cut, referred to the gap between Heaven and the underworld. According to some Finnish mythology, this gap was the gateway to Hades (*Tuonela*, *Manala*). Falling into a trance meant that the soul of the person traveled to the underworld to meet the souls of the dead, who offered wisdom unattainable otherwise.

The underworld was governed by a female goddess called *Louhi* or *Pohjolan Emäntä* (Mistress of the North, which was often a synonym for the underworld). According to some folk poems, when the world began, the Mistress of the North, while fighting with other gods, created all of humanity's adversities—illnesses, crop failures, and so on. Shamans and witch doctors, it was believed, could fend off the evil spirits of *Louhi*. By conjuring or singing incantations, the seer sent the misfortunes back to the gloomy northern underworld where they belonged.

Shamanism was part of the Finns' and Lapps' ancient religion, although among the Finns the tradition seems to have almost entirely vanished before the time of the witch hunts. Very few shamans appeared in courts in Finnish Lapland, although shamanism was still a living tradition and the area was famous for shamans and witches. Shamanism was by no means the last Finnish tradition of great witch doctors and seers. Fervent seers, who did not fall in trances or use a shaman drum (*noitarumpu*) in their rituals, were known as *intomies* or *myrrysmities* (enthusiasts or witch doctors). This type of seer dominated soothsaying and magical healing long before the time of the witch hunts. The shamanistic witch culture probably survived alongside them until well into the Middle Ages (Siikala 1986, 285–297).

Many fragments of traditional incantations can be found in court records, but we lack any contemporary explanations of how and in what context to interpret these spells. It seems likely that the old mythological traits of magic were rarely prominent in the witchcraft trials of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Finland, although fervent seers are occasionally met in court records and some features of shamanism can be found even later. Professional healers were seldom accused of witchcraft during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—so far there are no detailed studies from the eighteenth century—and this may explain why a minimum amount of material related to older mythological beliefs has been published from court records.

Conversely, the magical deeds described in these records generally resemble the kind of acts known almost everywhere in Europe during the witch hunts.

Some cases of love magic can also be found from the court records. Various *maleficia* (harmful magic) were performed to bring about damage or harm people, although witches were very seldom accused of collective mischief, like crop failures. In Finland, simple threatening speech or “bad words” sufficed to cause malignant effects. Singing incantations were typically used in magical healing, but they could be used to cause harm as well. In Finnish folk poems, “to sing” (*laulaa*) often refers to singing incantations (*laulaa loitsuja*). Casting salt often accompanied reciting spells.

Usually such magic was aimed at harming people or livestock, but it also could be employed to heal sick people and cattle. As in Estonia, interference with, and destruction of, beer being brewed also appeared often in court records. However, tar burning was very seldom damaged by magical means, although tar soon became Finland's most important export and figured among the most important subsidiary trades of peasants. In general, magic was directed almost exclusively against traditional means of livelihood.

Modern theories of witches worshipping Satan at the witches' Sabbath had little influence in Finland. Such theories dominated only some trials in places under particularly strong Swedish influence, like Ahvenanmaa (Åland), a group of islands located between Sweden and Finland, or Ostrobotnia on the western coast. In the interior of the country, or in eastern Finland, ideas of diabolism were hardly known.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE PERSECUTIONS

Countermagic was an everyday habit, and unofficial violence against witches took place in the Middle Ages and long afterwards; courts were not the only place to attack witches. However, Finland's first recorded witchcraft trials appeared in court documents from the 1520s. The number of trials increased from the 1550s but decreased at the end of the century. In all, 93 persons were accused before 1600, two-thirds of them (64) between 1560 and 1590. Two-thirds of the accused were men, and thirteen death sentences were passed (Nenonen and Kervinen 1994, 232–234, 277, note 5).

Political turmoil in Finland, a long war against Russia, and, soon after, a civil war between members of the Swedish royal family help explain the decline in witchcraft accusations between 1590 and 1620. Trials increased after the 1620s, and the number of convictions increased rapidly. Fewer than forty persons are known to have been charged in the 1630s, but at least 150 persons were accused of witchcraft and magic in the 1650s. Most of the supposed witches were men, though women now constituted almost half of them. One group stands out sharply: some twenty notorious witches—male and female—were tried in western Finland from the 1640s until the late 1660s. Despite

the fact that their numbers were few, they were greatly feared and widely blamed for misfortunes, sometimes by an entire parish. These witches were itinerant beggars who lived by terrorizing ordinary people; we can call them beggar witches.

During the 1660s, the number of trials rose. It increased even further in the next decade, when 217 persons were reportedly accused; the actual total probably exceeded 300. Finland's witch persecutions culminated in the 1670s and early 1680s. After 1690 witchcraft trials declined. War and social turmoil at the beginning of the eighteenth century may explain the decrease, as Russian troops occupied Finland for years during the Great Northern War (1700–1721). Minor revivals of witchcraft trials took place later in the eighteenth century.

Finland's witchcraft trials differed from time to time and from place to place. One may ask whether Finland followed any consistent patterns. Currently, three different phases of witchcraft trials can be clearly differentiated (Nenonen 1992, 41–72, 223ff.; 1993, 88–90).

First, until the 1670s, mostly men were accused of maleficent magic, and at least two-thirds of the accused were acquitted. Most often, the accuser was a private person who had some quarrels with the supposed witch. The accuser believed that his or her enemy had used malevolent magic to revenge some insult or harm.

Benevolent magic was not considered an indictable offense until the 1660s, even though some statutes against white magic dated from the mid-sixteenth century. The courts did not enforce these edicts, but based their judgments instead on Swedish laws from the late Middle Ages. Sometimes the Church punished performers of benevolent magic. But during the 1660s, a turn took place in witchcraft cases. It was so sharp and swift that many courts had difficulties following the new policy, according to which benevolent magic, including healing with suspicious procedures, became an offense in secular courts. In the 1660s, men still dominated among the accused. However, during the next two decades, women formed the majority, most often charged with benevolent magic.

Two-thirds of those accused of benevolent magic were convicted, and mostly given fines, because they had indeed performed acts that were now seen as illegal (healing by herbs and other natural means was however still permissible). Moreover, benevolent magic was easy to verify as it usually had many witnesses, for example, the sick person who had asked for help. Often, people could not distinguish between their ordinary daily work habits and the illegal magical means they were said to have committed. "Our Father who art in Heaven" was fully appropriate for prayers, but when repeated nine times in suspicious circumstances, its meaning could appear doubtful. Most often, the accuser in trials of

benevolent magic was a member of the clergy, often the parish minister, or a state official, usually a bailiff (*kruununvouti* or *nimismies*).

A third kind of witchcraft trial emerged in the mid-1660s, when some of the leading figures of the Finnish elite, among them the bishop of Turku, Juhana Gezelius the Elder, adopted continental theories about witches who worshipped Satan at the Sabbath. The first trials based on theories about flying witches and diabolism emerged in Ahvenanmaa (Åland) in Turku diocese during 1666 (Heikkinen 1969, 204ff.). This occurred two years before the great Swedish mass hunts of northern Dalarna. The impact came from Germany through the Baltic; a judge who had attended the Swedish University of Tartu in Estonia was appointed to the Ahvenanmaa district.

Perhaps no more than eighty persons were accused of diabolical witchcraft in Finland. Most such trials took place in the 1670s and early 1680s in Ostrobothnia, located on Finland's western coast some 300 kilometers north of Turku, then the capital of Finland. In these trials, women dominated among the accused. Ostrobothnian mass panics paralleled those in Sweden on the opposite shore of the Gulf of Bothnia; in both places, women dominated among those accused of diabolical witchcraft. The role of the government was prominent in these cases, even though private accusers had an important place as well. However, most of the supposed Sabbath-goers were acquitted, and in the late 1680s the courts took a more critical attitude toward Sabbath beliefs.

In addition to these different types of trials, some mid-seventeenth century cases against men using demonic magic took place at the new University of Turku (established in 1640). Bishop Eskil Terserus, who came from Sweden, even blamed Finnish schools and the university for teaching magic (Heikkinen 1969, 380).

MALE AND FEMALE WITCHES

Most of the accused were peasants or their wives, and in towns burghers or their wives; in both instances, most of those accused were married. More strikingly, the persons accused of witchcraft and magic were often of considerable wealth, though many itinerant beggars appeared in the courts as well (Nenonen 1992, 201–220). Almost without exception, the supposed witch was an acquaintance who lived in the neighborhood and had been known for years by his or her accusers. Despite tales about great and famous witches dwelling somewhere in the far north, it was invariably someone from the neighborhood, rather than such terrifying but distant enemies, who happened to be caught and tried for witchcraft.

Very few (5 percent) of Finland's accused witches are known to have been charged more than once with

witchcraft or magic, and there is little evidence of accused witches coming from different generations within the same family (Nenonen 1992, 200, 218–219). All of this contradicts much of what has been believed about witches. However, as professional healers were not often charged with illegal magic, nothing can be said about their families.

According to the court records, men seemed more inclined to use harmful magic, whereas women were more often accused of healing through illegal magical means. However, statistics based on court records give a one-dimensional picture (Nenonen 1992, 353–363). Because accusing women of any witchcraft and magic was uncommon in many areas before the 1670s, they were rarely charged with maleficent magic either. Conversely, because benevolent magic was not regularly considered a crime before the 1660s, the men who predominated among Finland's earlier accused witches were not often charged with benevolent magic.

Contrary to the statistics derived from the court records, it is evident that in everyday life, both men and women used malevolent magic, and both acted as healers. Nevertheless, women probably dominated the various forms of benevolent magic employed in such everyday tasks as animal husbandry and healing. To a great extent, animal husbandry was women's work in traditional agriculture, and informal healing may also have been more appropriate for them. The division of ordinary tasks along gender lines may have dictated who used which kinds of magic in everyday life. Perhaps men were less vulnerable. With the occurrence of a serious quarrel or disagreement between men, followed by some sort of misfortune falling upon one or the other, suspicions of malevolent magic could be aroused. But when men were hunting or fishing, no one could observe their use of magic.

Only during the 1670s and 1680s did women comprise most of Finland's accused witches, reaching a peak of 72 percent in some western areas. It is noteworthy that the change in jurisdictional practice criminalizing benevolent magic did not cause an immediate shift from male to female witches; in the 1660s, men were still charged more often than women. However, the new theories about witches who flew to the Sabbath in order to worship Satan could have been the final cause that broke the male stereotype of the Finnish witch in the 1670s.

Theories about the witches' Sabbath had no impact on either inland or eastern Finland. With some exceptions, Finnish clergy and secular authorities mostly remained critical towards such new theories and never gave unqualified approval to such beliefs. Regarding the practice of benevolent magic, which was not harmful but highly offensive to the orthodox Lutheran clergy, the authorities were quite severe and would not tolerate such customs. The high number of Finnish witchcraft trials can

be explained by this extremely strict policy of both state and church opposing traditional magic in everyday life. People were usually punished with a heavy fine; poor people who could not pay were sentenced to the lash. However, the most sacrilegious practices—for instance, using a consecrated wafer for magical purposes, or uttering curses against God—received a death sentence. Most such condemnations were made in the relatively short period of time between 1649 and 1684.

Jurisdictional practice in eastern Finland followed the same lines as in western Finland, and benevolent magic became a target for secular courts. However, women were seldom charged with magic and witchcraft in eastern Finland, and—unlike elsewhere—even less so in southern Karelia around Vyborg at the end of the seventeenth century, when only one-fifth of the accused were women. In general, the further from the west coast a trial was held, the more often men were accused. This was inversely proportional to the frequency of trials: far fewer judicial proceedings took place in the inland areas and eastern Finland than in western Finland, except for southern Karelia, where trials were more frequent than in other eastern areas. Most trials in northern Finland took place on the shores of Ostrobothnia, but not in the interior.

With few exceptions, Finland's judicial system did not yield to mass hysteria but retained traditional procedures and investigated witchcraft according to its best understanding. Torture was illegal, though it was permitted by the Court of Appeal, as happened a few times during trials for diabolism in Ahvenanmaa. Very rare traces of unofficial violence and injustice can be found in court cases. In all, 150 death sentences may have passed in lower courts; but the Turku Court of Appeal, established in 1623, confirmed fewer than half of them.

MARKO NENONEN

See also: MAGNUS, OLAUS; MALE WITCHES; SHAMANISM; SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF WITCHES; SWEDEN.

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FISCHART, JOHANN (1546–1590)

Fischart was a late-Renaissance German humanist from Strasbourg significant in the history of European witchcraft in two capacities: first, as the German translator of Bodin's *Démonomanie des sorciers* (Demon-Mania of Witches, 1580), and later as a witch-hunting official in the Germanophone part of the duchy of Lorraine. In the latter capacity, Fischart became an informant of Lorraine's homegrown demonologist, Nicolas Rémy. Fischart is best known for his German translation and adaptation of François Rabelais's *Gargantua and Pantagruel*.

Educated at Paris and Basel, where he earned a doctorate in law in 1574, Fischart published a remarkable variety of writings. In addition to his great Rabelais translations, or *Geschichtsklitterung*, which he reworked twice after its first version in 1575, Fischart produced numerous anti-Catholic (especially anti-Jesuit) polemics, many poems (including a verse version of *Till Eulenspiegel*), a misogynistic satire told from the viewpoint of a flea, a treatise on laughter as a cure for gout, and much else. His brother-in-law, Bernard Jobin, one of Strasbourg's greatest printers, in whose house Fischart lived during the 1570s, published most of them. In 1580 Fischart moved to Speyer, where he practiced law at the imperial chamber court or *Reichskammergericht* in Speyer. After marrying in 1583, he found a post in a Lorraine fief belonging to his Protestant patron Egenolf von Rapperstein. During the last seven years of his life, the Protestant Fischart administered the solidly Catholic district of Forbach as *Antmann* (bailiff) in the service of its suzerain, Duke Charles III of Lorraine.

When translating Rabelais, Fischart added some anti-Jewish asides to the original material and adopted a realistic rather than jocular approach to diabolical magic (Weinberg 1986, 114–120). But it was only after starting to work at the *Reichskammergericht*, which showed the same caution and skepticism about witchcraft as other

appellate courts, that Fischart became involved in translating and editing demonological texts. In 1581 he employed his mastery of French to produce the first German translation of Bodin's demonology in 1581. A telltale phrase about the "parliament of witches" shows that Fischart's translation of Bodin was employed later that decade for interrogating witches in the bishopric of Augsburg (Behringer 1997, 125). In 1582 Fischart prepared an index for a reprinting of the infamous *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) by the Frankfurt printer Bassaeus. In 1586, Fischart offered a second edition of his German translation of Bodin, dedicated to the son and successor of his patron von Rapperstein (Hauffen 1921, I, 84); it was apparently the last published book signed by this prolific author.

Unfortunately, Fischart's involvement with witch hunting did not stop with modernizing the *Malleus* or translating its demonological successor. Although no legal records have survived from Forbach, the Lorraine district he administered, we know that at least four or five witchcraft trials were held there in August and September 1587, probably resulting in death sentences. The evidence comes from the demonology published in 1595 by Lorraine's chief prosecutor, Nicolas Rémy, who included (with apparent precision) the names and residences of many imprisoned witches and the dates of their sentencing. In Book I, chap. 12, Rémy says that "as I was writing these lines, I received reports from the interrogations of some witches at Forbach, a small town located in the German part of the duchy of Lorraine. I learned something of which I had been unaware, about the witches methods for assuring that their husbands noticed nothing when their wives left them in bed while preparing to fly off to their reunions" (Rémy 1998, 108–109). Each of Fischart's three witches employed a different technique: one put a child's mattress in her place; a second used a straw broom (both after pronouncing their demon's name); the third and most original rubbed her sleeping husband's ears with the same magic grease that she used to anoint herself. Rémy presents other details from confessions by Fischart's Forbach witches, telling us that two other suspects were arrested for helping an arch-witch poison her own son; one of them, a man, also dug up a newly buried child and boiled him in order to make a diabolical unguent to spread on trees (Rémy 1998, 184–185, 197).

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: BODIN, JEAN; LORRAINE, DUCHY OF; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; RÉMY, NICOLAS.

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FLADE, DIETRICH (1534–1589)

Dr. Dietrich Flade, *Stadtschultheiss* (town bailiff) of Trier and the richest man in the city, was burned at the stake as a convicted witch on September 18, 1589. His trial aroused interest throughout the Holy Roman Empire; Peter Binsfeld, Cornelius Loos, and Martín Del Rio mentioned it. Moreover, the complete trial record has survived, along with other documents related to Flade's case.

The son of Trier's town clerk, Dietrich Flade was born in 1534. After studying law, he found service with the elector-archbishops of Trier. In the ensuing years, he made a good marriage, accumulated various offices, and made many loans, gaining significant political influence while becoming the wealthiest man in Trier. By 1559 he was already a *kurfürstlicher Rat* (electoral councillor); by 1569, he combined the offices of *Schultheiss* (bailiff) at the criminal court in Trier, *Beisitzer* (assessor) at the *Hofgericht* (electoral court) of Koblenz (Coblenz), *Schultheiss* of the cathedral-deanery in Trier, and *Schöffe* (court assessor) of the criminal court of the imperial abbey of St. Maximin. As a faithful servant of the electors of Trier, opposing attempts by the city of Trier to gain greater autonomy, Flade approved the suppression of its Protestant faction led by Caspar Olevian in 1559. Flade also supported Elector Jakob III von Eltz (died 1580) in the expensive legal suit brought by the municipal councillors before the *Reichshofrat* (imperial aulic court), attempting to obtain confirmation of Trier's status as an imperial city and thus its independence from its territorial lord, the elector. The case ended in 1580 with a crushing defeat for the municipality, throwing the city of Trier into financial chaos, economic depression, and a crisis of political legitimacy.

Flade was rewarded for his service by being appointed *Stadtschultheiss* and thus chairman of the city's administration and criminal court when the elector reformed the city government. Until 1583, Flade also acted as the electoral *Statthalter* (vice-governor). He was considered avaricious and ambitious, and was believed to accept bribes in his role as judge. Flade had not only made various loans totalling 40,000 florins to citizens, peasants, and vintners of Trier and its rural hinterland, but also loaned money to both the elector and the city, which owed him 9,000 and 4,000 florins, respectively. He also acted as judge in eight witchcraft trials and sentenced eight female citizens of Trier to death, so Flade cannot be considered an opponent of witchcraft trials.

A large-scale regional witch hunt occurred when the whole archbishopric and electorate of Trier suffered a prolonged and severe subsistence crisis after 1580. By 1586, as witchcraft trials took place with increasing frequency in the territories bordering Trier, accused witches (under torture) began describing inhabitants of Trier as leaders of the witches' sect, who allegedly destroyed crops with weather magic to profit from famine by selling their private stocks of grain. Suspicion rapidly focused on Flade as a leader of these wealthy Trier witches, alleging that he presided over the witches' Sabbats. Accused witches even alleged that Flade was involved in a plot devised by the witches to murder the archbishop of Trier. In the summer of 1587, denunciations against Flade increased, sometimes made by accused witches who were themselves his debtors. The archbishop of Trier (who took the threat of witchcraft seriously) requested the Jesuit-led theology faculty of Trier University to evaluate the allegations against Flade, and they incriminated him. Flade tried twice to escape trial by fleeing the city; he offered to spend the rest of his life in a monastery after giving all his money to the elector. Nothing worked. Dr. Flade was arrested on April 22, 1589. Rendered tractable through torture, Flade soon confessed to all the acts of harmful magic of which he had been accused. The pardon that he hoped for until the end of his trial never materialized, and on September 18, 1589, he was strangled and then burned at the stake.

The trial of Dr. Dietrich Flade must be seen in the context of the history of the city of Trier. The city's failure to gain autonomy within the Holy Roman Empire and the ensuing humiliating capitulation to the power of the elector in 1580 meant that the standing and legitimacy of its governors were seriously compromised. They, and particularly people connected in any way with its political and economic depression, were regarded by most citizens as corrupt traitors, opportunists, or easily became proofs of witchcraft, because individuals first fell into sins such as ambition and greed through their seduction by the Devil. After 1585, municipal authorities in Trier could no longer resist popular pressure for witchcraft trials, now accompanied by riots and disturbances. The authorities' hesitant, indecisive action in the matter only succeeded in raising the suspicion that they too belonged to the witches' sect. The execution of Flade, pandering in part to popular anger against witchcraft, dramatically shattered any assumption that high social and political rank protected individuals from being tried as witches. It acted as a catalyst for subsequent trials against high-ranking men and women, during which almost all those who had been involved in the humiliating political defeat of the city in 1580 were executed.

RITA VOLTMER

See also: BINSFELD, PETER; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); LOOS, CORNELIUS; ST. MAXIMIN, PRINCE-ABBAY OF; TRIER, ELECTORATE OF.

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FLIGHT OF WITCHES

The belief that demons transport magicians and witches through the air simply inverts the belief that angels carry saints and holy men. Both, known as transvection, have been around since antiquity. In Grecian and Roman lore, sorceresses could transform themselves into birds, especially owls and ravens, as Apuleius of Madaura vividly describes in the *Golden Ass*. The European folk belief in the ecstatic flight of women as the entourage of a fairy queen was ascribed ca. 900 to the Roman goddess Diana. Medieval romances are full of beautiful fairies like Morgan le Fay, who had not only the ability to fly and change her appearance but also the power to heal.

Witches, who did harm rather than good, flew only under cover of darkness and usually with the aid of broomsticks, forks, or shovels. Or they might ride demons who had transformed themselves into such animals as goats, horses, cows, or wolves; clerics claimed the devils even had the power to pick people up and whisk them through the air without any visible means of support or transport. Witches were further accused of using ointments consisting of fat boiled from unbaptized infants to help them fly. Other magic ointments supposedly contained herbs and drugs that put witches into hallucinatory states, causing them to believe that they had actually flown, usually toward certain mountains or remote places where Sabbats were performed.

HISTORY

Two famous biblical stories involve magical flight. In the Hebrew Bible, angels carried Habakkuk from Judea to Chaldea almost instantaneously. The New Testament describes how Simon Magus, a Samaritan magician, challenged St. Peter to a magical competition in Rome. When Simon was able to fly with the aid of demons, Peter, observing the evil spirits carrying him, started to pray, thus forcing the demons to let Simon fall.

Pagan Europe offers rich examples of magical flight, particularly in Nordic tradition. The fourteenth-century Icelandic sagas (whose manuscripts date from the fifteenth century) describe the idea of the *gandreið*, usually implying a witch going out, often in a noncorporeal sense. The later manuscripts use the term for physical transvection to the site of an assembly or feast. But the most suggestive testimony of all with respect to assembly and transvection is the famous passage from Hávamál in the *Edda* (ca. 1200).

Because such notions smacked of paganism and idolatry, Christian theologians condemned women who believed that they left their homes secretly at night to attend the court of a goddess or spirit (with different local names, but often identified as Diana), and rode with her on processions, traveling great distances. First condemned in the *Canon Episcoporum* in the early tenth-century penitential by Regino, abbot of Prüm, the condemnation was repeated in the following century by the well-known canonist, Burchard of Worms, who warned against such women in book nineteen of his *Decretorum libri XX* (The Twenty Books of Decisions), known as the *Corrector et Medicus* (Corrector, or the Physician). Early medieval theologians were convinced that such beliefs were merely delusions of the Devil. Although the nocturnal processions were illusory, they were nevertheless linked to diabolical activities. The leader of the nocturnal host had many names: Herodias, Abundia, Satia, Helda, and Perchta were most common. In the thirteenth century, William of Paris added *Domina Abundia* (Lady of Abundance) and her ladies, who were believed to enter houses at night and bring riches when they found offerings. The poem *Romance of the Rose* (ca. 1270) mentioned that sorcerers believed they wandered with "Lady Abundance." Their souls left their bodies and went with good ladies into strange places. Some scholars have connected these nocturnal groups of women to rural fairy beliefs.

Soon, scholars failed to discriminate between different types of nocturnal ladies and their entourage. As early as the thirteenth century, Stephen of Bourbon wrote that the *bonae res* (good women) rode on sticks but that the *malae res* (evil women) or *lamiae* rode on wolves. The term *lamia* has a complex meaning; according to William of Auvergne (1180–1249), it is an evil spirit like the *striga* (screech owl—ancient Roman belief in a bird-like creature sucking children's blood, but coming to mean an evil woman who practiced magic). Often identified with the Bible's Lilith, the *lamia* also has cannibalistic attributes; she is a complex conflation of nightmare, fairy, and *unholde*. By the fifteenth century, this conflation became general: theologians intermingled the *lamiae* with the *bonae res*, subordinating the latter to the former, and nocturnal flight became diabolized.



Witch flies out from a house while others prepare to ascend the chimney. Flight (*transvection*) was essential if witches were to travel great distances to attend their meetings, Sabbats. (TopFoto.co.uk)

The *Errores Gazariorum* (Errors of the Gazars or Gazarii [Cathars—a common term for heretics and later witches]) ca. 1437 asserted that demons presented a stick with flying ointment to all new witches after they had offered the “kiss of shame.” Paulo Grillando, writing in 1525 of the danger church bells posed to witches, concluded that the speed of a witch’s flight “was generally sufficient to obviate this peril.” But he also mentioned the confession of a woman named Lucrezia, who claimed that when returning from a Sabbat in Benevento the ringing of the bells brought her down, causing her to be captured and later burned (Robbins 1959, 512).

Subsequent demonologists also pondered problems connected with flying witches. Jean Bodin, in his *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (On the Demon-Mania of Witches, 1580), affirmed that witches rode a broom or

a black ram; he added that if a boy were born with a caul, he could traverse great distances in a single night. King James VI of Scotland (later James I of England) was generally skeptical about the flight of the witch in his *Demonologie* (1597), and thought it more likely that witches flew in spirit than in their actual physical bodies. (It is worth noting that English witches almost never flew; none of the various witchcraft acts in effect after 1542 ever prohibited flying.)

But could these women really fly? At the end of the Middle Ages, such clerics as Alphonso de Spina, Nicholas of Cusa, or the bishop of Avila, Alonso de Madrigal, accepted the experiences of women who followed the *bonae res* as basically imaginary. Upon investigation, it was determined that while these women thought they were traveling, they were actually lying motionless in a trance, completely insensible to their

surroundings and could not be awakened by shouts, heavy blows, or even by being burned. However, some years later Alonso de Madrigal had completely changed his mind, and he surely was not the only one. He now maintained that such women did not travel in their imagination, nor were they in a trance, but they really did fly through the air at night, with demons carrying them from place to place.

North of the Alps, Johannes Nider's *Formicarius* (The Anthill, 1437/1438), which became a major source for fifteenth-century witchcraft doctrine, reported the case of a woman who claimed to fly by night. A Dominican monk persuaded her to let him and others observe her. They saw her rub some salve on her body while saying a charm. At once she fell into a deep sleep, in which she thrashed around so forcefully that she fell from the table and hit her head. When she woke up, she told the witnesses that she had flown with Venus, but they eventually convinced her that she had been dreaming.

Heinrich Kramer, in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) offered two possible explanations of how witches could fly: either a devil could transport them, or, if that was inconvenient, they could invoke the Devil and go to sleep. Both methods incorporated characteristics of the *bonae res*, as well as the evil *lamiae*, into the new concept. Night flight provided a clear example of how Kramer could incorporate the trance-like dream state of women who rode with the benevolent *bonae res* into his image of the witch by adapting the popular concept of the soul leaving the body. While the witches dreamed, a bluish vapor came from their mouths, which made them aware of everything that happened on their travels.

In the second method of flying, the witches of the *Malleus Maleficarum* made an ointment from murdered children. Although they usually rubbed this salve on themselves, they might instead smear it over a chair or some other piece of wood, thus signaling an invisible demon to come, sometimes in animal form, and whisk them away. With this salve, the *Malleus* also managed to integrate infanticide, an old characteristic of *lamiae*, with the night-flying women. If angels or demons transported saints and magicians, and even Jesus had been carried by demons, the *Malleus* concluded, it was much more likely for demons to carry women who worshiped the Devil.

FEAR OF FLIGHT

Henri Boguet, in *Discours exécration des sorciers* (Execrable Speech of the Witches, 1602) quoted many conventional accounts of the physical flight of witches, using examples taken from certain witches whom he had questioned himself. They confessed that while remaining in their houses as dead for two or three hours, they were actually at the Sabbat in spirit. Carlo

Ginzburg (1983) was particularly interested in this type of flight, not the physical forms of flight clearly implausible to the modern reader. It was precisely at this time that Ginzburg found records in northeastern Italy describing *benandanti* (good-doers) fighting witches at night, but "in spirit," to protect the fertility of the fields. While in trance it was quite dangerous, because, if by chance, while they were out, someone came with a light and looked for a long time at the body, the spirit would never reenter it until there was no one left around to see it that night. If the body, seeming to be dead, should be buried, the spirit would have to wander around the world until the fixed hour for the body to die.

The spirit flight of the *benandanti* obviously was the same phenomenon many demonologists described. The difference was that the *benandanti's* flight was entirely part of a coherent belief system, so they could explain it to their inquisitors in the 1570s. In other parts of Europe, references to this "traveling while asleep" are often encountered, but widely scattered, with the Sabbat aspect imposed, usually by the judiciary. In Friuli, it took roughly 100 years to impose the Sabbat aspect onto the people who practiced the flight, so strong was their folklore and knowledge of it. It could be, as Ginzburg suggested, the case that this phenomenon or belief was once widespread and that in most of Europe it vastly diminished, but that in Friuli it remained relatively intact until the mid-seventeenth century.

Another notable example can be traced in the records of the Spanish Inquisition in Sicily from 1579 to 1651 (almost exactly the same time-span as the *benandanti*) associated with a sect known as *donna di fuora* (the women from outside) (Henningsen 1990). Its members confessed to flying in spirit form to Benevento (a famous mainland gathering site for Italian witches) to take part in a Sabbat. In 1560, another Italian witch said she rubbed herself with an ointment and entered a trance; when coming out of it she found herself flying over mountains and seas.

It should also be noted that, precisely during this time, Christian hagiographical records offer numerous instances of ecstatic saints levitating corporeally (e.g., St. Teresa of Avila).

THEORIES

Norman Cohn (1975) asserted that the picture of the Sabbat taking shape in the early fifteenth century was a recent elaboration by lay and ecclesiastical judges and demonologists of hostile stereotypes first applied by Romans to the early Christians. Then the stereotype was applied by early medieval Christians to both Jews and heretical sects, and Cohn denied that this stereotype corresponded in any way to reality. Carlo Ginzburg (1983) amended this argument by emphasizing that the

stereotype underwent radical changes from the medieval period to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, under the influence of not only theologians, but also of folk rituals and beliefs: the myth of the Sabbat, as Cohn described it, was not created solely by the elite, because folklore also played a part. Cohn and Ginzburg agreed that when the Sabbat appeared in early modern documents, the flight of the witch was an important part of this myth. Ginzburg (1990) and his followers (e.g., Pócs 1992) emphasized the previously neglected accounts of flight that occurred in folklore and shamanic culture throughout the world, rather than that it was an elaboration by elite mentalities during the witchcraft trials of the early modern period. In other words, they stressed that the flight of witches was not simply invented, or stolen from Roman antiquity, but also, in a sense, discovered (or rediscovered). Ginzburg was particularly concerned to show how and why the flight of witches originated in folklore, believing that the *benandanti* provided vital clues to this. Ginzburg's study about the *benandanti* clearly demonstrated that the notion of the witch's Sabbat took shape around the middle of the fourteenth century, much earlier than was previously thought and clearly not in agreement with Cohn's argument.

Although Cohn's rationalist argument remains valid insofar as witches did not actually fly, considerable evidence about trance-like shamanistic states favors Ginzburg's explanation of the flight. When such accounts are combined with the testimony of the *benandanti*, *Táltos*, and *Calusari*—or indeed, compared with modern accounts of spirit flight—it appears that there is something genuine occurring.

Spirit flight is common today. Anywhere between 8 and 34 percent of respondents in surveys claim to have had an out-of-body experience at some point in their lives. Such testimony describes a completely separate phenomenon that appears to be an elaboration of folk belief in nighttime spirit flight of the type described by Ginzburg. It is possible that spirit flight was indeed once common throughout Europe. Its origins lay in early European pagan practices, possibly shamanistic.

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See also: ANIMALS; APULEIUS OF MADAURA; BENEVENTO, WALNUT TREE OF; BURCHARD OF WORMS; *CANON EPISCOPI*; DEMONS; DIANA (ARTEMIS); DRUGS AND HALLUCINOGENS; FAIRIES; FOLKLORE; GINZBURG, CARLO; HOLDA; INFANTICIDE; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; LAMIA; LILITH; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; NIDER, JOHANNES; OINTMENTS; PEOPLE OF THE NIGHT (*NACHTVOLK*); SABBAT; SHAMANISM; SIMON MAGUS; STICKS; STRIX, STRIGA, STRIA.

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FOLKLORE

Witchcraft, as a normative communal and behavior regulating institution, was endemic in most agricultural communities in medieval and early modern Europe. The system required an ideology in which certain persons could cause damage to fellow creatures through occult means. This witchcraft ideology was mainly passed down through oral transmission in these communities, gradually incorporating some elements from elite demonology, until both strata merged into the witchcraft folklore of present-day Europe. Because of local traditions, witchcraft folklore remains extremely varied; nevertheless, there are many convergences and identities all over Europe because witchcraft tradition is

very ancient and because demonology has exercised a unifying influence.

REPORTS OF EXPERIENCES (MEMORATES)

Memorates most directly reflect the beliefs and rites of witchcraft. They suffice for projecting local beliefs onto a member of a given community who is momentarily accused of witchcraft, and they provide an ideological background to the process of incrimination both in the village community and at the court recording the witchcraft trial through eyewitness accounts. They offer pictures of stereotypical village witches and provide a folkloric map of such figures almost everywhere in Europe. The folklore motifs contained in them define the character, capabilities, activities, methods of making spells, and targets of the witch. The overall character and main features of the witch figure vary from region to region in accordance with their various demonic and magical ancestors (e.g., the witch's relations with Mahr, mara, mora, Alp, Elb, fairy, and werewolf figures).

The most important motifs include the formal variants of witches (various animals according to local tradition such as cats, dogs, snakes, etc.). All over Europe, several attributes manifest their superhuman powers: witches are invisible; they can fly; their soul flies out in a state of trance and so on. Their diabolical helpers, allies or familiars, and their animal helpers present great regional diversions: cats in western and central Europe; rabbits in northern and western Europe; frogs in central and eastern Europe; and snakes and dogs in eastern Europe. Their harmful activities seem broadly similar almost everywhere: witches damaged crops and domestic animals, especially milk and dairy products. The most important personal memories of nonwitches usually concern spells against themselves or their households, which mainly exist in the system of neighborhood witchcraft as narratives based on noticing symptoms of illness. Counteraction is usually fitted into the same narrative. There are several local versions for identifying a witch and avenging the damage, mostly involving divinatory methods for selecting the culprit and symbolic forms of punishment. Thus it was common all over Europe that pricking, firing, or smoking milk provided methods for making the witch sick. An important group of memorates refer to the death of the witch and transmitting its legacy (a witch cannot die before passing her knowledge on to somebody, sometimes by shaking hands).

BELIEF LEGENDS

These are narratives of a higher aesthetic standard that do not connect the stereotypes of witchcraft to a particular person or a personal experience. Although they may include local folklore motifs, these migrant legends seem highly unified all over Europe, mirroring few of

the local variations in witchcraft belief. They are known even in places where witchcraft never existed as an institution or had died out. They are strongly influenced by stereotypes of Christian demonology found in anti-witchcraft manuals. Demonological notions of the witches' Sabbath were thereby transported to a few areas of eastern Europe that were free of antiwitchcraft purges. The similarity of these motifs, overarching several countries and languages, is clearly demonstrated by international and national catalogs of legends, in which types of witchcraft legends form extremely rich chapters throughout central, western, and northern Europe. The situation is somewhat similar in south and southeastern Europe, where similar legends are also associated with demonic figures and magicians.

The most important topics of international witch legends include the unique circumstances of the witch's birth (born of a demon, of a person without status, born with a sign or a bodily mark); the way witches acquired their knowledge, learning from spirits or the Devil through denying God, with an oath sworn to or a pact made with the Devil. The Devil's pact is not necessarily a consequence of elite demonology: it was a well-known folklore motif across much of Orthodox eastern Europe, regardless of witchcraft belief. Stereotypes of *maleficium* (harmful magic) associated with groups of witches are connected not to local and specific cases of bewitching, but to a more general notion of witchcraft, partly inspired by clerical demonology. Elements of this nature include the special dates of communal malefaction (Matthias, Walpurgis night, Friday of the new moon, Luca, Good Friday, St. John's Day, St. George's Day, Christmas, and so forth, depending on the area) and the recognition, detection, and surveillance of witches on these days (such legends, highly popular in central and eastern Europe, usually concern initiation into demonic knowledge such as St. Lucy's stool in central Europe or identification by a priest in Orthodox areas). Group or communal methods of bewitching include taking the yield of the grain by picking dew (a predominantly central European legend), Germanic or Slavic "wind witches" in central Europe, groups of witches raising hailstorms in western and central Europe (witches who "steal" rain were also known in the drier parts of central and eastern Europe), or groups of witches on the Balkan peninsula who remove or eat people's hearts.

Legends about witches' societies and parties range from folklore narratives of demon and fairy groups to the stereotypical demonological narrative of the witches' Sabbats. They contain motifs from legends of groups of witches flying on tours of *maleficium* or marching to orgies on the backs of animals. Sometimes these orgies took place in mills and cellars, but usually they were held atop hills (the German Blocksberg, Hungarian Tokay Hill and Gellért Hill, Ukrainian and Polish Bold Hill, Scandinavian Blåkulla, Croatian Klek, Medvenica,

etc.); their contents (music and dance, feasting, perverse sexuality, Devil's mass) are stereotypical and widespread. They are saturated with the conspiratorial notions of witches' gatherings and Devil's masses propagated by ecclesiastical demonology, particularly in central and western Europe where witchcraft manuals were more commonly known. Legends about the witches' Sabbat were popular in the territories of several peoples. Their motifs include spying on the witches spreading ointment on their bodies (persons spying and copying the witches experience harm); at the mention of God's name the flying witch falls down; food or musical instruments become worthless or obscene objects; the victim dragged to the witches' Sabbat is initiated, or swears membership, or makes a pact with the Devil; initiation by such methods as removing bones or boiling the person; turning people into horses or other animals, then saddling or humiliating these animals. Devices used to fly to these orgies vary according to area: Romanian and Ukrainian witches use instruments of hemp work, while German witches use broomsticks, baking shovels, or milk churns.

In central and eastern Europe, narratives of witches' Sabbats incorporate a great number of beliefs and rites about such pre-Christian supernatural beings as demons, fairies, or werewolves, and offer a large place to "soul journeys" by shamanistic magicians, which were integrated into the medieval system of village witchcraft. For example, we can find both motifs of fairy feasts and battles by witches in storm clouds for good weather and good harvests in Hungarian, Croatian, and Slovenian sources, and we can find battles of Romanian witches to deter disease. Group gatherings of demons, magicians, and witches and their battles appear as the oldest and most persistent topos of witches' Sabbat narratives before being revived as part of European witchcraft beliefs in the Middle Ages.

FAIRY TALES

The witches of fairy tales have little in common with witchcraft belief and the functioning social institution of witchcraft. The witch in these tales is a universal European figure, a vicious, demonic opponent who the hero must defeat to attain his aim—usually, a happy marriage. In other cases, the witch is an ambivalent harming–helping being who sometimes helps the hero in return for certain services or assistance. Witches in fairy tales can be influenced by the demonic beings of local folklore or its stereotypical witch figure, as with the *Holle* and the man-eating witch of German tales, the Russian Baba Yaga, or the Eastern European "Iron-nosed witch" (see types AaTh 450, AaTh 327A, AaTh 709 in the international catalog of folktales).

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TRANSLATED BY ORSOLYA FRANK

See also: ANIMALS; CATS; COUNTERMAGIC; FAIRIES; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; POPULAR BELIEFS IN WITCHES; SABBAT; SHAMANISM; WEATHER MAGIC.

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FOURIER, ST. PIERRE (1564–1641)

Among several post-Tridentine saints who were involved in repressing witchcraft, including the famous St. Carlo Borromeo (who encouraged some prosecutions in his archdiocese of Milan), none had a more bitter experience with this problem than Lorraine's Pierre Fourier. This homegrown saint, canonized only in the twentieth century, who both reformed his own monastic order and founded a new religious order for women (both were approved at Rome in 1628), served from 1597 to 1632 as parish priest in the large village of Mattaincourt, near his birthplace; he also became a respected adviser to Lorraine's rulers, especially Duke Charles IV (1624–1675).

In this baroque age, Fourier seems unpretentious and levelheaded. During his first thirty years at Mattaincourt,

ten people from his parish were tried for witchcraft, although only one of them was burned, in 1598. There is no mention of any of them in Fourier's abundant correspondence; his first recorded opinions on the subject came when he witnessed some spectacular exorcisms of a noblewoman in Lorraine's capital in 1621 and expressed thinly veiled skepticism about the authenticity of her possession and her accusations that two prominent men had bewitched her. Four years later, Fourier attended the celebratory banquet preceding the burning of Lorraine's most politically prominent witchcraft victim, the former ducal councilor André des Bordes: not much skepticism seems apparent here.

It was deeply embarrassing to Fourier when Charles IV learned that a massive outbreak of demonic possession had struck Mattaincourt in 1627. Understandably preoccupied by the fate of his reforms at Rome, Fourier was absent from his parish for over a year, sending a few ineffective exorcists there while local secular officials, confident that local witches were behind this scandal, began arresting suspects. When he finally reached Mattaincourt in 1628, Fourier was aghast at the size of the problem. "There are at least eighty-five people," he reported, "either possessed by the Devil (*l'ennemi*) or tormented by various other kinds of bewitchments. Some of them grunt like pigs, others bark like dogs, and all of them are unable to function normally. Nearly all of them are young girls and a few women; I know of only one man and one or two boys. When they are all together in the church for Mass, they make such strange noises that it is impossible to hear any music, any sermon, any other voices than theirs, which terrify those in attendance. And when they are commanded by the vicar of the Franciscans from Toul (who has been working with them for five or six weeks), those who can speak do nothing but shout, slander, curse, blaspheme, screaming that such-and-such a one (whom they name by their full names) has sent them there, and that she must be burned before they will leave the poor creature. It's all extremely pitiful," concluded Fourier (Derréal and Cord'homme 1988, III, 127–128).

The future saint had been victorious at Rome, but the Devil was handing him a humiliating defeat in his own parish, in a context that looks surprisingly like an early Catholic anticipation of events in Salem Village, Massachusetts, sixty years later. Fourier was not the kind of man to attempt exorcisms himself, and none of his imported experts could control the situation. The secular arm took over: Duke Charles IV named special commissioners to conduct the investigations. Before the fires died out in 1631, almost thirty of Fourier's parishioners had been burned as witches and eight child-witches had to be quarantined indefinitely in a special home, which had been confiscated from the richest victim of this witch hunt. The panic spread to nearby regions; before it ended, fifty people had died,

making it the single worst episode in the history of witch hunting in a strongly affected province. It certainly contributed to Fourier's resigning his position in 1632, but of course, it was never mentioned in the subsequent hagiographic literature leading to his beatification and eventual canonization.

—WILLIAM MONTER

See also: BORROMEIO, ST. CARLO; CHILDREN; LORRAINE, DUCHY OF; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; SALEM.

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FRANCE

The kingdom of France is a key area for the study of witchcraft trials, despite quite serious archival deficiencies. France had an unusual, highly sophisticated judicial system, which exercised a high level of control over local courts. There were serious disagreements among the elites about witchcraft, which gave rise to highly illuminating disputes and discussions. While there were probably several thousand trials in the country, and numerous lynchings, the number of legal executions was strikingly low, perhaps not more than a few hundred over the century of general activity between 1570 and 1670. One exceptional feature is the high proportion of men among the accused, around half of the known cases, and up to 75 percent in some regions. Ultimately, in the face of some outbreaks of local witch hunting led by self-proclaimed witch finders, the royal government intervened to halt persecution after 1670, and there were only a few sorcerers executed after this time.

The departmental archives of the modern French state contain some extensive records of witchcraft trials, yet with rare exceptions these are from regions still outside the frontiers of the kingdom at the relevant time. Parts of the then Spanish Netherlands, Lorraine, Alsace, Franche-Comté, Savoy, and Navarre all fall into this category. A number of scholars have fallen into the trap of treating these border regions, many of them French speaking, as mere extensions of the areas actually ruled by the Valois and Bourbon kings. The admittedly defective evidence suggests that in most respects this is unjustifiable, since the French kingdom proper followed its own very distinctive pattern.

The most basic problem arises from the dismally poor level of preservation of local judicial archives across France, which are virtually nonexistent for any first instance court before the later decades of the

seventeenth century. It is not clear whether some historians are correct in asserting that trial records were commonly burned with the witch, a practice that would naturally have worsened the situation. This crucial archival gap severely limits the possibilities for close analysis of the French case; it explains the otherwise baffling paucity of local monographs and published source materials. The haphazard survival of documents on a few cases suggests that rural witchcraft accusations in France closely resembled those across most of Europe, a very unsurprising conclusion. The most striking discrepancy is the unusually high proportion of men among French suspects; but there also appears to have been a significant difference in the way the legal system handled the cases, albeit with significant local variations, some of which we can only intuit.

France possessed a complex hierarchical assemblage of law courts (which was evidence for the slow process of state formation), within which royal justice and lawyers played a key role. In the sixteenth century, a series of reforming ordinances, notably that of Villers-Cotterets (1539), reaffirmed and developed the procedures to be followed in these courts. The standard inquisitorial procedure was coupled with the provision that appeals could be made through higher courts until they reached the top level of the *parlements*, sovereign courts whose *ressorts* (jurisdictional areas) between them covered the whole kingdom. These prestigious institutions had wide regulatory powers; while their central concern was with property law, they also maintained a special chamber (the *Tournelle*) to hear appeals in criminal cases (and occasionally to act as a first instance tribunal). The vast *ressort* of the Paris *parlement* covered around half the country; it was surrounded by a range of smaller districts supervised by regional *parlements* at Rouen, Rennes, Bordeaux, Pau, Toulouse, Aix-en-Provence, Grenoble, and Dijon. Once the jurisdiction of these skilled professionals had been established, the crown was apparently content to allow them to define the law through practice, with a wide range of discretion. Witchcraft was just one of many capital offenses that remained undefined by any formal legislation until the late seventeenth century. The underlying assumption appeared to be that the law came close to being a mystical entity, a reflection of divine will as formulated and refined by the best legal minds since the days of the Israelite kingdom and the Roman Republic. Such ideas would have reinforced the other motives of self-interest and prestige that drew the *parlementaires* to assert themselves at the expense of lower courts, usually in the name of ensuring higher judicial standards.

The standard procedure in a late sixteenth-century French trial would be for a local court to collect witness testimony, interrogate the accused, if necessary under torture, and then pronounce its sentence. Anyone convicted of a crime could then appeal to the relevant

parlement, which would review the documentation, question the defendant afresh, and perhaps order another session of torture. This often meant an expensive process of transferring the prisoner long distances under guard, so that the superior court could confirm or modify the original verdict. After the first decades of the seventeenth century, the Paris *parlement*, followed by some others, required automatic appeals in witchcraft cases. That clearly implied grave concerns about the operation of the previous system, which depended both on the accused being aware of their legal rights and on the lower courts respecting them. Because there is a presumption that accused witches would often have been isolated figures, there was an obvious temptation for local judges to evade the costly appeal process. Worse still, evidence was accumulating for episodes of virtual lynch law, with the community seizing suspects in order to subject them to wholly illegal treatment such as the swimming test, or just doing away with them on the flimsiest grounds. In his famous demand for harsher measures against witches, the *Démonomanie des Sorciers* (On the Demon-Mania of Witches, 1580), Jean Bodin blamed excessive lenience by the judges for such abuses. His ingenious argument seems to have fallen flat with the magistrates, who were far more inclined to punish the perpetrators, as part of a general assertion of their own higher rationality when this was set against popular violence and credulity.

Another effect of the central position held by the *parlements* was to restrict the judicial role of the Church. France had never possessed a national inquisition, and the local inquisitorial tribunals around its southern fringes had disappeared by the middle of the sixteenth century. We now know that the hundreds of trials supposedly carried out by the fourteenth-century inquisitors at Carcassonne and Toulouse were complete fictions, invented by the prolific novelist Lamothe-Langon in the 1820s (Cohn 1975, 126–138).

There was a very severe early persecution in the alpine regions of Dauphiné in the fifteenth century, although this territory was still virtually autonomous at the time, after coming under the distant authority of the crown in 1349. Here the ecclesiastical authorities and the secular courts appear to have combined all too efficiently, probably inspired by preachers from the mendicant orders. There were at least 300 trials in the period from the 1420s to the 1460s, most of which probably ended with death sentences. Like the fifteenth-century trials in neighboring Switzerland and Savoy, these cases appear to have been remarkably similar in essentials to those from the major European persecutions that took place more than a century later, with a combination of *maleficium* (harmful magic) and diabolism alleged against most of the accused. As with its Swiss counterparts, it is easier to see how this epidemic began than to understand why it receded by the

late fifteenth century to a relative handful of scattered local trials (Paravy 1993, 775–905).

Across the kingdom as a whole, there is little sign that witchcraft trials were anything but very rare events before the mid-sixteenth century. They begin to appear in growing numbers at just that period, around the time when laws were being codified, new courts created, and something of a repressive drive launched against many other forms of crime, with a particular concern about highway robbery and the misdeeds of discharged soldiers. As elsewhere in Europe, the sixteenth century in France saw a very sharp rise in capital sentences for a variety of crimes, with service in the royal galleys as a thoroughly disagreeable second-rank form of deterrence. These trends appear to correlate better with the social and economic problems associated with a growing population, most notably an increase in begging and vagrancy, than with the highly disturbed era of the Wars of Religion. The ruling classes might well have become conscious of a general threat of disorder, calling for draconian preventive measures. At the level of fantasy, at least witchcraft represented a summation of virtually all the greatest fears of the age, with the witches as the ultimate deviants, traitors both to God and to the rest of humanity.

While a whole range of plausible links of this type can be suggested, the surviving evidence is so scanty that none can be properly tested. We have no reliable figures for the numbers of trials in the *ressorts* of most provincial *parlements*, although the present consensus of opinion favors a very modest figure. The Rouen *parlement*, which was unusually prone to convict witches, is known to have heard a minimum of 380 cases between 1564 and 1660. Samples from Aix-en-Provence show 103 cases, and from Dijon 159, over shorter periods (Monter 1997, 564–567, 584). Elsewhere, records have either been destroyed (as at Bordeaux by fire), are currently unavailable for consultation (one series at Toulouse), or have so far proved uncommunicative.

In relation to the population concerned, the Rouen figure would not differ sharply from the other case where a fairly convincing count is possible. This results from the protracted labors of Alfred Soman in the archives of the Paris *parlement*, a triumph of paleography when dealing with some of the worst handwriting even this notorious period ever produced. A virtually continuous record survives for those prisoners held in Paris while their appeals were decided over the period 1565–1639, with obvious imperfections during the years of the Catholic League (1589–1594); with some other material, this produces a total of 1,288 known appeals from convicted witches between 1540 and 1670. Traces also exist of some 554 other cases known to have been heard in the inferior courts over the same period, while the Paris records include rather summary interrogations of numerous individuals. The same

sources allow a comparison between figures for witchcraft and other crimes. Some of the conclusions from this data apply mainly to the jurisprudence of the *parlement*, and appear under that separate heading. The overall curve is a wholly typical one for neighboring regions: a slow increase in annual numbers until 1580, a plateau at around 20 appeals a year, dropping to 15 across the 1620s, and declining to negligible levels thereafter. It seems probable that any cases not appealed would occur mainly in the earlier period, so the decades before 1600 may contain the highest aggregate figures, as they certainly did for death sentences. At no time did the lower courts condemn significantly more than half the accused to death, a figure that again dropped sharply after 1620, while the *parlement* confirmed only a fraction of these sentences at any time. In consequence, only just over 100 of those who appealed were executed, and after 1625 it was effectively impossible to be legally put to death as a witch within Parisian jurisdiction (Soman 1992, *passim*).

The evidence from appeals to the higher courts, coupled with the scattered local material, does allow some general conclusions about the pattern of events in France. Formal accusations and trials took off abruptly from a previously low level around 1575; within a decade they had probably reached a plateau maintained until about 1620. Over this period there was an underlying pattern of scattered trials over wide areas of the kingdom, boosted by some local panics that promoted brief bursts of more intense activity. The northeastern province of Champagne, and more specifically the Ardennes region, stands out as a center of such witch hunts. They produced various abuses, including murdering suspects and using the swimming test, which attracted strong disapproval from senior clerics, royal agents, and judges alike. There was also the famous hunt at the southwestern extremity of the kingdom, in the Basque *pays de Labourd*, led by the Bordeaux judge Pierre de Lancre in 1609–1610, which seems to have embarrassed his colleagues. His claim to have executed 600 witches is now considered a gross exaggeration, with 80 as a more plausible figure, and only twelve (including three priests) known as certain.

Our very limited information about this and other provincial *parlements* suggests that their attitude evolved in a broadly similar fashion to that of the Parisian judges; the most notable exception is the *parlement* of Rouen. By the 1640s it was becoming evident that there was a real divergence between the judges in Paris and Rouen, to the point that a tactless joke caused trouble at a meeting between leading members of the two courts during the Fronde. It is tempting to think that the Norman judges were trying to uphold traditional Christian values as a way of asserting themselves against their haughty neighbors up the Seine. This might also have reflected the special character of the

cases they heard, for no less than three-quarters of those accused in Normandy were men. A high proportion of these were shepherds, whose widespread practice of sympathetic magic to protect their animals was easily construed as witchcraft. Accusations against a significant number of priests may have been connected to the sacrilegious use of communion wafers for such purposes (Monter 1997, 580–594).

Because the *parlements* of Paris and Dijon also saw a slight majority of male witches, the French situation was plainly an exceptional one, compared to that in any other major European country. Although significant numbers of shepherds, herdsmen, and priests are also found in these other regions, on their own they do not seem a sufficient explanation for an anomaly historians have yet to explain; the lack of fully documented trials is a major handicap here. Within the huge *ressort* of Paris there is a distinct gradient, from around 70 percent men among the accused in the west to 70 percent women in the northeast. Aix-en-Provence had a 70/30 predominance of women, which was probably typical for the Midi as a whole.

The frequent cases where priests were discovered acting as magicians and *devins* (cunning folk) also appear to have been something of a French speciality. They shaded off into the spectacular cases of demonic possession affecting convents in which priests allegedly acted as the diabolical agents who brought about the affliction. In the cases of Louis Gaufridi at Aix in 1611 and Urban Grandier at Loudun in 1634, their supposed victims were Ursuline nuns, while the less impressive episode at Louviers in 1643 involved a local order of Hospitalières and two priests (Mandrou 1969, 195–341; Certeau 2000). There were also some instances of self-confessed werewolves, notably Jacques Roulet of Anjou (1598) and Jean Grenier from near Coutras (1603), both of whom the courts treated with remarkable restraint (Mandrou 1969, 157, 185–188; Mandrou 1979, 33–109). From the start there were evidently many men in authority who took a skeptical attitude toward witchcraft accusations set against other Frenchmen who displayed high levels of credulity or persecuting zeal. The Devil's actions in the world plainly aroused wildly varying opinions and reactions among the French elite, in a period when the Wars of Religion and the subsequent age of Catholic reform created a very special context. Around the middle of the seventeenth century there was a perceptible change in atmosphere as an austere and disciplined religious style gained ascendancy over the more enthusiastic, supernatural elements in French Catholicism. This crucial cultural shift helped make belief in witchcraft increasingly unfashionable among the educated classes, a clear majority of whom came to classify most manifestations as signs of popular superstition and unreason, even if they still accepted the theoretical possibility.

The skepticism of many French lawyers, doctors, and clergy was deepened by the scandalous possession trials at Loudun and Louviers, then by a widespread popular witch hunt in 1644–1645 that began in Languedoc and affected Champagne, the Bourbonnais, Burgundy, and parts of Gascony. In some areas the catalyst was devastating summer frosts, but there were numerous instances where traveling witch finders appeared to organize the hunt for suspects, including a shepherd boy in Burgundy known as the *le petit prophète* and a whole team in Languedoc whom the *parlement* of Toulouse hunted down and hanged. The *parlements* of Toulouse and Dijon were swamped by large numbers of cases sent up on appeal, to which they responded by a handful of executions followed by hundreds of acquittals and reductions of sentences. Not surprisingly, we also hear of many summary executions and killings in 1644 and 1645. For several years afterward, the *parlements* also took action against the witch finders and those who aided them, and numerous death sentences were handed down, mostly in absentia because the ring-leaders fled (Mandrou 1969, 370–394).

After a lengthy period of relative quiescence, a new panic broke out in 1670, this time affecting both the southwest and Normandy. The *parlements* of Bordeaux and Pau had to deal with a renewal of the witch-finding phenomenon; while the former reacted strongly, the commissioners sent out from Pau appear to have been both credulous and corrupt. Meanwhile, the Rouen *parlement* was facing a wave of accusations in the Cotentin area, and First President Claude Pellot found himself at odds with a powerful group of senior magistrates who favored a traditional stance. As a relative and client of the powerful royal minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert, Pellot was able to call royal authority to his aid with an order to suspend the proceedings. He also consulted the chancellor of the University of Paris, Pierre Lalemant, who responded with a beautifully crafted statement of the case for mitigated skepticism and judicial caution. Royal intervention also brought an end to the troubles in Gascony. In 1672 a royal order forced the Rouen magistrates into unwilling compliance, while promising a decisive ordinance on the whole matter (Mandrou 1969, 425–466; Mandrou 1979, 219–230).

No new ordinance was promulgated until 1682; the long delay can be partly imputed to the scandalous *affaire des poisons*, in which numerous courtiers were found to have been dabbling in black magic and divination. The royal decision only dealt with witchcraft in a curiously oblique fashion. It was merely listed among a range of activities that involved imposture and abuse, defined as “so-called magic,” *la prétendue magie*, while at the same time emphasizing the heinous nature of sacrilege and poisoning. Its provisions even allowed the *parlements* of Paris and Rouen to approve the execution

of some shepherds for *prétendue magie* in succeeding years (Mandrou 1969, 466–486, 499–512).

Nevertheless, it is evident that the monarchy and most of its senior officials now saw witchcraft accusations as the kind of disorder they wished to eliminate, an attitude that ensured there would be no more serious persecutions in France. There were to be a few further cases of demonic possession, mostly hushed up quite effectively, while magicians continued to find gullible clients for love magic and for locating buried treasure. Witchcraft beliefs would never be eradicated. Down into the late twentieth century they continued to motivate a scattering of murders and acts of violence in rural communities, and modern anthropologists have been able to study them as a living entity; in that sense, the history of witchcraft in France remains unfinished business.

ROBIN BRIGGS

See also: AFFAIR OF THE POISONS; AIX-EN-PROVENCE NUNS; ARDENNES; BASQUE COUNTRY; BODIN, JEAN; BURGUNDY, DUCHY OF; CUNNING FOLK; DAUPHINÉ; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; LAMOTHE-LANGON, ÉTIENNE-LÉON DE; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; LANGUEDOC; LAWYERS; LOUDUN NUNS; LOUVIERS NUNS; LYCANTHROPY; LYNCHING; MALE WITCHES; MANDROU, ROBERT; MUCHEMBLED, ROBERT; NORMANDY; *PARLEMENT* OF PARIS; POISON; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; PROOF, PROBLEM OF; SWIMMING TEST; WARS OF RELIGION (FRANCE); WITCH FINDERS.

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FRANCHE-COMTÉ

Borderèd on the north and east by the two worst witch-hunting regions of Francophone Europe—Catholic Lorraine and the Swiss Protestant Pays de Vaud—Franche-Comté was understandably afflicted with many trials and executions for witchcraft. Today a part of eastern France, this French-speaking province belonged to the Spanish Habsburgs during the age of European witchcraft trials. Although its earliest trial, already featuring flying broomsticks and roasted babies, dates from 1434, the province saw only five known cases before 1500. Perhaps inspired by the imperial law code of 1532 (the Carolina Code), the provincial appellate court wrested jurisdiction over witchcraft from the Inquisition in 1534. However, Franche-Comté's witchcraft trials remained rare after 1500. There were only eighteen known cases before 1549, and only forty-seven more cases (one per year) until 1597 (Rochelandet 1997, 45–46). The vast majority of Franche-Comté's nearly 800 known trials were held between 1600 and 1660, a generation later than in neighboring regions.

Witchcraft legislation was minimal here. After the province laicized this crime in the 1530s, nothing further occurred until 1604, when an ordinance from the Spanish Netherlands permitting all local judges to impose the death penalty for *maleficium* (harmful magic) or for attending Sabbats was extended to Franche-Comté. Because the best predictor of whether or not such a region would experience exceptionally severe persecutions is the extent of its regulation by appellate justice, it is important to realize that Franche-Comté (except for its largest town, the imperial free city of Besançon) had a sovereign provincial *parlement*, which acted much like its French counterparts when judging appeals in witchcraft cases. Surviving sources, carefully explored (Rochelandet 1997), enable us to learn the outcomes of exactly 700 witchcraft trials in Franche-Comté from the fifteenth century until the French conquest of 1668. Nearly 60 percent of them ended with death sentences, but this figure masks the difference between cases decided by local judges and never appealed, with 84 percent resulting in death sentences, over half of which were carried out immediately, and cases judged on appeal by the provincial *parlement*, with 53 percent resulting in death sentences (Rochelandet 1997, 66–67).

Franche-Comté's first major witch hunts, orchestrated by the demonologist Henri Boguet at St. Claude around 1600 and a generation later by his disciple Jean Clerc, the *bailli* (bailiff, the king's representative in a bailiwick) of Luxeuil, both relied on testimony by children and both occurred in lands belonging to great Benedictine abbeys. Neither episode, however, led to a great chain of trials and deaths. Boguet was responsible for fewer than thirty executions in a decade; at Luxeuil,

while Clerc pronounced about forty death sentences. Boguet's career as both witch hunter and demonologist ended after the *parlement* overturned some of his death sentences early in 1612. Clerc's situation seems similar because the *parlement*, after confirming a few appeals of his early death sentences, upheld only four deaths in nineteen witchcraft cases appealed from Luxeuil after summer 1631, and we have no reports of further witchcraft trials there (Monter 1976, 77, 219). Franche-Comté's *parlement* judged cases of witchcraft every year from 1591 until the Thirty Years' War devastated the province after 1636 and destroyed a large part of its population. The *parlement* rarely upheld more than five executions for witchcraft per year, and, even with Boguet or Clerc, no individual village generated more than five trials a year.

Franche-Comté avoided both the excesses and the achievements of its neighbors. The province had no major panics with dozens of executions at a time; there were no bewitched convents, no sorcerer-priests, and no famous cases apart from a peculiar fascination with werewolves. If 136 suspects were searched for the Devil's mark in Franche-Comté and only two did not have one, it is also true that relatively few suspected witches were tortured (Rochelandet 1997, 31, 34). However, its *parlement* never saw fit to imitate the example of its western neighbors and institutional cousins in the duchy of Burgundy (at this time, people spoke of the "two Burgundies") by ordering automatic appeals of all death sentences for witchcraft.

Lycanthropy was a local specialty in Franche-Comté and seems particularly prominent among the province's sixteenth-century witchcraft trials (Oates 1989). "The people of this country ought to know as much as anyone about werewolves," Boguet remarks, "because they have always been known here" (Boguet 1929, 140)—and they were particularly feared for attacking and killing children. Johann Weyer knew about the burning of three local werewolves in 1521; their portraits decorated an important town church. A hermit burned as a werewolf in 1574 was celebrated by a pamphlet. Boguet noted four werewolves (three of them women) among his first group of suspected witches in 1598 and complained that two other confessed werewolves had been executed before they could satisfy his curiosity. Nevertheless, despite this tradition, Franche-Comté's seventeenth-century witches included few werewolves.

After the province had lost much of its population during the Thirty Years' War, Franche-Comté experienced a final flurry of witch hunting between 1658 and 1661. This late panic began when an inquisitor, Pierre Symard, encouraged witchcraft accusations through *monitoires* (monitories—admonitions) in church pulpits in 1657. Symard's antiwitch crusade caused hundreds of arrests, and records show over twenty

witchcraft trials per year after 1657, totals surpassed only by the 1627–1632 surge. However, only 25 of the 116 recorded witchcraft trials in Franche-Comté from 1658–1661 had any connection to this inquisitor (Rochelandet 1997, 58). At first, in 1658–1659, the *parlement* upheld the vast majority of death sentences from those appealing to it. However, the appellate court then reversed itself and the counterattack was rapid and effective. A Besançon physician published the first French translation of Friedrich Spee's diatribe against torture, with the approval of local ecclesiastical dignitaries, in 1660. Complaints to Rome about Symard's methods persuaded the papacy to revoke his appointment as inquisitor by 1661. No more death sentences for witchcraft were carried out in Franche-Comté after 1661 and Louis XIV had no need to decriminalize this offense when he annexed this province in 1674.

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: BOGUET, HENRI; BURGUNDY, DUCHY OF; FRANCE; LYCANTHROPY.

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FRANCKEN II, FRANS (1585–1624)

Frans Francken II was a Flemish artist whose Antwerp studio is primarily known for its altarpieces and small cabinet paintings depicting religious and mythological themes and innovative subject matter, such as an assembly of witches. Francken's witch scenes are unique for their encyclopedic display of witchcraft motifs, presumably based on a well-digested knowledge of various demonological tracts. They depict old and young women engaged in various demonic activities: worshipping the Devil, anointing their bodies before flying up the chimney and traversing the night skies, stirring a cauldron, reading *grimoires*, divining by twisting a sieve, and conjuring with a magic circle. They also show a dazzling array of attributes of sorcery—a mandragora, a hand of glory, a waxen image, a priest's stole—and monstrous creatures.

Four surviving witchcraft paintings from his studio are by his hand, including three versions of a witches' kitchen (an indoor assembly of witches around a fireplace) (London, Victoria and Albert Museum, signed and dated 1606; Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum:

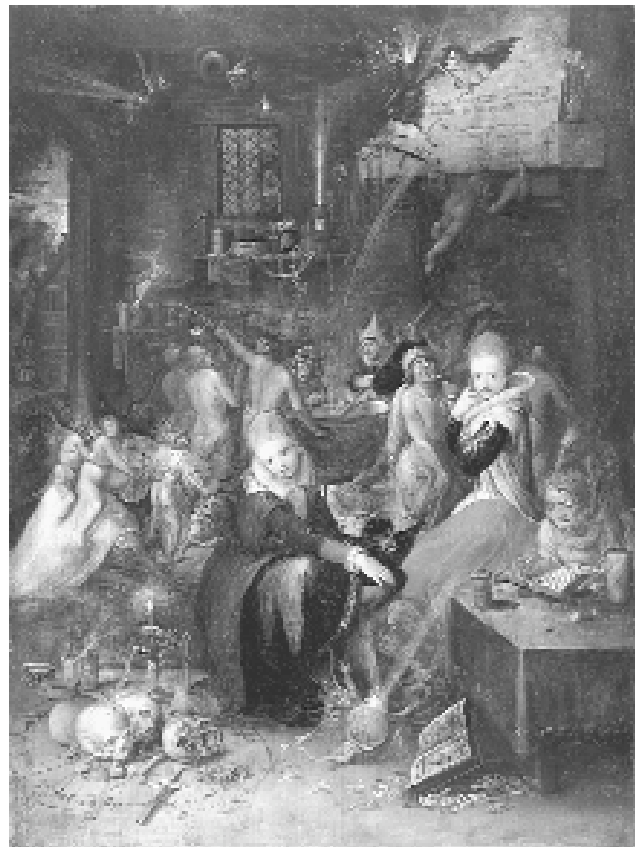
ca. 1610; Munich, Alte Pinakothek: ca. 1610) and a large outdoor night scene (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, signed and dated 1607). Two additional paintings are mentioned in auction catalogs. One authentic drawing presents a witches' scene (Vienna, Albertina). (Härting 1989, # 405, 410, 409, 408, 406*, 407*, and ill. 67).

THE PRODUCTION OF FRANS FRANCKEN II'S WITCHCRAFT PAINTINGS, INSIDE AND OUTSIDE HIS WORKSHOP

As the head of a painters' dynasty, Frans Francken II excelled in not only painterly but also entrepreneurial skills (Peeters 1999). The organization of his workshop showed early features of an evolution toward mass production of paintings: collaboration between employees and members of the Francken family and diversification into genres. The production of witches' scenes exemplifies this new marketing policy. Francken's drawing shows color indications and must therefore have circulated in his workshop to facilitate the rapid completion of paintings by employees (Peeters 1999, 70–73). Most painted copies and variations date from around 1615. A *Toverij* (sorcery scene) by his brother Hieronymus II, for example, is mentioned in the probate inventory of their father Frans Francken I (Peeters forthcoming). Ursula Härting mentions seven actual paintings, one by Hieronymus II (Prague, National Gallery) (Härting 1983). At least nine more painted and drawn copies and variations of the witches' kitchen can be traced, all from outside his workshop. An etching interpreting a Francken witches' scene by the Parisian printmaker Jaspar Isac (ca. 1654) is accompanied by a French poem titled *l'Abomination de sorciers* (The Abomination of Male Witches), although Francken depicted only females. Francken's inventions directly inspired the witches' kitchens of David Teniers the Younger.

ICONOGRAPHY

Frans Francken II was probably familiar with some of Jacques de Gheyn II's witches' scenes, for he apparently adopted several of his iconographic inventions. Most important was the device of a picture within the witchcraft picture, showing a revelry of naked witches or, as in the much-copied Francken scenes, a church building threatened by witches and demons, symbolizing and advocating loyal constancy to the "True Faith," rather than yielding to "Temptation," that is, allowing the senses to be deluded or deceived by the Devil. This moralizing message is also emphasized by some of the sorcery equipment and monstrous beings in Francken's witches' scenes, which bear a secondary, allegorical reference to devilish temptations or, more specifically, to one of the various sins that people may



Frans Francken II, Witches Sabbath, or The Assembly of Witches (1607), with thirty witches, young and old, erotic and ugly, rich and poor. Demons serve as witches' assistants or are worshipped. Witches perform amatory magic with charms and spells. (Stapleton Collection/Corbis)

commit if they yield to such temptations. A (pierced) toad, for instance, reminds the beholder of the sin of avarice, the result of a Devil-imparted delusion about the attraction of worldly possessions (Löwensteyn, forthcoming).

Like his colleagues, Francken used witchcraft paintings to present some beautiful young, female nudes whose erotic qualities are enhanced by their contrast to ugly old hags acting as procuresses for the Devil. While offering these nubile nudes to the Devil for his delectation, the old hag also offers them to the beholders—and the young women gaze straight into (his) their eyes while performing a striptease—certainly an audacious contribution to the iconographic tradition. Even more striking, however, is the fact that before they undress, these seductive nudes are clothed as contemporary bourgeois ladies of Antwerp, subtly suggesting that these young witches could be the viewers' daughters, sisters, spouses, or even perhaps, themselves (Löwensteyn forthcoming).

MACHTELD LÖWENSTEYN

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BRUEGHEL, PIETER THE ELDER; DEMONOLOGY; GHEYN II, JACQUES DE; ROSA, SALVATORE; SABBAT; TENIERS THE YOUNGER, DAVID.

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FREDEGUNDE (CA. 545–597)

Fredegunde was a Frankish queen associated with two cases of witchcraft. Of low origin, Fredegunde became one of the mistresses of the Merovingian king Chilperic I of Neustria. She later married him after inducing him to strangle his wife Galswintha (ca. 567), a member of the royal Gothic dynasty. This became a reason for the renewed war between the Frankish kingdoms of Neustria and Austrasia. Following the murder in 584 of Chilperic (over whom she had exerted remarkable power) and her order that several sons whom her husband had with other wives be killed, Fredegunde acted as regent for her son Clotaire II. Frankish historiography portrays her as an extremely cruel and power-mad ruler, torturing and murdering many men and women, even those of high standing, at her discretion; no source allows us to contradict that verdict.

When her sons had died during a disease epidemic, Fredegunde became convinced that one of her female servants had bewitched them and intended to do the same thing to her. This woman allegedly wanted to kill the queen and her children because her daughter had become the mistress of Chilperic’s son Clovis and might become the future king’s spouse, if both Fredegunde and her sons could be eliminated. The queen, therefore, had both the woman and her daughter captured and tortured. The servant confessed her use of magic arts or poison (*maleficiis*) and blamed it on Clovis, whom Fredegunde soon had murdered. The suspected sorceress “was condemned to be burned alive. As she was dragged off to the stake, the poor creature started to admit that she had lied, but her confession availed her nothing” (Gregory of Tours 1974, V: 39).

Some what later, Fredegunde’s young son Theuderic also died, probably of dysentery. Again, she searched for

the culprit and found him in the person of the prefect Mummolus, whom she hated. He had boasted of a certain herb in his possession that could cure Theuderic’s illness. As the queen could not attack this royal official directly, she first had a number of Parisian women rounded up and tortured. They were forced to confess “that they were witches . . . and responsible for many deaths . . . ‘We sacrificed your son, O Queen, to save the life of Mummolus.’ Fredegunde then had these poor wretches tortured even more inhumanely, cutting off the heads of some, burning others alive, and breaking the bones of the rest on the wheel.” This was their punishment for having used *maleficiis et incantationibus*, magic (or poison) and incantations, to murder Theuderic. Upon Fredegunde’s instigation, Chilperic I also had the prefect questioned similarly; but he denied all sorceries, admitting, however, to having used unguents and potions in order to bring him into the good favor of the king and his wife. Even after his torments, he boasted not to have felt the pain. Chilperic therefore concluded “it must be true, then, that he is a sorcerer, if the punishment which we are giving him does not hurt him.” So he racked him again, and he did not survive this for long (Gregory of Tours 1974, VI: 35).

For a number of reasons, these incidents are informative for the history of witchcraft during the Early Middle Ages: Through them we learn that the application of magic, both to arouse love and to destroy life, must have been quite common in sixth-century Gaul. Though a man might be the instigator, women were suspected first and foremost of bewitching. Torture created (or, at least, convicted) witches. Burning was a common punishment for crimes of magic, in accordance with the *Lex Salica* (Salic Law) 19, 1. In many respects, this situation was comparable to the later Middle Ages and the early modern era. However, no special ecclesiastical or civil institutions existed for witch hunting, and there is no hint of any suspicion of involvement by demonic forces. Therefore, cases of persecution for sorcery remained relatively scarce before the fourteenth century.

PETER DINZELBACHER

See also: ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS.

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FREUD, SIGMUND (1856–1939)

Freud was the pioneer of modern psychoanalysis, with an abiding interest in demonic possession and witch

persecutions. Born in Freiberg, Moravia (now Příbor, Czech Republic), Freud first became professionally interested in demonic possession while studying at the Salpêtrière hospital in Paris from 1885 to 1886 with the noted French neuropathologist, Jean Martin Charcot. In his autobiographical *Report on My Studies in Paris and Berlin* (1886), Freud praised Charcot for his astute comparisons of modern hysteria with the medieval phenomenon of demonic possession, a method that became known among contemporaries as “retrospective medicine.” Its followers eulogized the sixteenth-century physician Johann Weyer as the harbinger of modern psychiatry. Thereafter, Freud continued to identify himself closely with this highly romanticized notion of an enlightened and compassionate Weyer fighting against popular ignorance.

Apart from his personal association with Charcot, there is evidence that early modern demonological ideas influenced both Freud’s psychoanalytic theory and his practice. In his *Studies on Hysteria* (1893–1895), Freud characterized the psychoanalyst as “a father confessor, who gives absolution, as it were, by a continuance of his sympathy and respect after the confession has been made” (*S.E.* 2: 282). He also described procedures employed to overcome the resistance of patients to depth therapy, such as the laying-on of hands and the pricking of insensitive parts of the body with needles—methods curiously resembling those used by exorcists and witch hunters. In his correspondence with Wilhelm Fliess in 1897, Freud went so far as to suggest that the medieval theory of possession was *identical* with his own theory on the splitting of consciousness, that his own work on hysteria had already been published “a hundred times over, though several centuries ago,” and that he would study the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) “diligently” (Masson 1985, 224–227). In the same correspondence, he admitted his awareness that “inquisitors prick with needles to discover the devil’s stigmata” and posited a close relationship between confessions about sexual abuse by the Devil made by accused witches under torture and the communications of his own patients made during sessions of psychoanalysis concerning their childhood sexual experiences.

In 1920, a Viennese archivist brought a well-documented case of demonic possession to Freud’s attention, leading him to try his hand at retrospective medicine. His *Demonological Neurosis* (1923) examined the possession experience of a seventeenth-century Bavarian artist, Johann Christoph Haizmann. Freud diagnosed Haizmann as a long-time sufferer from ambivalent sexual identity and a castration complex whose full-blown possession followed the death of his father. He based this interpretation on archival documentation, including a monastic attestation, two pacts with the Devil, and the artist’s own androgynous caricatures of Satan. By

confidently asserting the applicability of psychoanalytic method to historical study, Freud had literally written one of the first works of psychohistory. Ultimately, however, given the overwhelming domination of Georg Wilhelm Soldan’s paradigm of possession and witchcraft at the time, his works were decidedly historicist.

There was another side to Freud’s fascination with demonology. The Devil appears over 120 times in his writing, and he displayed a marked penchant for diabolical literature. His favorite opera was Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*. His favorite books included Flaubert’s *Temptation of St. Anthony*, Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, Hugo’s *Notre Dame of Paris*, and Dante’s *Inferno*, but there is no evidence that he ever read the more famous *Madame Bovary*, or *Paradise Regained*, or Dante’s *Paradise*. Freud, an avid cocaine user from 1884 to 1895, first experimented with the drug on Walpurgis Night. This is especially striking, when one considers the lengths Freud went to in order to purchase the drug from the chemist Emanuel Merck. As Freud knew, Merck headed the German pharmaceutical company founded by Johann Heinrich Merck—a close friend of Goethe and the model for Mephistopheles in *Faust*. One psychiatrist has gone so far as to speculate that Freud (who was fascinated by the works of Nietzsche at the time) was involved in a neurotic fantasy pact with the Devil, and may have even contracted a written pact on the evening of his first experiment with cocaine, before he met Charcot or heard of Haizmann (Vitz 1988, 149–157, 170f.).

DAVID LEDERER

See also: POSSESSION, DEMONIC; PSYCHOANALYSIS; SOLDAN, WILHELM GOTTLIEB; WEYER, JOHANN.

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FREUDE, MICHAEL (CA. 1620–1692)

A Lutheran pastor in Mecklenburg, Freude implemented confessionalism in the duchy of Mecklenburg-Güstrow with a campaign of puritanical discipline and

rejection of superstitious beliefs. His experiences led him to examine the topics of witchcraft and possession closely in his writings. It is due to his work, and the work of others like him, that the persecution of witches finally ended in Mecklenburg-Güstrow.

Freude was the son of a craftsman's family in the small Mecklenburg town of Plau. He studied theology and served as pastor of Kuppentin parish between 1645 and 1678. He decided to leave his position in 1678 after long and intense disagreements with both the village overlord and with many of his parishioners. He died in Lübeck in 1692. Freude was among the few Mecklenburg pastors who actively supported the discipline and denominational policies of Duke Gustav Adolf of Güstrow, who sought to wipe out folk magic and superstition. In 1667, Freude published the first version of his *Gewissens-Fragen von Processen wieder die Hexen. Insonderheit denen Richtern hochnötig zuwissen* (Questions of Conscience Concerning Trials of Witches. In Particular, Highly Necessary for the Judges to Know). Its expanded 1671 version focused on the three aspects: the social constructs of witchcraft; the repertoire of remedies for bewitchment; and the legal basis for trials against witches. In an appendix, he discussed the topic of possession in both its religious and legal contexts.

The author reflected the theory and practice of witchcraft trials in Mecklenburg, but he also extended the discussion of determining witchcraft and the practice of trials. He determinedly followed the cautious opinion of witchcraft typical of a large group of mostly Protestant scholars, whose total opposition to superstition finally led them to vanquish belief in witchcraft. This balance between the freedom of the human will, divine permission, and the power of the Devil appears to be the complete opposite of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486). As the Devil has hardly any magical competence to perform destructive magic, the witches fall into his trap, in which Satan need only suggest the actual damage to be done. Freude did, however, consistently refer to the reality of pacts made with the Devil, and to the Devil's persuasive methods.

The educational intentions of Freude's book stemmed from his everyday experience, and he consistently emphasized the equality of the nondevout, the possessed, and witches. There were gradients of difference between these three forms of sin, but doing active or passive damage was one mark of a life without God or morals. The author constantly emphasized that salvation can only be ensured through penance and conversion, and he included witches in this. People who participated in persecuting witches because of damage done to them were stigmatized just as radically as those using any form of folk magic. A denunciation of witchcraft and folk magic would come at some predestined time, but may not be made by the victim himself.

Better to die pious, Freude claimed, than to use magic or other illegal means of healing. The only individual remedy against witchcraft he prescribed was the spiritual sword: true faith.

In addition to his strict rejection of superstition, Freude also criticized witchcraft trials, referring to legal deficiencies and charges brought against innocents in proceedings he knew of. Unlike his early work of 1667, he now quoted extensively from Friedrich Spee's *Cautio criminalis* (A Warning on Criminal Justice, 1631), although Freude seemed less radical. His personal reservations about the use of torture were portrayed vividly to the reader, but did not lead to a radical criticism of the current system of proof. (Torture, however, was not necessarily conclusive proof.) His experience with the noble patron of his parish and the attempts of the Güstrow government to place witchcraft trials under central control informed his call for strict control over local court officials by sovereign princes.

Freude was committed to arguing for a cautious and temperate approach to naming witches, accusations, and circumstantial evidence. As in 1667, his assessment of the legal basis for a trial remained vague, although this section was more extensive in 1671. He referred to witch crimes as *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime), but also thought that it should be standard procedure to give defendants legal counsel and to examine circumstantial evidence carefully. Prompted by Güstrow, Freude condemned every form of testing for witchcraft and turned his attention toward naming witches and confrontations. Although his views became obscured in citations of pieces of documentary evidence, he dismissed the idea of arresting on a single accusation and argued for cautious dealings with easily spread rumors.

After clarifying different special cases, pointing out that members of the upper classes should also be investigated if under suspicion, and questioning the characteristics of old age or youth in sentencing, Freude returned to his original goal. Witchcraft, according to him, could only be eradicated by fighting against the unbelief and ignorance of the general population. It was precisely this combination of criticism of trials and of superstition that characterized the Güstrow clergy. Only a decade after the publication of *Questions of Conscience*, the persecution of witches had ended there, because the belief in witches had in itself become a form of superstition.

KATRIN MOELLER

See also: BRENZ, JOHANN; DEMONOLOGY; GERMANY, NORTHEASTERN; MECKLENBURG, DUCHY OF; POSSESSION, DEMONIC.

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FREY, BERNHARD, SJ (1609/1610–1685)

As father confessor and advisor to the Bavarian Elector, Frey urged moderation in matters of witchcraft, demonic possession, and the insanity defense. He passed his early childhood in Oberstdorf in the aftermath of a severe witch hunt and a peasant revolt. In 1621, Frey enrolled in the Jesuit lyceum in Dillingen, became a novice in Landsberg in 1626, and studied philosophy at Ingolstadt, where he took orders formally in 1628. After teaching in Freiburg, he returned to Ingolstadt in 1633 to complete his studies in theology. After being ordained in 1637, he taught at various Jesuit educational institutions in Augsburg, Ingolstadt, Innsbruck, Landshut, Munich, and Lucerne. During this period, he intensified his interest in casuistry and moral theology (precursors of modern psychology and psychiatry) and published numerous theses on his primary scholarly interests: the soul/mind/body relationship, personal guilt, and mental culpability. In 1652–1653, he led a mission to reintroduce Catholicism to the Sulzbach region of Pfalz-Neuburg.

After 1654, Frey spent his remaining years in Munich, first as head of the elite Marian congregation and then, from 1673 to 1679, as the last in an unbroken, century-long chain of Jesuit father confessors at the court of the Wittelsbach dukes/electors. By this time, a marked shift away from demonological to pathological explanations of madness, suicide, and the insanity defense was underway at court. As father confessor and trusted spiritual advisor to Elector Ferdinand Maria, Frey helped pave the way for this paradigm shift, producing a number of seminal briefs in cases of insanity, demonic possession, and witchcraft. An incident in 1679 clearly illustrated his stance. During a private meeting with the Bavarian chancellor, his personal friend Johann Rottgner stormed into the room, produced a pistol, shot and wounded Frey, and assaulted the chancellor with a knife. Although both escaped with their lives, Rottgner was sentenced to the galleys. However, Frey interceded on his behalf with the elector, pleading for leniency on the basis of an insanity defense.

In his role as ecclesiastical advisor to the elector, he was called on to deliver expert testimony in several extraordinary cases of demonic possession. Between 1666 and 1668, Frey participated in a lengthy investigation into the activities of the demoniac, Anna Puchmayer, who drew large crowds in Freising and

Munich. After an examination of witnesses, the possessed was tested. She screamed when an empty reliquary was applied, but failed to notice the secret application of actual relics. Because she could not detect things hidden or speak in foreign languages, Frey and the other theologians decided it was a case of either melancholy or fraud. Despite subsequent claims that she could now speak Latin, Italian, and Hebrew, Puchmayer was declared a victim of fevers and a madwoman and remanded to the custody of the Holy Spirit Hospital in Munich. Simultaneously, the demoniac Anna Mayer underwent literally hundreds of exorcisms in Altötting and Benediktbeuern. Frey was convinced that all evidence of possession was lacking and that her denunciations threatened a witch hunt. He recommended she be remanded to a respectable family for Christian discipline, heavy work, and fasting. At Frey's urging, the elector officially dismissed her exorcist, the Franciscan Lucas Gasberger, from the case while Mayer, who physically assaulted the skeptical Jesuit rector in Altötting, was ultimately ordered to return home and earn her livelihood through honest toil. In 1668, Frey again discredited the relationship between the demoniac Katharina Rieder, who had signed a pact with the Devil, and her exorcist, Willibald Starck, SJ. His superiors had already had Starck transferred from Straubing to Munich after he disobeyed by performing embarrassing exorcisms there on the demoniac Elisabeth Susanna de la Haye. Frey discredited Starck's continued exorcisms in Munich as blatant repetitions of the previous incident in Straubing and again warned that he ran the danger of inciting witchcraft accusations. Frey was already known as an outspoken advocate of moderation in accusations of witchcraft, basing his opinions largely on the earlier ideas of fellow Jesuits, above all Friedrich Spee and Adam Tanner. In 1670, he became the first Bavarian official to refer publicly to the more radical *Cautio Criminalis* (A Warning on Criminal Justice, 1631) on the excesses of torture and the dangers of chain reaction persecutions alongside Tanner's moderate admonitions in an attempt to contain an isolated accusation of witchcraft and to end a series of witch hunts he duly condemned as "dangerous and dreadful trials against witches" (Behringer 1997, 323, 356).

DAVID LEDERER

See also: EXORCISM; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; PSYCHOANALYSIS; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; STOECKHLIN, CHONRAD; TANNER, ADAM.

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FREYA (FREYJA)

The goddess of fertility Freya is connected with the witch figure in many aspects: her shape-shifting abilities, her connections with magical healing, her lasciviousness, and her ability to fly at night. She became so famous that all women of distinction were given the title “*fru*” (“lady”) in her honor.

In Norse mythology, Freya is the daughter of Njord and Nerthus, or Skadi. She is Freyr’s sister and wife. She is also the wife of Od, a sun god, and Ottar’s mistress. The poet Snurri Sturluson claimed that with Od (Odur) she had two daughters, Gersemi and Hnoss (both names are synonymous with “treasure”). Freya is important to the Aesir, as well as the frost giants, who always seem to find a way to claim her. During the construction of Asgardr, the Aesir commanded one of the frost giants to build the wall around their home. On condition that he finish the wall within a certain time, he asked for and was promised Freya as his wife, in addition to sun and moon as his payment. Another time, the frost giant Thrymir stole Thor’s hammer and held it ransom, demanding the hand of Freya as payment.

Freya was worshiped as a mother goddess, a bringer of fertility and love. Women were thought to go to her abode after their death. She was pictured in falcon garb and moved over the earth in her feather dress. Together with her maids, she sat beneath the fruitful boughs of Yggdrasil, from where Aurboda and Beli abducted her and brought her to Jotunheim. It is obviously a Norse fertility myth with similarities to Persephone.

THE WITCH FIGURE

Freya is also known as a sorceress who introduced magic among the Aesir. In this role, she was identified as Heid. Some scholars saw her as a moon goddess, or the goddess of the night who was drawn across the skies by two cats or boars. She is a spring goddess whose attributes include flowers, music, and the color green. Early Christians considered her a witch, banishing her to the mountains, where she danced with demons on Walpurgis Night (Guiley 1989, 130).

Freya is a lascivious woman, who gives her favors quite freely to gods or mortals. This is clearly illustrated by the story of her necklace *Brisingamen*, a marvelous

jewel made by four dwarves known as the Brisings. When Freya saw the necklace, she agreed to spend a night with each of the four dwarves in return for ownership.

Together with the Vanir hostages Njord and Freyr, she was brought to the Aesir, teaching them her magic, as the *Ynlingasaga* (chap. 4) outlined. Freya’s association with cats may have stemmed from her links to the Volva, who practiced a sort of shaman-like trance divination, known as “*seidr*,” that Freya reputedly invented and then taught; the Volva dressed as animals, often cats. Freya had other connections with the arts of the shaman: she was a shape-shifter, often assuming the shape of a falcon in order to fly from Asgardr to all corners of the nine worlds.

Pre-Christian Scandinavia already had the notion of enchantresses riding or driving out at evening and night, as the *Edda* states. The notion of the Furious Host is at some state intertwined with the notion of the night flight. The female figures known as “ladies of the night” and those participating in the Furious Host are supernatural beings, goddesses. Theologians might have identified them with the Roman Diana or with Herodias, but the populace never entirely forgot their traditional native names. If Dame Holda, also known as Freya or *Abundia*, had once led the round dance of elves, Christian theologians subsequently considered her an *unholde* that is, an evil woman.

CHRISTA TUCZAY

See also: DIANA (ARTEMIS); FLIGHT OF WITCHES; HOLDA; METAMORPHOSIS; SHAMANISM; WALPURGIS (WALPURIGS) NIGHT.

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FRISIUS, PAULUS (CA. 1555–?)

Author of the 1583 book *Defss Teuffels Nebelkappen. Das ist: Kurzer Begriff den gantzen handel von der Zauberey belangend zusammen gelesen* (The Devil’s Hoodwink: A Short Summary of What Has Been Compiled Concerning the Whole Business of Witchcraft). Frisius [Paul Friese] has left few certain details about his life to posterity. Probably the son of Johannes Frisius, a pastor in Nagold, he matriculated at

the University of Heidelberg in 1575 and seems to have signed the Lutheran Formula of Concord of 1580. Because Frisius dedicated his work to Landgrave Georg I of Hesse-Darmstadt, and a number of his stories originate in Hesse, he was probably a pastor in one of the Hessian territories in the 1580s.

The Devil's Hoodwink, published in Frankfurt by Wendel Hum, belonged to the new literary genre of Devil books (*Teufelbücher*) that appeared with increasing frequency in German cities from the 1550s, and especially in Frankfurt am Main, which became the principal center for their dissemination. Frisius's work was republished in Frankfurt in 1586 in a collection of nine books dealing with devils and witchcraft, the *Theatrum de Veneficis* (Theater of Poisoners), published by Nicholas Bassé and edited by the Marburg lawyer, Abraham Saur.

Frisius structured his work around the popular folklore of the *Nebelkappe*, the large magical hood or cloak (*Kappe*) that supposedly made its wearers invisible and allowed them to carry out their deeds veiled in fog (*Nebel*). The motif had been used in this way by the Nuremberg author and playwright, Hans Sachs, in a play of 1559 about a country bumpkin with such a magic hood (*Der Paurenknecht mit der nebelkappen*). Frisius appropriated the notion to express the complex webs of diabolical deception and illusion within which the acts and perceptions of witchcraft needed to be understood. In Frisius's work, then, witchcraft became a spectacular hoodwink perpetrated on humanity by the Devil, the master conjurer, arch-trickster, and father of all lies.

Frisius's work seldom referred to theological or philosophical arguments, but was built on stories of mysterious and marvellous deeds drawn from the Hebrew Bible, ecclesiastical authorities such as St. Augustine, John Cassian, and Vincent of Beauvais, and from sixteenth-century collections of *exempla*. Its approach was that of the preacher, welding together accounts of common cultural experiences to display the compact between the witch and Devil. Frisius's critical argument was that the marvellous deeds of witches ("poor whores of the Devil," as he repeatedly called them) did not depend on their own power or instruments, but only on the Devil's power. The illusions created by the Devil, the Devil's "blinding" or hoodwink, allowed witches and observers to be duped into thinking that witches had such power, and to hide the Devil's true role. Witches were no more than shadow puppets of the Devil, who manipulated the forces of nature, the human senses, and the human imagination. The witch's responsibility lay in her evil intention to participate in a pact with the Devil, an intention stimulated most commonly in Frisius's work by the vice of lust.

The title-page woodcut for Frisius's work was modeled on an illustration that first appeared in *Die Emeis*

(The Ants), Geiler von Kaysersberg's 1516 and 1517 sermon collection. The woodcut published in 1583 had been used twelve years previously in a pamphlet by a Catholic priest from Schlettstadt, Reinhard Lutz; a slightly different version appeared in several editions of Johann Weyer's *De Praestigiis Daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils) and in a work by Abraham Saur, which argued for the reality of witchcraft and was published in Frankfurt in the previous year, 1582.

The *Devil's Hoodwink* had some themes in common with Weyer's seminal tract, insofar as it focused on diabolical illusion and trickery as fundamental to witchcraft. Unlike Weyer, however, who partly attributed claims of witchcraft to the melancholic nature of old women, Frisius focused on their evil intentions and on the diabolical pact that they willingly entered. Indeed, Frisius's dedication to Landgrave Georg I of Hesse-Darmstadt constituted a plea to eradicate the evil of witchcraft; and because Frisius's work appeared just one year after the landgrave had established a new criminal code that first stipulated specific punishments for witchcraft, its purpose may have been to support this princely initiative.

CHARLES ZIKA

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; DEVIL; DEVIL BOOKS; FOLKLORE; GEILER VON KAYSERSBERG, JOHANN; HESSE; MAGIC, POPULAR; SIGHT, POWERS OF (SECOND SIGHT); WEYER, JOHANN.

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FRÜND, HANS (CA. 1400–1469)

Fründ was a Swiss chronicler famous for his report in old German about the witch hunt of 1428–1430 in the bilingual Swiss canton of Valais. Like Dauphiné and Savoy, Valais belongs to the Alpine regions where the earliest witch hunts have been found. For this reason, Fründ's report of witches gathered around an "evil spirit" is a major source of the history of witchcraft.

Born in Lucerne at the beginning of the fifteenth century, Hans Fründ became chancellor (*Landschreiber*) of Schwyz (Schwiz) and wrote a "Chronicle of the Ancient War of Zurich" covering the years 1436–1447 (Marchal 1980, 992). His "witch-report," written soon after the events of 1428–1430, could have been his very first essay. In it, Fründ related how the "wickedness, crimes and heresy" of men and women called *sortilegi* in Latin were uncovered in 1428. These *sortilegi* were first found in the Val d'Anniviers and in the Val d'Hérens, two French-speaking valleys of Valais, and then in

nearby German-speaking regions. Insisting on the novelty of the phenomenon, Fründ reported at length about the sorcerers' practices and beliefs, using information gathered from trials and confessions, mostly made after torture. According to him, those persons gathered in heretical "schools" directed by an evil spirit (*böse Geist*: the words "devil" or "demon" were never mentioned), who appeared to them in the form of a black animal, either a bear or a ram, or in some other horrible form. If they were weak or envious or doubtful, this evil spirit convinced them to reject Christianity by denying "God and all his Saints, Baptism, and Holy Church." The evil spirit perverted the Mass: he preached sermons against the Christian faith, forbidding his audience to attend church or confess. They had to pay an annual fee, either a black sheep or a measure of oats, and promise to give him one of their limbs after their death. Only then did the evil spirit teach them how to make magical potions and ointments that could make women sterile and men impotent, or make people sick, or kill them (Fründ 1999, 53–62).

Fründ believed in the reality of the night flight. According to him, the "evil spirit" taught the sorcerers how to anoint some chairs on which they flew from one mountain peak to another and visited whenever they wanted the castles with the best wine. There, they banqueted and feasted in the cellars, but the wine was magically restored. The evil spirit also taught them how to become wolves, eating raw meat, or how to become invisible by absorbing some herbs. During their gathering or "society" (*Gesellschaft*), they killed and ate their own children or those of their neighbors.

In the aftermath of the War of Rarogne (1414–1420), which had deeply disturbed the political climate in Valais, fears of an anti-Christian conspiracy acquired some plausibility. Even before 1428, some people had been judged there for sorcery or magic spells (*sortilegium*), without mentioning the Sabbat. According to Fründ, in one and a half years since 1428, more than 100 persons had been arrested, judged, and burned in Valais, with trials continuing as he was writing. The new sect counted 700 members and was preparing to overcome the Christians, elect a king, and set up new courts. Though Fründ's numbers—100 or 200 victims burned, 700 members—may be overestimated, the chronicler reported true events in Valais. Between approximately 1428 and 1436, numerous trials were conducted in Valais, principally by secular courts; between 1428 and 1434, secular authorities and assemblies, such as the one in Leuk (Loèche) in 1428, decreed new laws against witchcraft and sorcery. Valais witchcraft trials showed the Sabbat appearing around 1429, which was very early in comparison to the rest of Europe (Fründ 1999, 63–93).

—MARTINE OSTORERO

See also: LAUSANNE, DIOCESE OF; METAMORPHOSIS; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; SABBAT; SAVOY, DUCHY OF; VALAIS.

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FUGGER FAMILY

In the first quarter of the sixteenth century, the Fugger family succeeded the Medici as the most important bankers in Europe. A half-century later, some members of this family became outstanding supporters of the Counter-Reformation, promoted by public exorcisms and witch hunting.

Of humble rural origins, the Fuggers migrated to the imperial city of Augsburg after the Black Death. Already in the fifteenth century the family rose to importance and divided into two branches, labeled after their coat of arms as "Fugger vom Reh" (deer) and "Fugger von der Lilie" (lily), founded by Jacob I Fugger. His son Jakob II Fugger "the Rich" (1459–1525) managed the Fugger company in Innsbruck after 1485, soon becoming chief banker to the Habsburg dynasty under the Holy Roman emperor Maximilian I. Jakob accumulated an enormous amount of wealth. The Tyrolean Habsburgs had to pawn their silver mines to him. He also acquired copper mines in Spain, Austria, and Hungary, and took over the financial transactions of the papacy concerning the sale of indulgences. As the leading European banker of his age, he provided crucial aid for the election of King Charles I of Spain, who became Emperor Charles V in 1519. In return, the Habsburgs showered the Fugger family with titles and land, on the basis of which the Fuggers became feudal lords, counts, and eventually princes of the Holy Roman Empire. Raimund Fugger (1490–1535) and Anton Fugger (1493–1560), who succeeded their childless uncle Jakob II as "rulers" (*Regierer*) of the Fugger company, maintained the policy of accumulating feudal property and thus managed to survive the major losses contracted through loans to Charles V and his son King Philip II of Spain. During Anton's "reign," the company had branches throughout Europe from Poland to Spain, and in Spanish America. Raimund's grandsons, Philipp Eduard and Octavian Secundus

Fugger (1549–1600), commissioned the most extensive news collection of the sixteenth century, the “Fugger Newsletters” (*Fugger-Zeitungen*), by employing correspondents, postmasters, and news agents in cities all over Europe, from 1568 to 1605, when the printing of periodical newspapers started in the Holy Roman Empire.

The Fuggers remained a bulwark of Catholicity within the largely Protestant imperial free city of Augsburg, guided by their alliance with the Habsburg dynasty and their business relations with the popes. When Martin Luther and his supporters were already raging against so-called “works-righteousness,” in 1519 Jakob II commissioned the construction of large blocks of buildings (the *Fuggerei*) within one of the poorer suburbs of Augsburg, the *Jakober Vorstadt*, devoted to his patron saint St. Jakob. There the needy were (and after almost 500 years still are) invited to live for a symbolic fee and the vow of regular prayers for the salvation of Jakob Fugger. Although trying to maintain friendly relations with the Protestant fellow citizens, Anton Fugger established close links with the bishops of Augsburg, the Catholic dukes of Bavaria, and the new Jesuit order. In particular, he supported Peter Canisius as a Counter-Reformation missionary during his period as cathedral preacher in Augsburg. Anton’s son Markus “Marx” Fugger (1529–1597) continued this support, and during this “rule” the female members of the Fugger family were particularly closely related to Canisius. Marx’s wife Sibylla von Eberstein (1527–1589) converted to Catholicism, as did Ursula von Lichtenstein (1542–1573), Georg Fugger’s wife. In return, both promoted the founding of the Jesuit College in Augsburg in 1582, like other Fuggers by donating large sums of money, estates in the city, and landed property in the countryside.

Members of the Fugger family, such as Anton’s son Hans Fugger (1531–1598), were outstanding art collectors and bibliophiles. They spent enormous amounts of time networking and sponsoring artists, were educated or even learned, and succeeded as humanists. By demonstrating taste or cultural hegemony, they gained the attention and friendship of princes of the Holy Roman Empire. Duke Albrecht V of Bavaria bought the famous library of Johann Jakob Fugger (1516–1575) as a basis of his own library (which eventually became the *Bayrische Staatsbibliothek*). Early on the Fuggers celebrated their success as a dynasty by commissioning works like the “*Fuggerorum et Fuggerarum imagines*,” and the Fuggers have employed historians to the present day in order to celebrate their dynasty.

The darker sides are usually excluded from Fugger-sponsored historiography. Marx Fugger not only allowed Canisius to use his female relatives and their female servants for terrifying public exorcisms to

demonstrate the superiority of Catholicism over Protestantism, but he also started witch hunting. During the first wave of persecution in this region around 1590, witches were burned throughout his large estates that stretched from the Danube in the north to Augsburg, around his small capitals Oberndorf and Nordendorf. As an unknown reporter put it, “Marx Fugger, the noble man, is also rooting out and punishing the evil throughout his estates, everywhere” (*Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, Fugger-Zeitungen, Cod. 8963, fol. 751ff.*). These persecutions have not yet been adequately explored. The Fugger newsletters provide detailed reports about witchcraft trials in the prince-bishopric of Augsburg, particularly at the district court of Schwabmünchen, because of the nearby Fugger residence at Kirchheim.

However, in the long run, the Fuggers did not show outstanding zeal in persecuting witches or prosecuting witchcraft, neither as lords nor as politicians in Augsburg or in the Holy Roman Empire. It was even claimed that one Alexius Fugger resigned as a ruling lord in 1590 because he felt unable to cope with pressure from both his peasants and neighboring lords demanding witch hunting in his lordship Randeck on the Danube, because he could not reconcile the bloodshed with his conscience. It was only from the 1640s to the 1660s that further witchcraft trials are reported from the tiny Fugger lordship Wasserburg am Bodensee (Lake Constance), with up to twenty executions between 1656 and 1664. Prince Anton Ignaz Joseph von Fugger von Kirchberg und Weissenhorn (1711–1787), prince-bishop of Regensburg, invited the exorcist Johann Joseph Gassner to cure his beginning blindness and other diseases in 1774. Gassner infamously explained all diseases by witchcraft, and the very fact that this bishop offered a stage to a man who had already been outlawed by Emperor Joseph II, Prince-Elector Max III Joseph of Bavaria, Archbishop Clemens Wenzeslaus von Sachsen, and other enlightened celebrities, seemed outrageous. The bishop survived both witchcraft/exorcism and public opinion, commissioned a marvelous high altar still to be seen in Regensburg cathedral, and donated his property to the poor.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AUGSBURG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; CANISIUS, ST. PETER; GASSNER, JOHANN JOSEPH; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; INNSBRUCK; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); MAXIMILIAN I, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; TYROL, COUNTY OF.

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FULDA, PRINCE-ABBEY OF

Germany's largest imperial prince-abbey, located in the former district of the Upper Rhine, Fulda experienced major witch hunts during the interrupted reigns of Prince-Abbot Balthasar of Dernbach (ruled 1570–1576, restored 1602–1606). An enthusiastic supporter of the Counter-Reformation, Dernbach had quarrelled with the Protestant estates and been expelled from Fulda in 1576. When he returned to Fulda after twenty-six years, following a decision by the imperial privy councillor, he carried out a program of drastic re-Catholicization. Additionally, he appointed Balthasar Nuss, an old confidant, as criminal judge for capital offenses. Nuss immediately began a large-scale witch hunt. In contrast to what earlier findings have suggested, this was not a calculated Counter-Reformation measure, as both Catholics and Protestants were among the victims. Nevertheless, many Protestant families left Fulda, starting in 1603. Among those persecuted at the very beginning of this wave of trials was the mother of a Fulda alderman, Dr. Georg Haan. He soon moved to Bamberg, where he later became chancellor, before he too was executed as a sorcerer in 1628.

Between early 1603 and 1606, at least 239 people were executed for alleged witchcraft. Before the wave of persecution started, the prince-abbey had asked the law faculty in Würzburg to certify its methods of conducting witchcraft trials. However, Nuss ignored their rather persecution-friendly guidelines while directing his trials. His procedures thus complied with the concept of *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime), but did not follow the *processus ordinarius* (ordinary procedure) as provided for in the *Carolina* (the imperial law code, 1532). This apparently caused friction with the abbot, who advocated adhering to standard procedure and forbade Nuss from pocketing part of the legal costs in addition to his official pay. In the end, however, Balthasar of Dernbach tolerated these witchcraft trials, supposedly because they implicated relatives of his political opponents. A special order put the city of Fulda's secular subcourt (the so-called *Müntz*) in charge of carrying out the trials. Members of the *Müntz* allowed to pass sentence included several lay assessors, as well as Balthasar Nuss. This court convicted not only inhabitants of Fulda, but also accused witches from other places under the jurisdiction of the prince-abbot.

The trial of Merga Bien in the summer of 1603 became especially well-known. She was arrested solely on the basis of denunciations by other suspects, and

then, bound by her hands and feet, was locked in a dog-stall, where she could only crawl on all fours. The charges against her concerned elaborate witchcraft, particularly taking part in witch dances and harming cows. Her husband lodged a protest against Nuss and his fellow-judges before the imperial appellate court in Speyer, which ordered that her trial be conducted in strict accordance with the measures prescribed by the *Carolina*, and specifically forbade torture without adequate circumstantial evidence. Nuss, however, forced Bien's husband to withdraw his charges by threatening legal action. That very same day, the court in Fulda started torturing Merga Bien, who confessed and was executed. In the end, Blasius Bien had to pay for the burning of his wife.

A second spectacular incident during Fulda's witchcraft trials was Nuss's attempt to try six women from Fulda's upper class for witchcraft. All six had already left with their families and thus never appeared before the *Müntz* in Fulda. Instead, they filed suit against Prince Abbot Balthasar and his judges before the court of appeals (the imperial chamber court, *Reichskammergericht*) in Speyer for their unlawful conduct of witchcraft trials.

The witchcraft trials ended with Balthasar of Dernbach's death on March 15, 1606. His successor, Johann Friedrich of Schwalbach, dismissed and then arrested Balthasar Nuss, after hearing complaints that Nuss had administered his office improperly. Nuss was imprisoned for twelve years on charges of unjustified profits, corruption, and embezzlement, and was finally executed in 1618. After 1606, no witchcraft trials ever took place in Fulda. In 1612, Friedrich Spee pronounced his vow as a novice of the Jesuit order in Fulda. On this occasion, he probably learned about Fulda's witch hunts and Nuss's arrest, which likely strengthened his loathing for witchcraft trials.

PETER OESTMANN;

TRANSLATED BY JONATHAN STICKNEY

See also: BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; *CAROLINA CODE*; GERMANY, WEST AND NORTHWEST; NUSS, BALTHASAR; *REICHSKAMMERGERICHT* (IMPERIAL CHAMBER COURT); SPEE, FRIEDRICH.

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GAPPIT, PERRISSONA

The case of Perrissona Gappit, tried in 1465 in the seignury of Châtel-Saint-Denis (today in the Swiss canton of Fribourg), offers exceptionally complete documentation. Unlike almost all fifteenth-century witchcraft cases, the records of her trial include not only the transcripts of the interrogations of the accused and the verdict, but also extensive pretrial material. This allows a nearly complete reconstruction of the case; a critical edition of the whole corpus has been published (Modestin 1999, 276–317). First studied in 1909, the case has been used subsequently by key scholars: one emphasized the shift of the charges from sorcery to diabolical witchcraft during the trial (Kieckhefer 1976, 32–33); another highlighted the intrinsic interest of the case for studying the backgrounds of individuals accused of witchcraft (Blauert 1989, 71–73). The latest discussion (Modestin 2000, 120–128) stressed its political context—the unstable situation of Châtel in the 1460s.

THE PRETRIAL EXAMINATION

The trial began on January 11, 1465, when Claude Burritaz, a notary commissioned by the episcopal and inquisitorial authorities of Lausanne, questioned three witnesses, followed by Perrissona. (Burritaz had previously served as clerk in a 1448 witch hunt near Vevey.) The first witness was the son-in-law of the accused; the second was his father, that is, Perrissona's second husband. Both believed her to be a "heretic" rather than a "good Christian." The reason they offered was Perrissona's character: she was alleged to be extremely irascible—a feature that later became a stock piece preceding an accusation of witchcraft. In addition, they alleged, Perrissona had an intrinsic power to cause illness: her son-in-law claimed to be paralyzed because of her, and her husband had allegedly become mute—which apparently did not prevent him from charging his wife. The third witness, finally, suggested myths about the witches' Sabbat: a neighbor accused Perrissona of attempting to abduct her newborn baby.

The first two accusations illustrated the daily difficulties between the two men and Perrissona within a common household. Details in their depositions offer insights into a microcosm into which Perrissona had failed to integrate even after eighteen years of marriage.

Mutual distrust poisoned their relationships. Yet, what aroused the suspicions of the third witness is unclear.

The accused at first denied the charges brought against her. But when the commissioner confronted her with what were probably minor contradictions in her testimony, she broke down. In the end, she confessed attending the "sect of the heretics" presided by a "big man in black." Thus, at the final stage of her pretrial examination, the accusation had shifted from "domestic" sorcery to diabolical witchcraft. Her subsequent trial focused exclusively on the latter, completely overshadowing the charges that had originally triggered Perrissona's examination.

THE TRIAL

The actual trial, after which Perrissona was sentenced to death and burned in public, was conducted by a vice-inquisitor from the Dominican convent of Lausanne and required seven sessions between January 23 and February 4. The accused confessed denying God, though with considerable reluctance. After undergoing torture, she also admitted having had sexual intercourse with the Devil.

THE POLITICAL CONTEXT

The social positions of the assessors of her trial suggest that the local elite took considerable interest in Perrissona Gappit's conviction. Her trial was preceded by several other cases at Châtel-Saint-Denis sometime in the 1440s or 1450s, but we cannot link her case directly with them. However, in the 1460s, political sovereignty over the seignury of Châtel was claimed both by its local lords and by the city of Fribourg, to which it had been mortgaged. In March 1461, Fribourg appointed a castellan to control Châtel; he remained until mid-1464, when the question of the debts was settled. Châtel-Saint-Denis changed hands several times in the following months, before a Savoyard nobleman, Bernard of Menthon, purchased it on January 16, 1465. Thus Perrissona Gappit's trial was under way exactly when Châtel was changing hands. The chronology of the events suggests that the local elite profited from the brief absence of overlordship to get rid of a particular person by initiating a witchcraft trial.

GEORG MODESTIN

See also: ACCUSATIONS; FAMILY; LAUSANNE, DIOCESE OF; SWITZERLAND; WITNESSES.

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GASSENDI, PIERRE (1592–1655)

French theologian, philosopher, scientist, Catholic priest, and provost at the cathedral of Digne, Gassendi was a pioneer of corpuscularianism (the theory that matter is made up of corpuscles—minute particles) and empiricism, famous for helping design a revolution in natural philosophy. He advocated abandoning Aristotelianism for a "truer and better" skeptical and empirical philosophy. Without attacking witchcraft directly, Gassendi was one of the major seventeenth-century thinkers who undermined magic. His conviction was that an eclectic, Christianized epicureanism enabled philosophers to contribute to the progress of the new experimental sciences while providing better support for the Christian faith. He distinguished "clear" from "obscure" philosophies, with the latter including those that used fables or symbols to express mystical or occult concepts.

At the request of Father Marin Mersenne (1588–1648), in 1628 Gassendi became involved in a controversy with Robert Fludd (1574–1637), the English hermeticist, cabbalist, chemist, and Rosicrucian, and a spokesman for magical animism. Although he did not agree with Mersenne that Fludd was an evil magician and an atheist, Gassendi judged Fludd's version of the doctrine of the "Soul of the World" to be pantheistic and heretical because Gassendi believed it led inevitably to the deification of creatures including demons, to idolatry, to the conclusion that animal souls were immortal, and that everything done on earth, both good and bad, was done by God (*A Consideration of the Philosophy of Robert Fludd*, 1630). In his later works, especially the *Syntagma philosophicum* (Philosophical Treatise), prepared between 1649 and 1655, Gassendi worked out a clear alternative to such Neoplatonic magical-occult philosophies. A proper understanding of mechanical physics would eliminate forever the world of mysterious metaphysical causalities, sympathies, and antipathies. He saw astrology as a "puerile" superstition that could

only be ascribed to human imbecility and stupidity. Gassendi dealt at length with the vanity of astrologers, denying vigorously that stars can influence humans. If astrological predictions seemed to come true, reasons other than astrology explained it: fortune or chance, the charlatan's cunning, and the ignorance and stupidity of their clients. In the same way, he attacked alchemy. Like René Descartes, Gassendi attempted to reduce every physical phenomenon to local motion, using no concepts except atoms and their reciprocal collisions. Thus, his *Syntagma* completed Gassendi's earlier polemics against magic and astrology, started in his *Epistolica exercitatio* against Fludd, with his atomistic and mechanical explanations. Gassendi expressed skepticism about diabolical and malevolent magic. Tales of long fasts, like those of possession by demons and bewitchment, were often based on imposture. Although he denied the power of imagination over other bodies, nevertheless, this outspoken skeptic was inclined to accept something like the evil eye and tried to offer a mechanistic explanation: a woman "fascinator," her eyes and imagination focused on the tender body of an infant, might throw off maleficent rays and injurious effluvia and so affect the state of the baby's health.

Gassendi's polemics against astrology and magic were very influential in creating a mechanistic alternative to Platonic naturalism and Renaissance Aristotelianism. In 1634 Mersenne used Gassendi's antiastrology polemic in his *Préludes de l'harmonie universelle* (Preludes of Universal Harmony). Only one year after its publication, the part of Gassendi's *Syntagma* attacking astrology was translated into English: *The Vanity of Judiciary Astrology Or Divination By The Stars: Lately Written In Latin By That Great Scholar And Mathematician, The Illustrious Petrus Gassendus, Mathematical Professor In the King of France. Translated into English by a Person of Quality* (London: H. Moseley, 1659). Five years earlier, Walter Charleton (1619–1707) had published his *Physiologia Epicurum–Gassendo–Charltoniana or, a Fabrick of science natural, upon the hypothesis of atoms, founded by Epicurus, repaired by Petrus Gassendus, augmented by Walter Charleton* (London, 1654), which also used Gassendi's arguments opposing astrology and magic.

DRIES VANYSACKER

See also: ANIMISTIC AND MAGICAL THINKING; ASTROLOGY; DESCARTES, RENÉ; KABBALAH; MAGIC, NATURAL; MECHANICAL PHILOSOPHY; SCIENCE AND MAGIC; SKEPTICISM.

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GASSNER, JOHANN JOSEPH (1727–1779)

Gassner became famous as an exorcist and miracle healer who postulated that all illness was the work of demons and witches. After studies at Prague and Innsbruck, he was ordained as a priest at Chur in 1750 and took over the pastoral care of two parishes, Dalaas and Klösterle. While still at Klösterle, he successfully tested his miracle cures, first on himself and later on his parishioners.

His therapies always followed the same pattern. This is evident from the numerous publications, some by Gassner, that amply document his methods. A patient would appear, and the miracle healer would in most cases inquire about the patient's complaints. Then he would begin an invocation, after exhorting the sufferer to trust in Jesus and his help. The diagnosis of "possession" was, as a rule, a foregone conclusion; the patient's medical history was mostly disregarded. Even if he conceded the existence of natural illnesses in theory, for Gassner, diseases were almost without exception of an unnatural and thus demonic origin. Still, the demons or devils had to manifest some sign of their presence first. This he tried to accomplish through a test exorcism, which official Church law did not permit. He would order the Devil to manifest some of the symptoms that the diseased person had shown before, and only after that would he begin the exorcism proper. However, the priest broke Church statutes again by teaching his patients a prayer with which they would be able to ban the Devil on their own, even without his immediate involvement, which undermined the priestly monopoly on spiritual affairs. The effects of his cures, quite successful in some cases, were never lasting, and can today be partially explained by posthypnotic suggestion.

After some spectacular cures, this parish priest from Vorarlberg gained a wide following that extended beyond southern Germany geographically, and into the highest circles socially. In particular, the upper nobility and the bishops of Regensburg and Chur favored him. Even though he was unable to heal Anton Ignaz Fugger, the blind Prince-Bishop of Regensburg, Fugger gave Gassner official permission to perform exorcisms in his diocese. Even Protestants could be found among his followers, first and foremost the duke of Württemberg and Johann Caspar Lavater. After his initial success at Klösterle, the miracle healer practiced with episcopal permission at Kempten, Regensburg, and then especially at Ellwangen. During his stay at Ellwangen alone, between November 1775 and June 1776, Gassner reportedly treated 20,000 patients. The high degree of

attention the public gave Gassner at the height of his fame can be seen not only by the numerous poems and countless personal testimonies, but also by the reports of the various commissions that investigated him and his methods. More than 100 publications for or against the exorcist (*Gassneriana*) were published within a short time from 1775 onward and reviewed in the leading periodicals of the time; the controversy about Gassner's therapies electrified the entire German-speaking public. In fact, this became one of the most important controversies of the Enlightenment in southern Germany, and one of the prominent debates in the German Enlightenment as a whole.

Enlightened Protestants regarded these cases of exorcism as yet more proof of darkest Catholic superstition, part of the belief in witchcraft and the Devil. Soon, however, critical voices could be discerned from within the Catholic camp. In addition to Elector Max III Joseph of Bavaria and Emperor Joseph II of Austria, even Pope Pius VI eventually turned against Gassner, especially as they feared disturbances of "peace and order" from Gassner's large following. The Bavarian Academy of Sciences played a leading role in the fight to contain the influence of this exorcist, although it was undermined immediately after the end of the Bavarian "witchcraft war." When the Viennese doctor Anton Mesmer seemed to be able to produce much the same effects as Gassner by relying on his "animal magnetism," the academy favored Mesmer as the "lesser evil," although many contemporaries regarded him as hardly less doubtful than Gassner. After Pius VI condemned Gassner's teaching as heretical in a *breve* of April 20, 1776, even his noble patrons were no longer able to support his methods. The miracle healer spent his last years quietly as a parish priest under the patronage of his long-time supporter, Anton Ignaz Fugger, at Pondorf, a village on the banks of the Danube.

NILS FREYTAG

See also: BAVARIAN WAR OF THE WITCHES; ENLIGHTENMENT; EXORCISM; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; POSSESSION, DEMONIC.

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GASTALDO, GIOVANNI TOMMASO (D. 1655)

An Italian Dominican angelologist and demonologist, Gastaldo's major work, *De potestate angelica, sive de potentia motrice ac mirandis operibus angelorum atque daemonum* (On Angelic Might, or, On the Locomotive Power and Wondrous Works of Angels and Demons), published from 1650–1652 in three volumes, totals 2,110 large double-column pages. It summarized a half-millennium of systematic angelology and demonology since Peter Lombard's *Sententiarum libri quattuor* (Four Books of Sentences, ca. 1150). Gastaldo's major debt was to his fellow Dominican, St. Thomas Aquinas, but he also exploited two centuries of witchcraft treatises.

Though "scientific," Gastaldo's treatise was polemical. His preface declared his intention to refute skepticism about the existence of angels and demons: "We occasionally find persons so enslaved by their senses that they consider nothing worthy of belief unless they can perceive it with their senses, as St. Augustine asserts in book 21, chapter 3 of his *City of God*" (Gastaldo 1650–1652, 1: vii). Gastaldo investigated whether angels and demons could interact corporeally with human beings and give sensory proof of their reality. Verifiable interaction would provide empirical evidence for the validity of Christianity.

The nine divisions of Gastaldo's treatise rehearsed and expanded the favorite contentions of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century witchcraft treatises: (1) on the might (*potentia*) or locomotive power (*potestas*) of angels and demons; (2) on supernatural angelic power; (3) on angels' power to move themselves; (4) on angels' natural power to accomplish marvels, especially demons' power to produce the wonders of magicians; (5) on angels' power to "assume" virtual bodies; (6) on demons' power to effect sorcery (*sortilegia*) and witchcraft (*maleficia*); (7) on demons' power over the possessed; (8) on demons' power to attack humans; and (9) on angels' power to foreknow and reveal future events (*De potestate angelica*, 1: iv.).

Distinctions four through six polemically vindicated the reality of angels and demons. Distinction five, the center of the work, examined "whether angels, both good and evil . . . can truly take on bodies, so as to

appear to us" (*De potestate angelica*, 2: 414). That angels have appeared to humans in bodily form (*in corporibus*) was an article of faith, because Scripture recorded many such events. "Thus there is no difficulty" concerning the *fact* of such apparitions. "But are angels shown to the external senses by means of true bodies, which can be seen and touched, or . . . instead only through deceiving our senses?" (*De potestate angelica*, 2: 416). Gastaldo required another 172 columns to answer these and related questions.

Distinction six showed the most influence of witchcraft treatises. Like them, it revisited a problem that worried Aquinas: did witchcraft (*maleficium*) actually exist? If it did not, then proof was scarce that demons existed (*De potestate angelica*, 2: 502–503). Like the beginning of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), Gastaldo quoted Aquinas's rebuttal: angels and demons were an article of faith, but the reality of *maleficium* demonstrated their reality empirically (*De potestate angelica*, 2: 501–612). Demonic *maleficium* indirectly guaranteed the immortality of the human soul (*De potestate angelica*, 2: 130–164). Moreover, demons were necessary to theodicy: without their *maleficia* (harmful acts), no satisfactory explanation existed for the death of baptized infants: either God seemed unjust or his sacrament appeared inefficacious (*De potestate angelica*, 2: 513–515). *Maleficium* must be defended against the objections of medical writers like Avicenna and Galen, who tried to assign natural causes to every disease, and against more recent skeptics like Pietro Pomponazzi (*De potestate angelica*, 2: 537).

Gastaldo's obsessive-compulsive defense of spiritual reality eloquently demonstrated the fragility of that concept by 1650, the time of Galileo and René Descartes. Despite its immensity, Gastaldo's treatise brought little novelty to arguments current from Aquinas to Torquato Tasso: fictive ("assumed") corporeality, locomotion, *maleficium*, possession, and prophecy. Gastaldo depended heavily on the *Malleus Maleficarum* to develop these ideas; he surpassed such single-minded witchcraft treatises only through bibliographical thoroughness and argumentative stamina.

WALTER STEPHENS

See also: ANGELS; AQUINAS, THOMAS; AUGUSTINE, ST.; CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DEMONS; IMAGINATION; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; TASSO, TORQUATO.

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GAULE, JOHN (CA. 1604–1687)

An obscure clergyman, John Gaule's claim to fame in witchcraft history rests on the publication, in 1646, of his *Select Cases of Conscience Touching Witches and Witchcrafts*, a skeptical work prompted by the author's hostility to the witch-finding activities of Matthew Hopkins. This book appeared shortly after John Davenport's *The Witches of Huntingdon, Their Examinations and Confessions; Exactly Taken by his Majesties Justices of the Peace for the County* (London, 1646), which described the trials of a number of witches, of whom about six were executed. *Select Cases of Conscience* apparently originated in a number of sermons against witch hunting that Gaule had preached to his parishioners at Great Staughton in Huntingdonshire, and was dedicated to the local lord of the manor, colonel Valentine Walton, presumably the man to whom Gaule owed his incumbency and who was also Oliver Cromwell's brother-in-law.

Little is known of Gaule's life. He apparently attended both Oxford and Cambridge universities without taking a degree at either, and in the 1620s moved in aristocratic circles, possibly serving as chaplain to Robert Bertie, first earl of Lindsey, and definitely as chaplain to Baptist Hicks, Viscount Camden, upon whose death Gaule published a "Funerious Commemoration" in 1630. Gaule published a number of other works that undermine the British *Dictionary of National Biography's* description of him as "an unlearned and wearisome ranter." In 1628, he preached one of the prestigious Paul's Cross sermons in London, an important honor for a young minister; in 1649, after several years as vicar of Great Staughton, he preached an assize sermon at Huntingdon, proof of local recognition of his competence.

Gaule's *Select Cases of Conscience*, like most "skeptical" works of the period, did not reject the possibility of witchcraft, and contained much that was familiar in English demonological works. Its underlying purpose was to stress the need to bring people to a proper understanding of witchcraft. In particular, this implied persuading would-be accusers of witches both to accept that most of the misfortunes they attributed to *maleficium* (harmful magic) were in fact the result of God's providence, and also to contemplate their own sinful and uncharitable hearts. Gaule clearly did not deny the existence of witches. He asserted "that as there have been; so ther are & wil be witches unto the world's end" (Gaule 1646, 9), and he insisted that witchcraft was a great sin. In the best English Protestant tradition, he also stressed the central importance of the demonic pact, accepted the reality of familiars, and spent some time discussing the Sabbat.

Moreover, and again in common with all mainstream English Protestant demonologists, he attacked the "vulgar conceit" that "distinction is usually made betwixt

the white and the blacke witch: the good and the bad witch," arguing that "good" witches were worse than malefic ones, and were equally deserving of censure (Gaule 1646, 30–31). Again like most English writers, he clearly regarded some of the more extreme educated witch beliefs as nonsensical, dismissing the belief that sexual congress between human beings and incubi or succubi could result in the birth of offspring as "the height of all phantasticall delusions" (Gaule 1646, 49).

Gaule's main aim, therefore, was not to attack the belief in witchcraft, but rather to attack the excesses that were causing mass witch hunts in eastern England at the time he wrote. Thus he criticized those who "conclude peremptorily (not from reason, but indiscretion) that witches not only are, but are in every place" (Gaule 1646, 4), and reserved special odium for "witch-searchers or witch-seekers," whom he described as practitioners of "a trade never taken up in England till now" (Gaule 1646, 6). Despite his acceptance of the existence of witchcraft, and the conventional ways in which he viewed it, Gaule's work could clearly provide ammunition for those opposed to the type of witch hunting indulged in by Matthew Hopkins. Written as it was in the wake of Hopkins's activities, it was a brave book, although perhaps one that indicates clearly that attitudes toward witchcraft were not so monolithic at this time as has sometimes been supposed.

Later, in 1652, Gaule also published a major attack on astrology, *The magistro-astrological Diviner posed, and puzzled*, a work dedicated to Oliver Cromwell.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: ENGLAND; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; SKEPTICISM.

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GEILER VON KAYSERSBERG, JOHANN (1455–1510)

A leading pre-Reformation theologian and preacher, Geiler's significance for European witchcraft rests on the twenty-five sermons he preached on witchcraft in 1509, from which the Franciscan author Johann Pauli took notes that he published in Strasbourg as *Die Emeis* (The Ants) in 1516 and 1517. Born at Schaffhausen but named for the town where his grandfather raised him, Geiler received his MA in Freiburg (1463) and his doctorate of theology in Basel (1475), before returning to Freiburg in 1476 to become professor of theology and then rector. In 1478 Geiler became a preacher in Strasbourg, from 1486 in the cathedral, achieving widespread renown and delivering numerous sermon series over the next three decades, most of which were published posthumously.



Anonymous drawing of a Sabbat from Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg's sermons on witchcraft published as the *Die Emeis* (*The Ants*), 1516. The illustration contains many elements common to such representations: weather magic, nudity, demons, bones, cauldron, serpent, and flowing hair. An enchanted table moving with its front legs in the air is an unusual touch. (Cornell University Library)

The title *Die Emeis* was taken from the *Formicarius* (Anthill), the influential work of the south German Dominican theologian, Johannes Nider, from which Geiler frequently quoted and drew his material. Geiler covered topics such as the witches' night rides, their powers of metamorphosis, the relationship between the female gender and witchcraft, the power of the evil eye, and the capacity of witches to inflict harm. He also discussed the extent and limits of the Devil's power, the licit and illicit means used to protect oneself against witchcraft, as well as the relationship of witchcraft to such aspects of folklore as wild people, werewolves, and the processions of the Furious Horde.

Geiler placed much emphasis on the Devil's power to tamper with the human imagination to create fantasies and illusion. This happened with the witches' night rides, he argued, or with claims of shape shifting. And when harm was caused by witchcraft, it was the Devil who intervened to ensure its success. Geiler supported the death penalty for those who carried out serious sorcery, or alternatively for those who believed in their own power to either divine the future, harm by sorcery, or invoke the dead through necromancy.

The Ants also provided a rich source for illustrations of witchcraft. Three are especially significant. The first

was a woodcut accompanying the first of the sermons, modeled on Hans Baldung [Grien]'s work of 1510, that appeared later in Hieronymus Braunschweig's *Book of Distillation* (1519) and in at least five editions of Johann Pauli's collection of moral tales, *Schimpf und Ernst* (Humour and Seriousness, 1522), thereby becoming a most influential example of the new witchcraft iconography. The scene represented Geiler's emphasis that many claims made by witches were merely products of diabolical illusion. The woodcut illustrated a story from Nider, in which a village woman claimed to ride out at night with other witches. The artist supported the text's conclusion that this was simply a diabolical fantasy by including the classical planetary god Saturn, a figure linked to contemporary notions of melancholic delusion.

The second important figure was a woodcut illustrating Geiler's sermon on "How witches milk axe handles to procure milk" that exemplified the common technique used by artists to identify traditional sorcery practices as witchcraft. It depicted a well-known method for stealing milk: an old woman kneels on the ground with an axe firmly wedged into a house post, while milk pours into a pail from the end of the axe handle. The artist has also inserted two visual cues, a

cauldron on a smoking fire and a hailstorm in the sky, which had no connection with the subject but ensured an easy identification with witchcraft.

The woodcuts accompanying Geiler's sermon on the Furious Horde (*Wütisches Heer*) were especially instructive for understanding contemporary readings of traditional folklore. This third significant illustration, a 1516 woodcut, depicted a procession of Bacchus, the god of wine, a drunken Silenus, the father of satyrs, and a satyr playing a bagpipe. The scene represented the world of unbridled senses, a common target of moralist preachers like Geiler. In 1517 this image was replaced with a woodcut previously published in two 1497 editions of Sebastian Brant's popular *Ship of Fools* (1494) and in a Geiler sermon series of 1512. It depicted a soldier standing on his head in a cart, which was being pulled by horses traveling backwards and led by a fool using the wrong end of his whip. This was an image of carnival inversion, in which all was upside-down and ruled by folly. As with interpretations of witchcraft, the folklore of the Furious Horde has been linked to fears of societal disintegration and disorder.

CHARLES ZIKA

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BALDUNG [GRIEN], HANS; CAULDRON; DEVIL; DÜRER, ALBRECHT; FOLKLORE; GENDER; IMAGINATION; MAGIC, POPULAR; MELANCHOLY; MILK; NIDER, JOHANNES; PEOPLE OF THE NIGHT (*NACHTVOLK*); SATURN; SORCERY; WEATHER MAGIC.

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GENDER

Like many other crimes in early modern society—or today—witchcraft was gender related, though not gender specific. Between 75 and 85 percent of those questioned, tried, and executed for witchcraft after 1500 were women, though this percentage varied significantly. In Finland and Estonia, half or more of those prosecuted for witchcraft cases were male; in seventeenth-century Iceland or Muscovite Russia, the vast majority of those

executed for evil magic were men. On the other hand, in the Holy Roman Empire, including pre-1648 Switzerland and modern eastern France, which saw by far the worst persecutions and the greatest number of mass trials, women predominated overwhelmingly; men occasionally comprised up to one-third of accused witches, but some witchcraft trials involved only women. There were reports of German villages where every adult female inhabitant was accused and nearly all of them executed.

Links between gender and witchcraft were not limited to the witches themselves. Except for a few female rulers, all of the authorities involved in witch persecutions—officials, rulers, judges, inquisitors, notaries, executioners—were male. Rulers and officials intent on finding and destroying witches consciously used patriarchy as a model, describing themselves as firm but just fathers, carrying out their investigations for the protection of those under their authority just as responsible fathers protected their children from harm. This harm included physical injury at the hands of witches, or the spiritual danger that could come from any woman, even their own mothers, teaching them magical sayings or other superstitious practices. While investigating suspected witches in many parts of Europe, judges and inquisitors routinely sought the exact details of a female (but never a male) witch's demonic sexual contacts, ordering suspects to be stripped, shaved, and pricked with a needle for the "Devil's mark" (a wart or mole insensitive to pain) left as a result of this contact. In England, searchers (sometimes women) looked for the witch's mark, a protuberance or supernumerary nipple that a witch's familiars (domesticated demons) sucked. Because these investigations were generally carried out by male officials—judges, notaries who recorded the witch's answers, the executioner who did the actual pricking or other types of torture—with the witch at least partially naked, it is difficult not to view them as at least partly motivated by sexual sadism.

Scholars of witchcraft have dealt with its gendered nature in various ways. Some of the earliest historical studies of witchcraft ignored it, discussing demonology or the development of witch persecutions in different areas without analyzing how ideas about witchcraft shaped, and were shaped by, contemporary notions of what it meant to be male or female. During the 1970s and 1980s, several authors asserted that the witch hunts were primarily an attempt by male authorities to suppress independent women, especially those who had spiritual knowledge or were midwives, herbalists, or healers. This conclusion has been refuted by more recent studies, but it has gained acceptance among some contemporary practitioners of witchcraft, who view "true" witchcraft as linked with nature and healing rather than with demonic forces.



offt geschreyen hat/hat sie geant wort/ich
 Teufel genummen vñ zu einem ladēhmanß
 set/gelegen am Graffer thal/der ist groß
 leut metten/do hat er sie lassen sälen neben

A demon or the Devil takes away a female witch, while an executioner breaks the bones of a male witch. (TopFoto.co.uk)

Today most historians acknowledge the role of misogyny, asserting that hatred and suspicion of women were important factors in the witch beliefs and witchcraft trials of many parts of Europe and America. They note, however, that negative ideas about women had been part of Western culture long before the age of the witch hunts, and that they were just as prevalent in areas that saw few trials, such as southern Europe, as in areas that saw many. It is therefore important to investigate why accusations of witchcraft developed out of misogyny only at certain times and places and not at others, thus integrating gender with other explanatory factors. It is also important to make distinctions between learned demonological theory, popular ideas, and the actual course of witchcraft trials; though these were often interwoven, gender figured quite differently in each of them.

DEMONOLOGICAL THEORY

The link between women and witchcraft became very strong in the learned demonological theory of central

and western Europe, beginning in the fifteenth century, particularly in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), the most influential and also most misogynous treatise on demonology and witch hunting. The authors of these works asserted that women were more likely to be witches than men because they were impressionable, mentally weak, resentful of authority, easily deceived by the Devil and likely to deceive others, ambitious, vain, talkative, and vindictive. This list of women's negative qualities was based on the writings of Aristotle, Church Fathers such as Jerome, Augustine, and Tertullian, and a host of medieval Christian authors, all of whom provided underlying intellectual concepts that supported the link between women and witchcraft. These included the dichotomies of order and disorder, culture and nature, reason and emotion, mind and body—dichotomies in which men were linked to the more positive first term and both women and the Devil to the more negative second one. In both the classical and Christian traditions, women were thought to be more disorderly than men, and witches to be both disorderly and actively bent on destroying order; witchcraft was often portrayed as an inversion of the normal order, as were situations in which women had authority over men.

Demonological theorists added two ideas to this intellectual tradition, making the links between women and witchcraft even stronger. One was the notion that the essence of witchcraft was the pact with the Devil, a pact that required the witch to do the Devil's bidding. Thus witches were no longer people who used magical power to get what they wanted, but people used by the Devil to get what he wanted, a dependent position particularly fitting for women. The second emphasized a sexual connection between witches and the Devil that sealed their pact, combined with an emphasis on women's greater sexuality and the fact that the Devil was always portrayed as male. This is a particular obsession in the *Malleus*, whose author stated plainly: "All witchcraft comes from carnal lust, which is in women insatiable. . . . Wherefore for the sake of fulfilling their lusts they [women] consort even with devils" (Kramer 1486, 127). However, the concept of the pact began in places where men were heavily represented among accused witches and therefore was not always gendered. Demonologists—and most other scholars—saw female sexual drive as increasing throughout a woman's life, making the postmenopausal woman most vulnerable to the blandishments of a demonic suitor. Witches were rarely accused of same-sex relations: if the author of the *Malleus* thought that sexual intercourse with the Devil was limited to women, later French demonologists (who encountered many male witches) thought the Devil took a female form when he had sexual relations with male witches.

The spread of demonological theory, and particularly the use of the *Malleus* as a guide to witch hunters,

stimulated a greater feminization of witchcraft, for witches were now the dependent agents of a male devil, rather than independently directing demons themselves. In some areas of Europe in which the demonic concept of witchcraft never took hold, such as Finland, Iceland, Estonia, and Russia, witchcraft did not become female-identified and there were no large-scale hunts. (England was an exception to this situation.) In these areas and in parts of Europe where the *Malleus* and similar books were not influential, including Scandinavia, sexual relations with the Devil were not part of witch accusations.

POPULAR IDEAS

While witchcraft theorists drew on classical and Christian writers in linking women and witchcraft, common people drew on their observations of the world around them and oral traditions. Women were recognized as having less physical, economic, and political power than men, making them more likely to use magical assistance to gain what they wanted. A man could fight or take someone to court, but a woman could only scold, curse, or cast spells. Thus in popular notions of witchcraft, women's physical and legal weakness was a contributing factor, with unmarried women and widows recognized as especially vulnerable because they did not have husbands to protect them. Because women often married at a younger age than men and female life expectancy may have been increasing, women frequently became widows. If they remarried, it was often to a widower with children, so that they became stepmothers; resentments about preferential treatment were very common in families with stepsiblings, and the evil stepmother became a stock figure in folk tales. If a woman's second husband died, she might have to spend her last years in the house of a stepchild who resented her demands but was legally bound to provide for her, and so old age became a standard feature of the popular stereotype of the witch. Family structure and living arrangements were different in eastern Europe, where extended families often lived together, so the resentment of older women may not have been as strong; this combined with the fact that Eastern Orthodoxy never developed an elaborate demonology may explain why witchcraft was not associated with women there, but remained the province of male sorcerers.

Women also had close connections with many areas of life in which magic or malevolence might have seemed the only explanation for events—they watched over animals that could die mysteriously, prepared food that could become spoiled unexplainably, nursed the ill of all ages who could die without warning, and cared for children who were even more subject to disease and death than adults in this era of poor hygiene and unknown and uncontrollable childhood diseases.

Women who cared for women who had recently given birth and their infants, known as lying-in maids, were especially vulnerable, for this was a particularly dangerous time for both the new mother and infant.

The person initially accused in a witch hunt in most of Latin Christendom fit a stereotype that has been remarkably resilient: she was an older woman, widowed or single, poor, and in some way peculiar—someone who looked or behaved oddly or was known for cursing or scolding or aberrant sexual behavior. She was often on the margins of village society and dependent on the goodwill of others for her support, and was also suspect because she was not under the direct control of a man. She might have had a reputation as a healer, a scold, or a worker of both good and bad magic, and was the inversion of what people expected a “good woman” to be: argumentative, willful, independent, aggressive, and sexual, rather than chaste, pious, silent, obedient, and married. In some parts of Europe and North America, she might also have been suspected of other types of crimes or have been troublesome to authorities.

One might assume that women would have done everything they could to avoid such a reputation, but in actuality the stereotype could have protected a woman for many years. Some women consciously cultivated popular notions of their connection with the supernatural, performing rituals of love magic with herbs, wax figures, or written names designed to win a lover or hold a spouse. Neighbors would be less likely to refuse assistance, and the wood, grain, or milk that she needed to survive would be given to her or paid as fees for her magical services such as finding lost objects, attracting desirable suitors, or harming enemies. This can help explain why some women apparently confessed to being witches without the application or even threat of torture; after decades of providing magical services, they were as convinced as their neighbors of their own powers.

ACTUAL WITCHCRAFT TRIALS

Gender figured not only in learned and popular ideas about witchcraft, but also in the ways in which accusations and trials developed. The entire realm of sexual relationships, for example, created the possibility of conflict that could easily have led to accusations of witchcraft. Choosing a spouse was an important and sometimes difficult business, and those whose courtships failed might search for someone to blame. Once a marriage occurred, sexual or reproductive dysfunction on the part of either partner required an explanation, and natural causes were often not evident or sufficient. Extramarital relationships brought even greater possibilities of danger, uncertainty, and powerful feelings, with witchcraft used as an explanation for both their beginning and their end.

Relations within the family and kin group were similarly fraught with tension and the possibility of

conflict. Family members were expected to be loyal to one another and to defend one another in times of crisis, but tensions over property, stepchildren, or the public behavior of a relative or in-law were very common in early modern families. Women were in a more vulnerable position once such strains came out into the open, for marriage had often separated them from their birth families and they were dependent on their husbands' family to protect them. Women generally married men who were older than they were, and, given high child mortality rates and the prevalence of disease, might have had no children who lived; thus between one-quarter and one-third of the older women in a community might have had no direct descendants to defend them against accusations. Studies in many parts of Europe indicate that when men were accused, they were more likely to have family and friends who testified in their favor—and more likely to flee to avoid being executed.

Neighborhood antagonisms also led to accusations, and because most adults spent the majority of their time with people of the same sex, women generally accused other women and men other men. Women accused other women of harming children or curdling milk, while men accused other men of spoiling crops or killing horses. The witnesses initially brought in were also of the same sex, and often those who knew the lives of the alleged witch and the victim intimately, such as servants or close neighbors. Some scholars have particularly addressed the question of why women would accuse other women in a process they knew might have deadly results, and have concluded that women gained economic and social security by conforming to the standard of the good wife and mother, and by confronting women who deviated from it.

Family and neighborhood tensions played a role in many witch accusations, but aspects of gender relations that were important in one witch hunt might be invisible in others. For example, Carol Karlsen found in her study of the New England witchcraft persecutions that many of the women accused of witchcraft were widows or unmarried women who had inherited property or might do so, and that older women received harsher sentences than younger. In many other groups of trials, however, the women accused of witchcraft owned nothing at all, and sentences were not affected by the age of the accused. All aspects of witchcraft reveal great geographic differences in terms of gender, both over large areas and within one geographic area—from canton to canton in Switzerland or town to town in Austria and Germany.

Geographic differences were even greater once a suspect was brought in for questioning by legal authorities, both in terms of the likely outcome and the way gender shaped this outcome. In southern Europe, witchcraft was handled by the Spanish, Portuguese, or Roman

Inquisitions, which generally simply dismissed the case or at most ordered punishments of public humiliation. Judges in the Inquisition regarded the women and men charged with witchcraft as pawns of the Devil, as misled by the "Father of lies" into thinking they had magical powers. They disagreed with the author of the *Malleus*, which they never used as a guidebook for questioning, as secular and ecclesiastical judges did in central Europe, and asserted that most witches were simply stupid or deluded old women suffering from depression who needed spiritual retraining and (earthly) male guidance. The testimony of such people was certainly not valid grounds to arrest anyone else, which meant there were almost no mass panics in southern Europe. Inquisitors' attitudes toward women were thus more condescending and patronizing than those of northern judges, but the effects of this attitude on women's lives were certainly more positive.

In Europe north of the Alps and Pyrenees, the initial accusation might also be dismissed if the judges regarded the evidence as questionable, or it might have led to a wider round of questioning, which often included the relatives or neighbors of the first suspect, as well as people whose lifestyle made them suspect or who had the reputation of being a witch. Most of those accused in such a hunt fit the stereotype—female, older, poor; male suspects were frequently relatives of the accused women. At this point, especially in central Europe, the hunt might turn into a large-scale panic, in which the circle of suspects brought in for questioning continued to grow unchecked until it numbered in the hundreds. Women continued to be the majority of those accused in such mass panics, but when such large numbers of people began to be accused, the stereotype also often broke down. Wives of honorable citizens were taken in, and the number of male suspects increased significantly, though these were still often related to female suspects and were only rarely accused, of actions such as night flying or pacts with the Devil; male witnesses became more common as well.

This breaking down of the stereotype helps explain why any mass panic finally ended; it eventually became clear to legal authorities, or to the community, that the people being questioned or executed were not what they understood witches to be or that the scope of accusations defied credulity. In many ways it was similar skepticism that led to the gradual end of the witch hunts in Europe. Gradually, the same religious and legal authorities who had so vigorously persecuted witches began to doubt whether witches actually existed, or at least whether the people brought before them actually were witches. Older women who thought themselves witches were more likely to be regarded as deluded or mentally defective, meriting pity rather than persecution, even by people who still firmly believed in the Devil.

It is clear that gender shaped witchcraft in both theory and practice, but less clear exactly how the witch hunts shaped gender, though historians have offered some hypotheses. The stereotypical older woman from the period before and during the hunts was bawdy, aggressive, and domineering, while by the nineteenth century older women were seen as asexual, passive, and submissive. Stereotypes are usually based on something, and some scholars have suggested that the witchcraft trials might have convinced older women to act less “witch-like.” Other scholars have pointed out that along with witchcraft, accusations of women for other types of crimes also increased during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, particularly gender-related ones such as prostitution or infanticide. They suggest that this general criminalization of female behavior served as a means of controlling women who did not fit with the more domestic and delicate ideals for women developing during this period. The effects of the witchcraft trials on notions of masculinity or men’s behavior as men has yet to be explored systematically, but future research in this new area of historical inquiry will no doubt suggest some links.

MERRY WIESNER-HANKS

See also: BODY OF THE WITCH; DEMONOLOGY; EVE; FAMILY; FEMALE WITCHES; FEMINISM; HOMOSEXUALITY; MALE WITCHES; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MIDWIVES; MOTHERHOOD; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PANICS; PERSONALITY OF WITCHES; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC; TRIALS; WITNESSES.

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GENEVA

The history of witchcraft trials in this independent city-state, John Calvin’s adopted home, offers a few unexpected features. Because of Geneva’s location in the western Alpine region, home of the earliest witches’ Sabbats, we can find traces of diabolical pacts and spell casting (*sortilegium*) in or near it shortly after 1400. Between 1463 and 1500, more than fifty witches were burned at Geneva (Binz 1997, 577–578). Witchcraft trials here, as in the neighboring Pays de Vaud, continued until and after the Reformation in a practically unbroken series; except for a few interruptions (1540–1543, 1550–1556, or the war years 1588–1593), the Republic of Geneva held witchcraft trials virtually every year from its creation in 1536 until 1662. The most complete tabulation (Broye 1990, 161–173) counted 336 witchcraft trials conducted by the Republic from 1536 until 1681, resulting in sixty-nine deaths.

After Calvin settled in Geneva, he encouraged the republic’s magistrates to “extirpate the race of witches” from a nearby rural parish which they governed; in all, five people were arrested and two killed in 1545. Trials and executions multiplied rapidly after Calvin’s death; one-fourth of all Genevan executions for witchcraft occurred during two plague years in 1567 and 1568. However, after Lambert Daneau published the first Calvinist discussion of witchcraft at Geneva in 1574, there were only two local executions for this crime in the next twenty-four years. Witchcraft trials revived afterwards; between 1595 and 1624, with a population around 15,000, Geneva averaged about five witchcraft trials and almost one execution per year.

A regional peculiarity associated diabolical pacts involving *maleficium* (harmful magic) with persons believed to spread the plague deliberately. Geneva’s particular obsession with such plague-spreading “anointers” began in 1530, well before Calvin arrived. Two subsequent local persecutions of anointers, in 1545 and 1613, were triggered by confessions in smaller towns on Lake Geneva, which coincided with attacks of the plague. In the worst such episode (1571–1572), perhaps the only true panic related to witchcraft in Genevan history, almost a hundred people, mostly immigrants, were either killed or banished within twelve months (Monter 1976, 44–45, 115–118).

Geneva’s overall average of executions for witchcraft (21 percent) was dramatically lower than in any surrounding region (Monter 1976). It fell steadily from over 40 percent before 1550 to about 20 percent during the general peak of witch hunting in western Europe between 1580 and 1630; only one witch died at

Geneva after 1626. However, an unusually high share of Genevan defendants charged with witchcraft, including a large majority of those who withstood torture without confessing, were not simply released, but banished. A survey of the legal opinions of Geneva's most distinguished jurist during Geneva's busiest period of such trials (1562–1570) revealed that he paid no attention to a prisoner's kin and was cautious about proof of a suspect's *maleficia* (evil acts); instead, he was preoccupied with their attitudes toward the reality of devils and witchcraft (Monter 1976, 51–54). In a state that subscribed to the Calvinist doctrine of original sin, such criteria usually created as much uncertainty about a suspect's innocence as about her or his guilt. Doubting the value of torture to elicit truth, Genevan judges preferred to export the problem by banishing such people.

The decline of witch hunting in seventeenth-century Geneva—once again, far sooner than anywhere else in this region—was apparently related to problems with two issues: finding the Devil's mark on suspected witches, and assessing testimony from diabolically possessed persons. After a particularly troublesome case in 1622, professional surgeons located the Devil's mark only once among eight accused witches, and that woman became the last witch ever executed at Geneva, in 1652. Meanwhile, testimony from possessed women and children first became a serious issue in 1607 and 1610; it thoroughly dominated the history of Geneva's witchcraft trials after 1625. However, because their accusations could not be corroborated by surgical searches for the mark, only one woman was executed for this reason after 1626. A decade after her death, virtually no one was arrested for witchcraft. By the 1680s, some “enlightened” Genevans were already wondering why their native city had ever tolerated such “barbarous superstitions.”

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: CALVIN, JOHN; DANEAU, LAMBERT; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; DEVIL'S MARK; PLAGUE; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; SWITZERLAND; TRIALS; VAUD, PAYS DE.

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GEOGRAPHY OF THE WITCH HUNTS

With the help of many major advances in knowledge during the past generation, it has become possible to

sketch the geographical contours of European witch hunting more precisely than before. Significant lacunae still persist, however, and it remains extremely difficult to agree on the most satisfactory method of measuring the geographical distribution of trials and executions for witchcraft. The fullest account of current wisdom on this topic, found in the most widely used general introduction (Levack 1995, chap. 7), emphasized two general factors affecting the very uneven geographical distribution of witch hunting: first, the extent to which the cumulative concept of witchcraft was accepted in a particular European region; and second, geographical variations in judicial procedures and in degree of central control over local legal systems. At the same time, that account underplays such cultural factors as dominant religions, which greatly influenced the incidence of witchcraft trials in eastern, southeastern, and Mediterranean Europe.

It seems necessary to recall that at the time of the witch hunts and witchcraft trials, European political boundaries were extremely different from what they are today. In general, there were fewer states, several of them multinational. To take some of the most obvious examples, during the age of witchcraft trials, Norway (and Iceland) belonged to the crown of Denmark; Finland and Estonia, and the northern half of Latvia were parts of the crown of Sweden; Lithuania, Belarus, and the Ukraine all belonged to the crown of Poland. Although half of Hungary (including Budapest) was occupied by the Ottoman Empire during much of the witchhunting age, the Hungarian crown also claimed to rule most of modern Croatia, Slovakia, and Romania; in fact, the capital of the kingdom of Hungary from 1550 to 1700 was a Danubian city that is today (under a different name) Slovakia's capital. So the first question is whether to use European geography of the twenty-first century or that of the early modern era when trying to map the incidence of its witchcraft trials. Each strategy presents particular advantages and drawbacks.

Moreover, physical size should be correlated with relative population; some of Europe's largest states, like Sweden, contain relatively few people, while some smaller ones like the Low Countries (three separate national governments today, but not then) have always been relatively densely populated. During the age of the witch hunts, Europe's population was not only far smaller in absolute numbers than it is today (for example, Germany alone held 80 percent as many people as all of Latin Christendom combined around 1600), but it was also distributed differently: for example, France was then more populous than Germany, while Renaissance Italy was almost three times as populous as Tudor England, although they are now roughly equal.

Given these problems, it is understandable that leading contemporary historians, including several on the Editorial Board of this *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition*, have found different ways to attack the geographical distribution of witchcraft trials. One approach (Behringer 1998, 65–66, slightly revised by Henningsen 2003, 585) started with current political boundaries and attempted to calculate the approximate number of executions per country, adjusting it by early modern population estimates. Using entries from this *Encyclopedia* to further refine their results creates the following picture of Latin Christian Europe:

TABLE G-1

<i>Current Nation</i>	<i>Population 1600 (thousands)</i>	<i>Witches Executed (per thousand)</i>
Luxemburg	250	4.0
Switzerland	1,000	3.5
Germany	16,000	1.6
Denmark	570	1.3
Norway	400	0.75
Estonia	100	0.65
Austria	2,000	0.5
Sweden	800	0.45
Iceland	50	0.44
Poland	3,400	0.4
Czech Republic	1,000	0.4
Belgium	1,200	0.35
Finland	350	0.31
Slovakia	700	0.3
Hungary	3,000	0.28
France	20,000	0.25
United Kingdom	6,500	0.2
Netherlands	1,500	0.12
Spain	8,100	0.03
Italy	13,100	0.02
Portugal	1,000	0.01

These calculations obviously contain some margin of error, because early modern demography uses records not much richer or more reliable than legal records. Although some places are literally “off the map”—for instance, the Republic of Ireland (with only two known trials), some Baltic republics, or all of southeastern Europe (which was then mostly under Ottoman control)—a few conclusions emerge clearly from this list. Perhaps the most remarkable one is that the 2004 official boundary of the European Community (EC) closely coincides with the frontier between countries that executed witches in significant numbers and those that did not; except for Ireland, Greece, little Cyprus, and tiny Malta, only witch-hunting countries have been admitted to the EC. Another even more unsettling

observation is that twenty-first-century prosperity correlates positively with intensive witch hunting in the early modern era: the two European nations with by far the highest per capita execution rates for witches, Luxemburg and Switzerland, are also by far the two wealthiest continental European nations today (conversely, Europe’s poorest nations per capita usually rank among the lowest in per capita witchcraft executions). One notes with relief that Ireland now ranks among Europe’s wealthiest nations.

If the Behringer model manipulated some comparable statistical measurements, it used twenty-first-century European political boundaries and has not yet generated any usable maps. On the other hand, a Briggs model not only used early modern political boundaries but even featured actual maps, including one covering all of Europe and another on the “Heartlands of Persecution” (Briggs 2002, x, xi). But it employed extremely vague standards of comparison, distinguishing on a European scale between “areas of sustained moderate persecution or significant local crises” from “areas of relatively light but not insignificant persecution,” and distinguished in the heartlands among “areas of intense witch-hunts,” “areas of intensive but dispersed persecution,” “areas of significant persecution,” and “areas of lower-level and patchy persecution.” Many spaces, including places that we know experienced witchcraft prosecutions, remained blank: *hic sunt leones* (lions roam here), as Renaissance cartographers used to say. In other words, each geographical model had different, but perhaps equally serious, flaws. With the help of the entries in this *Encyclopedia*, it is possible to present useful (though certainly not comprehensive) statistical data on witchcraft trials and executions throughout early modern Europe cartographically, perhaps adopting the Briggs model of Europe’s political boundaries ca. 1600.

It is probably most helpful to begin with a revised version of the Behringer model, and start at the bottom rather than at the top of his witchcraft-persecution scale, taking a close look first at places that experienced no legalized witch hunts in the early modern era. Geographically, the largest zone free of institutional witchcraft trials in early modern Europe coincided with the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire, which governed the Balkans from Europe’s largest city, Istanbul. Nevertheless, there were many witch lynchings, perhaps even popular witch hunts, in the Ottoman Balkans.

The next geographical layer of Europe—the entire far east—actually emerges more clearly against twenty-first-century boundaries than against seventeenth-century boundaries. The key region, now as then, was the Muscovite Empire, which saw over a hundred known witchcraft executions, but a ridiculously small per capita

ratio given its immense size and vast population. The large zone between modern Russia and Poland also experienced tiny totals of known executions (for example, eleven in the Ukraine or thirteen in Lithuania).

One geographical conclusion emerges with dazzling clarity: the “witchcraft frontier” separating eastern Europe from east-central Europe coincided closely with the religious frontier separating Latin from Orthodox Christendom and from the Islamic southeast. While the Orthodox Church was extremely familiar with demonic forces and *maleficium* (harmful magic), for several reasons (including the absence of liturgical references and of medieval heretical movements), it never accepted the cumulative concept of witchcraft developed in fifteenth-century Latin Christendom. Consequently, there were extremely few executions for *maleficium* in Orthodox Europe, as there had been in early medieval Latin Europe, and nothing remotely approaching a witch hunt. Therefore, our first geographical exploration of the absence of institutional witch hunts in far southeastern Europe reveals the importance of sixteenth-century political and religious boundaries (the Ottoman Empire and Islam), while our next observation about its absurdly low incidence throughout far eastern Europe emerges more clearly through twenty-first-century political boundaries. Both explorations demonstrate vividly the dramatic importance of religious boundaries—not those *within* Latin Christendom, which we normally explore carefully during the confessionalized early modern era, but instead those *between* Latin and Orthodox Christendom and especially the political frontier between Christendom and Islam—in determining the geography of early modern European witchcraft, above all its “negative geography.”

The next remarkably low incidence of witchcraft executions concerns Europe’s southernmost regions, the Mediterranean zones of Italy, Spain and Portugal. Political boundaries in the Iberian peninsula are identical in the sixteenth and twenty-first centuries, while “Italy” remained a geographical notion until the nineteenth century. Except for Portugal (where many more accused witches died in prison than were executed), this region showed slightly higher per capita totals than eastern Europe, although Mediterranean ratios never exceeded one execution per 4,000 people. Moreover, these executions were concentrated along the northern rim of “Mediterranean” Europe, namely the southern slopes of the Alps and Pyrenees. If modern Spain had hundreds of witchcraft executions, virtually all of them occurred in its northern provinces (Navarre, Aragon, Catalonia). Henningsen has traced a “witchcraft frontier” cutting east–west across the middle of the Iberian peninsula (see Knutsen 2004, 219); although no comparable frontier has yet been drawn for Italy, it would certainly run east–west across subalpine Italy, with the

heaviest concentrations in the far north and some prolongations in the Apennines. Moreover, chronology seemed more important than geography, because most Italian witchcraft executions occurred quite early, before 1540.

Once again, although less clearly than in Orthodox Europe, geographical mapping points to religious factors. This was the most solidly Catholic region of early modern Europe. But it also points to Levack’s second general geographical explanation through judicial and legal factors. It is now generally recognized that the fundamental reason for the extremely low incidence of witchcraft executions in Mediterranean Europe was the policy of the Spanish, Roman, and Portuguese Inquisitions, all of which claimed (but did not always exercise) jurisdiction over this crime. After its reforms of 1526, the Spanish Inquisition permitted the execution of fourteen witches; the Roman Inquisition, founded in 1542, executed 36 witches; and the Portuguese Inquisition executed only four (Henningsen 2003, 582–583). It is one of the more important paradoxes in European cultural history that, although a fifteenth-century papal inquisitor in northern Europe produced the most widely read guide to witchcraft trials, the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), a half-century later the governors of Mediterranean Europe’s highly centralized inquisitions had clearly rejected the *Malleus* in favor of an older model inherited from canon law.

The next lowest incidence of witchcraft executions occurred in a region that had emerged by 1600 as the progressive core of Atlantic Europe: England, France, and the Netherlands. England and France, two neighboring kingdoms with very different procedural systems but a comparable degree of centralized judicial controls, both had remarkably low levels of per capita witchcraft executions. Their core districts, the British Home Circuit and the *ressort* or appellate district of the *Parlement* (sovereign judicial court, with jurisdiction over approximately one-half of France) of Paris, boasted ratios well below national Spanish levels. However, in both England and France (or, for that matter, in Spain), twenty-first-century national averages must also incorporate vastly higher ratios—often at least ten times greater—from largely autonomous peripheral regions like Scotland (which was in personal although not institutional union with England when it held 90 percent of its witchcraft trials) or Alsace and Lorraine (which held over 90 percent of their regional witchcraft trials before France acquired them). The northern Netherlands, a new state of early modern Europe created near the end of the sixteenth century, had a rudimentary regional appellate court system, but here too the *Hooge Raad* (High Court) of Holland played a role in ending witchcraft executions sooner than any other corner of Latin Europe. The obvious comparison here is with modern

Belgium (the southern Netherlands), which also had a rudimentary appellate court and enjoyed a relatively low execution rate—which was nevertheless three times higher than its northern neighbor.

Continuing up the per capita execution ladder, we encounter a relatively bunched situation among the solidly Protestant Scandinavian countries. Virtually all of them, from Iceland to Estonia, have been studied carefully. A twenty-first-century political map underlines the essential homogeneity of this region, because it includes six countries instead of two early modern kingdoms (Denmark-Norway-Iceland and Sweden-Finland-Estonia). On the Behringer scale, five of these six clustered between 0.3 and 0.7 executions per thousand, that is, one for every 1,500–3,000 inhabitants. Denmark, the only Scandinavian country attached to the European mainland and the first to experience the cumulative concept of witchcraft, was an exception, exceeding the threshold of one execution per thousand.

The eastern outposts of Latin Christendom added to the EC in 2004 (that is, Latvia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia) appeared to have execution ratios broadly comparable to those from Scandinavia. Although their rates seemed slightly lower, their executions came slightly later, and only one of them (Hungary) has been studied carefully. Throughout these eastern edges of Latin Christendom, it was the numerous and widely scattered pockets of German speakers, descendants of the medieval German *Ostsiedlung* (the colonization of the east) scattered from the Baltic to the southern Carpathians, that provided the first and often the most intensive examples of witch hunting in a region populated overwhelmingly by Slavic speakers but governed mainly by Magyars or Austrians.

At the upper end of our per capita execution scale were countries with more than one witchcraft execution per thousand population in 1600. Two small regions bordering modern Germany—Switzerland and Luxemburg—had Europe's highest per capita ratios. Nevertheless, on a national European scale, the Behringer model never reached five witchcraft executions per thousand people—unless one counted the tiny principality of Lichtenstein, where this ratio easily surpassed fifty executions per thousand. However, Lichtenstein was also the only modern European state to be created because of excesses in witchcraft trials by its previous rulers; after acquiring the County of Vaduz in the early eighteenth century, the Lichtenstein princes carefully avoided witchcraft trials. At the most superficial level, therefore, it is apparent that Europe's witch-burning nations formed a contiguous block centered on modern Germany, which by itself accounted for at least half of the entire European total. And it is in explaining Europe's highest per capita executions that the Briggs model finally becomes necessary; here one must think exclusively in terms of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century political geography.

The key concept is the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, which included not only all of present-day Germany but a great deal more besides. Until 1648, it technically included modern Austria, Switzerland, Luxemburg, and the Low Countries, plus Alsace-Lorraine. Experts disagree about the exact number of truly autonomous governments within the Old Reich before Napoleon destroyed it, but agree that there were at least several hundred. Experts also disagree about the exact number of trials and executions for witchcraft within its ample borders, but they agree that a large majority of the entire European total occurred here. Moreover, they agree that witchcraft executions were distributed extremely unevenly throughout the empire. Therefore it becomes indispensable to map the old Holy Roman Empire, the true heartland of this phenomenon, in such a way as to reveal the hot spots among these hundreds of governments.

The scale of the Behringer model must be refined at the upper end to adjust the Briggs model and highlight the centers of persecution within the Holy Roman Empire. One obvious threshold for regions with over 100,000 people ca. 1600, like Luxemburg, would be five executions per thousand. Few places this large reached this level. Extremely few territories approaching 100,000 people ca. 1600 reached the level of ten witchcraft executions per thousand; the Pays de Vaud in modern Switzerland ranked among the rare exceptions attaining this dubious distinction. However, a few of the Empire's hundreds of microstates (*zwergerstaaten*) like Vaduz-Lichtenstein saw fifty or more witchcraft executions per thousand population, and a handful of tiny ecclesiastical territories (for example, St. Maximin, Mergentheim, Ellwangen) may have exceeded Vaduz in relative severity. But none of these autonomous states ruled as many as five thousand subjects, and any map of west-central Europe's "black holes" of witch burnings needs to emphasize this fact.

Another cartographical desideratum would be a map displaying the geographical spread of Europe's witchcraft executions from 1420 to 1500, noting every place affected by the new cumulative concept and highlighting the handful of places with one or more executions per thousand (Dauphiné in France, Valais in Switzerland, the city of Arras, etc.). The excellent maps showing the early spread of printing could be modified to do this.

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See also: BALKANS; ECCLESIASTICAL COURTS; GERMANY; HISTORIOGRAPHY; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; ISLAMIC WITCHCRAFT AND MAGIC; NUMBER OF WITCHES; ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY; VADUZ, COUNTY OF; VAUD, PAYS DE.

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GERMANY

"Germany, mother of so many witches!" cried Friedrich Spee in his famous *Cautio Criminalis* (A Warning on Criminal Justice, 1631), at the climax of central European persecutions, and his despairing diagnosis is confirmed by retrospective statistics. But we must keep in mind that Germany as a national state did not exist before 1871; instead, Spee used the Latin term *Germania*, referring to Germanophone areas. Most of them belonged to the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, to the nobility of which Luther addressed his famous diatribe in 1520, but many did not: the German-speaking parts of present-day Switzerland, Denmark (duchy of Schleswig), the Netherlands (Limburg), Luxemburg, Poland (Prussia and Silesia), and a number of towns in Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, and Romania (Transylvania). The elected Holy Roman Emperors were moreover not German, but rather—a legacy of the Middle Ages—were considered successors of the ancient Roman Emperors, and protectors of the Holy (Roman) Church; in 1519, the principal candidates for Holy Roman Emperor were the kings of France, England, and Spain. Most emperors in the early modern period were Habsburgs, a dynasty of Swiss origin with their main dynastic lands in Austria, Hungary, Bohemia, Alsace, and northern Italy.

Nevertheless, recent research has established the concept that more witches were killed within the confines of present-day Germany than in the rest of Europe—something between 25,000 and 30,000 victims, far more than half of all estimated victims throughout Europe. This observation is particularly helpful for the linguistic geography of witch hunting, especially when one considers that even outside the boundaries of Germany (*Deutschland*) in its present form, most of the recorded witches in places like Austria, Switzerland, Alsace, Luxemburg, or even Hungary or Silesia also spoke some dialect of German. Even the few parts of western Europe where numerous witches did not speak

Germanic dialects, like Lorraine or the Pays de Vaud, were contiguous with regions that did. Linguistically, Spee was completely correct: a very large majority of Europe's witches were Germanophone, but they were not necessarily politically German.

In the early modern period when witch hunting occurred, most contemporaries spoke of "the Germanies" in the plural, rather than Germany. In fact, using Lucien Febvre's regressive method, we find that a German Empire (*Deutsches Reich*) existed as a unified state only from 1871. Between 1815 and 1871, an alliance of German territories (*Deutscher Bund*) had existed, with an inclination toward state construction guided by nineteenth-century nationalism. After an attempted unification from below failed in 1848, the German states were forced into two unifying wars by the Kingdom of Prussia, whose territory stretched across parts of western and northern Germany and Poland from France to Russia. Afterward, the imperial Habsburg monarchy—still ruling parts of northern Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Hungary, Slovakia, and Bohemia—was excluded from the new German Empire, which also soon annexed Alsace (largely Germanophone) from France. After World War I, Alsace returned to France and the Austrian monarchy disintegrated; but a German Republic, founded at Weimar after the revolution of 1918, still extended far into eastern Europe. Only after World War II were the eastern parts of former Prussia lost, with Königsberg, the home of Immanuel Kant, becoming Kaliningrad in the Soviet Union. In 1945, large parts of the former Nazi state were also annexed by Poland, which lost most of its former eastern territory to the Soviet Union.

It has also been claimed that witch hunting was concentrated in Germanophone areas within the Holy Roman Empire, as well as elsewhere in eastern and southeastern Europe. It is true that, since the tenth century, the term "*deutsch*" (German) described the language of uneducated people, those who were incapable of speaking Latin. In the nineteenth century, the German language served as a pretext to forge a German nation-state; linguists like Jakob Grimm tried to promote ideas of its continuity, and even called their language studies "*Germanistik*." However, the concept seems anachronistic for the late medieval and early modern periods. Around 1500, people from Hamburg understood Swedish or Danish more easily than Bavarian or Austrian. "*Dutch*" was not yet considered different from "*Deutsch*" (German), since the dialects spoken in Amsterdam, Antwerp, or Atrecht (today Arras in France) were not yet greatly different from those in Cologne or Münster in Westphalia. The Anabaptists of Amsterdam therefore had no problem in choosing Münster as their new Jerusalem in 1533, and Jan van Leiden easily became the "king" of this Anabaptist

commonwealth. Johann Weyer, born in Grave on the Meuse, later part of the Netherlands, had no problem serving as an apprentice in the household of Cornelius Agrippa in Bonn, or working as court physician for the dukes of Cleves at Düsseldorf, or with publishing his *De praestigiis daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils) at Basel in 1563, of course in German. The concept of “Low Countries” or “Netherlands” relates to the geography of the Rhine valley, with “Upper Germany” on the other end. Begun by Luther’s poetic Bible translations, which first deliberately attempted to bridge the gulf between High and Low German (*Hochdeutsch* and *Plattdeutsch*), the modern German language took firmer shape after the mid-seventeenth century, when the Holy Roman Empire was disintegrating after the Thirty Years’ War and literary societies (*Sprachgesellschaften*) were created to construct a new national language based on Luther’s vernacular Bible. By then, however, witch hunting was already in sharp decline.

When witch hunting was being attacked at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Italian jurist Andrea Alciati labeled the persecutions in the Italian Alps as *nova holocausta*, a “new holocaust,” referring to ancient human sacrifices to pagan gods. More recently, some scholars have tried to correlate the modern Holocaust with the period of witch hunting, and (avoiding comparisons with parts of contemporary Africa or Asia) attempted to interpret a politics of extinction as something essentially “German.” However, since politics and language are unlikely to provide sufficient evidence, scholars maintaining this idea may be asked whether they imply that persecuting minorities is genetic. However, Germanophobia does not make more sense than a stereotyping hatred of any other linguistic or ethnic group. Humanists invented the concept of Germania after the discovery of Tacitus’s ancient text around 1450, and a number of Germanophone humanists embarked on attempted constructions of ancient pedigrees. Meanwhile, following the cultural phenomenon of lumping all foreigners together, the “German nation” at Italian universities included Hungarian and Czech students—in fact, any European from outside the Romance countries and Britain. In conclusion, the cultural concept of “Germany” makes little sense during the period of witch hunting.

For the convenience of the present-day reader, and with a bow toward the ancient notion of “the Germanies,” this *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft* includes four separate entries on Germany—northeast, west and northwest, southwest, and southeast. The numerous independent territories comprising the central European Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation are rarely part of common knowledge today, and useful directions are most easily provided through articles based on twenty-first-century geography. Because Germany did not exist in the early modern period, it is

appropriate to cut its current version into more digestible slices.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM, HEINRICH CORNELIUS; ALCIATI, ANDREA; ANABAPTISTS; AUSTRIA; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; BOHEMIA; GEOGRAPHY OF THE WITCH HUNTS; GRIMM, JACOB; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; HUNGARY; LUTHER, MARTIN; POLAND; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; SWITZERLAND; WEYER, JOHANN.

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GERMANY, NORTHEASTERN

To date, studies of witch persecution in northeastern Germany—the present-day states (*Länder*) of Mecklenburg, Western Pomerania, Saxony-Anhalt, Brandenburg, Thuringia, and Saxony, all formerly in the German Democratic Republic (GDR)—are few and often quite out of date. After reunification in 1990, there was a push to conduct more research, from which new publications should emerge; their results are partially reflected in this survey. Only a rough sketch of the persecutions can therefore be offered. We can see, for instance, that like the rest of the Holy Roman Empire, northern Germany also saw some west-to-east, as well as a smaller south-to-north differentiation in witchcraft persecutions. The rate of death penalties ranged from around 50 percent in Mecklenburg and Electoral Saxony to about 70 percent in Western Pomerania and Thuringia. In most areas the persecutions reached their peak between 1580 and 1630, with significant regional differences. From 1650 to 1670, a second large wave affected some northeastern areas but apparently spared the regions of Saxony-Anhalt and Brandenburg. All regions possess enough records to document an apparent social spread of the accusations over time. At first they were aimed primarily at the lower classes, but there was a decided upward shift later. Although northeastern Germany was mostly rural in nature, the highest concentration of witchcraft persecutions occurred in its smaller cities.

Persecutions of witches began later in the eastern regions of Germany than in the western regions. The trials were driven by the fully elaborated concept of witchcraft, which became more embedded in the middle of the sixteenth century, after the crime of witchcraft had been included among other legal transgressions. Once witchcraft had been redefined and criminalized,

the number of trials increased dramatically throughout this overwhelmingly Lutheran area, creating a series of trials that already showed signs of the persecutions to come, such as the use of torture, the serialization of trials, and the death penalty for witchcraft that resulted in serious harm or involved Satanic activities. Throughout the witch persecutions, these northern leaders generally adhered to the procedures of the Carolina Code (*Constitutio Criminalis Carolina of 1532*), which called for a *processus ordinarius* (ordinary procedure) and defined witchcraft in the sense of damaging *maleficium* (harmful magic), as in the Middle Ages. The southern states tended to lean toward stricter definitions, reflecting a complete reception of a cumulative concept of witchcraft, as set down, for example, in the 1572 criminal code of Electoral Saxony.

MECKLENBURG

The persecutions of witches in Mecklenburg, which divided into two duchies after 1621, rank among the most intensive in the Holy Roman Empire, or anywhere in Europe. Nearly 4,000 trials were conducted in these sparsely populated lands between 1570 and 1700 (Moeller 2002b, 38). They came in two waves of roughly equal size and intensity, peaking from 1599–1614 and again from 1661–1675.

Following the Carolina Code, Mecklenburg's church ordinances of 1552 and its police regulations of 1562–1572 defined magic and witchcraft as criminal activities. At first there was a marked reluctance to prosecute witchcraft as a spiritual crime, evident in adherence to the *processus ordinarius* and warnings against using rumors as accusations. Two strong Lutheran voices, Johann Georg Goedelmann and Ernst Cothemann, criticized the new definition of witchcraft. The rapidly increasing number of trials held in Mecklenburg resulted from government efforts to implement the new legal codes in criminal cases, not only by applying procedures from Roman law, but also through increased professionalism and discipline in local courts. The confessionalizing and modernizing campaigns of the Reformation dukes helped increase witchcraft trials considerably, especially prosecutions of professional magicians. At the same time, pressures for prosecution came from beneath, from peasants clinging to the idea that harmful—and now criminal—witchcraft was used in neighborhood conflicts. Moreover, Mecklenburg's first wave of prosecution between 1599 and 1614 followed epidemics and crop failures. Strikingly, many of the witchcraft trials conducted during this phase were individual prosecutions taking place in courts under the complicated jurisdictions of the changing manor lords. After these jurisdictions had been consolidated, most manor lords lost interest in conducting witchcraft trials.

After a temporary standstill of witchcraft persecutions during the Thirty Years' War, a new cycle of severe

and massive persecution began in 1650, peaking between 1661 and 1675. The social range of suspects was now much broader than before, and serial trials also began at this time. Both regions, Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Mecklenburg-Güstrow, showed the same tendencies but developed very differently because of the way the trials were conducted.

Mecklenburg-Schwerin's ruler, Christian Louis I, spent most of his time abroad. He was a repeated and vocal proponent of stopping the trials. His officials, however, encouraged by the creation of a separate inquisitorial committee and supported by legal advisers, tended to employ practices that came very close to redefining witchcraft as a *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime). Confiscation of property or additional taxation helped expand witch hunts into large serial trials, which were held primarily in this region. Even in cases with no clear verdict, the decision was usually to banish rather than release the accused. Not until the last rabid proponent of the death penalty had passed away in May 1700 was this practice of sentencing in witchcraft trials stopped. The crime of witchcraft, however, remained on the books.

Witchcraft persecutions developed quite differently in Mecklenburg-Güstrow under the leadership of Duke Gustav Adolf. Here the view of witchcraft and magicians formed the core of an intensive policy of Lutheran confessionalism, with widespread inquisition measures to investigate occurrences of suspected magic. Pastors, local leaders, members of the judicial system, and church courts were all parts of this control system, which considerably intensified investigations of witchcraft. At the same time, however, legal safeguards were increased. Therefore, sentences were much less severe in Güstrow after the first phase. The means of conducting trials, including meticulous appraisals and the requirement that impartial officials observe and obtain approval from state leaders, resulted in prolonging them over many years. The Güstrow church, also involved in the whole process, maintained a rather critical view toward these trials, which eventually led to a fundamental criticism of the terms defining witchcraft. Prosecutions ended here between 1681 and 1683, as witchcraft was demoted from a crime to a superstitious belief.

WESTERN POMERANIA

No recent research has been done on witch persecutions in Pomerania-Wolgast (including the Bogislav XIII region of 1569) or the regions that in 1648 became Swedish and Prussian Western Pomerania.

Prosecutions for performing magic appeared early in the Pomeranian legal practice. The "Wendisch-Rugianian regional practices," written by the District Officer Matthäus Norman from 1525–1541, stated that the normal punishment for

harmful magic was the death penalty; although it added that cases of witchcraft crimes were rather rare. In 1566/1569 the relevant stipulations of the Carolina Code were integrated into regional criminal codes (the *Hbfgerichtsordnung*). Subsequent versions of these police orders in 1663 and 1672/1681 retained these rulings. Swedish Queen Christina's orders to the city of Verden in 1649 to stop persecutions of witches apparently had no influence on Swedish Pomerania.

A survey of the sentencing recorded at the law faculties of Rostock and Greifswald universities showed a total of 567 people accused of witchcraft crimes in these regions. The lay judges in Stettin, Brandenburg, and Stargard were also of great importance in exchanging and dispatching documents. Altogether there must have been at least 1,000 cases brought to trial (Moeller 2002a), making the western Pomeranian regions about average in their percentage of witchcraft cases per thousand population. The first "real" witchcraft trials can be situated around 1570; the last trials where torture was used took place in 1709 and 1710. Roughly 60 percent of the accused were sentenced to death. Throughout the eighteenth century, there were further accusations, all of which were dismissed in light of the intensified stipulations regarding investigation procedures. According to source material now available, the persecutions reached their highest points around 1610 or 1620, and especially between 1650 and 1670. There was a slow and general transformation from late medieval trials dealing exclusively with harmful magic, into real witch persecutions. Only the mass persecutions in the second half of the seventeenth century established the cumulative definition of witchcraft. In Western Pomerania, an unusually high number of witchcraft trials occurred in the very smallest towns. On the other hand, the share of witchcraft trials judged by seigneurial courts was rather small.

The practice of exchanging and dispatching documents became part of set committee practice at Greifswald University that, in accordance with the state laws, adhered to the *processus ordinarius*. Claims to justify the use of torture through merely circumstantial evidence were dismissed. While investigations of accusations of witchcraft and other crimes were given a rather free hand, the use of defense counsel was granted upon request. Greifswald's law faculty was more accommodating than Rostock's in granting consultation requests, there by maintaining good client relations. In the second half of the seventeenth century, legal officials gave considerable leeway to their consultants by moving away from the older mild questioning methods and developing searches for the Devil's mark which, when proved, could shift directly to torture. If the accused did not shed tears or showed no emotions under torture, or made a revocation or retraction, such behavior invariably served to justify repeating the torture.

The tendency at this time was also toward the expulsion of the accused rather than release. Property confiscation, however, could not be conducted on a regular basis by the consultants.

The last death penalty handed down by the legal authorities in Greifswald was sent to the consuls of Prussian or Western Pomerania in September 1714. Reacting to this decision, King Friedrich Wilhelm I issued a decree that December requiring that all parts of the legal proceedings—namely the use of torture—and sentencing in witchcraft trials must be approved by a central instructional and certifying agency. As early as 1706, the Estates of Prussian or Western Pomerania issued a mandate criticizing abuses in witchcraft trials and calling for stricter control mechanisms. Reacting in an opposite vein, in 1723 Swedish Western Pomerania issued a new version of the antique police order that called for the death penalty in cases of witchcraft, except in cases of harmless forms of popular magical practices.

BRANDENBURG

Our knowledge of witchcraft trials in Brandenburg and the surrounding regions is incomplete and even older research shows large gaps.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Elector Joachim I of Brandenburg asked the Benedictine abbot Trithemius to tell him about the new definition of witchcraft. Magical acts were condemned in early sixteenth-century legal codes, but only with moderate restraints, and after 1534 the Carolina Code served as the basis for criminal law. The decisions of lay judges in Brandenburg show them always adhering to the practice of the *processus ordinarius*. The results suggest a relatively early focus on investigating magicians, but no early widespread concept of witchcraft. The majority of trials dealt with harmful magic and simpler magical practices, sometimes with the Devil helping in destructive magic. Even though torture was probably used in the earliest witchcraft trials, we find no confessions of pacts with the Devil or participation in a witches' Sabbath. Not until the end of the 1550s do confessions appear that resemble those in other north German territories, showing an elaborated view of witchcraft.

The high point of the persecutions in Brandenburg can be pinpointed between 1560 and 1590, when the newer view of witchcraft became more widely accepted. Nearly 90 percent of the 266 cases of witchcraft and magic known in Prignitz took place before the start of the Thirty Years' War (Enders 1998, 23); a similar tendency is evident from the surviving legal consultations for this region. Although there was an increase in witch persecutions after the Thirty Years' War, the numbers in Brandenburg seem quite small in comparison to its northern and southern neighboring regions. It is striking that efforts were made to reach amicable settlements in accusations of witchcraft, as with other kinds

of injury. In general, Protestant skepticism of witchcraft trials was evident in the maintenance of trial standards, such as the right to defense counsel or discounting rumors as grounds for accusations. Only a few exceptional cases from the second half of the seventeenth century constitute genuine witchcraft trials, and even these never turned into serial trials. The establishment of a central supervisory office of trials in 1714 served as an effective measure to restrict witchcraft trials, although by this time the persecution of witches played a very small role in the region. Other witchcraft trials in 1721 and 1728 do, however, serve as reminders that witchcraft remained a criminal offense.

SAXONY-ANHALT

Even though the present-day state of Saxony-Anhalt is famous for the mountain Brocken and the witches' dancing square in Thale, very few studies of witchcraft have been done on the area. This may be because the loss of source material is thought to have been relatively high. Today we can find documentation for roughly 200 trials in the region, nearly all of them between 1550 and 1650 (Lücke 2001, 12). Just as in Brandenburg, the trials peaked before the start of the Thirty Years' War, with most trials taking place between 1575 and 1600 and another peak between 1615 and 1620. A final cluster of trials in the mid-1660s did not match these earlier incidents in either numbers or severity. The fully articulated concept of witchcraft was embraced early on in some regional courts. A trial in Luther's hometown of Wittenberg in 1540 showed elements of the crime of making a pact with the Devil or influencing the weather. This practice, however, did not continue for long; the fifteen cases in 1540 and the six cases in 1544 remain exceptions.

Two cities, Quedlinburg and Wernigerode, each sentenced roughly forty accused witches. However, no sources confirm the supposed mass executions mentioned in older literature, claiming that no fewer than 133 witches were put to death in a single day at Quedlinburg. There is, however, proof of occasional confiscations. The idea of the *Elbenzauber* is typical for the region of the Harz Mountains. The accused is said to have bewitched other people with *Elben* or "bad things," creatures thought to be the children of the Devil, and a witch that invaded a person's body like worms and caused damage.

THURINGIA

In the early modern era, the region of Thuringia (like Electoral Saxony) extended well north and south of the borders of the present-day *Land*. Over 1,500 cases of witchcraft persecution can be documented in this region between 1526 and 1731 (Füssel 2001, 89ff.). After a slow start earlier in the century, the number of cases increased rapidly after 1590. Between 1598 and

1631, there was a larger wave with several breaks. Late 1629 seems to have marked the absolute apex of witch persecutions in Thuringia, while 1631 saw a sudden end to the number of cases because of the Thirty Years' War. After 1648, there were a few quiet years, but the persecutions resumed in 1656 and built up to a second massive wave by 1700. After that, one finds only a few sporadic cases.

Over 60 percent of these cases took place in the south and southwestern regions of Henneberg (750 cases) and Coburg (roughly 230 cases). But Gothian Georgenthal also saw a fair amount (50 cases), as did the two imperial free cities of Mühlhausen (roughly 65 cases) and Nordhausen (roughly 30 cases). Seen from a geographical perspective, the persecutions were centered in the mountains of the Thuringian forest and the Rhone region; whereas there were only a few persecutions in the Thuringia basin region.

The points of dispute and accusations clustered around homes and farms, usually involving illness and death of people and livestock; there are records of only a few cases dealing with influencing the weather. Despite the large number of different rulers in Thuringia, the witchcraft inquisition was conducted in nearly identical ways throughout the region, with most cases following the *processus ordinarius* as outlined in the Carolina Code. Spokesmen and government representatives alike paid attention to this, and witchcraft was not treated as *crimen exceptum*.

Local courts did not decide Thuringian witchcraft cases on their own, but they relied on the rulings of *Schöppentühlen* (learned jurists) and law faculties, which were then confirmed through the state government. The *Schöppentuhl* of Jena was consulted in over half of these cases, the Coburg jurists were consulted in about 20 percent, and Leipzig's *Schöppentuhl* in roughly 15 percent. After electoral Saxony promulgated its criminal code in 1572, most Thuringian rulers, although not all, adopted it. The records show that roughly 75 percent of the cases in Thuringia ended in executions. Half of all those sentenced were executed by burning, with only 11 percent being "mercifully" decapitated beforehand. Other types of execution were rare. Eight percent of those accused of witchcraft died during the proceedings before a verdict was spoken, suggesting a rather severe and intensive use of torture.

SAXONY

The modern-day *Land* of Saxony is much smaller than electoral Saxony in the early modern era; parts of it now belong to Thuringia and Saxony-Anhalt. Electoral Saxony contained a number of ruling courts within a relatively small area, which were often consulted in difficult criminal cases by lesser courts elsewhere. Not only the renowned legal faculties of Leipzig and Wittenberg (now in Saxony-Anhalt), but also the central district

capital's courts and lay judges were just as involved in judging witchcraft and related matters as the actual top legal authorities in Dresden. Moreover, Saxon jurisprudence was unusually rich. The early *Sachsenspiegel* viewed crimes of illicit magic or *Zauberei* as heretical and proposed the punishment of death by fire. When electoral Saxony found it necessary to create not only a modern but also a unified law for itself after the Reformation, it promulgated new criminal and procedural codes in 1572.

These new codes were epoch making in dealing with witchcraft, because they did not share the view of the Carolina Code, which did not include witchcraft among its articles concerning heresy. Electoral Saxony's new criminal codes set an important precedent by proposing to punish merely consorting with the Devil with death by fire, whether or not any intent to do damage could be proved. In contrast, even harmful witchcraft, if performed without the involvement of the Devil, deserved the milder punishment of decapitation. In comparison with the terms of the Carolina Code, this spiritualization of witchcraft offenses meant that sentencing for crimes of illicit magic became much stricter. This legislation became known far beyond the borders of electoral Saxony through the writings of renowned Saxon jurists, above all the famous Benedict Carpov.

The effects of this "strict" legislation in electoral Saxony seem to have been much less serious than one might have expected. Some very old studies, supplemented by the records of the Nazi "SS Special Commission on Witches," show only a total of 200 cases raised against witches and magicians, mainly in the years around 1540, 1580, and 1615. Between 1660 and 1690 there were a few further cases, but nothing indicates any large wave of persecutions. Most trials were carried out in Dresden, Leipzig, and Wittenberg (now part of Saxony-Anhalt), since the central courts and ruling courts were located in these cities. We hear of a trial for *Zauberei*, or magic, at Zwickau in 1424, but it cannot be seen as a precedent for the witchcraft trials.

A general regional study of witch persecutions in electoral Saxony between the early fifteenth and the mid-nineteenth centuries shed light on witchcraft persecutions in one of Germany's largest territorial states and one of only four lay electorates in the empire (Wilde 2003). For the approximately 750 witchcraft trials, most originating in the Thuringian part of Electoral Saxony, there were peaks of persecutions from 1570 to 1630 and again from 1656 to 1670. Thus far, no evidence has been found of any mass persecutions resulting from unsupervised accusations based on rumors. Most cases were based on claims of *maleficia*, acts of harmful witchcraft, and stemmed from neighborhood squabbles. Of the roughly 300 cases that ended with the death penalty, approximately 200 came from the Thuringian area of electoral Saxony (Wilde

2003, 166). In a state with a population of roughly half a million, this means that we cannot speak of mass persecutions. Even at their peak, the total number of witchcraft trials made up only about 5 to 7 percent of all criminal trials, and therefore never played a major role.

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See also: BRANDENBURG, ELECTORATE OF; CAROLINA CODE; CARP-ZOV, BENEDICT (II); CONFESSIONS; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; GERMANY; GOEDELMAHN, JOHANN GEORG; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; MECKLENBURG, DUCHY OF; NAZI INTEREST IN WITCH PERSECUTION; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; SAXONY, ELECTORATE OF; THURINGIA; TORTURE; UNIVERSITIES.

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GERMANY, SOUTHEASTERN

Southeastern Germany refers to present-day political boundaries, which were meaningless during the period of witch hunting. During the late medieval and early modern periods, southeastern Germany was a part of the Holy Roman Empire, a patchwork of territories including dozens of prince-bishoprics, prince-abbeyes, imperial free cities, and scores of imperial lordships and earldoms. The region generally supported the imperial cause, being geographically close to the residential capitals of the Habsburg emperors at Vienna and Prague, and most of the territories needed protection against expansive modernizing states. Nevertheless, during the sixteenth century, the duchy of Bavaria became increasingly dominant. In 1609, it annexed the imperial free city of Donauwörth, and in 1623 the Upper Palatinate (*Oberpfalz*). By 1803 or soon after, Bavaria had sacked the prince-bishoprics of Augsburg, Bamberg, Eichstätt, Freising, Passau, Regensburg, and Würzburg, as well as large parts of electoral Mainz and Salzburg, together with the imperial abbeyes of Benediktbeuren, Berchtesgaden, Ebrach, Edelstetten, Elchingen, Irsee, Kaisheim, Kempten, Otto-beuren, Roggenburg, Söflingen, St. Ulrich and Afra, Ursberg, Waldsassen, Wengen, and Wettenhausen; and the imperial free cities of Augsburg, Bopfingen, Buchhorn, Dinkelsbühl, Kaufbeuren, Kempten, Lindau, Memmingen, Nördlingen, Nuremberg (Nürnberg), Regensburg, Rothenburg, Schweinfurt, Wangen, Weissenburg, Windsheim, and Ulm, plus the imperial villages of Gochsheim and Sennfeld. Eventually Bavaria also annexed the territorial states of the Margraves of Burgau, Ansbach, and Bayreuth, of the Teutonic Order, and of the Habsburgs in Swabia, not to mention dozens of earldoms and hundreds of lordships of imperial knights with their mostly tiny territories, mainly in Swabia and Franconia. At the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806, almost all of the formerly independent territories in southeastern Germany had become part of the Kingdom of Bavaria. Now stretching from the Alps north to Thuringia, the Bavarian monarchy voluntarily joined the second German Empire in 1871. During the 1918 revolution, Bavaria became a republic (*Freistaat*) and joined the Weimar Republic in 1919. Bavaria remained intact until 1934, when the Nazi dictatorship wiped out all federal structures. After liberation by American troops, the republic (*Freistaat Bayern*) was restored, comprising six provinces: Upper and Lower Bavaria (*Ober- und Niederbayern*); the Upper Palatinate (*Oberpfalz*); Swabia (*Schwaben*); Upper-, Middle-, and Lower-Franconia (*Ober-, Mittel-, und Unterfranken*). In 1949, Bavaria became a member state of the Federal Republic of Germany. Unlike France or Britain, Bavaria has maintained its conquests in Swabia and Franconia to the present day. Southeastern Germany in this sense

refers to the territory of the modern state of Bavaria, not to be confused with the historical duchy of Bavaria.

Southeastern Germany may serve as a test case for theories about witchcraft and the persecution of witches, since until its unification under Bavarian rule this region was extremely heterogeneous, containing large and small territories, rich urbanized capitals, and poor backward regions, absolute rulers, and territories governed by parliaments. Subsistence farming zones bordered protoindustrialized regions, agrarian face-to-face societies lay close to large towns where strangers could live anonymously. The imperial free city of Augsburg was a major center of communications, where the European postal routes between the Netherlands and Italy, France, and Bohemia met. It was a center of early capitalism: contemporaries were struck by the gap between the extraordinary wealth of the Fuggers, a banking dynasty, and the extreme poverty in their immediate neighborhood, where scores of people died of hunger during the subsistence crisis of 1570; one old man froze to death on the Fuggers' dung heap. In addition to such economic and social discrepancies, the region had extreme political and religious tensions: Nuremberg was the first imperial city to embrace Protestantism, while Bavaria founded the Catholic League and assumed leadership over the prince-bishoprics. The Upper Palatinate belonged politically to the electoral Palatinate and was therefore part of the major Calvinist territory in central Europe. The region had Counter-Reformation post-Tridentine Catholic states; moderate traditional Catholic ecclesiastical territories; ecclesiastical states split by confessional infighting; Calvinist and Lutheran territories; Lutheran and Zwinglian city republics; Catholic, Lutheran, and Calvinist lordships; towns like Augsburg with mixed confessions; and territories with Jewish, Anabaptist, Schwenckfelder, or Spiritualist minorities. Gypsies and travelers roamed through the region, together with discharged soldiers ready for violent attacks, adding to rural insecurities. How did any of this affect the belief in witchcraft or the inclination to persecute witches?

Throughout southeastern Germany there was widespread belief in the efficacy of magical cures, divination, sorcery, and witchcraft. Wise women, herbalists, diviners, and witch doctors were sought after, as sources from the imperial cities of Augsburg, Memmingen, and Nuremberg demonstrate. However, we cannot assume that the intensity of witchcraft beliefs was uniform, and in several cases we encounter eminent contemporaries who did not believe in witches—particularly in Nuremberg, where humanists, artists, poets, and even lawyers ridiculed belief in witchcraft. It is impossible to imagine Jacob Fugger the Rich fearing witches; throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the self-confident patricians of urbane centers like Augsburg, Ulm, or Memmingen seem to have maintained a relaxed

attitude toward suspected witches. In such places, attitudes toward witchcraft had consequences for the persecution of witches. Urban courts prosecuted witchcraft, because the populace expected such action, but they hardly ever forced anyone suspected of witchcraft into confessing by means of torture, thus ensuring few death sentences. Many smaller imperial cities were satellites of the largest ones; all Franconian cities looked to Nuremberg. For example, Weissenburg asked for advice in 1590, and stopped its first witchcraft trials immediately after Nuremberg's lawyers and theologians had given their opinion.

Within centralized territories, legal treatment depended on decisions by the central authorities. The Calvinist government in Heidelberg rejected belief in witches and simply forbade their provincial government at Amberg from conducting witchcraft trials in any district court of the Upper Palatinate. After the Upper Palatinate was occupied by Bavarian troops in 1623 and subsequently annexed, Protestantism was suppressed. Nevertheless, even under Catholic Bavarian rule, the Upper Palatinate had few witchcraft trials and only a handful of executions. The duchy/electorate of Bavaria also saw relatively few executions, except one witch hunt around 1590, when witches were persecuted in several district courts. However, these trials were soon seen as a severe mistake and promptly stopped. As a relatively large territorial state, Bavaria's complex system of institutions generated considerable resistance against witch hunting: Although most Jesuits and the University of Ingolstadt, as well as the duke and his court council, had supported the witch hunt, many larger towns, the nobility, the Bavarian estates (*Landschaft*), and the Privy Council opposed the idea that witchcraft could be considered an extraordinary crime that required extraordinary measures (a basically illegal court procedure).

This opposition won the struggle. Bavaria's roughly 100 district courts were tightly controlled by the central government in Munich and the provincial governments in Burghausen, Straubing, and Landshut (and, after 1623, in Amberg). District judges had to report immediately after suspects were imprisoned and ask permission for any further steps. Within the duchy of Bavaria, only governments could impose torture, which they decided after reviewing a complete written record of all interrogations of suspected witches and independent witnesses. Because only the government could impose torture and death sentences, Bavarian death sentences for witchcraft were rare events, even if most councilors and certainly the princes believed in witchcraft. Avoiding witch panics in a large territory was a matter of state policy, not religion. Because Bavaria and the Upper Palatinate were by far the largest states in the present-day southeastern German provinces of Upper and Lower Bavaria and the Upper Palatinate, the

number of regional executions was comparatively low, just like in the neighboring southern states of Tyrol and Austria, or the kingdom of Bohemia to the east.

In contrast to such well-ordered police states, the picture in Swabia and Franconia is unbalanced. Small lordships, earldoms, or abbeys lacked the complex system of checks and balances that existed in large territorial states. Because the more important towns had become independent before 1500, urban opposition was generally absent; certainly there were no universities or a complex system of government. In many cases, decisions depended simply on the ideas of the ruling lord or abbot. There are cases where a bishop's illness caused witchcraft trials (e.g., presumably in the prince-bishopric of Augsburg) or where demands by the peasants drove the local ruler into witch hunting. For example, the Catholic Hans von Rechberg permitted burning witches in his tiny lordship of Illereichen (Swabia) in 1562 to calm his peasantry, while the Calvinist lords von Kaltenthal conducted trials in their fief of Osterzell in 1590 for similar reasons. Large-scale witch hunts with more than twenty burnings are reported from the County of Oettingen-Wallerstein around 1590 and again around 1629, alongside witch panics with several victims in Illereichen and in some Swabian lordships of the Fuggers. The tiny principality of Pfalz-Neuburg saw two witch hunts: one around 1590, when it was Protestant, and another around 1629, when it had become Catholic.

On the other hand, considering the scores of small territories in this region, most petty rulers seem to have remained cool and obviously managed to deflect demands for persecution. The same seems to apply to most abbots and abbesses in southeastern Germany as well. Although not all sources have been scrutinized, we have no evidence that any of the many imperial abbeys mentioned earlier ever conducted a witch hunt. It seems more than unlikely that any major witch hunts have escaped our attention, because they would be mentioned in supralocal sources like legal opinions, broadsheets, correspondence, travel reports, diaries, chronicles, or early modern publications on witchcraft. The reasons ecclesiastical territories in this region (unlike those further west and north) avoided witch hunting were multifold. Some had a relaxed attitude toward confessionism, and therefore to the female sex; abbesses may even have felt some solidarity with persecuted women. Reason of state also played a role: for example, the Benedictine abbot of Benediktbeuern avoided dispensing death sentences because his right to enforce them was disputed by the dukes of Bavaria. In his criminal records, all cases of homicide were mitigated into financial compensation to the victims' families. This was done to avoid a decision of the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court) about the constitutional status of his territory and maintain

the fiction that Benediktbeuren was a free imperial abbey, not a Bavarian vassal.

Although it seems self-evident that most “witches” were executed during witch hunts, it is also possible to substantiate this claim statistically. Of about 950 known “witches” executed within the boundaries of the modern provinces of Upper and Lower Bavaria, Swabia and the Upper Palatinate, 51 percent died during 14 large-scale witch hunts (those with more than 20 executions), mostly conducted around 1590 or 1629; another 31 percent fell victim during 38 lesser panics (with between 4 and 19 executions), mostly between 1580 and 1630. And, between 1300 and 1800, only about one “witch” in six (18 percent) received a death sentence in episodes involving three or fewer executions. The fact that 82 percent of these victims were executed in clusters, after trials using “extraordinary” procedures, verifies the proverbial use of the term *witch hunt*. In southeastern Germany, convictions for witchcraft were unlikely outside such panics or witch hunts; in the long run, contextualized within the broader history of crime and punishment, the number of executions for witchcraft was marginal. Witch hunts molded the perception of contemporaries, and large-scale witch hunts decisively distinguished this region from Franconia, where several hundred witches were burned in each of the prince-bishoprics of Bamberg, Eichstätt, Mainz, and Würzburg, and hundreds more in the territories of the Teutonic Order, and the prince-abbey of Ellwangen. Here even Protestant principalities like Saxe-Coburg hunted witches excessively. Overall, more than 4,000 “witches” were probably burned between 1590 and 1630 within the provinces of Upper, Middle, and Lower Franconia, presumably more than 90 percent of them in large-scale witch hunts. Very few witches were burned in this region either before or after these dates.

What caused such excessive witch hunts in Franconia? Like everywhere in early modern Europe, Franconia had a magical subculture and experienced neighborhood conflicts, plus the characteristic subsistence crises of the Little Ice Age. Clearly, its massive witch hunts around 1600, between 1616–1618, and between 1626–1630 were linked to extreme climatic events. In contrast to the Upper Palatinate, Bavaria, or Swabia, its dominant cash crop, viticulture, was even more vulnerable than cereals in these northern areas. Many areas with severe witch hunting, in Germany as in France, Switzerland, or Austria, practiced viticulture under marginal conditions. The loss of wine harvests through hailstorms or late frosts apparently triggered scapegoating. However, not all wine-producing territories succumbed to these demands from below; for instance, the government of the Palatinate, aided by the university of Heidelberg, discouraged accusations and punished accusers; Lutheran Württemberg with its university at Tübingen also kept accusations under

tight control, very much like Catholic Bavaria. Strong secular governments, whether Calvinist, Lutheran, or Catholic, remained unaffected by popular demands. But Germany’s prince-bishoprics were weak both politically and structurally. In many ecclesiastical territories in Franconia and the Rhineland, self-confident peasants and burghers took action autonomously, forming village committees and hunting witches, leaving the authorities with a choice between facing open rebellion or accepting the illegal actions of their subjects. These committees often handed suspects to officials only after they had confessed. After 1600, the authorities tried to gain control by introducing witch commissioners, who spearheaded or even replaced the committees by taking fierce action against anyone suspected. Here is where denunciation and torture entered the picture: witch commissioners could act faster than village committees, and their prince-bishops officially authorized them.

The rulers of these Franconian prince-bishoprics actively supported a militant Counter-Reformation and were prepared to suppress any form of heresy. All of them considered witchcraft primarily a form of heresy rather than a secular crime, as suggested by the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486). Whenever the populace and the authorities worked together, witchcraft trials grew into massive hunts. Obsessed by a desire to eradicate heresy, these prince-bishops, like the prince-provost of Ellwangen, the prince-abbot of Fulda, or the master of the Teutonic Order at Mergentheim, overlooked the dangers of shedding innocent blood. Such “political” considerations were considered Machiavellian by intransigent ecclesiastical members of the Catholic League around 1600, and therefore implicitly atheist or heretical. When defending pure belief, no compromise was possible. These prince-bishops were not only ready to wage war on the battlefield (which they were indeed about to do in the Thirty Years’ War), but they were also ready to wage war against all kinds of internal enemies, and as a Catholic historian (von Pölnitz 1934) remarked, eventually against themselves. Jesuits frequently advocated this kind of radicalism, and an American Jesuit (Bireley 1975) did not hesitate to label them extremists. The remarkable ferocity of witch hunting in Franconia can be best explained by a combination of extreme zealotry, spiritual uncertainty, and physical insecurity, which drove the populace into scapegoating.

We can sometimes see how moral entrepreneurs were directly involved in triggering a witch hunt. The only large-scale witch hunt in any imperial free city of southeastern Germany occurred after an ideologically motivated lawyer gained power in Nördlingen. He exploited the case of a mentally disturbed maidservant working in a household where three little children had died mysteriously in 1589. In this witch hunt, thirty-five people were burned within five years, despite considerable

resistance from the Protestant superintendent. In many witch hunts we find that individual agency played a decisive role in either starting, maintaining, or stopping hunts. Although rural supporters usually appear as unstructured crowds, one can sometimes identify leading individuals if the sources are sufficiently detailed. Some moral entrepreneurs were driven by material interests, some by anxieties, others by ideology, and many by varying mixtures of these ingredients.

In this region, witch hunts started comparatively late and peaked relatively early, with the persecutions of the late 1580s. Afterward, persecution declined sharply in the southeast, but gained momentum in Franconia until reaching unprecedented levels of cruelty in the late 1620s. After a whole generation of Catholic prince-bishops had been replaced, their successors obviously repudiated their predecessors' conduct. Between 1630 and 1700, death sentences for witchcraft in these ecclesiastical territories approached zero, while many Protestant imperial cities now held witchcraft trials, and most saw a few executions. This picture reversed after 1700, with no further executions recorded from the free cities, while Catholic territories resumed witch hunting. Southern Germany saw chains of trials, particularly linked to agrarian crises of 1709 and the 1720s. It was clearly a sign of Catholic backwardness that only a late execution at Würzburg in 1749 triggered a public debate, eventually leading to the Bavarian War of the Witches, the final debate on the subject in the Holy Roman Empire, where supporters of witch hunting (mostly conservative theologians) were labeled superstitious and inhumane in the late 1760s.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AUGSBURG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY; AUGSBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; AUSTRIA; BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; BAVARIAN WAR OF THE WITCHES; BOHEMIA; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES; EICHSTÄTT, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; ELLWANGEN, PRINCE-ABBAY OF; FUGGER FAMILY; FULDA, PRINCE-ABBAY OF; GERMANY; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; HUNGARY; INGOLSTADT, UNIVERSITY OF; KEMPTEN, PRINCE-ABBAY OF; LITTLE ICE AGE; MERGENTHEIM, ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORY OF; NÖRDLINGEN, IMPERIAL FREE CITY; NUREMBERG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY; PALATINATE, ELECTORATE OF; PANICS; POPULAR PERSECUTION; WITCH HUNTS; WÜRZBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF.

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GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN

Conceptions of the witch, originating in the early 1400s in Dauphiné, Savoy, and western Switzerland, spread extremely early into the southwestern German-language area, which long remained a central witch-hunting zone. Recently, Oliver Landolt not only found the insult *Hex* in the municipal *Frevelbuch* (register of offenses) of Schaffhausen between 1367–1387, but also located evidence of the burning of one or more *hegsen* from Beringen in its financial records from 1402–1403, thereby obtaining the earliest known uses of the German term for witch, *Hexe*.

After the Council of Basel (1431–1449), the cumulative witch concept expanded northward and eastward, with trials around Basel, in Alsace, and in the Palatinate. Rudolf von Baden, regional commander (*Komtur*) of the houses of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem in Breisgau between 1456 and 1470, staged witch hunts in Freiburg, Neuenburg, and Heitersheim, all three in Breisgau. In a letter dated November 1484, Heinrich Kramer (Institoris), papal inquisitor for all of upper Germany since 1478 and author of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), recommended Count Rudolf, now commander at Überlingen on Lake Constance, to Count Johann von Sonnenberg (d. 1510) as an expert in witch hunting. Kramer, an Alsatian Dominican, conducted large persecutions in the diocese of Constance during the early 1480s, where he boasted of bringing forty-eight women to the stake, although no corroborative records survive.

However, after the appearance of Kramer's *Malleus*, regional witchcraft proceedings were rare and mainly limited to the old concept of harmful sorcery practiced by individuals. In 1562, this picture changed abruptly when the great witch hunts began in southwestern Germany. The chronology of these persecutions was marked by surges and lulls, with high points from 1590–1600 and 1626–1630. In some regions, another upsurge followed between 1650 and 1670, preceding a short phase of single trials that trickled off around 1700. In their regional and confessional distribution, larger territories were less affected than smaller, and Catholic regions more frequently and to a greater degree than Protestant regions, especially after 1600.

Monographically, southwestern Germany, has been treated only once, but in a fundamental and striking way that created a paradigm shift in German witch research (Midelfort 1972). The region Midelfort investigated, largely within the current *Land* (state) of Baden-Württemberg, was then splintered into more than 350 often minuscule and fully autonomous states, including imperial free cities, cloisters, and abbeys as well as a nearly unmanageable series of noble territories. In southwestern Germany, without using serial sources, Midelfort counted 3,229 witch burnings between 1561 and 1670 through simple addition of substantiated cases. His methodological approach was based on bundling various observational techniques to create a regional-historical approach, obtaining a maximum of vividness and differentiation through a combined consideration of the political, legal, economic, social, cultural, religious, demographic, and settlement developments within a clearly bounded geographical space. Its principal results have held up extremely well.

Given the many questions that still face witchcraft researchers in southwestern Germany, witch hunts have been the object of historical seminars since 1992 at the University of Tübingen's *Institut für Geschichtliche Landeskunde und Historische Hilfswissenschaften*. On the basis of Midelfort's study, congenially complemented to the east by Behringer's 1987 work on Bavaria (Behringer 1997), several monographs have been published that have deepened our earlier picture and clarified its outlines. In cooperation with the *Badischen Landesmuseum* in Karlsruhe, a sizable exhibition about "Witches and Witchcraft Prosecutions in Southwestern Germany" opened in 1994, generating an extensive volume of essays (Lorenz 1994). A revised and greatly expanded edition was offered as a *Festschrift* to Erik Midelfort ten years later (Lorenz and Schmidt 2004).

Meanwhile, a series of projects on the history of witchcraft trials in various southwest German territories have appeared. Investigating the witchcraft trials in the duchy of Württemberg, Anita Raith's results differentiated Midelfort's picture by clarifying the role of Württemberg's judicial system and exposing the decisive role of the Stuttgart chancellery, under whose competent and usually uncompromising supervision its local courts lay. This ducal council, two-thirds legal experts, held strictly to the requirements for legal proof in Charles V's *Carolina Code* (*Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*) of 1532, ensuring that even in witchcraft trials, proceedings were orderly, that is, without legal abuses. While Württemberg's legislation of 1567 made it the first territory in the Holy Roman Empire to mention and punish pacts with the Devil, it provoked no mass trials because of legal constraints on the behavior of its judiciary. Of about 350 witchcraft trials in Württemberg, only around 100 executions are demonstrable. Considering its size and population, Württemberg ranked among the least-persecuting

territories in the empire. The desire to persecute witches came mainly from ordinary people, not officials. The trial against Katharina Kepler was, therefore, not an exceptional event: like her, over 60 percent of Württemberg's other accused witches survived their trials.

The very divergent developments in the margravate Baden, divided after 1535 between the houses of Baden-Durlach and Baden-Baden have also been investigated (Schneider 1994). A Reformed territory, Baden-Durlach ranked among the persecution-poor territories of the Holy Roman Empire: between 1550 and 1670, only nineteen people were implicated in criminal proceedings for sorcery or witchcraft. In Baden-Durlach, no witch hunt took place. Matters were quite different in Baden-Baden, which underwent a strong re-Catholicization after 1569. Here two waves of persecution occurred. The first, between 1569 and 1580, cost 43 women their lives; the second, between 1625 and 1631, included at least 244 arrests and 231 executions. Both waves of persecution coincided with phases of re-Catholicization; but, unlike during the first wave, the attitude of the authorities became the force driving the later trials.

An excellent dissertation on the imperial free city of Esslingen (Je rouschek 1992) combined legal expertise with psychoanalytical observation. A great storm of 1562, which laid waste to large stretches of inner Swabia and apparently provided the impetus for a marked witch hunt in the region, also struck Esslingen harshly. Its chief pastor, Thomas Naogeorgus, explained the storm from the pulpit as witchcraft and demanded punishment of the culprits. His insistence found popular approval and ultimately forced the city council to begin proceedings against three women. This resulted in one execution, but also cost Esslingen's head minister his office; henceforth, Esslingen's clergy opposed such persecutions. Only in 1653, when Tobias Wagner became chancellor of the University of Tübingen, did the situation change when the council lawyer Daniel Hauff developed into a fanatical witch hunter. While over fifty people in Esslingen and in the villages of Möhringen and Vaihingen fell victim to his zeal between 1662 and 1665, Hauff made this broadly planned and executed witch persecution a springboard for accelerating his career within the hierarchy of municipal offices. The persecution fell apart after Hauff's abrupt and ominous death at the end of 1665; no further deadly witchcraft trials took place in the territory of this imperial city.

Three regional studies informed another volume. Johannes Dillinger's study of witchcraft prosecutions in the Habsburg county of Hohenberg revealed how Austrian authorities in Innsbruck found witchcraft trials objectionable and sought to forestall them. Often, intermediary authorities and officials successfully outmaneuvered the Tyrolean government through

unauthorized decisions. In addition, a resolution of internal conflicts through witchcraft trials took place in Rottenberg, Hohenburg's capital. Tensions were exacerbated by difficulties in suppressing the Reformation amid a feeling of being surrounded by Lutheran territories, and by economic difficulties resulting from storms and exclusion from Protestant markets. The high point of the prosecution fell between 1595 and 1602, when the ineffectiveness of Habsburg authorities exacerbated weak leadership by local authorities, as magistrates yielded easily to popular demands to persecute witches. Rottenburg's witchcraft trials provoked fresh internal conflicts because of the city's unequal treatment of suspected witches. Its council was criticized for protecting rich and prominent citizens. The persecutions abated after three investigative committees were sent from Innsbruck to Rottenburg to examine abuses in the local judiciary, administration, businesses, and in its local church.

Between 1565 and 1667, witchcraft trials cost at least fifty-three people their lives in the imperial city of Reutlingen. Whereas an oligarchic city council controlled Esslingen, a democratically elected council dominated Reutlingen. Here, the persecution waves correlated more or less to council elections (Thomas Fritz, in Lorenz 1998). New men striving to enter the council frequently echoed the persecution desires from below to earn votes from Reutlingen's citizens. After a violent but short period of witchcraft trials, the council quickly returned to a moderate stance; as a rule, it only yielded to these popular desires during a change of generations in the city council. Like Daniel Hauff in Esslingen, Reutlingen's Johann Philipp Laubenberger used witch hunting as a springboard for his political career. His popular prestige as a tough and sweeping witch commissioner catapulted Laubenberger into the mayoral office in the council elections of summer 1665. Once securely in power, however, Laubenberger rapidly developed doubts about the circumstances of witchcraft trials (which he naturally knew better than anyone) and underwent a conversion "from Saul to Paul" on the witchcraft question.

The persecutions in the prince-abbey (*Fürstpropstei*) of Ellwangen were unique within southwestern Germany (Wolfgang Mährle, in Lorenz 1998). Both the total of around 450 trial victims and the intensity of the proceedings were significantly higher than in other southwestern territories, resembling the patterns of persecution in the trial series in the Franconian prince-bishoprics of Würzburg, Bamberg, and Eichstätt, and in the Teutonic Order's district of Mergentheim. Aside from a few single cases, Ellwangen's witchcraft trials were conducted exclusively in 1588 and from 1611 to 1618. The second persecution wave was particularly meaningful, because it revealed the effects of an increasing confessionalization in contemporary witch discourse. Molded

by Tridentine doctrine, Ellwangen's prince-abbot Johann Christoph von Westerstetten represented this connection between confessionalization and witch hunting. He carried out massive series of trials not only in Ellwangen but also in Eichstätt after becoming bishop there in 1613. His persecutions claimed nearly 300 victims in Ellwangen in 1611 and 1612 alone. This intensity, exceeding anything known previously, apparently resulted from a new form of witch judiciary that removed competence from the ordinary agencies of criminal justice; instead, a witch commission established by the prince-abbot controlled the proceedings.

This commission, consisting of two councillors, efficiently applied the prince-abbot's desire to persecute. Procedural law changed to the disadvantage of the accused, and no accused person escaped with his life thereafter. This omnicompetent management of the trials by deputized councillors employed the idea of close familial or social ties among the victims, structuring these persecution waves by trials of entire witch families or households. Once the criterion of family relationship or close social connection between the victims became authoritative, the demonological stereotype of the old woman witch broke down completely, as persons of nearly every age, gender, and social position were executed. When the persecutions ended abruptly in 1618, they had caused a powerful demographic cleft throughout broad sections of the population, especially in the capital city of Ellwangen, and had destroyed the mutual trust that upholds society. In addition, the economic dislocation resulting from the prince-abbot's confiscation practices further destabilized the entire local social system.

It should be emphasized that only a few Catholic territories were affected by such excessive witch hunts. The moderate and persecution-hindering attitude of the government in Bavaria (Behringer 1997) reappeared in the Habsburg territories. Likewise, many ecclesiastical territories, for example, the diocese of Constance (Zimmermann 1988), did not follow the pattern of Ellwangen. Between 1570 and 1590, the diocese of Constance resembled neighboring territories, with executions at Meersburg and the *Obervogtei* (lordship) of Reichenau accompanying persecutions in the rest of the Lake Constance region. But in the first half of the seventeenth century, hardly any further convictions can be found in episcopal territory, although court records from the *Obervogtei* of Reichenau show that witchcraft accusations remained part of everyday village life. The episcopal government, strengthened by the formation of a secular council at the end of the sixteenth century, hesitated to confirm petitions for executions presented by communities; its reluctance to persecute witches forestalled trials and convictions.

With twenty-seven villages spread across 220 square kilometers, the Catholic imperial free city of Rottweil

controlled one of the largest geographical territories (next to Ulm and Schwäbisch Hall) in southwestern Germany. Here at least 266 people fell victim during various waves of persecution (Zeck 2000). Evidence suggests that Rottweil's witchcraft trials were not promoted by local authorities, but rather originated in its urban and rural middle classes; neighborhood conflicts often provoked trials. Rottweil's witchcraft trials developed their dynamic through a blend of social, economic, and legal struggles, strongly influenced by traditional superstitions.

A methodologically superb study (Schmidt 2000) illuminated the unique place of the Palatinate in the history of witchcraft trials, both among the electorates and among other major territories of the Holy Roman Empire. This large territory substantially avoided the great western witch hunt. The most important explanation was the reluctance of its elector and his high council to accept the new cumulative witchcraft concept. Thus sorcery never turned into witchcraft in the Palatinate, nor could such elements as night flight and the witches' Sabbath lead to witch hunts. The Palatinate's complete abstinence from witchcraft trials was an active stance that its administration defended against both external and internal threats. Its authorities steadfastly repelled accusations from witchcraft trials outside its borders and ignored local demands to instigate them.

Schmidt (2000) provided an intricate analysis of the influence of Calvinism, which dominated in the Palatinate, in provoking this result. Although the Heidelberg theologians initially counseled witchcraft persecution, they began to follow the approach of the electors and their high council by the end of the sixteenth century. However, the Reformed confession with its emphasis on the omnipotence of God appears to hold a key to the position of the jurists of the high council. If supernatural intervention by the Devil was impossible, there could be no criminal proceedings involving supernatural acts, which could never have occurred. This critical stance toward the crime of witchcraft was reinforced by the electors' and the high councils' engaged advocacy of the *processus ordinarius* (ordinary procedure), the criminal proceedings developed by jurists on the basis of the Carolina Code. Helped by an efficient defense (entirely unlike a heresy trial), the accused was thus able to pick apart the grotesque and absurd insinuations, which elsewhere in the empire generally led to an order for torture and thus usually to death.

Another new method of approach, likewise using a regional-historical framework, compared the witch hunts in Swabian Austria and Electoral Trier, seeking commonalities, differences, and interactions for an integrated comparison (Dillinger 1999). This impressive work offered a wealth of findings, especially noteworthy for its convincing integration of popular magic

and "church magic" into elements constituting an explanatory model. The dispersed territories of Swabian Austria, organized into four districts, were sometimes inefficiently administered from relatively remote Innsbruck. At least 528 people fell victim to the persecutions in Swabian Austria.

However, despite social and economic difficulties, no part of Swabian Austria was affected by the wave of witchcraft trials in southwestern Germany at the end of the 1620s. The impetus of the archducal administration at Innsbruck to persecute witches was never strong, and after 1600 it was further weakened by the impact of the Jesuit Adam Tanner's opinion regarding the relationship of the Devil and the witch. Tanner argued that one should deprive demons of their human tools not through execution but through conversion. The Habsburg officials at Innsbruck increasingly rejected witchcraft trials carried out by autonomous committees of subjects. As soon as the territorial overlordship, as a superlocal power, was able to subjugate the organization of courts under their control and thereby delocalize it, the persecution system fell apart. Witchcraft trials not approved by higher authorities provoked the coalescing territorial state to harsh countermeasures, justified through the numerous victims of unsupervised proceedings.

Other research has focused on smaller places in this region. Using new sources, Robert Meier studied the trials carried out in the county of Wertheim around 1630. An investigation of sixteenth-century witchcraft trials in the Franconian margravates included the margravate of Ansbach, which occupied the northeastern corner of the current state of Baden-Württemberg (Kleinöder-Strobel 2002). Another work used surviving archival records of witchcraft trials in the imperial abbey of Marchtal on the Danube, which cost at least sixty-one persons their lives between 1586 and 1757 (Störk 2003). Here, under the rule of the Premonstratensians, trials were concentrated in a few waves of persecution; the last, between 1745 and 1757, fell almost entirely outside the usual chronological framework. Other research investigated the territory Bussen on the Danube, possessed by the *Reichserbtruchsessen* of Waldburg but threatened by Habsburg attempts to take it over. Using the records of the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court) in cases of *crimen magiae* (crime of magic) from the imperial free city of Offenburg illuminated the possibilities and limitations of its influence on witchcraft trials (Oestmann 1995).

Thus the impulse that southwestern German witchcraft research received from Erik Mdelfort's work in 1972 has borne much fruit. Nonetheless, researchers still have much to accomplish in order to blanket the area of southwestern German with regional studies, to say nothing of microstudies. Still missing are major studies of

such southwestern German territories as the prince-bishoprics of Strasbourg and Speyer, the counties of Fürstenberg or Limpurg, the dominions of the *Reichserbttruchessen* of Waldburg, and the imperial free cities of Weil der Stadt and Heilbronn, without overlooking the numerous upper Swabian imperial abbeys and noble domains with the right to judge capital cases. Whereas most cloisters and abbeys have a rich archival inheritance, written sources suitable for drawing a picture of witchcraft trials can rarely be found for the smaller territories of the nobility, which were mostly reorganized at the end of the Old Regime. Here often only large-scale archival research accompanied by an intimate knowledge of regional conditions and administrative structures allows a representation of events. Unfortunately, this is especially true for the highly significant territory of Wiesensteig, where after the great storm of 1562 the Lutheran count of Helfenstein had very large numbers of women burned following short trials. These events, sketched only hazily in archival records of neighboring territories, urgently need a reappraisal, because they apparently marked the beginning of the great witch hunt in southwestern Germany, as contemporary observers also noted. Even in the distant Pomeranian university of Greifswald, the rector noted with shock in his matriculation register of 1562 the news of the widespread execution of witches in southwestern Germany.

SÖNKE LORENZ;

TRANSLATED BY LAURA STOKES

See also: AUSTRIAN WESTERN TERRITORIES; BADEN, MARGRAVATE OF; BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*); EICHSTÄTT, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; ELLWANGEN, PRINCE-ABBEY OF; GERMANY; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; KRAMER (INSTITUTORIS), HEINRICH; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MARCHTAL, IMPERIAL ABBEY OF; MERGENTHEIM, ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORY OF; MIDELFORT, H. C. ERIK; OFFENBURG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY; SOURCES FOR WITCHCRAFT TRIALS; TANNER, ADAM; WESTERSTETTEN, JOHANN CHRISTOPH VON; WÜRTTEMBERG, DUCHY OF; WÜRZBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF.

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GERMANY, WEST AND NORTHWEST

Western and northwestern Germany, extending roughly from the Saar, Nahe, Mosel, and Middle Rhine regions in the south to the North Sea, encompassed a variety of territories of widely varying size, cohesiveness, and importance. Divided confessionally as well as administratively, the western and northwestern portion of the Holy Roman Empire did not comprise a unified area of persecution where witch hunts were consistently and uniformly conducted in the early modern period. Nevertheless, certain common structures can be discerned.

Basically, there were five different zones of persecution. The first was the Saar, Nahe, Mosel, and Middle Rhine region with the electorate of Trier and the Nassau counties. The second was the central Rhineland with the counties of the Eifel region along with the electorate of Cologne (including the duchy of Westphalia). In

these two zones, the mass witch hunts in whose course thousands of people were executed were concentrated. Intensive witch hunts also occurred in the third region, the more northern prince-bishopric of Münster, the county of Lippe, and the ecclesiastical territories of Osnabrück, Verden, Bremen, and Minden. Here execution levels did not reach those of the first two zones, but still took hundreds of lives. Moreover, in this zone, the witch hunts were often concentrated in larger cities instead of in villages and small towns. In the far northwest, the fourth zone encompassed the united duchies of Jülich-Berg and Cleves and the counties of Oldenburg and Friesland, while the fifth, in the eastern-northwestern parts, included the Hessian counties, the Brunswick principalities, the duchy of Schleswig, and the duchy of Holstein. These last two zones experienced more moderate persecutions that seldom led to mass trials (the prince-abbey Fulda constituted an exception).

THE CENTERS OF PERSECUTION

THE SAAR, NAHE, MOSEL, AND MIDDLE RHINE REGIONS, THE ELECTORATE OF TRIER, AND THE NASSAU COUNTIES Under the influence of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) and its author, Heinrich Kramer, who was active around 1488 in the Mosel region, the Mosel and Middle Rhine regions experienced their first witchcraft trials before 1500. Knowledge of the new teaching about the evil-doing witch sect spread rapidly along the river systems of the Rhine, Mosel, Maas, Nahe, and Saar. However, the mass persecutions in the countryside around Trier and the territory of the imperial abbey of St. Maximin, which gained empire-wide notoriety, came only after 1586. Economic crises caused the witch hysteria. Witches were held responsible for persistent periods of bad weather and harvest failures, and the rising prices, hunger, disease, and deaths of people and animals that followed. The shifting movement of witch fears and accusations is also apparent, for parts of the electorate of Trier were infected by persecutions underway in the neighboring duchy of Luxembourg. Even at the beginning of these witch hunts, village communities formed committees that stoked popular persecutory zeal. Originally extra-legal, these committees conducted a good part of the preliminary investigations, consolidated witch accusations, and drove the persecutions, eventually working closely with officials. Local persecutory zeal was so strong that the weak territorial lord, Archbishop Johann VII (1581–1599), who strongly feared witches himself, was hardly able to enforce his 1591 criminal ordinance regulating the witchcraft prosecutions.

The imperial law code, the Carolina Code (*Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*), promulgated by Emperor Charles

V in 1532, laid the formal foundation for the witchcraft trials. It prescribed inquisitorial procedures, but restricted the use of testimony by a confessed “witch” against accomplices “seen” at a witches’ Sabbat. In the first wave of persecutions between 1587 and 1596 in the electorate of Trier, hundreds of women and men met a fiery death. The spectacular trials in the city, to which even highly placed citizens and members of the upper clergy fell victim, were widely noted at the time. They came to a rapid end in 1596 because the many scandalous injustices finally brought the territorial governmental to exert control. A second wave of persecutions in the electorate began in 1629, caused by witch hunts in the neighboring Eifel territories. Once again villages created local committees that played a substantial role. Invasions by French and Swedish troops brought this wave of persecutions to a quick end. Isolated trials still occurred until 1640–1641, and a third wave of persecutions took place around 1650. However, the new elector and archbishop, Carl Caspar von der Leyen (1652–1676), resisted the trials after his ascension, and after 1654 only small trials took place in outlying areas and condominiums, lasting into the 1680s.

Particularly severe persecutions occurred in the nearby imperial abbey of St. Maximin. Between 1586 and 1596, in 1637, and from 1641 to 1642, approximately 500 people were burned, a fifth of all inhabitants.

The intense witch hunts in St. Maximin and Trier influenced the trials in the Saar and Nahe regions. Between 1500 and 1700, at least 591 witchcraft trials took place in the jurisdictionally fragmented Saar region. The equally fragmented Nahe region experienced approximately 140 witch prosecutions between 1534 and 1684. However, while in the Mosel and Middle Rhine regions members of village as well as city elites, members of the upper clergy as well as parish priests, government officials, and judges were among the victims even at the beginning of the trials. In the Saar and Nahe regions, generally only members of the lower classes were executed, with rare exceptions. In the Catholic territories (Trier and St. Maximin), at least one-third of the victims were men, while in the Protestant areas 80 percent of the executed were women. (This was exactly the reverse in Protestant and Catholic parts of French Switzerland.)

In the Middle Rhine, Mosel, Saar, and Nahe regions, popular pressure for persecutions was especially strong, manifested in the creation of communal witch-hunting committees. Moreover, these witch hunts were concentrated primarily in minor lordships that conducted witchcraft trials on their own to defend themselves against the growing control of higher-level authorities. These petty religious and secular lords cooperated with the local commoners’ committees to create intensive persecutory environments in which hundreds of executions might occur. Only with difficulty did major

territorial governments assert control over the trials as part of the state-building process.

Similar persecutory structures were also found in the Nassau counties (Nassau-Idstein, Nassau-Weilstein, Nassau-Saarbrücken, Nassau-Dillenburg, Nassau-Siegen, Nassau-Beilstein, Nassau-Hadamar, and Nassau-Diez), a majority of which were Calvinist. A total of 411 witchcraft trials are known between 1573 to 1713, although there were undoubtedly many undocumented cases. At least 264 people were executed and 17 died in prison or from torture; 88 percent of the victims were women.

The Carolina Code provided the legal foundation for the trials in the Nassau counties, so the required legal consultations were made either with the count's chancellery or with the law faculties at the universities of Marburg, Giessen, or Mainz. During the first wave of persecutions under Count Johann VI of Nassau-Dillenburg (1559–1606), who united many of the divided counties under his lordship, the convicted were mostly burned alive in straw huts. During the high points of persecution, around 1618 and 1629–1632, when two of the territories (Nassau-Hamar and Nassau-Siegen) reverted to Catholicism (1629), the convicted were beheaded first, and their corpses burned.

In the Nassau counties, the impetus for witch persecutions also came from the populace. Numerous appeals to the count's chancellery demanded witch prosecutions under the threat of withholding taxes. Johann VI interpreted such demands from his subjects as an assault on his sovereignty, so he only allowed witchcraft trials after careful examination by his chancellery, imposed strict oversight on the local judges, and accepted no communal action against suspected witches. Twenty people were executed in all.

A substantial increase in witchcraft trials occurred in Nassau-Dillenburg and the other Nassau counties in 1629–1632, when the creation of communal witch-hunting committees was permitted if the villagers agreed to bear the horrendous trial costs. Overwhelmed by the volume of requests for legal advice in witchcraft trials, the count's chancellery named several witch commissioners to provide on-site consultations. The result was to decentralize the control of local persecutions, and the close collaboration between the witch commissioners and the local witch-hunting committees produced an intense persecutory environment reinforced by savage torture. While the witch-hunting committees selected the suspects and assembled the evidence against them, the witch commissioners heard accusations, which were mainly convicted suspects' reports of who they had "seen" at Sabbats, interrogated witnesses, imprisoned suspects, conducted the hearings of the accused, and reported to the count about the process of the trial. In order to

make suspects confess, pricking for the Devil's mark and the swimming test (the water ordeal) were employed. Between 1629 and 1632, 154 executions and 9 deaths under torture occurred in Nassau-Dillenburg alone. In 1632, the Thirty Years' War interrupted the trials.

In Nassau-Diez, fifteen witchcraft trials were conducted in 1644–1645, while in 1651–1652 seventeen people fell victim to trials in Wehrheim, which was administered collectively by Trier, Nassau-Diez, and Nassau-Dillenburg.

There was another outbreak of witch hunting with perhaps forty-five trials and thirty-two executions in 1676 in Nassau-Idstein. Promoted by Count John, the wave of persecutions only ended with his death in 1677. Thereafter no more executions took place.

In 1644 in Nassau-Diez and Nassau-Beilstein, the tolerant Count Wilhelm Frederick, also the governor of Friesland in the Netherlands, spoke out against the trials. Nevertheless, local judges still carried out trials until 1645. However, the moderate position to convert rather than to burn those suspected of magic won out, promoted particularly by Calvinist theologians. In general, to assert their judicial power, the counts conducted and even promoted witchcraft trials in the Nassau counties.

CENTRAL RHINELAND: THE EIFEL
COUNTIES MANDERSCHIED-KAIL,
MANDERSCHIED-BLANKENHEIM,
MANDERSCHIED-GEROLSTEIN, THE
COUNTY ARENBERG, AND THE ELECTORATE
OF COLOGNE

The Catholic counties Manderscheid-Kail, Manderscheid-Blankenheim, and Manderscheid-Gerolstein lay in the Eifel region, contained fewer than 5,000 inhabitants, and at the turn of the seventeenth century conducted a massive witch hunt. Between 1580 and 1638, at least 260 trials ended in death. The consequences reached as far as Cologne and Trier. Excepting isolated trials around 1580 and 1590, the trials in these counties were almost always initiated and promoted by the counts themselves.

In Manderscheid-Kail, Count Diedrich II (1577–1613) had at least thirty witch suspects executed between 1590 and 1597. Popular initiative played almost no role. Diedrich II appears to have begun the prosecutions to discipline recalcitrant officials, threaten annoying creditors, increase the financial exactions from his subjects, and expand his powers. The Carolina Code did not constitute the legal foundation of the prosecutions, but rather the criminal ordinances of Luxembourg, to which Kail was subordinate.

Arnold II became count of neighboring Manderscheid-Blankenheim in 1604. This former cathedral prior of Trier had once been suspected of

witchcraft. Charges of various harms attributed to witchcraft led him to have the local parish priests question his subjects about witches. By the time of his death in 1614, there had been at least eighteen executions for witchcraft, and he planned a campaign to eradicate witchcraft that his son Johann Arnold implemented after reaching majority. The new count invited the famous witch hunter Johann Möden to Blankenheim to conduct prosecutions as an official witch commissioner. Möden tyrannized the local judiciaries and ran the prosecutions himself. Accusations concerning harmful magic played only a secondary role; testimony of convicted witches against people “seen” at the Sabbat sufficed to make an arrest. Möden obtained confessions through unmerciful torture. He worked as witch commissioner not only in Blankenheim, but also in Manderscheid-Gerolstein. Here he faced opposition from a county official, Heinrich von Mühlheim, but Möden gained Count Karl’s (1611–1649) support for massive persecutions after casting suspicion on von Mühlheim. Between 1627 and 1633, Möden had ninety-five people executed in Blankenheim and sixty-four in Gerolstein, including, in 1629, von Mühlheim.

The massive witch persecutions in the electorate of Trier and in the Eifel influenced the county of Arenberg, which lay to the north. Here the populace complained about the great harm to people, animals, and harvests, as well as epidemics and famines, caused by witches. Hence, the populace created communal witch-hunting committees in 1593, when there was a chain-reaction trial against thirteen accused witches. Renewed witch prosecutions were conducted in 1615 and 1629–1630. While Arenberg’s trials were based on the Carolina Code, testimony of convicted suspects about others they had “seen” at Sabbats was accepted as sufficient evidence for prosecution. The total executed in 1615 is not known, but in 1629–1630 forty-one people were charged and thirty-three burned (85 percent women).

In the neighboring electorate of Cologne, the prosecutions began around 1592, inspired by the intense witch hunts in Trier. However, severe prosecutions only started in 1626, probably influenced by hunts raging in the Eifel. Further high points occurred in 1636 and 1638. In Cologne, the local judges and juries were supervised by legally trained witch commissioners to guarantee that trials were conducted properly. However, the judicial counselors of the electorate’s central government thereby gave control of the prosecutions to the commissioners, who took over the trials from the locals and often led cruel, excessive persecutions comparable to Manderscheid-Blankenheim, Manderscheid-Gerolstein, and the Nassau counties.

The practice of sending commissioners replaced the usual practice, followed in other territories, of procuring legal advice from higher levels of government or

universities. In Cologne, the witch commissioners were not sent as a result of a governmentally initiated witch persecution, but rather on the basis of petitions from subjects who wanted witchcraft trials. Communal witch-hunting committees were established to work with the witch commissioners. The trials in Cologne thus did not stem from a governmental program to eradicate witches, but rather they concentrated in minor lordships as well as in small judicial and administrative units where committees, local officials, witch commissioners, and noble landlords jointly ran the persecutions. Approximately 600 people in the southern portion of the electorate were executed. In the northern portion, hardly any trials took place. In the duchy of Westphalia, which had a similar structure of persecutions as electoral Cologne, around 1,000 people were executed between 1508 and 1732, peaking between 1626 and 1632.

THE PRINCE-BISHOPRICS OF MÜNSTER, OSNABRÜCK, VERDEN, BREMEN, AND MINDEN, AND THE COUNTY OF LIPPE

This area presents a contrast between scattered witchcraft trials in rural areas and more extensive persecutions in capital cities. Witchcraft prosecutions began in Münster after 1555. Between 1580 and 1650, 177 ended with an execution. The city of Münster conducted around thirty trials. The hunts were concentrated not in districts controlled directly by the prince-bishop (only about twenty death sentences are known), but rather in the independent lordships created by a reorganization of the prince-bishopric that Bishop John von Hoya implemented in 1571. This reorganization required that all criminal prosecutions follow the Carolina Code, which mandated written consultations, to better control the many minor noble jurisdictions by placing them under the territorial government’s supervision. The small, autonomous lordships resisted von Hoya’s reforms by conducting witchcraft trials on their own. In contrast to the territorial government’s judges, the nobles’ judges often used an abbreviated trial procedure, not uncommonly arresting suspects after a single denunciation. None conducted the required consultations, and one even used the swimming test (which the territorial government had specifically forbidden), justifying it as a traditional legal practice.

The small county of Lippe, Calvinist after 1600, became a center of the witch hunt in the northwest although the number of executions remained low compared to Trier, St. Maximin, Cologne, and Westphalia. Of the 40,000 rural Calvinist inhabitants, just 221 were involved in witchcraft trials between 1550 and 1686, but the Lutheran city of Lemgo affirmed its autonomy from the count by pronouncing verdicts in criminal trials, and conducted mass witchcraft trials in 1565, 1583–1605, 1628–1637, and

1653–1681. The testimony of convicted suspects sufficed to justify an indictment, and over 250 people were executed in this city with a population of 4,000.

Similarly, in Osnabrück (perhaps the most confessionally mixed state in all of Germany) the witch hunts in the city differed from those in the surrounding prince-bishoprics. The seven rural districts had ninety trials between 1538 and 1638, with one last trial in 1691. Fifty-three ended with an execution. Fifty of these trials took place during the sixteenth century. All concerned harmful magic and focused on individual suspects. The water test was only occasionally employed. Consultations with a law faculty were rare, for usually the princely council decided the outcome of the trials. One reason for the early end of the trials was probably their high cost, which this relatively poor territory could not bear.

The trials went differently in the city of Osnabrück, which strove for the greatest possible autonomy, and in the seventeenth century was able to achieve virtual independence. Of the approximately 4,000 inhabitants, at least 276 were executed for witchcraft between 1561 and 1638. By 1583 there had already been 121 executions. Under Mayor Hammacher the total rose to 204 by 1592. Such massive witch hunts were possible because of the excessive use of the water test and torture. Testimony by confessed “witches” against people they accused (generally under torture) of being at Sabbats fueled the persecutions. The second wave of intense persecutions began in 1636 under Mayor Wilhelm Peltzer, who used witchcraft trials to carry out a local political power struggle as well as to defend the city’s autonomy against the prince-bishop’s chancellery and the Swedes (who had occupied Osnabrück in 1633). Peltzer undertook these witchcraft prosecutions despite the open opposition of Lutheran clerics. In 1639, the hunts, which had killed sixty-four people, ended, the last witch prosecutions to take place in the city. Peltzer’s trials, which even targeted members of the elite, earned him influential enemies. In 1640 he was removed from office; in 1650 he was extrajudicially imprisoned; and in 1669 he died in custody, insane.

The bishopric of Verden fell under the administration of the duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbütel after it turned Lutheran in 1566. The only two known witchcraft prosecutions in the rural territory of Verden occurred in 1585. But in the city itself, forty-six witchcraft trials are known to have taken place between 1564 and 1647. They played an important role in the city’s jurisdictional struggles for independence from the territorial government, evidenced in a 1617 hearing in the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court). During the Thirty Years’ War, first the Danes and then the Swedes occupied Verden. The last witchcraft trial took place in 1647, when a nine-year-old girl claimed she had seen members of the city’s elite engaged in

witchcraft. The accused’s relatives appealed to the Swedish administrators, who insisted that they be freed and all documents be turned over for examination. When Verden complained to Stockholm about this infringement of its rights, Queen Christina of Sweden responded with the famous edict that curbed further trials in Swedish-occupied territory. Sweden continued to rule Verden after 1648 under the terms of the Peace of Westphalia.

Like Verden, Bremen turned Protestant in the 1530s, occupied first by the Danes and then by the Swedes during the Thirty Years’ War, and granted to Sweden in 1648. Only two known witchcraft trials occurred in the rural territory, in 1550–1551 and 1559, involving individual suspects. The city of Bremen experienced forty trials for harmful magic between 1503 and 1603, when an edict of the Protestant bishop Johann Friedrich von Waldeck (1596–1634) brought them to an end.

The Protestant prince-bishopric of Minden experienced an intensive witch hunt with at least eighty-two executions between 1651 and 1657. While no trial documents have survived, the duke of Brandenburg and governor of Minden, Georg Friedrich, issued an edict against excessive accusations, and consultations were conducted with the legal faculty in Helmstedt and the court of jurors (*Schöffentuhl*) in Herford. In the city of Minden there is evidence of witch prosecutions in the sixteenth century, and 126 people are known to have been prosecuted for witchcraft between 1603 and 1684.

AREAS WITH MODERATE PERSECUTIONS

The Lower Rhine Region with the Duchies Jülich, Cleves, and Berg, the County Oldenburg, and Imperial County East Friesland were areas with moderate numbers of persecutions.

Although the duchies Jülich, Cleves, and Berg (which were united until 1609 and had a population of almost 500,000, making it the largest state in northwestern Germany) appear to have seen relatively little persecution in part because of the influence of Johann Weyer, physician of Duke Wilhelm III (V) (1539–1592). Fears of a secret witch conspiracy as described in the *Malleus Maleficarum* had spread in the Lower Rhine region along trade and communications routes around the turn of the sixteenth century. Consequently, the first trials in the united duchies, which were clearly related to prosecutions in neighboring districts of Cologne, took place before the Carolina Code took effect in 1532. By 1540, fifty-three people had been executed in Jülich and Berg for harming animals and bewitching milk. In Duisburg, part of Cleves, trials are known from 1513 and 1514. However, after 1533, witchcraft trials gave way to trials of Anabaptists, and a series of wars in the region after 1543 further hindered witchcraft trials. Trials for magic therefore died

down even before the appearance of the famous antipersecution writings of Johann Weyer. A broadsheet published in Augsburg claiming that over eighty-five women in the neighborhood of the city of Jülich were executed as we revolves in 1591 appears to have been pure invention, and while fifty to sixty trials of single suspects are known to have taken place in Jülich and Berg between 1580 and 1650, witch hunting virtually ceased in Cleves. The final trial in the duchies took place in 1737–1738 in Gerresheim, Berg.

While there were only a few witchcraft trials in districts ruled directly by the duke, more intense persecutions occurred in minor lordships like Wildenburg, where eleven people were executed in 1627–1628. The territorial prince, Duke Wolfgang Wilhelm (1614–1653), attempted to curb these with a decree in 1631 requiring lesser jurisdictional units to receive written consultations from the ducal chancellery before conducting witchcraft trials.

Overall, witchcraft prosecutions in the Lower Rhine region were concentrated in the southern parts of Jülich, Cleves, and Berg, near the areas of intense persecutions in Eifel and Cologne. However, even though the populace exerted pressure for prosecutions, they did not form communal witch-hunting committees.

No witch hunts appear to have taken place in the county of Oldenburg, although mass trials did occur in two small autonomous lordships, Kniphausen and Jever. In Kniphausen, twenty women were executed for witchcraft in 1590, while in Jever 21 women were prosecuted for magic in 1592, and three more were tried in 1615. In the large imperial county of East Friesland, forty-one people were prosecuted for magic between 1543 and 1592, while in the city of Aurich fifteen suspects were burned by 1543.

THE COUNTIES OF HESSE, THE PRINCE-ABBAY FULDA, THE PRINCIPALITIES OF BRUNSWICK, AND THE DUCHIES OF SCHLESWIG AND HOLSTEIN

Hesse was definitely among the areas of moderate persecution. The first Lutheran count, Philipp I (1518–1567; conve rted 1524) opposed witch prosecutions during his reign. In 1544 he intervened in a trial in favor of a person suspected of magic. Only during his imperial imprisonment in 1550, when his court councilors, who favored persecutions, were in charge, were three executions carried out. After Philipp's death, his territory was divided among his sons Ludwig IV (1567–1604), Georg I (1567–1596), Wilhelm IV (1567–1592), and Philipp the Younger (1567–1583) into the counties Hesse-Marburg, Hesse-Darmstadt, Hesse-Cassel, and Hesse-Rheinfels. Ludwig and Wilhelm retained their father's skeptical attitude. In Hesse-Marburg, a woman was executed for witchcraft in 1582, but other investigations do not appear to have resulted in trials. In

Hesse-Cassel, Wilhelm IV regarded witch fears as papist superstition, and only one woman was executed for magic and murder by poison. The main phase of the witch persecutions in Hesse-Cassel occurred during the reigns of Wilhelm V (1627–1637), his widow Amalie Elisabeth (1637–1650), and his son Wilhelm VI (1650–1663). Between 1511 and 1710, 214 prosecutions for harmful magic and witchcraft were conducted in Hesse-Cassel, but torture was administered in only in 20 percent of the cases, and only 60 people (less than 30 percent, of whom approximately 80 percent were women) received death sentences. The trials never broadened into mass panics, and were geographically limited to the jurisdictionally and confessionally fragmented region of north western Hesse.

An important reason for the moderation in Hesse was the tightly organized, centralized judicial procedures, based on the Carolina Code, which insured the supervision of local judges by higher judicial organs. In fact, the law faculty of Marburg University and the count had to authorize any death sentence. Torture was employed only moderately, and neither testimony by confessed "witches" nor denunciations from the populace carried much weight. Many accused of magic were not prosecuted because of insufficient evidence, and reconciliation between accuser and accused was sought. Furthermore, it appears that the subjects did not press actively for witch prosecutions, for there is no record of communal witch hunting committees in Hesse.

Only one great witch hunt affected Hesse-Darmstadt during the reign of Georg I (1567–1596). Between 1582 and 1590, thirty-seven people, almost exclusively women, were executed there for witchcraft. A plague epidemic and fear of poisoning may have been the causes, and Count Georg I led the persecution himself and ordered his district officials to seek out suspected people. His court preacher Johann Angelus took part in the hearings and also brought new cases to the chancellery's attention. In contrast to his skeptical brothers, Georg I believed in magic. He exhibited all the characteristics of a fanatical witch hunter: uncompromising severity, relentless self-discipline, ascetic austerity, and rigid morality. He sought to use the witchcraft trials politically. This was particularly apparent when he stood up forcefully for a Hessian subject in 1571 who had been incarcerated and tortured on suspicion of magic by Count Wolfgang von Isenburg-Büdingen. Georg did this not from sympathy, but rather because he wanted to defend his rights from an outsider. His decisive role in the witch hunts from 1582 to 1590 is shown by the fact that after his death no more executions of witches occurred in Hesse-Darmstadt. Even a plague epidemic in 1597 did not cause a new wave of persecutions.

In the neighboring Catholic abbey of Fulda, at least 239 people were executed for witchcraft between 1603 and 1606 during the reign of Prince-Abbot Balthasar

von Dernbach. He recruited the witch hunter Balthasar Nuss, who led the witch hunt with unrelenting hardness and cruelty. Nuss patently sought financial profit, illicitly pocketing part of the fines for judicial costs on top of his official salary. His scandalous activities, which disregarded the Carolina Code, led to numerous charges before the imperial court. Catholics as well as Protestants fell victim to his persecution, as did political opponents of the prince-abbot. After Dernbach's death, Nuss was dismissed, imprisoned, and finally sentenced to death by the new prince-abbot, and the witch persecutions in Fulda ended.

Older accounts often cite the reformed principalities of Brunswick as an area of terrible persecutions. In particular, Duke Heinrich Julius of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel (1589–1613) is supposed to have been a relentless witch hunter. However, trial records document only 114 trials for magic and 53 executions between 1590 and 1620. Little is known about the social historical background of these prosecutions, but many shepardesses were apparently prosecuted as witches. Records of only 21 more trials from 1620 to the end of the seventeenth century are known, and between 1557 and 1670 a total of 225 witchcraft trials, which ended in death for 88 people, mainly women, can be confirmed. In the principality of Brunswick-Calenberg, there was a sensational trial in 1572–1573 against Duke Erich II's wife Sidonie and four female associates. Similarly, the elite appear to have initiated some large persecutions. In particular, a mass trial in the Hitzacker district of Brunswick-Lüneburg took place in the context of a conflict between the sons of Heinrich of Brunswick-Lüneburg, Julius Ernst, and his younger brother August, over their father's estate. August claimed the district Hitzacker, and in 1610 initiated witchcraft trials that lasted until 1615 and that resulted in seventy executions. August had subjects of his brother incarcerated and tortured, and only released them when threatened militarily. These witchcraft trials clearly served to demonstrate and expand lordship and legal rights. Except for this interlude, however, the Brunswick principalities experienced only moderate persecution.

Denmark ruled the linked Lutheran duchies of Schleswig and Holstein (in all around 495,000 inhabitants) after 1581. Holstein was part of the Holy Roman Empire, so trials there were subject to the Carolina Code, while trials in Schleswig were judged according to Danish law. From 1530 to 1735, 852 witchcraft trials can be identified, of which almost 90 percent were against women. Approximately 600 people were executed. Protestant clerics in Schleswig and Holstein believed in the power of witches and supported the persecutions in sermons and tracts, but they questioned the reality of the Sabbat. Consequently, accusations of people purportedly seen at Sabbats carried little weight, hindering the development of mass trials. Instead, accu-

sations of harmful magic generated individual trials, so the witch hunts remained endemic. Furthermore, witchcraft trials did not occur evenly over the entire region; instead they were concentrated in the splintered judicial entities where ultimate judicial power lay in the hands of petty lords. The persecutions came to an end as King Christian V of Denmark curbed the legal jurisdiction of the minor nobles as part of a broader centralization of the state. As a proportion of the total population, executions in Schleswig and Holstein were around 0.12 percent of the inhabitants, in contrast to 20 percent in St. Maximin, 6 percent in Lemgo, and 6 percent in the Manderscheid counties. This northern extension of the Holy Roman Empire certainly belongs to the areas of moderate persecution.

CONCLUSION

1. In western and northwestern Germany, witch hunts were often concentrated in minor ecclesiastical and noble lordships, which wanted to defend their autonomous judicial rights against the encroachments of centralizing regimes. Securing seigneurial autonomy from outside interference bolstered the legitimacy of governmental authority over subjects. Cities similarly used witchcraft trials against their territorial lords to demonstrate autonomy and to solve local political conflicts. This phenomenon of using witch persecutions to assert political and administrative control was not confined to northwestern Germany, but occurred in other parts of Germany and Europe wherever central authority was sufficiently weak.
2. In minor lordships characterized by dense settlement and close communications, witch fears, suspicions, and denunciations were easily disseminated. Consequently, no severe witch hunts occurred in the more thinly settled regions of the north German ecclesiastical territories, while their capital cities presented a decidedly favorable environment for persecutions.
3. Epidemics, agricultural crises caused by bad weather, or witch hunts in neighboring territories often precipitated persecutions. However, no simple causal relationship between local crises and witch persecutions existed.
4. Popular pressure for witchcraft trials existed in all regions, although in different degrees. Weak central governments allowed communal witch-hunting committees enormous leeway in selecting suspects and lodging accusations. When communal witch-hunting committees worked together with cooperative minor lords, district officials, judges, or witch commissioners, the interplay created an intensely persecutory environment.
5. Occasionally the elite initiated and conducted witch hunts that whipped up the persecutory zeal of the

populace. An ambitious, careerist, greedy, or fanatical witch hunter often led these hunts.

6. Individual prosecutions could only become mass persecutions if the institutions conducting the trials accepted the reality of Sabbats. When combined with the classification of the witch offense as a *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime), justifying the unreserved use of torture, a long list of denunciations of people “observed” at the gatherings of witches could be compiled. Without these components, intense witch hunts did not develop regardless of popular pressure. Prosecutions involving only harmful magic therefore tended not to broaden into mass witchcraft trials.
7. A persecutory environment could only develop in the absence of centralized state control. Where a centrally organized judicial process had established or could establish firm standards of evidence and require the submission of documents, and where local judicial lords could no longer, or only with state supervision, exercise capital jurisdiction, either severe persecutions did not occur or they were quickly suppressed. In contrast, decentralized or weakly asserted government facilitated severe witch hunts.
8. In western and northwestern Germany, massive witchcraft trials were not confined to rural areas, but were instead related to small-scale jurisdictions, dense settlement, and close communications, combined with political conflicts. Consequently, there were few structural differences between the intensive witch hunts in smaller cities and those in small but thickly populated noble or ecclesiastical lordships.
9. The witchcraft persecutions in western and northwestern Germany came to an end generally because an intensification of state control over the local trial procedures made the conduct of witchcraft prosecutions significantly more difficult and limited scandalous judicial misconduct. In effect, tighter state control meant a prohibition of trials, even if this was seldom stated explicitly. Such procedural corrections did not mean that territorial lords had suddenly become enlightened, but rather that they sought to unite all state functions, in particular, legal jurisdiction, in their own hands. In addition, the financial pressure of the often-astronomical trial costs helped bring the prosecutions to an end. The broadening of prosecutions to members of the social elite played only a limited role, for in some cases members of the elite were executed at the beginning of mass trials without causing them to cease.

RITA VOLTMER;

TRANSLATED BY EDWARD BEVER

See also: CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*);

CRIMEN EXEPTUM; COLOGNE; COMMUNAL PERSECUTION; DENMARK; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES; FLADE, DIETRICH; FULDA, PRINCE-ABBEY OF; GERMANY; HESSE; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; IMPERIAL FREE CITIES; LIPPE, COUNTY OF; MÖDEN, JOHANN (JAN); MÜNSTER, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; NASSAU-SAAR-BRÜCKEN, COUNTY OF; NUSS, BALTHASAR; OSNABRÜCK, BISHOPRIC OF; PFALZ-ZWEIBRÜCKEN, DUCHY OF; POPULAR PERSECUTION; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; SAAR REGION; SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN, DUCHIES OF; ST. MAXIMIN, PRINCE-ABBEY OF; SWEDEN; SWIMMING TEST; TRIER, ELECTORATE OF; WEYER, JOHANN; WILHELM V “THE PIOUS,” DUKE OF BAVARIA; WITCH HUNTS.

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GERSON, JEAN (1363–1429)

Gerson's teaching about sorcery provided an intellectual source of legitimacy and justification for later witchcraft trials. Until the early sixteenth century, Gerson—his real

name was Charlier—remained an influential authority for German and French theologians alike; even Protestants referred to him.

Named after his hometown Gerson-lès-Barby, situated in the diocese of Reims, Gerson began his studies in Paris in 1377, receiving a professorship from its theological faculty in 1392. Three years later he was elected chancellor of the University of Paris. In spite of long absences, he held this office until he died on July 12, 1429, at an abbey near Lyons. This eminent critic and reformer was referred to as the "most Christian theologian" (*doctor christianissimus*, a flattering parallel to the "most Christian king" of France) and is now considered a moderate nominalist, whose teachings favored mysticism more than scholasticism. He played a leading part in the early fifteenth-century conciliar movement that attempted to heal the schism in the Western Church; Gerson saw councils as a higher authority than the pope. His pastoral ethics gave a major impetus to promoting the Ten Commandments as Christian values above the seven deadly sins, reversing common practice during the Middle Ages.

Gerson considered the belief in magically charged items such as amulets, or calling on sorcerers or sorceresses, as serious offenses against the First Commandment. In Gerson's book on sins, *Le miroir de l'âme* (Mirror of the Soul), both actions were described as a most serious offense, falling within the definition of apostasy. In September 1398, under his chairmanship, the faculty of theology of the University of Paris issued twenty-eight propositions of superstition which he probably also drafted. In 1402 he repeated the condemnation of magic practices in his essay *De erroribus circa artem magicam* (Concerning Misconceptions about Magical Arts), giving further reasons. Misconceptions and blasphemy included not only the belief in other gods and entities, but also summoning demons by invocations or incantations, even if veiled by Christian formulas. Even magical arts with some good purpose, such as the search for protection against ghosts, constituted idolatry. Gerson strived especially to oppose the process of blending Christian with so-called heathen beliefs by stressing that Christian prophets were not magicians, whose acts, he thought, relied fundamentally on a tacit or expressed pact with demons.

Gerson related learned and popular magical practices, naming both as errors of belief. The Hebrew Bible punished these violations by death. In *De erroribus*, Gerson both summarized and advanced the dominant view of magic by contemporary theology. On one hand, the Inquisition could now prosecute magic and conduct sorcery trials, because of the attested heresy. On the other hand, Gerson continued a theological development begun by Thomas Aquinas, arguing that sorcery was not powerful in itself but only in connection with the Devil—a foundation of later demonology. Separating

protective from aggressive spells had now become more difficult, although other elements that would later belong to the witch paradigm were still missing.

Secluded in his abbey, the aged Gerson supported Joan of Arc in 1429 by declaring her God's agent and thus opposing numerous rumors that she was a heretic. However, he died before her trial started.

ROLF SCHULTE

TRANSLATED BY JAN VAN DER CRABBEN

See also: AQUINAS, THOMAS; FRANCE; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; JOAN OF ARC; *MALEFICIUM*; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PARIS, UNIVERSITY OF.

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GESUALDO, CARLO (1566–1613)

Gesualdo was the most illustrious victim of witchcraft in Baroque Italy, suffering lengthy and severe illness in 1603 through the spells of his concubine, Aurelia d'Arrico, and her accomplices.

Gesualdo was a many-faceted personality. Best-known today as a composer of sacred music and madrigals (Stravinsky ranks among his posthumous admirers), he was also prince of Venosa, ruling almost two dozen fiefs in the Kingdom of Naples, and a reputedly violent man who had his first wife murdered before remarrying a Modenese princess, Leonora d'Este. Moreover, he enjoyed intimate connections with the hierarchy of post-Tridentine Catholicism: himself the grand-nephew of Pope Pius IV, Gesualdo's maternal uncles included St. Carlo Borromeo, and a paternal uncle had been Cardinal-Archbishop of Naples.

In the best traditions of Neapolitan love magic described a generation earlier by Giambattista Della Porta, the spells applied to Gesualdo involved various incantations and conjurations, including some sacred ingredients (the Eucharist, holy water) supplied by a local priest, Antonio Paulella. The most bizarre spell, which may explain Gesualdo's illness, involved serving the prince a slice of bread containing his own sperm and his mistress's menstrual blood. It was supplemented

by other spells: two small statues, representing Gesualdo and Leonora, transfixed by nails and pins; a key and lock buried under the prince's favorite passageway, together with a crucifix and a large loaf of bread; some hair and toenails from corpses placed in a lock. Last but not least, Paulella sold Aurelia a magic spirit, trapped in a carafe, which told her—in Greek and in falsetto—what Gesualdo was doing.

In 1590, Gesualdo's bodyguards had murdered both his first wife and her noble lover, a Carafa. This time, Gesualdo was once again in a position to revenge himself through subordinates by ordering his mistress imprisoned in his castle at Gesualdo, together with the local *fattucchiera* (witch) who had recruited Paulella, Polisandra Pezzella (a priest's daughter, previously punished for blasphemy by an episcopal court), and her apprentice. However, the priest's legal status put him beyond Gesualdo's reach (we do not know if he was even arrested), and the prince's other actions provoked a jurisdictional quarrel between his baronial judge, Cesare Stabiano, and the local bishop of Avellino. Despite a threat of excommunication, Stabiano had his prisoners tortured and refused to surrender them to a notoriously lenient ecclesiastical court. We know nothing of the fate of Polisandra's apprentice, who was probably released or allowed to escape, but both Gesualdo's mistress and the local witch probably died in their lord's dungeons.

Thus the scandal was snuffed out as quietly as possible. Although their only child, a boy, had died at age five in 1600, Carlo Gesualdo's wife had two brothers, a cardinal and a duke, and he could not afford a second marital scandal or a formal separation. Leonora suffered from chronic ill health, fashionably labeled as melancholia. She returned to Modena, complaining that the women imprisoned in the castle of Gesualdo had continued to cast spells even after their deaths. Her husband's death in 1613 probably gave her some relief; remaining a widow for twenty years, she died at age seventy-six. Only Carlo Gesualdo's music remains, thus reversing Shakespeare's famous remark that "the evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones."

ANNIBALE COGLIANO;

ARRANGED BY WILLIAM MONTER

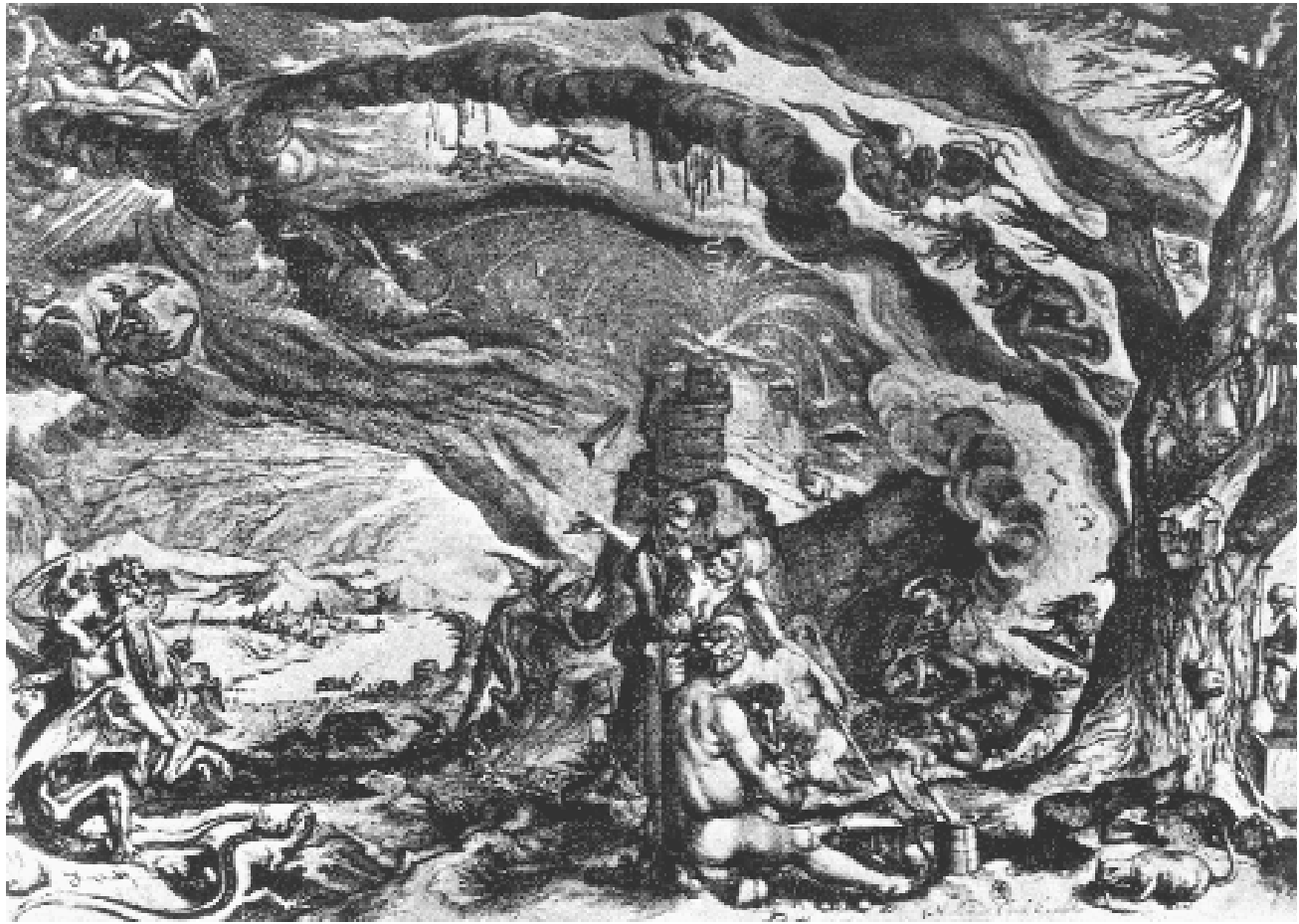
See also: DELLA PORTA, GIAMBATTISTA; INQUISITION, ROMAN; ITALY; LOVE MAGIC; MELANCHOLY; NAPLES, KINGDOM OF; SPELLS.

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GHEYN II, JACQUES DE (1565–1629)

Netherlandish draughtsman, engraver, and painter, de Gheyn addressed the themes of monsters, witchcraft, and



Jacques de Gheyn's *Witches' Sabbat*, also called *La Cuisine des Sorcières* (The Witches' Kitchen). Surrounded by demons, familiars, and a snake, witches concoct, while their sister witches depart for the Sabbat. (TopFoto.co.uk)

related topics in several drawings from the first decade of the seventeenth century. Born in Antwerp, de Gheyn trained with Hendrick Goltzius in Haarlem (1585–1590) and opened workshops in Amsterdam (1590–1595), Leiden (1596–1600), and The Hague (1600–1629), where he received commissions from the Stadholder's court.

The nucleus of his witchcraft oeuvre is formed by scenes of an assembly of old women engaged in different acts of witchcraft, often situated near or in ruins, and studies of monstrous rats and toads, skulls, and sorcery books (Van Regteren Altena = VRA 1983, cat. nos. 50, 131, 493, 510–530, 538 recto, 539 recto, 743, 867, 892, 1050; Meij 1986, cat. no. 70; Nürnberger 1999, cat. no. 35; Löwensteyn forthcoming: a gathering of young and old witches, signed and dated 1605). An elaborate design of witches in an overcast landscape was presumably engraved by Andreas Stock and published by Nicolaes de Clerck in Delft (Filedt Kok 1990, 279–280). The Polish artist Jan Ziarnko included elements of this engraving in his print illustrating the Sabbat for Pierre de Lancre's *Tableau de l'inconstance des mauvais anges et demons*

(Description of the Inconstancy of Evil Angels and Demons, 1612, 1613, and 1623).

INTELLECTUAL ENVIRONMENT

Like most artists engaged in the representation of witchcraft, de Gheyn was a member of the educated elite and moved in circles where witchcraft was discussed. In Leiden he established connections with the newly founded university and the publishing business, and was certainly acquainted with its professors of medicine and philosophy who, in 1594, had negatively advised the court of Holland about the validity of the water ordeal (swimming test). In 1602, after de Gheyn had already moved to The Hague, the publisher Thomas Basson, originally from England, received the request to translate Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* into Dutch. The curators of Leiden University and others in the academic community, who favored toleration toward individuals accused of witchcraft, especially old women, supported the project. Scot's *Ontdecking van tovery* (Discoverie of Witchcraft) appeared in 1609 with a Dutch version of Leiden's professorial advice. De Gheyn drew his witches while his

friend Basson was translating Scot. De Gheyn had certainly remained in contact with Basson, whose son Govert married de Gheyn's sister Anna in 1608. De Gheyn's 1603 drawing of *The Devil sowing tares* (Matthew 13: 24–30), a parable traditionally cited in pleas for religious tolerance, with flying witches in the background, may indicate that he shared the enlightened attitude of Basson and his companions. Also, de Gheyn's witchcraft iconography with its focus on old women and occasional hints at their melancholic hallucinations makes this plausible (Löwensteyn forthcoming).

ICONOGRAPHIC TRADITION AND INTERPRETATION

In Antwerp, de Gheyn would have seen demonological scenes in the tradition of Hieronymus Bosch or Pieter Brueghel the Elder. In the course of de Gheyn's career, he could not fail to have been exposed to depictions of demons and witches by other artists as well, including Hans Baldung [Grien], Cornelis van Oostanen, Bartholomeus Spranger, Jacob Isaacz van Swanenburg, and Frans Francken II, either in the original, or as a copy or variation. Clear influences were Baldung's woodcut of a witches' Sabbath and the pendant prints depicting *Saint James and Hemogenes* designed by Brueghel (VRA cat. nos. 519, 522). In addition, De Gheyn's direct or indirect knowledge of demonological literature other than Scot's tract is proved by his use of the motif of Diana and Herodias, the lady captains of the witches' flight (VRA, cat. no. 522), a stock item since the *Canon Episcopi*.

Various attempts have been made to interpret de Gheyn's enigmatic representations. Recently it was demonstrated that the left-handedness of the witches in the large print (VRA, cat. # 519) was intentional, introducing the motif of inversion inherent to the phenomenon of witchcraft (Swan 1999, 335–339). The print as a whole should be interpreted within the conceptual framework of inversion. De Gheyn confronted the sun-bathed city teeming with church towers in the distance with the clouded world of the witches and demons in the foreground, respectively symbolizing faith in God and temptation by the Devil. Additional emblematic motifs warn against the sin of avarice, the possession of earthly goods constituting the most evil of all devilish temptations. Specific motifs symbolizing the opposition of faith to temptation, a recurring theme in contemporary moral theology, often determines the reading of Netherlandish witchcraft images. Susceptibility to temptation frequently figured as a typically female weakness (Löwensteyn forthcoming).

MACHTELD LÖWENSTEYN

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BALDUNG [GRIEN], HANS; BRUEGHEL THE ELDER, PIETER; *CANON EPISCOPI*; DEMONOLOGY; FRANCKEN II, FRANS; SABBAT; SCOT, REGINALD; SWIMMING TEST; ZIARNKO, JAN.

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GHOSTS

Ghosts are innately difficult to define; as the dead returned to or existing in the physical world, ghosts may still have many and varied forms, qualities, and purposes. In medieval and early modern Europe (ca. 1200–1750), these variations stem from the diverse sources for the widespread beliefs in ghosts: biblical, classical, Germanic, and folkloric. Of particular importance to medieval ghost beliefs was the doctrine of purgatory, developed and disseminated in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. As a "home" for souls between the fires of hell and the bliss of heaven, purgatory provided an explanation for ghosts' origins and intentions. The Protestant challenge to the doctrine of purgatory also threatened the logic of ghost beliefs, although it did not prevent Protestants from continuing to believe that the dead could return to or remain on earth and make demands of the living. Throughout the Enlightenment and into the twenty-first century, belief in ghosts persisted, fostered by thousands of printed works advertising "true ghost stories" and the application of such new technologies as photography to studying apparitions.

ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL GHOSTS

Biblical, classical, and Germanic texts provided strong support for medieval beliefs in ghosts who had ambiguous and frequently dangerous relationships with the

living. Biblical examples such as the ghost of Samuel (I Samuel 28:13) and condemnations of “ghosts and familiar spirits” (Deuteronomy 18 and Isaiah 8) distinguish between ghosts and spirits such as demons, but leave many questions unanswered. Both classical and Germanic sources described haunted houses and forests, wild nighttime hunts including both ghosts and other supernatural beings, and ghosts who were so “alive” that they could conduct business, hold hands, and even have sex. The belief in ghosts was so strong in late Roman society that early Christian authors, such as St. Augustine, were afraid any concessions in this area would reinforce widespread pagan belief in spirits. Instead, Augustine and his later followers argued that apparitions were actually “spiritual visions,” immaterial images produced by the imagination. Many early ghost stories depended on these ideas and made no distinction between a ghost seen while awake and a vision during a dream of a person about to die.

Building on these concepts, a “theology of ghosts” emerged in the late Middle Ages. Ghosts were frequently described as physical, corporeal entities who were known to the percipient and who returned to this world to deliver a doctrinal or moral message. The dead appeared when funeral rites were improperly observed, when mourning or penitence was incomplete. As such, they affirmed the bonds linking the communities of the living and the dead in Christian society. Moreover, they emphasized the role of God in establishing these bonds and rules by which heaven and earth functioned; as “marvels,” ghosts testified to the astonishing diversity of God’s creation while supporting beliefs about its underlying order.

Ghosts were also sources about humanity’s fate after death, and from the thirteenth century they appeared in an increasingly diverse array of sources. Ghosts revealed the landscape of the dead—not only what would happen, but how everything would look, feel, smell, sound, and even taste. As such, medieval ghosts reinforced the ideas about good works, intercession, and salvation that were spreading throughout medieval Europe. Medieval ghosts also generally had personal connections to those who saw them: kin, neighbors, confessors, bondsmen, or clerics from the same community. Such social ties were perceived as also having a spiritual component, forming essentially a transcendental kinship.

THE REFORMATION AND GHOSTS

When in the 1520s Protestant reformers attacked the doctrine of purgatory, theologians became homeless. The Zurich theologian Ludwig Lavater wrote one of the earliest and most influential attempts to explain ghostly phenomena within a Protestant framework. Rather than challenge ghosts’ existence, he reclassified them; what people called ghosts were either angels or demons. According to Lavater, whatever their

qualities, ghosts had a mission to make people understand and experience God’s presence in the world. Lavater’s angelology and stress on angelic assistance spread through many Protestant regions in the sixteenth century, taking on characteristics similar to those of the Catholic cult of guardian angels. Lavater’s stress on the possibility of ghosts’ demonic nature also reflected an increased focus on the demonic in many aspects of sixteenth-century thought; it was rare in medieval accounts of ghosts.

Despite these challenges, many patterns of medieval ghost beliefs and practices continued into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries among Protestants and Catholics alike. Ghosts continued to visit their relatives, ask for aid, and strive to conclude unresolved business. They followed people on voyages and physically pushed and pulled the living, if necessary, to obtain their mysterious ends. Moreover, sources for reports about ghosts were also growing. Diaries, broadsheets, sermons, theological treatises, and other writings that noted ghostly phenomena circulated more freely because of changes associated with the printing press. As prophets, ghosts were active during the English Civil War and Restoration and during the French Wars of Religion. Records of hauntings also made their way into judicial records; in the duchy of Bavaria accounts of specters (*Gesperster*) earned special hearings from the ducal court and the archiepiscopal court of Augsburg.

ENLIGHTENMENT AND SCIENTIFIC GHOSTS

With the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries came challenges to traditional belief in ghosts. Some scholars and lawyers now saw ghosts as delusions of the uneducated, the rustic, the downtrodden, and women. Despite Enlightenment skepticism, interest in ghost stories, “true life” accounts, and even trials involving spectral evidence continued unabated. Writers such as Daniel Defoe, scientists such as John Beaumont, and theologians such as Auguste Calmet all wrote influential works attesting to the reality of ghosts. Yet the qualities and interests of ghosts, and the means by which people learned about them, were changing. By the nineteenth century, challengers of Enlightenment rationality, such as Romantics, saw the ghost and the spectral as aspects of an essential nature that the “modern” had wrongly abandoned. Their ghosts were ethereal and enigmatic. They haunted places, unlike the medieval and early modern ghosts who primarily haunted people.

By the later nineteenth century, belief in ghosts had also taken a new manifestation inspired by the foundation of scientific societies devoted to the study of paranormal phenomena and whose membership included leading scientists of the day. The most famous was England’s Society for Psychical Research (SPR),

founded in 1882, and its goal was to employ the latest scientific methods to the study of psychic phenomena, including ghosts. Such societies used modern census techniques to survey percipients, tape measures to check the thickness of walls and to search for hidden chambers; still cameras for indoor and outdoor photography; a fingerprinting kit; and even portable telephones for contact between investigators. Sigmund Freud incorporated ghosts and the “uncanny” into his theories about the mind and human nature, as did a score of lesser philosophers, psychologists, and scientists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Movements such as spiritualism, mesmerism, and theosophy had a broad social appeal, and circulation of scientific texts such as the SPR’s *Report on the Census of Hallucinations* (1894) further legitimized belief in ghosts. In populations traumatized by World War I, belief in ghosts and deathbed sendings flourished, and the 1920s and early 1930s saw the last resurgence in Europe of widespread, open belief in haunted people and places. Despite growing skepticism in the later twentieth and early twenty-first centuries about a rational foundation for ghost beliefs, however, ghosts retained an active place in popular culture and media, and hundreds of societies with diverse credentials continued to study “ghostly” and psychic phenomena.

KATHRYN A. EDWARDS

See also: CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST 1800); DEMONS; ENDOR, WITCH OF; FREUD, SIGMUND; HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, MAGIC; METAMORPHOSIS; PEOPLE OF THE NIGHT (*NACHTVOLK*); POLTERGEIST; REVENANTS; SPECTRAL EVIDENCE; STOECKHLIN, CHONRAD.

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GIFFORD, GEORGE (D. 1620)

Gifford was a Puritan clergyman whose two tracts on witchcraft are noteworthy for the evidence they provide on popular beliefs about witchcraft and witches. Gifford matriculated at Hart Hall, Oxford, but earned

his degrees (BA and MA) at Christ’s College, Cambridge, which in the later sixteenth century was a hotbed of advanced Protestant thinking. In 1582 he obtained the living of All Saints, Maldon, a small borough and seaport in southern Essex. After his Puritanism provoked problems with the ecclesiastical authorities, the townsfolk retained him as a lecturer (that is, preacher). Gifford was admirably positioned to study witch beliefs in a county experiencing steady witchcraft prosecutions, and he published *A Discourse of the Subtill Practises of Devilles by Witches and Sorcerers* in 1587 and *A Dialogue Concerning Witches and Witchcraftes* in 1593 (it would be republished in 1603).

Gifford’s reputation for drawing heavily on local beliefs about witchcraft rests mainly on the second work *A Dialogue Concerning Witches and Witchcraftes* opens with one of its characters, Samuel, declaring his fear of witches. He constantly heard stories of how they exercised their malice to maim and kill cattle, children, and adult humans, he believed that there were one or two witches in every town and village in the county, and he described his fears of the strange animals he had seen around his house, which, he was convinced, were witches’ familiars. Samuel also had a great deal to say about cunning folk. But, despite providing these details of local beliefs and concerns, Gifford’s work had an agenda that placed it firmly in the mainstream of English Protestant demonology. He described popular beliefs as a first step toward correcting popular errors about witchcraft. Gifford’s concern was to provide his readers with an informed and theologically correct view of witchcraft (expressed by another character in the *Dialogue*, Daniel), which would facilitate more effective witch hunting devoid of what he regarded as widespread misconceptions on the subject. Gifford was not denying the reality of witchcraft or *maleficium* (harmful magic), but rather attacking, via Daniel, the popular conception of how it was performed and what it represented. For example, Gifford stated firmly that witches should be hanged not for the harm that they did to humans and livestock, but rather for entering into a pact with the Devil. He also, like other English Protestant writers of his period, took a very hard line against cunning folk, those “good” witches to whom the population resorted in large numbers, not least for advice when they thought themselves bewitched. Moreover Gifford, along with other English demonologists, stressed the absolute sovereignty of God, encouraging his readers to take a providentialist view of their misfortunes and endure them with Job-like patience, rather than attributing them to the malice of witches.

Gifford’s writings on witchcraft thus demonstrated a broader Protestant concern with evangelizing and christianizing the population. It should be remembered that for Gifford like many other writers whom witchcraft historians have identified as demonologists, witchcraft

was just one of many areas in which it was necessary to confront and correct popular misconceptions about religious matters. Apart from his two works on witchcraft, Gifford wrote a number of theological tracts, their thrust being indicated by the title of one of the first, *A briefe Discourse of certaine Points of the Religion, which is among the common Sort of Christians, which may be termed the Countrie Divinitie*, published in 1581. For Gifford and many other Protestant writers, in both England and elsewhere, replacing this “countrie divinity” with a more theologically and scripturally informed view of witchcraft became the main objective when considering the problem of witchcraft. Thus Gifford’s writings on witchcraft, while undoubtedly providing modern scholars with rich evidence on popular notions on the subject, demonstrate advanced English Protestant thinking on the issue of witchcraft and remind us that works of demonology need to be considered in the broader context of their author’s entire corpus.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: DEMONOLOGY; ENGLAND.

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GINZBURG, CARLO (1939–)

Former professor of history at Bologna University and now at the University of California at Los Angeles, Ginzburg’s provocative books have helped renew interest in the study of witchcraft among early modern historians. At the *Scuola Normale* of Pisa, he built up a strong interest in sixteenth-century Italian religious history under the direction of Delio Cantimori, and in Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre’s historiographical “revolution” of the 1930s. Bloch’s voracious reading, amazing skill to “invent” historical problems, and constant eagerness to renew the historian’s craft must have left some sort of genetic imprint on Ginzburg.

Ginzburg’s career had a precocious beginning. In 1966, *I benandanti* (*Night Battles*) appeared, a book on a then rather weird topic. The protagonists were

described as members of a “sect,” probably diffused earlier over a vast area, who practiced rites of an ecstatic agrarian cult to ensure the fertility of fields. Inquisitors tried them and interpreted their nocturnal gatherings as diabolical Sabbats. In 1976, he turned to the study of popular mentalities by publishing *Il formaggio e I vermi* (*The Cheese and the Worms*). There he scrutinized the moods and mind of Domenico Scandella, called Menocchio, the unforgettable sixteenth-century miller burned by the Inquisition. Afterward, he began toiling on his most ambitious work that signaled a return to the history of witchcraft, and in 1988 *Storia Notturna* (*Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches’-Sabbath*) appeared. In a book of wide erudition and theoretical purpose, Ginzburg attempted a characteristically bold interpretation of the medieval origins of the witches Sabbat stereotype, seen as part of a body of shamanistic myths and rituals.

Ginzburg certainly must be considered the most imaginative early modern Italian historian of the 1970s and 1980s and his works, translated into many languages, have been hailed as major contributions to the study of the mentality of popular classes and to the method known as microhistory. This being granted, some forty years after *Night Battles* and fifteen since the publication of *Ecstasies*, we can now assess Ginzburg’s specific contribution to the study of beliefs about magic and witchcraft.

The *Benandanti* was not an anticipation of the new interpretative paradigm inaugurated by Keith Thomas’s *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (1971). Julia Caro Baroja’s influential *Las brujas y su mundo* (1961), translated in English in 1964 as *The World of the Witches* (and, curiously, never mentioned in Ginzburg’s works), makes a more suitable forerunner for that future trend. After appearing in English, *Night Battles* soon flowed into the continuing renewal of witchcraft studies begun by Thomas’s work. Today, it has not escaped the fate of many path-breaking books: a closer reading and new archival research have shaken some of its main assumptions. In fact, there is no evidence in the trials for the existence of a “sect,” nor of an agrarian fertility cult. Ginzburg’s far-fetched reading of sources and his neglect of late seventeenth-century trials made him downplay the *benandanti*’s main role in Friulan society, namely, their function as healers and cunning men to counter malefic witches.

Although *Night Battles* was immediately acclaimed as stimulating research, *Ecstasies*, on the contrary, received an immediate negative reaction. The reason for this generally harsh criticism goes far beyond the book’s minor factual mistakes and inconsistencies, and must be connected with Ginzburg’s ultimately fatal urge to reshape the rules of his discipline. In retrospect, Ginzburg’s reaction to some reviewers of *The Cheese and the Worms* seems significant; he postulated a need

for changes in the standard of evidence and for new criteria of proof, specifically suited to an investigation based on heterogeneous and unbalanced documentation. Briefly, in *Ecstasies* this tendency to jettison the conventional burden of proof was rife. Ginzburg's deciphering of the Sabbat was soon submerged by his search for the fundamental structure of human nature. His narration wandered off seeking a shamanistic interpretation for the origins of this myth, and in prose that became excessively allusive but hardly ever analytical, Ginzburg gathered a multiplicity of heterogeneous cultural data, blithely indifferent to their social contexts. Paradoxically, women—the protagonists of the Sabbat and main victims in the witch hunt—were again sacrificed in the book.

Nevertheless, despite his questionable interpretations, it seems fair to say that breadth of outlook featured constantly in Ginzburg's writings. Moreover, each of his major works was preceded or followed by original essays, meant to give a fuller picture of his methodological concerns.

OSCAR DI SIMPLICIO

See also: *BENANDANTI*; CARO BAROJA, JULIO; HISTORIOGRAPHY; SABBAT; SHAMANISM; STOECKHLIN, CHONRAD; THOMAS, KEITH; TREVOR-ROPER, HUGH (LORD DACRE OF GLANTON).

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GIRARD, JEAN-BAPTISTE (1680–1733)

Girard was a Jesuit priest, tried in 1731 in Aix-en-Provence for seducing and bewitching his nubile former penitent, Marie-Catherine Cadière, in the last major witchcraft trial involving demonic possession to take place in France.

Arriving in Toulon in 1728, Girard became the spiritual director of the teenage Cadière, who aspired to become a saint. Girard wished to become known as a maker of saints, and the bishop of Toulon and others who desired fame for the city and diocese supported his endeavor. Cadière quickly gained a reputation as a living saint for her asceticism, visions, powers of divination, and for having received the stigmata. By November 1729, Cadière began to experience sexual desires, trances, hallucinations, and assaults by demons.

By the end of the following summer, Cadière broke from Girard because he had declined to permit her to leave her convent and because he had begun to doubt her claims to holiness. She confided to her subsequent confessor, Nicolaus Giroux, that Girard had seduced her and helped her instigate an abortion; the anti-Jesuit Giroux then concluded that Girard had bewitched his penitent with demons. Cadière was exorcised to expel the malign spirits and to prove that the Jesuit priest had caused her demonic possession.

This case of demonic possession and supposed sexual intercourse (Cadière's lawyers found—or cajoled—ten other women who claimed Girard had seduced them) produced a pamphlet war in Provence that gained national, even international notoriety, and became embroiled in the century-old struggle of Jansenists (Catholics who advocated strict asceticism and who followed St. Augustine's doctrine of predestination) and Jesuits, strongly committed to the role of free will in achieving salvation. Girard's enemies depicted him in songs, lampoons, engravings, and broadsides (some pornographic) as the successor to other lecherous sorcerer-priests: Louis Gaufridy at Aix-en-Provence in 1611, Urbain Grandier at Loudun in the 1630s, and Thomas Boullé at Louviers in the 1640s.

Cadière's family managed to have the trial evoked from the ecclesiastical court at Toulon, which had favored Girard, to the *parlement* (sovereign judicial court) of Aix. In September 1731, its *procureur-général* (public prosecutor) recommended a guilty verdict, torture, and execution for Cadière for false accusation, pretending saintliness, and debasement of religion. This further inflamed a populace (already excited by the midnight public exorcisms of Cadière organized by her brother, a Dominican priest), prone to believe the tales of Girard's sexual and clerical abuse, and to accept Cadière's claims to holiness. However, there is no conclusive evidence that the confessor had sexual relations with his penitent, and it seems likely that Cadière had applied her own menstrual fluid to help mimic the stigmata. The Jansenists, who had used the affair as an opportunity to attack all Jesuits, had waged their propaganda war well.

Next month, the *parlement*, by one vote, acquitted both Cadière and Girard, remanding the priest, because of his clerical irregularities, to a Church court (which later exonerated him) and holding Cadière and her family liable for court costs. The *parlement's* failure to convict Girard sparked vandalism and disturbances in Provence, including violence against Jesuits; the army had to restore order. Cadière soon left Provence for good; Girard moved to Dôle in 1732, dying there the following year.

What had happened? For some, primarily but not entirely from lower social groups, demons as well as depraved sorcerer-priests were part of this world. For

Jansenists and their allies, the public dissemination of Girard's alleged misbehavior and indiscretions provided a great victory over the Jesuits by presenting them as licentious and evil. Cadière's accusations, the trial, and the enormous publicity weakened the Jesuit order and presaged their expulsion from France in 1764. For many in France, the trial, charges, and testimony smacked of superstition and credulity; the accusations of witchcraft and demonic possession were nothing but fabricated and fraudulent nonsense; the era of miracles had long passed. In this sense, the trial and its outcome clearly belonged to the early Enlightenment and reaffirmed the French royal edict of 1682 that had redefined the crimes of witchcraft and magic as superstition.

RICHARD M. GOLDEN

See also: AIX-EN-PROVENCE NUNS; BEWITCHMENT; DEMONS; ENLIGHTENMENT; EXORCISM; FRANCE; LIVING SAINTS; LOUDUN NUNS; LOUVIERS NUNS; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; SKEPTICISM.

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GLANVILL, JOSEPH (1636–1680)

Together with Henry More, Glanvill published the most influential defense of the reality of spirits and witches in post-Restoration England. Intended to counter the fashionable skepticism of materialists and atheists, their *Saducismus Triumphatus* (Sadducism Conquered, 1681) joined the approaches of modern empirical science to ancient erudition to offer both a philosophical and a natural historical account of how spirits acted in the world.

Born in Plymouth, Glanvill was educated at Oxford after 1652. He held a series of livings in Somerset after 1660; in 1666, he acquired his most prestigious post, the Abbey Church of Bath, which he kept until his death. Powerful connections also got him a prebend in Worcester Cathedral and a royal chaplainship in 1672. In addition to his works on witchcraft, Glanvill published on philosophical and scientific subjects, attacking Aristotelianism and defending the new science of the Royal Society, whose moderate skepticism and experimentalism, he believed, best supported the truths

of revealed religion. Although latitudinarian toward the essentials of Christianity, Glanvill strongly defended the rights of the Church of England against dissenters, both in his writings and as an active parochial clergyman; his publications guided Anglican clergy and laity on such issues as plain preaching, the sacraments, and morality. He followed Henry More's "Cambridge Platonism," which used the world of spirits (and preexistence of the soul) as support for the established church against enthusiastic dissenters, Roman Catholics, and materialistic atheists.

In 1666, Glanvill published *Some Philosophical Considerations Touching the Being of Witches and*



Title page of Joseph Glanvill's *Saducismus Triumphatus* (*Sadducism Conquered*), a late seventeenth-century defense of the reality of witchcraft. (The British Library/Topham-HIP/The Image Works)

Witchcraft, responding to Thomas Hobbes and perhaps to the 1665 edition of Reginald Scot. A second edition appeared in 1667; a third, retitled *A Blow at Modern Sadducism*, is dated 1668, although Samuel Pepys was reading it on Christmas Day 1667. The third edition contained the famous story of the Drummer of Tedworth, a poltergeist case that Glanvill had witnessed himself in January 1663 at Mr. Mompesson's house in Wiltshire. Glanvill also had access to notes about the witchcraft cases prosecuted by Robert Hunt in Somerset between 1657 and 1665; but, although his 1666 book was addressed to Hunt, he never incorporated most of this material into his work until the revised edition, responding to John Webster's 1677 *Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft*, which he was preparing at his death, was published in 1681 by Henry More as *Saducismus Triumphatus*. Because Glanvill's work followed the pattern set by More's *Antidote Against Atheism* (1652) and More added greatly to the various editions of the *Saducismus*, they should really be seen as joint authors. Their work proved the most influential defense of witchcraft for many years: revised editions appeared in 1682, 1689, 1700, and 1726, and it set the pattern for similar collections of cases, including *The Certainty of the World of Spirits* (1692) by Glanvill's long-time correspondent Richard Baxter.

More and Glanvill were interested in witchcraft primarily for the experimental evidence it offered for the existence and nature of spirits, thus offering an antidote to materialist atheism. They provided a philosophical account within which the action of devils, directly or through witches, could be reconciled with the new empirical science; but they also appealed to the weight of authentic testimony of witchcraft and related phenomena as proof that such things were matters of fact and could not be declared impossible a priori by those skeptical of witchcraft. Hence their collection of such cases, in which many members of the Royal Society, including Robert Boyle and John Aubrey, joined enthusiastically, was as central to the Baconian enterprise of natural history as Glanvill's other investigation into such local phenomena as the Mendip lead mines or Bath's spa waters. In turn, such contemporary evidence reinforced scriptural testimony for witchcraft. Despite Glanvill's use of Hunt's trial material, however, we lack evidence that he and More were interested in witches either as threats to the established church or as harmful agents within local communities. Instead, their work contributed to a lively intellectual and scientific debate lasting well into the eighteenth century, when it formed the chief target of such writers as Francis Hutchinson.

JONATHAN BARRY

See also: BAXTER, RICHARD; DEMONS; HOBBS, THOMAS; HUTCHINSON, FRANCIS; MORE, HENRY; POLTERGEIST; SCIENCE AND MAGIC; SKEPTICISM; SOMERSET WITCHES; WEBSTER, JOHN.

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GOAT

The goat has a limited role in literary descriptions of witchcraft, but is quite prominent in pictorial representations. It is either the animal on which witches are most frequently shown to ride through the air, or the physical shape that the Devil adopts at the witches' Sabbat. In Teutonic, Celtic, and Classical mythologies, goats represented the life force and fertility. Christians subsequently associated the goat with lust. In the New Testament, goats were identified with the wicked, and contrasted to the good sheep, while in the Hebrew Bible the scapegoat carried the sins of the community. By the late Middle Ages, the most popular animal forms used to represent the Devil were the serpent, the dragon, the dog, and the goat.

In descriptions of the witches' Sabbat, the Devil sometimes appeared as a goat, but equally often as a cat, dog, horse, fly, or man. As late as 1608, Francesco Maria Guazzo's account of a diabolical Sabbat in his *Compendium Maleficarum* (A Summary of Witches) described the Devil seated on his throne "in some terrible shape, as of a goat or a dog" (Book I, chap. xii). However the anonymous artist who illustrated the work depicted the Devil with the head, horns, and tail of a goat. In Jean Bodin's *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (On the Demon-Mania of Witches) of 1580, the Sabbat concludes by the Devil consuming himself in fire and witches collecting the ash to harm their victims (Book II, chap. 4). Nicolas Rémy's *Demonolatrie* of 1595 acknowledged these different animal forms, but claimed that the Devil chose the shape of a goat whenever he was involved in some ceremony, because the goat's "rank smell" and his "obscene lasciviousness" accorded best with his diabolical nature (Book I, chap. xxiii).

The identification of the Sabbat Devil with a goat in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries was possibly influenced by widespread accounts of the 1459–1460



Witch riding a goat to the Sabbat, sixteenth-century woodcut. (Bettmann/Corbis)

prosecutions of the French Waldensians or Vaudois in the northern French town of Arras. Though the documents described the Devil appearing in different forms, the “kiss of shame” (the *osculum infame*) applied to the Devil’s rear involved a goat. In three French manuscript versions of the *Speculatio in secta Valdensium* (Speculation on the Sect of the Waldensians, ca. 1460) by the Cologne theologian Johann Tinctor, written in the wake of the Arras trials, groups of Waldensians were depicted kneeling around a goat with lighted candles.

A century later, the Devil was again shown as a goat in a Sabbat scene of ca. 1570, which survives as a colored drawing in the Zurich collection of Johann Jakob Wick. In this case, as in most others from later decades, the Devil appears as half man and half goat, depicted either with the head of a goat or simply with horns and possibly hooves or a tail. Only with the famous etching of Jan Ziarnko in 1613 did the Devil take on the full appearance of a goat. This was followed by numerous illustrations, the most important of which is that in Johannes Prätorius’s description of Walpurgis Night festivities on the Blocksberg in 1668.

Goats also featured in witchcraft accounts and illustration as animals on which witches rode through the air. While literary descriptions included the goat among many possibilities for transportation, in pictorial images the goat represented the most common animal depicted. In the first two decades of the sixteenth century, the images of Albrecht Dürer, Albrecht Altdorfer, Hans Schäuffelein, and especially Hans Baldung [Grien] established the visual stereotype of a witch riding a goat. The strongest grounds for this identification seem to be the association of goats with the vice of lust, and the interest that these artists had in the theme of sexual disorder. For instance, Dürer emphasized this by the witch’s grasp of the goat’s horn, an allusion to her powers of castration, while Baldung depicted a witch lighting her torch from a goat’s genitals. In such ways the goats included in pictorial representations of witchcraft helped foreground sexual themes that were more fully elaborated in the demonological treatises.

CHARLES ZIKA

See also: ANIMALS; ARRAS; ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BALDUNG [GRIEN], HANS; BODIN, JEAN; DEMONOLOGY; DEVIL; DOGS;

DÜRER, ALBRECHT; GUAZZO, FRANCESCO MARIA; KISS OF SHAME; PRÄTORIUS, JOHANNES; RÉMY, NICOLAS; SABBAT; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC; TINCTOR, JOHANN; VAUDOIS (WALDENESIANS); WALPURGIS (WALPURIGS) NIGHT; ZIARNKO, JAN.

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GOEDELMAUN, JOHANN GEORG (1559–1611)

A Lutheran jurist, Goedelmann was one of the most prominent late-sixteenth century opponents of witch hunting in Germany. His three-volume work on this theme, entitled *Tractatus de magis, veneficis et lamiis deque his recte cognoscendis et puniendis* (A Treatise on Magicians, Sorcerers and Witches and How Properly to Identify and Punish Them), was published in Frankfurt am Main in 1591; a German translation followed in 1592. In the work, Goedelmann distinguished between different categories of witches and argued that only those proved to have worked *maleficium* (harmful magic) should be executed. He also dismissed as physical impossibilities certain aspects of witchcraft belief. Of greatest importance was Goedelmann's insistence that witchcraft should be treated according to normal rules of legal procedure, and not as a *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime), in the prosecution of which all the safeguards that usually worked to protect the accused from over-hasty arrest and excessive torture were ignored.

Goedelmann was born in Tuttlingen in Swabia. He studied law at the universities of Tübingen, Wittenberg, Rostock, and Basel, where he graduated in 1580. In 1583 he became a professor of law at the University of Rostock, but stopped teaching in 1592 to become a court-counsellor (*Hofrat*) to the elector of Saxony in Dresden, a position he held until his death. His *Tractatus* originated from lectures he gave in Rostock in 1584 and from legal opinions he had written on the subject of witchcraft as a member of the Rostock law faculty. In book one, Goedelmann chiefly discussed and criticized learned magicians and sorcerers (*Magi, Schwarzkünstler, Zauberer*), who deliberately made pacts with the Devil that empowered them to work harmful magic. Book two consisted of a far more sympathetic discussion of witches (*Hexen, lamiae*). Following Johann Weyer, whose 1563 criticism of witchcraft trials Goedelmann cited frequently, Goedelmann defined witches as melancholy old women, deceived by the Devil into believing that they had had sex and entered into pacts with him, and that

they had flown to witches' Sabbats and caused bad weather by magical means. Goedelmann dismissed sex with the Devil, night flying, Sabbats, and the metamorphosis of witches into animals as physical impossibilities. Confessions to these deeds were thus the result of the diabolic delusion of weak minds, as was the admission by a witch that she had raised hailstorms: only God had the power to cause bad weather.

In book three, Goedelmann discussed the legal treatment of witches. In opposition to French jurist Jean Bodin, who advocated treating witchcraft as a *crimen exceptum*, Goedelmann insisted that all types of witch should be handled by German courts according to normal legal procedure as laid down by the Carolina Code (*Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*), the criminal law code issued for the Holy Roman Empire in 1532. In adopting this position, Goedelmann was influenced by the work of witchcraft trial critic Hermann Witekind, and by the legal opinions of Frankfurt jurist Johannes Fichard and Lorenz Kirchhof, one of Goedelmann's Rostock colleagues. In a detailed discussion of many specific points of law, Goedelmann argued that the evidence on the basis of which a suspected witch could be arrested and tortured was to be subjected to rigorous scrutiny and that suspects must be given adequate opportunity to defend themselves against the charges brought against them. Goedelmann was generally critical of witchcraft trials conducted in haste and on the basis of flimsy evidence. He pointed out that torture was an unreliable method for obtaining the truth and that judges would have to answer for any innocent blood that they shed.

Regarding the punishment of witches, Goedelmann adhered rigidly to Article 109 of the Carolina Code, which decreed that only those who worked harmful magic should be executed. Those who made a pact with the Devil or who worked magic without causing harm were, according to Goedelmann, to be given various discretionary punishments, such as fines, flogging, or banishment. The *lamiae* whose confessed crimes were impossible and the result of delusions needed medical treatment and better instruction in God's word. Again following Weyer, Goedelmann thus suggested that the spiritual crime of apostasy was not worthy of the death penalty.

There were inconsistencies in Goedelmann's work. For example, although the first two books of his *Tractatus* suggested a division between learned, powerful, maleficent, male magicians who willingly made pacts with the Devil, and weak-minded, powerless, female witches who were deceived by the Devil, in book three Goedelmann referred to female sorcerers (*Zauberinnen*) who were capable of working *maleficium*. Despite such ambiguities, Goedelmann's work made an important contribution to the developing criticism of witch hunting. He made Weyer's ideas

available to a wider audience and, in his insistence that witchcraft be treated as an ordinary crime, foreshadowed such seventeenth-century witchcraft theorists as Friedrich von Spee or Johann Matthäus Meyfart, who criticized legal abuses in witchcraft trials. Goedelmann's impact on contemporaries can be seen in the fact that his critics vilified him as a defender of witches, while skeptics as far away as Catholic Bavaria also cited his work favorably. Second and third editions of his *Tractatus* were published in 1601 and 1676, respectively.

ALISON ROWLANDS

See also: AGE OF ACCUSED WITCHES; BODIN, JEAN; CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITUTIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*); *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; DEMONOLOGY; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; LAMIA; *MALEFICIUM*; MELANCHOLY; MEYFART (MEYFAHRT), JOHANN MATTHÄUS; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; SABBAT, SKEPTICISM; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; THUMM, THEODOR; TORTURE; WEATHER MAGIC; WEYER, JOHANN; WITKIND, HERMANN.

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GOLDAST, MELCHIOR (1578–1635)

A well-known lawyer and constitutional historian who studied at universities of all three confessions (Catholic, Lutheran, and Calvinist), Goldast confirmed the necessity of the witch hunt and confiscation in a work published in 1629.

The son of an impoverished Reformed nobleman near Bschofszell in the Swiss canton of Thurgau, Goldast showed an early far-reaching confessional orientation by studying philosophy and law first at the Jesuit university of Ingolstadt (1595–1596) and then at the Lutheran university of Altdorf near Nuremberg (1597–1598). He worked in 1599 at the library of the St. Gallen monastery, registering charters and documents, before moving to Geneva in 1600 and 1601, where he worked at publishing manuscripts for his rich protector Bartholomäus Schobinger. Goldast then became secretary to Duke Henry of Bouillon, going with him to Heidelberg, where he presumably received

his doctor's degree. (Baade 1992, 34). But neither his new title nor his move to Frankfurt am Main in 1606 improved his financial situation. Goldast worked as an author, editor, and lawyer, joining the court of Saxe-Weimar in 1611 and becoming a councillor in 1613. But in 1615 he moved to the court of Count Ernst II of Schaumburg-Bückeburg, where he remained until 1624. Because of the Thirty Years' War and Ernst II's death in 1622, Goldast left Bückeburg and moved his library to the relatively safe city of Bremen. By 1625, Goldast was back in Frankfurt am Main, where he had married Sophie Ottilie Jeckel in 1612 and had two daughters with her.

Already during his service with the count of Schaumburg, the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II commissioned Goldast, a Swiss Reformed Protestant, to justify the imperial succession to the Bohemian crown against the Reformed rebels. In gratitude for these works, Ferdinand appointed Goldast imperial councillor in 1627 and simultaneously councillor to the Catholic elector-archbishop of Trier. His last position was his appointment in 1632 at Landgrave George II of Hesse-Darmstadt's University of Giessen, where he was presumably named university chancellor. After Goldast's death in 1635, his library of 4,151 titles, including every important ancient author as well as many medieval and early modern works, was bought by the city of Bremen, where it still can be consulted (except for the manuscripts given to Queen Christina of Sweden).

Some of the 65 works Goldast published or wrote extended to several volumes. Because many of them were purely collections of documents, he has been accused of an "uncritical, often compilatory treatment" (Müller 1995, col. 820), especially because some documents were questionable (Hoke 1971, col. 1736). Goldast's special interests included imperial and Bohemian law, medieval lyrics (first edition of Walther von der Vogelweide), Swabian writers, and theology. His abundant editions helped German constitutional law to base itself not only on ancient but also on medieval and early modern sources.

GOLDAST AND WITCHCRAFT

While serving the dukes of Saxe-Weimar, Schaumburg-Bückeburg, the archbishop of Trier, and the landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt between 1611 and 1635, Goldast encountered witchcraft trials. Goldast took a relentless position about witchcraft. His point of view was explained in a 180-page book, finished in 1629 but not published until 1661: *Rechtliches Bedencken. Von Confiscation der Zauberer und Hexen-Güther* (Juridical Considerations. On Confiscating the Property of Magicians and Witches). Presumably Goldast wrote this work in Frankfurt am Main in his capacity as a councillor of Trier, influenced by the witchcraft trials in

this territory. But his praise for the confiscation laws in Schaumburg showed that he was previously acquainted with the subject. Goldast was undoubtedly exhorting the authorities to conduct witch hunts; otherwise they would become guilty before both God and the emperor. Goldast's position constituted an indirect affront to his latest employer, Landgrave George II of Hesse-Darmstadt, who was very cautious in witchcraft trials. Goldast knew what he was talking about with respect to "hard punishment," because in 1603 his brother had been executed on the wheel for murder at Strasbourg.

Goldast had a very wide-ranging definition of witchcraft. In the category of sorcerers, he included not only people who committed harmful magic (*Schadenszauber*), those convicted of copulation with the Devil, or treason against God, but also many others. For him, witchcraft began with petty superstition and the help of the Devil. Goldast included not only fortunetellers, and casters of love magic (referring to the *Malleus Maleficarum* [The Hammer of Witches, 1486]), but also astronomers, rat-catchers, jugglers, tightrope-walkers, and even such physicians as Paracelsus or Johann Weyer as sorcerers who have either concluded a pact with the Devil or at least used his help. For every magician convicted of a pact with the Devil, Goldast demanded the death penalty by burning, regardless of any possible physical harm through magic that might have occurred. He rejected the possibility of a conversion, proposed by such authors as Weyer, Anton Prätorius, or Johann Georg Goedelmann. Goldast resolved the contradiction with the Carolina Code, where confiscation in cases of lese-majesty was prohibited, by two methods. First, he changed the sense of the paragraph by replacing "not" by "with" ("*ni t*" by "*mit*"); second, he referred to a few territorial laws that ordered confiscations. In this manner, Goldast evaded the central axiom "*ubi leges non distinguunt, neque nos distinguere debemus*" (where laws do not differ, we must not differ either) in order to legalize confiscation policies actually in practice. Because witchcraft was growing enormously in 1629, he considered a strict and relentless persecution necessary, without respecting social rank or origin.

LUDOLF PELIZAEUS

See also: CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITUTIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*);

GOEDELMMANN, JOHANN GEORG; HESSE; LAWYERS; PARACELTUS, THEOPHRASTUS BOMBASTUS VON HOHENHEIM; PRÄTORIUS, ANTON; TRIER, ELECTORATE OF; WEYER, JOHANN.

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Frage: Ob die Zauberer und Hexen, Leib und Guth mit und zugleich wewürcken, also und dergestalt, dass sie nicht allein an Leib und Leben, sondern auch an Haab und Guth, können und sollen gestraffet werden?; Sampt einverleibten kurzem Bericht, von mancherley Art der zauberer und Hexen und deren ungleicher Bestraffung; zu Erklärung und Erläuterung der Käyserlichen Peinlichen Hals-Gerichts-Ordnung, Ca rol. V. Imperat. im 109. und 218. Articuln. Bremen: Köhler. Reprint Gonzenbach: 1968. Gonzenbach. "Goldast." Pp. 327–330 in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*. Vol. 9. Berlin: Duncker.

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GÖLDI, ANNA (1734–1782)

The last known person to be executed in Europe for the crime of witchcraft, Anna Göldi was beheaded in the Swiss canton of Glarus in 1782. A servant, Göldi was accused of poisoning the second-eldest daughter of her employer, Johann Jakob Tschudi, with a *Läckerli* (literally a "tasty treat"; in this case, a piece of cake), so badly that *Gufen* (pins) and wires grew in the girl's stomach, causing her to vomit almost daily for two months. The girl additionally suffered from "gout-like convulsions" and spasms in her left leg. Children often exhibited such symptoms, which under closer examination always turned out to be fraudulent; however, the fact that Göldi was able to heal the girl ultimately persuaded judges of her guilt. The trial of this "poisoness" was the only witchcraft trial that led to a death sentence in Glarus.

Born in Sennwald, in the present-day Swiss canton of St. Gallen, Anna Göldi was the fourth of eight children and earned her living as a servant. At age twenty-four, she gave birth to a son. No marriage took place, however, and she secretly gave birth to a second child in 1765, while working in a clergyman's house. This child, whose father left for Dutch military duty, died in its first night. The death was labeled infanticide. Göldi was sent to the pillory and banished to her sister's house for six years. However, after only three years, she began working in Glarus for one of the area's wealthiest families. Becoming pregnant by her employer's son, she gave birth to her third child (a son) in Strasbourg, France, in 1774, giving the child to a foundling home.

After working satisfactorily for various families in Glarus, in 1780 she entered the service of Johann Jakob Tschuldi, a doctor and *Fünfferrichter* (local judge), and his family of five children. When *Gufen* were found in the breakfast milk of the family's second-eldest daughter, Anne-Miggeli, following an argument with Göldi

in October 1781, Tschudi immediately suspected the maid. She was quickly dismissed and fled to another canton under an assumed name.

An odd spectacle affected the house of Tschudi in mid-November 1781. Anne-Miggeli was bedridden with cramped limbs and, between screams, spit up pins, pieces of wire, and nails during November and December of 1781. Either the girl took the objects out of her mouth, or they were removed for her by relatives, her father, or her mother.

Guests never witnessed these events. A warrant was issued for Anna Göldi's arrest. She was found and jailed at Glarus in March 1782. Anne-Miggeli suffered from "gout-like convulsions." Anna Göldi was urged to heal the girl, and her third attempt was successful.

Instead of dropping his complaint, Göldi's employer pressed opening trial proceedings. Anne-Miggeli told the court's board of inquiry that Anna Göldi and her friend, Rudolf Steinmüller (a man with no criminal record), were the cause of her suffering: they had given her an overly sweetened *Läckerli* with "nail seeds." The pins, pieces of wire, and nails had then grown from these seeds, which the girl had consequently vomited up. Interestingly enough, no injury to her esophagus could ever be determined.

The malfeasance trial against Anna Göldi began mid-March 1782. During her third cross-examination, she confirmed Anne-Miggeli's testimony and accused Steinmüller of having given her the *Läckerli*. During her *Schreckexamen* (an interrogation while showing the torture instruments), Anna said that the Devil had given her the *Läckerli*. Three additional interrogations (all torture sessions) followed. At this point, Steinmüller was ordered questioned; but the night before his interrogation began, he hanged himself. On May 19, 1782, Anna Göldi's final interrogation took place. Tschudi pulled every string to get her sentenced to death by beheading. On June 6, 1782 (in accordance with the Julian calendar), she was found guilty of poisoning Anne-Miggeli. By a margin of only two votes she was sentenced to death by beheading rather than perpetual imprisonment. Her execution followed one week later.

This decision caused outrage in central Europe, although censorship prevented public debate in Switzerland. The resulting discourse about the "Göldi Affair" in Germany about superstition and trial conduct created the term *Justizmord*, meaning "judicial murder."

ELISABETH KORRODI-AEBLI;

TRANSLATED BY JONATHAN STICKNEY

See also: DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; ENLIGHTENMENT; SWITZERLAND.

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GOLSER, GEORG (CA. 1420–1489)

Golser was the bishop of Brixen responsible for stopping the overzealous inquisition and witch hunt being carried out by the Dominican inquisitor Heinrich Kramer (Institoris) in Innsbruck. In 1485, Kramer had returned from Rome authorized by the papal decree *Summis desiderantes affectibus* (Desiring with Supreme Ardor), to conduct a formal inquisition against witches in all German Church provinces. Invested with such a carte blanche, Kramer tried to start a paradigmatic witch hunt at Innsbruck. The capital of the duchy of Tyrol was a significant place, since Archduke Sigmund was then the most powerful Habsburg prince, ruling over a patchwork of territories stretching from northern Italy, over Tyrol and southwestern Germany into Alsace, the inquisitor's homeland. Innsbruck would serve as Kramer's gateway into the Holy Roman Empire. His inquisition there, starting in July 1485, was characterized by a climate of intimidation, brutal force, unlimited use of torture, the denial of legal defense, and distorted reports—all in all, scandalous conduct even according to late fifteenth-century legal standards. Therefore, not only the relatives of the accused, but the citizens of the capital, the clergy, and the Tyrolean nobility protested against such illegal procedures.

Bishop Georg II Golser, successor of the famous philosopher Nicholas of Cusa in the see of Brixen, appointed a commission to scrutinize Kramer's inquisition. The formal interrogations of seven imprisoned women started on October 4. And despite desperate resistance from the inquisitor's side, the bishop stopped the persecution on October 29, nullified its results, and—after having secured the archduke's support—liberated all suspected women on November 2. Kramer was discredited as a fanatic, and Bishop Golser went as far as to ask the papal inquisitor formally to leave his diocese on November 11. Later, on February 14, 1486, Golser even threatened to use force if Kramer failed to leave Tyrol immediately.

On this occasion, Golser formulated the famous words: "I am really upset about the presence of this monk in the diocese. . . . It seemed to me that he has become completely senile and childish, when I had the

opportunity to listen to him here in Brixen, together with the cathedral chapter. I advised him to return to his monastery and stay there forever. Really, I got the impression that he is crazy, and that he wants to carry on witch hunting. But I will not agree, since he committed so many errors in his previous trial” (Behringer 2000, 63). An Augustine canon of Brixen, Hartmann Ammann (1856–1930), excavated a written defense of Kramer from the local archive, which clearly indicates that he started working on the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) as a consequence of this defeat. The prince-bishops of Brixen never again allowed a witch persecution, and—even more important—the Tyrolean government suppressed attempts by lower courts to launch witch hunts even in future generations. The Innsbruck inquisition was an unmitigated defeat for the papal inquisitor, primarily at the hands of a courageous bishop named Georg Golser.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: INNSBRUCK; KRAMER (INSTITORIS), HEINRICH; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; TYROL, COUNTY OF.

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GOODWIN CHILDREN (1688)

The case of the Goodwin children of Boston in 1688 provides a classical example of diabolical possession in America. It resembled numerous earlier instances, such as the case of the Warboys witches in England, where an unpopular old woman became a scapegoat and was executed following accusations from children, and it anticipated the happenings during the Salem witch hunt of 1692–1693, where children’s accusations led to the conviction and execution of nineteen witches. Puritan New England played a special role in regard to witchcraft in seventeenth-century British North America; while in the middle and southern colonies, witch hunting was either restrained or nonexistent. In New England, some 234 people were indicted for witchcraft, and 36 of them were executed—including Mary Glover, an old Irish Catholic widow, who was hanged in Boston

for bewitching the Goodwin children.

In the summer of 1688, four of the six children (Martha, age thirteen; John, eleven; Mercy, seven; and Benjamin, five) of John Goodwin, a mason living in Boston, began to display symptoms that contemporaries judged to be diabolical possession. One eyewitness found them “grievously tormented, crying out of head, eyes, tongue, teeth breaking their neck, back, thighs, knees, legs, feet, toes, etc.” (Hall 1991, 266–267). Furthermore, they were sometimes deaf, dumb, and blind; however, because their problems seldom occurred after ten o’clock in the evening, they managed to sleep well at night.

Martha, the oldest of the children, accused Goody Glover, who did the family’s laundry, of stealing some linen, allegedly in order to perform some type of witchcraft. Confronted with these allegations, the mother of the laundress, Mary Glover, also a washerwoman, became very angry and used foul language against Martha. Martha immediately retaliated by developing strange fits; within a few weeks, one of her sisters and two brothers exhibited the same behavior. The best local physicians were called in to check on the afflicted children and diagnose the cause of their sufferings. One of them, Dr. Thomas Oaks, concluded that the origin of the children’s strange behavior was “a hellish witchcraft” (Hall 1991, 268). Accordingly, ministers from Boston and the surrounding area joined in a day of prayer in the Goodwin home; following this, the youngest child of the four gained relief from his troubles.

Reports of the case soon reached Boston’s secular authorities. Witchcraft in New England was a secular crime and hence tried in a civil court; it was also a capital crime in old and in New England, and clergy as well as magistrates condemned it primarily because it implied a demonic compact. When civil authorities received a complaint from John Goodwin that his neighbor, Mary Glover, and her daughter Goody Glover had bewitched his four children, both mother and daughter were arrested, but only the mother was put on trial for witchcraft. During the proceedings, Mary Glover’s interrogation was conducted through interpreters, because she spoke Irish (Gaelic). Among the charges levied against her was that six years before she had bewitched a woman to death. Meanwhile, her house was searched and some images, puppets and babies, all made of rags and stuffed with goat’s hair—materials believed to be essential to witchcraft—were found. Before reaching its final verdict, however, the court appointed six physicians who checked Mary’s mental condition to confirm her sanity. They declared her *compos mentis*, fully sane, and hence capable to stand trial. After she had confessed to being in league with the Devil, enchanting the four children, and practicing image magic, Mary was condemned to death and hanged at Boston on November 16, 1688.

Despite Mary Glover's death, the strange behavior of the three Goodwin children continued. Cotton Mather, minister of Boston's Old North church, who had followed the case closely from its beginning, now took Martha into his house in order both to observe her behavior more closely and to apply some spiritual healing. Almost a year after their first appearance, the children's fits and strange behavior finally disappeared. Memories of the case of the Goodwin children continued to haunt public imagination, especially when other "afflicted" children emerged in Salem Village within four years.

AVIHU ZAKAI

See also: CHILDREN; MATHER, COTTON; NEW ENGLAND; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; SALEM; WARBOYS, WITCHES OF

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**GOYA Y LUCIENTES,
FRANCISCO JOSÉ DE (1746–1828)**

A world-famous Spanish painter, Goya's ample works contain some notable engravings and paintings dedicated to the themes of witchcraft and superstition. Goya's life coincided with the end of the Enlightenment and the beginning of Romanticism, as well as profound political and social changes in Spain after the War of Independence against Napoleon (1808–1813). These revolutionary years ended Spain's Old Régime, recognizing the principle of national sovereignty for the first time in Spanish history. Nevertheless, once the war ended, the monarchy was restored in the person of Fernando VII and absolutism returned to Spain. Despite his privileged position as the official court portraitist, Goya was moved by these events to go into voluntary exile in France in 1824, dying at Bordeaux four years later.

Goya's work on witchcraft and superstition followed a grave illness in 1792, which left him completely deaf. In opposition to the amiable and popular technique that had characterized his first epoch as a painter, he now turned his vision to the realm of the phantasms of imagination. In a famous series of 80 engravings called the *Caprices* (*Caprichos*, works of pure imagination), which were put up for sale in 1799, the theme of witchcraft appears clearly in 19 of them (numbers 44–48, 51, and 59–71). But many

others in addition to these also partake indirectly in this theme. For example, the 49th *Caprice*, entitled *Duendecitos* (*Goblins*), oscillates between representations of an underworld of witchcraft (that of the goblins) and anticlericalism, where monks are represented as gluttonous, lewd, dirty, and obese goblins. Similarly, the theme of prostitution and pimping links with the practices of love magic, each of these being present everywhere in contemporary Spanish society. In reality, as some critics have made clear, the world represented by Goya in the *Caprices* is not a simple accumulation of singular scenes, but presents a unity around the concept of the night, of gloom, and, in general, of everything which in the light of day and reason lies hidden behind appearances and conventions.

One idea appearing throughout the *Caprichos* is that of the "world of the other side," which corresponds to the world represented in the scenes of witchcraft, and, more concretely, with anything that parodies or reverses the Catholic religion, which Goya criticizes harshly in



Se Repulen (*They Spruce Themselves Up*), by Francisco de Goya, the celebrated Spanish painter of the Enlightenment, who depicted witchcraft satirically as superstition in many paintings. Here one witch clips the toenails of another, who has been partly transformed into an animal, while a third witch has become a bat. (Bettmann/Corbis)

various scenes dedicated to the activities of the Inquisition. Indeed, one of Goya's principal inspirations for his arrangement of witchcraft scenes must have been the printed account of the *auto-da-fé* (act of faith) that took place in Logroño in 1610, where 33 witches and sorcerers were tried, which included detailed accounts of the crimes of which they were accused. Not coincidentally, in 1811 the Enlightenment writer Leandro Fernández de Moratín, a friend of Goya, published under a pseudonym an annotated edition of this account, with the aim of demonstrating the injurious effects the Inquisition had on Spain, and of contributing, for this reason, to its scorn and abolition. Nicolás Fernández de Moratín, his father, had published a long poem entitled *Arte de las putas* (The Art of the Whores), that the Inquisition prohibited in 1777; it was also considered a source of inspiration for several *Caprices* dedicated to this theme.

For many critics, the satirical and political aims of Goya's witchcraft scenes are patent. It was a question of making clear how the destructive monsters, engendered in the deep obscurity of the night, continue to be active even in the clear light of day—in other words, how ancient or obscure elements continue undiminished in power, even though modern institutions had been born from the hands of the liberal revolutions, using ideas of the Enlightenment. It is certain that commentaries on the *Caprices* that use such verbs as *untar* (to smear), *soplar* (to blow), and *chupar* (to suck), apparently referring to representations of witches and the activities of which judges accused them, have a double meaning in a picaresque idiom. As Diego Torres Villarruel wrote in one of his *Witches' Couplets*, "Judges and witches/we all give suck/some to children and others to joints of meat."

Nevertheless, unlike Moratín, who throughout his life defended rationality, the Enlightenment, and progress, which had finally dissipated the darkness and monsters of injustice, Goya evolved from a superficial and optimistic rationalism, characteristic of the first epoch of the Enlightenment, to a more profound and creative immersion in the world of shadows. The *Witches' Coven*, one of the *Black Paintings* with which Goya's residence called *Quinta del Sordo* (acquired in 1819) was decorated, is a good example. In opposition to the ordered universe offered by Enlightenment intellectuals, Goya uncovers an insoluble and fatal abyss between the intellect and human experience, leading him to acknowledge and explore facets of existence that remain outside of reason's domain. This associates him with Romanticism and its attraction to the mysterious, although Goya's absolute originality and authenticity, oscillating between satire, the grotesque, and monstrosity, prevents his being confined under any single label.

MARÍA TAUSIET;

TRANSLATED BY THOMAS SIZGORICH

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; ENLIGHTENMENT; MAGIC, POPULAR; ZUGARRAMURDI, WITCHES OF.

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GRAETER, JACOB (1547–1611)

Jacob Graeter delivered two sermons on witches and sorcerers during the summer of 1589, dedicated to the nobleman Hans Werner von Wolmershausen and his wife, and published that same year at Tübingen as *Hexen oder Unholden Predigten . . .* (Sermons on Witches or Monsters . . .). The first sermon was an interpretation of Luke 6, the second of Luke 1. Although Graeter believed that witches really existed and found them deserving of death according to Exodus 22:18, he also emphasized the delusions caused by the Devil and warned about false denunciations. Whoever lives virtuously, he argued, should not be afraid of witches, because God limits their power. With confessional polemical zeal, he underlined that no righteous Protestant woman could become a witch. Graeter wanted to remove the fear of the witches and give his audience a guide for a moral way of life. Thus he cannot be seen as an advocate of mass prosecutions of witches. His opinions accorded well with both the Württemberg providential tradition promoted by Johann Brenz and others and with the lenient position of the Schwäbisch Hall magistrates: only one witch execution is known at Schwäbisch Hall, in 1574.

Born in the imperial city of Schwäbisch Hall, where his father Jacob the Elder, a Lutheran pastor, had translated the influential sermon by Johann Brenz on hailstorms and witchcraft, Jacob the Younger studied at the university of Tübingen. In 1582, after occupying some other parishes, he also became a pastor at St. Michael in his native town. In 1588 Graeter was made preacher and dean, but had to leave Schwäbisch Hall in 1594. He died as pastor of Gernsbach, near Baden-Baden. Between 1582 and 1600, some of Graeter's other sermons were printed at Tübingen, Frankfurt am Main, and Strasbourg.

KLAUS GRAF

See also: BRENZ, JOHANN; EXODUS 22:18 (22:17); GERMANY.

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GRATIAN (FL. 1130–1150)

Gratian was designer and compiler of the *Concord of Discordant Canons*, which became the basic textbook for the study of canon law from the mid-twelfth century onward. Said to have been a monk, Gratian appears to have taught canon law at a school in Bologna. The aim of Gratian's work and his teaching was to reconcile different traditions and scattered and locally applicable earlier collections of canon law; to resolve apparent conflicts in earlier sources; and to create a coherent and consistent system of ecclesiastical law. His work, popularly known as the *Decretum*, was produced in two versions, one around 1130 and a revision in the 1140s, with later additions by other scholars. The *Decretum* discusses sorcery in several places, and from these discussions emerged the legal basis of understanding sorcery in canon law.

Part II of the *Decretum* contains Gratian's material on heresy and sorcery. Part II is divided into *Causae*, or *cases*, which may be actual or hypothetical. Each case raised several points of law, which Gratian posed as questions. Within each question and addressing one of the points of law, Gratian cited individual canons, authoritative texts that he culled from many earlier collections (in the entire *Decretum* he cites 3,945 individual canons, usually cited individually by their opening word or words), and he added his own comments before or after each canon. *Causae* 23–26 deals with issues of heresy and sorcery, the latter discussed in *Causa* 26. Gratian also discussed sorcery in *Causa* 33, part of his treatment of marriage law.

Causa 26 presents the case of a priest who was a magician and diviner, investigated by his bishop, refused to stop his activities, and was excommunicated by his bishop. Later, at the point of death, he was given last rites by another priest without his bishop having been consulted. Gratian raised seven questions about the case, five of which pertained to magic and divination. He drew on texts from St. Augustine, Isidore of Seville, and Regino of Prüm, sometimes from later citations of these, including the collection of Burchard of Worms. *Causa* 26, question 5, canon 12 is the *Canon Episcopi*, which condemns sorcery and divination, and also expresses profound skepticism that some women actually rode great distances at night with the goddess Diana. Later canonists who wished to prove the reality of the transvection of witches thus had to find ways around Gratian's explicit citation, and some of them eventually did so.

Gratian's *Causa* 26, question 1, canon 4 (*Nec Mirum* ["It is not to be wondered at . . ."]) was also a frequently cited text attributed to St. Augustine, but taken by Gratian from the ninth-century treatise against the magic arts by Hrabanus Maurus, which addressed condemnations of both classical and biblical instances of magic. This text, too, was later regularly cited by canon lawyers and theologians (including Martin Luther) writing against sorcery, divination, and witchcraft.

Gratian's third most important text, *Causa* 33, question 1, canon 4 (*Si per sortiarias* ["If, by means of magic . . ."]), deals with magically caused impotence and whether or not such impotence was an impediment to marriage. Gratian stated that, in such cases, the couple should confess their sins, be contrite, fast, and even undergo exorcisms, while giving alms to the poor. If these methods did not work, the couple may be separated, but they could not marry others. Such afflictions occurred with God's permission, through demons, and must be borne with patience. Because marriage law was developing in its technicality during this period, this text probably drew more attention in schools of canon law than the texts from *Causa* 26 discussed above. Not until the early fifteenth century, when the classical image of the witch was being formulated by theologians, inquisitors, and canon lawyers, did Gratian's citation of the *Canon Episcopi* find opposition, and arguments were devised, most notably by Nicolas Jacquier, to prove that it did not address the contemporary new heresy of witchcraft as it was perceived in the fifteenth century.

EDWARD PETERS

See also: BURCHARD OF WORMS; *CANON EPISCOPI*; *ERRORES GAZARORUM*; JACQUIER, NICOLAS; JOHN OF SALISBURY; LUTHER, MARTIN; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*.

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GRAUBÜNDEN (GRISONS), CANTON OF

Graubünden was a confessionally and linguistically mixed region (today Switzerland's southeasternmost canton) that experienced numerous witchcraft trials.

There were perhaps 500 casualties in both Catholic and Reformed regions, and throughout its German-, Rhaeto-Romanic-, and Italian-speaking parts of what was then the autonomous Gray Leagues, or Grisons.

In the early modern Grisons, jurisdiction remained in the hands of local communities. They mostly followed the Carolina (*Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*), the 1532 code of criminal procedure for the Holy Roman Empire. In 1657, they supplemented it with a special *Kriminalverordnung*, or criminal ordinance, on witchcraft matters. In 1716, regional authorities issued another criminal ordinance, naming witchcraft and sorcery as major crimes. In the Grisons, most executions were carried out by beheading, followed by burning the corpse, while numerous trials ended with expulsions. Many people evaded arrest by fleeing.

Some witchcraft trials with fatal outcomes were already documented here in the fifteenth century (1434, at Thusis and at Lostallo; 1448, at Safien). In the Valtelline (Veltlin) valley, a subjugated area, some severe witch hunts took place at the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century. Afterward, only single trials are known in the Grisons until the end of the sixteenth century. In the wake of the reforming activities of Milan's archbishop and cardinal, St. Carlo Borromeo, a systematic pursuit of witches finally started here, first in the Italian-speaking valleys of Misox and Calanca. The importance of Borromeo's activities remains controversial. Presumably, his persecutions of Protestants paved the way for the witch hunts that were carried out by local courts at the request of large parts of the population.

Graubünden's witch hunts seem to have spread across the Alps from the south toward the end of the sixteenth century. In 1590, a large witchcraft trial in Disentis cost 14 women their lives. In the Rheinwald, four executions are mentioned in 1598; three years later, two women were tried for witchcraft; and in 1604 a man from the Austrian valley of Montafon was burned as a sorcerer in Maienfeld. Witchcraft trials are also known to have taken place at Chur (the regional capital and seat of the local bishop) shortly before the end of the century. Witchcraft trials reached a new peak in 1613, when about 30 people were burned in Misox and Calanca. During the Thirty Years' War, which greatly affected the Grisons, only Poschiavo seemed to have experienced extensive witch hunts; 53 people stood trial for witchcraft there between 1630 and 1633.

Shortly after 1650, in almost every part of the Grisons, severe witch hunts occurred. The northeast was particularly affected at that time. Within a decade, the persecutions had claimed more than 100 deaths; in 1655 alone, 58 persons were supposedly burned in the valley of Prättigau, a phenomenon made locally famous as *die gross Häxatöodi* or "the great witch killing." In Vals, 23 people were executed in 1652. Two years later,

15 children from this valley, also accused of sorcery, were handed over to the Milanese inquisition, which lodged them in the homes of "honest people" to give them proper religious educations—and save them from possible execution.

Poschiavo was struck by another exceptionally severe persecution from 1672 to 1676, when no fewer than 124 people stood trial. Also in Disentis, a large number of people were prosecuted for malevolent sorcery, leading to the execution of at least 31 of them. Around 1700, still another accumulation of witchcraft trials took place in several parts of the Grisons. The last extensive series probably occurred at Klosters (Prättigau); it claimed at least ten lives. Until 1779, several other sorcery and witchcraft trials were held, but now only one or a few people were arrested, and these trials had milder outcomes.

The sex distribution of victims in the Grisons was close to the general European average: about 80 percent of those executed as witches were women. Because most victims of the witchcraft trials were also poor as well as female, the legal prosecutions usually caused serious financial losses for local communities. While most confessions in court corresponded to the fully elaborated witch doctrine, the accusations continued traditional patterns, with magic that harmed people or cattle predominating.

MANFRED TSCHAIKNER

See also: ANHORN, BARTHOLOMÄUS; BORROMEIO, ST. CARLO; SWITZERLAND.

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GREEK MAGICAL PAPYRI

The generic name given to a substantial body of magical recipe books, cursing, and amuletic texts produced in Greco-Roman Egypt. Most were made between the second and fifth centuries C.E., although the oldest text, the "curse of Artemisia" (*PGM* XL), dates from the fourth century B.C.E. and is among the oldest extant Greek papyri. The series of lengthy and often repetitive recipe books or "grimoires" or "formularies" that constitutes their basic and greater part offers a matchless resource for the study of magic in antiquity.

The bulk of these formularies derived from a single ancient collection, the so-called "Theban Magical Library" (that is, *PGM* IV, V, Va, XII–XIV, and probably I–III, VII, LXI; alchemical texts were also present). Discovered in a third- or fourth-century tomb in western Thebes, they were bought in 1828 by the colorful antiquities dealer Giovanni Anastasi, who broke them up and sold them to the great museums of Europe,

where they still reside. These books were among the few to survive the attempts of early Christians to burn them into oblivion (cf., for example, Acts 19:19). The curse-papyri bear strong affinities with the lead *defixiones* (curse tablets), and the amulet-papyri resemble the metal and gemstone amulets that flourished across the Greco-Roman world.

The religious background of the papyri was syncretistic, but their dominant inputs were Greek, Egyptian, and Jewish, these elements being unified in a remarkably homogenous and distinctive blend. The papyri therefore expressed the cultural mix peculiar to the city of Alexandria in the Hellenistic period (Egypt belonged to Rome after 30 B.C.E.; the dearth of Latin material in the papyri is striking). Some of their Greek formularies contained portions written in Demotic or Coptic, and some purely Demotic and Coptic papyri had similar contents.

The oldest substantial surviving formularies date from the first century B.C.E. (*PGM* CXVII and CXXII). They were more literary than later documents, but relatively brief. They showed no trace of the elaborate magical rituals and lengthy series of obscure “abracadabra”-style *voces magicae* (magic words), vowel-series, word-triangles and -squares, palindromes and “characters” that were to become the hallmarks of the genre. But these features flourished by the time of the largest extant formulary, the *Great Magical Papyrus in Paris* (*PGM* IV), which is thought to be a fourth-century C.E. copy of a second-century original.

This document can be used to illustrate the structure, texture, and sorts of content typical of mature formularies. Its 3,274 lines comprised a wide variety of recipes in a largely random order. They offered protection against death and demons and the expulsion of the latter; the attraction of lovers; the inspiration of friendship and favor, and the restraint of anger; divination by trance alone, by bowl, by lamp, or from a corpse or skull, and the inducing of dreams; and they described how to manufacture multipurpose charms based on Homeric verses and the Bear constellation. The formulary also contained a number of ancillary or meta-magical recipes for such things as prayers, hymns, consecrations, initiations, and techniques for picking plants. A brief astrological text was also included.

We can be sure that practical use was made of such formularies. This book’s elaborate erotic-attraction recipe at 296–434 corresponded closely (but not perfectly) with a remarkable third- or fourth-century trove of magical materials, perhaps from Antinopolis, now in the Louvre. This consists of a voodoo doll representing the woman Ptolemais, pierced with thirteen pins, and a curse-text inscribed on a thin lead sheet invoking the ghost of one Antinous, possibly the local hero.

DANIEL OGDEN

See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; *DEFIXIONES*.

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GREGORY IX, POPE (1170–1241; POPE, 1227–1241)

This pope did much to diabolize heretics if not witches, and laid much of the groundwork for what later became an institutionalized papal Inquisition. Hugh, count of Segni, was born about 1170 in Anagni, and probably studied canon law in Paris. His relative, Pope Innocent III, made him a chaplain at the Roman curia in 1198 and, eight years later, cardinal-bishop of Ostia. As a papal legate and preacher, he carried out missions in many regions of Italy and Germany. After the death of Honorius III, whose most important counsellor he had been, the cardinals elected him pope in 1227.

The main problem of his pontificate was his hostile relationship with Emperor Frederick II, revolving around the question of which of them should dominate the Christian world, and especially Italy. Their struggle remained unresolved when the pope died in August 1241. Within the Church, Gregory favored especially the new mendicant orders of the Dominicans and Franciscans, canonizing their founders and encouraging their missionary work. He also supported crusades to Palestine and in the Baltic—and with more success against the Stedinger, a community of free peasants who had been declared heretics by the bishop of Bremen, who wanted to force them under his obedience. In the bull *Vox in Rama* (*A Voice in Rama*), published on this matter in 1233, the pope described the abominable practices of these rustic devil worshippers, including kissing the anus of a black tomcat, initiation orgies involving sexual promiscuity and incest, and desecration of the Eucharist—stereotypes that would be quoted again and again as typical behavior for both heretics and witches.

In 1231, Gregory began a search for heretics in his own dioceses, in Rome; several persons were burned at the stake. By sending copies of the relevant instructions to all archbishops and princes in Europe, he invited them to undertake a similar task. Ordering the

Dominican friars to enter into the office of papal inquisitors, he of course came into conflict with the bishops whose rights of jurisdiction were thereby infringed. After inviting the Dominican prior of Paris to create inquisitors for all parts of France in 1233, he soon had to revoke his instructions because of strong opposition from French bishops. In Languedoc, however, he succeeded in establishing a permanent tribunal of Dominican inquisitors whose task it was to eradicate whatever remnants of Catharism still existed after the Albigensian crusades. As a legislator, Gregory commissioned the Spanish Dominican Raymond of Peñafort to collect a volume of decretals in 1230 to strengthen his authority: it was entitled *Liber Extra* (The Book That Goes Beyond), and the pope sent it to the University of Bologna for use in teaching. Its chapter X 5, 7, entitled *De Hereticis* (Concerning Heretics), contained the juridical basis for the persecution of heretics, a text that would remain part of canon law until 1917. With such measures, Gregory established precedents for what later became an institutionalized inquisition, although he himself only commissioned temporary investigators for locally acute problems.

The most famous of Gregory's appointed inquisitors were Conrad of Marburg and Robert le Bougre. The first, a secular priest and confessor of Saint Elizabeth of Thuringia, had hundreds of alleged heretics burned in Germany, until he made the mistake of taking action against members of the high nobility, who had him killed in 1233. Gregory was deeply upset when he learned about Conrad's "martyrdom," though he did not approve of his irregular and arbitrary way of proceeding. Meanwhile, Robert, himself a former Cathar, proceeded in a no less fanatical manner against deviant Christians in northern France. He enjoyed the special protection of a future saint, King Louis IX, but people thought he possessed a magic charm that forced everyone to confess whatever he wanted. About 1241, he was finally deposed, though we do not know the details.

PETER DINZELBACHER

See also: CONRAD OF MARBURG; DOMINICAN ORDER; HERESY; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; PAPACY AND PAPAL BULLS.

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GREGORY OF VALENCIA (1549–1603)

A prominent Catholic theologian, Gregory of Valencia supported the persecution of witchcraft. Born at Medina del Campo (Spain), he joined the Jesuit order in 1565 and received an excellent education at the University of Salamanca. Early in the 1570s, Gregory was sent to Germany, where the Jesuit generals concentrated their troops in order to maintain bridgeheads of Catholicism and to roll back the Protestant advance. Gregory is considered to have been the most eminent post-Tridentine theologian in Germany. He served at the Jesuit University of Dillingen in the prince-bishopric of Augsburg from 1573 to 1575, and subsequently at the University of Ingolstadt in Bavaria from 1575 to 1597, where he dominated the theological faculty and educated a new generation of theologians. There he rose to become a figure of European importance and was called to Rome, where he defended the Jesuit Luis de Molina before Pope Clement VIII. Gregory also played an important role in Catholic debates about grace and capital interest rates. His prime importance lay in his attempt to reshape Thomistic theology with his four volumes of dogmatic *Commentarii theologici* (Theological Commentaries, Ingolstadt, 1591–1597).

In this standard work, Gregory of Valencia recommended the zealous persecution of witches, based on the theory of witchcraft as an extraordinary crime (*crimen exceptum*) requiring extraordinary measures. His main authorities (instead of St. Augustine or St. Thomas Aquinas) were the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches) of Heinrich Kramer, and Peter Binsfeld's recent treatise on witchcraft, *Tractus de confessionibus maleficorum et sagarum* (Treatise on Confessions by Evildoers and Witches, Munich, 1589). In contrast to these authors—the first a maverick inquisitor, and the other an obscure suffragan bishop—Gregory of Valencia was an authority of European reputation, the first post-Tridentine Catholic theologian to write powerfully on witch hunting.

Historians have agreed that the years around 1590 marked a watershed in Catholic attitudes toward witchcraft. Gregory may well have served as a beacon in this redirection. And the Spanish Jesuit knew exactly what he was talking about, because in the years 1589–1591 he regularly attended the torture chambers of Ingolstadt during the first wave of persecutions in Bavaria, in order to instruct young prince Maximilian, the future ruler of Bavaria, whose tutor he then was.

The correspondence between Maximilian and his father, Duke Wilhelm V of Bavaria, revealed the nature of these lessons, where Christian mercy and compassion played no role at all, and local women served as examples for demonstrating demonological theory.

Because of his great number of successful students, Gregory earned the nickname *doctor doctorum* (teacher of teachers). Unsurprisingly, he produced a good number of future hard-liners, like Jacob Gretser SJ, but also a few dissidents like Adam Tanner SJ. Gregory died at Naples, the capital of Spanish southern Italy.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; BINSFELD, PETER; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; GRETSER, JACOB, SJ; INGOLSTADT, UNIVERSITY OF; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MAXIMILIAN I, DUKE OF BAVARIA; TANNER, ADAM; WILHELM V “THE PIOUS,” DUKE OF BAVARIA.

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GRETSER, JACOB, SJ (1562–1625)

Born at Markdorf in Baden, Gretser became a leading protagonist of the second generation of Jesuits in Germany and a leader of the witch-hunting faction in Bavaria. Influenced by Peter Canisius at Fribourg (Freiburg) in Switzerland in 1585, Gretser settled at the University of Ingolstadt for the rest of his life. The Bavarian dukes surrendered its theology faculty to the Jesuits, and, after the departure of the Spaniard Gregory of Valencia, who became his second teacher, Gretser rose to central importance in the late 1590s as a prolific teacher in moral theology and an experienced and successful author, with a total of 234 publications.

Like Gregory, Gretser strongly supported witch hunts, at first on the basis of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) and Peter Binsfeld, later on the basis of Nicolas Rémy and especially his fellow Jesuit Martín Del Rio, who had made demonology resemble a modern science by 1600. When opponents of witch hunting in the Bavarian government stopped an outrageous witchcraft trial in 1601, the pro-persecution faction used Gretser as its authority. For a time, there seemed to be a “Jesuit party” in Bavarian court politics, and, because the Jesuits dominated the university, Gretser’s faction seemed invincible. When the moderate “politicians”—as they were labeled by Gretser—of the Bavarian Privy Council managed to obtain a skeptical legal opinion from the law faculty, Gretser served as a secret agent, denouncing the culprits and their alleged motives, asserting that they had simultaneously served as lawyers for accused witches (in the same case, where their employer, the prince, had com-

missioned an opinion) and were therefore guilty of treason. Gretser, sometimes labeled as an “irenical” author by Catholic Church historians, was indeed willing to send his academic colleague, the leading legal expert, Dr. Caspar Hell, to the stake.

When Bavaria’s “politicians” managed to stop the treason trial against Dr. Hell, Gretser urged Duke Maximilian I to commission opinions from Lorraine’s Prosecutor-General Rémy (Maximilian was married to a Lorraine princess) and Del Rio, from the law faculties at Freiburg/Breisgau, Padua, and Bologna, and from the governments of electoral Trier and electoral Mainz, where large-scale witch hunts had taken place in recent years. Unsurprisingly, Del Rio supported Gretser’s opinion. However, the Bavarian privy councilors and their secretary managed to split the “Jesuit party” by commissioning a theological opinion in 1602, from Adam Tanner, whose interpretation was diametrically opposed to those of his fellow Jesuits Del Rio and Gretser. Although Gretser continued to back the hard-liners, his influence was thus curbed and the disgruntled zealots lost this struggle.

Repeatedly, Gretser indicated that his mind remained unaltered. For example, in the foreword to his book on Christian holidays (*De festis Christianorum*, Ingolstadt, 1612), he congratulated the prince-bishop of Eichstätt on his excellent witch hunts. But Gretser never regained his central position of the years around 1600, when it seemed possible to purge Bavarian society by burning everyone who aroused suspicion. Believing that God would not permit the burning of innocent persons, Gretser was an extremely dangerous “arsonist,” because he asserted that everybody who was burned was indeed guilty. Like Binsfeld and Del Rio, he epitomized the kind of zealot against which his fellow Jesuits Tanner and Friedrich Spee fought.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; BINSFELD, PETER; CANISIUS, ST. PETER; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; EICHSTÄTT, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; GREGORY OF VALENCIA; INGOLSTADT, UNIVERSITY OF; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MAXIMILIAN I, DUKE OF BAVARIA; RÉMY, NICOLAS; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; TANNER, ADAM.

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GRILLANDO (GRILLANDUS), PAOLO (PAULUS) (1ST HALF 16TH CENTURY)

Born in the Tuscan village Castelfio rentino, Paolo Grillando became a famous demonologist with his *Tractatus de hereticis et sortilegiis eorumque poenis* (Treatise on Heretics and Sorcerers and Their Punishments) in five books, written around 1524. Grillando’s detailed and

suggestive description of the witches' Sabbat unquestionably contributed to establishing the credibility of witchcraft in Renaissance Italy. His work enjoyed considerable authority. After several re-editions (Lyons, 1536, 1545, and 1547; Rome 1581), his tract was coedited with Giovanni Francesco (Gianfrancesco) Ponzinibio's *De lamiis* (Concerning Witches, Frankfurt/Main, 1592). Later it was integrated into miscellanies on criminal justice, and after 1615 alongside the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches) in miscellanies on demonology. Grillando was cited in subsequent demonological works by Martín Del Rio and Francesco-Maria Guazzo, and by the exorcism expert Girolamo Menghi; he was even plagiarized in 1554 by the Flemish jurist Joost de Damhouder in his *Praxis rerum Criminalium* (Practice on Criminal Cases, 1554).

Grillando was a doctor of both canon and civil law who served as judge in witchcraft cases in the vicinity of Rome; later, he heard criminal cases in Arezzo for the papal vicar Andrea di Giacomo. The first edition of his treatise was dedicated to Felice Troffini, archbishop of Chieti (1524–1527), and Bishop Gregorio Gori of Fano (1518–1524). This dedication not only enables us to date Grillando's tract, but, more importantly, it contained the author's motivation for writing it: the constant growth of this pernicious sect and the fact that many clerics were its leaders or members. Grillando referred to few other works on witchcraft: he never mentioned the *Malleus*, but relied on what he had himself seen or heard as a judge. In his treatise, Grillando gave a detailed enumeration of the different sorts of sorcery. He explained the difference between tacit and express professions (or pacts) and described astrology, chiromancy, divination, and especially amatory sorcery. He discussed the materials used in sorcery (teeth, hair, nails, fragments of the clothes of a person to be bewitched; bits of corpses—especially from hanged criminals). He dwelled on the Devil's power and knowledge, and on why God permits many evils that he could easily prevent. Grillando also explained why no witch could escape from prison. A cardinal point, on which proper punishments depended, is whether sorcery is or is not a savor of heresy.

The treatise's most interesting part treated the question of transvection, whether witches were transported corporeally to the Sabbat or whether it was merely a diabolical illusion. Grillando formerly adhered to the first opinion, found in the *Canon Episcopi*. But after long experience, after various examples of witches' operations, some of which he had seen and others he received from trustworthy persons, Grillando became convinced that witches were transported bodily. Grillando gave several reasons and examples for his view, including evidence from several witchcraft cases in the vicinity of Rome. Some of them—like a September 1524 case in Castro Nazareno—he heard

himself as a judge. They all contained detailed information about the Sabbat. Recurrent topics included the reverence paid to Satan, that all dances were done backward; that after the feast the lamps were extinguished and the demons, as incubi or succubi, fornicated with the women and men present (with extreme voluptuousness). The demons had to carry the witches back before the church bells sounded the *Ave Maria*; if they heard it on the way, they dropped their burdens instantly, no matter where they were. One of the "witches" stated that, after attending a Sabbat, she was so exhausted that she suffered for three or four days. All these confessions, Grillando insisted, were made by women who were not tortured. The author saw and handled the unguents with which they harmed men and beasts, and ordered all of them burned with the witches.

DRIES VANYSACKER

See also: DEMONOLOGY; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; ITALY; SABBAT.

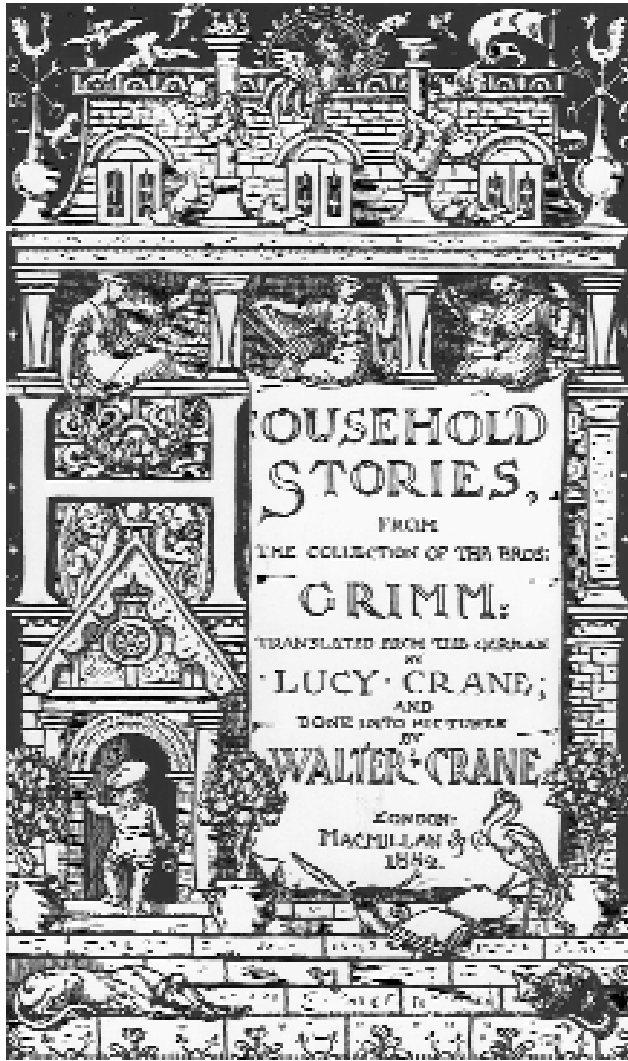
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GRIMM, JACOB (1785–1863)

After the execution of witches had already ceased, a completely new, post-Enlightenment interpretation developed, inspired by Romanticism. In 1835, Jacob Grimm, the founder of international language studies and academic romanticism, whose influence can still be felt in collections of fairy tales all over Europe, redefined witches as "wise women," who conserved the traditional age-old wisdom of their peoples, the "Germanic tradition" in particular. Grimm thereby turned people whom enlightened criticism perceived as innocent victims into mysterious bearers of ancient wisdom, unjustly persecuted by a Christian Church seeking to destroy European national cultures. The wise woman emerged from Grimm's head like Athena from Zeus, and Grimm created the "Romantic paradigm" in the interpretation of historical witchcraft. Furthermore, he could almost be seen as founding a new religion, because Grimm's reinterpretation of witchcraft became the starting point for the more recent religion of the neopagan "New Witches," as well as feminist fairy worlds like those constructed by such authors as Marion Zimmer Bradley.

Grimm's interpretation reveals signs of its nineteenth-century political agenda. Between the beginning of the French Revolution (1789) and the Congress of Vienna (1815), most old states had crumbled under the



The cover of *Household Stories*, a collection of fairy tales by the Brothers Grimm. Jacob Grimm had great influence on the history of witchcraft through his compilation of fairy tales and folklore. (Historical Picture Archive/Corbis)

impact of the Napoleonic Wars, particularly the Holy Roman Empire in 1806. New nation-states were constructed, and the past was reinterpreted, preferably by nativists exalting the supposed values of the local populations, now redefined as ethnic groups (*Volk*) with a glorious past. Grimm studied at Marburg in 1802 under the famous legal historian Karl Friedrich von Savigny, and participated in Romantic literary circles at Heidelberg. Ironically, Grimm started his career as librarian for Napoleon's brother Jerome, king of Westphalia after 1808.

By then, he and his brother Wilhelm Grimm had already collected their famous fairy tales. Their ideas about the origins of fairy tales and other folk narratives began serious European folklore studies. Meanwhile, Jacob Grimm also conducted language studies, leading

to the publication of a "German Grammar" (1819) and a monumental German dictionary, but eventually produced more general studies about the development of languages. Jacob became a founding father of modern language studies generally and of Germanic studies (*Germanistik*) in particular. His research in libraries and archives unearthed important early examples of Old German, Anglo-Saxon English, and Old Nordic languages.

When Jacob Grimm published his *Deutsche Mythologie* (Teutonic Mythology) in 1835, he had become university librarian and professor at the university of Göttingen. As a liberal-minded scholar, he publicly opposed an attempt by the king of Hanover to abolish the liberal constitution. Together with five other scholars, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm were therefore fired in 1837, Jacob also being exiled. The *Göttinger Sieben* (Göttingen seven) became celebrated as martyrs of the liberal cause, and their subsequent publications contributed decisively to the development of German liberalism. Soon afterward, the Grimm brothers were named to the Prussian Academy of Sciences at Berlin, and Jacob (like three others of the Göttingen seven) was elected to the German parliament at Frankfurt during the 1848 Revolution.

Grimm designed his *Deutsche Mythologie* in a period well before politicians succeeded in assembling the tiny principalities of central Europe into a German nation. His "nationalist" publications received overwhelming applause from the educated. But after his death, hundreds of well-paid folklorists collected shaky ancient evidence of Germanic glory. Another liberal language scholar, Moriz Haupt (1808–1874), ridiculed the activities of the *Altertumsvereine* (Antiquarian Society), suggesting that every stinking billy goat or red rooster risked being interpreted as a Germanic god.

Meanwhile, other nations developed their own obsessions. Jules Michelet, an equally fervent nationalist, not only constructed an interpretation of the French nation based on the French Revolution, but also transformed Grimm's notion of wise women into female "doctors of the people," fighters against feudal oppression who were ruthlessly crushed by a conspiracy of feudal princes, lawyers, theologians, and academic physicians. Witches, therefore, became suppressed forerunners of the French Revolution, or the French nation. In Michelet's eyes, witches should also be remembered as a source of power in an eternal fight for freedom.

The examples of Grimm and Michelet illustrate the liberal political agenda of the nineteenth century. Their "poetic visions" were ridiculed or simply ignored by academic historians in the Rankean tradition, who wished to replace imagination with evidence. A "Soldan Paradigm" or "Rationalist Paradigm" replaced the

Romantic approach (Monter 1972). But clearly, Grimm remains one of the most influential authors in the history of witchcraft.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST 1800); ENLIGHTENMENT; FOLKLORE; HISTORIOGRAPHY; MICHELET, JULES; SOLDAN, WILHELM GOTTLIEB.

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GRIMOIRES

The term *grimoire*, derived from the French word *grammaire*, refers to a magician's written or printed manual, his "black book" for invoking demons. It was later extended to include all books dealing with any subdiscipline of magic and divination. Grimoires have usually been fictitiously ascribed to famous personalities of outstanding knowledge—for example, Moses, Solomon, even popes—whose "secret" wisdom they purportedly contain. Rumors and legends about magicians especially emphasized their books of magic. Grimoires provide practical information—how to draw a magic circle, what robes to wear, spells to utter, prayers to offer, tools to use, and so forth.

EARLY SOURCES

Hermes, a god associated with magic since late antiquity, was worshipped as *Trismegistus* or "three times greatest." Medieval Arabic secret literature viewed him as an alchemist and as the ultimate source of wisdom. Roger Bacon called him the father of philosophy. His name became synonymous with secrecy and several "hermetic" writings are ascribed to him. The *Lunar*, quoted by Albert the Great and William of Auvergne, dealt with the magical power of names. Another, *Thot*, provided love and death spells, listed magical herbs, and



Page from a sixteenth-century grimoire, a magician's manual containing practical knowledge of how to invoke demons or perform other types of magic or divination. (Fortean Picture Library)

explained the appropriate rituals and requirements of a magician.

Famous (still in print) is the *6 and 7 Book of Moses*, bogus additions to the five Mosaic books of the Hebrew Bible. This *grimoire*, of uncertain origin but relatively modern, is particularly well-known in Germany, but is also widely read by North Americans of African descent.

The legendary King Solomon was not simply a synonym for wisdom, but he was also rumored to be a master of magic: the power of his ring commanded all spirits and demons. A famous Persian poet, Firdausi, wrote Solomon's history in verse (the *Book of Kings*); afterward, Arab, Turkish, Persian, and Talmudic writers enhanced the story. Solomon became a legendary figure, not only the richest and wisest king on earth, but also a man who commanded celestial, terrestrial, and infernal spirits.

A book of incantation for summoning demons was already in circulation under the name of Solomon in the early Roman Empire. The historian Havius Josephus stated that this book was used by a Jew named Eleazar, who, in front of Emperor Vespasian, delivered those possessed of devils by applying a ring (containing the figure of a root designed by Solomon) to their noses. Formulas were added to the book, later called *Clavicula Solomonis* (The Key of Solomon). Various authors mentioned this book of sorcery. The

eleventh-century Byzantine writer Michael Psellus referred to a treatise on stones and demons. By the thirteenth century, it had reached the Latin world. A new version, called *The Sworn Book of Honorius*, or *Juratus*, published in 1629, was ascribed to the twelfth-century Pope Honorius III, who was suspected of practicing sorcery, as were Leo II, John XXII, and especially Sylvester II, the legendary Gerbert of Aurillac (999–1003). Printed versions reputedly had less value than a manuscript written by a sorcerer's own hands and the Bibliothèque de l' Arsenal in Paris contains a considerable number of these manuscripts. Later, the *Small (or Lesser) Key of Solomon* or *Lemegeton* became a tutorial for inflicting illness or death and conjuring the dead.

Aristotle was one of the most important and influential personalities in medieval philosophy, but his name also appeared as the author of magical books. At the end of the twelfth century, Alexander Neckham mentioned that Aristotle had carefully buried his magical books with him and shielded them by a curse. The most famous *grimoire* ascribed to him was the *Secretum secretorum* (The Secret of Secrets), well known for centuries. Two hundred surviving manuscripts could still be counted in 1900. Translated into almost every major world language, the book was a compilation from many sources, whose present form dates from the seventh or eighth century. One of the translators (supposedly Patriarch Guido of Antioch) explained in the preface how Alexander the Great demanded that Aristotle reveal to him the secret courses and influences of the planets, alchemy, geomancy, and the art of conjuration, all in one manuscript. The work explained the magical effects of precious stones, herbs, and amulets, and offered remedies.

A *Book of Secrets* ascribed to Albert the Great circulated since the later Middle Ages, supplemented by writings from a pseudonymous "Albert the Small." Many clerics and inquisitors mentioned black books; a few even made lists of them, like Johannes Hartlieb's *Book of All Forbidden Arts* (*puoch aller verpoten kunst*).

Little is known about the historical Doctor Faustus described by Christopher Marlowe and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, but legends quickly appeared in the sixteenth century. A certain Christoph Kaylinger allegedly taught him the art of crystal gazing. Eventually, he made a pact with the Devil and gained the help of a spirit, Mephistopheles. In his latter years, he reportedly practiced alchemy; according to Philip Melancthon, the Devil destroyed Faustus about 1540 at a rural inn in Württemberg.

Although later times or enlightened contemporaries considered Faustus's magical feats to be petty and fraudulent, Martin Luther and Philip Melancthon obviously took him seriously. His notoriety made him

a symbol of the "wrong" religious, scientific, and philosophical thought of his day, as he appeared in the first so-called "Faust-book," the anonymous *Historia von D. Johann Fausten* (History of Dr. Johann Faust, 1587). However, this obscure personality, Faust, became the archetypal German magician of the age. His posthumous reputation as a magician swelled in German and English literature shortly after his death; a number of *grimoires* were soon attributed to him, featuring his alleged familiar Mephistopheles. The treatise *Doctor Johannis Fausti magiae naturalis et innaturalis*, later famous as *Doctor Faustus's Coercion of Hell*, told the apprentice and reader how to summon and bind all spirits and force them to bring everything demanded.

THE WITCH'S GRIMOIRE

Up to this point, only men have been associated with *grimoires*. When the Jesuit Martín Del Rio published his *Disquisitionum Magicarum Libri sex* (Six Books on Investigations into Magic, 1599/1600), he saw the wise women of his own time, whom he called sibyllae (purposely connecting prophetesses with witchcraft), in relation to the manteses, who allegedly wrote a little book that they intended to present to the "Wise Women," to make them guardians of necromantic magic. These women were to consecrate these books so that the demon invoked would appear in the shape of a handsome young man and obey them; they were to sign the books with a powerful magical formula to protect readers from arrest and judgment. As reward, the magicians promised they would take these wise women as their ladies and rulers forever. Obviously, for Del Rio, presenting books of magic to apprentice witches was part of the ritual of the pact with the Devil. In section 17, Del Rio emphasized that books of magic must not be left to an heir to read, but must be burned. Access is reserved to the pope, who may permit certain others to read them, namely inquisitors and censors. Anyone else who kept such books was to be excluded from absolution, a major punishment.

Most sources tell us that one became a witch either hereditarily or voluntarily; only a few mention books to instruct the sorcerer's apprentice. Moreover, it required a certain talent. Learning and studying books was not emphasized, though the notion of a witch conjuring with the help of black books found its way into illustrations.

CHRISTA TUCZAY

See also: AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM, HEINRICH CORNELIUS; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; FAUST, JOHANN; HERMETICISM; MAGIC CIRCLE; MOSES.

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GUAZZO, FRANCESCO MARIA

Guazzo was famous for his witchcraft treatise, *Compendium Maleficarum* (A Summary of Witches, 1608), which he wrote in 1605 at the request of Cardinal-Archbishop Charles Borromeo of Milan. It was published in 1608 and ran to an amplified second edition in 1626. Guazzo (who flourished in the early seventeenth century) was a Barnabite friar. His small order specialized in exorcisms. He had served as a consultant on witchcraft trials at the capital of his order, Milan, where witches were burned in 1599 and 1603. The Barnabites were keen to reform the corrupt morals of their time by personal example and missions to the people—hence one stimulus for Guazzo’s writing the *Compendium*. Another was his visit to the German state of Cleves-Jülich at the request of its chronically bewitched Duke Johann Wilhelm (Midelfort 1994, 98–124), who suffered personally from magical attacks and whose territory suffered from werewolves.

The *Compendium* is divided into three books. Book 1 begins with a chapter on imagination, which, as many other writers on magic and witchcraft agree, can have a powerful effect on both mind and body. Thereafter we are given a survey of what witches allege they can do, their pact with Satan, the reality or unreality of such phenomena as transvection to the Sabbat, incubi and succubi, and shape changing. All these Guazzo regarded as both possible and probable. He ended book 1 with a discussion on the reality of ghosts, a contentious subject that provided both Catholic and Protestant writers with a theme for theological dispute. Guazzo took the line that ghosts may indeed appear, but only on irregular occasions and by God’s special dispensation. This raised a point about whether evil spirits could be summoned by human beings and constrained to obey their orders, and Guazzo came to the standard conclusion that evil spirits only appear to cooperate in order to entrap their victims.

Book 2 details different kinds of harmful magic witches practice. These included administering poisonous or soporific drinks, or overpowering the objects of their malice with smoke induced by setting fire to dead people’s hands or feet. Witches also used parts of corpses for a variety of magical purposes and as food in their cannibal feasts. They induced impotence in men, set houses and towns on fire, and caused diseases

of various kinds. This they did to gratify their own spiteful natures, and were permitted to do so by God as a tribute to his glory when people maintained their faith regardless, as a demonstration of his power over both evil spirits and humans, and as a punishment for people’s sins. But when people fell into Satan’s clutches, deceived by his powers of illusion, or foolish enough to practice superstitious rites, they tended to stay there.

Book 3 points out that one may not lawfully use magic to undo the effects of maleficent magic, and discusses how one may distinguish between someone who was possessed by an evil spirit and someone who had merely been bewitched. Guazzo gave many physical symptoms by which one may judge both. This appeal to medicine rather than theology was very common among writers on magic during this period, as was Guazzo’s opinion that the werewolves that so troubled the duchy of Cleves were simply illusions of the Devil. However, few authorities agreed with Guazzo’s assertion that Martin Luther was the offspring of a nun and the Devil. His treatise ended with edifying stories to illustrate the efficacy of Catholic sacraments in combating Satan.

The *Compendium* was learned, but not in the least original. It leaned heavily on two of Guazzo’s predecessors and contemporaries, Martín Del Rio and Nicolas Rémy, and it repeated many of their anecdotes. Indeed, the construction of the treatise cut discussion to the bone while anecdotal illustrations formed the major part of the text. The *Compendium* thus provided more entertainment than scholarly disquisition. This impression is increased by the inclusion of an unusually large number of woodcuts frequently reproduced in modern books about witchcraft. In book 1, these concentrated heavily on the figure of Satan—depicted as a winged male with horns and cloven toes—superintending the idolatrous actions of witches, who were rather oddly depicted as fashionably dressed men and women. In book 2, the pictures illustrated witches’ acts of malevolence. Several were repeated, either within book 2, or from book 1. Those in book 3, however, were quite different. They clearly came from a different source, and showed episodes from the life of Jesus, who appeared as the major figure.

Guazzo thus cannot be considered a major writer on the subject of witchcraft. He is sometimes cited because his work has been translated into English by the notorious Montague Summers (Guazzo 1929), and his illustrations have often been reproduced, but shorn from the context that gave them meaning.

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BORROMEO, ST. CARLO; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DEMONOLOGY; DEMONS; GHOSTS; RÉMY, NICOLAS; SUMMERS, MONTAGUE.

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GUI, BERNARD (CA. 1261–1331)

Perhaps the most famous of all medieval inquisitors, and certainly one of the most important and influential, Bernard Gui is best known for his monumental inquisitor's handbook, *Practica inquisitionis heretice pravitatis* (The Practice of the Inquisition of Heretical Depravity), written around 1324. Although he never described anything like the full stereotype of witchcraft as it would appear in later centuries, he did include in this work several sections dealing with learned demonic magic, or necromancy, as well as more evidently popular forms of sorcery. The *Practica inquisitionis* became one of the most widely read of all medieval inquisitorial manuals, second only to the later *Directorium inquisitorum* (Directory of Inquisitors) of the Catalan inquisitor Nicolas Eymeric. Gui's descriptions of sorcery thus seem very important, particularly in terms of shaping later clerical, and especially inquisitorial, thought on this subject.

Born in southern France around 1261, Gui entered the Dominican order and studied theology both at Montpellier and Paris. In 1307, he was appointed inquisitor of Toulouse, and served in this office until 1323 or 1324. From 1324 until his death in 1331, he was bishop of Lodève. Throughout his life, Gui was active in the administration of the Dominican order as a theologian, and also as a historian. Yet it was as an inquisitor that he achieved his greatest influence, mainly through his *Practica inquisitionis*. Intended as a practical handbook to guide inquisitors in the conduct of their office, this work covered all major forms of heresy existent, or thought to be existent, in Gui's time, outlining heretical beliefs and practices, offering guidelines to be used in questioning, and proposing formulas for the conviction and sentencing of heretics. Within this large work, only a few brief sections were actually devoted to sorcery, divination, and demonic invocation.

During his tenure as inquisitor of Toulouse, Gui seems never to have tried a case of heretical sorcery personally. Nevertheless, during this period sorcery was increasingly becoming a matter of inquisitorial concern. In 1320, Pope John XXII had specifically ordered the inquisitors of Toulouse and Carcassonne to take action against any sorcerers who offered sacrifices to demons or otherwise worshiped or adored them. In all likelihood, the type of magic that worried Pope John XXII was learned demonic magic, or necromancy. This sort of magic involved complex and often quasireligious invocations of demons. It was above all a clerical form

of magic with which many people at the papal court at Avignon would have been familiar. Judging from the material in the *Practica inquisitionis*, this was also the form of magic that most concerned Bernard Gui. His most extensive sections on sorcery and demonic invocation contained formulas for the abjuration and degradation of clerics found guilty of performing superstitious or sorcerous acts, often involving misuse of the Eucharist or of baptized images and figures. He also described in detail a complex necromantic ceremony as it was supposedly performed by a clerical sorcerer, involving wax images, blood rituals, and explicit sacrifice to demons.

In other sections of the *Practica inquisitionis*, however, Gui described a different form of sorcery, involving less complex rites and more commonplace material and devices. Here sorcerers worked through simple incantations, herbs, and bodily items such as hair and nails. According to Gui, these people sought to cure disease, detect thieves, recover lost items, arouse love, and restore fertility between couples. In short, his accounts here seem clearly to reflect common or popular magical practices that might actually have been in fairly widespread use in the region of Toulouse in the early fourteenth century. His descriptions of the practices contained virtually no hints of the demonic invocation and diabolism that had been so evident in his sections on clerical sorcerers. Nevertheless, he was explicit in his conviction that these simpler practices were also necessarily demonic in nature. Indeed, it was the element of demonic invocation that allowed inquisitors to bring charges of heresy against these people. Thus Gui serves as a particularly good example of how the clerical conviction in the demonic nature of almost all magic, suited mainly to ecclesiastical authorities' understanding of learned necromancy, was transferred to the simpler practices of popular or common sorcery. Although Gui never described witchcraft in the full sense, this conviction on the part of clerical authorities, and learned secular authorities as well, came to play an important part in sustaining the witch hunts of future centuries.

MICHAEL D. BAILEY

See also: DOMINICAN ORDER; EYMERIC, NICOLAS; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; INVOCATIONS; JOHN XXII, POPE; MAGIC, LEARNED; MAGIC, POPULAR; NECROMANCY; SORCERY.

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GUNTER, ANNE (1584–16??)

Anne Gunter was an English woman famous for her fraudulent bewitchment. Born at Hungerford in Berkshire, Anne was the youngest child of Brian Gunter and his wife, also named Anne, a locally important gentry family of Welsh origins. By 1587 Brian Gunter and his family were living in the village of North Moreton (then in Berkshire, but now in Oxfordshire), a small agricultural settlement dominated by a few long-established farming families. Brian Gunter was a forceful, and indeed violent, personality, whose presence in North Moreton seems to have disrupted the equilibrium of the village, especially after he inflicted fatal wounds on two members of the Gregory family in the course of brawl at a village football match in 1598. Thereafter, ill will existed between Brian Gunter and the Gregory family.

In the summer of 1604 Anne Gunter fell ill with a mysterious malady. Early diagnoses of hysteria or epilepsy proved unsustainable, and eventually local physicians suggested bewitchment as a possibility. By this point Anne was demonstrating many of the classic symptoms of what might be described as a typical English witchcraft-cum-possession case of the period. In her torments, Anne accused three women of bewitching her. The chief one was Elizabeth Gregory, abetted by two “likely suspects”: Agnes Pepwell, who had a well-established local reputation as a witch, and her illegitimate daughter, Mary. Agnes Pepwell fled, but Mary Pepwell and Elizabeth Gregory were arrested and tried for witchcraft at the Abingdon assizes in March 1605. After a lengthy trial that was obviously treated with considerable circumspection by the two assize judges, both women were acquitted.

Matters should have ended there. However, in August 1605, the University of Oxford was visited by King James I, who, as James VI of Scotland, had acquired the English throne two years before. James was regarded as an expert on witchcraft, and that was probably why Brian Gunter took his allegedly bewitched daughter to meet the monarch. Gunter had good connections with Oxford University (Oxford is about twelve miles north of North Moreton), especially because Thomas Holland, Regius Professor of Divinity,

had married another of Gunter’s daughters, Susan. However, Gunter miscalculated badly. He fell foul of a temporary and unusual phase of contemporary ecclesiastical politics, in which issues of possession and witchcraft were near the top of the agenda.

James delegated the investigation of Anne to Richard Bancroft, formerly bishop of London and from early 1605 archbishop of Canterbury, who was a confirmed skeptic on these issues. Anne was put in the custody of Bancroft’s chaplain, Samuel Harsnett, who had been a propagandist for skepticism in the John Darrell affair, and her medical state was examined by the physician Edward Jorden, who had demonstrated his skepticism about possession and witchcraft a few years earlier in the Mary Glover case. Anne was soon alleging that her father had put her up to accusing Elizabeth Gregory and the Pepwells of witchcraft, and that her sufferings had been simulated, in part at least after reading a tract dealing with the witches of Warboys. Probably at Bancroft’s instigation, Anne and her father were tried before the Star Chamber for falsely accusing Elizabeth Gregory, Agnes Pepwell, and Mary Pepwell of witchcraft. The resulting dossier, which runs to several hundred pages of testimony delivered by over fifty witnesses, makes this quite simply England’s best-documented witchcraft case.

Unfortunately, gaps in the documentation make it impossible to know how the Star Chamber prosecution ended, or, indeed, what happened to Anne Gunter afterward. But the Gunter affair remains a remarkable episode that allows one to study reactions to a witchcraft case on a variety of social levels, from the villagers of North Moreton at one end of the spectrum to the royal demonologist, James VI and I, at the other, with local gentry, the medical profession, and a body of Oxford dons in between. It also demonstrates how skeptical the upper levels of the Church of England were about witchcraft and related matters by the early seventeenth century.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: BEWITCHMENT; DARRELL, JOHN; ENGLAND; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; JORDEN, EDWARD; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; SKEPTICISM; WARBOYS, WITCHES OF.

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H

HAIR

In many traditional societies, hair was closely connected to the identity, virtues, or strength of the person to which it belonged. A lock of hair often became a keepsake, and saint's hair was venerated as a relic. Through similar sympathetic association, hair became a common ingredient in charms used in popular magic and sorcery throughout Europe. And in visual images, disheveled hair became a visual cue for moral disorder. But in witchcraft treatises, hair was most frequently referred to as an instrument used by witches to resist accusation and interrogation.

Many witchcraft treatises from the late fifteenth century warned judicial officials that witches used their hair and clothes to hide magical charms or drugs that made them taciturn, or insensible to torture. In order to avoid this "spell of silence," as the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) called it, the witch should be shaved. The shaving often involved not only the hairs of the head and face, but also those of the whole body including the genital area. The *Malleus* even referred to the practice of inquisitors using this shaved hair in countermagic: it was mixed with holy water and blessed wax and given to the witch to drink to break her silence. The Jesuit demonologist Martín Del Rio claimed in Book V, sect. 1 of his *Disquisitiones Magicae libri sex* (Six books on Investigations into Magic, 1599) that this countermagic had to be repeated thirty times for it to be effective, but he remained concerned about the superstition it could breed. In 1580, Jean Bodin, in his *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (On the Demon-Mania of Witches, Book IV, chap. 1), also recommended that witches who refused to confess have their clothes changed and all their hair shaved off to remove any charms they were hiding. Other experts, such as Nicolas Rémy (*Daemonolatriae* [Demonolatriy], Book III, chap. 9) or Francesco Maria Guazzo (*Compendium Maleficarum* [A Summary of Witches], Book II, chap. 14), described the Devil himself hiding in a witch's hair or hair net, from where it whispered instructions and advice into the witch's ear.

In England, Scotland, and France, an important reason for shaving the witch's whole body was to discover the Devil's mark, that anesthetic scar on a witch's body that was considered firm evidence of a pact with the

Devil. The mark could be located anywhere; in order to help find it, the hair of the head, the armpits, and the genital area was shaved off. Searches for the Devil's mark by judicial officials began in the regions of Geneva and the Pays de Vaud from the 1530s, and by the seventeenth century the practice of subjecting accused witches to the invasive and shameful practice of shaving, examining, and pricking the mark was widespread.

In visual representations, witches were sometimes depicted with shaven heads as they were burned at the stake. Several such examples can be found in the so-called Wonder Book of the Zurich pastor Johann Jakob Wick, a mass of documentary material concerning the state of Christendom compiled between 1560 and 1588. But in the first half of the sixteenth century, hair also achieved quite a different role in representations of witchcraft. In the new iconography developed by such German and Swiss artists as Albrecht Dürer, Albrecht Altdorfer, Urs Graf, Niklaus Manuel Deutsch, Lucas Cranach, and especially Hans Baldung [Grien], witches were frequently depicted with long and disheveled hair, flying out wildly in a multitude of directions. Throughout the Middle Ages, long, uncut hair was associated with women; indeed, according to Paul (II Corinthians, 11:14), long hair was shameful for men but an adornment for women. It was customary in the sixteenth century to associate long and flowing hair with unmarried and sexually available women. Thus, contemporary iconography frequently depicted prostitutes or lustful women with wild and frizzy hair, as they did the mythical wild folk of the forest or the savage natives of the Americas. Baldung, in particular, developed this physical feature of the witch. He matched the wild and billowing hair of witches with the fiery vapors shown escaping from both their bodies and their cauldrons, emphasizing the sexual energy and disorder that Baldung's images consistently identified with the powers of witchcraft.

CHARLES ZIKA

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BALDUNG [GRIEN], HANS; BODIN, JEAN; BREU, JÖRG THE ELDER; CHARMS; CRANACH, LUCAS; CRANACH, LUCAS; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DEVIL'S MARK; DÜRER, ALBRECHT; GENDER; GUAZZO, FRANCESCO MARIA; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; PRICKING OF SUSPECTED WITCHES; RÉMY, NICOLAS.

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HALE, SIR MATTHEW (1609–1676)

Hale was a fervid believer in witchcraft, known for being the presiding judge at the notorious witchcraft case that began on March 17, 1662, in the English market town of Bury St. Edmunds, an assize site in East Anglia. The accused, Amy Denny and Rose Cullender, were elderly women from the coastal town of Lowestoft. Hale convicted and then sentenced them to be hanged. Previously, at the Kent summer assizes in 1658, he had presided over the trial of three persons accused as witches, one of whom, Judith Sawkins, was hanged.

Born in Alderly (Gloucestershire), Hale was educated at Oxford, with his law training in London at Lincoln's Inn. He was a prodigious writer, and his jurisprudence dominated not only his own time but also centuries thereafter. Among his better-known works, published posthumously, are the *History of the Pleas of the Crown* (1736–1739) and a *History of the Common Law of England* (1713).

Numerous flagrant flaws riddled the state's case at Bury St. Edmunds. Those unpersuaded by the young girls who declared that they had been bewitched by Denny and Cullender called for a courtroom experiment. In it, one of the girls, blindfolded, mistook the touch of an innocent person as that of one of the accused. Nonetheless, Hale accepted the explanation of the girl's father that the misfiring of the experiment merely indicated the cleverness of the Devil. In retrospect, much of the evidence presented at the trial seems downright silly. Witnesses described mysterious overturned carts and infestations of "lice of extraordinary bigness" visited by the accused women on decent folk. One farmer testified that, because of enchantment, as soon as his sows pigged, the piglets would "leap and caper" and then fall down dead.

Ironically, Sir Thomas Browne, a doctor-essayist who testified at the trial to a belief in witchcraft, was the author of *Pseudoxica Epidemica* (sometimes referred to as *Vulgar Errors*), a book on how to think properly and to reject "fabulosities." Browne had warned against relying on authority and illogical reasoning because these produce "a resignation of our judgments." He also cautioned against "erecting conclusions in no way inferable from

their premises." Nonetheless, in his testimony at Bury St. Edmunds, Browne relied heavily on a similar witchcraft case in Denmark, in which the accusers also had vomited pins, to "prove" that demonic forces truly were at work.

The trial at Bury St. Edmunds played a prominent part in legitimating the Salem accusations in New England thirty years later. For one thing, the accusers behaved at Salem much as they had in Lowestoft; for another, many of those involved in the Salem trials had migrated to the New World from East Anglia and were familiar with the witchcraft cases tried there. John Hale, a New England minister, noted shortly after the Salem trials that the judges there "consulted the presidents [precedents] of former times & precepts laid down by learned writers about witchcraft, [including] Sir Matthew Hale." (Hale 1702, 27–28)

Yet Hale was not an unkind man. Seven months before he sentenced Amy Denny and Rose Cullender to death he had sympathetically paused and listened to the pitiful pleas of John Bunyan's wife to release her husband, the to-be famed author of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, from the Bedford jail. Following the Bury St. Edmunds trial, Hale tried two other women in Lancaster as witches, one of whom was hanged. From 1667 until 1669, Hale lived near Richard Baxter, a preeminent Puritan divine, and they shared views on the manner in which biblical authority demonstrated the reality of witchcraft and the need to be forever vigilant in rooting out diabolic practices. In 1691, the final year of his life, Baxter published *The Certainty of the Word of Spirits*, an extraordinarily credulous treatise, ridiculed by a critic of the time as an instance of "aged imbecility."

The strong theological element underlying Hale's position on witchcraft can be seen in his charge to the jury in the Bury St. Edmunds trial:

That there were such creatures as witches he made no doubt at all; for first, the scriptures had affirmed so much. Secondly, the wisdom of all nations had provided laws against such persons, which is an argument of their confidence of such a crime. And such hath been the judgment of this kingdom, as appears by that act of parliament which hath provided punishments proportionable to the quality of the offense. And desired them [the jury], strictly to observe their evidence: and desired the great God of heaven to direct their hearts in this weighty thing they had in hand. For to condemn the innocent, and to let the guilty go free, were both an abomination to the Lord. (Geis and Bunn 1997, 227)

In 1671, Hale was appointed lord chief justice of the King's Bench, a post that he held until February 1676 when he retired due to ill health.

IVAN BUNN AND GILBERT GEIS

See also: ALLOTRIOPHAGY; BAXTER, RICHARD; BEWITCHMENT; DENMARK; ENGLAND; SALEM.

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HALLOWEEN

As celebrated today, this secular (and primarily American) holiday bears only token resemblances to similarly named observances in past centuries. It takes its name from the Christian Vigil of the Feast of All Saints on October 31 (All Saints Day is November 1). Known earlier in England as “All Hallows’ Eve,” the phrase was contracted to “Hallowe’en.” Because this Christian feast is celebrated at a time when Celtic peoples marked the beginning of winter, it may also be related to the ancient pagan festival of Samhain (pronounced SOW-an). Although scholarly opinions differ,

the festival may have marked a special time of the year when the boundary between the living and the dead became especially permeable. While some practices (e.g., role of ghosts) associated with the holiday today indirectly reflect such a tradition, most people pay little attention to it. Instead, it offers an opportunity for children to dress up in costumes, attend parties, and in particular to go trick-or-treating for candy, and for adults to engage in carnivalesque behavior. A growing number of modern Neopagans also celebrate Halloween as one of two central holidays, along with Beltane (May 1), in their religious calendar. Today, Halloween is becoming more global as a consumer-oriented holiday generating huge profits through the sale of both foods and other merchandise.

Although Halloween may have pagan roots, very little is known about precisely how Samhain was observed. Historical sources are either second hand Roman accounts of Celtic religious practices that do not mention it at all, or Irish and English sources written centuries after the people in the British Isles had become Christian. Nevertheless, some themes emerge from folkloric scholarship. Samhain was probably a fire festival, featuring huge bonfires burning on hilltops, done at a time when it was believed that the boundaries between the material and the supernatural worlds broke



Halloween postcard of witch flying on a broomstick, ca. 1907–1915. (Poodles Rock/Corbis)

down. It was thus a time for placating the gods before entering the bleak months of winter, when food was scarce, and for communicating with the dead, whose spirits could return to haunt people in the material world. Most scholars deny that the holiday also featured human sacrifice.

The Feast of All Saints may have incorporated some pagan traditions, even as it sought to supplant them, becoming a holiday for Christians to say special prayers for the dead. It was mentioned in a seventh-century martyrology (a list of saints' feast days) attributed to the famous English monk and historian, the Venerable Bede. Further, we know that in Italy, Pope Gregory III dedicated an oratory to the saints (a prayer service) in the eighth century, and that in France, Alcuin, the famed tutor of Charlemagne, sought before 799 to have this feast day celebrated throughout Europe. When the feast spread throughout Christendom in later centuries, it bore little resemblance to its pre-Christian forms.

Although Halloween was not celebrated in the rest of Europe during the early modern period, in at least some areas of Britain and Ireland (if modern folkloric sources may be believed), many pagan practices continued alongside more orthodox ones, especially such activities as trying to foretell the future, burning fires, and suspending the rules of everyday life in favor of revelry and celebration. In later centuries, Halloween celebrations were never uniform in the British Isles, but reflected different local customs. In places where it persisted, it was mostly a pious holiday for families and a more carnivalesque occasion for rowdy young men seeking to upend community norms, at least momentarily. From roughly 1540 to 1690, Protestants suppressed Halloween in the British Isles; instead, many of them, like Protestants throughout Europe, commemorated October 31 as "Reformation Day," the anniversary of Luther's posting of his famous ninety-five theses. Afterward, religious authorities in the British Isles tended not to treat All Saints Day as a significant threat. Although Halloween was not celebrated in the rest of Europe during the early modern period, religious or secular authorities often suppressed other festivals similar to it, such as Walpurgis Night on April 30. Today, some Christians (especially American fundamentalist Protestants who have forgotten about Reformation Day) treat Halloween, like anything with even remote pagan roots, as inspired by the Devil (which it most certainly is not).

Halloween came to America around the mid-nineteenth century with Scottish and Irish settlers, but it was not until the early twentieth century that it became a genuinely national celebration. This change accompanied the growth of national magazines and radio, which spread information about Halloween and how to celebrate it. By the late nineteenth century, outside of immigrant communities it was a rather genteel

affair, an opportunity for adult socializing. It acquired an essentially secular aspect, although preserving such elements of earlier traditions as telling ghost stories, divining the future as a game, and dressing in costumes. It was also slowly becoming a day for children's revelry. But only during the 1930s, and especially after World War II, did trick-or-treating really become a national American custom.

More recently, adults have begun to celebrate Halloween as much as children (if not more so), making it an opportunity for transgression and carnivalesque reversals, an occasion for pranks, parties, and parades. Although accounts of Halloween sadism (poisoning candy, abducting children, placing razor blades in apples) have been largely the result of urban folklore, "Devil's Night" in Detroit, Michigan, was something else entirely during the 1980s and 1990s: the night before Halloween (October 30) became an occasion for literally setting the city on fire, causing millions of dollars worth of damage. Although many other less dire pranks also take place throughout the United States, millions of adults merely dress in costume, act out their fantasies, make political statements, and party the night away. In many areas of North America, especially among urban gay communities, Halloween includes informal parades as a kind of street theater. Most striking, however, as the holiday shifts toward adult revelry, consumerism mushrooms: in the United States, only Christmas now generates more sales than Halloween.

Despite this trend toward commercialization, Halloween has also acquired (or recovered) some religious dimensions—not among Christians, but as a major holiday for modern NeoPagans (contemporary witches), who have made Samhain their spiritual new year, perhaps the most important of the eight Sabbats in the pagan calendar. Although NeoPagan celebrations of the holiday take various forms among its highly individualistic, nonsectarian, and nonhierarchical believers, some general themes can be identified. Samhain marks the end of the harvest, and its rituals and meditations both honor the dead and explore such spiritual themes as loss and remembrance, natural cycles, transitions, and renewals.

HALLOWEEN TRADITIONS

For All Hallows' Eve in Europe, people carved turnips and placed candles in them to represent the souls of people in purgatory (where sinners waited before joining God in heaven). Instead, immigrants to America used indigenous winter squash, especially pumpkins, which were much easier to carve. Modern Jack-o'-lanterns derive their name from an old Irish folktale about a night watchman named Jack, who was too stingy to get into heaven but too much of a trickster to be tolerated in hell, so the Devil set him to wander the earth with his lantern.

Trick-or-treating may have its roots in the related Irish and English activities known as “mumming” and “souling.” Because normal rules were suspended at Halloween, groups of revelers threatened the better-off citizens with mischief. These “mummers” dressed in outlandish costumes and demanded bribes to restrain themselves. Meanwhile, almost everybody baked “sweet soul-cakes” to distribute to family members and poor neighbors in exchange for prayers for the dead. Over time in America, these two activities merged into the practice of trick-or-treating.

Because Halloween presumably emerged from a festival marking a season when the boundaries between the material and the supernatural worlds broke down, people could give expression to their fears of witches, who were thought to have special powers, and expect to encounter ghosts, who were the returning dead seeking to settle scores with the living, and “little people” such as fairies or other trickster demons. It is important to remember that witches, ghosts, and fairies could seek vengeance on the living at any time, but Halloween reminded everyone of the claims that the dead could make on the living and more generally of supernatural forces. Wearing costumes at Halloween probably has its roots in these beliefs as well as in “mumming,” dressing up and engaging in mischief. More recently, even though fewer people believe in witches, they often recall other monstrous figures from folklore and myth by dressing up. Of course, in any given year, many people prefer dressing up as superheroes, fairy-tale characters, or other political, pop-culture, or historical figures. Nonetheless, scary costumes (and often extremely gory ones at that) remain popular, and the macabre remains a central attraction within Halloween activities. Nowadays, fewer people believe in the reality of supernatural powers, but can still pretend to be frightened by them, as the astonishing growth of Halloween-related “haunted houses” and horror movies seems to suggest. Some scholars consider Halloween’s celebration of the frightening as a form of social catharsis, but clearly the holiday remains far more than that; in the contemporary United States, a country where relatively few celebrate Mardi Gras or Carnival (as many Europeans and Latin Americans do in February), Halloween has become an opportunity for both children and adults to bend the rules of normal, everyday life, a time for fun through reversals and transgressions of everyday norms.

GROWING POPULARITY

Halloween evolved into an essentially American holiday, which is now often celebrated in Canada, Mexico, and in parts of Europe. While each culture celebrating the holiday draws on its own traditions, in some, the American ways of doing things are gaining popularity. As culture becomes more “global” and more consumer oriented, it is possible to see this American influence at

work. Many Canadians now celebrate Halloween just like their neighbors to the south, as some have been doing for decades. In Mexico, Halloween is slowly merging with *El Día de los Muertos* (the Day of the Dead), which is primarily a religious holiday blending Christian with indigenous pagan practices (a Tex-Mex hybrid is emerging in parts of the southern United States). In Europe, Halloween festivities are a relatively new fashion, except for parts of Great Britain and Ireland where many traditional practices endure. Despite the continued existence of significant local variations, as Halloween becomes increasingly part of consumer culture, its practices are becoming more homogenous. Nonetheless, Halloween was and remains a holiday subject to constant reinvention by those celebrating it, so a variety of practices and beliefs will continue to shape it.

EDMUND M. KERN

See also: CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST 1800); FAIRIES; FOLKLORE; GHOSTS; HAT; SATANISM; WALPURGIS (WALPURIGS) NIGHT.

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HAMBURG AND BREMEN

Hamburg and Bremen conducted comparatively few witchcraft trials during the early modern period, even though the penal legislation concerning witchcraft in Hamburg was stricter than the 1532 Carolina Code, the general criminal code (*Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*) for the Holy Roman Empire.

HAMBURG

The largest city of northern Germany, Hamburg had some 40,000 inhabitants around 1600, rising to 75,000 by 1700. The city at the mouth of the river Elbe took precedence over the other cities in the north because of its great population and its position as a commercial center. The merchant elite of Hamburg had controlled the city’s politics since the thirteenth century with virtually complete autonomy. The council (*Rat*) was the highest court in the city. Hamburg’s penal legislation punished sorcery as early as 1270, 1301, and again in

1497, always in the sense of classical *maleficium* (harmful magic). In 1603/1605, the Lutheran-dominated council redefined witchcraft in such a way as to bring it more into line with the fully developed, “demonized” early modern witch doctrine. Henceforth, proven *maleficium*, in combination with a pact with the Devil, was a crime punishable by death. These regulations were stricter than the Carolina Code, but Hamburg’s laws were different from most other German criminal procedures because here the defendant had to be granted a defense counsel.

Witchcraft trials in Hamburg began quite soon, indeed uniquely so for northern Germany. As early as 1444, a woman was burned for sorcery. The heyday of the trials began after 1540 and continued through the second half of the sixteenth century, before receding noticeably in the early seventeenth century—in other words, witchcraft trials decreased in Hamburg precisely when the new, diabolized definition of witchcraft was promulgated there. After 1583, there is no evidence of witchcraft trials involving multiple defendants. The last classical witchcraft trial occurred in 1642. Another trial for a different crime, with witchcraft as a subordinate crime, took place in 1701/1702. Between forty-five and fifty-five people, about 80–90 percent of them women, were arrested. Only a few were acquitted; the vast majority were executed. We do not know the exact numbers because Hamburg’s great fire of 1842 destroyed many sources. Nevertheless, it is certain that there were no mass executions in Hamburg and the trials stopped comparatively early, despite the stricter regulations after 1605.

BREMEN

Just as in Hamburg, Bremen’s governing town council, which also functioned as the highest court, consisted for the most part of members of the wealthy merchant class. By the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries, the Hanse city of Bremen, which had formed a close alliance with Hamburg, reached a population of nearly 20,000 inhabitants. During the Thirty Years’ War, the city’s authorities were able to prevent troops from destroying the town’s infrastructure, thereby sustaining its economic position during the first half of the seventeenth century. Yet Bremen’s citizens and preachers tended toward the Reformed religion. According to municipal laws of 1303, 1428, 1433, and 1497, the punishment for witchcraft and heresy was burning at the stake. A new law passed in 1606 bore distinctive resemblance to the municipal law of Hamburg. This *Statuta Reformata* (Reformed Statute) went beyond the Carolina Code and demanded the death penalty not only in cases of proven *maleficium*, but also for apostasy and for making a pact with the Devil. However, this new law was not reinforced.

Bremen’s first trial for witchcraft dates to 1503. However, up to the mid-sixteenth century, the persecution

of witches was restricted to offenses such as simple harming, healing, and protection spells. It was not until 1559 that elements of the new witch laws turned up in a trial of two witches that included accusations of entering into the pact with the Devil, sexual intercourse with the Devil, and attending the witches’ Sabbat. The last burning of a witch took place in 1603. Even though witches were still being persecuted and accused of being the Devil’s servants in the seventeenth century, they faced milder sentences or were simply expelled from the city. The official witch hunt gradually changed into trials based only on individual accusations. The last trial, in 1714, did not have typical witchcraft trial characteristics. Between the years 1503 and 1714, at least sixty-one people were tried for witchcraft in Bremen. The tribunals of the town council held a large majority of those trials. Unlike witchcraft trials in other German cities, torture was used moderately. One-third of the accused were sentenced to death, one-half acquitted, and the rest expelled from the city. Trials of one or two witches predominated, and none of the trials exceeded three accused. Two-thirds of the accused were women, who belonged almost exclusively to the lower classes, whereas in some cases the males who were put on trial had citizen status. The comparatively high percentage of males among the prosecuted witches in Bremen can be explained. In the sixteenth century, the town council also prosecuted persons who dealt with protective magic, healing spells, or fortunetelling on a commercial base; many of these witches were men.

Bremen’s moderate persecution of witches corresponded to the attitude of the city’s cultural elites after 1600. The town’s physician and scholar, Johann Ewich, warned against overestimating crimes of witchcraft in 1583 in his book, *De sagarum* (Concerning Witches; republished in 1586 as *Theatrum de veneficis* [Theater of Poisoners]) Ewich was a friend of Johann Weyer, the great German skeptic of witch hunting. In 1603, the highest church dignitary of Bremen, Archbishop Johann Friedrich, rejected the swimming test (water ordeal) as legal proof and doubted the existence of the witches’ Sabbat. In 1647, a Bremen printer published the first partial German translation of the influential *Cautio Giminalis* (A Warning on Criminal Justice, 1631) by Friedrich von Spee, the famous opponent of witch hunts.

Hamburg’s and Bremen’s moderate persecution of witches was typical of many large cities in the Holy Roman Empire, which rarely conducted severe witch hunts. Hamburg’s and Bremen’s records of witchcraft were similar; both places were comparatively unaffected by the great witchcraft trials of seventeenth-century Germany.

ROLF SCHULTE;

TRANSLATED BY JAN VAN DER CRABBen

See also: CALVIN, JOHN; CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*); FEMALE WITCHES; GERMANY, WEST AND NORTHWEST; IMPERIAL FREE CITIES; LUTHER, MARTIN; MALE WITCHES; *MALEFICIJUM*; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; SABBAT; SAXONY, ELECTORATE OF; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; SWIMMING TEST; WEYER, JOHANN.

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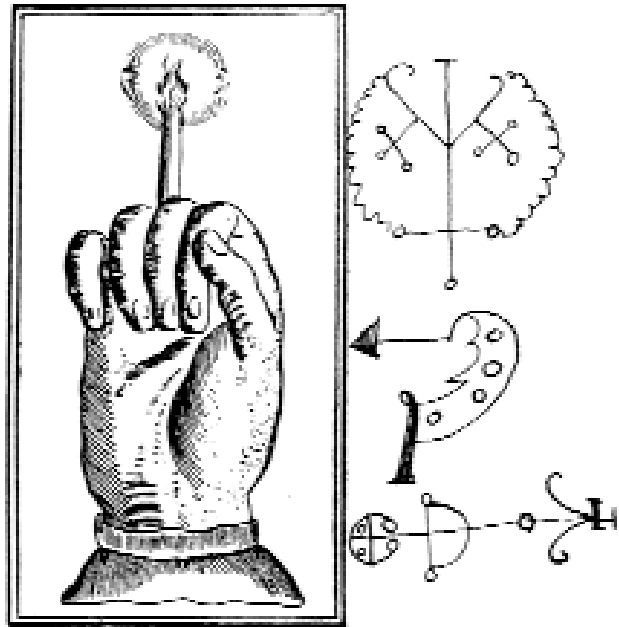
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HAND OF GLORY

The severed and mummified hand of a corpse, the Hand of Glory, was believed to have magical properties, in particular that of making its possessor invisible.

Variant forms of the Hand of Glory are widely known, in both literature and recorded folklore, in many parts of Europe from Ireland to Russia (see Aarne-Thomson 1961, Type 958E; for examples in Britain from 1440 onward see Opie and Tatem 1989, also Elworthy 1900, pp. 178–193). The hand (of a felon, murderer, or witch) had to be cut from the corpse on the day of execution, or during an eclipse, by the intending user. It was then mummified or dried in the sun, or in smoke (details of the process were given in some versions of *Le Petit Albert*, reproduced in English in Waite 1911, chap. 8, §4, and Walter Scott's *The Antiquary*). A summary of the process as given by Waite was: "Take the hand of a dead hanged man, wrap it in a shroud and press it to squeeze the remaining blood out, and put it in an earthen vessel with powdered *zimon* [cinnamon], saltpetre, salt, and pepper-corns; it should remain in this vessel for fifteen days and then be exposed to the Sun during the Dog Days until it dries completely; if it has to be dried more, put it in an oven with vervain and bracken; make a candle from the fat from the hand, virgin wax, and sesame of Lapland."

The hand, either with each finger set on fire, or holding a "dead candle" made of human fat with a wick made from the hair of a corpse, had the property



The Hand of Glory, the severed and mummified hand of an executed murderer, thought to have magical properties, such as making its possessor invisible. (Fortean Picture Library)

of sending everyone in a house into deep sleep, and opening locks; it was used by thieves to rob houses and to find treasure because only they could see its light. In some German accounts, the hand had to be cut from an unborn child torn from its mother's womb. The recommended defense against burglars employing the Hand was to smear the threshold with an unguent made during the Dog Days from the gall of a black cat, grease from a white fowl, and the blood of a screech owl.

In English and French literature, especially fantasy literature, and more recently in fantasy and horror films, the theme of the severed hand with magical or demonic properties, or more particularly the Hand of Glory, has been popular. It can be found in a variety of forms from Scott's *The Antiquary* (1816) to R. H. Barham's *Ingoldsby Legends* (1840) ("The Nurse's Story"), several later novels and short stories, and J. K. Rowling's best seller, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1998). It probably owes its long literary life to the description of its preparation in later versions of the popular and regularly reprinted *grimoire*, *Les Secrets du Petit Albert* (also found under other similar titles), falsely ascribed to Albertus Magnus but in fact was published much later (see Husson 1970). An early illustration of the hand appeared in one of the plates appended to *Superstitions anciennes et modernes, préjugés vulgaires* (I, Amsterdam, 1733: *Main de gloire ou main de pendu dont les voleurs se servent pour voler la nuit* [Hand of glory, or hand of the hanged that thieves use to steal during the night]). The hand was the subject of

a story by Gérard de Nerval (*Main de gloire* [Hand of Glory], 1832) which was turned into an opera by Jean Françaix in 1945. The Hand of Glory and the *Petit Albert* are also the subject of the first Canadian novel in French: Philippe Aubert de Gaspé, *Le Chercheur de trésors, ou l'influence d'un livre* (the Treasure Hunter, or the Influence of a Book, Quebec, 1837).

The *Hand of Glory* is more than just a folktale or literary motif. Several specimens have survived in museums, notably in the Whitby Museum in Yorkshire. One recorded case, in St. Lucia, of the murder of a boy performed to obtain a hand, included the detail that the murderer had a copy of the *Petit Albert* in his pocket when he was arrested.

The name *Hand of Glory* is translated from French *main de gloire*, which some see as a folk etymology of mandragora, the mandrake. This is unconvincing and ignores the ring of light meaning of glory; it true that one of the many beliefs about mandrake is that it grew beneath the gallows and was used as a narcotic, but in all other respects, the extensive magical reputations of the mandrake and the Hand of Glory are distinct.

The Hand of Glory is a specific variant of an ancient belief in the magical properties of severed hands. The first literary reference to its alleged curative powers appears to be Pliny, *Naturalis historia*, XXVIII.vi.11. This therapeutic use of the hand persisted until modern times in Britain and Ireland: a reputed “witch’s hand” capable of curing all ills was sold at auction in London in 1925. A Cairo Genizah Jewish formula for finding treasure also required the use of the hand of a corpse (Thompson, 1955–1958, motif D 1314.5).

WILL RYAN

See also: GRIMOIRES; MANDRAKE; VERVAIN.

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HANSEN, JOSEPH (1862–1943)

One of the most important historians of witchcraft, Hansen’s edition of sources, *Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Hexenwahns und der Hexenverfolgung*

im Mittelalter (Bonn, 1901) remains fundamental for European intellectual history, although (because fewer students now read Latin) more and more of the sources he discovered and first edited have been re-edited and translated in recent years. Hansen epitomized the rationalist approach toward witchcraft, and nineteenth-century scholarship on the topic culminated in his *Zauberwahn, Inquisition und Hexenprozess im Mittelalter und die Entstehung der grossen Hexenverfolgung* (Munich, 1901).

Born into a Catholic milieu in Aachen, Hansen became a spirited liberal, and a sought-after scholar. Educated at Bonn by Moriz Ritter (1840–1923), and in close contact with the reforming social historian Karl Lamprecht (1856–1915), Hansen became director of the important City Archive of Cologne (*Stadtarchiv Köln*). From this position he created networks of scholars in different areas. In witchcraft research, he was closely linked to the Bavarian Liberal Sigmund Riezler, as well as with the American historian George Lincoln Burr, whose studies in German archives Hansen supported. To his own edition of sources, Hansen appended a lengthy article on the terminology of witchcraft, authored by his friend Johannes Franck (1854–1914), a linguist and professor of German and Dutch languages at Bonn. Hansen received three calls to universities—Leipzig (1912), Kiel (1914), and Breslau (1916)—all of which he declined.

One may take it as an irony of history that Hansen, who had withdrawn from the public in 1933, because he despised the Nazi regime, was killed in his house ten years later, together with his wife, in a British air raid on Cologne. At the same time, British social anthropology also demonstrated the limitations of Hansen’s approach. His refusal to accept witchcraft and magic as part of social life, as a social fact, had confined his research to a methodological position, characterized as “Whiggish” by Anglophone historiography. However, Hansen represented traditional historiography at its finest. His editions of the reports of papal nuncios in the late sixteenth century, his writings about the history of the Jesuit order in the Rhineland, and his edition of medieval sources for the history of witchcraft are still unsurpassed. His papers in the City Archive of Cologne demonstrate how scrupulously Hansen organized his international archive trips, and how carefully he kept contact with a host of international scholars. Being in command of at least Latin, Greek, French, English, and Italian, he referred quite naturally to the Oxford anthropologist Edward B. Tylor (1832–1917), and opened his book on witchcraft with a quote from William Hartpole Lecky (1838–1903).

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: BURR, GEORGE LINCOLN; HISTORIOGRAPHY.

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HARTLIEB, JOHANN (CA. 1410–1468)

Hartlieb was a renowned many-sided author and translator of the fifteenth century, whose works included magical, didactical, rhetorical, medical, religious, and narrative texts. For a long time, scholars believed that necessity made him translate anything his noble patrons demanded. Recent research has provided a different perspective.

Hartlieb's life clearly fell into two periods. In the first period, he served several princes while continuing his studies. He began at the court of Duke Ludwig the Bearded of Bavaria, who sent him to study in Vienna in the late 1430s. In early 1440, while in Vienna, he translated a *Treatise on Love* for Duke Albrecht (Albert) VI. Finally, Hartlieb became a doctor of medicine at Padua and physician and counselor to Duke Albrecht III of Bavaria-Munich. This began Hartlieb's second phase, where he spent the rest of his life in a permanent position at the Munich court as a medical attendant. Hartlieb even married Albrecht III's daughter by a first marriage to Agnes Bernauer, who was executed as a sorceress. After Albrecht's death, Hartlieb remained physician to Albrecht's son Sigmund. For him he translated the *Secreta mulierum* (Secrets of Women) and wrote *Buch von warmen Bädern* (The Book of Hot Baths).

HARTLIEB'S TREATISES ON MAGIC

Hartlieb's treatise on lunar divination attempted to reveal a person's fate, deriving from the twenty-eight moon stations, that is, the planets the moon passes in twenty-eight days. Hartlieb combined two methods, the hour of birth and the numbers combined with the name. In his *Mantic of the name* (ca. 1440), he first described a method of foretelling the outcome of an ordeal by using the names of the opponents. Furthermore, he listed the favorable days and times of day, and the most likely outcomes of the duel. He used numerology, the ancient practice of converting letters into numbers, to uncover the hidden associations between words. Unlike modern numerology, which revolves around interpretations of individual numbers, this older form focused on lists of words, names, and dates with numerical values that match one's own numerical value in some way.

When Hartlieb stayed with Margrave Johann (the Alchemist) of Brandenburg-Kulmbach in January

1456, he was invited to write a general treatise on secret arts for him, as Hartlieb stated in the prologue to his *puoch [Buch] aller verbotenen kunst* (Book of All Forbidden Arts). This study of magic and divination provided clues to reveal the author's personality. His first translator, Dora Ulm, wished to prove that Hartlieb intended to write a book against superstition; later researchers have followed suit, although with less naiveté. But it remains puzzling that if Hartlieb had rejected superstition, as he asserted in his *Book of All Forbidden Arts* (and can therefore be celebrated as one of the first German representatives of Renaissance enlightenment), why did he later write detailed treatises on chiromancy without expressing any distaste or rejection? Some scholars responded by simply denying his authorship of those treatises.

To protect his orthodoxy, Hartlieb did condemn magic in all its forms and provided a list of sources that should be avoided at all costs. He denied the possibility of demonic prediction. Therefore, when he described the art of scrying, it was always an angel who helped the medium, a boy, to see the future. The first part of his *Book* warned the reader against these forbidden arts and demonic influences. Its second part showed how to perform such secret arts in full detail. Although the two parts of his book seem to contradict each other, its details could well serve as a practical manual of superstitious practices under the mask of enabling his reader to avoid them. Hartlieb, of course, claimed that he had learned this information from hearsay, rather than through his own research.

CHRISTA TUCZAY

See also: ASTROLOGY; DIVINATION.

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HAT

The modern Halloween witch is almost always shown wearing a pointed black hat. This image is so commonplace that it defines "witch" to the modern observer. But witches' hats are actually a very recent item of iconography and have almost nothing to do with the visual images of witches as they appear in earlier periods. The earliest images we have of witches, such as those who appeared in Ulrich Molitor's 1489 *De Lamiis et phitonicis mulieribus* (Concerning Witches and

Fortunetellers), were shown as ordinary persons in everyday dress. Some wore head coverings, but they did not wear tall pointed hats. In almost all of the illustrated publications from the period of witch persecutions in Europe, that is, from about 1500 to 1680, one generally does not see witches wearing headgear of any kind. The same observation holds true for paintings and prints of witches.

It has been suggested that the witches' pointed hat derives from the hats that some Jews were constrained to wear during the Middle Ages and the early modern period, but this is clearly not the case. The hats were not the same shapes. And, Jews were not heretics as witches were considered to be. Jews were seen as a different type of religious deviant than witches. Furthermore, witches, as Christian apostates, did not have to wear special garb meant to single them out in society. It has also been suggested that the witches' pointed hat might possibly have derived from the *sanbenito*, the penitential dress given to convicted heretics in Spain that included a tall kind of "fool's hat." Such hats appeared on various inquisitorial victims shown in Goya's *Caprichos*, and can be seen on figures in *Capricho 23* "Those Specks of Dust," and *Capricho 24*, "Nothing Could Be Done About It." But Goya was not the source for our modern witch's hat. The *sanbenito* hat was shaped differently and was not black. Furthermore, in the Goya etchings the hats were decorated with images. This hat was an item of ridicule, part of a clown suit.

How did the modern witch image come to include a person wearing a tall black hat? The witch's black hat probably derived from headgear worn by both men and women in seventeenth-century England. One sees a pointed hat worn by Anne Baker, an English witch, in a pamphlet from 1619 recounting the activities of another witch named Joan Flower. Interestingly enough, the infamous Matthew Hopkins (died 1646), known as the "witch-finder general," was commonly shown wearing a very similar tall crowned black hat. As early as the eighteenth century, however, the witch's black hat appeared as an item of stereotyped ridicule. William Hogarth's print entitled "Credulity, Superstition and Fanaticism" depicted a Protestant minister inveighing against witches and the Devil while his congregation was far less than properly attentive. The minister held a witch puppet in his hand. This he dangled in front of his congregation so that they might see for themselves what a witch looked like. This witch rode a broomstick and wore a "witch's hat." Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the witch's hat was well established in the iconography of the witch. Witches wearing hats became quite popular images in the United States. The image was so commonplace as to appear on the "Salem Witch" in Daniel Low's Salem, Massachusetts, commemorative spoons and other souvenir items. These spoons and other items

began appearing in the early 1890s. The Salem jeweler and silversmith produced an entire line of witch items ranging from pencil cases to stickpins to small portable containers for drinking glasses. All were emblazoned with his Salem witch image and every one of these witch images included a pointed hat. This Salem souvenir explosion may have had something to do with the popularity of the hat in twentieth-century Halloween decorations. Witches wearing pointed hats were also commonly shown on turn of the twentieth-century Halloween postcards. Some of these witches wore black garb and hats, but others wore red apparel. Red or black, the peaked hats were firmly in place on the witches' heads.

JANE P. DAVIDSON

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; HALLOWEEN; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; SALEM.

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**HAUBER, EBERHARD
 DAVID (1695–1765)**

When he edited his *Bibliotheca sive acta et scripta magica* (Library of Magical Practices and Writings) between 1738 and 1745, Hauber was church superintendent of the Calvinist county of Schaumburg-Lippe. Hauber had studied mathematics, sciences, and theology at the universities of Tübingen and Altdorf (Nürnberg); he was one of the founders of scientific cartography and wrote the first history of cartography, *Versuch einer umständlichen Historie der Land-Charten* (Attempt at a Detailed History of State Charters, Ulm, 1724). As pastor in Stadthagen, Hauber supported a kind of rationalist pietism. His interest in witchcraft was intensely local, springing from his discovery of extensive witchcraft trial records from the Calvinist territory of Schaumburg-Lippe, and especially of its capital Lemgo, where hundreds of people had been burned for witchcraft only two generations earlier.

Surviving copies of his publication were usually presented as books, in three volumes (Lemgo 1739–1745). These, however, did not represent the original form of Hauber's *Bibliotheca sive acta et scripta magica*; it was a unique mixture of source edition, comment, and historiography in a period when witchcraft trials were still a potential reality. Hauber clearly aimed at influencing public opinion, and did so by publishing his material as a magazine with about four issues per year in 1738, later speeding up to an average of six per year. In the first issue of 1738 (52 pages) he actually asked for support, news, and reviews; later, he apparently commissioned articles

from well-known contemporaries to add their reputations to his project. Furthermore, he dedicated each issue to a famous public figure, for example the Hamburg senator and poet Barthold Hinrich Brockes (1680–1747), editor of the enlightened moral weekly magazine *Der Patriot*. Many issues were dedicated to academics at the University of Halle, surviving supporters of Christian Thomasius, like the jurist Jacob Brunnemann, the professor of medicine Friedrich Hoffmann (1660–1742), or the Protestant Church jurist Justus Henning Böhmer, and celebrities of the period. Hauber's first piece (I, 1–52) began with an engraving of Pope Innocent VIII, the Latin edition and the first German translation of his bull of 1484 that entitled the future author (Heinrich Kramer) of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) to inquire against the witches' conspiracy, and included fragments from the *Malleus* itself. Hauber's second issue (I, 53–139) was less coherent, and combined bulls from other popes, for example, John XXII's *Super illius specula* (Upon His Watchtower), with a copper engraving of Johann Weyer and texts from opponents of witch hunting. The third part (I, 141–212) started with an engraving of the swimming test, reported actual witchcraft trials in Hungary, and finished with further editions of papal decrees. Hauber's fourth issue (I, 213–276) dealt mainly with appearances of ghosts and cases of sorcery in ancient Greek and Roman texts, displaying his classical erudition. His first twelve pieces were followed at the end of 1739 with an index, suggesting they be shelved as a book.

The next issue—#13 (1740) if treated as a newspaper, or vol. 2, pp. 1ff. if seen as a book—caused a sensation: An edition and translation of the British witchcraft act of 1736, the first official repeal of witchcraft legislation anywhere in Europe, was decorated with a comment on “the improvement of our present age.” In this style, Hauber's publication continued as a kind of quarterly magazine for enlightened intellectuals who wished to have their knowledge of superstition and witchcraft updated. The mixture became ever more colorful, with reports on early witchcraft trials in Savoy, Eskimo shamanism, Chinese sorcery, the recantation of Cornelius Loos (translated from Martín Del Rio's *Disquisitiones Magicae libri sex* [Six Books on Investigations into Magic], 1599/1600), an account of the burning of Dr. Dietrich Flade at Trier, a discussion of why Thomasius's intervention of 1701 had been so successful, and a review of Francis Gayot de Pitaval's *Causes célèbres* (#25, 1741). In the foreword to this number, Hauber boasted that his magazine sold well. In the end, however, Hauber offered stories rather than history, although his only permanent collaborator, Johann David Köhler—who shared Hauber's interest in cartography (*Bequemer Schul- und Reise-Atlas*, Nürnberg, 1719)—was appointed professor of history in Göttingen. Like Henry Charles Lea at the beginning of

the twentieth century, Hauber offered his “Materials Towards a History of Witchcraft.” His “materials” finally stopped in 1745 with issue # 36, concluding volume 3.

It may well be that Hauber terminated his witchcraft quarterly because he gave up his job in Stadthagen for unknown reasons, and moved to Copenhagen. In 1746, he became parish priest of the German community (*Petri-Gemeinde*) in the Danish capital. But the lack of successor may imply that witchcraft had ceased to be of great importance to German Protestants, whereas the Germanophone Catholic south had not yet begun public debate about the subject. When these debates began, Hauber's achievement had vanished from memory, and Italian, Austrian, and Bavarian intellectuals cited Thomasius or earlier English debates.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: ENLIGHTENMENT; LIPPE, COUNTY OF; SKEPTICISM.

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HAUSMÄNNIN, WALPURGA (CA. 1510/1527–1587)

The trial of Walpurga Hausmännin became prominent in the Anglophone world, because her case was included first by Victor Klarwill in his edition of the Fugger Newsletters (1923), then in English translation in George T. Mathew's *News and Rumor in Renaissance Europe* (1954), and eventually by William Monter in his frequently reprinted collection *European Witchcraft* (1969). All these editors may have included it in their collections because it seemed to exemplify a full-fledged confession of witchcraft as well as the persecution of midwives, as suggested by the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486). And this met exactly the function it was meant to serve in 1587 as well. However, none of these editors made any attempt to contextualize their source and analyze its significance, despite abundant source material, including court council records and correspondence.

In reality, Hausmännin's confession was not at all stereotypical at the time of its first publication on the occasion of her execution. She received her death sentence on August 26, 1587, and was presumably executed on September 2, as the Fugger news collection reported (not August 20, as misread by Matthews and Monter, who copied Klarwill's misreadings). As the first stereotypical confession to appear in print in the German south, where witchcraft trials were still unusual, it provided valuable news concerning witchcraft.

Walpurga Hausmännin was the first of four midwives accused among seventy-nine known suspects in

**Zigicht vnd verſaich-
nuß/ ſo Walpurga Hauſmännin zu
Dillingen/ inn ihrer peinlichen Marter befand
hett/ was ſy für vbel vnd Jamers mit ihrer Her-
cey/ ſo ſy biß in die 30. Jar getriben/ angerichte
vnd geſtüffe hat/ mit Hilff vnd Raht ihres Bil-
teuffels / ſo ſie darzu geholffen / Welche
Walburga/ Anno 1587. Jar/ den
24. October/ verbrant vnd
geſicht iſt worden ic.**



M. D. LXXXVII.

Walpurga Hausmännin was a midwife executed as a witch in Dillingen in the prince-bishopric of Augsburg in 1587. She achieved notoriety for the heinous crimes that she confessed, including having sex with the Devil, entering into a pact with the Devil, desecrating the Host at a Sabbath, and murdering forty-four children. The illustration is from a 1587 pamphlet. (Cornell University Library)

the Danube town of Dillingen, the capital of the prince-bishopric of Augsburg, and the first to be sent to the stake. Another midwife, Anna Beringin, was released the same year, as was Maria Jauffmännin in 1611. However, a former midwife, Afra Butzin, was executed in 1612. The approximately 300 known suspects of witchcraft in the prince-bishopric included two more midwives, executed at Schwabmünchen in 1590 and 1591. This raised the ratio of midwives among those executed to roughly 2 percent, which was indeed unusually high, but less than expected. The trial of Walpurga Hausmännin demonstrated why prosecution of midwives was not a viable option: She was the pledged town midwife of the city of Dillingen for almost twenty years. Like most urban midwives, she was no medical freelancer, but a licensed official, sworn in by the magistrate.

However, Hausmännin's case aroused considerable notoriety, because she confessed to almost incredible crimes. She admitted intercourse with the Devil, the pact, apostasy, demonolatry, desecration of the host at the witches' Sabbath, and harmful magic: the killing of forty-four children, weather making, and the devasta-

tion of crops and livestock. Her confession suggested that she indeed should have been considered the most dangerous person in the principality. Not even members of the government were safe from her attacks: she accepted responsibility for having magically killed chancellor Dr. Peuter's wife eleven years earlier, and two of their children, and for having killed no fewer than three children of the princely governor (*Statthalter*) Wilhelm Schenk von Stauffenberg, who died on October 23, 1587, and may have been ill during the trial. Not only did Hausmännin receive poison from her devilish lover, but she also sucked out the children's blood to prepare her harmful unguent. Her crimes seemed so extraordinary that she received an extraordinarily cruel punishment. Before being burned alive, Hausmännin was pinched with red-hot pliers on her way to the stake, and her right hand was cut off at the place of execution because of her perjury. Her ashes were dispersed into flowing water, the Danube.

The Dillingen town secretary, presumably on demand, communicated the confessions privately. Handwritten copies can be found in the archives of the imperial city of Weissenburg, the earls of Waldburg-Wolfegg, and in the Bavarian capital at Munich. On September 14, 1587, the government of the prince-bishopric urged the two lord mayors of Dillingen to reprimand the secretary for his unauthorized action. The lord mayors had to assure that in the future, the secretary would be controlled more tightly. A local printer, however, had already printed Hausmännin's confession. This pamphlet of early September caused concern among contemporaries, as can be seen from the correspondence of neighboring Lutheran princes early in September (now at Hauptstaatsarchiv München), and from its inclusion into the Fugger news collection in Augsburg (now at the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna). Presumably the authorities feared either that someone might imitate Hausmännin's crimes, or that emotions about witchcraft could be fueled unduly. The pamphlet was reprinted the following year, though very poorly and with a different title. This second printer dated her execution on October 24, which was definitely wrong, and even misspelled the victim's name as "Hausmaennen" (see the copy in the Cornell University Library).

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AUGSBURG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY; AUGSBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; FUGGER FAMILY; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MIDWIVES; MONTER, WILLIAM.

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HECATE

An Anatolian goddess, originally associated with the protection of entranceways and with childbirth, Hecate subsequently became associated with chthonic deities, the crossroad, demons, and the patronage of witchcraft. The earliest literary mentions of Hecate occurred in Hesiod's *Theogony* and in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* (both seventh century B.C.E.). In these sources, she was seen as a favorite of Zeus, closely connected with nurturing children, and as a tireless friend to Demeter when Hades abducted that goddess's daughter. Both literary and archaeological sources attested to her association with gates, thresholds, and other liminal places where demons or ghosts were believed to have lingered, hoping for the opportunity to enter. According to Aristophanes in *Wasps*, protective statues known as *hekataia* were placed at these entrances to guard them from demons and malevolent spirits. It is quite possible that their presence also served as a boundary marker dividing the polis and the household from outsiders. Like Diana (Artemis), Hecate was invoked by young women who were about to pass from maidenhood to marriage or who were in childbirth. Thus, Cassandra in Euripides's *Troades* called on Hecate to "give light" to the maiden's marriage bed. The goddess was often described or portrayed in art carrying a torch, and this may have related both to her chthonic associations (living in a cave or at the entrance to the underworld) and to nocturnal celebrations that brought brides to their husbands' households.

The originally benevolent character of Hecate at her cult places in southwestern Anatolia (principally Lagina in Caria) seemed to be transformed in the Greek context to one more associated with magic, witchcraft, and the world of demons and ghosts. This change may have been the result of the Greeks already having both a god of entrances (Hermes) and a goddess (Artemis) whose primary role included protecting maidens and women in childbirth. Thus, given the dual nature of many of the ancient deities, the Greeks emphasized the darker side of Hecate's character: instead of averting evil, she allowed it to pass freely over the threshold. The dual-sided character of the goddess may have been an indication of her connection to the Mesopotamian underworld goddesses Lamashtu and Lamassu. These deities were cardinal opposites, with Lamashtu serving as the frightening demon who ripped unborn children from their mothers' wombs with her bloody claws and was associated with the she-wolf, dog, and serpent.

Physically, Hecate took on the character of a demoness, whose frightening aspect, like the Gorgons,

included a head of writhing serpents instead of hair (*Orphic Argonautica*—a fourth- to sixth-century C.E. poem that recounts the participation of Orpheus in Jason's expedition for the golden Fleece). Theocritus described her devouring the flesh and blood of those who died before their time. Apotropaic sacrifices, including circular cakes, were made to her at crossroads, a practice similar to Mesopotamian excretion rituals in which the practitioners of magic buried images made of dough at a crossroad to invoke a curse against an enemy. Like Artemis and Selene, Hecate was associated with the moon, but only to its dark phase, when the dead had their greatest power, and she received the chilling epithet, "black Hecate."

In this more malevolent manifestation, Hecate's association with dogs, sometimes seen as a healing attribute, was transformed into a sinister, unclean familiar given to demons as a sacrifice. Significantly, Eusebius described Hecate's instruction that serpents were to entwine her waist and be coiled around her entire body. Instead of turning back the spirits of the dead, Euripides's *Helen* noted Hecate's willingness to torment the living with these phantoms. Because control of the soul was essential to the efforts of ancient magicians, it is not surprising that Hecate's power over the dead made her an object of worship and invocation. So powerful did this tradition become that Shakespeare used Hecate in the scene in which the three witches appeared to the ill-fated Macbeth.

While later Greco-Roman traditions tied Hecate to the sorceresses Medea and Circe, this may have been a conflation of attributes rather than any physical tie. The close association of Hecate with witches or female magicians was the result of her role as leader of the souls of the dead. However, Hecate's earlier, more benevolent character, assisting women in childbirth, would have also served as a reason for her to be worshipped or invoked by women engaged in folk medicine and the use of magical herbs.

VICTOR H. MATTHEWS

See also: CIRCE; CROSSROADS; DIANA (ARTEMIS); DOGS; MEDEA.

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HELL

MAIN LINES OF CHRISTIAN TEACHING

Hell is the eternal abode of damned souls, in contrast to the temporally limited purgatory. The Bible con-

firms its existence in many passages and hell stands as a dogmatic truth in the teachings of all Christian confessions. Originally, God created it as an everlasting prison for the rebellious angels following Lucifer. Hardly anybody doubted its location in the middle of the earth; volcanoes were interpreted as roads to hell. Apocryphal texts, visions of the otherworld, sermons, didactic works, and so forth, tried to surpass each other in inventing the most sadistic punishments for each category of sinners. Images of hell as a part of the Last Judgment were present in all churches from the twelfth to the eighteenth centuries, and concrete representations of this subterranean dungeon could be seen in many religious plays. Fire formed the main torture in hell, but devils, who functioned as jailers in these concentration camps of the ecclesiastical imagination, administered a great variety of other torments. That pain which theologians qualified as the most severe, the complete loss of God, did not play an important role in popular mentalities. Both of our most complete descriptions of hell, Dante's *Inferno* and Regnaud le Queux's *Barâtre infernal* (Infernal Churn, 1480), integrated features from classical mythology into the Catholic tradition. Hell's most detailed pictorial representations were painted by Taddeo di Bartolo (cathedral of San Gimignano, 1393) and Hieronymus Bosch (several retables, late fifteenth–early sixteenth centuries).

People of the Middle Ages and the early modern period were convinced that God had predestined most human beings to hell, a doctrine extending from St. Augustine to Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz. It was irrelevant whether a dying person had committed many mortal sins, or was only burdened with Adam's and Eve's original sin. Either way, the person would end up in hell, although tormented by different punishments. A special compartment of the netherworld, called Limbo (*limbus puenorum*), was reserved for children of Christian parents deceased without baptism. Another special compartment, the *limbus patrum*, had served as a residence for the patriarchs and other people of the Hebrew Bible. They, however, were delivered from the underworld when Jesus "conquered" hell between his death and resurrection. Apart from some individuals or sects, only the Enlightenment reduced the intensity of the Churches' use of this threatening device for establishing moral and practical discipline. Whereas nineteenth-century catechisms still gave very sensual pictures of hellish pains, more recent theologians usually have adopted a position of complete agnosticism about the physical reality of its punishments.

HELL AND WITCHCRAFT

There was, of course, no doubt that witches would end up in hell, sorcery being an especially dangerous kind of



The torturing of witches in hell. (Fortean Picture Library)

heresy. Nonetheless, they were rarely recorded in the medieval visions of the otherworld. Hell was mentioned occasionally in postmedieval magical formulae; but it was its employees, not the place itself, which the sorcerer wanted to contact.

The English Benedictine Edmund of Eynsham had a vision of the infernal underworld in 1189, where he saw the punishments inflicted on women who caused abortions through *maleficiis* (evil acts): they had to drink boiling liquefied metals and were tortured by snail-like demons. This description was clearly a reworking of the early Christian apocryphal *Vision of St. Paul*, which also combined the "typical female" sins of infanticide and divination. According to St. Hildegard of Bingen (d. 1179), sorcerers were tormented in a fetid and burning swamp full of vipers (*Liber vitae meritorum* [Book of Life of Merits] 5, 64). St. Francesca Romana (d. 1440) insisted that those practicing sorcery suffered alongside their customers. In Norway, the famous late medieval visionary folk-ballad *Draumkvaede* [The Dream Song], tells about the "trol-lkjeringan" (witch) whose hell consisted of eternal exhausting churning while standing in blood. Several late medieval wall paintings of the Last Judgment in Northern Germany and Scandinavia also showed a witch with a butter-churn among the damned. The most famous magician to enter hell alive was Faustus, whose impressions of that place were first rendered in a 1587 pamphlet. Later, Goethe replaced Faust's descent into hell with his participation in Walpurgis Night, the major witch Sabbath in the Harz

Mountains. Certain books of necromancy entitled “*Höllenzwang*” (Constraint of Hell) circulated in German-speaking countries of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, most of them allegedly related to the famous Dr. Faust or to the Jesuits. They proposed to force the demons out of hell through special conjurations, often in order to make them help find buried treasure.

PETER DINZELBACHER

See also: BIBLE; DEMONS; DEVIL; FAUST, JOHANN GEORG.

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HEMLOCK

Hemlock (*Conium maculatum*) is among the poisonous and medicinal herbs traditionally believed used by witches in compounding ointments and potions for use in black magic. This use of the herb was mentioned in various sixteenth- and seventeenth-century demonological texts. There may have been some confusion on the part of herbalists and demonologists as to which form of hemlock the witches used. *Conium maculatum* looks similar to another poisonous plant called water hemlock (*Cicuta virosa*). Linnaeus eventually gave the two plants different scientific names in 1737 to remove the confusion. Generally the most noticeable difference between the two plants lies in the shape of the leaves. Water hemlock is deadly to humans as well as to cattle that consume it. Because witches were notorious for poisoning cattle, this property of toxicity to animals is especially interesting. Johann Weyer, the sixteenth-century German physician and witch expert commented on

witches’ use of hemlock in his *De Praestigiis daemonorum et Incantationibus ac Veneficiis* (On Witchcraft, Incantations, and Poisoners) of 1568. Hemlock was one of a collection of deadly poisonous herbs supposedly employed by witches in particularly supernatural ways. Thus even though this herb was extremely toxic, the witch might use the herb to make up a brew or flying ointment to help her get to a Sabbath without killing herself, or she might go a more practical route and just poison someone with the herb. Witches using hemlock can also be seen in seventeenth-century art. *Witches Scene*, a painting by David Teniers the Younger, dated about 1650, hanging in the city museum (*Staatliche Kunsthalle*) of Karlsruhe, Germany, shows two female witches working at the foot of a gallows, busily digging up mandrake roots, plants that were thought to grow at such places. Fittingly, the events take place at night and the witches work by lantern and torchlight in the company of a whole host of zoomorphic devils. One of the witches also has filled her apron with hemlock. Without question these witches are harvesting components for some very deadly brews.

JANE P. DAVIDSON

See also: DRUGS AND HALLUCINOGENS; MANDRAKE; POISON; WEYER, JOHANN.

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HEMMINGSSEN, NIELS (1513–1600)

Denmark’s foremost witchcraft theorist and undoubtedly the most influential Danish theologian of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Hemmingsen matriculated at the University of Wittenberg in 1537, where he became strongly attached to Philipp Melanchthon, whose theology Hemmingsen championed all his life. Returning to Denmark in 1542, he was appointed professor of Greek and in 1553 professor of theology at the University of Lund. During the controversy concerning the Lord’s Supper in the 1560s, Hemmingsen openly favored Melanchthon’s ideas, and in 1574 he declared himself in favor of the Calvinist doctrine of the Lord’s Supper. Complaints came from other princely Lutheran courts, and although his prestige remained high in Denmark, the Danish king felt compelled for the “sake of concord” to dismiss Hemmingsen from his post as professor of theology in 1579. However, visitors came from abroad to discuss religious questions with him, including the Scottish King James VI, who met him in 1590 while visiting Denmark on the occasion of his marriage.

In 1575, Niels Hemmingsen published his *Admonitio de superstitionibus magicis vitandis* (Warning About the Tricks of Superstitious Magicians), the only treatise

published in Denmark during the period of witchcraft persecutions dealing exclusively with the subject. Recent research has shown his shorter vernacular treatise, *En vnderuisning aff den hellige scrifft / huad mand dome skal om den store oc gruelige Guds bespottelse* (Instruction of the Holy Scripture on How to Judge the Great and Awful Blasphemy), once considered an abbreviated translation of his 1575 book, to be a translation of a chapter of Hemmingsen's 1562 commentary on the Gospel of John, *History of the Lord Jesus Christ*. In both treatises, Hemmingsen discussed the things sorcerers and witches could do through their magic, and suggested how secular and religious authorities should deal with this crime.

In both texts, Hemmingsen answered three questions of central importance to the subject: its origin, its effects, and God's permission. The *Admonitio* added discussions about the use of counterwitchcraft and protective measures (white witchcraft). Hemmingsen argued that all witchcraft originated with the Devil; evil people could not act alone. Although he never doubted the efficacy of witchcraft, he believed it could be done only with God's permission through the Devil. God permitted the Devil and the witches to harm people's lives and property either to test their faith or to punish them for their sins. A Christian congregation should exclude any member who had abused God's name, whether for harmful or for benevolent purposes. Hemmingsen's *Admonitio* stressed that it was inexcusable to use white magic to counter witchcraft, because the sin was the same, whether the purpose was harmful or benevolent; thus he disapproved of using magic for protection against illness or death.

The main difference between the *Historia* and the *Admonitio* is that the latter offered a dictionary of witchcraft in eighty pages, in which Hemmingsen, among other things, rejected the notion of women gathering at night at certain places for a Sabbath. When people claimed to have seen the women, it was only an illusion, as were tales of metamorphoses.

Hemmingsen's conclusion insisted that adversity and hardship originated with God, and emphasized the need to imitate the example of Job. It told a vicar to treat a person who used white witchcraft against illness by provoking a sense of guilt, then counseling repentance, and ending with a prayer for divine assistance. However, secular authorities should punish harmful magic without mercy, if it could be proved. But while advocating this, Hemmingsen criticized the Danish judges as insufficiently devout and pious. He recommended that all complicated cases be brought immediately before the High Court to avoid ignorant judges acquitting those accused of witchcraft, because, according to Hemmingsen, many judges knew only the secular laws and not God's laws.

Hemmingsen's opinions in his *Admonitio* together with similar ones by the canon of Ripe, Anders Sørensen

Vedel, and the bishop of Stavanger, Jørgen Frickssøn, played a significant part in the rather mild witchcraft persecution in Denmark. It can hardly be doubted that the Danish ordinance of 1576, the first in Europe to require all witchcraft cases to be reviewed by a High Court, owed much to Hemmingsen's influence.

JENS CHR. V. JOHANSEN

See also: DENMARK; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND.

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HENNINGSEN, GUSTAV (1934–)

Two interrelated themes, European witchcraft and the Spanish Inquisition, have dominated the long and fruitful career of the Danish ethnographer and historian Gustav Henningsen, best known for his magisterial study of a seventeenth-century Navarrese inquisitor, Alonso de Salazar y Frías, whom he has immortalized as *The Witches' Advocate*.

Originally trained in ethnography, Henningsen began his scholarly career with a thesis about witchcraft beliefs in a remote Danish island, which has remained unpublished because the local population was too small to disguise the identities of some suspected witches. Winning a lengthy research grant for work on contemporary witchcraft beliefs in northwestern Spain, Henningsen, inspired by the great Spanish anthropologist and historian Julio Caro Baroja, began deepening the historical dimensions of his research. He soon discovered a largely untapped collection of witchcraft cases in the central archive of the Spanish Inquisition, especially the *relaciones de causas*, the annual summaries of cases judged by each tribunal, which had to be submitted to its central board in order to collect a hefty supplement to their regular salaries. By autumn 1971, Henningsen realized the remarkable richness of this material and recruited a gifted young Spanish historian, Jaime Contreras, to help him index the entire collection of *relaciones*, not simply its witchcraft cases. After two years, they had inventoried about 25,000 cases. In 1975, a young French historian, preparing a doctoral thesis on the tribunal of Toledo, adopted their method and contributed over 4,000 *relaciones* to their project.

By 1977, when Henningsen published a path-breaking article in Spanish outlining the results, this embryonic multinational collaboration had created about 42,000 handwritten cards, which they sorted out to produce our first reliable statistical profile of the global activities of the Spanish Inquisition spanning the century and a half after 1550.

Snubbed at a Spanish conference commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Spanish Inquisition in 1978, Henningsen organized a competing and more broadly international conference at Copenhagen; its results, coedited with an American expert on the Roman Inquisition, became a landmark in comparative Inquisition studies (Henningsen and Tedeschi 1986). The long-standing delicate balance between Spaniards and foreigners in Inquisition research revealed by this episode has had frustrating consequences. In 1980, Henningsen attempted to create an international program on the Inquisitions of Spain, Italy, and Portugal under the aegis of the multinationally funded European Science Foundation, but the Spanish representative vetoed the proposal (Henningsen 1993). One by-product of this decision is that international funding has never been found to produce a usable electronic version of the now venerable *relaciones de causas* project.

Henningsen's career followed an unusual trajectory. Like another well-known European interdisciplinary scholar, Philippe Ariès, he never held a university chair, but was instead employed by Denmark's national folklore archives. While there, Henningsen completed and published his most ambitious project, subsequently translated into several languages, about the Spanish Inquisition's fateful encounter with Basque witchcraft in 1609–1614 (Henningsen 1980). His numerous articles, all marked by a distinctive ethnographic curiosity, often drew on his unparalleled fund of information about witchcraft-related "superstitions" provided by inquisitorial tribunals throughout the Spanish empire. He has investigated topics ranging from Basque influences on the practice of black magic by African slaves in seventeenth-century Colombia to the activities of fairy-like Sicilian night witches, whom the Spanish Holy Office called "ladies from outside" (*doñas de fuera*).

Throughout his scholarly career, international collaboration has remained a leitmotif of Henningsen's activities. Together with a Swedish colleague, he organized another landmark international conference about his other specialty, European witchcraft, in 1984; they coedited the published results (Henningsen and Ankarloo 1990). Henningsen remains a major figure at international conferences about witchcraft or the inquisitions.

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: BASQUE COUNTRY; CARO BAROJA, JULIO; INQUISITION, SPANISH; SALAZAR FRIAS, ALONSO DE; SPAIN.

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HEPSTEIN, JOHANN

In 1525, when a majority of the five lawyers (*Ratskonsuln*) in the service of the imperial free city of Nuremberg wavered in their judgment of a witchcraft case, with one of them supporting execution, Dr. Hepstein openly challenged their position. In 1533 he recommended that the small imperial city of Weissenburg, a satellite of Nuremberg, not torture a woman suspected of witchcraft. In a trial of three women at Nuremberg in March 1536, when plenty of evidence suggested sorcery, and a number of witnesses accused them of witchcraft, Hepstein argued that sorcery and witchcraft were generally taken for "fantasy and self-deception." In his eyes, belief in witchcraft, and hence related accusations, were a consequence of "disbelief, stupidity, and excited imagination of the people" (Kunstmann 1970, 62). He considered the supposed deeds of the witches to be impossible. Hepstein concluded that the suspects were to be released without delay, except for one of them, who seemed to be guilty of fraud. The woman Hepstein wanted to see convicted and punished with a fine was a diviner, who had served as a witch doctor, and had accused the other two. Although Hepstein's was a minority position, the government followed his advice soon after. In June 1536, the government decreed a law against witchcraft, sorcery, divination, and incantation, stating explicitly that it was a serious error to believe in the existence of witchcraft, and imposing serious punishments on those who exploited the credulity of the people through divination or sorcery. Hepstein was clearly not a Catholic, and he displayed humanist inclinations, but his life and thoughts have yet to be studied.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: NUREMBERG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY; SKEPTICISM.

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HERBAL MEDICINE

For the overwhelming majority of people living in early modern Europe, “medicine” meant primarily herbal medicine: plants and vegetable products were the principal pharmacopoeia for both doctors and folk healers. Sometimes, their remedies seemed close to suggesting food, such as a good tonic soup. Many herbal healers were accused of being witches because of their arcane knowledge; herbal medicine had real power for those who mastered it, whether witches or not.

During the fifteenth century, herbal medicine was so well developed that this century has been called the “century of plants.” The ancient founders of medicine, Hippocrates (460–377), Dioscorides (first century C.E.) and Galen (ca. 131–ca. 201) were widely published and quoted. *Nicholau's Antidotarium* (The Antidote Book of Nicholas) was a standard handbook of medicinal recipes that circulated widely in Europe since the twelfth century. Most important early illustrated herbals were produced in Germany: in 1485, Johann Wonnecke von Cube published his *Hortus Sanitatis* (The Garden of Health) at Mainz; Hieronymus Bock, called Tragus, edited his *Kreutterbuch* (Book of Herbs) at Strasbourg in 1539 with beautiful woodcuts by David Kandel; Otto Brunfels, using the engraver Hans Weiditz, published his *Herbarum Vivae Eicones* (Living Portraits of Plants) in three volumes between 1530 and 1536 at Mainz; and Leonhart Fuchs published his masterpiece, the herbal *De historia stirpium* (Concerning the History of Plants), at Basel in 1542. Valerius Cordus's *Dispensatorium* (Dispensary) became, after 1542, the official guide for the apothecary guild at Nuremberg and influenced all of Europe. The commentaries on Dioscorides by Matthioli (1500–1577) also constituted one of the greatest books of medical botany. After the crusades, Arab medicine had introduced new plants into Europe. In polypharmacy, the use of many plants in one mixture, including plants imported from a great distance, involved a great change: the remedies could not be homemade any more, and had to be purchased in apothecaries. The result was a progressive loss of the ability to prepare one's own remedies, and control of the healers, usually women, by representatives of medical authorities, always men.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Paracelsus marked a turning point by criticizing Galen's and Avicenna's theories. In his work, plants had a special place: he offered a specific remedy for every sickness, according to his famous doctrine of signatures. He attempted to match the properties of plants with their morphological characteristics, shape, or color. Thus, the

lungwort, with leaves that have white stains like lung tissue, could be used in the treatment of pulmonary diseases.

Current research confirms that these plants were usually judiciously used. The active principles contained in the plants in their natural state are sufficient to cure or to poison the patient. Plants were used fresh or dried, entirely or only in part, root, rhizome, stem, leaf, flower, or bark from trees. Remedies usually combined several plant-based ingredients with other constituents from animal or mineral sources. Some remedies, called *theriac*, included about a hundred ingredients. These different elements can act as catalysts to make the remedy significantly more active to cure the patient. Plants served as remedies in different ways: internally through infusion or decoction, or externally through applications of poultices, plasters, or enemas.

Some plants were (and are) associated with witchcraft, such as the mandrake, belladonna, datura, or juniper. The mandrake is the most famous. If such plants are really toxic or lethal, they have been linked to the Devil for a long time. Numerous superstitions and legends accompany the magical properties of these plants. But even so, the recipes listed in old sources are known for their narcotic and analgesic properties. Solanaceae plants are listed among the ingredients of physicians' recipes and also of the witches' ointment—along with unbaptized baby's fat.

Plants were used not only for their medical properties, but also for their symbolic and alleged supernatural powers. That is why the moment and the ritual of the gathering was very important. St. John's Day (June 24), corresponding to the summer solstice, has given its name to many herbs called St. John's herbs, for instance, “St. John's wort,” vervain, or mugwort (*artemisia*), the “mother herb.” The gestures and the words during the picking, the preparation, or the administration of remedies made from these plants, were as important as the plants themselves in the eyes of both the patient and the healer.

MARYSE SIMON

See also: CUNNING FOLK; DRUGS AND HALLUCINOGENS; MANDRAKE; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; MIDWIVES; OINTMENTS; PARACELSUS, THEOPHRASTUS BOMBASTUS VON HOHENHEIM; VERVAIN.

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HERESY

Witchcraft's heretical roots are often largely underestimated, because the large European witch hunts date from the early modern era and most historians of witchcraft are therefore experts in this period, with little or no knowledge of late medieval heresy. Even students of the witch hunt's medieval beginnings (e.g., Ginzburg 1991) have all too often underestimated witchcraft's heretical heritage. Ginzburg, for example, drew a straight line from the persecution of the lepers (around 1320) and the Jews (around 1350), to that of witches (fifteenth century), thereby almost completely neglecting the heretics.

Important exceptions to this rule include Jeffrey Russell (1972), Norman Cohn (1993), Brian Levack (1993), and Andreas Blauert (1989). Russell argued that witchcraft should be viewed as a form of heresy, and that heresy was far more important for understanding it than magic. Russell (1972: 19, 39f., 133, 267–269) also contended that early witch hunts occurred mainly in places where heretics had allegedly previously been found, including southern France, the Netherlands, the Rhineland, northern Italy, and the Alps (a region to which heretics had withdrawn, but not an especially backwards area). On the other hand, Russell incorrectly believed (63ff.) that both witchcraft and heresy existed already in the Early Middle Ages. Cohn (1993, chaps. 1, 3, 4) saw late medieval heresy only in its distorted, demonized form, and used his observations to construct a stereotype that he believed was originally used to defame the early Christians. Levack (1993, 43f.) agreed with Cohn and claimed that the idea of the witches' countersociety, as expressed in their confessions, originated in the rhetoric of the invective clerics of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries used against heretics, and developed a life of its own. Blauert directed attention to the territory of modern-day Switzerland and especially western Switzerland, where (with the important exception of Dauphiné) the last Waldensian-hunts and the first witch hunts took place simultaneously in the first half of the fifteenth century.

Starting with the cumulative idea of witchcraft as presented in the *Errores Gazariorum* (Errors of the Gazars or Gazarii) written in the Aosta valley before 1436/1438 and one of the earliest descriptions of a witches' sect, one can indeed differentiate between heretical and magical elements. Heretical elements included initiation into the sect; the pact; the nighttime gatherings; the sect's organization and the accusation of hypocrisy; the magical flight of witches and warlocks to

the witches' Sabbat; some of the *maleficia* (harmful magic), especially infanticide; and motives for joining the sect (vindictiveness and hedonism, as well as sexual desire). Even the tract's title went back to the Cathars; *gazarii* is a form of "Cathar" found mostly in northern Italy (Ostorero et al. 1999, 301–303). Although it had been effectively wiped out by the early fourteenth century, the heresy of the Cathars contributed a great deal to the cumulative concept of witchcraft.

The Cathars' name was derived from "cat" in Alain de Lille's twelfth-century polemic "because it is said that they [the Cathars] kiss a cat's posterior, in which form, it is said, the Devil appears to them" (*Dicuntur [Cathari] a catto, quia, ut dicitur, osculantur posteriora catti, in cuius specie, ut dicunt, apparet eis Lucifer*) (Lambert 1998, 43). One main feature of the Cathar movement, in its widespread form in thirteenth-century southern France, was dualism (or Manicheism): the role ascribed to the Devil as the creator of the visible world (Lambert 1998). This was an obvious parallel to later sects of witches, who also reputedly worshiped the Devil. The Cathars' most important sacrament was the *consolamentum*, which was first administered in the form of adult baptism upon acceptance into the sect, and later as the last rites, which were said to guarantee direct acceptance into heaven. Subsequently, after the Cathars had fled to the Pyrenees (Montaillou) to escape the Inquisition, this sacrament was possible only at night. Cathars thus held nighttime gatherings around the beds of the dying, to which the few remaining *perfecti* (the perfect ones, the master adepts) had to be brought, frequently from far away. If a *perfect* did not successfully administer the *consolamentum* to the dying person, his or her soul would have had to set out on a transmigration and could be reborn up to seven times. The chaste and vegetarian *perfect* asked those gathered at the death bed to administer the *melioramentum* (a sort of prayer or devotion) and required those present to accommodate him and offer him gifts. Those present often entered into a pact (or *convention*) with him, stating that they, too, wished to receive the *consolamentum* from him in their hour of death. According to the inquisitors, such accomplices were therefore guilty and were punished accordingly, although only recidivists were burned at the stake.

One must not ignore the fact that it was during the fight against the Cathar movement in southern France that the papal Inquisition was created in 1233, which employed a new inquisitorial method (Lambert 1998, 125, 127; also Levack 1993, 68–99). Both the Inquisition and inquisitorial procedure were responsible for the analogies and parallels between heresy and witchcraft. In the end, it was inquisitors such as Geoffrey d'Ablis (inquisitor in Carcassone, 1308–1309), Bernard Gui (inquisitor in Toulouse, 1307), and Jaques Fournier (bishop of Pamiers, 1318–1325) who wiped out the Cathar movement in its refuge in the Pyrenees.

Nevertheless, remnants of the Cathar movement survived in the Alps, in Piedmont, between southern France and Lombardy, and next to Spain, the preferred refuge of the southern French Cathars. The Alpine valleys of Piedmont and Dauphiné were simultaneously a place of refuge for Waldensians. Especially in Piedmont toward the end of the fourteenth century (Merlo 1977), a mix (or syncretism) of the Cathar and Waldensian movements thus came into being, which bore a great deal of similarity to the doctrines of the later witches' sects. An interrogation led by inquisitor Antonio di Settimo on March 23, 1387, described the "synagogue of the Walsensians" taking place "in the hour of the first sleep" (*primum somnium*); the *consolamentum* (consisting of consecrated bread); the rejection of purgatory (a Waldensian characteristic); and a sexual orgy. The designation of Cathars as *gazarii*, which reappeared in the *Errores gazariorum*, also appeared here (Lambert 1998, 295). The Waldensians, who stood much closer to the orthodox Church and did not recognize dualism, served oddly enough as a mediator between the Cathar movement and witchcraft.

Around 1170, the Waldensian movement was started by a merchant from Lyons named Waldo, who not only devoted himself to poverty and preaching, but also drew inspiration from the Bible (Audisio 1998). Because it was then forbidden for laymen to preach or have knowledge of the Bible, the archbishop of Lyons condemned Waldo and his followers and expelled them in the early 1180s. Nevertheless, Waldo's teachings spread widely throughout Europe in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, reaching from southern France, Lombardy, Piedmont, and Dauphiné as far as Austria, Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Brandenburg, and Pomerania. By the fourteenth century, Waldensianism had two distinct wings, German and Roman. Through drastic inquisitorial persecution, the German wing was almost completely exterminated by the end of the fourteenth century; practically only the Swiss Waldensians of Fribourg survived.

Persecution changed Waldensian behavior: while originally the Waldensians mainly denied the oath, which the Bible forbade, they later began to deny purgatory, which had already become prominent in the Latin Church. Waldensians believed that atonement must take place here and now, and could not be postponed until purgatory; therefore, the only sacrament that a Waldensian master (or apostle) could administer to his followers was confession. This took place during nighttime gatherings, as it was not otherwise possible, at which they also preached. Believers received their other sacraments from the orthodox Church, thus earning them accusations of hypocrisy. The Roman wing of the Waldensian movement (active in Piedmont and Dauphiné) was decidedly more anticlerical than the German wing: the Roman wing attached no impor-

tance whatsoever to any sacrament administered by sinful Catholic priests. Their own masters were called *Barben* ("barbels," "beards") by the mid-fifteenth century, at the latest. Throughout the entire fourteenth century, the Waldensians of Dauphiné and Piedmont faced severe persecution from constantly present inquisitors. Persecutions against Waldensians in Dauphiné continued far into the fifteenth century, until a Crusade in 1488, and caused them to flee to southern France (to Provence, especially Luberon). They thus became the only medieval heretical sect to survive and join the Protestant Reformation in 1532, at the Synod of Chanforan.

We have already seen that a syncretism of Waldensian and Cathar movements with similarities to witchcraft emerged in late fourteenth-century Piedmont. Shortly afterward, in 1392–1394, 400 Waldensians were interrogated in Brandenburg and Pomerania, some of whom had recently been suspected of being devil worshipers, or Luciferians. Inquisitor Peter Zwicker did not believe this accusation, unlike his colleague in Piedmont, Antonio di Settimo; Zwicker found that these suspects were merely Waldensians. Such "Luciferians" had already been persecuted in Angermünde in 1336, and they too had been Waldensians; the roots of Luciferianism indeed came from the Cathar movement, albeit in a rather mutated form (Kurze 1968, 56f.; Patschovsky 1981, 660f.; Lambert 1998, 120). Furthermore, the German Cathars persecuted in the thirteenth century by Conrad of Marburg had been accused of being Luciferians, as were the Waldensians persecuted under this name in Schweidnitz in 1315, after the Cathars had been destroyed (Patschovsky 1991). These Luciferians suggest the stereotype of the demonized heretic portrayed by Cohn. The demonization of heresy ran parallel to the hereticization of magic; Pope John XXII put the Inquisition in charge of the latter through his 1326 bull *Super illius specula* (Upon His Watchtower) (Cohn 1993, 114f.).

The accusation of Luciferianism was transferred from the Waldensians to sects of witches and warlocks in the fifteenth century; they could be assimilated all the more easily, because neither sect had ever actually existed. Until the end of the fifteenth century (and well beyond), witches in French-speaking Switzerland were invariably called "heretics," or "*vaudois*." The necessary prerequisite for the seamless transfer of this label from one sect to another was a constant inquisition, with a continuous existence in western Switzerland that can be proven from 1399 (Andenmatten and Utz Tresp 1992). Its first sphere of activity was the city of Fribourg, where it conducted Waldensian trials in 1399 and 1430, finally destroying the German Waldensian movement (Utz Tresp 2000). In the second trial, one sees a change from heresy to witchcraft (also a form of

heresy). Practically all the heretics persecuted were clearly Waldensians. Trial records already termed their gatherings “sects” and “synagogues,” exactly like later gatherings of witches in western Switzerland.

Surrounding the 1430 trial, however, a few instances arose of non-Waldensians who were not yet entirely witches. Such was the case of Itha Stucki, who came from the surrounding countryside, denounced because she allegedly knew “how to make a wagon move on its own, without outside aid” (*quod uxor Willini Stucky sciebat taliter parare currum et artificiare, quod per se sine alio adiutorio ibat*). Her judges, including the inquisitor Ulrich de Torrenté, pursued the matter further and found that Itha Stucki reputedly committed many harmful acts (*vehementer diffamata est et erat de multis maleficiis et nephandis*). Because it could not be proved that she had summoned help from the Devil, she only had to take an oath of cleansing. A similar case was that of Oetzschina, also denounced toward the end of the second trial. She believed neither in purgatory nor in revenants. She defended Waldensian preachers from accusations that they “kissed the cat beneath its tail” (*osculantur catum sub cauda*), and that they were preachers of the Devil (*predicatores diaboli*). In both cases, the accused had to be released. However, in 1442, Itha Stucki was caught up in the first witch hunt conducted by the city of Freiburg itself, without first consulting the inquisitor, and she was sentenced to burning at the stake, along with her son Peter. The heresy trials in Freiburg and surrounding areas thus turned seamlessly into witchcraft trials in the 1430s.

In Dauphiné, where witch hunts began slightly earlier (1424–1428) than in western Switzerland, persecution was aimed at both witches and Waldensians throughout the fifteenth century. In this region, secular judges tried the witches, while the Inquisition tried the Waldensians (Paravy 1993). Meanwhile, in western Switzerland, Waldensian hunts were almost completely replaced by witch hunts. In the later 1430s, the Inquisition in western Switzerland (still led by Ulrich de Torrenté) also conducted witchcraft trials at Dömmartin in 1438 and at Neuchâtel in 1439 (Andenmatten and Utz Tremp 1992, 93f., 95–97, 110–118).

Practice followed theory almost immediately; the first five theoretical texts describing the witches’ sect were created in the western Alps between 1428 and 1442 (Osterero et al. 1999). In western Switzerland, the Inquisition conducted its first small-scale witch hunt at Vevey in 1448 (CLHM 15), repeated in the same place on a larger scale thirty years later (CLHM 17). Significantly, the witches of Vevey in 1448 were described as “modern Waldensian heretics” (*heretici moderni Valdensium*); apparently, there and only there was any need felt to distinguish witches from Waldensians. Around 1460, the bishop of Lausanne,

Georges de Saluces (Saluzzo), had witches arrested and executed in his own territory (CLHM 25). In 1498, the chapter followed suit in its village of Dömmartin, where a male witch had previously been executed in 1438 (CLHM 17). In this case and in a further witch hunt conducted in the same area from 1524 to 1528 (CLHM 1), the heretical elements (inauguration into the sect, nighttime gatherings, and the sect’s organization) took a backseat to magical elements, particularly *maleficia*. The heretical tradition receded in favor of the magical tradition, which would have been both more apparent and more important in village society.

The heretical substrate nonetheless decidedly influenced the first witch hunts. If we examine present-day French Switzerland at the end of the Middle Ages, we can conclude that, wherever heretics had been persecuted by an established inquisition, heretical elements surfaced quite frequently in early witchcraft accusations and confessions, and men were frequently prosecuted as witches, while *maleficium* (harmful magic) dominated in rural regions with no previous experience of inquisitorial persecution aimed at heretics. This knowledge makes the contrast between western and eastern Switzerland (especially Lucerne and its environs) especially significant, as does the contrast between early witchcraft trials in northwestern Switzerland and those in Val Leventina (Canton Ticino, Switzerland), shaped by northern Italian inquisitors (Modestin and Utz Tremp 2002).

KATHRIN UTZ TREMP;

TRANSLATED BY JONATHAN STICKNEY

See also: CONRAD OF MARBURG; DAUPHINÉ; *ERRORES GAZARIORUM*; GUI, BERNARD; HISTORIOGRAPHY; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; JOHN XXII, POPE; LAUSANNE, DIOCESE OF; MANICHEANISM; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; SAVOY, DUCHY OF; SWITZERLAND; TORRENTÉ, ULRIC DE; *VAUDOIS* (WALDENSAINS); WITCH HUNTS.

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HERMETICISM

An intellectual fascination with or pursuit of the mysticism contained in the writings attributed to Hermes Trismegistus ("Thrice-Great Hermes"). Hermetic literature incorporates an amalgam of philosophical and magical doctrines, not characterized by any explicit doctrinal unity, coming from a variety of sources (including Greek, Roman, Egyptian, Gnostic, and Neoplatonic) ascribed to Hermes and delivered to his chosen scribes. From the Hellenistic age (ca. third century B.C.E.) through to late antiquity, and then during its revival in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, this body of material acquired significance and influence because of its supposed great antiquity.

The Hermetic tradition was created within the historical and literary perspective of Greco-Roman Egypt. Between the first and third centuries B.C.E., a series of works from Alexandria, a syncretism of Egyptian and Greek belief systems resulting from the extensive cultural exchanges in Greco-Roman Egypt

was attributed to Hermes Trismegistus—the honorific title for the "Egyptian Hermes," otherwise known as Thoth, god of wisdom, the scribe of the gods, and the inventor of writing. While both of the latter attributes explain his association with Hermetic literature, Thoth's connection with the Egyptian doctrine of fate and its association with the regulation of the cosmic ordering of religious and cultic activity is also an important explanatory signifier in the historical origins of Hermes Trismegistus as the founder of the Hermetic treatises. As the divine scribe who presided over the sacred calendar and the related rituals and invocations, Thoth was also regarded as the author of certain texts, as illustrated by the attribution to him of parts of the *Book of the Dead*. Works of a magical, theological, and also secretive nature (specialized techniques employed in temple workshops, for example) were also ascribed to Thoth or Hermes Trismegistus.

The extant works on philosophical matters include the *Fragmenta Hermetica*, consisting of fragments from authors ranging from Tertullian in the second–third



Hermes Trismegistus, Thrice-Great Hermes, mythological founder of Hermeticism, a philosophical and magical corpus of writing that appealed to medieval and early modern intellectuals. (Stapleton Collection/Corbis)

centuries B.C.E. to Bar Hebraeus from the thirteenth century); the *Corpus Hermeticum*, compiled sometime between 500–1100 C.E.; the *Asclepius*, a Latin work based on *Logos Teleios* or “Perfect Discourse,” ca. 500 C.E.; the *Nag Hammadi Codices* (expressly, 6.6, 6.7, and 6.8, which were not discovered until 1945); and the *Fragments* of Joannes Stobaios, compiled ca. 500 C.E. in his *Florilegium* (Collection of Flowers).

A. J. Festugière distinguished three categories of occult science or technical works within the Hermetic corpus: material on astrology, dating from the third to second centuries B.C.E.; alchemical texts dating from the second to first centuries B.C.E.; and magical papyri from the fourth to fifth centuries C.E. (but deriving from a much earlier tradition). The preeminent text in astrology is the *Liber Hermetis* (Book of Hermes) written in Latin but with discernable Greek influences from the Hellenistic age. It included a description of the decans, an Egyptian method of dividing the zodiacal circle or year into thirty-six components (thirty-six ten-day periods), each with its own astrological or divine attributes. There were also treatises on astrological medicine (Book of Asclepius, called *Myriogenesis*) and works that related botany and minerals to astrology (for example, the *Holy Book of Hermes to Asclepius* detailed the association between plants and decans to achieve certain botanical prescriptions).

Among alchemical texts of related interest, the most significant is the *Cyranides* or *Kuranides* (ca. first-century C.E.), which identifies Hermes Trismegistus as its supernatural source: “the god Hermes Trismegistus received this book from the angels as God’s greatest gift and passed it on to all men fit to receive secrets” (Prologue, Book 1). Here we detect an echo of other ascriptions, such as Manlius’s recognition of Hermes as the one who bestowed astrology to mankind: “God of Cyllene [Hermes], you are the author and the inspiration of this great sacred tradition. Thanks to you, we know the distant reaches of the sky, the constellations, the names and movement of the stars, their significance and their influence.” Book 1 of the *Cyranides* had twenty-four chapters, each based on a letter of the Greek alphabet with corresponding names of the plant, bird, fish, or stone under examination. This first book was distinctly magical: recipes for specific remedies were characterized by detailed actions of a ritualistic nature intended to be performed in conjunction with the use of various and, at times, hard to obtain, ingredients. Other books dealt with the construction of magical instruments, such as amulets and talismans, which resembled certain passages from the *Greek Magical Papyri*. This collection (Festugière’s third category) contained several spells that required the aid of Hermes for a successful completion. Like the other many and varied spells in the *Papyri*, they represented practical magic at its least ambiguous, using Hermes as the instructor

who illuminates the means through which a person can manipulate the natural world for his benefit.

By the Middle Ages, several texts showed Hermetic influences: *Hermes on the Reproof of the Soul* (ca. eleventh to thirteenth centuries), an Arabic text in the philosophical tradition, and the *Picatrix* (eleventh century), also Arabic, but distinctly magical. At the beginning of the Renaissance, more complete texts and manuscripts emerged, producing further fascination and imitation. In the fifteenth century, for example, Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499) translated the *Corpus Hermeticum* (1–XIV) into Latin. This constituted a collection of dialogues, opening with the *Poimandres*, which deals with the creation of the world and the infinite mysteries of life: “Once, when thought came to me of the things that are and my thinking soared to the heights and my bodily senses were restrained, like someone heavy with slumber from overeating or toil of the body, an enormous being totally unbounded in size seemed to appear before me and call my name and say: ‘What do you want to hear and see; what do you want to learn and know from your learning?’” (Cited in Copenhaver 1992, 1).

Scholars such as Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim, inspired by Hermeticism but to an even greater extent by Neoplatonism, developed fresh theories of natural magic. Pico interpreted *magia naturalis* (natural magic) as the sum of natural wisdom, an integral and practical component of natural science based on a comprehension of the natural world; Agrippa regarded it as a study of what exists in the world, aligning it with “medicine and the natural philosophy (in effect, with physics)” (Clark 1997, 218).

Pico studied and developed a magical system that included an elaborate combination of Hermetic knowledge and the Kabbalah. His *Conclusions* (defended in Rome in 1486) and *Oration on the Dignity of Man* (1487) rank among the most influential texts of the Renaissance. The latter began with a direct reference to the Hermetic tradition: “Most esteemed Fathers, I have read in the ancient writings of the Arabians that Abdala the Saracen, on being asked what, on this stage, so to say, of the world, seemed to him most evocative of wonder, replied that there was nothing to be seen more marvelous than man. And that celebrated exclamation of Hermes Trismegistus (what a great miracle is man, Asclepius) confirms this opinion.” Inspired by the *Asclepius*, among other Hermetic and Neoplatonic texts (such as those by Plotinus, Porphyry and Iamblichus), the *Oration on the Dignity of Man*, as the previous quotation illustrates, places man as a being in possession of a divine spark with the capability, through the study and practice of *magia naturalis*, to affect change.

Hermes, as the ascribed instigator of such a variety of texts—both philosophical and magical and, at times, a

combination of both—may best be described as a mystagogue. To the Renaissance mind he may best be defined as the *magus* par excellence, the personification of wisdom, philosophy, and esoteric knowledge. In addition to other materials, such as the aforementioned Neoplatonic texts, medical texts such as those by Galen, as well as earlier scientific research and methodologies, Hermetic literature belongs within a series of influential texts from antiquity expounded on in medieval and Renaissance magic.

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See also: AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM, HEINRICH CORNELIUS; ALCHEMY; ASTROLOGY; GREEK MAGICAL PAPYRI; KABBALAH; MAGIC, LEARNED; MAGIC, NATURAL; OCCULT; THOTH; YATES, FRANCES AMELIA.

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HERMOGENES

Hermogenes was an ancient magician who featured in accounts of the travels and miracles of the apostle St. James the Greater as early as the apocryphal

Historiae apostolicae (Apostolic History) of the pseudo-Abdias, compiled in the fifth century. These stories were popularized by the *Golden Legend* (ca. 1260) of Jacobus de Voragine, and from that source were taken up by many different artists in the later Middle Ages. By the sixteenth century, the struggle between James and the magician Hermogenes had become representative of the Church's assault on the magical arts, which now also included witchcraft.

The *Golden Legend* tells how Hermogenes, a magician allied with the Pharisees, attacked the apostle James when he was preaching in Judea. Hermogenes sent one of his disciples, Philetus, to demonstrate the falsity of James's teaching. But Philetus was converted to Christianity by James's miracles and was sent back to his master to convert him in turn. Hermogenes became furious and had Philetus bound by invisible magical bonds, from which he was later released through the power of James's handkerchief (*sudarium*). In a rage, Hermogenes then commanded his demons to have James delivered to him in chains. But confronted by James, the demons changed their allegiance and pleaded to be released from Hermogenes's service. In exchange, they promised to deliver Hermogenes to James. Finally, the convert Philetus released Hermogenes from his shackles, Hermogenes's books were thrown into the sea (rather than burned, in order to avoid harm from their noxious smoke), and Hermogenes converted to Christianity.

Our earliest visual images, such as the thirteenth-century stained-glass cycles at Chartres, Bourges, and Tours, or the many Italian images from the later fourteenth century, follow the *Golden Legend* very closely. The story is also found in several early frescoes such as Arrigo di Niccolò's in the cathedral in Prato and Altichiero's from the late 1370s in the Basilico del Santo in Padua. Mantegna completed a fresco for the Eremitani church in Padua about 1450, which includes a scene of James ordering two demons to deliver the bound Hermogenes to him. In 1387/1388, Lorenzo Monaco painted a panel for the predella of an altarpiece for the monastery of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Florence (now in the Louvre) that depicts the bound Hermogenes being brought by three devils to St. James and Philetus. And about 1430, Fra Angelico completed an exquisite panel (now in the Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth), depicting Philetus freeing Hermogenes on James's command, while James stands by holding a group of terrible demons at bay with the power of his staff.

Visual versions of the struggle between James and Hermogenes were not limited to Italy, but also appear in northern Europe. A panel by Ludwig Kornreuter (ca. 1490) from the altar of the church of St. James in



Hermogenes shackled by the devils he had sent to chain Saint James. (Erich Lessing/Art Resource)

Nösslach in Austria shows two devils presenting the bound figure of the magician to the saint; a relief from the high altar of the Teutonic Knights Castle church in Winnenden (ca. 1520) depicts St. James and Hermogenes burning the magician's books (based on pseudo-Abdias rather than the *Golden Legend*); and a panel dated ca. 1510–1520, possibly by Hieronymus Bosch, depicts James in the vicinity of the magician, shown seated on an ornate chair, supposedly relaying spells and orders to the strange demonic creatures gathered around him.

Hermogenes occasionally appears in later demonological literature, for example, Johann Weyer's *De praestigiiis daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils, Book VI, chap. 2), as one of a line of ancient magicians. But his most dramatic appearance occurs in two engravings by Peter Van der Heyden after drawings by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, published by Hieronymus Cock in 1565. One depicts James in the magician's chambers and represents the range of demonic forces over which Hermogenes was believed to exercise power. Prominent among these are the forces of witchcraft, represented by three different belching cauldrons and witches riding dragons, goats, and brooms. The second, *The Fall of the Magician Hermogenes*, which depicts Hermogenes's demons attacking their former master and hurling him headlong to the ground, includes a witch riding a broom among the massed phalanx of metamorphic monsters and hybrids. The ancient story of the Church's struggle against magical arts has been extended to include witchcraft.

CHARLES ZIKA

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BREUGEL, PIETER THE ELDER; DEMONOLOGY; DEMONS; MAGIC, LEARNED; STICKS; WEYER, JOHANN; ZIARNKO, JAN.

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HESSE

Witch persecution happened practically everywhere in Hesse, in both Protestant and Catholic areas. The present *Land* (state) of Hesse, founded in 1945, included more than a dozen territories during the Holy Roman Empire (especially after the death of Landgraf [Landgrave] Philipp 1567); they were often very small and were governed by both noble and ecclesiastical lords. In addition, Hesse contained three imperial free cities: Friedberg, Gelnhausen, and the largest one, Frankfurt am Main (which never executed any

witches). All three cities were Protestant, as were the sovereigns and subjects of the secular territories. The Catholic territories belonged to the archbishop of Mainz (along the river Main, in the Taunus mountains and around the city of Dieburg) and the fully autonomous prince-abbot of Fulda, who ruled the largest *Fürstabtei* (prince abbacy) in the empire. When from time to time the local population demanded persecution by their government, it could be motivated by the example of a neighboring territory, even one that belonged to another confession.

Persecutions were generally more intense in the smaller territories, despite the great number of trials in the large ecclesiastical dominions of Mainz and Fulda. The number of executed witches in Hesse approached 2,000, with most (as elsewhere) being female. The largest territory, the *Landgrafschaft* (Landgraviate) of Hesse-Kassel, saw only fifty-one executions of witches, forty of them taking place between 1650 and 1680. The smaller *Landgrafschaft* of Hesse-Darmstadt saw thirty-seven executions between 1582 and 1590. Hesse-Darmstadt also owned the *Amt* (district) of Homburg when up to twenty executions were ordered there between 1603 and 1605. After the *Amt* Homburg became an independent *Landgrafschaft* (Landgraviate) of less than 10,000 persons in 1622, about seventy more witches were executed here, with persecutions peaking in 1634/1635 and particularly from 1652 to 1656. Landgrave Wilhelm-Christoph, who reigned over Hesse-Homburg from 1650 to 1681, preferred to live in his even smaller *Landgrafschaft* of Hesse-Bingenheim (joined with Hesse-Homburg after 1648). From 1648 until his death, Wilhelm-Christoph and his *Amtmann* (bailiff) ordered a total of fifty-three executions in Hesse-Bingenheim, including twelve men and five children under age fifteen. Here the persecutions seemed to depend on the rulers; a similar case happened with the *Grafschaft* (county) of Isenburg-Büdingen, where a single *Amtmann* (Johann Hartlieb) was responsible for legal proceedings in 1633–1635 and 1651–1654 that led to at least 283 executions. However, it would be a mistake to assign sole responsibility to the administration: in Isenburg-Büdingen, dozens of inhabitants wrote petitions urging the administration to continue with the persecutions. The same happened in the *Grafschaft* of Nassau-Dillenburg, where witch committees (*Hexenausschüsse*)—copying the neighboring electorate of Trier—professionally searched for witches from 1618 to 1648 and found 158 of them.

Many petitions (*supplicationes*) survive from other parts of Hesse, especially during the Thirty Years' War. In extremely troubled times, it seems that part of the population sought people whom they blamed for their situations and hoped for an end to their problems by killing witches. Hessian persecutions stopped when Swedish troops arrived in 1631 (Dieburg, Büdingen),

but resumed after they left. On the other hand, there were many executions both before and after the war, for example, up to 100 in the *Grafschaft* of Hanau-Münzenberg from 1580 to 1618, or 51 executions after 1650 in the *Grafschaft* of Nassau-Usingen, and 49 executions in the small principality (*Fürstentum*) of Waldeck. Persecutions were very rarely based only on the bad (or ill) will of one person: if the crazy *Bürgermeister* (mayor), Johann Koch of Gelnhausen, was responsible for twenty-two executions from 1596 to 1599, he was outdone by a very corrupt but apparently sane *Schultheiss* (mayor) named Geiss, who was responsible for twenty-five executions between 1662 and 1664 (including seven men) in the tiny town of Lindheim.

Hessian persecutions decreased sharply in the 1680s, due largely to the influence of enlightened leaders. The last execution in Hesse took place at Gambach, in the *Grafschaft* of Solms-Braunfels, in 1718. The last trial (whose results remain unknown) was held at Nieder-Mörlen in the electorate of Mainz in 1739.

THOMAS LANGE;

TRANSLATED BY KAREN FLEISCHHAUER

See also: COMMUNAL PERSECUTION; FULDA, PRINCE-ABBEY OF; GERMANY, WEST AND NORTHWEST; HARTLIEB, JOHANN; MAINZ, ELECTORATE OF; NASSAU-SAARBRÜCKEN, COUNTY OF; POPULAR PERSECUTION.

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HISTORIOGRAPHY

Witchcraft and witch persecutions became a distinct sub-discipline of history only around 1970, when previous

research was first internationally reviewed (Midelfort 1968) and subsequently classified, just about the time when a paradigm shift also occurred. In a still useful classification, Monter (1972) divided witchcraft research into three major paradigms (in the Kuhnian sense): rationalist, Romantic, and social science. Obviously, some approaches, like Carlo Ginzburg's (1983) did not fit into Monter's classification trinity; and even if we stretch its meaning, it would be hard to accept a late demonologist like "Reverend" Montague Summers (1926) as "Romantic."

The third paradigm was the most recent, and most scholars then subscribed to this apparently more sophisticated approach, by employing theories derived from sociology, anthropology, or psychology. The most attractive models included Keith Thomas's *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (1971), which borrowed extensively from Edward Evans-Pritchard's classical (1937) study of British social anthropology. These two Oxford scholars even staged a polite scholarly exchange over the relationship of history and anthropology. One of Thomas's students, Alan Macfarlane, seemed to demonstrate how fruitful this exchange was in his dissertation, published in 1970. However, it soon turned out that social-scientific theories made little sense for a good number of phenomena in continental European history, which required more traditional historical methods and explanations (Midelfort 1972). Some of these theories, like Evans-Pritchard's, were already outdated when historians discovered and employed them, and structural-functionalist social anthropology was less widely accepted than British historians believed; they overlooked previous Russian research on shamanism (Shirokogoroff 1935) or American cultural anthropology (Kluckhohn 1944).

Therefore, a generation beyond 1970, it seems appropriate to take a broader, long-term view of the historiography of witchcraft. In Europe, a number of clear-cut definitions have drastically challenged traditional notions of witchcraft and molded perceptions of its history. First, Christian demonology equated black and white magic. Founded on the thought of St. Augustine, bishop of Hippo in northern Africa, any kind of magic, and even superstitious customs like wearing amulets or watching stars for astrological purposes, implied some contract between a human and a demon (the Devil), because magicians expected effects from ceremonies or things that could not work without one (*De doctrina christiana*, II, 30–40). In this scenario, witchcraft became a chapter in the everlasting struggle between good and evil, although its specific forms reportedly came from ancient Babylon. In the wake of Roman sorcery scares, and inspired by monotheism, any kind of magic seemed equal to witchcraft. Magicians and witches were allies of the Devil and belonged to the *civitas diaboli* (city of the Devil). As

offenders of the law, biblical (Exodus 22:18) as well as Roman, they were to be killed.

Second, for theologians of the early and high Middle Ages like Bishop Burchard of Worms, author of an influential penitential whose formulations would become part of canon law, witches were individuals who believed they possessed powers that in reality did not exist. In this period of missions, devils were equated with pagan gods, which were defeated and therefore less powerful than Jesus. Witches were merely deceived by devilish illusions. They should not be killed, but corrected and educated (*Corrector Burchardi*, in *Patrologia Latina* 140, col. 491–1090).

Third, the rise of heretical movements in the later Middle Ages changed this perspective. Some theologians, like the Dominican inquisitor Heinrich Kramer, author of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), imagined witches to be members of a vast conspiracy directed against Christian society, which God allowed to cause immense physical and spiritual hardship. The witches' power, although supported by the Devil with God's permission, was real. Witches therefore must be physically eradicated, according to divine and secular law, and by virtually any means, because exceptional crimes required exceptional measures. However, because canon law disputed the existence of night-flying witches, historical inquiry was necessary. Kramer claimed that these witches were novel, and traditional Church law did not apply to them. The appearance of the witches was one sign of the imminent end of the world.

Fourth, opponents of witch hunting generally disapproved of the atrocities. But it took Johann Weyer, a court physician to the duke of Cleves, to find a nonreligious reason. The author of the most influential early modern book against witchcraft persecutions considered so-called "witches" to be melancholic females who needed leniency and medical care to cure their mental illness. They were not evil but sick, and they needed not punishment, but sympathy. Killing them could not be justified under any circumstances, but was a "massacre of the innocents" (*De praestigiis daemonum*, Basel, 1563, preface). Opponents equated witch hunting with the persecution of Christians in ancient Rome. The European denial of witchcraft had firm roots in this pre-Cartesian opposition to atrocity, subsequently adopted by representatives of European spiritualism, rationalism, and Enlightenment. Because they did not believe in the existence of witchcraft, they considered witch killings a cruel injustice committed by authorities, as Andrea Alciati suggested, or "judicial murder" (*Justizmord*) as the enlightened historian August Ludwig Schlözer called it on the occasion of the last legal execution of a witch in Europe (Schlözer, *Stats-Anzeigen*, 1783, 2: 273–277).

Fifth, whereas Renaissance scholars like Alciati had already attributed the creation of the crime of witchcraft

to the papal Inquisition, the enlightened scholar Christian Thomasius scrutinized the history of witchcraft and witchcraft persecution more thoroughly. In 1712, this law professor at Halle wrote the first dissertation on the history of witchcraft, based on printed sources. By demonstrating that witches had been legally persecuted only for a short period from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, and that their "crime" had indeed been an invention of the inquisitors, as Alciati suggested, Thomasius managed to instrumentalize history as a weapon of Enlightenment. When he first challenged beliefs in witchcraft in a 1701 legal dissertation, he was fiercely attacked and moved to the center of public debate in Germany. Thomasius received considerable support from theologians, as well as from lawyers, philosophers, and physicians. The debate, which lasted for more than two decades, had much in common with earlier English debates. Like Thomas Hobbes or John Wagstaffe, Thomasius was labeled an atheist, but like the Whig politicians he managed to turn the subject into a weapon against the clergy. However, Thomasius's main argument was historical. Soon afterward, Francis Hutchinson published his *Historical Essay Concerning Witchcraft* (London, 1718), and subsequently, historical considerations became commonplace in Enlightened discourse.

Rationalism remained the dominant ideology among academics during the period of industrialization. Most professional historians were proponents of a rationalist approach, labeled the "Soldan paradigm" by Monter (1972), referring to Wilhelm Gottlieb Soldan, a Lutheran professor of history, and member of Parliament in Hesse, who in 1843 published the first modern *Geschichte der Hexenprozesse* (History of the Witch Trials), firmly based on sources in a Rankean style. Joseph Hansen, the most influential protagonist of the Rationalist interpretation, considered witchcraft to be a nonexistent crime, and his interpretation has molded Western historical research to the present day, including anthropologists like Bronislaw Malinowski or Evans-Pritchard. Nevertheless, it must have been evident to everyone reading the trial records that some of those accused had indeed experimented with magic, worked as healers, experienced visions and ecstasies, or even dared to invoke demons, very much like their educated male contemporaries, or witches outside Europe.

Meanwhile, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the execution of witches had already ended, a completely new, postrationalist interpretation turned up, inspired by Romanticism. Emphasizing the importance of women, witches were reinterpreted as incarnations of popular culture, or even of popular resistance. Jacob Grimm, the godfather of language and folklore studies, redefined witches as "wise women," bearers of ancient wisdom, unjustly persecuted by the Christian

Church's attempts to destroy European national cultures. A Romantic paradigm was created, culminating in the fantasies of the French historian Jules Michelet, who reinterpreted the witches as heroines of folk medicine, victims of feudal suppression, and predecessors of the French Revolution. Although marginalized in the nineteenth century, the seeds sown by Grimm and Michelet flourished among occultists, and later in feminist movements (Howe 1972); they eventually helped create a new religion, the New Witches, which gained momentum after the 1960s (Purkiss 1996).

These Romantic or even fantastic approaches have received support more recently from postmodernist philosophies, which blur the boundaries between reality and fantasy. However, as Diane Purkiss pointed out, witchcraft persecutions, like the twentieth-century Holocaust, may not be the best subject for such intellectual exercises (Purkiss 1996). Even without reducing reality to text, we must admit that the European approach to witchcraft over the last two millennia has been characterized by what Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (1983) termed the "invention of tradition." Augustine, Burchard, Kramer, Weyer, Grimm, and Michelet, but also Thomasius and Soldan, were founders of distinctive traditions. Witchcraft historiography was deeply involved with constructed realities centuries before the advent of deconstructivism or postmodern theory, but most historians remained convinced that, at least to some extent, past realities can be reconstructed.

Due to the rise of social theory, the interpretation of witchcraft underwent a leap of abstraction around 1900, best illustrated by some contemporaries of Hansen, whose concepts have proved influential to the present day. Psychology since Sigmund Freud viewed hidden desires of omnipotence and aggression, suppressed into the subconscious, as a driving force of witchcraft fantasies, and saw witches as objects of projection for anxieties and aggression. The functionalist sociology of Émile Durkheim (1858–1917), particularly his idea that societies define norms through deviance, has molded social anthropology's doctrine that witchcraft should be considered a means of securing norms, and therefore identity. Max Weber's (1864–1920) historical sociology linked the process of rationalization in Europe to complex changes in mental as well as economic structures, leading to a disenchantment of the world. Anthropologists since Malinowski have interpreted witch fears and antiwitchcraft movements as symptoms of crisis in society. Like earlier European rationalists, these anthropologists considered magic a product of the imagination, a consequence of deficient technology, and a lack of insight into the laws of nature in primitive societies.

But the widespread assumption that belief in witchcraft was characteristic of primitive, uneducated people,

like medieval peasants or tribal societies, has proved untenable. Even in Western Europe and North America, traditional anxieties about witchcraft persisted, and individuals may still be suspected of being witches under certain circumstances. The assumption of primitivism also failed to fit the experience of early modern Europe, where innumerable educated people firmly believed in the existence of witches and urged their prosecution. There was also an obvious paradox, because for those believing in witchcraft, its dangers were indeed real, because severe anxieties can provoke psychosomatic reactions, and thus real harm. Such a conclusion makes it more difficult to explain away witchcraft as imaginary or irrelevant. One of the most recent observations of anthropological research was the “modernity of witchcraft.” No longer considered a marker of “primitive cultures” or of a distant past, modern witchcraft was instead characteristic of complex societies at the beginning of the twenty-first century. These anthropologists have ceased to treat witchcraft as being located in tribal societies, and deliberately inserted historical analysis of developments in African societies into their narratives (Geschiere 1997).

Most historical paradigms have served some specific political purpose. The examples of Grimm and Michelet demonstrated the nationalist political agendas of the nineteenth century. Witchcraft gained new importance in the increasing conflicts between the European nation-states and the still-powerful Catholic Church. Tensions increased when Pope Pius IX (ruled 1846–1878) condemned Rationalism and Liberalism in his *Syllabus of Errors* (1864), and Catholic political parties tried to implement papal policies within some nation-states. These conflicts gained momentum after the pope declared himself infallible during the First Vatican Council in 1870. The subject of witchcraft gained importance as circumstantial evidence against the dogma of infallibility. In central Europe, large parts of the literature on witchcraft, and on witchcraft persecutions in particular, were written by a generation molded by the conflict between Church and state, the *Kulturkampf*. Even Hansen, who exemplified the Rationalist paradigm in the historiography of witchcraft, felt obliged to make this comment: “The elements of the craze, leading to witch persecution, are almost without exception still part of Christian teachings in all denominations. This is why our historical research is of particular actuality” (Hansen 1901, vii). American scholars like Henry Charles Lea and George Lincoln Burr had their own political agendas, emphasizing the guilt of Church and state in these persecutions. Burr’s employer, Andrew Dickson White (1832–1918), president of Cornell University, was deeply annoyed by the attempts of religious fundamentalists to restrict the freedom of science and control the curriculum at Cornell. Therefore he included a long

chapter on the European “witch craze” in his utterly polemical *History of Warfare of Science with Theology and Christendom* (1913).

A quite different use for witchcraft developed in the context of a rising occultist movement, which flourished in *fin de siècle* European cities like London, Paris, or Vienna. Prosperity and boredom created strange combinations: life reform, theosophy, spiritualism, early communism, early feminism, vegetarianism, and antivivisectionism, but also anti-Semitism, clearly a sign of unrest in these centers of industrial capitalism. The son of a beer brewer, Edward Alexander (1875–1947), founded a satanic order under the pseudonym of “Aleister Crowley.” His *Thelema* club (alluding to a group of free-thinkers in Rabelais’s *Gargantua*) became a magnet for all kinds of sinister figures, including L. Ron Hubbard, a member of the American branch of Alexander’s movement before founding his own group, later called the “Church of Scientology” (Howe 1972). Another of Alexander’s students was Gerald B. Gardner (1884–1964), who founded a new religion of witchcraft. Gardner built it from a most irritating publication, Margaret Murray’s *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe* (1921), which imagined the persistence of an age-old pagan fertility cult where wise men and women ritually adored a horned god, the “god of the witches,” who was of course misinterpreted by the Christian Churches as the Devil. Murray must have been amazed by the success of her story, which made her a celebrity, gaining applause even from eminent British scholars like Christopher Hill and Sir Stephen Runciman, and wide audience through the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, whose entry on witchcraft from 1929 until 1968 was based on Murray’s fantasies. Murray remained entirely innocent of the existing secondary literature as well as all but a handful of sources, which she quoted uncritically. Shortly before publishing her autobiography, *My First Hundred Years*, she came into contact with the new witches’ movement, even contributing a foreword to Gardner’s *Witchcraft Today*, the first description of his new religion of witchcraft, constructed from Murray’s fantasies.

Except for a few examples of international cooperation (for instance, between Hansen and Burr) and cases of national political propaganda in the context of the *Kulturkampf*, witchcraft research remained largely confined to local historians, exploring their town, their valley, their region, or their nation. Between about 1880 and 1930, when cultural history flourished in most European countries, numerous source-based studies could be mentioned, exploring local evidence without much theoretical ambition, quite unlike recent “micro-histories.” Many of these studies are still worth reading to get information about particular areas.

The “rational assumption” that atrocities like the witch hunts would never again happen in Europe, as

Sigmund Riezler had claimed in 1896, crumbled after the World War I, World War II, the war crimes, and the Holocaust. It was during this crisis of European rationalism that the new academic discipline of anthropology produced studies on witchcraft. The social-scientific approach dominated the academic perception of witchcraft throughout the twentieth century, with Malinowski and Evans-Pritchard as outstanding figures, surrounded by a corona of researchers who even reached a wider public, like Lucy Mair (1901–1986) or Mary Douglas. Some recent anthropologists (Niehaus 2001; Geschiere 1997) have developed a stronger sense of the historicity of not only customs and mentalities, but also of institutions. With the rising importance of post colonial African states and the integration of local economies into the world market, anthropologists increasingly look at the publications of historians and start to compare African and European developments (Geschiere 1997, 187ff.).

In historiography, a major increase in witchcraft studies started in the 1960s. Some scholars, like Kurt Baschwitz (1963) and Hugh Redwald Trevor-Roper (1967), tried to summarize older witchcraft research within the Rationalist paradigm, relying on published sources (Hansen 1901) and available literature. However, at about the same time, younger scholars started correcting mistakes of older witchcraft historiography by critically reviewing the sources (Cohn 1975). They took trial records seriously and studied them systematically, informed by a variety of ideas from neighboring disciplines, as well as new developments such as history “from below,” the history of crime, inquisition studies, and gender history. Although the French *Annales* school usually receives credit for all kinds of innovations, the decisive new studies on witchcraft, indicating a paradigm shift, came from Italy, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In Italy, a student of Delio Cantimori, an expert on heresy, revolutionized witchcraft studies by taking the witches’ confessions seriously. In 1966, Carlo Ginzburg published his dissertation on the *Benandanti*, a folk belief about ritual specialists who mystically fought witches to secure fertility; several scholars understood this as an attempt to revive Murray’s ideas on prehistorical survivals. However, although obviously stimulated by Grimm’s ideas about popular traditions, Ginzburg clearly interpreted existing sources from a particular region, the Friuli, eventually developing them into a vision of hidden traces of Eurasian shamanism throughout historical Europe (Ginzburg 1990).

Whereas Ginzburg focused on folk mythology, in England Keith Thomas used folk practices. Although employing the glasses of structural-functionalism, his study on magic (1971) carried so many details from trial records and contemporary pamphlets that it was also possible to grasp early modern mentalities and folk

beliefs. Its wealth of insights, exceeding the author’s intended interpretation, was mirrored in the variety of approaches chosen by his students. Whereas Macfarlane (1970) tried to prove that witchcraft in early modern Essex resembled British colonial Africa; Robin Briggs (1996) focused on neighborhood quarrels in Lorraine; Ian Bostridge (1997) scrutinized the final debates on witchcraft in Britain, a compelling exercise in social and intellectual history; and James Sharpe became the leading social historian of English witchcraft (1997).

In the United States, H. C. Erik Mdfelt (1972) and William Monter (1976) tried early on to deliver balanced regional studies, taking into account social theory as well as regional peculiarities, and social as well as intellectual history. For many central European scholars, Mdfelt provided a convincing pattern of research as well as of interpretation, because his comparative regional study on the German Southwest avoided the impression of premodern intellectual underdevelopment and painted an entirely novel landscape of early modern debates that were closely related to specific witch hunts. Within such a scenario, traditional historiographical methods like prosopography made as much sense as quantification, and the combination of approaches and the discussion of results on a theoretical level created a new type of study on witchcraft. The importance of scholars like Thomas, Mdfelt, and Ginzburg for the historiography of witchcraft has been widely acknowledged; each has been honored with conferences (Exeter, 1990; Weingarten, 1997; Budapest, 1999) and related publications or *Festschriften*.

In the 1980s, new witchcraft studies proliferated. Flourishing schools of research were established in Scandinavia (Bengt Ankarloo, Gustav Henningsen, Hans Eyvind Naess), where the impact of British social history was particularly strong, whereas in France the tradition of the *Annales* school prevailed (Robert Muchembled, Alfred Soman). Important schools of research also started in Austria (Heide Dienst, Helfried Valentinitzsch); Germany (Sönke Lorenz, Gerhard Schormann, Wolfgang Behringer, Eva Labouvie, Walter Rummel, Karen Lambrecht, Johannes Dillinger, Britta Gehm); Hungary (Gábor Klaniczay, Eva Pócs); the Netherlands (Willem Frijhoff, Marijke Gijswijt-Hofstra, Hans de Waardt, Willem de Bécourt); Switzerland (Agostino Paravicini-Bagliani, Martine Ostero, Kathrin Utz-Tremp); and Scotland (Christina Lerner, Julian Goodare).

Reviewing historical research of witchcraft on an international level has therefore turned into a major challenge. More research has been done within the past years than in any previous decade, often within the context of multinational conferences. Contributions of younger (and, to an increasing degree, female) scholars have changed our perspectives. More studies are now

characterized by interdisciplinary, comparative, and experimental approaches. It is therefore impossible to summarize the abundant studies published in the last two decades of the twentieth century without using hundreds of pages (Behringer 2004a).

However, it is possible to sketch some major trends. Beyond comparative regional studies, new models of research have been employed to study several specific problems, including the witches' Sabbath, a major exercise in folk beliefs (Ginzburg 1990); the system of demonology, a major contribution to intellectual history (Clark 1996); microstudies of particularly interesting cases (Behringer 1998); and sometimes exploring such specific methods of interpretation as psychoanalysis (Roper 1994). Historians of witchcraft have also explored related subjects, including the history of modern European inquisitions (Henningsen and Tedeschi 1986), of fairy beliefs (Pócs 1989), of divination (Pócs 1999), or the history of madness (Midelfort 1999).

These new models of research confirmed that social theory has ceased to be the main model for research. We observe a much greater awareness of cultural issues (institutions, folk beliefs, customs and rituals, mentalities, mental diseases) and intellectual systems (legal, medical, theological, philosophical). Whether these already constitute another paradigm shift, an entirely new approach in historical studies, is still difficult to determine. Anthropology, too, has experienced an upsurge of recent publications. Some scholars claimed that new interpretations have already been reached by interpreting witchcraft as a "language" of the suppressed (Bond and Ciekawy 2001, 1–38). It is hard to see where the "cultural turn" will take us; it seems to mean different things in different disciplines. But the kind of cultural history, or historical anthropology, presently preferred by scholars exploring witchcraft seems to surpass the boundaries of a mere "social-science paradigm."

The fascination of the subject remains unbroken; more scholars than ever before are exploring the meaning of witchcraft. But why are we so fascinated by the subject of witchcraft? There are many different reasons for different people, and more than one even for the same person. Beyond sheer entertainment, the best guess is that the subject of witchcraft is a matter of identity. It offers the endless attractions of sex and crime, the stereotypes of forbidden knowledge, hidden conspiracies, occult powers, secret circles, underground rituals, feminine power, misogynistic clerics, blood-thirsty persecutors, and heroic fighters against suppression and persecution. For obvious reasons, the term "witch hunt" serves as a metaphor for certain types of oppression by forces now conceived as evil. The historiography of witchcraft seems to be informed by coded subjects: the suppression of human rights by specific institutions in specific political circumstances; the issue

of religious fundamentalism, emphasized by late nineteenth-century scholars in Europe and America alike; injustice generally; or the gender issue, so prominent in recent years (Wunder 1998; Wiesner 2000). Students are usually more attracted by witchcraft than by drier parts of their academic disciplines. And they are right to choose this exotic and entertaining subject, which offers at least as many insights as traditional but boring topics. For academics, there is the fascination of witchcraft's cross-cultural prevalence, frequent cultural prominence, and paradoxical attributes, with the potential for testing theories about structures, belief, and social action (Levack 1993; Behringer 2004b).

Furthermore, the subject generates lively and controversial discussions in seminars or in public, because there is room for interpretation. It is, however, indispensable to be aware of existing debates on the subject. Some recent multivolume tools have made this easier: a comprehensive *History of Witchcraft and Magic in Europe* (Ankarloo and Clark 1999–2002) as well as this *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition* (Golden 2005). Both can be taken as harvests of late twentieth-century witchcraft research, and as guides to further reading.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: ALCIATI, ANDREA; ANTHROPOLOGY; AUGUSTINE, ST.; BEHRINGER, WOLFGANG; BURCHARD OF WORMS; BURR, GEORGE LINCOLN; CLARK, STUART; CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST 1800); DOUGLAS, MARY; EVANS-PRITCHARD, EDWARD E.; FREUD, SIGMUND; GINZBURG, CARLO; GRIMM, JACOB; HANSEN, JOSEPH; HENNINGSEN, GUSTAV; HUTCHINSON, FRANCIS; LAMOTHE-LANGON, ÉTIENNE-LÉON DE; LEA, HENRY CHARLES; LEVACK, BRIAN; MACFARLANE, ALAN; MALINOWSKI, BRONISLAW KASPER; MICHELET, JULES; MIDELFORT, H. C. ERIK; MONTER, WILLIAM; MURRAY, MARGARET ALICE; RIEZLER, SIGMUND; SOLDAN, WILHELM GOTTLIEB; THOMAS, KEITH; THOMASIVS, CHRISTIAN; TREVOR-ROPER, HUGH (LORD DACRE OF GLANTON); WEYER, JOHANN.

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HOBBS, THOMAS (1588–1679)

Rationalist, empiricist, materialist, and mechanist philosopher and political theorist, Hobbes, in Book IV of his great work *Leviathan* (1651), argued that the concept of spiritual causation generally, and witchcraft in particular, were philosophically inconceivable and insignificant.

Hobbes was a powerful thinker and an eloquent writer, qualities that gave his works great vividness, but also generated heated opposition to both his scientific and political ideas. In *Leviathan*, he insisted that the

supremacy of the state was essential in order to rescue humanity from the savagery and chaos of the state of nature.

Hobbes dismissed all the biblical citations usually brought forth in support of witchcraft beliefs as merely metaphorical. Following John Calvin, Hobbes condemned the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation as inferior to the illusions created by the magicians of the Pharaoh in Exodus 7:8, who at least produced visual effects. Although Hobbes attacked chiefly Catholic doctrines and practices, consistent with other Protestant identifications of Catholicism with witchcraft and sorcery, his denial of spiritual causation proved unsettling to most other Christians and provoked strong criticism from Protestant circles.

Hobbes's work on geometry and optics during the 1630s acquainted him with both continental (he met René Descartes, Marin Mersenne, and Pierre Gassendi, and was said to have once met Galileo) and English scientific circles, leading to friendship and brief service with Francis Bacon. Hobbes's exile from England during the Civil War ended in opposition from both the French Catholic clergy and the exiled court of Charles II, and Hobbes returned to England in 1651. Subsequent scientific controversies, including one with Robert Boyle, diminished Hobbes's reputation as a scientist, but the enduring arguments of *Leviathan* have preserved his reputation as a major political philosopher.

Hobbes's reference to the case of Pharaoh's magicians in Exodus 7:8 cited one of the key scriptural texts in the debates on witchcraft in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a text Cotton Mather cited a generation later in North America on the eve of the Salem witchcraft trials. In Hobbes's view, all assertions of spiritual causation in the material world, whether or not they produced visible effects, were erroneous. In this respect, Hobbes stood in a seventeenth-century tradition of material causation that originated with Descartes and was continued by Baruch Spinoza. Hobbes was extremely well read in contemporary science and medicine, and the materialist physics that he represented provided the strongest philosophical attack on witchcraft beliefs in early modern Europe. His attack encountered a vigorous reaction from philosophical opponents like Henry More and Joseph Glanvill, and later Richard Bovet, among others, who attempted to demonstrate the reality of spiritual causation based on empirical data of individual cases that More and Glanvill assiduously collected and presented in works like the *Sadducismus Triumphatus* of 1689. Such work became the most popular, although ultimately failed, philosophical counterthrust to Hobbes's arguments, which they dismissed as "coarse-grained Philosophers as those Hobbesians and Spinozans." The case of witchcraft and demonology became the central ground for this debate.

Hobbes began by redefining Christian ideas of demons and demonic possession, arguing that scriptural descriptions of spiritual powers describe corporeal, although subtle and invisible, rather than incorporeal or spiritual beings. Although the apostles and other early Christians were given power over these by God, thus making their exorcisms successful, their increasingly corrupted successors lost that power; no one who pretended to possess it at the present time was telling the truth. Besides mechanists who opposed spiritual causation, Hobbes's arguments also appealed to thinkers who did not wish to abandon Scripture, but who also were reluctant to admit the interaction of matter and spirit. Independent of his scientific and political works, Hobbes's ideas about witchcraft and exorcism influenced a wide spectrum of seventeenth-century thought about witchcraft and demonology.

EDWARD PETERS

See also: BEKKER, BALTHASAR; BOVET, RICHARD; CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DESCARTES, RENÉ; GASSENDI, PIERRE; GLANVILL, JOSEPH; MATHER, COTTON; MECHANICAL PHILOSOPHY; MORE, HENRY; SKEPTICISM.

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HOGARTH, WILLIAM (1697–1764)

Hogarth was an English artist who represented Enlightenment skepticism concerning popular religious beliefs. His genius lay in his ability to transform rationalist literary, philosophical, and sometimes theological arguments into devastating moral pictorial satires. Hogarth's series of paintings and the engravings made from them offer vivid and theatrical depictions of what he called "modern moral subjects." He instructed his viewer in appropriate moral conduct by displaying the terrifying, shameful, and often ridiculous consequences of immoral conduct. His best-known series, called *The Rake's Progress*, displays the progressive degeneration and impoverishment of a profligate young man. Hogarth's moral satires were also informed by a powerful skepticism about explanations of the supernatural manifested in human affairs that made belief in God's power almost contingent on belief in spiritual causation and the alleged activities of demons, sorcerers, and witches.

This resistance to criticism of witchcraft beliefs on many grounds was a response to what many in seventeenth-century England, including the Cambridge Platonists Henry More and Joseph Glanvill, saw as the growing threat of atheism and deism. The best-known English representative of this view in Hogarth's century was the Methodist John Wesley, who claimed, "giving up witchcraft is in effect giving up the Bible" (Wesley 1906, 3:330).

Hogarth's 1763 engraving *Fontis-Piss*, for example, shows a stereotypical witch with a broomstick sitting on top of a crescent moon, urinating in a great cascade on a telescope and on books by Isaac Newton and Francis Hutchinson, whose *Historical Essay* of 1718 was one of the milestones in the criticism of witchcraft beliefs. This illustration, like others by Hogarth on similar subjects, employed pictorial elements from a long tradition of serious and credulous pictorial representations of sorcerers and witches, but turned them into satirical objects of scorn, which later artists like James Gillray employed in the satire of political cartoons. In the eighteenth century, the image of the witch as a withered old hag—destitute and comical, dressed in clothing and headgear a century out of date—became common in literature, art, and even in costumes for masquerade parties, which were often condemned as occasions of demonic worldliness. Hogarth's *Masquerade Ticket* of 1727 shows just such a witch figure in the foreground, while the same picture also depicts a witches' Sabbath in another picture hanging on a rear wall.

Perhaps Hogarth's best-known attack on witchcraft beliefs as mere superstitions is his 1762 print of *A Medley—Credulity, Superstition and Fanaticism*. This crowded and busy engraving represents many forms of chicanery, charlatanism, and what he and others considered to be popular superstition; it also contains pictorial references to many recent and near-contemporary events. At the top of the picture, a preacher in a high pulpit manipulates two puppets—a stereotypical witch riding a broomstick and a winged Satan with a gridiron. The preacher's text is the biblical "I speak as a fool": his wig flies off, revealing him to be a Jesuit dressed as a clown and disguised as a Methodist preacher. A thermometer hanging to the preacher's right indicates the sermon's intensity on a scale ranging from lukewarm to raving, with a great open mouth at the top. Three panels in the pulpit show reliefs depicting apparitions of well-known ghosts. The chandelier contains a map of hell as a monstrous face. The ugly, wildly behaving congregation kisses images and listens to demons; a woman in the left foreground is clearly Mary Tofts of Surrey, an impostor who claimed to have given birth to rabbits and here does the same thing. To her right, the Bilson Boy, another well-known recent case, spits pins and nails, the basket to his right sitting on a



William Hogarth's Enlightenment print *Credulity, Superstition, and Fanaticism*, 1762, which mocked popular superstitions and religious zealotry (Brian P. Levack, ed. *The Witchcraft Sourcebook*, 2004, p. 304)

copy of James I's treatise on demonology. A thermometer-like scale on the far right of the picture, which sits on a copy of John Wesley's sermons, is labeled a Methodist's brain. It is topped by a picture of another contemporary ghost report, this one of "Scratching Fanny," a deceased wife who knocks on the bedroom wall of Elizabeth Parson. At the top of this scale, directly under the preacher's intensity thermometer, is the figure of the Drummer of Tedworth, a famous example of spiritual causation much studied by More and Glanvill.

The picture crowds together many of the diverse elements of popular belief that Hogarth and others had come to see not merely as targets of rational argument, but equally properly as objects of venomous pictorial satire.

EDWARD PETERS

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BILSON BOY; DEFOE, DANIEL; ENLIGHTENMENT; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; GLANVILL, JOSEPH; HUTCHINSON, FRANCIS; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; MECHANICAL PHILOSOPHY; MORE, HENRY; POPULAR BELIEFS IN WITCHES; SKEPTICISM; STICKS; WESLEY, JOHN.

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HOHENEMS, FERDINAND KARL FRANZ VON, COUNT OF VADUZ (1650–1686)

Controversy over Count Hohenems's persecution of witches from 1678 to 1680 eventually led to his disposition and death and contributed to the establishment of the principality of Liechtenstein. Ferdinand Karl Franz was the first son of Franz William I, count of Hohenems-Vaduz, and Eleonora Katharina von Fürstenberg. At the age of twelve he lost his father, who had left Vaduz in desperate financial straits. From 1662 to 1675, a regency jointly presided over by Ferdinand's mother and his uncle Karl Friedrich von Hohenems governed the county. Their leadership was equally oppressive. In the autumn of 1675, the count, aged twenty-five, finally assumed office during a war against France. The bad economic situation of the count, who had no children and was unhappily married to Jakobaea Eusebia von Wolfegg, was worsened by his inclination to arbitrariness and violence. His penchant for coarse jokes and his extreme tactlessness made him even more unpopular.

Ferdinand Karl Franz did his utmost to squeeze money from his territorial estates. Witch hunting, which had begun shortly after his assumption of government, played an important role in this respect. Because wide sections of the population wished to get rid of their enemies, the estates of Vaduz borrowed a large sum of money from nearby Grisons in the summer of 1676 to continue these witchcraft trials. The count guaranteed repayment of this loan with money from the confiscations of convicted witches. In all probability, witchcraft trials were not reintroduced until the beginning of 1678, when they claimed at least nine casualties. However, the count did not enforce these persecutions as intensely as the public wished him to. Next year (1679), the witchcraft trials under *Landvogt* (governor) Dr. Romaricus Prügler ended with the execution of twenty people. Soon strong resistance arose against the prosecution, although the legal files had been submitted to a jurist. Its neighbors mocked the county of Vaduz as a "land of witches," which put it at an economic disadvantage. The problems with these witchcraft trials, leading finally to the *Landvogt's* hasty escape, were only part of a general dissatisfaction with the rule of Ferdinand Karl Franz. In 1679 the count's siblings as well as the bishop of Chur (his principal creditor) lodged complaints about him with the Holy Roman Emperor in Vienna.

The conflict concerning the witchcraft trials finally was settled with a deal. The count, who was seriously in

debt, granted the estates all his future income as well as the money from confiscations from previous trials. This new situation apparently changed the attitude of the estates toward these persecutions. The new *Landvogt*, Andreas Joseph Walser, who had sharply condemned his predecessor's conduct of these trials, now started similar legal proceedings in 1680, assisted by a specially assigned lawyer. These trials resulted in twenty-five deaths. Because no more official resistance against witch hunting could now be expected, some affected people, supported by the minister of Triesen, decided to turn for help to the emperor. They were heard.

In Vienna, an imperial commission presided over by the prince-abbot of Kempten, Rupert von Bodman, originally created to investigate the count's conduct, was now also instructed in the summer of 1681 to examine these complaints about the witchcraft trials of Vaduz. The commission issued an injunction prohibiting the count from continuing any legal proceedings or recovering any confiscations. Von Bodman sent the legal files for closer examination to the University of Salzburg, where a jurist recommended the revocation of all verdicts from the years 1679 and 1680. Meanwhile, the conflict between the count and his subjects escalated; they accused him of ruthless financial exploitation and of breaking the law. In 1684, the proposals in the legal report from Salzburg were implemented by imperial order. Soon afterward, the count was not only deposed but also arrested. Tossed in a dungeon at Kemnat near Kempten, Ferdinand Karl Franz died after a two-year imprisonment, on February 18, 1686. Subsequently, his brother Jakob Hannibal (1653–1730) sold his rights to Vaduz and Schellenberg to the House of Liechtenstein with the blessing of the emperor, who raised it from a *Grafschaft* (county) to the dignity of a *Fürstentum* or principality in 1719.

The problematic witchcraft trials of the county of Vaduz thus contributed decisively to turning a financial disaster into a governmental crisis and ultimately played an indirect role in creating a new state, the *Fürstentum Liechtenstein*, which prospers today.

MANFRED TSCHAIKNER

See also: VADUZ, COUNTY OF; VORARLBERG.

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HOLDA

About 906, Regino, Abbot of Prüm, wrote in the *Canon Episcopi* that some women, beguiled by demonic hallucinations, believed that they ride out on beasts on particular nights, led by the goddess Diana and covering great distances. Pagan Germans surely did not

worship Diana; but folk belief isolates a traditional German female figure named Holda who was connected with the “furious host,” the cavalcade of the dead.

Holda can be identified with Nerthus, the German Earth-Mother, who leads a “Furious Host” of those who had died prematurely. Another name for this female leader was Perchta, who had terrifying as well as nurturing aspects. Holda, however, always served beneficent functions. In France and Italy this concept took the form of a belief in mysterious “ladies of the night” who, together with their “queen,” visited people’s homes for benevolent purposes.

THE LEGEND

Regino was the first to give evidence about these nocturnal rides. In 1015, Burchard of Worms repeated the story in his *Decretum*, naming Diana and Herodias as leaders. Already, the *Decretum* connected these nocturnal ladies with the Devil (“Herodias,” scholars presume, was mostly a goddess of witches). The belief in Holda, who was able to ride out by night on wild beasts like those possessed by the Devil, dismayed Burchard. He was twisting an ancient belief mysterious to him, based on the concept of the external soul, which the pagan Germans knew as “*hamr*” and Latin sources called “*animus*” or “*spiritus*.” This external soul left a sleeping or entranced body to wander in either human or animal shape. This ancient concept informed notions that evidently existed in medieval folk-belief, and that clerics “translated” into demonical sorcery, devilish deceit, or delusion.

THE NOCTURNAL CAVALCADE

It seems reasonable to suppose that the influence of the widely used *Canon Episcopi*, an instruction to preachers, helped to spread Regino’s tale about ladies capable of supernatural nocturnal flights among learned and unlearned alike. These female cohorts traveled under many names. East of the Rhine their leader was known as Percht or Perchta. Berthold of Regensburg condemned these Bavarian superstitions, commanding that Christians must never believe in such nocturnal travelers or *nahtvaren*, neither the benevolent type, named *holden*, nor the malevolent, the *unholden*. Even the elves, as well as the “ladies of the night,” were all demons in disguise. The *unholden* (mainly some aspects of Perchta) feasted on human flesh; here the notion evidently intertwined with the older *striga* of Greco-Roman antiquity. According to Claude Lecouteux, the concept of the holdas originated in fairy cults. Mircea Eliade was the first, in 1970, to discuss both imaginary and real Sabbats, but historians ignored his points until Gustav Henningsen and Carlo Ginzburg took up the idea. Both elucidated the concept of the trance state during which the soul wanders. Unlike Norman Cohn’s position that the origin of the Sabbat lay in demono-

logical theories, they locate it in trance, dream, and vision. Indeed, there were instances where witches claimed the ability to extract their soul from the body.

The Austrian and Swiss concept of the “saligen” or the blessed people seemed to prove this theory of the trance state and the wandering soul, which Wolfgang Behringer denoted as some sort of peasant utopia. Another branch of stories connected the hulden or good people with the abduction to the court of Venus where the poet Tannhäuser lived. This popular legend appeared, for example, in the preacher Geiler von Kaysersberg’s sermon on the “unholden and witches” that mentioned those women who traveled at night to the mountain, or court of Venus.

THE MODERN FOLKTALE

A related Germanic version of the “furious host” pictured the god Wuotan (Odin, Wodin, Woutan, Wodan, Wotan) as its leader. Both legends eventually amalgamated, with some legends picturing Holda joining Wuotan in leadership. Jacob Grimm was convinced that Holda, as leader of the wild host, was Wuotan’s “wife” and identified her with the mild goddess Freyja or Fricka. Other folktales also adopted and adapted the goddess Holda, transforming her into a friendly old crone who taught mortal women orderly housekeeping by setting tasks. But she also remained a nature spirit, because when Lady Holle shook her cushions, the loose feathers tumbled to earth as snow. Holda and Berchta (Perchta, Bertha) also oversaw spinners, and on the last day of the year, they destroyed work that they found unfinished.

CHRISTA TUCZAY

See also: *BENANDANTI*; BURCHARD OF WORMS; *CANON EPISCOPI*; DIANA (ARTEMIS); FAIRIES; FERTILITY CULTS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; FOLKLORE; FREYA (FREYJA); GEILER VON KAYSERSBERG, JOHANN; GRIMM, JACOB; HECATE; SICILY; STRIX, STRIGA, STRIA.

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HOLINESS

Christian notions of holiness (holy words and signs, such as “Jesus” and the “Cross”) were taboos at the Sabbat and

in the world of the witches in general. In Jewish and Christian theology, holiness is primarily a quality reserved for God, distinguishing Him (theoretically exclusively) from all other existence. Although Samuel 2:2 announces that there is no holy one besides God, his previous order “Be ye holy, for I am holy” (Lev. 11:44) warrants the possibility of human holiness. Catholic Christianity applies the term “holy” not only to God, but also to men (e.g., saints, or the “Holy Father,” i.e., the pope), to institutions (“Holy Mother Church,” “Holy Office,” i.e., the Inquisition), to dates (“Holy Thursday”), and even to objects (“Holy Water”). Until very recently, with a few exceptions like cardinal Nicholas of Cusa, Catholic clergy restricted the quality of sacredness to elements of their belief while denying it to all other religions or confessions.

From the standpoint of the phenomenology of religions, there is no basic difference between the attitudes with which a witch venerates the demon, casts spells, or pronounces magical formulas, and that of a priest celebrating the mysteries of his religion. The sorcerer is an awe-inspiring person, working miracles, and is thereby comparable to the living saint, because he and his actions surpass the profane everyday world, possessing rather their own, sacred sphere. This is how a *magus* differs from an illusionist and his conjuring tricks. So the function of the rites of official religion and the charms of forbidden magic is the same for those who, respectively, believe in it. The location where these rites take place, the church, is hallowed, as are the sites of magic ceremonies like crossways or enchanted spots in nature. A place can be haunted either after the manifestation of a divine power there or after that of a demonic force. As Protestants have pointed out for almost 500 years, the phenomenological identity between ecclesiastical and magical formulas can be illustrated clearly by the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation. Only if the priest uses the absolutely correct wording “*hoc est enim corpus meum*” can the bread of the Host be transformed into the body of Jesus. This miracle occurs regardless of the priest’s personal merit or his intentions, exactly as magical incantations do. In both cases, only the holiness of the precisely correct words accomplishes the task. So the development of the ecclesiastical formula into “hocus pocus” does not seem to be fortuitous.

From the standpoint of the history of religions, however, holiness is a category valid for all religions, in fact their very core, as by definition, a religion requires some distinction between holy/sacred and profane. According to a seminal study of Rudolf Otto, the sacred is characterized by four components: the tremendous (the awe inspiring), the majestic (the overwhelming), the energetic (a gripping dynamism), and the mysterious (the completely alien). The term “sacredness” expresses this ambivalence better than the purely positive “holiness,” because it comes from the Latin

word “*sacer*,” which comprises not only the notions of holy and sanctified, but also accursed. Holiness can be defined as a theoretical concept, but it remains meaningless if not intuitively and emotionally experienced by the faithful. From extra-European religions, some expressions have been integrated into our general terminology about the holy, for example, “mana” or “taboo.” The first designates positive holiness and implicitly, power, while the second articulates negative holiness, implying danger and prohibition.

PETER DINZELBACHER

See also: CROSSROADS; LIVING SAINTS; MAGIC AND RELIGION; MIRACLES; SPELLS.

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HOLT, SIR JOHN (1642–1710)

As Lord Chief Justice of the King’s Bench in England for twenty-one years, from 1689 to 1710, Sir John Holt presided over at least eleven trials in which women were accused of witchcraft. Every time, Holt had the jury return a verdict of “not guilty,” thereby establishing his reputation for skepticism about witchcraft and contributing significantly to the end of English witch hunting.

Born in Oxfordshire, Holt reputedly led a dissolute life at Oxford University and left without taking a degree. He studied law at Gray’s Inn in London and embarked on a distinguished legal career that led to his knighting by King James II in 1685, and his appointment four years later, after the Glorious Revolution, to preside over England’s highest court. Holt died at his house in Bedford Row, London, and was buried at Redgrave church in Suffolk, where an elaborate baroque-style monument shows him sitting in his judge’s robes, flanked by allegorical figures of Justice and Mercy.

Typical of witchcraft trials before Holt was the case of Phillippa Munnings of Hartset, heard in Bury St. Edmunds in 1694. Munnings was accused of casting

a spell on her landlord and predicting, correctly, that he would lie “nose upward” in the churchyard before the next Saturday. She also was accused of possessing a polecat and two other black and white familiars. Holt decided that the alleged black and white imps were merely two balls of wool, and he set Munnings free.

In another case tried by Holt, the mother of a supposed bewitched girl said that on four or five occasions her daughter had walked backwards up a wall nine feet high, and then walked across the ceiling with her face and the forepart of her body parallel to the ceiling. The daughter claimed that Betty Horner had carried her up to her ceiling perch by means of witchcraft. Holt was not persuaded and set Horner free. Others Holt acquitted had been charged with having witch marks on their body, causing a young girl to vomit pins, straw, and feathers, and leaping five feet into the air.

Historians discussing Holt and witchcraft invariably repeat an unverifiable story about a trial where a woman was accused of witchcraft because of scraps of indecipherable paper found in her possession. Holt reportedly told the jury that one of the scraps was his own writing; he had given it to her years before, when he was without funds on a visit to Oxford and the woman, who rented rooms, had a daughter who was suffering from a bout of ague. Holt wrote some mumbo-jumbo in Greek (some sources say Latin) and told the woman that this would cure her daughter. When the girl improved, Holt received a room free for a week. When the jury, hearing the story, acquitted the woman, Holt allegedly gave her money to pay for his lodgings and for her time in court. True or otherwise, the story testifies to the reputation for integrity and kindness that Holt brought to his work as a judge.

Apart from his witchcraft verdicts, Holt is highly regarded by legal historians for his general contributions to jurisprudence. He is credited with being influential in establishing a separation between the domains of the king and the Parliament and the courts. An anonymous review of Holt's career, *The Life of the Right Honourable Sir John Holt, Knight, Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench* (1764), maintained, “There never was an abler, more unbiased and upright judge since England was a nation . . . his Lordship was always remarkable strenuous in . . . supporting the Rights and Liberties of the Subject” (cited in Holt-Wilson 2001, 1). When a Recorder in London, he resigned his judicial position rather than condemn an army deserter to death, despite the king's wishes that he do so. Holt maintained that in times of peace, desertion could only be prosecuted as a breach of contract.

Holt occupied an honored place in the history of English witchcraft. In witchcraft trials, Holt invariably assumed that plaintiffs were imposters, which, one writer notes, “greatly reduced their numbers.” To each

trial, he brought “a mind unclouded by prejudice and a single-hearted desire to give the prisoner every chance” (Hole 1957, 162).

GILBERT GEIS

See also: ACQUITTALS; ENGLAND; FAMILIARS; SKEPTICISM; TRIALS.

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HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

The Holy Roman Empire, a fragile structure that served in practice as an umbrella for several hundred virtually independent territories, allowed witch hunts for structural reasons, without ever stimulating them. The emperors and their institutions never openly supported witch hunting.

Neither “Holy” nor “Roman,” the empire was based on the prophecy of Daniel (2:37–45, and 7:8–11) that this world would end with the collapse of the four great empires of world history. Therefore, it was important for medieval minds that the fourth and last world empire, the Roman Empire, would endure. According to this “invention of tradition,” the pope had transferred this empire from ancient Rome to Charlemagne by crowning him (Roman) emperor on Christmas day, 800; the legitimate title of Roman emperor was subsequently transferred to Carolingian rulers, then to the Ottonian and Salian dynasties, and eventually to the Staufers. After the glorious reigns of Frederick I Barbarossa (ruled 1152–1190) and Frederick II of Hohenstaufen (ruled 1212/15–1250), this vast empire, then stretching from the North Sea to Rome and claiming suzerainty over all European kingdoms, disintegrated.

Even at this stage, the almost-virtual empire proved an obstacle to nation building. The fiction of empire permitted the construction of middle-size territories like Bavaria, Lorraine, or Saxony, but also allowed for the survival of numerous small independent feudal lordships, abbeys, imperial cities, and even autonomous villages. Its political fragmentation contrasted increasingly with rising national kingdoms like France, England, Spain, or Sweden, which became (after periods of war or civil war) unified states. In contrast, the Holy Roman Empire resembled the United Nations more than a state or an empire. Its imperial diet was no parliament, but an assembly of delegates from territories ruled by autonomous princes or parliaments, or both. According to the “Golden Bull” of 1356, the *Kaiser* or emperor was elected by seven powerful princes, including three archbishops: the prince-electors (*Kurfürsten*) of Mainz,

Cologne, Trier, Bohemia, the Palatinate, electoral Saxony, and Brandenburg. They mostly chose princes from the powerful Habsburg, Luxembourg, and Wittelsbach dynasties. However, there were also candidates from abroad, including some kings of England, France, and Spain. When the Habsburg heir Charles I, a king of Spain born and educated in the Netherlands, was elected emperor in 1519, he defeated both Francis I of France and Henry VIII of England.

After 1555, the Peace of Augsburg guaranteed considerable freedom of conscience in the empire: liberty for princes and cities to remain Lutheran, and permission for individuals to choose a residence according to their faith. In 1648, the Peace of Westphalia, terminating the horrors of the Thirty Years' War, extended these rights to Calvinist states and carefully regulated coexistence among its different Christian confessions. From then until the Holy Roman Empire collapsed in 1806, there were few further constitutional changes.

The Holy Roman Empire was no "German Empire," but instead resembled a United Nations of central Europe. Unlike national monarchies such as France or Spain, which waged aggressive wars to acquire their neighbors' lands, the Holy Roman Empire served as a peacekeeping organization. Because of its complicated political structure—the emperor was dependent on taxes granted by the imperial diets—it was unable to declare war except in extreme situations, for example, when the Ottoman Sultan launched a major military campaign against Habsburg lands, or when France invaded the empire's western parts. In two cases of real danger (1529, 1683) when Turkish armies besieged Vienna, the empire was able to strike back effectively. By improving its political tools, the *Reichstag* (diet) and the *Kreistage* (district assembly), and its judicial tools, the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court) and the *Reichshofrat* (imperial aulic court), the Holy Roman Empire managed to keep peace within its boundaries, to avoid civil wars, and to maintain the rule of law.

Several languages were spoken within the Holy Roman Empire, certainly one reason Latin served as lingua franca among the educated, maintaining its high esteem until the end of the eighteenth century. All academics in the empire could converse in Latin, the teaching language at its universities. Former territories of the Holy Roman Empire are now parts of France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Italy, Slovenia, Austria, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Poland, and, of course, Germany. Around 1600, the Holy Roman Empire included 7 prince-electoral, 43 secular principalities, 32 ecclesiastical principalities, 140 lesser secular lordships, about 70 imperial abbacies, 4 cantons of the Teutonic Order,

about 75 imperial free cities, and many independent imperial knights (about 670 in Swabia, 700 in Franconia, and about 360 in the Rhineland). Because of constant fluctuation (even the number of electors grew after 1648), it is impossible to provide a definite total of all territories with independent jurisdictions within the empire's boundaries, but there must have been more than 2,000. This constitutional pluralism permitted the coexistence of a wide variety of lifestyles, aided by the Reformation with its plurality of denominations and the invention of the printing press and later the periodical press. For example, Johann Kepler invited Galileo Galilei to move to Germany in order to escape persecution in Italy, because there was no papal Inquisition north of the Alps, and he could choose a new home wherever he desired. At the same time, however, the virtual independence of even tiny territories enabled imperial lords, knights, or abbots to commit the most incredible crimes. Only a few of them were ever punished, like the witch-hunting count of Hohenems and Vaduz, who was stripped of his feudal rights and imprisoned for the rest of his life; his territory was awarded to the princes of Liechtenstein.

Witch hunting was first introduced in the Holy Roman Empire during the reign of Emperor Frederick III (ruled 1440–1493), a weak monarch incapable of exercising any control over his realm. We do not know whether he ever noticed the activities of the author of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), the Dominican inquisitor Heinrich Kramer. Frederick's son Maximilian I (ruled 1486/1493–1519) established a kind of cultural hegemony in part of the empire, but although evidently interested in learning more about the threat of witchcraft, this means little, because he was interested in almost anything. The Benedictine abbot Johannes Trithemius claimed that he had answered eight questions from Maximilian concerning witchcraft, and the author of the *Malleus* claimed that Maximilian granted him a royal privilege in Brussels in 1486. But this cannot have been very favorable, because Kramer avoided publication and no other trace of this alleged privilege remains. There is no indication whatsoever that Maximilian approved the atrocities of witchcraft trials; the stifling of trials in his homeland (Tyrol) suggests the opposite.

Under his grandson and successor Charles V (ruled 1519–1556), witch hunting abated in Germany (as well as in his other possessions in the Netherlands, Italy, and Spain), possibly because of preoccupations with the Reformation, or maybe by a more favorable climate during his reign, when most parts of the Holy Roman Empire were enjoying relative prosperity despite religious tensions. Clearly the imperial legislation of 1532, the Carolina Code (*Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*), tried to calm attempts to

promote the persecution of supposed witches and even avoided using the term. Like Charles V's Spanish Inquisition, his German Estates denied any authority to the *Malleus Maleficarum*, and German lawyers even managed to repeal heresy laws. The upsurge of trials under Charles's Austrian successors, Ferdinand I (ruled 1556–1564) and Maximilian II (ruled 1564–1576) can hardly be explained through any particular persecutory zeal; the latter was an articulate supporter of religious toleration.

However, once economic conditions turned unfavorable after the early 1560s with the onset of the Little Ice Age, triggering grassroots demands for persecution, the political fragmentation within the Holy Roman Empire and its lack of a centralized judicial system allowed a plurality of attitudes toward witchcraft. Whereas territories like the electoral Palatinate could simply deny the existence of witches and suppress any accusations, neighboring territories like the prince-archbishopric of Mainz could conduct waves of severe persecutions, or the duchy of Lorraine could adopt a policy of chronic prosecution for forty years. No emperor could affect anything that these princes or parliaments decided in their territories.

Nevertheless, it seems a striking coincidence that the ruler in whose reign the witchcraft persecutions reached their first climax considered himself bewitched, and was considered by some Jesuits and Capuchins to be a magician or sorcerer possessed by the Devil. Emperor Rudolf II (ruled 1576–1612) was famous for his complacency, his melancholy, or his madness; but more recent research demonstrated that his court at Prague was unusually civilized and culturally rich, attracting diplomats from Russia and Persia, and artists and scientists from all over Europe, including such celebrities as Giordano Bruno or John Dee, the English magician and mathematician. Like his predecessors, Emperor Rudolf did nothing to promote witch hunting, and very few executions occurred in his hereditary lands in Bohemia and Austria. The same holds true for his successors, emperor Matthias (ruled 1612–1619) and Ferdinand II (ruled 1619–1637), although the latter was a zealous supporter of the Counter-Reformation. Religious warfare in the Holy Roman Empire and witch hunts climaxed simultaneously around 1630, but obviously for different reasons. (The coincidence of civil war with witch hunting is well known in France and England as well.) The anarchy of the Thirty Years' War, with Spanish, French, and Swedish armies including soldiers from all over Europe ravaging the Empire, may have aggravated its political anarchy and certainly added to its hardships. However, the devastating famines with consequent mortality crises were clearly caused independently, by climatic extremes of the Little Ice Age like the terrible frosts of early summer 1626 or the "year without a summer" in 1628. Such hardships

may have increased the fierceness of warfare, and both were clearly beyond the control of any political authorities in the Holy Roman Empire.

Whereas witchcraft accusations were mainly grassroots reactions triggered by individual and collective hardships, with the weak administrations of some ecclesiastical territories succumbing easily to popular pressure, imperial institutions tried to stop the atrocities. The *Reichskammergericht* as well as the *Reichshofrat* issued several judgments in favor of those persecuted and even imposed penalties against two prince-bishoprics, Bamberg and Cologne. Relatives of victims of witch hunting managed to form a lobby and convince officials that more direct political pressure was needed to stop the persecutions. The Habsburg capitals at Prague and Vienna, centers of the Counter-Reformation, became refuges for witch suspects from the Catholic prince-bishoprics, very much like Holland or such imperial cities as Frankfurt or Speyer, the seat of the *Reichskammergericht*. From these safe havens, the refugees organized resistance against the hellish persecutions in their homelands. Because no imperial diets were summoned between 1608 and 1640, a meeting of the prince-electors (*Kurfürstentag*) at Regensburg in 1630 became a forum for their complaints. Imperial and Bavarian politicians were prepared to intervene even against their closest political allies, making Franconian prince-bishops aware of rising disapproval of their conduct within the Counter-Reformation camp. Although the Swedish invasion in Germany liberated the remaining prisoners in Franconia, executions had already stopped in 1630.

A close look at the activities of the *Reichskammergericht*, the highest independent court of appeals in the empire, which moved to Wetzlar after the demolition of Speyer by Louis XIV's troops, shows that its judgments influenced public opinion, although not immediately, and affected the conduct of lawyers in various territories. This is rather surprising, because this court had no responsibility for criminal justice. However, defendants could appeal cases that demonstrated faulty legal procedures in territories where rulers had not managed to gain a *privilegium de non appellando* (exemption from the jurisdiction of the imperial courts). Despite all its limitations, this court of appeals was more successful in influencing the politics of persecution than was formerly assumed. Even at the climax of the persecution in the late 1620s, it issued harsh decrees against the Franconian witch hunts. The number of lawsuits about witchcraft trials in no way reflected the volume of witchcraft trials in the empire, but represented their general course surprisingly well: a substantial rise from the 1560s, a climax between 1590 and 1630, a gradual decline until the 1680s, and few cases afterward.

TABLE H-1 LITIGATIONS OVER WITCHCRAFT TRIALS AT THE REICHSKAMMERGERICHT, 1500–1800 (Behringer 2004, 137, using data from Oestmann 1997, 531–602)

<i>Generation</i>	<i>Victims Appealing</i>	<i>Litigations over Witchcraft Trials</i>
1500–1529	1	3
1530–1559	10	17
1560–1589	19	39
1590–1619	50	97
1620–1649	29	46
1650–1679	17	30
1680–1709	3	6
1710–1739	2	6
1740–1769	0	1
1770–1800	0	2
Totals	131	247

Because of general criticism of the atrocities of witch hunting in the 1630s, articulated most fervently in public by the Jesuit Friedrich Spee and the Protestant Johann Matthäus Meyfart, accompanied by a general exhaustion of religious zeal and a collapse of population in central Europe, the number of witchcraft trials and executions declined sharply. During the regency of Emperor Ferdinand III (ruled 1637–1657), there were relatively few persecutions in the empire, and virtually none in his Austrian homelands. Under his successor Leopold I (ruled 1658–1705), central Europe saw another upsurge of trials. But for the first time, the imperial administration intervened to stop a local witch hunt. After Count Ferdinand Karl Franz von Hohenems had conducted a large-scale persecution of witches between 1677 and 1680, within his tiny county of Vaduz, the *Reichshofrat* commissioned the prince-abbot of Kempten to hold an enquiry, eventually stripping the count of his rights. The count died in prison at Kempten after two years of confinement and his lands were given to the prince of Liechtenstein, an imperial favorite, whose descendants still rule this land as an independent nation.

In the first half of the eighteenth century, there were few changes under the Habsburg emperors Joseph I (ruled 1705–1711) and Charles VI (ruled 1711–1740). Like their predecessors, they did not react to witchcraft trials in the empire, nor did their unfortunate Wittelsbach successor, Charles VII (ruled 1742–1745). Even the Habsburg-Lorraine emperor Francis I Stephen (ruled 1745–1765), although personally enlightened, failed to intervene in sporadic late trials in the empire, much like his wife, Empress Maria Theresa, who ruled the Habsburg Austro-Hungarian possessions. It was

only under their son, emperor Joseph II (ruled 1765–1790), a radical proponent of enlightened ideas, that the endemic witchcraft trials were finally stopped from above in Hungary and Austrian Silesia (currently in Poland), and accusations were discouraged everywhere through public campaigns like the Bavarian War of the Witches. Only Josephine legislation in Austria-Hungary removed magical crimes altogether shortly after the French Revolution, although no witches had been executed for about a generation.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AUSTRIA; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; BAVARIAN WAR OF THE WITCHES; CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*); FERDINAND II, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; FRANCE; GERMANY; HOHENEMS, FERDINAND KARL FRANZ VON, COUNT OF VADUZ; ITALY; JOSEPH II, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; KEMPTEN, PRINCE-ABBOT OF; KEPLER, JOHANNES; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); LITTLE ICE AGE; LUXEMBOURG, DUCHY OF; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MARIA THERESA, HOLY ROMAN EMPRESS; MAXIMILIAN I, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; MEYFART (MEYFAHRT), JOHANN MATTHÄUS; NETHERLANDS, NORTHERN; NETHERLANDS, SOUTHERN; PALATINATE, ELECTORATE OF; POLAND; *REICHSHOFRAT* (IMPERIAL AULIC COURT); *REICHSKAMMERGERICHT* (IMPERIAL CHAMBER COURT); RUDOLF II, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; SLOVAKIA; SLOVENIA; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; SWITZERLAND; TRITHEMIUS, JOHANNES; VADUZ, COUNTY OF.

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HOMER

Homer is the supposed author of the earliest surviving works of European literature, the Greek epics *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, which contain the earliest surviving literary accounts of magical phenomena. In later antiquity, Homeric verses were considered to have magical qualities, while Homer came to be regarded as a magical adept.

The epics attributed to Homer are now recognized to be the products of an oral tradition that matured over many centuries. They were probably written and fixed

in more or less the form in which we possess them around the seventh century B.C.E. Their most striking and important magical episode was the *Odyssey's* tale of the hero Odysseus's encounter with the witch-like Circe in books 10–12. It also incorporated Odysseus's trip to the underworld to summon up the ghosts of the dead, in accordance with her instructions.

In the *Iliad*, the goddess Hera borrowed the love goddess Aphrodite's *kestos himas* or "embroidered band" so that she could seduce her own husband Zeus, king of the gods (14.197–222). This mysterious band can almost certainly be identified with the "saltire" Aphrodite was sometimes depicted as wearing in ancient statuary. This consisted of a pair of straps worn over the upper torso and crossed over the breasts. They emphasized the shape and prominence of the breasts beneath a loose-fitting dress. The function of such a band as an erotic amulet was therefore self-evident. The *Odyssey* also mentioned a healing amulet. When a boar young Odysseus was hunting gored him above the knee, his friends, the sons of Autolycus, bound the wound and "staunched the black blood with an incantation" (19.449–458). The use of the incantation suggests that the binding had a magical as well as a practical function.

The *Iliad* may also have alluded to magical cursing. King Proteus dispatched Bellerophon to Lycia with a folded tablet, on which he inscribed "many life-destroying baleful signs." When the Lycian king read these, he understood that he was to attempt to kill Bellerophon (6.167–170). But the mysterious signs need only have been coded images; or they may reflect the once-again illiterate Homeric society's memories of a forgotten Mycenaean writing system, Linear B.

Over time, such paradigmatic magical episodes led to the notion that Homer had been a master sorcerer. In the fifth century B.C.E., he was attributed with some remarkable verses, *Kiln*, a curse against potters, in which a variety of appropriately named demons, Basher, Smasher, Over-fire, Shatterer, and Under-fire, were invited to destroy the potters' work, and the kiln itself was asked to grind their pots as if in a horse's mouth ([Homer] *Epigram* 14). In the second or third century C.E., Philostratus claimed that Homer had used the necromancy with which he was so familiar to call up the ghost of Odysseus and learn the details of the *Odyssey* story from him.

Interest was also taken in the magical nature and properties of the Homeric texts. In ca. 230 C.E., the Christian scholar Julius Africanus remodeled the Homeric account of Odysseus's evocation of the ghosts, and inserted into it an exotic prayer saluting the magical culture of his own age (*Kestoi* ["Magical embroideries"] 18 = *PGMXXIII*). The prayer made appeal to a series of powers familiar from the Greek magical papyri: to Greek underworld deities, to the Sun, to Egyptian

deities (Anubis, Ptah, Phre/Ra, Nephtho), to Jewish ones (Yahweh), and to prominent demons (Ablanatho and Abraxas/Abasax). Africanus explained that it had been an original part of the poem, and that it had been suppressed either by Homer or his subsequent editors because its tone was inappropriate to the epic.

The recipes of the Greek magical papyri exploited Homeric texts in a number of ways, doubtless because of the paradigmatic magical episodes they contained. Most remarkable were the instructions for the "Homer oracle" in a third- or fourth-century C.E. papyrus (*PGM VII.1–148*). One posed a question and threw a die three times. A verse of Homer was supplied to be read in prophecy for each of the 216 possible sequential combinations up to 6.6.6. The fourth-century C.E. "Great Magical Papyrus in Paris" prescribed the inscription of an iron tablet with three seemingly random verses from *Iliad* book 10, to make a multipurpose magical assistant (*PGM IV.2145–2240*). The tablet concealed runaway slaves; it enabled dying and dead men to prophesy; it delivered one from binding spells; it conferred victory upon athletes and litigants; it dismissed demons and wild animals; and it brought love and riches to its wearer.

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See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; CIRCE; *DEFIXIONES*; GHOSTS; GREEK MAGICAL PAPYRI; NECROMANCY.

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HOMOSEXUALITY

The associations between the two "monstrous" crimes of homosexuality and witchcraft in medieval and early modern Europe were purely theoretical, but not infrequent. Demonologists read the story of Sodom and Gomorrah (*Genesis* 19:1–29) as the archetypal depiction of human wickedness, mixing sexual deviance with violence and pride, although "sodomy" meant primarily an "immoral" and "depraved" form of sex. Sodomy and witchcraft were seen as essentially similar forms of

radically rejecting God's commandments. Early demonologists often made vague allusions to the unspeakable sexual acts performed by witches during their night gatherings. But whereas they offer graphic descriptions of the witches' alleged cannibalism and vampirism, they avoid any direct reference to sodomy.

The distinction between our modern concept of homosexuality and medieval and early modern sodomy is of essential importance. Although in recent times some scholars have tried to desexualize sodomy, claiming that this concept is merely a generic label for sinfulness, all treatises on demonology uphold the explicitly sexual nature of sodomy.

In the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, part I, question 2), Heinrich Kramer held that Zoroaster, inspired by the Devil, first practiced the arts of magic. Referring to St. Augustine's *City of God* (book 21, chap. 14), Kramer wrote that Zoroaster laughed when he was born, which was a clear sign of his demonic nature. Zoroaster was defeated in war by king Ninus, who had a morbid love for his father Belus. When Belus died, Ninus built a statue of his father, which became the first example of idolatry. For the authors of the *Malleus*, sodomy and incest were the foundations of idolatry and magic, and thus of witchcraft. Being an act "against nature," that is, an act of rebellion against the natural laws of God's creation, sodomy subsumed all possible forms of sinful behaviors and beliefs.

It was a commonplace assumption of medieval and early modern demonology that even devils refrained from practicing sodomy with their followers, because of its baseness. We can trace this hypothesis back to Thomas of Cantimpré (d. ca. 1270–1272). In the chapter "Devils blush over the sin against nature" of *Bonum universale de apibus* (The Universal Good Concerning Bees, 2.30.2), Thomas stated that he had never heard of any succubus or incubus being engaged in acts against nature. According to several demonologists, devils will even avoid a man for three days when he has practiced sodomy with another man. Although treatises on demonology hinted at repulsive sex acts between devils and their followers, witchcraft theorists reject sodomy as a possible form of intercourse because the devils (if not their human partners) find it repugnant.

In *An Investigation of Witches* (*Quaestio de strigibus*, 1523), Bartolomeo della Spina stated that by offering themselves to the Devil, witches abandoned their condition as human beings, for they lost their free will forever. According to Spina, witches could not withdraw from their duties after signing a pact with Satan. Spina defined witches as "heretics" who have committed an act against nature. If to be human meant to exert free will, witches were sodomites in that they have turned into beasts.

Perhaps the most thorough analysis of the interrelationships among witchcraft, sodomy, and heresy was

De encantationibus seu ensalmis (*On Incantations or Ensalmi* [evil incantations], 1620) by the Portuguese Manuel Vale de Moura. He believed that "sodomite" indicates all people who have given themselves to Satan. Jews, de Moura was convinced, were devoted to the practice of sodomy. As the sodomites insulted the creation by misusing their sexual organs, so did the Jews reject God by denying that Jesus was God. *De ensalmis* focused on those invocations called *ensalmi* (texts made of quotations from the Bible and Catholic prayers) that *conversos* recited to address the Christian God. For Moura, *ensalmi* were in fact forms of witchcraft; *ensalmistae* or *ensalmadores* (those who performed these rituals) were magicians inspired by the Devil. The word *ensalmista* equaled *sodomita* (section 3, chap. 4).

In his *Breve discurso contra a heretica perfidia do iudaismo* (Short Discourse Against the Heretical Treachery of Judaism, 1623), Vicente da Costa Mattos claimed that the Bible, especially Hebrew Scripture, was written *against* the Jews (chap. 16). In the Bible, God meant to leave a written record of the Jews' perverse nature. Innumerable travelers in Northern Africa, Mattos says, reported that indeed the Jews indulged in this unspeakable sin even with their own children. As with Zoroaster, sodomy was linked to incest.

The concept of sodomy ranks among the most enduring legacies of medieval and early modern demonology.

ARMANDO MAGGI

See also: DEMONOLOGY; DEMONS; IDOLATRY; INCUBUS AND SUCCUBUS; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MOURA, MANUEL VALE DE; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC; SPINA, BARTOLOMEO DELLA.

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HONOR

The concept of honor often played a key role in both early modern witchcraft trials and in lawsuits brought by the victims of witchcraft slander, trying to defend their (and their family's) reputations against such suspicions. Moreover, arguments about honor often surfaced in the preliminaries to a witchcraft trial. Mutual slandering as witches can often be interpreted as struggles over personal and clan honor.

In recent years, historians and sociologists have developed several concepts of honor in face-to-face societies: Pierre Bourdieu, for example, decoded honor as symbolic capital that was spread between the members of a society in different portions. But in the case of witchcraft slander, honor can be understood better as a

binary formula (Walz 1993, 422–425), that is, that either honor or dishonor characterized a person in general. Strong tendencies existed to designate one's enemies as completely dishonest while trying to represent oneself as completely honest. In this context, it is therefore necessary to describe honor and dishonor as fundamental concepts of identity. Slandering somebody as a witch often demonstrated that the opponent was a person beyond normal sociability.

For many sixteenth- and seventeenth-century legal experts, honor was a significant criterion to be considered in a witchcraft trial. An assessor of the highest German tribunal, the imperial chamber court (*Reichskammergericht*), delivered an expert opinion in the context of a witchcraft trial from 1588, arguing that a good reputation (*bona fama*) normally should bar any witchcraft suspicion. Therefore, he thought that the testimony of honorable witnesses about a person's reputation should be much valued in the attempt to prove guilt or innocence (Gylmann 1602, 77). On the other hand, in juristic circles, the idea was widespread that witchcraft was a *crimen obscurum* (secret crime). Some jurists therefore thought that, in witchcraft trials, testimonies of neighbors were not reliable and the affirmation of a good or bad reputation (*mala fama*) was not conclusive, especially if other incriminating facts had been revealed.

In European countries with legal systems using Roman or canon law, a trial for witchcraft slander could be initiated by the *actio iniuriarum* (defamation suit). But even in England, which used neither, it was possible to bring an action against a person who had cried out a witchcraft slander (Sharpe 1980; Rushton 1982). In Westphalia and some other German regions, insulted and offended persons had four main ways to affirm their honor: first, by accusing the slanderer before lower criminal courts; second, by the swimming test (water ordeal); by *canonica purgation* (canonical purgation—the oath of compurgation); or finally, by a formal *actio iniuriarum*.

If a charge of slander was upheld in a lower criminal court, the slanderer was condemned to a fine, which the court normally collected. Little is known about these summary and oral proceedings. But we can assume that slanderers rarely had a chance to bring up evidence for their imputation, even if they actually intended to do so. The widespread condemnation of aggressors in lower courts resulted mainly from the desire of local authorities to punish any disturbance of social peace.

Most educated jurists refused the cold-water ordeal. Nevertheless, local judges ordered many water ordeals performed, often because a suspected witch had requested it in order to clear herself of suspicion. Water ordeals were frequently real contests over honor between two people who had slandered each other as witches or werewolves. If the water ordeal failed, this fact was not only taken as a very strong indication of

guilt, but also as dishonorable. Nevertheless, a successful water ordeal offered a good chance to restore a damaged reputation.

Few postmedieval documents have been preserved concerning the *canonica purgatio*, an outmoded and discredited method of proceeding, in which the suspected person took an oath that he had not committed the alleged crime and produced a required number of honorable witnesses (*compurgatores*) who swore by a fixed oath formula that the suspected person had told the truth (Graminaeus 1594, 68). Although it was very difficult to obtain permission to take such an oath and it might be equally difficult to find enough suitable witnesses, a few prestigious people tried to free themselves from suspicion in this way (Fuchs 1995, 2; Fuchs 2002, 117–120). In Croatia, into the early seventeenth century, the accused had the opportunity to seek acquittal through witnesses who would testify to his or her innocence in court.

The most important legal method for upholding one's honor was the formal Romano-canonical *actio iniuriarum*. It could be used in two different ways. In a criminal proceeding, the aim of the plaintiff was to punish the slanderer physically—with prison, banishment, pillory, and so forth. In a civil proceeding, the plaintiff and court estimated the sum of money needed to repair the damage to the plaintiff's honor (Fuchs 1999, 52–54). In either form of proceeding, a slanderer could also be required to declare in public that he regretted the slander and that he considered the plaintiff to be a totally honorable person.

Because the struggle for honor normally increased during such proceedings, a defendant often tried to bring in evidence supporting his witchcraft accusations against the plaintiff. If a defendant produced enough credible witnesses, it increased the plaintiff's risk that the suspicions of witchcraft were considered substantiated, and an ex officio trial might be started against the plaintiff. Nevertheless, as some case studies have shown, plaintiffs also had a real chance to rehabilitate themselves from suspicion of witchcraft.

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See also: ACCUSATIONS; CROATIA; ROMAN LAW; SLANDER; SWIMMING TEST; TRIALS; WITNESSES.

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HOOGSTRATEN, JACOB VAN (1465–1527)

The Dominican friar and papal inquisitor Jacob van Hoogstraten (also Hochstraten or Hoogstraeten) abandoned the demonology of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486). Born in Hoogstraten, a village now in Belgium, he matriculated in arts at Louvain in 1482 before studying philosophy and theology at Louvain and Cologne. In 1505, he became professor of theology at Cologne; in 1510, he was elected prior of the Dominican convent in Cologne, leading to his nomination as papal inquisitor for the archdioceses of Cologne, Mainz, and Trier. He died in Cologne.

In 1510 he published a *Tractatus magistralis declarans quam graviter peccent querentes auxilium a maleficis* (Magisterial Treatise, Declaring That Those Who Seek Help from Witches Commit a Grave Sin). In 1486, Heinrich Kramer, his predecessor as papal inquisitor in the Rhineland, identified witchcraft in his *Malleus Maleficarum* as a crime that could only be perpetrated by people who had concluded a formal pact with the Devil. Van Hoogstraten, however, returned to the teachings of St. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, according to which magic indeed implied a pact, but it could very well be only an implicit covenant, of whose implications a witch might not be aware. Van Hoogstraten interpreted magic as a system of signs that informed demons about the wishes of a magician or a witch. Van Hoogstraten did not deny the reality of the explicit pact as a contract concluded by a human being with a demon, but his statement that witchcraft did not need such a covenant to be effective reduced the unmitigated position of the *Malleus*—not so much from any sort of toleration, but because of Hoogstraten's devotion to traditional scholasticism.

He showed similar conservatism in the controversy over whether or not to destroy the Talmud. In 1507, Johannes Pfefferkorn, a convert from Judaism, began campaigning for the confiscation and destruction of the Talmud to promote the conversion of the Jews. In 1510, the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I asked

advice from several people and institutions, including van Hoogstraten and Johannes Reuchlin (1455–1522), a humanist lawyer who had learned Hebrew and had published a commentary on the Kabbalah in 1494. Backed by the University of Cologne, van Hoogstraten favored adopting Pfefferkorn's policy. Reuchlin opposed destroying the Talmud for a variety of reasons: Jews should be considered fellow citizens with a legal right to maintain their own religious traditions, and the Talmud and the Kabbalah contained passages that corroborated Christian views; these texts should therefore be studied and not destroyed. Hoogstraten responded by formally accusing Reuchlin of heresy.

In November 1513, the pope ordered the bishops of Speyer and Worms to preside over a trial against Reuchlin, with van Hoogstraten as prosecutor. In March 1514, this episcopal court acquitted Reuchlin, but van Hoogstraten appealed to the pope. The Holy See took six years to reach a verdict; in 1520, Rome finally ruled in favor of van Hoogstraten. By then, the matter had lost much of its significance, with the early Lutheran Reformation occupying the center of German public attention. During this quarrel, known as the *Reuchlinstreit*, some of Reuchlin's supporters ridiculed van Hoogstraten and his allies with satires, portraying him as an ignoramus who understood nothing about the contents of the Talmud, but was convinced that, as an inquisitor, he should prosecute everything he was unable to understand. In a collection of fabricated letters, van Hoogstraten's imaginary allies expressed themselves in barbarous Latin and were completely ignorant of both Greek and Hebrew. The conflict over the Talmud thus became a public dispute between traditional scholasticism and humanist philology. In 1520, van Hoogstraten's fellow Dominicans deposed him as prior of their convent in Cologne and also as papal inquisitor. But the pope promptly restored him in order to concentrate on the struggle against Luther. Meanwhile, soon after his trial had ended, Reuchlin was appointed professor of Greek and Hebrew at the University of Tübingen, where he died in 1522.

HANS DE WAARDT

See also: AQUINAS, THOMAS; AUGUSTINE, ST.; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; KABBALAH; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; PACT WITH THE DEVIL.

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HOPKINS, MATTHEW (D. 1647)

Matthew Hopkins, the “Witch-Finder General,” was associated with the only mass witchcraft trials to occur in England, taking place in some eastern counties between 1645 and 1647. We know practically nothing about Hopkins before those years. The best guess is that he was the son of a Suffolk minister named James Hopkins; the tradition that he was a lawyer is probably unfounded.

By his own account, Hopkins, then a minor gentleman living at Manningtree in Essex, first became worried about the presence of witches in and around his home village in the winter of 1644–1645. His fears, and those of other local residents, resulted in a number of women in Manningtree and the neighboring parishes being investigated as suspected witches. On March 25, 1645, the first of these, an aged, one-legged widow named Elizabeth Clarke, confessed to keeping familiars. Others were drawn in and subjected to a process known as “watching,” which entailed lengthy periods of sleep deprivation, combined with general rough handling, leading questions, and psychological pressure. Thirty-six women, of whom perhaps nineteen were subsequently executed, were tried at Chelmsford in July 1645.

The trials did not end there. Manningtree was a locally important port on the River Stour, and witchcraft fears evidently crossed the river into neighboring Suffolk, which experienced the most numerous trials in this episode (for extracts from relevant sources, see Ewen 1933, 281–302). From there the trials spread into Huntingdonshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, the Isle of Ely, and perhaps less intensively, into a number of adjacent counties. Records are insufficient to permit a complete reconstruction. However, surviving documentation suggests that maybe 250 suspected witches were tried, or at least subjected to preliminary examination, of whom at least a hundred (some contemporary sources double this figure) were executed. It was by far the biggest witch hunt ever experienced in England, on par with many large-scale hunts of continental Europe, and occurred at exactly the same time as the largest witch hunt in the Kingdom of France convulsed Languedoc.

A number of factors were at work that made witch hunting on this scale possible. Obviously, Hopkins, along with his associate John Stearne, provided a catalyst. Occasionally aided by a woman called Mary Phillips (who had acquired great skill in finding the witch’s mark), these two men rapidly acquired a reputation as witch-hunting experts, and the presence of such

“professional” witch finders acquired considerable significance. It has been suggested that Hopkins’s enthusiasm for witch hunting was fueled by the fees that he (like his counterparts in Languedoc) received from settlements grateful for having their witches detected and removed. But this interpretation seems overdrawn: Hopkins generally received only a small fee and money for his expenses: his main motivation seems to have been a genuine fear and hatred of witches, and a desire to root them out. What is rather more certain is the importance of the methods Hopkins and Stearne used to obtain confessions in a land where torture was legally prohibited, except in cases of high treason. The use of “watching” meant that suspects were sometimes kept without sleep for two or three days while subjected to general ill treatment and severe psychological pressure. Although a close reading of records from earlier English cases occasionally reveals similar pressures being brought to bear on suspected witches, the degree and intensity of such abuse in the Hopkins trials are remarkable.

These methods, coupled with the apparent preconceptions of Hopkins and Stearne about witchcraft and the religious mood in East Anglia at the time, produced a distinctive flavor to the witches’ confessions that they elicited. For the first time, the Devil appeared regularly



Title page of Matthew Hopkins' *The Discovery of Witches* (1647) depicting accused witches and their familiars.

in the confessions of English witches: many admitted to having made a pact with him, and several to having had sexual intercourse with him. But the English witchcraft stereotype did not break down entirely. Many women may have claimed to have met the Devil; but despite Hopkins's conviction that the witches around Manningtree met regularly, there was no hint of a Sabbath in their confessions. Women were more likely to describe their familiars, which featured very prominently in these trials, than to claim they had met the Devil. Most of those tried were charged with acts of *maleficium* (harmful magic) that had long formed the basis of English witchcraft accusations. Above all, as in Languedoc in 1645, the stereotype of the witch never broke down, almost all of those accused being relatively poor women. The major exception was John Lowes, vicar of Brandeston in Suffolk, who was executed. One of the women convicted, Mother Lakeland, was well connected socially and had previously enjoyed a good reputation; she also had the distinction of being burned at Ipswich in 1645 because she was convicted of killing her husband by witchcraft (which redefined her offense as petty treason and even permitted the use of torture).

It is obvious that Hopkins could only have initiated mass witchcraft trials if there was popular enthusiasm for them, and recent rethinking of these trials tends to emphasize the importance of popular demands for witch hunting rather than ascribe the whole affair to the evil genius or greed of Hopkins. Both Hopkins and Stearne, in their respective justifications of their actions, stressed that they only carried out their witch-hunting activities in towns that had welcomed or even invited them to come and search for witches. There may be an element of special pleading here; but the inhabitants of the eastern counties certainly seemed happy enough to participate in witch hunting, or at least give evidence against supposed witches, and we can trace a number of factors at work in this respect.

The Hopkins witchcraft trials came toward the end of the First Civil War. East Anglia had not been a war zone; but it was, along with London, the heartland of parliamentarianism. By early 1645, that war was becoming increasingly ideological. In particular, south-eastern England had developed a hard-line, popular Puritanism that identified very strongly with the parliamentary cause. One aspect of this was the purging, under the direction of parliamentarian committees, of "scandalous and malignant" clergymen in 1643–1644. Some of them were men who led scandalous lives or were regarded as professionally incompetent, while others (and the two categories were not mutually exclusive) were simply not enthusiastic enough for the parliamentary cause. This meant that many experienced and relatively moderate parish clergy were replaced by young and enthusiastic committed Puritans. Religious zeal boiled over in 1644, when a Suffolk man of respectable

yeoman stock, William Dowsing, had, under parliamentary authority, led a campaign of iconoclasm in which ornaments and decorations in about 150 Suffolk parish churches were mutilated or destroyed. The more moderate religious style that had been largely responsible for the virtual ending of witchcraft trials in England in the 1630s had been replaced in this region by a much more hard-line form of belief. Moreover, the experienced justices of the peace who might have helped dampen down the early stages of the witch hunts had either been replaced as ideologically unsound or were preoccupied with maintaining the war effort; normal judicial structures, although far from absent, had been in some measure eroded by events of the previous three years. Religious enthusiasm, and a situation that allowed Hopkins to operate without much supervision from justices of the peace or assize judges, formed the essential context within which these trials took place.

Hopkins remains a well-known figure among the general public, his fame being enhanced by the British film of 1968, *Witchfinder General*. Curiously, Hopkins's major influence in the medium term was to alienate moderate opinion from witch hunting. After the Restoration of 1660, even those who advocated witch beliefs shied away from large-scale hunts, seeing them as a by-product of the religious enthusiasm of the Civil War period and its aftermath. Hopkins, as a relatively obscure man, could be represented as typical of those whose short-lived prominence in the 1640s and 1650s rocked the social hierarchy. The tradition, still repeated in reference works, that Hopkins was himself investigated as a witch and hanged, is unfounded. John Stearne recorded that Hopkins died of consumption in Manningtree, and his death in 1647 is in fact recorded in the register of the parish of Mistley cum Manningtree.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: CONFESSIONS; ENGLAND; ESSEX; FAMILIARS; GAULE, JOHN; LOWES, JOHN; PURITANISM; STEARNE, JOHN; WATCHING AND WALKING; WITCH FINDERS; WITCH'S MARK.

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HORACE (65–8 B.C.E.)

Horace's portrait of the "witch"—old, female, ugly, grotesque, dealing in images, herbs, and poisons, and working largely maleficent magic—played an important part in establishing later clichés about them.

Quintus Horatius Flaccus was a Roman poet whose oeuvre consisted of lyric verses (*Odes and Epodes*), poetic conversation pieces, letters, and advice on how to write poetry (*Ars Poetica*). Horace had a dry sense of humor that seemed to have escaped many later writers on magic and witchcraft who used and quoted him as one of their sources.

His principal "witch" was called Canidia. A late but unreliable source suggested that she was modeled on a real person. A commentator on Horace's *Epode* 3.7, remarked that "the name Canidia refers to a Neapolitan maker or dealer in ointments, called Gratidia, a worker of poisonous magic." She appeared in several poems, always described in highly theatrical terms. Her matted hair was entwined with vipers; one of her fingernails had grown very long; her teeth were badly discolored—hence her foul and deadly breath—and her complexion was pale and sallow. She wore a large black mantle and went barefoot. At least some of her teeth might have been false, because on one occasion, taken suddenly by fright, Canidia ran away and they fell out. Her companion Sagana, who was older than she, was just as unpleasant to look at. She wore a wig that she lost when Canidia lost her teeth (*Epode* 5; *Satires* 1.8 and 2.8).

Epode 5 involved a boy who began the poem by asking Canidia fearfully why she was staring at him like a stepmother or a beast at bay. Canidia made no immediate reply, but instead gathered together pieces of fig-wood uprooted from a cemetery, the eggs and feathers of an owl, smeared with toad's blood, poisonous herbs, and some bones, all of which were to be burned on a magical fire. Meanwhile her accomplice, Sagana, was sprinkling water from Lake Avernus (reputedly the entrance to the underworld), while a third "witch," Veia, dug a shallow grave. The boy was to be buried therein and starved to death, after which his marrow and liver were to be extracted to make a love potion. Canidia, Horace explained, was in love with a man called Varus who was impervious to her passion. At the end, however, the boy threatened to come back and haunt Canidia as a vengeful ghost.

In *Epode* 17, Horace addressed Canidia, asking her to cease her incantations and magical rites, because she succeeded in driving away his youthful bloom and he was wasting away in torment. He was ready to buy her

off, he said. But Canidia replied scornfully that, in view of the way he had been openly mocking her and the rituals she had been performing on the Esquiline hill, she would continue to harass him magically. She boasted of her skills in magic. "I can impart motion to images made from wax; I can snatch down the moon from the sky by my incantations; I can arouse the dead after they have been cremated; and I can blend drinks which excite desire."

Canidia's references to mockery and the Esquiline hill came from *Satire* 1.8 which had been published some six years previously. The satire was put into the mouth of a fig-wood statue of the god Priapus. The Esquiline, he said, would be a pleasant enough place were it not for the women who upset people with their incantations and poisons. He remembered seeing Canidia and Sagana there, digging a trench with their nails, tearing a black lamb to pieces with their teeth, and pouring its blood on the ground in a necromantic ritual intended to invoke the souls of the dead. When the ghosts arrived, their voices were sad and shrill. Canidia and Sagana then buried a wolf's beard and a snake's tooth, and burned a wax image. At this point, Priapus became so frightened that he farted, causing both "witches" to run away in confusion.

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART

See also: BODY OF THE WITCH; LOVE MAGIC; NECROMANCY.

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HOVAEUS, ANTONIUS (ANTON VAN HOVE) (D. 1568)

A Benedictine abbot who supported Johann Weyer's fight against the belief in witchcraft, Hovaeus, formerly abbot of the Benedictine convent in Egmond (Holland), became abbot of Echternach in the duchy of Luxembourg (Spanish Netherlands) in 1562. Following the publication of Weyer's *De praestigiis daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils) in 1563, Hovaeus sent the author an enthusiastic letter stating his agreement, which was added to later Latin editions between 1564 and 1588 as well as to the German translation in 1586. Hovaeus's name appeared under the Latin acronym A.H.H.A.E. (*Antonius Hoveaus Haecmundanus Abbas Ehtemacensis*). The abbot argued that the witch hunters, who allegedly fought the Devil, believed more in the power of the Devil than in the power of God and Jesus. Hovaeus was fundamentally opposed to torture. A skeptical humanist, he considered malicious magic impossible and any belief in witchcraft superstition,

which he illustrated with two examples from Echternach. Hovaeus was also a poet and published a dialogue entitled *Zuermondus* in 1564, followed by *De arte amandi Christum* (Concerning the Art of Loving Christ) in 1566, which contained a book of odes and hymns. He lies buried in his abbey church at Echternach, where his portrait survives among its abbots.

GUNTHER FRANZ;

TRANSLATED BY JONATHAN STICKNEY

See also: SKEPTICISM; WEYER, JOHANN.

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HUNGARY

With perhaps 1,110 executions for witchcraft in a population that ranged between 3.5 million and 5.3 million from the fifteenth through the beginning of the eighteenth centuries, Hungary experienced quite moderate witch hunting.

THE MEDIEVAL PRECEDENTS

The legislation of the first Hungarian kings—Saint Stephen (1000–1038), Saint Ladislaus (1077–1095), and Coloman (1095–1116)—provided the first legal measures against the use of magic and witchcraft. These early texts referred to *maleficium* (harmful magic), *sortilegium* (sorcery), and *veneficium* (poisoning), and also used the term *striga* (witch or blood-sucking night creature). All three kings ordered that people practicing magic be brought before ecclesiastical courts. Coloman's law made an important distinction between *strigae* and *malefici* (practitioners of harmful magic). Following the tradition of the *Canon Episcopi* and the Carolingian capitularies, it denied the existence of the former ones, and condemned the latter.

Compilations of individual cities' customs began to include punishment for magical acts during the late Middle Ages, the earliest being Dalmatian city laws in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and those of Zagreb. The customs of Buda, written between 1403 and 1439, condemned so-called *ansprecherin* (woman casting spells) and *czaubern* (sorceress), ordering them to wear a pointed ("Jewish") hat painted with angels

before being burned. The synod of Esztergom (1100–1116) ordered those convicted of *maleficium* punished according to canon law; the synod of Buda (1279) threatened to excommunicate sorcerers and those using sacraments for magical purposes.

The first trials against magicians—*fytonissa* (female seer or diviner) and *incantatrix* (woman casting spells)—seem to have appeared during the thirteenth century in both ecclesiastical and secular courts (feudal and municipal), but until the sixteenth century no regular witch persecutions took place in the Kingdom of Hungary (modern Croatia, Slovakia, and much of Romania).

Thirty-nine people, all of them women, were accused of magic and witchcraft between 1213 and 1496. The earliest cases were at the bishopric of Várad (fourteen cases of *maleficium* and *veneficium* between 1208 and 1235) and at Zagreb (six women tried between 1360 and 1379; at least one went to the stake). We know of only a dozen trials from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Hungary.

EARLY MODERN WITCH PERSECUTION

Witch hunting in early modern Hungary coincided with difficult times. The Ottoman Turks defeated the Hungarian army at Mohács in 1526 and occupied Buda, the capital, in 1541. For the next 150 years, Hungary was divided into three parts. The Hungarian kingdom, ruled by Habsburg kings, was limited to the northwestern part (Upper Hungary). The central and southern parts of Hungary (the area of the Great Hungarian Plain), occupied by the Turks, belonged to the Ottoman Empire, while the eastern part, Transylvania (today part of Romania) became a quasi-independent principality ruled by Hungarian noble dynasties. During the 1680s and 1690s, the Habsburg army drove the Turks out of Hungary, bringing the whole country, including Transylvania, under Habsburg rule until 1918.

Witch hunting began in sixteenth-century Hungary, intensifying during the 1580s. Legal persecutions of magic and witchcraft were reinforced; for example, in 1614 the Transylvanian diet issued a decree punishing sorcerers and witches. However, throughout Hungary witchcraft was never considered a *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime) and was punished together with other crimes at feudal, municipal, and county courts. After 1656, Hungary's most frequently used criminal procedure was based on the teachings of a German jurist, Benedict Carpzov, adapted for Austria and published in Latin at the Hungarian university of Nagyszombat (Trnava) in 1687. Entitled *Forma processus iudicii criminalis seu Praxis Criminalis* and reprinted (always in Latin) in 1697, 1700, 1717, 1732, and 1748, this compilation—with its precise textual relationship to Carpzov's famous *Practica nova imperialis Saxonica*

verum criminaliam (New Rules in Criminal Cases for Imperial Saxony) unknown—introduced such western demonological concepts as the Sabbat and the witches' pact to Hungary. This helps explain why Hungarian witchcraft trials reached their peak only at the end of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries.

Chronology of accused Hungarian witches:

1526–1552: 17

1553–1600: 131

1601–1650: 330

1651–1700: 781

1701–1750: 2,254

1751–1800: 534.

Although Hungary has been a multiethnic country throughout its history—Upper Hungary hosted a considerable number of Germans, Slovaks, and Czechs; Transylvania Germans and Romanians; while Croatian, Serbian, Romanian, and, later, Slovakian groups lived on the Great Plain area, not to speak of Gypsies—the great majority of the accused witches seem to have been ethnically Hungarian.

LEARNED AND POPULAR DEMONOLOGY

Protestant churches, whose demonological ideas are much better known in Hungary than those of the Catholics, played a considerable part in starting witchcraft trials in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Hungary. The Transylvanian Lutheran synod of 1577 threatened anyone practicing magical acts with the stake. The earliest Hungarian treatises commenting on witchcraft and the Devil's works also came from a Lutheran preacher, Péter Bornemisza, who surveyed various northwest Hungarian peasant witch beliefs and magical practices in his *Ördögi kísértetekről* (About the Temptations of the Devil) published at Sempete (Sintava) in 1578.

Calvinist teachings on witchcraft and demonology, the best known in Hungary, began in 1562 with the *Confessio Ecclesiae Debrecinensis* (Confession of Faith for the Church of Debrecen), compiled under the direction of Péter Méliusz Juhász, the first Calvinist bishop in Hungary. A follower of Johann Brenz, Méliusz expressed a highly skeptical point of view about the reality of diabolical witchcraft. Similar skepticism penetrated the comprehensive treatise on demonology (*Disputatio theologica de lamiis veneficis*, or Theological Dispute About the Ill-Willed Lamiae) compiled by two Reformed theology students, Joannes Mediomontanus and Andreas Csehi, and published in Várad (Oradea) in 1656. They surveyed international demonological literature, quoting more frequently from Johann Weyer than the Puritan William Perkins.

However, seventeenth-century Hungarian Calvinist opinions on witchcraft seem far from homogeneous. A Reformed synod held at Margita (Bihar county) in 1681 seems to have stimulated witch hunting in this region by ordering sorcerers and their clients excommunicated. Its president, Bishop Mátyás Nógrádi of Debrecen, had visited England just when Matthew Hopkins, the notorious witch finder, was active there; he included a short treatise on “*Az ördögi practicáról mint kellyen ítélni embernek*” (How to Judge Devilish Practices) in his *Lelki próbakő* (Spiritual Touchstone) of 1651. Although Nógrádi argued for rather prudent treatment of village witches, he analyzed various types of pacts with the Devil carefully, taking them more seriously than his colleagues. If most Hungarian Calvinists considered the witches' pact and the Sabbat as illusions (or a product of melancholy), they condemned all forms of popular magic. In 1610, the Debrecen Calvinists published *Lex Politica Dei* (God's Public Laws), a collection of biblical texts including a long list of the Hebrew Bible's laws punishing sorcery and divination. Seventeenth-century Calvinists condemned primarily the treatment of illnesses by popular healers, emphasizing that cunning people and midwives using magical practices deserved severe punishment. As late as 1719, Imre Pápai Páriz's *Keskeny út* (The Narrow Road), published at Debrecen, reinforced this rather skeptical trend in Hungarian Calvinist opinions about diabolical witchcraft, while supporting the punishment of any form of “white” magic.

Some seventeenth-century Hungarian students upheld antidiabolical and antidemonological conceptions of magic in disputations at Wittenberg, the Lutheran Rome. In 1665, Georgius Fridericus Magnus, from Pozsony (Bratislava or Pressburg), defended Weyer's propositions denying the possibility of the witches' pact; in 1692, Johannes Surmann, from Beszterce (Bistrita, Transylvania), in his *De daemonologia recentiorum auctorum falsa* (About the False Demonology of Recent Authors), dared to defend Balthasar Bekker.

Unfortunately, we know too little about Hungarian Catholic opinions on the issue of witchcraft during these times. The *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) was known in Hungary—Miklós Zrínyi, one of the greatest seventeenth-century Hungarian poets and writers, had a copy in his library and it was explicitly mentioned during the 1691 trials at Somorja (Samorin)—but it apparently exerted little influence on witch hunting here. The criminal courts of Catholic communities regularly used Carpzov's *Praxis criminalis* or other legal guides that propagated concepts of diabolical witchcraft. Rituals of exorcism were routinely included in Catholic liturgical manuals; Franciscan and Jesuit missionaries (often Italians or Southern Slavs) performed this rite among the nobility

and peasantry alike during the seventeenth century. Much like Hungarian Protestants, Catholics condemned both diabolical witchcraft and “white” magic (conceived as instigated by the Devil himself) throughout the eighteenth century in printed collections of sermons (József Telek, *Tizenkét csillagú korona* [Crown of Twelve Stars], 1769), *exempla* (János Taxonyi, *Az embernek erkölcsének és az Isten igazságának tüköre* [Mirror for the Morals of the People and the Truth of God], 1757), or manuals of *ars vivendi* (the art of living) (Ferenc Nagy, *Az egy igaz és boldogító hitnek elei* [The Foundations of the One and True Faith That Makes One Happy], 1796).

German demonology seems to have played a significant role in Hungarian witch hunting at both learned and popular levels, although its more diabolical trend is still not very well known. It was the predominantly German or Saxon towns of Upper Hungary and Transylvania that launched Hungary’s first campaigns against witches in the late sixteenth century, coinciding with the demonological teachings of the Lutheran Church. Hungary’s first detailed description of a Sabbath came from the area near Pozsony, at the Austrian border, in 1578. The Lutheran preacher Péter Bornemisza claimed that the witches had a queen, transformed themselves into cats, and danced and fornicated at their meetings. A much later—and this time Calvinist—Sabbat was described by Joannes C. Mediomontanus in his 1656 *Disputatio theologica de lamiis veneficis* (Theological Dispute About Witches and Poisoners): the witches ordinarily gathered at the wine cellars on Mount St. Gellért near Buda, an ill-famed hill called *Blocksberg* by local Germans.

The first data suggesting popular adoption of demonological ideas also came from regions mainly inhabited by Germans. A witch’s alliance with the Devil was mentioned in 1581 at the Upper Hungarian mining town of Selmechánya (Schemnitz; Banská Štiavnica). Western Hungarian cities—like Kőszeg, Sopron, and Pozsony—might have been affected by witch hunts spreading eastward from Austria during the 1560s. One of the first popular descriptions of witches flying on broomsticks and copulating with the Devil came from the city of Pozsony in 1602. It was also in this region, around such communities as Sopron, Körmend, Lakompak, or Darászfalva (Trausdorf), that extended series of popular Sabbath descriptions appeared when mass persecutions started in the 1650s. The other area with a similarly early appearance of popular diabolical beliefs included the seven self-governing Saxon towns (*Siebenbürgen*) of Transylvania. The cities of Segesvár (Sighisoara/Schassburg) or Nagyszében (Sibiu/Hermannstadt) experienced regular and intensive witch hunting from the 1660s into the eighteenth century. Austrian and German soldiers, occupying Hungarian villages during and after the Turkish wars, constituted

another important channel in mediating German conceptions of witchcraft throughout Hungary. In many local cases from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, German soldiers accused their hosts of witchcraft, sometimes even acting as witch finders.

However, witch hunting in Hungary seems as much a local and primarily urban phenomenon as an adoption of German demonological concepts. Among the first persecuting cities, both Kolozsvár in Transylvania and Debrecen on the Great Plain were mostly inhabited by Hungarians. Kolozsvár, a town of mixed religions, saw at least twenty-one witchcraft trials between 1565 and 1593, with fifteen resulting in burnings; Debrecen, which was then turning from Lutheran to Calvinist, probably received its first stimulus for witch hunting in the 1570s through wandering preachers from Kolozsvár. Moreover, the towns and villages of the Great Plain, a typical frontier society, occupied by Ottoman Turks until the end of the seventeenth century and almost completely resettled during the eighteenth century, saw no intensive witch persecution before the 1710s and 1720s. Although the Turks did not prevent local jurisdictions from functioning in this region, only in 1728 did one of Hungary’s largest witch panics develop there, in the Catholic city of Szeged (Csongrád county), with thirteen witches burned and a further twenty-eight accused; in the nearby religiously mixed town of Hódmezővásárhely, forty-one people were tried between 1724 and 1763 (only seven died at the stake). Similarly, 20 witches were accused in the village of Ottomány (Bihar county) in 1724; altogether, there were 107 accused witches (but only 15 capital sentences) in that predominantly Calvinist county between 1711 and 1730. These late witch hunts can best be explained by the belated urbanization of this region.

The popular image of the Hungarian Sabbath emerged less from foreign demonological concepts than from such local (and originally nondiabolical) sources as the *táltos* (a sort of shamanistic sorcerer) as well as from *tündér* (fairy) beliefs. The Sabbath encountered in Hungarian confessions resembled a village feast, with excessive eating, drinking, music, and dancing, held in ordinary houses, churchyards, or the local tavern, mostly without the Devil’s presence. In cases where the Devil was present, he was modeled from stereotypes of learned diabolical witchcraft, appearing either as a billy goat or in human shape (a tall black man, a priest, or a handsome peasant lad); such devils wore Hungarian dress in German-inhabited regions and German dress in ethnically Hungarian regions.

STATISTICAL AND CHRONOLOGICAL PATTERNS OF WITCH HUNTING

According to our present knowledge, 4,089 accused witches were brought to trial between 1213 and 1800 in the Kingdom of Hungary (the total number of trials

being 2,205). The vast majority of the accused, including everyone before 1500, were women: overall, women comprised 3,516 or 87 percent for the entire period, as opposed to 518 men. Similar gender percentages recur in local studies: for example, only 11 men (roughly 9 percent) were brought to trial in the city of Debrecen between 1575 and 1759, and 8 (barely 5 percent) in Bihar county between 1591 and 1766. By nationality, about two-thirds of these alleged witches (3,067) were Hungarian, the majority of the rest were Germans (362), Croatians (301), and Romanians (173), with occasional Slovaks (84), Gypsies (47), Ruthenians (23), and Serbs (9).

The exact rate of death sentences in Hungarian witchcraft trials cannot yet be determined. Formerly, it was estimated at 51 percent (Klaniczay 1990a,b,c). According to the most recent statistics (based, however, on only 3,269 accused witches between 1213 and 1800), 498 witches (that is, roughly 34 percent) received capital punishment among the 1,468 people whose final sentence is known. One must, however, consider that for 1,801 persons (over half), the final sentence remains unknown. If we suppose the same percentage of the 1,801 people were executed as were the 498 witches whose sentences are known, we can add 612 executions, giving a total of 1,110 probable executions. The majority of those avoiding death received corporal punishment or were expelled, temporarily or permanently, from their communities. Only a small minority was acquitted. The capital sentence of convicted witches meant burning at the stake, without strangulation beforehand. No other methods of execution, such as hanging, seem to have been used.

Local rates of capital sentences vary. In the Calvinist city of Debrecen, among 147 witches (82 percent with known sentences) only 28 (roughly 27 percent) were executed—the majority burned. In mostly Calvinist Bihar county, out of 177 witches (only 39 percent with known sentences), 26 people (roughly 38 percent) received capital punishment.

Early modern Hungarian witch hunting seems well embedded in the country's long-term local history. It tended to increase during peaceful periods after major wars and uprisings, and also coincided with the aftermath of devastating plague epidemics. It reached its first peak in the 1580s, a peaceful period but in the aftermath of a plague epidemic. The intensity of the persecutions decreased during the Fifteen Years' War with the Turks (1591–1606) and the anti-Habsburg uprising of István Bocskai (1604–1606). The 1620s saw a new increase during a decade when Prince Gábor Bethlen of Transylvania led three campaigns against the Habsburgs. Individual trials usually occurred in peaceful years and regions, and it is highly probable that the plague epidemic of the 1620s helped intensify persecution during these years.

Another rise in Hungarian witchcraft trials followed the end of the Thirty Years' War, from the 1650s, which included another big plague epidemic, until the 1670s; but the most dramatic increase occurred when the Ottomans were definitively driven out of Hungary after 1690. In the first half of the eighteenth century, Hungarian witch hunting reached its peak, especially after the end of the anti-Habsburg revolt led by Prince Ferenc Rákóczi (1703–1711), during and between the two greatest eighteenth-century plague epidemics (1709–1711 and 1738–1745).

Studies of local witch hunting nuance this pattern of long-term fluctuation. The generally small-size witch hunts of Debrecen and Bihar county (1–3 accused per annum) intensified during and after plague epidemics or other natural catastrophes, such as drought, frost, or famine (up to 5–10 accused per annum).

Although witch persecution seems to have started to decline in the 1750s, the Habsburg Empress Maria Theresa stopped it from above after 1756. After having personally examined a Slovenian woman named Heruczina accused of witchcraft, Gerard van Swieten, the enlightened court physician, submitted a memorandum to Maria Theresa in 1758 arguing that witchcraft charges were built on false concepts and suggested that the persecution cease. The Royal Court first changed some municipal sentences of witches to acquittals, and then, in 1768, issued a royal decree permanently prohibiting the execution of witches.

MICROSOCIOLOGY OF WITCHCRAFT ACCUSATIONS

In this respect, early modern Hungarian witchcraft charges illustrate at least three significant patterns.

The first was “accusations from above,” a sociologically stronger, more powerful party accusing a weaker one. This pattern typified the politically motivated witchcraft trials among the Transylvanian high nobility during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The princes accusing the families of their defeated political enemies of witchcraft included Sigismund Báthory (blaming the mother of Boldizsár Báthory, whom he murdered, for his impotence); Gábor Bethlen (who, after having succeeded the murdered Gábor Báthory in 1612, accused the latter's sister and two other noblewomen in his entourage with witchcraft); and Mihály Apafy (initiating a major witchcraft trial, with some twenty accused between 1679 and 1686, against the wife of his exiled rival).

Similar patterns were also manifest in early modern town and village witchcraft. For example, in the Calvinist city of Debrecen, prosperous burgher merchants and artisans accused their lodgers, their house servants, or the city beggars of witchcraft in dozens of cases, in the context of a local sociopolitical campaign against the poor. In the same place at the same time,

“honest” Puritan citizens accused “adulteresses,” “drunkards,” “thieves,” or “blasphemous” women of the same crime (fifty-three people, roughly 36 percent of all Debrecen witches). The “from above” pattern can also be seen in two other typical forms of social conflict in the eighteenth-century frontier world of the Great Plain. Local people had a considerable inclination to accuse strangers and newcomers of witchcraft (in Bihar and Csongrád county as well as in Debrecen or Hódmezővásárhely); such formerly privileged social groups as the *hajdú* (Haiduk) nobles, who lost their administrative, economic, and military privileges after the end of the Turkish occupation, used the weapon of witchcraft to get rid of newcomer peasants settling in their communities.

A second and complementary pattern was “accusations from below,” a sociologically weaker party accusing a more powerful one. This pattern seems to have been typical in some Hungarian witch panics; for example, in the 1728 trials in the Catholic city of Szeged, a poor “wise woman” and a beggar accused a former judge, Dániel Rósa, of witchcraft. Other local magistrates and judges similarly found themselves or their families accused, for example, in the 1724 Ottomány panic, the 1724 Nagykereki panic, or the 1734 Kiskunhalas panic. Another recurrent manifestation of this pattern can be seen when fourteen- to sixteen-year-old maidservants or even nine- to twelve-year-old children accused their landlords, hosts, or even grandparents of witchcraft. Sometimes this occurred during witch panics, sometimes not: child accusers first appeared in Kolozsvár toward the end of local witch panics in 1615 and 1629; however, young kitchen maids and children were constantly present as accusers in scattered Debrecen and Bihar county trials until well into the 1760s.

Accordingly, the “from below” pattern also occurred in periods of rather moderate witch hunting. It can be seen in the eighteenth-century Debrecen trials in a few cases where lodgers accused their hosts of witchcraft; and also in the far more frequent cases where clients accused “wise women,” midwives, or other magical experts of inadequately curing the sick. Such accusations suggest a considerable degradation of the traditional status of these popular healers. The Haiduk nobles of the estate of Derecske were charged with witchcraft by the local peasants during the eighteenth century, who tried to bring the trials before the landlord’s court, trusting that the landlord, a political adversary of the Haiduks, would decide in the peasants’ favor.

The third pattern was “status rivalry,” witchcraft accusations developing among those of similar social rank. The most typical form of this pattern emerged as a personal competition among cunning folk (called in Hungarian *tudós* or *orvos*, “wise (wo)man”); a large number of Hungarian witchcraft accusations arose in

this way. The first victims of the Kolozsvár trials in 1565 were nearly all cunning folk mutually accusing one another. The same holds for the Debrecen trials: forty-five persons, roughly 31 percent of all accused witches, were practitioners of popular magic: “wise women” brought charges against each other, midwives against other midwives, and—a typical urban phenomenon—barber-surgeons and official midwives testified against their colleagues. This type of witchcraft accusation seems to have been quite closely connected to the reorganization of Debrecen’s local health care system during the eighteenth century.

Tudós pásztorkok, “wise” or cunning shepherds, also found themselves charged with witchcraft during the seventeenth and especially the eighteenth centuries, either by their village clients, or by their shepherd colleagues. A peculiar form of these charges seems too have been founded on werewolf beliefs; such cases appeared all over Hungarian territory. It is highly probable that these charges were connected with the crisis of the old cattle-herding lifestyle, lowering the social status of the shepherds, and itself embedded in Hungary’s great economic and social transformations after the Turkish occupation.

ILDIKÓ SZ. KRISTÓF

See also: ACCUSATIONS; AUSTRIA; BALKANS (WESTERN AND CENTRAL); BEKKER, BALTHASAR; BRENZ, JOHANN; CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITUTIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*); CARPZOV, BENEDICT (II); CROATIA; CUNNING FOLK; DEMONOLOGY; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, MAGIC; HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, WITCHCRAFT; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (MEDIÆVAL); LYCANTHROPY; MARIA THERESA, HOLY ROMAN EMPRESS; PANICS; PERKINS, WILLIAM; PLAGUE; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; PURITANISM; ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH; SKEPTICISM; SWIETEN, GERARD VAN; *TÁLTOS*; URBAN WITCHCRAFT; WEYER, JOHANN; WITCH HUNTS.

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HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, MAGIC

Remnants of traditional folk belief and everyday practice of popular magic have lingered in village communities of the area until modern times. Fortunetellers and specialists in communication with the otherworld with quasi-shamanistic abilities were active. Folklore views of popular belief spread through oral transmission, as well as popular magic, are both inseparable from folk religion which included ideas and forms of behavior not included in or even rejected by official dogma and liturgy. (These were labeled as pagan, heretic, or superstitious by the Christian religion.)

Better preserved by the Orthodox populations of southeastern Europe (Serbia, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania, Greece, and Albania) than in Latin Catholic areas (Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia), popular magic syncretized various elements of Christian and non-Christian origin. In the Eastern Church, basically unaffected by witchcraft trials or demonology, elite and popular religion have remained close, preserving many medieval European traditions. Their history, marked by prolonged foreign occupation (several centuries of Ottoman rule), migration, and language changes have affected folk belief and magic between different peoples and regions. Historical contacts and cultural interrelations and the influence of Christianity (including the considerable effect of Bogomilism on Balkan peoples) gave popular magic the same basic features across the entire region.

In Latin areas, many magical norms, sanctions, and actions that remain alive in the east have disappeared, or survive only in folklore narratives. In Latin Catholic areas (Hungary, Slovenia, and Croatia), surviving sixteenth- through eighteenth-century witchcraft trial records enable us to reconstruct some traditional magical cosmogony and practices. The following summary describes a few important phenomena that characterized the entire region, ignoring for the most part local characteristics.

COSMOGONY, MYTHOLOGY, AND THE SPIRIT WORLD

In this region, cosmic explanatory systems combined the Hebrew Bible's creation myth with Bogomil notions of a dualistic creation by God and Satan and with pre-Christian traditions retained in folk narratives (e.g., the defeat of a dragon of chaos by the god of heaven). Notions of the universe were similarly manifold. A widely known notion was a universe with seven "layers," and the world tree reaching from the underworld to the heavens. (According to the Macedonian myth, underworld monsters, called *kallinkantsaroi*, whose aim was to destroy the world, gnawed the roots of the tree, but the birth of Jesus prevented this from happening.) Other widely known elements were dragons and werewolves that caused eclipses of the sun and moon or earthquakes, a floating whale or a buffalo that supported a disc-shaped earth on its back, an earthly otherworld in the west or over the river, an underworld filled with frogs and snakes, and a mother goddess with attributes of an underworld snake, traceable in Serbian, Croatian, Slovenian, or Bulgarian folklore.

Pre-Christian mythical beings survived mainly in ambivalent roles of determining people's fates and distributing sanctions or rewards. A largely negative pagan demon world merged with the Christian Satan to create a great variety of "popular" devils among all these peoples; for example, in Albanian *djall*, *dreq*, and *satan*

refer to different devilish-demonic beings. Hardly any non-Christian spiritual beings had positive roles, which were invariably taken by Christian saints and the Virgin Mary, who assumed several features from similar pagan forerunners. Thus, saints who were patrons of animals (St. George, St. Michael, St. Blasius, or St. Sava) carried features of an archaic “lord of animals.” Saints associated with the prescriptions and taboos of the magic of husbandry and the household, or with divinatory and sacrificial rites, played normative roles in regulating human behavior. St. George and St. John the Baptist (and his day in the calendar) were connected with innumerable individual and collective rites of crop magic and milk magic. St. Elias bore the features of the Slavic sky and storm god Perun, also traceable in Romanian and Hungarian folk beliefs. Female healing saints had numerous pagan features, thus Saint Marina, honored throughout the Balkans for protecting people from snakes, was connected with such antique “snake” goddesses as Artemis or Bendis. Saint Lucia (for Latins) and Saint Paraskeva (for the Orthodox) were associated with spinning and other women’s jobs as well as with fertility. Similar features, sanctioning all the taboos of female jobs even in the modern period, appeared in the Hungarian and Romanian “*Woman of Tuesday*,” Romanian and South Slavic *Piatnitsa* (Friday) and Slovenian *Pehtna Baba*, who guaranteed fertility and deserved sacrifices (cakes, floury foods, hemp, flax) on their days.

An exceptional and clearly non-Christian figure in folk mythologies was that of the “fate woman.” Belief in the power of these beings who announced human destiny (Greek *moira*, Serbian and Croatian *urishnitsa*, Romanian *ursitoare*, Bulgarian *urishnitsi*, Albanian *fatia*, Slovenian *rojenice*) remained common in twentieth-century Orthodox countries, where food sacrifices were prepared for these women. Such figures, who carried features both from antiquity and pre-Christian Slavic traditions, usually appeared in groups of three on the night after childbirth to announce the destiny of the newborn.

Traditions about nature spirits, creatures of the forests and the waters, survived in the entire region until the twentieth century (except in Bulgarian and Greek areas, where fairies filled these roles). Forest spirits (e.g., Serbian *lesnik*, Slovenian *lesnik*, *lesni škrat*, *divji moû*, *cateû*, Hungarian *vadöreg*, *erdei csoda*, *vadléány*) were natural beings belonging to a part of the world outside human experience; lords of the forest and often of the animals, they had a wild exterior and plant or occasionally animal attributes (a dress of moss or bark, hairy bodies, long flowing hair). They uprooted trees and supported woodcutters, but tended to frighten anyone lost in the woods. Woodcutters occasionally gave them gifts of meat or wine in the hope of better treatment. Some of their female versions were seduc-

tively beautiful (Romanian *fata padurii*) or appeared as large-breasted, lascivious fertility goddesses (Serbian *shumska maika*, “forest mother”). They aided pregnant women and newborn babies, but also tended to “swap” babies (cf. changeling). Slovenian *zalik ûene* (“blessed women”), who looked like fairies, also had similar features.

The role of water spirits may also have been filled by the water-nymph varieties of the fairies. Other water spirits were mainly known in the western Balkans (Slovenian *povodni moû*, Croatian *vodni moû*, Serbian *vodeniak*, *vodeni duh*, etc.) Often resembling dwarfs, drowned bodies, or mermaids, they turned into water demons after drowning, and lured people into the water, pulled bathers under the surface and drowned them, or tangled fishermen’s nets. Sometimes they aided fishermen and, as “lords of the fish,” received food or drink poured into the water in return.

DRAGONS GOOD AND BAD

Dragons and their variants, the most archaic type of nature spirits, still play significant magical roles for many people. All types of dragons (Bulgarian and Serbian *hala*, Serbian *ale*, *azhdaha*, *lamnia*, Bulgarian *lamnia*, Albanian *lamje*, *kuûsedra*, *bolla*) were weather demons that caused storms, rain, or hail; in myths, they also caused cosmic disasters, for example, stealing the sun or causing earthquakes. Born from beings of the marshes or the underworld, dragons dwelled in water and caves. Certain types of dragons could be guardian spirits; among the Bulgarians, they became patrons of the shamanistic magicians protecting a tribe or village. These “good” dragons (Bulgarian *zmei*, Serbian *zmai*, Macedonian *zmev*, Romanian *zmeu*, Croatian *pozofj*) fought cosmic battles against foreign dragons to aid their own communities in ensuring good weather. Despite their watery origins, they also had fiery features—in the rites of shamanistic magicians, their heavenly patrons fired arrows of lightning.

FAIRIES

The complex and varied figures of fairies have played an important role in the beliefs, magic, and sacrificial rites of southeastern Europe, but by the twentieth century, this role survived only in Orthodox areas. In Roman Catholic central Europe, they survived only in folklore, or their features were projected onto witches. In the Balkans, fairies played an important role in heroic epics, while the majority of Hungarian fairy beliefs were much more secondary. The use of taboo names for fairies was quite characteristic, for example, Romanian words meaning “them,” “the belles,” or “the misses,” or Albanian terms for “the whites,” “the happy ones.” Fairies were water, forest, or mountain nymphs; they had the characters of dead persons (in the Orthodox

Balkans their figure coincided with the periodically returning dead), presented as good-looking women, migrating or flying in groups singing, dancing, and playing music. They could assume animal shapes (snake, donkey, horse, etc.). They could fulfill the role of fertility goddess or communal guardian spirit, guaranteeing the well-being of a family or a village or a good harvest. At the same time, they were taboo figures regulating behavior, sanctioning those who transgressed their places (paths, crossroads, meadows) or times (night, midday, period between Easter and Whitsun) with specific “fairy diseases.” They snatched the living and those they took died or returned sick; innumerable legends described men who were snatched to become musicians in the fairies’ ecstatic groups for music and dance. They also snatched the healers and fairy magicians that they supported and took them to their own otherworldly sphere, where they participated at feasts accompanied by music and dance and learned the art of healing, thus becoming initiated into the trance and dream techniques of conferring with the otherworld. Such magicians (e.g., Croatian *vilenica*, *vilenjak*, Hungarian *tündéres*; Greek, Bulgarian, and Serbian forms also existed) could heal the transgressors of fairy taboos by conjuring up the fairies and presenting them with sacrifices.

GHOSTS

The haunting dead and ghosts were syncretic mythical beings carrying both Christian and pagan attributes. Up to the present, archaic views held that a person’s spirit lived on after death, separating from the body only gradually. Until the gap left behind by the person vanishing from a close community was again filled, until the mutual expectations of the living and the dead were complied with, the dead soul lingered in some transitional place, not far from the living, and returned to haunt them through signs, dreams, or apparitions. It was also possible to communicate with the dead person in this period in order to complete affairs that had been cut off because of the death. This gradual distancing from the world of the living and the occasions for communication both had traditionally appointed times such as after forty days of mourning, the anniversary of the death, the Day of the Dead (November 2) for Roman Catholics, or Orthodox festivals of the dead (Easter, Whitsun, Saturdays of the dead). Even today, numerous Christian and non-Christian rites and acts of magic are performed to provide for the dead, keep them at a distance, or help them in the otherworld.

It was common to provide for the bodily, physical needs of the dead by including objects and personal belongings in the grave, or holding a mourning feast, eating together with the deceased. Christian forms intended to influence the lot of the deceased in the otherworld were known everywhere, while such

customs as feasting on the grave, “feeding” the deceased, and giving a treat to the dead at memorial feasts were confined to Orthodox areas. During this transition period, magicians and seers could contact the dead, interpreting their wishes in response to requests of the survivors; such “seers of the dead” remain active in Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania.

HOUSE SPIRITS

House spirits or family guardian spirits, known throughout the entire region (e.g., Bulgarian *stopan* or *talasâm*, Serbian *talasoni/talasomi*, Greek *pergalio*) were related to ancestors or came from their souls after they stayed with the family. Their various names in Hungarian, Serbian, Croatian, or Albanian often mean “snake of the house”; the Greek *stoicheion* and related terms in Bulgarian, Macedonian, southern Albanian, or Romanian often mean shadow (“shadow soul”). These spirits, whether goblins or taking the form of an animal, often a snake (but the Bulgarian *stopan* could also be a horse or an ox), lived in the house, in its hearth, doorstep, or wall, and were in a way the double of the master of the house. It is universally known that if one measures the shadow of a stranger in the house, using a reed that is then built into the wall, then the person who was measured will die and become the *genius loci* of the house. The house spirit could be given a sacrifice when the house was built (e.g., a hen killed on the doorstep and its bones then built into the house). In return, the spirit protected the residents of the house; its absence afflicted them with sickness, death, or collapse of the building. Narrative traditions about house spirits from Hungarian and other Latin territories (e.g., legends about a child who fed milk to a snake) seem less vivid than the beliefs and cults of the Orthodox Balkans.

Beside a varied world of folk devils, the “original” forms of malevolent popular demons have also survived in great numbers in the entire region. Some of these are related to the dead who are often ambivalent toward the living. They also have expressly malign types that attack their own community.

Among ghosts coming from persons who died without religious rites (major sinners deprived of burial rituals, suicides, unbaptized babies, the unburied dead who perished in a disaster or war) are those who attacked their own family, causing confusion or bringing disease, such as the Romanian *movi* or Hungarian *szecske*, or those who were referred to as “shadows” (Greek *isklos*, Serbian *osenia*, Romanian *samca*, Bulgarian *senka*, *sianka*, Hungarian *rosszak* [the evil ones], or *keresztletlenek* [unbaptized], Macedonian *nav*, *navi*, Croatian *nekrestenci*, *nevidinci*, or the Greek *telonio*, Macedonian *navi-ia*). These “shadows”—usually bird-shaped beings, often weather demons—appeared in groups in times devoted to the dead (e.g., between Christmas and

Twelfth Night. They also had a communal guardian role, fighting battles for their own community against the spirits of the neighboring community.

MALEVOLENT DEMONS

Sickness-causing demons (against St. Antony's fire, throat diseases, fevers, etc.) are known mainly in Orthodox regions, partly through spells against them. According to Romanian, Serbian, and east Hungarian narratives, demons of plague and cholera break into the village and snatch the living. Some remnants of protection rites survive: having the village ploughed around by virgin maidens or twin calves, or hanging up a shirt sown or woven in one day in the fields surrounding the village.

Demons of the childbearing bed were particularly well known in the Balkans under such names as *mora*, *gello*, *gilo* and were related to the Jewish Lilith (feared by eastern European Jews). These demonic females usually attacked in groups and assaulted both mothers and babies after childbirth. Amulets proclaiming that a saint could defeat these demons were hung on walls as protection. Beliefs regarding changelings, known throughout the region, were also connected with these demons (or elves, werewolves, or demonic witches), who swapped an unbaptized baby for one of their own. "Re-swapping" rites also existed. These beliefs both explained premature, ill-formed, or sickly babies and documented a form of double beings, widespread across Europe, which permeated boundaries between the living and the dead.

DOUBLE BEINGS

Double beings penetrating the boundaries of the worlds of the living and the dead are the Serbian, Bulgarian, Croatian, and Serbian *mora*, *morina* (a related Hungarian figure is the will-o-the-wisp *lidérc*) who were humans or demons (corresponding to German *mahr/marel/mara*). As humans they had a double life; in a state of trance, they were capable of turning into demons that attacked humans. They were usually women whose souls left their bodies to enter homes through a keyhole during the night. The double beings then assaulted the sleepers and "pressed" their bodies. The victims experienced the presence of the double beings as invisible spirits or as animals (turkey, hen, cat, etc.). They could also enter into sexual contact with their victims as incubus or succubus demons. In some places, they were purely demonic figures with no human double. "Dead *mora*" were demons that were the dead version of a person who was a *mora* in his or her life. *Mora* played an important part in the present by diagnosing, explaining, and repelling ill health or sexual disturbance accompanied by feelings of pressure during the night. Witches of the region displayed many *mora* as well as werewolf features.

WEREWOLVES

Werewolves were also double beings existing on the boundary of the living and the dead (Serbian, Croatian *vkodlak/kudlak*, etc., Slovenian *volkodlak*, Bulgarian *vkolak*, Albanian *vurvulak/vurvolak*, Greek *vrikolakas/varkalakas*, Romanian *pricolici*, Slovenian *vedomec*, Hungarian *csordásfarkas*, *szakállas farkas*, *prikulics*). A werewolf could turn into a demon that attacked humans both in its life (in a trance) and (in the case of "dead werewolves" or werewolf demons) after its death. Contrary to *mora* figures, which were mainly female, werewolves were usually men. Their birth was fated: those who were outside of time/space/society were usually werewolves (illegitimate children, seventh children, twin brothers, children conceived on a day of celebration, unbaptized, excommunicated, or swapped by a werewolf, etc.). Werewolves were often persons born with animal signs (teeth, tail, bristles, wings, or in snake skin). They were capable of turning into animals (mainly wolves, as well as snakes, dogs, male wild boars, horses, cats, etc.) by sticking themselves through a belt of silver birch, by putting on a belt of wolf skin, by doing a somersault, or during a trance or dream ("in their soul"). There were typical times for this transformation (the new moon, Fridays, nights, between Christmas and Twelfth Night, at Easter, etc.). After transformation, the werewolf joined the wild group of werewolves and together they assaulted humans and animals. A typical group of werewolf beliefs from the Balkans were about dead, otherworldly beings that attacked humans at the winter solstice (Serbian *karakondzuli*, Greek *kallinkantzawi*, Macedonian *karkandzule*, Albanian *karkandsoli*, *karkanxholl*, Croatian *karangjolož*). Known primarily in Orthodox areas, these demons attacked when human activities (women's housework, spinning, sexual activity) were governed by taboos. The world was ruled by conditions of the underworld: werewolves brought chaos and sickness into houses and indulged in repulsive orgies in kitchens and cellars. Serbian, Bulgarian, Greek, and Hungarian rites enabled babies born as werewolves to evade their destinies or to be re-swapped. These included the symbolic cooking or roasting of the baby, or dressing it in a shirt woven in one night. These rites intended to turn the double beings into humans. More recently, an expansive vampire belief has accreted over these beliefs. Presently, the term *double being* refers to a vampire or a werewolf with strong vampiristic features. There were also werewolves that protected humans. Some werewolves played the role of the "lord of animals," the leader of the werewolf group that protected flocks from attacks by other werewolves. Thus the werewolf triumphed over its own assaulting self in "battles of the soul." These notions provided the mythical background to the so-called werewolf magicians of the region who fought mythical soul battles in animal shape against hostile werewolves.

Related to werewolves were horse demons (Romanian *sântoaderi*, Serbian *todorci*, *todorovci*), which attacked on Saint Theodor's day in Orthodox Balkan areas. They marched at night in the shape of centaurs, horses, or men with hooves accompanied by the clapping of hooves. They brought sickness but also fecundity to the living. Also related to werewolves was the dog-headed demon (Serbian *psoglavac*, *pasoglav*, Croatian *pasoglavec*, *soglav*, Slovenian *pesoglav*, Romanian *capcaun*), which attacked from the "far side of the waters," from "over the wall"—in other words from a symbolic alien otherworld.

MAGICIANS AND MEDIATORS

Throughout this area, various magical specialists played an important part in traditional communities, as did mediators offering contact with the spirit world. Magicians healed, ensured the health of animals, and provided good weather as well as amorous services. It is not possible to separate magicians using divination techniques from mediators establishing contact with the supernatural world through visions and dreams, who went to the otherworld to acquire knowledge and fulfill their tasks in trance visions. They also entered the otherworld to fight soul battles with demons attacking their community, to conjure up the dead, or to get information about their fate in the otherworld. Using trance and dream techniques and various methods of divination, they could provide information about the future or about lost animals or missing persons, identify thieves, or locate buried treasure. One important divinational task was to diagnose the malefactions of witches and identify the malefactors.

Each fortuneteller, seer of the dead, or quasi-shamanistic magician could fulfill one or more of these functions simultaneously. All of them used various techniques of divination: wax casting, spinning a sieve, looking in a mirror or at the stars, trance journeys, or being possessed. All were active throughout central and eastern Europe, but with some specific variants. Both sexes were involved in fortunetelling, divination, and their principal activity, healing. Female magicians were mainly healers or seers of the dead; they were also involved in love magic and, according to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century sources, in finding hidden treasure. Most weather magicians were men. Magical methods are still practiced by many village healing women. Few except healing monks used manuscript recipe books; most repeated long spells that they knew by heart.

Local magicians differed according to which spirit world or otherworldly realm or guardian spirit they contacted. Weather magicians and fertility magicians with quasi-shamanistic abilities (some still active in the early twentieth century) had different local variants. Croats and Serbs had "cloud leaders" (*stuhal/zdubac*), in

contact with the winds, who fought storms. Numerous types of werewolf-magicians, born with cauls or in snakeskins (Serbian, Macedonian, Bulgarian *zmei/zmail/zmiia*; Slovenian, Croatian *kresnik*, relevant types of Hungarian *táltos*), kept contact with various animal guardian spirits (eagles, dragons, snakes, cockerels). All these fertility magicians traveled to the otherworld in order to fight magicians from a neighboring village or clan, or fight against underworld dragons or witches attempting to steal the harvest or snatch the grain to the otherworld. Some Slovenian *kresniki* went to the underworld in order to take grain from a snake goddess. Magicians of fertility, particularly some healers, also kept ritual contact with fairies. Holy people, lay Christian spiritual mentors, who often mediated simultaneously with the spirit world and with otherworldly Christianity through visions and other mystical experiences, often fulfilled these tasks.

RELIGIOUS MAGIC AND FOLK CULTS

Popular magic was inseparable from rites of popular religion and had similar functions, such as protection from demons, influencing everyday life, and farming. Certain manifestations of the cult of saints, pilgrimages to sacred spots, holy oaths and vows, magical healing taking place at sacred spots, priestly blessings and healings, spells and divination, exorcism against the Devil, and other chastening exorcism rites concerned the same profane sphere of everyday life as nonreligious magical activity. Priests who healed or looked into the future used or prescribed magical means and objects similar to lay practices (e.g., wearing sanctified objects as amulets, magical fasting, blessing or cursing over the belongings of the sick). Priests and monks have more important roles in healing, exorcism, and blessings in the Orthodox areas today than in the Catholic western Balkans. These Orthodox peripheries of Europe have retained medieval practices of clerical magic and divination in their commissioned blessing and cursing rituals and their positively or negatively motivated votive masses.

EVERYDAY MAGIC

Both religious and magical rites had their everyday forms, including versions of sacrifice and divination related to calendar holidays (e.g., divination of death and love affairs near the winter solstice, fortunetelling from pig's shoulder blades at Orthodox Christmas dinners). Belief in presaging signs (particularly of death) and other forms of divination not related to the calendar were also common. Certain methods of divination on festive days were related to sacrifices offered to the mythical beings visiting at these times—floury foods were offered to the dead on Christmas night and to Luca (St. Lucy) on Luca's day. Forms of activity within magical practice permeated all-important areas of the

everyday life of traditional communities, although the procedures varied. Ensuring the fertility of grain and animals (milk yield) and the protection of flocks and of fields from hailstorms was associated with certain calendar occasions or the start and end dates of work (e.g., rites related to the animals first being led to the pastures, such as making the animal tread on an egg to make it fertile—on St. George's day). Many divinatory rites to protect people also accompanied the transitional rites of human life. It was common to offer magical protection through amulets and sanctified objects to persons in liminal states, such as mothers just after childbirth, babies before baptism, and the dead displayed in coffins. On days known for attacks by demons, the house and the stables needed protection through objects worn on the body or placed in the doorways and by deterrent spells. Magical and religious actions, objects, and spells surrounded all procedures of farming and the household, but particularly those with a more risky outcome, such as butter churning or bread baking. In crisis situations, magical and divinatory practices survive to the present (e.g., rain magic by pouring water, deterring hailstorms by throwing the bread shovel or the axe into the courtyard, love magic, or identifying future husbands). Some areas of folk healing persist as well (especially the healing of maladies attributed to malediction). Harm through magic had intentional and unintentional, graver and less serious forms. The evil eye was considered an inherited and thus unintentional malediction, separate from witchcraft, perceived as intentional. The evil eye is still the most common magical cause of illness today in the southern Balkans, where "casting water" (throwing embers in cold water) curbs its effects. Amulets and spells can ward off the evil eye, as might devices such as the sign of the horn or the fig, and the colors red or blue.

Other types of black magic in the Orthodox Balkans included fasting, laying curses, and burying objects of malefaction in somebody's path. Sometimes people commissioned magicians to practice these types of harmful magic. Even today, priests send curses or give masses of malefaction. Love magic commonly involves taking the person's bodily fluids or belongings or acquiring the person's bodily parts—such as hair—and tying them to one's body or to a house (e.g., picking up a person's footprint from the ground and pasting it to the bread-oven with mud). On other occasions, people sought specialized experts (usually Gypsies) for love potions.

COMMUNAL MAGICAL AND HEALING RITES

Most communal magical rites were intended to ensure the fertility of grain harvests or the health of animals. Most were rites of transition from one season to

another and were connected to a particular date. The rite of dipping in the water on St. John's Day, mainly practiced in Orthodox territories, or the rites of "picking the dew" done throughout the region on St. George's Day, Whitsun, or St. John's Day, both aim to ensure rain, fertility for grain, and the milk yield of cattle and sheep. Masked rites of fertility magic had two main festive cycles: around the winter solstice (in the entire region) and the end of winter carnival (mainly in Latin parts). The varied dramatic plays of the different nations emphasized wishes for the fertility of grain and animals as well as humans; they included numerous death and resurrection plays, ritual pulling of plows and sowing of seeds, masked impersonations of the "returning" dead and of werewolf demons who became active at these times.

Rain magic among the Serbs, Croats, Albanians, and Romanians in times of drought included such rites as *dodola* and *paparuda*, whereby naked girls dressed in green branches roamed over the village singing songs of rain magic while villagers poured water on them.

Collective healing rites entailing a possessed state of consciousness are known from the Orthodox Balkans in the Serbian, Bulgarian, and Romanian forms of *rusalia* and *calusari*. These specially organized ritual societies had serious communal functions each year between Easter and Whitsun and during the twelve days of Christmas, times when people could be possessed by the dead or by fairies. Their main task was to heal illnesses caused by fairies. Through music and dance, the "good fairies" possessed them. Sick people were drawn into the dance, inducing a trance in which they fought, with the help of the spirits that possessed them, against the evil spirits. Traces of Whitsun fertility rites related to fairies have also survived in Roman Catholic Croatia, Slovenian, and Hungarian territories (*ljelje*, *kraljice*, *pünkösdi királyné*), but have no known healing function. Bulgarian *nestinari*, who dance on embers, maintain a cult related to a possessed state and include a healing function, but *nestinari* are possessed by Christian saints (chiefly St. Constantine and St. Helena) rather than fairies, and the rite is connected to their festivals. All these rites survived in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in many places as both fertility magic and healing rituals.

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TRANSLATED BY ORSOLYA FRANK

See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; ANIMALS; ANIMISTIC AND MAGICAL THINKING; BALKANS (WESTERN AND CENTRAL); CAUL; CROATIA; CUNNING FOLK; CURSES; DEMONS; DIVINATION; EVIL EYE; FAIRIES; FOLKLORE; GHOSTS; HUNGARY; HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE; WITCHCRAFT; LILITH; LOVE MAGIC; LYCANTHROPY; MAGIC, POPULAR; METAMORPHOSIS; NIGHTMARES; ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY; REVENANTS; SHAMANISM; SLOVENIA; SPELLS; *TÁLTOS*; VAMPIRE; WEATHER MAGIC.

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HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, WITCHCRAFT

In Hungary and Southeastern Europe, popular concepts of witchcraft mainly entailed *maleficium* (harmful magic), done by a known local enemy. In this fashion, witchcraft helped to interpret otherwise inexplicable misfortunes of all kinds—particularly sudden diseases in humans or animals, decreases in milk production of cows, or the death of babies. In medieval and early modern times, at the southeastern edges of Latin Christendom (i.e., Hungary, Croatia, and Slovenia), witchcraft became an important community function expressing tensions between members of isolated and close-knit communities. Traces of witchcraft as a village community institution still survive in areas that most strongly retain traditions, but other areas only record narratives about the actions and beliefs of witches.

In Orthodox southeastern Europe (i.e., Greece, Macedonia, Bulgaria, and Romania), other systems of beliefs explained many such misfortunes, including supernatural causes and reasons for diseases (e.g., fairies, transgressions of taboos about the dead, sickness demons, etc.). In this region, black magic and *maleficium* did not exist solely in relation to witchcraft beliefs, but might operate, for example, through religious curses "sent" with the participation of priests. We know much more about the history of witchcraft in Latin

Christian regions of central Europe, where the persecution of witches was institutionalized, than we do in the Orthodox lands of southeastern Europe. Moreover, relevant documents are extremely sparse here before the fifteenth century, unlike Hungary, where eleventh- and twelfth-century law codes discussed magicians and fortunetellers (*maleficia* and *weneficia*) as well as *striga* (night demons known in Hungary through sixth- and seventh-century German legislation).

Throughout Latin Christian areas (Hungary, Croatia, and Slovenia), accusations of sorcery and black magic recurred too sporadically throughout the Middle Ages to enable us to describe the supposed activities of witches, while sermon literature usually mentioned witches together with fortunetellers and magicians. But neither do we know what forms of harmful magic were condemned by scattered clerical prohibitions in Orthodox sources (Serbian, Bulgarian, Greek, and Macedonian). Afterward, documentation from thousands of witchcraft trials in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Hungary, Croatia, and Slovenia reveal the early modern Latin system of witchcraft; methods for channeling tensions within villages and small communities onto scapegoats through accusations of *maleficium*, against a background of a syncretistic religious/magical cosmogony that aided the functioning of the system.

As elsewhere in Latin Christianity, accusations of *maleficium* usually gave vent to various social tensions (neighborhood conflicts after the rules of coexistence were trespassed). That is, witchcraft accusations often affected persons with whom the accuser had previously had a personal conflict (neighborhood jealousy, material damage to each other, refusal of help, denial of services or loans, territorial conflicts, family, particularly marital conflicts or those between mother-in-law and son-in-law, inheritance conflicts, libel, and so on). Others accused of witchcraft had actually carried out sorcery or acted as magicians or healers or pursued some other suspicious trade, for example, midwives, fortunetellers, or people who practiced conjuring up the dead. Communities often had a "standing witch" who provoked the suspicion of bewitching through his or her magical activity as healer, midwife, or magician. Other persons became the regular victims of witchcraft accusations because they were judged to be aliens within the community, by personality or by socioeconomic status. In Hungary, witches commonly cured their own spells, or the healer was the same person who identified the witch. Throughout the entire region, there were and still are numerous folk methods for identifying a witch, most of which force the malefactor to the victim's house or symbolically injure the witch by beating or burning a piece of his or her clothing, hair, or feces.

If the bewitching was remedied, private accusations against witches were rare. But we find communal

sanctions for recurring cases of *maleficium* through water ordeals or through beating the witch, both before and after the times of witch hunting and also in places and times free of such hunts. Witchcraft purges provided opportunities for drastic legal solutions to such tensions and accusations by expelling the accused persons from the community, while local remedies for solving tensions and accusations survived. In this region, witch persecutions never became sufficiently extensive to effect radical changes. The effect of demonology was too weak to demonize archaic witch beliefs at the village level, and local experts in magic did not change much during three centuries of witchcraft persecutions.

POPULAR WITCHCRAFT IN MODERN TIMES

In more recent times, anthropological and folklore collections provided ample data for the entire central and southeastern European regions, including Orthodox Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, and Greece, which were free from witch persecution (Albania and Macedonia remain less well known), enabling us to draw a clear outline of modern functioning of witches, magicians, and witchcraft within communal systems, as well as the mythical background behind witchcraft and the typical attributes of regional witches.

Throughout the region, people accused of witchcraft displayed supernatural traits (including the occult capacity for bewitching), making them suitable subjects to whom various misfortunes could be attributed.

On the other hand, ordinary people actually practicing black magic existed mainly in the Balkans. Among Hungarians, the actual practice of harmful magic occurred mainly in Hungarian communities presently living in Romania. Persons involved in such practices and their techniques (curses, black fasting, placing or burying objects in the victim's path) were not necessarily considered sorcerers and sorcery, especially in areas where communal traditions of witchcraft were weak (Greece, Bulgaria, parts of Romania, eastern Hungary). In such regions, one should talk of magicians rather than witches, because Slavic terminology for magic and sorcery is often inextricably intertwined; for example, *ved* (Old Slavic for "know") reappears in Serbian, Croatian, and Slovenian *veščica*, Bulgarian and Macedonian *veštica*, or Serbian *vještac*, *višćun*, *vjedogonja*, *vjedovit*. Another group of terms denotes demonic witches, especially those who live and function as night demons (vampires, werewolves, or *mora*—"pressing" night demons from the underworld), and in the Balkans they refer to witches with two formal variants, one living and one demonic or dead. Hungarian *boszorkány* originated as a "pressing" night demon or incubus that caused, by weighing down on the sleeping person during the night, a sense of suffocation, pressure, heart complaints, and erotic experiences. By the

Middle Ages, it came to include human witches, but in Hungarian folk belief the *boszorkány* still retains the traits of the "pressing demon."

Some terminology refers not to human but to demonic witches. The Greek word *strigla*, *striglos*, *stringlos* (a bird-shaped demon harming animals, children, or women, or a demon of the childbearing bed), as well as the Romanian term *strigoi* (simultaneously meaning human witch, werewolf, vampire), was carried north by Vlachian shepherds from the southern Balkans into Slovakian–Ukrainian–Polish areas, where it refers to vampires or demonic werewolves. However, among Dalmatian and Istrian Croats, Slovenes, Albanians, and Serbs, it also denotes a human witch (probably through the classical Greek *striga*, a bird-shaped demon harming animals, children, or women, which also means human witch). The Bulgarian term *bnodnica* denoted a different type of demon, originally a water fairy but today a witch who steals grain from a neighbor's land. Hungarian *szépasszony* (fine-looking woman) originally and often still means a fairy, but could be a synonym for a human witch.

In medieval or early modern Hungarian, Slovenian, and Croatian folk beliefs, demonic ancestors lost their original functions and apparently merged into the topos of the witch, adding the werewolf and fairy traits attached to such names. Meanwhile, to a much greater extent than in Latin regions of eastern Europe, Orthodox peoples have retained a rich range of demonic beings that have endured until the present. In many respects, Serbian witches resemble *mora* demons rather than humans; Romanian *strigoi* are also more vampire than human. Bulgarian witches are closest to fairies, while Greeks practically never mention human witches. All this is connected both to the relative lack of witchcraft as a communal village institution and simultaneously to the extensive survival of demonic rather than human causes for misfortune.

Among southeastern European peoples, even human witches often had demonic formal variants, which characteristically existed as living and dead pairs. For example, a Romanian *strigoi* could be either living or dead. Like human witches, a living *strigoi* could assume a demonic form in the night, while a dead *strigoi* was usually the ghostly variant of a dead *strigoi*, or possibly its ancestor or guardian spirit. Dead variants occurred also in Serbian and even in Latin (Croatian, Slovenian, or Hungarian) beliefs. Here a witch could possibly become a demonic being—a werewolf or a vampire—after its death. For example, dead Hungarian witches sometimes became demonic *lidérc*, similar to *mora*.

Witches could acquire their supernatural knowledge either through birth, inheritance, or learning; and in the background we may find helping or guardian spirits, demons, or even the Christian Devil. The dichotomy between taught witches and born witches

characterized the entire region. The inherited capacities of the born witch may be indicated by some sign at birth, such as being born with teeth or a double line of teeth, being born with a caul (white cauls indicated a good werewolf who supported humans, black ones foretold an aggressive werewolf or a vampire). These traits were generally known—probably least among Hungarians—and were connected everywhere with werewolf and *mora* characteristics of the witch (teeth, caul) as opposed to vampire characteristics (double line of teeth). Romanians preserved beliefs about *priculici*, witches born with a tail, which was also a werewolf trait. Another Romanian belief (also known in other Balkan contexts) was that at birth, the “fate women” or midwives defined the destiny of the *strigo*-baby, committing them either to positive lives or to evil, anti-human deeds.

There were many beliefs in southeastern Europe regarding learning witchcraft, the most common being the acquisition of some sort of helping spirit, often a chicken or a snake. This spirit was gained either by performing certain rituals (sometimes with chicken’s blood) or frequently through travel in the underworld from a cave, from water or a marsh, or from a snake-like underground goddess-type creature. Through the assistance of this helping spirit, the sorcerer acquired the capacity for trance. During their soul journeys in the night, the chicken or the snake became quasi-shamanistic soul animals, like the helping spirits of the “good” werewolf magicians; but the sorcerer used the trance for negative aims: in the night, the soul left the body and harmed sleepers by getting through their keyholes or taking an animal or spirit shape. A dragon or even the Christian Devil may have played a similar assisting role. Hungarian witches also used *lidérce*s (as chickens or owls) for helping spirits, this latter being related to the South Slavic *mom*. Regardless of demonology, the region was full of helping spirits that went along with innumerable variants of learning from the Devil, initiation by the Devil, or general contact between witches and devils. Given the Byzantine origin of legends about Theophilus’s pact with the Devil, it is not surprising that Romanian, Bulgarian, and Greek folklore contains numerous witches who were possessed by the Devil, surrendered themselves fully to the Devil, became united with the Devil, or maintained sexual contact with the Devil. Certain folkloric notions of the witches united with the Devil or permanently possessed by devils also occurred in Hungarian, Slovenian, and Croatian folk beliefs, where the name of witches was actually *ördög* (= Devil) in a large eastern region.

Witches could assume animal forms in all regions: butterflies or birds in Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, or Macedonia; a goose, dog, or wolf in Bulgaria; cats or dogs in Croatia, Serbia, Hungary, Romania; a wolf, horse, or cockerel in Romania; a turkey or chicken in

Romania and Serbia. They could become invisible and fly. In other words, they could behave like spirits, but according to many beliefs, only during night hours, when they could appear as pressing night *mora*, *lidérc*, werewolves, fairies, or fate-women.

Other sources reveal that the ability to turn into animals was connected with the capacity for trance: their “free souls” or doubles, leaving the body during the trance, took the shape of an animal (usually a butterfly) or a demon, and set out to attack, harm, and sicken humans, traveling both individually and in groups. In a third widely known type of explanation, witches had more or less permanent corporal and spiritual doubles who could appear as spirits, either in human or animal form, and possess other persons or animals in whose shape they appeared. With such double witch figures, the “dead” variants could be identical to the living ones in every respect, except that soul journeys and transformations into animal shape referred to spiritual beings rather than living people.

Witchcraft entailed the supernatural ability to bewitch or heal everywhere, but methods of *maleficium* varied widely. They could be performed from a distance, when only the result was perceived; or directly, when the witch made a victim swallow substances causing *maleficium* or placed objects under a neighbor’s doorstep, in a courtyard, or by using objects stolen from the victim. Spells against animals or the deprivation of milk required touching, stealing the necessary objects, or symbolic actions mimicking milking. Throughout the region, “picking dew” was a widespread method for taking milk from a neighbor’s cow or grain from his fields on St. John’s Day, St. George’s Day, or on other important agricultural festivals. It was not necessarily connected to witchcraft but often surfaced as a witchcraft accusation in trial documents. Verbal magic, curses, and threats played a great part during the centuries of witchcraft persecution and continue to do so in Orthodox regions. A unique trait of Bulgarian and Macedonian witches connected their milk-spoiling with the moon: they “pulled” the moon down magically and milked it like a cow in order to steal milk from other houses.

Other beliefs connected witches’ maleficent methods to their capacity for trance. A great deal of data depict witches lying unconscious; legends related that after awakening, they described their experiences at the witches’ meeting or during their journey. Beliefs often associated flying with the journey of the soul. Beliefs regarding flights, both individually or in groups, were highly varied: the *mora* witch, known in all regions, sat on the chest of sleeping humans and assaulted them or initiated sexual intercourse with them; a Macedonian or Greek *striga* or *striglos* sucked blood; like Croatian witches, a Serbian witch flew from house to house eating humans, particularly little children, or people’s

hearts. The belief about witches making victims into horses and galloping on their backs was known throughout the region, and was most intensely alive in relation to Hungarian witches.

The souls of Romanian *strigoi*, flying out in a trance, went in groups bewitching herds, milk, and grain, participating in parties and feasts, or fighting with poles against neighboring groups of *strigoi*. These activities happened on certain feasts at the start of the agricultural season (which are also days associated with werewolf beliefs) such as St. George's Day, St. John's Day, and St. Andrew's Day. Similar flights of groups of witches attempting some *maleficium* against the harvest, or battling against neighboring grain-spoiling witches, also appeared in Croatian and Slovenian folk beliefs. Witches who traveled as wolves or other animals on tours of harmful magic were also known in Hungarian, Romanian, and Serbian folk beliefs. Narratives often associated visions of witches with their capacity for trance and for assuming animal shape. In the former phenomenon, the night spirit-ghost appeared in the victim's dream or vision as an apparition that sat on the victim's chest as a "prëssing" demon, tried to strangle the victim, and finally cantered on the victim after turning him or her into a horse. On other occasions, a group of witches arrived in a house as elf-like creatures that held a rough and noisy party, playing music and dancing. These night apparitions abound in the documentation from witchcraft trials everywhere they occurred, providing this region with unusually rich and varied images of spirit and demon figures in the early modern period. The integration of the demon world, and particularly the rich world of fairies characteristic in the Balkans, made witch parties into fairy balls, while its scenes of battle resembled the soul fights of the witch's magician ancestors, fought in a state of trance.

In all the countries of the region, these dream apparitions, group soul journeys, and battles preserved autochthonic parallels from folk belief to demonological doctrines. Antiwitchcraft demonology reached Hungary, Croatia, and Slovenia through witchcraft trials and priests who had studied in the West, and appeared to some extent in trial records but the doctrine of witches renouncing baptism or the witches' Sabbat as a conspiracy of apostate witches never took root as an ideology serving antiwitchcraft purges. None of these ideas ever penetrated Orthodox areas free of witch hunts. Hungarian, Croatian, and Slovenian stories about the journeys and meetings of witches' societies shared some features with clichés about the witches' Sabbat used in official demonology (e.g., a village lad, who was in fact the Devil, initiated or forced a pact on a victim dragged away from the village). Similar stereotypical elements, including the witch's ointment or the motif of flying with the Devil's help, can only be documented from the minutes of trials; these elements

are absent from modern witch beliefs, where witches' parties become dinners and dances taking place either on a local mountain or hill, under a tree, or at a crossroads. These parties, following the stereotypical elements of international legends, suddenly turn rough and wild (e.g., the food turns into dung), or in other cases, they are described as slightly disgusting underworld-type events, noisy and rough feasts held in cellars or mills. Such narratives sometimes contain initiation motives more archaic than the official pact with the Devil, incidents in which the victim is cooked and boned. They include some otherworldly symbolism, such as crossing a river or narrow path, or reaching the goal in a small object such as a sieve or a nutshell drifting downriver. Together with other data referring to the witch's ability for trance and soul flight, such details support the hypothesis (Ginzburg 1991) that these archaic images of journeys to the otherworld serve as the basis of the images of the witches' Sabbat.

ÉVA PÓCS;

TRANSLATED BY ORSOLYA FRANK

See also: ANIMALS; ANIMISTIC AND MAGICAL THINKING; BALKANS (WESTERN AND CENTRAL); CAUL; CROATIA; CURSES; DEMONOLOGY; DEMONS; FAIRIES; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; HUNGARY; HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, MAGIC; LYCANTHROPY; *MALEFICIUM*; METAMORPHOSIS; MILK; NIGHTMARES; ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY; POPULAR BELIEFS IN WITCHES; SABBAT; SHAMANISM; SLOVENIA; SORCERY; STRIX, STRIGA, STRIA; THEOPHILUS; VAMPIRE.

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HUSSITES

The relationship between the reform movement named after the Czech reformer Jan Hus (1370–1415) and the history of witch persecutions was twofold. On the one hand, like witches, the Hussites became victims of the fifteenth-century papal inquisition after the Council of Constance, where their leader Jan Hus was burned at the stake in 1415; on the other hand, the Hussite church, founded in Bohemia in the fifteenth century, consistently rejected witchcraft.

The term *Hussites* incorporates various groups formed after the conflicts in Bohemia, which survived into modern times in one way or another. Differentiating among "Taborites," Moravian and Bohemian Brethren, and the Assembly of Brethren exceeds the scope of this entry. A direct connection between the inquisitorial persecution of the Hussites and the onset of witch persecution can be found in the writings of Heinrich Kramer (Institoris), the author of the infamous *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486). Within the context of demonology, it mentioned the Hussites (II/1,1), but without implying any direct connection between witchcraft and their heresy. Unlike the term Waldensian, Hussite never became a synonym for witches or sorcerers, but after his inquisition of witches in southwestern Germany, Kramer turned to the persecution of Hussites with similar intensity. When appointing him inquisitor for Bohemia and Moravia in 1499, Pope Alexander VI issued a papal decree explicitly condemning the Bohemian Brethren and the Waldensians, and Kramer soon published a book with a title as militant as the *Malleus*, his *Sancte Romane ecclesie fidei defensionis clipeus adversus Waldensium seu Picardorum heresim* (Shield of Defense of the Faith of the Holy Roman Church Against the Heresy of the Waldensians or Picards in the Nations of Germany and Bohemia . . . Olomouc, 1501). It alluded to witchcraft by charging

that one of the heresies of the Bohemian Brethren was their rejection of proceedings taken against witches. Another Catholic demonologist, Jean Maldonado, linked the Hussite heresy to witchcraft: "Bohemia and Germany, [where] the Hussite heresy was accompanied by such a storm of demons that witches were busier than heretics" (cited in Waite 2003, 106).

The Hussites' own views on witchcraft are more difficult to ascertain. The main representative of Hussite theology, Luke of Prague (1460–1528), who probably came under the influence of the German Reformation in his last years, expressed a comparatively moderate attitude. His own catechisms, and those written or influenced by other Hussite theologians, contained almost no references to sorcery and witchcraft. Their exposition of the first commandment, which is helpful here, emphasized the ethics of love, in which love for God finds its true expression in love for one's neighbor. Christians must reject strange cults and false gods on the basis of the Decalogue; according to the Hussites, this primarily involved the rejection of such Catholic forms of devotion as reverence for saints. Not until the late sixteenth century did Hussite catechisms prohibit all consultations with sorcerers and diviners, whether to prevent or to cause harm. The formulas used, however, showed strong influence from Lutheran catechisms of sixteenth-century Germany. Thus the Hussites, and later the Bohemian Brethren and the Assembly of Brethren, ranked among reform movements of the late Middle Ages and early modern period that consistently internalized their conception of the black arts, developed no doctrine of demonology, dissociated themselves from witch hunting, and bridged the transition to the moderate attitude of Reformed Protestantism and early Pietism in the late seventeenth century.

JÖRG HAUSTEIN;

TRANSLATED BY HELEN SIEGBURG

See also: BOHEMIA; HERESY; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; KRAMER (INSTITORIS), HEINRICH; MALDONADO, JUAN; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; NIDER, JOHANNES; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; *VAUDOIS* (WALDENSIANS).

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HUTCHINSON, FRANCIS (1660–1739)

Author of *An Historical Essay Concerning Witchcraft* (1718; 2d enlarged edition, 1720), Hutchinson was educated at Cambridge (BA, 1680; MA, 1684; DD, 1698). He was, first, vicar of Hoxne in Suffolk, and by 1692 became curate of St. James's church in Bury St. Edmunds. Hutchinson became bishop of Down and Connor in Ireland in 1720.

His politics were those of the Whig establishment; he preached in 1707 in favor of Anglo–Scottish union, and in 1717 he published a biography of Archbishop John Tillotson, a figure approved of by the Whigs. In 1708, he published a rationalist tract against the contemporary practice of prophecy and faith healing (*A Short View of the Pretended Spirit of Prophecy*), and his *Compassionate Address to . . . Papists* (1716) dismissed Catholic claims to practice exorcism. He planned his book on witchcraft as early as 1706, but was advised against publishing on the subject by the bishop of Norwich and the archbishop of Canterbury. In 1712, the case of Jane Wenham momentarily revived his plans to publish; but he only pressed ahead in response to the publication of Richard Boulton's *A Compleat History of Magick, Sorcery and Witchcraft* (1715). Boulton later defended himself against Hutchinson with a *Vindication* (1722).

Hutchinson's *Historical Essay* demonstrated an extensive knowledge of previous literature for and against belief in witchcraft. He listed twenty-five works published since the Restoration defending belief in witchcraft, and among the skeptics, he was familiar with Johann Weyer, Reginald Scot, Friedrich Spee, Thomas Ady, John Webster, and Balthasar Bekker. Hutchinson sought to place himself in the tradition of Samuel Harsnett (1561–1631), author of attacks on Catholic and Puritan exorcisms (*A Declaration of Popish Impostures* and *A Discovery of the Fraudulent Practices of John Darrell*), and eventually archbishop of York; Harsnett, for his part, was much influenced by Scot. Hutchinson followed both Scot and Harsnett in treating witchcraft and possession stories as ridiculous and contemptible; he referred with approval to François Rabelais and Miguel de Cervantes as exponents of the art of telling stories that in their telling could be seen to be patently untrue (1st ed., p. 172).

It would be wrong to think that Hutchinson had nothing new to contribute to the debate on witchcraft, for he is the first of the skeptics to deploy probability theory (which had been effectively invented in the late seventeenth century) to measure the reliability of historical testimony. Thus, Richard Baxter had given an account of an elderly parson, Lowes, who had sunk a ship by witchcraft. Hutchinson responded: "When wise men believe wonderful things, they take care, that the proof be as extraordinary to support it: But in this case we have no corroborating circumstances of time, or

place, or the name of the ship, or any witnesses, in a case that requires vast numbers, that could depose, that at such a time, that very ship by name, or at least a ship particularly described, did sink miraculously, when it had a calm sea and a fair wind, without either rock or tempest. Instead of these kinds of probabilities . . ." we have only a confession extracted under torture (Hutchinson 2003, 67). Boulton responded in kind. Where Hutchinson had protested that much of the evidence for witchcraft was the result of mental disease, imposture, and torture, Boulton insisted it was easy to lay such evidence to one side, for "who would convict a witch against probability and circumstances of actions? These are the things which moral proof consists of, and which give credit to testimony, and as belief is founded upon moral proof, upon that proof judgement ought to be given" (Boulton 2003, 50)—"moral proof" being a technical term referring to testimony in support of a matter of fact so reliable as to make disbelief irrational. The issues in debate between Hutchinson and Boulton were thus identical with those later raised in Hume's "Of Miracles."

Hutchinson also relied on a new notion of evidence that, Ian Hacking (1975) has argued, was a by-product of probability theory. Hutchinson explained his novel system of reasoning by appealing to the story of the ass that tried to pass as a lion by donning a lion's skin, but one ear stuck out and betrayed him. So a woman confessed in 1618 that she had asked her cat to bewitch someone, "whereupon the cat whined and cried mew," signifying she had no power to do so. "Now this one circumstance looks to me like the ass's ear. For what should a cat say but *mew*? And how could the poor woman have been suffered to have interpreted that to her own destruction, if she had not been in the hands of fools?" Despite testimony that convinced a jury, "I do not believe a word of it." "A true lion, let him be young or old, or lame or blind, yet he hath not an ass's ear; nor hath a natural true action anything about it that is unnatural and false" (Hutchinson 2003, 28–29).

Unsurprisingly, Hutchinson balanced his skeptical historical arguments regarding the evidence for witchcraft (developed through a detailed study of numerous cases) with two sermons, one giving a brief and conventional account of the evidence for the truth of the Christian religion (from prophecy, well-attested miracles, reliable histories, etc.), and the other outlining what we can reliably know about good and evil spirits. There was, however, a tension between these sermons and Hutchinson's earlier claim that "The Scripture facts soberly interpreted, agree with the notions we have of God and Providence, and the Laws of Nature" (Hutchinson 2003, 11) and his insistence that we should always remember "how very steadily nature, and even the imitations of it, keep their course" (Hutchinson 2003, 150).

Hutchinson's historical knowledge was considerable and enabled him to rebut the traditional argument that the evidence for witchcraft is the same in all times and all places by a much more sophisticated account of the history of witch beliefs. He argued that certain beliefs were peculiar to certain times and places—belief in familiars or “imps,” for example, to England—and that the evidence in favor of witchcraft was not objective, but was constructed to validate beliefs people already held. Insofar as that evidence depended on what Hutchinson called “spectral testimony” (evidence of spirits and visions, or evidence produced by charms and magical practices), he was prepared to dismiss it out of hand—not by denying the existence of evil spirits or the possibility of magic, but by insisting that the Devil was a liar, and was likely to give testimony against the innocent. (Boulton's reply had to adopt the uncomfortable position that the Devil often deliberately betrayed his adepts into the hands of justice.)

As a contribution to a wide-ranging debate on the character and reliability of historical testimony, particularly testimony in favor of supernatural events, Hutchinson's *Historical Essay* belongs alongside such works as his own *A Defence of the Antient Historians* (1734). There has been considerable puzzlement as to why belief in witchcraft declined rapidly among educated people after 1718, without a sustained attack on traditional demonology: Hutchinson's book stood alone and could not have been widely read. The answer lies in

a wider shift in standards of evidence that took place as part of the emergence of probability theory, a shift Hutchinson's book illustrated.

DAVID WOOTTON

See also: DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; ENGLAND; EVIDENCE; MIRACLES; SKEPTICISM; SPECTRAL EVIDENCE; WENHAM, JANE.

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I

ICELAND

Iceland is situated far enough outside the European mainstream that witch persecutions lagged behind continental witchcraft trials. While the island was somewhat belatedly undergoing the changes of the Reformation (1550–1600), witchcraft still remained in the background. Nevertheless, once witch persecutions finally reached Iceland, then inhabited by barely 50,000 people (Finnsson 1970, 195), witchcraft doctrines shook its society with great force. Between 1593 and 1720, Iceland recorded 134 trials for sorcery and magic, involving 186 individuals, 166 men, 15 women, and 5 of unknown identity. As many as 103 of those cases, involving 128 individuals, were brought before the *Althing*, Iceland's highest court; 22 of them were burned at the stake as witches (Fiorvar'ardóttir 2000, 175–184, 317–319). In an Icelandic context, the word “witch” seems an inappropriate term for the accused; “cunning people,” “wizards,” or “magicians” better translate the Icelandic word *ffólkyngisfólk* (literally, “wise people”), the most frequently used term in the protocols (Fiorvar'ardóttir 2000, 22–25).

Remarkably enough, and a sharp contrast to what happened in most other parts of Europe, the Icelanders accused and tried for practicing sorcery were nearly always adult males; with rare exceptions, Iceland's women and children were not punished as witches. Of the 128 witchcraft defendants at the *Althing*, only 10 were women; of the 22 burned, only one woman was executed as a witch (Fiorvar'ardóttir 2000, 317–319). The only woman ever executed at the stake for this crime in seventeenth-century Iceland died together with her teenage son in 1678—apart from him, no adolescents were executed as witches in Iceland, unlike in some parts of continental Europe. Before the actual era of Iceland's witch persecutions, two other women were executed at the stake for diabolical crimes. A nun, damned by the church for making a pact with the Devil, was burned to death in 1343 (Storm 1888, 402); in 1580, a woman was executed for breeding a *tilberi* or imp, created by witchcraft, somewhat similar to the Swedish *mjólkhænt/trollkatten* (Resen 1991). Apart from these two, a woman was burned to death in 1608 for murdering a child by throwing it into boiling water (Benediktsson 1881–1932, I, 90). That is the only

known case in Iceland where a murderer suffered that kind of death penalty; normally women were drowned and men were decapitated for capital offenses other than witchcraft. However, although this woman was not legally a witch, the court punished her as one because it was so horrified by her crime.

Most of those burned at the stake for sorcery in seventeenth-century Iceland lived in *Vestfir'ir* (Westfjords). To some extent this severity can be attributed to the fact that two of the most powerful public servants in Iceland, both of them incredibly enthusiastic witch hunters, ruled this district at the time. Closely linked by family ties, these men (*fiorleifur Kortsson*, the lawman of the western and northern regions of Iceland, and *Páll Bjömsson*, a rural dean of *Vestfir'ir*) supported each other in their campaigns against witchcraft (Fiorvar'ardóttir 2000, 99–111).

Most of the accused were individuals of little influence, poor people, even wanderers or vagabonds. Though they were sometimes accused, rich farmers, priests, or chieftains almost never ended up at the stake, with very few exceptions. The accusers, on the other hand, were very often priests and lawyers, the same people who imposed Lutheran ideology with the full support of the Danish kings who ruled Iceland. One can argue that these persecutions originally spread to Iceland from Denmark, where most Icelandic clergymen and other civil servants were educated at the time (Fiorvar'ardóttir 2000, 150, 314–324).

ÓLÍNA FIORVARÐARDÓTTIR

See also: CUNNING FOLK; DENMARK; EXECUTIONS; MALE WITCHES.

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IDENTIFICATION OF WITCHES

A considerable part of antiwitchcraft and countermagic is concerned with the detection of witches. They could be discovered by certain marks on their body or by a characteristic behavior such as an inability to shed tears, or by a divining ritual. Such a ritual is known from a Danish trial for superstition against the housekeeper at an estate in North Jutland. One day in April 1735, when Ane Marie Nielsdatter was going to the dairy, she caught sight of some "witch's butter" (*merulus lacrimans*) on the wall of the building, near the ground. She scraped it off carefully with a potsherd and took it to the captain, telling him: "You had better order the carriage to be driven into the yard, so we can grease it with this butter." The captain complied with the request after receiving an assurance that the horses would come to no harm, and the same butter was spread on the hubs of the wheels in the Devil's name, after which the housekeeper told the coachman to drive off in the Devil's name without looking back. The huntsman had been instructed to ride behind and watch out for anyone running after the carriage. If he saw anyone he was to give him or her a charge of buckshot in the backside. No one followed the carriage, but the affair had consequences for the housekeeper, who was fined for this outrageous performance and sentenced to confess her crime to a minister of the church in private (Henningsen 1988, 132). On the island of Zealand (Denmark), there was a widespread belief that one could see who was a witch in the village by going to church on Maundy Thursday with a pullet's egg in one's pocket. Thus in 1788, during a service that day in Vemmelev Church (on the island of Zealand), a boy started crying out that he could see "four womenfolk sitting there with balls and pots on their heads." Two of the women afterward reported the episode to the authorities, with the result that the boy and two laborers who had put the egg in the boy's pocket were fined and sentenced to eight days on bread and water (Henningsen 1988, 122). Among the peasantry in nineteenth-century Denmark, it was a common saying that witches could not leave the church if the pastor forgot to close the Bible after the service but left it open on the Communion table. In Montenegro and Herzegovina it was believed that witches were best recognized at Easter: if someone turned a tile on the church roof around while people were at Mass, every witch would be unable to move and would have to stay inside the church until the tile was put back the right

way. In some places near Dubrovnik it was said that when a friar saying Mass turned toward the congregation to say *orate fratres* (pray, brethren) he would see a pair of horns on the head of every witch (Vukanovic 1989, 20f.). In all parts of Europe there appears to have been a rich folklore of oracles for the identification of witches. In some cases, however, the "oracles" appear to have been constructions by demonologists. Thus during the great persecution in the Basque country in the early seventeenth century, several of the witches confessed that they were unable to see the Consecrated Host during Mass; all they saw was "that the priest, when elevating, held in his hands something like a black cloud" (Henningsen 2004, doc. 2.4). The special thing about this "divining ritual" was that only witches could perform it, and that makes one suspect it was an invention of the inquisitors.

GUSTAV HENNINGSEN;

TRANSLATED BY JAMES MANLEY

See also: COUNTERMAGIC; PERSONALITY OF WITCHES; POPULAR BELIEFS IN WITCHES.

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IDOLATRY

Idolatry, the worship of false gods or images, was strongly linked to Devil worship in the earlier Middle Ages and, in the later Middle Ages, to illicit magic and witchcraft. A practice deeply condemned by all monotheistic faiths, the sin of idolatry directly transgressed the first and second commandments of the Hebrew Decalogue that forbade the worship of other gods and the creation of artistic representations of divinities (Exod. 20:3–5). As the Church of the late Roman Empire accommodated itself to the visual depiction of biblical characters, stories, saints, and even of God, theologians were compelled to make clearer distinctions between the proper use of religious art, as an aid to worship and a didactic tool for illiterates, and its misuses. Missionaries attacked images of pagan divinities as demons while at the same time placing images of Christian saints in their stead. Theologians therefore distinguished two categories of worship: *dulia*, a reverence and respect for saints that stopped short of outright worship, and *latría*, the direct worship of God that could be shared with no creature. Such distinctions were, naturally, lost on illiterates and proved impossible to enforce in common practice.

Some theologians, and occasionally rulers, rejected the validity of such definitions and sought to ban the use of religious icons altogether as the only safe means to avoid idolatry, thus provoking iconoclastic storms in eighth- and ninth-century Byzantium. In the Latin west, such medieval heretics as Cathars, Waldensians, English Lollards, and Bohemian Hussites later sought to purge churches of idolatrous images, for which Roman authorities anathematized the heretical groups. Church leaders counteracted the possible appeal of such heresies by demonizing them, linking them with rebellion and worship of Satan. Thirteenth-century inquisitors such as Conrad of Marburg portrayed heretics as worshipping Satan in the form of a black cat or a toad. The fifteenth-century reinterpretation of popular *maleficia* (evil acts) as witchcraft embellished the new crime with degrading forms of Satanic worship previously attributed to idolatrous heretics.

The general trend after the thirteenth century was to define sin in accordance with the Decalogue rather than the more traditional seven deadly sins, moving the emphasis from harm against humans to that against God, epitomized as idolatry and blasphemy. Scholastics such as Thomas Aquinas defined idolatry as part of the sin of superstition, which encompassed the irrelevant or excessive worship of God as well as according service to the wrong object (idolatry). Aquinas considered divination an act of idolatry, because any effort to divine the future by natural or magical means opposed correct worship, which required humans to turn only to God for instruction. The result was a conception of witchcraft as spiritual apostasy involving demon worship that was readily transposed onto the popular understanding of it as acts of *maleficia*. All magic therefore implied a degree of diabolical idolatry, whether explicitly by making a pact with the Devil, or implicitly, in the naive efforts of necromancers and sorcerers to control the demons they conjured. A lesser variant of idolatry occurred when Catholics treated images not as symbols of divine assistance but as objects of worship themselves, thus shifting from *dulia* to *latria*.

Even popular preachers could find themselves suspected of idolatry. In 1426, Bernardino of Siena was brought before an inquisitor in Rome for his practice of encouraging the veneration of tablets containing the holy name of Jesus. Thanks to high-ranking supporters, he was released, but he turned almost immediately to preaching fervently against the explicit idolatry of witches. By the early sixteenth century, it was widely argued by churchmen that all forms of illicit magic and superstition were demonic in origin and implicated their practitioners in apostasy. Theological differentiations between implicit and explicit pacts were soon blurred in the confessional storm to come and in the need to prosecute blasphemous crimes against God.

The image controversy was revived on a massive level in the sixteenth century through the biblicism of many Protestant reformers, who became convinced that the veneration of saints was a form of idolatry, and destructive acts of iconoclasm accompanied the Reformation in many regions. Late medieval efforts to define and eradicate all forms of idolatry had proved effective in sensitizing ordinary people to the issue. In 1522, Luther's compatriot in Wittenberg, Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt, wrote a widely influential tract promoting the removal of religious icons from churches so as to avoid incurring divine judgment for tolerating such idolatry any longer. Although Luther abhorred Karlstadt's initiative, other Reformed leaders and Anabaptists insisted on the removal of Catholic religious art from churches as part of their campaign to cleanse sacred spaces of any taint of "priestly magic." These reformers likened Catholic ritual not only to idolatry, but also to religious magic, associating both with lay magic, divination, and superstition in general. For Protestants, then, it became increasingly essential to oppose all forms of illicit magic, because its survival would keep the doors open for a return to Catholicism.

The Catholic Church responded by defending the proper veneration of saints and more tightly defining the role of images in churches, retorting that, by replacing images with such texts as Bibles or hymnals, Protestants were as guilty of idolatry as ignorant people who improperly worshipped icons. In France, where Huguenots sought to purify churches of idolatrous images, enraged Catholics in some cases committed grisly acts of desecration of Calvinist corpses comparable to what the Calvinists had done to their saints' images. The great iconoclastic fury of 1566 in the Netherlands likewise witnessed thousands of religious images removed, destroyed, or desecrated to prove that these "saints" were not sentient beings after all. In response, such Jesuit theologians as Martín Del Rio and Juan Maldonado argued that while their order was destroying idols elsewhere in the world, the Devil had found a new home in the minds of heretics. Heresy, they believed, would inevitably degenerate into sorcery or atheism, both forms of diabolical idolatry.

After the mid-sixteenth century, both Catholics and Reformed Protestants increasingly returned their attention to the blasphemy and idolatry of superstition. On both sides pastors warned their flocks about the sin of superstition and attempted to track down remnants of heresy or idolatrous practices. Attention also returned to the most egregious form of blasphemy: demonic witchcraft. Catholics found no better way to reinforce the validity of their sacramental system and veneration of saints than by having witches confess to idolatrous worship of Satan in an exactly reversed mirror image of Catholic worship. Similarly, Protestants, who considered Catholic rituals, especially the Mass, as superstitious, also

broadened the charge of idolatry to encompass all manner of religious dissidence, even among their fellow Protestants.

Such polemical use of the language of idolatry for purposes of religious propaganda was reinforced by news from the Americas. In the early 1530s, clerics in New Spain began uncovering evidence that many baptized converts still venerated their ancient idols. The discovery in 1562 of widespread idolatry in Yucatan, Mexico, resulted in massive trials and executions. In the perspective of Spanish-born inquisitors, what they were uncovering were not mere remnants of the old pagan religions, but demonic idolatry and witchcraft. The persecution of New World idolatry paralleled and reinforced the rising fear of diabolical plots in the Old World.

IDOLATRY AND THE WITCH HUNTS

In both America and Europe, authorities were most deeply concerned about the religious apostasy of those whom they believed had made a pact with Satan. The presence of only a few such horrific idolaters, it was believed, would bring down severe punishments from God. The worsening weather and increasing incidents of destructive storms and crop failures after ca. 1560 provided clear signs of God's displeasure. Whether or not theologians or state officials believed that witches could perform weather magic, they were convinced that suspected witches must be arrested for their idolatry that had prompted such evident divine wrath. The forced confessions of witches to their supposed acts of idolatrous worship at their Sabbats became correspondingly more detailed.

Both Catholic and Protestant theologians emphasized the diabolical and idolatrous nature of witchcraft, so that even though the common people feared the *maleficia* of local witches, the crime for which they merited the most horrific death penalty was their service to and worship of the Devil.

Where both rulers and ruled adjusted to some form of religious toleration, fears of divine wrath and diabolical plots behind the religious "other" declined accordingly. For example, in the Dutch Republic, the Reformed Church lacked the powers of a state religion, and membership in it became voluntary. Alternate denominations—Lutherans, Mennonites, and Catholics—were permitted to carry on discreet worship services, and the populace soon had the advantage of religious choice. Fears of diabolical witchcraft declined accordingly, and executions of witches ended shortly after the turn of the seventeenth century, while concerns about idolatry and demon worship receded into the background. But the process was also reversible: other "tolerant" parts of Europe, Poland and Transylvania, took up witch hunting with considerable enthusiasm after overcoming their ecumenical backgrounds. Thus, in some

regions, the religious conflicts and tensions continued to inspire fears of diabolical plots and divine displeasure well into the eighteenth century.

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See also: AQUINAS, THOMAS; ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BERNARDINO OF SIENA; CONRAD OF MARBURG; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DEVIL; DIABOLISM; DIVINATION; HERESY; MALDONADO, JUAN; NETHERLANDS, NORTHERN; NEW SPAIN; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; RITUAL MAGIC; SABBAT; SUPERSTITION.

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IMAGE MAGIC

The assumed identity of an image, especially a three-dimensional and therefore realistic statue, with the person it supposedly represents, is extremely common in religious history. Countless records describe sculptures of Greek or Roman gods moving, sweating, or speaking, and of wooden statues of Jesus or the Virgin Mary crying, embracing, talking, and so on. According to this notion of "empsychosis" (repudiated by modern theology), the supernatural being actually inhabits the image. In archaic thought (reaching from ancient Egypt to the modern Caribbean islands and even people in major Western cities), this idea also works in a different though related way: Making an image of a living person establishes an existential connection in the form of a magical rapport between both, though the figure is only a life token, and is not inhabited. Upon this conviction, all sorts of black and amorous magic have been based, with the image (mostly a doll) being tortured or destroyed or manipulated in various ways. This is one

reason why some people dislike being photographed, fearing bewitchment by this means.

Apart from direct application of toxic substances, magic done through manipulating images probably was and is *factually* the most effective method of all. Its success requires that the person who is to be vexed or killed or driven into love must know about the ceremonies performed with the alter ego. Through this induced autosuggestion, the person really begins to produce the appropriate psychosomatic manifestations, for example, experiencing pain in the very part of the body whose analogue has been pricked by a needle in the puppet. Therefore, the nail-studded doll usually is placed where the victim must come across it, or else the sorcerer arranges to have the person informed about what has been done to the artificial double.

Various learned theories explain the effectiveness of image magic. On the one hand, it is construed as homeopathic magic, identifying the representation and the represented, and therefore the outcome of an erroneous (“primitive”) mode of thinking; on the other hand, its point has been seen in the process of image making itself, the exactness of the reproduction working as a guarantee of its animation, though this exactness must not be presumed to lie in the naturalistic appearance of the puppets (in fact, usually they are most crude), but in their correct naming (Freedberg 1989).

This magical practice is called *envoûtement* in French (from Latin *invultuatio*, “in the face”), and the doll is called an *Atzmann* or *Rachepuppe* in German (“man to be eaten up”; “doll [puppet] for vengeance”). In medieval and early modern Christianity, it was common to have the doll baptized, giving it the name of the victim, before it could function. Also, some of the victim’s hair or nails might have been added to the wax or clay that often served to make the image. Occasionally a dead animal or even an object, such as a candle, represented the human being in question. Besides wounding the doll with needles or nails, burning it was and is a favorite method of destruction, serving equally well to murder the victim or to enflame a cold beloved’s heart. However, Paracelsus and other early modern authors also knew a similar procedure that was used with the intention to heal the member affected by “burning out” an illness.

Image magic has a long history and worldwide spread. Ancient Egypt has left many pertinent written sources, reaching back to 3830 B.C.E. In classical antiquity, writers as famous as Virgil, Ovid, Horace, and Apuleius of Madaura mention image magic, with Hecate being the goddess to address for this kind of *maleficium* (harmful magic). Some pierced antique statuettes and hundreds of leaden tablets with the name and picture of the intended victim have been excavated in various parts of the Roman Empire, some of them dating from the early Christian era. While there are

only a few cases known from the Early Middle Ages, we have a dense net of evidence from the thirteenth century onward, when this practice, like all other fields of magic, became treated as part of a collaboration with the Devil.

In the fourteenth century, when other uses of images also began to flourish (execution of effigies, pictures of infamy, funeral masks, public statues, etc.) and the *crimen magiae* (crime of magic) attracted the full interest of the canonists, image magic became widespread throughout western Europe. France was the center of its dissemination, especially the papal and royal courts; the Avignon popes especially popularized this practice. Clement V put Bishop Guichard of Troyes on trial for having applied image magic to murder Queen Jeanne of Navarre; it took a decade until he was finally freed in 1314. Other members of the high clergy such as Bishop Géraud of Cahors, and of the secular nobility, even King Louis of Bavaria and two Visconti, were accused of having employed statuettes to kill Pope John XXII; the bishop was convicted and burned in 1318.

The generally intensified persecution of witchcraft during the late Middle Ages also multiplied the written and material sources about image magic. A fifteenth- or sixteenth-century *Atzmann* with a nail in its hip can still be seen in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum (Bavarian National Museum) in Munich. Image magic remained common in the early modern period, and often this accusation was used in political processes (and in Russia even later). Several kings of France and of England, as well as an elector of Saxony, become targets of such practices, or used them against their enemies. Common people, especially witches, also had recourse to image magic, so that prohibitions against making and wounding such images can be found in some law codes (e.g., Bavaria, 1611). Protestants spread rumors that the Jesuits possessed a waxen image of each reformed prince that they habitually cursed and maltreated in order to kill them. But Catholic clerics reportedly even employed this *maleficium* against the pope; Urban VIII (1623–1644) believed he was the target of such a machination, whose conspirators were executed or made galley slaves. Seabrook and other specialists in contemporary magic claimed that witch’s dolls were still frequently employed in the twentieth century in areas such as the Caribbean and in such cities as London and Paris.

Apart from dolls, there are innumerable other forms of image magic, even if only rarely mentioned or completely fictitious. A few examples will suffice. In several medieval romances about Alexander the Great, the Egyptian king Nectanebos, when endangered by an enemy fleet, put waxen ship models and warriors into a basin with water, bewitched them, and either made them fight the aggressors or simply had them sunk, thereby causing the destruction of the enemy’s armada.

A sophisticated way to tame wild animals was described in a fifteenth-century German necromancer's manual, which, as a learned work, also included astrological features: One must make an image of the beast, carve its name on the head, and on the chest the name of the hour and the lord of the hour, and so forth. After being fumigated, the picture must be buried, thereby turning the animal's will to that of the person performing the ritual (Kieckhefer 1997, 178). This handbook also gave an especially graphic charm by which one could win favor. Two rocks are smoothed down, the figures of the two persons in question are carved into them, their respective names are inscribed, tin is melted, and then cast into the forms. Next, a small iron chain is bound to the neck of the image of the person whose favor one wishes to obtain, the other end of the chain is fixed to the tin sorcerer's hand; the victim's image has to bend its head, and both are finally buried. It goes without saying that all these ceremonies had to be accompanied by many magical formulas and by invocations of devils and God (Kieckhefer 1997, 76–78).

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See also: APULEIUS OF MADAURA; *DEFIXIONES*; GREEK MAGICAL PAPYRI; HECATE; INVOCATIONS; LOVE MAGIC; NECROMANCY.

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IMAGINATION

Until the late Middle Ages, devils' physical interactions with human beings through demonic possession, temptation, or appearances to groups of heretics apparently provoked little formal analysis until around 1400, when theologians began postulating more widespread and systematic corporeal interactions between heretics and demons. To defend the reality of this witchcraft, theologians had to refute two earlier traditions of skepticism about human–demon interaction.

The oldest was the *Canon Episcopi*, a directive to bishops forged about 900 C.E. and incorporated into canon law. The *Canon Episcopi* described women who claimed to follow the goddess Diana on midnight rides, traversing great distances on the backs of animals. It condemned these beliefs as heretical dreams and visions caused by the Devil, claiming that the women's experiences happened mentally, "in the spirit," not physically or "in the body." Later, Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) twice parenthetically mentioned skeptics who claimed that demons existed only in the imagination of uneducated people, not in reality. Aquinas's systematic treatises on angels and devils also mentioned Aristotelian philosophers who opposed the reality of demons. In one passage, Aquinas admitted that Aristotle himself never asserted demonic reality.

Moreover, Aristotle's discussions of imagination as a distinct faculty of the human mind implicitly threatened demonic reality. Imagination could combine remembered perceptions from highly disparate experiences and forcefully present the composite pseudo-experience to the conscious mind, indistinguishable from real experience. Addressing the objection that demons existed only in uneducated people's imagination, Aquinas said skeptics assumed that "the terrors that a man creates for himself out of his imagination are attributed to a demon. . . . because certain figures can appear to the senses in exactly the same form as a man has thought of them" (Stephens 2002, 320).

Aquinas's remarks became an important stimulus to treatises (ca. 1450–1520) that transformed earlier stereotypes into the heresy of witchcraft. Jean Vînet avowedly wrote to refute "the presumptuous and heretical-sounding opinion of those who say that demons do not exist, except in the imagination of the common people." Quoting the same passage of Aquinas, the first page of *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) defends the reality of demons by asserting that witches encountered them in reality and interacted with them "in the body" (Stephens 2002, 25, 36, 318–321).

Early demonologists were dismayed because these traditions implied that all experience of demons was in dreams or hallucinations. Tales of experiments from

around 1400 seemed to support such a conclusion. Some women reportedly claimed to travel rapidly to nocturnal feasts and revels by anointing themselves with mysterious unguents, but reliable eyewitnesses soundly refuted them, observing that the women fell asleep and went nowhere until awakening. Thus any writer who affirmed the reality of demonic witchcraft had to disqualify or limit the power of the human imagination. Another theory of Aquinas filled the need ideally. Demons could create a convincing *praestigium* or illusion in two ways. First, they could create aerial bodies and “assume” them so convincingly that experience of them—including sexual intercourse—would seem real. Second, because demons had no intrinsic bodies, they could freely enter the human mind and deceive it from within. Retrieving “images” of previous perceptions from the memory, demons could combine traces of real experiences into a compelling hallucination (Stephens 2002, 277–321).

The second hypothesis became socially significant in juridical debates over hallucinations related to physiological rather than purely emotional conditions. Sufferers from melancholia were known to have aberrant imaginations and powerful delusions. If accused witches were proved melancholic, their encounters with demons were presumably hallucinations: how guilty were they then? The encountered devils could still be real. Some writers defined black bile, the humor that caused melancholia, as *balneum diaboli* (Devil’s bath), asserting that melancholics were especially vulnerable to demonic influence. Opponents of witch hunting argued that demons exploited this physical handicap, and that witches were therefore innocent, because their crimes happened involuntarily in imagination. Defenders of witch hunting occasionally found ways of making the *balneum diaboli* condition culpable. The Devil’s bath argument allowed still other writers, for example, Johann Weyer and Girolamo Tartarotti, to defend the reality of demons and the supernatural while opposing the persecution of “witches.”

Between 1450 and 1750, few discussions of witchcraft neglected its relation to imagination; Francesco Maria Guazzo even began his treatise with a chapter on imagination. Witchcraft inspired more general treatments of imagination by both proponents and opponents of witch hunting, for example, Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola and Michel de Montaigne. Ostensibly objective seventeenth- and eighteenth-century treatises on psychology concealed defenses of demonic reality and witchcraft. Thomas Feyens (+1631) concentrated on the power of imagination to affect bodies, particularly the notion that a gestating mother’s imagination left birthmarks on her fetus that symbolized her cravings for particular foods. How did this take place? Could the imagination do things to external reality that seem magical but are natural?

Feyens thought so. But he warned that Avicenna and Algazel, often invoked by writers on imagination, “were far too superstitious in their praise of the soul and the imagination, ascribing things to the imagination that should be attributed to the power of the Devil. Because they as yet lacked the knowledge of witchcraft and magical arts that we now possess, when they saw and heard that some men could do wondrous, supernatural things, they thought the men did these things through the power of their souls and imaginations, whereas they did them through the power of the Devil” (Feyens 1635, 63). Marsilio Ficino, Pietro Pomponazzi, and others repeated the error, “for they attribute so much to [imagination] that many things, which everyone else thinks are done either by diabolical witchcraft [*fascinatione diabolica*] or else by a miracle, they believe are done by the sole force of a powerful imagination” (Feyens 1635, 87).

In 1745, Ludovico Antonio Muratori explored the creative effects of the imagination as well as its pathologies, foreshadowing modern and more aesthetic appreciation of its power. Muratori forcefully criticized Feyens and others, dismissing witchcraft as a delusion of nymphomaniacal women and their gullible male audience. Some women “have not known . . . how to disguise their dissolute lasciviousness, otherwise than by pretending to frequent those spirits [*incubi*], depicted as so libidinous; and they have persuaded whoever is especially inclined to believe everything that wears the livery of the marvelous and supernatural.” Muratori concluded that “a powerful imagination alone is the cause of their supposed nocturnal travels through the air, and of the bestial outbursts of their lust” (Muratori 1995, 101–102). Paradoxically, Muratori’s misogyny nurtured his confidence in the reality of demons: “To attribute so much power to devils over Christians, after our divine Savior harrowed hell, is to wrong our holy religion” (Muratori 1995, 100).

Girolamo Tartarotti (1745) attributed the Sabbat to rampant imagination, stimulated by lust or vengefulness, and amplified by narcotic unguents. However, he defended the possibility of demonic interaction by distinguishing among three phenomena: *veneficio*, often confused with *maleficio* (*maleficium*), is poisoning, an unmiraculous effect produced by natural agents; magic (*magia*) produces real effects through the concurrence “of God who permits, . . . of the Devil who works, and . . . of the magician who desires and invites” the Devil’s agency; and, finally, witchcraft. *Milleus Maleficarum* and similar treatises erroneously refer to *magia* as witchcraft, but witchcraft produces effects only in the mind. Because the witch obeys the Devil rather than commanding him, she herself is bewitched, “receiving the effect of [the devil] or, if we prefer, of her own ruined and filthy imagination” (Tartarotti 1745, 161). Rationalistic critics scoffed that Tartarotti’s

distinctions were pointless; he retorted that denying demonic power was potentially heretical (Tartarotti 1745, 353–362, 426–447). He was perhaps the last systematic defender of demonic reality against the rationalistic valuation of human imagination.

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See also: AQUINAS, THOMAS; *CANON EPISCOPI*; CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DEMONS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; GUAZZO, FRANCESCO MARIA; MELANCHOLY; MONTAIGNE, MICHEL DE; MURATORI, LUDOVICO; PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA, GIANFRANCESCO; SKEPTICISM; TARTAROTTI, GIROLAMO; VINET, JEAN; WEYER, JOHANN.

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IMPERIAL FREE CITIES

A few of Germany's eighty-odd imperial free cities experienced early executions for witchcraft (Metz or Ravensburg, 1484) or sorcery (Lindau, 1443 and 1493; Regensburg, 1467). As elsewhere in Germany, most large-scale witchcraft trials occurred in imperial free cities between 1560 and 1630, although there were some later seventeenth-century outbreaks (thirty-two executions at Esslingen from 1662–1666; fourteen executions at Reutlingen, 1665) and a few executions occurred later still (one at Ulm, 1680; five at Augsburg, 1685–1686; one at Rothenburg ob der Tauber, 1692). The council of an imperial free city constituted its court of high criminal justice. The city councillors were thus responsible for trying alleged witches from both the city and its rural hinterland; sometimes one or more councillors were deputized as special *Commissaren* (commissioners) to make preliminary investigations in such cases. Legal procedures in witchcraft trials in imperial

free cities were prescribed by the Carolina Code (*Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*), the criminal law code issued for the Holy Roman Empire in 1532. Whether or not (and to what extent) witchcraft trials escalated in an imperial free city largely depended on whether the councillors chose to abide by the Carolina Code or instead treated witchcraft as a *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime) and tortured accused witches without restraint.

Because there were so many imperial free cities of such different sizes, it is hard to compare or generalize about the witchcraft trials that they experienced. Moreover, the history of witch persecution has been thoroughly researched for only a relatively small proportion of them; usually the largest and most important, or else those which experienced significant episodes of persecution. Sometimes (for example, in Schwäbisch Gmünd), poor source survival means that only a partial history of witchcraft trials can be recovered. Despite these caveats, it is possible to divide the imperial free cities into three categories in relation to witch persecution (illustrated by the case studies that follow):

1. Those that experienced severe, endemic persecution of witches, such as Rottweil. In the context of current research this is the smallest category.
2. Those that experienced at least one wave of relatively severe persecution, such as Esslingen, Reutlingen, Schwäbisch Gmünd, Offenburg, and Nördlingen. These waves occurred in the context of popular pressure for witchcraft trials (sometimes linked to a subsistence crisis), instability or factionalism within the political elite, or the influence of particular individuals in favor of witch hunting. Often, however, one such wave of persecution taught city councillors that severe witch hunting was destabilizing and best avoided.
3. Those that experienced an extremely low level of witch persecution, characterized by an absence of large-scale witch hunts and a low number of executions relative to population size. Several imperial free cities—particularly some of the largest—fall into this category, including Augsburg, Nuremberg, Frankfurt-am-Main, Lübeck, Ulm, Rothenburg, and Schwäbisch Hall. The deliberate refusal by the councillors of these cities to share the contemporary enthusiasm for witch hunting, even during periods of regional witch panics, was due to various political, economic, and religious reasons.

Given the significance of this third category, it is possible to conclude that the pattern of witch hunting in imperial free cities was, overall, relatively restrained.

URBAN POLITICS AND THE ECONOMY

Ruled by councils of varying size, imperial free cities were autonomous political and juridical units within

the Holy Roman Empire. They owed allegiance directly to the Holy Roman Emperor, who had granted them privileges and rights that gave them their independent status. Many of them were situated in what is today southern Germany. The number of imperial free cities in the Empire declined during the early modern period from eighty-three in 1521 to fifty-one by 1800; all but six finally lost their independence in 1803. Most experienced economic decline by the late-seventeenth century, a process accelerated significantly by the Thirty Years' War. Imperial free cities varied greatly in size. The very largest (Augsburg, Cologne, Lübeck, Nuremberg) surpassed 20,000 inhabitants. Most, however, were middle-sized, with 5,000–7,000 inhabitants (Esslingen, Schwäbisch-Gmünd, Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Rottweil, Reutlingen), while others such as Gengenbach (1,100 inhabitants) were small. A few imperial free cities (Nuremberg, Rothenburg, Rottweil, Schwäbisch Hall, Ulm) also governed large rural hinterlands.

From the fourteenth century, most imperial free cities experienced latent or actual conflict between the guilds and the urban patriciate for dominance of membership of the city council. By the early modern period, this conflict had been largely resolved in favor of the patriciate, but political tension still found expression in some cities through the medium of witchcraft trials. Pressure from guildsmen who regarded the councillors as too lenient in their treatment of witchcraft played a part in instigating witchcraft trials in Gelnhausen and Offenbourg. Emperor Maximilian II's restoration of Reutlingen's old guild constitution in 1576 introduced an element of instability into the city's politics that helped shape three of the five waves of witchcraft trials that occurred there in 1603 (seven executions), 1660/1661 (nine executions), and 1665 (fourteen executions). Each persecution was linked to the election of a new generation of councillors, eager to prove their witch-hunting zeal to the general citizenry. In 1660/1661 and 1665 the impetus came particularly from councillor and *Commissar* Johann Philipp Laubenberger, who acquiesced to popular demands for witchcraft trials to increase his political power at the expense of his rivals. Laubenberger even managed to drive his main political opponent, Heinrich Efferen, from Reutlingen, after forcing other alleged witches to name Efferen's wife as their accomplice (Fritz 1998). Laubenberger was not alone in using a demonstration of witch-hunting zeal as a way of advancing a political or legal career in an imperial free city; this was also done by jurists Leonhard Friz (Schwäbisch Gmünd, 1613–1617), Wolfgang Graf (Nördlingen, 1589–1594) and Daniel Hauff (Esslingen, 1662–1665), and by mayor Johann Pferinger (Nördlingen, 1589–1594). Given the potential of witch persecution as a tool for personal aggrandizement in the context of local politics,

however, it is striking that it was not used more often in imperial free cities and that so many free cities avoided large-scale witchcraft trials.

Popular anxiety about witchcraft in an imperial free city could be stirred by a specific local disaster, such as the outbreak of fires in Reutlingen in 1593; by voluntary confessions of witchcraft, particularly by children; by the influence of witch hunts in a neighboring territory; and by bad weather (blamed on witchcraft) that caused a severe subsistence crisis. For example, the witchcraft trials that took place in Schwäbisch Gmünd between 1613 and 1617, causing forty-two executions, were triggered both by severe hailstorms that destroyed the harvest in 1613 and by the influence of the exceptionally severe witch hunts in nearby Ellwangen from 1611. However, there was no automatic connection between agrarian crises and episodes of severe witch persecution in imperial free cities. The late 1580s and early 1590s were years of inflation following harvest failures; many towns in southern Germany were also affected by plague epidemics. The Swabian imperial free cities of Kempten and Memmingen were both badly hit by this double crisis, yet neither experienced executions for witchcraft. Overall, of the thirteen imperial free cities in Swabia and Franconia, only five became caught up in the major wave of witch persecution that swept through this region around 1590 (Behringer 1997). The crucial issue was whether or not a city council was disposed to acquiesce to popular demands for witch hunts during such agrarian crises, should such demands arise in the first place. Witchcraft may have been regarded as less of a threat to communal well-being at both a popular and elite level in imperial free cities that were generally relatively prosperous (at least until the Thirty Years' War) and thus more able to cope with periods of crisis. Nuremberg, Augsburg, Ulm, Rothenburg, and Schwäbisch Hall all fall into this category, and all experienced very low levels of witch persecution. Schwäbisch Hall may have been particularly immune to agrarian crises because its main industry was the salt trade (Schraut 1994). We need further research into the connections between witch persecution and the economies of individual imperial free cities and into the issue of crisis management by city councils, especially after harvest failures.

SEVERE ENDEMIC PERSECUTION:

ROTTWEIL

Rottweil (population 5,100), a Catholic imperial free city on the Neckar in Swabia, was the seat of the imperial *Hofgericht* (a high court for settling disputes between territorial lords). The city ruled a 220-square-kilometer hinterland containing twenty-seven villages that produced a high proportion of the victims of the city's witch hunts. Compared to other imperial free cities, Rottweil experienced remarkably severe witch hunting,

with 287 witchcraft trials between 1525 and 1701; 266 of them ended in executions between 1546 and 1659. The most severe outbreaks occurred in the last two decades of the sixteenth century and the late 1620s, coinciding with cycles of agrarian crisis and plague epidemics. However, a striking feature of the witch persecution in Rottweil was its endemic nature: apart from 1578, every year between 1571 and 1607 saw executions for witchcraft. The majority of Rottweil's executed witches were poor: most of those who came from the city or its villages were from the lowest social order, while many of those who came from other territories were vagrants (Zeck 2000).

Because of the city's many contacts with the Swiss Confederation, Rottweil's inhabitants probably had an early interest in witchcraft and witch persecution. Ideas about witchcraft were spread further in Rottweil by demonologies published by Reinhard Lutz and Johann Spreter. There were two main reasons—one legal, the other social—for the intensity of Rottweil's witch persecution. The first was that, although the city council as a whole pronounced verdicts in witchcraft trials, the interrogation (and torture) of suspects was supervised by a small committee of five councillors, who consistently treated witchcraft as a *crimen exceptum*. Because of their many personal links to the imperial *Hofgericht*, this small committee enjoyed a high level of authority; their severe handling of witchcraft trials seems never to have been challenged. This may also have been because most of those tried as witches were poor, and often came from outside Rottweil. The city's witchcraft trials can thus be interpreted as expressions of social conflict, in which individuals who were both poor and antisocial ran the greatest risk of being accused of witchcraft by their wealthier neighbors, especially during years of inflation and hardship. These social conflicts lost relevance during the Thirty Years' War when the population of Rottweil declined by half; as a result, witch persecution also declined rapidly after 1631 (Zeck 2000).

WAVES OF SEVERE PERSECUTION: ESSLINGEN

More commonly, imperial free cities experienced one (and occasionally more than one) wave of severe persecution, during which ten or more people were executed. Such waves of persecution occurred, for example, in the following cities:

Cologne, which experienced one witch hunt in 1627–1630 during which twenty-five individuals were executed, can also be included in this category. However, given its great size (35,000–40,000) and its low total number of witchcraft executions during the early modern period (thirty-three), Cologne is regarded as having a generally restrained pattern of witch persecution.

TABLE I-1

City	Date of Witch Hunt	Number Executed
Esslingen	1662–1666	32
Gelnhausen	1596–1599	19
	1633–1634	18
Kaufbeuren	1591	17
Nördlingen	1589–1594	33
Offenbourg	1627–1629	61
Reutlingen	1665–1667	14
Schwäbisch Gmünd	1613–1617	42
Windsheim	1596–1597	24

Such waves of severe witch hunting occurred when city councils were unwilling or unable to resist popular pressure in favor of witchcraft trials, or when one or more members of the political-judicial elite attempted to advance their careers by demonstrating zeal as witch hunters. In a general context of increased anxiety about the threat posed by witchcraft, it was treated as a *crimen exceptum*, as a result of which the number and severity of trials escalated. These waves of persecution ended either because the political aims of pro-witch-hunting councillors had been achieved (Reutlingen, 1666–1667), because the councillors lost confidence in the treatment of witchcraft as a *crimen exceptum* (Nördlingen, 1594), because witchcraft accusations began to threaten too many members of the city's social and political elite (Cologne, 1629–1630), or because of the intervention of the *Reichskammergericht*, or imperial chamber court (Gelnhausen, 1599).

The Lutheran imperial free city of Esslingen (population 6,000) formed an enclave in the duchy of Württemberg. It experienced a severe wave of witch hunting between 1662 and 1666, during which around sixty people were tried for witchcraft and thirty-two executed. Before 1662, only five individuals had been executed since witchcraft trials began in 1541, and no further executions occurred after 1666. The 1662–1666 episode began when a seventeen-year-old boy named Hans Elsässer from Vaihingen boasted that he had made a pact with the Devil and flown to Sabbats. The city councillors gave the case to a newly appointed jurist, Daniel Hauff, to investigate, and their decision had significant consequences. Hauff forced confessions and the names of their supposed accomplices from Elsässer and other alleged witches, using severe torture or its threat. Most of those arrested, tried, and executed for witchcraft came from Vaihingen and Möhringen, two villages subject to the authority of the Esslingen Hospital. Hauff also sought advice on the witchcraft trials from the legal faculty of Strasbourg University as well as from Tübingen University. This was a clever ploy, because the Strasbourg jurists were

much more likely than their Tübingen counterparts to confirm and give added authority to Hauff's actions and decisions. Hauff's pursuit of witches was motivated both by a genuine belief that they were evil and worthy of eradication, and by a desire to further his career. Although Hauff was largely responsible for the instigation and escalation of the 1662–1666 witch hunt, it could not have progressed without the support of a powerful subcommittee within Esslingen's city council—the Secret Council (*Geheimer Rat*), made up of three mayors and two other influential councillors. Council support for Hauff declined only after accusations of witchcraft spread from Vaihingen and Möhringen to Esslingen, threatening the city's social elite. Increasingly desperate attempts by the council to put a stop to Hauff's actions were cut short by his death—perhaps by means of poison—at the age of thirty-six in 1665. Thereafter the council brought the witch hunt to an end.

**LOW-LEVEL PERSECUTION:
ROTHENBURG OB DER TAUBER**

A significant number of imperial free cities had a very low level of witch persecution throughout the entire early modern period, characterized by a low total number of executions relative to population size and an absence of large-scale witch hunts, even during widespread witch panics in Germany in the 1590s and 1620s. These included some of the largest and politically most important imperial free cities—Nuremberg, Augsburg, Ulm—which may have set an example of restraint to other, smaller cities in their regions (Behringer 1997). Individuals tried for witchcraft in these cities had a reasonable chance of being released unpunished or of suffering a noncapital punishment, such as banishment.

The complex web of factors underpinning low levels of witch persecution can be seen in the Lutheran imperial free city of Rothenburg ob der Tauber. Situated in Franconia, Rothenburg had an early modern population of 5,000–7,000 and also ruled a 400-square-kilometer hinterland containing 10,000–11,000 inhabitants. Between 1549 and 1709, its city council dealt with twenty-eight trials involving accusations and confessions of witchcraft. None of them escalated into a large-scale witch panic; only three of the sixty-five people involved in these trials were executed (in 1629, 1673, and 1692), and two of them had also committed other capital crimes, namely infanticide (1629) and poisoning (1692). Rothenburg's city councillors and the jurists who advised them consistently refused to treat witchcraft as a *crimen exceptum*. Consequently, torture was used against only twelve alleged witches and with relative restraint; no one tried for witchcraft there was forced through torture to make a false confession. The

TABLE I-2

<i>Name of City</i>	<i>Population Size (pre-1618)</i>	<i>Witches Executed</i>
Augsburg	50,000	17
Nuremberg	40,000	6
Lübeck	30,000	13
Ulm	ca. 19–21,000	4
Frankfurt am Main	ca. 15–20,000	0
Rothenburg o. d. T.	ca. 5–7,000	3
Schwäbisch Hall	ca. 5,000	0

maintenance of this legal caution was in part an assertion of Rothenburg's judicial autonomy as an imperial free city. Until 1671, its councillors never sought advice from a university law faculty in a witchcraft trial, although the Carolina Code had recommended this procedure in 1532. Treatment of witchcraft as an ordinary rather than an exceptional crime also helped protect Rothenburg's councillors from imperial interference in governing the city by ensuring that alleged witches and their families had no grounds for complaint to the *Reichskammergericht*. The councillors also felt that witchcraft was such a difficult crime to prove at law that its punishment was best left up to God, rather than attempted by mere mortals who might make (literally) fatal mistakes in their judgment of guilt or innocence. Confessions of attendance at witches' Sabbats (by children or mentally unstable individuals) never provided the trigger for a large-scale witch hunt in Rothenburg because the councillors and the jurists who advised them held the characteristically Lutheran belief that Sabbats were merely delusions wrought by the Devil on the minds of impious individuals. Such confessions thus offered an inadequate legal basis on which to pursue other supposed Sabbat attendees. Zealous legal pursuit of alleged witches also made little practical sense to the Rothenburg councillors. The city's prosperity depended on the agrarian productivity of its hinterland as well as the industry of its craftsmen. Large-scale, socially destabilizing witchcraft trials could have affected both the rural and urban economies adversely, and were therefore best avoided. Rothenburg's councillors generally regarded the maintenance of social harmony as a higher priority than the legal pursuit of witches during the early modern period. For this reason, they treated as slander (and punished, with varying degrees of severity) a significant proportion of the allegations of witchcraft with which they were confronted between 1561 and 1652. This policy discouraged popular enthusiasm for making formal accusations of witchcraft. Popular agitation in favor of witch hunts was anyway largely absent in Rothenburg throughout the early modern period, partly because the lower orders were not especially terrified of witches, and partly because they regarded nonlegal

methods as the most effective way of dealing with witchcraft (Rowlands 2003).

Similar factors help explain the low level of witch persecution in other imperial free cities. It was significant that most imperial free cities with low or very restrained levels of witch persecution (apart from Cologne and Regensburg, which were Catholic, and Augsburg, which was biconfessional) were Lutheran. This probably encouraged their rulers to regard the witches' Sabbats as an illusion rather than a reality, an attitude that helped prevent the escalation of witch panics. However, a desire to maintain social stability to protect the economic well-being of the urban community was probably the most important factor explaining an absence of witch-hunting zeal, perhaps especially so in Ulm, Nuremberg, and Schwäbisch Hall that, like Rothenburg, also ruled large rural hinterlands. The councillors of these and other cities that experienced a low level of witch persecution realized from an early date, and without having to suffer the horrors of a large-scale witch panic themselves, that discretion was wiser than zealotry as far as the prosecution of witchcraft was concerned.

ALISON ROWLANDS

See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; AUGSBURG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY; CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*); COLOGNE; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; GERMANY; GERMANY, SOUTHEASTERN; GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; HAMBURG AND BREMEN; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; NÖRDLINGEN, IMPERIAL FREE CITY; NUREMBERG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY; OFFENBURG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY; PANICS; PLAGUE; POPULAR PERSECUTION; UNIVERSITIES; URBAN WITCHCRAFT; WITCH HUNTS.

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IMPOTENCE, SEXUAL

Many cultures hold that sexual impotence can be caused by magic, and concern about this form of bewitchment played a noteworthy, and perhaps somewhat exaggerated, role in the witch persecutions of early modern Europe. Impotence can be ascribed to witchcraft, spontaneous bewitchment—or sorcery, ritual casting of spells—or both, depending on the culture. In late medieval Europe, ritual techniques for causing impotence and the jealousies and disputes that prompted people to use them were rather common, so employing them was not necessarily a sign of malevolent witchcraft for ordinary people. However, late medieval and early modern demonologists emphasized this form of *maleficium* (harmful magic) in their discussions of the Devil's conspiracy, and their alarm appears to have had a particular resonance among prominent laymen and clerics, who seemed more concerned with it than

its actual incidence warranted. Virility, both in the sense of powerful sexuality and in the desire for procreating offspring, was a vital measure of a man's worth in early modern Europe, and male vulnerability to sexual dysfunction therefore became a major concern to elites. Modern social scientists have long recognized that impotence can result from emotional distress, so bewitchment can play a role in its onset and, conversely, magical treatments can cure it. Generalized concern about this form of magical attack clearly manifested deeply rooted and widespread masculine insecurities, but while some accusations undoubtedly transferred attention from a man's internally generated impotence to a convenient scapegoat, it is also clear that this form of "magical" attack was attempted and could be effective.

ELITE ANXIETIES AND POPULAR CONCERNS

One of the earliest theories insists that early modern witch hunts developed from the repressed sexuality of celibate clerics in the late Middle Ages. Although the authorities who actually hunted witches were overwhelmingly married magistrates, the preoccupation of some clerical demonologists, seen especially in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), with unbridled female sexuality and the threat to male virility did reflect the sexual neuroses of their authors. In the *Malleus*, witches' ability to interfere with normal sexuality was the first form of harmful magic discussed, moving from a chapter on their ability to manipulate people's affections to one on their ability to obstruct the procreative act—mainly by causing male impotence—to a third that discusses their ability to make men think that their genitals have been removed entirely.

Members of the secular elite and Protestant ministers were not only allowed but also were expected to marry, so that it might appear that they did not have to struggle against temptation as the Catholic clergy did, but because one legacy of the Reformation was a heightened emphasis on fidelity in marriage, these husbands often had to repress their sexual desires in ways not totally unlike the self-restraint expected of their Catholic brethren. Furthermore, they were even more sensitive to threats to virility than the Catholic clergy, because a sexually active male's honor was strongly connected to both his sexual prowess and his procreative accomplishments. A threat to virility became an intimidating prospect in this honor-conscious culture, calling for vigilant precautions or a vigorous response.

Although ordinary peasants and townsmen shared upper-class male concerns with virility and honor, witchcraft trials involving impotence were rather less frequent than theoretical discussions of it would suggest. In England, the charge was very infrequent, and on the Continent, although more common, it was

still never a major cause of trials. However, the plethora of popular cures suggests it was indeed a common problem. The likeliest explanation is that the dishonor of impotence inhibited men from making a public issue of it if they could avoid it. Because this malady often has a strongly psychological dimension, it was particularly amenable to less drastic remedies than a formal accusation, and so cases were more likely to end in a cunning person's cottage or a priest's chambers than in court. Together, these reasons explain why a common malady, frequently discussed theoretically, precipitated so few trials.

RITUAL ATTACKS, MALEVOLENT INTENTIONS, AND MAGICAL CURES

The means for provoking male impotence included both ritual attacks (practices that anthropologists label sorcery) and spontaneous acts and unstated ill will (that anthropologists call witchcraft). Both mechanisms operated in early modern Europe, and both were countered by a wide variety of popular rituals designed to overcome the bewitchment and restore male sexual functioning.

The most common form of ritual spell to cause impotence was *ligature*, the tying of a cord or lace in a knot to cause a sympathetic effect on the man's member. It was sometimes thought to be particularly potent if performed during a marriage ceremony, but could be conducted in other circumstances as well. Other ritual procedures involved the use of images, rooster testicles, and various herbs. Some, like bent snuffed-out candles, were to inhibit erection, others to prevent ejaculation, and some to cause premature ejaculation. Related ceremonies were available that supposedly prevented women from conceiving or caused abortion, but they seem less common (and presumably less reliable) than rituals aimed at men.

While anyone could use these rituals, some people were thought to be able to inflict impotence through spontaneous words or gestures, or simply through the power of their ill will. Spontaneous actions could include a crude sexual gesture, a sharp glance (the "evil eye"), or a simple motion or touch. Words might be hostile (a threat or insult) or insinuating (a sexual reference or innuendo), but apparently even benign or friendly signals could be construed as spells depending on the relationship between the people involved, the circumstances, and the aftermath. Theoretically, some witches needed no mechanism at all to inflict the damage; the sheer power of their ill will sufficed. In practice, because it was understood that magic did not cause all instances of impotence, legal allegations generally required some reference to the suspect's words or actions to support them.

Early modern Europeans had a range of remedies available to counter impotence caused by a spell. Some

could be performed at home by anyone, while others involved consulting a professional healer. A number involved such symbolic actions as urinating through some sort of hole, like a church keyhole or a wife's wedding ring. Other methods were more direct, including at least one example of a sexual surrogate who plied a respectable trade restoring the virility of other women's husbands. Educated physicians, who understood that many instances of impotence stemmed from psychological roots, might resort to placebos to tap their patients' powers of imagination.

BELIEF, FEAR, AND PHYSIOLOGY

Like early modern physicians, modern social scientists agree that psychological problems can cause impotence. Furthermore, they acknowledge that at least some of the ritual techniques in early modern and other cultures intended to inflict or cure impotence could work through this link between mind and body.

Social scientists have traditionally played down the significance of this efficacy, assuming it to be a manifestation of psychological weakness in the afflicted person rather than psychological strength in the sorcerer or healer, and also by assuming that it merely reflects a prior cultural belief in the power of magic. In particular, psychodynamic psychosomatic theory classified psychogenic impotence as a conversion reaction, a symbolic somatization of an intrapsychic tension, while cultural determinism insists that impotence resulting from witchcraft or sorcery always stemmed from fear instilled by cultural belief in its power, and took its form from cultural expectations as well.

However, current medical understanding classifies psychogenic impotence as a psychophysical disorder, a direct manifestation of hormonal changes triggered by the "flight or fight" stress response. Fear can indeed trigger this response, but so can other strong emotions, and the fear that triggers it can come from a wide variety of perceived dangers. Spontaneous words and gestures can instill fear, anger, despondency, or rage leading to impotence without any prior expectations or enculturation, and malicious rituals were developed and used deliberately to trigger this psychophysical process.

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See also: BEWITCHMENT; COUNTERMAGIC; CUNNING FOLK; CURSES; DISEASE; EVIL EYE; HONOR; LOVE MAGIC; *MALEFICIUM*; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; SPELLS; WORDS; POWER OF

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INCUBUS AND SUCCUBUS

The word "incubare" (from Latin, "to lie upon something"), which in Christian theology later came to denote a demon lover who seduced women, was originally associated with nightmares: Horace believed that nightly asthma attacks and nightmares were caused by so called *Ephialtes* or "Incubi." Lascivious and lecherous spirits, fauns, and satyrs permeated ancient sources: Strabo mentioned them in his *Geography* (1,19) and Petronius in *Satyricon* (38,8). A "succubus," which became its female counterpart, originally played a major part in hagiography, illustrating the temptations of holy men. The Church Fathers, chiefly St. Augustine, St. Jerome, and Isidore of Seville, introduced both terms and notions into medieval theology: incubi—demons in the shape of human males—preyed on women, whereas succubi—demons in female shape—pursued men.

HUMANS AND DEMONS

Although an incubus was generally believed to be unable to procreate and a succubus was unable to bear children, both concepts appeared in legends of ancestors—one of the most famous was Merlin—to explain their supposed demonical abilities. Most had their sources in pre-Christian traditions, although the Bible insists that the giants sprang from intercourse between fallen angels (or demons) and the daughters of mankind. Many legends of important families detailed such half-human and half-divine ancestors; for example, Merovech, the mythic ancestor of the Merovingians, was allegedly the son of a sea-god. Many others were rumored to have demonical ancestors, including Robert, the father of William the Conqueror; Martin Luther; Alexander the Great; Plato; Julius Caesar; Scipio Africanus; Romulus and Remus; Merlin; or the Huns.

The Latin Church generally did not admit the reality of intercourse with demons before the twelfth century. The most important intermediary, Isidore of Seville, strongly rejected the idea of succubi in his *Eymology*, later, Burchard of Worms in his *Corrector* (Book 19 of his *Decretum*) denied that elves were able to have sex with human beings. In the twelfth century, William of Paris vehemently disapproved of the idea that demons were able to have offspring, although in 1120 Guibert of Nogent said not only that his father

was denied consummation of marriage due to sorcery but also that the Devil visited his mother in the guise of an incubus.

In the thirteenth century, the concept of the incubus became more common, partly through the many variants of the stories about Merlin and Melusine; from then onward, legends about demonical procreation began to spread. After the thirteenth century, the “incubus” condemned in Isidore’s *Etymology* as mere fantasy involved real assaults by lascivious demons, adding a voluntary character as fulfillment of sinful female sexual desire. At the same time, the notion of the voluntary pact with the demon developed as the Inquisition spread; intercourse with demons became an accepted concept in orthodox theology. By the fourteenth century, Pope Benedict XIV employed the testimony of the Bible as proof for the existence of incubi and succubi in his *De servorum Dei Beatificatione et beatorum canonizatione* (On the Beautification of the Servants of God and the Canonization of the Blessed). In particular, heretics, and later witches, were not only accused of copulating frequently with demons (sometimes in animal form), but also of worshipping them, especially during their festivals, the Sabbats.

THE INCUBUS AS LOVER

Demon lovers existed in the stories of the ancient Hebrews, Egyptians, Greeks, Assyrians, and Persians, among others, while contemporary belief in UFOs includes reports not only of abduction by aliens, but also of sexual intercourse with them.

In the *Sefer ha-Zohar* (Book of Splendor), the most important book of Jewish mysticism, any pollution of the semen produced demons. Michael Psellus (1019–1078) retold folk beliefs of demon–human relationships in his *De nugis curialium* (On Courtier’s Trifles) speculating about the offspring of such relationships.

Late medieval and early modern witches invariably described intercourse with demons or with the Devil as disagreeable and painful. Heinrich Kramer, in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), noted scornfully that in the past, incubus devils assaulted women against their wills, but now the witches voluntarily offered themselves. Witches’ confessions and some witchcraft theorists described incubi with huge members, sometimes made of horn or covered with scales, obviously emphasizing their animal-like nature; like the Devil, incubi ejaculated icy semen. Silvestro Prierias contributed an extraordinary detail, reporting in his *De strigimagarum, demonumque mirandis* (Concerning the Prodigies of the Witch-Magicians and Demons, 1521), that incubi had a double penis.

Some witchcraft theorists insisted that incubi could impregnate women. Demons, unable to generate semen themselves, stole it from men who had nocturnal

emissions, or as succubi from men during intercourse. The demons saved the semen to use subsequently when copulating with women. Some writers claimed that the children born from such unions were half human and half beast.

Some English incubi served as familiars to witches. In continental trials, after sex with devils became a key aspect of witchcraft, witches were tortured until they confessed to having intercourse with incubi. In 1485, the inquisitor of Comè condemned forty-one of these women to death. Incubi were believed to be visible to witches alone, except in unusual circumstances. Stories like *La belle et la bête* (Beauty and the Beast) and its ancient forerunner *Amor and Psyche* described people who had invisible partners, and such folk beliefs became a standard part of theological treatises. These debated whether incubi had physical or spiritual bodies, as well as the gravity of the sin of intercourse with demons and the techniques of intercourse. The insatiable curiosity of the experts led them to examine all possible details of sexual intercourse with demons, and their sadistic industry was rewarded with an abundance of imaginative details.

Intercourse with demons implied a pact with the Devil and therefore served as evidence in trials, starting at an inquisitorial trial in Carcassonne in 1275. The famous Irish witch, Dame Alice Kyteler, was accused in 1324 of having intercourse with an incubus called Robert son of Art. Innocent VIII, in his notorious bull of 1484 against the witches, *Summis desiderantes affectibus* (Desiring with Supreme Ardor), affirmed the reality of intercourse with demons. Witchcraft theorists were keen to find evidence for witches’ sexual intercourse with incubi in order to prove the existence of demons, and thus of the entire spirit world, including angels and God.

SUCCUBI

Less prevalent than incubi, succubi could appear as beautiful women who tempted anchorites, but more often they visited men in their sleep. Because of Christian views about the inherently evil nature of women, they were morally weak and therefore more prone to yield to sexual seduction than men. Although a man visited by a succubus was most likely not at fault, succubi appeared often in the record of witchcraft trials. Intercourse with succubi was often described as penetrating a cavern of ice, similar to the notion of the ice-cold semen of the incubi.

THE DEVIL’S CHILDREN

There was widespread belief that misshapen children descended from the sinful intercourse between a human and an incubus demon. In 1275, a certain Angela de la Barthe bore a child in Toulouse that was half wolf and half human as a result of a long-lasting

relationship with a demon, who had intercourse with her every night. Other women give birth to unspeakable monsters or even objects. Obviously in some legends the concept of the changeling intertwines with the Devil's offspring; folk belief asserts that demons abducted children and left misshapen monsters behind. For its part, the Church interpreted ancient beliefs about fairy abductions as punishment for sins. By the seventeenth century, medical treatises began explaining monstrous children as a result of shock, but still associated them with nightmares.

The Catholic Church offered five methods for driving away incubi and succubi: (1) confession; (2) making the sign of the cross; (3) reciting prayers; (4) moving to another location; or (5) exorcism. Caesarius of Heisterbach stated in his *Dialogus Miraculorum* (The Dialogue on Miracles, 1150) that St. Bernard of Clairvaux reportedly chased away an incubus by exorcism. In some cases, holy water or a Paternoster provided some help.

CHRISTA TUCZAY

See also: BURCHARD OF WORMS; CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DEMONOLOGY; DEMONS; FAIRIES; FAMILIARS; INNOCENT VIII, POPE; ISIDORE OF SEVILLE, ST.; KABBALAH; KYTELER, ALICE; LILITH; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MERLIN; MONSTERS; NIGHTMARES; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PRIERIAS, SILVESTRO; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC.

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INDICULUS SUPERSTITIONUM ET PAGANIARUM

This list of thirty religious practices designated as pagan and superstitious followed the canons of the Frankish Council of Estinnes/Leptinnes (ca. 742/743) in the unique surviving manuscript, probably produced at Fulda, later held at Mainz, and now in the Vatican library. Neither the author nor any of the circumstances of its production are known, and it is clearly not an authoritative ecclesiastical document, but rather a list of practices from the northeastern edge of the late Merovingian or early Carolingian Frankish world that the author knew of or had read about. Many of these practices are mentioned in no other source, and some

are extremely difficult to identify. None of them was explicitly condemned, except by using the words “pagan” and “superstitious” in the title of the list. These words had a highly pejorative connotation in the period, although they might also have referred to rivalries among different groups of Christians or different views of ideal Christianity.

Several scholars have linked the text to the reforming, rather than the missionary work of St. Boniface (ca. 675–754/755), although Boniface is not thought to be the author. The list seems to contain practices of pagan origin that the author believed still survived in Christian communities, regardless of whether or not they actually did. Although many earlier and near-contemporary Frankish Church councils, royal capitularies, and individual churchmen had listed and condemned religious practices that they designated pagan and superstitious, there is no necessary connection between the *Indiculus* and the Council of Leptinnes, and the list may well date to the later eighth century or even the early ninth, as analysis of the manuscript evidence indicates.

A number of the practices listed in the *Indiculus* as “pagan” included ceremonies for the gods Mercury and Jupiter (romanized names of Thor and Odin), and the often-criticized observation of the Kalends of January, conducting religious rites in groves dedicated to pagan deities, respect paid to pagan sacred stones, shrines, and idols, and sacrifices of animals to the sun. There is no indication that these observances were in any way diabolical in character. Other practices included “sacrileges”—distortions or misuse of Christian ceremonies of mourning the dead, misconduct in church buildings, excessive sacrifices to saints, or indiscriminate veneration of the dead as saints. Ecclesiastical reformers for the next several centuries sharply criticized such misdirection of devotional enthusiasm as harmful “superstition.”

Later thinkers linked still other practices to both sorcery and witchcraft. Among these were the use of enchanted amulets and knots (ligatures), incantations, divination, weather magic, and the belief that certain women had the power to command the moon and remove men's hearts from their bodies. In addition, at least from the thirteenth century on, diabolical sorcery came to be considered idolatry, so that veneration or worship directed at any being other than God, the angels, or the saints was regarded as the worship of demons. Psalm 95 (96) stated that the gods of the pagans were demons in disguise, and many of the practices on the list that seemed to indicate residual pagan religious practices would then be condemned as something far more sinister than nondiabolical superstitions.

Despite its private and idiosyncratic character, the *Indiculus superstitionum* (A List of Superstitions and Pagan Practices) nevertheless provided important

witness to ecclesiastical interests and concerns about a society, some of whose members defined Christianity by asserting what it was not, at a key moment in Frankish and European history. Other earlier and contemporary sources, particularly church councils and the literature of penitentials were more direct, explicit, condemning, and informative of practices similar to those in the *Indiculus*, but it, too, constitutes a small window on the cultural values of the late eighth century.

EDWARD PETERS

See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; CAESARIUS OF ARLES; DIVINATION; IDOLATRY; MOON; SUPERSTITION; WEATHER MAGIC.

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INFANTICIDE

When the witches’ Sabbath was first described in the fifteenth century, murdered babies provided vital ingredients for its perverse rituals. Recruits were “given a jar full of ointment with which . . . he must go to the [Sabbat]. . . . That unguent is made . . . out of the fat of small children who have been cooked.” Moreover, some convicted witches confessed to strangling babies and “the next night they open the grave and take the body . . . to the synagogue, where it is cooked and eaten” (Kors and Peters 2001, 161–162). A century later, cannibalism disappeared from witchcraft confessions, but the cliché endured: an illustration of the satanic meal printed in Francesco Maria Guazzo’s treatise of 1608, the *Compendium Maleficarum* (A Summary of Witches), depicts two witches roasting a child over a fire. The ancient myth of ritual murders, brought by Syrians against the Jews, Romans against Christians, Christians against Gnostics, and the medieval Church against Jews and heretics, had been twisted into a new

version: it was the turn of witches, mostly women, to be accused of cannibalism and vampirism. The notion of witches devouring children or sucking their blood, widespread even in such nonprimitive cultures as Renaissance Italy and verified by twentieth-century anthropologists in their field research, cries out for an explanation that can harmonize cultural diffusion with archetypal and structural inheritance.

In the heyday of European witch hunting, witches no longer confessed to eating children at Sabbats, but they continued to be accused of murdering them. Demographic and social factors revived and adapted these ancient beliefs. Crushing high rates of infant mortality struck early modern Europe during its two worst agrarian crises (the 1590s and late 1620s). It is probably not coincidence that at such moments witchcraft accusations offered another way to deal with unbearable illness and death, particularly the death of young babies.

Of course, popular perception of infanticide as *malificium* (harmful magic) varied considerably across Europe. In the French department of Ariège and in southern Netherlands, for instance, witches were blamed for stillbirths and for killing the newborn in their cradles. But in other places, for example, Denmark, such accusations were exceptional.

Although Old Régime Europe was not a child-centered society, much literary evidence suggests that infants were not held cheap. However, centuries-old disguised forms of infanticide, in some ways almost institutionalized, remained widespread. They followed certain conventions and therefore were not considered homicide by practitioners and authorities. These indirect infanticides included the practice of abandoning newborn babies, sending them to wet nurses, and “overlaying,” whereby parents rolled over a baby sleeping with them and smothered the infant. Church authorities repeatedly prohibited parents from sleeping with infants. In several Italian synods, the power to absolve from this sin was reserved to the bishop. For reasons that have yet to be explained, Europe began a draconian criminal prosecution of infanticide in the sixteenth century, when nearly every state passed legislation against child murder. In France, 5,000 seems a conservative estimate for the number of women executed under a statute of 1556; here, the great infanticide craze took vastly more women’s lives than witch hunting (Soman 1992). Ultimately, “change in the conduct of criminal proceedings relating to witchcraft . . . began to take shape in the second half of the seventeenth century. As witchcraft declined and gradually lost its status as a crime, the blurring of the two crimes declined, and mothers who killed their children were tried simply for infanticide” (Levack 1999, 78–80).

OSCAR DI SIMPLICIO

See also: CANNIBALISM; OINTMENTS; RITUAL MURDER; SABBAT; VAMPIRE.

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INGOLSTADT, UNIVERSITY OF

The sixteenth-century law faculty of Ingolstadt at the Bavarian University first encouraged witch hunting, but by the end of the century, for the most part it adopted a skeptical attitude toward witchcraft. Founded in 1472, the University of Ingolstadt played a characteristic role in the process of early modern state formation. Bavaria's future leaders were to be trained there in loyalty to the ruling house and in regional customs. Ingolstadt was established to prevent money from leaving Bavaria when students attended other universities and to exercise cultural hegemony over neighboring secular and ecclesiastical territories. Ingolstadt proved to be successful, since the dukes managed to employ professors who attracted students. It gained stature when Dr. Johannes Eck, a distinguished theologian, challenged Luther's Reformation theology of justification by faith alone. By emphasizing Catholicism, unity, and tradition, Ingolstadt became a bridgehead of Counter-Reformation Germany, attracting Catholic students from all over central Europe, including future Catholic princes, prince-bishops, and theologians.

When the Jesuits appeared, Duke Albrecht V of Bavaria recognized that his state could benefit greatly from these new cadres' expertise in the Catholic Church by using his land as a strategic base. The Jesuit scholar Peter Canisius was invited to occupy the chair previously held by Eck, and he did so in a much more favorable environment, backed by his fast-growing order in the 1560s. The Jesuits were expected to discipline the clergy and offer important support to the Wittelsbach dynasty's struggle against Lutheran factions within the Bavarian nobility and the citizenry of its larger towns. Eventually the theology faculty was handed over entirely to the Jesuits and all professors

had to swear an oath to support the decrees of the Council of Trent.

This close link between the Bavarian house of Wittelsbach and certain Jesuits at Ingolstadt contributed decisively to Bavaria's position in the history of witchcraft. In the 1560s Canisius became deeply convinced that a war between good and evil was going on, and that the sharp increase in witchcraft was the consequence and climax of all the devilish heresies (Lutheranism, Zwinglianism, Anabaptism, Calvinism, Spiritualism) that had sprung up during the past generation. It is likely, though still unproven, that Canisius was already inspired by the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486). Certainly this was true of the second generation of Jesuits, when Gregory of Valencia SJ dominated the University of Ingolstadt. Gregory wrote the expert opinion on witchcraft commissioned by Duke Wilhelm V "the Pious" in April 1590, which pointed firmly to the *Malleus* and Peter Binsfeld as the only acceptable authorities for Catholics generally, and Bavarian judges in particular. Witchcraft was considered an exceptional crime (*crimen exceptum*) requiring exceptional legal measures (*processus extraordinarius*). This opinion was supported not only by Peter Steuartius SJ (1549–1624), Michael Myrhofer SJ (1548–1641), and of course Jacob Gretser SJ, but also by all members of the law faculty, including the famous Italian jurist Andreas Fachineus. At this point, to the dismay of the Bavarian political elite, the university was dominated not just by the spirit of the Counter-Reformation, but also by persecutory zeal. At the same time, scores of future Catholic rulers and their future councillors were educated here, including the Emperor Ferdinand II, the Bavarian Prince-Elector Maximilian I, the Archbishop Ferdinand of Cologne, Münster, Hildesheim, Liège, and Paderborn, and several prince-bishops, who would become responsible for the most terrible witch hunts in Europe.

The prince-bishops' lawyers and officials as well as the notorious Dr. Johann Sigmund Wagnereckh, councillor in the duchy of Bavaria, were likewise educated at Ingolstadt.

Within ten years after an articulate opponent of witch hunting, Dr. Kaspar Lagus (1533–1606) had been removed from the law faculty in 1585, the scene changed entirely. During the 1590s the law faculty regained independence and a new generation of lawyers, with Dr. Joachim Denich (a son-in-law of Lagus) and Dr. Kaspar Hell as the senior law professors. In 1601, they stopped an irregular witchcraft trial conducted by some zealous court councillors in Munich before it could trigger a general witch hunt. Although the zealot faction tried to intimidate these professors (and Dr. Hell was indeed charged with treason and thrown into prison), the jurists' minds remained unchanged. They insisted on regular criminal proce-

dures according to imperial law (*processus ordinarius*). The university became involved in one of the most ardent power struggles in Bavaria, lasting for roughly a generation, with factions within the university, the Jesuits, the government, and even the ruling dynasty. However, despite the removal of Dr. Hell (whose son, Kaspar Hell SJ, later became one of the most determined opponents of witch hunting in the region, and director of the Jesuit College in Amberg), the law faculty maintained its skeptical attitude and never again conceded the illegal *processus extraordinarius*, as suggested by the zealot faction. In fact, Joachim Denich's son Dr. Kaspar Denich (1591–1660) succeeded his father as the dominant member of the law faculty. Between 1614 and 1629, both served simultaneously on the law faculty when it made some serious decisions. In 1614, the law faculty demanded capital punishment for a judge, Gottfried Sattler, who had conducted an illegal witch hunt at Wemding; similarly in 1618 it sentenced to death judge Balthasar Nuss (or Ross), the terrible witch hunter of Fulda. Both became decisive precedents, cited afterward by opponents of witch hunting like Adam Tanner, Friedrich Spee, and Johann Matthäus Meyfart (Meyfahrt). These cases demonstrated that legal decisions could be erroneous, and witch hunting could become a crime itself. In the late 1620s, the Ingolstadt law faculty tried to curb the terrible persecutions in Eichstätt, and limited witchcraft trials in Bavaria, supported by the Jesuit Adam Tanner, who shared the lawyers' ideas. Kaspar Denich's son Sebastian Denich SJ would continue the family opposition to witch hunting in the third generation.

Between 1670 and 1760, when witch hunts no longer posed an immediate threat, Ingolstadt's reputation declined, and its legal decisions became of less consequence. Under the Jesuit umbrella, the university was cut off from intellectual changes in western and northern Europe, and the legal opinions of luminaries like Christoph von Chlingensberg (1651–1720) or his son Hermann Anton von Chlingensberg (1685–1755) look old-fashioned in comparison to Protestant universities like Halle or Göttingen. Because all Protestant authors were on the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* (Index of Prohibited Books), Catholic lawyers were not even allowed to use older authors like Johann Weyer, let alone such enlightened opponents of witchcraft trials as Christian Thomasius. In order to break this Jesuit stranglehold, courtiers founded the Bavarian Academy of Sciences in 1759, and officials of the central government avoided consulting the Ingolstadt faculties, considering their expertise as inferior. In 1766, enlightened politicians in Munich, some of them Protestant converts who had studied in the Netherlands, launched the "Bavarian War of the Witches," a fierce public debate that served to intimidate the conservative faction. Only when the Jesuit order was stripped of its power of censorship and

eventually dissolved did Ingolstadt become a center of enlightened ideas. Adam Weishaupt (1746–1830), the founder of the enlightened Illuminate Order, was professor at Ingolstadt. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Bavarian university was transferred first to Landshut, and in 1826 to Munich.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; BAVARIAN WAR OF THE WITCHES; BINSFELD, PETER; CANISIUS, ST. PETER; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); EICHSTÄTT, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; FERDINAND II, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; FULDA, PRINCE-ABBAY OF; GERMANY; GREGORY OF VALENCIA; GRETSER, JACOB, SJ; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); MAXIMILIAN I, DUKE OF BAVARIA; MEYFART (MEYFAHRT), JOHANN MATTHÄUS; NUSS, BALTHASAR; SATTLER, GOTTFRIED; TANNER, ADAM; THOMASIVS, CHRISTIAN; UNIVERSITIES; WEYER, JOHANN; WILHELM V, "THE PIOUS," DUKE OF BAVARIA; WÜRZBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF.

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INNOCENT VIII, POPE (1432–1492)

Pope Innocent VIII's bull on witchcraft, *Summis Desiderantes Affectibus* (Desiring with Supreme Ardor) on December 5, 1484, supported the efforts of the Dominican inquisitor Heinrich Kramer to prosecute witches in Upper (southern) Germany and contributed to the formation of the belief in diabolical witchcraft and a diabolical conspiracy.

Born Giovanni Battista Cibo in Genoa, the future pope led a profligate and dissolute youth before studying at Padua and Rome and taking holy orders. After entering the service of Cardinal Calandrini, he was consecrated bishop of Savona in 1467, exchanging his see to become bishop of Molfetta five years later. Elected pope on August 29, 1484, he attempted to restore peace to Christendom, meanwhile promoting an abortive alliance against the Ottoman Empire and tackling the papacy's spiraling debt through the expedient of creating and then selling ecclesiastical offices. Though politically inexperienced and frequently ill, Innocent soon proved himself a fearsome enemy to "heresies" of all kinds, strongly condemning both the Hussites in Bohemia and Jewish conversos in Spain. He also sanctioned a ferocious campaign against Waldensian communities in southeastern France and forbade Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola to hold a public debate in Rome on his "900 Theses," which ranged from magic to mathematics. He found Pico's ideas "offensive to pious ears" for honoring "the deceits of the Jews" and supporting "the errors of pagan philosophers" (Farmer 1998, 15).

One of Innocent's first actions on becoming pope was to issue his witch bull. Although he apparently lacked

first-hand experience of witchcraft trials, this promulgation was directly prompted by Kramer's appeal against local opposition to his witchcraft trials in Upper Germany. Local elites, clergy, and judicial authorities had all been extremely wary—if not downright skeptical—of the methods Kramer employed to uncover suspected witches and to obtain confessions and convictions. Though Kramer had probably already honed his theories about witchcraft that would surface two years later in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), he felt the need to seek support from the new pope. Luckily, he found a receptive audience in Innocent VIII, who incorporated Kramer's views into the main body of his bull, declaring that "It has recently come to our ears . . . that in some parts of Upper Germany . . . many persons . . . give themselves over to demons, incubi and succubi" (Kors and Peters 2001, 178). Significantly, Innocent made no distinction between the respective predisposition of men and women to commit witchcraft; "persons of both sexes" chose to forsake eternal salvation for the joys of practicing demonic arts. Innocent broke little new ground with *Summis Desiderantes Affectibus*, reinforcing numerous earlier papal pronouncements against the use of diabolical magic. Even though Sabbats were not mentioned, the figure of the Devil took center stage as the active instigator of witchcraft.

The bull reinforced the idea that *maleficia* (evil acts or evil doings) rather than ritual magic lay at the heart of witchcraft, railing against the "incantations, charms and conjurings" that cut down "the offspring of women, the young of animals, the fruits of trees . . . and . . . hinder men from begetting and women from conceiving, and prevent all consummation of marriage" (Kors and Peters 2001, 178). Moreover, Innocent intended to strengthen Kramer's authority and compel local authorities to participate in his crusade against witchcraft. Thus, Pope Innocent ordered that inquisitors were not to be hindered in their investigations by anyone, regardless of status or profession; he commanded the bishop of Strasbourg, in particular, to protect and assist them in every way possible. The severest penalties were to be handed down on individuals who opposed, or refused to cooperate, with them; Church officials had the right to compel secular authorities to intervene in the struggle against doctrinal heresy.

Though Innocent VIII was a comparatively weak pope, unable to compel officials to indulge witch-hunting inquisitors or even preserve law and order within his own patrimony, his pronouncements helped create a climate in which the concept of demonic witchcraft described later in his pontificate by the *Malleus Maleficarum* might thrive; the papal bull was often printed in front to early editions, serving as a kind of preface and tacit papal approval for its often dubious assertions.

JOHN CALLOW

See also: GOLSER, GEORG; HUSSITES; KRAMER (INSTITORIS), HEINRICH; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; PAPACY AND PAPAL BULLS; *VAUDOIS* (WALDENSIANS).

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INNSBRUCK

Capital of the Habsburg county of Tyrol, Innsbruck became the site of a particularly noteworthy trial for witchcraft in 1485. Although part of a larger late medieval trend toward ecclesiastically inspired witch hunts, it is exceptional because both religious and secular authorities intervened to end it. Both Archduke Sigismund and Bishop Georg Golser of Brixen successfully drove the Dominican inquisitor Heinrich Kramer (*Institoris*) from Tyrol and secured the release of the accused witches he had interrogated and tortured. In addition, events in Innsbruck had the unintended consequence of prompting Kramer to compose his notorious handbook for judges, the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486). Significantly, Innsbruck never again experienced a major witchcraft trial, and governmental officials continued to limit the prosecution of witches in Tyrol and most surrounding Habsburg territories.

Shortly after Pope Innocent VIII issued *Summis desiderantes affectibus* (Desiring with Supreme Ardor), his so-called "Witch Bull" of 1484, attempting to remove juridical obstacles to the prosecution of witches, Kramer arrived in the Alpine valleys of Tyrol in summer 1485 to identify and to eradicate the "heretical depravity" of which the bull speaks. His preaching produced numerous denunciations from his audience, and he set about arresting and interrogating those accused by their neighbors. All told, around fifty women found themselves subjected to the inquisitor's investigations, alongside at least two men. Ultimately, seven women were imprisoned and being formally tried when proceedings were halted.

The testimony of both accusers and accused revealed a whole world of everyday magical practices and beliefs.

Most common were chronic or acute maladies stemming from supernatural causes: lameness, rheumatism, gout, arthritis, blindness, headaches, female barrenness, and male impotence. Charges of murder through magical means were also made in the course of the interrogations. Research has uncovered a host of local animosities that led to denunciations (Dienst 1987b). Envy, rivalry, and public quarrels between armorers and bowmen, settled residents and newcomers, as well as younger and older women apparently provoked the formation of suspicions. Largely absent from accounts generated by these cases (and from Kramer's *Malleus*) were details normally associated with diabolical forms of magic, such as the witches' Sabbat.

As Kramer's proceedings were accelerating, Bishop Golser took steps to suppress them. He insisted on the involvement of a secular magistrate and appointed one of his priests to serve as an ecclesiastical commissioner, working to undermine Kramer. The secular magistrate dismissed the charges against all seven women being held, and soon Kramer himself was charged with abuse of office and commanded to leave Tyrol by Archduke Sigismund. Initially, Kramer did not want to acknowledge the order, finding it an affront to his authority; but when the husbands of the women accused of witchcraft threatened to seize him, he thought better and left the territory.

In subsequent years, although many of the surrounding territories of southwestern Germany (including some ruled by the Habsburgs) became major centers of witch hunting, Innsbruck remained immune from further witch panics. Trials involving simple charges of sorcery occurred in 1540, 1602, and 1629, while charges of diabolical alchemy were brought against another suspect in 1650. And although at least seventy-two trials occurred in Tyrol during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they too remained limited in size and intensity (Dienst 1987a, 286–288). In fact, the government in Innsbruck normally tried to limit the prosecution of witches in areas over which it had jurisdiction, as it did in the seventeenth century when it repeatedly suppressed cases originating in Prättigau.

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See also: AUSTRIA; GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; GOLSER, GEORG; INNOCENT VIII, POPE; KRAMER (INSTITTORIS), HEINRICH; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; TYROL, COUNTY OF.

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INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL

Inquisition, in a general sense, means a certain form of juridical procedure; in a more specialized sense, it designates the method used by the medieval and early modern Catholic Church for the discovery and prosecution of heretics and others guilty of criminal sins.

ORIGINS

In both ancient Roman and Germanic procedural law, a charge preferred by the injured party was the normal way of instituting an action before a court, a procedure generally termed accusatorial, because magistrates usually did not initiate trials. With the intensified control that the late Roman emperors exerted over their subjects, a new form of initiating a lawsuit in certain kinds of cases came into use: the inquisitorial procedure. In this procedure, without any formal accusation being made, the authorities began to inquire whether a crime had been committed. The search for evidence undertaken by officials both in criminal and in civil cases was called *inquisitio*. In criminal cases, and in the case of testimony from slaves, the magistrates also had recourse to torture to obtain information and confessions.

When Christianity became the official religion of the Roman state around 380, the *inquisitio*-procedure was also used in the criminal prosecution of some non-Christian and Christian heterodox citizens. With the fall of the empire and the foundation of new Germanic successor kingdoms in the fifth and sixth centuries, however, these late imperial practices generally fell into disuse throughout Europe. Within the clergy of the Catholic Church, however, the *inquisitio* procedure survived, although for a long time it was of little importance. Charlemagne (ruled 768–814) tried to introduce official inquisition anew into secular jurisdiction by ordering his emissaries, the *missi dominici*, to inquire diligently into the administration of the counts and other dignitaries, and to use the inquisitorial process known as the *Rügefverfahren* (censuring procedure) in certain kinds of serious cases, but these institutions did not survive the ninth century.

In the sphere of religion, the early medieval hierarchy had no need to develop special proceedings against heretics, since there were only rare cases of deviance from the normative faith, which involved only individual persons, usually intellectuals without a popular following.

CENTRAL AND LATE MIDDLE AGES

The first sects that appeared in western Europe during the eleventh century remained restricted to a regional level and therefore failed to evoke significant reactions in ecclesiastical law. The situation changed in the following century, when Cathars and Waldensians alienated a quite considerable part of the population of France, Italy, and the Rhine provinces from the Catholic Church. Local ecclesiastical councils prescribed more severe punishments, including excommunication, mutilation, imprisonment, and the withdrawal of civil rights. The general councils, especially Lateran III and IV (1179, 1215), described and condemned heretical beliefs and practices. Several popes issued detailed bulls about the new heterodoxy, such as Lucius III in 1184 with the decretal *Ad abolendam* (For the Purpose of Doing Away With), ordering the clergy to identify heresies and lay judges to punish them. The papacy, whose religious authority had grown continually since the Investiture Controversy of the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, soon tended to doubt the vigilance of the local episcopal inquisitions and to substitute its own centralizing power in their place. In the late twelfth century, Pope Innocent III (ruled 1198–1216) explicitly urged the use of the inquisitorial process as a means of disciplining members of the clergy by directly submitting them to his *ex officio* jurisdiction. In the Church's fight against the heretical sects, Innocent was the first pope to combine heresy with the doctrine of *laesa maiestatis* (lese majesty) in Roman law; that is, he argued that the heretics committed high treason against God. Given that this crime was capital in secular law, the same retribution also had to be used against unrepentant heretics. In 1207, Innocent decided that the goods of a convicted heretic should be sold: one part going to the accuser, another to the court, and a third to be invested in building prisons. Gregory IX (ruled 1227–1241) inserted anti-heretical measures firmly into canon law and created the office of inquisitor of heretical depravity. He assigned Dominican friars to act as inquisitors by papal authority as judges subdelegate, a regulation that formed the central structure of "the Inquisition" until its abolition. After Gregory, the inquisitorial method of dealing with heretics became a standard feature of canon law. From the thirteenth through the eighteenth centuries, jurists produced a large body of normative texts on inquisitorial procedure.

The other legal prescription that influenced the future development most deeply was Innocent IV's bull *Ad extirpandam* (to Exterpate, 1252), which permitted inquisitors to use torture without incurring irregularity. Whereas torture had hitherto been excluded from Church law, now it was declared a legal instrument for the detection of heretics. Without the introduction of torture in the inquisitorial process, when

used against both the accused and the witnesses, the witch hunts would probably have remained an insignificant episode in the history of the later Middle Ages and the early modern period, because a tiny number of persons would have confessed to diabolical witchcraft. The fact that practically none of the Knights Templar confessed to any occult beliefs or rites when questioned without force, while nearly all of them confessed to the most absurd blasphemies and misdeeds when subjected to torture, offers sufficient proof of the power of torture.

Although inquisitors were assigned to specific localities and initially did not exchange information with each other, there existed, nonetheless, a certain uniformity to their practices, insofar as the inquisitors acted on the basis of similar papal directions and were nearly all members of the Dominican or (less frequently) Franciscan orders. Nevertheless, besides the papally appointed or delegated inquisitors, bishops continued to exercise this function. The famous trial of the Dominican mystic Meister Eckhart (d. ca. 1328), for example, was initiated by the archbishop of Cologne and then transferred to the papal curia at Avignon.

To understand that the regular use of the inquisitorial process from the second half of the thirteenth century onward constituted an innovation, it is worthwhile to compare it with the synodal court (German *Sendgericht*), an institution established in the time of Charlemagne. The synodal court was held by the bishop or his vicar in each parish on regular terms; sworn parishioners (synodal witnesses), whose obligation it was to spy on the members of the congregation, were expected to denounce all violations of the Church's norms. However, they were concerned with external infringements only; there was no question of their discovering or controlling individual religious beliefs. But the aim of the inquisitorial procedure was precisely to uncover and prosecute such beliefs. For this, the confession of the accused was necessary, and it could now be obtained by torture. The older possibility of purging oneself through the oaths of oath helpers (compurgation) or an ordeal was eliminated. The older punishments had consisted of various forms of conventional ecclesiastical penance, and the secular powers had no part in the procedure. Now, many convicts received a death sentence, to be executed by the secular authorities, or the secular "arm" of ecclesiastical discipline.

PROCEDURE

The common procedure of the Inquisition followed established rules, codified in manuals. When the inquisitor arrived at his destination and began his work, he delivered a sermon and proclaimed a "period of grace" of two to four weeks so that people under suspicion might have an opportunity to confess voluntarily,

and so receive only light penances. The period of grace also allowed private denunciations of suspected heretics. After the period of grace expired, those suspected of heresy were cited, taken prisoner, and questioned; if the inquisitor thought their answers to be insufficient, torture was applied. From 1264 onward, the inquisitors were at least present in the torture chamber, although they usually did not apply torture themselves. Innocent III had greatly restricted the ability of lawyers to defend heretics, so the accused did not dispose of the help of a skilled defender. Those accused of heresy were not told the names of the witnesses for the prosecution because inquisitors learned from experience that relatives of the accused might attack them. Upon conviction by the inquisitorial tribunal, sentences for heretics varied, because there were many possibilities: fines, flagellation, the wearing of badges, penitential pilgrimages, loss of possessions, temporary or lifelong imprisonment, and, at worst, delivery to the secular arm, which meant burning at the stake. The condemned's possessions were divided among the holy office, the pope, and the secular authorities who had lent their help (which, however, was secured by the menace of excommunication).

SOURCES

Given that all trials were held in strict secrecy, and all relevant documents kept under lock and key, what are the historian's sources? Although the inquisitors made and kept far more extensive records than other tribunals, sometimes the relevant documents, especially trial records, have been destroyed. For example, documents were destroyed in 1559 by the Roman mob after the death of Pope Paul IV, and again after Napoleon's reign, when the thousands of trial records he had taken to Paris were sold in fragments. Nevertheless, many inquisitorial documents have been preserved in secular and ecclesiastical archives (like those of the episcopal inquisition in the village of Montaignou, from the first quarter of the fourteenth century) or the vast Collection Doat in Paris. Apart from archival sources, inquisitorial handbooks, written by and for inquisitors, gave a detailed and complete picture of the operating procedures and the self-interpretation of the papal inquisition. The best known are the *Practica Inquisitionis haereticae pravitatis* (The Practice of the Inquisition of Heretical Depravity, ca. 1324) by Bernard Gui, inquisitor at Toulouse from 1306 to 1324, containing three parts on the procedure, one on the power of the Inquisition, and one on the history and types of heresy. In 1376, Nicolau Eymeric, inquisitor general of the Crown of Aragon, wrote a *Directorium Inquisitorum* (Directory of Inquisitors), discussing Catholic belief, the nature and variety of heresies, and inquisitorial procedure. Eymeric's work was the standard manual long into the early modern

period. Specifically for witchcraft, the same is true of Heinrich Kramer's *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486). Among the historiographical sources, one chronicle merits special mention, because it was written by a member of that organization, that is, the diary-like notices of the Dominican William Pelhisson (Pelisso) on the actions of the inquisitors in Toulouse from about 1220 to 1240.

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See also: ACCUSATORIAL PROCEDURE; COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; COURTS, INQUISITORIAL; DOMINICAN ORDER; EYMERIC, NICOLAS; GREGORY IX, POPE; GUI, BERNARD; HERESY; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; ORDEAL; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; TEMPLARS; TORTURE; *VAUDOIS* (WALDENSIANS).

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INQUISITION, PORTUGUESE

Created much later than the Spanish, the Portuguese Inquisition was preoccupied throughout its long existence with problems of "Judaizing" among the large community of "New Christians" (descendants of Jews converted through a process forced on them in 1497); consequently, it paid relatively little attention to crimes of witchcraft, folk healing, or other illicit forms of magic.

The establishment of a Portuguese Holy Office was a lengthy process, which encountered much resistance from the Holy See from the moment King Manuel I took the first steps in 1515 to resolve Portugal's sizable "New Christian" problem by acquiring the same privileges that his neighboring "Catholic kings" had possessed since 1478. However, the Crown's intentions were obtained only under King João III, exerting all kinds of pressure on the Holy See, in an environment filled with bribery by both royal and "New-Christian" agents in Rome, against a background of weakening papal power due to the Protestant Reformation, the 1527 sack of Rome, and the Turkish conquest of Hungary in 1526.

In 1536, the Inquisition was definitively instituted in Portugal by Paul III's bull *Cum ad nihil magis*. Yet it was not until a further bull of 1547, *Meditatio cordis* (Mediation of the Heart), that the main legal features of the Portuguese Holy Office were finally established. It was a court that was simultaneously ecclesiastical (delegated by the pope, it had jurisdiction over crimes against the Christian faith, and its judges were clerics) and royal (the king appointed the Grand Inquisitor, who was invested by the pope). The Grand Inquisitor controlled the election of the Inquisition's General Council members, oversaw its activities, and physically executed its capital sentences. This institution proved to be extraordinarily durable: for almost three centuries, except from 1774 until its final extinction on April 5, 1821, it used this dual dependence on the pope and the king wisely to consolidate its power and maintain its autonomy. The Holy Office eventually became one of the most powerful bureaucratic and judicial institutions of Portugal. Its second grand inquisitor (1539), Dom Henrique, the king's brother and archbishop of Braga (later cardinal, papal legate, archbishop of both Evora and Lisbon, and even king), played a leading role in the strategy of independence and centralization that characterized Portugal's Holy Office.

It took three decades to draw the template that, with few adjustments, characterized this institution until its extinction. By the 1560s, it had settled into four tribunals: Lisbon, created 1548; Évora, also 1548; Goa, the capital of Portuguese Asia, created 1560; and Coimbra, begun in 1565. It evolved mechanisms to improve its surveillance techniques: regular inquisitorial visits intensified in the last quarter of the sixteenth century (but practically disappeared after 1637); a local network of Holy Office commissioners and *familiares* (lay officials of the Inquisition) was created in the sixteenth century, achieving gigantic proportions in the early eighteenth century. In 1547, its first *Index of Prohibited Books* was published, enlarging the Roman *Index*. Other mechanisms included visits to seaports (initiated in 1550), visits to bookshops on orders from the General Council; and preliminary censorship of all printed texts, which could be distributed only after examination and licensing by Holy Office *qualificadores* (censors). It compiled sets of its internal regulations, or *Regimentos*, in 1541, 1552, 1570, 1613, 1640, and 1774.

In addition, the Inquisition used its own rituals wisely, of which the *autos-da-fé* or acts of faith were the most dramatic. The first was performed at Lisbon in 1540, and the last public act at Coimbra, in 1781. These self-legitimizing rituals affirmed the institution's mission, promoted its power, and disseminated an image of Catholic triumph and terror. The political implications of the Inquisition's actions, more acute in the period after the restoration of Portuguese independence from Spain in 1640, should not go unmentioned, although they require more solidly founded studies.

The rhythms of inquisitorial prosecution were not homogeneous. Following a fairly mild beginning, which lasted until 1605, at an average of 46 cases/year, until 1674, when the pope suspended the Inquisition, the seventeenth century marked a period of maximum repression at 78 cases/year. When it was reinstated in 1681, it showed clear signs of decline, which intensified significantly after 1750, and its annual case average dropped to twenty-six. It is estimated that overall, about 5 percent of its verdicts called for burning at the stake; the usual sentences were imprisonment and banishment, sometimes reinforced by physical punishment (whippings and the galleys) and defamation (e.g., wearing special penitential clothes such as the *hábito penitencial*).

"NEW CHRISTIANS" AND WITCHES

A simple analysis of the Inquisition's 44,000 prosecutions clearly shows that, excepting Goa, its targets were overwhelmingly "New Christians" accused of secretly practicing Judaism. In Portugal, Protestant heresy was insignificant; a few foreigners were prosecuted at Lisbon or Goa. Although Portuguese history lacks detailed statistical analyses, it appears that around 78 percent of those sentenced by the three mainland

tribunals (Lisbon, Coimbra, and Evora) were accused of “Judaizing.” For example, among Coimbra’s 10,374 cases, Judaism accounted for 83.4 percent. Witchcraft and sorcery ranked third at 3.1 percent, behind “actions impeding the Inquisition’s proper functioning” (4.5 percent), but ahead of such offenses as heretical blasphemy (2.7 percent), bigamy (1.9 percent), or sodomy (0.4 percent).

Prosecutions for witchcraft and illicit magic varied throughout the Portuguese Inquisition over time; in the sixteenth century, for example, Coimbra had many fewer such cases than either Évora or Lisbon. Figures for Goa remain unknown and unknowable; but for mainland Portugal between 1600 and 1774, we know of 818 such cases, again just above 3 percent of the overall totals (Coimbra 361, Lisbon 264, Évora 193). Of these, no fewer than 690 of the original trial records remain (284 from Coimbra, 240 from Lisbon, and 166 from Évora). Analysis of these 690 actual trials showed that 36 percent of these defendants were folk healers using superstitious practices, 29 percent were *feiticeiros* (sorcerers) usually charged with some kind of *maleficium* (harmful magic), 18 percent were both folk healers and *feiticeiros*, 8 percent used spells to keep from being wounded, 5 percent were charged with making a pact with the Devil, and 4 percent were healers or *feiticeiros* also charged with some other crime, for example, blasphemy or abuse of Church rituals.

These 818 cases (908, including the small sixteenth-century totals) represent only the tip of the iceberg of denunciations for various kinds of illicit magic made to Portugal’s Holy Office. Again taking Coimbra as an example, its 361 cases resulted from no fewer than 6,190 denunciations recorded in the notebooks of the tribunals prosecutors (*Cadernos do Promotor*) for the period 1611–1757—almost twenty denunciations for every arrest. Denunciations—but not trials—increased sharply after 1690, peaking in the 1740s.

Like other Mediterranean inquisitions, Portugal’s Holy Office did not punish its “witches” very rigorously, although most of them were exhibited at *autos da fê*. The vast majority were banished or exiled. Exactly four were condemned to death, but twenty-seven more died in prison before their trials were concluded. Overall, in comparison with the other major Mediterranean inquisitions, Portugal paid much less attention to witchcraft—proportionately only half as much as Spain after 1600, and vastly less than the Roman Inquisition.

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See also: COURTS, INQUISITORIAL; INQUISITION, ROMAN; INQUISITION, SPANISH; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; PORTUGAL.

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INQUISITION, ROMAN

The Roman Inquisition usually refers to the organization created by Pope Paul III with the bull *Licet ab initio* (It Is Allowed from the Beginning) of July 21, 1542. Governed by a board of cardinals, it eventually included forty-six provincial inquisitorial tribunals, run by Dominican or sometimes Franciscan inquisitors, and located in Italy’s most important cities and, in a few cases (e.g., Malta), in foreign countries.

When Sixtus V reorganized the Roman curia in 1588, the Inquisition board became the *Congregatio Sanctae Inquisitionis Haereticae Pravitatis* or, for short, the *Congregatio Sancti Officii* (Congregation of the Holy Office; hereafter “[Roman] Congregation”). It operated as an independent court and as a surveying board overseeing provincial tribunals through a massive correspondence. Presided over by the pope, it varied from six to fifteen cardinals (inquisitors general—*inquisitori generali*) plus various advisors (experts in theology and canon law), notaries, and warders. After the unification of Italy (1861), the Roman Inquisition no longer held jurisdictional power. In 1908 the Congregation was thoroughly reshaped, and in 1965 changed its name to *Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith*.

Most provincial tribunals were operating before the establishment of the Roman Congregation, which partly was superimposed on a medieval structure. Following is a list of provincial tribunals (those outside Rome), grouped according to states (Del Col 2002,

350–351), with the date of their creation (for those established after 1542) in brackets, and with capital cities in bold:

Duchy of Savoy: Asti, Mondovi, Saluzzo, **Turin**, Vercelli;
State of Milan: Alessandria, Como, Cremona, **Milan**, Novara, Pavia, Tortona;
Republic of Venice: Aquileia, Belluno, Bergamo, Brescia, Capodistria (for Istria), Ceneda, Crema (1614), Padua, Rovigo, Treviso, **Venice**, Verona, Vicenza, Zara (for Dalmatia);
Republic of Genoa: **Genoa**;
Duchy of Mantua: Casale Monferrato, **Mantua**;
Duchy of Modena: **Modena** (1599), Reggio Emilia (1599);
Duchy of Parma: **Parma** (1588), Piacenza;
Grand Duchy of Tuscany: **Florence**, Pisa, Siena;
Papal States: Ancona, Avignon, Bologna, Faenza, Fermo (1631), Ferrara, Gubbio (1632), Perugia, Rimini, Spoleto (1685);
Kingdom of Naples: **Naples**.

A few tribunals operated outside Italy (besides Avignon): Cologne for the Holy Roman Empire; Carcassonne and Toulouse for France; Besançon for Franche Comté; and Malta for the island of Malta (established in 1574) (Del Col 2002).

An inquisitor, nearly always a member of the Dominican order, presided over these courts; only the inquisitors of Tuscany and, partly, of the Venetian Republic, belonged to the Franciscan order. At first, the generals of their orders appointed the inquisitors, but, since the end of the sixteenth century, the Roman Congregation appointed them. In some cases, such as the Republic of Lucca and the Kingdom of Naples, bishops presided over the courts (but in the city of Naples, besides the episcopal court, there was also an inquisitor with jurisdiction over the entire state).

In addition to the main tribunals, there were also some vicariates, that is, tribunals presided over by an inquisitorial vicar under the authority of an inquisitor; for instance, before 1599, Modena was a vicariate under the authority of the inquisitor of Ferrara. Since the beginning of the seventeenth century, moreover, the so-called “vicariati foranei” (lower country courts) spread all over the various Italian States as a branch of city courts.

THE ROMAN INQUISITION AND WITCHCRAFT

Inquisitorial jurisdiction, covering anything defined as “heresy” by canon law or theology, also included witchcraft. Because such offenses aroused suspicions of heresy (usually because they involved the invocation of

devils and the abuse of sacraments and sacramentals), canon law gave inquisitors jurisdiction over *maleficium* (harmful magic) and “superstitions” generally. Worse, when witches admitted adoring the Devil, they became guilty of apostasy—a more serious crime than heresy. In the early sixteenth century, many Italian inquisitorial tribunals started murderous witch hunts, as happened in Valcamonica in 1518 and at Mirandola between 1522 and 1525. Pope Paul III established the Roman Inquisition mainly to check the spread of the Protestant Reformation in Italian cities. Therefore, in its first decades, the Roman Congregation discussed very few cases of witchcraft: exactly five are known from 1542 to 1559. Shaping any clear policy toward witchcraft was delayed by the Roman Congregation’s lack of interest. On May 11, 1559, when Pope Paul IV authorized the execution of four witches tried by the bishop of Bologna, he declared that he was ignoring the law that spared the life of a first-time offender, if the person repented, because of the extreme gravity of these witches’ crimes.

The Roman Inquisition’s attitudes toward the vast field of magic and superstition, together with witchcraft, changed abruptly in the last decades of the sixteenth century, after the final defeat of the Protestant Reformation in Italy; henceforth, these became by far the crimes the Roman Inquisition most often investigated. The Roman Inquisition, born as a special court, now became a more ordinary means of control over religious life throughout the Italian states.

This change necessitated a definite policy toward witchcraft. It remains unclear how far, if at all, the Roman Inquisition copied the guidelines established long before (1526) by the Spanish Inquisition; certainly, they were extremely similar. Specifically, by 1588 the Roman authorities urged their provincial tribunals to ignore denunciations of “accomplices” by witches who had confessed to participating in the witches’ Sabbat. These guidelines prevented witch hunts at a time when massive persecutions occurred in other European regions, but they did not deny the theoretical reality of the Sabbat, as one might expect. Instead, those indicted for witchcraft were treated according to the regulations for heresy trials, which permitted repentant defendants to avoid the death penalty, at least after their first conviction. The witchcraft trials begun or supported by the cardinal-archbishop of Milan, St. Carlo Borromeo, mainly in 1583 in Val Mesolcina (where ten women suffered at the stake), largely bypassed the Roman Congregation because of Borromeo’s exceptional role and prestige. However, inquisitors undertaking similar persecutions were immediately forbidden to proceed by the Roman Congregation, which in some cases even punished overly zealous judges, including the archbishop and

a rchdeacon of Bitonto in 1596. Therefore, as far as the repression of witchcraft was concerned, since the late sixteenth century, the Congregation of the Roman Inquisition clearly preferred persuasion, often through the intervention of confessors, to repression.

Moreover, the Roman Inquisition's moderate policies about witchcraft now received official form in a famous document, the *Instructio pro formandis processibus in causis strigum, sortilegiorum et maleficiorum* (Instruction for Conducting Trial Procedures Against Witches, Sorcerers, and Evildoers). We do not know exactly who drew up this document, or when; either its first draft dates from the very late-sixteenth century and its author was Giulio Monterenzi, the chief prosecutor (*fiscal*) of the Holy Office (Decker 2001), or it might have been assembled by the cardinal inquisitor Desiderio Scaglia, around 1620 (Tedeschi 1991, 205–227). We know that the Roman Congregation began sending its *Instructio* to provincial inquisitors in the first two decades of the seventeenth century.

The Roman Inquisition's *Instructio* emphasized two guidelines: the first gave formal approval to its policy from the late sixteenth century, stating that persons could not be prosecuted for participating in the Sabbat; moreover, inquisitors were forbidden to convict a prisoner by finding evidence of the Devil's mark or by a defendant's not shedding tears under torture. The *Instructio*'s second rule introduced some new principles on the question of *maleficium*, hitherto neglected, probably because lay courts had claimed jurisdiction over it. The Roman Inquisition now claimed jurisdiction over *maleficium* and stipulated (1) no suspect could be arrested unless material evidence of a crime could be found; (2) the judge must consult a physician to identify exactly the cause of an illness, whether natural or diabolic; and (3) inquisitors were forbidden to prosecute suspects on testimony from exorcists, overly inclined to see the works of the Devil and his allies everywhere.

Although the *Instructio* enables us to know the attitude of the Roman Inquisition toward witchcraft, its wider significance, and, especially, its actual impact, remain unresolved, for several reasons. First, the rules of the *Instructio*, like the legal practices from which it originated, did not disturb the theoretical ground on which belief in witchcraft rested. Second, its very existence suggests that provincial inquisitors committed frequent abuses while investigating witchcraft. Last, the Roman Congregation diffused the document only in manuscript form among the bishops or inquisitors under its jurisdiction, until 1657, when a printed edition was published, and it took no official action against those judges who committed abuses outside its jurisdiction. Sometimes Italian courts continued sentencing witches to death by using procedures disapproved by the

Roman Holy Office.

Documentary evidence reveals that the tribunals of the Roman Inquisition by and large spared witches' lives and preferred to punish them by abjuration, flogging, or exile. The Holy Office was more lenient than at least one of the popes who headed it: Gregory XV's bull *Omnipotentis Dei* (Omnipotent God, 1623) imposed the death sentence even on a repentant first offender, if convicted of committing a *maleficium* that resulted in a fatal injury; but his decree was never applied, probably because the inquisitors general opposed it.

In the eighteenth century, the Roman Inquisition seemed to be rapidly decaying. Its judicial business decreased; charges and punishments seemed to involve second-rate crimes such as blasphemy, sexual solicitation in the confessional (the so-called *sollicitatio ad turpia*), and "superstition," which became less and less diabolical and more human. Moreover, many books on exorcism were put on the Index of Prohibited Books, among them the work of Girolamo Menghi, a famous Franciscan friar who had strongly supported witch hunting in the late sixteenth century. Roman authorities began suspecting that much diabolic possession and consequent indictments for witchcraft resulted from mental and physical diseases instead of some diabolical spell.

All this was happening in an Italian and European environment in which Enlightenment culture was spreading with all its radical opposition to witchcraft, magic, and diabolic phenomena. At the end of this process, the Roman Inquisition, with its judicial caution, still upholding the theoretical grounds of the belief in witchcraft (still partly preserved in Catholic culture today), found itself most unfashionable. Unsurprisingly, it attempted to struggle against "Enlightened" philosophy and science rather than against the witches; but even in Italy it lost this battle and could not prevent the diffusion of new ideas. The provincial tribunals of the Roman Inquisition, by now obsolete and useless, were dismantled around mid-century, mainly to satisfy the desire of the Italian states: at Naples (1746), Parma (between 1765 and 1768), Tuscany (1782), or Modena (1785); in the Papal States; most of them were probably suppressed during the Napoleonic conquest. However, some courts, for example, Bologna, continued until the mid-nineteenth century, on the eve of Italian unification.

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TRANSLATED BY CARLO DALL'OLIO

See also: *BENANDANTI*; BORROMEIO, ST. CARLO; COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; COURTS, INQUISITORIAL; DOMINICAN ORDER; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); ENLIGHTENMENT; EPISCOPAL JUSTICE; HERESY; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; INQUISITION, SPANISH; INQUISITION, VENETIAN; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; ITALY; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); MENGHI,

GIROLAMO; MILAN; MODENA; PAPACY AND PAPAL BULLS; PEÑA, FRANCISCO; PIEDMONT; ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH; SIENESE NEW STATE; SUPERSTITION.

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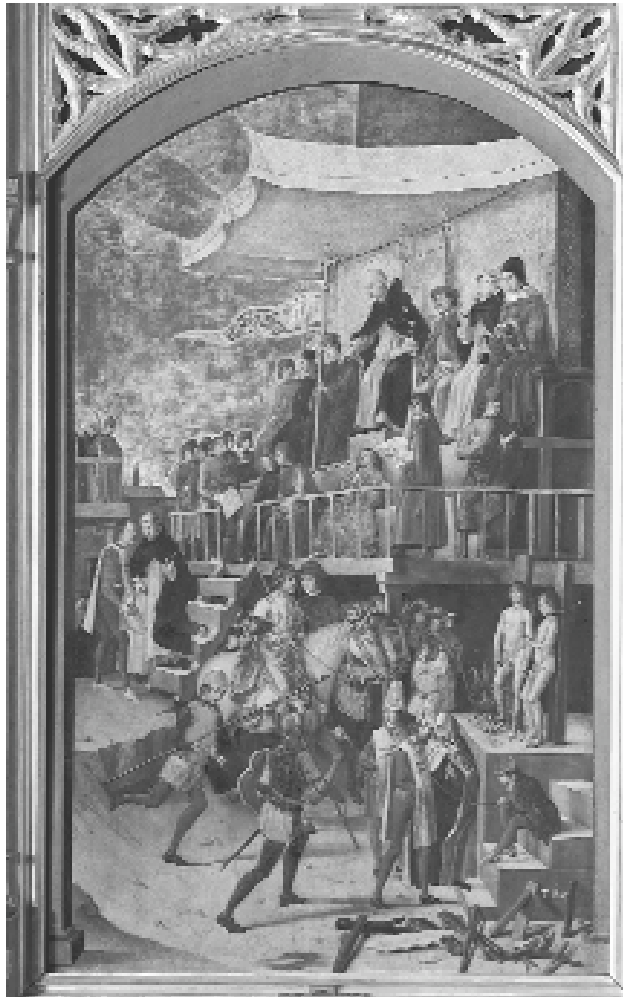
INQUISITION, SPANISH

The role of the Spanish Inquisition in cases of witchcraft was much more restricted than is commonly

believed. Well after the foundation of the Holy Office in Castile in 1478, jurisdiction over sorcery and witchcraft remained largely in secular hands; a Castilian decree of 1500 ordered an investigation into sorcery but referred the matter to the civil courts. The medieval papal Inquisition had likewise left such questions largely in secular hands, so that no change of policy was involved. In the first thirty years of its activity, the Castilian Inquisition showed little interest in sorcery (*hechicería*); in the early sixteenth century, repression of the offense was still normally in the hands of courts belonging to other jurisdictions (bishops and abbots, nobles and towns). Certain types of popular superstition, and the whole range of astrology, were ill-defined areas in which many learned men and clergy dabbled. Astrology, for example, was on the university syllabus at Salamanca, but not until the late sixteenth century did the Inquisition, encouraged by the papacy, attempt to suppress it as a science. The inquisitorial Index of 1583 followed Rome in banning occult arts and divination. The campaign of the Catholic authorities against popular superstition was a broad one, marginal to the Inquisition's concerns in the sixteenth century but more significant in the seventeenth, when in some tribunals it accounted for a fifth of all prosecutions.

In the crown of Aragon, which received the new Inquisition slightly later than Castile, Inquisition tribunals began to investigate maleficent witchcraft (*brujería*) in mountainous districts by the mid-1490s, claiming that heresy was involved. Medieval secular practice had been that witches should be burned, and the Inquisition at first followed suit: the Saragossa tribunal burned one in 1498, another in 1499, and three in 1500. Afterward, it reported some cases of witches (*brujas*) in Castile also, for example, at Toledo (1513) or Cuenca (1515). By 1520, edicts of faith in both Castile and Aragon added magic, sorcery, and witchcraft to their list of offenses implying heresy. However, even though Spain had already produced several treatises on witchcraft by this time, belief in the Sabbat was still far from being accepted by educated Spanish opinion. At Saragossa in 1521 a theologian declared that the Sabbat "was a delusion and could not have occurred, so no heresy is involved" (Kamen 1997, 270).

The subsequent policy of the Inquisition arose out of an historic meeting held at Granada in 1526. As a result of a persecution of witches by secular authorities in Navarre the year before, Inquisitor General Manrique delegated a committee of ten to decide whether witches really did go to the Sabbat. The discussion paper they offered to the meeting noted that "the majority of jurists in this realm agree that witches do not exist," because of the impossibility of the acts they claimed to do. A vote was taken and six of those present decided "that they really go" to the Sabbat; a minority of four



Pedro Barruguete's painting, Burning of the Heretics (1490), depicting an auto de fe (act of faith), a public ceremony in which the Inquisition transferred convicted heretics to the secular authorities for execution. (Erich Lessing/Art Resource)

voted “that they go in their imagination” (Kamen 1997, 271). The committee also decided that, because the homicides to which witches frequently confessed might well be illusory, they should be tried by the Inquisition and not handed over to the civil authorities. If, however, the authorities had proof of homicide, they could act on their own account.

In general, the committee was more concerned about educating the so-called witches than chastising them. The persecution and execution of witches continued, but the Holy Office played very little part in it. The 1526 decisions were communicated in detail to local tribunals as distant as Sardinia. In Navarre, for example, the inquisitors were given strict instructions not to proceed in such cases without consulting the supreme council (*Suprema*) and the local judges. When cases occurred in Navarre in 1538, the inquisitor, Valdeolivas, was instructed by the *Suprema* not to accept the confessions of witches literally, and to “speak

to the principal people and explain to them that the loss of harvests and other ills are either sent by God for our sins or are a result of bad weather, and that witches should not be suspected” (Kamen 1997, 272). In the next few months, he and his colleague judged and penanced sixty-four witches at Bilbao and Pamplona; some were whipped, but none died.

In other Inquisitions of the peninsula, a similar skepticism was the rule. The tribunal of Saragossa executed a witch in 1535, but after protests by the *Suprema*, it executed no further witches throughout its history. In 1549 the inquisitor of Barcelona, Diego Sarmiento, allowed a number of witches to be executed without referring the cases to his superiors. The *Suprema* sent Francisco Vaca to investigate and report; he sent them one of the most damning denunciations of witchcraft persecution ever recorded, recommending freeing all prisoners, and returning all confiscated property. Inquisitor Sarmiento was pensioned off in 1550 for ignoring regulations (Monter 1990, 265–267). For the rest of its career, the Inquisition executed no witches in Catalonia.

Throughout the sixteenth century, the Inquisition seems to have maintained its hostility to persecution. Juana Izquierda, tried before the Toledo tribunal in 1591, confessed to taking part in the ritual murder of a number of children. Sixteen witnesses testified that the children had in fact died suddenly, and that they considered Izquierda to be a witch. What would in any other European country have earned Izquierda the death sentence, in Spain earned her 200 lashes.

The only significant lapse from this good record occurred a few years later in Navarre, where the tribunal had for many years resisted local pressure to execute witches (see Henningsen 1980). The background to this relapse originated not in Spain but in France. Just across the frontier, in the Pays de Labourd, the Bordeaux judge Pierre de Lancre had conducted a horrendous witch hunt in the autumn of 1609, during which he supposedly executed around eighty witches (but probably only twelve, including three priests). Many suspected Basque witches (*xorquinas*) fled over the border into Navarre and created a witch scare on Spanish territory. The inquisitors of Logroño reacted by arresting dozens of *xorquinas* and even obtained permission from the *Suprema* (which apparently forgot its own guidelines) to confiscate their property. They held a great *auto de fe* on Sunday, November 7, 1610. Fifty-three prisoners took part; twenty-nine of them were accused of witchcraft. Six witches were burned at the stake, together with the corpses of five others who had died in prison. In March 1611, the *Suprema* deputized a Logroño inquisitor, Alonso de Salazar Frías, to visit the afflicted parts of Navarre, carrying an edict of grace inviting the inhabitants to confess their errors. Salazar heard almost 2000 confessions, mainly from children. In the course of his mission, Salazar came to the

conclusion that these offenses were entirely imaginary, and became embroiled with his senior Logroño colleagues, who never doubted the reality of all aspects of witchcraft.

Before Salazar's mission, the Inquisitor General had commissioned an opinion (*consulta*) from Pedro de Valencia. His report, dated April 1611, was careful not to deny the reality of witchcraft. However, he implied that there was a strong element of mental sickness in the Navarre events ("The accused must be examined first to see if they are in their right mind"; their conduct, he said, "is more that of madmen than of heretics"), and urged that exceptional care must be taken to prove offenses through "evidence, according to law" (Kamen 1997, 275).

On August 29, 1614, the *Suprema* finally reaffirmed its policy of 1526, which remained the basic guide to its future policy. Drawn up in thirty-two articles, these instructions advised caution and leniency in all investigations. Although the Spanish Inquisition still regarded witchcraft as a crime and claimed jurisdiction over it, in practice it rejected all testimony about it as delusion. Thus, for the most part, Spain was saved from the ravages of popular witch persecutions prevalent in many areas of Europe. The decision of 1614 benefited those accused but placed the Spanish Inquisition in an ambiguous position both in theory and in practice. In theory, it admitted that diabolism was possible but denied any single instance of it. In practice, it was reluctant to intervene in witchcraft cases and often conceded jurisdiction to the civil authorities. It continued to prosecute all types of superstition with vigor.

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See also: ARAGON; ASTROLOGY; BASQUE COUNTRY; COURTS, INQUISITORIAL; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; SALAZAR FRÍAS, ALONSO DE; SPAIN; SUPERSTITIION; VALENCIA, PEDRO DE.

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INQUISITION, VENETIAN

Although it developed a few individual characteristics, the Inquisition of Venice remained a branch of the Roman Inquisition. From 1500 to 1519, the patriarch

of Venice and the inquisitor, a Conventual Franciscan friar, prosecuted only seven cases against men (one for magic) and twenty against women (nineteen for magic). During a major witch hunt in the Valcamonica, north of Brescia, between 1518 and 1521, the Venetian government's chief executive organ, the Council of Ten, requested that the papal nuncio supervise the work of the Dominican inquisitor and six judges appointed by the bishop of Brescia. After more than 165 trials and 62 to 80 executions by fire, the Council of Ten halted the prosecutions (Del Col 1988). The nuncio remained thereafter the most important inquisitorial judge in the Republic.

From 1541 to 1560, the Venetian Inquisition was run by the nuncio's auditor and the inquisitor, both with competence throughout the Republic. After 1560, the nuncio, the patriarch, and the inquisitor (now a Dominican friar) served as judges; by the end of the sixteenth century, as in other Italian tribunals of the Holy Office, the inquisitor had come to play the leading role. From April 22, 1547, on, the *Tre savi sopra l'eresia*, prestigious members of the Senate elected by the Minor Council and after 1595 by their peers, participated in the tribunal's proceedings—but almost always as mere "assistants." Nonetheless, Venetian secular government, frequently flouting the provisions of canon law, had a significant impact on the Inquisition's operations, because the Council of Ten oversaw the functioning of fifteen Inquisition tribunals throughout the Republic's territories: Belluno, Bergamo, Brescia, Capodistria (covering the Istrian peninsula), Ceneda, Crema (established in 1614), Feltre (only in the sixteenth century), Padua, Rovigo, Treviso, Udine, Venice, Verona, Vicenza, and Zara (covering Dalmatia). It also ruled on issues of territorial competence, impeded the sequestration of convicted heretics' goods, resisted the extradition of Venetian subjects to Rome, allowed foreign suspects to escape from prison, proposed sentences lighter than those formally mandated, and curtailed the ecclesiastical judges' freedom of action in other ways (Del Col 1991).

A rough calculation based on an imprecise inventory of the series *Sant'Ufficio* (Venice, Archivio di Stato) indicates that from 1547 to 1794, 1,041 of 3,592 cases handled by the Inquisition of Venice—by no means all of them complete trials—concerned belief in and practice of illicit magic. At first, cases involving magic constituted a small proportion of the Inquisition's case load; but from the late sixteenth century, they amounted to between one-third and one-half. Studies of about 500 cases tried between 1550 and 1650 (Martin 1989) revealed a wide variety of magical practices: necromancy (learned ritual magic, consulting the spirits of the dead); divination (both learned and popular) and conjuration of spirits and saints through spells and incantations, finding lost or stolen objects, gaining or

impeding love, obtaining money, predicting the future; and a vast range of popular healing practices. Few proceedings culminated in formal condemnations, and culprits received light punishments. Diabolical witchcraft was conspicuously absent (only six cases contain references to the Sabbat), and no one was condemned to death on this charge.

After 1700, however, three men were condemned by the Inquisition and executed by Venetian secular authorities for abuse of consecrated hosts for magical purposes: two were strangled in jail in 1705, the other was burned at the stake in the Piazza San Marco in 1724. This was the first and last such event at Venice, as heretics sentenced to death were usually drowned at night out of the Lagoon (Del Col and Milani 1998).

Although “enlightened” rulers in other Italian states abolished inquisitions in the 1770s and 1780s, those in the Venetian Republic lasted until the arrival of Napoleon’s armies. Only two of its tribunals, Venice and Udine, preserve extensive documentary holdings; two others, Rovigo and Feltre (eventually united with Belluno) are complete for the sixteenth century. Unsurprisingly, few scholars concerned with magic and witchcraft have exploited the surviving trial records.

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See also: *BENANDANTI*; COURTS, INQUISITORIAL; INQUISITION, ROMAN; ITALY.

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INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE

Inquisitorial procedure, the main method used to prosecute crime in Europe during the late medieval and early modern periods, greatly facilitated the conviction of accused witches. The inquisitorial form of criminal procedure was introduced into continental European court rooms between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries. In most places, it replaced the accusatorial system of criminal procedure, which had been the main method of prosecuting crime in both the ecclesiastical and secular courts since the fall of the Roman Empire.

Inquisitorial procedure changed both the way criminal prosecutions were initiated and the way courts determined guilt. In the accusatorial system, the injured party or his or her kin initiated a criminal action. The accusation was a formal, public, sworn statement laid before the court. The person who entered the complaint technically became the prosecutor of the crime, and the trial was an adversarial proceeding between the accuser and the accused. The outcome of those trials in which the guilt of the accused was in doubt was determined either by an ordeal or by oaths regarding the good reputation of the accused. If the court determined that the accused was innocent, the accuser was liable to a punishment that was the same as the accused would have received if convicted.

In trials following inquisitorial procedure, the courts assumed responsibility for the initiation and prosecution of crime. The first method of initiation was by *accusation*. Most courts still allowed individuals to initiate cases in the traditional manner by accusing another person of a crime, but the state regulated the methods by which this was done. The liability of the accuser was generally reduced to a bond, payable as a surety at the time of accusation, and in many jurisdictions it was eliminated entirely. In certain circumstances, including many witchcraft cases, the courts allowed secret accusations. In cases initiated by accusation, the court superintended the entire process and assumed responsibility for the prosecution if the accuser withdrew the charge or reached a settlement with the accused. A second method of initiation was by *denunciation*, according to which persons holding positions of authority, such as clerics or minor officials, would secretly submit the name of an alleged offender to the court, which then assumed responsibility for trying the person who had been denounced. Ecclesiastical courts had used denunciation as early as the ninth century, but it now became a regular means by which criminal cases could be initiated.

A third method of initiation, frequently used in witchcraft and heresy cases, was by proceeding *ex officio*. In these cases, judges or officials of the court would start the proceedings by themselves on the basis of evidence the court had obtained through its own investigation. Prosecutions *ex officio* often took place when

persons, including alleged witches, were suspected merely on the basis of ill fame or rumor. In some jurisdictions the court arranged for members of the community to testify to the existence of the rumor that the person had committed a crime.

The most distinctive feature of inquisitorial procedure was the collection and evaluation of evidence by the officers of the court in an effort to establish guilt or innocence. The system reflected the growing interest of the state in the prosecution of crime. Regardless of the method used to initiate the prosecution, inquisitorial trials were conducted entirely by officers of the court, who deposed witnesses and interrogated the prisoner as part of an effort to prove guilt. Judges gave weight to different pieces of evidence on the basis of rules established by jurists. "Perfect" proof in capital crimes required either a confession or the testimony of two unrelated eyewitnesses. Circumstantial evidence was insufficient to convict in a capital case but could be used to authorize the use of torture to secure a confession. In contrast to the accusatorial system, in which the determination of guilt was based on the outcome of an ordeal or the reputation of the accused, inquisitorial procedure represented an effort to determine guilt on the basis of human reason. Inquisitorial procedure was the product of the scientific jurisprudence that developed on the European continent in the late Middle Ages. It was introduced only after the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) forbade clerics to participate in the ordeals, a prohibition that effectively abolished them.

While also abandoning ordeals and compurgation, Anglo-American legal practice has retained the accusatorial system, and its adherents condemn inquisitorial procedure for its secrecy, its denial of the rights of the accused, and its authorization of torture. It has also been criticized on the grounds that the same judicial officials who prosecuted the criminal also determined that person's guilt. Although inquisitorial procedure was vulnerable to abuse, especially when torture was applied, it did provide for legal representation of the accused, and it did not presume the guilt of the accused, as is so often alleged. The legal "presumptions" judges made were determinations that there was sufficient evidence to proceed with a trial.

Inquisitorial procedure was not adopted in all European jurisdictions, but it became standard in ecclesiastical courts, especially papal and episcopal tribunals appointed to investigate heresy. In the Middle Ages, papal commissions issued to various ecclesiastics were often referred to collectively as the Inquisition, even though the inquisition possessed no permanent organization (Kieckhefer 1995). In secular courts, inquisitorial procedure was adopted mainly in those areas of Europe most directly influenced by the study of Roman law: Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, the Low Countries, Switzerland, and Germany.

Inquisitorial procedure was never introduced into English secular courts. After the abolition of ordeals, the determination of guilt in courts of common law was assigned to lay juries rather than professionally trained judges. In Scotland, which saw a limited reception of Roman law in the late sixteenth century, certain elements of inquisitorial procedure, for example, the collection of written testimony in dossiers and the introduction of defense attorneys to respond to indictments, became part of secular criminal procedure. In the Scandinavian countries, inquisitorial procedure, and the use of *tortu* with which it was often associated, made little headway. In eastern Europe, especially Hungary, some medieval ordeals survived until the eighteenth century.

The adoption of inquisitorial procedure facilitated the prosecution of all crime, but it proved to be especially useful in witchcraft trials. The elimination of the liable accuser made it possible for villagers to bring charges against their neighbors, sometimes secretly, without fear of being held accountable themselves if the charges were not upheld. Local officials could now proceed against suspected witches *ex officio*, simply on the basis of rumor. Inquisitorial procedure also made it possible to arrest and interrogate witches named by their alleged accomplices, thus making feasible some of the largest witch hunts of the entire period.

Inquisitorial procedure, especially when it involved the use of torture to secure proof through confessions, also made convictions in witchcraft cases more likely than under accusatorial procedure, which could be manipulated to secure acquittals. The most intense witchcraft prosecutions occurred in countries where inquisitorial procedure had come into wide use, especially in the German territories. Conversely, the number of trials and convictions remained relatively low in countries that never adopted inquisitorial procedure. The use of inquisitorial procedure, however, did not necessarily lead to a large number of convictions and executions in witchcraft cases. Witches tried before the Spanish, Portuguese, and Roman Inquisitions, which used inquisitorial procedure but that also insisted on maintaining rigid procedural and evidentiary rules, convicted and executed relatively few witches. The same can be said for those witches who were tried on appeal before the *Parlement* of Paris, the most prestigious secular tribunal in Europe employing inquisitorial procedure.

In certain circumstances, moreover, it was easier to secure a conviction in a court that followed accusatorial procedure than in one using inquisitorial procedure. When courts began to exercise caution in witchcraft trials, especially toward the end of the seventeenth century, it proved easier to secure a conviction of witches by juries, which were not bound by a strict law of proof, than by relying on a trained judge to evaluate the

evidence. The relative “success” of a witchcraft trial using accusatorial procedure under those circumstances explains why the decline of witchcraft prosecutions was sometimes more sudden in countries that employed inquisitorial procedure than in those that did not. In France, for example, where judges controlled the judicial process, witchcraft trials ended abruptly once the courts began to question the validity of the charges brought before them. In England and Scotland, on the other hand, where juries determined the facts of the case, witchcraft trials lingered on well into the eighteenth century.

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See also: ACCUSATIONS; ACCUSATORIAL PROCEDURE; COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; COURTS, INQUISITORIAL; COURTS, SECULAR; EVIDENCE; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; INQUISITION, PORTUGUESE; INQUISITION, ROMAN; INQUISITION, SPANISH; INQUISITION, VENETIAN; LAWYERS; ORDEAL; *PARLEMENT OF PARIS*; ROMAN LAW; TORTURE; TRIALS; WITCH HUNTS.

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INVOCATIONS

By the term *invocatio*, the Romans usually meant the proper prayers for the intervention of the gods. Late antique theurgy may be regarded as a form of invocation. In Roman Catholicism, “invocation” is a technical term for both the liturgical prayer for divine intervention, especially in the consecration of the Eucharist, and for a prayer for the helping intervention of the saints.

Though an invocation is phenomenologically kindred with conjurations, spells, incantations, exorcisms, prayers, and cursing—all manifestations of sacred and powerful speech—its distinguishing feature consists in a more or less forceful claim to exercise a degree of coercion over the beings addressed, whose compliance is implied. It is not only begging, but also an order; other elements like narrative ones, quoting a successful

example *in illo tempore* (at that time), may be included. In a narrower sense, the term “invocation” is restricted to those parts of conjurations that contain the names of the powers whose help is being sought (“in the name of thus-and-such divinities or demons”). Even if spoken words form the core of any invocation, it also regularly requires corresponding gestures, very often combined with the use of sacrifices, magic objects, symbols, and so forth. When the powers addressed do not react immediately, which usually happens, the invocation must be repeated or intensified.

Concerning witchcraft in Europe, we must deal here with the invocations used in black magic, be they invocations of God, of events of sacred history (Jesus’s Passion, the Last Judgment), of the saints—or invocations of demons and ghosts. God and his saints were invoked again and again for magical purposes, proving that most people using sorcery by no means thought themselves outside the Christian religion. An example for an invocation spoken for making a dead person rise may be quoted from a fifteenth-century German necromancer’s manual: “by the virtue and power of the divine majesty, and by the thrones and dominations and powers and principalities of Him . . . , and by those [angels] who do not cease to cry out with one voice, saying, ‘Holy, holy, holy . . . , and by these names, which cause you fear and terror: Rator, Lampoy, Despan, Brulo . . . the deceased is conjured to follow the magician’s instructions (Kieckhefer 1997, 128). This broad range of numinous instances who are called to help, from God himself to the most fantastic names of unknown demons, was quite characteristic for those forms of sorcery that intended to effect some advantage for the wizard or his client. Similar forms were applied to find hidden treasures, to compel a dead person to tell the future, and so forth.

Exclusive invocations of the Devil or his hosts seem to have been restricted to heretics and witches, at least according to their persecutors. An early instance of condemning the *invocator daemonum* (invocator of demons) can be found in the *Codex Theodosianus* 9, 16, 5, promulgated in 438. The ban on invocations of demons, which remained a constant item in criminal codes until modern times, can be found in, for example, the early medieval Visigothic code or in Ulrich Tengler’s sixteenth-century *Layenspiegel*. These prohibitions reflect standard Christian mentality. Very rarely, more tolerant positions can be found. In around 1370, a Spanish Dominican (!), Raimundus of Tarrega, a converted Jew, wrote a treatise *De invocatione daemonum* (On the Invocations of Demons), according to which we are permitted to invoke and adore demons, keeping in mind that they can be venerated as God-made beings. Inquisitor Nicolas Eymeric had this book burned and composed one himself against those who called up demons.



*The Devil appears to witches who had invoked him, from Francesco Maria Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficarum* (A Summary of Witches), 1608. (Art Archive/Dagli Orti)*

Notwithstanding the ascription of invocational practices to heretics and witches in the stereotypes of their persecutors, there can be no doubt that demons were indeed frequently invoked; it is sufficient to consider the number of conjuring books preserved from the late Middle Ages onward, both manuscripts and printed books, all clearly intended for practical use. Many of them were written in Latin, which proves their circulation within learned groups of society, that is, during the Middle Ages, the clergy. Biographical, historical, juridical, and other sources present further evidence. A famous early example was the experience of the Roman emperor Julian the Apostate (361–363), who witnessed, much to his terror, the invocations of demons in a pagan temple, reopened by him (Theodoret, *History of the Church* III, 3, 130). The “New Manichaeans,” one of the earliest heretical groups of the Middle Ages, were accused at the synod of Orléans (1022) of ritually declaiming the names of demons, who then appeared

in animal form. For the late Middle Ages, the trial of the perverted marshal of France Gilles de Rais (1404–1440) contains much material on the invocation of evil spirits and shows the technical level that this “art” had reached. All the typical components of a professional invocation—sacrifice, magical circle, conjuring book, and so on—form part of the rituals his collaborators described. Another instance from the age of Louis XIV is connected with the “Affair of the Poisons,” where diabolical invocations formed part of black masses. Gilles de Rais was a medieval Satanist, whose existence as a sect is doubted by most historians. However, there is evidence that such sects indeed existed from the twelfth century onward on a local level, and that they did invoke Satan or demons. Of course, the existence of similar groups in modern times cannot be denied.

The invocation of the dead, that is, necromancy, also formed part of the magical arts. Its most frequent aim was to make the deceased provide information about

the future. Invoking dead men has a long history, starting with the witch of Endor (1 Kings 28) and Ulysses's seer, the blind Theiresias. There is ample evidence for similar practices from late antiquity; it did not cease entirely after the Christianization of the Roman Empire, although real cases become rather rare in the Middle Ages and afterward. In legends and gothic novels, however, like that of the famous scholar Johann Faust, the invocation of the dead remained a *topos*; Faust brought the shadows of Alexander the Great and his spouse before the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (as the 1587 *Faustbuch*, chap. 33, narrates).

In vocations of the dead have also been recorded as acts of saints, and thus of course qualified as miracles. So St. Spyridion (d. ca. 350) asked his dead daughter to reveal to him the place where she had hidden some precious objects, and she answered him out of her grave. St. Severin of Noricum (d. 482) revived a deceased priest, whom he wanted to continue with his pastoral obligations. St. Fridolin of Säkingen (seventh century) made one of his benefactors, named Ursus, arise from the grave and brought the revived corpse with him to court in order to provide testimony for a disputed donation that he had received from Ursus during his lifetime. This saint's regular iconographic attribute, therefore, is a small skeleton or corpse.

Formally, invocations typically contained an appellative (the addressee), with or without further specific actions, and an order. Most often, they also cited the names of the divinities or demons by whose power the words should work. For example, the formula sung by Matteuccia di Francesco, the witch of Todi, in 1428 to call her animal demon goes: "*O Lucibello, / demonio dello inferno, / poichè sbandito fosti, / el nome cagnasti, / et ay nome Lucifero maiure, / vieni ad me o manda un tuo servitore.*" (O Lucibello, demon of hell, having been banned you changed the name, and into the name Lucifer the greater. Come to me or send me one of your servants!) (Mammoli 1972, 22). The Christian version of an invocation comprises the same elements, as we learn, for example, from St. Severin: "Thus the holy man spoke to the corpse: 'In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, saint priest Silvinus, speak with your brothers!'" (Eugippius 1965, c. 16).

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See also: AFFAIR OF THE POISONS; BLACK MASS; DEMONS; DEVIL; ENDOR, WITCH OF; EYMERIC, NICOLAS; FAUST, JOHANN GEORG; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (MEDIÉVAL); *LAYENSPIEGEL*; MIRACLES; MOURA, MANUEL VALE DE; NECROMANCY; RAIS, GILLES DE; RITUAL MAGIC; SATANISM; TODI, WITCH OF; WORDS, POWER OF.

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IRELAND

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about trials for witchcraft in Ireland is how few of them there were. In the case of the medieval period, the irregular structure of the church in Gaelic Ireland means that virtually no archival material has survived. Therefore it is impossible to know whether or not witchcraft prosecutions occurred there. A collection of proverbs made in late sixteenth-century County Clare contained a saying that seems to have originated in a piece of advice literature to a Gaelic lord enjoining him to "Burn them who do witchcraft." However, whether this was in imitation of the biblical injunction in Exodus 22:18 or whether it reflected actual judicial practice within a lordship is not clear. Within that part of medieval Ireland controlled by the Anglo-Normans, evidence survives for only one witchcraft trial, that of Alice Kyteler, who with some codefendants was tried for sorcery and heresy in 1324 by Bishop Ledrede in Kilkenny. Her trial suggests that Ledrede was attempting to introduce the methods of the Inquisition into the judicial practice of Ireland.

The absence of witchcraft trials in early modern Ireland is even more striking, especially given that many of those who migrated to Ireland after 1600 came from Scotland, where witchcraft trials were frequent and numerous. While there are a number of references to the practice of witchcraft in early modern Ireland, only nine trials for witchcraft are known and details survive on only two. The first was that of Florence Newton of Youghal, tried for witchcraft in 1661, and, second, the Island Magee witchcraft trials of 1711. Newton's case followed a classic pattern: first, Mary Longdon's refusal of charity to Florence Newton; second, Newton's curse followed by Longdon's subsequently falling into fits. The Island Magee trial was more complex, with seven women being accused by Mary Dunbar of bewitching her after she fell into fits. On the basis of the surviving deposition evidence, there does not seem to be any concrete cause for dispute, such as the refusal of charity,

between Dunbar and her accusers. In both instances, the normal mechanisms of the assize were used to conduct the trials.

Historians have offered three principal explanations, all of them quite faulty, as to why so few witchcraft trials are known from early modern Ireland. One unlikely theory suggested that Ireland's legal framework differed from England's and discouraged witchcraft prosecutions. This was clearly not the case. The Irish statute against witchcraft of 1586 repeats almost verbatim the English act of 1563. A handbook prepared in 1634 for Irish justices of the peace by Richard Bolton also instructed the justices in the marks of witchcraft, based on English precedents. A second unconvincing explanation blamed the destruction of many Irish records in the 1922 explosion in the Public Record Office of Dublin; hence, records of witchcraft trials simply do not survive. However, St. John D. Seymour's book, *Irish Witchcraft and Demonology*, published nine years before the explosion, failed to identify any further evidence of witchcraft trials. This was unlikely to be the result of careless scholarship, because in other areas, such as his work on the Cromwellian church, Seymour was a meticulous scholar. A third flawed explanation held that the native Irish failed to prosecute witchcraft cases in the common law courts in Ireland as an expression of passive resistance against an alien judicial system. This too seems unlikely. On the basis of surviving Irish court records, it is clear that the native Irish were deeply involved in the workings of the common law system by the 1640s. They eagerly prosecuted theft, assault, and murder through these courts, so it is difficult to see why witchcraft should have been excluded in such a way.

In some ways, seeking answers to the question of why there were so few witchcraft trials in early modern Ireland is to formulate the problem badly. It might be better to ask why the beliefs in witchcraft and maleficent magic, which clearly existed in early modern Ireland and which produced accusations of witchcraft from time to time, failed to translate into formal witchcraft trials. To understand the answer to that question involves both social and economic analysis together with an understanding of the cultural role of law in early modern Ireland. In economic terms, Ireland shared one feature with other areas of the British Empire where witchcraft trials were few or absent before the 1680s, most notably the Isle of Man, the Scottish highlands, and most of colonial America. That feature was a lack of pressure on available resources. Irish population, though growing fast in the seventeenth century, was low in relation to the resources. The result was that, unlike England and many parts of Europe, there was no significant redistribution of wealth through inflation, and hence, those who were increasingly pushed to the edge of society elsewhere, notably the poor and women, were less marginalized in Ireland. Consequently, the

importance of breaches in charity was less significant than in other places. In Ireland, redistribution of resources took place between ethnic groups rather than social ones; hence, while ethnic tensions may have been strong, social tensions remained weak. The kinds of tensions that often underlay witchcraft accusations and trials elsewhere were muted in Ireland, with a corresponding reduction in the general rate of criminal activity—including witchcraft. This trend may have been reinforced by the cohesion that seems to have existed within specific ethnic groups in Ireland: this promoted some extreme violence between those groups, as in the 1640s, but maintained high levels of social solidarity within them.

A second consideration that may have served to mitigate the incidence of witchcraft trials can be traced to attitudes toward the law in early modern Ireland. Ireland in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries was becoming a colonial society, within which there was considerable disruption of native Irish social structures and a simultaneous fracturing of kin networks among colonists through the migration process. In this context, law played an important part in defining and maintaining social relationships. Rather than being seen as an adversarial process, the law served to bind individuals and communities together either by providing sites where relationships could be negotiated, such as the assize or quarter sessions, or by providing a framework for the definition and maintenance of order. In Ireland, law was not, therefore, seen as an appropriate instrument to use when seeking a resolution of the sort of social tensions that appear to have underlain so many witchcraft trials elsewhere. In Ireland, other mechanisms, such as arbitration, proved more important in this area.

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See also: ENGLAND; KYTELER, ALICE; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); SCOTLAND; TRIALS.

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ISIDORE OF SEVILLE, ST. (CA. 560–636). St. Isidore of Seville was bishop of Seville (600–636) and the most widely learned churchman of early seventh-century Iberia. He presided over the important Fourth Council of Toledo in 633 and was a prominent adviser to the Visigothic kings of the Iberian Peninsula, particularly in matters of raising the level of clerical culture and systematizing and circulating the knowledge of

antiquity and the early Christian world. Isidore was also a polymath whose interests ranged across a vast number of subjects. Although not an original thinker, he became a successful compiler of much of the learning of the ancient world, including its views on magic and sorcery. He passed that learning on to centuries of later readers in his vast work called the *Etymologies*, a kind of encyclopedia of all knowledge, based on the theory that the meaning of everything could be learned by considering the origins of its name. Although Isidore died before he had completed the work, his friend Braulio of Saragossa edited the work and divided it into twenty books. This work immediately became and long remained the chief source of information on the learning of antiquity. A close reader of the works of St. Augustine, Isidore demonstrated a broader interest in the nonreligious aspects of Greco-Roman thought than Augustine, and his discussion of magic in Book VIII of the *Etymologies* became the standard approach to the term and its history.

In his discussion of magic, Isidore drew heavily on all the Roman literature he knew, whether pagan or Christian. Book VIII, chapter 9 begins with Isidore's version of the history of magic from an imaginary Zoroaster, king of the Bactrians, to his own day, citing as sources Aristotle and the Roman poet Lucan. In VIII.9.3, Isidore stated that the magic arts were the result of the teaching of rebel angels concerning divination, auguries, oracles, and necromancy. Although magicians possessed great powers, they did not perform miracles. He pointed out that Circe, in Homer's *Odyssey*, was a magician in this sense, and he quoted other Latin poets to the same effect. Isidore was one of the most influential transmitters of the image of Circe as a witch to later centuries. He mentioned her again in Book XI.4. For Isidore, all testimonies on the subject were of equal value and referred to the same thing, regardless of whether they are of Hebrew, Greek, Roman, or Christian origin. Just before speaking of Circe, for example, he cited the example of Moses and the magicians of Pharaoh (*Exodus* 7:8).

Isidore offered a long catalog defining twenty different kinds of magic culled from all his sources, concluding with the warning that "In all these the demonic art has risen from a pestilential association of men and bad angels [demons]. Whence all must be avoided by Christians and rejected and condemned with thorough-going malediction" (IX, 31).

Generally, Isidore's ideas about magic were those of Scripture, early Christian literature, the Greek and Latin poets, and Roman law. He does not discuss any practices that can be identified as those of his own day, but he provided a considerable vocabulary of terms to later writers who wished to classify contemporary practices in their own age. On the subject of magic, as on other subjects, Isidore's work became the standard reference book for centuries of later scholars. The

significance of his treatment of magic lies in the wide variety of practices he included in this category and in his lack of discrimination between pre-Christian and Christian sources. In 2001 the Roman Catholic Church named Isidore the patron saint of the Internet.

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See also: ANGELS; AUGUSTINE, ST.; BIBLE; CIRCE; DEMONS; DIVINATION; ENDOR, WITCH OF; NECROMANCY.

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ISLAMIC WITCHCRAFT AND MAGIC

The Quran (Koran) attests the existence and efficacy of magic and the existence of a class of spirits called *jinn*s in Muslim theology and folklore. In the centuries after the first preaching of Islam, Muslim sorcerers continued to employ pre-Islamic Arab spells and adapted magical materials from the Greeks, Copts, Nabataeans, and others. Moreover, the Quran began to be used for sortilege and other magic. Although practitioners of magic were usually regarded as sinister, they were not systematically persecuted.

The last two *suras* or chapters of the Quran are both very short and apotropaic. *Sura* 113 proclaims:

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the
Compassionate
Say: "I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak
From the evil of what he has created,
From the evil of darkness when it gathers,
From the evil of women who blow on knots,
From the evil of the envier when he envies."
(*The Koran Interpreted* 1953, 2: 362)

In pre-Islamic Arabia, spells were commonly cast by tying knots and envy often provoked the casting of the evil eye. According to al-Bukhari's ninth-century collection of sayings concerning the deeds and words of the Prophet, this *sura* was revealed to Muhammad after he

had been placed under a spell that involved the knotting together and burial of a comb with some of the prophet's hair (Al-Bukhari 1893–1896, 5, 250). Muhammad had the sorcerer killed—an act that may have served as a precedent for the order of the Caliph 'Umar (ruled 634–644) that all the sorcerers in one area of Iraq should be killed (Morony 1984, 397–398). The tenth-century bookseller and cataloger Ibn al-Nadim listed a sorcerer who had produced treatises entitled *The Untied*, *The Tied*, *The Knots*, and *The Twistings* (Ibn al-Nadim 1970, 2, 731; Morony 1984, 399).

Sura 114 is as follows:

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the
Compassionate
Say: "I take refuge with the Lord of men,
the King of men,
the God of men,
from the evil of the slinking whisperer
who whispers in the breasts of men
of *jinn* and men."
(*The Koran Interpreted* 1953, 2: 363)

The whisperer in the breasts of man was Iblis or Satan (who in later Islamic lore was usually visualized as a handsome one-eyed old man with a thin beard). The Arabic noun *waswas* means whispering, devilish insinuation, temptation, melancholy, or delusion. *Jinns* are repeatedly referred to in the Quran and consequently form part of orthodox Muslim belief. According to the Quran, the *jinns* were created from smokeless fire. Elsewhere in the Quran, the Biblical King Solomon is credited with power over the *jinn*: a considerable body of Islamic folklore grew up about his dealings with the *jinns*, his use of various magical impedimenta, and his imprisonment of some *jinns* in stoppered flasks (*The Koran Interpreted* 1953, 2: 96–98; 21: 78–82; 34: 12–13). After the conquest of Persia by Muslim armies in the seventh century, Arabic lore about *jinns* was assimilated to the preexisting Persian lore about *divs* (supernatural monsters). The legendary Persian monarch, Jamshid, controlled the *divs* in much the same way that Solomon controlled the *jinns*. *Jinns* were sometimes also referred to as *shaitans* (satans) and in *Sura* 2 of the Quran, the *shaitans* were responsible for teaching people sorcery, making use of two fallen angels, Harut and Marut, who were hung upside down in a well in Babylon (*The Koran Interpreted* 1953, 2: 96–97). This legendary well became a place of pilgrimage for those who wished to learn sorcery.

Like Christian angels, there were good *jinns* as well as rebellious and maleficent *jinns*. Law books proclaimed the lawfulness for Muslim mortals of commercial and sexual intercourse with *jinns*. Jurists set out the property and marriage rights of *jinns*. Nevertheless, though some anecdotes presented individual *jinns* in a benign

light, on the whole, *jinns* had a reputation for cruel and arbitrary behavior. They lurked in such sinister and unclean places as cemeteries, caves, and lavatories. The *ghoul*, shape-shifting jinn, who was usually female and cannibalistic, lurked in wastelands and sometimes used the semblance of beauty to lure men to their doom. Sorcerers usually derived their powers from control of the *jinns*. The mad (*majnun*) were commonly held to be possessed by *jinns* (Westermarck 1899; Macdonald 1909, 130–156; Fahd 1971).

Jinns were held to be the sources of inspiration for the pre-Islamic poetry of the Arabian Peninsula. Every poet was supposed to have his *qarin*, or associate spirit. Poetry was used for cursing, particularly in the final moments before engaging in battle with a rival tribe. To some extent, this association between poetry and demonic inspiration persisted in the Islamic tradition for centuries, and there were numerous anecdotes about famous poets receiving their inspiration from Iblis or one of the other lesser *jinns*. Poetry proper was distinguished from *saj'*, a form of rhymed and rhythmic utterance that was in the first instance the language employed by the *kahins* or soothsayers. The *kahins* of pre-Islamic Arabia not only uttered predictions, but also cast spells, practiced medicine, and acted as tribal mediators. The Prophet fiercely denounced *Kahins*. Nevertheless, their magical use of *saj'* and the forms of divination persisted into Islamic times (Macdonald 1909, 30–34; Fahd 1987, 91–176).

Finally, sorcery also features in *sura* 7 of the Quran relating the encounter of Moses with the sorcerers of Pharaoh. They conjured up serpents, but Moses cast his staff upon the ground and it became a serpent that devoured the hallucinations conjured up by the Egyptian sorcerers (Moses's staff was often discussed in later Islamic occult treatises). The magical powers of Solomon and Moses, as well as Muhammad's resemblance to a *kahin* in some superficial respects, stimulated the production of a body of Islamic literature that sought to discriminate between divinely inspired prophecy and the miracles of saints on the one hand, and witchcraft and various forms of divination and occultism on the other.

One of the most extensive and predominantly skeptical accounts of the various branches of occultism can be found in the fourteenth-century North African philosopher-historian Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddima* (*Prolegomena*). Ibn Khaldun believed that good intentions underpinned true prophecy, while evil intentions marked out the divinatory powers of the sorcerer. He also stressed the distinction between a miracle-working Sufi, whose powers came from God, and a magician who worked with talismans or magic letters. (Ibn Khaldun 1967, 1, 191). Although Ibn Khaldun wished to reject as much of magic and the related occult sciences as possible, he was fascinated by the occult. He

defined sorcery as the technique by which souls may influence the world without any aid. Because sorcery involved veneration of spheres, stars, or *jinn*, it was a form of infidelity. Not only was the effectiveness of magic attested by the Quran and religious law, but also Ibn Khaldun had personally observed a sorcerer making use of spitting and of knots, as well as a pact with the *jinn*s. Ibn Khaldun also gave an account of the “rippers” of North Africa, who could tear an animal or a garment to pieces by pointing at it and muttering certain magic words. This sort of magic was used to blackmail herdsmen into paying off the sorcerer with an animal from his flock. Ibn Khaldun had actually talked with these sorcerers (Ibn Khaldun 1967, 1, 203–245; 3, 156–227).

Whether effective or not, magic was widely regarded by Muslims as something alien to Islam, as something that had either survived from pagan idolatry or had been imported from neighboring lands. The Copts in particular were regarded as the heirs of an ancient and secret Pharaonic wisdom. Ibn Khaldun regarded Egyptian temples as relics of ancient sorcery and the Copts, together with ancient Syrians and Chaldeans, as the original specialists in sorcery, astrology, and talismans. A great deal of extremely sinister, but most fantastical sorcery was traced back to the mysterious Sabaeans of Harran (today in eastern Turkey). The Sabaeans were star worshippers who reputedly practiced human sacrifice and used severed heads to predict the future; their city was a place of abomination. The tenth-century book-cataloger Ibn al-Nadim mentioned a Sabaean book, *al-Flatifi*, that dealt with planetary worship, human sacrifice, knotting spells, incantations, and talismans. Sabaean paganism, whatever its true nature, apparently survived for several centuries under Islamic rule. Ibn al-Nadim further observed that while some sorcerers claimed to acquire their powers by fasting and living virtuous lives, others boasted that their power came from disobeying divine laws and doing forbidden things. Like Ibn Khaldun, Ibn al-Nadim saw Egypt as the place par excellence for sorcery. He also recorded a dream told to him by a magician of his acquaintance, in which the magician beheld Venus surrounded by black Nabataeans (the ancient inhabitants of Iraq) with cloven hooves (Ibn al-Nadim 1970, 2, 745–773; Hutton 2003, 138–140, 145–150).

Although the *‘ulum al-awa’il*, or sciences of the ancients, including Aristotelian philosophy, Euclidean geometry, and Ptolemaic astronomy, were widely respected by medieval Muslim intellectuals, there was also a sinister side to what was (or at least was supposedly) the legacy of antiquity. The Jabirian corpus is one of the most important examples of this *damnosa haereditas*. Jabir ibn Hayyan was an alchemist who allegedly lived in the late eighth and early ninth centuries, but it seems fairly clear that he did not write the huge number of treatises attributed to him, most of

which apparently date from the late ninth and early tenth centuries. Although alchemical recipes and speculations were at the center of the Jabirian corpus of pseudepigrapha, it contained a great deal of other matter, some of which must be characterized as ritual and talismanic magic (Kraus 1942). Ibn Khaldun (1967, 3, 157) described Jabir as the chief sorcerer of Islam. Among much else, one finds spells to kill snakes, to cure insomnia, to trap *jinn* in statues, and for the artificial generation of serpents and homunculi. The Jabirian corpus placed much emphasis on the “filthy dispensary”—the magical use of corpses, semen, blood, and excrement, as well as relying on the power of the planets and stars to infuse talismans. Jabirians drew on the occult legacy of late antiquity, but also on folk magic.

Similar material was ascribed to the probably no less legendary Ibn Wahshiyya, who was supposed to have written on poisons, magic alphabets, and alchemy. The chief work ascribed to him was the *Kitab al-falaha al-nabatiyya* (Nabataean Agriculture). Purportedly a translation from Syriac made ca. 900, it celebrated the ancient glories of pre-Islamic Iraq, especially its mastery of agronomy. It also contained a vast amount of occult lore. Similarly, the book on poisons, *Kitab al-sumam*, included what we would regard as malefic spells rather than poisons—for example, an unusually disgusting recipe for producing a human-headed calf, the mere sight of which was enough to kill people (Ullmann 1972, 209–210, 384, 440–443; Hutton 2003, 153).

Ibn Wahshiyya’s spells for conjuring spirits, as well as Jabirian speculations about the *khawas* or special properties of plants, stones, and parts of the human body, were drawn on in the manual of magic known as *Ghayat al-hakim fi’l sihr* (The Goal of the Sage with Respect to Magic). Falsely ascribed to a respectable Andalusian Arab mathematician, al-Majriti (d. 1008), it was probably written in the 1050s. It was later abridged and translated into Latin in the mid-thirteenth century as *Picatrix*. The *Ghayat* offered a wide range of recipes for the manufacture of talismans under the appropriate astrological influences. The filthy dispensary was often used; for example, a spell for a magic mirror required the use of tears, blood, earwax, spittle, sperm, urine, and excrement. Despite the protests of Islam in the exordium and elsewhere, the general tone of the *Ghayat* was sinister. Indeed, some of its spells were so sinister and fantastic that a critical reader may conclude that they were included as horror stories to make a reader’s flesh creep, rather than representing the actual practice of magicians in Muslim lands (Pseudo-Majriti 1933; Pseudo-Majriti 1986; Matton 1977, 245–317; Pingree 1980; Ullmann 1972, 385–386; Hutton 2003, 154–158).

Despite ‘Umar’s instructions to his governors in Iraq, there has never been a sustained witch-hunting craze in Islamic lands, nor anything resembling Heinrich



A genie flies with two people (from The Arabian Nights). The Arabian Nights contains much Islamic magic, including jinns, good and evil spirits, and witches. (Bettmann/Corbis)

Kramer's witch-hunting manual, the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486). Pacts with the Devil and contracts to sell one's soul were virtually unknown in Islamic culture. Instead, the sorcerer sought to control the *jinns* by mastery of the right magical words and impedimenta. Moreover, sorcerers were more likely to be male than female. There are very few references to covens of witches in Arabic, Persian, or Turkish literature. However, Leo Africanus, a sixteenth-century North African convert to Christianity, who wrote a *Description of Africa* while residing in Italy, gave an account of something that looks like a coven and that flourished in Fez when he was a boy. Leo recalled that it included female diviners who pretended that they enjoyed the friendship of various types of *jinns*—red, white, and black. When asked to prophesy, the women faked being possessed. Those who had come to consult them left presents for the *jinns*. Leo added that these women were lesbians with predatory designs on any pretty women who came to consult them (Leo 1896, vol. 2, p. 458).

Similarly, in *The Arabian Nights*, witches often featured as lesbians and sometimes as man-eaters. Arab witches were believed to fly on jars rather than broomsticks. But the magical stories of *The Arabian Nights* featured just as many male North African and Zoroastrian Persian sorcerers as they did female witches. Male and female sorcerers were normally presented as working alone, rather than in covens, in both *The Arabian Nights* and in popular epics of folk literature (Irwin 1994, 184, 201–203). 'Aquila, the sorceress in the romance of *Sayf bin Dhi Yazan*, was credited with "knowing magic, having *jinn* helpers, opening up treasures, uncovering the secrets of the heart, changing shape, knowing how to fly in the air, constructing elixirs, countering spells and unlocking talismans" (Lyons 1995, 1: 49). The sorceresses of popular romance were not always malign figures. In "The Tale of the Second Dervish" in *The Arabian Nights*, a king's daughter was able to detect that the prince has been turned into an ape, because as a child she studied with "a wily and treacherous woman who was a witch" who "taught me witchcraft, and I copied and memorized the seventy domains of magic." Despite her sinister apprenticeship, the princess was virtuous and engaged in a shape-shifting battle with *jinn* who had imprisoned the prince in ape's form. (*The Arabian Nights*, 108–112).

In the absence of trial records or of any source comparable to the *Malleus*, one is dependent on tales of the marvellous and what the sorcerers wrote about themselves, together with later accounts by Western travellers and anthropologists. One of the most interesting sorcerer's manuals, the *'Uyun al-haqaiq* remains in manuscript. It was compiled in the mid- to late-thirteenth century by Abu'l-Qasim al-Iraqi, who worked as street corner conjuror in Mamluk, Cairo. A curious mixture of supernatural spells and conjuring tricks, it contained spells for mind reading, walking on water, and giving a man the appearance of a bird, among many other marvels. Abu'l-Qasim had read widely and had also engaged in the (misguided) study of the images in ancient Egyptian temples (Irwin 1994, 203, 321; Ullmann 1972, 235–236, 391–392).

Abu'l-Qasim was a late representative of the sort of sorcerer who studied what he took to be the *'ulum al-awa'il* and who invoked authorities like Hermes and Plato. Increasingly, this was replaced by a magic that drew to some extent on Sufi mysticism, used the Quran as a kind of spell-book, and worked magic through invoking the name of God or by manipulating letters and numbers. The great magical compendium, the *Shams al-Ma'arif al-Kubra* (The Great Sun of Gnosis) was the most famous and popular work expounding this kind of magic. Attributed to the North African Shadhili Sufi mystic, Muhyi al-Din al-Buni (d. 1225), it seems to have been assembled some decades after his death by his

disciples. The text (of which there are variant versions) was illustrated with numerous designs for talismans and magic squares. Despite the piety of much of the text and its emphasis on ritual purity and fasting, some of the spells had an evil intent. For examples, the book gave guidance on such matters as soul stealing, magically setting a house on fire, and paralyzing an enemy through fashioning a wax doll (Buni; al-Gawhary 1968).

Literary magic was an urban affair. We know much less about rural and desert sorcery. From the late eighteenth century onward, the puritanical Wahhabi sect set out to extirpate pagan survivals and unacceptable superstitious accretions to strict Islamic practice in the Arabian Peninsula. Nevertheless, plenty of evidence demonstrates the survival of magical practices in the desert up to the present day. In particular, the low-caste Sulluba tribe, who work mostly as hunters and blacksmiths, have a reputation as guardians of magical knowledge. The women of this tribe in particular are reputed to be able to cast spells; they have the power of the evil eye, as well as being experts in poison and witchcraft. They tell fortunes by casting stones and shells upon the ground. (It is worth noting that it is generally held throughout Islamic lands that the bearer of the evil eye is not necessarily aware that he or she possesses it.) The Sulluba serve as scapegoats, for other tribes tend to blame their misfortunes on Sulluba sorcery (Dickson 1949, 521–525).

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See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; ANGELS; DEMONS; DIVINATION; EVIL EYE; JEWS, WITCHCRAFT, AND MAGIC; MAGIC AND RELIGION; MOSES; SORCERY; SPELLS.

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ISOLANI, ISIDORO (1475–CA. 1528)

Isolani was a Dominican professor of theology, active in Milan and its vicinity in the early sixteenth century, whose numerous writings expressed concern with the growing presence of witches in northern Italy. Isolani discussed the theoretical aspects of the phenomenon of witchcraft, justified the harsh persecution of this diabolical sect, and offered information about contemporary witch hunts. He also discussed female living saints, whom he viewed as antitheses to witches.

Isolani joined the monastery of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan, which belonged to the Lombard Congregation, and completed his studies in Bologna,

where he studied under the famous theologian and demonologist Silvestro Prierias. In the first two decades of the sixteenth century, he was reader in philosophy and theology in various Dominican institutions and prior of friaries in Milan, Cremona, and Pavia. At Milan, Isolani was involved in pro-French politics and affiliated with the spiritual circle headed by the mystic Arcangela Panigarola.

He was a prolific author who discussed the major controversies of his time, including prophecy, the immaculate conception, and the Luther affair. Isolani entered the debate on magic and witchcraft in 1506, with his *Libellus adversus magos, divinatores, maleficos* (A Little Book Opposing Magicians, Diviners, and Sorcerers). In the *Libellus*, Isolani rejected any distinction between natural and demonic magic: even magical rites that did not explicitly invoke demons were incompatible with Christianity, and all those who practiced them were heretics with a tacit or explicit pact with the Devil. His arguments resembled other Renaissance refutations of astrology and similar practices, but the *Libellus* was among the first Italian books that discussed witches in a polemical treatise against magic.

Isolani treated witchcraft in the third part of his *Libellus*. He argued that the witches submitted both body and soul to the Devil; they met occasionally in forests, where they sang, danced, copulated with demons, renounced the Christian faith, abused the Eucharist, and worshiped a certain mistress who presided over their meetings. With the Devil's assistance, the witches killed children and caused fatal diseases, impotence, infertility, and natural disasters. Their crimes were real, not imaginary; Isolani repeated standard theological explanations about how God permitted the Devil and his followers to deceive humans. Isolani never served as an inquisitor, but reported testimony heard by contemporary inquisitors to prove his points, and praised their attempts to exterminate the witches' sect.

The *Libellus* deals mainly with types of learned magic popular among Italian men, but its section on witchcraft and *maleficium* (harmful magic) deals with "little women" (*mulierculae*) who practiced the healing arts. Isolani asserted that, being illiterate, these women's healing abilities necessarily derived from pacts with the Evil One. Isolani never cited the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), but repeated its contention that women's frailty, and especially their lasciviousness, accounted for their greater proclivity toward witchcraft. In the two decades following the publication of his *Libellus*, other Dominicans (Rategno, Prierias) from the Lombard Congregation voiced similar characterizations of the witches' sect.

Isolani's preoccupation with diabolic witchcraft recurred in the first book of his *De Imperio militantis ecclesiae libri quattuor* (Four Books on the "Imperium"

of the Church Militant, 1517), which was concerned with papal authority. Witches provided one indication of an increasing diabolical presence in the world, a sign of the imminent coming of the Antichrist; Isolani praised the execution of more than sixty witches in Como in 1514, while he was serving as a reader in a local friary. In his book about the *Inexplicable Mysterious Deeds of the Blessed Veronica of Binasco* (1518), Isolani attempted to distinguish between diabolically and divinely inspired supernatural phenomena, presenting this Milanese mystic as an antiwitch.

TAMAR HERZIG

See also: CAGNAZZO, GIOVANNI OF TAGGIA (OR TABIA); DEMONOLOGY; DIVINATION; ITALY; LIVING SAINTS; MAGIC, LEARNED; MAGIC, NATURAL; *MALEFICIUM*; MILAN; PRIERIAS, SILVESTRO; RATEGNO, BERNARDO OF COMO.

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ITALY

"To the fire, to the fire, to the fire!" St. Bernardino of Siena's invocation of stakes in a 1427 sermon against superstitions illustrates that the dangers from sorcery and now witchcraft were already strong in Renaissance Italy. The European fear of witches, endemic among both urban and rural populations, materialized in small and occasionally large and bloody hunts. These patterns lasted over three centuries, but with irregular frequency, intensity, and diffusion. Italy conformed to this general scenario. However, one must also admit that an outline of Italian witchcraft trials is seriously hampered by a lack of reliable modern studies. We know far too little to sketch out anything except the broad temporal and geographical distribution of witchcraft trials in a rudimentary map, with many lacunae.

Moreover, a clear characterization of the crime must precede its general profile. Fantastic tales of witches' gatherings were certainly known by Bernardino's day, but the basis of most witnesses and accusers' depositions

throughout Italy remained the fear of *maleficium* (harmful magic); people were not interested in whether or not the Devil played a part. *Maleficium* was mainly a neighborhood crime, fostered by the malevolence and suspicion endemic in early modern villages. But Italy also swarmed with cities, and we must not overlook the professional urban witches of Renaissance Italy who specialized in love magic; they abound in inquisitorial records as well as in literature.

Italy for the most part escaped large witch hunts. This relatively mild pattern (rivaled on the continent mainly by the northern Netherlands) primarily resulted from three interconnected factors. First, after overcoming the challenge of Protestantism, the post-Tridentine Church wished to indoctrinate its superstitious flock. Second, the Roman Inquisition (created in 1542), a strongly centralized agency, claimed jurisdiction over this crime and successfully removed most witchcraft cases from Italy's less scrupulous secular courts. Third, a judicial rationale raising standards of proof prevailed among the cardinals of the Congregation of Rome's Holy Office, which by 1600 had produced a manuscript *Instructio pro formandis processibus in causis strigum, sortilegiorum et maleficorum* (Instruction for Conducting Trial Procedure Against Witches, Sorcerers, and Evildoers), eventually published in 1657. For example, physicians had to establish whether an infant's death was due to natural or unnatural causes. "In prosecuting suspected witches the inquisitor must not reach the point of incarceration, inquisition or torture until the corpus delicti is judicially established. The presence of sickness in a man or the presence of a corpse in themselves do not constitute adequate evidence, *since* infirmity and death do not need to be connected to acts of witchcraft, but can result from a large number of natural causes" (Tedeschi 1990, 92).

Moreover, after 1588 the Roman Inquisition prohibited prosecuting people denounced by witches as accomplices seen at the Sabbat, thus preventing the domino effect responsible for Europe's worst witch crazes. Other "modern" aspects of the inquisitorial trial, such as an obligatory defense attorney, had little effect, while its reputedly limited use of torture requires careful reappraisal.

TEMPORAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

Given the physical geography of the Italian peninsula, our model of its witchcraft trials must contain three large zones—the entire Alpine band, a central area, from the Po flatlands southward, and the Kingdom of Naples—and a four-phase temporal subdivision. An early phase, lasting from ca. 1430 to ca. 1530, was followed by fifty years of apparent lull. Around the 1580s came a sudden upsurge of witchcraft trials, mainly conducted by the Roman Inquisition. It endured until the

mid-seventeenth century, followed by a century of rare and scattered witchcraft trials.

FIRST PHASE (1430–1530) A reconstruction of the chronology of early Italian persecutions shows no particular patterns of geographical diffusion. The entire Kingdom of Naples is a blank spot. In the Papal States, there occurred individual witchcraft trials at Rome (1424), Todi (1428), and Perugia (1446), all ending in executions. Despite St. Bernardino's volcanic sermons, there were few prosecutions in fifteenth-century Tuscany: one woman was beheaded in Florence as a *strega* (witch) in June 1427. Further north, and later, we hear of a witch burned in 1471 at Vercelli; elsewhere in Piedmont (Canavese), five women were tried and two of them executed in 1474–1475.

By the end of the century, matters had taken a harsher, dramatic turn. A pattern of escalation emerged; there were clusters of witchcraft trials in the early sixteenth century, culminating between 1520 and 1530—the heyday of Italian stakes. In 1506, three women were burned in the south, at Benevento, and between 1505 and 1524 three more died in Rome. Farther north, in a tiny principality in the Po basin ruled by Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola, nephew of the great philosopher, a secular court tried sixty witches and executed ten of them in 1522. Two years later, near Rieti, the notorious Paulo Grillando sentenced three women to death: two of them had attended a *Sabba* under the famous walnut tree of Benevento (already famous at Todi in 1428); the other escaped the stake only by transfixing her throat with a nail. Bellezza Orsini, too, under torture, admitted she had excavated infant corpses in order to prepare the grease to enable her to fly to the Sabbat.

Above all, Italy's Alpine valleys were in flames. In the Val Fiemme (Trent), a secular court tried fifteen women and one man from 1501 to 1505. Under systematic torture, they confessed to killing cattle, infanticide, storm raising, pacts with the Devil, and flights to lascivious nocturnal assemblies, and named their accomplices. Large witch hunts took place in Val Camonica (Brescia): a Dominican inquisitor between 1518–1521 tried at least 165 witches, and 64 of them were burned. In Valtellina, seven women out of thirty were executed. At Venegono superiore (duchy of Milan), a "mixed" court of ecclesiastical and lay judges tried nineteen women and two men, and burned seven women. But, although we have no reliable numbers of witches tried and executed here, the diocese of Como undoubtedly conducted the most ruthless and massive witchcraft trials on Italian territory. Here Antonio of Casale reportedly sentenced 300 witches to the stake in the years following 1416. In 1485, we hear of another forty-one witches burned here. When Bartolomeo della Spina, in his *Quaestio de strigibus* (An Investigation of Witches, 1523) writes that between 1519 and 1522, the number

of witches tried in the diocese of Como exceeded a thousand and those executed exceeded a hundred, we have no way of ascertaining the solidity of his estimates.

THE APPARENT LULL Early in the sixteenth century, “no thoughtful observer would have predicted that witchcraft trials would become relatively rare” in Italy, or that the Roman Inquisition “would be primarily responsible for curbing their spread” (Monter 2002, 44). Though the Roman Inquisition would eventually play a hegemonic role in conducting Italian witchcraft trials, during the central decades of the sixteenth century, its energies were completely absorbed by the fight against Protestantism, and the previous rhythm of persecutions seemed to fall abruptly. During this apparent half-century lull from witch hunting, lack of research makes it impossible to discover variations in witchcraft trials from one region to another. Nevertheless, witchcraft trials did happen at unexpected times and were conducted indifferently by episcopal, inquisitorial, and secular courts. If Italian authorities apparently avoided any large-scale witch hunts, we have evidence of scattered cases in major cities. In 1540, a Florentine vicar sent four women to the stake at San Miniato. In 1569, five women were reportedly burned at Siena, and four women at Rome in 1572. At Bologna, six women were hanged and then burned in 1549, 1559, and 1577; clearly, Johann Weyer’s remark about the “moderation on the part of the magistrate at Bologna” (*De Praestigis Daemonum* [On the Tricks of Devils], 539) needs to be corrected. And a serious confrontation ensued when the overzealous witch-hunting cardinal-archbishop of Milan and future saint, Carlo Borromeo, insisted on sentencing eight women from Lecco to the stake. The Roman Congregation of the Holy Office, unsatisfied by the procedure followed, insisted that in the case of supposed infanticides, the *corpus delicti* had to be verified, thus anticipating its future moderate judicial strategy.

THE MAJOR WITCHCRAFT TRIALS (1580–1660) All of our patchy information points to a resurgence of persecutions during the last two decades of the century, with a clear peak during the 1590s. Trials were conducted in most parts of central Italy, especially those that had already gained the reputation of being infested by witches, but less frequently in the south; meanwhile, in some Alpine valleys, trials again multiplied into extensive persecutions. At Lucca, where a secular court, using severe torture, had already sent two women to the stake in 1571, no fewer than fifteen people (ten women, five men) were tried in 1589, and two women were sentenced to death (both died in prison before their executions). In Perugia, we know of a woman burned for witchcraft in 1590, in Florence of another one in 1612, and in Milan of a few more between 1590 and 1610.

Meanwhile, inquisitorial trials for crimes related to witchcraft multiplied almost everywhere. At Naples, trials for magic virtually doubled, from twenty-five in 1582–1586 to forty-eight in 1597–1601. In Reggio Emilia, they mushroomed from 26 between 1582 and 1591 to 250 in the following decade. In Siena, five-year averages of denunciations and trials for *maleficium* rose steadily from twelve to sixty-five between 1580–1584 and 1600–1604. The trend is confirmed by the indexes of Venetian and Friulan Inquisitions (Monter and Tedeschi 1986); in the latter, denunciations for magical arts increased from 45 between 1557 and 1559 to 256 between 1596 and 1610. In the Ligurian village of Triora, there occurred another significant episode from 1589 paralleling Lucca’s. Struck by famine, it experienced an exceptional toll of infant mortality. An investigation, started by the Inquisition, soon involved 100 suspects among its 2,500 people. When the villagers complained about the mild way it was being conducted, these cases were taken in hand by the Republic of Genoa, which seized eighteen women and one man and sentenced five to death. Rome eventually succeeded in stopping their executions, but only after all five women had already died in Genoa’s prison. As this example suggests, Italy’s fortunate avoidance of the worst excesses of witch hunting was indeed due primarily to the influence of a strong central agency, the Holy Office, which monopolized jurisdiction over this crime in most of the peninsula and enforced such high standards of proof that it eventually aborted a process that caused great human devastation in most other European regions.

In the Alpine valleys, the original Italian hotbed of witch hunting, earlier traditions continued, but on a much smaller scale: deaths declined drastically. Despite some clusters of trials in Val Fassa (1573, 1627–1631, 1643–1644: fourteen victims, including three men), Non valley (1611–1615: ten victims, including three men), or Nogaredo (1646–1647: eight victims, including one man), lay judges ordered barely thirty executions (three others died in prison). If we take into account the Grison Italoophone valley of Poschiavo (part of the diocese of Como), where the secular court conducted some 160 trials between 1631 and 1674 in an area devastated by the Valtelline wars and the 1630 plague, the number of Italian stakes might surpass 100.

AFTER 1650 By the second half of the seventeenth century, *maleficium* trials had become scarce. In a few Alpine valleys, the drag from previous witch hunts was still visible, with trials again reported in Non valley (1679), Nogaredo (1714), and Poschiavo (1705, 1709, and 1753). South of the Alps, the activity of inquisitorial tribunals shrank drastically, but one must not overlook a surprising 1705 capital sentence for illicit magic and sacrilege decreed by the Venetian Inquisition. In the south, we know that the episcopal tribunal of

Capua judged 130 cases of magic between 1600 and 1715. But without further information available to make useful series from this or other scattered cases (which suggest a probable continuation of evil spells intended to cause the death of enemies or unwanted lovers), we have no choice but to admit ignorance about the prosecution of witches in the Kingdom of Naples.

INTERPRETATIONS After an early upsurge of harsh witch hunts, a relatively benign tendency dominated in the Italian peninsula after 1530. Can available studies let us sketch the peculiarities in our three geographical areas? How shall we interpret both the late sixteenth-century rise in persecutions and indictments and the next fifty years, which featured a slow disappearance of *maleficium* cases? Conventional wisdom credits overly skeptical ecclesiastical judges with refusing to convict witches on the basis of formal accusations made by common people. But could not the flow of *maleficium* complaints also have shrunk from below? These are major questions that historians have not yet confronted.

But an even more obvious question leaps off our rudimentary map: why did most places in Italy apparently escape persecution? Of course, lack of research and the dispersal of Roman Inquisitorial archives may hide more than we think; nevertheless, the sparse distribution of witchcraft trials should be seen as a basic condition, closely related to witchcraft beliefs, that were deeply embedded in early modern communities. And before we account for the appearance or disappearance of witch hunts, we must have a better grasp of what this historical phenomenon was. Most Italians managed to coexist with the everyday ill will of some neighbors by relying primarily on the “natural antidotes” to witchcraft: recourse to cunning folk and to a range of strategies (force or persuasion) to tame a suspect neighbor. Settling old scores with such maleficent people through the judiciary was “unnatural,” uncertain, traumatic, and expensive. Still, these “unnatural” solutions recurred. The way in which many Italian trials were carried out, the depositions of victims, and testimonies of bewitchment, reveal divergent typologies between regions.

SUB-ALPINE VALLEYS From the cluster of trials carried out between 1611 and 1615 by an itinerant court in Non valley, it is possible to make some generalizations for the entire Alpine arc (Bertolini 1990). Their past belongs to the history of witch hunting in Tyrol. In 1573, the extension of the 1499 *Neureformierte Landesordnung* to the prince-bishopric of Trent introduced antiwitch measures among its police regulations. Early in the seventeenth century, the prince-bishop Carlo Gaudenzio Madruzzo was encouraged by the

bigoted Tyrolean archduke Maximilian of Austria to extinguish the maleficent sect in the imperial land of Anaunia. A special tribunal, directed by a lay judge, searched the whole valley and interrogated some 400 people. Angered by *maleficia* committed by their neighbors, 240 villagers testified against 140 suspected witches, including 20 men. The judge interrogated accused witches with the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) and Peter Binsfeld's *Tractatus de confessionibus maleficorum et sagarum* (Treatise on Confessions of Sorcerers and Witches, 1589) quite literally in his hand, and had them searched for the Devil's mark and tortured.

The main preoccupations of the local population are neatly expressed by the three Italian Ss (*salute, soldi, sesso*/health, money, sex), but in this context, their concern for health and material goods predominated. Infanticides and “wasting” (*guasto*) of cattle or crops were the crimes most often reported, against only one case of impotence induced by bewitchment. Sub-Alpine peculiarities also included the fact that, though accusations and prosecutions were usually directed against women, men were also tortured and burned. There were recurrent charges of weather magic. In the Alps, rain and hail caused by witches already had a long tradition; moreover, these complaints fit with the climatic interpretations of witchcraft trials, whose peak age is congruent with the Little Ice Age, particularly strong between 1570 and 1630. Unfortunately, our information for drawing a sociological profile of witchcraft defendants remains inadequate. Healers seem rare here; in Non valley, only one female witch was surely a healer, although six men were soothsayers (*crivellatori*). In Poschiavò's great drama, no reputed healers could be found among the defendants. We also know that the numbers of married and widowed witches were approximately equal, and we have some data on their ages. But how meaningful are they, if most defendants had already been suspected for many years?

REST OF ITALY The present state of research gives us no option but to propose a pattern using the wide range of evidence available from the post-1560 Siense New State (Di Simplicio 2000), whose differences from Alpine areas were quite considerable. In southern Tuscany, we find no trace of large witch hunts. Trials, mostly of individual witches, were endemic but scattered between 1580 and 1660. The peak of the 1590s, also notable in other parts of Italy, probably overlapped with a more general European crisis. Excessive use of torture was avoided, and peripheral courts like Siena were scrupulously reminded by the Holy Office about its rules of proof. Siense *maleficium* cases concerned human beings, particularly infants, and showed no traces of diabolism. No weather-making witches were ever denounced, and bewitching cattle seems very rare

in this agrarian society. But “binding” to cause impotence was a specific type of spell that was frequently cast by women south of the Alpine valleys.

In bigger cities, like Venice, most spells were directed toward love or gain. Male experts, obsessed with money, specialized in conjurations and divination, useful in gambling and treasure hunting. Female experts, often prostitutes or other women of dubious reputation, practiced “binding” together with charms and incantations for love magic. Here the *maleficium* of infanticide was rarely reported, and of course there were no accusations of “wasting” cattle. A dearth of information prevents us from generalizing the Venetian urban pattern, but a similar profile of illicit magic could probably be found between 1580 and 1660 in every Italian town with more than 15,000 inhabitants.

And who were the witches? In the Sienese state, maleficent witchcraft was a gender-specific crime: *all* witches were women. Unfortunately, we cannot check this intriguing feature against long series of trials from other central and southern regions. Sienese documentation will enable us to sketch some social profiles. Not all these women were old, unmarried, widows, very poor, or marginal, and no specific occupations emerge, certainly not midwifery. Three kinds of witches can be distinguished according to the personal power attributed to them. First came the neighborhood’s “social witch,” who was frequently compelled to heal her victims on the basis of the principle that *qui scit destruere scit sanare* (*who knows how to destroy, knows how to heal*). Second came the expert in therapeutic magic or divination, whose healing expertise was much sought after; it was however a potentially risky activity, as we sometimes find a shift from the status of “good” healer to maleficent witch occurring in popular opinion. Last, indirect evidence reveals a group of highly qualified cunning men, who all managed to slip through the inquisitors’ nets and were never implicated in *maleficium* cases.

WITCHCRAFT AND POWER

At the pinnacle of Italian society and power, we find a few famous cases of *crimen laesae maiestatis* (crime of lese majesty) involving *maleficium*; in both Rome (1635) and Piedmont (1715), little wax figures were made to bewitch and cause the death of Pope Urban VIII and of a Savoyard prince. At the bottom as well, crucial power relations also permeated Italian witchcraft belief and witchcraft trials. Was recourse to inquisitors against rites of witches stronger than the “natural controls” to neutralize bewitchment? Were the cures offered by the Church stronger than unofficial, forbidden healing? Were cunning men stronger than exorcists?

Among many topics that badly need improved scrutiny by historians, exorcisms must be selected first. Their actual diffusion is difficult to reconstruct, because, unlike witchcraft trials, exorcisms rarely left

written traces: trials against them were extremely rare, and they seldom left records like Giulio Cesare Chiesa’s account of his activity in 1690s Piedmont. In early modern Germany, the Devil was equally active in towns and in the countryside. The German experience is relevant for Italy, where admittedly the phenomenon was rife but there seems to be no way to gauge its urban and rural intensity in the course of the seventeenth century and beyond. The impact of widely publicized urban and rural exorcisms on the general population is difficult to assess, and in the short run, one should probably view them as strong antidotes to modernization. A global assessment of their specific role in cases of *maleficium* is difficult. For example, did parents of sick and bewitched infants look first to an exorcist, or to a cunning man who could exert his skill even from afar? In the countryside, which was more easily available, the “official” specialist or the “forbidden” one? Certainly, a competition for power was inherent in the notion of exorcism: would the Devil prevail over the religious ritual? In the fight against illness and death, exorcisms represented a fourth option, alongside healers, physicians, and prayer to God and the saints (including some living saints, mostly in southern Italy). After the sixteenth century, white witches and cunning folk could no longer practice their magical healing with impunity, but the Inquisition’s attitude toward exorcism long remained ambiguous. It is significant that only in the eighteenth century were Girolamo Menghi’s famous treatises on exorcism finally included in the *Inex librorum Prohibitorum* (Index of prohibited books).

The Church’s dogged campaign against superstitions reveals that its hierarchy was playing for high stakes concerning knowledge and power. The close contact between religion and medical care accounted for its relentless concern about any kind of healing practice that affected both body and soul. Such antimagical healing concerns were epitomized in Giovanni Codronchi’s 1593 treatise *De Christiana ac tuta medendi salute* (Of Christian and Safe Remedies for Health), which stated that “for no reason may the sick ask cunning men for help to recover their health; they must suffer all pains and even die instead” (Di Simplicio 2000, 103). This disastrous strategy was strongly rejected by people, judging from the Sienese statistic that therapeutic magic still accounted for 9 percent of all inquisitorial offenses in the eighteenth century. Prayers, holy objects, and amulets remained the paraphernalia of both priests and magical healers. Of course, witchcraft beliefs continued well beyond the seventeenth century, but they disappeared as things actionable at law. Could this change be interpreted, as Sienese sources suggest, as evidence that *maleficium* was increasingly considered simply an unlikely case of misfortune?

Focusing on the problem of power has led our analysis to a core theoretical problem concerning the

meaning of witchcraft trials. What needs more investigation is the Italian dialectic between power and its subjects, between the Church and the faithful. Witchcraft trials cannot be separated from the intense religious climate of the post-Tridentine Church, and its political ideology accounts for their peculiar course. It was not coincidental that the peak phase of repression in the 1590s coincided with the most intense religious climate of the period. Labeling and punishment of deviants became a preoccupation of Church and regional states aiming at achieving conformity in behavior and belief. In Scotland, Italy, and elsewhere, witches were pursued primarily as “enemies of God.” The attempt to equate healers with maleficent witches was a constant concern of the Church, and the mild, drawn-out trials against the *Benandanti* of Friuli seem exemplary of this process of indoctrination.

To be fully victorious, such campaigns would have involved much more than a single agency of repression, even one as powerful as the Roman Inquisition. The uneven penetration of Tridentine teachings across Italy could partly explain why certain places had few witchcraft trials, or none at all. Many areas of southern Italy seem to be cases in point. How far did Counter-Reformation zeal permeate southern peasant villages? Everywhere in Italy, parish priests reading inquisitorial edicts against magical healers and witches acted as potential “triggers” to activate a mechanism of confession/denunciation/trial. But did the South, the land where “Christ Stopped at Eboli,” have a post-Tridentine clergy able or willing to stimulate their flock to report cases of superstition?

OSCAR DI SIMPLICIO

See also: *BENANDANTI*; BENEVENTO, WALNUT TREE OF; BERNARDINO OF SIENA; BORROMEO, ST. CARLO; CARPI, POSSESSION IN A POOR CLAIRE'S CONVENT; CHRONOLOGY OF WITCHCRAFT TRIALS; COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; COURTS, INQUISITORIAL; COURTS, SECULAR; CUNNING FOLK; DRAMA, ITALIAN; EXORCISM; GRILLANDO (GRILLANDUS), PAOLO (PAULUS); INQUISITION, ROMAN; INQUISITION, VENETIAN; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; LITTLE ICE AGE; LOVE MAGIC; MENGHI, GIROLAMO; MILAN; MODENA; MOUNTAINS AND THE ORIGINS OF WITCHCRAFT; NAPLES, KINGDOM OF; PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA, GIANFRANCESCO; PIEDMONT; ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH; RURAL WITCHCRAFT; SIENESE NEW STATE; SPINA, BARTOLOMEO DELLA; TODI, WITCH OF; TRIALS; TYROL, COUNTY OF; URBAN WITCHCRAFT; WEATHER MAGIC; WITCH HUNTS.

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J

JACQUIER, NICOLAS (CA. 1400–1472)

Jacquier was a Dominican theologian and inquisitor, known especially for the *Flagellum haereticorum fascinariorum* (Scourge of Heretical Witches, as called by Jacquier and others “Waldensians”) in 1458. Probably born in Dijon, he attended the Council of Basel (1430–1440), where he was instrumental in urging the deposition of Pope Eugenius IV, served as ambassador from Philip the Good of Burgundy to the emperor Frederick III in Vienna in 1451, and was the Dominican proctor in the canonization process of St. Catherine of Siena (1460–1461). He functioned as inquisitor in Artois (1459), Lille (1464), Tournai (1465), and Ghent, as inquisitor against the Hussites in Bohemia 1466–1468, and as inquisitor again in Lille from 1468 until his death in Ghent in 1472. His contemporary Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, later Pope Pius II, described Jacquier as a small man with an energetic mind and relentless determination, possessing unusual talents. He authored a number of sermons, a conciliar tract, and a report on his Vienna legation concerning proposals for a crusade against the Ottoman Turks. His most important works were a treatise on demonology, *De calcatione daemonum* (On the Tramping-Down of Demons) in 1452 and, of course, the *Flagellum haereticorum fascinariorum*. Jacquier’s work, based primarily on his experience as inquisitor of heretical depravity in the southern Low Countries, provides important testimony from a key period in the development of the theory of diabolical witchcraft in the early fifteenth century. Jacquier attacked skeptics whose criticisms impeded the work of inquisitors and made a powerful argument that the strictures of the *Canon Episcopi* (the key canon-law text treating witchcraft as a superstitious illusion) did not apply to the new sect of witches, identified by Pope Alexander V in 1409. Here Jacquier followed and developed the slightly earlier arguments of Jean Vinet (1450) and Johann Hartlieb (1456). The *Flagellum* survives in seven manuscripts; it was first printed at Frankfurt in 1581 as a supplement to an edition of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches), the most widely used guide for witch hunters. The *Flagellum* played a role both in the witchcraft trials at Arras in 1459–1461 and in the prolonged debates through the seventeenth century over the *Canon*

Episcopi and the issue of the reality of witches’ flight (transvection) to the Sabbat.

Jacquier’s “scourge” was, he said, both Scripture and the teachings of the saints. The *Flagellum* begins with a discussion of the nature of demonic illusions, particularly those sent in sleep, especially to women. He then cited the *Canon Episcopi* as an example of such illusions. But to Jacquier, as to others, the *Canon Episcopi* addressed only illusions, and ignored the material reality of the new sect of heretical and diabolical sorcerers and witches. It did not apply, therefore, to the witches and sorcerers of Jacquier’s day. Jacquier cited a case of 1453 in which Guillaume Adeline, a convicted sorcerer whom Jacquier knew personally, confessed to the material reality of the accusations made against the new sect of witches. In chapter 7, Jacquier distinguished categorically between the modern sect of witches and the deluded old women described in the *Canon Episcopi*. Jacquier observed that the physical fatigue of modern witches was evidence of the reality of their flight and rituals. He pointed out that modern witches do not mention Diana, the goddess referred to in the *Canon Episcopi*, but rather the Devil himself. Nor did the *Canon Episcopi* mention the apostasy and idolatry to which modern witches have confessed.

Further, Jacquier correctly doubted the authority of the Council of Ancyra, which supposedly produced the *Canon Episcopi*, discussed Scriptural evidence, and relied heavily on St. Augustine’s demonology. He also relied heavily on recent trials and the contents of the confessions of convicted witches, including Gilles de Rais. He directed his arguments against skeptics, especially those who cited the *Canon Episcopi* to argue against more recent theories of witchcraft. Throughout the work, Jacquier used evidence from recent confessions to emphasize the corporeal consequences of the pact with Satan: desecration of the host, infanticide, the ingestion of human semen, enchanted poisons, and the magical infliction of impotence and infertility.

All this, however greatly it displayed the power of demons, was done only with God’s permission, for which Jacquier accounted at great length in chapters 20–26. He then turned to the heretical nature of the witches’ activities, as described by Nicolas Eymeric and others, and to the legal procedures, including punishment, appropriate

for such offenses, which Jacquier insisted could only be death.

EDWARD PETERS

See also: ARRAS; AUGUSTINE, ST.; *CANON EPISCOPI*; DIANA (ARTEMIS); *ERRORES GAZARIORUM*; EUGENIUS IV, POPE; EYMERIC, NICOLAS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; HARTLIEB, JOHANN; HERESY; HUS-SITES; IDOLATRY; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; RAIS, GILLES DE; *VAUDOIS* (WALDENSIANS); VINET, JEAN (VINETI, JOHANNES).

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JAILERS

The primary role of the early modern jailer was to take care of criminal suspects from the moment of arrest to the day of punishment. As imprisonment was not a common feature of early modern justice, jailers tended not to guard convicted criminals. The jailer ensured that each suspect was fed and clothed as well as his or her resources would allow, and guarded against any escape attempts.

The profile of the early modern jailer depended on the judicial system that employed him and the size of the territory it served. Large bureaucratic institutions, like the duchy of Bavaria or the Spanish Inquisition, had networks of prisons and employed professional, full-time wardens. For example, a jailer known as the “Ironmaster” and his family ran the *Falkenturm* (“Falcon Tower”) in Munich, where Bavarian witch suspects were held from 1600. The Ironmaster was authorized to torture the suspects, but had no other professional obligations associated with his post. In contrast, a caretaker and his wife managed the town hall of the small prince-bishopric of Eichstätt, where local felons were incarcerated. They were inexperienced in caring for prisoners on a regular basis, being occupied mainly with the upkeep of a building normally used for council meetings. In England, a parish constable might sometimes have to guard felons until they could be transferred to jail, where a professional jailer supervised them until they were tried by an assize court.

As witch persecutions escalated in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, some places found it necessary to employ additional jailers to cope with the increasing number of prisoners, sometimes building new prisons such as the *Hexenhaus* (witch house) in Bamberg (built 1627). These jailers tended to be temporary and part time; the new jailers employed from

about 1617 in Eichstätt included a weaver and a tailor. The wives and children of professional jailers undertook much of the daily care of prisoners. They cooked and cleaned for the suspects, sometimes cared for the wounds inflicted on them during torture, and nursed them through the illnesses prevalent in early modern jails.

Despite the close proximity of jailers to their charges, we know relatively little about their dealings with and opinions about suspected witches. Some jailers, like the Ironmaster of Munich’s *Falkenturm*, reported on the prisoners’ words and actions when they were away from the interrogation chamber. Under investigation for abusing their positions, several jailers in Eichstätt confessed to abusing suspected witches physically and sexually, profiting from the fees paid to cover the provisioning of the prisoners, and smuggling in one suspect’s husband in an attempt to get her pregnant. Johannes Junius, a Bamberg witch suspect, famously persuaded a jailer to pass his farewell letter to his daughter Veronica; and the Ironmaster’s wife may have helped at least one Bavarian prisoner to commit suicide. Later, a Boston jailer and his wife testified to the good behavior of two of the New England witch suspects in their care.

Jailers did these things despite the potential dangers to which they exposed themselves: harm by imprisoned suspects, being accused of witchcraft themselves, and punishment by their superiors. The jailers in Eichstätt lost their jobs; Junius was concerned that his jailer might lose his head. Although such items as “witch-forks,” used by jailers to hold suspected witches at a distance, have survived, it appears that they were ambivalent about the threats to their persons and livelihoods. Sexual gratification, neighborliness, or respect seem to have motivated some jailers to act in favor of the witch suspects in their care. Their main motivation to take greater risks, however, appears to have been money. The Eichstätt jailers who conspired to get a witch suspect pregnant were certainly bribed, and it is likely that Junius’s jailer was also. This is hardly surprising, because the dishonor associated with their contact with criminals meant that jailers endured poor working conditions and received meager wages that were not always paid on time. In 1693, one Salem jailer petitioned for nine years’ back pay at £5 per year.

The abuses committed by jailers against their charges, together with the general conditions in which prisoners were held, figured among other criticisms of witchcraft trials made by Anton Prätorius and Friedrich Spee, among others.

JONATHAN DURRANT

See also: BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; EICHSTÄTT, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; EXECUTIONERS; INQUISITION, SPANISH; JUNIUS, JOHANNES; PRÄTORIUS, ANTON; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; TORTURE.

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JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND (1566–1625)

King James was a monarch widely associated with the intensification of witch hunting in the British Isles in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries whose influence has been exaggerated.

In Scotland, James VI inherited a kingdom where belief in witches was endemic, and trials were occasionally conducted under an existing witchcraft statute. As king, his attitude in such matters was bound to be influential. In the 1590s, James became personally involved in trials and developed an interest in demonology. He read widely on the theory of witchcraft, recording his opinions on the subject. In 1603, he became King James I of England as well, and oversaw the passing of a new statute that made witchcraft a more serious offense. By this time, however, his passion for burning witches had already cooled, and his reign in England was actually marked by declining levels of prosecution in both kingdoms. Like many jurists and clerics, King James became uneasy about standards of evidence used to convict witches, and his personal interventions during the two decades when he ruled England served more often to defend accused witches rather than accelerate their progress to the gallows.

James was born in 1566 to Mary, Queen of Scots. Her kingdom had passed a Witchcraft Act in 1563—the same year that Elizabeth I introduced a parallel measure in England. James became king as an infant when his mother was forced from the throne, but he did not assume power until 1585. He had grown into a bookish and insular young man who, under careful tutorship, rejected his mother's Roman Catholicism while also rejecting the Presbyterian notions of his teachers about a godly contract between monarch and people. Relations with England were uncertain, and, like other nascent Protestant states, feelings of insecurity in religion were strong. Domestically, feuds between Scottish noble clans were endemic, and the Calvinist Church, the Kirk, claimed God's direct mandate.

James thought that monarchs enjoyed a divine right to exercise supreme authority over churches, nobles, and people. He tamed a feuding nobility and curbed the religious autonomy of the Kirk through episcopacy—this obsession with political authority partly explains his interest in witchcraft. In a polity where the “great chain of being” connected God's authority downward through the social order to the meanest household, witches also represented political insubordination, even rebellion and treason. This was why along with every political treatise on which he could lay his hands, after 1590 James came to read the major works concerned with witchcraft, an interest entirely in keeping with the broader concerns of a Renaissance prince.


Witchcraft was just one of many criminal and moral offenses proscribed and punished in the interests of godly state building. It was, however, a peculiarly heinous crime because it symbolized the ultimate offense to God and man, and for this reason the Kirk clamored for more rigorous enforcement of the law in the 1570s and 1580s with a series of protests by its General Assembly to the royal court. We have no evidence that he met their demands; indeed, he may even have blocked them, given his general hostility to the Kirk. But a shift in his thinking occurred. Although it is misleading to characterize James as a dedicated witch hunter in the 1590s, the prosecution of witches in Scotland reached new heights then, especially in the lowlands and across the eastern seaboard, regions where the Kirk controlled the administration of justice. At least where witches were concerned, the interests of church and state did seem to converge.

For a generation after the passage of the 1563 Witchcraft Act, no more than a few cases came to trial each year, and demonic pacts never featured in the charges. In 1590 the pattern was broken when James became involved in a series of prosecutions in North Berwick, where at least seventy suspects confessed to a reasonable plot. In the previous year, with a view to strengthening the Protestant succession, James had agreed to marry Princess Anne of Denmark and he then brought her to Scotland. On the journey, her ship was nearly lost in fierce storms and was forced into harbor in Norway for several weeks until the weather improved. James traveled to collect her, and once more storms blew up. The royal passengers counted themselves lucky to be alive as they docked on the Scottish coast in the spring of 1590. News arrived from North Berwick that the accusation and torture of a healer, Geillie Duncan, had exposed a network of witches who, under orders from the Devil dressed in a black cloak, had conspired to kill the king and his bride by raising storms. Venom was extracted from a toad, it was said, and curses were directed at an image of the king. The accusations spread across East Lothian, Ross-shire, and

Aberdeenshire, and implicated a range of people from the most humble serving girl to James's cousin, the earl of Bothwell. Indeed, fearsome Bothwell, an extreme Protestant dissident, should be seen as the political target of these trials.

James insisted on questioning the North Berwick suspects himself, and yet his attitude seems ambivalent. He called them "extreme liars," but did not deny that their master was the Devil, and so authorized their torture to get at the truth. It was said that he was horrified that the witches appeared to know about private conversations between himself and his bride on their wedding night. Regardless of whether the suspects' actions were treasonable, their words certainly were, and so the old-style political trial involving charges of sorcery was rearranged to fit the style of a European witch craze. From this point, it was clear that the crime of witchcraft became less an exclusively ecclesiastical concern, and that James's academic appetite to understand it had been whetted. Triumphant in the public eye over Satan (and Bothwell, who fled to Norway), he became an avid reader of continental demonologists. In consequence, he devised counterarguments to skeptical Protestant voices, especially the German physician Johann Weyer and the English gentleman Reginald Scot, whose *Discoverie of Witchcraft* had been published in 1584. James's ideas were derivative rather than original; but they were sincerely held and proved deeply influential on the legal, religious, and political contexts in which witches were tried in Scotland in the closing years of the sixteenth century.

The level of prosecutions tailed off after 1591, but this marked a pause rather than a decline. The continuance of the war against the agents of Satan was ensured by the Privy Council's passing a general commission for examining witches in October 1591, which not only devolved specific powers across Scotland but emphasized the importance of torture for extracting confessions. In addition, as an issue of national security, and even as a diplomatic concern, James did not allow the matter of Bothwell and his alleged coven of witches to drop. James encouraged Elizabeth I to extradite witches seeking refuge beyond the border, reminding her that she too was at risk from their malevolent powers. In 1597, James published *Daemonologie* in Edinburgh, a short treatise that advanced many opinions, among them that all but the elect (to whom God's grace had been restored) were tainted by original sin and therefore prone to impiety. The greatest impiety was the worship of the Devil, and the belief in witchcraft followed naturally. James also asserted that, in an inversion of the covenant Protestants formed with God, witches sealed a pact with Satan; female witches outnumbered males twenty to one; and clients of cunning folk were as guilty as the magical practitioners. More broadly, the work united his ideas about kingship with the threat posed



DAEMONOLOGIE, IN FORME
of a Dialogue,
Divided into three Bookes.



EDINBURGH

Printed by Robert Walde-graue
Printer to the Kings Majestic. AN. 1597.
Cum Privilegio Regio.

Title page of Daemonologie, 1597, by James VI of Scotland, the only monarch to have ever written a witchcraft treatise. (Fortean Picture Library)

by witchcraft, and therefore should be seen alongside other works that he wrote around the same time, principally his defense of divine right, *Basilikon Doron* (1598).

The symmetry between the idea that kings were orderly images of God and the idea that witches were disorderly images of Satan had a powerful ideological resonance. *Daemonologie* may not have caused the fresh wave of witch hunts that Scotland experienced in 1597, but, alongside the Bible, it served as the textual justification and guide to their orchestration. Earlier in the year, fresh antagonism emerged between crown and Kirk over the treatment of witches, the former concerned that the innocent were being punished, the latter that the guilty were walking free. By summer, however, a craze began that sucked in between 200 and 300 suspects, all spreading from the confession and accusations of a single woman known as "the great witch of Balweary." Although once again James

became personally involved in the examinations (at St. Andrews, for example), overall, it is possible that second thoughts about the bloodletting explain why James decided to revoke the general commission. By year's end, the prosecution of witches had been brought back under central authority. From this time on, James decreed, anyone trying witches without special license from the crown would be punished. As a result, witchcraft cases became scarce in Scotland between 1597 and 1621, when their numbers crept slowly upward until James's death, without reaching the peaks of the 1590s.

James was crowned king of England in 1603. Unlike his Catholic mother, James was a devout and reliable Protestant in whose hands, it was felt, England would be safe. In 1586, an agreement had been made with the English queen, Elizabeth I (who would permit the execution of James's mother soon afterward) acknowledging his right to succeed if Elizabeth died without an heir. In 1603, the English queen died and James lost little time in traveling south to join his two kingdoms, financially and spiritually. Despite meeting stiff opposition from a suspicious Parliament, interest in England's new king was considerable. Anglicized versions of *Basilikon Doron* and *Daemonologie*, published in London in 1603, were widely read. Tradition also has it that James ordered that copies of Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* be publicly burned, although there is no direct evidence that this happened. But the really symbolic change seemed to be with the statutory provisions against witchcraft, dissatisfaction with which was shared by elements in England and Scotland.

In the following year, 1604, the English Parliament passed a new Witchcraft Act, the bill having been examined by a panel of prominent judges, bishops, and other peers. Essentially it was based on the Elizabethan statute, but imposed more draconian terms in keeping with Scots' law and the king's expressed opinions: a first offense of causing harm with witchcraft, which formerly carried a sentence of a year's imprisonment and exposure in the pillory, was now deemed to deserve death; and second offenses of all types of witchcraft were similarly punished. Likewise, invoking evil spirits, with or without maleficent intent, became a capital crime, a change that reflected continental influence and shifted the technical status of witchcraft as an offense away from an antisocial felony and toward heresy. In 1607, perhaps inspired partly by the devilish designs of the gunpowder plotters two years earlier, the Witchcraft Act was extended to allow its use in cases of treason. Contrary to historical myth, however, these statutory changes seem less significant when one examines the old 1563 provisions, nor was James primarily responsible. Legislative impetus came from interested parties active in Parliament around the turn of the century, some of

them gentry affected by the infamous witches of Warboys in Huntingdonshire in 1593.

By the time the new Act was passed, the king's commitment to prosecuting witches had subsided. Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, written and performed for the royal court in around 1605, may well have entertained the king, but perhaps less for its relationship with the reality of witchcraft than the idea it advanced that the Devil's influence over witches was not to empower them but to delude them into thinking they were powerful. This delusion, James argued, was no less of a sin, because it stemmed from moral weakness and deviation from God, and was therefore deserving of punishment. Therefore James could appear to be increasingly skeptical while at the same time still send a reputed witch and healer from Huntingdonshire to be interrogated by the Lord Chief Justice for making prophecies. This he did in 1605. Like many other skeptics, he became persuaded that although witchcraft could theoretically exist as a logical extension of the Devil's existence, it seemed improbable that the poor wretches routinely paraded before the courts could really be his acolytes. James's reputation as a witch hunter may well have been deserved north of the border, especially before he acquired the English crown, but in England his interventions were almost invariably forthright challenges to accusations.

Indeed, in his day James was known not so much as the scourge of witches than as a diligent and shrewd investigator and discoverer of imposture. In the early years of his reign, allegations of bewitchment and diabolic possession in Cambridge and Berkshire attracted his attention, as did a case involving six girls in Caernarvonshire in 1611. He spent the afternoon of January 20, 1605, on the Cambridge case, and instructed doctors from the university to examine women supposed to be bewitched. Regarding the incident in Berkshire, James became personally involved in questioning a girl, Anne Gunter, whose fits and accusations damned several women until she admitted that her father had put her up to it; because the Court of Star Chamber in London heard the case, it remains probably the best documented witchcraft case in English history. The king ordered investigations in other cases. Guilty verdicts admitted at the Leicester assizes in 1616, which once might have received James's support, now brought royal censure upon the judges. Nine people had been hanged, largely on the evidence of a thirteen-year-old boy, whom James ordered be brought to London where he was examined by the archbishop of Canterbury. After his exposure as a fraud, suspects still alive in jail awaiting trial on the boy's evidence were released. James did continue to act against those rebellious subjects suspected of using magic to influence him; in 1620, a schoolmaster called Peacock was tortured in the Tower of London on the king's orders for

just such an offense. Yet his predominant judicial influence from this time was to cause circumspection and restraint. This can be seen in the caution exercised at the trial of six women at York in 1622, when the judges were evidently determined that the mistakes at Leicester six years earlier would not be repeated.

James's succession to the English throne ushered in no new era of witch hunting. Overall, what is striking about his reign is the way that indictments for witchcraft as a whole declined. The influence of *Daemonologie* cannot be doubted; Scottish indictments and petitions continued to cite it throughout the seventeenth century, and it ran to many reprints and new editions, including French, Dutch, and Latin translations. In England, too, its impact can be detected. In the decade after its publication there, more witchcraft accusations acquired a continental flavor of witches communing with diabolical spirits, if not Satan himself. Use of the swimming test, of which James approved, was first recorded in 1612, the same year that the Devil made a personal appearance in the stories of the famous Lancashire witchcraft trials. If accusations sometimes became more wild and cruel, they also became rarer. The busiest period of English witchcraft prosecution had occurred between the 1570s and 1590s, the climax coinciding with the North Berwick craze in which James participated in Scotland. In southeastern England, there was now less than one-fourth of the indictments that had been presented in the 1570s, and during the 1620s a mere twenty cases came to light.

By the time James died in 1625, prosecutions in England were at their lowest level since the passing of the Elizabethan Act in 1563. Although Scotland had another surge between 1628 and 1630, the downward trend persisted during the reign of James's son, Charles I, and it took the peculiar social, political, and legal conditions of the civil war and Interregnum for suspected witches to be arraigned for trial in significant numbers. Close examination of James's reign in relation to witchcraft reveals him to have been, for the most part, a remarkably fair-minded, discriminating, even rather progressive monarch, despite his peevishness, overbearing manners, and conceited posturing regarding the elevated status of kingship. Yet the legacy of the North Berwick interrogations, the endurance of *Daemonologie* as a canonical work, and the increased severity of the 1604 statute, together ensured that he would be remembered as a bigoted and bloodthirsty witch hunter.

MALCOLM J. GASKILL

See also: BEWITCHMENT; DEMONOLOGY; ENGLAND; GUNTER, ANNE; LANCASHIRE WITCHES; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); NORTH BERWICK WITCHES; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; SCOT, REGINALD; SCOTLAND; SHAKESPEARE, WILLIAM; SWIMMING TEST; WARBOYS, WITCHES OF; WEYER, JOHANN; WITCH CRAZE.

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JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS)

The most successful early modern Catholic order, the Society of Jesus, was officially recognized by the pope in 1540, and, because the Jesuits' dynamic growth coincided with the peak phase of Europe's witchcraft trials, Jesuits were necessarily involved with them in various ways. However, no systematic modern study of the role of the Society of Jesus in the context of the European witch persecution has yet been undertaken.

The Society of Jesuits grew rapidly; by the time its cofounder, Ignatius Loyola, died in 1556, it had around 1,000 members in Europe (in Portugal, Spain, the Holy Roman Empire, Italy, and France) and overseas (in Brazil, Japan, India, Central America, and soon in China). The Society regarded its main task as missionary work among non-Christians. Its other principal

areas of activity were teaching in schools and universities, training priests, and catechizing the post-Tridentine laity. By 1650, there were about 15,000 Jesuits (at the time of its temporary dissolution in 1773, the Society boasted around 23,000 members).

Jesuits were especially active in serving the Counter-Reformation in the Holy Roman Empire and the Spanish Netherlands; in both places, Jesuits were also extensively associated with the phenomenon of witch persecution. Although the Society never presented a unified opinion on the issue of witchcraft, Jesuits decisively influenced European debates about witchcraft through the publications of such Jesuits as Martín Del Rio and Adam Contzen, who favored persecution, or Adam Tanner, Paul Laymann, and Friedrich Spee, who criticized it. Generally speaking, most Jesuit authors appear to have preached and written in favor of persecution during the sixteenth century. After 1602, however, Jesuits increasingly adopted a skeptical—and sometimes downright critical—stance against witch hunting. In particular, their role as confessors of accused witches brought many Jesuits to oppose witch hunts by forcing them to confront the many horrors of the trials firsthand.

In addition to their role as the confessors of alleged witches, Jesuits also figured prominently after 1600 in exorcising allegedly possessed people, an activity that could trigger witchcraft trials. Already prime targets of hostility and suspicion from their Protestant enemies, Jesuit critics of witchcraft trials were also openly slandered as alleged “sorcerers” by those favoring the persecution of witches. Another form of Jesuit involvement in witchcraft trials derived from their role as teachers; in the late 1620s, several pupils at Jesuit schools in the prince-bishoprics of Franconia fell under suspicion of witchcraft and some were executed.

In addition to texts written by Jesuits for and against the hunting of witches, the *litterae annuae*—annual reports that each Jesuit theological college had to send to its provincial superior—offer our most important source for research on Jesuit involvement in early modern witch persecution. Written for propaganda purposes, these reports intended to glorify the Catholic Church by reporting the successful results of missionary work and of hostilities overcome by the Jesuits. Competing with Protestants, with older Catholic orders, and with other Jesuit colleges, the writers of these reports strove to emphasize the splendid achievements of their own establishments. As triumphs over the Devil’s machinations constituted a major form of Christian achievement, the Devil became an important topic of discussion in the *litterae annuae*. As the Jesuit order’s leadership noted at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century, the authors of the reports willingly bent the truth or disregarded the secrecy of the confessional when writing their *litterae*

annuae. The leadership constantly reminded individual authors to refrain from boastfulness, exaggeration, or distorting the truth in their accounts. Collected by the provincial leadership of the Order, these reports were then censored, reworked, and shortened before being published. Although the information contained in the *litterae annuae* must therefore be examined critically, they remained important channels of communication linking the various provinces of the Jesuit Order, through which ideas about possession, exorcism, fear of the Devil, witchcraft and witchcraft trials were spread. Once printed, they were also accessible to readers outside the Jesuit Order.

JESUIT OPPOSITION TO POPULAR MAGIC, BEWITCHMENT, AND DEMONS

Champions of the Counter-Reformation, the Jesuits fought on a broad front against every sort of heresy and deviation from orthodox Catholic belief. In their opinion the Devil was responsible for spreading false religious ideas (that is, for Protestantism), as well as for improper religious practices and so-called “superstition.” The moral code propagated in Jesuit sermons, tracts, catechism commentaries, and missionary activities branded sexual sins, and religious deviation in particular, as mortal sins resulting from seduction by the Devil; their catalog of moral failings could be interpreted as evidence of witchcraft. When catechizing and teaching the lower social groups of Europe, Jesuits vigorously opposed soothsaying, the recitation of quasi-Christian blessings, magical forms of healing, and other types of popular magic for countering disease and coping with the exigencies of everyday life. In place of such practices, Jesuits advocated the efficacy of prayer, confession, and communion, as well as the use of objects (such as the Agnus Dei, or Lamb of God amulet) sanctioned by the Church as protection against demons and witches.

In this context, the *litterae annuae* often reported allegedly successful expulsions of demons from the bodies of possessed individuals. Children or adolescents who had been possessed or seduced by the Devil played a particularly prominent role in such accounts: they were taken into Jesuit-run institutions to be cared for and were sometimes exorcised there. A case from Vienna in 1583, in which Jesuits drove 12,652 demons from a possessed girl after weeks of exorcism, caused a sensation throughout the entire Order. This happened, however, only after the girl’s grandmother—who had allegedly handed her over to the Devil—had been burned at the stake as a witch. Similar cases also occurred in Ingolstadt in 1582 and in the rural environs of Trier between 1586 and 1596. The first German Jesuit, St. Peter Canisius, advocated exorcism in the mid-sixteenth century and later had a significant influence on the witchcraft trials

in the prince-bishopric of Augsburg. Exorcisms by Jesuits also brought suspicions of witchcraft in their wake elsewhere in Europe.

Although by the seventeenth century the Order's leaders generally advised that exorcisms be avoided altogether, six French Jesuits were involved as exorcists in the famous affair of Urban Grandier and the possessed nuns of Loudon in the 1630s. Even after accusations of witchcraft had largely disappeared from courts of law, Jesuits were occasionally active as exorcists, for example, offering their help against alleged bewitchment in Luxembourg ca. 1680.

JESUITS AS ADVOCATES OF WITCH PERSECUTION

Many examples showed that Jesuit priests—acting as confessors of secular and ecclesiastical princes, as professors at universities and theological faculties, or as preachers in urban churches—actively helped encourage the persecution of witches. Particularly in the Holy Roman Empire, some Jesuits pressed adamantly for the pursuit of witchcraft trials. For example, in the 1590s, Jesuit preachers called for persecution in Trier, stopping only after repeated and severe reprimands from the Order's leaders and participating in witchcraft trials afterward only as confessors.

The publication in 1599/1600 of Martín Del Río's *Disquisitionum magicarum libri sex* (Six Books on Investigations into Magic) constituted the high point of Jesuit arguments in favor of witch persecution. It quickly became the standard work of Catholic demonology and was reprinted in twenty subsequent editions. In Munich and Ingolstadt, two Jesuits, Gregory of Valencia and Peter Stewart, significantly influenced important statements of Catholic demonology that defined any criticism of witchcraft beliefs (particularly by Protestants) as heresy. In Bavaria, Jesuits such as Jacob Gretser, Adam Contzen, and Georg Stengel advocated severe witch persecution along the lines suggested by Del Río. During the Bavarian debates about witchcraft in the 1620s, Contzen led the Jesuit faction advocating a hard-line position on the question of witch persecution.

Jesuits were also often involved in witchcraft trials as confessors to accused witches. A Jesuit cathedral preacher, Lukas Ellenz, accompanied more than 200 alleged witches from the rural environs of Trier to the stake, while Father Petrus Kircher acted as confessor to 400 individuals condemned as witches during the mass trials in Bamberg. But the question of how individual Jesuits conducted themselves as confessors must remain open, because Friedrich Spee was probably also involved in this role in witchcraft trials. In some cases, Jesuits collaborated completely with the secular courts trying accused witches, demoralizing suspects with images of eternal damnation, and thus helping

persuade them to make the necessary confessions of witchcraft. On the other hand, the confessional also gave Jesuits an opportunity to lessen the spiritual anguish of suspects forced through torture to make unfounded judicial confessions—that is, to commit perjury—and thus to commit a mortal sin. In his commentary on the catechism for Luxembourg in 1623, the Jesuit Nicolaus Cusanus recommended that confessors not tell the secular authorities when an alleged witch retracted a confession, in order to prevent the renewed torture that usually followed such retractions.

JESUIT OPPOSITION TO WITCH PERSECUTION

Until 1600, the dominant voices within the Society of Jesus (in Germany, if not in Rome) lent unqualified support to the persecution of witches. After 1602, however, outright criticisms of witchcraft trials began to emerge in the Holy Roman Empire in the writings of Adam Tanner and Paul Laymann. After 1602, it was generally recognized that Jesuits were more likely to oppose than to support the persecution of witches. As a result, officials in electoral Cologne demanded that Jesuits no longer be permitted to act as confessors to accused witches there. The Witch Commissioner (*Hexenkommissar*) Heinrich von Schultheiss even wanted to arrest the Jesuit Adam Tanner for witchcraft because of Tanner's criticisms of witch-hunting methods.

After 1620, Nicolaus Cusanus, who had experienced witchcraft trials firsthand in several places (Trier, the Eifel region, Luxembourg, and Lorraine), also expressed serious doubts about the correctness of witchcraft trial procedures. Both Tanner and Cusanus emphasized the false denunciations of accomplices forced from alleged witches in custody, and judged torture unreliable for establishing truth in witchcraft cases. Like other Jesuit opponents of witchcraft trials (or Mediterranean inquisitors), they placed great emphasis on the repentance of alleged witches, and on the general importance of Christian education and discipline for everyone. Meanwhile, Jesuits in such areas as Paderborn and Bamberg also tried to exert a moderating influence on witchcraft trials. Father Kaspar Hell publicly criticized the severe hunts at Eichstätt in 1629, although other local Jesuits eagerly participated in them. At the Jesuit College in Rome, Father Johannes Spies devoted himself to caring for two suspected witches who had fled Bamberg, advocating less severe torture and less reliance on denunciations as evidence in witchcraft trials. Father Spies had previous firsthand experience of witchcraft trials, acting as a confessor to alleged witches tried in Luxembourg and the Spanish Netherlands. However, no Jesuit denied that witches existed; not even the most brilliant Jesuit criticism of witchcraft trials, Friedrich Spee's *Cautio Criminalis* (A Warning on Criminal Justice, 1631), dared go this far.

PUPILS OF JESUIT SCHOOLS ACCUSED OF WITCHCRAFT

At several places (Trier, Würzburg, Eichstätt, and Hildesheim), suspicions of witchcraft were raised against boys attending schools run by Jesuits, often after the Jesuits had taken so-called “witch-boys” (usually self-confessed boy witches) into their schools to question, exorcise, and instruct them. In Würzburg, a few pupils at Jesuit schools were even executed for witchcraft in the late 1620s. Suspicions of witchcraft and examinations of boys as alleged witches at Jesuit schools reached a point where the Order’s leadership issued a special instruction in the midseventeenth century to prevent further escalation of the problem.

RITA VOLTMER;

TRANSLATED BY ALISON ROWLAND

See also: BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; BAVARIAN WAR OF THE WITCHES; CANISIUS, ST. PETER; CONFESSORS; CONTZEN, ADAM, SJ; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DUHR, BERNHARD, SJ; EXORCISM; GREGORY OF VALENCIA; GRETZER, JACOB, SJ; LAYMANN, PAUL; LOUDUN NUNS; PADERBORN, BISHOPRIC OF; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; SCHULTHEISS, HEINRICH VON; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; SUPERSTITION; TANNER, ADAM; WÜRZBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF.

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JESUS

There are two main components in the life of Jesus as told by the Gospels that link him to the domains of magic and sorcery. One concerns the interpretation of his miracles, the other lies in the field of astrology.

In the New Testament, Jesus accomplishes miracles, most of which consist of healing, for example, in Mark (1:30–34), where we find a brief report about a sick woman, the mother-in-law of Simon Peter, who regains her health after the intervention of Jesus: “30: Now Simon’s mother-in-law lay sick with a fever, and immediately they told him of her. 31: And he came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her; and she served them.” The same episode is told by Matthew (8:14–17) and Luke (4:38–44). But Mark’s account is particularly interesting, for he adds: “32: That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. 33: And the whole city was gathered together about the door. 34: And he healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.” It is a paragraph where the power of Jesus as an exorcist is clearly stated, although the demons’ knowledge about his true nature and mission establishes some kind of connection between him and them.

Moreover, here Mark shows the link between disease and demonic possession with lucidity. Hebrew culture, though struggling constantly against the idolatry of the populations that interacted with it and sometimes tarnished its monotheism, knew forms of practical magic for both healing and exorcising. The most influential (as well as confrontational) tradition was the Babylonian, as shown in Daniel 1–2, where the young prophet, who has been given special gifts by God, defeats “the magicians, the enchanters, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans” (2, 2) by interpreting Nebucadrezzar’s dream correctly. Among the Jews, many forms of sickness and insanity were considered as provoked by demonic possession; healing and exorcising were thus very close.

Other episodes in the life of Jesus seem to prove the



The Devil tempts Jesus (late fifteenth-century painting). (The British Library/Topham-HIP/The Image Works)

centrality of his healing miracles as forms of exorcism. The most significant is told, slightly differently, in three of the four Gospels: Matthew (12:22–30), Mark (3:22–27), and Luke (11:14–20). Jesus is casting a demon out of a blind and dumb man: the miracle allows the man to see and hear again. But part of the surrounding crowd is doubtful and accuses him of operating with the help of Beelzebul (Beelzebub), commanding the demons by the power of their lord. Jesus answers this accusation by arguing that it makes no sense for Satan to defeat himself; but it is of the utmost importance to note what Luke adds as a conclusion to Jesus's words: "19: And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. 20: But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you." The mention of the *ezbah Elohim* (the finger of God) is a clear reminder of Exodus (6:6), where God speaks to Moses, announcing the coming days of freedom for Israel and the end of their slavery under the Egyptians: a promise that will be accomplished, according to the Hebrew Bible, through many prodigies. Luke's words are even more effective, considering that he is writing for a Hellenistic audience unfamiliar with Jewish tradition, but was probably inclined to pay attention to miracles, which were common in their tradition and caused many Greeks to connect Jesus with the prodigious

healer Apollonius of Tyana.

Though the Christian exegetical tradition has struggled to elevate Jesus's prodigies beyond the domain of "magic," usually by referring to them as *signa* (signs) rather than *miracula* (miracles), it seems a hard task to separate the two completely. It is significant that the very earliest Christian traditions, as shown in *Acts* and in many of the Apocryphal Gospels, hugely expanded the sphere of miracles, which became one of the main components in their narrative texture and influenced heavily the centuries to come. Some of the arguments alleged in order to separate Jesus's prodigies from the field of "magic" involve the fact that his actions—unlike the "pagan" tradition—do not involve rituals and are not associated with sanctuaries or cult places. But the Gospels are complex and seem to allow miracles of many kinds. It is hard not to see "operational" magic in Jesus's healing of the man blind since birth (John 9:6–7), when he mixes saliva with mud and puts it on the man's eyes: "6: As he said this, he spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and anointed the man's eyes with the clay, 7: saying to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam.' So he went and washed and came back seeing" (John 9:6–7). The mention of the pool of Siloam is also significant: it was situated outside the present walls of Jerusalem, and was supplied with water by the river Gihon, where Solomon had been declared king by the priest Zadok and the prophet Nathan (1 Kings 1:33–34) and where King Hezekiah had built a canal to bring water to the city (2 Kings 20:20). Back then it was clearly an important place for Jewish religious tradition. Although the probable meaning of the name "Siloam" (the "messenger" or, better, "the one who has been sent," from the verb *salah*, "to send") makes us believe that Jesus chose it as a symbolic reminder of the significance of his presence in the world, it must have been difficult for pagans (or the newly converted) not to perceive it as a sacred, "powerful" place. The same thing would happen at the river Jordan, where Jesus had been baptized, and where for centuries to come innumerable Christian pilgrims would go to bathe, hoping to preserve their bodies from any sickness.

Others among Jesus's prodigies also evoke scenes from the Hebrew Bible. The miracle at the marriage at Cana in Galilee (John 2:1–11), or the one at the Sea of Tiberias that provides the crowd of his followers with bread (Matthew 14:13–21 and 15:29–39; Mark 6:31–44 and 8:1–10; Luke 9:10–17; John 6:1–15), recall other, more ancient episodes when God sent provisions and water to his people in need through the intercession of several prophets, for example, Moses (Exodus 16:14–35), Elijah (1 Kings 17:1–16), or Elisha (2 Kings 4:1–7; 7:42–44). In latter days, this kind of prodigy became commonplace in Christian literature and can be put in the domain of white magic: for

instance, in some novels the Holy Grail had the power to make food miraculously appear at table.

Unlike these prodigies, others lie in more controversial fields. The control that Jesus exercises on nature, shown when walking on the water (Matthew 14:22–36; Mark 6:45–56; John 6:16–21) or calming a storm (Matthew 8:18, 23–27; Luke 8:22–25; Mark 4:35–41), could be easily perceived as weather magic, with its many implications. But the most astonishing accounts are those related to the miracles of the resurrection of dead people: Jairus's daughter (Matthew 9:18–26; Mark 5:21–43; Luke 8:40–56); the young son of a widow at the Gates of Nain (Luke 7:11–17, quoting 1 Kings 17:17–24 and 2 Kings 4:23–37); and Lazarus (John 11:1–46). While the first two episodes are short stories where Jesus operates shortly after the death of children, Lazarus's resurrection scarily transgresses the boundary between the realm of the living and that of the dead: Lazarus has been lying in his sepulchre for four days: "39: Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, 'Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days.' (. . .) 43: When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out.' 44: The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with bandages, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.'" Even if late antiquity and medieval traditions offer many miracles of resurrection operated by saints, the realism of the scene depicted in the Gospel of John, the body coming out of his grave as a walking corpse and brought back to life by Jesus's words, resemble—if only in a barely formal way—an act of necromancy.

From the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus comes the account of the Descent of Christ into the Limbo of the Fathers. This legend was already thought to be hinted at by the Acts of the Apostles (2:25–32), but it had a further development in this apocryphal Gospel and then in medieval iconography. The legend says that, while his body was in the tomb, Jesus's spirit went to Limbo where dwelled the souls of the Just of the Ancient Law—from Adam to Dismas, the Good Thief, and including, among many others, Abel, Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, and John the Baptist—who were waiting to be released. Jesus kicked down the gates of hell and brought them out. Then his soul rejoined his body in the sepulchre, to await the day of resurrection.

Other tales from the apocryphal Infancy Gospels deal with an entirely different pattern of miraculous acts: the Book of James, the Gospel of Thomas the Israelite, and the later, but soon-to-be famous Gospel of the Pseudo-Matthew, fill up the lack of knowledge about Jesus's early years with many miracles and magic tricks, many of which entered the western medieval tradition. The same apocryphal Gospels that had a part in establishing Jesus's fame as a performer of miracles and

magic underlines clearly how the incarnation won over all forms of paganism and idolatry when, during the flight to Egypt, the very presence of the infant Jesus brings down and destroys all pagan idols.

Another controversial side of the life of Jesus concerns the domain of astrology and prophecy. A medieval legend relates that the Tiburtine Sibyl—a priestess of Apollo with the gift of prophecy—had announced to the Roman Emperor Octavius Augustus that a mightier emperor than he was about to be born; this tale was included in the *Golden Legend* (VI, 2.1.3) and in other collections of Christian miracles, and was also made famous by many iconographical representations. Like the Sibyl to Augustus, some *magoi* announced the birth of Jesus to Herod. Matthew (2:1–12) tells how a star announced the birth of Jesus. In this way, prophecies in the Hebrew Bible about the coming of the Messiah (Isaiah 60:6; Psalms 72:10; Numbers 24:17) seemed to have been confirmed first by pagan priests skilled in astrology. Matthew's account gives no further explanations about them: were they meant to be Persian astrologers, perhaps Mazdeans? Or less impressive magicians like Simon Magus or Bar-Jesus, whom we meet in Acts (8:9–11 and 13:6–8)? Regardless, Christians have commonly read their homage to the newborn Jesus as a sign of submission of other religions. But the ambiguity about their status was not easy to forget; between the fifth and sixth centuries, the *magoi* began to be identified with eastern kings. This new condition—together with the development of legends that tended to define their number, their names, their ages—aimed to obliterate gradually that of *magoi*, dangerously linked to forbidden practices of astrology.

The stars remained in Christian symbolic tradition as an announcement of Jesus's coming, while the sun represented Jesus himself. A depiction of Jesus as *Helios* (the Sun), an image linked to the prophecy of Malachi (4:2) about the coming of a messiah defined as *Sol iustitiae* (the sun of justice), became common in Roman and Gothic miniatures during the Middle Ages. This association was reinforced since the third and fourth centuries by celebrating Jesus's alleged birthday on the Latin feast for the *Sol invictus* (invincible sun).

The tie between Jesus and the stars took another turn after the twelfth century, when the diffusion of astrological lore in western Europe brought many astrologers to question the prohibition against determining Jesus's horoscope: if Jesus was not just the son of God, but also a human being, he should also have been subject like other humans to the laws of nature. The Italian poet and astrologer Cecco d'Ascoli was tried and condemned to death in 1327 for his attempt to push his research this far (Pompeo Faracovi 2000).

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See also: ASTROLOGY; BIBLE; EXORCISM; JEWS, WITCHCRAFT, AND

MAGIC; MAGIC, POPULAR; MIRACLES; MOSES; NECROMANCY; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; PRODIGIES; SIMON MAGUS; WEATHER MAGIC.

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JEW, WITCHCRAFT, AND MAGIC

Jews have always had a complex relation to magic. The Hebrew Bible condemns both witchcraft and magic. Yet in asserting that precise ritual behavior sustains the world, the Bible and later classical Jewish texts express what might easily be construed as magical worldviews. Moreover, Jewish authorities frequently ruled leniently when called upon to assess the legality of a wide range of quasi-magical practices. Many of the most revered figures in Jewish history were established wonder workers and magical savants. Even those who were not often became so in Jewish hagiography, indicating the esteem given to magical prowess by Jewish society. The frequent association between Jews and magic in non-Jewish literature thus was not pure invention; if there was a “legend of Jewish sorcery” there was also “truth behind the legend” (Trachtenberg 1939). However, the magic imputed to the Jews was often viewed as pernicious, its purpose being to harm Christians (Ginzburg 1991).

The Bible rejects magic and witchcraft unequivocally, as evinced by the terse dictate of Exodus 22:17/18: “You shall not suffer a witch to live.” The prescriptive core of the antimagical legislation of the Hebrew Bible, however, is Deuteronomy 18:9–14. It contains a litany of religious practices condemned as the “abominations of those nations” that live in the soon-to-be-conquered land of Canaan. The Israelites may not practice child sacrifice, nor may they tolerate among them soothsayers, enchanters, witches, charmers, mediums, wizards, or necromancers. Such practices, most of them forms of

divination, represent the biblical view of local pre-Israelite religion, and are forbidden as abhorrent. The ancient rabbinic metonym for forbidden magical practices and beliefs would, in a similar spirit, become “the ways of the Amorites” (*darkei ha-emori*) (Veltri 1998–1999; most of the rabbinic material is in *Tosefta Shabbat* [6–7], a collection of rabbinic teachings redacted in the third century).

Yet not all divination contravened cultic statutes. Licit methods of divination are prescribed in verses 15–22 of Deuteronomy 18, immediately after the prohibitions of verses 9–14. A good example of a biblically approved divinatory device is the “Breastplate of Judgment” or “*Urim* and *Thummim*” worn by the high priest. It was only after the divinatory channels provided by the Jewish cult, including this breastplate, failed, that King Saul made his famous forbidden visit to the necromancer (I Samuel 28). On a routine basis, every Jew received biblical assurance that proper enactment of the Torah would assure the flow of sustenance, expressed primarily as rain (Deut. 11:13). The assumption that by fulfilling the Torah the Jewish people could—among other things—reveal God’s will, gain access to the divine realm, effect the remission of their sins, and secure rainfall, indicates some basic structural characteristics of Jewish religiosity. It is “performative” and predicated on the belief that if one carries out certain actions properly, the desired results will surely follow. It has been suggested (Idel 1997) that the ease with which Judaism assimilated foreign magical traditions throughout its history may be ascribed to this basic structural parallel.

If the normative observance by all Jews had magical efficacy, revered Talmudic sages were also described as engaging in magical activity alongside their legal, exegetical, and homiletical pursuits. R. Hanina and R. Oshaya, Palestinian rabbis of the third century, are portrayed admiringly as having employed the “Laws of Creation” to create mouth-watering calves on Friday afternoon just in time for Sabbath dinner. Rava, a fourth-century Babylonian sage, reportedly created a *golem*-style anthropoid, but his colleague R. Zera returned it to dust upon realizing that it could not speak, and was thus surely “a creature of the magicians” (Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin* 65b, 67b; on *golem*-making in Judaism, see Idel 1990). Honi ha-Me’aggel (“drawer of circles”) was a famous rainmaker, though his powerful magic was attributed to his close relationship with the Almighty. While the rabbinic leader of first-century B.C.E. Jewry in the Land of Israel, Shimon ben Shetah, objected in principle to Honi’s standing in his magic circle demanding rain, his hands were tied. “What can I do,” the Talmud relates Shimon saying in exasperation to Honi, “seeing that you ingratiate yourself with the Omnipresent and He performs your desires! And you are like a son who

ingratiates himself with a father who performs his desires” (Babylonian Talmud, *Berachot* 19a). Elsewhere in the Talmud, however, this same Shimon ben Shetah is reported—perhaps apocryphally—to have ordered eighty witches hanged on a single day (Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin* 45b).

These Talmudic discussions largely defined the parameters of magical activity in subsequent rabbinic discourse. Just as the precise definition of the labors prohibited on the Sabbath clarified those labors permissible on the Sabbath, the rabbinic insistence that biblical terms be precisely defined made it possible to distinguish prohibited from permissible magical activities. Thus rather than a blanket condemnation of any activity that might be considered magical, Deuteronomy 18 came to be seen as a list of specific techniques (and contexts) that were to be avoided amid a wide range of other permissible techniques—including the magical creation of calves and anthropoids. According to rabbinic sources, even forbidden magical techniques could be studied and practiced by rabbis if their goal was to understand the practices academically and acquaint themselves with material they might encounter in a judicial context.

Although the parameters of acceptable magical activity were subject to rabbinic debate over the centuries, “word-magic” was widely considered permissible. Medieval rabbis accepted all forms of name-based incantations to angels; many regarded those to demons as no less acceptable. R. Eliezer of Metz (12th c.) ruled that “invoking the demons to do one’s will is permitted from the outset, for what difference is there between invoking demons or angels?” On the other hand, R. Eliezer ruled that manipulating objects or other ritual performances constituted forbidden magic, for “an action may not be characterized as ‘magic’ unless it consists of taking hold of a thing and manipulating it, that is, if it is the performance of a deed . . . but invoking demons is permitted *ab initio*” (Trachtenberg 1939, 20). The condemnation of ritual magic—the inverted reflection of Jewish religious behavior—may well reflect the classical Jewish construction of forbidden magic as a form of *‘avodah zarah* (lit., alien worship; idolatry).

If Jewish legal sources enable us to frame a description of licit Jewish magic, it would be naive to think that Jewish authorities kept scrupulously within these imposed limits. It was common for Jewish magical treatises to prescribe ritual performances, manipulations of objects, concoctions of foul substances, and whatever else magical tradition suggested might be efficacious. Jews availed themselves of much in the gentile magician’s arsenal of formulas, from blood, saliva, feces, and hair, to herbs, gemstones, and salt; they deployed them much like their non-Jewish neighbors did. Such behavior could be sanctioned by rabbis, who often stressed their secondary relationship to the word-magic, con-

strued as the primary dimension of such ceremonies. The only consistently forbidden forms of magic were silent, voodoo-like rituals.

Language, particularly the use of names, thus formed the quintessential core of Jewish magic. Adjurations, incantations, amulets, and magical bowls from antiquity to the present attest to this. This forte of Jewish magic was recognized in antiquity, with non-Jews like Origen commenting on the special strength of Jewish invocations. “Their names are so powerful when linked with the name of God,” he wrote, “that the formula ‘the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’ is used not only by members of the Jewish nation in their prayers to God and when they exorcise demons, but also by almost all those who deal in magic and spells” (Origen 1965, 209).

Origen’s comments are especially perceptive in noting that Jews used identical liturgical formulas in “normative” and magical settings. In addition to the liturgical formulas found in synagogue prayers and exorcism ceremonies, such items as sacred scrolls in everyday use, for example, *mezzuzot* (doorpost scrolls, *pl.*) *tefillin* (phylacteries, or head and arm scrolls), and Torah scrolls (the Pentateuch), had prominent magical dimensions (Bar-Ilan 1985). All had to be written by scribes who followed strict standards of purity, taking a ritual bath regularly, often before each inscription of a divine name. Moreover, every aspect of the written text was carefully regulated, from the ingredients in the ink and the animal skin on which the sacred texts were to be written, to the formatting and design of the text, down to the very shape of the letters. If a single calligraphic crown of a letter was missing, the scroll became unfit for use. The magical significance of the visual dimension of the written text in Judaism should thus not be overlooked (Wolfson 2001).

Mezzuzot were scrolls of Deuteronomy 6:4–9, fixed upon critical liminal spaces, the doorposts of Jewish houses. Additional magical formulas were added to the *mezuzah* (*sg.*) in the course of the Middle Ages to augment its apotropaic powers. A standard *mezuzah* still retains two such medieval vestiges on its reverse: the name *SHADDAI* (understood as the acrostic of *Shomer Delatot Israel*, “guardian of the doors of Israel”) and the ostensible gibberish *KOZU BEMOCHSAZ KOZU*. The latter was a transposition of the three core words of Deuteronomy 6:4 (“Hear Israel, *YHVH* (our) *God*, *YHVH* (is) one), with which the obverse side begins. By replacing each letter by the one following it in the Hebrew alphabet (one of many techniques of *temurah* or letter recombination that could be used hermeneutically or to produce new divine names), a formula was created that was both more mysterious and more powerful than the unmodified, familiar text. Medieval Jewish literature preserves cases of Gentile interest in acquiring these potent amulets that adorned every

Jewish home, alongside cases of vandalism that expressed the fear and loathing that accompanied the a we-inspiring image of the Jewish magus. While Jews could not remove the biblically mandated *mezuzah* to protect themselves from Gentile misunderstandings, customary practices could be curtailed if they encouraged suspicions of *maleficia* (evil acts). Thus, sixteenth-century Jewish legal authorities warned Jews not to search their homes by candlelight for leavened products the night before Passover, because of the danger of witchcraft accusations (*Shulhan Arukh, Orekh Hayyim* Passover §433, 7).

Because Jewish magic was grounded in complex textual traditions, it remained a largely masculine affair: learned rabbis were best able to engage in a magic of sacred names learned from arcane manuscripts of *Kabbalah Ma'asit* ("Practical Kabbalah"). Rabbis had the ideal background to decode a magical literature consisting largely of names permuted from classical Jewish sources by means of complex exegetical techniques. Licit Jewish magic, moreover, presumed the saintliness of the practitioner; indeed, magical prowess was an indicator of saintliness: "the righteous man decrees, and the Holy One, blessed be He, obeys." Although in contemporary Christian sources, usage determined whether magic was "white" or "black," Jewish discussions of magic rarely dwell on its intended uses. Assuming the practitioner to be a saintly rabbi who knew that *any* harmful action was forbidden, Jewish authors considered the illegality of *maleficia* as a moot point. Instead, their discussions focused almost exclusively on questions of technique, as we have noted (Trachtenberg 1939, 22).

Jewish magic, however, was not practiced exclusively by learned male elites. Sources from responsa to hagiography and autobiography preserve ample evidence of Jewish women's involvement in magical arts. Women were consulted as healers, diviners, dream interpreters, and mediums. While some were described as enjoying natural gifts of clairvoyance and preternatural senses, many women were clearly expert practitioners of mantic techniques and "folk" medicine. Their expertise was such that even leading rabbis turned to them for assistance in cases of illness, loss, or from sheer curiosity. Female mediums also enabled rabbis to communicate with the dead and delivered messages of the utmost urgency to communities in danger. Numerous examples exist, for example, in an early seventeenth-century autobiography (Chajes 2003, 97–118).

Alongside such benign views, medieval Jewish sources also preserve some threatening images of the female witch. German-Jewish *Hasidim* (pietists) shared the same pronounced fear of vampiristic witches as their contemporary Christian neighbors. The most heinous accusation leveled against these women was that they ate children, and, even in death, continued to

devour the living. *Sefer Hasidim*, the seminal work of the twelfth/thirteenth-century pietists, relates that at the moment of their vigilante-style executions (not by the *Hasidim* themselves!), such cannibalistic witches might be offered an opportunity for atonement in exchange for knowledge of techniques that would render them harmless after death. Driving a stake through their mouths clear through to the ground beneath was recommended by one "witch"; another suggested filling the mouths of her dead cohorts with gravel.

While not active participants in the early modern European witch hunts, contemporary Jewish writers occasionally commented on the events of their day. One leading figure, R. Menasseh ben Israel (1604–1657), who had been Spinoza's childhood teacher, endorsed the entire complex of learned witch beliefs, going so far as to justify the executions of witches. Menasseh was aware of the critique of the witch hunt voiced by such sixteenth-century Christians as Johann Weyer or Reginald Scot. Against their critiques of the witch hunt, however, Menasseh (like most Dutch Calvinist pastors of his day) emphasized the insurmountable significance of the demonic pact, a feature of witchcraft more significant than *maleficia* in nearly all Protestant demonology (Chajes 2003, 119–138).

It is also striking to note that after a millennium during which no Hebrew accounts of spirit possession were written (or at least have survived), such accounts proliferate from the mid-sixteenth century immediately prior to the very period that historians have referred to as "the golden age of the demoniac" (Monter 1976, 60). Jewish accounts have much in common with their Christian counterparts, with one significant difference: early modern Jewish authorities regarded ghosts (called *dybbukim* since the seventeenth century) as the most common unwelcome bodily invaders. As a result of this alternate etiology, Jewish exorcism became a treatment for both parties: exorcists were required to treat the possessor with nearly as much care as the possessed. This augmented responsibility was reflected in the modification of exorcism techniques prescribed by the foremost sixteenth-century Jewish mystic, R. Isaac Luria (1534–1572). Regarding the possessing spirit as a soul in limbo, R. Luria instructed exorcists to conduct the expulsion while incorporating techniques to smooth the soul's transition to Gehenna and, ultimately, to its next incarnation. Luria and his circle actively practiced grave-incubation techniques designed to promote their own possession by benign spirits. Possession by spirits, be they benevolent or malevolent, may thus be regarded as a prominent feature of early modern Jewish religiosity.

Jewish intellectuals in Renaissance Italy created a sizable body of magical literature akin to works by such well-known figures as Marsilio Ficino and Giovanni

Pico della Mirandola. Their rabbinic contemporaries, sharing their view of these Christians that magic was the highest actualization of human potential, construed Judaism as a system of perfected magical words and hermetic vessels. In fact, they had close personal contact with one another. Pico's "tutor" in Kabbalah was Rabbi Johannan Alemanno (1435/1438–ca. 1510), who argued that the study and mastery of magic constituted the final stage of one's intellectual and spiritual education. This contact, initiated as a result of Christian interest in probing the ancient wisdom hidden in Jewish mystical sources, resulted in unprecedented cross-fertilization between Jewish and Christian Renaissance thought (Idel 1983).

Building on these precedents, the eighteenth-century eastern European Jewish pietistic movement known as Hasidism took the figure of the magus and made him the center of religious society. Its founder, Rabbi Israel Ba'al Shem Tov (lit. "master of the good Name"), was an accomplished magical healer as well as a profound mystical thinker. He is portrayed in Hasidic hagiography as a shaman par excellence, regularly ascending to heaven, privy to the secrets of the universe, and conversant in the languages of all creatures. Its subsequent leaders, called *zaddikim* or "righteous ones," were regarded by their communities as conduits for blessing and sustenance (Idel 1995). The blessing of a *zaddik* could heal the sick, fructify the barren, and free the captive. A master of magical devices—though never depicted as slavishly beholden to technique—the *zaddik* could also travel from place to place through the *axis mundi* shortcut, crossing great expanses in a moment (Verman and Adler 1993/1994). Less exposed to the secularizing trends of European society, the magical practices and beliefs of some North African and Middle Eastern Jewish communities remain prominent features of their religiosity to this day, including traditions of venerating their rabbis as wonder-working saints (Bilu 2000).

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See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; ANGELS; BIBLE; BIBLIOMANCY; DEMONS; DIVINATION; ENDOR, WITCH OF; EXODUS 22:18 (22:17); EXORCISM; GHOSTS; IDOLATRY; INVOCATIONS; ISLAMIC WITCHCRAFT AND MAGIC; KABBALAH; MAGIC, LEARNED; NECROMANCY; SCOT, REGINALD; WEYER, JOHANN; WORDS, POWER OF.

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JOAN OF ARC (CA. 1412–1431)

Mystic, soldier, martyr, and saint, Joan of Arc was also accused of being a witch at her trial for heresy in Rouen, France. In the late stages of the Hundred Years' War with France (1337–1453), the English and their collaborators were keen to destroy Joan, who had succeeded in rallying French troops and leading them to a key victory at Orléans in 1429. Less than a year later,

enemy forces captured her. Eventually tried before a special court headed by Pierre Cauchon, bishop of Beauvais, Joan was condemned to death, handed over to the secular authorities, and burned at the stake on May 30, 1431.

From 1425 on, the young Joan had claimed to hear voices and see lights that she identified as Saints Michael, Catherine, and Margaret. They, she said, revealed her mission to come to the aid of France. Dressed as a male soldier, Joan took up what she considered a mission from heaven. After her victory at Orléans, she also accomplished her goal of having King Charles VII crowned at Reims—an act in defiance of English pretensions to the French throne. Taken prisoner at Compiègne by Burgundian troops in May 1430, Joan was sold to the English and later brought before Cauchon's tribunal. A recent study considered how the subsequent legal proceeding may be considered "the first of the great witchcraft trials," and asserts that in Joan's era the "fear of witches . . . was connected to anxieties about class and particularly gender mobility" (Gordon 2000, 109). Joan's activities and crossdressing stoked those anxieties, and her claims of direct contact with the saints in heaven provided ammunition for accusations of heresy.

Joan's visions were declared false and diabolical. She then seems to have recanted at least some of her claims about those visions, but, on May 29, 1431, after resuming male dress—which she had agreed to abandon—she was condemned as a relapsed heretic. In the final sentence, read publicly before her execution, Joan was said to have fallen into "errors and crimes of schism, idolatry, invocation of demons, and many other misdeeds" (Barrett 1931, 328). Though witchcraft was not mentioned by name, Joan was stated to have invoked demons and to have been "seduced" by the "author of schism and heresy," evidently the Devil (Barrett 1931, 329). News of her heresies and death soon reached the Council of Basel, a crossroads where many strands of European witchcraft doctrine were aired in the 1430s.

In the centuries since her death, Joan has more often been praised than blamed. When the French had finally expelled the English, a court appointed by Pope Callistus III reopened Joan's case, and in 1456 declared her to have been unjustly condemned. While the story of Joan faded from public consciousness after her rehabilitation, nineteenth-century French nationalists revitalized it. Anticlerical, republican voices, such as Jules Michelet, remembered her as a patriotic daughter of the people, and as a victim of an intolerant Church; right-wing monarchists praised her a champion of traditional monarchy and as a exemplary foe of foreign interference in France. Catholics saw her as a saint and martyr for her unshakable fidelity to a divinely appointed mission. Canonized as a saint in 1920, Joan had by then reached international status, the object of devo-

tion even in England.

In the later half of the twentieth century, rapidly growing interest in women's history has served once again to renew interest in Joan. Contemporary studies of Joan have tended to downplay the political context of her trial and execution, and to emphasize how Joan was a casualty of late medieval misogyny and its fear of independent women who not only blurred gender boundaries by taking the role and even dress of men, but who also falsely claimed divine inspiration for their activities, and who, as witches, did the work of the Devil.

THOMAS WORCESTER

See also: BASEL, COUNCIL OF; CLERGY; ENGLAND; EXECUTIONS; FRANCE; GENDER; HERESY; MICHELET, JULES.

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JOHN OF SALISBURY (CA. 1115–1180)

Student of Peter Abelard and others at the schools of Paris and Chartres, later a theologian, papal servant, historian, political theorist, and moralist, John of Salisbury, in two places in the *Policraticus* (The Statesman, 1159), a highly original work of political theory, discussed several aspects of contemporary beliefs and practices concerning divination and sorcery.

John traveled widely both in his student life and afterward in service to several popes. He became secretary to two successive archbishops of Canterbury, including Thomas Becket, whose murder he witnessed in 1170. In 1176, King Louis VII of France appointed him bishop of Chartres. John's chief works also included the *Metalogicon* (1159), a defense of the liberal arts; the *Historia Pontificalis* (The Papal History, ca. 1154), a well-informed and opinionated history of the mid-twelfth-century papacy; and a great many letters.

The *Policraticus* was not only a major work of political philosophy, but also a book of vices and virtues for rulers and courtiers. In this respect, the *Policraticus* was similar to, but more systematically organized than the works of Walter Map and Ger vase of Tilbury, written around the same time or shortly after. Book I deals with the vices unique to courtiers: fear of fortune, impropriety, hunting, gambling, music, actors, mimes, jugglers, and illusionists. From his discussion of illusionists in

Book I, chapter 9, John turned to magic, omens, dreams, divination, and other forms of vice touching on the preternatural that courtiers must avoid, concluding his discussion at the end of Book II. Thus John's work provided not only a window on the newly emerging life of the court but also an analysis of the insecurities of that world, based on many years of shrewd observation and a profound moral concern.

In his discussion of the magical arts, John drew widely on his extensive reading of classical Latin literature, the Bible, the encyclopedic work of Isidore of Seville, and the Church Fathers, particularly St. Augustine. John considered all of his sources and authorities to be discussing the same phenomenon, and some scholars have dismissed these sections of the *Policraticus* as simply a parade of recondite learning. But John was genuinely alarmed at the prevalence of magic, particularly in the form of fortunetelling, divination, and forbidden forms of astrology. He had firsthand experience of its appeal to many courtiers (including Becket), and he possessed a profound awareness of the dangers it posed to unwitting, ambitious, unlearned courtiers who needed both instruction about its true nature and a body of authoritative evidence to justify John's warnings.

John even included some autobiographical details in Book II, 28, telling of his own youthful experience in which a priest tried to use him as a medium in a procedure of crystal gazing. At the end of Book II, 17, John refers to the general belief in night-riding women and infant cannibalism that was found in the *Canon Episcopi*, as well as in the work of Burchard of Worms. John stated that, with divine permission because of human sin, demons may cause humans to suffer only in the spirit things that they believed happen in the flesh. John brusquely dismissed the idea that such assemblies actually occurred, and insisted that the entire belief was the result of the illusions created by sporting demons, affecting only poor old women and simpleminded men. In this regard, John firmly asserted the power of proper religious and moral instruction as the only legitimate means of combating the powers of demons, which operated only on the spirit and not in the material world. John's work was an important example of twelfth-century humanist moral skepticism.

EDWARD PETERS

See also: ASTROLOGY; AUGUSTINE ST.; BURCHARD OF WORMS; *CANON EPISCOPI*; DIVINATION; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; HOLDA; ISIDORE OF SEVILLE, ST.; LAMIA; SABBAT; SKEPTICISM; SORcery.

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JOHN XXII, POPE (RULED 1316–1334)

Throughout his pontificate, John XXII exhibited a marked concern over matters of sorcery, divination, and demonic invocation. The pope feared magical assaults and assassination attempts on his own person, and he used charges of heresy, sorcery, and idolatry as political weapons against his enemies. He also promoted the more general persecution of sorcery by ordering papal inquisitors to take action against sorcerers and by issuing a sentence of automatic excommunication against all those who practiced any form of demonic invocation that entailed the supplication or worship of demons. His bull on this matter, *Super illius specula* (Upon His Watchtower), remained an important part of the legal apparatus against practitioners of sorcery for the remainder of the Middle Ages.

John XXII was born Jacques Duèse in Cahors, France, in 1244. He was educated by the Dominican Order, and studied theology and law at Montpellier and Paris. He became a very prominent canon lawyer, a professor of both civil and canon law, and rose through the ranks of the Church to become bishop of Fréjus, then of Avignon, and then cardinal-bishop of Porto. He came to the papal throne as the final choice in a long and hotly contested election (the papacy had been vacant for nearly two years). John's reign was eventful to say the least. He worked diligently to reassert papal power, especially financial power, in the wake of the recent move of the papal curia from Rome to Avignon; he involved himself in the dispute over the proper nature of religious poverty taking place within the Franciscan Order, fiercely opposing the so-called Spiritual Franciscans and their position of absolute poverty; he took issue with leading theologians such as William of Ockham and Marsilius of Padua; and he enmeshed himself in a protracted political contest with the Holy Roman emperor Louis IV.

John's involvement with matters of sorcery began almost as soon as he assumed the papacy. In 1317, he had Hugues Géraud, bishop of Cahors, arrested on charges of attempting to kill him through sorcery. Further charges of sorcery, demonic invocation, poisoning, and attempted assassination soon followed, leveled at various members of the papal court, prelates of the Church, and political enemies of the pope. In 1318, for example, the archbishop of Aix, Robert Mauvoisin, was charged with performing certain illicit magical practices, although he escaped condemnation. In 1319,

the Franciscan Bernard Délicieux was tried at Toulouse for possession of books of sorcery. In 1320, Matteo Visconti, the ruler of Milan, and his son Galeazzo, powerful opponents of John in Italy, were accused of plotting to murder the pope with sorcery, and from 1320 to 1325, numerous charges of heresy and demon worship were brought against John's political enemies in the Mark of Ancona.

In using accusations of heresy, sorcery, and demonic invocation for clear political purposes, Pope John was hardly alone in the early fourteenth century. Many individuals during this period found they could use such charges to eliminate or at least discredit rivals at court, or to augment or secure their own positions. Famously, servants of the French King Philip IV brought numerous charges of heresy and idolatry against the Knights Templar, undermining the order, leading to its dissolution in 1314, and allowing the French crown to seize much of the Templar property and wealth. Philip had also used charges of heresy and sorcery in his political struggle with Pope Boniface VIII. Yet, just because such charges were politically expedient and often clearly employed without real conviction, this does not mean that the belief in sorcery, the fear of possible magical assault, and the conviction that demonic invocation represented a terrible evil in the world were not very real for John XXII. In 1320, through a letter from William, Cardinal of Santa Sabina, he ordered the inquisitors of Toulouse and Carcassonne in southern France to take action against any sorcerer who invoked demons, offered sacrifices to them, or otherwise worshiped them. Later, in 1326, he issued the bull *Super illius specula*, in which he declared a sentence of automatic excommunication on anyone who engaged in demonic invocation, offered sacrifices to demons to procure supernatural services, or worshiped demons in any way. The pope was compelled to act, so he wrote, because such practices were drawing many Christians into grave error, sin, and heresy. Later papal decrees continued to spur inquisitors and other Church officials to act against sorcery and demonic invocation, and John's rulings would form an important legal basis for the prosecution of cases of sorcery, and later of witchcraft, in ecclesiastical courts.

MICHAEL D. BAILEY

See also: GUI, BERNARD; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; INVOCATIONS; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; PAPACY AND PAPAL BULLS; TEMPLARS.

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JONCTYS, DANIEL (1611–1654)

A physician, Jonctys offers a good example of the dramatic turnabout some academically trained people made in their views regarding witchcraft. Born in Dordrecht, he began his medical studies in Leiden in 1630, graduating five years later, followed by a Grand Tour during which he visited France, Germany, and Italy. In 1638, he published *Verhandelinge der Tooversieckten* (Treatise on Witchcraft Diseases), a translation of *De morbis a fascino et incantatione ac veneficiis inductis*, a 1633 work by the German physician and Wittenberg professor Daniel Sennert (1572–1637). In opposition to Johann Weyer, this moderate Paracelsian claimed that witches concluded pacts with the Devil with the deliberate aim of harming other people. This alone was sufficient to sentence them to death, even though the pact could not have given them the power to realize their nefarious aims. Jonctys hoped that this translation would contribute to the debate about the reality of witchcraft. He emphasized that he did not believe that witches could change the course of nature, but also that they deserved punishment because of the pact.

In 1641, he published a long poem that, among other things, criticizes the attitude of the Reformed Church toward modern science. In reprisal, the Dordrecht church-council banned him, prompting Jonctys to move to Rotterdam, where the local Reformed Church was known to be less heavy handed. In his new domicile, he was soon allowed to participate again in church services. He also joined the local secular elite, being elected to a one-year term as alderman in 1648. In Rotterdam, his tendency to give a liberal interpretation to Calvinism seems to have increased, judging from his 1651 attack on the use of torture *De pyn-bank uedersproken en bematigd* (The Rack Opposed and Restrained). Its first two parts are a translation of a treatise that the Arminian minister Johann Greve (1584–1624) had published three decades earlier against the brutal treatment he had experienced after his imprisonment by orthodox Calvinists.

Greve had been born around 1584 in the duchy of Cleves in a well-to-do, patrician family. After studying theology, he became a minister of the Reformed Church where he joined the more liberal faction. In 1610, he was called to a small town in Holland. In 1618, the conflict inside the Dutch Reformed Church between Arminian Remonstrants and orthodox Counter-Remonstrants reached its zenith when Maurice of Orange used these troubles to justify his coup d'état. Greve was deposed, and on his refusal to step down was formally banished from the territory of

the United Provinces. However, he repeatedly returned in secrecy to assist the now clandestine Remonstrant congregations. Dutch authorities had him kidnapped from Cleves territory and imprisoned in Amsterdam where he was severely tortured. In 1621, he was released and again forced to leave the country. Three years later he published his *Tribunal Reformatum* in Hamburg, which strongly attacked the use of judicial torture as a completely unreliable and highly un-Christian expedient to extract confessions and information from supposed criminals.

Although the first two parts of Jonctys's treatise about the use of torture were a translation of this *Tribunal Reformatum*, he wrote the third part himself. It was particularly in this section that he repeatedly referred to witchcraft trials as examples of the ignominious effects torture could have. Unlike in his translation of Sennert's book, Jonctys now explicitly accepted Reginald Scot's view that witchcraft was impossible and that the pact was nothing but a chimera. In the thirteen years that had elapsed between these two publications, his views concerning witchcraft and especially concerning the demonic pact had made a full swing. This reflected a development experienced by most academically trained Dutch in this period. Whereas lawyers and physicians had formerly held to the belief that the pact was in principle not impossible, they now saw it as pure fantasy. Jonctys's book had considerable influence, being quoted continuously until the late eighteenth century by Dutch opponents of the belief in witchcraft and the use of legal torture.

HANS DE WAARDT

See also: NETHERLANDS, NORTHERN; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PARACELTUS, THEOPHRASTUS BOMBASTUS VON HOHENHEIM; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; SCOT, REGINALD; SKEPTICISM; TORTURE; WEYER, JOHANN.

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JORDANAUEUS, JOHANNES (D. 1650)

Parish priest of the church of St. Remigius in Bonn, Jordanaeus published a book in 1630 entitled *Disputatio brevis et categorica de proba stigmatica* (Brief and Categorical Argument about the Devil's Mark),

which made a veiled attack on the proof of the Devil's mark, or *stigma*, in witchcraft trials. The torturer who searched the naked and blindfolded body of the captured "witch" for conspicuous marks, into which he pricked a needle, executed the proof. If no blood appeared, the mark became an indicator that the suspect was a witch.

Little is known of Jordanaeus's life. In 1610, he obtained his bachelor's degree at the *Gymnasium Tricornatum*, a Jesuit college in Cologne. He later studied theology, receiving a doctorate in theology from the University of Cologne. In 1623, he entered the collegiate church of St. Cassius in Bonn. His canonicate was incorporated in the large parish of St. Remigius. He resigned in 1641, but did not die until 1650, when he made a bequest of 500 books to the Jesuit college at Bonn.

While Jordanaeus was a parish priest in Bonn, the first witchcraft trials began in 1628. In his role as priest and confessor, and because of his close contacts with the Jesuits, Jordanaeus must have been well aware of the witchcraft trials in his city. But was he against them or was he a supporter of the persecution? Joseph Hartzheim, author of the *Bibliotheca Coloniensis* (Cologne, 1747), saw Jordanaeus as the author of the *Processus iuridicus contra sagas et veneficos* (Legal Procedures Against Witches and Poisoners) published at Cologne in 1629 under the name of the famous Jesuit theologian Paul Laymann, who was not the author. If Jordanaeus wrote them instead, he must have been a very committed persecutor of witches at that time. However, we know that in 1630 Jordanaeus published a book in his own name, the *Disputatio brevis*, which criticized witchcraft trials. It was a reply to the *Commentarius iuridicus ad l. stigmata, c. de fabricensibus*, published in 1629 by Peter Ostermann, a professor at the University of Cologne. Ostermann tried to prove that the Devil's mark was the best type of circumstantial evidence (*indiciu[m] indicioru[m]*) to convict someone of witchcraft. Jordanaeus used a threefold argument to counter Ostermann: that the stigma-as-proof was not part of canon law, that the Devil could press his mark on an innocent person, and that an unbleeding mark could be attributed to natural reasons. Therefore, in a charge as serious as witchcraft, the courts could not legally rely on such an insecure method to prove a person's guilt.

Nowhere in his book did Jordanaeus deny the existence of witches and the necessity of prosecuting and condemning them. Jordanaeus's argument against the proof by needle is directed only against a certain method within established procedures in witchcraft trials, not against witchcraft trials as such. But the needle proof was an important element of witchcraft trials, as Elector Ferdinand of Cologne's guidelines asserted in 1607 and again when they were renewed in 1628. It is

therefore possible, as has been argued (Schormann 1991, 38), that opposition to the needle proof substituted for opposition to witch hunts in general. When we consider that Jordanaeus was a priest in a large parish where many trials were pending, and that the commissioner who led these trials was the fanatic and merciless Dr. Franz Buirmann (who used the needle proof whenever he investigated a witch case), it is very likely that Jordanaeus chose this avenue to counter the frenzy surrounding him without endangering himself. Ostermann and others wrote sharp and polemical replies, but neither those writers nor any witch persecutors could inflict any harm on Jordanaeus. On the other hand, he did not succeed in removing the needle proof as an important method for establishing proof in witchcraft, either in the courts of the electorate of Cologne or in neighboring territories.

THOMAS P. BECKER

See also: BUIRMANN, FRANZ; COLOGNE; DEVIL'S MARK; EVIDENCE; FERDINAND OF COLOGNE; LAYMANN, PAUL; PRICKING OF SUSPECTED WITCHES; PROOF, PROBLEM OF.

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JORDEN, EDWARD (1569–1632)

A medical doctor who became involved in two well-documented witchcraft trials at the beginning of the seventeenth century, Jorden's importance lay in his being one of the first physicians to be asked to give expert medical evidence in witchcraft trials. His input, and reactions to it, demonstrated how contested such evidence remained at that time.

Born in Kent, he studied at Oxford and Cambridge before traveling on the Continent and earning his MD at the University of Padua, one of Europe's most prestigious medical schools. Returning to England, he became a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in 1597, developed some useful contacts, and apparently established a successful practice. He later settled in Bath, where he lived and practiced medicine until his death. Appropriately, his best-known work was *A Discourse of Natural Baths and Mineral Waters*, first published in 1631 and reprinted in 1632, 1633, 1669, and 1673.

Jorden's first known involvement in witchcraft came in 1602, when Mary Glover, a girl of fourteen from a solid and well-connected London merchant family, alleged that a woman named Elizabeth Jackson had bewitched her. The accusation was fiercely contested, with Richard Bancroft, bishop of London and a skeptic in witchcraft matters, playing an active part in Jackson's

defense. More particularly, the case was remarkable because the prosecution and the defense alike drew on medical evidence: both alleging and denying Jackson's guilt had sought opinions from the College of Physicians. The actual trial was marked by an exchange between Jorden and the presiding judge, Sir Edmund Anderson, who was apparently one of the very few assize judges who actively favored witch hunting. Anderson refused to accept Jorden's admittedly rather equivocal opinion that Mary Glover was suffering from hysteria, and harangued the jury on the reality of witchcraft and the need to extirpate it. Jackson was convicted, although for noncapital witchcraft, and it is possible that she was subsequently reprieved. The experience prompted Jorden to publish his *A Briefe Discourse of a Disease Called the Suffocation of the Mother* in 1603. This was a tract of some importance in medical history, arguing that hysteria was caused by disorders of the mind rather than the uterus. It also argued, as its extended title informed us, that "divers strange actions and passions of the body of man" had "true naturall causes," and should not be attributed to "possession of an evill spirit, or some such like supernaturall power."

A few years later, Jorden was involved in another case alleging the bewitchment of a young woman (in this instance aged twenty or so), Anne Gunter. Her father had sought the intercession of King James I in his daughter's case, but James had handed her over to a team headed, once again, by Richard Bancroft, now archbishop of Canterbury. Bancroft put Anne in the custody of his chaplain, Samuel Harsnett, who had a record of skepticism in matters of witchcraft and possession going back to the John Darrell affair. Once again, Jorden gave somewhat equivocal evidence, which is preserved in the relevant Star Chamber dossier, although he recounted that while in his house she had not voided pins, and that her fits and trances had ended. Jorden's wife, Lucy, also gave evidence to Star Chamber, confirming what her husband had said. This documentation suggested a different story from that provided by Thomas Guidott, another doctor who prefaced the 1667 edition of Jorden's *A Discourse of Natural Bathes and Mineral Waters* with a short biography of its author. According to Guidott, Jorden rigged his treatment in such a way as to demonstrate that Anne Gunter was counterfeiting, a conclusion confirmed when he reported to James I that the young woman went into fits when the Lord's Prayer was read to her in English, but not in Latin, a language she did not understand.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: BEWITCHMENT; DARRELL, JOHN; ENGLAND; GUNTER, ANNE; LORD'S PRAYER; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; MENTAL ILLNESS.

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JORIS, DAVID (CA. 1501–1556)

Perhaps the most notorious heretic of the sixteenth century, the Anabaptist David Joris denied the essential reality of the Devil and so complemented his unpopular promotion of religious tolerance. A skilled glass painter in Delft, Holland, Joris was exiled for three years in 1528 for his iconoclastic speeches and joined the Anabaptists when they controlled the Westphalian city of Münster (1533–1535). After the fall of their kingdom in 1535, Joris became the major Anabaptist leader of the Low Countries because of his visionary and charismatic authority. Joris became a thorough spiritualist, denouncing all confessions and doctrinal squabbling as inimical to true, internal Christian faith. He emphasized the dichotomy between spirit and flesh, relying heavily on an immediate experience with the “inner Word” for religious authority. When necessary, Joris permitted his followers to practice Nicodemism, outwardly conforming to approved religious ceremonies so as to conceal their true beliefs.

Pursued energetically by the authorities, Joris escaped the flames through the devotion of his followers, many of whom died protecting his whereabouts. A secret network of supporters disseminated his letters and publications throughout Europe. For the last dozen years of his life, he resided in Basel under an assumed name. His death ended neither his influence nor the antagonism of his opponents; when his true identity was revealed three years afterward, a posthumous trial condemned his corpse to the stake in 1559.

One of Joris’s most radical ideas was to repudiate the notion that the Devil existed outside of the human mind. He argued instead that Satan originated only after the fall of Adam and Eve as the evil, fallen nature of humans. Resisting the Devil required neither sacraments nor exorcism, but merely removing the pride that interfered with attaining humility. Joris first expressed this view in a tract published c. 1540 entitled *Behold, the Book of Life Is Opened to Me (Neemt Waer. Dat boeck des leuens/ is mi gheopenbaert)*, reprinted in 1616 as *A Brief and Instructional Tract Wherein Is Handled the Meaning of the Word Devil (Een Cort ende Leerlijck Tractaat: waer in verhandelt wert/ wat dat woort Duyvel sy)*. In the second, 1551 edition of his *magnum opus*, *The Wonder Book (Tiwonder-boeck)*, Joris challenged the Devil to show himself if real; without such a demonstration, Joris pledged to maintain his unorthodox opinion. His continued use of traditional terminology regarding the Devil and antichrist was

merely a rhetorical device for the uninitiated.

No physical Devil implied no witchcraft; Joris also asserted that believers should not fear harm by witchcraft. His position, comparable to Reginald Scot’s, helped shape the opposition to witch hunting among nonconformists within spiritualist and liberal Mennonite circles, and he was in touch with such spiritualistically minded intellectuals as Sebastian Castello and possibly also Johann Weyer, author of the famous *De praestigis daemonum* (*On the Tricks of Devils*), who shared his promotion of religious tolerance and abhorrence of state-mandated persecution.

To counteract such pernicious opinions, Joris’s many adversaries demonized him, calling him an atheist and “the devil of Delft,” and spread rumors that he possessed sinister magical powers. After the public disclosure of his identity in 1559, rumors circulated that Joris had blasphemously predicted his own resurrection and that his followers venerated his preserved remains. One story, told by a Genevan Calvinist, even claimed that a Dutch noblewoman, “persuaded by stories of demonic incubi,” had visited Basel hoping to have sexual relations with the prophet’s corpse and thus receive the Holy Spirit.

Despite such tales, the internalization of the Devil promoted by Joris and fellow spiritualists became remarkably popular in the Dutch Republic, helping to shape its singular position of relative religious toleration and early rejection of witch persecution. In the swirl of polemics surrounding the publication of Balthasar Bekker’s *De Betoverde Weereld* (*The World Bewitched*) in 1691–1693, some opponents sought to discredit its skeptical ideas by comparing them to those of David Joris.

GARY K. WAITE

See also: ANABAPTISTS; ANTICHRIST; BEKKER, BALTHASAR; DEVIL; FAMILY OF LOVE; MENNONITES; NETHERLANDS, NORTHERN; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; SCOT, REGINALD; SKEPTICISM; WEYER, JOHANN.

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JOSEPH II, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR (1741–1790; RULED 1765–1790)

An embodiment of the ideals of the Enlightenment, Joseph II decriminalized witchcraft and worked ardently to curtail superstition (including beliefs in witchcraft and the demonic) and the Catholic Church.

Heir to the Habsburg hereditary lands, archduke of Austria, king of Bohemia and Hungary, the oldest son of Emperor Francis I and Empress Maria Theresa, Joseph II initially ruled as coregent with his mother from 1765 until her death in 1780, then ruled alone until his death ten years later. A highly controversial figure, condemned by clerical and aristocratic elites but celebrated by the populace, Joseph II attempted a thorough reorganization of Habsburg politics and society following the Enlightenment values of reason, pragmatism, and natural law, emblematic of late eighteenth-century “enlightened despotism.”

Joseph II vigorously continued reform programs begun as coregent, transforming them after his mother's death into relentless attacks on hereditary and ecclesiastical privilege throughout the Austrian hereditary lands, as well as his Bohemian and Hungarian kingdoms. He wished to establish a well-ordered, centralized state in which loyalty and merit mattered more than birth. Most of his far-reaching and lofty goals proved to be well beyond his reach. Nonetheless, his efforts led to the overhaul of both civil and criminal law, eliminating both torture and the death penalty from the Austrian penal code. In addition, by 1781, Joseph II abolished serfdom and provided a large measure of religious liberty with the Patent of Toleration.

As a direct result of Joseph II's reform of Austrian criminal law, witchcraft ceased to exist as a crime in Habsburg territories. His 1787 penal code (*Allgemeine Gesetzbuch über Verbrechen und deren Bestrafung*—Universal Law Code on Crimes and Their Punishments) and his 1788 court ordinance (*Allgemeine Kriminalgerichtsordnung*—Universal Ordinance for Criminal Courts) simply omitted sorcery, witchcraft, or other magical activities as punishable offenses. Whereas Maria Theresa's 1766 attempt to suppress trials for witchcraft still maintained that diabolical witchcraft remained a possibility (although extremely unlikely), Joseph's reforms simply dispensed with this fantasy all together, along with torture and the death penalty (which had been moderated, but maintained, in his mother's extensive reformulation of the penal code). The number of trials for witchcraft had been declining in the Austrian hereditary lands since at least 1700, and in the Bohemian and Hungarian crown lands since Maria Theresa's numerous interventions in the 1750s. Nevertheless, because magical beliefs remained extremely widespread throughout the Habsburg territories, they continued to influence legal testimony until Joseph's actions prevented judicial action on the basis of such testimony.

As Holy Roman emperor, Joseph II also took steps to suppress the prosecution of accused witches throughout Germany. Following the so-called War of the Witches among Catholic proponents and opponents of witchcraft trials in Bavaria between 1766 and 1770 (in which the enlightened views of reform Catholicism ultimately prevailed), the emperor intervened in a newly emerging controversy involving the Catholic faith healer Johann Joseph Gassner. Exploiting the belief (still widespread in southern Germany) that illness resulted from the actions of demons and witches rather than natural causes, Gassner found followers among both the lower and upper social orders by the mid-1770s. Along with the Bavarian elector and numerous ecclesiastical authorities, including Pope Pius VI, Joseph attempted to halt the influence of Gassner and his adherents. He prohibited the prince-bishop of Regensburg from supporting the preacher's activities, particularly his frequent and public exorcisms of the afflicted.

Joseph's action in the Gassner affair typified his well-known suspicions of superstition and religious zeal. Taught by an early tutor that “bigotry and superstition, astrology, soothsaying and witchcraft are the enemies of God's honor” (Beales 1987, 60), Joseph subsequently sought to curb not only the credulity of ignorant and superstitious people, but also the excesses of orthodox religious practice. Deeply familiar with the works of eighteenth-century rationalist authors, he surrounded himself with like-minded advisors and tried to implement their ideas by reforming Habsburg politics and society.

EDMUND M. KERN

See also: AUSTRIA; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; BAVARIAN WAR OF THE WITCHES; BOHEMIA; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; ENLIGHTENMENT; GASSNER, JOHANN JOSEPH; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; HUNGARY; MARIA THERESA, HOLY ROMAN EMPRESS; SUPERSTITION.

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JUNIUS, JOHANNES (1573–1628)

Mayor of Bamberg, born in Niedermasch, Wetterau, and burned for witchcraft in 1628 in Bamberg, Junius ranks among the best-known victims of German witchcraft trials, thanks to the unique documentation he left behind. Shortly before his execution, Junius wrote his daughter, Veronica, a moving farewell letter from prison. Because it was intercepted by the prison staff

and added to his *prozessakte* (trial record), we are exceptionally well informed about his trial.

Bamberg's chancellor, Dr. Georg Haan, and his son, both also imprisoned for witchcraft, were among those testifying that Junius had taken part in the witches' Sabbat. When confronted with the witnesses against him, Junius denied everything and demanded that his denouncers be compelled to swear an oath. The judges refused. The witnesses later told him that they had been coerced into providing incriminating testimony. Because he refused to cooperate with the judges, Junius was now tortured, beginning with the thumbscrews. He was then stripped of his clothes and hoisted up eight times on the strappado. Despite enormous pain and bleeding hands, he made no confession. According to ordinary criminal procedure (particularly the 1507 *Constitutio Criminalis Bambergensis* [Penal Code of Bamberg], still valid in the prince-bishopric of Bamberg), Junius had cleansed himself of the accusations against him by surviving his ordeal.

His enemies, however, told the mayor that the prince-bishop, Johann Georg II (ruled 1623–1633), wanted to make an example of him: Junius was to be tortured until he confessed. The prison staff advised Junius to make a false confession to avoid this threat. Junius requested clerical advice and one day to think it over. Junius was granted only the latter, and made a confession on July 1, 1628, containing the usual elements of fully elaborated witchcraft. However, the court was not satisfied and told him to make further denunciations against other inhabitants of Bamberg. When he refused, the names of other witches and sorcerers, listed by streets, were offered to him—another clear violation of contemporary criminal law, which prohibited suggestive questioning.

Surprisingly, Junius was not immediately executed after his forced confession. Instead, he remained incarcerated for several more weeks. By July 24, 1628, his hands had healed enough to allow him to write—with some difficulty—a letter to his daughter informing her of his ordeal. He could hardly have written it without some collusion from the prison staff. Junius feared that the guards would lose their heads if someone learned about his letter. He advised his daughter to leave Bamberg for at least six months, and she probably did flee. Junius had clearly realized that, at the high point of Bamberg's persecution wave, social position offered no protection against accusations of witchcraft.

Junius's case interests researchers in the history of witchcraft for many reasons. First, it contradicts the

notion that the only primary sources available were left by those who prosecuted witches. Victims also spoke, often in complaints filed by persecuted families to appellate courts like the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court) and the *Reichshofrat* (imperial aulic court). Second, Junius's detailed chronicle of his trial revealed contradictions with prescriptive trial procedures of his time, which exceeded ordinary guidelines of criminal codes through the theory of *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime). Just two weeks before Junius's trial, the imperial chamber court had strongly recommended to Bamberg that orderly trial guidelines be maintained (Staatsarchiv Bamberg B 68 II no. 1, f. 140v). Finally, Junius's trial (like Bamberg's entire persecution wave between 1623 and 1630) offered important proof of how, at the apex of a witch hunt, even such very prominent people as mayors and chancellors could become victims. Such extreme situations produced a simultaneously dreadful and democratic equality before the law (Behringer 2000, 274). The disappearance of socioeconomic boundaries became one reason to end witch hunts: when denunciations affected the governing class, the trials often ended. The trial of Johann Junius exemplifies the fact that witchcraft trials cannot be reduced to a process directed against lower-class people.

PETER OESTMANN;

TRANSLATED BY JONATHAN STICKNEY

See also: BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); *REICHSHOFRAT* (IMPERIAL AULIC COURT); *REICHSKAMMERGERICHT* (IMPERIAL CHAMBER COURT); TORTURE; TRIALS.

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K

KABBALAH

By the late Middle Ages, the occult tradition of Judaism was referred to most frequently by the generic term “Kabbalah,” literally, “that which has been received.” The term reflects the universally accepted attitude among Kabbalists that their teachings form part of the rabbinically sanctioned oral Torah, which complements the written Torah. Kabbalah is not monolithic, but comprises a collage of disparate doctrines and practices cultivated by elite circles within medieval rabbinic society.

Contemporary scholarship ordinarily distinguishes two major typological trends within the history of medieval Jewish mysticism: prophetic and theosophic Kabbalah. Prophetic Kabbalah, as expounded by Abraham Abulafia (thirteenth century) cultivates meditative practices centered on the permutation of letters (*tseruf ha-otiyot*) of the Hebrew alphabet to attain ritual and moral purity. These exercises attempt to unfetter the rational soul from the body and facilitate its conjunction (*devequt*) with the divine intellect, a state also referred to as cleaving to the Name, that is, YHWH, which was thought to be the one true reality that encompassed all the other letters. Moreover, following Maimonides, Abulafia and his disciples viewed this unitive state as the true meaning of prophecy; for them the goal of Kabbalah was to overcome differentiation and be incorporated into the divine Name, which is the spiritual essence of the messianic ideal and the true meaning of the eschatological world-to-come.

Theosophic Kabbalah, by contrast, is concerned primarily with the visual contemplation of ten luminous emanations that collectively represent the configuration of *Ein Sof*, the infinite Godhead beyond all linguistic and iconic representation. The most emblematic term for these emanations was *sefirot*, initially employed in the first section of an older anthology of cosmological speculation, *Sefer Yesirah* (Book of Formation). Over time, Kabbalists developed allegedly new and more intricate images, based at least in part on principles from earlier sources, including, most importantly, the idea that the *sefirot* are comprised within the Tetragrammaton and thus are the name by which the nameless is called. Additionally, the *sefirot* assume the form of an anthropos in the human imagination; because Adam was created male and female, this

divinely human image is androgynous. Therefore, Kabbalists portray the unity of God in the explicitly erotic language of heterosexual coupling. In the *Sefer ha-Zohar* (Book of Splendor, the major repository of Kabbalistic writings attributed to the mystical fraternity headed by Simeon bar Yohai of second-century Palestine, but actually composed in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Castile), the coupling of male and female is the mystery of faith (*raza di-meheimanuta*).

Complex as Kabbalistic symbolism can be, it views gender very simply: the potency to overflow is masculine and the capacity to withhold feminine. Adopting an earlier rabbinic tradition, Kabbalists further link the male and female potencies, respectively, with the attributes of mercy and judgment, and their designated names *YHWH* and *Elohim*. Kabbalists interpret the traditional religious obligation to unify the God of Israel as the harnessing of male and female, a pairing of the will to bestow and the desire to contain.

One must not oversimplify. Careful textual scrutiny indicates both that Kabbalists identified as “theosophic” had ecstatic experiences of union, and that Kabbalists labeled “ecstatic” presumed that esoteric gnosis imparted theosophic wisdom. Here, we shall concentrate on the convergence of the ecstatic and theurgic aspects of the experience of enlightenment cultivated by the so-called theosophic Kabbalists.

The Kabbalist’s goal—what justifies calling him a Kabbalist—is to receive the secret of the Name; that is, to cleave to *YHWH*, the archaic Deuteronomistic injunction interpreted by Kabbalists (in a manner very close to twelfth-century Andalusian Neoplatonist philosopher-poets) as conjunction of thought (*devequt ha-mahshavah*), the true mystical intent (*kawwanah*) of liturgical worship, and Torah study. In another crucial way, this Kabbalistic ideal betrays crucial affinities to views in Islamic and other Jewish philosophical sources. Twelfth- and thirteenth-century Kabbalists, like later generations, understood this conjunction of intellectual and imaginative components as an expression of prophecy. However, in their case, the contemplative ascent is emphatically a personal experience of *unio mystica*, a more deeply expressed existential sense that the fragmented soul can attain wholeness by being reincorporated into the Godhead. Union with the divine

Name is a psychic transport (after having cleared mundane matters from the mind) that in turn facilitates the theurgical unification of the divine potencies signified by letters of the Name.

Although the mystical conjunction facilitates the theurgical task, it seems preferable to imagine a core experience of ecstasy with two facets, reintegration of the soul in the divine and fusion of the sefirotic potencies. It is tempting to align these two phases in causal sequence, the former occasioning the latter. However, viewed morphologically, as opposed to typologically, that is, under the semblance of form rather than type, ecstasy and theurgy become two manifestations of the same phenomenon.

The consonance of these two elements, too sharply bifurcated in dominant critical studies of Jewish mysticism, is necessitated by the ontological assumption regarding the divine/angelic status of the Jewish soul. This idea assumes that the righteous or holy ones of Israel have been endowed with an angelomorphic nature, a conception that evolved in late-second temple Judaism, probably based on still older ancient near-eastern forms of angelic or divine kingship. Medieval Kabbalists presumed that, because God and Israel are circumscribed within a monopsychic unity that flattens the difference between cause and effect, it follows that mystical union and theurgical unification are concurrent processes that have been artificially separated for extraneous reasons. In the final analysis, the two schools of Kabbalah shared many features: traditions about the secret names of God, particularly the most sacred name, *YHWH*; the unique status of Hebrew, the one language considered “natural” rather than conventional; the understanding of sefirotic potencies as the means to attain mystical communion; and the theurgical interpretation of ritual as the way to maintain the unity of multiple potencies within God.

One of the most significant elements shared by all Kabbalists is their inordinate emphasis on secrecy. Kabbalah is usually studied as a form of mysticism, but a far better term to capture its nature may be esotericism, although the two terms are not easily differentiated, especially with Kabbalistic material. Kabbalah’s mystical dimensions are embedded within a hermeneutical framework of esotericism, and its esoteric dimensions within a phenomenological framework of mysticism.

With respect to secrecy, Kabbalists embrace a fundamental paradox also found in other religious cultures, but expressed in ways that reflect different theological, anthropological, and cosmological assumptions. Although truth is transmitted from generation to generation in a continuous chain—hence the term “Kabbalah”—it is a secret truth that cannot be disclosed in its entirety. These restrictions are not based on any need to hide the truth from those unworthy to receive it, a stance affirmed by Kabbalists, but are due

to the enigmatic nature of the mystery, the doubling of secrecy engendered by the fact that, to remain secret, it can be divulged only if it is concealed in its disclosure. This orientation, probably inherent in the esoteric texture of Kabbalah, was enunciated explicitly by sixteenth-century Kabbalists in Safed, utilizing a maxim taken from the Muslim philosopher Avicenna, “disclosure is the cause of concealment and concealment the cause of disclosure” (Wolfson 2002, 113–114).

Kabbalistic sources often justify secrecy with the biblical verse, “To investigate the matter is the glory of kings, but to conceal the matter is the glory of God” (Ps. 25:2). It is no exaggeration to say that Psalmist’s text served as an oracle posted on the walls of the small elitist circles, where specific secrets concerning both symbols and rites have been transmitted orally and in writing, although the eventual proliferation of the latter usually posed a challenge to the explicit injunction against disclosing secrets publicly. Of course, not every written exposition of occult knowledge defies this injunction; some Kabbalists mastered the art of concealing secrets by revealing them. One might say that the form of esoteric writing—to conceal in the exposition and expose in the concealment—is the hermeneutical method that allowed Kabbalists to explicate their esoteric knowledge. As Abulafia elegantly expressed it, “My intention is to hide and to reveal, to reveal and to hide, for the truth is deep for the enlightened and how much more so for the ignorant!” (Sitrei Torah, MS Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale 774, fol. 149a).

The same principle characterizes Zoharic literature. Mysteries of Torah are disclosed through being hidden, an exegetical pattern perceptible in the Torah. Its exoteric and esoteric layers of meaning are distinguishable, but the latter can only be expressed through the former. The initiated in the mystical teaching sees the secret through the garment of the text, rather than discarding it to behold the naked truth. The greatest of veils would be for one to think that one could see the face of God unveiled; the final veil to remove, therefore, is the veil of thinking it possible to see without any veil. For Kabbalists, the ultimate veil is the Tetragrammaton, the name that is the Torah in its mystical essence.

The minds of Kabbalists, again without distinguishing between theosophic and prophetic camps, reveal an intricate nexus between esotericism and eroticism. Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to say that one enters the heart of Kabbalah by marking the precise spot where the erotic and the esoteric intersect—a spot providing entry into the garden of mystical secrets. From the Kabbalists’ vantage point, the ecstatic experience of enlightenment facilitates knowing the eros of mystery wrapped in the exposé of the mystery of eros.

ELLIOT R. WOLFSON

See also: BIBLE; JEWS, WITCHCRAFT, AND MAGIC; OCCULT.

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KEMPTEN, PRINCE-ABBEY OF

The imperial abbey (*Fürstabtei* or *Fürststift*) of Kempten is famous for a very late execution, usually labeled the last legal execution of a witch in the Holy Roman Empire. The case was mentioned already in the mid-nineteenth century (Haas 1865) and widely popularized by Soldan and Heppé's history of witchcraft trials (Soldan and Heppé 1880). In 1892, Von Wachter reliably paraphrased the surviving contemporary copy of a legal opinion—still in place in the Kempten archive in the late 1980s, but which seems to have disappeared recently. According to the document, a death sentence was issued in 1775. This legal opinion referred to the prehistory of the case in much detail and described the entire life story of a mentally disturbed woman of about forty, who had suffered considerable hardships (orphanage, leprosy, lameness), and had converted, hoping to marry a Protestant lover, who abandoned her soon afterward. She gained the impression that he might have been a diabolical seducer, and felt great guilt for renouncing the saints, and the Virgin Mary in particular. Because of her incapacities, she was put in a workhouse at Langenegg, where she incited other female inmates with her fantasies. At some stage she was accused by a possessed five-year-old girl and beaten by other female inmates. The director of the workhouse tried to calm the tumult, but in consequence of their shared fantasies, one of the female inmates eventually delivered her to the authorities. If we can trust the

records, torture was not used in her trial. The criminal court of the prince-abbey dealt with her case from February 20. Because she maintained her stories of devilish possession, a Devil's pact, and apostasy, the high judge came to the conclusion that she had to be convicted according to criminal law, although she denied harmful magic. The prince-abbot, Honorius Roth von Schreckenstein (ruled 1760–1785), signed the death sentence on April 11, adding the words: *fiat iustitia* (let justice be done)! This is exactly what one could expect from a prince-abbot who in 1774 had invited the controversial exorcist Johann Joseph Gassner, notorious for claiming that all diseases were caused by witchcraft. Gassner's booklet on how to fight the Devil effectively, *Nützlicher Unterricht wider den Teufel zu streiten* (Useful Instruction on How to Struggle Against the Devil), was first printed at Kempten in 1774.

Although no newspaper reported her execution, there seemed little doubt that it actually took place. A local lawyer even published a booklet on the case in the early 1890s, amplifying the whole story with more details. However, a local archivist recently started digging deeper in local sources and found that her death sentence was never carried out. Although a conservative faction within the government supported the conviction, another faction fiercely denied the possibility of witchcraft and the legality of the trial, even if witchcraft remained in the law codes. But in the decade after the Bavarian War of the Witches, under the rule of the enlightened emperor Joseph II, even Benedictine monks were able to attack witchcraft publicly. The already convicted witch, Maria Anna Schwägelin (1734–1781), was imprisoned and died six years later. Hers was a witchcraft trial, but can no longer exemplify the final execution in the Holy Roman Empire. In his legal opinion, the high judge, named Treichlinger, referred to an earlier execution of a witch in 1755, in which he had participated, as a precedent within the prince-abbey. Even if this case cannot yet be verified from other sources (and no other local case was referred to in this legal opinion), it implied that the prince-abbey of Kempten shared the experience of late executions with a few other southern German ecclesiastical territories, but also that they must have been extremely rare events.

This surprising turn enables us to tell a completely different story of witchcraft trials in the prince-abbey, setting the events of 1775 in perspective. A thousand years earlier, in 772, the Benedictine abbot of St. Gallen founded a monastery at Kempten, near the ruins of an ancient Roman town, which had succeeded a Celtic settlement. The Carolingians used the monastery as a bridgehead in an Alemannic region. In 1062, the Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV made Kempten an imperial abbey; in 1360, Emperor Charles IV elevated it to the status of a prince-abbey. Its prince-abbots managed a

territory of about 50,000 inhabitants, making Kempten one of the largest monastic lands within the Holy Roman Empire. However, its road to state formation was rocky. By 1289, the town of Kempten became an imperial city and escaped the abbot's rule. After 1525, this imperial city of just about 4,000 inhabitants became Protestant. Likewise, the local nobility managed to become independent, and joined the Imperial Knighthood of Swabia. The abbacy was thus reduced to seven market towns and eighty-five villages. And because other estates were lacking, peasants sat in the parliament (*Landschaft*) of this extraordinary territory. These peasants were particularly self-confident and challenged their feudal overlords in numerous rebellions, including the great peasant war in 1524/1525.

Through the activities of capable local historians and an interested local public, Kempten's history has been particularly well explored. Extensive publications on the history of the imperial city and the imperial abbey revealed few incidents of sorcery or witchcraft, and almost no executions for witchcraft. In an early case of 1484, presumably linked to the activities of Heinrich Kramer, author of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), in the region, an accuser—not the witch—was punished in the market town of Unterthingau. In 1549, a village collectively accused a woman of damaging their crops by making hailstorms. The local lord, Veit Werdenstein von Eberspach, tried to convince the witch to retract her spells, but the peasant woman ridiculed him publicly. The nobleman and his villagers appealed to the prince-abbot's government. The Kempten high court scrutinized the case, but concluded that it was impossible to substantiate the accusation and open a formal criminal trial. Under Abbot Wolfgang von Grünenstein (ruled 1535–1557), the prince-abbey's government withstood repeated attempts by villagers to imprison or to punish this alleged witch, because there was no convincing circumstantial evidence; it eventually threatened the villagers with severe punishment if they did not stop harassing her. When witch hunting peaked in the region around 1590, the prince-abbey did not participate in the persecutions. When the prince-bishop of Augsburg tried to extend his persecution into Kempten's territory, Prince-Abbot Johann Erhard Blarer von Wartensee (ruled 1587–1594) was prepared to offer military resistance to invasions by foreign troops.

In 1673, we hear for the first time that a woman was burned for witchcraft within the prince-abbey, at Martinszell. A few years later, in 1687, after witchcraft trials had shaken the imperial city for the second time since 1664–1665, Prince-Abbot Rupert Bodman (ruled 1678–1728) denied the extradition of a peasant woman, because his government considered the circumstantial evidence against her insufficient. By then,

Bodman had already gained deep insights into the treatment of witchcraft. When Count Ferdinand Carl Franz von Hohenems resumed massive persecution between 1677–1680, burning large numbers of subjects within the county of Vaduz, the imperial administration of Leopold I (ruled 1658–1705) intervened and appointed Prince-Abbot Bodman to investigate. He condemned the lack of circumstantial evidence, the “unchristian torture,” and the obvious financial interest the count had taken in his persecutions. Bodman took on not just the responsibility of inquiring the case and suggesting an appropriate sentence, but even took care that this severe sentence was indeed enacted.

After convicting the count in the *Reichshofrat* (imperial aulic court), the emperor commissioned the prince-abbot of Kempten to lead a Habsburg army that eventually captured Count von Hohenems in 1681. The emperor stripped the count of Vaduz of his rights in 1684, and had him imprisoned in the prince-abbot's dungeon, where he died after years of confinement. From 1681 to 1712, the Benedictine abbot of Kempten administered the count's territories, before they were awarded to the princes of Liechtenstein, who still rule it. Rich and noble as the Kempten Benedictines were, at least this abbot did not hesitate to convict another rich and noble ruler for his crimes, and to enforce the most drastic treatment of an aristocratic witch hunter anywhere in the history of the Holy Roman Empire. Possibly Bodman was the most qualified of all Kempten's abbots: he had studied at the universities of Strasbourg, Salzburg, and Padua, and spoke fluent French, Italian, and Spanish in addition to Latin and German.

The prince-abbey of Kempten, formerly stigmatized for its late executions, can now serve as an example for ecclesiastical territories that carefully avoided witch hunts. If we look for explanations, we find a striking absence of religious zeal during the period of the Counter-Reformation and the Thirty Years' War. The Benedictines were certainly Catholic, but they clearly did not share the austerity that characterized Catholic piety elsewhere in this period. For instance, all prince-abbots of Kempten had concubines and children, as the chroniclers in the neighboring Protestant imperial city of Kempten meticulously and maliciously recorded. In 1594, papal visitors lamented that the Benedictines of Kempten all lived in private houses instead of cells, that they wore secular clothes with rich jewelry, and that they spent their time on drinking, hunting, gambling, and women. The abbots of this wealthy sinecure were usually not religious zealots, and their attitude toward sin, like their attitude toward women, seems noticeably more relaxed than those of most Counter-Reformation bishops. Although Abbot Bodman was more serious in his religious attitude, his government seems to have been characterized

by a relaxed attitude, because he granted his subjects the pleasure of smoking and founded new breweries. Furthermore, he improved his territory by commissioning water pipelines and bridges, postal services, and fishing ponds; he replaced feudal services by taxes, regulated social relationships within his territories by means of contracts, and introduced professional health service and firefighters in his prince-abbey.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: BAVARIAN WAR OF THE WITCHES; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); EXECUTIONS; GASSNER, JOHANN JOSEPH; HISTORIOGRAPHY; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; JOSEPH II, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; KRAMER, HEINRICH; VADUZ, COUNTY OF.

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KEPLER, JOHANNES (1571–1630)

One of the most intriguing episodes of the Scientific Revolution was Galileo Galilei's trial before the Roman Inquisition, but hardly less significant was the fate of Johannes Kepler, who had to flee the Catholic Counter-Reformation at several places, was exiled from his Lutheran homeland Württemberg for refusing to sign the Formula of Concord, and eventually became entangled in an endless witchcraft trial against his mother, Katharina Kepler.

His father Heinrich Kepler (1547–1590) owned the tavern *Zum Engel* in the tiny imperial free city Weil der Stadt; his mother Katharina (1551–1621) was the daughter of an innkeeper and village judge at Eltingen, Melchior Guldenmann. Kepler's parents settled in Leonberg, a Württemberg town, but family life was strained, and Heinrich left in 1589, leaving behind Katharina and four children. In 1608, Margaretha, the lone daughter, married a Protestant theologian, Georg Binder, who became pastor in nearby Heumaden (today a suburb of Stuttgart). One son, Christoph, became an artisan, married a woman from Eltingen, and settled in Leonberg. Another son, Heinrich, became a soldier and died young, after returning to his mother's house.

Their brother Johannes was allowed to study at the University of Tübingen. The astronomer Michael

Mästlin (1550–1631) aroused his enthusiasm for astronomy and mathematics, and, after graduating in 1594, Kepler was hired as a professor of mathematics by the estates of Inner Austria at Graz, a Habsburg territory with Protestant nobility and close links to Tübingen. There Kepler published his *Mysterium Cosmographicum* (Mystery of the Cosmos, 1596), attempting to combine the Copernican system with Neoplatonic ideas. Under the impact of the Counter-Reformation—Martín Del Rio was teaching at the Jesuit College in Graz—Kepler was exiled. Supported by the Bavarian chancellor Johann Georg Herwarth von Hohenburg, a long-standing correspondent, Kepler managed to succeed Tycho Brahe as imperial court astronomer in Prague. In this position, Kepler suggested that God spoke in the language of mathematics and interpreted the movements of the planets in mathematical equations (Kepler's Laws), one of the major achievements of the Scientific Revolution. He published some important books on Copernican cosmology, the *Astronomia Nova* (New Astronomy, 1609), a *Dissertatio cum Nuncio Sidereo* (Discussion of the Starry Messenger, 1610), and *Dioptrice*, a book about optics (1611). During this period, Kepler invited Galileo to settle in Germany, where everybody was free to think and publish whatever he wished. However, Kepler's situation deteriorated sooner than Galileo's. After the death of the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II (ruled 1576–1612), his position as imperial astronomer was confirmed by Emperor Mathias I (ruled 1612–1619), and even by Ferdinand II (ruled 1619–1637), who had exiled him from Graz. But Kepler preferred to settle at Linz, where the Protestant estates of Lower Austria employed him as professor of mathematics.

In 1615, his sister Margaretha informed him that their mother was involved in a bitter feud with neighbors at Leonberg, who had accused her of witchcraft. There were no extensive witch hunts in the duchy of Württemberg, but precisely in 1615 a number of women were burned at Leonberg. When a neighbor, Ursula Reinbold, accused his mother of witchcraft, Christoph Kepler sued her for slander. However, the litigation was delayed, since the Reinbold family found an ally in the district judge, Luther Einhorn, who had been rejected by Katharina Kepler as a husband for her daughter. Another ally was a local doctor who had become court physician to Prince Achilles Friedrich of Württemberg. The Reinbold faction began threatening Katharina Kepler physically, and eventually claimed material damages for the harm done to their children through her maleficent witchcraft. In autumn 1616, Johannes Kepler brought his mother to Linz. However, the stubborn lady returned to Heumaden in Württemberg, where the quarrels continued. Kepler tried to protect his mother by intensifying his contacts

with Württemberg's ruling elite. The famous lawyer Dr. Christoph Besold (1577–1638) and the theologian Wilhelm Bidembach served as informants and supporters. However, because Kepler had refused to sign the Formula of Concord, the duchy's orthodox Lutherans, including his former teacher Mathias Häfenræffer, emphasized Kepler's dissidence.

At this point, Johannes Kepler traveled to Württemberg, attempting to influence the decision of its *Hofgericht* (high court). Besold urged Kepler to take his mother back to Linz, and in November 1617, Kepler obtained official assurance that her departure did not constitute "flight," providing circumstantial evidence for her guilt. However, Katharina Kepler decided to stay in Württemberg, even returning to her house at Leonberg in June 1618. Besold kept warning Johannes Kepler about the machinations of Judge Einhorn. Seeking her estate, the Reinbold family commissioned a lawyer, Dr. Philipp Jacob Weyhenmayer, to compile evidence of Katherina Kepler's witchcraft. In August 1619, he presented fifty-two articles, and a formal inquisition into her case was started in winter 1619–1620, hearing numerous witnesses, while Judge Einhorn delayed the Kepler family's countersuit for slander.

On July 24, 1620, the Württemberg aulic council decided to imprison Katharina Kepler, and on August 7, 1620, she was jailed at Leonberg. Christoph Kepler immediately protested and succeeded in having her transferred to a prison in Güglingen. Johannes Kepler tried to intervene through Christoph Besold, before reaching Güglingen himself in September 1620. He commissioned a formal defense, presumably supported or authored by Besold and/or Bidembach, which was submitted to the *Hofgericht* on May 7, 1621. The ducal vice-chancellor, Dr. Sebastian Faber, arranged that this case reached the court's agenda within a few weeks. Councilor Hieronymus Gabelkover gave his opinion by July 14, and the case went to the legal faculty of the University of Tübingen (to which Besold belonged) in August 1621. On September 10, 1621, they ruled that Katharina Kepler was to be tortured at the lowest grade, the *territio*, which in practice meant that the instruments of torture were shown to her before a formal interrogation. Their very precise decision explicitly forbade the hangman to touch her, or even bind her. Under these circumstances, Katharina Kepler would not confess, and on October 3, 1621, Duke Johann Friedrich von Württemberg (ruled 1608–1628) ordered her set free. When the local court finally complied some days later, Katharina Kepler had been imprisoned for 405 days. She died six months later, in April 1622.

Like many contemporaries, Johannes Kepler was acutely aware of freedom of conscience and suppression. He must have been deeply impressed by his mother's

fate, although he admitted openly that, like many old people, she was indeed quarrelsome, difficult, and stubborn. It is striking that his own stubbornness caused him enormous difficulties, since the Lutheran superintendent of Linz, a Württemberger, suspected him of being Calvinist while simultaneously conspiring with the Jesuits. These accusations provoked fierce debate within the parliament of Lower Austria before a precarious favorable decision saved his position at Linz.

About the same time, Kepler published his *Harmonice Mundi Libri Quinque* (Five Books of the Harmony of the World, 1619), dedicated to King James I of England, a Neoplatonic interpretation of the universe as inspired by eternal harmony. His claim that God spoke in the language of mathematics implied that orthodox (but mathematically illiterate) theologians were unable to understand God's word. By Easter 1626, the Counter-Reformation in Lower Austria drove Kepler from Linz. He retired to the imperial city of Ulm, where he published the *Tabulae Rudolphinae* (Rudolphine Tables, 1627), then to Regensburg, both Protestant towns. In 1628, Imperial Generalissimo Albrecht von Wallenstein employed Kepler, and he moved to Sagan in Silesia. In autumn 1630, Kepler decided to return to Austria, but died en route.

Four years later his son Ludwig Kepler (1607–1663) published a manuscript that had played a role in his grandmother's witchcraft trial. After the invention of the telescope, Johannes Kepler had written his *Somnium seu Astronomia lunari* (Dream, or Lunar Astronomy, 1634). Influenced by Plutarch and Lucian, Kepler invented a literary framework for descriptions of the moon, where the possibilities of getting there were discussed ironically. According to Aristotelian physics, dry and thin Spaniards were likely to be attracted by the moon, but Kepler preferred employing an old hag to beam his hero up—and in this story the hero calls his mother a witch. In 1611, Kepler sent copies of this manuscript to Tübingen and other places, where they were recopied and circulated. Kepler suspected that readers identified him with the hero of his story and that his intellectual joke had played a role in the witchcraft trial against his mother.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AUSTRIA; FERDINAND II, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; RUDOLF II, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; SCIENCE AND MAGIC; WÜRTTEMBERG, DUCHY OF.

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KISS OF SHAME

The kiss of shame, also known as the *osculum infame* or the obscene kiss, was believed to be an act of worship performed at the witches' Sabbat. The Devil appeared to the witches in the form of a goat or other animal and

his followers kissed him on the anus, genitals, or feet. The kiss had its origins in Roman propaganda against Jews, conspirators, and early Christians. Christian authorities later used the kiss against medieval heretics. It appeared in depictions of the witches' Sabbat used to illustrate early modern demonological texts, and in medieval and early modern literature, notably Geoffrey Chaucer's *Miller's Tale* (late fourteenth century) and Hans (Johann) Jakob Christoph von Grimmelshausen's *Simplicissimus* (The Adventures of Simplicius Simplicissimus, 1669). The kiss of shame had several functions: as a parody of the kiss of peace in the Christian Eucharist; an act of fealty; an act of illicit sexual activity (premarital fornication, adultery, or bestiality); a humiliation; and a means of denoting the dishonor of the performer.

In his *Octavius* (late second century), Minucius Felix, a Christian apologist, recorded the rumor that Christians worshipped the head of a donkey and revered the genitals of their priests. He separated the two essential elements of the kiss of shame, which were later



Witches at a Sabbat offer the kiss of shame to the Devil's anus. (Art Archive/Dagli Orti)

conflated: worship of an animal considered to be abject in the dominant culture; and adoration of an unclean part of the body. The English cleric Walter Map in the late twelfth century and Pope Gregory IX in 1233 both claimed that contemporary heretics worshipped a large black cat by kissing it on the feet, under the tail, or on the genitals. The Waldensians, Gregory stated, had also to kiss a huge toad (or a goose or a duck) on the behind or the mouth, and afterward a mysterious pale, ice-cold being. The notion that Waldensians worshipped the Devil in the form of an animal persisted into the fifteenth century. Illustrations to Johann Tinctor's (Johannes Tinctoris; Jean Taincture) *Contra sectam Valdensium* (Against the Waldensian Sect, ca. 1460) depicted a heretic about to kiss a goat on the anus. King Philip IV of France used this propaganda in his attack on the Knights Templar in 1307. He accused the knights of revering a Satanic cat by removing their hats, bowing to it, and kissing it on the anus.

Although the kiss of shame cannot be found in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), at the height of the witch persecutions it was incorporated into later demonological texts, pamphlet accounts of trials, and images depicting the heretical witches' Sabbat. For example, the kiss appeared in a colored woodcut in a news-sheet reporting the witchcraft trials in Geneva in 1570, now in the Zürich collection known as the *Wickiana*, and a century later it was still the central image of an illustration for Johannes Prätorius's *Blockes-Berges Verrichtung* (Performance at the Blocksberg, 1668). In these images, the kiss of shame (clearly a parody of the kiss of peace) illustrated the fealty of the witch heretic to the Devil, and therefore her abandonment of God and the inversion of spiritual norms. It also indicated her sexual promiscuity and lack of chastity: if single, she could not marry the Devil; if married, she was committing adultery with him. The pamphlet *News from Scotland* (1591) introduced English readers to a different version of the kiss of shame. It reported that the North Berwick witches were forced to kiss the Devil's buttocks as a humiliating penance because they had "tarried overlong" in performing their evil duties. Both Chaucer and Grimmshausen also used the kiss as a gesture of humiliation in their works. In *The Miller's Tale*, Alison granted her suitor Absalon a kiss, but he ended up kissing her "naked arse." In *Simplicissimus*, some soldiers were forced to kiss the backsides of the peasants who had captured them before being shot. In a further episode, an impersonator of the eponymous hero refused a duel and was forced instead to kiss the backsides of the sheep he had intended to steal. The duel provided an honorable means of resolving conflict; kissing sheep, or goats in the case of witches, was an act of bestiality that

incurred personal dishonor, social exclusion, and the punishment of exile or death.

JONATHAN DURRANT

See also: BLACK MASS; CATS; GOAT; GREGORY IX, POPE; NORTH BERWICK WITCHES; PAMPHLETS AND NEWSPAPERS; PRÄTORIUS, JOHANNES; SABBAT; TEMPLARS; TINCTOR, JOHANN; VAUDOIS (WALDENSIANS).

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KRAMER (INSTITORIS), HEINRICH (CA. 1430–1505)

Kramer (in Latin, Institoris), a Dominican friar and inquisitor, achieved a dubious kind of immortality by publishing the first comprehensive handbook for witch hunters, the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), which not only described the crime luridly but gave detailed instructions to help lay judges as well as inquisitors conduct witchcraft trials and also did much to associate the crime of witchcraft with women. His career as a witch-hunting inquisitor, however, suggests a pattern of failure and frustration.

Born in Sélestat (Schlettstadt), an imperial city in Alsace, Kramer's father may have been a retailer, as his German name suggests. That Institoris is the Latin form of his original German name is proved by the *Nürnbergger Hexenhammer* (Nuremberg Witches' Hammer), a secular witch hunt instruction from 1491 written in his own hand, where he named himself Heinrich Kramer. He probably entered the Dominican monastery of his native city about the age of fifteen, rising through the order and becoming master of theology by 1474. Being well suited for this profession, he was also appointed inquisitor that same year. By 1475, he was involved in gathering evidence about earlier Jewish ritual murders in south Germany to help with the famous Jew-baiting ritual murder case of the "child-saint" Simon at Trent (the capital of the prince-bishopric of Trent, now Trento in Italy). In 1478, he was promoted to inquisitor of upper (i.e., southern) Germany.

Kramer's first experiences with witchcraft trials date from the 1480s in the Rhineland, mainly in his homeland, Alsace. Encountering some opposition, he went to Rome and obtained the famous bull *Summis desiderantes*

(Desiring with Supreme Ardor) from the new Pope Innocent VIII in December 1484, directed at the bishop of Strasbourg. Afterward, named papal inquisitor in upper Germany, he moved to the diocese of Constance, which covered the greater part of southern Swabia. However, his attempted persecutions of witches in the imperial city of Ravensburg, and especially the Tyrolean capital Innsbruck, miscarried dramatically.

Starting in July 1485, Kramer's inquisition at Innsbruck was conducted through intimidation, limitless torture, denial of legal defense, and distorted reports. Not just the relatives of the accused, but also the citizens of the capital, the clergy, and the Tyrolean nobility protested against Kramer's procedures. The bishop of Brixen, Georg Golser, appointed a commission to investigate his inquisition, which interrogated seven imprisoned women on October 4. Over Kramer's desperate resistance, the bishop stopped the persecution on October 29, nullified its results, and, with the Tyrolean archduke's approval, liberated all the imprisoned women on November 2. Nine days later, the bishop formally requested the inquisitor to leave his diocese; by February 1486, Golser threatened to use force if Kramer did not leave Tyrol immediately.

Kramer sought revenge for such bitter defeats by composing his notorious treatise *Malleus Maleficarum*, published in 1486, with a second edition in 1487 that included the 1484 papal bull. The formerly assumed coauthorship of Jacob Sprenger has been convincingly refuted, and the notarial document giving approval from the theological faculty of the University of Cologne was a forgery.

There was evidence of pathological elements in Kramer's personality; Bishop Golser thought he was mad. Everywhere he picked quarrels and became disliked; soon the wandering inquisitor departed, sometimes exiled. Kramer's misogyny was extreme even for a medieval monk, and his sadism was mixed with prurience; he was accused of illegally investigating sexual affairs of women. In his *Nuremberg Witches' Hammer*, Kramer approved a "reserved" use of torture to avoid releasing women who did not confess after undergoing it. Kramer's boasts of having burned 200 women at the stake in 1491 seem greatly exaggerated. At first, popes protected him, but the jurists at the Roman Curia did not share his opinions and hindered his activities with uncomfortable bulls.

In 1500, Pope Alexander VI, at the instigation of the bishop of Olomouc, Stanislav Thurzo, named Kramer papal inquisitor to Moravia and Bohemia. He moved to Olomouc (Olmütz), which boasted an important Dominican monastery, and devoted himself to literary polemics. In April 1501, he published two tracts at Olomouc against Czech heresies, but never began any inquisitorial trials against them; and so far as we know, he made no further attempt to conduct witchcraft

trials. He died in Olomouc in 1505, but his grave has not yet been found.

GÜNTER JEROUSCHEK

See also: GOLSER, GEORG; INNOCENT VIII, POPE; INNSBRUCK; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MORAVIA; RITUAL MURDER.

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KYTELER, ALICE
(CA. 1260/1265–AFTER 1324)

The trial of Alice Kyteler for heresy and sorcery in 1324 is the only such case known from medieval Ireland. It was significant for three reasons. First, it was one of the earliest trials in European history to link sorcery with heresy. Second, it was the first to treat the defendants as members of an organized group. Third, it was the first to accuse a woman of having acquired the power of sorcery by means of sexual intercourse with a demon. Our information about the trial derives from a single manuscript, generally referred to as the *Narrative* because of the title (A Narrative of the Proceedings Against Dame Alice Kyteler) given to it by Thomas Wright in his edition of 1843. Although the *Narrative* is unsigned, it is clear from internal evidence that its author was Alice Kyteler's accuser, Richard Ledrede, bishop of Ossory (1317–ca. 1360).

We know little about Alice. William Outlaw, the son of her first marriage was appointed "sovereign" (equivalent to mayor) of Kilkenny in 1305, suggesting that she was born ca. 1260–1265. Her family was Flemish. In 1277, William le Kyteler of Ieper (Ypres) was granted a safe conduct to trade in Ireland. He settled there and, by 1303, had become sheriff of the liberty of Kilkenny. Joseph de Ketteler (perhaps William's son or brother) died in 1286/1287 and was buried at Kilkenny. Alice was presumably the daughter of one of these men. She married William Outlaw, a wealthy Kilkenny money lender and merchant, ca. 1280. Their son, also called

William Outlaw, inherited the family business after his father's death, which had occurred by 1303. By then Alice had married again, this time to another wealthy man, Adam le Blund. In 1307, Blund's heirs renounced all claims on their inheritance in favor of William Outlaw. By 1309, Blund was dead and Alice had married a third husband, Richard de Valle, the owner of six manors in the neighboring county of Tipperary. William Outlaw was appointed to look after de Valle's business interests, but his heirs refused to surrender their inheritance. On de Valle's death ca. 1316, Alice was forced to take legal proceedings against her stepson, Richard de Valle junior, in order to gain her widow's dower of a third part of the estate. Sometime between 1316 and 1324 she married a fourth husband, Sir John le Poer, a member of a prominent Anglo-Irish aristocratic family. By 1324 Lady (or Dame) Alice, as she had become, was a very wealthy woman. She also had influential connections. Roger Outlaw, a kinsman of her first husband, was the chancellor of Ireland. William Douce, mayor of Dublin, was a close friend, while Walter de Islip, the treasurer of Ireland, and Arnold le Poer, the seneschal (and, therefore, chief legal officer) of the liberties of Kilkenny and Carlow, were her son's trusted friends.

In 1324, Alice and five other women were accused of being heretical sorceresses. There were seven charges. These alleged that (1) they denied the Christian faith for a month or a year, depending on the scale of what they desired to attain through sorcery; during this time they neither heard mass, nor received communion, nor entered any church. (2) They sacrificed to "son of Art," one of the inferior demons of hell, at a crossroads near Kilkenny, using live animals that they dismembered and scattered there. (3) They asked advice and sought responses from demons through sorcery. (4) They usurped the authority and jurisdiction of the Church by excommunicating their husbands at nightly gatherings. Using lighted candles, they named, spat on, and cursed each part of their husband's bodies, extinguishing their candles at the end with the words: "fi, fi, fi [perhaps a manuscript abbreviation of *fiat*, "let it be"], "amen" (Davidson and Ward 1993, 28). (5) They made powders, ointments, potions, and candles, which they used to arouse love and hate, to maim, and to kill. They prepared these from a stew that consisted of a thief's decapitated head, dismembered cockerels, dead men's nails, pubic hair, spiders, disfigured worms, milfoil, and the brains and clothing [perhaps the caul] of boys who had died unbaptized. (6) The sons and daughters of her four husbands had commenced litigation at the bishop's court. They openly accused Alice of using sorcery to kill some of their fathers and infatuate others to such an extent that they gave all their possessions to her and to William Outlaw. Her present husband, Sir John le Poer, had been reduced by sorcery to such a state that he was

totally emaciated, his nails had fallen out, and there was no hair on any part of his body. (7) Alice had a demon incubus, called "son of Art" or "Robin son of Art," who had sexual intercourse with her. He appeared sometimes in the form of a cat, other times as a shaggy black dog, or as a black man with two companions. She had given herself and all her possessions to this incubus, and she acknowledged that she had received all her wealth and everything that she possessed from him. One of Alice's accomplices, Petronilla of Meath, later confessed that, with her own eyes, in full daylight, she had seen Robin materialize in the form of three black men bearing iron rods in their hands and had watched the apparition, thus armed, having sexual intercourse with Alice. Indeed, she added that she had dried the place with a bedcover after their departure.

The local bishop, Richard Ledrede, an English Franciscan schooled at Avignon and a personal appointee of Pope John XXII, formulated the charges. Ledrede requested the chancellor of Ireland to arrest Alice because of the public accusation of heresy and sorcery. But the chancellor was her relation, Roger Outlaw, and he replied by urging the bishop to drop the case. When Ledrede persisted and summoned her to appear before his own ecclesiastical court, his summons was ignored. A second date was set; but Alice, using her influence with the seneschal, Arnold le Poer, had the bishop arrested instead and committed to prison in Kilkenny Castle. If they hoped that a spell in prison would cool the bishop's ardor, it had precisely the opposite effect. He appealed in person at the seneschal's court, reading out the papal bulls that required the secular power to pursue heretics. Ledrede was told bluntly to "go to the church and preach there" (Davidson and Ward 1993, 46)

The case appeared to be lost but, by chance, John Darcy, the justiciar (chief governor) of Ireland, passed through Kilkenny in July 1324 and Ledrede succeeded in having the issue brought before him. Guilty verdicts were returned, but Alice managed to slip away. Her son, William Outlaw, publicly renounced his heresy, accepted penance, and promised to atone by providing monies for the repair of the cathedral. Petronilla of Meath confessed to all the charges after she had been flogged six times and tortured until she was senseless. Refusing to accept penance or abjure her heresies, she was paraded through the streets of Kilkenny and burned alive on November 2, 1324.

Although some commentators detected political motives behind Ledrede's actions, there can be little doubt but that he was endeavoring to introduce the Inquisition's methods into the judicial practice of Ireland and England, where convictions on the basis of confession alone were prohibited. The charges, which have many similarities with those placed against the Templars seventeen years earlier, originated because of a

combination of disaffected stepchildren and a religious zealot. The description of John le Poer's body as emaciated and devoid of body hair fits the symptoms of arsenic poisoning. Together with the allegation that Alice had killed her previous husbands, her stepchildren suspected that she was slowly murdering the current one. The property and wealth of heretics did not pass to their blood heirs but reverted to the family's next of kin. Because both Alice and her son, William Outlaw, would have been dispossessed by her conviction, John le Poer would have inherited her property and wealth.

Instead, Ledrede was forced to flee from his diocese in 1327. He sheltered at Avignon, returning only in 1349 when he again started to pursue heretics. Subsequently he was accused of trumping-up charges against the "decent, simple, faithful people" as a means of extorting money (Colledge 1974, xxxi). Ledrede survived the accusations, however, and died of old age in 1360 or 1361. We have no idea what happened to Alice Kyteler after 1324.

JOHN BRADLEY

See also: COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; CROSSROADS; HERESY; INCUBUS AND SUCCUBUS; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; IRELAND; JOHN XXII, POPE; PAPACY AND PAPAL BULLS; POTIONS; TEMPLARS.

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LAMBE, DR. JOHN (CA. 1545–1628)

Lambe was a notorious English conjurer, magician, and astrologer who in the 1620s became an adviser to the king's favorite, Sir George Villiers, first duke of Buckingham. The fortunes of the two men became intertwined, their ambition and vanity spread murderous hatred among political elites and common people alike.

Lambe began working as a tutor to the sons of the gentry but turned to medicine and was licensed by the bishop of Durham. Lambe used sorcery, conjurations, and cunning magic. His career ended in 1608 after he was prosecuted at Worcester for bewitching Thomas Lord Windsor. He was also charged with invoking spirits. Although found guilty on both counts, he escaped execution. Initially held in Worcester Castle, he was moved to London after some participants in the trial died. He remained in the King's Bench Prison until June 1623, styling himself "Doctor" and continuing to practice magic for wealthy clients. In 1622, the duke of Buckingham accompanied his mother at a consultation session with Lambe to determine whether sorcery had caused his brother John's insanity. Buckingham became Lambe's patron, quashing his conviction for raping an eleven-year-old girl while in jail. Shortly before he was to be hanged, Lambe told the Lord Chief Justice, in an interview arranged by Buckingham, that he had important information about the gunpowder plot. The attorney general was instructed to issue a pardon.

How close Lambe became to Buckingham is unclear. A letter of 1624 from the duke to the king at least pretended to mock him. In 1625, Lady Purbeck, who had been forced by her father to marry the insane John Villiers, reportedly visited Lambe accompanied by her lover Sir Robert Howard. Upon hearing a rumor of this, Buckingham tried to compel Lambe to divulge what had been said in order to prove that her infant son was a bastard. Nevertheless, Lambe became a symbol of malign influence when the duke's popularity waned. In June 1626, before the king dissolved Parliament for trying to impeach Buckingham, a terrible storm broke over the River Thames. Gossip spread that "Buckingham's Wizard" had caused it. In 1626–1628, tension over parliamentary subsidies accompanied ballads attacking Lambe for both witchcraft and sexual

scandal, suggesting that he used magic to procure women for Buckingham. Meanwhile, rumors abounded that Buckingham's mother had consulted Lambe about her son's fate, and even that Lambe was responsible when Lady Purbeck faced charges not only of adultery but also of witchcraft after the discovery of a wax image of Buckingham. In 1627, Lambe was examined by the Royal College of Physicians and found ignorant of the principles of astrology.

In June 1628, a mob spotted Lambe leaving a London theater. Reviling him as "witch," "devil," and "the duke's conjurer," they chased him and beat him so severely that he died the next day. News of his death caused popular rejoicing and inspired ballads. Martin Parker, in his ballad, *The Tragedy of Doctor Lambe, the great suposed Conjurer*, damned Lambe as "the Devill of our Nation," hated not just for his magic but also for his greed (his last meal had been half a suckling pig). The final verses treat Lambe's death as an act of providential deliverance from treachery, corruption, and immorality. A popular pamphlet ridiculed Lambe in his ribboned knee-points (that hold stockings up), striped silks, and deep lace ruff, pathetically trying to repel his assailants with the sword he carried to affect the appearance of a gentleman. London's authorities made little effort to trace Lambe's killers, earning them a rebuke and a fine from King Charles I.

Mocking verses circulated in the London crowd that Buckingham's authority was bound up with Lambe's magic and that Buckingham would soon share his much-loathed magician's fate. Buckingham was assassinated in August of the same year. The link between Buckingham and Lambe, and their association with witchcraft, was revived in the 1650s during the well-publicized witchcraft trial of Anne Bodenham, who claimed to have been Lambe's servant.

MALCOLM J. GASKILL

See also: ASTROLOGY; CUNNING FOLK; ENGLAND; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; MALE WITCHES; PAMPHLETS AND NEWSPAPERS; SORCERY.

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LAMIA

According to late Greek tradition, Lamia was a very beautiful Libyan queen. Zeus, king of the gods, fell in love with her, but his wife, Hera, full of jealousy, robbed her of her children. In despair, Lamia began to steal other people's children and murder them, and this appalling behavior warped her face and made her extremely ugly. Accordingly, she became the bogey-woman of the nursery. Horace, for example, suggests that a poet should not ask his audience to believe impossibilities such as drawing a child still alive from Lamia's stomach (Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 340). Other late Greek and Roman authors, such as Philostratus, conceived *lamiae* as nonhuman females who seduced young men so that they could eat their flesh and drink their blood—hence their development, in modern Greek folklore, to beautiful women with monstrous feet or half-woman, half-fish creatures who drown people who go swimming in the sea.

Lamia quickly became a term used insultingly about female magical operators. Apuleius of Madaura (second century C.E.) has the hero of his *Metamorphoses* describe how two elderly women entered the room as he lay in bed, drenched him with urine, and tore out his traveling companion's heart. And in his famous story of Psyche and Cupid, Psyche's two sisters, creatures endowed, according to the tale, with more than natural envy and malice, are called "wicked" and "treacherous little wolves," as well as *lamiae* (Apuleius, 5.11). These, then, are the associations that the word *lamia* carried forward into later times, deriving in part, perhaps, from men's memories of elderly women in the family who dominated their childhood and played a prominent role in the magical rituals attending almost every act of consequence in family life.

Isidore of Seville made a greater impression on the Middle Ages by deriving the word *lamia* from a Latin verb, *laniare*, meaning "to tear, savage, mutilate"—ingenious but inaccurate: The term is originally Greek. But Isidore's mistaken derivation became popular; Gervase of Tilbury repeated it. A thousand years after Apuleius, Gervase knew *lamiae* as a type of mischievous fairy, describing them as "women who run about all over the place, never still for a moment, looking for a way to get into people's houses. Once in, they empty jars, baskets, and dishes, and peer into pots. They drag babies out of their cradles, light candles or tapers, and often hit people while they are asleep" (Gervase of Tilbury, *De otiiis imperialibus* part 3, chap. 87). A few

centuries later, the title page of Ulrich Molitor's treatise on witches, *De laniis et phitonicis mulieribus* (Concerning Witches and Fortune-tellers, 1489), contained an interesting misprint, since *lamiiis* (witches) there appears as *laniis* (butchers), a variation corrected in later editions.

Lamiae was picked up by later writers on magic and witchcraft, who tried, not altogether successfully, to use it as a technical rather than a general term for "witch." Johann Weyer, for example, offered to explain *lamia* to his readers, only to identify it with *striga* and *saga* (two words with very different histories and implications), before saying that he is going to use it to refer to a woman who enters into a pact with an evil spirit and thereafter worked maleficent magic with his help (Weyer, *De praestigiis daemonum* [On the Tricks of Devils], book 3, chap. 1). His contemporary, Johann Georg Goedelmann, went somewhat further, describing *lamiae* as ignorant old women who, unlike magicians (*magi*) and workers of poisonous magic (*venefici*), did not learn their magical techniques from books but were cozened by the Devil into believing they could work wonders (Goedelmann, *De magis, veneficis, et lamiiis* [On Sorcerers, Poisoners, and Witches], book 1, chap. 2). The Jesuit Martín Del Rio, however, mocked Weyer's claim to distinguish among the various names given to workers of harmful magic on the grounds that what was important about such people were their deeds and not their names. By now, he asserted, it had become accepted custom to lump together the various magical practitioners, regardless of what they were called, and to treat them as though there were no differences among them (Del Rio, *Disquisitiones Magicae Libri Sex* [Six Books on Investigations into Magic] book 5, section 16). This is the position adopted by many, perhaps most, early modern authors writing on magic and witchcraft.

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART

See also: APULEIUS OF MADAURA; DEL RIO, MARTIN; FAIRIES; GOEDELMANN, JOHANN GEORG; ISIDORE OF SEVILLE; MOLITOR, ULRICH; STRIX, STRIGA, STRIA.

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LAMOTHE-LANGON, ETIENNE-LÉON DE (1786–1852)

An impoverished nobleman from Toulouse, whose father had been killed in 1794 during the "Terror" of the French Revolution, Etienne-Léon de Lamothe perpetrated the most spectacular hoax in the historiography of witchcraft. Lacking formal schooling, he earned his living as a freelance author and Romantic novelist

with “a marked taste for the sinister, the mysterious, and the melodramatic” (Cohn 1975, 132), becoming one of the most productive French writers of this period. He began writing at three o’clock in the morning and managed to publish no fewer than 400 books (or 1,500 volumes in manuscript) in fifty years.

His work includes a celebrated three-volume *Histoire de l’Inquisition en France* (History of the French Inquisition) of 1829, presumably inspired by Juan Antonio Llorente’s *Histoire critique de l’Inquisition d’Espagne* (Critical History of the Spanish Inquisition, 1817–1818), a best seller throughout Europe. Lamothe allegedly wrote his history from archival sources. However, Lamothe had no time for archival research. In 1829 alone, he published twenty-two volumes, including novels like *La Vampire ou la Vierge de Hongrie* (The Vampire, or The Virgin of Hungary), and he had no training in paleography. Only recently has it become clear that he not only amplified his own name into “Lamothe-Houdancourt” (from 1815–1817) and “Baron de Lamothe-Langon” (after 1817) but also invented his “sources.” They included the earliest reports about the witches’ Sabbat, allegedly from 1275, as well as the earliest reports of a large-scale witch hunt, allegedly conducted between 1300 and 1350. His accounts of mass persecutions seemed plausible, because Pope John XXII in a bull of 1320 had indeed empowered the Inquisitions of Toulouse and Carcassonne to proceed against practitioners of certain kinds of magic.

Lamothe’s forgeries became universally accepted after Wilhelm Gottlieb Soldan quoted them in his authoritative *Geschichte der Hexenprozesse* (History of Witch Trials, 1843), and even more so after Joseph Hansen quoted them fully in both his history of witchcraft in the Middle Ages (1900) and in his source collection (1901). Thereafter, scholars universally took the authenticity of these sources for granted. It was only in the mid-1970s that two historians (Cohn 1975, 126–146; Kieckhefer 1976, 16–20) independently demolished Lamothe’s allegations. Neither Lamothe’s alleged inquisitors of Carcassonne and Toulouse nor their witch hunts could be substantiated from any surviving sources. Lamothe had simply fabricated the victims and their confessions in order to sell his publications and perhaps in order to amplify the importance of France in the history of witchcraft. But even Pope John XXII had withdrawn his authorization in 1330, and thereafter, inquisitors were no longer responsible for sorcery trials in France. With Lamothe’s forgeries eliminated, it became clear that it was only circa 1400–1430 that different aspects of witchcraft and heresy were assembled into a specifically European “cumulative” concept of witchcraft, which allowed witch hunts of unprecedented severity. The case of Lamothe remains a warning to historians not to accept “sources” just because they appear to be plausible. After 1835,

Lamothe specialized in forging sources, and he fabricated (among many others) the memoirs of Louis XVIII and Napoleon Bonaparte. Furthermore, Lamothe’s fraud demonstrated the efficacy of traditional source criticism: In a masterful intellectual exercise, Norman Cohn suggested that Lamothe had simply copied his account of the witches’ Sabbat from a seventeenth-century French demonologist, Pierre de Lancre.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: FRANCE; HANSEN, JOSEPH; HISTORIOGRAPHY; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; JOHN XXII, POPE; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; SOLDAN, WILHELM GOTTLIEB.

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LANCASHIRE WITCHES

The term *Lancashire witches* (sometimes called the *Pendle witches*) usually refers to a group of sixteen alleged witches from the Pendle region of Lancashire who were tried at the Lancaster assizes August 18–19, 1612. This Lancashire outbreak was, at the time, the most serious witch hunt yet experienced in England. Ten of the accused were executed, and another was sentenced to a year’s imprisonment punctuated by four sessions on the pillory. Another woman associated with this group, Jennet Preston, had been tried and executed in the neighboring county of Yorkshire three weeks previously.

Thomas Potts, the clerk of the court that tried the witches, soon recorded the Lancashire outbreak in a lengthy tract, published in 1613. This tract, which reproduced the examinations of the witches and of those giving witness against them, is a major source for the events of 1612. Unusual for an English case, the 1612 Lancashire trials have passed into local legend, and their memory endures in the local tourist



Ten witches from Pendle in Lancashire were hanged in what was England's largest witch hunt up to that time. The witch on the left may be the octogenarian Elizabeth Southernns ("Old Demdike"), while the fear that a Sabbat had taken place was represented by the female witch, male witch, and devil riding on broomsticks to the witches' gathering. (TopFoto.co.uk)

and heritage industries. This probably owes much to *The Lancashire Witches*, a novel based on the 1612 trials, published in 1849 by William Harrison Ainsworth, one of the most popular Victorian writers, and still in print. Robert Neill in 1951 published another novel based on the 1612 Lancashire witches, *Mist over Pendle*.

The train of events behind the Lancashire witch scare began on March 21, 1612, when a woman named Alizon Device met a peddler called John Law. Device asked to see some of the goods in his pack and grew angry when he refused her. Law instantly went into what was regarded as a witchcraft-induced illness (to the modern reader, his affliction looks much like a stroke), and he and his relatives decided to report the matter to the authorities. On March 30, the justice of

the peace, Roger Nowell, took depositions from Alizon Device, her mother Elizabeth, and her brother James and from John Law's son, Abraham. Three days later, Nowell examined Elizabeth Device's mother, the octogenarian Elizabeth Southernns (alias "Old Demdike"), Anne Whittle (alias "Chattox"), and three witnesses. On April 4, Nowell committed Alizon Device, Old Demdike, Chattox, and Chattox's daughter, Anne Redferne, to the jail at Lancaster Castle to await trial for witchcraft. Rumors of witchcraft continued to burgeon, especially after a group of suspects met together at the Malkin Tower, apparently to discuss tactics in the face of the developing witch craze and also to plot blowing up Lancaster Castle in order to release their friends. News of this meeting, which looked very like a Sabbat to contemporaries, convinced Nowell and his fellow

justices of the peace that they were confronting a major outbreak of witchcraft, and investigations intensified. Sir Edward Bromley and Sir James Altham, experienced judges who had been responsible for convicting Jennet Preston in Yorkshire, presided over the trials. Both judges had been well briefed by the Lancashire authorities, and the trials, notable particularly for an unusual dependence on child witnesses, were heavily weighted against the accused.

Because the Lancashire trials were the largest yet seen in England, contemporaries regarded them as noteworthy and possibly controversial: Potts's tract was apparently written at the request of the judges and can be read as a justification of their conduct of the trial. Although, as we have noted, the trials have continued to attract considerable attention, they have not become the subject of a full-scale scholarly investigation, despite some useful studies by local historians (for example, Lumby 1995) and an important recent collection of essays (Poole 2002). Many questions about the trials remain unanswered. Most importantly, it is very unclear why such a large-scale outbreak of witchcraft occurred in this place at a time when witchcraft cases in other parts of England were in decline. This problem awaits investigation, but the answer probably lies in the peculiar state of religious affairs in the county.

Lancashire was one of the strongholds of Catholicism in England, but it also had an active Protestant county elite, who were anxious both to check popery and to impose greater godliness on the population at large. The parish of Whalley, within which Pendle lay, was typical of upland England, being large and full of scattered settlements, the kind of area to which it was difficult to bring the message of the Reformation. Much responsibility for the development of this witch craze rests with Nowell, who seems to have played an important part in orchestrating the examination of the suspected witches. Nowell was an experienced local administrator, aged sixty-two at the time, who was not only a justice of the peace but had also served as sheriff of Lancashire. Through his family connections, Nowell also had contacts with advanced Protestantism. He was related to another gentry family, the Starkies of Cleworth, whose household had been in 1595 the center of one of the typical demonic possession-cum-witchcraft cases of the period. He was also close to the Lister family, one of whose members was victim of Jennet Preston, the Yorkshire witch executed in 1612. In Nowell, we have an unusual local justice of the peace who had a strong animus against witches and whose influence was very marked, both in the pretrial investigations of the 1612 witches and on the assize judges.

Although it was the Pendle witches who passed into legend after the 1612 trials, three more women from the nearby village of Salmesbury were also tried at the Lancaster assizes in 1612 (hence the nineteen witches

referred to in Potts's tract). They were prosecuted through evidence given by Grace Sowerbutts, who accused them of offering her various forms of physical abuse, of tempting her to commit suicide, of killing a child whose body they later exhumed and ate, and of transporting her to the River Ribble to participate in what was in effect a Sabbat, where she and the three alleged witches danced with "four black things" and then had sexual intercourse with them after the dancing. The Pendle witches were tried and, in the relevant instances, convicted of standard malefic witchcraft, but Sowerbutts's evidence was very different from that offered by witnesses in the main series of trials. The court, which was in the process of sentencing ten alleged witches to death, totally rejected Sowerbutts's allegations and acquitted the three women she named. The judges would not countenance allegations of this type, especially after they learned that a Jesuit priest had schooled Sowerbutts in her witchcraft beliefs. In 1612 Lancashire, malefic witches were dangerous, but popish delusions about the Sabbat and cannibalistic witches were superstitions.

After the 1612 trials, rumors of witchcraft evidently continued in the Pendle area, and reentered the historical record in a less-well-known witch scare of 1633–1634. At the center of this episode lay an eleven-year-old boy named Edmund Robinson, who claimed that shape-changing witches had taken him to the Sabbat and that he there saw a large number of local people whom he recognized. The 1633–1634 outbreak was badly documented, but one source suggested that sixty people were suspected. Certainly, a large-scale witch panic threatened, with Robinson and his father touring settlements in the area offering their services as witch hunters. But there was to be no replay of 1612. The judge presiding over the trials, clearly worried by what was happening, contacted the central government at Westminster. Apparently no trials were held, and the bishop of Chester, within whose diocese Pendle lay, was sent in to investigate. Robinson and his father were taken to London, along with five of the suspected witches, who were given medical examinations. Robinson withdrew his evidence, claiming that he had made everything up because he was late getting the cattle home and feared being chastised by his mother. The incident demonstrated both the persistence of witch beliefs in rural England in the 1630s and a growing reluctance among British authorities to countenance witch hunting, in stark contrast to the situation in 1612.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: CHILDREN; ENGLAND; PANICS; RURAL WITCHCRAFT.

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LANCRE, PIERRE DE (1533–1630)

In 1609, Pierre de Lancre conducted trials that resulted in dozens of executions for witchcraft—the largest mass witchcraft trial in early modern France, until the Languedoc-Ardenne panic of the 1640s. Frustrated by the persistent skepticism of his colleagues at the *Parlement* (sovereign judicial court) of Bordeaux, Lancre then wrote three lengthy treatises on the subject, defending his actions and arguing that witchcraft was real, that witches constituted a dangerous heretical sect, and that the sect had to be stamped out with severity.

Lancre was born around 1533 to an influential Bordeaux family. He was related by birth and marriage to several well-known Bordeaux authors, including Florimond de Raemond and Michel de Montaigne. On the way to his long legal career, Lancre attended the Jesuit *college* of Clermont in Paris in the early 1570s. He (and Martín Del Rio) probably heard Juan Maldonado's influential lectures on witches in 1571. Throughout his life, Lancre was inspired by the intense Catholic spirituality encouraged by the Jesuits.

In 1579, Lancre received his doctorate of law. He joined the *Parlement* of Bordeaux in 1582. In the early seventeenth century, when he was in his fifties, he began a prolific writing career that lasted almost up to his death in 1630. In 1607, he published a long work of neostoicist philosophy. He devoted about a third of this book to the exalted role of judges in the grave, almost divine, function of dispensing justice. He opposed cruelty and the too-easy recourse to torture he had observed among some of his colleagues. He firmly supported the French legal tradition of trials being conducted by groups of judges to avoid abuses that could occur if one person held the power of life and death. Such judicial caution was an especially powerful tradition among his parliamentary colleagues at Bordeaux, who were apparently the last appellate tribunal in France to approve an execution for witchcraft. Another central theme of this work was the weakness and inconstancy of women. He described women as dishonorable, licentious, and, following the example of Eve, inclined by nature to follow the Devil.

The following year brought the judicial assignment that made Lancre famous. In late 1608 or early 1609, complaints from the Labourd region, a Basque area south of Bordeaux, reached King Henry IV, stating that witchcraft was out of control in the region. The king named two special commissioners, Pierre de Lancre and

Jean d'Espaignet, to conduct a four-month judicial mission to the Labourd to investigate the problem and to conduct trials as they saw fit. They had full powers to convict and execute anyone they found guilty of the heinous crime of witchcraft. Both judges found widespread belief that huge witches' Sabbats were taking place, and they heard hundreds of confessions, apparently without torture, from people who claimed they had attended these diabolical gatherings. Meanwhile, as suspected witches fled for safety across the border, the Spanish Inquisition received similar complaints and began investigating the problem in the Spanish Basque areas.

For four months, Lancre and d'Espaignet traveled throughout the region. As they interrogated people, their goal was to distinguish the witches who had renounced Christianity and to offer clemency to the women and children who had merely attended Sabbats, using their testimony to identify the ringleaders and organizers who were seen to be active members of a demonic sect. The existence of the Devil's heretical sect became Lancre's obsession, inspiring his subsequent writings on witches. The two judges conducted interrogations and trials and carried out executions with speed and efficiency. They seem to have executed between fifty and eighty witches, although we cannot be certain of more than two dozen, including at least three "ringleader priests." When the judges' commission expired in November 1609, those whom Lancre thought were guilty but whom he had not been able to deal with were sent to Bordeaux for trial by the *parlement*. Lancre's verdicts were based on his perception that the real problem in the Labourd was the sect of Devil worshipers. He based his findings on testimony and confessions about participation in Sabbats. But the *Parlement* of Bordeaux never adopted his views and discounted his evidence. Applying its normal criminal procedures and upholding its traditions about suspected witches (which Michel de Montaigne, a former Bordeaux judge, had eloquently expressed), the judges insisted on evidence of actual crimes (*maleficia*) committed by the accused. On this basis, the court convicted a few of Lancre's witches and released many others.

Lancre's colleagues' professional rebuff, which showed they were unwilling to take seriously testimony on Sabbats and to see it as proof of the existence of a demonic sect threatening godly society, motivated Lancre to write his best-known book, *Tableau de l'Inconstance des mauvais anges et demons* (Description of the Inconstancy of Evil Angels and Demons, 1612). He put great energy into trying to convince his readers that "there was no way to cast doubt on [the reality] of witchcraft and that the Devil actually and bodily transports witches to Sabbats. . . . Sixty or eighty certain witches and five hundred witnesses . . . have stated that Satan had done this" (Lancre 1982, 2). Lancre was

concerned that if judges did not take these matters seriously, their blindness and weakness would help the Devil's power grow.

Central to this book, and to Lancre's concept of witchcraft, was the Sabbat. For Lancre, basing his arguments on Martín Del Rio's recent synthesis, the Devil's transportation of people to Sabbats, in body or in spirit, was real. Belief in this idea was required of Christians. The details of what happened at the Sabbats were shocking. All the attendees practiced unnatural sexual acts and committed horrible blasphemies. Lancre stated, "I can say of the women and girls of the Labourd who have gone to Sabbats, that instead of being quiet about this damnable coupling [with demons], or of blushing or crying about it, they tell the dirtiest and most immodest circumstances with such great freedom and gaiety that they glory in it and take pleasure talking about it" (Lancre 1982, 142). One even called the Sabbat a "Paradise." Of course, this fit in with Lancre's view that women were inclined to witchcraft "because of their imbecilic nature" and basic inclination to evil. For Lancre, aspects of Basque society made the Labourd region especially vulnerable to the Devil's work. He saw these people as foreign, barely civilized, and poorly educated as Christians. The fact that most adult men were sailors meant that normal agricultural life was not present there. Furthermore, it meant that the women were far too independent, so that the proper, male-dominated family life did not exist. "They are Eves," he wrote, "who easily seduce the children of Adam" (Lancre 1982, 43). Although Lancre welcomed testimony from children as part of gathering evidence, he disagreed with Nicolas Rémy's opinion that prepubescent witches should be executed.

Lancre's position on the Devil's power, based on Del Rio, was carefully orthodox. Satan could not do anything really supernatural, such as transforming people into animals (in contrast to what Jean Bodin argued). But he could create illusions of these sorts of changes. For Lancre, witches who joined the Devil "have fallen into heresy and apostasy" (Lancre 1982, 531). In the fight against them, judges had to be vigilant and severe. Although witchcraft and heresy were closely related, Lancre held that witchcraft was more dangerous than ordinary heresy because it was hidden in darkness and because innocent people were victims of witches' evil spells. He went to great length to argue that these evil-doers should be put to death.

Because the parliamentary judges at Bordeaux and Paris continued to ignore his opinions about witches and witchcraft, Lancre published another long work on witchcraft in 1622, *L'incredulité et mescréance du sortilege* (Incredulity and Misbelief of Enchantment). This book was entirely devoted to the problem of judicial incredulity about witchcraft. He stated that he had written "to dislodge whatever incredulity the

Parlements, all judges and other important people might have . . . who sustain that there is no truth in what is said of witches and witchcraft but that it is only an illusion" (Lancre 1622, 4). This work was very defensive in tone. He reiterated the main arguments of his earlier work, referring often to his experiences as a judge.

In 1627, Lancre wrote his final book on witchcraft: *Du sortilege* (About Witchcraft). But no matter how many books he published, Lancre remained a voice crying in a French judicial wilderness. It is clear that French *parlements* seldom prosecuted witchcraft severely or paid much attention to testimony about Sabbats after 1610. Between 1610 and 1625, although most of the thirteen people executed by the *Parlement* of Paris were charged with having been present at Sabbats, only one was put to death for attending a Sabbat. It is clear that the career and writings of Pierre de Lancre did little to reverse a clearly visible trend in French jurisprudence.

JONATHAN L. PEARL

See also: BASQUE COUNTRY; BODIN, JEAN; CHILDREN; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; FRANCE; INQUISITION, SPANISH; MALDONADO, JUAN; METAMORPHOSIS; MONTAIGNE, MICHEL DE; PARLEMENT OF PARIS; RÉMY, NICHOLAS; SABBAT.

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LANGTON, WALTER (D.-1321)

Treasurer (1295–1307) of King Edward I of England and bishop of Coventry and Lichfield (1296–1321), Walter Langton was accused of sorcery, entering into a pact with the Devil (frequently offering the kiss of shame to Satan), murder, adultery, and simony and was tried from 1301 to 1303. Pope Boniface VII suspended Langton from his episcopal duties and ordered him tried by an ecclesiastical court presided over by the archbishop of Canterbury, Winchelsea, Langton's personal enemy. The case was soon transferred to

Rome. Edward I wrote four letters to the pope in Langton's defense and charged that his accuser, Sir John Lovetot, had acted out of personal animosity. Lovetot believed Langton was responsible for his stepfather's murder and that he had maintained an adulterous affair with Lovetot's stepmother, subsequently keeping her as his mistress after her husband's strangulation. The Roman Curia found Langton innocent in June 1303, owing in part to his thirty-seven compurgators.

After his acquittal, Langton returned to England, where he became Edward I's principal adviser. But in 1307, as soon as Edward I was dead, his son King Edward II had Langton arrested, charging him with malfeasance as royal treasurer. Langton was imprisoned, and his lands and wealth were confiscated. However, he was released, became treasurer again, and was subsequently excommunicated by the archbishop of Canterbury. After the archbishop's death in 1315, Langton joined the royal council, until Parliament called for his dismissal two years later, thus ending a tumultuous political career.

Although Langton's trial took place a century before the emergence of the cumulative concept of witchcraft and fully developed witch hunts, it set precedents for a number of political witchcraft trials in the early fourteenth century in which members of the elite were targeted. It slightly preceded the notorious trial of the Templars in France and occurred just two decades before the most notorious of these trials in the British Isles, that of Alice Kyteler in Ireland.

RICHARD M. GOLDEN

See also: KISS OF SHAME; KYTELER, ALICE; ORIGINS OF THE TEMPLARS WITCH HUNTS.

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LANGUEDOC

The French province of Languedoc, the heart of southern France, was once believed to be the site of Europe's earliest witches' Sabbats, in the mid-fourteenth century, until the "document" on which this opinion rested was shown to be a forgery (Cohn 1975, 126–138). Actually, witch hunting in Languedoc has a very different history.

Recorded witchcraft trials in this province reach back to the end of the Hundred Years' War. After an apparent pause, they resumed at the outbreak of the French Wars of Religion and peaked when Languedoc experienced the single largest recorded witch craze in France in the 1640s. However, from the mid-fifteenth century until the age of Louis XIV, the *Parlement* of Toulouse, France's second-oldest and second-largest appellate court, consistently played a major role in reducing the severity of punishments of accused witches.

Shortly after its installation in 1443, the *Parlement* of Toulouse investigated various irregularities committed in some witchcraft trials at Millau. It cleared a plaintiff from Millau charged with witchcraft because the written evidence against her was obviously perjured. The *parlement's* investigator discovered other irregularities in this witch hunt as well: An accused witch who had died under atrocious tortures without confessing had been illegally buried in profane ground; the judge ordered a stake put up for another witch before pronouncing sentence against her. All told, at least three witches were burned at Millau in autumn of 1444, two others died before sentence was pronounced, and at least three other women were accused of attending Sabbats and killing babies. The episode reveals how quickly the new crime of witchcraft had spread southwest from Dauphiné, and the *parlement's* attitude anticipated the better-known skepticism of their Parisian colleagues when investigating the *Vauderie* of Arras in 1491.

But the *parlement* could not prevent other burnings of accused witches in Languedoc. Around 1490, a woman was burned for sorcery and diabolism in Vivarais. Shortly afterward, we catch glimpses in notarial records of three women burned as witches by seigneurial courts near Nîmes and of two other women burned in the same region in 1493 (Grard 1995). Then comes a long silence, finally broken in 1555 when the seneschal of Bigorène in the Pyrenees, asked the Toulouse *parlement* to send commissioners to judge several prisoners charged with witchcraft "in order to extirpate such scandalous and pernicious people from this region" (ADHG, B 3408). The court brusquely dismissed his request, on the grounds that people who "fell into such diabolical errors and illusions" had been improperly educated, and turned the whole business over to their local parish priests.

Only seven years later, the Toulouse *parlement* took witchcraft accusations seriously enough to uphold some death sentences for this crime from Pyrenean Languedoc. In the spring and summer of 1562, amid the turmoil surrounding the first French War of Religion, it approved at least three burnings for witchcraft (Le Nail 1976). However, the *parlement* soon reverted to its previous practice and decreed lesser punishments for the next thirty women from this region also accused of witchcraft.

Afterward more executions certainly occurred in a region as large as Languedoc during the time when most witches were burned elsewhere in France (roughly 1580–1625). However, we cannot trace the Toulouse *parlement's* judgments in witchcraft trials because of the exceptional laconism of its criminal records. A “notable warlock” and five women witches were executed in southern Languedoc in 1586, but the sovereign court for the county of Foix had judged them. However, at some unknown date, the *Parlement* of Toulouse copied the Parisian custom of requiring all local judgments in witchcraft trials to be automatically appealed to it. So when the greatest witch panic in French history struck Languedoc in 1643, it left an enormous paper trail, and an ingenious study (Vidal 1987) examined its actions.

From spring of 1643 until spring of 1645, the *Parlement* of Toulouse judged at least 641 accused witches, only 8 percent of whom were men. It behaved much as it had in 1562. For several months, it upheld many local decisions, and probably some fifty or sixty witches were burned. But by December 1643, the *parlement* became aware of the activities of professional witch finders in several parts of Languedoc. It ordered some of them arrested; by summer of 1644, three men had been hanged for forging commissions from the Privy Council or the *parlement* to hunt witches, and others had been sent to the galleys. At the same time, the *parlement* sharply reduced almost all punishments for accused witches; extremely few were burned, over a hundred were banished for periods of one to five years, and almost two-thirds of these 600 prisoners were released, often because of insufficient evidence. Meanwhile, this witch hunt even inspired a chapbook, the *Historia maravillosa del sabbat de las bruxes y bruxots* (Wondrous History of the Witches Sabbat), supposedly translated from French and printed in 1645 at Barcelona (which was then under French occupation). It described the adventures of “Señor Barbasta,” a mythical super-heroic Languedoc witch finder, who had reputedly identified over 3,000 witches throughout the kingdom of France, including his own wife.

After this panic subsided, as late as 1680 the Toulouse *parlement* was still trying to investigate witchcraft cases in the Pyrenees (at Bigorre, the same region affected in 1555). There was an instance of demonic possession in Toulouse in 1681–1682, but there was no further talk of burning witches in Languedoc (Mandrou 1968, 473–478).

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: ARRAS; FRANCE; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; PANICS; WARS OF RELIGION (FRANCE); WITCH FINDERS.

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LAPLAND

Lapland's witches were famous throughout early modern Europe. From ancient times, the Lapland sorcerers had a strong reputation for wind magic, shape shifting (metamorphosis), employment of familiars, the ability to move objects (such as small darts) across great distances, and for their wicked drum playing. Portrayals of the evil witches from Lapland became a favorite motif in demonology, travel narratives, and literary fiction between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. The expression *Lapland witches* appeared in the work of such renowned English writers as William Shakespeare, John Milton, Daniel Defoe, Henry More, and Jonathan Swift. In 1796, the Swiss painter Johann Heinrich Füssli depicted them in a rather dismal painting, *The Night-Hag Visiting the Lapland Witches*, illustrating some passages from Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667). By the end of the eighteenth century, the mention of Lapland witches had become a cliché.

The concept “Lapland witches” refers to the indigenous people of northernmost Scandinavia and Russia, the Sami (formerly known as Laplanders or Lapps). Today, the Sami call their land Sapmi, and their whole area is often named the North Calotte. The notion of the far northern regions of Europe as centers of witchcraft and idolatry reduced to the question of Sami sorcery. “For practice of witchcraft and sorcery, they pass all nations in the world” (Anderson 1958, 13), wrote the English ambassador to Russia, Sir Giles Hetcher, in 1591, describing the life and manners of the “wild” Sami in northern Russia. The Lapland witches and the knotted winds had already become somewhat notorious by then, because authors like Olaus Magnus and Jean Bodin had already told Europe that the Sami were immensely dangerous magicians and sorcerers. The conjuring of these Lapland witches was so great that people believed they could use sorcery instead of weapons while in combat with their enemies. Rumors indicating that the Swedes used the techniques of Sami sorcery in warfare dogged Swedish military forces throughout the seventeenth century. When they won several significant battles and advanced deep into German territory during the Thirty Years' War, it was

insinuated that their success was due to sorcery by Sami troops assisting them.

RUNEBOMME—THE MAGIC DRUM; SHAMANISM

Educated Europeans of the early modern age believed that Sami witchcraft entailed three characteristics: First, the Sami were famous for their ability to tell fortunes and predict future events. Ever since the recording of the Nordic sagas, this feature of the indigenous populations of the far North was well known. In general, Old Norse sources give the impression that all Sami were great sorcerers. Ancient Norwegian laws forbade people to travel to Finnmark's Sami to have their fortunes told. Closely associated with their powers of prophecy were their abilities to narrate events. By the use of a magic drum (*runebomme*) and other rituals, a Sami shaman (*noaidi*) would allow himself to fall into some kind of a trance (*ecstasis diabolica*), at which time his spirit would be led far away. Upon awakening, he could describe events that had occurred at the places to which his spirit had traveled. Christians immersed in demonological concepts of shamanism believed that Satan himself gave these drums to the Sami. The drum, an instrument of the Devil, enabled a sorcerer to summon his demons, which were believed to reside in it and were revived by striking it. In this manner, each drumbeat—to quote a Swedish missionary working among the Sami whose discourse helped to “diabolize” them—was intended for Satan in hell. The singing among the Sami, called *Joik*, which accompanied the beating of the drum, was regarded as a diabolical, monotonous cacophony.

While under the spell of his satanic trance, a shaman communicated with his attendant demon that, because of its tremendous acuity and faculty for moving swiftly, could divulge global events to its master. As a result, seventeenth-century Lutheran missionaries to the Sami regions made arrangements to burn these drums and thereby destroy the Sami pagan gods. The demonizing of this pantheistic religion continued throughout the seventeenth century, and Sami who believed they could predict the future were accused of being satanic prophets.

DIABOLICUS GANDUS

The ancient idea of “elf-shot” (in German, *Hexenschuss*) was the third kind of sorcery attributed to the Sami. This kind of spell casting, or *gand* (*diabolicus gandus*, in Sami sorcery trials of the seventeenth century), was what pious Norwegians feared most during the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century. The witches of Lapland were known to cast their evil spells across vast distances. Their spells could even be carried upon the

northern winds and could provoke illnesses among people far to the south in Europe. “Shooting,” or the conjuring of spells “on the wind,” was a well-known *maleficium* (harmful magic) across most of northern Scandinavia and was asserted with great conviction by some leading European intellectuals. Among others, the famous French jurist and demonologist Jean Bodin had much to say about the evil magic of Lapland's witches. The *gand* was imagined to be something physical. “Lapp shots” were perceived as small leaden darts, which the Sami could shoot across great distances. In the mid-sixteenth century, Olaus Magnus described them as small leaden arrows. At the end of the seventeenth century, a Norwegian vicar, Petter Dass, later described the Sami spell as vile, dark blue flies, or “Beelzebub's flies.” Court records from northern Norwegian witchcraft trials offer explicit descriptions and actual illustrations of the Sami *gand*. One of the passages even mentions that the *gand* resembles a mouse with heads at both front and rear. What we today call shamanism among the Sami was regarded by the Lutheran confessional church as the worst type of superstition and witchcraft. A few witchcraft trials in Norwegian, Finnish, and Swedish Lapland contained elements of shamanism.

LAPLAND WITCHES AND THE WITCH HUNT

As a collective group living in the borderlands, moving and trading within three countries at the same time, the Sami posed a threat to the territorial expansion of Nordic countries and their endeavors to spread Christian civilization in the North. This was especially the case for the conflicts among Russia, Sweden, and Denmark-Norway at a time of territorial state formation. All of them considered the Sami as subjects in need of proper integration. Fearful of Sami sorcery, the Norwegians, according to reports forwarded to King Christian IV in 1608, dared not inhabit the fjords of Finnmark that were populated by the “wild and wicked” Sami. In response, the king in 1609 commanded the governors of his northern-Norwegian districts to hunt down and eradicate all kinds of Sami sorcery. Those who practiced it would be put to death. In the three counties that comprise Arctic Norway, civil courts held witchcraft trials for thirty-seven individual Sami between 1593 and 1692 (Hagen 1999). Of these, twenty men and eight women were burned at the stake. Suspicion of sorcery was one of the charges that arose every time serious conflicts emerged between the Sami and the Danish-Norwegian authorities during this period. But still, it should be pointed out that there were many more Norwegian women involved in the hunt than people from the indigenous group.

TABLE L-1 WITCHCRAFT TRIALS IN
NORTHERN NORWAY
(ARCTIC NORWAY) 1593-1692

Gender and ethnicity	Total	Death sentences
Female—Sami	11	8
Male—Sami	26	20
Female—Norwegian	120	87
Male—Norwegian	14	5
Unknown	6	6
Total	177	126

Meanwhile, in Swedish regions of Lapland, seventy-three Sami males and three Sami females were prosecuted between 1639 and 1749 on charges of using drums and practicing sacrificial rituals (Granqvist 1998). Few of them received death penalties, however.

In both Norway and Sweden, it was primarily Sami men who were accused of witchcraft. The notion of witchcraft, with few exceptions, was primarily a male phenomenon in Sami society. At the same time, in small northern Norwegian coastal villages, witchcraft was basically a crime committed by Norwegian women. Legal sources thus confirm that Sami men were the basic cultural bearers of their traditional ritual magic. And the witchcraft trials of the far north were distinctive in a European context because of the simultaneous prosecutions of wives of seasonal Norwegian fishermen and of Sami shamans.

RUNE HAGEN;

TRANSLATED BY MARK LEDINGHAM

See also: BODIN, JEAN; CHRISTIAN IV; DENMARK; FAMILIARS; FINLAND; GENDER; MAGNUS, OLAUS; MALE WITCHES; METAMORPHOSIS; NORWAY; SHAMANISM; SORCERY; SPELLS; SWEDEN; WIND KNOTS.

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LARNER, CHRISTINA (1934-1983)

A preminent historian of the Scottish witch hunt. Larner's main book, *Enemies of God* (1981), is a beacon of methodological clarity that ranks among the most influential and widely cited regional studies of European witch hunting.

Larner, a sociologist at the University of Glasgow, taught not only in her own department but also in those of history and politics, and she was appointed to a personal chair shortly before her tragically early death. She wrote her PhD thesis (1962) on Scottish witchcraft, and in 1970 Norman Cohn encouraged her to resume work on this. A new anthropological perspective on village-level witchcraft was opening up, which Larner was well placed to exploit. However, she first studied an elite witch hunter and demonologist, publishing "James VI and I and Witchcraft" in 1973 in a volume edited by Glasgow historian Alan Smith. (It was republished, along with most of the rest of her articles, in the 1984 collection, *Witchcraft and Religion: The Politics of Popular Belief*.) Although her idea that James imported the demonic pact to Scotland from Denmark in 1590 has been questioned, her article remains essential for the development of James's views.

Larner then obtained funding for a project to collect information on all recorded cases of witchcraft in Scotland. The results, published by her research team in 1977, listed 3,069 witchcraft "cases" with their place, date, and trial status. Although an imperfect work (riddled with miscitations, several hundred duplicate cases, and other errors), it exploited hitherto-unused manuscript sources and provided a firmer statistical basis for the Scottish witch hunt than had ever been available before. The best estimates for numbers of executions had hitherto ranged between 3,000 and 4,500; Larner pared away layers of speculation to show that the number must have been much lower. More than half of these "cases" (the exact proportion was unknown) ended in acquittals or other noncapital outcomes, suggesting a figure of probably fewer than

1,500 executions with a maximum of 2,000 (Larner 1984, 28). More recent research has explored further sources and has tended to raise the numbers somewhat but has also endorsed the soundness of Larner's basic approach.

Larner's masterpiece, *Enemies of God*, was also written at this time. It combined statistics with a detailed reading of individual cases. Many seminal works are characterized by a single penetrating idea, but Larner's work stood out in its balanced use of complementary methodologies. She reconstructed peasant networks of accusation with the same verve that she brought to beliefs about the Devil or theories of social control. She confirmed the quarrelsomeness of many accused witches while showing that Scotland did not fully fit the "Thomas-Macfarlane" model, where by English witches were accused after a denial of charity was followed by misfortune. Distinguishing between "English" and "continental" patterns of witch hunting, she placed Scotland between the two. Subsequent research, although refining the "continental" pattern, has not significantly modified Larner's conclusion. She was alive to the hitherto-neglected issue of women as witches, but she resisted the tendency of some feminist contemporaries to turn the witch hunt into a "woman hunt."

As well as peasant quarrelsomeness, Larner emphasized the responsibility of governmental authorities. She came to believe that *witch hunting* was an apt term because witches did have to be sought out and labeled. She had not yet reached that point when she wrote in her 1962 thesis, "There are those who claim that the witchcraft persecution originated at the end of the fifteenth century precisely because this was the era of the creation of the modern state. . . . Yet most historians today would not give that importance to the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries in the creation of fully developed administrative systems which writers of an earlier generation did." But she later changed her mind, adding a pencil note in the margin: "But I think I would now (1971) plus literacy" (Larner 1962, 15). She was, in fact, moving toward what she called "the Christianization of the people" (Larner 1981, chap. 12), a process taken up by local elites seeking to inculcate godly discipline; after the godly King James VI succeeded the godly state. A few of its details were problematic—her much-quoted "general commission" or "standing commissions" of the 1590s have proved illusory—but later research has borne out the general soundness of her approach.

What most distinguished Larner's book was its methodological sophistication. She was far more familiar with social theory than most empiricist historians; she could write about the problems of "treating seventeenth-century culture as an alien belief system" (Larner 1981, 134) from within the rich conceptual framework of the social sciences. She took a particular

interest in the belief system of preindustrial Europe, characterizing it as a "middle ground" society, neither primitive nor dominated by belief in science and technology.

After *Enemies of God*, Larner gave the 1982 Gifford Lectures, "Relativism and Ethnocentrism: Popular and Educated Belief in Pre-Industrial Culture." These lectures, by a sociologist intervening in a debate "among philosophers and anthropologists" (Larner 1984, 97), are vital for historians of witchcraft, who need to decide how to respond to beliefs that seem alien. She provided a powerful corrective, both to condescending accounts of past "ignorance" and "superstition" and to extreme relativist interpretations in which all beliefs are equally valid. Larner's clear, jargon-free prose sparkled with erudite wit and humor. Arguing against reductionist explanations for witchcraft beliefs, she asked, "Was the social structure of hell feudal or was it more likely 'hydraulic' (the term given by Karl Wittfogel to despotic regimes organized in relation to permanent water shortage)?" (Larner 1981, 202). She not only knew her subject, she also knew how to communicate it.

JULIAN GOODARE

See also: FEMINISM; GENDER; HISTORIOGRAPHY; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; SCOTLAND.

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LATVIA

Witchcraft trials occurred between 1548 and 1699 in Latvia, which was partitioned and dominated by Poland, Sweden, and Russia in the early modern period.

Latvian folklore preserves extremely rich evidence about witches in its folktales, legends, stories, customs, sayings, riddles, beliefs, incantations, and folk songs. In folktales, the witch's husband is the Devil. She herself eats people and kills her own daughters. Latvian witches live in strange houses with one leg, dance with devils in hell, can change their form, and cast spells that turn people into animals or objects. They have tails, which

not everyone can see. Like sorcerers, they do not die easily. Folklorists have preserved other traditions concerning Latvian witches. Evil people turn into witches, having given up their souls to the Devil. Anyone can become a witch by putting drugs in a mortar and grinding them up while making an incantation; one must also wear appropriate clothes and walk in a circle around the mortar, until one flies away through the air. Or one can become a witch by smearing a special ointment on the body, particularly in the armpits. On the Saturday of Whitsuntide, a woman can wash in the bathhouse, wrap herself in a white cloth, and lie down to sleep in the bushes on her stomach. An evil force will fly down in the form of a bee, crawl into the sleeping woman, and she will become a witch. By a single look, witches can harm newborn babies, often exchanging the children for their own.

According to folklore, milk witches were especially widespread throughout Latvia. They milk cows belonging to others and collect dew from fields to bewitch their neighbors' livestock, transferring the milk to themselves. Witches are particularly active on June 23 (Midsummer Night), but animals also need protection from them on other special nights. Milk witches have their own servants, the milk carriers, whom they feed and maintain.

Although Livonia was famous as a land of witches, sorcerers, and werewolves, its recorded witchcraft trials only began in the mid-sixteenth century and never reached the scale seen in most European countries. Witches and sorceresses were well known in medieval Latvia, under the Livonian Order (a crusading order). Several of Latvia's earliest law codes contained articles dealing with witches, and their punishment was that of heretics—burning—but no trials were recorded. Regulations issued at Valmiera in 1537 charged territorial overlords and church authorities with prohibiting and eradicating sorcery, superstition, and idolatry. The death penalty for malignant sorcery was also envisaged in the Carolina Code (1532) of the Holy Roman Empire, which became law in Livonia soon after being issued in 1532. We know about witchcraft trials from Cēsis in 1548 and from Courland in 1550 (Augstkalns 1938, 169). In 1559, the bailiff of Grobiņa ordered a witch to be burned, the first such instance known in Latvia (Arbusow 1910, 104).

However, after the area came under Polish rule in the second half of the sixteenth century, witchcraft trials attained their typical form in Latvia, with an inquisitorial procedure, examining witches, torture, and irregular institution of proceedings. Much of our evidence comes from sources in Riga and the surrounding area, where twelve sorcerers and witches were burned between 1577 and 1590. Almost as many victims were recorded from the first decades of the seventeenth century (Svelpis 1984, 182).

Latvian legal practice made extensive use of so-called ducking (also known as the swimming test or the water ordeal) to identify witches. It was mentioned in Latvia's first documented witchcraft trial, in 1548, when the master of the Livonian Order, Hermann von Brüggenei, submitted a legal opinion regarding ducking to the Cēsis town council (Augstkalns 1938, 197). The method was as follows: An executioner undressed the accused, tied her arms and legs crosswise, and, holding her by a rope, submerged her three times in cold water, repeating the ducking in case of doubt. According to the records, the accused usually "floated on the water like a duck" or "like a blade of grass," providing sufficient proof of guilt. Some sources also mentioned complaints that executioners, by tugging on the rope or by various other means, had not allowed the accused to sink. If during the ducking the accused died in the icy water, the court recorded that the Devil had killed the witch to prevent him or her from betraying associates. In Riga and the area that later became Courland, ducking was used rarely at first, beginning in the mid-sixteenth century, because neither local custom nor general German law envisaged this form of interrogation. But by the first half of the seventeenth century, witch ducking was practiced throughout Latvia, being abandoned only at the close of the century.

After 1621, Latvia was divided. In the west, the duchy of Courland and Semigallia made up a vassal state of Poland; in the center, the lands on the right bank of the River Daugava along with Riga became the Swedish province of Livland; and the eastern part, Latgale, belonged to Poland. These regions differed in their handling of witchcraft trials.

In Livland, the largest number of witchcraft trials took place in the 1630s. Legends about covens and corporations of sorcerers and witches, who were thought to meet in a bog or on a hill and who could harm livestock, people, and crops with the aid of Satan, were widespread in all sections of society. Pastors and judges also believed in them. Hermann Samson (1579–1643), senior pastor of St. Peter's Church in Riga and superintendent of Livland, demanded in his sermons that all malignant witches be put to death. He also reported that in the course of church inspections, many people had complained to him about witches and sorcerers. Evidence of frequent witchcraft trials can be found in the records of Livland's High Court, which show that forty such proceedings were begun between 1630 and 1640; most of them ended with the burning of the accused. Witchcraft trials also took place at almost every session of the Land Court. Often, the accused named her supposed associates, so the proceedings included groups of defendants. One case tried in 1646 at Riga's Land Court involved fifty accused witches (Arbusow 1910, 118).

In the second half of the seventeenth century, the number of witchcraft trials in Livland fell, and the death penalty was seldom invoked. This resulted partly from Swedish royal decrees from 1665 and 1687 stating that the death penalty could only be applied for malignant sorcery and a pact with Satan; divination, fortunetelling, quackery, and other superstitions were punishable only with fines and corporal punishments, along with public confession and putting in the stocks during the church service.

After torture was forbidden in the courts of Livland in 1686, the number of sorcerers and witches fell sharply. Courts in Livland often complained that they could no longer force accused witches and sorcerers to confess and that the accused had to be acquitted or punished for superstition with quite light, arbitrary penalties, which usually meant beating peasants with ten or twenty blows from rods, followed by confession and being locked in the stocks or pillory. After 1686, Livland's High Court imposed very few death penalties. The last case of witch burning in Livland occurred in 1692 and the last beheading of a witch in 1699 (Svelpis 1984, 183).

By the eighteenth century, when Russia annexed Livland, belief in witches and sorcery had declined significantly. In the court records from before 1731, one still finds a few such cases, but now the guilty were punished only for superstition, and the most severe penalty was a sentence of life imprisonment passed in 1724. In 1731, the Senate, in order to eradicate the superstition of supposed sorcerers, stated that such deceivers were to be burned alive, and those who requested help from witches and sorcerers should be whipped severely or even executed. Afterward, trials connected with sorcery and witches came to an end in Livland.

In the duchy of Courland and Semigallia, persecution of witches, based on Article 209 of the Statute of Courland and on the General German Law, continued unhindered throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Court archives show witches being punished by burning, beheading, or banishment. Thus, for example, in the Sēlpils district alone, a total of thirty-one witchcraft trials were held at the Senior Castellan's Court between 1630 and 1720; fifteen executions took place, the last witch being burned in 1718. At Blankenfelde in Semigallia, two witches were burned as late as 1721 (Arbusow 1910, 117–119).

There is very meager information about witchcraft trials in Latgale, the part of Latvia under direct Polish rule. However, witchcraft trials may have been just as frequent there as elsewhere. Poland only repealed the death penalty for witches in 1776, that is, after Latgale had been annexed to Russia.

Belief in sorcery and witches long persisted in the popular mind, as Latvia's rich folklore testifies. Thus, as late as 1808, a noblewoman in Livland ordered her

maidservant to be flogged mercilessly for casting a spell on the manor's livestock and for keeping a "dragon" at home. An 1848 issue of the newspaper *Inland* expressed the opinion that witches existed and suggested that they should be stoned.

PĀRSLA PĀĶĒRŠĀNE

See also: CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITUTIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*); FOLKLORE; LYCANTHROPY; MILK; POLAND; RUSSIA; SWIMMING TEST; TRIALS.

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LAUSANNE, DIOCESE OF (FIFTEENTH CENTURY)

The diocese of Lausanne, in the center of French Switzerland, covered most of the present cantons of Vaud, Fribourg, Bern, and Neuchâtel. Together with Dauphiné, the Valais, the Val d'Aosta, and the Bernese Oberland (all in the western Alps), it became a center for persecutions of the new heresy of witches and devil worshipers in the fifteenth century. Its first witchcraft trials took place in the 1430s, with many local witch hunts following later in the century. Nearly fifty records of fifteenth-century witchcraft trials are preserved from the diocese of Lausanne. Many recent microanalyses and critical editions have helped clarify both the local and judicial implications of this phenomenon. Dominican inquisitors conducted these trials, using inquisitorial procedure, that is, relying on denunciations and local rumor (*fama*) when arresting suspects, making secret investigations, and employing torture. An element specific to the fifteenth-century witchcraft trials in the diocese of Lausanne is their detailed descriptions of the witches' Sabbath, called the "synagogue," including secret gatherings of the sect around a demon, banquets, cannibalism of children, night flight on brooms or sticks, and evil ointments.

CHRONOLOGICAL SURVEY

The first well-documented witch hunt occurred in 1448 near Vevey. The three trial records preserved establish

that at least seven sorcerers and witches were condemned and that forty other persons were denounced and probably prosecuted (Ostorero 1995). Thirty years later, the same Riviera region of Lake Geneva experienced a second witch craze, often involving the same families, in which at least a dozen victims were condemned to the stake (Maier 1996). Around 1460, a witch hunt affected some territories of the prince-bishop of Lausanne, Georges de Saluces (Saluzzo), located in the eastern part of his diocese (Henniez, La Roche, and Bulle). His persecution of devil worshipers formed part of a larger movement of spiritual reform he initiated in his diocese (Modestin 1999).

The village of Dommartin, north of Lausanne, appeared to be a nest of sorcerers and witches. Relatively important hunts happened here twice, in 1498 and again around 1525—the first carried out by a Dominican inquisitor, the second by the area's local landlords, the cathedral chapter of Lausanne. Microanalyses have shown that the victims of Dommartin's persecution were mostly rich farmers, well integrated into their community but engaged in conflicts either with neighbors, with their own families over inheritances, or with the local authorities. Accusations of witchcraft reveal local tensions and conflicts that led to unusually dramatic resolutions, that is, the inquisitors and the stake (Choffat 1989; Pfister 1997).

In the northern part of the diocese of Lausanne, the region of Neuchâtel experienced two witch hunts: first around 1439, then from 1480 to 1499 (Andenmatten and Utz Tresp 1992). In the east, around Fribourg, the first witchcraft cases appeared between 1438 and 1442; it is the only situation in the diocese of Lausanne when witches were judged not by the Inquisition but by local secular authorities (Utz Tresp 1995, 42–47).

CONTEMPORARY ECHOES OF THE WITCH HUNTS

Apart from the judicial records, both the novelty of the phenomenon and its importance in the diocese of Lausanne were amply attested. In 1438, Aymonet Maugetaz, a young man of the wine-growing village Eppesses, went “spontaneously” to the inquisitor Ulric de Torrenté to confess that he belonged to a sect of Devil worshipers who committed *maleficia* (harmful magic). He told how witches stole ice from the mountains in order to make it fall on the crops as hail. This anecdote reappeared almost verbatim in a second version of the anonymous treatise *Erroris gazariorum* (Errors of the Gazars or Gazarii [Cathars—a common term for heretics and later witches]), first written around 1436 in the Val d'Aosta. That clue proved that this text, which contained one of the first descriptions of the witches' Sabbat, was also used by inquisitors in the diocese of Lausanne. In his *Formicarius* (The Anthill, 1437–1438), the Dominican theologian

Johannes Nider, a professor at the University of Vienna, related facts of witchcraft that had taken place *recently* in the diocese of Lausanne, that is to say, around 1435–1438. Nider took most of his examples from trials held in the diocese of Lausanne, mostly in the Bernese territories. Unfortunately, no judicial evidence has been found yet (Chêne 1999, 223–248). Martin Le Franc, the secretary of the Savoyard antipope Felix V, described the new crimes associated with witches in his lengthy poem *Le Champion des dames* (The Defender of Ladies, 1440–1442). Although he referred to a valley in Dauphiné (*Valpute, Vallouise*), Le Franc must also have known about the first witch hunts in the diocese of Lausanne, because he was then provost of the chapter of Lausanne. In a bull of 1440 against duke Amadeus VIII of Savoy, elected by the Council of Basel as the antipope Felix V (1439–1449), Eugenius IV connected his rival's pontificate with all the heresies and sorcery in his lands. Therefore, from Vienna to Rome, the diocese of Lausanne (mostly a Savoyard possession), had the dubious reputation of a land filled with devil worshipers as early as 1440.

INQUISITION AND JUDICIAL FRAMEWORK

In the diocese of Lausanne, Dominican inquisitors conducted all trials in collaboration with the vicar of the bishop of Lausanne. Their intervention began only upon request from local authorities, who were present in court. The local population played an important role by denouncing suspects. Between 1450 and 1480, inquisitors conducted most of these trials in the castle of Ouchy, in Lausanne, where suspects were brought. Their archives were conserved in this castle as the episcopal Inquisition became increasingly effective.

The longtime prince-bishop of Lausanne, Georges de Saluces (Saluzzo), began the first witch hunts in his diocese, after having done the same in the diocese of Aosta before moving to Lausanne. The struggle against heretics was part of his program of spiritual reform. A major regional power in the fifteenth century, he had the favor of his close relative, the Duke of Savoy, Amadeus VIII, overlord of the Pays de Vaud.

MEN OR WOMEN?

One particularity of the witchcraft phenomenon in the diocese of Lausanne was the high rate of men sentenced, amounting to 60 percent of all fifteenth-century cases. The most frequent explanation offered is that in this region, the Inquisition was actively pursuing Waldensians, both men and women, at the beginning of this century. The image of the witch and devil worshiper had been fashioned from the figure of the heretic. For example, the persons persecuted for witchcraft in 1448 at Vevey were defined as “modern Waldensians heretics” (*heretici*

moderni valdenses). Witchcraft implied a pact with the Devil, making it a crime against God; therefore, the sorcerer was above all a heretic. In the first phase of witch persecutions, this crime, like Waldensianism, was often charged to men.

MARTINE OSTORERO

See also: *ERRORES GAZARJORUM*; BASEL, COUNCIL OF; DAUPHINE; DOMINICAN ORDER; EUGENIUS IV; GENDER; HERESY; INQUISITION MEDIEVAL; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; LE FRANC, MARTIN; MALE WITCHES; MOUNTAINS AND THE ORIGINS OF WITCHCRAFT; NIDER, JOHANNES; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; SABBAT; SAVOY, DUCHY OF; VALAIS; *VADAI* (WALDENSIANS) VAUD, PAYS DE.

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LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (ANCIENT)

Laws against the practice of magic in the ancient world were more numerous, specific, and punitive in Rome than in Greece.

GREEK LAW

Few traces remain of legislation of any kind against magic by any Greek state. Indeed, it seems the Greeks never outlawed (or defined) magic as a category, although it may have been possible to prosecute harmful acts of magic under more general laws. A common source of ambiguity in ancient law, for the ancients themselves and for modern interpreters alike, has been equivocation of the Greek word *pharmakon* and its Latin equivalent *venenum* between "poison," "drug," and "spell."

Shortly after 479 B.C.E., Teos in Asia Minor erected an inscription known as the *Dirae Teiorum* (Curses of the Teians), which began with the imprecation "If anyone makes harmful spells/poisons [*pharmaka dêlêtêria*] against the Teian state or against individuals of it, he is to die, himself and his family with him" (Meiggs and Lewis 1969, no. 30). The fact that the state was contemplated as an object of possible attack guarantees that *pharmaka* here included spells. The text generally resembled an early law code in style, layout, and phraseology, and it may therefore have prescribed in trials. But the demand that the perpetrator's family should also die suggested rather the deterrent technique of a curse and an ill-defined magical defense against an ill-defined magical attack.

It is sometimes speculated that one could seek redress against harmful magic in fifth- and fourth-century B.C.E. Athens through a "public prosecution for damage" (*dikê blabês*). When, in that city, Philoneos's concubine supposedly poisoned him accidentally in the belief that she was giving him a love potion, she was charged with (and executed for) murder, pure and simple, according to Antiphon. The circumstances of the condemnation and execution of the "witch" (*pharmakis*) Theoris remain obscure, but the charge was one of impiety, as Demosthenes tells us.

In the first century B.C.E., the private rules of a religious cult in Philadelphia in Lydia required its members, among other things, to "swear an oath by all the gods not to use trickery against men or women, not to devise or perform a wicked spell [*pharmakon*] against people, nor wicked incantations [*epôidai*], nor a love charm [*philtron*], nor an abortifacient, nor a contraceptive" (Dittenberger 1915–1924, no. 985).

Beyond this, we can only turn to the imaginary regulations Plato composed for an ideal state in his *Laws* in the fourth-century B.C.E. First he prescribed that those found guilty of the evocation of the dead, of trying to bring compulsion upon the gods through sorcery (*goêteia*), or of trying to destroy families for money were

to be jailed for life and deprived of contact with free men; when they died, their bodies were to be cast out without burial. But then he prescribed execution for those found guilty of producing binding spells, charms, or incantations. It remains unclear whether these laws resembled any on the statute books of any Greek state of Plato's day, but the philosopher does seem to have been particularly hostile to sorcerers inasmuch as they were rival soul-technicians.

It seems, however, that magic was much used in association with the law. Numerous classical Athenian "tongue-binding" curse-tablets, or *defixiones*, manufactured against opponents in lawsuits have been discovered in the city's civic center and its Ceramicus Cemetery. A number of protective amulets for use in lawsuits also survive from the wider ancient world.

ROMAN LAW

Roman law is a more fertile area of study. The original Roman law code of 451 B.C.E., the *Twelve Tables*, included laws against the singing of evil incantations (*malum carmen*) and against the charming of crops from one field into another (*excantatio cultorum*), but we have no indication of the assigned penalties. The specification here of "evil" suggests that harmless varieties of incantation were permitted; certainly Cato the Elder was able to publish a healing incantation in his *De agricultura* of circa 160 B.C.E. In the first-century C.E., Pliny the Elder recounted an apocryphal tale about the unsuccessful prosecution of the honest freedman Cresimus for crop charming in his *Natural History* (77).

The principal law against magic in the Late Republic and after seems to have been Lucius Cornelius Sulla's 81 B.C.E. *Lex Cornelia de sicariis et veneficis* (Law of Cornelius on Assassins and Poisoners/Sorcerers). Once again, the key Latin term is equivocal, but the later jurists leave us in no doubt about the law's scope; they also specify that it outlawed, among other things, the selling, buying, possession, and administering of harmful drugs. It is usually believed that it was in reply to a prosecution under this law that Apuleius of Madaura made his famous ironic *Apology*, or "defense speech," on a capital charge at Sabratha in 158–159 C.E. Apuleius had arrived in the North African town of Oea and persuaded its most desirable rich widow, Pudentilla, to marry him, to the chagrin of her family, who wished to retain control of her money. They accordingly brought him to trial, primarily on the grounds that he had used erotic magic to seduce Pudentilla, but the case was built up with many further allegations of magical practice, such as the use of voodoo dolls and the infliction of trances upon boys for divination. A second-century C.E. rhetorical exercise by Hadrian of Tyre may have indicated that it was usual to burn witches at the stake, in a remarkable anticipation of more-modern ages.

The events of the so-called Bacchanalian conspiracy, resulting in the Senatorial Decree on Bacchanals of 186 B.C.E., and the subsequent execution, supposedly, of some 5,000 people for sorcery (according to Livy) showed the Roman government for the first time linking magic, divination, and foreign cults and considering all alike to be threats to the state. Cassius Dio later imagines Agrippa explaining the relationship to the new emperor Augustus:

You should hate and punish those who introduce foreign elements into our religion . . . because men of this sort, by importing new powers, persuade many people to take up foreign customs, and from this are born conspiracies and gatherings and secret clubs, which are the last thing a monarchy needs. Do not then permit people to be atheists or sorcerers [*goêtes*] . . . it is proper that there should be no mages [*mageutai*] whatsoever. For such men often incite many to revolution, either by telling the truth, or, as more often, by telling lies. (*Roman History* 52.36.1–2)

Executions or expulsions from the city of individuals branded as "Chaldaeans," "astrologers," "sorcerers," or "mages," together with burnings of their books, became frequent. Large groups were again targeted under the Republic in 139 B.C.E. and under the earlier empire in 33 B.C.E. (Augustus), 45 C.E. (Tiberius), 52 C.E. (Nero), and 69 C.E. (Vitellius). The emperors were particularly sensitive to the conspiratorial implications of divinations made to individuals and divinations on the subject of death, their own death in particular. Augustus, Tiberius, Nero, and Valens took special measures to ban this.

Under the Christian empire (for the relevant laws of which see the ninth book of the Theodosian Code), Constantine legislated in 319 C.E. against soothsaying and magic, making special mention of magic to create erotic attraction but excepting measures taken for healing or for agricultural weather control. In 357 C.E., Constantius II legislated against soothsayers, astrologers, diviners, augurs, seers, Chaldaeans, mages, and evildoers (*malefici*) in general. The effects of Constantius's legislation were far-reaching. It resulted, Ammianus Marcellinus tells us, in the execution of individuals merely for wearing amulets or for passing by graves at night. Further legislation followed under Valentinian between 368 and 389 C.E. and under Honorius in 409.

In his *Apology*, Apuleius cleverly argued that there were no circumstances under which a charge of magic should be brought: If a charge was false, it should not be brought for that reason alone, but if it was true, then the accuser would fall victim to the magician's terrible power, which was inevitably greater than that of the court.

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See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; APULEIUS OF MADAURA; DEFIXIONE; DIVINATION; LOVE MAGIC; POISON; POTIONS; ROMAN LAW; SPELLS.

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LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN)

Although it has recently been claimed that laws on witchcraft constituted a "judicial revolution" in the early modern period (Ankarloo 2002, 63–64), this is clearly not the case. Witchcraft can be considered one of the oldest crimes in the history of mankind, going as far back in history as we can see. From the earliest surviving law code (1792–1750 B.C.E.) of ancient Mesopotamia, literate societies with codified law have severely punished sorcery or witchcraft. The Code of Hammurabi imposed a river ordeal (swimming test) if such charges could not be proved by means of witnesses. This offered an effective remedy against too frequent accusations: According to the principle of talion, the accuser had to face the punishment the accused would have suffered if the ordeal failed to prove the suspect's guilt. In cases of witchcraft, this was the death penalty.

We know similar laws from the Middle Assyrian Empire, and one can assume that the death penalty was imposed on both male and female witches throughout the ancient Middle East (Thomsen 2001, 25–26). The most comprehensive set of texts from the struggle against witchcraft, about 100 incantations and prayers compiled during the rule of King Esarhaddon (680–669 B.C.E.), bore a title significant for the treatment of witches: *Maqlu*, which literally means "Burning." The laws of the Hebrews include the rule that witches (or poisoners) must be killed (Exod. 22:17), that those employing a spirit should be stoned to death (Lev. 20:27), and generally that diviners and prophets were to be killed (Deut. 13:5). Biblical law remained the most important legal source for witchcraft throughout the Christian history in Europe.

How much European perceptions of witchcraft were also molded by long-standing secular law becomes perfectly clear seen against the backdrop of ancient Rome. From the earliest Roman law codes (ca. 450 B.C.E.) to late-imperial legislation, the possibility of magic was generally admitted and its misuse (*maleficium*) penalized (Luck 1990, 147–151). Witchcraft panics generated a rising awareness in Roman law, starting with the *Lex Cornelia de sicariis et veneficiis* (Law of Cornelius on Assassins and Poisoners/Sorcerers), promulgated by Lucius Cornelius Sulla (138–178 B.C.E.), one of the most important sources of European laws on witchcraft in the late medieval and early modern periods (Ferrary 1991, 417–434).

According to a decree of Emperor Diocletian (ruled 284–305 C.E.), harmful sorcerers were to be burned alive, but those who practiced beneficial magic were to remain unpunished. By the later fourth century, the equating of *veneficium* (poisoning), *maleficium* (harmful magic), and divination paved the way for collective actions against evildoers in the Roman Empire. In book 16, chapter 8, Ammianus Marcellinus (330–ca. 395 C.E.) in his *Roman History* reported a sorcery scare from the reign of Emperor Constantius II (ruled 337–361 C.E.) during a period of famines and diseases: "If anyone consulted a soothsayer . . . , or if he used an old wives' charm to relieve pain . . . , he was denounced through some agency which he could not guess, brought to trial, and punished with death" (*The Later Roman Empire*, book 16, chapter 8).

Contrary to the Greco-Roman distinction between bad and good magic or between black and white magic, Christians questioned the efficacy of all magic, but they considered any kind of sorcery as diabolical. During the era of Emperor Constantius II, magicians were labeled "enemies of mankind" (*humani generis inimici*), and the death penalty was imposed for black and white magic alike in a series of laws from 357 (*Lex Nemo; Lex Multi*) and 358 (Fögen 1997, 223–232). This paradigm shift soon had other consequences. When the synod of

Zaragoza (380) condemned the scholar Priscillian as a heretic, he was also subjected to an imperial investigation. Found guilty of magical practices, he and six followers were sentenced to death for *maleficium*. The first convicted Christian heretic was thus actually punished for magic and, against the protest of several bishops, executed in 385. The consequences can also be seen in such late Roman codes as the *Codex Theodosianus* of Theodosius I (ruled 379–395), or the *Codex Justinianus* of Justinian I (ruled 527–565). With the reception of Roman law in medieval Europe, these imperial decrees had a lasting legacy. Their impact was increased by the semiotic theory of magic developed by St. Augustine (Harmening 1979, 303–308).

Early medieval penal codes imposed severe penalties for witchcraft, for example, the Salic law, “if a *stria* shall devour a man and it shall be proved against her . . .” (Hansen 1900, 58–59). Legislation remained contradictory, however; Frankish, Lombard, and Alemannic laws all treated the subject differently. Alemannic law, compiled around 600 C.E., forbade burning *strigae* (witches), which probably indicated that this was the customary procedure. Likewise, the Lombard king Rothari decreed in 643 that Christians must not believe that women devour a human being (“*ut mulier hominem vivum intrinsecus possit comedere*”) and therefore supposed *strigae* must neither be killed nor convicted in court. A capitulary of Charlemagne (ruled 768–814) for the Saxons in 787 imposed the death penalty on and burned those who, like pagans, believed that someone could be a *striga* who devours humans. Around 800, an Irish synod likewise condemned belief in witches, and particularly those who slandered people for being *lamiae* (witches; “*que interpretatur striga*”). Clearly, there was an increase in official skepticism during the Carolingian period, even allowing for an increase in surviving sources.

The most important text on the subject was the *Canon Episcopi*, officially attributed to a fourth-century Church council but in fact formulated and perhaps conceived by Abbot Regino of Prüm in an early tenth-century penitentiary, which admonished bishops (*episcopi*) to proceed against sorcerers in their dioceses. It was later adopted by the most important contemporary authorities, first by Bishop Burchard of Worms and then, around 1140, by Gratian of Bologna. Regino’s canon was important not only for its rejection of the efficacy of sorcery but also for its denial of certain witch beliefs. After an introductory paragraph about the need to fight against sorcerers, male as well as female, suggesting lenient sentences, Regino inserted a long paragraph about women who believed that they experienced nocturnal flights with the pagan goddess Diana. He condemned believers in such fantastical tales for implicitly accepting a supernatural power rivaling God. Bishops should fight against these beliefs through

their clergy and should make clear that these flights were not real, but only dreams and devilish illusions. The canon became part of the *Corpus Juris Canonici*, the Church law of Latin Christendom, and proved influential during the following centuries. The harsh implications of Mosaic law (Exod. 22:17: “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live”) were reinterpreted by such Carolingian theologians as Archbishop Rabanus Maurus of Mainz, who suggested as punishment mere exclusion from the community instead of physical extinction (Haustein 1990, 69). The idea that “the official church stance regarding magic shifted from a demonic association with paganism to a demonic association with heresy” (Jolly 2002, 21) seems compelling.

Of course, medieval reality was more complex. Harmful magic was considered devilish: According to St. Augustine, it implied a demonic pact, and according to Roman law, it deserved the death penalty. Both traditions influenced the development of European law. For instance, the laws of Alfred the Great of Wessex (ruled 871–899) clearly used the same biblical reference as had Rabanus Maurus to impose the death penalty on women who frequented sorcerers or magicians: Here, witchcraft was considered real. Nor does it sound like “skepticism” when the Carolingian king Charles II decreed in 873 that witches—men and women alike—had caused illness and death in different parts of his realm and should therefore be put to death, together with their accomplices and supporters. Killing witches was obviously practiced among Germanic peoples. The laws of the Franks, Ostrogoths, and Visigoths rejected only the belief in *strigae*, rarely questioning the danger of harmful magic. “Carolingian skepticism” notwithstanding, Charlemagne was quite clear about the punishment of *maleficium*. In his *Admonitio Generalis* (General Warning) of 789, the future emperor, commenting on several papal decrees from Hadrian I (ruled 772–795), decreed that sorcerers and witches (*maleficii, incantatores, and incantatrices*) must not be tolerated, explicitly referring to Mosaic law; in later versions of this list, *tempestarii* (witches who raise storms) were added (Hansen 1900, 63–64).

In Frankish and Anglo-Saxon law, harmful magic was frequently placed together with murder, which makes perfect sense if we consider present-day African ideas about witchcraft. According to the *Lex Salica* (Salic Law), those who could not pay for their magical crimes should be burned (“*certe ignem tradatur*”) (Hansen 1900, 55–56). Numerous decrees from the later Carolingian period implied the death penalty for harmful sorcery. Such sorcerers were liable to suffer capital punishment under Norman rule in England (Ewen 1933, 26), as well as in Sicily. The Venetian Republic issued draconian laws against *maleficium* in 1181, as did many Italian towns in the thirteenth century. Medieval German law codes imposed burning

at the stake as the customary penalty for harmful magic. The *Schwabenspiegel* (Swabian Legal Mirror; ca. 1240), one of the most influential medieval compilations of imperial law, suggested that sorcery implied apostasy and a pact with the Devil (Hansen 1900, 387). The author, probably a jurist close to the Franciscans at Augsburg, merely combined secular law with Christian theology. Demonic witchcraft was no new invention but required only basic knowledge of theology. In a famous legal opinion of 1398, Jean Gerson and the University of Paris came to exactly the same conclusion (Hansen 1900, 283–284).

The decisive step toward mass persecutions of witches in Europe was the construction of a cumulative concept of witchcraft during the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, when the first large-scale witch hunts and major persecutions were launched in some Alpine valleys. Only around 1400 were different aspects of witchcraft and heresy assembled into the specific European concept of witchcraft, which allowed witch hunts of previously unprecedented severity. Harmful magic combined with the pact with the Devil to form the core of the new cumulative crime, the first aspect crucial for secular law, the second for its qualification as a heresy. Around these crystallized a group of what were even by medieval perceptions exotic accusations: apostasy, flying through the air to nocturnal gatherings at remote places, the witches' dance, sexual intercourse with demons, and adoration of the Devil.

In legal practice, accusations of nocturnal flights turned out to be the most destructive, because suspects were asked to name their accomplices, whom they supposedly met at these gatherings. Combined with the use of torture, such questions could generate chain reactions, resulting in massive witch hunts, reminiscent of similar events in Roman antiquity. Inquisitorial procedure was a legacy of Roman law that had survived within the Latin Church; first revived for disciplining the higher clergy, it was later applied in heresy trials. At the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), the Roman Church accepted torture in trials run by inquisitors in order to obtain confessions from suspects, while forbidding archaic rituals like ordeals by hot iron or cold water (the swimming test). Although subsequently illegal, ordeals were nevertheless practiced in lynchings throughout northern and eastern Europe and were occasionally even commissioned by lower courts.

Because legal torture aimed to achieve material truth rationally rather than through mystical intervention, as in ordeals, it was initially considered an improvement to legal procedure. We must keep in mind that the meaning of legal torture differed decisively from modern perceptions. Although torture had been meant to replace ordeals, in practice judges sometimes used unlimited torture as if it were an ordeal, particularly in heresy trials. A blend of physical coercion, systematizing

all kinds of real or false information, and mere fantasy or projection led to the idea that dissidents belonged to a devilish sect and worshipped the Devil.

Harmful magic and heresy were first fused into a new cumulative crime of witchcraft in Savoy under Duke Amadeus VIII (ruled 1416–1451). This new state dominated the eastern Alps. When Duke Amadeus felt bewitched, the persecution of Jews, Waldensians, and witches gained momentum. It was in Savoy that the fusion of heresy, anti-Judaism, and sorcery took place, and the new cumulative crime of witchcraft was born. Amadeus VIII's ambitious law code of 1430, the *Statuta Sabaudie* (Statutes of Savoy), emphasized the crime of sorcery, although still in traditional language. Ten years later, witchcraft surfaced in a much more prominent form when Pope Eugenius IV (ruled 1431–1447) mentioned in a decree that Savoy bristled with "*stregule vel stregonos seu Waudenses*"—female and male witches, or Waldensians (Hansen 1900, 18–19).

In Savoy, trials of sorcery fueled heresy trials and eventually, by the late 1420s, produced large-scale witch hunts. The persecution in neighboring Dauphiné never reached this massive level but was characterized by a steady flow of "small panic" trials. One explanation for this contrast could be the different judicial system. In Dauphiné, subject to France since 1349, only secular courts were responsible for witchcraft trials, with judges referring mainly to secular law, to French jurists, or to Roman law. Therefore, they ignored both witches' flight and synagogues or Sabbats, which were still considered to be devilish illusions. Several late medieval territories accepted the services of papal inquisitors, but, with a few exceptions, they generally observed existing or customary laws on witchcraft. When Tyrol, an independent duchy of the Holy Roman Empire, suffered Heinrich Kramer's attempt to launch a major witch hunt in 1485, both government and parliament were extremely reluctant to accept indictments for witchcraft. "Witchcraft" was in fact never mentioned in its law codes, and when "sorcery" was first mentioned in the *Tiroler Landesordnung* (Tyrol government regulation) of 1544, it was classified as a form of fraud. Likewise, the imperial city of Nuremberg defined witchcraft as fraud as late as 1536.

Spanish and German traditions merged in the legislation of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (ruled 1519–1556), the leading ruler of his age. His criminal law of 1532, promulgated as *Constitutio Criminalis Carolina* (the Carolina Code), had been negotiated long before among the imperial estates. This code, which remained virtually unchanged until the Holy Roman Empire collapsed in 1806, completely ignored the cumulative crime of witchcraft as defined by the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486). It contained a paragraph against harmful magic (par. 109), the treatment of which was regulated

scrupulously in three paragraphs on procedural law (pars. 21, 44, 52). Capital punishment was confined to cases where harmful magic could be proven beyond doubt, whereas nonharmful magic of any sort was left to the arbitrary judgment of the courts.

The inquisitorial procedure of the Carolina Code avoided the worst shortcomings of Inquisition courts by granting suspects clearly defined rights and ruling out the arbitrary use of violence. In order to avoid arbitrary acts by local courts, every capital sentence had to be submitted to a high court or a law faculty. Within the boundaries of the *processus ordinarius* (ordinary procedure), as later jurists called it, torture could only be used in cases of evident guilt, when a suspect already stood convicted by two independent witnesses, or in cases of clear evidence. Torture could not be employed in order to extract confessions on the basis of mere denunciation or suspicion.

Later witch hunters complained that under these conditions, hardly anyone could be convicted of witchcraft. Indeed, this may have been one purpose of this legislation. Its main author, the Franconian baron Johann von Schwarzenberg (1463–1528), a humanist translator of Cicero and an early follower of Luther's Reformation in 1521, becoming one of the first lords to forbid Catholic rites in his territory—had belonged to Maximilian I's entourage in the late 1480s and was presumably familiar with discussions about the scandalous inquisitor Heinrich Kramer, the author of the *Malleus*. In contrast to an earlier law code designed by Schwarzenberg before the Reformation, in the Carolina Code he now eliminated any mention of interference by good or evil spirits and any trace of heresy laws. The Carolina Code clearly signaled its disapproval of Inquisition courts, whose activities were no longer tolerated by German estates, thus marking a clear difference from Charles's Spanish and Italian territories. The Carolina Code was accepted even in the most remote corners of the Holy Roman Empire, for instance, Switzerland or the Spanish Netherlands.

Like the Holy Roman Empire, many other states introduced witchcraft into their penal codes during the sixteenth century, either in order to limit the power of ecclesiastical courts or to underline the achievements of the Protestant Reformation. Even in countries where Roman law was never applied, traces of this development can be found. In Tudor England, a new Witchcraft Act was promulgated in 1563. It superseded an earlier attempt of 1542, which had been repealed after five years (Sharpe 2001, 99–100). Like the penal code of Charles V, the Elizabethan witchcraft statute focused on harmful magic, but it also provided extensive details on minor punishments for cases of magic causing harm less than death, or even causing no harm at all. The bill had already been introduced in the House of Commons in 1559, and it received a second

reading in the House of Lords before being revived in 1563, in the context of the Protestant restoration after Elizabeth I's accession. Although historians have not yet discovered related English trials until 1566, we can assume that the act was not enacted without reason. In the Channel Islands, the first recorded death penalties for witchcraft occur exactly at this time, on Jersey in 1562 and on Guernsey in 1563. The English witchcraft bill fits neatly into the general picture of rising awareness about witchcraft in Europe during the 1560s. In Scotland, legislation was also introduced in 1563, accompanied by a Calvinist Reformation and a sudden rise in the number of accusations. Claims that the Scottish Witchcraft Act might indicate skepticism (Larner 1981, 66) are ludicrous. Its wording clearly stated that according to divine law, those who used witchcraft, sorcery, or necromancy must receive the death penalty (Normand and Roberts 2000, 89), as must those who sought help from witches, sorcerers, or necromancers. After 1563, numerous laws dealt with superstition, sorcery, and witchcraft in general; it will be difficult to provide a comprehensive list for all European territories.

Furthermore, after 1563, numerous laws and decrees dealt with certain aspects of the witchcraft trials. In August 1563, the Council of Luxembourg promulgated an ordinance on August 13, 1563, in order to limit ongoing prosecutions in this province of the Spanish Netherlands. Laws on witchcraft became more numerous in subsequent years, usually attempting to curb legal abuses in witchcraft trials or to stop actual witch hunts. Massive witch hunts alerted the government of Luxembourg to promulgate more laws on witchcraft in 1570 and 1573, and frequently from April 1591 onward. Decrees of King Philip II for the Spanish Netherlands in 1592, 1595, and 1606 also affected Franche-Comté and Luxembourg.

Continuing legislation on aspects of witchcraft trials was by no means confined to Catholic governments. King Frederick II of Denmark (ruled 1559–1588) tried to limit executions for witchcraft through a 1576 decree making the ratification of such judgments by the high court compulsory, although there are no indications that this law had any more effect than later Danish decrees. Many German territories tried to curb the persecutions of supposed witches, even states with massive persecutions such as the archbishop-electorate of Trier, which in 1591 and again in 1630 attempted to reduce the power of witch-hunting village committees. Numerous decrees, for example, in electoral Mainz in 1612 or in the prince-bishopric of Würzburg in 1627, limited the extent of confiscations of convicted witches' property. Other laws, as in the imperial free city of Kaufbeuren in 1591 or the prince-bishopric of Bamberg in 1627 and 1628, tried to curb witchcraft persecutions by punishing gossip. But other territories,

like the principality of Saxe-Coburg in 1629, simply tried to regulate court procedures in order to avoid disturbances during witchcraft trials.

A third category of legislation on witchcraft tried to redefine the crime in the spirit of St. Augustine. Not surprisingly, this development began in the duchy of Württemberg, a stronghold of Lutheran orthodoxy, whose reformer Johann Brenz had been attacked by Johann Weyer in 1563 for inconsistencies when discussing witchcraft. Like Weyer, Brenz claimed that witchcraft was ineffective, but Brenz nevertheless wanted to see witches burned because of their apostasy. The legislative process apparently began after Weyer ridiculed Brenz by emphasizing that apostasy was not a crime in secular law. Unsurprisingly, in Württemberg's new law code (*Landrecht*) of 1567, for the first time harmful magic was no longer required when defining the crime of witchcraft. Within a few years, this radical reinterpretation was adopted by other Lutheran states. In 1572, the Lutheran prince-electorate of Saxony's new penal code (*Kursächsische Kriminalordnung*) shifted emphasis entirely to the spiritual aspects of witchcraft: The witch's compact with the Devil now stood at the crime's core. This redefinition of witchcraft explicitly denied the importance of harmful magic and implicitly denied the meaning of both ancient and modern imperial law (Behringer 1988, 79).

The Saxon lawyers drew the consequence of a prolonged Protestant debate over the efficacy of harmful magic, building on both common sense and the theological tradition of the *Canon Episcopi*. Unlike the insulted Württembergers, the Saxons argued directly against Weyer, whose arguments they considered worthless, because he was a doctor of medicine, not of law. The Saxon code was the more consistent piece of Lutheran legislation, because it required no proof of harmful magic for conviction. The then-Lutheran electoral Palatinate followed in 1582 (*Kurpfälzisches Landrecht*), but it soon returned to Calvinism, thus becoming the first Calvinist state with a spiritualized definition of witchcraft in its law code. Other Protestant penal codes showed similar spiritualizing tendencies, enabling us to identify an overall tendency. In Norway, subject to Denmark, the Lutheran clergy got royal approval of a 1584 statute that imposed the death penalty for superstition. This punishment was reduced to exile in Denmark's subsequent comprehensive 1617 witchcraft statute (Ankarloo 2002, 69), while those who made a pact with the Devil were to be burned. This Danish statute was extended to Iceland in the 1630s. Similarly, the famous English Witchcraft Act of 1604 imposed the death penalty not just for the witch's pact but also for harmful magic; it included a broader variety of harm than the 1563 statute. But clearly there was a shift in emphasis from *maleficium* to demonolatry throughout the laws of Protestant Europe.

Similar tendencies can also be observed in Catholic states. In 1588, the Counter-Reformation territory of Baden-Baden (then under Bavarian guardianship because of the minority of its ruler) no longer required proof of *maleficium* for a death penalty, focusing instead on apostasy and the Devil's pact. Interestingly, its government took this wording from the 1582 code of the Calvinist Palatinate (*Kurpfälzisches Landrecht*), although adding several "Catholic" notions (such as the witches' flight) in an appendix that contained an extensive questionnaire. The duchy of Bavaria followed in practice in 1590 and de jure in 1612; electoral Cologne followed in 1607, and the prince-bishopric of Bamberg in 1610.

The Bavarian statute promulgated by Duke Maximilian I in 1612 offered by far the most comprehensive example of legislation on witchcraft, covering no fewer than forty printed pages (Behringer 1988, 165–191). Bavarian lawyers had argued that because the government had failed to explain what witchcraft actually meant, it was unpunishable in principle. So this extensive law first explained why witchcraft must be punished (1–7), then it defined witchcraft as opposed to sorcery and mere superstition (8–29), and, finally, it published sanctions for all forms of witchcraft, sorcery, and superstition (30–40). Although seeming insane from our modern viewpoint, it clearly represented a courageous attempt to impose some order on the chaos of contemporary views about witchcraft. Furthermore, it attempted to protect superstitious peasants from persecutions by Counter-Reformation zealots. Whereas demonologists like Peter Binsfeld and Martín Del Rio suggested that according to Augustinian theology, wearing amulets indicated an implicit compact with the Devil, the Bavarian law clearly considered such customary superstitions completely separate from witchcraft. First published in 1612, this witchcraft statute was reissued in 1665 and again as late as 1746—by then an outstanding example of Bavarian stubbornness and backwardness.

Like the criminalization of witchcraft, the repeal of witchcraft laws has yet to be researched on a comparative level in Europe. With the outstanding exception of the British witchcraft act of 1736 (Bostridge 1997, 180–203), we lack thorough studies. Clearly, the formal British repeal via parliamentary decision was unique. The kings of France and Prussia, the tsar of Russia, and Empress Maria Theresa of Austria-Hungary suppressed witchcraft trials without changes in legislation, just as the Spanish Inquisition and the Dutch Estates General had done earlier. In this context, we should notice that after the massive witch hunts of the 1620s, many German princes and prince-bishops had simply forbidden further witchcraft trials, for example, Carl Caspar von der Leyen, archbishop-elect of Trier in 1659 (Rummel 1991, 246). The first European

government to start crushing witchcraft accusations as early as 1572, the electoral Palatinate, despite its disgruntled clergy and its 1582 penal code, never issued a death sentence for witchcraft. But because such conduct can only be detected by reading archival sources instead of published law codes, there may be further discoveries in the future.

Only shortly before the French Revolution did a landslide start. In 1766, Maria Theresa intervened decisively in Hungary. Witchcraft laws were repealed in Poland in 1776 and in Sweden in 1779. A Swiss “judicial murder” of 1782 provoked action in Germany. In 1787, Emperor Joseph II simply omitted all articles about sorcery or witchcraft from his new criminal code for the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy. French laws against *magie et sortilège* (magic and witchcraft) remained in place, albeit limited by a 1682 royal edict. However, France experienced trials well into the Enlightenment, with the Devil playing an important role (Bostridge 1997, 227–231); only during the French Revolution, in 1791, were these *crimes imaginaires* (imaginary crimes) abandoned.

Some states never formally introduced laws on sorcery or witchcraft and therefore never needed to remove them, but most countries only disposed of those laws during the social and political upheaval around 1800, when new criminal law codes were introduced in the wake of general reforms, often in such newly created states as the Kingdom of Bavaria (1813). A late repeal of witchcraft laws meant nothing. Such legislation remained intact longest in the European country with the fewest known witchcraft executions: Ireland’s 1587 Witchcraft Act remained in force until 1821. The public debates about its abolition remind us that even in the British Isles, a minority continued to believe in witchcraft and were convinced that witches must be punished.

European legislation on witchcraft was exported during the prolonged period of European expansion, not least through such ideologies as Marxism, functionalism, and modernization theory. The Soviet rulers of Russia and China, claiming to dictate their subjects’ belief as had previous rulers of these empires, tried to extirpate beliefs in witchcraft, shamanism, and official religion simultaneously. But more often, disbelief in witchcraft was introduced under foreign colonial rule—in the Americas, Australia, and large parts of Africa and Asia.

However, modern European legislation on witchcraft was not welcomed or universally accepted, and it sometimes even created major problems. Following Christian tradition, such colonial laws not only forbade persecution of evil witches but also criminalized witch doctors. When Dutch legislation was introduced in Indonesia in 1905 or British legislation in eastern Africa in 1922, many natives understood them as laws to protect witches; European law inverted traditional

values. Because the European elites had stopped believing in witchcraft and had exported their laws to the colonies, legal prosecution suddenly became impossible, with the ritual killing of witches classified as murder. Poison ordeals and oracles were prohibited, witch doctors were prosecuted as legal offenders, while witches were protected. The colonized could not believe this inversion of norms: Why would their foreign rulers protect evil witches?

Some postcolonial African countries have begun to legalize witch persecution. In 1965, newly independent Uganda introduced legislation that replaced the colonial witchcraft ordinance with an “Act to Make Provision for the Prevention of Witchcraft and the Punishment of Persons Practising Witchcraft.” This act laid considerable emphasis on “repute” as valid evidence. This repeal may have encouraged the subsequent witch hunts in northern Uganda, launched in the home region of President Milton Obote (ruled 1962–1971, 1980–1985) during a time when he had decided to destroy the traditional Bugandan monarchy and introduce socialist reforms. Obote’s supporters took his Five-Year Economic Plan of 1966/1967 as a model for a “five-year antisorcery plan” and began rounding up suspected witches, many of them educated or wealthy (Abrahams 1985, 32–45).

In Cameroon and Malawi, diviners testified in court against suspected witches. It has become acceptable to decide cases of suspected witchcraft through such occult practices as divination, with the accused risking physical punishment and prison sentences. If witches may be officially accused and tried, it is no longer necessary to kill them clandestinely. During the late 1970s, under President Ahmadou Ahidjo of Cameroon, the official tribunal of the eastern province (home of the Maka people) regularly sentenced accused witches, sometimes even without their admission of guilt. Traditional healers, the *nganga*, testified to the witches’ guilt through their mystical knowledge; on that basis, courts issued sentences of up to ten years in prison, the legal maximum under the 1965 penal code. The interesting aspect is that this law is similar to the English Witchcraft Act of 1736 and to colonial law codes that were meant to punish witch doctors. However, legal practice turned their meaning upside down.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: ACCUSATORIAL PROCEDURE; AFRICA (SUB-SAHARAN); BIBLE; *CANON EPISCOPI*; CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITUTIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*); COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; COURTS, INQUISITORIAL; COURTS, SECULAR; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; EXODUS 22:18 (22:17); HERESY; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (ANCIENT); LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (MEDIÆVAL); LAWYERS; *MALEFICIUM*; ORDEAL; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; PAPACY AND PAPAL BULLS; ROMAN LAW; SWIMMING TEST; TORTURE; TRIALS; UNIVERSITIES.

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LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (MEDIÉVAL)

During the centuries conventionally defined as the Middle Ages, laws concerning witchcraft cannot be easily separated from those condemning magical practices and beliefs or surviving pagan habits. Unlike the laws of later centuries, medieval laws often aimed to condemn not witches but rather those who believed their powers were real.

Laws constitute one of the better sources for studying magic and witchcraft during the Early Middle Ages. Nearly all of them fall into one of two categories: secular Germanic legal codes and ecclesiastical legislation. To the former belong all the codes produced in different European regions during the reigns formed with the contribution of Germanic and Latin elements. In the latter there are numerous regulations (canons, synods, decrees, penitentials) decreed by the Church during its first centuries as an official state religion. Not all of them have the same purpose: Some were meant to impose or forbid a habit; others just instituted penalties. Only in the twelfth century, with the *Concordantia discordantium canonum* (Concord of Discordant Canons, better known as the *Decretum*) of the monk Gratian, did there appear a revision that harmonized the entire ecclesiastical legislative tradition.

It is not easy to discern exactly what "witchcraft" was in those early sources because most of them express, in Latin, notions emerging from Germanic (and sometimes Celtic or even Asiatic) culture. The long-term result of interchanges among those many traditions ultimately led to the formation of the early modern notion of witchcraft, involving the idea of a diabolical pact or at least some intervention by the Devil. But early legislation dealt with a complex of traditions concerning deadly spells, weather magic, residues of pagan cults, and men and women thought to have certain powers over things or people; many of the laws are not easy to decipher and relate to cultural contexts that we can detect.

The early Christian world inherited two main traditions about witchcraft: one from Scripture, the other from the legislation of the Roman Empire. Both considered practices of witchcraft to be real rather than fraudulent. In the Bible, Deuteronomy (18:10–12) condemns all forms of magic as abominations: 10: "There shall not be found among you any one who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, any one who practices divination, a soothsayer, or an augur, or a sorcerer," 11: "or a charmer, or a medium, or a wizard, or a necromancer." 12: "For whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord; and because of these abominable practices the Lord your God is driving them out before you" (*The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version*. London: Nelson, 1966.) Wizards and witches deserve death for their practices, as stated explicitly in Exodus (22:17: "You shall not permit a sorceress to

live”) and reaffirmed in Leviticus (20:27: “A man or a woman who is a medium or a wizard shall be put to death; they shall be stoned with stones, their blood shall be upon them”). The whole episode of Saul’s visit to the witch of Endor (1 Kings 28; now 1 Samuel 28) presupposes the reality of the evocation of Samuel.

Roman imperial legislation toward *maleficia* (harmful magic) was severe as well, showing the same level of belief in the reality of witches’ powers. In the third century C.E., the punishment of burning alive was prescribed for people who had provoked someone’s death through spells. The first Christian councils, held in late antiquity, merged the Roman with the biblical traditions and took witchcraft with the same seriousness. For instance, Canon 6 of the Council of Elvira (306) refused the Viaticum to those who had killed a man *per maleficium* (through harmful magic), adding that such a crime could not be perpetrated “without idolatry”: The worship of pagan idols was already equated with worship of the Devil, as became general in following centuries. Also, Canon 24 of the Council of Ancyra (314) imposed five years’ penance for the lesser crime of seeking advice from magicians. But this ruling seems to refer to the survival of pagan practices and beliefs, especially in rural settings. We have many such indications of this: Throughout the Early Middle Ages, councils held across Europe provided evidence that peasants, even those who were baptized, still worshiped trees, rocks, and springs once linked to some deity. Many “rustics” also required help from figures whom our sources, following the Romans, called *sorilegi* (sorcerers), *auguri* (augurs), *arioli* (diviners), and *incantatores* (spellbinders). But the attitude of the Church councils toward these beliefs was generally “disenchanted”: They were considered “superstitions” rather than real menaces.

During the Early Middle Ages, many Germanic kingdoms provided themselves with written codes, usually collected from their common traditions and more or less influenced by Roman legislation. Some of these codes punished practices of magic and witchcraft, but they also contained law that only censured those who believed those practices have real effects or those who accused someone of being a witch or a wizard. For example, in the Salic law, issued by the Franks, those found guilty of *maleficia* had to pay sixty-two and a half golden *solidi* (coins; all Germanic codes refer to this measure, issued from the Roman world, though golden coins were no longer produced and silver coins had replaced them everywhere in Europe); the penalty rose to 200 golden *solidi* for a witch (*malefica*) who had eaten a man. The power of witches was recognized as real, and making an unproved accusation of being a witch drew a fine of eighty-seven gold coins.

The Visigothic Code was harsher because it did not always allow *Wergild* (“man price,” that is, financial damages as the only punishment for crimes): Those

who had done serious *maleficia* could lose their freedom and become slaves; if the *maleficium* had caused someone’s death, the perpetrator could receive the death penalty. Weather magic with bad consequences, invocations, and worshiping of the Devil were punished with severe whippings (up to 200 strokes) and public humiliation. The Lombard laws showed fewer worries about the real effects of magical acts, merely condemning those who call a woman *striga* or *masca* (clearly both names for “witch,” though the second was previously unknown); we must suppose that the Lombard legislators wanted to discourage any beliefs of this kind.

The many codes created in the Carolingian era show little uniformity. The Council of Lipsia (743) prescribed a fine of only fifteen *solidi* for those found guilty of *maleficium*. Another council, held in Paderborn (785), was more detailed, though being partially self-contradictory. Sorcerers were condemned to submit themselves as servants to the Church, but those who, blinded by the Devil and infected with pagan errors, held another person to be a witch who ate human flesh and who therefore burned her, ate her flesh, or gave it to others to eat would themselves be punished with death. We should note that these measures were meant for a particular region, recently conquered by Charlemagne: The Saxons who lived there were still pagans and strongly resisted conversion to Christianity.

Among the laws issued directly by the Frankish kings, called *capitularia* (capitularies), some condemned surviving pagan traditions; they mentioned divine sorcerers, witches who raise storms (*tempestarii*), and, more peculiarly, “women who eat the moon and rip men’s hearts off” (*Monumenta Germaniae Historica* 1883, I, n. 108, p. 223).

In the Church’s prolonged fight against surviving pagan habits, diminishing ancient cults could sometimes be discouraged as useless superstitions, including beliefs and practices about witchcraft. Medieval penitentials shed light upon the various ways Christianity sought to overwhelm paganism. In the Irish world, the penitentials of Finian (written in mid-sixth-century Ireland) and St. Columba (written slightly later in Europe by an Irish author) showed a certain moderation: Forty days of fasting were prescribed for those who joined pagan or diabolical rites; those who repeated the same sin would observe penitence for three Lents; three years’ penance was suggested for those who persisted in their crime. As usual in such sources, penalties for Christian clerics were harsher: doubled for deacons, tripled for priests. One year of penitence was the price for fabricating a love potion, and inducing an abortion by magical means could cost up to six Lents of fasting or a penance of half a year with just bread and water (plus two years without wine or meat).

In late-seventh-century England, the penitential of Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, threatened three

years' penance to those who sacrificed to demons (presumably referring to pagan survivals), but in the most serious cases, the penance rose to ten years. If a woman performed diabolical incantations or divinations, she was condemned to a penance of one year. Another English penitential, named for the Venerable Bede but probably belonging to the eighth century, prescribed five years' penance for clerics and three to five for laymen who performed different forms of magic, such as fabricating amulets or consulting diviners. The early-ninth-century French penitential called "of Halitgar" contained interesting details because many of its prescriptions involved surviving pagan traditions: A wizard found guilty of taking away the mind of a man by invoking demons was condemned to a penance of five years; a conjurer of storms received an even harsher penance of seven years, three of them on bread and water, or exactly the same as for those who caused the death of someone performing magic arts. The early-ninth-century Spanish penitential of Silos was more severe: Those who made images of demons or consulted them were condemned to eight years' penance, and a woman who burned grain where a man had died, seeking relief for the health of the living, had to do penance for one year.

Post-Cardingian society produced few written law codes. Sometimes we can discover crimes and punishments indirectly: For example, in tenth-century Anglo-Saxon England, under King Edgar, a woman and her son were condemned to death by drowning for having employed magical figurines, or *defixiones*. Pope Gregory VII wrote to King Harold of Denmark in 1080, forbidding him to put to death those who were believed to have caused storms, damaged harvests, or spread pestilence. In this era, our most important legislative corpus came from three Hungarian kings: Stephen I (997–1038), Ladislas I (1077–1095), and Coloman (1095–1116). Their laws separate magical practices punishable by civil legislation (such as those related to poisoning or *maleficia*) from those that included invoking demons or divination, which were left to ecclesiastical judgment. It is also important to recall that King Coloman, deeply engaged in the fight against the still very widespread pagan practices among his people, refused to issue laws condemning witches (though it is unclear exactly what he meant by the word) because he thought witches did not exist.

After the tenth century, our sources start to show a theme—the "game of Diana"—that would become important in forming the image of the modern witch. It appears in a penitential known as *De ecclesiasticis disciplinis* (About Ecclesiastical Discipline), ascribed to Regino of Prüm and dated to the first decade of the tenth century. Among the usual prescriptions against magical practices, the author inserted a text later known as *Canon Episcopi*, which dismisses the belief that

women, seduced by the illusions of demons, could follow Satan and ride at night upon beasts along with the pagan goddess Diana. Slightly more than a century later, another penitential, the *Decretorum libri XX* (The Twenty Books of Decisions) of Burchard, bishop of Worms (about 1015), returned to this subject in its nineteenth book, often known separately as the *Corrector et medicus* (Corrector, or the Physician). Burchard paid attention to many forms of magic, including magical potions that could produce impotence or abortion, ceremonies for inducing fertility, and love charms. But he also rejected the reality of the nocturnal ride through the air, along with the control of thunder, rain, and sunshine, the transformation of a man into an animal, and the intercourse of *incubi* and *succubi* with human beings (unlike what Scholastics commonly held in later centuries). The beliefs denounced by Regino and Burchard nevertheless soon found acceptance in other legislative sources, such as the English penitential of Bartholomew Iscanus, from the second half of the twelfth century. The author seemed to acknowledge the reality of some magical powers; for instance, those who took away another's supply of milk or honey or of other things by any incantation were condemned to a penance of three years; conjurers of storms or those who, by invoking demons, led someone to insanity had to do five years' penance. But people who believed in the nocturnal rides or in the transformation of men and women into wolves got, respectively, one year and ten days of penance.

Many of the confused norms that had accumulated during the Early Middle Ages were reconsidered and reordered in the twelfth century by the monk Gratian. His *Decretum* included a section devoted to acts of sorcery (*De sortilegiis*), kept separate from the section about heresy, where the belief in nocturnal rides with Diana was included. Meanwhile, about the same time, the rise of the papal Inquisition began a new era for legislation about witchcraft. Though in 1258 Pope Alexander IV stated that the inquisitors should limit their intervention to cases involving a clear supposition of heretical belief, it was often hard to separate heresy from witchcraft. For example, a few years earlier, in 1233, Pope Gregory IX issued the bull *Vox in Rama* (A Voice in Rama), promoting a crusade against the Stedinger, peasants of a northern Germanic region (Steding) who refused to pay taxes to the archbishop of Bremen. The pope excommunicated the Stedinger and accused them of both heresy and magical practices, among them orgies; worshiping the Devil in the shape of beasts (a black cat and a toad) in many ways, including the *osculum infame* (kiss of shame, obscene kiss); and profaning the holy host.

Because inquisitors had to deal increasingly with cases connected with magical beliefs and practices, Pope

Alexander IV stated in both 1258 and 1260 that they had to consider those accusations carefully and that only crimes dealing with divination and sorcery—obviously considered as involving the Devil—should be prosecuted. Consequently, at Toulouse in 1275, where the Cathar heresy had been strong, prosecutions ended with the condemnation of a woman; she was burned to death for having given birth to a creature after intercourse with demons and then nourishing it with babies' flesh, which she procured during her nocturnal rides. The fourteenth century witnessed further enlargement of inquisitors' powers, though not without some opposition: King Philip IV of France forbade inquisitors to prosecute crimes of magic. Under the papacy of John XXII, the Inquisition's authority over magicians and witchcraft became almost boundless. With his *Super illius specula* (Upon His Watchtower) in 1326, Pope John XXII excommunicated anyone who made a pact with the Devil.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, many jurists, especially in Italy and France, gave opinions about the reality of magical powers. It must be remembered that the most famous among them, the Italian Bartolo of Sassoferrato (1313–1357), a professor at the University of Perugia and an adviser to the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV, gave a *consilium* (juridical advice) for the bishop and the inquisitor of Novara during their trial of a woman who had confessed to having worshiped the Devil, profaned the holy cross, and bewitched children who consequently died. Bartolo suggested she deserved the death penalty for her heretical crimes (unless she were to repent), as stated by the Roman *Lex Cornelia de sicariis et veneficiis* (Law of Cornelius on Assassins and Poisoners/Sorcerers, 81 B.C.E.), but he doubted that these women could kill with just their looks and touches because of their pact with the Devil.

Increasing inquisitorial activity against magic also pushed many authorities to include laws against magical activities in their codes—though most seemed more worried about frauds than about the real damages these practices could do, and none of them specified punishments against witchcraft. One of the earliest came from the city of Florence, with the *Constitutiones* of its bishop Antonio degli Orsi in 1310–1311. At that time, the Inquisition had many problems in Florence and did not begin to work effectively until the middle of the century. The attention paid by the *Constitutiones* to magical practices probably offered a way to handle the situation without external interference. A chapter about acts of sorcery (*De sortilegiis*) condemned crimes achieved through magic, divination, poisoning intended to hurt or kill (*veneficia*), and amulets (*brevia*). Later collections of laws (*statuta*) issued by different towns contained similar prescriptions.

In the fifteenth century, legislation about witchcraft became tighter. Civil authorities began to judge acts of

witchcraft as distinct from other kinds of magical practices. This situation emerged clearly from the trial of a woman called Matteuccia, held in Todi in 1428 without the intervention of the inquisitor, who lived nearby in Perugia. During her trial, she was accused of many magical activities but also specifically of being a *strega*, or witch, and of flying to the southern town of Benevento with other women, where they met the Devil, had intercourse with him, turned into animals, and went around Todi and nearby villages killing children in their cradles. Matteuccia was found guilty and burned.

In 1451, Pope Nicholas V issued a bull that, reversing precedents from the previous century, explicitly asked inquisitors to involve themselves in cases of witchcraft, even when the link to heresy was not clear. The route leading to the witch hunts was now traced out, and it culminated with the *Summis desiderantes affectibus* (Desiring with Supreme Ardor) promulgated by Innocent VIII in 1484.

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See also: BERNARDINO OF SIENA; BIBLE; BURCHARD OF WORMS; *CANON EPISCOPI*; CHARMS; *DEFIXIONES*; DIANA (ARTEMIS); ENDOR, WITCH OF; EXODUS 22:18 (22:17); GRATIAN; GREGORY IX, POPE; HERESY; IDOLATRY; INCUBUS AND SUCCUBUS; INNOCENT VIII, POPE; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; ISIDORE OF SEVILLE, ST.; JEWS, WITCHCRAFT, AND MAGIC; JOHN XXII, POPE; KISS OF SHAME; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (ANCIENT); SPELLS; SUPERSTITION; TODI, WITCH OF; WEATHER MAGIC.

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LAWYERS

Lawyers, broadly defined as men trained or educated in the law, played a variety of roles in witchcraft prosecutions. Their most visible function was as judges in witchcraft trials, especially in the central or upper-level courts of European states. Many of the court officials who assisted in the investigation and prosecution of witchcraft also had legal training. Some of the most prominent authors of witchcraft treatises, including Jean Bodin, Benedict Carpzov, Henri Boguet, Nicolas Rémy, and Christian Thomasius, possessed law degrees and had served in some official judicial capacity. In Germany, members of the university faculties of law regularly consulted with officials in local jurisdictions regarding witchcraft prosecutions.

The most controversial and sensitive role lawyers played in witchcraft trials was representing those accused of the crime. Although witches were entitled to defense counsel in all continental European and Scottish trials, few lawyers took such cases during the peak periods of witch hunting. Not only was legal counsel too costly for the typical lower-class witch (only the major Inquisitions provided lawyers gratis for defendants), but lawyers were reluctant to defend witches on the grounds that they might thereby encourage the Devil's activities and incur suspicion themselves. The *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches), while admitting the right of the judge to appoint an advocate for the accused, insisted that those appointed be convinced of the justice of their client's cause. If a lawyer were to unduly defend a person accused of heresy or witchcraft, he would become a patron of that crime and would come under strong suspicion himself. Concerns regarding the religious

orthodoxy of lawyers reinforced the old German saying, "Lawyers are wicked Christians" (Stolleis 2002, 1).

Although we cannot gain any kind of accurate figures regarding the number of witches who had the benefit of counsel, there is a sufficiently large record of legal representation in the seventeenth century to suggest that the number of cases in which lawyers defended the accused was increasing. The large volume of business that was directed to the appellate courts of France by itself accounts for a great part of this increase, because legal representation at appeals was mandatory. Even in trials in the first instance, however, lawyers started pleading for witches in greater numbers during the seventeenth century. In Scotland, lawyers began to defend witches in the Court of Justiciary in the 1620s, and they succeeded in securing acquittals in some cases. Most of those acquittals came after 1670, such as that of the witch known as Maevia, whom Sir George Mackenzie successfully defended before the High Court of Justiciary. To this can be added the acquittals of Margaret Clerk in 1674 and Bessie Gibb in 1680, each of whom had an attorney, in Gibb's case, her husband. By the 1660s, the legal representation of German witches also seems to have become fairly common. In Hungary, counsel for accused witches appeared in the records as early as the 1650s and received frequent mention in eighteenth-century cases, when the number of trials finally began to decline. In England, lawyers could be assigned to defendants only to advise them on points of law. This happened occasionally, such as in 1630, when Chief Justice John Finch assigned four barristers to counsel a poor woman accused of witchcraft.

Legal assistance of this sort benefited witches more than those accused of any other crime, precisely because the evidence in witchcraft cases was so vulnerable to challenge by a person skilled in the law. Lawyers in witchcraft cases could easily raise doubts regarding the supernatural causes of alleged *maleficia* (harmful magic), demand evidence of the corpus delicti, and impeach the credibility of witnesses who would not have been allowed to testify in the trial of ordinary crimes. They could also point out the insufficiency of the evidence, especially when it was hearsay, and the irrelevancy of the evidence that was presented to the indictment or the libel. They could even go so far as to deny the existence of witchcraft and call for a ban on the trials, as one Hungarian lawyer did in 1671. No wonder that in the previous century, Martin Luther, in one of his outbursts regarding the crime of witchcraft, complained that lawyers wanted too much evidence and refused to accept clear proofs of witchcraft. It was doubtless a similar frustration with the tactics of lawyers that led members of the Spanish Inquisition to complain in 1526 that none of the jurists in Castile believed in witchcraft. Nor should it surprise us that the one

person acquitted of witchcraft in the central Scottish courts between 1605 and 1622 had been wealthy enough to hire no fewer than three lawyers.

BRIAN P. LEVACK

See also: BODIN, JEAN; CARPZOV, BENEDICT; MACKENZIE, SIR GEORGE; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; RÉMY, NICOLAS; THOMASIU, CHRISTIAN; TRIALS.

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LAYENSPIEGEL (1509)

Layenspiegel is a handbook for lay judges, written by Ulrich Tengler (1447–1511), a clerk serving both the chancery of the Bavarian duke and the imperial free city of Nördlingen, who later became high bailiff and even a count palatine (*Reichsgraf*). Recognizing the need for a vernacular manual on practical juridical matters, in 1509 Tengler published his *Layenspiegel* (A Mirror [of Law] for Laymen; *Spiegel*, “mirror,” was a frequent title for such books), which he dedicated to Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I. It was an eclectic compilation of helpful materials, written for his colleagues and selected from many sources chosen among German, Roman, and canon laws. The humanist Sebastian Brant, author of the famous *Ship of Fools*, contributed an introduction of recommendation. The first edition, embellished by interesting woodcuts of high quality, was printed by Johann Rynmann in Augsburg and was followed by a second edition only a year later. It was reprinted, with alterations, thirteen times before 1560 and was much used both by Catholics and Protestants during the sixteenth century (there is, however, no recent edition nor any modern translation). The first part of the *Layenspiegel* comprised civil and police law; the second dealt with civil legal process; the third was about criminal law. How firmly Tengler was rooted in the traditional Catholic mentality that saw law as a religious problem became evident through several additions to the legal text, for example, a poem about the *Processus Sathanae contra genus humanum* (an invention of fourteenth-century Italian jurists dealing with the sinfulness of mankind, the Devil’s rights, and redemption, in the form of a canonical trial) or a religious play about the last judgment (another fourteenth-century text). The book’s main impact for

the history of Germanic law consisted in its dissemination of Roman jurisprudence.

Tengler was the first layman to deal with the witchcraft trials in form of a textbook. Given his practical concerns, in part 3 he discussed the subject “*Von kätzererey, warsagen, schwarzer kunst, zauberey, unholden, etc.*” (On heresy, soothsaying, black magic, sorcery, witches, etc.) (Tengler 1511, chap. CIV, p. v). In the second and later editions, he was much more severe against these crimes, having been influenced by his son Christopher, a theologian at the university of Ingolstadt. Whereas Tengler saw necromancy as being based on forbidden contact with demons, he saw astrology and similar arts as possibly being regarded as legal as long as they were practiced as natural sciences and without superstition. Regarding witchcraft, the *Layenspiegel* transmitted the teachings of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches), which it recommended for further details on this subject. Tengler offered a *Forma Citation wider Unholden*, that is, a schedule for bringing witches to trial, with a list for questioning them: “Why do your cows give more milk than the neighbors’ cows? What did you do in the field during a thunderstorm? Do you believe in witches? Why do you think people are scared of you? Why did you do this or that during your neighbor’s delivery?” and so on. It also showed how to record the witnesses’ testimonies, how to search the house of the accused, how to interrogate the alleged sorceress, and the like. Many details of the practice of German criminal courts when dealing with witches were codified here, for example, the use of blessed salt, water, and wax; the practice of fetching the accused into court with her back to the judge; or the complete removal of all hair.

Through Tengler’s *Layenspiegel*, both the idea of a pact with the Devil and the inquisitorial procedure of canon law were spread far and wide among juridical practitioners in sixteenth-century Germany. Undoubtedly, this book did much to intensify and brutalize the persecution of witches by offering an abridged vernacular version of the *Malleus Maleficarum* to everybody who could read but remained an *illiteratus* with no Latin.

PETER DINZELBACHER

See also: LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; ROMAN LAW; TRIALS.

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LAYMANN, PAUL (1574–1635)

Laymann was the Jesuit author of the *Theologia Moralis* (Moral Theology; Munich, 1625), a standard textbook on witchcraft and magic that influenced the great critic of witchcraft trials, Friedrich Spee. Born near Innsbruck in Tyrol, Laymann joined the Jesuit order in 1594 and spent most of his life in Bavarian Jesuit colleges. He was a novice in the college of Landsberg on the Lech, a student in Ingolstadt, and a gymnasium teacher in Dillingen, capital of the prince-bishops of Augsburg. From 1603 to 1609, he taught philosophy at Ingolstadt, then, from 1609 to 1625, he taught moral theology at the large college in Munich, and he then became professor of canon law at the University of Dillingen, where he stayed from 1625 to 1632. Fleeing from Swedish invaders during the Thirty Years' War, Laymann died of plague at Constance.

The *Theologia Moralis* was reprinted many times well into the eighteenth century. Whereas its first edition touched only briefly upon how confessors should treat witches, Laymann's third edition (Ingolstadt, 1630) borrowed widely from Adam Tanner, as did all subsequent editions. Laymann's foreword to the 1630 edition emphasized that its section "De iustitia" (Of Justice) had been enlarged to discuss witchcraft trials. Like his Bavarian fellow Jesuit Tanner, Laymann recommended utmost caution, because the Devil could deceive the senses, and very many cruelties had occurred. Laymann denied that denunciations had any legal value in witchcraft trials and suggested that many innocent people had already fallen victim to illegal witch hunts. Clearly distancing himself from Martín Del Rio, Laymann copied whole passages verbatim from Tanner. In 1631, Spee, in his *Cautio Criminalis seu de processibus contra sagas liber* (A Warning on Criminal Justice, or a Book on Witch Trials), used Laymann to double the number of Catholic authorities he could quote to support his position. Laymann's works were present in every better monastic library, where it was well known that his arguments about witchcraft were in fact Tanner's; usually they were quoted like twins, "Tanner and Laymann."

In 1629, at the climax of witch hunting in Germany, Laymann's chapter on witchcraft in his *Theologia Moralis* was allegedly published separately at

Aschaffenburg, in German, although under a Latin title. However, as its subtitle demonstrated (a translation into German, amplified with useful examples and other things), Laymann had little to do with this pamphlet. Someone (probably Hermann Goehausen, a lawyer serving Ferdinand of Bavaria, archbishop-elect of Cologne) used Laymann's authority in moral theology to justify the massive witch hunts in the Rhineland by translating, amplifying, and reshaping some bits of text from the first edition of Laymann's *Theologia Moralis*. It was merely a forgery, not a translation, possibly commissioned by the printer Quirin Botzer, who published other pamphlets of similarly dubious quality. Presumably the interests of Goehausen and some authorities coincided perfectly with Botzer's. The absence of approval by the Jesuit superiors demonstrated clearly that this publication was unauthorized.

This misuse may have provoked Laymann to reshape and clarify his ideas on witchcraft trials in his third and subsequent editions of his *Theologia Moralis*. After three years of intensive witch hunting in many parts of Germany, witchcraft trials had expanded beyond moral theology into a political and partisan issue. By clearly articulating that he and Tanner approved a lenient attitude and opposed Del Rio's rigidity (Laymann 1630, 1:524), Laymann repudiated any claim that the 1629 pamphlet represented his ideas. Nevertheless, the false claims to authenticity of Botzer's Aschaffenburg pamphlet, reprinted in Cologne, confused Laymann's first Jesuit biographers and provoked a sharp debate around 1900 between a Jesuit historian and a liberal Catholic about Laymann's real position, where the Jesuit's interpretation was more nearly correct. In 1909, Henry Charles Lea (who owned a copy of Botzer's pamphlet) was careful enough to notice that the same text, with few additions, was reprinted in Cologne in 1629 under Goehausen's name; his discussion (Lea 1939, 2:670–689) remains the most extensive account in English. However, a medical historian and early biographer of Johann Weyer (Binz 1901) found that an eighteenth-century bibliographer ascribed the pamphlet to Dr. Johannes Jordanaeus, a canon and parish priest at Bonn, who reportedly assembled the text anonymously, commissioned by Archbishop-Elector Ferdinand. In any case, the evidence points to the authorities of electoral Cologne, and it seems more likely that Goehausen was the author.

But Sigmund Riezler emphasized that Tanner was clearly the primary precursor of Friedrich Spee, especially considering Laymann's defense of the imperial Edict of Restitution (March 6, 1629) during a bitter feud among Catholic orders. And even without confusing Laymann's ideas with those of the 1629 pamphlet, "we do not have to look far elsewhere in Laymann's writings to find complete demonological orthodoxy" (Clark 1996, 206). Laymann was indeed

conventional about magic and witchcraft. However, it was significant that he supported Tanner's criticisms of witch hunting in 1630, thereby providing another major Jesuit authority for Spee.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AUGSBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DUHR, BERNHARD, SJ; FERDINAND OF COLOGNE; INGOLSTADT, UNIVERSITY OF; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); LEA, HENRY CHARLES; RIEZLER, SIGMUND; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; TANNER, ADAM; TYROL, COUNTY OF.

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LE FRANC, MARTIN (1410–1461)

Le Franc was one of the most accomplished French-language poets of the fifteenth century, secretary of Duke Amadeus VIII of Savoy, provost of the cathedral of Lausanne, and later administrator of the monastery at Novalesse. While attending the Council of Basel (1431–1449) in the service of Amadeus VIII (whom the council elected pope as Felix V), Le Franc wrote his long (24,384 lines) poem *Le Champion des dames* (The Defender of Ladies). It included an important discussion of contemporary ideas of diabolical sorcery and witchcraft within the context of a poetic debate on women's virtues and vices. A Paris manuscript of Le Franc's poem, copied around 1450 for Philip the Good,

Duke of Burgundy, to whom the entire poem is dedicated, contained the earliest known illustration of witches riding broomsticks. Around the turn of the twentieth century, first the Cologne archivist Joseph Hansen and then the great Dutch historian Johan Huizinga, in his classic study *The Autumn of the Middle Ages* (1919), recognized Le Franc's importance in the development of ideas of witchcraft (Huizinga 1996, 286–293).

The 823-line discussion of witchcraft (Le Franc 1999, 4:113–146) between the "Adversary" (of women) and "Free Will," the "Defender" (of women), was part of Le Franc's contribution to the fifteenth-century moral and poetic debate known as "the quarrel over the *Roman de la Rose*," a series of literary works dealing with the misogynistic treatment of women by the thirteenth-century poet Jean de Meung, in which Christine de Pizan was one of the most notable participants.

In Book 4 of Le Franc's poem, as the Defender describes the achievements of illustrious women of antiquity and later ages in metalwork, painting, and other arts, the Adversary interrupts, insisting that the Defender also consider women's sorcery, flight to the Sabbath, and cannibalism. The Defender abruptly dismisses the challenge with the argument that men invented sorcery and says that the charges made by the Adversary are only delusions. Instead of responding with traditional misogyny, however, the Adversary begins to cite recent trial records and confessions concerning the recently formulated idea of "classical" witchcraft: flight to the Sabbath, apostasy (renouncing Jesus), idolatry (demon worship), sexual orgies, demonic discipline, and the infliction of various injuries upon humans. Among the latter, the Adversary cites sexual impotence and infertility, injurious weather magic, and sexual intercourse with demons.

The Defender responds with what becomes the initial skeptical argument, citing St. Augustine, Gregory the Great, St. Ambrose, and St. Jerome—as well as the life of St. Germanus from *The Golden Legend*—to insist that these were only mental illusions created by the demons, who were in Hell and could not roam the world seeking the ruin of souls. But the Adversary responds with the biblical story of Simon Magus, reinforced with references to Apuleius of Madaura, the legendary Circe, the Roman ethnographer Solinus, the Sybil, the fairy Melusine, St. Augustine, and Albertus Magnus (Albert the Great), to emphasize that such things may be done with God's permission.

The Defender then launches a long and fierce attack on contemporary clerical ignorance, corruption, and incompetence that have permitted such erroneous beliefs to flourish, citing a number of recent instances of misguided laity, including the very recent case of Gilles de Rais, to which the Adversary responds with his past point: that the case of Gilles de Rais only proved that it was easier for the Devil to tempt men than women.

These arguments located Le Franc in the broad contemporary movement of ecclesiastical reform of the clergy and laity and attacks on what they termed “superstition” associated with Jean Gerson, who had also participated in the debates over the *Roman de la Rose*.

EDWARD PETERS

See also: APULEIUS OF MADAURA; BASEL, COUNCIL OF; CIRCE; EUGENIUS IV.

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LEA, HENRY CHARLES (1825–1909)

Lea was the most erudite American historian of the nineteenth century; author of still-valuable studies of the Inquisitions of the Middle Ages and early modern Spain, sacerdotal celibacy, and auricular confession and indulgences; and compiler of an immense, posthumously published collection of sources for the history of witchcraft, *Materials Toward a History of Witchcraft*. Lea was born into a publishing family in Philadelphia in 1825, was tutored at home until he joined the firm in 1843, and was a productive and frequently published literary critic and scientist until he suffered a breakdown from overwork in 1847. Lea turned his attention to history, first historical memoirs and then chronicles, developing a serious interest in medieval Europe, to which his considerable intellectual energies turned as he spent his days working in and then directing the publishing house until his retirement in 1880. During his life, he was politically active in the Union cause in the Civil War and subsequently in both local and national civic affairs until his death.

Lea's early historical works focused on the history of law, which he considered the most reliable guide to what he termed the “inner life” of past peoples, and the history of the Latin Christian Church. His early works on legal procedure and sacerdotal celibacy were remarkable for their period, and extraordinary for a scholar working in the United States, using information taken exclusively from his own growing private library and a network of European libraries and booksellers.

Lea kept a sharp eye on political Roman Catholicism in his own time, both in the United States and in Europe, and he strove in his historical work to distinguish between dogma and personal devotion, on the

one hand, and institutional history and prelacy, on the other. Lea criticized both the Episcopalian bishop of Vermont for justifying slavery on the basis of arguments from the Bible and Catholic bishops for their separation from society and the danger of their powers of ecclesiastical discipline in civil matters. From 1884 until his death, Lea turned these subjects into material for his historical works, *A History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages* of 1888 and *A History of the Inquisition of Spain* in four volumes of 1906–1907. Lord Acton, who admired Lea greatly, invited him to write the chapter “The Eve of the Reformation” for the first volume of *The Cambridge Modern History*.

Lea wrote several other long and important works during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, but his last great project was to have been a history of witchcraft, which he died without having completed. Arthur C. Howland edited his notes, and the work was published as *Materials Toward a History of Witchcraft* in three volumes in 1939. *Materials* is a treasure trove of both original sources and Lea's reading notes, including extensive translations into English from many languages. Lea's range of reading was immense, and he read original sources closely, since he argued that only from these could reliable history be written. His work remains invaluable for students and historians of the subject.

The first of the three consecutively paged volumes contains Parts 1 and 2 of Lea's notes: Part 1 deals with demonology, magic, and sorcery from antiquity to the sixteenth century, and with learned and popular beliefs, including the Sabbat. Part 2 treats the assimilation of sorcery to heresy and provides brief accounts of all known trials for witchcraft to the mid-sixteenth century. The second volume contains the beginning of Part 3, on the demonological literature, canon law, and secular legal procedures, as well as the literature of the Roman Inquisition. The third volume contains the rest of Part 3, demonic possession and a survey of witchcraft by regions, as well as Part 4, texts illustrating the decline of the beliefs, final controversies, and survivals of witchcraft beliefs into the nineteenth century. The entire work offers eloquent testimony to Lea's astonishing scholarly energy and to the genius of one of the greatest historians who ever investigated this subject.

EDWARD PETERS

See also: BURR, GEORGE LINCOLN; HISTORIOGRAPHY; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; INQUISITION, SPANISH.

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LEMNIUS, LEVINUS (1505–1568)

An Erasmian and Galenist physician, Lemnius gave preference to natural causes and cures in cases of diseases that were usually attributed to demonic interference. Born in Zierikzee, a town in the Dutch province of Zeeland, he matriculated at the University of Louvain in 1521, first studying arts and letters. In addition to Latin, Lemnius also learned Greek and Hebrew, probably at the Collegium Trilingue, an independent institute outside the university. Founded in 1517, it was instrumental in spreading the humanist study of classical letters in northwestern Europe. Lemnius also studied medicine at Louvain, but he received his medical doctorate elsewhere, probably from an Italian university. He returned to Zierikzee around 1527, where he married and began practicing medicine. He stayed Catholic, while maintaining contact with Protestants. After ending his practice, Lemnius traveled to London in 1560 to visit his son Willem, who had turned Protestant and therefore moved to England. There, Lemnius met the humanist Thomas Newton, who later translated one of Lemnius's books, and probably also the botanist William Turner, who was in close contact with Dutch Protestant exiles. In 1560, Lemnius also traveled to Italy and Switzerland. He died at Zierikzee.

As a physician, Lemnius was a convinced Galenist but also an admirer of Vesalius, whom he had met personally, probably in 1558. His publications showed that he knew the works of such contemporary physicians as the Frenchman Jean Fernel, the Swiss Conrad Gesner, and the Italian Girolamo Fracastoro. He was also familiar with the work of Girolamo Cardano, but he never mentioned Paracelsus. In his view of astrology, Lemnius was a typical transitional figure. He rejected the idea that one could predict future events by interpreting the position of the planets. Nor did he believe that the time and location of medical interventions such as bloodletting should be chosen on the basis of astrological calculations. Nevertheless, he accepted that comets could change the physical and mental condition of human beings—but believed that the influence of food and drink, rest, physical exercise, sleeping and waking, or the quality of the air was far more important. Their effects

depended on individuals' constitution, the character of their humors, the geographic circumstances in which they lived, and their mental state.

A similarly mixed attitude characterized his ideas concerning demonic possession. While admitting that this affliction could occur, he preferred purely somatic explanations such as "melancholy, frenzy, madness, epilepsy and horrible diseases that in the case of young women and widows clearly result from uterine disturbances, either when their first menstruation begins very late, or when they marry at advanced age. Then their mind is so afflicted by dark and dense vapors that they seem to be harassed by an evil spirit, as if the devil has conquered their mind and has driven them to abnormal fantasies" (Lemnius 1593, 573). To free patients of these "poisonous vapors, or the devil, or fantasy," they should be bled and treated with herbal medicines. Not demons but unbalanced humors caused illness. Demons could, however, mingle with the humors to incite the mind to things wicked. The use of superstitious prayers or strange formulas was quite unacceptable. Concerning witchcraft, Lemnius admitted its existence in principle and even acknowledged that witches should be burned. But he also stressed that the effects of witchcraft should be cured by the use of the appropriate herbal medicines, whose effectiveness resulted from God's benevolence and not from some superstitious ritual.

In the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Lemnius's books were frequently reprinted. French, German, and Italian translations of his main work, *Occulta naturae miracula* (The Secret Miracles of Nature), first printed in 1559, already appeared with variations in the title by the sixteenth century. An English version was published in 1658. In his *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Robert Burton frequently quoted Lemnius's Latin original, which apparently also influenced views on melancholy, the philosophy of Horace, and the prophetic power of dying human beings as they were presented in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

HANS DE WAARDT

See also: ASTROLOGY; ERASMUS, DESIDERIUS; HERBAL MEDICINE; MEDICINE, MEDICAL THEORY; MELANCHOLY; POSSESSION, DEMONIC.

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LEVACK, BRIAN (1943–)

Brian P. Levack is a leading historian of the European witch hunt. He studied at Yale under the legendary J. H. Hexter, earning his PhD in 1970. The work that he did for it later emerged as his first book, *The Civil Lawyers in England, 1603–1641* (1973). He has continued to publish extensively on legal history, with a particular interest in the Anglo-Scottish union; a book on this appeared in 1987.

He was appointed to the University of Texas at Austin, where he became John Green Regents Professor of History. He began teaching on the European witch hunt in the 1970s, a subject related to his judicial interests. The appearance of Christina Lerner's *Source-Book of Scottish Witchcraft* in 1977 aided his research for "The Great Scottish Witch-Hunt of 1661–1662," a seminal article of 1980 on the last and greatest of Scotland's witchcraft panics.

Then came *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe* (1987), the book that established his reputation as a leading scholar on the subject. Several syntheses on the witch hunts were published in the 1980s, but Levack's was arguably the best and was reissued in a revised edition in 1995. Noted for the clarity and accessibility of its exposition and for the breadth of up-to-date knowledge that it displayed, it proved invaluable in teaching and research. By showing that witch hunting could not be ascribed to a single cause but arose from a conjunction of factors, it cleared up much misunderstanding and placed subsequent research on a firmer footing. Levack paid much attention to the complex origins of the witch hunt, analyzing intellectual, legal, and religious causes and well as the social context. His emphasis on the judicial nature of witch hunting was welcome, and his dissection of the composite intellectual stereotype of the witch has stood the test of time particularly well. Levack stressed most of all the legal changes that led to the witch persecutions, especially the transition from accusatorial to inquisitorial procedure and the growing use of torture to extract confessions. He set such legal developments against the background of state building and saw a correlation between state control of the judiciary and the absence of witch persecution. Thus, witch hunting was most severe where local courts could act without hindrance from appellate courts and central governments. Levack later developed this theme extensively (1996).

More than a synthesis, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe* is noteworthy because many of its approaches and theses have become the standard explanations for scholars. Levack paid close attention to geography, including all of Europe in his discussion, whereas previously scholars had let England, Scotland, and western Europe drive discussions of witchcraft, ignoring, for the most part, Scandinavia and eastern Europe. This close scrutiny of regions enabled him to

develop more accurate totals for the number of witchcraft cases, reducing the number of executions to 60,000 (a figure that other historians have subsequently reduced further).

By contrast, the way this book distinguished between magic and religion was arguably outdated, and the book was sketchy on the crucial question of women and witch hunting. But these are minor criticisms of a comprehensive book that offers a great deal both to beginners in the subject and to experts. At the time of the writing of this entry, a third edition is in the press, further developing a number of themes, including demonic possession and the revival of witch hunting in the modern world.

Levack has remained in the forefront of the trends in witchcraft scholarship, as his more recent articles and the second edition of *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe* demonstrate. He has recognized the importance of community pressures and has taken a particular interest in the decline of witch hunting—something that earlier scholars had neglected. As befits a scholar who is a specialist in other fields too, he has always taken a broad view of the subject of witchcraft. Some of his recent publications have explored related areas, notably judicial torture and demonic possession.

In 1992, he compiled *Articles on Witchcraft, Magic, and Demonology*, a multivolume collection of reprints of articles on witchcraft, containing some of the best recent work as well as a number of gems of older scholarship. A second multivolume collection, published in 2001, made accessible some of the many works on the subject from the 1990s. Each collection contained well over 100 articles in English. Levack's most recent work is *The Witchcraft Sourcebook* (2004), a collection of sixty-one selections of primary sources, ranging from antiquity to the late seventeenth century and including selections from literature and drama, theologians, demonologists, and skeptics. This work is one of the two major collections of primary documents available in English, the other being Alan Kors and Edward Peters's *Witchcraft in Europe, 400–1700: A Documentary History*

JULIAN GOODARE

See also: HISTORIOGRAPHY; WITCH HUNTS.

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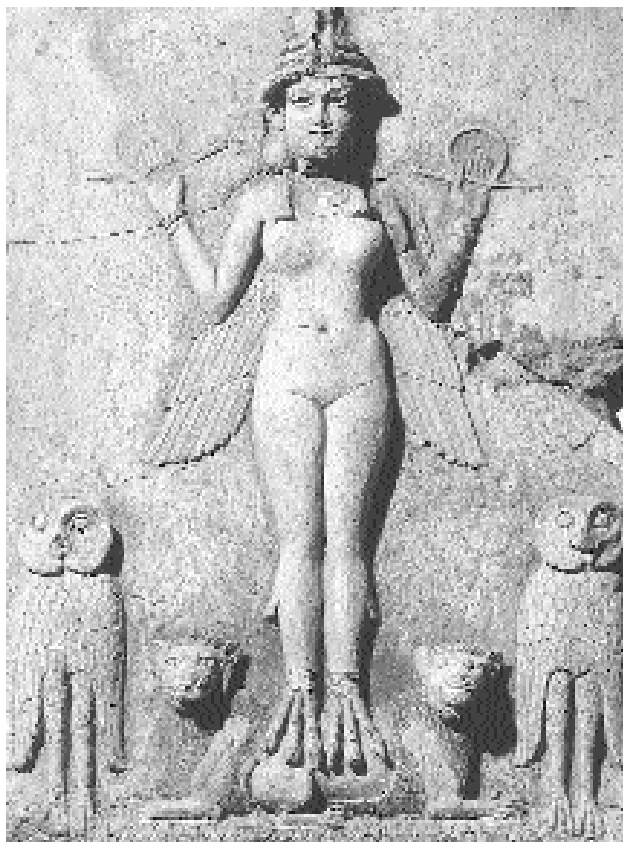
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LILITH

Lilith was a female demon that preyed on unsuspecting men and infants. Her origins are linked to Mesopotamian mythology, which made references to male and female demons called *Lilu* and *Lilitu*, respectively. These were storm or wind demons, with names that are etymologically based on the Sumerian word *lil*, literally meaning "wind." Lilith, the Hebrew form of *Lilitu*, occupies an important position in Jewish folklore and demonology. Hebrew Scripture contains one reference to Lilith, the night hag (Isaiah 34:14), in a passage describing Yahweh's day of retribution. In the aftermath of this vengeance, when the land is turned into a wilderness, Lilith is referred to as one of the creatures that will be tamed.

In postbiblical literature, Lilith was mentioned in the Babylonian Talmud. It was there that her demonic characteristics were developed: She had long hair (Erubin 100b); she had the form of a woman but was winged (Nidda 24b); she preyed on men who slept alone (Shabbat 151b). The story of Lilith as the wife of Adam was first evidenced in the *Alphabet of Ben Sira*, which was in part a version of earlier accounts of Lilith from the Midrashic tradition. Of uncertain



The female demon Lilith, who stole and killed children. Terracotta relief, Mesopotamia, ca. 300 B.C.E. (Art Archive/Christies/Eileen Tweedy)

date, possibly between the eighth and tenth centuries C.E., the *Alphabet* named Lilith as Adam's original wife and stated that she refused to submit to his authority, particularly in terms of sexual union (disobeying his expectation that she lay beneath him). Lilith eventually fled, pursued by three angels (Senoy, Sanseoy, and Semangelof) who, at God's behest, explained that she must return or have 100 of her offspring perish each day. Lilith defied the order and exclaimed that she was made to bring death to infants.

The story went on to describe the existence of amulets designed to protect the young from child-stealing demons such as Lilith, which suggests, to some extent, its etiological nature. Protective charms against Lilith are evidenced in archaeology, particularly in the form of incantation bowls, from a Jewish community at Nippur, dating from the early centuries C.E. It may be assumed that these bowls had a function similar to that of the amulets mentioned in the *Alphabet*, although they usually functioned in a broader context, namely to keep Lilith or other demons from harming the household in general. From these traditions developed the role of Lilith in the Kabbalah. In the thirteenth-century

kabbalistic text *Treatise on the Left Emanation*, for example, Lilith was born as one half of an androgynous being, the other half of which was Samael (the diabolic angel who, on falling from Heaven, assumed the name Lucifer or Satan). This text also named a second Lilith, the wife of Asmodeus, another demon king; hence, the two female spirits were distinguished by the titles Lilith the Elder and Lilith the Younger.

The collection of fourteenth-century writings known as the *Zohar* augmented Lilith's demonic aspects. In *Zohar* 3:76b–77a, Lilith and the demon Naamah (Charmer), were presented as succubi who appeared to men as they experienced wet dreams and collected their semen for the purpose of producing demonic offspring. Here Lilith's role as a baby-snatching demon was also reiterated. A combination of both the amulet and the Kabbalistic traditions concerning Lilith was best exemplified in the *Book of Raziël* written in about 1100 C.E., which contained several amulets to ward off evil spirits, particularly Lilith, who threatened to harm mothers and their newly born. These recipes were to be inscribed on parchment or on the door and walls of the room occupied by the mother and child. Less detailed rituals involved a protective spell for a boy-child in which a circle was drawn on the wall of the birthing room with the words "Adam and Eve. Out Lilith" inscribed within; this practice continued until the nineteenth century.

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See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; ANGELS; BIBLE; DEMONS; JEWS, WITCHCRAFT, AND MAGIC; KABBALAH.

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LILLE NUNS

In 1612–1614, possession cases at a Brigittine convent in Lille, in the Spanish Netherlands, generated controversial but largely ineffectual witchcraft accusations.

In a case of convent possession that began as an attempted "copycat" of the notorious Aix-en-Provence case of 1609–1611, two possessed "nun-witches" accused their convent almoner of witchcraft. A papal nuncio defended the priest in Rome, and the pope rejected the accusations. The French lay author Jean Le

Normant described the Lille cases in 1623 in a controversial book that depicted the outbreak of diabolical activities at the convent as evidence of the Antichrist's coming.

Early in 1612, several nuns at the convent started to go into convulsions, to dance on the altar of their chapel, and to fall into states of torpor. Following accusations by the possessed nuns, Marie de Sains, a nun who had been renowned for her piety, confessed she was a witch. She in turn accused a young novice, Simone Dourlet, of being her accomplice. Both were imprisoned at the *officialité* (diocesan prison) of Tournai but soon retracted their confessions. Nicolas de Montmorency, a powerful local noble and a patron of the convent, requested the *official* (presiding judge of the diocesan court) of Tournai to invite Sebastien Michaelis and François Domptius, the Dominican exorcists made famous by the recent Aix-en-Provence case, to exorcise the possessed women at the convent. In May 1612, three prominent possessed nuns alleged that Marie de Sains had caused their possessions by means of charms. De Sains was obliged to confess and display Devil's marks on her body. But events now took a different turn from similar cases: Although a self-confessed witch, de Sains began to play the role of the prophetic possessed, while her possessed sisters received less public exposure.

Under exorcism, de Sains delivered revelations about the coming of the Antichrist and claimed to have participated at a Sabbath with Father Louis Gaufridy, the priest executed at Aix-en-Provence in 1611. She had been vowed to the Devil at birth, and a governess had made her "princess of magicians" (thus the companion of Gaufridy, "prince of magicians"). Her devil, she said, had been infuriated by the foundation of the Brigittine house in Lille and had ordered her to enter it to undermine it. She claimed that she and Dourlet had caused all the illnesses and other problems at the house, the possession being their crowning achievement. She also admitted to making Nicolas de Montmorency and his wife infertile.

In mid-1613, de Sains made a witchcraft accusation against Canon Jean Leduc, almoner of the convent and *écolâtre* (priest in charge of teaching at a cathedral) of the chapter of St.-Pierre in Lille. The chapter persuaded the papal nuncio, Guido Bentivoglio, to intercede with Rome. In early autumn of 1613, Bentivoglio appointed the *official* of Malines, Father Jacques Boonen, to investigate the case, over the protests of Montmorency, who simply wanted the alleged witches prosecuted. Boonen cleared the canon of witchcraft, and Pope Paul V pointedly gave Leduc a more important benefice. While Montmorency pursued avenues of appeal against the decision, Bentivoglio had Michaelis's account of the Aix-en-Provence case, *Histoire admirable de la possession et conversion d'une pénitente, séduite par un magicien* (The Admirable History of the Possession and

Conversion of a Penitent Woman, Seduced by a Magician, 1614) examined by the faculty of theology of Louvain, who put it under interdict. The bishop of Tournai ordered all copies surrendered to him. In 1623, when Jean Le Normant published his account of the Lille case, the *Histoire véritable et memorable de ce qui c'est passé sous l'exorcisme de trois filles possédées és païs de Handre* (True and Memorable History of What Took Place in the Exorcism of Three Possessed Girls in Flanders), the Sorbonne censured it.

The nuns were much less fortunate than the canon. Although Bentivoglio informed Rome that he was returning the women to their convent, he was unable to effect this, and subsequently he suspected Montmorency of harboring them. Marie de Sains probably died in custody in 1630, after spending many years in the episcopal prison in Tournai and subsequently at a prison in Vilvorde. The claim that Simone Dourlet was burned for witchcraft has been refuted (Lottin 1984, 170–177), but she probably spent the remainder of her life in prison. They were, however, far more fortunate than two of their convent sisters in nearby Artois, who really were burned as witches immediately afterwards, in 1615 (Muchembled 2003, 250–265).

This episode revealed two deeply contrary tendencies in the upper echelons of Catholicism at this time. On the one hand, a vigorous and at times lethal passion for the fruits of exorcism was at work, and, on the other hand, a humane and skeptical spirit existed. To be sure, jurisdictional differences could from time to time affect who was on which side, but it remains that this division was representative of the tensions within early modern reforming Catholicism. Beyond this, the role of Montmorency and the layman Le Normant show that a Church-secular distinction, which might assume the Church to be the more likely to accuse witches, did not apply here. The caution of the papacy also seems to have been characteristic.

SARAH FERBER

See also: AIX-EN-PROVENCE NUNS; ANTICHRIST; BINSFELD, PETER; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DEVIL'S MARK; DUVAL, ANDRÉ; EXORCISM; LOUDUN NUNS; LOUVIERS NUNS; NETHERLANDS, SOUTHERN; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; SABBAT.

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LIPPE, COUNTY OF

A small county (*Grafschaft*) of the Holy Roman Empire, Lippe was an important center of witch hunts. It covered approximately 1,200 square kilometers and had about 40,000 inhabitants around 1600, of whom some 10,000 lived in small towns (Lippe became a protoindustrial region in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries). Its capital, Lemgo, preserved a certain autonomy from the count, including the right to condemn criminals to death; there were bitter conflicts between Lemgo and its lords. Around 1540, Lippe became Lutheran and then, about 1600, under Count Simon VI (ruled 1563–1613), Calvinist, although Lemgo remained Lutheran. Simon VI carried through important reforms in Lippe, including of its law courts. Simon's heirs quarreled, and the administration of his lands was partly divided.

Apart from Lemgo, we can find 221 persons involved in witchcraft trials between 1550 and 1686, including 41 in the town of Horn. Half of the 221 were tried during the most intensive hunt, which occurred between 1653 and 1661; only 8 were accused later, between 1670 and 1678. In Lemgo, the number of victims was about 250, with great waves of trials taking place in 1565, 1583–1605, 1628–1637, and 1653–1681.

Apart from trials of women, the usual victims, Lemgo also saw many trials against both men and children. More than fifty children were arrested between 1654 and 1676; some were imprisoned for eleven years, and some were even tortured. Most, but not all, were connected with the trial against a sorcerer-teacher, Hermann Beschorn, who had worked in Lemgo. Children "seduced" by him were usually re-educated by the teacher Henkhausen, but some children (older than fourteen) were executed as hopeless witches. Some of the Lippe clergy gave infamous advice in this difficult matter. When the clergy suggested these children be killed secretly while they were praying, in order to secure their salvation, the government did not follow their counsel.

The trials in Lemgo were Lippe's most famous because they were connected with the fight among political factions. They were also expressions of economic depression and of political upheaval during the Thirty Years' War. Lemgo's mayor, Hermann Cothmann, whose mother had been executed as a witch, was a main figure in the persecution. The previous mayor, Heinrich

Kerkmann, had also persecuted witches relentlessly. Lemgo's *Hexenbürgermeisterhaus* (house of the witch mayor), today a museum, is a witness to Cothmann's activities.

The Lippe witchcraft trials are well documented. There are comprehensive depositions of witnesses, making a microanalysis possible. The surviving protocols of the lower courts allow us in many cases to observe the "career" of a witch before her trial, sometimes for decades. These documents make it possible to show the behavior of both accused and accusers. We can discover whether or not the accused women had shown deviant behavior, compared with other suspected women who were not prosecuted. These patterns have been described in detail (Walz 1993). Witch finders played a great part in the defense against witches, but gypsies were also consulted. The Lippe population frequently consulted one of the most famous witch finders around 1650, Wicken Klaus; his magical practices were described in detail at his trial.

The local criminal procedure, codified in 1593, provided the foundation of the trials. The procedure was split into inquisition and accusation. Advocates were permitted. By about 1600, their counsels already showed arguments similar to those used by Friedrich Spee von Langenfeld some decades later, but they had no visible effect. Though Simon VI had forbidden the water ordeal (swimming test), it was applied in many trials, very often in order to shock the accused person into making a confession. Before a person was arrested and again before torture was employed, officials consulted universities, generally the law faculty of the nearby University of Rinteln. After being sentenced to death by fire, convicted witches were often "pardoned" to death by sword. In all probability, the slowdown in Lippe's witch hunts after 1660 was due more to the dysfunctional contradictions of an out-of-control epidemic than to any kind of "enlightenment."

RAINER WALZ

See also: CHILDREN; GERMANY, WEST AND NORTHWEST; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; SWIMMING TEST; UNIVERSITIES; WITCH FINDERS.

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LITERATURE

Texts provide the bulk of our information about the place of witchcraft in larger cultural contexts, particularly for the past. Witchcraft has achieved a relatively stable range of definitions in recent decades. But careful interpretation requires defining the spectrum of relations between texts and the themes or topics of witchcraft they display. Most importantly, do literary texts present witchcraft reliably? And what do we mean by *literature* and *literary*? The terms evade succinct definition. Equating literature with fiction oversimplifies many witchcraft texts: As wholes or in part, they resist categories like "factual," "historical," "fictive," or "fictitious." Understanding how texts represent witchcraft requires considering how they are produced (including conventions of genre and rhetoric) and how actual or plausibly conjectured audiences "consumed" them.

PRODUCTION

Witchcraft has been called a species of narrative, a statement that opens two possibilities.

The first possibility is that witchcraft always implied a narrative: It was a kind of "story" told about physical causation or human deviance, so "witchcraft literature" could comprise all texts mentioning *maleficium* (harmful magic), interaction with demons, and so on. By this definition, instructions for performing witchcraft could qualify as a hypothetical narrative in the second person and the future tense: "If you do this, that will happen." Similarly, an indictment for witchcraft would be a hypothetical second- or third-person narrative in the past tense: "You/She did this." These examples seem forced, however, and such an all-inclusive category would be useless.

The second possibility is that only explicit narratives—stories—describing *maleficium*, interactions with demons, or the like qualify as witchcraft literature. This is not strictly true; versified instructions about such activity would strike most readers as literature. Besides, many actual charms and spells had meter and rhyme. Yet many witchcraft texts were narratives. They told stories about persons not identifiable as the reader's (though the displacement may have been minimal, if events were presented as "news").

Stories have, in Aristotle's phrase, a beginning, a middle, and an end. The chronological sequence required by a story differentiates witchcraft narratives from witchcraft treatises, which depended on criteria other than temporal sequence, such as typologies of behavior or appearance. Analytical precision and classificatory arrangement precluded ambiguity and indeterminacy, the basis for many aesthetic effects characteristic of narrative, as well as indulgence in emotion for ends other than condemning specific individuals or groups.

These are not absolute distinctions. In fact, few witchcraft treatises were entirely analytical; most presented anecdotes about witches as evidence. Yet anecdotes never simply illustrated witchcraft analyses: They frequently told something more or something different. Narrative rhetorically exploited conditioned responses (such as the evil witch, the innocent victim), it rescued or replaced analysis when logic broke down, or threatened to (Stephens 2002, 235–238). But narrative's richness can derail analysis. Often in Francesco Maria Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficarum* (A Summary of Witches, 1608), so many various and strange anecdotes were cited to illustrate an argument that they blurred or even contradicted it.

In summary, witchcraft was not reducible to narrative, but narrative was essential to writings about witchcraft, even at their most unliterary. For the purposes of this encyclopedia, "witchcraft literature" has been separated from theatrical texts about witchcraft. Excluding theatrical texts from a conventional history of literature would be indefensible: Tragedies and comedies are no less literary than narrative poems, romances, or novels. And theatrical texts about witchcraft were numerous, as the entries on Drama attest.

But differences in consumption between theatrical texts and other storytelling media are unusually crucial for witchcraft. On stage, theatrical texts are intensely appropriate to witchcraft. In Aristotelian terms, theatrical texts predispose impersonation by their almost exclusively mimetic character. They display little diegesis—descriptive or explanatory narration—and abundant mimesis, or lines intended to be spoken, with accompanying gestures, by impersonating actors. Therefore, when a text presents its characters as *dramatis personae* to be physically impersonated by actors, even a solitary reader experiences the text differently from narrative. Early modern demons also engaged in a kind of theatrical impersonation, through possession or apparition, animating bodies perceptible by human senses.

Film presents comparable characteristics, but amplified and expanded. Constant technological advances make cinematic special effects ever more appropriate for presenting the wonders and illusions (*praestigia*) of demons.

Conversely, narration evokes readers' experience of listening to a single "voice." Voice and the illusory presence of a narrator are effects of grammar, produced by scenic description and indirect reportage of dialogue. Here again, differences are not absolute: A narrating voice can create mental "theater" when the reader visualizes the scenes it describes.

The dialogue, a genre adopted by many writers on witchcraft, presents a special case. Dialogue resembles theater by minimizing or excluding the utterances of a narrator, yet it must be consumed like narrative: An

abundance of direct speech and a paucity of action make impersonation difficult or impossible. Dialogues, like treatises, approached witchcraft scientifically. By replacing sequential analysis with debate, dialogue added a dimension of lifelikeness, and some early authors, such as Ulrich Molitor, even cast historical persons as interlocutors. Most witchcraft dialogues became treatises in disguise by preordaining the triumph of one viewpoint: The subject required that they either defend or oppose its reality. Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola's dialogue *Strix, sive de ludificatione daemonum* (The Witch, or the Deceptions of Demons, 1523) accomplished this through a strong narrative line (three interlocutors successfully convince a fourth that witchcraft is real) and novel characterization (the pro-witchcraft interlocutors include an inquisitor and a confessed witch).

Understanding how texts were consumed requires identifying their implied readers. What knowledge do texts require for comprehension: Latin? specialized legal, medical, or theological expertise? Pico della Mirandola's *Strix* was written originally in Latin, and its cultural references implied an erudite, skeptical humanist reader. It made arcane references to classical scholarship and mythology, but presupposed only superficial acquaintance with contemporary controversies over witchcraft. A year later (1524), Leandro Alberti translated *Strix* into vernacular Italian for a bourgeois and peasant audience, paraphrasing difficult vocabulary and explicating most of its arcane references. Along with implied readers, Alberti envisioned implied listeners, unable to read even simple Italian yet capable of comparing their folkloric witchcraft ideas with Pico della Mirandola's "scientific" explanations.

The implied reader of a text exists symbiotically with an implied author. Even when the empirical author—the historical individual who put pen to paper—remains anonymous, his or her intellectual and attitudinal profile remains. If the knowledge presumed or explained identifies an implied reader, it also delineates an implied author, as does the rhetorical temperature of the writing—objective and confident, hysterical and overwrought, compassionate, judgmental, skeptical, ironic, and so on. The implied author necessarily forecasts a reader receptive or resistant to the reality of witchcraft.

The implied author attempts to influence the implied reader's presumed reaction, in part by accepting or manipulating the conventions of genre. As treatise, Heinrich Kramer's *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) presupposed an audience of magistrates and inquisitors schooled in syllogistic argument and worried about such things as heresy or infant mortality. The *Malleus*'s third book, demonstrating how to entrap, prosecute, and execute witches, presumed that its previous demonstrations of witches' responsibility

had been convincing. The skeptical implied reader of Pico della Mrandola's *Strix* was expected to come to prize witchcraft for plausibly explaining the realities behind classical myth by revealing pagan deities as the demons of Christianity. Thus, he or she should have more readily accepted the reality of witchcraft, for Pico della Mrandola's classical erudition should have salvaged the intellectual respectability of the supernatural order. The scholarly alternative, a euhemeristic "deconstruction" of pagan gods as mythologized kings and warriors, would have damaged the case for witchcraft.

Aristotle's *Poetics* required probability or verisimilitude in representation. In modern philosophical terms, literature creates possible worlds. A possible world maximally resembles the actual reader's experience but is not identical to it, differing in one or more aspects. The extent of difference has generic implications for texts about witchcraft. In a treatise, an implied reader was fully expected to identify the world outside as the one described in the witchcraft text. "How-to" manuals for conjuring demons and demonological tracts describing how to discover and prosecute witches shared this trait. When a text postulated less perfect accord between the implied author's world and that of the implied reader, the latter was expected to modify belief, not take action: Rather than become a witch or witch hunter, he or she had to choose sides in the witchcraft controversy.

Two conditions make witchcraft texts seem fully "literary": The worlds of text and implied reader coincided quite imperfectly, yet ambiguity, allusion, and indirection prompted the reader to entertain an indecisive attitude toward witchcraft, neither accepting nor rejecting its reality.

Recognizably literary witchcraft texts characteristically encouraged this attitude by exploiting the theme of imagination, systematically refusing to present phenomena as either factual or imaginary, real or unreal. Nathaniel Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown" (1835) described a possible world where beloved elders and ethereally pure newlywed wives may be witches, the Devil may be lurking on every footpath, neighbors may be flying above the overcast clouds, and the outward appearances of "Faith"—the newlywed wife or the Christian religion—may mask the perfidious reality of witchcraft. Updated, sensationalized, and gender-reversed, the same premise animated Ira Levin's *Rosemary's Baby* (1967), in which husband, neighbors, and physician seemed to be conspiring against the heroine.

These examples display individualized psychology, attention to such aesthetic factors as narrative coherence and linguistic appropriateness, and other commonly agreed upon indices of literariness. However, witchcraft narrative necessarily explored ambiguous appearances, so literary features were not always indispensable. Though crude, anecdotes in

witchcraft indictments and treatises often resembled modern literary modes of uncanny or fantastic narration, such as in Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis* (1915).

If the implied author suggested that witchcraft described an impossible world, his narrative would be recognizable as satire or parody. An example is Laurent Bordelon's *Histoire des imaginations extravagantes de monsieur Oufle: Causees par la lecture des livres qui traitent de la magie, du grimoire, des demoniaques, sorciers* (The History of the Ridiculous Extravagances of Monsieur Oufle, Occasioned by His Reading Books Treating Magic, the Demonic Arts, Demoniacs, Witches, 1710), whose protagonist lost his reason by reading demonologies, as Don Quixote had a century earlier with chivalric romances. Oufle's name, an anagram of *le fou* (madman), reflects his upside-down worldview.

Is a precise typology of witchcraft and literature necessary? Would a laundry list of texts with witchcraft content be more useful? Literary genres are notoriously fluid; characteristics of "literariness" itself formerly occasioned endless, fruitless wrangling. Other classifications (such as ones accounting for gender, social class, or religious creed) might be equally or more valid. But to discuss literature in the specialized context of witchcraft, some concept of "literariness" is necessary.

Implied authors, implied readers, possible worlds, and modes of production and consumption vary considerably in any cultural context. Curse-tablets, Tacitus's description of the maleficent objects found after Germanicus's death, and Lucan's episode of Erichtho are all datable to early imperial Rome, but they differ literarily as well as magically. Even greater divergence is observable among medieval necromantic manuals, the fifth book of Caesarius of Heisterbach's *Dialogus Miraculorum* (Dialogue on Miracles, ca. 1225), and Giovanni Boccaccio's story (1352) of Bruno, Buffalmacco, and Maestro Simone (*Decameron* 8.9). Since the consolidation of witchcraft mythology around 1500, the range of variation has expanded constantly: Consider, among writers included in this encyclopedia, the sixteenth-century works of John Dee, Jean Bodin, Reginald Scot, and Torquato Tasso. The twentieth-century books by Aleister Crowley, Montague Summers, Arthur Miller, and Aldous Huxley differ among themselves comparably, and the decades since the 1950s have witnessed a publication explosion in witchcraft texts, including Wiccan how-to manuals, barely disguised demonologies like Daniel Ryder's *Breaking the Circle of Satanic Ritual Abuse*, novels such as Leslie Wilson's *Malefice*, and Umberto Eco's best-selling *The Name of the Rose*.

Outside of film (one thinks of the "witch" sketch in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*), burlesque and satirical treatments of witchcraft appear to have declined; as in the Romantic period, witchcraft is now a subject for

nostalgic or exploitative treatment. J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter novels offer the singular case of a fantasy world of "witchcraft" (mostly natural magic), in which the supernatural allegorized questions of diversity and adolescent development. Anne Rice's witch and vampire fiction performs a comparable service for a more urbane or disenchanting audience.

Historical change rearranges typologies and recontextualizes texts. Capital examples are trial records and news-mongering pamphlets or broadsheets, such as the Fugger newsletter about Walpurga Hausmännin (1587) and the numerous Elizabethan and Jacobean pamphlets. Pamphlets originally provided news and entertainment; scholars now read them for purposes of cultural anthropology, to recover neglected information about women, the poor, and the legal system. Since the 1980s, trial records have inspired microhistory, the narrative, sometimes novelistic reconstruction of common people's lives and lived realities.

Literary study is increasingly interdisciplinary, ever less purely aesthetic, ever more anthropological. In the 1960s and 1970s, structuralism, poststructuralism, and feminism prepared the revolution in attitudes to literary canons that triumphed in the 1980s and 1990s: *Literature* and *great* no longer imply each other in professional literary study. Even in literature departments, university courses increasingly scrutinize ephemeral and legal texts.

The motives of inquisitors, prosecutors, and magistrates who constructed the stereotype of the witch are overdue for attention comparable to that accorded defendants and accusers. Scholars have often regarded these men's motives as obvious, but what counts as "obvious" has changed over time. From about 1700 until the 1960s, condescension and sarcasm often inflected scholarly descriptions of inquisitorial ideology. More recently, Carlo Ginzburg has taken the opposite position, suggesting that witchcraft scholars involuntarily reproduce the inquisitors' and magistrates' ideologies and positions of power, asking the same questions they asked (Ginzburg 1989, 162–163).

But neither unintended sympathy nor facile contempt is inevitable. The concepts of the implied author and implied reader, coupled with more traditional techniques of close reading and rhetorical analysis, sharpen our perception of the type of person likely to write a particular text or set of assertions. Underneath overt expressions of smugness and prejudice, assertions about witches frequently imply enthusiasms, concerns, or dreads that remain unarticulated. Assertions are repeated within a text or among several texts; variations—or the lack of them—in witchcraft commonplaces could yield social insight under literary analysis. Texts contemporary or anterior to a given witchcraft text may discuss witchcraft only marginally or not at all, yet demonstrate related concerns and worries. More highly

literary (or philosophical or theological) texts can provide valuable perspective on unadorned official documents (Stephens 2002, 1–11, 27–31).

In *Europe's Inner Demons* (1975), Norman Cohn provided a model for tracking witchcraft stereotypes from culture to culture over many centuries, revealing submerged or implicit anxieties. Continued attention to the specific literary means used to express (or repress) such anxieties can further enrich our understanding of why witchcraft accusations were so seductive to writers in the literate subcultures of early modern Europe.

Any attempted census of witchcraft and (or in) literature will be partial—both too brief and somewhat biased. Recent collections of texts and histories of witchcraft, listed below, make the task less daunting.

WALTER STEPHENS

See also: BORDELON, LAUREN; DRAMA, DUTCH; DRAMA, ITALIAN; DRAMA, SPANISH; FILM (CINEMA); FUGGER FAMILY; GINZBURG, CAROL; WALPURGA HAUSMÄNNIN; HISTORIOGRAPHY; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; PAMPHLETS AND NEWSPAPERS; PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA, GIANFRANCESCO; RENAISSANCE DRAMA, ENGLAND; WITCH HUNTS.

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LITHUANIA, GRAND DUCHY OF

From the thirteenth until the eighteenth century, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania covered the entire territory of what is now Belarus, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, and parts of Russia (Smolensk and Briansk provinces), Poland (Belastok province), and Latvia (Daugavpils province). This vast and thinly populated region, with its bewildering variety of religions and complicated mixture of law courts, recorded remarkably few witchcraft trials. It is difficult to offer complete statistics, but even allowing for lacunae, no more than fifty witches perished throughout the whole territory between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries.

Although most of these Slavic regions were soon converted to Orthodox Christianity, the Baltic territories

of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania remained pagan—in 1394, visiting missionaries noted that the local population practiced a cult of fire—until the end of the fourteenth century, when its ruler, Grand Duke Jahaila (Jogaila), became Catholic in order to acquire the crown of Poland in 1386. Protestant ideas had spread over the grand duchy by the mid-sixteenth century. The majority of noblemen (*shlyachta*) and part of the petty bourgeoisie became Protestant. Beginning in the late sixteenth century, Catholicism's influence grew. Although Catholicism became dominant, Orthodox, Protestant, and Greek Catholic Christian Churches, Islam, Judaism, and paganism still were practiced. This religious pluralism did not result in serious conflicts like those that occurred between different religions in western Europe.

One reason we know of so few witchcraft trials in the Grand Duchy is that we have only erratic records from most of its courts. A more important reason is the fact that there were fewer trials: Although the rulers were Catholic, much of the population was Orthodox—a religion that virtually ignored diabolical pacts and therefore very rarely prosecuted witches. The temporal power of the grand duchy's rulers was great, and they practiced toleration of Lithuania's inhabitants owing to its multinational society and the diversity of religions.

In the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, secular tribunals, without any ecclesiastical interference, tried all cases of witchcraft. Defendants were judged solely for damage caused by sorcery. But the system of courts in the grand duchy was complex. From the bottom up, it included communal *Kopny* courts for peasants; town council courts for municipal citizens; and *Zemski* courts for district nobles. Regional castle courts handled appeals from both nobles and commoners, and at the top sat the grand duchy's highest tribunal, the Court of Appeal.

The Grand Duchy of Lithuania had no laws against witchcraft until the sixteenth century. In 1529, the first statute dealing with witchcraft held that a criminal who through sorcery did not feel pain when tortured had to pay a fine to the plaintiff. In 1566, another statute confirmed the 1529 law. After the Third Statute of 1588 (part 4, article 30) defined sorcery as a criminal charge, these provisions passed into judicial practice. A special provision (part 14, article 18) allowed the use of torture three times a day. In Lithuania, where sorcery remained a criminal offense until 1776, Roman or canon law and Magdeburg law (which provided for towns' having their own courts) occasionally supplemented such statutes (see, for example, Collection of Early Texts 1867b, 119–120).

The date of the very first witchcraft trial in the grand duchy is unknown. One of them first happened in 1436, but there is little information preserved about witchcraft trials until the sixteenth century, when the Catholic Counter-Reformation changed the situation

and the number of trials increased. A statement that there had been damage was necessary to initiate a case. Overall, evidence about witchcraft trials is sparse. Even in the seventeenth century, for which evidence is relatively abundant, we know of only thirteen trials between 1615 and 1699 that definitely ended by burning a witch.

Complaints varied greatly. At a trial held in the castle court of Brest in 1614, Rafal Andreeuski and his wife's brothers testified that Matsei Matseevich Rakitski's wife had killed Rafal's wife with a doll (Schedule of Documents 1913, 434–435). In 1630, the *wiski* (a court official in *Zemski* courts) of Pinsk and his wife complained in Pinsk's castle court that Fyodora Vysotski, the wife of the *vozny* (a court official) of Pinsk, had given her maidservant "sorcery" (bones, nails, and sand from a village grave) to injure them (Acts of Vilna Commission 1891, 304–310). In 1638, at the *Kopny* court of Balotchychy, Homa Zhylechovets blamed a maidservant for killing his wife by putting a toad in her mistress's food (Acts of Vilna Commission 1891, 333–334). Witches used many methods of sorcery, ranging from taking milk from cows by gathering dew from fields to causing illness or death to others. Many different complaints about damage caused by witches reached courts in the Grand Duchy, but few of them explain the beginning of a trial.

Interrogation was used in witchcraft investigations. A list of questions (which have rarely been preserved) from 1630–1631 shows two *voznies* of Navahradak, Adam Tseraivich and Mikalai Petrovich, and other noblemen asking Raina Gramychyna about witchcraft. Questioned about other witches, she named two men and a woman. Raina had met them at Andrei Afanasovich's estate, because his wife had skills in sorcery. They had tried to prevent the *marshalok* (an official at the Diet) Jan Sapega from marrying by injuring his health. Raina herself admitted putting the evil eye on the *marshalok*. When the *voznies* asked why she had not confessed this before, she answered that her mouth had been shut (Collection of Early Texts 1867b, 99–100, 143–146). At the end of the interrogation, she admitted that she could heal and gave recipes. Raina was burned, but the other witches she named were not arrested.

A statute from 1566 (part 11, article 16) stipulated that defendants who had magical spells in their mouth, armpits, or hair must pay a fine. In a 1595 incident, an executioner removed the shirt of a peasant accused of stealing horses and oxen; a crust of bread fell from the peasant's armpit. This constituted proof of sorcery; without the protection of the spell, the defendant died under torture (Schedule of Documents 1913, 254–246, 248, 276).

As in neighboring Latvia, witches were sometimes "ducked" in the grand duchy. In 1615, Jurgel's wife

Sofia Sunyan, her son Gasul, and Tumelis Paulavich Daradyndzenas underwent the ordeal by water (swimming test) in a peasant or *Kopny* court in a village in Braslau province—and all three of them floated, leading to the execution of Sofia and Tumelis. Torture was usually necessary to make a witch admit guilt.

Some documentary information suggests that here, as in Russia, men were considered more powerful sorcerers than women. At least half of those burned were men. The first, Tumelis Paulavich Daradyndzenas, was accused of belonging to a clan of notorious sorcerers. Sources show Maxim Znak (burned in 1691) to have been a powerful sorcerer who named other witches; Rasol from Vertialishki was both the oldest and strongest magician in the Grodno region in 1691 (Jodkowski 1932).

Witchcraft trails ended in different ways. Some well-known sorcerers were banished from the region and burned elsewhere. Condemned to death by fire were Jurgel's wife Sofia Sunyan and Tumelis Paulavich Daradyndzenas (1615), Barys Slavinavich (1622), Hanna Paulukova Krotka (1629), Fyadora Vysotskaya (1630), Raina Gromychyna (1631), Vasil Brykun (1643), Maxim Znak (1691), Kiril Adamovich, his son Fyodor, and Palashka Seiginava (1699), and others. Lithuanian witches often remained unpunished because peasants' owners refused to present them in court; for example, in 1670, Ieranim Buchavecki protected his peasant Charchykha from a *Kopny* court.

In the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, pagan beliefs strongly influenced everyday life among nobility, townspeople, and peasants alike, but pacts with the Devil were practically unknown. For both pagans and Orthodox, as a criminal act "witchcraft" meant sorcery, and people of all strata were seldom put on trial for causing harm by such methods.

NATALIA SLIZH

See also: LATVIA; MALE WITCHES; RUSSIA; SORCERY; SPELLS; SWIMMING TEST; TRIALS.

NOTE:

All proper names are given according to Belarussian transcription, and in the references, English translations of the titles are given in parentheses.

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LITTLE ICE AGE

The core period of the Little Ice Age coincided exactly with the climax of witch hunting in central Europe.

Not yet well defined, the concept of a Little Ice Age was invented in 1939. Subsequently, its proposed duration—originally large parts of the Holocene (the present geological epoch, beginning about 10,000 years ago)—has shrunk to an epoch between 1300 and the 1880s, in recognition of the fact that these almost 600 years of coldness were interrupted by more favorable periods. Using Swiss data, Christian Pfister and others (1996) have identified two core phases of the Little Ice Age in the fourteenth and the seventeenth centuries. The periodizations are usually drawn from remains of the physical environment (dendrochronology, glaciology, sedimentation, pollen analysis, and the like), but witch hunts also seem to be a sensitive indicator. Climatic deterioration in the Northern Hemisphere had its greatest impact between 1560 and 1630, when the effects of global cooling were worsened by an increase in precipitation, a combination that severely hampered both wine making and wheat harvests. It has frequently been remarked that marginal wine-growing areas (Franconia, the Rhineland, Alsace, Franche-Comté, the Valais, Styria) were particularly prone to severe witch hunting.

Though persecutions for heresy were known already in high medieval Europe (circa 1000–1300), persecutions of internal enemies for their supposed influence on the physical environment began after 1300: In the early 1320s, lepers and Jews were held collectively responsible for the poisoning of wells, and Jews were held responsible for the Europe-wide epidemics of 1348–1350 known as the Black Death and for the subsequent recurrences of plague later in the fourteenth century. Famine, flooding, and high mortality in the early 1340s preceded the arrival of the Black Death in December 1347. During these decades of the first half of the fourteenth century, when a sequence of cold and long winters indicated the return of Little Ice Age conditions, the interdependence among climatic factors, crop failures, rising prices, hunger, the outbreak of epidemics, and the classical pattern of subsistence crises of Old Europe became more visible. Thus, attention shifted from epidemics to weather, and it is striking to see that the gradual emergence of the new crime of cumulative witchcraft was closely connected to the waves of climatic hardship and agrarian crises during the earlier phases of the Little Ice Age, particularly the 1420s and 1430s, when the new cumulative idea of witchcraft was fabricated in the western Alps, or the 1480s, when the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) was compiled.

The impact of the Little Ice Age began to be felt again in the 1560s. Contemporary chroniclers such as Johann Jacob Wick from Zurich reported that the summer of 1560 was unusually wet. The following winter was the coldest and longest winter since

1515–1516. For the first time in generations, large Alpine lakes like Lake Constance froze (“*Seegfrömi*”), and the vegetation period shortened decisively. The following winter (1561–1562) was not only similarly cold but also included an immense snowfall, mentioned in a broadsheet printed at Leipzig in 1562. Orthodox Lutheran theology interpreted these events as signs that God was furious at the people because of their sins. The coincidence of coldness and wetness harmed this agrarian society by damaging the harvest, while rising prices worsened the living conditions for poorer people. During the spring and summer of 1562, a thaw and heavy rainfall caused flooding in various parts of Germany, poisoned the fields, and led to cattle diseases, rising infant mortality, and the outbreak of epidemics. After unusually severe thunderstorms hit central Europe, a fierce debate on weather making involved some leading Lutheran reformers in Germany (Johann Brenz, Thomas Naogeorgus, Jacob Heerbrand) and Johann Weyer, who exchanged the principal arguments on the subject. Simultaneously, severe witch hunts started in southwestern Germany. The mechanism of torture, confession, and denunciation turned single cases of witchcraft into witch hunts. The largest hunt occurred in the small territory of Wiesensteig, belonging to the Lutheran counts of Helfenstein, where sixty-three women were burned as witches within a year. A contemporary newsletter reported this event, making the witch hunt well known throughout the Holy Roman Empire.

Starting in the 1560s, a series of witch panics shook several European societies, followed by attempts to legalize witchcraft persecutions (for example, the English and Scottish witchcraft statutes of 1563). After the initial witch hunts of 1562 and 1563, a wave of persecutions followed the hunger crisis of the years around 1570, following the catastrophic coldness of the previous two years. But a totally new persecutorial zeal could be observed during the 1580s. At the end of the 1570s, crop failures and price increases again caused hunger in parts of central Europe, stimulating witch burnings in many places. After 1580, the persecutions began to reach levels previously unknown. Between 1580 and 1620 in the Pays de Vaud, which was under the rule of the reformed Swiss city-state of Bern since 1536, subject of the reformed Swiss town of Bern, more than 1,000 persons were burned for witchcraft. Between 1580 and 1595, hundreds of witches were burned in the duchy of Lorraine, subjects of their Catholic dukes who were heavily involved in the power struggles of the French Wars of Religion. The Lorraine witch hunts closely coincided with those in the neighboring Spanish Netherlands and in the archbishopric of Trier, where hundreds of witches were also burned between 1581 and 1595. A local chronicler, Johann Linden, canon of

St. Simeon in Trier, explains in his *Gesta Treverorum* (The History of Trier) the reasons for that witch hunt, the largest in German-speaking territories in the sixteenth century, which occurred under Archbishop Johann VII von Schönenberg (governed 1581–1599):

Hardly any of the Archbishops governed their diocese under such hardships, such sorrows and such extreme difficulties as Johann. . . . During the whole period he and his subjects had to endure a continuous shortage of grain, a rigorous climate and crop failures. Only two of these nineteen years were fertile, 1584 and 1590. . . . Since everybody thought that the continuous crop-failure was caused by witches from devilish hatred, the whole country wished for their eradication. (Linden 1964, 7:13–14)

Until recently, this explanation was not taken seriously, but research has demonstrated that the persecution was indeed not only demanded but also organized by the population. Because the legal administration of this territory was inefficient and officials were reluctant to prosecute, village committees began to extend their competence and organized the witch hunts themselves. Elected committees collected information, captured and tried the suspected witches, and delivered them to the authorities only after they had already confessed. The persecution thus resembled a popular uprising in which the people usurped functions usually reserved to state authorities. Only in 1591, when popular acceptance of the persecution in his archbishopric declined, did the electoral prince try to deprive the local committees of their power and recover his authority. A woodcut on a contemporary broadsheet hinted at the reason for these persecutions: It showed a panorama with three tremendous thunderstorms falling on villages and fields while witches flew through the air casting their spells (*Sigfriedus*, ca. 1590). Similarly, a broadsheet printed in 1590 about the witch hunt in southern Germany reads like a collection of meteorological disasters and their consequences on physical and mental health (*Erweyterte Unholden Zeyttung* 1590).

After 1586, long and cold winters were complemented by cold and wet springs and summers, thus causing hunger and epidemics and creating enormous psychological stress. In 1586, the famous collection of Fugger newsletters reported a “great fear” among ordinary people, terminology that reminds us of *la grande peur* preceding the French Revolution. These early witch hunts indeed acquired revolutionary dimensions, implicating some members of the ruling oligarchies—magistrates, clerics, even noblemen. Unlike the hunger crisis of 1570, the crisis of the 1580s endured for ten or more years. Socioeconomic explanations of the crises

indicate that since the 1560s a general decline in living standards resulted from a combination of continuous population growth and a diminishing food supply because of ecological crisis. In addition, the wine-growing areas of central Europe, from Hungary, Austria, Switzerland, and Germany into northern France, experienced a permanent decline in income due to the deterioration of wine harvests (*Landsteiner*). Basket-of-goods calculations on the basis of statistical data from the imperial city of Augsburg demonstrate that after 1586, an average craftsman with a family of four could no longer earn the necessary living costs without help from other members of his family.

The socioeconomic disaster affected society as a whole. But meteorological disfavor fell hardest on such disadvantaged areas as the Bernese highlands, the Scottish highlands, the mountainous regions of Lorraine and Alsace, the archbishopric of Trier, or the Ardennes in northern France. In these marginal agricultural regions, increasing wetness, falling temperatures, shorter growing seasons, and the increased frequency of hailstorms endangered the production of cereals and wine. After 1586, the impact of a series of cold and prolonged winters was sharpened by a period of wet and cold springs and summers. In Switzerland, snow covered the ground until late spring in 1587; snowfall returned on July 4 down to 400 meters on the Swiss plateau. Again, 1588, the year the Invincible Armada failed in heavy mid-September storms, was one of the rainiest years in history. A Swiss chronicler, Renward Cysat, reported severe thunderstorms almost daily, starting in June. It was during these two years, 1587–1588, that witchcraft accusations reached their climax in England and northern France, while large-scale witch hunts began in Scotland and Germany.

The synchronicity of accusations and persecutions in countries that were not connected by dynastic, confessional, or economic links demonstrates the importance of the climatic factor for explanation. Many individual witchcraft trials show that meteorological events contributed decisively to suspicions and accusations. These events were often supraregional or even supranational. Areas of low pressure can cover large regions; the advance of arctic air can at times harm the northern part of the Continent or even the Northern Hemisphere. What we can learn from this is that contemporary laments about decreasing fruitfulness of the fields, of cattle, and even of people were far from merely rhetorical devices; rather, they rested on empirical observation. The rising tide of demonological literature reinforced such lamentations. By the 1590s, members of contemporary elites, such as the famous French jurist Jean Bodin, the suffragan bishop of Treves Peter Binsfeld, the chief public prosecutor of Lorraine Nicolas Rémy, or the king of Scotland James VI (soon to become James I of England), all shared

the idea that witches could be responsible for the weather. In his *Daemonologie* (Demonology, 1597), James claimed that witches

can raise stormes and tempestes in the aire either upon Sea or land, though not universally, but in such a particular place and prescribed boundes, as God will permit them so to trouble. Which likewise is verie easie to be discerned from any other naturall tempestes that are meteoeres, in respect of the suddaine and violent raising thereof, together with the short induring of the same. And this is likewise very possible to their master to do
(James VI 1597, 46)

Rémy, like an ethnographer, reported detailed weather magic from Lorraine witchcraft trials that he had judged. Although Binsfeld certainly emphasized theological reasons for bad weather, his best arguments came from empirical data from his persecution in the archbishopric of Trier.

At the end of the sixteenth century, a few European states managed to escape the circle of witch belief and witchcraft persecution, since their elites stopped feeling threatened and became strong enough to suppress popular demands for witch hunts. In central Europe, however, where demographic pressure and economic depression lingered on, unstable governments remained vulnerable to new demands for persecution. Large-scale witch hunts occurred, for instance, around 1600 in Franche-Comté and some ecclesiastical territories in Germany, in the Basque region and parts of Germany from 1608–1612, and in Franconia between 1616 and 1618. Contemporary court records and broadsheets described the importance of meteorological events as triggering factors behind these persecutions.

During the third decade of the seventeenth century, when the Thirty Years' War preoccupied governing elites, organized witch hunts reached their peak in the ecclesiastical territories of the Holy Roman Empire. Once again the climax of witch hunting coincided with some extraordinarily dramatic meteorological events. It is noteworthy that contemporary accounts almost never connected these witch hunts with war, confessional strife, state building, changes in the medical or judicial system, gender relations, or whatever historians might imagine. Instead, court records dwelled upon disease and death of children and cattle, destruction of crops and vineyards. Chroniclers related such misfortunes to general meteorological developments. And historians of climate confirm their observations, in general as well as in particular. The 1620s were characterized by long and cold winters, late springs, and cold and wet summers and autumns, leading to crop failures and price increases. In 1626, during the last week of May, in the middle of the vegetation period, winter returned; temperatures

fell so low that lakes and rivers froze overnight and trees and bushes lost their leaves. Severe frost destroyed cereals and grapes, and even the grapevines. Such an event had not been recorded in the preceding 500 years (Pfister et al. 1996). The uniqueness and devastating effects of this climatic anomaly confirmed contemporary impressions that it was an “unnatural” event.

A chronicler in the Franconian town of Zeil reported:

On 27th May 1626, all the vineyards were completely destroyed by frost within the prince-bishoprics of Bamberg and Würzburg, together with the dear grain which had already sprouted. . . . Everything was frozen, which had not happened as long as one could remember. And it caused a great rise in prices . . . consequently, pleading and begging began among the rabble, questioning why the authorities continued to tolerate the destruction of crops by witches and sorcerers. Therefore the prince-bishop punished these crimes, and the persecution began in this year. (Behringer 2001, 250)

In the following years, broadsheets emphasized the supposed responsibility of witches for these severe frosts, adding later events like hailstorms, cattle diseases, and epidemics. Confessions under torture claimed to have detected a devilish conspiracy to destroy vineyards and grains for several years in order to create hunger and disease to the extent that people would be forced to eat each other. Only drastic measures by the authorities seemed capable of stopping these plans—and the measures taken were indeed dramatic. In the tiny prince-bishopric of Bamberg, 600 persons were burned for suspected witchcraft; in the neighboring prince-bishopric of Würzburg, 900; in the electorate of Mainz, another 900; and under the rule of prince-archbishop and elector Ferdinand of Cologne in the Rhineland and Westphalia, nearly 2,000.

Wherever the power of central governments, prosperity, and Cartesian rationalism increased, witch hunts were terminated during the seventeenth century. However, in large areas of central Europe, the link between climate and witch hunting remained intact. While scientists have debated the causal effects of the Maunder Minimum (the near absence of sunspot activity between 1645 and 1715), which occurred alongside the coldest part of the Little Ice Age, persecution of witches peaked around 1690, reaching its climax then in Austria, the Baltic region, and Scandinavia, and in Poland and Hungary during the first decades of the eighteenth century. In some Catholic areas of central Europe, every year with Little Ice Age types of events led to another cycle of witchcraft trials. It is more than just a metaphor that the sun of

Enlightenment melted the cold era of witch hunting. From the 1730s on, the climate, though still cold, was more stable than during previous decades. In a few backward areas of Germany, France, and Austria, witchcraft trials lasted into the 1740s, and in remote corners of Switzerland, Hungary, and Poland even into the 1770s.

Above all in central Europe, the age of witch hunting seems congruent with the era of the Little Ice Age. The peaks of persecution coincided with years of sharp climatic deterioration. Witches were traditionally held responsible for bad weather that was so dangerous to the precarious agricultural surpluses of the preindustrial period. But only in the fifteenth century did ecclesiastical and secular authorities accept the reality of this crime. The 1420s, the 1450s, and the last two decades of the fifteenth century, well-known to historians of climate, were decisive times when secular and ecclesiastical authorities increasingly accepted the existence of weather-making witches. During the “cumulative sequences of coldness” in the years 1560–1574, 1583–1589, 1623–1630, and 1678–1698 (Pfister 1984, 150), people demanded the eradication of the witches they held responsible for such climatic aberrations. The impact of the Little Ice Age increased the pressure from below and convinced some members of the intellectual elites of the existence of witchcraft. Therefore, we can conclude that witchcraft was the characteristic crime of the Little Ice Age.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; BINSFELD, PETER; BODIN, JEAN; BRENZ, JOHANN; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; LORRAINE, DUCHY OF; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MOLITOR, ULRICH; PLAGUE; POPULAR PERSECUTION; SCOTLAND; SWITZERLAND; TRIER, ELECTORATE OF; VALAIS; WEATHER MAGIC; WEYER, JOHANN.

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LIVING SAINTS

Many religions have revered people who, for different reasons, were venerated by their contemporaries as living saints. Some experienced extraordinarily intensive contacts with the deity; some worked miracles, especially healing; sometimes their position within the religious hierarchy assimilated them to the gods. We know about such individuals in Europe since pre-Christian antiquity. The sacred kings of the Celts and Germans had some qualities of living saints, upon whom the welfare of their peoples depended. Nor was the phenomenon unknown to Jews or early Christians (Brown 1981), but its heyday was the Middle Ages. The fame of many a saint, like Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), lay in his thaumaturgic miracle-working powers. When he left his monastery to visit a town, we are told, the faithful thronged around him praying for help, mostly to relieve illness or demonic obsession, and trying to pluck threads from his robe as relics. The number of living saints increased with the flowering of mysticism from the thirteenth century onward; from then until the eighteenth century, most living saints were women. Their charisma often included, besides the power to heal, stigmata, anorexia, telepathy, or the gift of prophecy. What mattered most, however, were their ecstasies, during which they received divine revelations. One can hardly imagine the throngs of admirers assembled to greet a famous visionary like Catherine of Siena (1347–1380). The phenomenon was especially widespread in Latin countries, where many kings kept a living saint at court, as Louis IX and Charles VIII of France did with the famous thaumaturge Francesco di Paula.

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, such saints encountered little resistance from ecclesiastical authorities. Later, however, things changed; a general skepticism arose toward their charisma, in part because visionaries propagandistically supported both popes (at Avignon and at Rome) during the Great Schism (1378–1417) of the Catholic Church. Especially from discussing the authenticity of the revelations of Bridgit of Sweden (1307–1373), the clergy developed an "art of discernment of the spirits," a set of theological rules to discover whether a revelation came from divine intervention or from an evil spirit. From then on, living saints were carefully tested for the possibility of human deception or, more menac-

ingly, diabolical fraud. The Holy Office tried many living saints because it seemed so difficult to separate thaumaturgy from witchcraft. A charismatic leader, Joan of Arc was burned as a witch in 1431, but many thought her to be a saint (and it took nearly 500 years to certify that she was). The papacy had Girolamo Savonarola, who had claimed divine inspiration while criticizing the pope, burned in 1498.

When Reformed theologians denied the possibility of private revelations and rejected the cult of saints, the phenomenon of living saints ceased in large parts of Europe. Meanwhile, in Catholic territories, the post-Tridentine clergy exerted strict control over women who manifested charisma, and only the cults of a few mystics such as Teresa of Avila or Theresa of Lisieux found official acceptance. Now, ecstasies and revelations mattered less in the canonization processes than obedient subordination to male ecclesiastics.

Because the phenomena on which the pious based the veneration of living saints were so ambiguous, many living saints were considered demoniacs or were accused of heresy and witchcraft, even if exonerated later. This happened, for instance, to Dorothea of Montau (d. 1394), Colomba of Rieti (d. 1503), Gentile of Ravenna (d. 1530), and Domenica da Paradiso (d. 1553), all of whom the Church beatified or canonized after many centuries. Why was it so easy to mistake a living saint for a witch? Because both operated similarly in many respects and because the Devil could appear disguised as an angel, one could never know which a person was. Both pious visionaries and malignant sorceresses encountered apparitions of nonhuman men. Both told of erotic encounters: the saints of the mystical union, often narrated in undeniably sexual terms, and the witches of intercourse with an incubus. The result might even be an extranatural pregnancy—for example, St. Bridgit of Sweden showed bodily signs of bearing the Christ child each Christmas—but there were also cases of alleged pregnancies by incubi, including the Catholic claim that the Devil had impregnated Martin Luther's mother. Saints and witches both received painful corporal marks from nonhuman lovers: the saints the stigmata, and the witches the Devil's mark. Whereas the saints often claimed to have been wedded ceremoniously to Jesus (the "mystical marriage"), the witches, too, confessed to have made a solemn pact with the Devil. Both often met their supernatural or superhuman lover at a feast, be it in heaven or at the Sabbath. The same kinds of miracles were associated with both groups, especially paranormal healing and flight experiences.

In the late Middle Ages and the early modern period, therefore, a woman who manifested paranormal faculties had a chance of being seen as a living saint, but she also ran the risk of being mistaken for a heretic and witch. How she was judged depended very strongly on

her social situation and whether or not she had supporters in the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

PETER DINZELBACHER

See also: DEVIL'S MARK; DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS; HOLINESS; INCUBUS AND SUCCUBUS; JOAN OF ARC; MIRACLES; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC; VISIONS.

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LÖHER, HERMAN (1595–1678)

Herman Löher has left us a detailed account of his personal involvement, both as a judge and as a victim, with the brutal witch hunts that swept over the German Rhineland in the second quarter of the seventeenth century in an extremely rare book of 1676. The book is one of extremely few ego-documents (memoirs, autobiographies, diaries, or personal correspondence where the writer is continuously present in the text) containing firsthand information about the ways people experienced the terror of the witchcraft trials. Born in Munster Eifel, a small town in the duchy of Jülich not far from Bonn, Löher moved with his family in 1601 to nearby Rheinbach in the lands of the archbishop of Cologne. At fifteen, Löher joined his father in the textile trade. In 1621, he was elected burgomaster (chief magistrate) of Rheinbach; ten years later, he became one of its seven aldermen. In that year, 1631, Rheinbach became the scene of a real witch hunt under the direction of the *Hexenkommissar* (Witch Commissioner) Franz Buirmann. After 1626, witch commissioners like Buirmann played a major role in many of the trials in the archbishopric of Cologne. Local courts were powerless against these commissioners.

The first two people executed at Rheinbach in 1631 were poor and powerless. This changed, however, with the third defendant, the widow of a former burgomaster and alderman. She died during the horrible torture Buirmann had ordered. After her, an alderman and the wife of another alderman fell victim to the commissioner's brutality. As the hunt went on, it became clear that it was being used to replace the town's governing oligarchy with a new faction. During interrogations,

Buirmann forced the accused to name members of this elite as accomplices.

After a few months, when the wave was already slackening, rumors spread that there were also witches within the household of Herman Löher. By bribing Buirmann's superior, Löher could prevent himself or other members of his family from being arrested. However, in August 1636, a new series of trials began under the direction of another commissioner, Johann (Jan) Möden, and Löher realized that he had to flee if he wanted to survive. He, his wife, and his mother-in-law left Rheinbach secretly on August 3, 1636. They went first to Cologne, in order to collect the money Löher had stashed away there, before moving to Amsterdam. In the Dutch Republic, no witch had been executed since 1608, and in Amsterdam none for over forty years. Amsterdam was nominally a Protestant city, but Löher always remained Catholic. He had already acquired full citizenship in Amsterdam in November 1636 and repeatedly showed pride in the commercial success of his new hometown in his book, but this did not lead him to change his religion. In Amsterdam, all sorts of religions and confessions could worship God as they saw fit. Even though the city magistrates were required to be Reformed, they never questioned the loyalty of citizens whose beliefs differed from theirs.

Löher published his autobiographical *Höchnötige Unterthanige Wemütige Klage der Frommen Unschültigen* (Much Needed, Humble, and Woeful Complaint of the Pious Innocent) in 1676. Any hope that it would persuade authorities in the Rhineland to allow his return proved futile. In his discussion of the supporters of the trials, Löher concentrated on the works of Agricola of Sttard, Jean Bodin, and Pseudo-Laymann (so-called because a book advocating harsh treatment of witchcraft suspects was incorrectly attributed to Paul Laymann)—the same authors that his Mennonite friend and fellow textile trader Abraham Palingh had singled out in his book. In appealing to the authorities to prevent witchcraft trials, Palingh had summarized Löher's experiences. Löher in turn borrowed stories from Palingh's book. Unlike Palingh, Löher also quoted the work of such opponents as Adam Tanner, Friedrich Spee, and Daniel Jonctys, and he inserted a treatise from the Catholic priest Michael Stappert, who as a confessor had observed firsthand the injustice and cruelty with which so many witchcraft trials abounded.

At the time of his death in 1678, Löher's financial situation was rather difficult. After his death, all remaining copies of his book were confiscated by a creditor, a paper trader who probably recycled them; thus, only two copies survive today. In his book, Löher repeatedly admitted that he had little formal education, which helps explain why his book was written in a

peculiar mixture of Dutch and Low German, making it a valuable source for sociological linguists as well as for historians of witchcraft trials.

HANS DE WAARDT

See also: AMSTERDAM; BODIN, JEAN; BUIRMANN, FRANZ; COLOGNE; JONCTYS, DANIEL; LAYMANN, PAUL; MODEN, JOHANN GANZ; NETHERLANDS, NORTHERN; PALINGH, ABRAHAM; SKEPTICISM; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; TANNER, ADAM.

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LOOS, CORNELIUS (1540 TO 1546–1596?)

A Dutch Catholic theologian, Loos was one of the most prominent opponents of witch belief and witchcraft trials. His written criticism of the persecution of witches, entitled *De vera et falsa magia* (On True and False Magic, perhaps partially published in 1592), was confiscated in 1592 by the censor; he was forced to recant his arguments in 1593. Thereafter, every criticism of the belief in witchcraft was regarded as heresy.

The son of a distinguished citizen of Gouda, Loos was born in the early 1540s. He studied theology at Louvain, earning the degree of licentiate in 1564. Ten years later, he was banished permanently after his family was involved in an unsuccessful royalist conspiracy. By 1578, Loos was apparently studying with the theology faculty of the University of Mainz. He published two anti-Protestant polemics in 1579, calling for a war of annihilation against the rebellious Dutch provinces. Around 1585, Loos moved from Mainz to Trier. Probably by autumn 1589, he was working on a rebuttal of the *Tractatus de confessionibus maleficorum et sagarum* (Treatise on Confessions of Sorcerers and Witches, 1589), which had been recently published by the suffragan bishop of Trier, Peter Binsfeld, in favor of witch hunting.

Binsfeld wanted to silence Loos's criticisms and to ensure that the *De vera et falsa magia* was not published. The official Catholic party was on Binsfeld's side; in April 1590 in Munich and Ingolstadt, it drew up statements of principle that, based partially on Binsfeld's *Tractatus de confessionibus maleficorum et sagarum* and with the participation of the Jesuits, favored severe witch persecutions and recommended the application of strict legal criminal procedures in witchcraft trials.

Binsfeld also found support in Cologne from the papal nuncio Ottavio Frangipani, who asked the archbishop of Trier to intervene and stop the publication of *De vera et falsa magia*, which Loos had already sent to a publisher in Cologne. Loos had also written letters to the city council of Trier, to highly placed churchmen, and to other unnamed individuals in which he questioned both the legality of the witchcraft trials that had taken place in Trier and the belief in witches generally. He specifically accused the elector of Trier of tyranny. Frangipani accused Loos of having sent his book—which allegedly contained both errors and new ideas—to be published without the approval from the censor, and he demanded that he be given a copy to examine. After the nuncio had read the text, he ordered that its printing cease immediately.

Nothing remains of *De vera et falsa magia* except a few publisher's proofs, discovered in 1888. The complete manuscript has disappeared; only one handwritten section survives in the City Library in Trier, which contains the first two of what the index indicates would have been four books. In his text, Loos referred to witchcraft trials that had occurred in Trier and also attacked Binsfeld's arguments with scathing derision. Drawing almost exclusively on the Bible, the Church Fathers, and classical authorities, Loos argued that it was impossible for the Devil to appear to humans in corporeal form or to have sexual intercourse with them; he also denied such other elements of witchcraft belief as the supposed ability of witches to fly and to cause bad weather. In a radically critical rejection of the scholastic mode of thinking adopted by Binsfeld, Loos showed himself an adherent of humanist philological textual analysis.

Loos was particularly skeptical about the value of the confessions and denunciations against their alleged coconspirators made by accused witches, thus destroying the basis of Binsfeld's arguments in favor of witch hunts. In Loos's opinion, such confessions and denunciations either came from mentally disturbed individuals or were the result of horrible torture. In emotional tones, Loos emphasized that by means of the witch-trial "machine," innocent people had been executed. He also hinted at the possibility that accusations of witchcraft and witchcraft trials could be manipulated for purposes other than the ostensible persecution of witches. Territorial lords who tolerated witch hunts Loos labeled tyrants. For this Dutch theologian, witch beliefs—along with Protestantism—constituted tools by means of which the Devil sought to imperil the spiritual welfare of true Christians. Those who persecuted witches were thus, according to Loos, the real adherents of the Devil, who damned their souls by shedding innocent blood.

Arrested and imprisoned in the prince-abbey of St. Maximin, Loos had to recant his ideas formally on

March 15, 1593. In 1599, Martín Del Rio published a copy of the recantation, attested by a notary. Its consequences are clear: Together with the theological statements drawn up at Munich and Ingolstadt in 1590, Loos's recantation made it impossible for any Catholic to criticize witch belief without being branded a heretic. New ways of arguing against witchcraft trials thus had to be found, such as those presented by other Jesuits, by Adam Tanner, and especially by Friedrich Spee in his fundamental criticism of witchcraft trials, *Cautio criminalis* (A Warning on Criminal Justice), in 1631. Banned from the diocese of Trier, Loos went to Brussels, where he was given a prebend in the cathedral. Here, he repeated his arguments against belief in witches and witchcraft trials; as a result, he was again incarcerated and was put on a diet of bread and water, although he was released after a relatively short time. Loos died before action could be taken for a third time against his criticisms of witchcraft trials.

RITA VOLTMER;

TRANSLATED BY ALISON ROWLANDS

See also: BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; BINSFELD, PETER; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); SKEPTICISM; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; ST. MAXIMIN, PRINCE-ABBEY OF; TANNER, ADAM; TRIER, ELECTORATE OF

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LORD'S PRAYER

In the New Testament, the Lord's Prayer is transmitted in two versions: Matthew 6:9–13 and Luke 11:2–4. It is related to Jewish prayers (for example, the Kaddish). The last bidding (numbered as the sixth or seventh) is "but deliver us from evil." *The evil* is a genitive (*apo tou ponerou*), so it has been discussed since ancient times whether it should be understood as a masculine form (referring to the Devil) or as a neuter form (referring to evil in general). The Greek Fathers interpreted it as

masculine, St. Augustine as neuter. Even during the Reformation, the debate continued.

Prayer, in general, is related to incantation. And the prayer of a developed religion, which is communication with a god as supplication or thanksgiving, can easily be used in magical contexts, giving it the primitive function of a spell. The bidding mentioned above suggests that the Lord's Prayer was especially suitable for use in apotropaic contexts, and it was used so in many functions and forms against demons and witches. It could be spoken, written on amulets, or even buried in the ground. It could protect harvests from hailstorms by speaking only the fourth bidding ("Give us this day our daily bread"). It was also prayed to protect newborn children. Above all, it was thought efficacious for driving away demons and witches, often combined with the sign of the cross. Inscribed in a magic circle around a person, it would protect him from demons.

Its magical function became especially clear if it was prayed backward: Then, it worked as black magic, causing harm to somebody. The magical function is also shown in the fact that it usually worked only in combination with a certain rite, for instance, spitting or using rue against witches. Often it was said as a conclusion to a series of incantations. Its use in incantations against disease was very common and departed from the normal form by leaving out the "Amen." Repetition (three, seven, nine times) also shows its magical function; there was even a superstition that praying it seventy-seven times healed every disease. It was often used against fever and for stopping blood, but it was also used for the salvation of the dead. The exceptional holiness of this prayer is shown in the belief that if a person interrupted it by noise when it was being spoken in church, he or she would die.

RAINER WALZ

See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; HOLINESS; MAGIC AND RELIGION; MAGIC CIRCLE; SPELLS; SUPERSTITION.

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LORRAINE, DUCHY OF

Records of nearly 2,000 trials and over 1,400 executions for witchcraft have been preserved from the duchy of Lorraine, omitting the duchy of Bar and numerous enclaves belonging mainly to the prince-bishops of Metz, Toul, and Verdun (for which relatively few records survive). Such figures place this independent

bilingual duchy, a buffer state separating the Holy Roman Empire from the Kingdom of France, with a total population of approximately 400,000, among the worst witch-hunting regions of Europe; Lorraine's rate of executions per thousand population in its French-speaking heartland ranks second in French-speaking Europe. Lorraine was permanently united after 1506 with the smaller duchy of Bar to the west, and the dukes of Lorraine owed feudal allegiance to the Holy Roman Empire for most of their lands, but they also owed homage to the kings of France for half of Bar.

Unusually rich local financial records record expenses from over 1,000 executions in Lorraine between the 1470s and 1630s. During the peak era of trials (1570–1630), these records are almost 90 percent complete for Lorraine's Francophone parts, and because every execution represented a justifiable public expense, local officials invariably recorded whenever witches were burned. Included among these same financial records, in order to justify claims for reimbursement, are partial trial records for over 350 defendants. Lacunae push the probable total number of executions to about 1,600—slightly more than half as many as previously supposed. Although Lorraine's probable overall total of witchcraft executions matched or even exceeded the estimated totals from many of the “superhunts” sponsored by Catholic prelates in western Germany, the numbers from its French-speaking heartland were lower than those from the Pays de Vaud in French Switzerland. During the peak of witch hunting in both places (1590–1630), Protestant Vaud, with a population much smaller than that of Francophone Lorraine, averaged thirty recorded witchcraft executions per year against only eighteen for Catholic Lorraine.

Several scholars have demonstrated recently just how heavily this region was affected by witchcraft trials (Biesel 1997; Briggs 2002). Its earliest known executions for witchcraft occurred in both the duchy of Bar and Lorraine itself, from the 1470s until the beginning of the sixteenth century. After a long hiatus, a few dozen witchcraft executions took place in mid-sixteenth-century Lorraine. Apart from these episodes, Lorraine's witchcraft executions were spread uninterrupted over two generations (1570–1635). However, these executions were distributed unevenly across its three principal geographic parts. Most of them occurred in the Francophone heartland *bailliages* (bailiwicks) of Nancy and Vosges; there were hundreds more in the Germanophone *bailliage d'Allemagne* in the northeast. However, there were relatively few executions in the western duchy of Bar, about half of which belonged to the huge zone supervised by the *Parlement* of Paris (a sovereign judicial court, with jurisdiction over approximately one-half of France).

There is one key explanation for Lorraine's grim record. This bilingual but solidly Catholic duchy produced a

well-known demonologist, Nicolas Rémy. Rémy composed his witch-hunting manual, the *Daemonolatria* (Demonolatriy), soon after being appointed Lorraine's *procureur-général* (public prosecutor), in 1591, and he published it four years later at Lyons. Having previously served fifteen years on the duchy's highest court, the *Change de Nancy*, he had practical experience that no other author on witchcraft could match. (Lorraine had no true appellate court: The *Change* merely exercised an ill-defined supervision over the proceedings in the local courts, which regarded its comments as advisory and occasionally disregarded them.)

With typical late-humanist bombast, Rémy boasted in his preface that he had prosecuted more than 900 people who had been executed as witches during the previous fifteen years, but he named only about 125 defendants, extremely few of whom can be traced in Lorraine's abundant fiscal archives (and some of them were not executed). Instead, Rémy's significance lies in the fact that he and his son Claude-Marcel occupied the post of *procureur-général* to the duchy of Lorraine for forty consecutive years after 1591, thereby making it the largest European state with chief prosecutors who consistently encouraged rather than curbed witchcraft prosecutions throughout the worst period of witch hunting in western Europe. The influence of both Rémys was indirect but real: Their commitment ensured that the dukes would not question the persecution, while the *Change* was highly unlikely to challenge local courts on witchcraft when the public prosecutor held such a high-profile public position.

Lorraine's remarkably abundant local financial records, supplemented by hundreds of trial fragments, describe more than twenty trials and executions for witchcraft between 1477 and 1486 and another cluster of witchcraft trials in its Francophone heartlands between 1544 and 1552: Ten witches were burned in four districts in 1545, six more in 1550. After stopping completely between 1555 and 1569, witchcraft trials resumed there during the 1570s; for the first time, they included Germanophone Lorraine. Despite very incomplete financial records, at least seventeen different districts recorded witch burnings during the 1570s; overall totals averaged almost six executions annually. In the following decade, financial records improved and the number of recorded witch burnings more than doubled, accelerating to about thirteen victims per year across Lorraine's Francophone areas, with Germanophone districts adding another four or five executions per year. For the first time, more than ten people were burned as witches in one year in a few districts (in St.-Dié in 1583; in Homburg in 1586; in Bitche in 1588; and possibly in Dieuze in 1586).

After Rémy's appointment as *procureur-général*, nearly complete financial records show a further increase to about eighteen executions per year from 1591 to 1600 in Francophone Lorraine, although the

highest totals of the early 1590s came from Germanophone districts (Dieuze, Wallerfangen, Val-de-Lièpvre, and Homburg). While the two generations of Rémys ran Lorraine's prosecutorial apparatus, recorded executions for witchcraft in Francophone Lorraine remained at approximately constant levels: From 1591 until 1630, one can locate almost 740 recorded burnings, over eighteen per year. As in the neighboring bilingual duchy of Luxembourg, Lorraine's Germanophone districts, the sparsely populated *bailliage d'Allemagne* (Hiegel 1961), seem proportionately more heavily affected by witchcraft trials than its Francophone regions, especially in the early 1590s and again from 1618 to 1621. Meanwhile, far sketchier financial records from the autonomous duchy of Bar, where the Rémys had no authority, suggest a probable total of fewer than four witchcraft executions per year between 1580 and 1630, in a region midway in size and population between Lorraine's Germanophone districts and its Francophone heartland.

One southeastern district, produced a disproportionate share of Lorraine's executions for witchcraft. St.-Dié, with less than 10 percent of Lorraine's Francophone population, accounted for over 35 percent of the recorded totals of executed witches from two dozen Francophone districts during the major persecutions between 1591 and 1630. Overall, 300 people from this single district were burned as witches, all but ten of them between 1580 and 1632. One possible explanation for this grim record is that, unlike most other parts of Lorraine, much of this district belonged to three great ecclesiastical lords (the cathedral chapter of St.-Dié and the abbeys of Etival and Moyeu-moutier). Each possessed the right of high justice and hunted witches enthusiastically, but they all used ducal officials to endorse their sentences and—because ecclesiastical officials should never shed blood—paid them to carry out the actual burnings.

In Lorraine, witchcraft persecutions extended upward to the ducal household after 1600 and became notable for the high rank of those accused. In 1604, after Bernabite experts, a cardinal and a papal legate, had been brought from Italy to conduct prolonged exorcisms on the duke's crippled second son, a minor court official was finally accused and burned for bewitching the child. A few years later, the same monks exorcised the cardinal's cousin, a bishop of Verdun who had been bewitched into marriage (because of his kinship with the ducal house, the bishop's career was unaffected by this peccadillo). In the 1620s, as Lorraine's annual averages of witchcraft executions dropped off to about ten per year before their final surge in 1629–1630, two other prominent men were burned for this offense. The first, a physician attached to the ducal family, was convicted of causing the demonic possession of an extremely devout noblewoman with pretensions to sainthood (Delcambre

and Lhermitte 1956). During her exorcisms, she also accused a high-ranking Franciscan, who fled to France in order to avoid arrest and then defended himself in a pamphlet. In a transparently political trial of 1625, a courtier and key adviser to the former duke was burned soon after his patron's death, charged with bewitching the new duke's marriage to the previous duke's heiress four years before; another official of the former duke met the same fate in 1631.

Lorraine's new ruler soon confronted the novel problem of a demonically possessed village, Mattaincourt. Its parish priest, a key adviser to Duke Charles IV and now venerated as a saint, ultimately had to resign because neither he nor anyone else could control the Devil's public scandals in his church whenever Mass was celebrated. Before this scandal ended, it had evolved from unsuccessful exorcisms into the largest single witch hunt in Lorraine's history. Over forty people were burned for witchcraft, most of them accused by demonically possessed adolescents. In order to end this panic, eight underage witches, too young to be executed, had to be quarantined for over a year. Mattaincourt's hitherto-unknown tragedy offered a Catholic version that foreshadowed the all-too-famous developments sixty years later among the Puritans of Salem village in Massachusetts. Widespread attacks of plague, coupled with the French invasion and occupation of Lorraine, effectively ended Lorraine's prolonged witch hunts in the early 1630s.

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: FOURIER, ST. PIERRE; NUMBER OF WITCHES; *PARLEMENT OF PARIS*; RÉMY, NICOLAS; VAUD, PAYS DE.

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LOUDUN NUNS

The spectacular exorcisms of Loudun's Ursuline nuns in the 1630s played an essential role in the most famous

witchcraft trial of seventeenth-century France. It is arguably the best-known witchcraft case in European history, its historical fascination paralleling that of the Salem witchcraft events in America. Recent generations have portrayed the nuns' torments on stage, in films, and even in an opera. The episode became so famous for at least two reasons: in part because thousands of people observed the extraordinary recorded behavior of the nuns in very unusual public exorcisms, and in part because a prominent priest, whom many believed innocent, was executed for causing the possessions. Moreover, there has been continuing debate ever since over what roles the principal characters played and why, up to and including King Louis XIII and his first minister, Cardinal Richelieu. Furthermore, this case does not stand alone; it was the second of four connected French cases of convent "possessions," preceded by one in Aix-en-Provence and followed by cases in Louviers and Auxonne.

In the western French town of Loudun, the Ursuline convent began experiencing multiple assaults of demonic possession in 1632. Led by their mother superior, Jeanne des Anges, the nuns accused a local parish priest, Urbain Grandier, of being the author of these possessions. He fought against these accusations but was eventually arrested, tried, and, in the words of his sentence, found guilty "of the crime of sorcery, evil spells, and the possession visited upon some Ursuline nuns of this town" (Bibliothèque Nationale, Fds fr. 24163).

Grandier was a brilliant young parish priest assigned to Loudun in 1617. At this time the town was part Catholic, part Huguenot, each fearing the strength and intentions of the other. Catholics hoped that the handsome, charismatic young priest would win many converts. For twelve years he was a great success; but then, almost certainly, he seduced Philippe, the daughter of his friend, Louis Trincant, one of Loudun's foremost citizens and a man whose widespread family connections reached up to Cardinal Richelieu. The whole Trincant clan suddenly became Grandier's implacable enemy. He could not be accused of Philippe's seduction without ruining her name; Trincant avoided this by accusing him of a hidden life of lechery with his female parishioners. The priest, constantly under attack during the coming years, ultimately fought off these accusations. But in the meantime, his reputation and the stories about him had reached inside Loudun's Ursuline convent.

The convent had opened in 1626 and had grown quickly. The nuns were very young, including their mother superior, Jeanne des Anges, who at the beginning of the possessions in 1632 was still only thirty years old. She was a clever, strong-willed leader, ambitious and determined to make her convent a great success. She was also a manipulator and had a tendency to severe nervous problems under stress, for which she had to be treated from time to time by Loudun doctors.

In late September 1632, one of her young nuns had a nighttime apparition. The priest who gave religious direction to the convent had recently died of the plague; one night his ghost appeared to the nun and begged for prayers. Shaken, she reported this the following morning. Jeanne des Anges accepted the apparition as genuine. The frightened nuns, obsessed by the thought of the specter night and day, prayed earnestly, but within a few days the old priest was forgotten and the charismatic but supposedly libertine Grandier, whom the nuns had never met or even seen, had taken his place in their thoughts. From now on, the nightly invasions became decidedly erotic. Jeanne des Anges said in her autobiography that "after the demons had fully aroused in us the passion of love for this man, he did not fail to come at night into our house and into our chambers to solicit us to sin" (Legué and Tourette 1985, 67). Soon the nuns began to experience extraordinary convulsions, uncontrolled laughter, running, swearing, screaming, and blaspheming. They lost all self-possession. They spoke in strange voices. These shocking events were happening to young women who were related to leading families in the town. Clearly, in the minds of most observers, they were possessed by devils. Exorcisms were begun, and Jeanne des Anges's "demons" accused Grandier of having brought all this about.

One of the chief exorcists was Trincant's nephew. It was he who first compared the case of Grandier to that of Louis Gaufridy, the priest who had allegedly caused the demonic possession of another convent of Ursuline nuns at Aix-en-Provence in 1611. The Loudun exorcisms, initially started in secrecy, were then extended to include an audience of local gentry and ultimately became public extravaganzas open to crowds from far and wide. The onlookers, as many as 2,000 at a time, were amazed at the contortions, the obscenities, and the immodesty of the young women. A highlight of one performance came when Jeanne des Anges vomited up a piece of paper, allegedly a pact that Grandier had made with the Devil and signed with his blood. It still exists in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (BN, Fds fr. 7618). Many believed everything they saw and were told, although some were skeptical and thought the exorcists were manipulating the nuns. Then the exorcists claimed that the Devil could be forced to tell the truth under exorcism—a proposition opposed by leading Catholic theologians of the time. This led to accusations of witchcraft against some of Grandier's friends, made by devils under exorcism, and created a widespread fear that a general witch hunt was about to begin. Fortunately, Grandier's friends were too powerful to be successfully attacked. Meanwhile, Grandier fought back against his accusers. By late 1633, the case was becoming a national drama.

Trincant and his supporters now appealed to Richelieu and the king to intervene. The question as to



The 1634 execution at Loudun of the French parish priest Urbain Grandier, the victim of the most famous witchcraft trial in Europe. To the left are the demonically possessed nuns being exorcized. (TopFoto.co.uk)

why the Crown acted is still unresolved. Perhaps it was important to avoid widening a breach between Huguenots and Catholics in Loudun; perhaps the moral issue of a priest seducing a parishioner and going unpunished was a factor. Whatever his motivation, the king ordered an inquiry, with the explicit purpose of finding Grandier guilty as a sorcerer and punishing him. In the trial some months later, seventy-two witnesses came before an assembly of experienced judges and testified against Grandier. The court found him guilty, and he was burned at the stake the same day before a crowd of thousands.

It was thought the possessions would end when their alleged instigator was dead, but they did not. This raised some doubts about the validity of all that had happened. Meanwhile, the nuns were left in poverty, with their school closed, no money coming in, and their reputations in tatters. They were exorcized for months and sometimes years; Jeanne des Anges was only finally cured in 1638. Some supporters came to their aid, but it was Jeanne des

Anges who saved her convent. As she recovered, “miracles” occurred, and she became famous. To those who believed her, she was no longer a woman attacked by the Devil for her weakness and sins but rather a prey chosen as worthy of all he could inflict. Her convent, and she herself, became a center for visitors and pilgrims. Many regarded her death as that of a saint. Like many other French convents, the Loudun Ursulines later fell on hard financial times, and their house closed in 1772.

UNRESOLVED ISSUES

Since the day of Grandier’s execution on August 18, 1634, debates have raged over this case. Time has answered some questions; many are still in doubt. The very first issue raised was whether the nuns were truly possessed or sick or charlatans—or some combination of these. If they were sick, what was the cause? If they were charlatans, who was instructing them and teaching them what to do? Then there are questions about why Richelieu involved himself so deeply in this

case. Were his primary concerns reasons of state, moral issues, or personal revenge? All have been put forward.

And was Grandier really the libertine he was accused of being? Both direct and indirect evidence suggests that he was, but was that sufficient reason to put him to death if he had not caused the possessions? Was he eliminated to avoid an open and perhaps murderous rift developing in Loudun between the Huguenots and Catholics? Then there are the questions relating to the Church. Why was his bishop so determined to ruin him? Why were the exorcists permitted to perform public exorcisms, contrary to well-established general practice? To what extent were all these events simply reflections of family and personal conflicts in a provincial town at a time of great tension?

What we do know is that the questions raised about the case played their part in the eventual decline of witch hunts in France.

—ROBERT RAPLEY

See also: AIX-EN-PROVENCE NUNS; AUXONNE NUNS; BEWITCHMENT; CONVENT CASES; EXORCISM; FRANCE; GHOSTS; LOUVIERS NUNS; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; POSSESSION, DEMONIC.

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LOUVIERS NUNS

An outbreak of demonic possession in a convent at Louviers in Normandy in the 1640s became the last in a French series of incidents in which possessed nuns made successful accusations of witchcraft against their spiritual directors.

In late 1642, at the Hospitaller convent of Ste.-Elisabeth and St.-Louis, several nuns began to display symptoms of demonic possession. They claimed the cause was the body of their recently deceased spiritual director, Father Mathurin Picard, who they said had been a witch. They also accused another nun, Madeleine Bavent, of witchcraft. Public exorcisms

ensued, at which the nuns accused another priest, Father Thomas Boullé, and a former mother superior, Françoise de la Croix. The *Parlement* (sovereign judicial court) of Rouen executed Father Boullé for witchcraft in 1647; Father Picard's bones were exhumed and burned with Father Boullé. The case against Madeleine Bavent was left unresolved; she died in an asylum in 1653. The accusations against Mother de la Croix never reached court. For exorcists, the case was a *succès de scandale* that promoted the value of exorcism.

Major possessions at Ursuline convents in Aix-en-Provence (1609–1611) and in Loudun in the 1630s provided a model for the incidents at Louviers. For nearly two years, exorcists flocked to the convent from Normandy and beyond to confront the possessed nuns, performing over 100 public exorcisms. These were scenes of high drama, in which the women writhed and wailed—behavior supposedly signaling torture by demons. Exorcists themselves also resorted to violence at times, seeing the women as no longer human but merely shelters for devils who must be obliged to submit to the Catholic Church. Manuscript and printed accounts of the case appeared over a period of twelve years (1643–1654). It inspired around thirty-five printed works, a number exceeded only by the Loudun case, which led to fifty-four works. The tragedy of Louviers is that of the considerable literature the possession generated, very little concerned Thomas Boullé, its chief victim. Instead, exorcists, their supporters, and their opponents brought to Louviers their own polemic agendas, and a widespread fascination with lurid possession cases in this period ensured a readership for their works. Some major texts merit analysis.

According to one exorcist, Esprit du Bosroger, a Capuchin priest, the trouble had started in the 1620s, when the convent's first spiritual director, Father Pierre David, had supposedly spread "diabolical" devotional practices of "illuminism" (meaning overzealous, mystical, and unapproved spiritual practices) in the convent. Bosroger published a full account of the case in 1652, entitled *La piété affligée, ou Discours historique & theologique de la possession des religieuses dites de Sainte Elizabeth de Louviers* (Piety Afflicted, or Historic and Theological Discourse of the Possession of the St. Elizabeth Nuns of Louviers). The supposed illuminism–witchcraft link became a distinctive feature of this case. Both illuminism and public exorcism are typical aspects of the intense Catholic spiritual revival characteristic of baroque France.

Another exorcist, Father Thomas Le Gauffre, saw the possessions as an opportunity to promote the cult of his deceased friend, the influential Father Claude Bernard (d. 1641), known as the "poor priest." Bernard had successfully performed exorcisms in his lifetime, and Le Gauffre sought both to emulate and venerate Bernard

by using some of his personal relics to exorcise the nuns of Louviers. Le Gauffre published several accounts of successful exorcisms using Bernard's relics, but the sainthood campaign did not advance very far.

After Boullé's execution in 1647, Madeleine Bavent remained in jail, her own fate still undecided despite her confessions of witchcraft. An Oratorian priest named Charles Desmarets undertook to defend her reputation—and make his own—by publishing *Histoire de Magdelaine Bavent, Religieuse du Monastère de St. Louïs de Louviers* (The Story of Magdelaine Bavent, Nun of the St.-Louis Convent of Louviers). The book mixed excerpted interrogations of Bavent with a long autobiographical piece, reputedly dictated by Bavent at her request. Desmarets's account tried to demonstrate, first, that Bavent's confessions to the *Parlement* of Rouen had been obtained under duress due to the pressure of continuous new accusations put forward under exorcism by the convent's "demons" (principally the demon of sister Anne Barré, named "Leviathan"); and second, that her new confession was in effect the first time Bavent had been able to confess fully and honestly, having been obstructed by a succession of corrupt spiritual directors and hostile female superiors at her convent.

Some French critics again argued, as at Loudun, that exorcists were frauds, exploiting exorcism for malicious or self-promotional ends. Pierre Yvelin, a doctor at the court of the regent, Anne of Austria, had visited the convent early in the case and wrote two short skeptical accounts. At this time, French physicians were divided over the question of possession, all allowing it as a possibility but often refuting individual cases. Two local Norman doctors, Pierre Maignart and Jean Lempèrière, who supported the diagnosis of possession at Louviers, replied aggressively to their Parisian colleague in print. The increasingly spiteful debate was only curtailed when the court in Paris intervened.

SARAH FERBER

See also: AIX-EN-PROVENCE NUNS; CONVENT CASES; EXORCISM; LILLE NUNS; LOUDUN NUNS; POSSESSION, DEMONIC.

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LOVE MAGIC

Multifarious magical rituals devised to gain power over other people's emotions (especially sexual desire) through the subversion of free will constituted love magic. As the term reveals, love magic was commonly used to arouse passion and to bind unwilling lovers. In more aggressive forms, it was aimed at destroying unfaithful lovers. The experiments or techniques of love magic could be learned by anyone, female or male, young or old. In practice, however, one can detect a noticeable gender bias: The practitioners and users of love magic in Mediterranean Europe were commonly female laypeople, or less frequently, male ecclesiastics; only in southern Italy do users seem to have been predominantly male and from the laity. Its many practices make it difficult to draw any strict boundary here between learned and popular culture or between religion and magic. Everything rests on the beliefs that feelings can be manipulated through external events and that lovers can be entirely controlled by the arousal of discomfort and love sickness. The rituals rely on both holy and demonic sources.

FUNCTIONS AND USERS

Love magic functioned as a means to cope with emotional insecurity and with the anxieties of everyday life by transforming unlucky circumstances into better ones. Often love magic involved a threat of physical distress: Victims should suffer and be deprived of food, drink, sleep, and power until the user's desires were met. Love magic was an attempt to gain power over the feelings and actions of another person with the aid of the supernatural. Behind this aspiration at gaining such power stood emotional anxieties, especially of women in Mediterranean Europe. Their amorous anxieties were reflected through a wide array of practices that revealed the "different stages of love" and the "psychological states" (Sánchez Ortega 1991, 63) experienced in a sexual relationship or in marriage.

Divinatory experiments promised useful information after a lover, or more rarely a husband, had disappeared. More generally, a woman could assess her chances on the marriage market. Primarily, however, practitioners of love magic sought to arouse affection, love, or even hatred. They intended to compel unwilling lovers to appear and to fulfill their erotic and amorous desires. Love magic was used not only to bind people (and male members) and force them into marriage but also to destroy already-existing relationships. Rituals of love magic were appropriate when a man and a woman had just met, but they could be applied at any time during a partnership or marriage. Married women relied on love magic to bind their lovers or to make their husbands treat them with greater respect and care; prostitutes used different techniques to attract and hold clients.

BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

Love magic covered a multitude of differing practices that are not easily categorized because they often overlapped. Divinatory experiments, for example, encompassed elements of necromancy or conjuration; others were merely superstitious rituals. They all had, however, the advantage of being simple and cheap. The easiest way was to count out a handful of beans while chanting “He loves me, he does not love me.” Another, even more popular experiment in northern Italy and Spain was casting beans or casting a rope. The pattern in which the beans or the rope landed after being thrown into the air symbolized the degree of intimacy between two lovers. This ritual was commonly preceded by a prayer to St. Helen or to St. Ursula and by making the sign of the cross over the beans. Alternatively, other fortunetellers used fire, a sieve, special cards, or scissors for the same ends.

Charms, incantations, and conjurations were more acquisitive in nature. Some of them were spread throughout Europe, whereas others were particular to a specific place. Some love charms and incantations were inspired by official rituals of the Church, such as praying on a rosary or saying a “prayer” (Key of David). They might call on the Virgin Mary, the saints, or the Holy Spirit, and they might require the use of blessed candles or other religious apparatus for their efficacy. They might appeal to events of religious legends or sacred history, pleading, for example, that the Virgin Mary make a certain person feel the love she felt when giving birth to her son. Like this example of sympathetic magic, many recitations were based on well-known aspects of biblical teachings and Christian doctrine. In early modern Venice, for example, Jesus’s holy passion became a common cultural image to induce pain and make the beloved suffer for the lover just as Jesus had suffered for mankind. Additionally, devotional or simple wax or pasta statutes were made (or bought) in the name of the person against whom the magic should work. They were punctured with pins or bound with string, but the action was always accompanied by words—such as the incantation of Sant’Orsola to cause impotence—creating an analogy between the object and the victim. In this cosmology, “Emotions, like physical pains, could be the result of external events and could readily be ascribed to other people, their source sought outside rather than in the self” (Roper 1994, 213).

Assistance was sometimes sought from priests—not always with their knowledge. “Prayers” were secretly spoken during Mass when the priest was making the sign of the cross over the Eucharist. Objects and magical formulas were placed under the altar, attempting in this way to absorb the liturgical power of the Mass. Some priests also willingly performed masses over magical objects or baptized profane things, most commonly a magnet. Baptized in the name of the

desired person, such magnets would attract the beloved through their innate power. Bodily fluids, like menstrual blood, were mixed with the wine of the Eucharist or with herbs like sage or rue (picked at dawn). When drunk by the desired person, they were believed to be an excellent aphrodisiac. Alternatively, a consecrated host was added to the food or wine of the desired person. Not only the ritual expertise of priests but sacramental objects in general (holy oil, holy water) were central to a variety of love magical practices.

Other magical rituals, conjurations especially, derived their power more clearly from demons and spirits (demonic magic). Unlike necromancy, which appealed to God in order to force the demons into obedience, in conjurations God and Christian elements were excluded from the ritual proceedings. Images of saints were removed from the room where the conjuration took place, as was the cross from the rosary. It was by the power of words alone that the evil spirits fulfilled the sorceress’s will. Spells that were placed on body and mind would command the spirits (with variations) to make a certain person unable to eat, sleep, think, write, read, or have sex unless he came to the woman and complied with her will. The aggressiveness of these practices lay in the attempt to destroy the will of another person entirely through especially violent metaphors.

PROSECUTION

The vast bulk of documentation of prosecution for love magic comes from Mediterranean Europe, mainly from northern Italy and the Iberian peninsula in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. However, love magic was a common allegation in fourteenth-century France and in medieval England. Two women were burned for using love magic in 1390 by the *Parlement* of Paris (sovereign judicial court, with jurisdiction over approximately one-half of France). The Mediterranean Inquisitions prosecuted love magic with increasing frequency in the climate of the post-Tritendine reform and convicted people of various offenses, from the holding of heretical opinions to coercion of free will to apostasy. These “superstitions” were prosecuted with a comparatively lenient approach by the Holy Office, which distinguished between professional sorceresses (who often claimed economic motives) and simple users of love magic. Whereas the former had to endure exile and whipping, the latter were commonly freed after an abjuration.

DANIELA HACKE

See also: CHARMS; GENDER; MAGIC, LEARNED; MAGIC, NATURAL; MAGIC, POPULAR; MAGIC AND RELIGION; MARY THE VIRGIN; NECROMANCY; RITUAL MAGIC; SPELLS; SUPERSTITION; WATER, HOLY; WORDS, POWER OF.

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LOWES, JOHN (CA. 1565–1645)

Vicar of Brandeston in Suffolk, the most prominent victim of the 1645 panic instigated by the self-appointed "Witch Finder General," Matthew Hopkins. Although male defendants were relatively rare in English witchcraft cases, and men of gentry status rarer still, the case of John Lowes fits patterns from continental witch panics by proving that no one was exempt from accusation when faced with an investigator of Hopkins's tenacity at a time of enormous unrest in England.

Lowes was a highly unusual vicar. Educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, he began preaching at Bury St. Edmunds in 1594. Appointed to a living at Brandeston in 1596, he married a local woman in 1599. In the next half-century, Lowes was rarely at peace with his neighbors. He insisted on a type and intensity of preaching that annoyed his parishioners. Accusations of Catholicism and sorcery were made against Lowes when he was in his forties, and he was later accused of accompanying a cunning man to a fair to buy "popish" trinkets. But these charges were probably unfounded; it seems more likely that his leanings were Puritan. As early as 1594, he had been summoned before a synod at Ipswich for failing to adhere to the rites of the Church of England. Complaints from his parishioners about his preaching and doctrine even reached the prestigious Court of the Star Chamber in Westminster.

Although Lowes was indicted (and acquitted) twice for witchcraft, his offenses were mostly secular. In the Star Chamber, it was alleged that Lowes fought with his neighbors and launched many lawsuits. In the early 1630s, he was also indicted in the Court of King's Bench for "barratry," or vexatious litigation. In 1642, a pamphlet entitled *A Magazine of Scandall* noted that a petition had been raised to eject Lowes as a scandalous minister. It also damned Lowes as a "common Barrettor," adding that he kept company with witches and used their services. It even alleged that he had threatened to burn the houses of anyone who accused him of witchcraft. The fact that he had protected an accused witch in Brandeston thirty years earlier made him even more suspicious.

The arrival of Matthew Hopkins at Brandeston in 1645 provided the catalyst for accusations that would destroy Lowes. His neighbors charged him with a range of *maleficia*. For example, a Brandeston deponent, Nathaniel Man, testified that Lowes had threatened him. Man's child sickened and died soon afterward, a direct result of the witness's previous dealings with Lowes.

Lowes—by this time in his eighties—was taken to Framlingham Castle, where he underwent the swimming ordeal in the moat. Subsequently, he was chased around a room until exhausted and, like other East Anglian suspects in these trials, deprived of sleep so that delirious confessions could be extracted. Lowes finally admitted that he kept seven diabolical imps, the largest of which he suckled, but he denied sealing a contract with the Devil. He used the imps to kill cattle and imperil shipping out of Great Yarmouth. To Hopkins himself, Lowes reportedly confessed that he had indeed compacted with Satan and that to test out his imps, he had sunk a ship, drowning fourteen men. Lowes was indicted and convicted at Bury St. Edmunds. Devoutly maintaining his innocence to the last, he was hanged on August 27, 1645, with several others condemned at the same trial. Lowes read the lesson at the execution himself.

Afterward, the steward of the manor noted that everyone was glad Lowes was finally out of the way. Others upheld his innocence but recognized the power of the parish to get its way against a common enemy.

MALCOLM J. GASKILL

See also: AGE OF ACCUSED WITCHES; CONFESSIONS; FAMILIARS; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; MALE WITCHES; PAMPHLETS AND NEWSPAPERS; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; PURITANISM; STEARNE, JOHN; SWIMMING TEST.

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LUTHER, MARTIN (1483–1546)

Luther's attitude toward witchcraft is significant not only in itself but particularly because of its influence on early modern Protestantism. Luther was undoubtedly the greatest Protestant authority of early modern times. Abundant sources permit a comprehensive review of Luther's statements on the subject. This, however, does not facilitate a straightforward assessment of his views and his role in the history of witchcraft trials. The background to Luther's attitude to almost everything, including witchcraft, was that of the late Middle Ages. Early academic biographies contained a few vague references to his parents, particularly his mother, being superstitious, but they provided no explanation for Luther's lifelong preoccupation with theologically complicated issues associated with witchcraft.

Luther's first academic encounters with the subject of witchcraft must have occurred while he was studying theology in Erfurt. There is a marginal note "*Incubus*" in the copy of St. Augustine's *De civitate Dei* (On the City of God) that Luther used in 1509. Luther's sermons on the Ten Commandments, which he preached at Wittenberg's municipal church in 1516–1517, provide an abundance of material. They contain an extensive rendering of contemporary views; such detailed knowledge presupposed a thorough investigation of the subject, including some witchcraft manuals. Luther explicitly mentioned the Strasbourg clergyman Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg and employed motifs from his *Die Ameis* (The Ants, 1516–1517). One can assume that Luther was familiar with expositions of the Decalogue by such other Augustinian friars as Gottschalk Hollen. Luther's *Decem praecepta Wittenbergensi praedicata populo* of 1518, printed in German in 1520 as *Der Zehn Gebot ein nützliche Erklärung* (A Useful Explanation of the Ten Commandments), seems to represent the tenth-century "*Canon Episcopi* tradition," recognizing the possibility of the evil arts (*maleficium*) while rejecting the idea of witches flying.

Like other contemporary representatives of this tradition, such as Martin Plantsch or Ulrich Molitor, Luther claimed that harmful magic was possible only with God's permission. The Devil and his witches had no independent and autonomous power. Luther retained this fundamental attitude toward *maleficium* and witches flying throughout his life, as he also maintained his attitudes toward two other key elements of witchcraft: the pact with the Devil and sexual inter-

course with demons. Basing his understanding on scholastic demonology, Luther considered intercourse with demons a possibility, whereas making a pact with the Devil played a subordinate role in his work.

Luther never demanded punishment for witches in any of his early sermons on the Ten Commandments. Later in life, Luther repeatedly approached the subject of sorcery and witchcraft with reference to the first (and sometimes the second) commandment, but never with the same intensity as in 1516. In his catechisms of 1529, Luther briefly prohibited sorcery: In the Large Catechism, he related it to the first commandment, and in the Small Catechism, to the second commandment. This context obviously makes sorcery a primarily religious offense to Luther, eventually resulting in demands for increasingly severe penalties for witches.

Luther's exegetical works provide a continuous but less accessible source for the evaluating of his views on witchcraft. He discussed the crucial biblical references to witchcraft in many sermons, university lectures, and Bible commentaries, interpreting them both traditionally and with a new accentuation. For example, in both sermons and lectures, Luther used Genesis 6:1–4 to support the incubus notion. In a sermon expounding Exodus 7 (Pharaoh's sorcerers and Moses), he mentioned the fundamental fact that magic could only be performed with God's permission. In his treatise *Misuse of the Mass*, Luther used 1 Samuel 28 (on the witch of Endor) to support his rejection of physical metamorphosis, indicating that Samuel appeared to Saul only as a spirit but not *corporaliter* (bodily). In this way, Luther never abandoned the framework of medieval demonology derived ultimately from St. Augustine.

Commenting upon Deuteronomy 18:10–12, which deals with the subject of witchcraft and magic in more depth, Luther applied the Hebrew terms for magical practices to witchcraft practices of his time. Within this context, he translated the word *Mecasheph* as *witch* and explained: "Witches are the evil whores of the devil who steal milk, make bad weather, ride on goats and broomsticks, . . . slaughter infants in their cribs, bewitch the marriage bed, etc." (*Kirchenpostille*, in Luther 1883ff, vol. 10, book I/1, 591). This statement did not prove, despite previous claims, that Luther believed in the reality of witches' flying. Rather, it defined the term *witch*, as used by both theologians and ordinary people in the sixteenth century.

In 1526, in a series of sermons on Exodus, Luther devoted one sermon to a detailed exposition of the best-known biblical text about witchcraft, Exodus 22:18 ("You shall not permit a sorceress to live" [*The Holy Bible*, Revised Standard Version. London: Nelson, 1966]). Without discussing flying, metamorphosis, or the witches' Sabbats, Luther repeatedly demanded the death penalty for sorcery, because of the *maleficium* and the pact with the Devil but above all because it violated

the first commandment. This sermon was not printed and had no further impact. It is important that Luther did not use the word *Hexe* (witch) in any of his Bible translations.

The Wittenberg reformers rarely took public action on such matters. It is of particular interest that Luther personally excommunicated two supposed witches in Wittenberg after preaching on witchcraft in 1529. Apparently, however, no secular prosecutions ensued. In 1540, a witchcraft trial did take place in Wittenberg; four people were condemned to death and burned at the stake. Luther was not involved directly but may have expressed approval. In his *Table Talk*, Luther occasionally mentioned magic and witchcraft but introduced no new aspects. It is striking that none of Luther's numerous letters ever mentioned witchcraft.

Luther's attitude toward witchcraft did not agree with the new "cumulative" picture propagated by the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), which Luther never read. Throughout his entire work, Luther rejected the notions of flying, metamorphosis, and the Sabbat. Like Ulrich Molitor and other "conservative" witchcraft theorists, Luther followed the *Canon Episcopi* tradition. It must be stressed, however, that Luther was no moderate representative of this tradition: He was not reluctant to condone punishment for witches. The essentially theological crimes of witches and sorcerers (who violated the first commandment and turned to other gods, in this case to the Devil) demanded prosecution and punishment—in most cases, death. Among Lutherans, this aspect provided sufficient encouragement for witchcraft trials, as could Luther's uncompromising opposition to and repeated criminalization of "white magic," that is, harmless sorcery with Christian motives.

However, in his sermons and catechistic writings, Luther deprived early modern witchcraft trials of one of their essential motives: He forbade hunting for scapegoats in the form of sorcerers when unexplained misfortune struck; instead, he referred the afflicted person to the will of God. Thus, he applied the theological notion that sorcery required God's permission to everyday life. Luther was not interested in "witch hunting" but in the existence of man before God. Since his own attitude remained ambivalent, responses to his position varied; both supporters and opponents of witchcraft trials claimed allegiance to Luther. His rejection of the notion that witches flew and held Sabbats required Lutheran advocates of severe prosecutions for witches and sorcerers to avoid discussing these issues when citing the biblical commandment to put such offenders to death.

In the late nineteenth century contexts of "Higher Criticism" and the *Kulturkampf* (culture war), Luther's position on witchcraft became the subject of heated controversy between Catholic and Protestant church

historians. In 1888, Johannes Diefenbach first put the main responsibility for witchcraft prosecutions on Luther; twelve years later, Rudolf Ohle denied Luther's involvement entirely; finally, a Catholic scholar, Nikolaus Paulus (Paulus 1910), succeeded in pronouncing a comparatively fair-minded judgment by placing Luther within the theological framework of his time.

JÖRG HAUSTEIN;

TRANSLATED BY HELEN SIEGBURG

See also: AUGUSTINE, ST.; BIBLE; *CANON EPISCOPI*; CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; ENDOR, WITCH OF; EXODUS 22:18 (22:17); GEILER VON KAYSERSBERG, JOHAN; INCUBUS AND SUCCUBUS; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; *MALEFICIUM*; MOLITOR, ULRICH; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PLANTSCH, MARTIN; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC; SORCERY.

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LUXEMBOURG, DUCHY OF

Between 1560 and 1683, approximately 2,500–3,000 witchcraft trials took place in the duchy of Luxembourg, one of the seventeen provinces of the Habsburg Netherlands. At least 2,000 ended with the execution of the accused, making Luxembourg's witch hunts among the most savage anywhere in western Europe. The figures cited in older research are either far too high (van Weverke 1983–1984 claimed 20,000–30,000 executions) or far too low (Dupont-Bouchat 1978 listed only 355). The rate of execution was clearly lower in the Walloon, the French-speaking parts of Luxembourg, than in the German-speaking regions, where witch hunts were pursued by special secret committees (*monopoles, Hexenausschüsse*) working in conjunction with minor territorial lords. Often, only marginal notes in account books documented trials in the so-called *Oberpropsteien* (Luxembourg's seventeen administrative districts), but manuscript records survive from some trials in small territorial lord-

ships, such as Neuerburg and Hamm. The richest source on Luxembourg's witchcraft trials is the *Fonds van Werueke*: At the start of the twentieth century, the archivist and historian Nicolas van Werueke collected around 1,700 references to witchcraft trials from the records of Luxembourg's Provincial Council (*Provinzialrat*), portions of which have since disappeared.

TERRITORIAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL HISTORY OF LUXEMBOURG

In order to understand Luxembourg's severe witch hunts, it is essential to look at the duchy's territorial and constitutional history. From 1441, Luxembourg belonged to the Netherlands, which was divided into seventeen nominally sovereign territories or provinces in 1531, with its central government in Brussels and its highest court, the *Grand Conseil* (Great Council), in Malines (Mecheln). King Philip II of Spain inherited this loose confederation of provinces in 1556.

At the apex of Luxembourg's government was a governor, holding office for life. The Ducal Council, its highest administrative and legal authority, became a Provincial Council. It served as the highest appellate court in civil cases; families or individuals could bring nullity suits before it on account of legal abuses in criminal cases. The Provincial Council received many petitions and supplications; it issued so-called *lettres de purges*, certificates confirming the good reputation of individuals who had been cleared of witchcraft slanders. It was not a sovereign court: Its verdicts could always be appealed before the *Grand Conseil* in Malines. Although we have no documented evidence that the Carolina Code (the 1532 code of criminal law procedure for the Holy Roman Empire) was observed even in Luxembourg's German-speaking areas, the influence of French as well as German law was apparent in Luxembourg. Through its ad hoc promulgation of numerous administrative and criminal law ordinances that shaped local practice, the Provincial Council ensured that Roman law had wide influence in Luxembourg.

At the end of the sixteenth century, the province was divided into seventeen administrative districts (*Oberpmpsteien*), each headed by a subgovernor (*Propst*), who also presided over its criminal law court. Within these districts lay more than fifty territorial enclaves belonging to minor lords, over whose courts the Luxembourg government only gradually obtained influence during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, partly as a result of the witch hunts. In these courts, uneducated jurors, mostly illiterate, judged cases on the basis of a still mainly oral tradition of customary law. Witchcraft trials occurred more frequently in these small lordships, often containing from one to three villages, than in areas belonging to an *Oberpmpstei*. Furthermore, some of these minuscule

noble or monastic lordships were fragmented by subdivision or mortgaged portions. In addition, some village communities also possessed criminal law rights, and the provosts (appointed by Luxembourg's governor) were often local noblemen using their position to further their private interests. Ecclesiastically, most of the provinces belonged to the archdiocese of Trier. Luxembourg was divided linguistically into German- and French-speaking areas.

LEGAL PRACTICES IN LUXEMBOURG WITCHCRAFT TRIALS

In Luxembourg, accusations in criminal cases (including witchcraft trials) could be made by a private individual (*partie formelle*), who had to produce evidence and witnesses and pay costs if his accusation was rejected. At the beginning of a criminal trial, both accuser and accused were imprisoned by court authorities. The accuser was released only after providing sufficient sureties for the duration of the trial. In German-speaking parts of Luxembourg, private accusation was the more common method for making witchcraft accusations; in French-speaking areas, judges or other officials initiated most such cases.

In both systems, however, the peasantry played a significant role in spreading witch hunts. In Walloon districts, witchcraft trials were initiated by a so-called *enquêtes generales* (general investigations) ordered by the authorities, requiring their subjects to denounce people who were reputedly witches to local courts. Local officials could then begin witchcraft trials on the basis of these denunciations. Some evidence suggests that *monopoles* (committees formed at the village level for the express purpose of bringing alleged witches to court) were formed in both German- and French-speaking parts of Luxembourg belonging to the archdiocese of Trier even earlier than in electoral Trier or the prince-abbey of St. Maximin. These committees were characterized by secret deals, corruption, and bribery (to the detriment of the accused witches), and they often used violent means to raise taxes in their villages to finance their witch hunts.

After being arrested, alleged witches were interrogated without torture and confronted with the witnesses against them. Sometimes an accused witch was allowed to name defense lawyers. However, many defendants did not use this opportunity, either because they believed firmly in their own innocence or because using a lawyer only increased the costs of the trial. In the end, it was the application of torture that produced the required confession from the accused. After implementation of the sentence, the convicted witch's property was confiscated and auctioned off. After the trial costs and a stipulated fine had been paid, a third of the property belonged to the lord who presided over the local criminal law court.

Records of Luxembourg's Provincial Council and ordinances issued by the Brussels government provide some detailed evidence about flagrant legal abuses occurring during witchcraft trials. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Luxembourg's provincial government tried to restrain the autonomy of local courts in its administrative districts and minor lordships by stipulating that they risked punishment if they arrested or tortured an accused witch without first sending the pertinent evidence to the provincial government for approval, or if they used, paid, or bribed private accusers to circumvent the regulations of accusatorial legal procedure. For example, an ordinance of August 13, 1563, decreed that no one could be arrested and tortured merely on the basis of only one denunciation and without a legal opinion on the case being provided by a lawyer of the Provincial Council.

The mass persecutions of the 1580s and 1590s produced so many scandalous breaches of the law that on April 6, 1591, the provincial government published a lengthy decree that severely censured the corruption and abuses evident in making both private and official accusations of witchcraft at local courts. It explicitly prohibited consortia of accusers, *monopoles* (the witch-hunting committees) and "front men" who brought accusations on behalf of others. Guaranteeing the financial position of private accusers became punishable: Apart from official accusations, only private accusations made at the accuser's personal risk were allowed. It was again stipulated that legal advice must be sought from Luxembourg's Provincial Council at every stage of the pretrial investigation. In addition, torturers could not conduct interrogations in the absence of judges and the court scribe. Leading questions and particularly the suggestion of possible accomplices were prohibited, as was the public proclamation of lists of accomplices at executions. Trial costs were to be kept as low as possible.

Neither the Provincial Council in Luxembourg nor the central government in Brussels intended or desired a complete cessation of witchcraft trials. The latter issued decrees in 1592 and 1606 calling for the merciless persecution of soothsayers, workers of black magic, heretics, witches, and sorcerers. Of greater significance was a reorganization of criminal law implementation, aiming to deprive noble and ecclesiastical lords of their power to exercise criminal law by subjecting them more firmly to the authority of the provincial government.

However, the many nullity suits and petitions brought before the Luxembourg provincial courts show that the centralizing efforts of the provincial government did not enjoy rapid success. Both local lords with the right to exercise criminal justice and village witch-hunting committees continued to resist its decrees. The Provincial Council repeatedly issued new mandates—for example, in 1598, 1605, and 1606—

forbidding the use of consortia of accusers or paid private accusers and reminding local lords of their duty to send witchcraft trial records to them for scrutiny and to use only lawyers approved by them when drawing up and assessing such records. Finally, in 1623, the Provincial Council promulgated a general ordinance of criminal law procedure, placing particular emphasis on procedures used in witchcraft trials. In addition to repeating stipulations from previous ordinances, this decree sought to give clear preference to official accusations and to limit the practice of private accusation. However, evidence of significant legal abuses in Luxembourg witchcraft trials can still be found until the trials ceased in 1683.

COURSE AND END OF THE WITCHCRAFT TRIALS

After a few isolated cases in the middle and late fifteenth century, witchcraft trials in Luxembourg increased after 1500. The most severe phase of persecution began in 1560. From then until 1636, continual waves of persecution affected various areas. The Provincial Council's attempts to impose centrally stipulated norms and procedures on arbitrarily pursued local witch hunts were insufficient to stem the rising tide of trials. Crises caused by the sixteenth-century economic decline of the province and intensive attempts to impose new Counter-Reformation standards of discipline triggered repeated calls from the inhabitants of Luxembourg for the destruction of witches. Minor territorial lords, who felt themselves to be victims of witchcraft, hoped to grow rich on the proceeds of witchcraft trials, or wanted to further their political ambitions, supported the efforts of village witch-hunting committees in German-speaking Luxembourg. The result was a local environment in favor of persecution, which the provincial government could influence only with difficulty. Moreover, the provincial government's decrees were circumvented by an ordinance of Philip II in September 1592, urging that the vice of witchcraft be fought on all fronts: Ecclesiastical and secular authorities should zealously persecute popular magic, soothsaying, magical healing, and witchcraft. This ordinance by no means triggered the Luxembourg witchcraft trials, as older research suggested (Dupont-Bouchat 1978), but it did provide additional legitimacy for the persecution.

A woman was burned as a witch in Arlon as late as 1675; a final phase of witch persecution arose in Echternach around 1680, resulting in several executions before ending in 1683. After the partial occupation of Luxembourg by the French in 1684, Louis XIV's 1682 edict issued for France came into effect, decreeing that sorcery could be punished with death only when accompanied by sacrilege. At this point, trials for witchcraft

ended in Luxembourg, although cases of witchcraft slanders and possession continued to be heard. Belief that witches could work *maleficium* (harmful magic) remained widespread, however.

RITA VOLTMER;

TRANSLATED BY ALISON ROWLANDS

See also: ACCUSATIONS; ACCUSATIONAL PROCEDURE; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); LAWYERS; LORRAINE, DUCHY OF; NETHERLANDS, SOUTHERN; NUMBER OF WITCHES; POPULAR PERSECUTION; RURAL WITCHCRAFT; ST. MAXIMIN, PRINCE-ABBAY OF; TORTURE; TRIALS; TRIER, ELECTORATE OF; WITCH HUNTS.

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LYCANTHROPY

The theme of the transformation of human beings into animals can be found in the imaginary worlds of all societies. Lycanthropy is the special case of transforming a man into a wolf: The Greek-derived word *lycanthropy* means "wolf-man," as does its English, German, Danish, or Italian counterparts. The Romans used an especially telling word for werewolf, namely *versipellis* or skin-changer.

There seem to be several possible roots for this belief. It might derive from numerous myths, folktales, and rituals that postulate a time when humans felt no clear boundaries between themselves and the animal world, assuming, rather, some permeability between them. Second, it may be a relic of belief in an animal-shaped external double of the soul, which often appeared in Old Norse sources (*hamr*). Third, totemistic structures also seem to have existed in prehistoric European societies (compare the Greek *Hirpi Sorani* who, clad in wolf skins, venerated Apollo Soranus, originally a wolf god). Secret societies using wolf skins for disguise may have infested some European regions, like the cannibalistic secret societies in Africa whose members disguised themselves as lions or leopards in order to kill men. Fourth, lycanthropy is a known, specific form of mental aberration, a psychic disease akin to schizophrænia, forcing the patient to act like the animal. Fifth, animal transmutations also figure in dreams and drug-induced ecstasies.

In the European traditions, two versions of this transmutation are known: Either it happens spontaneously, or else it is induced by another person without the victim's approval. These were already the usual patterns in classical antiquity: for example, on the one hand, Virgil's Moeris, a shepherd-sorcerer who became a wolf by eating special herbs; or, on the other hand, King Lycaon of Arcadia, whose impiety Zeus punished by changing him into a wolf. Among the Vikings, transformation into a bear was more common than transformation into a wolf: Their most formidable troops, the berserkers, were clad in bear skins and, falling into a trancelike state, fought like bears. However, the *Hamldskvædhi* (Harold's Song; ca. 900 C.E.) also mentioned "wolf-frocks," warriors howling like beasts. *Egil's saga Skalla Grímssonar* (The Saga of Egil Skalla-Grimsson, ca. 1230) described a berserker named Kveld-Úlfr who lived as a man during daytime, while at night he became a wolf (as his name—Evening

Wolf—implies). According to Olaus Magnus (1555), werewolves had become an epidemic in the Baltic, where they gathered by preference during Christmas time in order to undertake raids against the foresters (probably cases of criminal gangs acting under folkloric disguise).

The wolf-man figured as the subject of several medieval literary texts, the most famous of which was the Old French poem *Bisclavet* by Marie de France (ca. 1200). When the hero's wife recognized that the knight Bisclavet changed into a wolf for three days each week, she has his clothing hidden so that he could not become a man again. The king, however, brought the wolf to his court and helped him punish his wife. The werewolf in the anonymous romance *Guillaume de Palerne* (early thirteenth century) was a positive figure, helping other persons several times. Small wonder, as he was the son of the king of Spain transformed by a malignant sorceress.

In perfect synchronicity with the increasing persecution of witches, the old beliefs about werewolves were adapted to demonological models. Once the doctrine of the pact with the Devil became prominent, werewolves brought to trial had to confess to have received their abnormal powers from the Devil. Theologians such as Heinrich Kramer, the author of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (Part II, Question 1, Chap. 8–9), and many others discussed whether the Devil caused real animals to perpetrate those cruelties that were supposedly committed by men and women in animal form, men and women who were in reality lying asleep and dreaming. Or should one rather think that the Devil, appearing in the form of a wolf, committed the crimes the lycanthrope only dreamt of? Or did he only cause an illusion to that effect in the people's mind? The problem was that any real transformation into a wolf had been declared impossible by the unsurpassable authority of St. Augustine.

From the early sixteenth century, records of a considerable number of trials against werewolves have been preserved, the common accusations being slaughter of animals and men, committed in lupine form, and pact with the Devil. An inquisitorial trial held in the diocese of Besançon in 1521 against two werewolves, Pierre Bourgot and Michel Verdung, mentioned by Johann Weyer, is one of the earliest instances, and one of the last seems to have been a trial before a jury of the archbishop of Salzburg in 1720. During the two centuries between these dates, dozens of such trials were carried out; the French judge Henri Boguet boasted of trying several lycanthropes in his *Discours des sorciers* (Discourse on the Execrable Speech of the Witches, 1602). Boguet's Franche-Comté, apparently, was the center of the early modern hunt for werewolves. It is remarkable that no juridical persecution directed against a real wolf has been found, whereas not a few

animal trials have been documented from the thirteenth to the eighteenth century in which dangerous animals, especially pigs, were hanged by secular courts for the homicide of small children. People molested by vermin and parasites regularly sought redress from ecclesiastical courts against noxious pests like cockchafers or mice. In the case of the werewolves, both the religious and the secular authorities could be interested. Though the trials against this kind of delinquents were clearly a special form of witchcraft trials, sometimes even combined with the accusation of participation in the Sabbath, a marked difference consisted in the fact that the accused were nearly all men, although some of the werewolves burned by Boguet were women.

An instance of a case clearly referring to pathological lycanthropy occurred in 1603 when the *Parlement* (sovereign judicial court) of Bordeaux proceeded against a fourteen-year-old shepherd, Jean Grenier, who confessed to using a wolf skin and an ointment when roaming through the woods and hamlets, killing animals and children. Both devices were given to him by a gentleman in black who had marked him. Other werewolves, including his father, accompanied him. Grenier's hands and his way of moving and of eating were described as congruent with that of a wild beast, and what pleased him most was watching wolves. Because he was under adult age, this apparently semi-imbecilic adolescent was not executed but sentenced to lifelong imprisonment in a monastery, where he died in 1610.

More common was the fate of one Peter Stumpf, who changed himself into a wolf through a belt that the Devil had given to him. Having murdered and devoured thirteen children—including his own son—two pregnant women, and many sheep and cows, he was hunted down, tortured, condemned, and executed with exemplary cruelty at Bedburg near Cologne in 1589, together with his lover and a daughter with whom he had had incestuous relations. This is an example of a werewolf confession by a man tortured on suspicion of multiple homicides. Generally recurrent patterns were the following: The transmutation was effected through magic formulas, an ointment, a skin, a shirt, a belt, a drink, all provided by the Devil; often the magic worked only for a certain time; there was some connection with the phases of the moon. The gravest crimes committed were the slaughter of men and animals and cannibalism. If such a being received a wound while a wolf, it appeared on the very same part of his human body.

Especially in the sixteenth century, the werewolf, or rather certain "historical" werewolves, became the subject of artistic treatment in the manner of handbills, the most famous example being a woodcut of 1512 by Lucas Cranach the Elder. The eighteenth-century

Enlightenment put an end to the persecution of werewolves, who were henceforth treated as madmen. Nineteenth-century romantic literature was full of such creatures, and in the twentieth century a number of films were produced about them.

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See Also: ANIMALISTIC AND MAGICAL THINKING; ANIMALS; AUGUSTINE, ST.; BOGUET, HENRI; FRANCHE-COMTÉ; MAGNUS, OLAUS; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; METAMORPHOSIS; WEYER, JOHANN.

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LYNCHING

Illegal witch hunts, or lynchings, are an important yet poorly explored issue. It is difficult to provide sound overall estimates of the relation between legal and illegal executions of witches because official records documented exclusively the actions of secular and the ecclesiastical authorities, and refer to vigilantism only if *post facto* legal action was taken against the murderers. Surprisingly, this problem occurred right at the beginning of Europe's witch hunts, when a man named Gögler was punished for accusing women of witchcraft in Lucerne (Switzerland) in 1419. According to Joseph Hansen, this incident was the first time that the

German term for witchcraft—*Hexereye* (*Hexerei*)—appeared in court records. But there certainly were many earlier examples of lynchings of female and male sorcerers. As a general rule, lynchings served as a safety valve in areas where people believed in witchcraft but authorities would not, for whatever reasons (religion, law, laziness, Western rationalism), comply with their demand for persecution.

A number of spectacular lynchings are known from the period before legal witch hunting in Europe. In his famous sermon on hailstorms, Agobard of Lyons reported frequent lynchings of supposed *tempestarii* (witches who raise storms), as well as killings of sorcerers who were held responsible for diseases of livestock in the year 810. According to Agobard, the common people in their fury over crop failure developed the extravagant idea that foreigners were secretly coming with airships to strip crops from their fields and transport them to Magonia (the home of witches). Such anxieties led to severe aggression; on one occasion around 816, Agobard barely prevented a crowd from killing three foreign men and a woman, whom they considered to be Magonians. As their supposed airships and their country's name suggest, crop failures were blamed on magic. Bishop Agobard therefore emphasized that thunderstorms were always caused by natural or divine agencies. His account of the popular backdrop of these stories may have been distorted, since some of its details appear highly unusual for European witchcraft. For example, in 1080 Pope Gregory VII (ruled 1073–1085) admonished King Harald of Denmark not to hold old women and priests responsible for storms and diseases and not to slaughter them. The pope explained that these catastrophes were God's punishment for human sins and that killing innocent people would only increase his fury. No other source confirms these Danish witch hunts, but there is no reason to doubt the contents of this papal letter.

In 1090, a complex situation can be observed in Bavaria with the burning of three women, who had been convicted of harming or poisoning people (*veneficae*) and of having spoiled or destroyed the crops (*perditrices frugum*), presumably by causing hailstorms. According to the Benedictine chronicler of Weihenstephan, only the fact that the nearby bishop's see was vacant, together with related political tensions, enabled the rabble to carry out their persecution. The chronicler considered this procedure as essentially illegal and called the victims "martyrs." Their corpses were recovered and buried by the monks within the walls of the monastery.

The report was sufficiently detailed to reveal that the supposed lynching must have been a rather elaborate procedure. After being captured, the suspected witches first had to undergo an ordeal by water, a swimming test. Unexpectedly, they passed it and could therefore

not be executed. Thereafter they were publicly tortured, in order to force them into confessions, again unsuccessfully. The villagers turned next to the nearby episcopal city of Freising, where two men of “high rank,” presumably nobles, summoned a public meeting. The women were transferred to Freising and tortured again. Although the suspects still refused to confess, they were carried to the banks of the river and ritually burned to death (*Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores*, XIII, 52). However illegal the procedure may now appear, the persecutors obviously respected some procedural rules. More important, the authorities remained passive in the face of a grassroots movement.

For the High Middle Ages, our sources are scanty and difficult to interpret. In 1115, for instance, a Styrian chronicle laconically reported that thirty women were burned at Graz in one day (*concr̄matae sunt triginta muliers in Greez una die*). Capital punishment for females was highly unusual throughout European history, and burning was restricted to a very few crimes, such as arson, sodomy, counterfeiting, or domestic incest. None of these, however, were typical female crimes; nor were they likely to trigger a large-scale persecution. In cases of heresy, a more even gender distribution could be expected. Witchcraft therefore was a likely candidate for the cause of this mass burning, particularly in conjunction with major subsistence crises or epidemics of “unnatural” diseases. The scarcity of surviving sources suggests that there were some sporadic witch hunts during the High Middle Ages. Given the tensions between popular witch beliefs and the reluctance of the authorities, ecclesiastical or secular, to accept demands for persecution, we would expect acts of lynching rather than legal persecutions, especially in Alpine regions, Scandinavia, or Russia.

In the early modern period, Denmark under King Christian III (ruled 1534–1559) offered the most surprising case of lynching. After a tumultuous period of civil war, territorial expansion, and rapid political, social, and religious reforms, a witch panic—the first one in a Protestant territory—became a major, large-scale persecution. Peasants hunted witches in the open fields “like wolves,” as was reported approvingly by Peder Palladius, royal adviser and leading Danish churchman of his age as superintendent of ecclesiastical affairs for Norway, Iceland, and the Faeroe Islands. In Jutland alone, fifty-two women were killed in 1543; lynchings were reported in other parts of Denmark and in Danish-ruled southern Sweden as well. By 1547, the government in Copenhagen tried to curb the persecution through restrictive laws.

Illegal persecutions were not confined to northern Europe. The relative leniency of the Spanish or Roman Inquisitions also led to occasional lynchings. One finds them, for instance, at Reggio Emilia in Italy, where a

woman was stoned to death in 1599 after the inquisitors had released her after her public abjuration. In Spain, the same scene was repeated almost a century later, in 1691, in the Canary Islands. Meanwhile, in the “Enlightened” Netherlands, where capital punishment of witches ended sooner than anywhere else in Europe, lynchings took place in Amsterdam in 1624, in Rotterdam in 1628, and in Huizen, a village southeast of Amsterdam, in 1746. In “enlightened” England, a woman was lynched in 1751—five years later than in Huizen.

Lynchings are known from France to Poland, wherever legal systems made it difficult or impossible to punish known witches with death. The famous skepticism of French lawyers and the reluctance of judges in most French *parlements* to confirm death penalties for witchcraft left the rural population dissatisfied and apparently provoked numerous illegal executions, which we now call lynchings. In the 1580s, processions of “White Penitents” in the Ardennes and Champagne triggered massive but often illegal witch hunts. Many similar instances occurred over a wide zone from Languedoc to the Ardennes during the last great French witch panic in the 1640s, when the crime of witchcraft had been virtually “decriminalized” by the *parlements* (sovereign judicial courts). Sometimes sheer cost seems to have triggered such behavior. For example, in the easternmost zone subject to the *Parlement* of Paris, the *Barrois mouvant* (that area in the French sphere of influence in the duchy of Lorraine), from which it was prohibitively expensive to appeal to Paris, sporadic lynchings have been recorded in pardons from the dukes of Lorraine.

Eastern Europe saw much illegal witch hunting. For example, in the parts of Hungary under Ottoman rule, lynchings were the only way of punishing witches, because the Turkish authorities never accepted accusations of witchcraft in the courts. Incidents like the lynching in Wolhynia of a nobleman, who was put to the stake by an agitated rabble, led by the parish priest, because he was blamed for an epidemic, were recorded only because his widow afterward sued the murderers. A Polish historian, Janusz Tazbir, claimed that half of all victims in Poland and the Ukraine were burned in lynchings, although he provided no supporting evidence.

If lynchings occurred in Europe long before witchcraft became a capital crime, one could expect that they did not stop after witchcraft laws were repealed. Previously, Church law had denied the capacity of supposed witches to cause harm, and now secular law did so, in both instances leaving people alone with their misery and fear and punishing those who dared to challenge the authorities. The results were predictable. In England, numerous incidents of swimming witches—the swimming test—illustrated the

continuing discrepancy between popular perceptions and legal practices (Davies 1999). In 1808, Cambridgeshire villagers broke into the cottage of Ann Izzard, restrained her husband from protecting her, dragged her out of bed, threw her naked into the yard, scratched her arms with pins, and beat her stomach, breasts, and face with a length of wood. The parish constable refused to help, but a compassionate neighbor, Alice Russel, gave her shelter. On hearing this, the villagers returned, arguing that “the protectors of witches are as bad as a witch and deserve the same treatment” (Davies 1999, 111)—an argument reminiscent of the demonologist Martín Del Río—and attacked Russel as a harbinger of witches; she died a few days later from her wounds. The mob threatened Izzard with ducking, but the fifty-six-year-old woman managed to flee from the village and subsequently sued her attackers. The murderers received short prison sentences, and the constable remained unpunished. In Dorset, a young farmer named John Bird was tried as late as 1871 for severely beating Charlotte Griffin, an eighty-five-year-old woman, with a stick because he believed she was bewitching him and “hag-riding” him at night. A surgeon classified Bird as a “simple, weak-minded, monomaniac,” (Davies 1999, 41) but the judge found that Bird acted mainly because he believed in witches. Four years later, Ann Tennant was killed in Warwickshire with a pitchfork because her attacker, James Haywood, believed that she had bewitched him. The killer claimed that he had not intended to kill the old woman but had meant merely “to draw her blood in order to break her power over him” (Davies 1999, 41). On a different occasion he said that he considered it his duty to kill witches and that there were fifteen more in his village. Haywood was charged with murder, but a surgeon considered him insane, and the jury acquitted him on that ground. If all believers in witchcraft had been diagnosed as insane, English asylums would have been overflowing with inmates.

In the United States, witch killings were not confined to the Native Americans. A man and his wife, both citizens of Texas, attributed his incurable disease to Antonia Alanis, a woman in a neighboring village. In February 1860, his father, one of the wealthiest Mexican landowners in the area, hired several men to kidnap the witch. They killed one of her daughters, who was trying to protect her mother, wounded another, “lassoed” the suspected witch, and “dragged her on the ground” (*The Times*, April 17, 1860, 12) toward the village of Camargo (Nueva Villa). There she was kept prisoner for two weeks and repeatedly beaten. Because the bewitched man’s health failed to improve, a witch doctor suggested that the witch had to be burned (*The Times*, April 17, 1860, 12). Another lynching was reported from Arkansas, where a widow named Hill had been murdered together with a slave woman and

her house burned down in order to conceal the murder. *The New York Tribune* reported that a slave was forced through severe torture to confess to the murders in November 1859. He was subsequently burned at the stake. But the report strongly suggested that he had indeed been innocent and that the instant execution had been staged to protect the true culprits.

Witch huntings were frequently reported from Mexico and Russia in the second half of the nineteenth century—both countries at the periphery of Western civilization but certainly both independent, or post-colonial and governed by elites educated in the spirit of the Enlightenment. However, among Russian peasants, belief in witchcraft remained strong. Lynchings were mostly linked to crop failures, drought, epidemics, lack of milk, or love magic, particularly around 1880, with four killings recorded in this year alone. These lynchings often included a swimming test, severe beatings, and mutilation of the corpse of the deceased. Although there is no consistent body of sources, researchers have collected over 100 cases of lynchings from ethnographic, juridical, psychiatric, and newspaper reports, reaching from urban areas in the Ukraine to remote rural areas of European Russia. Countermeasures against witchcraft included disinterring the bodies of suspected witches and transporting their dangerous remains to remote forests. The witch craze was fueled by cases of demonic possession (*klikushestvo*), which could be seen as an antiwitchcraft movement, because the aim of the female peasant demoniacs, that is, “shriekers,” was to identify witches.

Some recent postcolonial African examples show extreme discrepancies between Western and native perceptions. The South African Witchcraft Suppression Act of 1895, refurbished in 1957 and amended in 1970, seemed completely pointless from an African point of view. Instead of persecuting the evildoers, it prevented their chiefs from handling cases of witchcraft properly, thus damaging their authority. Traditional healers, diviners, or other people who could detect witches were outlawed, and the witches were protected instead. As a consequence, the people took the law into their own hands and started to kill those whom they suspected of having harmed their children or livestock, either secretly or in mob lynchings. Gruesome dimensions were reached in Tanzania, where antiwitchcraft movements had already been active during the colonial period. According to Simeon Mesaki, an anthropologist from the University of Dar es Salaam, between 1970 and 1984 3,692 persons were killed as witches in Tanzania, 69 percent of them female. In this Swahili-speaking country, the Bantu people of Sukuma, living under traditional conditions in the northern provinces of Mwanza and Shinyanga, were particularly affected. With 2,246 witch killings, plus another 826 lynchings between 1985 and 1988, Mesaki offered a

grand total of 3,072 from this area between 1970 and 1988 (Mesaki 1994, 52).

Mesaki considered the “witch-killing in Sukumaland” as an indirect result of the villagization program imposed in the 1960s by the socialist government of Julius Kambarage Nyerere (party leader until 1987). However, there are many parallel examples from other parts of sub-Saharan Africa. In the late 1970s, the persecution in the People’s Republic of Benin (formerly Dahomey) was linked to a tetanus epidemic, and the witch hunts in Ghana in 1997 accompanied an outbreak of meningitis. Protests by human rights organizations against these lynchings caused the military government of Jerry Rawlings (ruled 1981–2001) to allocate four camps, or “sanctuaries,” for the protection of suspected witches in October 1997, presumably following the example of South Africa. Like sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia seems to count among contemporary hotspots of witch hunting. Newspaper reports mentioned mob lynchings in the late 1980s in both Java and Papua New Guinea.

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See also: AFRICA (SUB-SAHARAN); AGOBARD OF LYONS;
CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST 1800); HANSEN, JOSEPH;

LANGUEDOC; PANICS; *PARLEMENT* OF PARIS; POPULAR
PERSECUTION; SWIMMING TEST; WEATHER MAGIC.

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MACFARLANE, ALAN (1941–)

Alan Douglas James Macfarlane's place among witchcraft historians was established in 1970 by his first (and subsequently reissued) book, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England: A Regional and Comparative Study*, the published version of his Oxford DPhil thesis. This thesis was completed under the supervision of Keith Thomas, who then published his own major work on witchcraft and related beliefs in 1971. Macfarlane has published extensively on both history and anthropology and has, among other things, written works challenging standard interpretations of English historical development. Macfarlane was educated at Worcester College, Oxford, where he earned his BA, MA, and DPhil degrees, subsequently gaining an MPhil at the London School of Economics and a PhD at London University's School of Oriental and African Studies. He subsequently worked at the University of Cambridge, where he has been professor of anthropological sciences since 1991.

Macfarlane's *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England* reestablished witchcraft as a serious topic of study among historians of England and has proved influential among historians of witchcraft more generally. It was a work that entirely changed perceptions of early modern European witchcraft. Its novelty lay in three main directions. First, Macfarlane had worked through all of the main court records for England's most witchcraft-ridden county, Essex. The courts in question included the assizes, which tried most cases of witchcraft, defined as felony by statutes of 1563 and 1604; Essex borough courts; the county Quarter Sessions; and the Essex ecclesiastical courts. These court records, together with a series of pamphlets about Essex witchcraft trials, provided him with a massive body of evidence. Second, on the strength of these materials, he demonstrated that the motivating force for witchcraft accusations lay not in the activities of clergy or judges but rather in disputes between villagers. Most frequently, Macfarlane argued, a witchcraft accusation occurred after a slightly richer villager had turned away a poorer, and usually female, neighbor who had come begging at his door. The woman, possibly with an existing reputation for being a witch, would go away muttering or cursing in her disappointment. If misfortune befell the household of the person refusing charity a little later

(for example, the inexplicable death of cattle or illness of a child), that misfortune would be attributed to the suspected witch's malevolence. Macfarlane argued further that this pattern of witchcraft accusations was attributable to changes in the nature of the village community. Population pressure was increasing competition for resources, and the spread of market forces and agrarian capitalism was eroding traditional community values. More particularly, richer villagers were ambivalent in their attitudes toward an ever more numerous poor, a situation that eased as the poor law became an established part of English culture in the seventeenth century. The accuser of the witch thus transferred any guilty feelings about not giving charity by accusing the person to whom he had refused alms of witchcraft. Third, Macfarlane added anthropological insights to historical materials, not least those that interpreted witchcraft in terms of the breaking and reformulating of social relationships.

Macfarlane's thesis can be criticized on a number of levels. He tended, perhaps, to write the elite too much out of his model of accusations. The supposed relationship between witchcraft and socioeconomic change is rendered problematic by the experience of a number of other counties in southeastern England, notably Kent, Surrey, and Middlesex, that underwent essentially the same socioeconomic changes as Essex but experienced massively lower levels of witchcraft accusations. And the applicability of essentially non-Western anthropological models to early modern European witchcraft evidence has been questioned (it is noteworthy that little subsequent work on early modern witchcraft has followed Macfarlane's lead here). Indeed, Macfarlane has retreated from some of the positions he established in 1970, especially those suggesting links between witchcraft accusations and the supposed breakup of the traditional village community. Nevertheless, the originality of his focus on village disputes and interpersonal tensions as the background to witchcraft accusations remains a major conceptual breakthrough that has informed numerous subsequent studies.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: AFRICA (SUB-SAHARAN); ANTHROPOLOGY; ENGLAND; ESSEX; HISTORIOGRAPHY; THOMAS, KEITH; WITCH HUNTS.

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MACHIAVELLIANISM

Machiavellianism was a political doctrine that venerated the power and security of the state, disparaging religion and religious morality except insofar as they proved useful to the state, thus contributing to a perspective that regarded the belief in witchcraft as superstitious nonsense.

The printing revolution created new audiences that the Church could not control and fostered the rise of public opinion. Administrative institutions of emerging European states, such as courts, councils, academies, and universities, provided platforms for discussion and bred new attitudes toward spiritual affairs. Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527) saw the full potential of Renaissance politics. His classic *Il Principe* (The Prince), written in 1513 and published posthumously in 1531, reduced religion to an instrument of a rational ruler. In his *Discourses* (also published in 1531), the former Florentine official implied that religion served only to frighten and discipline the populace. The implications of such an attitude marked a paradigm shift, whereby politics moved to the center of history and divine predestination became irrelevant, if not nonexistent. Machiavelli's contemporary, the Paduan philosopher Pietro Pomponazzi, who denied the immortality of the soul and the existence of hell, similarly emphasized the political usefulness of religion for rulers. In such a context, magic and witchcraft were just other inventions, ridiculous to a man of virtue, a rational ruler, or an official who acted from necessity and "reason of state." Machiavelli's books, although put on the Roman Catholic Church's *Index librorum prohibitorum* (Index of Prohibited Books), molded the debate about politics throughout the early modern period. Even in the confessional age of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, religious zealots continually complained about Epicureans, Pyrrhonians, libertines, or atheists, usually meaning anyone conspicuously lacking in religious zeal, and displayed a common-sense attitude toward such things as witchcraft.

The antagonism between religious zeal and "politics" was already visible in Italy during Machiavelli's lifetime. The bishop of Brescia triggered a large-scale persecution of witches in the Valcamonica in the summer of 1518. The valley's worldly overlord, the Republic of Venice, stopped the persecution almost as soon as the news arrived. The Council of Ten summoned the inquisitors to Venice, provoking conflict between the republic and Pope Leo X, who tried to protect the authority of his inquisitors. Venetian politicians like Vice-Doge Luca Tron bluntly branded all stories of

flying witches as "nonsense," and lesser citizens like the famous diarist Marino Sanudo called the executed people "martyrs." The conflict dragged on for three years, with local inquisitors continuing to capture "witches" and the Venetian government immediately blocking any trials, until July 1521, when the Venetian government finally managed to terminate all trials (Decker 2003, 55–66). By then Italy's leading jurist, Andrea Alciati became the first secular author to brand the witch hunts as a *nova holocausta* (new holocaust) in his essay *De lamiis et strigibus* (On Witches and Evil Spirits). Alciati, inspired by Machiavellianism, indeed invented the almost Durkheimian interpretation that the Inquisition was not fighting witchcraft but was creating the witches instead (see Hansen 1901, 310–312).

It seems unnecessary here to summarize the early modern debates on Machiavelli, who was considered an atheist by theologians of all denominations and could therefore hardly be used officially as a source of interpretation in the confessional age. Admirers of his way of analyzing politics thus resorted to quoting Cornelius Tacitus, whose *Historiae* Machiavelli had commented upon in his *Discorsi* (Discourses). This indirect reference to Machiavelli is usually called "Tacitism," a hidden form of Machiavellianism. Meanwhile, religious authors of all confessions condemned any predominantly political decision as inspired by Machiavelli, in contrast to decisions motivated by religious considerations. Around 1600, when the first chairs of politics were established at universities (a consequence of the progressive formation of national bureaucracies), the term *politician* was equated with *Machiavellianism* by religious authors. For Martín Del Río, himself a former chief prosecutor of the Spanish Netherlands before joining the Jesuit order and becoming a leading demologist, *politici* were officials and advisers who tried to stop witch hunts for secular or "political" reasons.

Del Río certainly knew of the contemporary attack on Machiavellianism launched by his fellow Spanish Jesuit Pedro de Ribadeneira (1526–1611). However, in his *Disquisitiones Magicae libri sex* (Six Books on Investigations into Magic, 1599–1600), Del Río also referred to debates about witchcraft in Bavaria, where the opponents of witch hunting were called "cold and political Christians" or "politicians." In Counter-Reformation Bavaria, it is striking to see the sharp rift between two parties—zealots and moderates—within the Catholic camp. The same "politicians" who opposed witch hunting domestically also suggested entering negotiations with their Protestant enemies to prevent further bloodshed. The hard-liners, however, whom even Pope Urban VIII labeled *zelanti*, preferred to have their enemies killed first and to make peace afterward. The *politici* employed an Erasmian interpretation of the parable of the wheat and the tares (Matthew 13:29), later adopted by the Jesuits Adam

Tanner and Friedrich Spee, whereas the zealots wished to root out the weeds regardless of the damage, in order to prevent future heresies and crimes and avoid God's vengeance. It seems fair to call their approach radical, because the idea of getting to the root (Latin *radix*) of crime, or heresy, dominated their thinking. The interdependence of their fantasies of eradication and their adherence to radical measures, whether unlimited torture in criminal trials or wars of conquest in foreign policy, linked these ideas with a certain type of religiosity.

In contrast, the politicians sought balanced judgments in the service of their prince and country. Bavaria's politicians were led by such jurists as the chancellor of the privy council, Dr. Johann Georg Herwarth von Hohenburg (1553–1626), who was succeeded by his ally Dr. Joachim Donnersberger (1565–1650). Both came from urban patrician backgrounds, Donnersberger from the Bavarian capital of Munich and Herwarth from the imperial city of Augsburg. Both had received a solid academic education at foreign universities, a doctorate in France or Italy, and had practiced law at the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court). The Herwarths were a banking dynasty, with Protestant branches in Augsburg, France, and England, and the Catholic branch had entered princely service in Bavaria, eventually joining the landed nobility and becoming leaders of the Bavarian parliament. Herwarth recruited able officials from the Bavarian high nobility as well as members of the imperial aristocracy, including the Hohenzollern and Wolkestein dynasties. Herwarth personified an open Catholicism, keeping international contacts even beyond confessional boundaries. These "cold and political Christians" managed to end Bavarian persecution and launched a political debate instead.

Machiavellianism played an important role throughout Europe during the period of witch hunting and, for obvious reasons, frequently encountered the burning issue of witchcraft as an extreme symbol of religiously inspired policy. Beyond Italy, it was France where secular policy developed first; for example, Guillaume Farel equated Machiavellism, libertinism, and Epicureanism (Schneider 1970, 105). We must understand Jean Bodin's attacks against Epicureans, skeptics, and Pyrrhonists in these terms. Clearly the insult "politique" emerged to censure those, like Chancellor Michel de l'Hôpital, who shunned religious radicalism (either Catholic or Huguenot) during the French Wars of Religion, following the maxim that peace with two religions was preferable to war with none. After a generation of civil war, religious radicalism became more discredited in France than anywhere else in Europe. Clearly the strongest opponents of witch hunting in France are to be sought among "libertines" like Gabriel Naudé, the defender of accused sorcerers (Naudé 1625).

In England, similar conflicts emerged during and after the Civil War, when a high-ranking member of the

Royal Society, Joseph Glanvill, defended the existence of witchcraft. Even before a last series of witchcraft trials occurred under heavy popular pressure in the early 1680s, several intellectuals, embarrassed by Glanvill's equating disbelief in witchcraft with atheism, attacked him harshly. Aggressive rebuttals came from John Wagstaffe, who sailed in the waters of Machiavellian and Hobbesian atheism. Suddenly it was no longer the question of witchcraft alone that was being debated, but a much wider issue: religion. More credibly, John Webster, a Nonconformist chaplain in the Civil War, and later a physician, attacked Glanvill for attempting to "defend these false, absurd, impossible, impious and bloody opinions" (Webster 1677, 36).

Ironically, those considered godless by Christian theologians—Machiavellians, libertines, atheists—were moderate in their attitudes toward unnecessary bloodshed, whereas ardent supporters of confessional orthodoxies were responsible for the worst persecutions. But in western Europe the witch hunts faded or were forcibly stopped as the powers of the central governments increased. France was, of course, the model case, where political centralization successfully suffocated not only popular unrest but also popular witch hunting. French *parlements* usually controlled their districts tightly, and the *Parlement* of Paris upheld few death penalties after 1625. Louis XIV (ruled 1643–1715) brought these executions to an end by royal decree in 1682. By and large, France mirrored general European developments, somewhere in the middle ground.

All over western Europe, executions of witches petered out in the 1680s, in England as well as Denmark, Norway, and Iceland; in the formerly panic-stricken duchies of Holstein and Mecklenburg; in all of northern Germany; in the Swedish realm in the Baltic; in the Spanish Netherlands; and in the Rhineland and the Saar region, where particularly fierce hunts had been common only decades before. National, regional, or parochial historians offered tales of local heroes—professors, theologians, lawyers, or princes—successfully fighting the sea of superstition. However, the executions even stopped in places without a single hero. A new generation of politicians, educated at the same universities—whether Catholic or Protestant—and usually raised in the spirit of Cartesian rationalism, suppressed any attempt at witch hunting, if necessary by sending in troops, an instrument of power their predecessors had lacked. With the rise of nation-states, "reason of state" replaced religious zeal. However, the term *politician* retained connotations of Machiavellianism, still visible in works by other authors on witchcraft like Christian Thomasius or even in the articles in Johann Heinrich Zedler's *Universal-Lexicon* in the mid-eighteenth century.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: ALCIATI, ANDREA; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; ERASMOS, DESIDERIOUS; GLANVILL, JOSEPH; HOBBS, THOMAS; *PARLEMENT* OF PARIS; POMPONAZZI, PIETRO; SKEPTICISM; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; TANNER, ADAM; THOMASIIUS, CHRISTIAN; WAGSTAFFE, JOHN; WARS OF RELIGION (FRANCE); WEBSTER, JOHN.

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**MACKENZIE, SIR GEORGE
(CA. 1636–1691)**

As lord advocate of Scotland, Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh played a crucial role in the decline of Scottish witch hunting. Sometimes called “Bloody Mackenzie” for his relentless persecution of the

Presbyterian Covenanters, Mackenzie was far more sympathetic to accused witches. More than anyone else, he was responsible for the decline in the number of witchcraft convictions and executions in Scotland during the late seventeenth century.

Mackenzie’s initial involvement in witchcraft trials occurred during the large Scottish witch hunt of 1661–1662, when he was appointed to serve as a judge at a number of trials in Midlothian and East Lothian. This hunt was marked by a great many procedural abuses, including the pricking and torturing of witches by local authorities. Mackenzie made frequent references to these trials in his writings, and it is likely this experience shaped his conviction that only trained judges should try witches. In *The Laws and Customs of Scotland in Matters Criminal* (1678), he objected that many witches were tried by “country men” who received conciliar or parliamentary commissions to try witches in the localities. He also attacked the trade of the prickers who were employed to locate the Devil’s mark as a “horrid cheat” (Mackenzie 1678, 90–91).

Mackenzie served as an advocate in the High Court of Justiciary during the 1670s and in 1677 was appointed lord advocate, a position he held until 1686. In this capacity he secured a number of acquittals of accused witches. In 1680, for example, he directed the acquittal of Bessie Gibb, mainly on the grounds that the magistrates and the bailie of the burgh of Bo’ness who had proceeded against her were not competent to try her. Mackenzie was likewise critical of the use of torture in Scottish witchcraft trials. Upon his recommendation in 1680, five witches whose confessions were shown to have been the product of several types of torture were set at liberty. Mackenzie did not object to torture as such: he defended his own use of the practice in treason trials on the basis of reason of state and claimed that its use was authorized by the law of nations. But he insisted that its use be restricted to the Privy Council and the justice general (who presided over the Justiciary Court, the central court at Edinburgh), a policy similar to that declared by the *Parlement* of Paris in 1624.

Mackenzie apparently harbored no doubts regarding the existence of witches. He introduced the section on witchcraft in *Laws and Customs* by responding to the sixteenth-century skeptic Johann Weyer, whom he referred to as “that great patron of witchcraft” (Mackenzie 1678, 81). Mackenzie claimed that witches should suffer death, not just for poisoning and murder but also for “enchanted and deluding the world.” Even charmers, who served as healers, were in his eyes guilty of at least apostasy and heresy. Nevertheless, he claimed that witches were not so numerous as in the past, and as an advocate and judge he tended to doubt the validity of the charges brought against most witches. This judicial skepticism underlay his demand for adherence to due process and the use of caution in the trial of

witches. He would accept confessions only if they were in no way extorted, if they contained nothing that was impossible or improbable, and if the person confessing was neither melancholic nor suicidal. His skepticism was particularly apparent when he defended the accused witch Maevia before the High Court of Justiciary during the 1670s. In this pleading, he argued that acts of maleficent magic could only be proved by either confession or the testimony of two respectable eyewitnesses. He also insisted that diseases could not be said to have been inflicted by magical means just because those diseases had no known natural causes.

In defending Maevia, Mackenzie relied heavily upon Scripture and the works of theologians to support his client's cause. He made an eloquent statement of the Protestant belief in the sovereignty of God, citing scriptural passages regarding Jesus's casting out of the Devil and asked rhetorically how God could have allowed Satan "to reign like a Sovereign, as our fabulous representations would now persuade us" (Mackenzie 1672, 185). In discrediting the belief in witches' flight, he invoked the authority of the *Canon Episcopi*, St. Augustine, and even the Jesuit Martín Del Rio, insisting that flight, like metamorphosis, was the product of illusion. These citations were calculated to disarm his critics and ward off charges of atheism, but they also reveal how critics of the trials could use religious arguments to reinforce their positions.

BRIAN P. LEVACK

See also: ACQUITTALS; *CANON EPISCOPI*; CONFESSIONS; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; DEVIL'S MARK; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; PRICKING OF SUSPECTED WITCHES; SCOTLAND; SKEPTICISM; TORTURE; TRIALS; WEYER, JOHANN; WITCH HUNTS.

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MAFFEI, SCIPIONE (1675–1755)

An Italian skeptic about witchcraft and an Enlightenment thinker, born into a noble family of Verona, Maffei is probably best known as the editor of the periodical *Giornale de Letterati d'Italia* (Journal of the Literati of Italy). His life was filled with wide-ranging activities. He devoted several years to

archaeological investigations and artistic studies, including poetry; he also joined the Bavarian army and participated in a battle. Following contemporary aristocratic fashion, he traveled around the European continent seeking antiques for his collections. Like his contemporary, Voltaire, he was a famous playwright who was also fascinated by scientific research.

Maffei engaged in empirical research and read widely; his interests reached from philology to natural science and from archaeology to tragedy to magic. Jonathan Israel called Maffei called "one of the chief heralds of the Venetian Enlightenment" (*Radical Enlightenment* 2001, 142); his rich correspondence reveals various sides of the Italian and European Enlightenment. Maffei's eclectic approach to culture typified Italy's emerging Enlightenment, that had as its main concerns the discovery, encouragement, publication, and advancement of rational scholarship. After composing short essays on various scientific topics, Maffei wrote about the causes of lightning (*Della formazione dei fulmini; or On the Formation of Lightning*) in 1747. Meanwhile, he engaged in religious controversy, defending the Jesuit point of view against the Jansenists in 1742 with his *Theological History of the Doctrines and Opinions Expressed by the Church on Divine Grace, Free Will and Predestination*.

Before analyzing his polemics against superstition and magic between 1749 and 1754, it seems useful to recall that Maffei engaged in controversies among scholars and historians on many different subjects. For example, he argued about history with Montesquieu and debated tragedy with Voltaire. Maffei's polemical talents were also displayed in three works against magic. The first, *Arte magica dileguata* (Magical Arts Vanished, 1749), argued mainly against Girolamo Tartarotti (whom Maffei appreciated, as did Ludovico Muratori). Maffei contested Tartarotti's main assertions about the definition and reality of demonic magic; he claimed that fourteen other authors had also opposed its existence. The second, *Arte magica distrutta* (Magical Arts Destroyed, 1750), was written under a pseudonym to defend his previous work. The third, *Arte magica annichilata* (Magical Arts Annihilated, 1754) refuted accusations of heresy by Tartarotti and others. His polemic against Tartarotti went beyond the witches' Sabbath (or *congresso notturno*) to attack the whole theory. Maffei denied the existence of both witchcraft and magic because both were impossible in nature. Maffei also rejected any apparent proof from scriptural sources, stressing the deep diversity of practices described there. According to Henry Charles Lea (1957: III, p. 1449), he overcame Johann Weyer's inconsistencies by asserting that, even before Jesus, there was no magic and no witchcraft. Maffei defined all such evidence as fables and ridiculed anyone who defended their reality. No sane intellect can believe in

magic or witchcraft, he claimed; all “miracles” can be explained by natural laws. Maffei claimed that Pliny the Elder, to him the most important ancient author, rejected magic on the basis of his philosophical theories rather than because of atheism, as Tartarotti asserted. But when Maffei tried to persuade his opponents to reject tales of magic and witchcraft found in ancient sources, they charged him with impiety.

Maffei was anxious to provide plausible natural explanations for all supernatural phenomena. Rejecting any moderate position about magic and witchcraft, he employed skeptical arguments and offered natural explanations in pursuit of a scientific theory. Maffei was particularly acute in denouncing supposedly rational judgments that were shaped as orthodox. Hidden fables, as he showed in surveying both scriptural and literary sources, were utterly unreliable. His position was original for his time and place.

MICHAELA VALENTE

See also: ENLIGHTENMENT; MIRACLES; MURATORI, LUDOVICO; SKEPTICISM; TARTAROTTI, GIROLAMO; VOLTAIRE; WEYER, JOHANN.

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MAGIC AND RELIGION

Both the words *magic* and *religion* are products of a specific process of historical development within a specific culture, and attempts to employ them as generalized categories of human activity have generated increasing controversy. The word *magic* has proved particularly problematic because of its negative moral connotations. The common assumption that magic represents a binary opposite to religion, a practice in which spirits can be coerced, whereas religion more modestly supplicates its god(s), has been found inadequate because not all religions involve a conscious deity, and even when they do,

the line between coercion and supplication is difficult to discern or is even explicitly crossed.

Such difficulties have led many scholars to focus on elucidating the words' specific meanings in the circumstances in which they were employed. Although this solution threatens to leave us with no vocabulary for discussing phenomena that, however ill-defined, are generally acknowledged to be more or less universal, this approach seems justified in the current context because the “Western tradition” is the culture from which these words derived their meanings and within which the opposition between them was defined. Furthermore, the latest chapter in the relationship between them in the Western tradition is the social sciences' attempt to formulate them as generalized categories of human activity and apply them to other cultures—an approach that ultimately leads back to the issue of their general applicability.

Even within Western tradition, definitions of magic and religion pose difficulties because both concepts changed over time and have meant different things to different groups in society. In order to proceed with this entry, minimal definitions will be required as a basis for the following discussion of their specific development. Here, *magic* will signify the manipulation of spirits and occult forces to produce material effects, whereas *religion* involves the worship of god(s) and obedience to their moral instructions with the hope of gaining material rewards and a favorable situation in the afterlife. It should be noted that although these definitions preserve the Western tradition's formal polarization of magic and religion, the ambiguity and overlap between the concepts of manipulation and worship open up the possibility of magical practices within religion, which in fact frequently occurred.

JUDAISM, PAGANISM, AND MAGIC

One root of the Western distinction between magic and religion and of their antagonism was the Hebrew God's insistence that his people worship only him. The Hebrew Bible contains numerous prohibitions of divination and other activities presumed to involve other gods and spirits, which are often interpreted as a repudiation of magic. However, the Bible also contains stories of Hebrew priests producing magical effects in competition with foreign magicians in order to demonstrate the superior power of their god, and the Hebrew people from the lowest to the highest levels of society engaged in prophesy, divination, exorcism, incantations, cursing, protective spells, use of amulets, oaths, and ordeals similar to the magic forbidden by the Bible. The religious authorities accepted these practices so long as their acknowledged source of power was Yahweh and they did not compromise the priests' dominance of the community's spiritual life. Similar magical or folk-religious practices persisted in Jewish popular

culture through the Middle Ages into modern times, and the learned mystical tradition embracing Merkavah and Kabbalah was open to magical influences as well. Both the folk and the mystical traditions existed at the edge of Jewish orthodoxy, always in danger of straying from monotheism or of presuming too much power, so their existence only added ambiguity to, instead of undercutting, the biblical injunctions against magic.

The other root of the Western distinction between magic and religion, and the specific root of the term *magic*, lies in Greco-Roman culture. Specifically, the English word “magic” derives from the Latin *magia*, borrowed from the Greek *mageia*, which itself came from the Persian *magu*, or priest. The Persian term entered Greek as *magos* around the time of the Persian Wars as an insult associating Greeks who practiced magical arts like healing or belonged to ecstatic cults with hostile foreigners. The term *mageia* came into common use during the Hellenistic period and was adopted by the Romans during the last century B.C.E. Although not always used in a derogatory way originally, over time magic’s negative connotations became fixed, gradually increasing both cultural opprobrium and legal restrictions. As with the Hebrew proscription of magic, the Greco-Roman denigration did not imply denial of its power, although the potential of fraud was noted; nor did it amount to a repudiation of its practices and beliefs, which were quite similar to those of official religion. Instead, the issue was the danger that unregulated spiritual activity was perceived to pose to the community. The earliest Greek condemnations concerned the disruption it threatened to introduce into the community’s relationship to its gods, whereas the Romans were concerned with its potential damage to private citizens’ health and property, the way it empowered women and thereby undercut patriarchy, and, later, its potential to damage imperial authority.

Not all magicians accepted this intensifying vilification. Philosophers interested in magic, Neoplatonists in particular, called their practices *theurgy*, differentiating them from lesser traditions called *goetia*. They argued that magic and prayer alike work through the natural sympathetic bonds that permeate the universe and emphasized the extent to which magic operates through occult natural processes, thereby beginning a tradition known as “natural magic.” At its extreme, their concept of magic resembled a form of mysticism. However, by the time they developed their theories, their main opposition no longer came from traditional pagan religions but instead from a new creed, Christianity, which would prove far more hostile to magic.

MAGIC AND CHRISTIANITY

Christianity inherited Judaism’s rejection of magic, but Jesus, the early Apostles, and Christian saints also followed Hebrew tradition by producing magical effects,

and the Christian sacraments had magical connotations as well. The resolution of this paradox was to assert that magical effects produced by Christian actions were miracles, manifestations of God’s power freely exercised, whereas magic depended on evoking the power of demons. The concept of demons was derived from both Greco-Roman *daimones*, spirits that could be good, bad, or indifferent, and that played a significant role in magic, and Jewish demons, who were inherently bad spirits (angels were good ones) that undermined God and harmed humans. Early Christianity associated demons with Satan, who acquired increased prominence as the leader of God’s enemies, and turned magicians into the Devil’s foot soldiers.

While this process of demonization increased the moral menace posed by magic, Christianity simultaneously argued against its practical threat. The difference between miracles and magic was not simply that miracles were good and magic was bad but also that miracles were genuine and magic was false. For centuries, some pagan philosophies had questioned the efficacy of magic, attributing its effects to fraud, illusion, and natural processes, but Christians, who believed in miracles, denied its efficacy on different grounds. Like the Jews, they considered their God to be omnipotent: therefore he, and only he, could contravene the laws of nature. Borrowing arguments from the pagan philosophers, they emphasized the extent to which magic relied on natural processes, illusion, and fraud and argued that any additional power demons had was granted them by God.

These two intertwined themes—that magic involves the idolatrous worship of evil demons and that its power is ultimately illusory—were developed in late antiquity and reiterated and elaborated down through the Middle Ages. However, their exact implications were subject to changing interpretations, and the balance between them shifted as well. Focusing on the demonic basis of magic could heighten the threat it posed, whereas emphasizing its illusory nature could diminish its importance. However, just because magic often involved natural processes and trickery and demons deceived people into thinking they, not God, had power, did not mean magic could not harm people: it was perfectly possible to see magic as both illusory and dangerous. Similarly, the demonic element could be seen as either a purely moral issue (idolatry) to be punished with penance or excommunication, rather than as a public danger requiring criminal prosecution and secular punishment. Thus, in late antiquity, Christian emperors, influenced by the clergy’s desire to expurgate paganism and confident in their own power, made all practice of magic a capital offense. In the Early Middle Ages, in contrast, St. Boniface declared belief in witches and werewolves to be un-Christian, and the *Canon Episcopi* condemned the belief of some women that they flew at night on the backs of animals with the goddess Diana as an illusion and

punished it with penance. Such variations in emphasis reflect not only changing intellectual fashions but also the worldly power available to Christian authorities: when the opportunity permitted it, they readily suppressed magic by force as well as decrying it as vain; where secular rule was weak, they simply disparaged it and punished its practitioners with penance.

Even with the might of the Roman Empire at their disposal, the Christians could not expunge magic or magicians from their midst. By the time the western empire fell, they had largely succeeded in eradicating formal pagan cults, but they were far less successful in eliminating magic from popular culture. Furthermore, the conversion of the Germans, while similarly eliminating formal pagan opposition, was even less successful at the popular level, because in the process of conversion, Christian missionaries pragmatically tried to win acceptance by superimposing their religion on existing forms as much as possible. To some extent, Christian clergymen took over magical roles previously played by pagan priests, like blessing fields and animals, and to a much greater extent they simply continued time-honored practices after purging them of explicit paganism. For its part, the European populace gradually accommodated its traditions to the new creed, substituting God, Jesus, the Virgin Mary, and the saints for pagan deities in their spells and Christian symbols for pagan signs in their charms. This process introduced significant changes into both popular magic and Christianity. Because popular magic was amorphous and routinely adapted to and adopted from other spiritual systems, whereas Christianity was more rigid, these changes created a disjunction between formal doctrines and accepted rituals and actual beliefs and practices. The resulting tensions remained latent for centuries but eventually came to a head when secular power reached levels that made their resolution seem practicable.

Before that day of reckoning, though, new elements entered the mix in the High Middle Ages, when the importation of Arabic scholarship and revival of classical learning prompted a revival of learned natural magic. This system claimed to avoid demonic agency by manipulating hidden forces of nature rather than spirits. Alchemy and astrology, in particular, lent themselves to this interpretation, and generations of learned magicians from the twelfth-century Renaissance through the Neoplatonic movement in the High Renaissance to the early Scientific Revolution in the seventeenth century dreamed that they could gain acceptance in the Christian community. They pointed to the value of their arts in revealing the secrets of nature and argued that their cultivation would lead to a fuller understanding of the Christian God.

Unfortunately, natural magic posited that the universe is an organic, living whole bound together and permeated by an incorporeal spirit that seemed suspiciously close

to a god. Furthermore, a certain amount of natural magic involved invocation of spirits that, despite the magicians' protestations that they were neutral, almost mechanical connectors in the celestial system, sounded much like demons to the uninitiated. The Christian community already had a variety of less dubious means of approaching its God and understanding nature and an array of specialists engaged in them. Theologians therefore reiterated that any invocation of spirits was idolatry, that there were no good or neutral demons, that no form of magic leads to knowledge of God or the Holy Spirit, and that there is a fundamental difference between miracles and magic. For several centuries, natural magic enjoyed general acceptance as a body of knowledge within natural philosophy concerned with hidden processes in nature, but it never gained general acceptance as a set of practices or as a legitimate source of more general wisdom or approach to God.

The refutation of natural magic's religious claims formed one part of a much larger process by which medieval Christianity rationalized its beliefs, the intellectual movement known as Scholasticism that systematized ideas about the supernatural dimension of evil into the demonology that underlay the early modern persecution of witches. Belief in the immanent operation of a hierarchy of demons working against the Christian community under the overall dominion of the Devil became an integral part of late medieval culture even as it became more aware of the disparity between approved and actual beliefs and practices. Not just malevolent witches, who were thought to be primarily women, but all practitioners of magic, no matter how beneficent their activities or high-minded their intentions, were perceived as human agents of this dangerous diabolic conspiracy. Even among the elite, only a minority followed this reasoning to its logical conclusion, so at the height of the witch persecutions, local healers and learned astrologers and alchemists continued to practice, and ordinary people continued to employ a vast array of magical remedies and protections, but nevertheless, the demonological paradigm shaped law codes, informed jurists and magistrates, inspired artists and writers, frightened ordinary peasants and townspeople, gave malicious or vengeful people a weapon against anyone (particularly women) who could plausibly be accused of magic, and forced everyone (and again particularly women) to be more conscious of gaps between the dictates of their religion and their actual beliefs and practices. The witch persecutions reflected a number of trends and tensions in European society: one of the most important was the desire, inherited from late antiquity, to purge the culture of magic and society of its various practitioners.

Even as the early modern witch persecutions got underway, Europe was rent by the Protestant Reformation, which affected the relationship between

religion and magic in several important ways. To begin with, by replacing the Church, with its sacraments, saints, and good works, with individual faith as the key to salvation, Protestantism heightened the importance of the purity of each individual's beliefs and practices. It became more problematic for Christians to go to a cunning woman on Thursday and church on Sunday if they could not just confess and do penance in between. Second, just as Protestantism eliminated the spiritual hierarchy that mediated between the individual and God, so too it reduced the importance of demons in magic in favor of the direct involvement of the Devil, strengthening the connection between magic and evil. Third, the religious conflict intensified the scrutiny of popular practices on both sides of the confessional divide, as Protestants and Catholics competed in their zeal to prove their spiritual superiority. Finally, by denigrating Catholicism as rife with magical rituals and doctrines and minimizing its own magical elements, Protestantism codified the division between religion and magic. Some Protestant sects tried to eliminate all traces of magic, regarding rituals as symbolic only, consigning miracles to biblical times, and disparaging any claims of miraculous processes or supernatural effects in the present as rank magic no different from the pretenses of marketplace charlatans.

The decline of the witch persecutions in the seventeenth century involved another shift in the relationship of Christianity to magic. Faced with the disorder and injustices the witch persecutions created and perhaps reacting to their success in curbing if not eliminating magical practices, Europe's civil and, somewhat more reluctantly, its religious authorities gradually abandoned their concern about the danger posed by the Devil and malevolent magicians and placed increasing stress on the illusory nature of magic, both in terms of its efficacy and of its ultimate cause. While maintaining the theoretical possibility of magical effects and the Devil's involvement in human affairs, they increasingly questioned the likelihood of magic having caused harm in any particular instance, and they emphasized that since the Devil is subservient to God, any power he or his servants manifest is a sign of God's displeasure and should lead people to scrutinize their own consciences rather than punish the apparent perpetrators. They still opposed magical practices, but now (again) for their impiety and fraudulent claims. Without abandoning their fundamental belief in magic and the reality of the Devil, they shifted emphasis away from the danger they posed to their illusory nature—this time not because they lacked the power to combat them forcefully, but rather because they realized that they had too much of it.

MAGIC, RELIGION, SCIENCE, AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

As the witch persecutions ended because of a shift of emphasis within the traditional framework bequeathed

by antiquity, the relationship between magic and religion soon began to be affected by a radically new factor, the rising importance of science and, particularly, the new mechanical philosophy. Recent research has shown that the traditional Whig interpretation of the rising scientific worldview as the implacable foe of magic contains considerable oversimplification, for natural magic was an integral part of the natural philosophy out of which science emerged and played a role in scientific thought well into the eighteenth century. However, mechanical philosophy rejected the notions of occult causation, spiritual agency, and an organic unity to the physical universe, putting it at odds not only with magic but with Christianity as well. To some extent, this common opponent pushed magic and religion together, so, for example, defenders of witchcraft beliefs argued that denial of witches' magical powers and the Devil's immanence logically undercut other supernatural beliefs more central to Christianity, like miracles, angels, and the afterlife. Religion enjoyed the protection of powerful social patrons, though, whereas magic was a social orphan, so Enlightenment thinkers could rebut and lampoon magical beliefs far more openly and caustically than they could religious ones. Disbelief in magic (though not in religion) became a sociocultural marker of membership in the intellectual elite, and social pressure, class snobbery, and sycophantism played at least as great a role as experimentation and reasoned argument in the ultimate triumph of science. The *philosophes* used the vulnerability of magic, which Christianity had done so much to create, not only to deprecate magic but also to attack religion indirectly. Theologians generally responded to this scientific assault by de-emphasizing the magical aspects of religion and highlighting its moral message. During the eighteenth century magic disappeared entirely from learned discourse, and Christianity lost its central place in intellectual life, relegated to the role of metaphorical narrative and ethical adviser.

Rumors of the death of God and assumptions about the end of magic have proved greatly exaggerated: belief in the reality and power of both survived education, ridicule, and repression (in the case of magic) in popular culture, and both have revived in recent decades—even, in the New Age movement, together. Nevertheless, what intellectuals contested in the eighteenth century, their descendants in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries assumed they had won, and so they turned from scientific debates about the reality of magic to social-scientific explanations of magical and religious beliefs. Individual belief in magic and religious enthusiasm were pathologized by the emergent discipline of psychology, and psychologists competed with philosophers, historians, sociologists, and anthropologists in constructing sociocultural theories to explain magico-religious thinking's long hold on

human consciousness and to celebrate its eventual demise. Nineteenth-century theorists like Auguste Comte, G. W. F. Hegel, and Karl Marx pioneered an etic approach to the problem, proposing grand narratives in which different formulations of magic, religion, and science formed succeeding stages in the evolution of human cognition linked to the development of material civilization. Somewhat later, Max Weber championed a more emic approach that insisted on the need to understand what peoples' religious beliefs meant to them, and, in opposition to Marx, pointed to the ways they could shape the development of socioeconomic structures.

By the late twentieth century, at least eight major interpretive approaches had emerged, which have been termed the intellectualist, the emotionalist, the phenomenological, the structural-functional, the symbolic, the structuralist, the feminist, and the cognitive (Cunningham 1999).

The intellectualist interpretation (whose exponents include Herbert Spencer, E. B. Tyler, J. B. Frazer, and a number of British anthropologists since World War II) regards magical and religious thinking as prescientific attempts to explain otherwise inexplicable phenomena and magical and religious rituals as attempts to influence otherwise uncontrollable processes. Early intellectualists distinguished magic from religion as different stages in the evolution of conceptualization, whereas later ones were more concerned with the relationship of both to science. The emotionalist approach (exemplified by R. R. M. Ma rrett, Sigmund Freud, and Bronislaw Malinowski) explains both magical and religious beliefs as ways of coping with stressful emotions, whether the frustration caused by an inability to control an important situation, long-repressed infantile conflicts, or the need to express feelings generated by significant life events. The phenomenological approach (including Rudolf Otto, Karl Jung, and Mircea Eliade) seeks to study the contents of consciousness as people experience them, with Otto treating the transition from magic to religion not as a product of material development but as a widening of the range of human feelings, whereas Jung and Eliade treat magic and religion as a unitary set of symbols either inherited or recognized in nature that represent and help resolve critical life events and foster psychological development.

Although these three schools of thought have made contributions that have been assimilated into the current understanding of magic and religion, the mainstream of contemporary thought focuses on their relationship to the larger society and culture. The first such approach, structural-functionalism, began with Emile Durkheim's insistence that social phenomena be explained in social rather than psychological terms. He applied that idea to religion by saying it symbolizes social structures in a way that serves as a general

classificatory system linking individual consciousness, social relations, and the larger environment and that integrates society by reaffirming social identity. Durkheim paid less attention to magic because he felt it was distinguished by its private intent and secret execution from religion's public purpose and open practice and therefore revealed relatively little about the larger social reality. Following Durkheim's sociological approach, Marcel Mauss, his nephew, actually first worked out this distinction between religion and magic. A. R. Radcliffe-Brown took the tradition in another direction, opposing any distinction between religion and magic and focusing on the relationship between their rituals and other aspects of society, an approach that became the norm among anthropologists in the mid-twentieth century. Radcliffe-Brown's student E. E. Evans-Pritchard continued to link religious forms to social structure but broadened his approach to include the idea that the Africans he studied utilized two modes of thought, mystical and empirical, in explaining events and reacting to them, for he found that structural-functional explanations clarified only limited aspects of his subjects' magico-religious beliefs.

Evans-Pritchard's theory about two complementary modes of thought echoed the ideas of Lucien Levy-Bruhl, who first proposed an evolutionary schema involving a progression from primitive mystical consciousness into modern rational thought but later modified it to the notion that the two modes of understanding coexist. Because of his focus on the content of thought, as opposed to the process of thinking, Levy-Bruhl was an early exemplar of the symbolist approach in anthropology. From this point of view, structural-functionalism's portrayal of religion as an expression of social structure is just one possible type of symbolization. Anthropologists like Mary Douglas, J. H. M. Beattie, Victor Turner, Arnold Van Gennep, and Clifford Geertz broadened symbolic interpretations to include the ways that the rituals and beliefs of magic and religion symbolize basic biological and psychological processes, social transitions, and the cosmic order. They also emphasized that symbol systems can actually shape the social order. The anthropologist S. J. Tambiah has gone one step further by approaching magic as a rhetorical art in which performative acts and utterances do not just symbolize or guide but actually constitute transferences of (social) qualities and changes of (social) state.

Tambiah's focus on magico-religious symbolism as a form of performative rhetoric is rooted in semiotics, the science of symbol systems, which is the basis for the approach called structuralism. Primarily associated with Claude Levi-Strauss but also including Edmund Leach and Maurice Godelier, it approaches culture from the point of view of Saussuran linguistics, treating it as a set of communications systems exemplified by language in which the relationship of symbols to each other is

paramount. Leach's early work was characterized by a particularly direct reliance on linguistic structuralism, but Levi-Strauss put more emphasis on the unconscious structures of the human mind, and Godelier attempted to synthesize structuralism's focus on culture and language with Marxism's concern for socioeconomic realities. Following Marx's repudiation of religion as the "opium of the people," Godelier regarded religion and magic as inextricably linked, with religion an illusory explanatory system and magic an imaginary method for causing effects. Levi-Strauss also regarded magic and religion as complementary, although in very different terms: he posited that religion involves treating physical reality as if it has human characteristics, whereas magic involves treating human ritual actions as if they have a direct connection to physical reality. Lesch, in contrast, came to question whether words like *religion* and *magic* can be used to discuss cultures that do not include cognates, and has expressed doubts whether *magic* in particular has any meaning at all.

Feminist interpretations of magic and religion focus on the links between gender, power, and the legitimacy of spiritual activity. Because religions since antiquity have been patriarchal, both in their conceptualizations of spiritual reality and in their secular structures, women have tended to be particularly linked to magic, the illicit, or at least unofficial, practice of spirituality. Furthermore, because men dominated scholarship on this topic until the 1980s, early theories about religion and magic overlooked the role of and the impact on women. Feminist scholars in a variety of disciplines have worked to correct this imbalance, with a historian of religion like Ross Shepard Kraemer, for example, critiquing classicists' traditional reliance on male-centered sources when studying Greco-Roman religion; the anthropologist Julia Kristeva critiquing anthropology for its neglect of matriarchal Neolithic religions and the process of repression by which patriarchal cults supplanted them; and the theologian and philosopher Mary Daly launching a much broader attack on patriarchal religion as part of a broader critique of patriarchal institutions generally.

Finally, the cognitive approach has developed from dissatisfaction with Saussurean assumptions about the workings of the human mind, in particular, the reliance on semiotics and privileging of linguistics. Instead of seeing meaning as coming from the relationship between signs, it adopts generative linguistics' focus on the relationship between deep structures rooted in the brain and their specific manifestations in speech. Furthermore, it rejects the assumption that language determines people's perception of reality, instead treating language as one of several specialized mental processes that structure perception and mentation. For example, Dan Sperber argues that symbolism is a mechanism for handling irregular types of information that

makes use of a specialized cognitive process separate from language that interacts with perceptual and conceptual mechanisms in constructing knowledge and consolidating memories. E. Thomas Lawson and Robert McCauley have focused more specifically on religious and magical ritual, arguing that specific rituals are surface manifestations of three underlying cognitive mechanisms. Pascal Boyer argues that many ideas about magical causation and the resultant ritual actions are relatively mundane consequences of the normal functioning of our system for making inferences, while Patrick McNamara suggests that perception of the hidden workings of spirits, gods, or karma is triggered by our mechanisms for detecting intentionality and the subsequent application of our "theory of mind." What these last two theories, in particular, indicate is that magico-religious beliefs may stem not from some malfunction of the nervous system but from its regular functioning. We repeat things associated with success, avoid things associated with failure, and deal with the world on the assumption that it is sentient, because in a dangerous world it is safer to treat something as smart than is not than vice versa.

One final approach goes beyond cognitive psychology to explore the physiology of trance states and mystical communion. For example, the recent research of Eugene d' Aquili and Andrew Newburg has found that if either the sympathetic (arousing) or the parasympathetic (quieting) nervous system is pushed too far, it activates the other, and this simultaneous activation of the two opposing systems results in an ecstatic state and the suppression of the brain center that maintains our awareness of the border between ourselves and the external world. This, in their estimation, accounts for the sensation of mystical communion, and it can be achieved, as experience suggests, by either an overload or prolonged deprivation of activity and sensory stimulation. A different approach to trance states has been pursued by Michael Winkelman, who has connected the physiological, psychological, and anthropological dimensions of shamanistic healing to develop a rich understanding of how that form of magic works. Finally, in an older set of studies, d' Aquili and another set of collaborators focused on the effects of rhythmic group rituals on their participants, arguing that they "tune" the participants' nervous systems to common neural rhythms, inducing group harmony to facilitate collective action or promote intramural accord. This concept of "tuning" the nervous system seems to hold particular promise for expanding our understanding of religion and magic, suggesting that ritual actions, incantations, fasting, hallucinogenic drugs, meditation, and similar practices provide an array of techniques for physiologically "tuning" our processes of perception and cognition so that we apprehend and interact with the world in different and, in different contexts, useful ways.

More generally, the physiological and cognitive approaches together suggest that although the distinction between magic and religion may be an artifact of the historical development of the Western tradition, and specific magico-religious practices and beliefs are manifestations of specific cultures, the terms refer not simply to cultural constructs, but rather to cultural constructs built upon the common foundations of more basic human processes and experiences.

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See also: ANGELS; ANTHROPOLOGY; BIBLE; *CANON EPISCOPI*; CLERICAL MAGIC; DEMONOLOGY; DEMONS; DEVIL; DOUGLAS, MARY; ENLIGHTENMENT; EVANS-PRITCHARD, EDWARD E.; FREUD, SIGMUND; IDOLATRY; INVOCATIONS; JESUS; JEWS, WITCHCRAFT, AND MAGIC; KABBALAH; MAGIC, LEARNED; MAGIC, NATURAL; MAGIC, POPULAR; MALINOWSKY, BRONISLAW KASPER; MECHANICAL PHILOSOPHY; MIRACLES; OCCULT; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH; SCIENCE AND MAGIC; SHAMANISM.

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MAGIC CIRCLE

A sacred space creating a physical barrier to the environment within which many magical rites, such as invocations of demons and other similar ceremonies, are performed is called a magic circle.

Embodying wholeness, perfection, and unity, the circle had not only magical but also universal religious significance. Remnants of cult circles, not unlike the well-known Stonehenge, exist throughout the world, proving their ancient origins. Circular forms were used in old Babylonian magic. Medieval and Renaissance ceremonial magicians employed them; Rembrandt van Rijn's famous etching of Dr. Faustus shows the scholar focusing on a magical circle on the ground, which is reflected in the window panes. Some American Indian tribes or, for that matter, today's Wiccans, have used magic circles, but for different reasons.

ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL MAGIC CIRCLES

To summon an angel, a spirit, or a demon, a magician generally requires a magic circle. The German monk Caesarius of Heisterbach, a rich source for both learned and folk magic, included a story in his *Dialogus Miraculorum* (Dialogue on Miracles, ca. 1225) about a knight who denied that demons exist and was dramatically refuted by a monk, who drew a magic circle and conjured demons. In his *Autobiography*, Benevenuto Cellini vividly described experiencing a similar episode in the Roman Colosseum in the 1520s.

Handbooks of ceremonial magic from late antiquity to the present dealt repeatedly with the matter, although the form of the circle was not invariable and almost every *grimoire* showed a different form of magic circle. The well-known, widely adapted, and relatively ancient *Key of Solomon* described the essential clothing and requirements (knife, rings, scepter, fire, parchment, ink) needed to create a properly equipped magical circle from which an operator might safely evoke a demon. As the book instructed, the circle had to be 9 feet in diameter and traced with the consecrated knife. Four pentacles were to be engraved with the names of the Creator, inscribed with the same knife. The characters inscribed in the circle were Greek and Hebrew; the formula "alpha-omega," the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, had to be repeated several times.



Johann Georg Faust invoking a demon while inside a magic circle. (Stapleton Collection/Corbis)

A few other examples show how more recent imitators have twisted this formula. The *grimoire* *Le Dragon rouge* (Red Dragon), supposedly dating from 1522 but originally printed in 1822, called the circle the “Triangle of the Pacts.” It had to be made with the skin of a kid lamb nailed with four nails, and the triangle within the circle had to be traced with an enameled stone. *The Magus*, published in London in 1801 by Francis Barrett, who attempted to renew occultism in England, instructed the operator to engrave the letters *alpha* and *omega* and various divine names. His pentacles inscribed within the circles contained mostly Hebrew names and formulas.

MAGICAL CIRCLES IN NEOPAGAN RITUALS

In much of Wicca today, a circle becomes a sacred space to meet the gods and goddesses. Human mental energy creates the circle, which restricts negative energy and spirits. The circle, usually 9 feet in diameter, simply marks the point where the sphere

touches the earth (or floor) and continues beneath. Some kind of marking is often placed on the ground to show where the circle bisects the earth: a cord laid in roughly circular shape, a lightly drawn circle of chalk, or objects (even tarot cards) showing its outlines. Details like knives and pentacles recall Solomon’s ancient key.

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See also: CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST 1800); DEMONS; FAUST, JOHANN GEORG; GRIMOIRES; INVOCATIONS; RITUAL MAGIC.

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MAGIC, LEARNED

Since the Early Middle Ages, European culture has contained a tradition of literate or “learned” magic as well as the orally transmitted traditions of “popular” magic. The two differed both in their content as well as their mode of transmission, but they were connected by a reciprocal exchange of influences. Furthermore, like popular magic, learned magic encompassed a number of disparate traditions. Although written texts were fewer and more interconnected than the innumerable local and regional popular traditions, they were more widely accessible, particularly after the invention of the printing press in the late Middle Ages brought a quantum jump in the availability of texts. The printing press also accelerated the interaction between learned and popular traditions, gradually merging them to the point at which they are barely distinguishable today.

The roots of the learned tradition lay in antiquity, with magical techniques and theories transmitted directly through a small number of texts preserved in the European provinces of the western Roman Empire and indirectly through a much larger number of texts preserved and elaborated on in Byzantine, Arab, and Jewish cultures, which western Europeans increasingly encountered in the High and late Middle Ages. During the Renaissance, learned magic reached a high point in the Neoplatonic movement, which saw “natural” magic, or knowledge of the hidden forces of nature, as a route not simply to power but also to transcendent knowledge, comparable in many ways to religious mysticism. At the same time, western European learned magic descended into necromancy, or the deliberate summoning of demons through complex esoteric rituals, which contributed significantly to fears of a conspiracy of diabolic magicians that motivated early modern witch persecutions. Such fears put a significant damper on open involvement with many forms of learned magic, especially those involving spirits as opposed to occult natural mechanisms. Forms of the latter, like astrology and alchemy, continued to be practiced openly through the early modern period, and popular magical practitioners utilized books drawn from the learned tradition with increasing frequency, but in elite circles, open involvement with spiritual magic virtually disappeared. Covert practices probably declined as well, given the dangers involved, but some residual activity appears to have remained. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the open practice of learned magic revived and evolved,

mixing with non-Western traditions, popular practices, mysticism, and fringe science to form the magico-religious New Age movement.

ROOTS OF EUROPEAN LEARNED MAGIC

Early medieval culture, including magic, combined two basic influences: the traditions of the Germanic peoples who overran much of the western Roman Empire and the traditions of the “Romans” themselves, that is, the earlier inhabitants of the late western empire. Germanic traditions were almost exclusively oral and affected early medieval popular culture more than they did the learned culture. Much of Roman culture was also oral, but two of its strands were written and became the basis of medieval learned culture: the texts of pagan writers and of the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Of the two, pagan writers contributed more substantially to early medieval learned magic. The Bible, of course, confirmed the existence and power of magical forces, chiefly in the form of miracles, and some late Roman Christian commentators recorded some magical practices with evident approval. In general, though, the Judeo-Christian tradition, from the Hebrew Bible to the late-Roman Church Fathers, disparaged the apparent power of magic as illusory and warned its adherents to shun such practices as deliberate or implicit trafficking with demons. A few pagan authors similarly disputed the power of magic, but the vast majority accepted the existence of hidden, or occult, forces that directly influenced the material world. They recorded some of the wide variety of beliefs and practices held across the Mediterranean world, including both simple popular practices and complex learned systems like astrology. Proponents of philosophically grounded systems typically valued their magic as far superior to the mundane practices of village healers and marketplace fortunetellers, theurgy as opposed to goetia, which anticipated the divide between learned and popular magic in later European culture. The pagan writers whose writings influenced learned medieval magic included not only philosophers, historians, and others who intended to record and evaluate actual magical practices but also poets and storytellers whose fictional accounts (whether or not they reflected actual beliefs and practices) were accepted as real during the Middle Ages.

EARLY MEDIEVAL LEARNED MAGIC

Only a small number of texts survived the collapse of the Roman Empire in the west, so no coherent system of learned magic was preserved there. The few miscellaneous surviving works containing knowledge of magic were consulted, and through use, their knowledge gradually diffused into popular culture. They were supplemented by a growing body of texts recording popular practices, often mixed with classical knowledge, so

rather than forming a distinct tradition, the surviving texts contributed a learned component to what has been called the “common tradition” of medieval magic, which included healing, divination, talismans, love magic, and sorcery (Kieckhefer 2000, 56).

With the twelfth-century Renaissance, this situation changed. Growing contact with the Byzantine and especially the Arab world introduced educated Europeans to increasingly specialized knowledge, including complex and sophisticated forms of magic rooted in antiquity and further elaborated over the intervening centuries. These techniques required highly developed literacy and mathematical skills, and they were grounded in Aristotelian physics, Ptolemaic astronomy, and Galenic medicine. In particular, astrology (fortune telling based on the relative positions of the stars), astral magic (harnessing the power thought to emanate from the heavens), and alchemy (transmuting one element into another, particularly, changing base metals into gold) all required intensive study of texts, careful calculations, and, in the last case, elaborate equipment. Later, practice of the Jewish magical and mystical tradition known as the Kabbalah required a precise knowledge of Hebrew, and necromancy, the conjuring of spirits, involved complex rituals following elaborate written scripts. Such arts both influenced and were influenced by popular practices, but each of these traditions constituted an intricate, autonomous system. Together, their content as well as their mode of transmission made them a separate variety of magic, distinct from the popular traditions practiced in innumerable European localities.

APOGEE OF LEARNED MAGIC: THE RENAISSANCE

The high point of learned magic undoubtedly came during the Renaissance, when a group of humanists revived Neoplatonism and linked it to writings ascribed to a mythical ancient *magus*, Hermes Trismegistus. Neoplatonism, founded by the philosopher Plotinus in the third century C.E., held that a network of natural sympathetic bonds connects all things in the universe and can be manipulated through complex rituals. The Hermetic writings were thought to go back to ancient Egypt but were actually a collection of second- and third-century-C.E. Greek treatises on philosophy, astronomy, alchemy, and magic. The leaders of the Renaissance movement included Marsilio Ficino, who translated Hermetic manuscripts and wrote original works on astrological medicine and astral magic, and Giovanni Francesco Pico della Mirandola, who went to Rome and set forth for public debate 900 theses that asserted the underlying compatibility of all religions, defended the value of Neoplatonic magic as a means of understanding the inner workings of nature, and claimed to have found a higher and more potent form

of magic in the Jewish Kabbalah, in which the magician, speaking God’s own language (Hebrew), can gain both wisdom and power. For Renaissance magi such as Ficino and Pico, magic was a quasi-mystical way to approach God.

Such Renaissance magi practiced and publicized their magic in the face of Christianity’s traditional hostility to any supernatural phenomenon beyond the miracles ascribed to God and subsumed within the doctrine and rituals of the Church. They argued that their magic was fundamentally different from the magical practices that the Church opposed. These had traditionally relied on spirits, conscious incorporeal entities, which in Christian doctrine could only be agents of God, angels, or demons (agents of the Devil); and, because God’s supernatural work was generally done through the Church, any independent operator working through nonapproved spiritual channels was almost certainly working consciously or unconsciously with demons. However, the tradition in which these Renaissance magi worked styled itself as “natural magic” or the “occult sciences,” the study and manipulation of hidden natural forces. This concept of magic dated from the introduction of the learned magical systems during the twelfth-century Renaissance; it was one aspect of that much larger reintroduction of classical knowledge, particularly natural philosophy. While conceiving the universe as an organic, living whole permeated and bound together by incorporeal spirit, natural magic de-emphasized the role of individual conscious spirits in favor of a more mechanistic concept of the occult dimension of nature. To the extent that Renaissance magi still invoked spirits, they insisted that they were not demonic and could be manipulated like any other natural phenomenon, without recourse to a diabolical pact. Natural magic was, in their estimation, the alternative to demonic magic and hence was perfectly compatible with Christianity. Ficino, in particular, attempted to fuse Christianity and magic in what he called “Platonic theology.”

NECROMANCY AND THE PROSCRIPTION OF WITCHCRAFT

Although natural magic won widespread acceptance as the branch of natural philosophy that dealt with hidden processes in nature, learned magicians still faced formidable obstacles in their broader quest to gain legitimacy for their practices. One barrier was the Church’s deeply rooted suspicion of any heterodox spiritual system. Another was the fact that, as the learned magicians had to admit, their beliefs and practices were closely related to other forms of magic that were malign or even explicitly demonic, some of which also belonged to the learned tradition—particularly necromancy, which originally meant divination by conjuring the spirits of the dead but had come to mean conjuring

spirits, including demons, for any magical purpose. Necromancy, which involved complex rituals contained in illicit books, enjoyed considerable popularity in the late Middle Ages, especially in an underworld on the fringe of clerical and courtly circles. Many necromantic rituals appealed specifically for God's permission, and most necromancers probably rationalized their activities as within the bounds of Christian behavior, but many of their rituals were unquestionably performed for destructive or exploitative ends, and some explicitly invoked evil spirits.

The witch persecutions that began in the late Middle Ages and climaxed in the early modern period stemmed from multiple causes, but one was surely the actual practice of necromancy by members of the educated elite. A good number of the late medieval sorcery trials that contributed to the growth of witch fears and the consolidation of belief in a conspiracy of Devil-worshipping evil magicians involved people who had actually practiced harmful magic. Necromancy was particularly important, both because it tended to be practiced by people with the wealth to buy books and the education to read them and because it made the link between malefic magic and diabolism particularly clear. Not only did it involve the explicit invocation of demons, but also it often made illicit use of Christian symbols, prayers, and rites in the process. Furthermore, at times, necromancy was practiced by small groups of people, supporting the notion that evil magicians met in secret. There is no evidence that necromancers formed a widespread underground conspiracy that had renounced God and signed on with the Devil, but their actual beliefs and practices helped make fears about such a sect plausible.

LEARNED MAGIC, WITCHCRAFT PERSECUTIONS, AND THE SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION

Necromancy was not the only way that learned magic contributed to witchcraft beliefs, for learned magicians participated vigorously in the sixteenth-century debate about witchcraft. Several voiced skepticism about the notion that witchcraft was a diabolic counterreligion of malevolent magicians, like Cornelius Agrippa, who defended a peasant woman accused of witchcraft in 1519 and who reportedly called witchcraft a delusion and a dream; Paracelsus, Girolamo Cardano, and Jean-Baptiste Van Helmont all tried to explain witches' powers in nondemonic terms. After a "witch" let him observe her anointing herself with a mixture (which he described), then fell into a profound sleep and upon awakening, claimed to have flown away, Giambattista Della Porta argued that witches' flights to Sabbats were hallucinogenic dreams. Of course, all of them accepted that magic could work, and their opposition to witch beliefs was at most conditional. Other learned magicians, like Johannes Trithemius, denounced witches and

witchcraft as vehemently as any demonologist, whereas Johann Weyer, who had once been Agrippa's assistant, coupled skepticism about witchcraft and defense of accused witches with a harsh condemnation of learned magicians! In the end, the position each took probably mattered less than their collective contribution to the sheer volume of discussions of witchcraft, for quibbles about the source and extent of witches' powers or the nature of their congress with the Devil mattered less in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries than the apparent consensus that some people had given themselves over to the Devil and sought to harm others by practicing *maleficium* (harmful magic).

Weyer's attack on learned magicians was echoed by numerous demonologists, who denounced their activities as frequently as they denounced their popular counterparts, insisting that their magic probably involved demons, whatever the magicians claimed about natural magic, and arguing that even if it did not, it was still irreligious and probably fraudulent. In this age, even benign magic, although less serious than witchcraft, was still subject to penalties like fines, incarceration, and banishment, and there was always a chance that it could lead to an accusation of witchcraft. Consequently, being known as a learned magician became increasingly dangerous during the sixteenth century, and the number of prominent men who identified themselves as such appears to have declined significantly during the height of the witch persecutions from 1550 to 1650. Astrologers and, to a lesser extent, alchemists continued to practice, for their occult arts clearly involved natural forces, and local cunning folk and provincial wizards continued to offer their services, increasingly furtively, but learned magicians practicing the invocation of spirits had largely disappeared from the European stage by the seventeenth century. Nostradamus, for example, insisted that he was not a magician and claimed he had burned his magic books even as he cultivated a European-wide reputation for prophesying. Similarly, John Dee insisted that he was not a magician even as he studied the occult arts and employed scryers to communicate with spirits in hopes of attaining transcendent insights. In all probability, a few individuals on the fringes of upper-class society secretly practiced learned magic, hoping to harness occult powers for their own or their clients' purposes, but they kept a low profile and have left few traces.

Although natural magicians disappeared rather abruptly from the European scene, natural magic did not. As a body of explanations about the more obscure workings of the physical world, it held a respected place in natural philosophy. Natural magic played a role in all medieval philosophies of nature and continued to do so in the professional activities and conceptual schemes of many early modern scientists. Both William Gilbert and Van Helmont took magic very seriously, and

Johannes Kepler and Galileo Galilei cast horoscopes professionally. Kepler was deeply influenced by Hermeticism and Neoplatonism, and his research on planetary motion was encouraged by his faith in the existence of a magical geometry of the planets and a unifying spirit in the universe. Isaac Newton studied alchemy as well as optics, and his greatest achievement, the universal laws of gravitation, involved the acceptance of an essentially occult force in nature, gravity. However, because natural magic was so closely integrated into medieval natural philosophy, its explanatory power declined as science changed. Astrology, for example, had been explained in terms of Aristotelian cosmology, and the idea of occult influences on health and disease fit with Galenic medicine, but the magical systems lost their intellectual underpinnings as venerable scientific systems fell out of favor. Furthermore, the most vehement advocates of the new mechanical philosophy objected to any notion of action at a distance, so even though gravitation and magnetism made this position impossible to sustain in the long run, in the short run, mechanical philosophers argued strenuously against magical notions like the physical power of sympathy and antipathy or the ability of the heavens to directly influence human affairs. More fundamentally, and perhaps most importantly, the magical notion of a purposive universe held together by conscious forces ultimately could not be reconciled with the new scientific conception of an inanimate universe governed by mechanical processes.

LEARNED MAGIC AFTER THE WITCH PERSECUTIONS

Except for astrology, the practice of learned magic languished in Europe for the better part of two centuries, from the mid-1600s to the mid-1800s. The devout regarded it as irreligious if not diabolical; scientists rejected it as they embraced the new mechanical philosophy; the *philosophes* ridiculed it; and the upper classes in general adopted disbelief as a cultural marker distinguishing themselves from the common herd. Popular practitioners now used books, including texts adapted from learned magical traditions, but it is uncertain how many indulged in the more complex and arcane rituals. Whatever they did, like whatever isolated members of the elite did, was furtive and left few traces. A few famous eighteenth-century figures like Emanuel Swedenborg and Franz Anton Mesmer are sometimes considered magicians, but Swedenborg was a mystic who did not practice magic, whereas Mesmer combined modern technology and magnetic instruments with instinctive showmanship rather than practicing any esoteric tradition. Figures like Casanova and “Count Cagliostro” were merely adventurers and charlatans who used magic to perpetrate conscious frauds. Of course, their ability to perpetrate frauds demonstrates the con-

tinuing attraction of magical beliefs, even for a significant portion of the elite. It seems certain that some people read surviving treatises on learned magic and attempted to practice what they read, but learned magic had been pushed to the outermost margins of European intellectual life by the combination of religious disapproval, intellectual disregard, and social disdain.

The open and serious practice of learned magic only revived in the middle of the nineteenth century, when Alphonse Louis Constant began publishing books on learned magic under the pseudonym of Eliphaz Levi and quickly gathered a circle of disciples and pupils. This revival gained momentum when it was institutionalized in a number of secret societies modeled on Freemasonry, which was at that point already well over a century old. The first of these, the Societas Rosicruciana, was founded in 1866 to study the Kabbalah, the Hermetic texts, and other ancient traditions. It was soon followed by the Theosophical Society, which started in 1875 and focused on introducing non-Western esoteric traditions to Europe and the United States. The process culminated in 1888 with the founding of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, which had the express purpose of practicing the magic that such older groups were merely studying. In the following decades, books about the practice of venerable magical traditions spread gradually, stimulated by a series of charismatic magicians like Aleister Crowley and George Ivanovitch Gurdjieff and supported by attempts to study occult phenomena scientifically that appeared to confirm their existence. However, their following and impact remained limited until the passing of the Fraudulent Mediums Act that eliminated witchcraft from British law in 1951 and the rise of the psychedelic “counterculture” in the late 1960s opened the floodgates to widespread incorporation of a variety of magical traditions, including those that had made up European learned magic, into the New Age culture that involves a range of magical practitioners and whose books comprise a section of virtually every contemporary bookstore.

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See also: AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM, HEINRICH CORNELIUS; ALCHEMY; APULEIUS OF MADAURA; ASTROLOGY; CARDANO, GIROLAMO; CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST 1800); DEE, JOHN; DELLA PORTA, GIAMBATTISTA; DEMONOLOGY; ENLIGHTENMENT; FAUST, JOHANN GEORG; HERMETICISM; INVOCATIONS; KABBALAH; KEPLER, JOHANNES; MAGIC, NATURAL; MAGIC, POPULAR; MECHANICAL PHILOSOPHY; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; NECROMANCY; OCCULT; PARACELUS, THEOPHRASTUS BOMBASTUS VON HOHENHEIM; RITUAL MAGIC; SCIENCE AND MAGIC; SKEPTICISM; SYMPATHY; THORNDIKE, LYNN; TRITHEMIUS, JOHANNES; WEYER, JOHANN.

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MAGIC, NATURAL

A set of beliefs and practices relating to the ability of human beings to affect their condition for the better and to create helpful objects through the manipulation of natural forces. *Natural* magic, which worked with and within the laws of nature for useful and licit purposes, was distinguished by its practitioners from *artificial* magic, which made use of machines and technological processes, and from *demonic* magic, which superseded natural laws through intervention of supernatural beings and was considered wicked and illicit. (*Divine* magic, through which God created miracles and prodigies, had no relation whatsoever to human understanding.) The natural magician, or magus, was a learned man who sought to explore the workings of nature for speculative or mystical purposes (e.g., Marsilio Ficino in the fifteenth century), for domestic or utilitarian aids (e.g., Giambattista Della Porta in the sixteenth century), or as a pseudoscientific experimental research program (e.g., Athanasius Kircher in the seventeenth century). The philosophical roots of natural magic grew out of the same mystical Hermetic and Neoplatonic tradition that

inspired astrology, geomancy, and alchemy. Many of the recipes, spells, and beauty and household tips that we presented in Books of Secrets (as works on magic we sometimes called) also passed into manuals of natural magic. Its practical, use-oriented bias and the organized appearance of the discipline in early modern academies, along with publications that allowed for verification and repeatability of experiments, have led some historians to view natural magic as a precursor to science proper. Apart from a shared belief in hidden forces affecting objects at a distance, the forms of curative and love magic practiced by wise women and the black magic practiced by witches had little or nothing to do with the aims of natural magic, which sought not to influence people or fate but rather to understand better the workings of nature and to create useful products for the benefit of human society.

BASIC BELIEF STRUCTURE

At the base of natural magic lies the founding belief that the world is infused with a soul, or *anima mundi* (world soul), emanating directly from the Divine Mind and endowing all material forms with spirit. According to this Hermetic and Neoplatonic tradition, there is a correspondence between microcosm (all earthly things and beings as well as the little microcosm of the human body) and macrocosm (the planets and stars) that links all things together through sympathies and antipathies, creating a harmonious cosmic consensus. These resonances between sublunary and celestial beings are similar in their workings to how we understand modern physical forces like gravity, causing things to be attracted to or repelled by each other.

Magnetism, as described by Athanasius Kircher (1667), for example, was an immaterial sympathy that bound all beings and all levels of existence together in a hierarchical chain held in the hand of God. According to Kircher, the same force governed the declination of the magnet, the resurgence of plants, the association of animals with sun (cock) and moon (stag), the phenomena of heliotropic and selenotropic flowers, and the virtues of the snake-stone, a homeopathic remedy for snakebite (Godwin 1979, 74). Parts and qualities of earthly things, including the organs of the body and their ailments, were classified along with their corresponding celestial counterparts according to various theoretical schemas based on active versus passive, male versus female, solar versus lunar, and so forth. A magus strove to identify hidden “signatures” that revealed the exact place of things in the cosmic order so as to be able to manipulate their properties for his benefit.

For example, the early Renaissance practitioner of natural magic might construct a talisman out of gold (a solar metal) in the shape of an animal under the celestial reign of the sun's influence, such as a rooster or a hawk. By engraving an image of the sun on it with characters to

signify Jove (representing the penetrative solar power) and setting a solar gem like a carbuncle or ruby into it, he could induce healthful influxes into the formed metal. In order to benefit from the solar spirit thus called into the talisman, he could wear it around his neck, thereby allowing the celestial influence to permeate his body.

The art of the magus lay in gathering particular natural materials while the planet whose influx they contained was reigning; he then formed them according to their planetary resonance and obtained for himself the gifts that the heavens had to offer. What nature provided, he manipulated or operated on, turning it to his uses. This interventionist attitude toward nature and natural products, which the magus saw as being perfected by human knowledge and skill, is also at the basis of the technological attitude. In fact, by the end of the seventeenth century, natural magic had a solidly technical bias to it and gradually became assimilated into the new sciences.

THE MAGUS

Natural magicians took pains to distinguish their arts from the diabolical crafts of common conjurers, witches, and diviners, although the distinction was not always clear to some contemporaries who marveled at their arcane feats. Giambattista Della Porta, for instance, was denounced to the Inquisition several times, along with his fellow members of the Academy of the Secrets of Nature, for dabbling in the occult and resorting to demonic aid. Like others who were accused of straying into impious and dangerous practices in their pursuit of knowledge, he responded to the charges by pointing out that all technological inventions are classified as magic by the vulgar until their functioning is explained and their prodigious quality subsides.

Perhaps that is why, in the late sixteenth century, Della Porta also described the preparation and learning needed to become a natural magician as very arduous and wide-ranging: the adept must be “a very perfect Philosopher” and “a skillful Physician”: “moreover it is required of him that he be an Herbalist,” “and as there is no greater inconvenience to any Artificer, than not to know his tools that he must work with,” he must be equally proficient “in the nature of Metals, Minerals, Gems and Stones.” “Furthermore, what cunning he must have in the art of Distillation . . . no man will doubt of it: for it yields daily very strange inventions, and most witty devices.” Beyond that, “he must also know the Mathematical Sciences, and especially Astrologie,” and, finally, optics (Della Porta 1957, 3).

As is apparent from this curriculum, the late Renaissance magus was typically a scholarly person engaged in experimental research with his colleagues or working alone in his laboratory. Some examples of the experiments of a natural magician from this period include stuffing live geese into boiling water, building

furnaces for coloring plates, fabricating damask knives, preserving apples in sawdust, transforming spectators into monsters by boiling an ass's head in oil, constructing a talking head, breeding animals to produce creative hybrid races, or creating a quasi-perpetual motion machine.

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See also: ALCHEMY; AMULET AND TALISMAN; ASTROLOGY; DEE, JOHN; DELLA PORTA, GIAMBATTISTA; HERMETICISM; MAGIC, LEARNED; MAGIC, POPULAR; OCCULT.

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MAGIC, POPULAR

Witchcraft beliefs belong to a larger constellation of magical concepts that were articulated in related but distinct ways by learned and popular traditions in literate premodern societies. Magical concepts take many different forms but share a belief that the world is influenced by occult or hidden forces (spirits) that can be manipulated through words, ritual actions, or spiritually potent objects. Popular magic describes the set of beliefs current among the general populace (as opposed to specialist magical practitioners in the literate elite) about the nature of these forces and the rituals and objects that can be used to influence them. Magic was a pervasive part of early modern European popular culture, and early modern witch beliefs were strongly influenced by this tradition both directly and through its interaction with Christian theology.

THE CULTURAL CONTEXT OF POPULAR MAGIC

Magic is the oldest system for understanding and influencing the unseen processes that affect human life and has been an important part of almost all cultures. It has traditionally been distinguished from science by its belief that the nonmaterial forces that drive the universe are re conscious, and from religion by the belief that these forces can nevertheless be controlled rather than merely supplicated, although this distinction is less clear-cut

than it once seemed. Both religion and science condemn magic as superstitious, and social elites have sometimes tried to suppress it, but traditions of popular magic have generally adapted and endured.

There is not much distinction between learned and popular magic in simple societies, although there are often adepts with special knowledge and powers (shamans) in them. As class structures and literacy developed, specialists (priests) dedicated their lives to mastering esoteric knowledge and ritual skills, creating a body of written records that preserved and elaborated them. Learned magic thus separated from popular practices, though they remained heavily interconnected. However, not all specialists necessarily became part of the elite, so in many civilizations popular magic involved both the beliefs and practices of low-status practitioners who performed services that the formal priesthood either could not or would not, and the everyday magical beliefs and practices of the general populace.

The rise of the world religions challenged the learned magic of earlier priesthoods and popular magic alike. In addition, sleight-of-hand and other forms of illusion that were often used by magical specialists as part of their rituals were also utilized and developed by entertainers and con artists to amuse paying audiences and defraud the credulous. By the late Middle Ages in Europe, the popular magic of local practitioners and ordinary people thus existed alongside a tradition of conjuring as entertainment and theft, in a mutually enriching relationship with learned magic (although learned magicians often scorned their popular counterparts) and in an antagonistic relationship with the official religion (even though popular magic contained many religious elements and the priesthood participated semiofficially in some popular practices).

POPULAR MAGIC IN EARLY MODERN CULTURE

Popular magical beliefs and practices in early modern Europe were extraordinarily diverse. Peasants in the British Isles, for example, believed that fairies or elves, diminutive people with magical powers, lived in the wild areas between and beyond the cultivated fields. Hungarian peasants believed that babies born with teeth would grow up to be magically adept shamans capable of rendering diverse magical services to the community. Peasants in other parts of the Balkans nearby believed that such infants would die and come back as vampires unless decapitated before being buried. The poor of Venice frequently named their children "Nane" and "Marita" because they believed people with these names could not be bewitched, and Scandinavians believed that the ghosts of victims of infanticide haunted watery places unless they were baptized. Such examples could be multiplied a thousandfold and would still convey only a partial impression of

the range of magical beliefs particular to specific places and times across Europe.

Although the content of early modern popular magic varied enormously, certain common purposes, modes of thought, and practices can be discerned. First, popular magic sought both agricultural productivity and human health and reproduction. Agricultural productivity was fostered through a series of rituals tied to the yearly cycle, supplemented by additional rituals to deal with specific problems like adverse weather and disease in animals. Similarly, human health and reproduction were promoted through rituals tied to the life cycle, especially the points of greatest vulnerability: birth, infancy, marriage, procreation, pregnancy, and death (to help the soul's transition to the afterlife). A huge array of additional magical rituals supplemented these to combat specific maladies. Diagnosis often involved some form of magical divination, which was also used to identify thieves, locate lost objects, and foretell the future. Other common forms of popular magic were used to foster love, promote good luck, locate hidden treasures, ward off evil magic, or inflict harm on others. Across the Continent, these activities involved the ritual use of words, gestures, and objects (sometimes combined with natural agents), which were understood to operate through nonmaterial spirits.

Within particular localities, popular beliefs tended to comprise an aggregate of long-standing local traditions, more recent arrivals from adjacent territories via oral transmission, elements of learned magical traditions conveyed by a combination of written and oral communication, related religious notions imported by the clerical elite, innovations developed by authoritative practitioners, and mutations introduced by the vagaries of oral transmission and unconscious adaptation to changing circumstances. Individual beliefs existed in the context of the local magical cosmology and the larger popular culture, and they both expressed and helped shape social relationships.

POPULAR MAGIC, CHRISTIAN AUTHORITY, AND WITCHCRAFT FEARS

Because Christianity supplied early modern Europe's overall cosmology, popular beliefs and rituals, even those that originated in paganism, were at least loosely framed in Christian terms, or their implications were simply ignored. A larger intellectual framework for popular magic remained largely unarticulated, for any attempt would have constituted heresy. Meanwhile, working in the opposite direction, late medieval theologians assimilated both learned and popular magic into Christian doctrine by asserting that both inherently involved evil spirits or demons, thus making all magic diabolical and all magicians agents of the Devil. Only a minority of Europeans accepted this line of reasoning entirely, and civil authorities generally treated beneficent magicians

less harshly than people thought to practice harmful or explicitly diabolical magic, but this reductionist process of systematic diabolization nevertheless became an important part of the early modern belief in a widespread conspiracy of diabolical witches.

There was, as far as we can determine, no conspiracy of Devil-worshipping sorcerers in late medieval Europe. Nor was there any underground pagan religion with a theology and priestly hierarchy. There was, however, an immense body of popular magic that existed outside, and in some cases against, the formal doctrines of the established church. The desire to root this out, as disobedience and moral laxity if not as diabolism, was incorporated into many law codes. From this point of view, the witch persecutions were only the most severe component of a much broader campaign to suppress popular magic, which itself was a component of an even broader campaign to rid popular culture of all non-Christian elements. This campaign achieved only partial success overall, but it made life difficult for generations of specialized practitioners and distanced the sociopolitical elite from magical beliefs and practices, perhaps thereby contributing to the decline of magic and the rise of science during the same period.

Popular magic contributed in two other ways to early modern European concerns about witchcraft. First, fear of witchcraft, in the sense of hostile magic rather than diabolism, was a long-standing element of popular culture and “un-witchers,” or healers who specialized in detecting and countering witches, were common among popular practitioners. Second, popular magical traditions contained techniques that people could use to attempt to inflict harm on others—and some people used them, either alone or in combination with other agents like poisons. Consequently, the accusation that a person was a victim of some form of harmful magic, while difficult to prove and open to significant abuse, was neither inherently absurd nor necessarily wrong. In fact, popular magical traditions also included many other elements of the witchcraft demonology. Not only did people believe that some people flew through the air, congregated with other similar people, and could raise storms or change into animals, but also some people thought they themselves did these things. Popular magic was no mere backdrop for witchcraft beliefs, helping to make them plausible; it was the source for most of them. The demonologists did not invent their evidence, but rather they conflated many disparate and disjointed elements of popular magic and mixed them with literate traditions about magic and deviancy and with Christian theology in a way that distorted both their significance and their substance.

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See also: CHARMS; CLERICAL MAGIC; COUNTERMAGIC; CUNNING
FOLK; CURSES; DIABOLISM; DIVINATION; EVIL EYE; FAIRIES;

FOLKLORE; GHOSTS; LOVE MAGIC; MAGIC AND RELIGION;
MALEFICIJUM; OCCULT; PEOPLE OF THE NIGHT; SCIENCE AND
MAGIC; SHAMANISM; SPELLS; SUPERSTITION; VAMPIRE; WEATHER
MAGIC; WORDS, POWER OF.

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MAGNUS, OLAUS (1490–1557)

Magnus was a Swedish geographer and historian whose chapters on sorcery and supernatural powers, even though occupying only miniscule space in his vast description of the Nordic peoples, *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus* (History of the Northern Peoples, 1555), received the most attention in Europe and stunned readers.

Born in Lindköping, Sweden, Olaus Magnus was a Catholic who chose to live in voluntary exile after Sweden's conversion to Lutheranism in 1524. Together with his elder brother Johannes Magnus, he traveled and studied widely in Europe. From 1544 onward, he performed the duties of a titular Swedish bishop from Rome, where he had settled by 1541, and died sixteen years later.

The original Latin edition of *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus*, made of 22 parts comprising nearly 770 chapters in 816 folio pages, actually began as a detailed commentary to the *Carta Marina* (sometimes called the *Carta Gotica*), a 1539 map that Magnus had made and published in Venice, showing the vast territory the Catholic Church had lost through the Reformation. This work was based upon a journey that Magnus took to Norrland (the northern part of Sweden) in 1518–1519. He visited Nidaros (Trondheim) in Norway and traveled as far north as Pello, in Övertorneå. He described Torneå as a meeting

place for people trading in northern Scandinavia. Olaus Magnus was one of the first to mention and to locate Blåkulla, a famous Nordic mountain believed to be the site of witches' meetings.

Following typical conventions of the time, his book had an extensive subtitle: readers would learn about the northern people's "different positions, customs, habits, ways of life, superstitions methods of instruction, activities, government, food, wars, buildings, implements, metal mines, and marvels, together with almost all the living creatures that dwell in the North, and their characteristics." Scandinavia had been called the septentrionale region since ancient times in Europe. Its literal translation is "The History of the Peoples Living Under the Seven Plow-Oxen or Under the Plough [the Big Dipper]." It was the first report that thoroughly described the Nordic countries to a geographically interested Renaissance Europe, and it remained the most important work on Scandinavia until the mid-eighteenth century. It contained about 500 illustrations, many made by the author, some of which are still used to illustrate Nordic customs and witchcraft. Abridgements of the original text were translated into French, Italian, Spanish, German, Dutch, and English during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, although no Swedish translation appeared until the 1920s, and the first complete English translation appeared quite recently (Magnus 1996–1998).

Magnus emphasized three characteristics of the Nordic countries: they were the cradle of warfare, the haunt of demons, and the realm of immeasurable cold. The author wrote about everything Scandinavian: about the rich catches of fish off the coast of northern Norway, Lofoten's engulfing maelstrom, the invincible Vardø fortress, the lifestyle of northern Scandinavia's Sami, and sea monsters that tore human beings apart with their teeth. Exceptional depictions abound; the North was both the Arctic Eden and the ancient home of evil. Its climate produced a hardy people known for their courage, bravery, and strength. Knowledge and control of the natural elements not only helped the Swedes in warfare but also assisted northern Norwegian fishermen, who avoided shipwreck by their knowledge of the winds. By showing the reciprocal interactions between nature and northern peoples and their talents in the arts of war, Magnus wished to warn European leaders of what they faced if they planned to invade his homeland.

The book was published at the right time to fill geographical gaps in sixteenth-century demonological information. Nordic witches had permanent meeting grounds for holding Sabbats, and throughout northern Scandinavia, wrote Jean Bodin in 1580, alluding to Magnus's work, one could hear incantations and the tongue of the Devil. Sorcery was particularly widespread among the inhabitants of Lapland. They were

adept at fortunetelling, wind magic, and other shameful works of the Devil. Satan reigned over the people of the North, and evil and misfortune arrived on the northern winds. Lycanthropy plagued vast regions of the Nordic countries, and many werewolves resided in the Baltic nations—and all this came from Magnus.

RUNE HAGEN;

TRANSLATED BY MARK LEDINGHAM

See also: BLÅKULLA; BODIN, JEAN; DEMONOLOGY; FINLAND;

LAPLAND; NORWAY; SWEDEN; WEATHER MAGIC; WIND KNOTS.

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MAINZ, ELECTORATE OF

With approximately 2,000 victims in a territory of approximately 7,000 square kilometers, the ecclesiastical electorate of Mainz ranks among the most strongly affected states of the Holy Roman Empire (Pohl 1998, 41; Gebhard 1991, 65). Its main period of witch hunting lasted only from 1593 to 1630, in four main waves, until the occupation of the electorate of Mainz by Swedish troops brought the trials to an abrupt end as Elector Anselm Kasimir fled to Cologne. Under his successor, Johann Philipp von Schönborn, who was influenced by Friedrich Spee, only a few trials occurred. It is not true, as one often reads, that under his rule witchcraft trials ended; the last executions took place in 1684 at Worbis (in the district of Eichsfeld in Thuringia) (Pelizaeus 2004). Afterward, Mainz had individual trials for witchcraft insults until 1739.

The electorate of Mainz, whose territorial lord was not only an elector but also an archbishop and the imperial arch-chancellor, had an outstanding position within the Holy Roman Empire; therefore, witchcraft trials in this territory possessed a certain model character for other ecclesiastical territories. Like the other two archbishop-electors, his territory was scattered across possessions on the Rhine (the Unterstift, or lower

a rchbishopric), in the Spessart, Odenwald, Main, and Tauber River area (the Oberstift, or upper archbishopric), in Hesse and around Efurt, and in Thuringia (Eichsfeld). The witchcraft trials affected the upper archbishopric more than its possessions in the Unterstift, in Hesse, and in Thuringia. Most trials were promoted by local populations and local officials, whose zeal the electoral government tried repeatedly to moderate. However, the archbishop's government made no serious attempt to prevent the trials.

The principal literature agreed that there were four waves of pursuit but dated them differently, although agreeing that the last and largest wave occurred from 1627 to 1629, parallel to those in the Franconian dioceses of Würzburg and Bamberg. Most victims died during these waves. Pohl (1998, 39) dated the first wave from 1593 to 1595, the second one in 1603, and the third in 1615–1616; Gebhard (1991, 303) dated the first wave from 1601 to 1604, the next from 1611 to 1614, and the third in 1616–1617. However, Gebhard ignored the trials in the 1590s and overestimated the intensity of pursuit, so Pohl's dates seem preferable. Due to the unsatisfactory state of sources (only 404 criminal procedures survive), estimates of the distribution of the victims for the entire electorate are impossible and must be limited to certain districts. The large majority of those executed were female and married, although the proportion of men seems relatively high at 17–30 percent (Pohl 1998, 212–219). Victims were most commonly aged 41–60, followed by the 26–40 year olds. In the city of Dieburg, the average age of victims was about 55 (Gebhard 1991, 239–249; Pohl 1998, 214–219). Trials against children leading to execution were very rare.

The electoral government made no profits from these trials, particularly because a 1612 regulation expressly forbade the confiscation of goods intended for the victims' children. Many professions were involved in Mainz witchcraft trials. As elsewhere, outsiders like shepherds, musicians, or groups like migrants or widows (who because of their social status were in greater danger than other groups) were affected first. Midwives are repeatedly mentioned in trials, but no firm statistics exist about the frequency with which they were tried. Some large-scale trials of the final wave, particularly in the city of Dieburg, also reached into the urban upper class, including councilmen. However, clergy, scholars, or noblemen were never affected, even by the final wave of pursuit. Therefore, the majority of victims were artisans or came from rural groups. Although there is no evidence that special Counter-Reformation attacks lie behind these trials, it is noteworthy that districts bordering Protestant areas were particularly affected, as was Dieburg, where tensions between Catholic clergy and the partially Protestant population ran high.

LEGISLATION

Because Elector and Arch-chancellor Berthold of Henneberg (1484–1504) had a relevant role in planning what became the Carolina Code, already introduced in the electorate of Mainz during the reign of Albrecht of Brandenburg (1514–1545) in 1527–1528, five years before its official proclamation for the entire Holy Roman Empire, the Carolina Code always regulated criminal procedure at Mainz. All witchcraft trials had to be judged by the archbishop's *Weltlicher Rat* (Secular Council), which, despite its name, included a majority of clergymen. Nevertheless, during the seventeenth century such lower territorial instances as the *Keller* (Cellar) tended to accomplish many measures on their own. In order to cover themselves, they dispatched documents to the Secular Council in Mainz or at least corresponded with higher authorities before passing judgment. However, law faculties, including the University of Mainz, were almost never consulted. Therefore the influence of lawyers on the trials remained comparatively small, especially because only two lawyers generally sat on the Secular Council.

In 1612, Elector Johann Schweickart von Kronberg (1604–1626) published a detailed questionnaire and regulations about detention and confiscation. Although the new procedures were intended to provide greater equity, in fact they aggravated the situation. The questionnaire, consisting of 113 questions, enabled even lower local instances to proceed against witches without any legal advice and to convict suspects simply for confessing under torture to the questionnaire. This change allowed very rapid procedures and condemnations of suspects, which proved particularly fatal during the waves of 1612–1613 and 1627–1629. The new regulations for detention did improve the situation in individual cases, but with mass trials, the situation remained catastrophic after 1612. Therefore only the regulations for confiscation, compared to the previous regulations of Elector Wolfgang von Dalberg, may be regarded as beneficial.

CHRONOLOGY

In 1511, the first provable witchcraft trial before the city council of Mainz still involved nondiabolical *maleficium* (harmful magic), as did everything else until the last quarter of the sixteenth century. Only in the city of Steinheim did executions occur before 1550. In the last quarter of the sixteenth century, the behavior of the authorities changed fundamentally; from that point, they felt themselves obliged to intervene directly in cases of witchcraft accusations. Around 1570, during the reign of Elector Wolfgang von Dalberg (1582–1601), pursuit began to intensify, first in the upper bishopric. From there it reached the whole electorate, where trials occurred continuously after 1590, with varying intensity.

During the short reign of Johann Adam von Bicken (1601–1604), trials received a sharp stimulus. Bicken continued von Dalberg's proceedings, and trials multiplied rapidly, particularly in the upper bishopric and especially in some places that would also be affected later: Dieburg, Aschaffenburg, Miltenberg, and Lohr. After Bicken's sudden death, trials came to a nearly complete halt for about six years. The new elector, Johann Schweickart von Kronberg, responsible for the 1612 regulations, held himself back at first, apparently giving special attention to steering the trials into better-regulated courses. But when the population and local authorities again demanded trials, the elector complied with their desires. These trials gained momentum through re-arresting people already accused in 1604 and now included the lower bishopric as well.

Toward the end of Schweickart von Kronberg's reign, the trials decreased again, probably because of the parallel decrease in the neighboring bishopric of Würzburg. However, the largest wave, with the most victims, began immediately under his successor, Georg Friedrich of Greiffenclau (ruled 1626–1629). Like Schweickart von Kronberg, he yielded to local demands for resumption of the witchcraft trials. After his death in 1629, trials decreased substantially under Anselm Kasimir Walmbold of Umstadt (ruled 1629–1647) and almost stopped with the conquest of the electorate by Swedish troops in 1631. After the elector fled to exile in Cologne, only isolated trials continued; with his return, they did not revive. His successor Johann Philipp von Schönborn (ruled 1647–1673), who was also prince-bishop of Würzburg from 1642, marked a clear break. His government prevented the wave of trials from 1660–1670, which afflicted most of the Holy Roman Empire, from again disturbing the electorate. Isolated trials still occurred under Schönborn, but the elector always made an exact examination of each case and thereby prevented any expansion of the trials. Schönborn's actions were on the one hand considerably affected by the views of Friedrich Spee's *Cautio Criminalis seu de processibus contra sagas liber* (A Warning on Criminal Justice, or a Book on Witch Trials, 1631) and on the other hand by his political support from Louis XIV's France. The last two executions for witchcraft occurred in 1684 at Worbis; accusations can be found afterward, but they never led to executions.

LUDOLF PELIZAEUS

See also: CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*); ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); GERMANY, SOUTHEASTERN; HESSE; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; THURINGIA; UNIVERSITIES; WITCH-BISHOPS (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); WÜRZBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF.

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MALDONADO, JUAN (1534–1583)

Known in France as Jean Maldonat, this Jesuit became a significant figure in the development of European demonology. His well-attended Paris lectures of 1571–1572, which presented a militant, highly political approach to demons and witches, became very influential in France and helped shape Jesuit thought on these subjects before the great synthesis by his former student, Martín Del Rio, early in the seventeenth century.

A native of Seville, Maldonado studied at the University of Salamanca, where he became a professor of philosophy and theology in 1562. Ordained as a priest in the Jesuit order in 1563, he was soon sent to Paris to become professor of theology at the newly founded *collège* of Clermont. Staffed by Jesuits and patronized by the powerful Guise family, it was able to open its doors only after winning a bitter lawsuit brought by their French enemies.

Maldonado soon proved a popular and successful teacher. His ability to attract students probably explains the vehemence of his opponents in the University of Paris. But even those who opposed his intellectual and political positions considered his learning and holiness impeccable. Maldonado tried to create a revived Aristotelian Catholic theology and trained men to argue and defend it. Typically for a Spaniard, he described himself as a soldier in the religious combat of his age, and from his first days in Paris, he joined the Catholic polemicists who attacked the growth and spread of the French Reformed Church.

In 1569, during the third French War of Religion, Maldonado participated in a Catholic mission to reconvert people to Roman Catholicism in a region near Poitiers that had been deeply penetrated by Protestant heresy. After returning to Paris, he gave a series of public lectures that became crucial to the development of a confessionalized French Catholic demonology. We

know their contents only because one of his students published them thirty-five years later. Delivered in simple Latin to appeal to a wide audience and informed by his recent mission in Poitou, his lectures were enormously popular, attracting hundreds of auditors.

The theological thread running through all Maldonado's Paris lectures, including his series on witches, was the immortality of the soul. Seeing this doctrine as central to Christian belief, he accused Protestants of denying or seriously underplaying it; for him, that could only be diabolically inspired heresy. Maldonado tied the growth of heresy closely to the spread of demons. "In Bohemia and Germany," he claimed, "the Hussite heresy was accompanied by such a storm of demons that witches were busier than heretics" (Maldonado 1605, 156). Then Geneva became infected, then France. One of the greatest sins of contemporary heretics was to deny the reality of demons and angels; Maldonado considered doing so equivalent to atheism. He emphasized the reality and orthodoxy of beliefs like the transportation of witches to Sabbats. To deny such things, as he accused Calvin's followers of doing, only confirmed their heretical and diabolical atheism.

A brilliant lecturer and inspiring teacher, Maldonado's influence stretched far beyond his 1571–1572 lectures. His auditors and students included several men who

became important Catholic spokesmen and carried his ideas about the connections between witchcraft and heresy well into the seventeenth century. The prolific Jesuit author Louis Richeome was Maldonado's student, as was Ma rín Del Rio, the best-known Jesuit authority on witchcraft, whose subsequent career took place mainly in Flanders and whose influence was greatest in the Holy Roman Empire. Another listener at Clermont in 1571–1572 was Pierre de Lancre, who subsequently conducted the biggest witchcraft trials in French history; he was then in Paris studying law.

JONATHAN L. PEARL

See also: DEL RIO, MARTÍN; FRANCE; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; WARS OF RELIGION (FRANCE).

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MALE WITCHES

The crime of witchcraft was sex-linked, but it was certainly not sex-specific. With the large amount of scholarship devoted in recent years to the connections between women and witchcraft, we have almost lost



A male witch frolics with demons, who dance and play music around a magic circle at a Sabbat. From Olaus Magnus, Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus (History of the Northern Peoples), 1555. (Cornell University Library)

sight of the fact that a great many witches were men. In fact, probably somewhere around 6,000 men were executed for witchcraft in early modern Europe, which means that far more European men were burned as witches than were executed for heresy during the Protestant Reformation. Men were well-represented in the very earliest European witch hunts; for example, men formed at least one-third of the identifiable witches tried in Valais in 1428 and 28 percent of the 250-plus witches tried in the Alpine valleys of Dauphiné between 1424 and 1448. In a few places, like Neuchâtel in French Switzerland, men even formed a majority of the earliest recorded witches. If the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) insisted that witches were almost invariably women, the (probably forged) papal bull that preceded it specified that men and women alike were guilty of witchcraft.

Although the link between women and witchcraft accusations remained strong almost everywhere in Europe during the most intensive period of witch hunting between 1570 and 1660, some men were punished for practicing witchcraft almost everywhere. Very few places imitated the Inquisition of Siena, which heard testimony about male witches, or *stregoni*, but arrested only women; indeed, other branches of the Roman Inquisition behaved quite differently toward men who were magical healers, as the well-known history of the mostly male Friulian *benandanti* (do-gooders) testifies. At the opposite extreme from Siena was Europe's westernmost outpost, Iceland, where women comprised less than 10 percent of witchcraft defendants, and only one of the twenty-two people executed for witchcraft in the seventeenth century was a woman, burned together with her son. We need to realize that there were places as extreme as Siena or Iceland about gendering witches, but in fact, almost everywhere else fell somewhere in between—and they were usually much closer to the example of Siena than of Iceland.

In order to shed some light on the problem of male witches, it seems helpful to start by trying to answer some simple questions, such as *where* men were most frequently found among accused witches, and *what kinds* of men seem to have been most frequently accused of witchcraft, before trying to tackle the ultimate problem of *why*, despite the opinions of some witchcraft theorists and some modern authors, so many thousands of men were punished for witchcraft. If we imagine a geographical list that reverses the usual gender priorities about witches and proceeds from Iceland toward Siena rather than vice versa, we encounter a few places with sizable samples of recorded witchcraft trials where men comprised a clear majority of accused witches: seventeenth-century Muscovy, with about 150 men in 200 witchcraft trials (Zguta 1977;

Kivelson 1991), and Normandy in northwestern France, with almost 300 men in 400-plus witchcraft trials between 1560 and 1700 (Monter 1997). If seventeenth-century Muscovy saw three men arrested for witchcraft for every woman, this disproportion was even greater in seventeenth-century Normandy, with at least four male witches for every female witch; by mid-century, when this province averaged one or two witchcraft cases per year, women had almost disappeared.

In the areas discussed in this paragraph, men and women were represented approximately evenly among accused witches. They include two places near Muscovy: Finland, with almost-equal numbers of men and women, and Estonia, with a majority of men among its 200 indicted witches (Ankarloo and Henningsen 1990, 321, 267)—but in both places, the majority of executed witches were women. In some Austrian provinces, particularly Styria and Carinthia, men also comprised a majority of people arrested for witchcraft (Labouvie 1990, 57–58). In western Europe, we find similar percentages on Normandy's borders among the 1,000-plus witches judged by the *Parlement* of Paris between 1560 and 1640 (Soman 1977, 798–799); here, if we combine witchcraft with maleficent magic, men comprised a majority of those condemned to death by Europe's most prestigious appellate court.

Beneath such widely scattered half-male samples, we find a cluster of contiguous states along what were then the western edges of the Holy Roman Empire, west of the Rhine and extending south from modern Belgium to the French Alps, where men comprised a sizable minority of the very large groups of people tried and frequently burned as witches. Men accounted for between 27 percent and 33 percent of all witches in such German-speaking places as Luxembourg or Saarland and such French-speaking places as Lorraine, Franche-Comté, or the Pays de Vaud in western Switzerland; smaller samples from Alsace and the electorate of Trier confirm the impression that we are dealing with a regional phenomenon. Farther east, in the Germanic heartlands of the witch hunts, the percentage of men usually drops below one-fourth; for modern Germany as a whole, it was probably around 20 percent. And, of course, there were also several places, including the British Isles, Sweden, or parts of modern Belgium, where male witches were very rare, comprising less than one-tenth of accused witches.

In the handful of places where most witches were men, the *kinds* of men arrested for this crime seem extremely different. In Muscovy, the single most common feature among men charged with witchcraft is that they were vagrants, recent immigrants, or often-fugitive serfs; several other witches were non-Christians, Finns, or Turks. However, in Normandy, a cheese-producing region, by far the most feared male witches were

shepherds, some of whom possessed veritable arsenals suitable for performing both offensive and defensive magic. Unlike Muscovy, Normandy's witches included many priests, at least seven of whom were burned for *sonilège* (diabolic magic), while another went to the galleys and several more were permanently banished (Monter 1997, 582–583). Normandy's blacksmiths provided a third dangerous occupational category because of their skill in harming as well as healing horses.

There was, however, one important characteristic shared between seventeenth-century Muscovite and Norman male witches: Many men in both places practiced magical healing. Early modern European folk healers included large numbers of both men and women; it seems significant that the ordinary English phrase for them, "cunning folk," is not sex-specific. Male healers could be found throughout Europe, including Sieneese *strigoni* who, unlike many of their counterparts elsewhere, were never charged with witchcraft by the inquisitors. However, we should realize that male magicians rarely tried to heal very young children; in the age of witch hunting, "neonatal medicine" and "pediatrics" were almost exclusively female specialties. And because the very worst crimes attributed to witches involved harming or even killing very young children (for example, this was almost the only reason for hanging witches in England), women were overwhelmingly predominant among the usual suspects in such circumstances. Almost the only way men killed young children was in the form of werewolves, and such cases were extremely rare almost everywhere in Europe.

But if men rarely practiced pediatrics or inflicted *maleficia* (harmful magic) on small children, they had a near-monopoly on veterinary medicine, especially in connection with horses and cows, the largest and most valuable animals on any farm in early modern Europe. The whole western Alpine zone, where men comprised upwards of one-third of all witches, were afflicted with bewitched cattle. The blacksmiths of Normandy (and perhaps elsewhere) also fit here.

There were certainly other reasons why men were targeted as witches. Many men were drawn into the net of witchcraft suspects through being related to female witches, their mothers or sisters as well as their wives. In places such as England where men comprised an extremely small share of accused witches, kinship with other witches through blood or marriage provides the principal explanation for which men were accused. As with women, various personal attributes such as spitefulness, a penchant for making threats, or some other forms of criminal behavior, also increased some men's vulnerability to charges of witchcraft.

It has been demonstrated (Midelfort 1972, 182) that men even became a majority of those executed during the latter phases of some of the very largest German witch hunts in the 1620s, as traditional stereotypes of

witches began to break down; but it has also been argued that this very development led to a crisis of confidence in the legal system. Even more remarkably, the final phase of witch hunting in present-day Austria, the *Zauberer-Jackl* (Sorcerer-Jack) panic of Salzburg at the end of the 1670s, involved mostly very young men rather than old women, and this pattern carried over into some of eighteenth-century witchcraft trials in Bavaria (Behringer 1997, 336–344). But a great deal of work remains to be done on this topic, as the exploratory nature of this sketch shows.

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: AUSTRIA; *BENANDANTI*; CHILDREN; CUNNING FOLK; ESTONIA; FEMALE WITCHES; FINLAND; FRANCHE-COMTÉ; GENDER; ICELAND; LUXEMBOURG, DUCHY OF; NORMANDY; PARLEMENT OF PARIS; RUSSIA; SALZBURG, PRINCE-ARCHBISHOPRIC OF; SIENESE NEW STATE; TRIER, ELECTORATE OF; VAUD, PAYS DE.

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MALEFICIUM

Maleficium, harm inflicted through occult means, was one of the two main ingredients of early modern witchcraft, along with a pact with the Devil. In theory, any harmful magic required the assistance of the Devil and therefore implied a pact with him, but in practice the

two were generally distinguished. Learned commentators stressed the primacy of the pact, and some law codes made it alone a capital offense, but generally evidence of both diabolism and some form of *maleficium* was needed for prosecution to be carried through to execution. Commoners, who made most accusations and testified about prior offenses, focused on *maleficia*, which included both sorcery, or harmful ritual magic, and witchcraft, an inherent ability to cause magical harm. While diabolism was a particular, and in many ways peculiar, feature of early modern European witchcraft, *maleficium* linked it to the much broader fears of harmful magic that haunt people in many societies worldwide. No good evidence of the kind of widespread Devil-worship feared by the demonologists has been found, but there is no question that malefic magic was practiced, and there is reason to think that some of the activities it involved constituted a real threat to other peoples' health and well-being.

FORMS OF MALEFICIUM

As in many other cultures, harmful magic took two main forms in Europe: ritual magic intended to cause various sorts of damage, which social scientists call sorcery, and an inherent power to inflict harm that certain people were thought to have, called witchcraft. The specific rituals employed in sorcery vary widely from culture to culture, but the basic elements and forms of damage they are thought to inflict do not. Sorcerers, in early modern Europe as elsewhere, worked through the use of spells and incantations, ritual actions and gestures, potions (poisons), and spiritually potent objects. The damage they were thought to cause included first and foremost bodily injury (illness, impotence, and death in people and animals) and disruption of natural processes (storms and hail; stunted crops; and impeded production of butter, cheese, or beer). Love magic was sometimes considered a form of sorcery but could also be regarded as beneficent magic, depending on the circumstances.

Innate witchcraft was thought to manifest the witch's ill will directly, but as in many other cultures it was transmitted via a look (the evil eye), a touch, or a spontaneous word or gesture. Some cultures held that it could occur without the witch being aware that he or she was causing injury or even consciously wanting to do so, but early modern Europeans generally treated it as a manifestation of the witch's conscious desire to cause harm. In fact, the witch demonology insisted that the power came from an explicit pact with the Devil, and magistrates used torture to compel suspects accused of manifesting this power to confess to having made one. This innate witchcraft was held responsible for damages similar to sorcery, although bodily maladies and small-scale, localized physical effects like butter not churning were featured more prominently

than larger-scale natural processes like storms and stunted harvests, which were more likely to be ascribed to ritual magic.

MALEFICIUM, THE DEVIL, AND THE LAW

The idea that malign magical powers are closely related to a malign personality is deeply rooted. The word *maleficium* originally meant simply "wrongdoing" or "mischief," yet it was linked specifically to harmful magic even in pagan Rome. This association intensified with the rise of Christianity, which saw any recourse to magic as a moral failing. Roman law had proscribed sorcery as a source of injury to individuals from the earliest times, and the Roman Empire prosecuted magic as a source of politically destabilizing intrigue as well; Moses had enjoined his people not to "suffer a witch [or magician; the Hebrew is ambiguous] to live amongst you," and the Vulgate frequently referred to *maleficium*. The Theodosian Code joined these two traditions together, using *maleficium* in place of the earlier, more neutral *magia*.

Early medieval Germanic law codes contained punishments for sorcerers both because of the injuries they caused and because they employed pagan rites, and trials focusing on the harms caused by sorcery took place sporadically through the Middle Ages. The connection between harm and moral character was not lost, however, and late medieval theologians strengthened it considerably by reviving the argument first made in late antiquity that all magic requires some sort of spiritual agent, and illicit, especially malevolent, magic therefore must involve demons and at least an implicit pact with their master, the Devil. In the fifteenth century, this pact became linked with the notion that the Devil organized his followers into an underground conspiracy with perverted nocturnal orgies and the power and obligation to perpetrate various forms of *maleficium*.

The gradual adoption of this image of witchcraft by much of Europe's elites over the next century had the effect of not only making allegiance to the Devil a capital offense, on par with *maleficium*, but also, more subtly, changed the legal nature of *maleficium*. Until this point, prosecutions for *maleficium* generally concerned sorcery, magic that by definition had to be practiced deliberately, with some sort of external manifestation. Now, with the suspect's moral orientation the focus of attention, prosecution no longer hinged on proof of an explicit ritual attack or even the evidence of a reputation for practicing magic. Evidence of *maleficium* remained important, but in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century trials, this requirement was frequently met with allegations (and tortured confessions) of apparently spontaneous infliction of harm with no ritual mechanism specified or implied. In some cases this may reflect just an oversight in the investigation or the record, but in many it seems clear that the

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MALINOWSKI, BRONISLAW KASPER (1884–1942)

Polish-born British social anthropologist, regarded as the father of modern social anthropology, Malinowski explored the rationality of witchcraft and magical practices in contemporary "primitive" societies. He was among the first to argue for the centrality of fieldwork in anthropological research, and his method of "participant-observation" is now canonical in social and cultural anthropology. This technique enabled him to produce ethnographic writings steeped in the rhythms of daily life and to articulate a theory of magic as a "sacred" yet fundamentally pragmatic activity, distinct from, yet tightly entwined with empirical knowledge and techniques surrounding everyday "profane" practices.

Born in Krakow, Malinowski earned his doctorate in philosophy from Jagiellonian University in 1908 and later trained in social sciences at Leipzig and in anthropology at the London School of Economics. Having spent the better part of World War I conducting fieldwork in southeastern New Guinea, he occupied teaching posts at the London School of Economics and the University of London before taking a position at Yale University in 1938. Malinowski's insistence that the world was sensible "from the native's point of view" contradicted Lucien Lévy-Bruhl's *mentalité primitive*, his appeal to a psychological and sociological "functionalism" emergent from the "psycho-physiological" needs of individuals broke openly with the holistic and evolutionary sociology of Émile Durkheim, and his insistence on the centrality of ethnographic fieldwork would later be considered a decisive break from the "armchair" methodology of Victorian anthropology. A quarter-century after Malinowski died at New Haven, Connecticut, the 1967 publication of his private diaries caused a scandal by revealing that this seemingly egalitarian and tolerant ethnographer was, in fact, often frustrated by and condescending toward his subjects in explicitly racist terms. Far from unseating Malinowski from his central position in anthropology, however, this gap between professional presentation and private life has only served to heighten the mystique around the man and the methodology he championed.

Malinowski's interest in magic was present in his early ethnographic works, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922) and *The Sexual Life of Savages in Northwestern Melanesia* (1929), which described the *kula* magic invested in objects of ritual trade and aspects of sexual magic. However, his most significant material about magic and its practitioners came in *Coral Gardens and Their Magic* (1935), an ethnographic narrative that painstakingly delineated the everyday "monotony" of magic in the cycles of productive life. Malinowski's pragmatic theory of magic was most explicitly presented in his posthumously published *Magic, Science, and Religion* (1948), which argued against prevailing understandings of magic as a clumsy and inefficient proto-science. This conventional wisdom, best articulated by Sir Edward Tylor and Sir James Frazer, structured magic as the lowest rung on a developmental sequence rising through religious to scientific means of knowing the natural world. Malinowski never conflated magic with religion (magic, he insisted, was always a pragmatic *means*, whereas religion was an end in itself), but he took great pains to separate magic from such "primitive" scientific practices as the empirical knowledge of fluid dynamics involved in Trobriand canoe-building. Such everyday, predictable concerns were placed in the sphere of the profane, but magical activities occupied the affect-laden domain of the sacred. He illustrated this with an account of Trobriand fishing practices: boating in the lagoon was safe and its yield relatively predictable; such trips involved no magic at all. Yet fishing on the open seas, which could result in a fantastic bounty, an empty net, or the death of all involved, was associated with extensive magical ritual to secure safety and good results. Magic was therefore a complement to, not a substitute for, empirical knowledge, useful in situations involving extreme risk, high stakes, emotional commitment, or lack of control.

Although Malinowski's functional explanations of human behavior have been criticized for their "thinness" and transparent teleology, it is important to note that his ethnographic descriptions are rich with details not explained by his theories. Furthermore, Malinowski argued strongly for the importance of context in understanding magical practices, and his explicitly performative analysis of magic—in particular, his linguistic theory of the power of magical words—can be seen as prefiguring the ordinary-language philosophers. Malinowski's willingness to generalize from the Trobriand Islands to humanity at large led him to construct a general theory of the "meanings of meaningless words" and the "coefficient of weirdness" necessary to elevate magical discourse beyond mundane levels without rendering it completely unintelligible. Malinowski used this principle to suggest magical belief as a human universal, equally present in the advertising and "beauty magic of Helena Rubinstein and Elizabeth Arden" as

in the practices of medieval Europeans or early twentieth-century Trobrianders.

Perhaps more far-reaching than his own writings, however, was Malinowski's impact as an educator. If he has retrospectively been dubbed the father of modern anthropology, it is chiefly because he tutored many of the best minds of the next generation of British social anthropologists. In the context of anthropological debates on rationality and magical belief, it seems particularly significant that he taught E. E. Evans-Pritchard, whose *Witchcraft, Oracles, and Magic Among the Azande* would become a landmark in the field.

JEREMY GREENE

See also: ANTHROPOLOGY; EVANS-PRITCHARD, EDWARD E.; MAGIC AND RELIGION; SCIENCE AND MAGIC; WORDS, POWER OF.

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MALLEUS MALEFICARUM

Some late medieval theologians, like the Dominican inquisitor Heinrich Kramer (Institoris), author of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), imagined witches to be members of a vast conspiracy directed against Christian society that was allowed by God to cause immense physical and spiritual hardship. The witches' power, supported by the Devil with God's permission, was real. Witches therefore had to be physically eradicated, according to divine and secular law, by virtually any means, because exceptional crimes require exceptional measures. The *Malleus* was the result of Kramer's experience with witchcraft trials in his designated area as a papal inquisitor for "Upper Germany" (i.e., southwestern Germany, western Austria, Switzerland, and his homeland, Alsace).

Evidence survives from some of his trials in this region, particularly from 1482 to 1484. Kramer's activities were generally not well received by the local

MALLEVS MALEFICARVM, MALEFICAS ET EARVM

hæcũm francõ conõrens,
LX VARIE AVCTORIBVS COMPILATVS,
& in quatuor Tomos iuste diuisus;

[Faint Latin text describing the book's content, including names of authors and the nature of the material.]

TOMVS PRIMVS.

[Faint text below the section header.]

[Faint text, likely a printer's or publisher's mark.]

[Faint text, likely a printer's or publisher's mark.]



[Faint text at the bottom of the page, likely a printer's or publisher's mark.]

Title page of the 1669 edition of Heinrich Kramer's Malleus Maleficarum (The Hammer of Witches), 1486, the most notorious book on witchcraft. (Fortean Picture Library)

authorities, who disliked his interference with their administration of justice, and the populace, who sometimes initially welcomed him, soon tired of his persecutory zeal. Annoyed by such resistance, Kramer obtained papal authorization for his inquisitorial rights over the prosecution of witchcraft from Innocent VIII (ruled 1484–1492) through the papal bull *Summis desiderantes affectibus* (Desiring with Supreme Ardor, 1484), which authorized formal inquisitions against witches in all German Church provinces. Now invested with *carte blanche*, Kramer decided to start a paradigmatic witch hunt. Innsbruck, capital of the duchy of Tyrol, was a significant place, since its Archduke Sigmund was a powerful Habsburg prince, ruling over a patchwork of territories stretching from northern Italy and southwestern Germany into Alsace (present-day eastern France). Innsbruck was Kramer's gateway to the Holy Roman Empire.

Kramer's Inquisition in Innsbruck, starting in July 1485, employed intimidation, brutal force, and unlimited torture; denied legal defense; and issued distorted reports of his interrogations: scandalous conduct, even by late-fifteenth-century legal standards. Therefore, not only

the relatives of the accused but also citizens of Innsbruck, together with the clergy, the Tyrolean nobility and eventually the local bishop, protested against his illegal procedures. Bishop Georg II Golser, successor of the philosopher Nicolaus of Cusa at the see of Brixen, appointed a commission to scrutinize Kramer's Inquisition. Despite desperate resistance from the inquisitor's side, the bishop stopped the persecution immediately, nullified its results and (after having secured the archduke's support), liberated all suspected women.

It is worth remembering that both the secular and ecclesiastical authorities of Tyrol decided to resist this papal inquisitor and that they successfully prevented a witch persecution within their jurisdiction. Kramer was branded a fanatic, and Bishop Golser (who called Kramer senile and crazy in his correspondence) even threatened him with force if he failed to leave his diocese voluntarily. The prince-bishops of Brixen never allowed a witch persecution in their territory, and, even more importantly, the Tyrolean government had learned a lasting lesson and subsequently suppressed any attempts by lower courts to launch witch hunts. In short, the Innsbruck Inquisition was a crushing defeat for the papal inquisitor.

His failure at Innsbruck and his apocalyptic fears drove Kramer to develop his ideas further. Starting from his reports to Bishop Golser (Ammann 1911), he hastily systematized his notes into a lengthy manuscript. This papal inquisitor was among the first of his profession to recognize the importance of the printing revolution, and with this manuscript he tried to turn his defeat into victory by demonstrating the existence of witchcraft. Using his authority and experience, he urged the necessity of a campaign to eradicate witchcraft. The result was the *Malleus Maleficarum*.

Much confusion persists about the author, place of print, and date of print of this crucial publication on witchcraft. Even recently, scholars have claimed that the *Malleus* was at least coauthored by Jacob Sprenger (1437–1495). Only in 1519, decades after Sprenger's death, was he named as author on a front page, first in an edition by the Nuremberg (Nürnberg) printer Friedrich Peypus. Two generations later, in 1574, Giovanni Antonio Bertanus, a Venetian printer, even named Sprenger as its sole author. Later German and French printers adopted Bertanus's mistake. However, no contemporary evidence suggests that Sprenger had anything to do with the *Malleus*, or with witchcraft trials, or with executions of any kind as a result of inquisition trials.

The author of the *Malleus* stated that forty-eight women had been burned as witches in the diocese of Constance; there is no reason to doubt this number, especially because he indicated that he himself had searched this diocese more than any other. All these remarks pointed directly to "frater Henricus de

Sletstat," or "Heinrich Institoris," as Kramer often Latinized himself. The historian Sönke Lorenz found a hitherto unknown letter of this inquisitor from 1484, announcing his arrival at Wolfegg, a Swabian castle of Count Johann von Waldburg-Trauchburg (ruled 1460–1505)—close relatives to the ruling prince-bishop of Constance—for the purpose of witch hunting. Numerous documents survive concerning Kramer's inquisition in the Imperial City of Ravensburg, mentioned in the first (Speyer 1486) edition of the *Malleus* (fol. 44r). After his crushing failure at Innsbruck, Kramer turned his attention toward Alsace, particularly in the vicinity of his convent. The expulsion of the Jews from his hometown of Séléstat should be placed in this context. In 1488 Kramer tried to incite witch hunts in the neighboring diocese of Trier; that year, thirty-five witches were burned in the nearby imperial city of Metz. In an expert opinion for the imperial city of Nuremberg, "Bruder Heinrich Kramer Pädiger Ordens" boasted in October 1491 that "more than 200 witches" had been burned thus far due to his inquisitions, and in the same document he revealed his single authorship of the *Malleus* (Jerouschek 1991).

Further actions of this inquisitor remain shrouded in darkness, and recent research suggests that his own superior may have silenced him. Jacob Sprenger turned out to have been Kramer's most bitter enemy. In complete contrast to the Alsatian fanatic, a maverick who managed to get into trouble wherever he went and who had developed into a wandering inquisitor and persecution specialist, Sprenger was a prominent figure among the "observant" reform wing of the Dominicans. He was appointed prior of the large Cologne convent, then leader of the "Teutonic" province; Sprenger was also an influential theologian, promoting veneration of the Virgin Mary and introducing rosary brotherhoods organized by friars and secular clergy for lay people. It seems likely that Sprenger was involuntarily included in both the papal bull of 1484 and the foreword of the *Malleus* in 1486. Wilson (1990, 130) doubted that Kramer tried deliberately to deceive the public and Sprenger, but this must have been the case. Sprenger had tried to suppress Kramer's activities in every possible way. He forbade the convents of his province to host him, he forbade Kramer to preach, and even tried to interfere directly in the affairs of Kramer's Séléstat convent. Not one single fact or incident associated Sprenger with witchcraft prosecutions, and he apparently managed to drive the author of the *Malleus* from his province. Kramer spent his final years in Italy and Moravia, where he died. Kramer successfully deceived many modern scholars with his misrepresentations and outright lies. But one need only read the surviving Innsbruck trial records (Ammann 1890) and compare them with his accounts of the Innsbruck inquisition in the *Malleus* to realize that Kramer was ready to use any deception that served his purpose. His

career offers numerous examples, but this one seems sufficient (Segl 1988).

As to date and place of print, a printer's account book (Geldner 1964) demonstrated that the *Malleus* was first printed in autumn 1486 in the imperial city of Speyer, by then a medium-size town on the Rhine with about 8,000 inhabitants. The printer was Peter Drach (ca. 1450–1504), who delivered the “treatise against sorcerers” to booksellers by December 1486. The original text of the *Malleus* comprised 129 leaves (258 pages) in folio; given the usual production of a small printer (about 900 folio pages a day), Drach could have printed 150 copies a month. If the first edition was meant to have 300 copies, the manuscript must have been delivered to Drach by mid-October 1486, with more copies even earlier. Like many early books, it had no title page at that stage, so descriptions of the *Malleus* vary in the account book. The *Malleus* was called a “treatise against sorceresses,” or “against sorcery,” until Kramer added a foreword to the text, his *apologia auctoris in malleum maleficarum*, around Easter 1487 (Behringer and Jeroschek in Kramer 2000, 22–31). Afterward, the book's title was fixed and appears regularly this way in the account book, even without the *Malleus* having a title page.

Kramer promoted his publication in every possible way, notably by adding the papal bull of 1484 and a reference to its approval by the University of Cologne from April 1487. The latter was at least partly a forgery, because two of its supposed authors (Thomas de Scotia and Johann von Wörde) later denied any participation. These additions were not printed by Drach but by an immediate apprentice of Johannes Gutenberg at Mainz, Peter Schöffler (ca. 1425–1503), with a separate pagination. These parts were probably added in late May 1487 and bound together with the existing main body of the text. Henceforth, the author's *Apologia*, the papal bull *Summis desiderantes affectibus*, and the Cologne *Approbatio* remained part of the *Malleus*. In early December 1486, when Speyer hosted a meeting of representatives of the imperial cities (*Städtetag*), and Emperor Frederick III (whom Kramer had insulted some years earlier, to the great displeasure of the Dominican order) was due to arrive, Kramer apparently traveled to the Burgundian capital at Brussels in order to obtain a privilege from King Maximilian I (1459–1519), the future emperor. The response must have been so unfavorable that it was not inserted into the foreword, although it was mentioned there, thus conveying the impression that the highest ecclesiastical, academic, and secular authorities backed the *Malleus*. Kramer's strategy was aimed at the princes and their law courts. However, educated theologians and lawyers must have noticed that authoritative authors, like St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, as well as Roman law, were deliberately twisted and misquoted in the

Malleus. Moreover, Kramer brazenly emphasized the success of his inquisition at Innsbruck and even thanked the archduke for his support. He was correct in assuming that few would check his claims.

By reconstructing Kramer's itinerary, it becomes clear that the *Malleus* was assembled hastily, within nine months. Starting with his opinions and apologies to the bishop of Brixen and the archduke of Tyrol, Kramer, after his expulsion from Innsbruck in February 1486, mined some standard textbooks of scholastic theology (Thomas Aquinas, Antonius of Florence), a few inquisitors' manuals (Nicolas Eymeric), and earlier sermon notes. These indispensable texts were only available in the libraries of larger Dominican monasteries like Salzburg, Augsburg (Siemer 1936), Speyer, or his own convent at Séléstat. At one of these places, the *Malleus* must have been assembled. In the first edition (Speyer 1486, fol. 44r), Kramer told us that at least parts of it were written in the imperial city of Speyer, where he was physically present in autumn 1486, because Peter Drach had agreed to publish his text without delay. Kramer may have been unable to publish it at a more important printing center like Augsburg or Strasbourg.

Kramer's haste explains why the *Malleus* bristled with inconsistencies throughout. Contradictions and mistakes of all kinds (meaning, grammar, spelling) abounded; even the gender of the witches (*malefica/maleficus*) varied continuously, although the text was clearly directed against female witches. The most striking evidence for this haste comes from the *Malleus* itself. According to its contents, forty-eight questions were to be treated, but Kramer completely ignored this structure and ended with eighty-six chapters, unevenly distributed over three “parts,” two of them further subdivided. Part 1 supposedly contained sixteen chapters, but it actually had eighteen. The additional chapters, with new examples, were obviously added afterward; Chapter 17 claimed to be an extension of chapter 14, which had presumably been printed already. Part 2 supposedly contained sixteen chapters but ended up with twenty-five. Large chunks of its text were never mentioned in its table of contents; its headings hardly ever matched; whole chapters advertised in the contents were lacking; some were wrongly numbered; cross-references usually led nowhere.

It was obviously a work in progress, its author continually adding more evidence until the last possible moment, but without proofreading. The practical difficulties of compiling such a massive text under extreme time pressure and premodern conditions can hardly be underestimated. We can only guess why the maverick inquisitor became a maverick author and wrote a desperate book under such desperate conditions. Perhaps he feared more important dangers from the approaching emperor or from Jacob Sprenger, whose name he was again about to misuse and whose election as

provincial superior of the German Dominicans was imminent. The same day Sprenger became successor to Jacob Strubach as provincial superior (October 19, 1487), he obtained permission from his general, Joaquin Turriani, to lash out *adversus m[agistrum] Henricum Institoris inquisitorem* (against Master Heinrich Kramer, inquisitor). But perhaps the source of Kramer's haste should be sought in the realm of the irrational; apocalypticism seemed a good guess, if we took the author's *Apologia* seriously. If the end of the world was nigh, grammar became unimportant.

Kramer's main concern was witchcraft, or the heresy of witchcraft, but we must still explain his particular obsession with female witches. One likely explanation is the legacy of Christian theology, with its long-standing assertion of increased female susceptibility to temptations of the Devil, starting with Eve. This was certainly the starting point for the misogyny of the *Malleus*, whose author devoted several pages to explaining female inclinations to witchcraft, and recommended the subject for preaching, because women had a particular desire for instruction. His first demonstration of the malice of females was the Bible; he then cited instances of female credulity and their physical qualities, in particular the changeability of their complexion, leading to a vacillating nature. He then referred to their slippery tongues, which made them share their magic with friends, with whom they employed *maleficium* (harmful magic) because they were too weak to take revenge otherwise. Worst of all, however, because of their changeability, women were less inclined to believe in God. At this point, Kramer inserted a unique "realist" etymology of *femina*: "fe" is taken as an abbreviation of "fides" (belief); combined with the suffix "minus," it literally translates into "she who believes less." In the eyes of the Dominican inquisitor, a woman's lack of belief was the basis for her apostasy and witchcraft (Speyer 1486, fol. 20–21).

Kramer's paranoid emphasis on the dangers triggered by females contrasts strikingly with the attitude of his main opponent within the German Dominicans, the Cologne prior Jacob Sprenger, who instead emphasized the positive aspects of female religious devotion, recruiting them for the veneration of Mary. It is characteristic to find Kramer—a persecution specialist whose obsessions might be described in terms of "purity and danger"—engaged in an inquisition in Augsburg against women who desired the Eucharist too frequently, who were in turn defended by a local supporter of Sprenger (Koeniger 1923).

The *Malleus Maleficarum* was divided into three parts. The first treated theological issues and the second practical problems; the third offered advice on legal procedures, referring constantly to the author's extensive experience with witchcraft trials. The first part of the original edition (fols. 4r–43r) on theological

questions, designed to prove the reality and danger of witchcraft, was interesting in several respects and showed Kramer's erudition as an educated Dominican. Founded upon Augustine and Aquinas, its description of the crime of witchcraft was entirely conventional: witches could not themselves harm anyone through magic, but their abilities derived from a contract with a demon, which in turn was empowered by God. Both the *permissio Dei* (God's permission), and (wo)man's free will were crucial elements. At the core of witchcraft theory lay Augustine's semiotic theory that demons and (wo)men communicated via signs, amplified here by Kramer's perception that human deeds and natural phenomena were hardly ever what they appeared to be, but must rather be interpreted through a demonological theory of signs.

Like postmodern theorists, Kramer concluded that human beings could never be certain about reality; any phenomenon could be different from what it appeared to be and could be a demonic delusion. In contrast to modern philosophers, who denied the reality of demons, Kramer denied the reality of reality. He suspected demons were omnipresent and (with God's permission) extraordinarily powerful. Although witches believed they could do harm, it was actually demons who conducted supernatural interventions in order to fulfill their pact and to seduce them. The witch's crime thus in fact became her desire to harm. But no secular law imposed the death penalty for mere intentions, so witchcraft must therefore be considered essentially as heresy. For Kramer, heresy and apostasy lay at the core of witchcraft; although the witches themselves might have thought otherwise, their basic crime was spiritual. His conclusions were subsequently developed through examples of specific aspects of witchcraft, including sexual intercourse between humans and demons (either succubi or incubi), shape shifting, the sacrifice of babies, and the preparation of witches' unguents. According to Kramer, witches intended their harm to be real, although the demons actually did the damage by interfering in the real world in order to deceive the witches.

Kramer's conclusions were theologically correct but entailed serious practical contradictions. If harmful magic had no physical agent, it could not be prosecuted. If witches were seduced and deceived by demons, they became victims rather than perpetrators. If circumstantial evidence or direct observations could be discarded as devilish illusions (*praestigia daemonum*, as Johann Weyer later called them), witches could never be tried by a secular court because it was impossible to prove they had committed any crime whatsoever.

Surprisingly, after denying the possibility of judging the reality of evidence, Kramer's sharpest weapon (as he must have thought) was his reference to personal experience. Besides theological authorities, firsthand examples provided Kramer's foremost evidence for the

reality of witchcraft. Among roughly 250 examples in the *Malleus*, mostly from the Bible or ancient authors, at least 75 (nearly 30 percent) refer to recent events, which Kramer took from trustworthy contemporaries or from personal experience. About 10 percent of them came from Speyer or its immediate vicinity, further indication that Kramer completed the manuscript of the *Malleus* in this imperial city. Most of the rest came from Swabia, Alsace, or Tyrol; a few examples came from further abroad, usually towns with Dominican monasteries where Kramer had stayed (Rome, Cologne, Augsburg, Salzburg, Landshut in Bavaria).

The second part of the original *Malleus* (fols. 43r–92v) was split into two sections. The first (2.1) described how to protect oneself against witchcraft, specifically against impotence and infertility, weather making, and milk theft; the second (2.2) treated how bewitching could be cured. Again Kramer discussed demonically caused impotence, infertility, and weather magic, as well as love magic and demonic possession. The third part of the *Malleus* (fols. 92v–129v) explored the legal treatment of witches in great detail, recommending inquisitorial procedure as superior to trials based upon accusations, and paying attention to circumstantial evidence. In this part, Kramer literally copied large chunks of text from such inquisition manuals as Nicolas Eymeric's *Directorium Inquisitorum* (Directory of Inquisitors) of 1376 to provide the necessary legal formulas for inexperienced judges.

Pioneers of the intellectual history of demonology like Joseph Hansen emphasized that the *Malleus* contained almost nothing that could not be found in earlier demonologies or inquisitors' manuals. Because Kramer was a Dominican doctor of theology and papal inquisitor, and considering the conditions under which he assembled the *Malleus*, that was hardly surprising. However, five points in his *Malleus* could be called original. First, it stressed that witchcraft was a real crime, not just a spiritual one, and that witches therefore must be prosecuted and deserve capital punishment. Among earlier inquisitors, this had been a minority position. Second, Kramer claimed that witchcraft is the worst of all crimes because it combines heresy, including apostasy and adoration of the Devil, with the most terrible secular crimes such as murder, theft, and sodomy. Again, this point was not entirely new, but Kramer focused attention on it.

Third, because witchcraft was not only the worst of all crimes but also occult and difficult to trace, legal inhibitions must be abandoned. This idea was original in the sense that no serious lawyer in Europe normally suggested transgressing legal boundaries. His conflicts with local authorities had made Kramer keenly aware that this position was completely unacceptable under normal circumstances. Therefore, he resorted to the claim that witchcraft was an exceptional crime, in whose pursuit persecutory zeal was preferable to routine

legality. Thus Kramer claimed the superiority of apocalyptic theology over law.

Fourth, witches were primarily women. Despite the misogyny of the times, this idea was still uncommon in theology but was widespread in popular thought, so here Kramer's personal obsessions might have gained some popular support. Finally, he believed that secular courts should prosecute the crime; here again, the inquisitor drew conclusions from his own experience because he knew how unpopular inquisitors often were in Europe north of the Alps. However, this idea was also paradoxical because secular courts were reluctant to prosecute spiritual crimes.

A curious, literate public welcomed the *Malleus Maleficarum* as the first printed handbook of witch demonology and persecution. Although largely dependent on earlier theologians and inquisitorial handbooks, it was a fresh product by an erudite and experienced author. With twelve Latin editions printed in Germany and France between 1486 and 1523, *The Hammer of Witches* could be considered a success, although public interest was clearly strongest in the first ten years when the subject was still novel and the book was almost a best seller. Just after the Protestant Reformation, the demand for reprints broke down completely. Two generations later, with the Counter-Reformation accelerating, two Venetian printers saw a renewed demand for the *Malleus* in 1574 and 1576; in the 1580s, three new editions were reprinted in Protestant Frankfurt, followed by a fourth in 1600.

It was France that became the stronghold of *Malleus* reprints after the Reformation. Demand grew in the 1580s, with two editions printed at Lyons in 1584 and 1595; after 1600, seven further editions were published at Lyons, the last in 1669. Significantly, the *Malleus* was never translated fully into any vernacular language during the period of witch hunting; the partial translation into Polish in 1614 omitted its legal parts. Its reception remained confined to highly educated theologians, physicians, and lawyers. Its contents had to be spread, if at all, through sermons.

The upsurge of witchcraft trials in the early 1490s in central Europe has traditionally been interpreted as a result of the publication of the *Malleus*, and some incidents indicate that it had a direct impact. A monastic chronicler at Eberhardsklausen, on the Mosel River, reported that witches had plagued this region for some time, but great uncertainty about the matter had made it impossible to prosecute them. Only after reading the *Malleus* did local authorities see how they could proceed against witches—which they did. Here we see a kind of “conversion experience,” but that was a rare example, and how the *Malleus* was generally received remains unclear (Rummel 1990).

It is noteworthy that an early opposition publication was reprinted even more frequently in the 1490s.

Ulrich Molitor, a lawyer for the bishop of Constance and a minor official at Archduke Sigmund's court in Innsbruck, challenged the central assumptions of the *Malleus*. Molitor fashioned his text as a conversation between a fanatic believer in witchcraft, Molitor himself as an opponent, and Archduke Sigmund as the wise arbiter, always reaching reasonable conclusions and bluntly denying the possibility of the witches' flight, the witches' Sabbat, and shape shifting. Molitor merely repeated the traditional attitude of the Catholic Church and indeed promoted a conservative attitude toward sorcery. But this attitude had hitherto prevented witchcraft persecutions. Moreover, Molitor went one step further. By excluding theologians from his discourse, he implies that Dominicans or inquisitors should not interfere with legal questions. Illustrated by many exciting woodcuts, Molitor's dialogue quickly went through ten reprints in the 1490s, including, unlike the *Malleus*, translations into vernacular German. Molitor presumably witnessed Kramer's inquisitions in both the diocese of Constance and the diocese of Brixen. If this *juris utriusque doctor* (doctor of both laws, i.e., of canon and civil laws) opposed the *Malleus*, it was presumably because he knew its author and his illegal methods.

And there are other examples of people rejecting Kramer's views, either after reading the *Malleus* or after meeting him personally. In 1491, the imperial city of Nuremberg ordered a summary of the *Malleus* from Kramer because of some serious cases of sorcery; the famous publisher Anton Koberger, who printed three editions of the *Malleus*, was an immediate neighbor of Nuremberg's Dominican convent. However, Nuremberg's magistrates never followed Kramer's advice, and it may not be coincidence that the ideas of the *Malleus* were ridiculed publicly by leading Nuremberg humanists like Willibald Pirckheimer. In the imperial city of Augsburg, where Kramer stayed when traveling between Italy and Alsace and where he became involved in serious quarrels with the local representative of Jacob Sprenger's rosary brotherhood, the inquisitor was labeled a drunkard by the leading humanist Konrad Peutinger, and it may be no coincidence that the *Malleus* was never printed in this leading Upper German communications center. One of the most interesting reactions came from a close friend of the recently deceased Jacob Sprenger, who sharply rejected the idea that Sprenger had any connection to the *Malleus* (Klose 1972). By the early sixteenth century, the *Malleus* had clearly become a point of reference in intellectual debates: in 1509, defending a woman accused of witchcraft at Metz against the machinations of the local Dominican inquisitor, Agrippa von Nettesheim reacted equally sharply against the nonsense proposed in the *Malleus*. About the same time, Erasmus of Rotterdam satirized a zealous inquisitor in his *Praise of Folly*, and leading Italian jurist Andrea

Alciati, labeled witch hunts in northern Italy as *nova holocausta*. It was certainly not an arbitrary decision of the Spanish Inquisition in 1526 to deny any authority to the *Malleus*.

Rather than provoking the rising witchcraft persecutions at the end of the fifteenth century, the publication of the *Malleus* by this troublesome inquisitor may have simply tried to exploit preexisting popular fears. Between the 1480s and about 1520, witch burnings or small panic trials occurred not only in places where Dominican inquisitors incited the populace or where the town council had purchased a copy of the *Malleus*, but in many places throughout upper Italy, northern Spain, eastern France, Switzerland, western Germany, and the Burgundian Netherlands, even prior to its publication. In the decades between 1470 and 1520, there were severe mortality crises, and scapegoats were sought. In the early 1480s, plague raged widely through Upper Germany, Switzerland, and eastern France, and the original edition of the *Malleus* even linked witchcraft to plague in one particular case, in which a deceased witch had spread the disease from her grave (fol. 38r–38v). Imperial cities like Memmingen or Ravensburg lost much of their population in these years, and fears of sudden death were justifiably widespread.

Not only witchcraft anxieties but popular piety in general soared, as we can see in the iconographical representations of the "Dance of Death," or in the rise of millennial fears, with the idea that humanity was living in the last age—a time characterized by bitter hardships and terrifying signs of the end of the world. Like other fundamentalist prophets, the author of the *Malleus* points to the book of *Revelation* in his *Apologia* to argue that the emergence of the witches' sect was one sign of the imminence of the Antichrist.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM; HEINRICH CORNELIUS; ALCIATI, ANDREA; ANTICHRIST; APOCALYPSE; AQUINAS, THOMAS; AUGUSTINE, ST.; BOOKS; CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DEMONOLOGY; DEMONS; DOMINICAN ORDER; ERASMUS, DESIDERIUS; EYMERIC, NICOLAS; GENDER; GOLSER, GEORG; INNOCENT VIII, POPE; INNSBRUCK; KRAMER, HEINRICH; MOLITOR, ULRICH; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC; TYROL, COUNTY OF; WANN, PAULUS.

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MALTA

Information on witchcraft practices in Malta comes from its Inquisition tribunal archives, luckily saved from total destruction during the French occupation of Malta (1798–1800). Witchcraft became a significant preoccupation of the Malta Inquisition after the arrival of the Apostolic Visitor Monsignor Pietro Dusina in 1574. Witchcraft-related proceedings rose in importance in the mid-1590s. By the early seventeenth century, witchcraft cases accounted for one-third of the Inquisition's caseload—a level approximately maintained until the late eighteenth century.

Two main factors influenced the ways the Maltese adapted and shaped their witchcraft beliefs. First, Malta's crowded urban harbor area was constantly receiving people from neighboring Mediterranean lands and beyond. Second, Malta was an intensely Catholic society, a situation that inevitably colored the beliefs and thinking of its inhabitants.

Malta's harbor towns were crowded, with neighbors able to spy on each other, leaving little room for secrecy. Therefore, the more exotic types of witchcraft, such as cannibalism or night flying, occurred only in occasional denunciations by rural villagers in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. But the fact that any potentially useful witness would be acquainted with the accused and that the accused could not have done these things without being observed meant that Maltese Inquisitors rarely took accusations of exotic types of witchcraft seriously.

Meanwhile, sophisticated foreign travelers and traders introduced new ideas into Maltese society. The

presence of many people of different cultural backgrounds made residents of Malta harbor towns more tolerant of strange ideas and less threatened by them.

Maltese Holy Office records reveal a steady increase in witchcraft cases from the 1590s, with the flow of accusations remaining high until the end of the eighteenth century, when the tribunal was abolished. The punishments inflicted until the early 1630s were rather harsh, although they never ended with the execution of the accused. Subsequently, however, there was no significant trend toward either severity or leniency. By the time of Inquisitor Fabio Chigi (1634–1639)—later Pope Alexander VII—the tribunal came to adopt a more bureaucratic approach, with more thorough examinations of witnesses and more formal and detailed recording procedures. The tribunal settled into a routine that enabled it to look conscientiously into each case. Nonetheless, its basic methods for handling witchcraft remained unchanged throughout the tribunal's existence.

MALTESE WITCHCRAFT PRACTICES

A fairly clear distinction separated the type of witchcraft pursued by men from that practiced by women. Men, both clerics and others, concentrated on such potentially profitable brands of magic as treasure hunting. Perhaps the best Maltese necromancer of the early seventeenth century was the military engineer and member of the Order of St. John, Fra Vittorio Cassar. Women also shared men's fascination for buried treasure, but they almost monopolized most types of divination, conjuration, and *maleficium* (harmful magic), especially those aimed at love magic. Healing was also largely undertaken by women, although a few clerics and some slaves—largely Muslims, as well as a few members of the Jewish minority—attempted it for profit. Maltese men and women displayed fundamentally divergent motives in their attempts to manipulate supernatural forces: basically, men merely sought gain, whereas women's motives were more varied and complex.

Love magic was practiced primarily by unmarried women, including widows (who were not always elderly). Married women occasionally resorted to love magic to win a husband back from another woman (though some simply accused the other woman of love magic herself). Married women also resorted to divination to ascertain whether or not their husbands, away at sea, were still alive and, if so, if they had remained faithful. Others used more passive forms of love magic to soften a husband's harsh treatment of them. Conversely, the fact that a woman was in a stable marriage argued greatly in her favor if denounced, particularly since women under male supervision could be better controlled.

Poor moral behavior contributed greatly toward suspicions of witchcraft. This was one reason why courtesans featured so much in the list of those denounced. Living outside recognized moral norms, courtesans

were expected to have few scruples about violating conventional religious standards. They also had more reason to resort to witchcraft in order to entice men, thus earning the name of *meretrice* (prostitute). As with most witchcraft, the courtesan's motives can generally be reduced to love or gain. But it is clear that the courtesan-witch did not make a fortune from her witchcraft.

Another factor featuring prominently in the tribunal's thinking, and perhaps even more so in the thinking of the Maltese urban populace, was the nationality or place of origin of the "suspect." A good number of those accused in Malta's witchcraft trials were in fact foreign-born. The English traveler George Sandys, who visited Malta in 1610, commented how Malta was a place that saw an influx of people of all kinds. Many of them had moved into the harbor area, particularly Valletta, from the Maltese countryside. Many residents of Valletta came from Sicily, other parts of Italy, Greece, or elsewhere, not counting the large number of Muslim slaves. Four main groups stand out: Greeks, Sicilians, French, and male Muslim slaves serving the Order of St. John. It was mainly foreigners residing in Malta, rather than transients, who were accused of witchcraft. Such foreigners were more likely to practice certain types of witchcraft in order to gain a living in a strange environment. Male Muslim slaves were experts in divination, healing, and to some extent even love magic. But in the latter category, women of Greek origin seem to have been particularly sought after—and also to bring about impotence. Moreover, for the elderly, unmarried, or widowed popular healers of the countryside, witchcraft offered a way of gaining a certain prestige as well as providing a means of survival. A similar pattern emerged from the accusations against the male Muslim slaves, who were out to amass enough money to ransom themselves from slavery and return home.

PUNISHMENTS

As in other branches of the Roman Inquisition, the sudden increase of witchcraft-related cases in the 1590s marked a pronounced shift in the Inquisition's priorities, which is more easily identified than explained. Sixtus V's 1586 bull against magic was clearly significant in this context, describing the types of activity most commonly dealt with by the Inquisition in the 1590s and early 1600s, although the first serious clampdown on witchcraft in Malta appears to have taken place immediately after the terrible outbreak of plague in 1592–1593 and more specifically from 1595 onward.

The Inquisition's public punishments for witchcraft offenses certainly succeeded in advertising its disapproval of such activities, although they did not dissuade people from practicing such beliefs, as the continual flow of accusations throughout the late seventeenth and

eighteenth centuries shows. On such occasions, the methods used were meant to ensure adequate publicity and humiliation for the penitent. Penitents were made to stand at the Annunciation Church run by the Dominican friars or, more rarely, at the parish Church of St. Lawrence, both in Vittoriosa, holding a lighted candle during High Mass, usually on a feast day, to ensure that the largest possible audience witnessed the event. Public scourging, the tribunal's other main form of punishment, was inflicted in the main squares of Vittoriosa, and the penitent was then usually exiled. However, the tribunal's primary aim was to correct rather than punish. Hence, torture was generally reserved for those unwilling to accept this correction; Malta's witches were never executed, not even in the mass trials of the early seventeenth century.

By the late 1640s, the tribunal had almost accepted witchcraft as a fact of life in Malta and had established its own routines for dealing with it. The number of voluntary confessions for witchcraft increased by the mid-seventeenth century and remained steady right up to the last years of the tribunal. Nonetheless, it appears that Maltese society began to frown upon witchcraft practices, indicating that the tribunal's policy of publicizing its dealings with known offenders had indeed paid off. Obviously, the Inquisition had not been successful in eradicating witchcraft from Maltese society. Some witches saw little to fear from the Holy Office. They either believed they would never be caught, or even if they were, the mild punishment did not deter them. Popular magic outlasted the tribunal, which was suppressed in 1798. Some Maltese even seem to have been virtually addicted to witchcraft as a way of life. Thus, it continued to be practiced in the form of healing and as a way to ward off the evil eye, right into the twentieth century.

CARMEL CASSAR

See also: INQUISITION, ROMAN; LOVE MAGIC.

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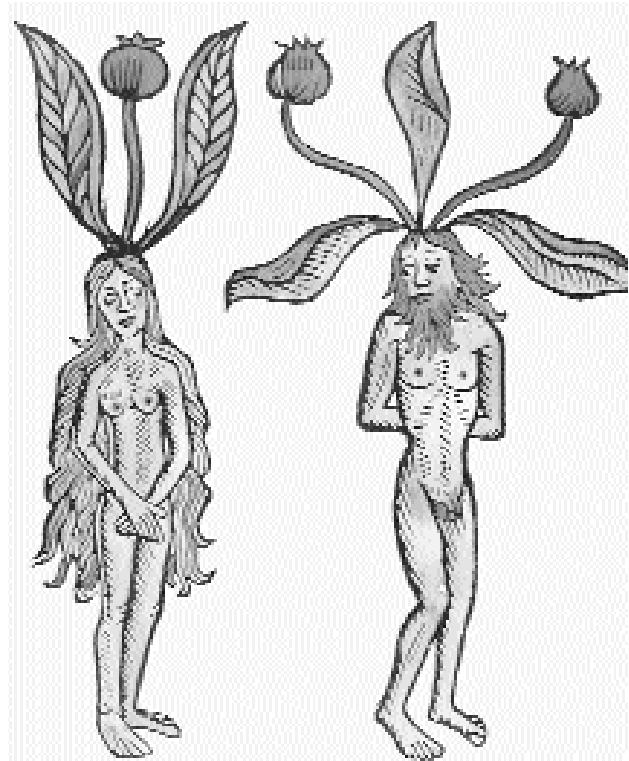
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MANDRAKE

The mandrake plant, *Mandragora officinarum*, is probably the best-known poisonous herb found in the witches' pharmacopoeia. Mandrakes were the subjects of much folkloric herbal beliefs, including the concept that the plants generated at the foot of a gallows from the semen of the executed. Mandrake plants were thus considered to be partially "human" and to have roots that resembled either the lower limbs or genitalia of human males or females. Sixteenth-century herbals commonly presented the "male" and "female" varieties of the plants. For example, such plants are shown in Johannes de Cuba's *Hortus Sanitatus*, a sixteenth-century herbal published in Frankfurt.

Being partly human, mandrake plants were thought to emit horrible screams when harvested, which gave rise to the folk belief that a dog should be employed to draw up the root because the scream of the plant could kill a human. Early herbals sometimes show this method of harvest employing such "drug-sniffing



Poisonous plant linked to witches and thought to grow under gallows from the semen of the executed. Because the mandrake was partly human, it emitted screams when pulled. (TopFoto.co.uk)

dogs.” Other items of mandrake folklore stated that one should not dig up the herb until sunset and that one should not dig if it was windy. Witches digging mandrake roots at night at the foot of a gallows are shown in a painting from about 1650 by David Teniers the Younger (found today in the Staatliche Kunsthalle in Karlsruhe, Germany). Teniers depicted a witch busily digging up a root while a freshly harvested mandrake root stands nearby, looking very humanoid in its appearance.

Like other poisonous plants thought to be used by witches, mandrake contains hyoscyamine, atropine, and scopolamine. These drugs affect the cardiovascular system and can produce hallucinations or make the individual think he or she is flying or floating. As with other poisonous herbs used by witches, mandrake could also be manipulated by a witch without causing her death, or it could be simply made up into a poison. Oddly, although mandrake was considered the very epitome of a poisonous plant used by witches, it was also believed that it could be used effectively to treat someone who was possessed. (One presumes that this was due to the herb’s sedative effects.)

Mandrake roots are probably the witches’ poisonous herbs most commonly depicted in the visual arts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Aside from their presence in herbals, one also finds mandrake roots in various seventeenth-century paintings. Apart from the Teniers painting, they include *Witches’ Sabbat* by the Flemish artist Frans Francken the Younger, completed in 1607 and owned by the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. A male mandrake root is prominently shown in the painting’s central area, close to several witches who are working *maleficia*. Two of these poisonous herbs also appear in a drawing by the seventeenth-century Dutch artist Jacques de Gheyn, entitled *Witches’ Scene*, now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rennes, France.

JANE P. DAVIDSON

See also: DOGS; DRUGS AND HALLUCINOGENS; HERBAL MEDICINE; TENIERS, DAVID THE YOUNGER.

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MANDROU, ROBERT (1921–1984)

One of extremely few distinguished French academics from a working-class background, Mandrou made the single most important twentieth-century French

contribution to the history of witchcraft with his 1968 doctoral thesis, *Magistrats et sorciers en France au XVIIIe siècle* (Magistrates and Witches in Seventeenth-Century France).

Secretary of the cutting-edge French journal *Annales: Economie, Sociétés, Civilisations* from 1954 to 1962 and then Lucien Febvre’s successor at the prestigious École Pratique des Hautes Études before becoming professor of history at the University of Paris-X (Nanterre) in the revolutionary year of 1968, Mandrou is best remembered today as a prolific scholar. He published many widely read books, starting with *A History of French Civilization* that he coauthored with Georges Duby in 1958 (English translation, 1964). Three years later came Mandrou’s pioneering exercise in the history of *mentalités* (mentalities—the ideas and values that a society shares), his *Introduction to Modern France, 1500–1640: An Essay in Historical Psychology* (English translation, 1975), which has remained in print continuously for forty years. In 1964 came another pioneering work, not yet translated, analyzing French popular culture in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries through the contents of chapbooks from the Bibliothèque bleue (Blue Library) of Troyes. Another synthetic work, *France in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (1967), preceded Mandrou’s thesis on witchcraft. An interesting monograph on the Fuggers as landed gentlemen in Swabia (translated into German in 1997) followed it in 1969. (A forced laborer in Germany during World War II, Mandrou admired many things German and often spent his vacations there.) *Louis XIV in His Time* (1973) completes the list of Mandrou’s major titles. His final book, an edited collection of texts titled *Possession and Witchcraft in Seventeenth-Century France* (1979), returned to the topic of his dissertation.

A generation after it first appeared, only parts of Mandrou’s sprawling investigation of the treatment of witchcraft by French appellate judges—above all, those who sat on the bench of the *Parlement* of Paris, probably the most prestigious secular court in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Christendom—have endured as authoritative contributions to witchcraft scholarship. Of its three parts (the medieval heritage to 1600; the major scandalous trials of the early 1600s, often linked to demonic possession; and the progressive abandonment of the crime of witchcraft at the appellate level after 1640), one can say that its scholarly credibility has been utterly eroded at the front but barely affected at the back. Mandrou’s first section is now completely discredited, but his second part retains partial validity, and his final section has suffered only minor damage from subsequent critics.

Despite its impressive bibliographical apparatus (345 published primary sources plus a survey of French parliamentary archives), the greatest weakness of Mandrou’s thesis has been its inadequate use of primary sources

from French *parlements*, above all the *Parlement* of Paris. Believing—incorrectly—that its *plumitifs*, or draft minutes of deliberations in criminal cases, were unreadable, Mandrou blandly assumed that Parisian appellate judges routinely confirmed upward of 90 percent of all death sentences for witchcraft until well into the seventeenth century, when Cartesian skepticism took hold. Unfortunately for Mandrou, within a decade of publishing his thesis, an expatriate American had successfully deciphered over 1,000 of these *plumitifs* from cases of witchcraft and demonstrated that the *Parlement* of Paris had *always*—ever since the fifteenth-century *Vauderie d'Arras*—practiced the level of judicial skepticism about witchcraft that Mandrou assumed it had acquired only by 1640 (Soman 1977). Subsequently, additional work in provincial French *parlements* has similarly shown persistent judicial skepticism about witch hunting at the appellate level throughout the French kingdom. The early-seventeenth-century “crisis of Satanism” lying at the center of Mandrou’s second section never occurred, at least not at the level of French appellate courts.

However, Mandrou saw correctly that a few spectacular, well-publicized cases of demonic possession did much to change educated public opinion about witchcraft in France by the mid-seventeenth century; subsequent scholarship continues to highlight such cases as Urbain Grandier, the Jesuit parish priest of Loudun who was accused of bewitching an entire convent of Ursuline nuns—and now we understand far better why Cardinal Richelieu never permitted the *Parlement* of Paris to intervene in his trial. Similarly, Mandrou’s final section on the decriminalization of witchcraft throughout France slighted its close connection with the scandalous “Affair of the Poisons” (1679–1682) but remains an otherwise authoritative account.

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: AFFAIR OF THE POISONS; ARRAS; FRANCE; FUGGER FAMILY; HISTORIOGRAPHY; LOUDUN NUNS; *PARLEMENT* OF PARIS; POSSESSION, DEMONIC.

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MANICHAISM

During the Middle Ages, ideas derived from Manichaeism, a Near Eastern religious movement, influenced the formation of the inquisitorial stereotype of the witch. Based on Gnostic principles and founded by the Iranian prophet Mani (216–277 C.E.), Manichaeism spread east as far as China and west into North Africa and southern Europe. Although described

as a Christian heresy (see the influential fourth-century text *Acta Archelai*), its roots were in Zoroastrianism, with influences from Christianity and Buddhism. Mani described himself as the promised Paraclete of God (Kephalaia 1:9–14) and the ultimate prophet (the title “Seal of the Prophets” is later used by Mohammed [Sura 30:44]), who had received a final, angelic revelation of the divine character of the universe at the age of twenty-four and then had begun an aggressive evangelism across the Persian Empire. Among the factors that helped spread his faith was its simplicity, its emphasis on a dualistic universe, and the injunction to translate his teaching to all peoples in their own language.

In his conception of the human predicament, Mani described three ages (past, present, and future) and a dualistic universe in which a continuous struggle occurred between the Kingdom of Light, with its focus being the Father of Greatness, and the Kingdom of Darkness, ruled by the Prince of Darkness and his five evil archons (demon, lion, eagle, fish, and dragon). At the heart of this struggle was the desire of the Father of Greatness to separate and return all his particles of light that had become trapped within the flesh of animals and plants during the process of the creation of the earth. It was the task of the evil forces coextensive with the forces of light to excite sexual lust and gluttony within all created beings, keeping the light particles impossibly commingled and thus lost to the Kingdom of Light. When their efforts failed, small pieces of light became disentangled from the darkness, and the sun and the moon functioned as two chariots bringing these pieces back from the world to the Father of Greatness. In the final age, a total conflagration of the earth would occur, ending with a complete separation of light from darkness, with the forces of evil sealed away forever within a bottomless pit.

Following the creation of the earth, Eve was seduced by an evil archon and subsequently gave birth to Cain. She then engaged in an incestuous relationship with both Cain and Abel, endangering humanity. Adam and his first son Seth were taught by “Jesus of Light” to adopt an ascetic lifestyle, which would protect the light particles within them. This discipline was then proposed by Mani as the basis for the rule of life of the elect, a select body within his community whose minds had been freed by the divine spirit *Nous* (knowledge) and who maintained strict ascetic practices, including sexual abstinence, poverty, and vegetarianism. The elect were not allowed to practice magic, own property, engage in commerce, kill animals, or even cut or step on plants because these living beings contained particles of light (referred to as the substance of the divine “Suffering Jesus”). The elect were assisted by a group of auditors who prepared their meals and performed all mundane tasks for the religious community. The auditors had a less rigid regimen but would not be directly

freed at death to join with the Father of Greatness; instead, they would have to be reincarnated as vegetable matter. All those who were not brought to this revelation were reincarnated as animals and eventually sank into the dark regions of the Netherworld.

Christianity found Manichaeism heretical for many reasons, starting with Mani's teaching that the soul suffered not from a weak and corrupt will but from contact with matter, which entrapped the light within the flesh. Evil was not the result of human sin but a physical reality; personal misfortunes were miseries to be endured, not the result of sins. The independent power of the evil forces also clashed with God's omnipotence and was refuted by several Church Fathers (Serapion of Thmuis, Tertullian, Titus of Bostra) on the grounds of human free will versus dualistic determinism. Among the arguments made against the passive avoidance or abhorrence of evil in Manichaeism is that it did not allow credit for the human ability to overcome evil.

Ultimately, it became the practice in the Middle Ages to label as Manichaeism any dualist Christian heresy, such as the tenth-century Bogomils (founded among the Slavic peasants of the Balkans) and the Cathars. It is clear that both of these groups adopted aspects of Manichaeism, including strict vegetarianism, abstinence from sexual intercourse, and drinking wine as a way of avoiding contact with the abominable. The contrast between the opulent wealth of the Orthodox Church and nobility and the physical misery of the Slavic peasants made them ready converts to Bogomilism's ascetic dogma and allowed them to participate in passive resistance, abstaining from violence against animals or humans.

The Cathars, strict dualists and iconoclasts, appeared first in the 1140s in Italy and spread across southern France and Spain. Although there were a number of sects identified as Cathars, they all shared the belief that the destruction of war and natural catastrophes were evidence of the Devil's rule over the world and that God either could not or did not choose to interfere. The battles between divine forces took place on a cosmic rather than an earthly level. The Cathar community, divided into auditors, believers, and the perfect, therefore battled against matter (even to the extent of replacing water baptism with the *consolamentum*, laying on of hands by a perfect). All flesh or earthly product was considered the essence of evil, and thus procreation was avoided because it would result in another soul being trapped in a bodily prison. The goal was to achieve perfection and liberation from the world through the obtaining of knowledge first revealed by Jesus, the messenger. Because the Cathars identified the official Church as a lying institution established by the Devil to keep humanity enslaved within the body, they were fiercely attacked and condemned as a danger to the Church and to civil order.

In constructing the stereotype of the witch, medieval demonologists drew upon and also misrepresented a

number of Manichaean ideas as developed by the Cathars. In describing witches as heretics, inquisitors claimed that they, in the manner of dualist heretic, had exaggerated the power of the Devil, so much so that they actually worshipped him. The description of sexual promiscuity and gluttony at the witches' Sabbat derived ultimately from the Manichaean belief that evil forces had excited these passions in order to keep light entrapped in matter. St. Augustine's description of sexual irregularities at the assemblies of Manichaeans gave medieval demonologists an authoritative source for such accusations. The claim that witches trampled on the cross as a symbol of their rejection of Christianity when making a pact with the Devil derived ultimately from the Manichaean and Cathar rejection of all physical material as evil.

VICTOR H. MATTHEWS

See also: DEVIL; HERESY; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC.

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MARCHTAL, IMPERIAL ABBEY OF

As in several other small states in southwestern Germany, witch hunting at Marchtal reached a peak between 1586 and 1596, but an extremely late witch panic took place between 1745 and 1757 that resulted in the execution of six women and the death of another in jail. This self-governing Premonstratensian Abbey, refounded in 1171 by Pfalzgraf Hugo II of Tübingen and his wife Elisabeth, had its seat on the edge of the Swabian Alb and belonged to the Swabian Circle of the Holy Roman Empire. Its abbots, who were authorized to establish a *Hochgericht* (high court) to hear capital trials in 1518, gradually enlarged their properties and rights until Marchtal controlled over twenty villages with a total population of about 2,700 by the eighteenth century. Marchtal developed a three-level jurisdiction, with a chief justice in Obermarchtal as the highest secular magistrate.

Marchtal's witchcraft trials share one salient characteristic: accusations of *maleficium* (harmful magic) originated especially in one village, Alleshhausen, located on the Federsee, where the peasants possessed a significant

portion of the land and often defied the abbot's control. At the initial trials in 1586, the *Vogt* (governor), Bernhart Bitterlin (who unsurprisingly came from the Federsee area), played a decisive role. He investigated the charges of witchcraft in Alleshausen and used torture to obtain the names of the witches' accomplices. Under the government of Abbot Konrad Frey (1571–1591) and his successor Johannes Riedgasser (1591–1600), Marchtal's witchcraft trials were most intense and resulted in the death of at least forty-nine people. The abbots gave their secular magistrates plenty of rope, not accelerating or preventing or alleviating witchcraft trials in their territory. Later, around 1627–1628, at least five more women were convicted. Witchcraft accusations in Marchtal usually followed the same pattern, but the responses of the authorities to the accusations were less predictable. Especially after the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648), the authorities rejected several denunciations from Alleshausen and punished the accusers. In 1745, the political and economic elite of Alleshausen, who officiated at the local court, once again assumed the role of the primary prosecutors. During the lawsuit, they also became influential members of the high court in Obermarchtal. They complained that a poor woman, Catharina Schmid, had used witchcraft to destroy her affluent neighbors' property because of a grudge against them. Schmid was arrested but did not confess. So Josef von Sättelin (mayor of the Catholic part of the imperial city of Biberach from 1741–1764) was consulted as a *Gutachter* (judicial expert) to advise the court in the conduct of the trial. At first, von Sättelin proposed to release Catharina Schmid from jail and to reintegrate her into Alleshausen; according to the Carolina Code (the imperial law code, 1532), he stated, there had not been sufficient evidence to justify the application of torture, only rumors. But the prominent inhabitants of Alleshausen ignored this unwelcome advice and expanded her trial with new accusations, now also directed against the accused's daughter, Maria Tornhäuser. They wanted both women convicted, and they finally succeeded: after languishing in jail for nine months, the mother accepted her daughter's denunciation. Despite his scruples, Josef von Sättelin no longer objected to their execution, which took place on March 9, 1746.

During the rule of a new abbot, Edmund Sartor (1746–1768), another five suspected women were accused. Four of them were convicted of witchcraft and executed, two in March 1747 and two more in November 1747, and the fifth died in jail in October 1747. Von Sättelin's *Gutachten* (judicial opinions) revealed an interesting transformation. His later *Gutachten* were no longer informed by the Carolina Code. Instead, he now made additional trials possible by arguing that witchcraft was caused by a pact with the Devil, as demonologists said, and necessarily stemmed

from diabolical malice. Later he argued that reason dictates the existence of witchcraft. His final argument implied that neither secular laws nor scientific logic was decisive, but that witchcraft was constituted by nature.

In the end, it was the same elite of Alleshausen, who had begun this cycle of persecutions, who brought an end to witch hunting. The *Amtmann* (bailiff) of Alleshausen offered a new interpretation of the damages attributed to witchcraft: the harm to livestock, he said, was not provoked by witches but caused by the peasants through their disregard for proper animal husbandry. In this way, the concept of witchcraft no longer provided an adequate explanation. Afterward, two newly appointed *Gutachter* from Schussenried and Ulm took the same position regarding the reality of witchcraft. No further trials were opened after 1757.

CONSTANZE STÖRK

See also: CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*);

ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; PANICS.

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MARIA THERESA, HOLY ROMAN EMPRESS (1717–1780; RULED 1740–1780)

Maria Theresa was a reforming empress whose skepticism regarding witchcraft contributed to its decriminalization in Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia.

As the eldest daughter of Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI, who had no male heir, Maria Theresa was heiress of the house of Habsburg, archduchess of Austria, and queen of both Hungary and Bohemia; but she became empress only through her husband, Duke Francis of Lorraine, who was elected Holy Roman Emperor in 1745. She had married him before beginning to rule after her father died in 1740. Although the major European powers had officially accepted Charles VI's Pragmatic Sanction (which guaranteed the right of female succession within Habsburg lands) at the time of its proclamation in 1713, Prussian challenges to Maria Theresa's succession provoked a seven-year war and at first prevented her husband from becoming emperor. Ultimately, she fended off these and additional affronts to emerge as one of the Habsburgs' longest-reigning and most successful monarchs. As the only woman Habsburg ruler, she is best remembered for her successful defense of her realm; her Catholic

piety; and an enlightened commitment to political, legal, social, and educational reform.

This commitment emerged clearly in her attitude toward witchcraft. As early as the mid-1750s, we have evidence of Maria Theresa's personal skepticism regarding magical crimes through her reaction to accounts of vampires and witches in Moravia and Bohemia. In response, she dispatched an investigative commission that included two physicians, Johannes Gasser and Christian Vabst. After receiving their report, she consulted her own principal court physician, Gerard van Swieten, director of the Hofbibliothek (National Library) and reformer of the University of Vienna, who concurred with the recommendations of his medical colleagues: crush such superstitions through political power. It is worth noting that, like Maria Theresa's later witchcraft patent, van Swieten's 1755 treatise on vampires affirmed the reality of miracles and Satan's earthly powers before it upheld the virtues of natural science and exposed the dangers of ignorance. In March 1755, the empress forbade her subjects from following their customary practices when fears of the supernatural led to specific allegations of harm. Instead, the authorities must investigate all cases involving vampires (*magia postuma*), apparitions, witchcraft, treasure hunting, or diabolical possessions using rational means. By January 1756, the government of Maria Theresa ordered that the royal appeals court in Hungary automatically review all decisions by lower courts involving charges of witchcraft. In response to such a trial in the Tabor district of Bohemia, she issued a resolution on July 30, 1756, stating, "It is certain that witches are found only where ignorance is; correct this and no more will be found. [The accused] is no more a witch than I" (Kern 1999, 170).

The empress's attitude toward witchcraft is best reflected in her government's *Artikel von der Zauberey, Hexerey, Wahrsagerey, und dergleichen* (An Article on Sorcery, Witchcraft, Divination, and Similar Activities), issued on November 5, 1766 (Kern 1999). Although trials for witchcraft had been on the wane for decades in the western lands of the Habsburg monarchy, they persisted in the eastern kingdoms of Bohemia and Hungary. By the 1750s, Maria Theresa had already begun to take steps to suppress trials for witchcraft, but this edict made them virtually impossible to prosecute by the late 1760s. Compiled by a court commission directed by Count Michael Johann von Althann for inclusion in a forthcoming penal code, the patent fills seventeen printed pages, in which the empress's legal advisers defined the prohibited activities and outlined their prosecution.

Although the *Artikel* nowhere denied the reality of diabolical magic, it had the overall effect of severely limiting the possibility of prosecuting anyone for witchcraft. Its text and tone suggest that although diabolical sorcery was possible, it certainly did not occur in

the Habsburg lands. The contradictory purposes of the patent became clear from the titles of its first few sections, which juxtaposed the outlawed activities in question ("the offense of sorcery") with a series of qualifiers stressing the frivolity of the threat: "delusion," "credulity," "false," "fraud," and "madness" (Kern 1999, 165–166). Its following sections contributed variously to a basic dichotomy informing all legal proceedings concerned with magical events: extremely rare diabolical crimes versus widespread and potentially criminal illusionary beliefs. Sections 1 and 2 established the practice of magic as an outlawed activity.

Nonetheless, section 3 reformulated the way magical crimes should be understood in a skeptical tone, implying that most matters concerning sorcery or witchcraft coming before the courts stemmed from popular ignorance. It accordingly established a legal basis for proceeding in such cases with a considerable degree of doubt. Sections 4 and 5, which created the possibility of distinguishing legitimate from illegitimate cases, directly emphasized this issue; section 6 firmly prohibited investigators from using superstitious methods in their inquiries. The decree further indicated that only the sovereign had the authority to investigate and decide cases that might have legitimate merit; thus, sections 7 and 12 created exclusive legal prerogatives for the sovereign and her legal counselors. The remainder (sections 8–11, 13, and 14) delineated careful guidelines for proceeding with investigations, emphasizing the need for skeptical inquiry. Its final two sections (15 and 16) extended those guidelines to the investigation and suppression of continuing widespread popular superstitions. Not only were witchcraft trials to be stopped, but also the folkloric beliefs sustaining accusations of witchcraft should be stamped out.

The paradoxical message of Maria Theresa's "Article on Sorcery" hinged on a reassessment by state authorities of the threat that magical activities posed to Austrian society and a new conception of the state's role in addressing it. Policy-makers did not see the Devil or his minions as real threats to social order, and beliefs in the Devil's powers had lost currency among most, but not all, the educated and politically powerful elites in Habsburg lands. Because of the stronghold of state-sponsored Catholic orthodoxy on Austrian religious practice, skeptical medical and legal scholars like van Swieten or von Althann could not denounce demonic magic and witchcraft outright, because the manifest powers of the Devil and the possibility of his malevolent intercession remained tenets of Christian faith. Instead, officials sought to downplay the powers of the Devil, attributing beliefs in demonic magic and malefice to the inherently superstitious populace. Although the impetus for constructing the 1766 patent emerged from Maria Theresa's efforts to reform criminal and civil law and create a judicial system based on

the abstract principle of justice, Bohemian and Hungarian witch and vampire cases during the 1750s and 1760s provided a more concrete stimulus.

EDMUND M. KERN

See also: AUSTRIA; BOHEMIA; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; HUNGARY; SKEPTICISM; SWIETEN, GERARD VAN; VAMPIRE.

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MARY, THE VIRGIN

Though there are only a few references to the mother of Jesus in the New Testament and Jesus himself had a rather distanced relation to her, Mary became, at least from the Carolingian epoch onward, the second most important holy figure in Christianity, with her cult reaching its peak in the late Middle Ages. Some late medieval prayers addressed Mary as more powerful than Jesus because he has to be obedient to his mother. She was painted as Virgin of Mercy, beneath whose mantle her adepts found protection not only against demons but also especially against the wrath of God the Father, who desires to destroy sinful mankind. Many *exempla* taught that Jesus could forgive a sinner who had offended him, but never one who had offended his mother. The Virgin, more than other saints, was used to exorcise and Christianize places vowed to another religion; after anti-Jewish pogroms, for example, Marian sanctuaries were regularly erected on the place of the former synagogue.

In connection with witchcraft, several aspects are of interest: Did the Virgin appear in charms and magic? What did the witches think of her? Could she protect even a sorceress?

The protection of the Virgin was thought to be of the greatest power against the Evil One; her name can be found in many an apotropaic charm. Mary helped even those who made a pact with Satan, the most famous proof of which was the miracle story of Theophilus, told in all European tongues. This originally Byzantine motif could even apply to rueful sorceresses. In the Dutch play *Marieken van Nieuwmege* (ca. 1500), the protagonist Marieken (i.e., "little Mary") made a pact with an incubus, but she had to change her name in order to stop the power of her patron saint. She, however, chose Emma (where the first letter of Mary's name appears twice) and was saved in the end.

Although the confrontation between the Virgin Mary and demons was a standard motif of preachers, she did not play any important role in specialized antiwitchcraft theology or practices of the Church. For women of all kinds, their relation to the Virgin was of central

importance. It became especially obvious on those occasions in the late Middle Ages and the early modern epoch when a woman showed signs both of being a mystic and a witch. The peasant Chiara Signorini, condemned in 1519 at Modena, manifested a complex mixture of veneration of the Virgin Mary and magical practices. Signorini conceded under torture that she had caused many people to fall ill by demonic help. However, she also confessed to being close to the Virgin, who (and not a demon) actually caused these maladies, in order to revenge herself after being offended. In late-seventeenth-century Normandy, Marie Benoist de la Boucaille was a famous healer and ecstatic who claimed to have had many visions of Mary, Jesus, and God; but she also showed a Devil's mark and was condemned for witchcraft and false prophecy. "Real" witches usually avoided any veneration for the Virgin, at least according to their confessions. Many of them, when denying Jesus, had to abuse his mother also. According to the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 2.2), witches called her the "fat woman."

Especially from the fifteenth century onward, a huge number of popular blessings have been recorded that address the Mother of God, the Virgin, or the suffering mother, sometimes begging for help in love affairs but more often seeking protection from illness and dangerous animals (especially snakes, because the Devil seduced Eve in that form and Mary was called the second, sinless Eve). To further this aim, apocryphal situations were created, as in the following early modern High German charm: When Jesus was wounded by the arrows of two demons, his mother came and agreed to help him, if he would give her half of the earth and half of heaven. Jesus promised, and Mary called fifty-five angels and healed her son; in the same way, the pains of the person saying this charm would be healed. From the standpoint of religious psychology, male-centered Christianity obviously required a female "goddess" nearly as mighty as the male god himself, a superhuman woman onto whom cravings for motherly nurture and understanding can be projected. Therefore, the thirteenth-century mystic Mechthild of Magdeburg literally called her *goettinne* (goddess) in her work *The Flowing Light of the Godhead* (Mechthild of Magdeburg 1998, 3.1; 3.4). Meanwhile, Lollards abused the Virgin as a witch, and Luther reversed Mechthild by calling her an *Abgöttin* (idol) (Luther 7: 568, 573 f.). Mary, also, like her son, became a rich subject for blasphemies, for example, cursing "by Mary's limbs" or "by the Virgin's cunt," and was often abused as a whore in Italy. But there is also evidence that the Virgin became the object of male sexual fantasies, expressed in many miracles with visions of Mary kissing or even lactating her celibate admirer.

Mary's cult provoked a definitely negative reaction from Protestant reformers. In Tridentine Catholicism,

Mary's glory was exalted even higher as she became the patroness of every anti-Protestant action, including military ones. The triumphant Catholic Church spread the iconography of the Immaculate Conception—the woman of the Apocalypse crushing the snake underfoot—over all countries under her rule, and her famous apparitions and miracles at Lourdes and Fatima have helped maintain her veneration until the present day.

PETER DINZELBACHER

See also: CHARMS; CURSES; JESUS; THEOPHILUS.

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MATHER, COTTON (1663–1728)

Cotton Mather was New England's most celebrated Puritan and a staunch believer in the reality of witchcraft.

Mather played an important role in the case of the Goodwin children in Boston in 1688 and later in the witch hunting in Salem in 1692–1693. During these years, Cotton Mather advanced his views on witchcraft in private correspondence, sermons, and books: *A Discourse on Witchcraft* (1689), *Memorable Providences, Relating to Witchcrafts and Possessions* (1689), and *The Wonders of the Invisible World* (1692). Mather preached that witches represented the Devil's special war against New England, but his actions usually discouraged witch hunting.

The son of Increase Mather, minister of the Second Church in Boston and president of Harvard College, Cotton Mather (named for his grandfather, John Cotton) entered Harvard College at the age of twelve and earned his MA in 1681, at age eighteen. In 1685 he was installed as his father's assistant at Second Church

in Boston. During Increase Mather's long mission in England (1688–1692) negotiating a new charter for Massachusetts, Cotton at the age of twenty-five was left in charge of the largest congregation in New England.

The author of over 400 works, Cotton Mather combined modern scientific interests, or "rational philosophy," with a strong belief in the existence of witchcraft. No Puritan better displayed the seventeenth-century New England curiosity about the physical universe than Mather did in his *Curiosa Americana* (1712–1724). An avid reader of current scientific literature, Cotton Mather was familiar with the writings of such mechanistic philosophers as René Descartes, Pierre Gassendi, and Robert Boyle. His lifelong interest in scientific issues earned him membership in the Royal Society of London, and his account of the smallpox inoculation episode of 1721 was published in the society's transactions. The best example of Cotton Mather's scientific attitude is his *Christian Philosopher: A Collection of the Best Discoveries in Nature, with Religious Improvements* (1721), where he pronounced Isaac Newton "the Perpetual Dictator of the Learned World in the Principles of Natural Philosophy" (p. 65). His magnum opus was *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702), an ecclesiastical history of New England from its founding to his own time.

Cotton Mather's belief in witchcraft was influenced most by William Perkins, the prominent English Puritan preacher and demonologist, whose *Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft* (1608) made him the chief authority in seventeenth-century England on witchcraft; by the Cambridge Platonist Henry More, whose *Antidote Against Atheism* (1653) not only accepted the reality of witches but even upheld their sexual intercourse with the Devil; by the famous Puritan preacher Richard Baxter, whose *Certainty of the World of Spirits* (1691) related many abnormal events as evidence of the invisible power of spirits; and lastly by Joseph Glanvill's *Saducismus Triumphatus, or Full and Plain Evidence Concerning Witches and Apparitions* (1681), which attempted to ground the belief in witchcraft scientifically on the basis of unshakable evidence.

To the thought of these authorities on witchcraft, Mather added a uniquely American perspective; he was obsessed with the view that the Devil had waged a war against Puritan New England since its founding: "The New Englanders are a People of God" settled in America, which was "once the Devil Territories" (emphasis in the original). Hence it was "a rousing alarm to the Devil, when a great Company of English Protestants and Puritans, came to erect Evangelical churches" in America. The Devil, accordingly, "tried all sorts of Methods to overturn" New England. Events in Salem proved that an "Army of the Devils is horribly broke in upon" the land, and the witches found there are evidence of an "An Horrible Plot" on the part of the

“Devil against New England” (Mather 1693c, 13–14, 74). New England therefore played a crucial role in fighting the Devil; as Jesus resisted the Devil in the wilderness, so now New England should stand against the Devil’s temptation in the wilderness of America (Mather 1693c, 174–178).

Cotton Mather’s first practical encounter with witchcraft came in the case of the Goodwin children in Boston in the summer of 1688, a story he described in *Memorable Providences, Relating to Witchcrafts and Possessions* (1689). An old Irish widow, Mary Glover, had confessed to be in league with the Devil, bewitching the four children of John Goodwin and practicing image magic. Before she was hanged in Boston in November 1688, Mather twice visited Mary Glover in jail; he claimed “she never denied” her guilt of “witchcraft,” or of “her confederacies with the devils,” or “her covenant with hell” (Hall 1991, 272). Following her execution, Cotton Mather preached a suitably damning sermon on the threat of witchcraft, asserting that “Witchcraft is the most Mōnstrous and Horrid Evil” because it is “a Renouncing of God, and Advancing of the filthy *Devil* into the Throne of the Most High. . . . *Witchcraft* is a renouncing of *Christ*, and preferring the Communion of a loathsome lying *Devil*.” And given “there are witches, we are to suppose that there are devils too” (Mather 1689b, 98–99).

Four years later, Cotton Mather was caught up in the drama of the largest witch hunt in New England. But we must remember two things about his role. First, his father Increase had returned from England in May 1692, and the younger Mather deferred to his leadership. Second, Cotton Mather’s behavior (not unlike that of many European Protestant ministers facing witch hunts) displayed a curious mixture of public endorsement for these prosecutions and private warnings about their dangers.

Seventeenth-century New England exhibited many signs of a witch craze: a large witch hunt claiming twenty deaths, more than half of the total victims for all New England, occurred in Salem in 1692 (nineteen Massachusetts men and women and two dogs were hanged for witchcraft, and one man was pressed to death for refusing to plead to the indictment). The first witchcraft accusations occurred in Salem Village, a parish of the town of Salem, in early February 1692. Two young girls fell into strange fits, much like those in the case of the Goodwin children in Boston, and soon other girls in the village exhibited the same behavior. Claiming that witches were afflicting them, the girls provided names of villagers, who were arrested and put in jail on charges of witchcraft. Facing a growing witchcraft hysteria, the new governor of Massachusetts, Sir William Phips, established a special court of Oyer and Terminer on May 27, 1692, to hear and determine the witchcraft cases in Salem. On June 10 the first execution occurred. The trial

and its outcome troubled so many that in June the governor turned to leading ministers for advice. In response, Cotton Mather composed “The Return of Several Ministers,” which urged caution in relying on the use of spectral evidence (an image of a person visible only to the witchcraft victim whom the specter was said to have attacked in some way) in court. However, the report nonetheless urged “the speedy and vigorous Prosecution” of those guilty of witchcraft (Mather 1693b, 291). The judges paid more attention to the second recommendation than to the first, giving the girls enormous power to manipulate the court. Accordingly, by July 19 five more women had been executed.

Cotton Mather’s eschatological visions ran high during that time; events in Salem signified that “there never was a poor plantation, more pursued by the *wrath* of the *Devil*, than our poor *New England*” (Mather 1693c, 74). On August 4, 1692, he delivered a sermon warning that the Last Judgment was at hand. Calculating from Biblical evidence that the year 1697 would be the year of the End, he deemed New England as leading the final charge against the Devil and his minions. Seeing the affairs in Salem as proof of an “Horrible Plot against the Country by *Witchcraft*” aiming to “Blow up, and pull down all the churches in the Country,” Mather urged New Englanders not to “allow the Mad Dogs of Hell” to have the upper hand (Mather 1693c, 14, 22).

By late September 1692, the witchcraft hysteria reached its peak, and eight more women had been hanged. Worried about the trials, Phips again turned to the spiritual leaders for advice. In October, Increase Mather composed his *Cases of Conscience*, challenging the court’s procedures head-on by denouncing the use of spectral evidence and arguing that it was better for ten suspected witches to escape than one innocent person be condemned, a view endorsed by many ministers. However, Cotton Mather was given the official trial transcripts and in the same month composed *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, which described the court proceedings favorably. The governor, however, accepted Increase Mather’s views and abolished the special court. Soon the storm was over.

Robert Calef, a Boston merchant who hated Cotton Mather, read *The Wonders of the Invisible World* as both a justification of the trials and an attempt to minimize Mather’s own role. Calef claimed that Cotton Mather was constantly warning that “the Devils were walking about our Streets with lengthen Chains making a dreadful noise in our Ears” (Calef 1700, preface). The truth, of course, was more complicated. The younger Mather never repudiated his father’s loathing of spectral evidence, which had fueled the Salem witch hunt. If Cotton Mather persuaded authorities to proceed with the execution of George Burroughs, a former Salem minister, despite Burroughs’s ability to recite the Lord’s Prayer perfectly while on the gallows, this intervention

must be set against Cotton Mather's visible desire to avoid turning Mercy Short's "unnatural afflictions" into a witchcraft case at Boston during 1692–1693 (Boyer and Nissenbaum 1974, 24–26). Although Cotton Mather repeated his original views on the Salem trials in his *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702), his later diaries reveal regret for his role in the trials and executions.

AVIHU ZAKAI

See also: BAXTER, RICHARD; GLANVILL, JOSEPH; GOODWIN CHILDREN; MATHER, INCREASE; MORE, HENRY; NEW ENGLAND; PERKINS, WILLIAM; SALEM; SPECTRAL EVIDENCE.

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MATHER, INCREASE (1639–1723)

Increase Mather was an American Puritan minister, theologian, and demonologist; president of Harvard

College from 1685 to 1701 whose *Cases of Conscience Concerning Evil Spirits Personating Men* (1693), a response to the Salem trials, quoted numerous witchcraft treatises, some now neglected.

Evidence of demonic activity at Salem divided pastoral opinion in the Massachusetts Colony. Judges appeared naively to dismiss the possibility that God could allow the Devil to assume the shape of an innocent person to perform evil. On June 15, 1692, several Cambridge ministers wrote to the Salem judges, warning that "a demon may, by God's permission, appear even to ill purposes, in the shape of an innocent, yea, and a virtuous man" (I. Mather 1980, 290). On August 1 the conclave commissioned Mather to write *Cases of Conscience*. By the time Governor William Phips received it, the trials were essentially over.

Increase and his son Cotton Mather disagreed over Salem. Cotton conceded that spectral evidence was unreliable but defended confessions as sufficient proof of guilt (C. Mather 1980, 14–16). His *Wonders of the Invisible World* was rushed into print before Increase's *Cases of Conscience*, though he had begun the former after the completion of his father's work. Cotton seemed to rebut his father's arguments preemptively (Hall 1988, 262–263). Contemporaries evidently thought so: Increase formally denied in a postscript to *Cases of Conscience* that the two books disagreed (I. Mather 1980, 288–290).

They did agree on the fascination of the "invisible world." In 1696 Increase published *Angelographia* and *A Disquisition Concerning Angelical Apparitions*, with a subtitle that revealed intimate connections with Salem: "In Answer to a Case of Conscience, Showing that Demons Often Appear Like Angels of Light, and What Is the Best and Only Way to Prevent Deception by Them."

Like Joseph Glanvill, Henry More, and others, the Mathers considered proofs of witchcraft necessary to rebut modern "Sadducees," who reputedly doubted the reality of "spirit"—angels, demons, ghosts, and the immortal human soul. "Sadducism [*sic*] is a degree of atheism, and commonly ends therein" (I. Mather 1696b, sig. K3v). *Angelographia* begins: "There are such beings as angels. They are not mere *entia rationis* [beings defined by reason alone], imaginary beings, or apparitions. . . . The Sadducees said. . . that the angels are not real beings, but only apparitions and impressions made in the minds of men" (I. Mather 1696a, 5).

Allusions to Salem (which was never mentioned by name) implied proof of demonic reality: "some who object that the age wherein we live has no demoniacks, or possessed persons, do from thence suspect the whole Gospel of fabulosity or imposture. That there are in this age enigmens, late examples amongst ourselves (and more than a few of them) are an awful



The Puritan minister Increase Mather and the title page of his *Cases of Conscience Concerning Evil Spirits*, 1693. (Corbis)

conviction. . . .” (I. Mather 1696b, sigs. K3v–K4r). Evil demons implied good angels: “there are evil angels: men cannot but perceive that. . . from the bodily possessions. . . if there are evil angels, reason saith they were once good. . . . And if the evil angels were once good, we may rationally conclude that there are some who are, as originally they were, holy spirits” (I. Mather 1696a, 7).

Good angels are still present: “Their appearings are in a great measure ceased, but their working is not” (I. Mather 1696a, 63). Both Mathers sought apparitions of good angels soon after Salem: Increase convinced himself of experiencing one in September 1693, and Cotton soon followed suit (Hall 1988, 273).

WALTER STEPHENS

See also: ANGELS; CONFESSIONS; CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DEMONS; MATHER, COTTON; SALEM; SPECTRAL EVIDENCE.

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MAXIMILIAN I, DUKE OF BAVARIA (1573–1651, RULED 1597–1651)

Educated as a witch hunter, the cautious Duke Maximilian never became one because he could not readily determine the guilty witch from the innocent accused. Bavaria’s iron prince-electoral had replaced his father Wilhelm V “the Pious” of the Wittelsbach dynasty (1548–1626, r. 1579–1594/1597) during the 1590s, when Bavaria was close to bankruptcy, before formally succeeding him in 1597. Maximilian became one of very few German princes who ruled before, during, and after the Thirty Years’ War. As the founder and head of the Catholic League, he took action against Frederick V in 1618, when this prince-electoral of the Palatinate of the Wittelsbachs was elected king of Bohemia. Maximilian’s army crushed the Protestant army in 1620 at the battle at the White Mountain near Prague, terminating Frederick’s kingship after only one winter. Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II subsequently rewarded his cousin Maximilian’s support by transferring the Palatine electoral vote to the Bavarian Wittelsbachs in 1623. As leader of the Catholic League, Maximilian became so deeply embroiled in warfare that his duchy was occupied twice during the war by foreign troops and lost about half of its population, mainly through epidemic diseases rather than military action. Bavaria emerged from the war exhausted but intact, while Maximilian secured both the title of prince-electoral and the territory of the Upper Palatinate for his successor. In his political testament, however, he recommended to his son Ferdinand Maria never to wage war except for the purpose of national defense because it placed too heavy a burden on the people.

The Spanish Jesuit Gregory of Valencia, a zealous demonologist, prepared Maximilian to be a witch hunter. Gregory literally spent days with his young pupil in the torture chambers, as we learn from Maximilian’s letters to his father in Munich. At the age of sixteen, Maximilian had to watch the trials of witches at Ingolstadt. Throughout his long life, Maximilian was ready to support witch hunts. Many of his councilors and officials, some educated at the University of Ingolstadt in the same years, harbored similar ideas; many of the Franconian prince-bishops whom Maximilian recruited into the Catholic League had also matriculated at Ingolstadt. Maximilian and his Austrian

cousin, who would become Emperor Ferdinand II (1578–1637) were the most prominent rulers during a generation of witch hunters. Furthermore, Maximilian, like his father, was married to a Lorraine princess, Elisabeth Renée (1574–1635), and thus closely allied with the rulers of this prolific witch-hunting duchy.

Despite all his zeal, however, Maximilian was a very cautious ruler, consuming his energies in the service of his people and spending many hours each day studying mountains of files. He was unwilling to tolerate administrative sloppiness, especially in the administration of the law. These positive aspects of Maximilian’s personality may have motivated Bavaria’s estates to secure his father’s early resignation, thus ending the terrible witch hunt of the years around 1590 and securing a more capable young ruler.

This calculation worked out, at least to some extent. Maximilian knew how to use witch-hunting rhetoric but never turned into a witch hunter himself. After some executions in 1600, when zealous councilors attempted to launch a general witch hunt throughout Bavaria, representatives of the estates and the Privy Council stopped them, and Maximilian conceded a review of the legal procedure. As a result of obvious irregularities and after heated debates within his government, Maximilian agreed to the expensive procedure for asking legal opinions from different parts of Europe, including German governments and law faculties, two Italian universities, and demonologists from Lorraine (Nicolas Rémy) and the Spanish Netherlands (Martín Del Rio), all of which had to be discussed by his councilors in written legal opinions. In conclusion, the witch hunt was terminated, and legal procedures in general were reviewed. The Court Council, whose detailed minutes recorded its sessions, controlled the lower courts more tightly. No torture was to be applied in Bavaria without the Court Council’s written consent. A general legal reform was begun, including the most detailed legislation anywhere in Europe against superstition, magic, and witchcraft, forty printed pages altogether, compiled between 1608 and 1612. A local judge, who had deceived the Court Council in order to conduct a local witch hunt in the Bavarian exclave of Wemding, was sentenced to death in 1613.

Although hundreds of cases of magic and witchcraft were scrutinized in Bavaria during Maximilian’s long reign, there were few executions. To the great disappointment of some of his councilors, particularly his Jesuit confessor Adam Contzen and the faction around the zealous court councilor Dr. Johann Sigmund Wagnereckh, Maximilian never became a witch hunter, despite all his verbal radicalism. His hesitation was motivated not by doubts regarding the reality of witchcraft or the existence of witches, but by the difficulties of distinguishing genuine witches from innocent people who were exposed to suspicion by the enemy of mankind, the

Devil. The degree to which reason of state entered into the prince-electors' motivation is difficult to estimate. For the members of his Privy Council and the leaders of the estates, the general welfare of Bavaria's people was the guiding principle; it seems likely that Maximilian shared their opinion, although he never said so in public.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; CONTZEN, ADAM, SJ; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; FERDINAND II, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; GERMANY; GREGORY OF VALENCIA; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; INGOLSTADT, UNIVERSITY OF; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS), LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); LORRAINE, DUCHY OF; PALATINATE, ELECTORATE OF; RÉMY, NICOLAS.

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MAXIMILIAN I, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR (1459–1519, RULED 1486/1493–1519)

The son of Emperor Frederick III and Eleanor of Portugal, Maximilian laid the foundations for the rise of the Habsburg dynasty to world historical importance. Married in 1477 to Mary of Burgundy, heiress of Charles the Bold, he was elected “king of the Romans” in 1486 and succeeded his father as Holy Roman Emperor of the German Nation in 1493, although his coronation took place only in 1508. After his wife's death in 1482, Maximilian secured the Low Countries for their son Philip I of Burgundy, whom he married to Juana of Castile and Aragon in 1496. Maximilian's oldest grandson, Philip's son Charles (1500–1558), became king of Spain (1516), duke of Burgundy, and Holy Roman Emperor (1519); his second grandson Ferdinand (named for the Aragonese grandfather who raised him) acquired Habsburg Austria and later became king of Bohemia and Hungary (1526) and finally Holy Roman Emperor (1556). At least two demonologists tried to gain Maximilian's support. Heinrich Kramer traveled to Brussels in November 1486 to gain the king's approval for his book *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486). The result must have been disappointing: only Kramer's petition is mentioned in an appendix to the *Malleus*, with the text of Maximilian's response suppressed. In 1508, Johannes Trithemius (1462–1516), abbot of the Benedictine monastery St. Jacob in Würzburg and a

specialist on occult affairs, answered eight theological questions asked by Emperor Maximilian at the town of Boppard on the Rhine. Three of these (nos. 5–7) concerned witchcraft. Although Trithemius's answers were published during Maximilian's lifetime (*Liber octo questionum ad Maximilaneum Caesarem* [Book of Eight Questions to Emperor Maximilian], Oppenheim, 1515), both the circumstances of the event and the emperor's interests remain unclear. Maximilian's curiosity regarding cultural phenomena was insatiable, which was one of the reasons he was so tremendously popular in Upper Germany and Austria. But there is no evidence that Maximilian ever encouraged witchcraft trials in his possessions. Neither Tyrol nor Austria saw any executions during his reign, although the emperor was concerned about the frequent clusters of witchcraft trials in the Netherlands, his Burgundian heritage.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AUSTRIA; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; TRITHEMIUS, JOHANNES; TYROL, COUNTY OF.

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MECHANICAL PHILOSOPHY

Seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century mechanical philosophy, which held that nature operated like a machine in accordance with the laws of nature, led some educated men to question their belief in witchcraft. The mechanical philosophy provided one of the main philosophical foundations for the Scientific Revolution. It is most closely associated with the work of the French philosopher and mathematician René Descartes, although many other scientists, including Galileo Galilei and Johannes Kepler, subscribed to its basic elements. Mechanists argued that nature operated mechanically, just like a clock or some other piece of machinery. According to mechanists, nature consisted of many machines, some of them extremely small. The human body was itself a machine, and its center, the heart, was likewise a piece of machinery that moved other parts of the body. Because God made the human body, it was superior to any human-made machine, but it was still nothing more than a machine. The only part of a human being that was not a machine was the mind or the soul, which according to Descartes was immaterial and therefore completely different from the body and the rest of the natural world.

Descartes argued that matter was completely inert or passive. It had neither a soul nor any innate purpose. Its

only property was extension, by which Descartes meant its physical dimensions, such as length, width, and depth. Without a spirit or any other internal force directing its action, matter simply responded to the power of the other bodies with which it came in contact. According to Descartes, "There exist no occult forces in stones or plants, no amazing and marvellous sympathies and antipathies, in fact there exists nothing in the whole of nature which cannot be explained in terms of purely corporeal causes, totally devoid of mind and thought" (Easlea 1980, 111). This view of nature posed a direct challenge to Neoplatonism, which held that the natural world was charged with various occult forces and therefore provided the main philosophical foundation for the practice of natural magic.

The mechanical philosophy also presented a challenge to the belief in witchcraft. The view that nature operated in a regular, predictable way, in accordance with immutable laws, called into question the belief that witches used the power of the Devil to intervene in the operation of the natural world. Those who adopted Descartes' philosophy, known as Cartesianism, did not necessarily deny the existence of good or evil spirits, but they did reject the view that those spirits could change the course of nature. The English philosopher Thomas Hobbes, who differed with Descartes on many issues but nevertheless also subscribed to a mechanical view of the universe, went so far as to deny the existence of spirits altogether. For Hobbes, even God was material, and the spirits and demons mentioned in the Bible had thin bodies that were incapable of being perceived by human beings.

Nevertheless, the mechanical philosophy had only limited success in undermining the belief in witchcraft among educated people. The main reason was that other natural philosophers modified Descartes' mechanical view of nature to allow for the intervention of spiritual forces. The English philosopher Henry More, who had originally been an admirer of Descartes, and the scientist Joseph Glanvill both claimed that spiritual or occult forces were necessary to explain various natural phenomena, including the motion of matter. Glanvill argued that spirits played an active role in nature and that scientists could acquire empirical evidence of their activities. He contended that the phenomena attributed to witchcraft provided evidence for a mechanistic natural theology, in which the Devil, like God, worked through the normal course of nature. For Glanvill, the Devil was part of nature, and the empirical study of demons had scientific validity.

The limited influence of the mechanical philosophy on the decline of witch beliefs among educated people can best be seen in the work of the Dutch Reformed minister and theologian Balthasar Bekker. Bekker was one of the most radical skeptics regarding witchcraft in the late seventeenth century. In his four-volume

treatise, *De Betoverde Weereld* (The World Bewitched, 1691–1693), Bekker denied that the Devil could intervene in the operation of the material world. Once the Devil was denied this ability, the possibility that a human being could commit the crime of witchcraft vanished. Bekker was admittedly a follower of Descartes, and he clearly accepted a Cartesian view of the sharp distinction between spirit and matter. But Bekker did not rely primarily on the mechanical philosophy or any other scientific evidence to attack the belief in witchcraft; the main foundation for his skepticism was his biblical scholarship, which he used to show that God maintained sovereignty over the world and had never allowed the Devil to exercise power within it.

Although the mechanical philosophy called into question the *beliefs* of some educated people in witchcraft, it had little influence on the decline of witchcraft *prosecutions*. The decline in the number of trials began in some European countries as early as 1600 and in most regions of western Europe by 1670. These were the years when the mechanical philosophy first made its appearance. Its spread, however, was a gradual process, and it was controversial. It took some time for this new mental outlook to make its mark in the universities, the legal profession, and state bureaucracies. It is unlikely that the judges and officials who applied the early brakes on witch hunting during the first seventy years of the seventeenth century were even exposed to, let alone influenced by, these new ideas.

The critical period in the reception of the mechanical philosophy appears to have been the years between 1690 and 1720, the period of the early Enlightenment. Thus, mechanism did not appreciably affect the mental outlook of the educated classes until well after prosecutions had begun to decline and, in some cases, until after they had stopped altogether. In Geneva, for example, the first magistrate to profess an adherence to Cartesian ideas, Robert Chouet, wrote a critical commentary on Geneva's prosecution of witches in 1690, almost forty years after the last witch had been executed in that republic, although only nine years after the last Genevan witch had been banished. Even in France, where the mechanical philosophy may have taken root somewhat earlier than in Geneva, Cartesianism probably did not have the negative influence on the level of prosecutions that scholars have often attributed to it. Certainly the members of the *Parlement* of Paris, who played a decisive role in the decline of French witch hunting after 1624, could not have been influenced by Cartesianism until long after they had brought executions for witchcraft to an end.

If the mechanical philosophy played any role at all in the decline of witch hunting, it was at the end of the process in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, when the last trials took place and witchcraft was decriminalized, but not in the earlier decades of the

seventeenth century, when some dramatic reductions in the number of trials occurred. Even during the later period, however, the influence of philosophical ideas on the conduct of prosecutions was limited. Witchcraft trials ended mainly because authorities came to the realization that it was impossible to prove the crime, not because they denied its reality.

BRIAN P. LEVACK

See also: BEKKER, BALTHASAR; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; DEMONOLOGY; DESCARTES, RENÉ; ENLIGHTENMENT; GLANVILL, JOSEPH; HOBBS, THOMAS; KEPLER, JOHANNES; MORE, HENRY; OCCULT; *PARLEMENT OF PARIS*; SCIENCE AND MAGIC; SKEPTICISM.

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MECKLENBURG, DUCHY OF

Mecklenburg, a Lutheran duchy in the northeastern part of the Holy Roman Empire, had more than its share of intensive persecution of witches between 1560 and 1700. In a region with a population of roughly 200,000 around 1600, there were more than 4,000 witchcraft trials, at least half of them ending with the death of the accused. The worst persecutions came in two large waves, cresting between 1599 and 1614 and again between 1661 and 1675.

These two times of persecution were quite different in nature. In the first phase, when Mecklenburg was politically unified, the victims were primarily members of fringe groups or groups caught in the midst of local social conflicts. The second, later phase, coming after

Mecklenburg had been divided into two duchies in 1621, grew into mass persecutions that sought to wipe out witchcraft by eliminating anyone suspected of it. The expanding and intensifying persecutions provoked resistance from some of the families affected and from several of Mecklenburg's religious leaders. At the same time, the shift away from fear of diabolical witchcraft and criticisms of the trials led to the end of the persecutions between 1681 and 1683 in Mecklenburg–Güstrow and around 1700 in Mecklenburg–Schwerin.

Early sorcery trials can be traced back to around 1480. In such trials, it is sometimes difficult to draw a clear line between trials aimed at persecuting witches for the damages they caused (*maleficium*) and later cases that saw the Devil as partner of the sorceress. In 1558 we find the first evidence of true witchcraft hearings. Archival sources show that Mecklenburg held about ten witchcraft trials per year by 1570. The massive increases in the early phases of prosecution came with attempts to enforce Mecklenburg's evangelical ecclesiastical ordinances of 1562 and 1572. Crimes were defined largely according to the terms of the Carolina Code (1532), with some of its standards intensified.

Local rulers could now follow through on chasing down and punishing witches, using stricter regulations and penalties for breaches of law. At the same time, the Lutheran rulers also prosecuted fortunetellers, treasure hunters, and people who earned their living by counteracting witchcraft (*Hexenbanner*) on the basis of confessional considerations. Mecklenburg's late-sixteenth-century witch persecution was based on complaints from individual farmers and municipalities; their claims of evil magic were mainly directed against people from families that were already stigmatized.

Around 1600, Mecklenburg's persecutions reached their highest point. Between 1604 and 1615, there were an average of thirty witchcraft trials per year in the region, which was also suffering from epidemics and crop failures. Witch prosecution usually took the form of small groups of trials clustered together. Because magistrates were required by law to send the briefs and documentation to the faculties of law and the judiciary chancelleries, a system of relatively mild verdicts became the norm. Sentencing in Mecklenburg did not employ full force against all of the criminal aspects of witchcraft. A rather skeptical Protestant providentialism led to a relatively temperate interpretation of witchcraft. Certain elements of the cumulative concept of witchcraft were abandoned; for example, witches who flew and were transformed into animals were not part of confessions elicited, nor did Mecklenburg's clergy or judges accept them.

More important than the theoretical differentiations was the practice of following the *processus ordinarius* (ordinary procedure). Witchcraft was not considered a *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime) in Mecklenburg

in the early stages of trials. On the contrary, the tendency was to lean toward moderation and caution in dealing with circumstantial evidence and torture. Prominent Mecklenburg jurists like Johann Georg Goedelmann and Ernst Cothmann symbolized the attitudes of the region's ruling classes and administrators, who adhered to humanistic principles of thought. Thus the use of defense lawyers was always allowed in witchcraft trials, and they appear in roughly one in five court cases regarding witchcraft. Rumors of witchcraft were treated with reservation, and a single accusation never sufficed to open a proceeding. Additional evidence was also treated cautiously. In slightly more than half (55 percent) of these cases, torture and the death penalty were permitted.

Local courts were less scrupulous about enforcing these strict codes, and they offer numerous examples of breaches of law in witchcraft cases before 1600. The systems of serfdom and farmers' loss of property rights to manorial lords ran parallel to the early witch persecutions in a sparsely populated region with several types of seigneurial and lesser manorial courts. At the same time, the regional government strove for better discipline and professionalism in local law courts. They dismissed various members of small town and district courts from their offices after investigations into breaches of law.

A specific type of persecution of witches developed in different jurisdictions—both the smaller and larger autonomous cities, and the noble and district courts. It focused primarily on those groups of the population caught in the middle of social tensions and conflicts. In the larger cities and offices, this meant primarily the poor and people from fringe groups. In the smaller towns, it was often people associated with the municipal elite; in noble courts, it was members of the farming community who had protested against the loss of their power and rights. Seigneurial courts, reflecting conflicts between the nobility and their subjects under the new social and legal manorial system, primarily conducted witchcraft trials in the first period. However, the intensity of these disagreements diminished considerably during and after the end of the Thirty Years' War. The noble court leaders and civic judges in the lake areas both lost interest in witchcraft trials and consequently dismissed accusations from ordinary people.

These social differences in addressing conflict leveled out after Mecklenburg's mass persecutions began. The late-seventeenth-century persecutions also reflected other changes. Unlike the earlier persecution, witchcraft no longer manifested itself in the practice of magic or in neighborhood quarrels; rather, ties to witchcraft were now sought through kinship and association with other witches. Trials no longer targeted small fringe groups and poorer people but expanded significantly to include middle- and upper-class defendants. Similarly,

witchcraft became less gender-specific; the longer these persecutions continued, the more likely they were to accuse men and children.

Mecklenburg experienced numerous intense waves of persecution following the end of the Thirty Years' War. At this time, its largest chain of trials took place, involving more than eighty people in the village districts of Redentin and Bukow. The governments in both parts of the duchy (Schwerin and Güstrow) actively supported these trials, but they used very different means. In Mecklenburg-Schwerin, the government increasingly discarded the stricter safeguards of public law and minimized the legal prerequisites for circumstantial evidence in witchcraft trials, thus allowing for chains of trials to develop. A witch's accusations toward her conspirators were accepted uncritically and used as the basis for new trials against "accomplices." One's chances of being cleared of such charges and released were minimal. Instead, in cases in which witchcraft was not proved, the basic suspicion was cause for banishment from the duchy. There was little supervision of local courts, because Schwerin law often employed special commissions. Even though its sovereign, Christian Louis I, personally called for an end to all witchcraft trials, he lived abroad; his chief civil servants, Chancellor Hans Heinrich Wedemann and later Adolf Friedrich zur Nedden, ignored his order and continued to issue commissions. Only after the death of Chancellor Nedden in May 1700 could the persecutions of witches be ended in Schwerin.

Meanwhile, persecution of magic and superstition became the core elements of an intensive campaign of confessional Lutheran discipline in Mecklenburg-Güstrow. As a result, every rumor of witchcraft was investigated—but not with the same legal procedures or standards as in Schwerin. The elimination of witchcraft was pursued with equal determination in Güstrow, but its extensive inquisitions and visitations were accompanied by rigorous controls over its local courts by upper-level and professional judges.

Mecklenburg's learned and pious experts studied each piece of evidence from each case with a high degree of exactness, often resulting in long periods of imprisonment for the accused without the case ever being decided. Many died in prison or were not released until the early 1680s. Meanwhile, because of their experiences in dealing with these trials, members of the clergy were quick to develop a more critical attitude toward witchcraft trials. In the long run, they were able to delay or prevent chains of new trials caused by accusations from those convicted, and they finally devalued the confessions of pacts with the Devil and the witches' Sabbats. Witchcraft was dismissed as a "superstition," and the persecution of witches ended by 1700.

KATRIN MOELLER

See also: ACCUSATIONS; CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*); COURTS, SECULAR; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; GERMANY, NORTHEASTERN; GOEDELHMANN, JOHANN GEORG; LAWYERS.

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MEDEA

Medea is one of the great paradigms of the classical magician, and hence of the female witch in later times. Granddaughter of the sun and niece of the divine magician Circe, she fell in love with Jason during his search for the Golden Fleece and aided him with her magic. A woman of violent emotions, her enmity could be fatal. When she abandoned her family for love of Jason and her brother tried to pursue her, she killed him without compunction; when Jason fell in love with another woman, Medea sent her a robe anointed with an unguent intended to kill; and having restored the youth of Jason's father by cutting him into pieces and boiling them in a pot with magical herbs, she persuaded the daughters of Pelias (the king who had sent Jason on his expedition for the Golden Fleece) to attempt the same, but made sure they failed by giving them inefficacious herbs. This was an aspect of her magic that early modern writers particularly noted. Marsilio Ficino and Johann Weyer, for example, drew attention to it; Cornelius Agrippa remarked in *De Occulta*

Philosophia (On Occult Philosophy, Book 1: 15) that some physicians were claiming to be able to restore a person's youth by giving him or her a concoction made from viper's flesh and hellebore. Medea could also control the weather by calming storm and sea and blight fruitful nature by piercing the liver of a doll made for just this purpose, and she had the evil eye. When a bronze giant called Talos menaced Jason and the Argonauts, Medea uttered invocations and then fixed the giant with the power of her evil eye and killed him.

Medea came from Colchis, a region just south of the Caucasus Mountains, and so was not a Greek. Consequently, Euripides, in *Medea* or *Andromache*, portrayed her in the light of the Greeks' view of the world that was divided between civilized people like themselves and barbarians, who indulged their passions with murder or occasionally with incest. Ancient authors frequently underlined two characteristics of her magic. She used *pharmaka*, herbs or minerals with preternatural powers, making her a *venefica*, a woman who either poisons others or works poisonous magic against them; and she worshipped Hecate, a goddess associated with the earth and the moon and hence the deity par excellence of magic. Significantly, then, we are told by the third-century-B.C.E. Greek poet Apollonius Rhodius (*Argonautica* 4.50–4.53) that Medea was well-acquainted with graveyards, having spent much time wandering through them.

The story of Medea, therefore, contained several features reminiscent of the medieval and early modern scholarly image of the witch. Her emotions were both strong and malicious; she indulged herself with illicit love and sex; she employed herbs for magical purposes, which might be beneficent or maleficent according to the prompting of the emotion that currently ruled her; she had the evil eye; she worked weather and crop magic by piercing enchanted dolls; she belonged, as it were, to a society other than that which is regular and civilized; and her magic was performed in conjunction with a deity who had power over the spirits of the dead and was capable of producing extraordinary phenomena. The portrait by Ovid (*Metamorphoses* 7.180–191) of her working a necromantic ritual was particularly vivid and highly theatrical. Medea let her hair and dress float free; she paced barefoot up and down without apparent purpose; she operated at night; and instead of uttering comprehensible words, she shrieked and howled almost like an animal. The marks of civilization had disappeared, and in their place she exhibited the signs of a person who had willingly cast aside the usual restraints observed by the rest of society. Medea thus became alien and frightening as she sought to rend the veil normally dividing the realm of the living from that of the dead. Later writers on witches and demonology, all educated in the Greek and Latin classics, therefore had little to do to develop their

portrait of a witch. All they needed to add were the purdy Christian elements.

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART

See also: CIRCE; EVIL EYE; HECATE; PERSONALITY OF WITCHES.

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MEDER, DAVID (1545–1616)

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, David Meder, a Lutheran minister in Saxony, passionately propagated the existence of an aggressive witch cult on earth and called for its extinction. Despite his fierce zeal, he desired only moderate witch hunts. Meder was close to the official mainstream in the early seventeenth-century electorate of Saxony, which crafted extremely severe legislation against witchcraft yet followed a relatively mild and scrupulous policy in witchcraft trials.

Born in Naumburg in the electorate of Saxony, Meder studied theology at the University of Leipzig and became a general inspector of Lutheran churches and schools for the small county of Hohenlohe (in southwestern Germany) in 1577. He returned to his place of birth as a preacher in 1595, later moving to the nearby Saxon town of Nebra, where he died.

Because of the divided views on witchcraft trials between the general population, who wished to eliminate witches, and the judges who pronounced sentences, who needed proof to justify them, Meder tried to influence public opinion through a series of sermons. Together with other material, his witch sermons were published in 1605, with a second edition in 1615.

In Meder's opinion, the main reason for the growth of witchcraft was the deteriorating state of mankind, manifested in increasing wickedness to which too many Christians yielded. This deterioration was further exacerbated by attacks on true Christianity from Catholics, Muslims, and Calvinists.

In his sermons, the Lutheran theologian cited the Hebrew Bible, the Church Fathers, and Martin Luther, all of whom accepted that witches existed on earth. Meder passionately opposed all skeptics of witch hunting; in his eyes, witchcraft was a capital crime, which surpassed all other sins. Witches, he believed, caused much damage; they were responsible for murder, diseases among humans and livestock, theft, and poor harvests. Their destructive undertakings were based on a pact with the Devil, who granted them powers. The pact was supposedly complemented by copulation with the Devil. Unlike many other Protestant authors, Meder accepted the witches' Sabbat, the collective

element in the witch paradigm, as true. He used certain recent trials as evidence that sorcery was not confined to women. Men and even children performed this destructive art. Because this capital crime encompassed the Seven Deadly Sins and violated almost all Ten Commandments, this Lutheran preacher called upon the authorities to take action by conducting witchcraft trials—including handing out death sentences.

Despite his vehemence, Meder called for relatively modest witch hunts. He dismissed imposing death sentences for conviction of nondiabolical sorcery, believing that imposing penance was a fair punishment for such offenses. He criticized excessively harsh torture and largely dismissed denunciations from convicted witches. Meder opposed the swimming test and accepted only testimonies of respectable Christians or unforced confessions as proof. Meder exemplified the providentialist tradition within Lutheranism stemming from the Württemberg school of Johann Brenz, which saw the growth of witchcraft as a kind of godly providence (Midelfort 1972, 36–66). Thus God permitted witchcraft through the Devil's agency in order to chasten sinful mankind and warn the faithful, but, nevertheless, God allowed Satan no independent power. Thus, the powers of witches were horrible, but—because only God reigns—limited.

Meder's approach was not exempt from contradictions, for he could not reconcile his implicit clamor for an extinction policy in the first part of the book with his explicit demands for relatively mild treatment of alleged witches. His explanations also followed providential theology on another level. Because this school rejected the reality of weather spells, Meder's assertions on this very important topic for contemporaries were contradictory. On one page he attributed the obliteration of harvests by hailstorms to the magic of witches but rejected such thinking on another page. Meder's two editions of his eight witch sermons demonstrate the degree of reception of his thoughts.

ROLF SCHULTE;

TRANSLATED BY JAN VAN DER CRABBEN

See also: APOCALYPSE; BRENZ, JOHANN; DEMONOLOGY; EVIDENCE; LUTHER, MARTIN; MALEFICIUM; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PROOF, PROBLEM OF; SABBAT; SAXONY, ELECTORATE OF; WEATHER MAGIC.

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MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY

Spider webs, ant eggs, snakeskin, extract of wood lice, extract of foxglove, beetle's blood, and an elixir with seventy-nine different ingredients . . . "This was not, as

would be reasonable to suppose, the first aid kit of a local witch left behind and found after her arrest. It was part of the pharmacopoeia of the University of Glasgow found by William Cullen on taking up an appointment as professor of medicine in 1751" (Larner 1984, 142). Astonishing as it might seem, it would be nonetheless simplistic to assume from this evidence that early modern learned medicine was rooted in a seedbed of misconceptions, that its practitioners had a poor understanding of the workings of the human body, and that the contents of their medicine chests were useless and most of their prescriptions potentially harmful. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Bottom's words remind us of the curative power of a spider's web against hemorrhages: "I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good master Cobweb: if I hurt my finger, I shall make bold with you" (III, I, 164–165). In terms of therapeutics, learned and popular medicine substantially overlapped, and both were powerless to heal serious illnesses.

Despite notable developments in the history of medicine during the last few decades, its nexus with early modern witchcraft still awaits a global assessment. The spectrum of questions raised by this intricate relationship is discouragingly wide. It has recently been held that the idea of witchcraft, "a composite subject consisting of discussions" about all facets of human civilization (Clark 1997, viii), was inherent in the moods, minds, and culture of early modern people. Nevertheless, from the vantage point of the treatment of sick people in early modern Europe, two broad questions can be formulated. First, how did an age commonly defined by historians as one of scientific advancements adjust itself to widespread beliefs about diseases of demonic origin? Second, how did learned medicine of this period succeed, if at all, in imposing its intellectual superiority and forcing cures that relied on magic and religion into a corner?

MEDICINE AND CHRISTIANITY

Christianity had always been a healing religion with a strong affinity between saving souls and healing bodies. Illnesses came ultimately from an offended God as a result of sin. When early modern people fell ill, they did not generally assume that their ailments were caused by witchcraft. However, if the signs of disease appeared weird and suspicious, both common belief and Holy Scriptures allowed that it might have been engendered by bewitchment cast by malevolent persons with the help of the Devil. Curative remedies, nevertheless, should not be magical, and their healing power must be implemented through prayer by both patients and doctors. Only Church hierarchies could establish the orthodoxy of a prayer. After the mid-sixteenth century, ecclesiastical hierarchies increasingly disavowed the centuries-old healing practice of divines, although much ambiguity persisted about the practice of exorcism in Catholic lands. No doubt, when the sixteenth-century physicians

Girolamo Cardano and Johann Weyer asserted that diseases apparently caused by witches could be traced to natural origins, they were anticipating the secularization of a discipline; but the separation of functions between medicine and religion occurred very slowly.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF EARLY MODERN MEDICINE

Recent works in the history of medicine have demolished Whiggish notions of scientific advancements, emphasizing elements that appear progressive in a modern sense. Much of the attention of historians now concentrates on how early modern people experienced medicine in terms of therapeutics and relief from anxiety and pain.

A preliminary digression on the theoretical mold of ancient medicine seems necessary before dealing with medical practitioners and patients. Unquestionably, any changes in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century medicine took place within these deep-rooted assumptions. The Hippocratic/Galenic tradition retained its preeminence throughout Renaissance, baroque, and Enlightenment Europe. Galenic physicians followed humoral theories, understanding the human body as composed of masses of four fluids: blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile. It was a microcosm related to the larger macrocosm of the universe. Humors were linked to the seasons, to the four ages of humankind (childhood, youth, adulthood, and old age), and were the product of the four Aristotelian qualities (hot, cold, dry, and fire). Good health resulted from a balance among these four humors, and any alterations in their nature might jeopardize a person's physical condition. The putrefaction of humors through contagion from some poison, as in plague, could also cause illness. Therefore all treatments aimed at blocking corruption and readjusting imbalances through bleeding, purging, vomiting, and evacuating. Healing meant restoring a harmony between macrocosm and microcosm. The best means of maintaining health was to practice moderation by avoiding exhaustion, overeating, overdrinking, overheating, and immoderate passions. Immorality and a vicious life were perceived as causes of disease.

The most challenging break with the Galenic paradigm came from the physician Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim, called Paracelsus (ca. 1493–1541), who carried out a head-on attack on tradition by proposing a novel physiology and anatomy. Contrary to Galenic wisdom, which ignored the existence of specific diseases, he taught that an *archeus* (vital force) external to the human body caused disease and offered a basis for understanding that illnesses were real entities. Paracelsus's chemically based medicine emphasized the process of fermentation and putrefaction at the basis of physiology. After him, iatrochemistry gained much prestige in the treatment of illnesses, in opposition to the herbal remedies mostly used by

Galenists. Iatrochemistry was soon joined by another feature of medical examination, iatromechanics, contending that human body processes obeyed the same laws of physics ruling earth and the planets. A description of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century medicine must include the many breakthroughs in anatomy (with decisive influence on forensic medicine), physiology, and pathology by Jan Baptista van Helmont (1579–1644) and his son Franciscus Mercurius van Helmont (1614?–1699), Théophraste Renaudot (1586–1653), Giorgio Baglivi (1668–1707), or Friedrich Hoffmann (1660–1742). But all these advances cannot conceal a stronger reality: throughout early modern times, methods of treatment remained overwhelmingly Galenic, and “few of the theoretical changes introduced, even the Paracelsian ones, made much difference in how illnesses were treated and none, by itself, contributed to cures” (Lindemann 1999, 88).

LEARNED DOCTORS

There seems to be an almost perfect correlation between mid- and late-seventeenth-century post-Galenic medicine and the end of witchcraft persecutions. But how can we reconcile this temporal coincidence with the fact that no radical epistemological changes characterized the birth of the new medicine? In fact, the decline of witchcraft was a complex sociocultural event, unrelated in any direct way to progress in medical science. What most recent studies have shown is that an empiricism that stressed observation and experience became the dominant theory among physicians, an investigative paradigm previously inconceivable within a community of Christian physicians.

The strongest challenges to the belief in witchcraft among university-trained scholars of the sixteenth century had come from physicians. And yet many of them, like Giovan Battista Codronchi, Pietro Piperno, or William Drage, championed the causation of illnesses by witchcraft. But unlike lawyers, philosophers, and theologians, physicians received a professional training that eventually allowed them to make a different diagnosis and provide naturalistic explanations for diseases. From correspondence in 1653 between a New Haven physician, Nicholas Augur, and John Winthrop Jr., medical doctor in Connecticut and later fellow of the Royal Society, we can observe the shaping of a different diagnosis. The illness of four young girls displayed symptoms similar to their counterparts in Salem forty years later, but these physicians ignored the girls’ narrative of diabolical bewitchment. Instead, Augur searched for natural explanations for their fits, and his differential diagnosis included three possibilities: “I must needs say that strange and various accidents and distempers do arise both from the obstruction of the spleen as well as from hysterical passions, and sometimes from the retention of overflowing of the menses. . . .” (Gevitz

2000, 24). The writings of such well-known early modern doctors as Johann Weyer, Jean Fernel, Ambrose Paré, Girolamo Cardano, Daniel Sennert, Edward Jorden, or John Cotta tried to clarify the nature of odd and puzzling symptoms in patients. However, many of them rejected both the Paracelsian paradigm and the entire Hippocratic/Galenic tradition. The dividing line between tradition and modernity remained uncertain, and the dominant ethos of every scientific corporation avoided the most radical positions.

For skeptical physicians, this caution meant that almost nobody would attempt to disprove the authority of Holy Scriptures in matters of witchcraft, with the probable exception of Weyer. Practically things fared quite differently, because we know from several cases that physicians did not accept witchcraft as a serious possibility when natural causes could explain suspicious possessions, illnesses, or deaths. The “long” sixteenth century was an era dominated by antagonistic forces that tended to blur in complex ways. The erudition of some medical doctors encompassed a variety of subjects: magic, philosophy, religion, alchemy, and occult studies. Some became astrological physicians, believing that heavenly bodies could affect the human body and cause illness.

No early modern medical practice better reveals this synthesis of late Renaissance learning than the amazing career of Richard Napier, an Anglican theologian, master of arts at the University of Oxford, and parson of a rural parish in Buckinghamshire. His detailed casebooks of some 60,000 consultations from 1597 to 1634 shed light on multiple health problems of all social classes (Macdonald 1981). Apparently, sick people used to go to doctors mainly to receive physical treatment; only 5 percent of Napier’s patients suffered from mental as distinct from bodily illness. In this age, few people from any social class would have questioned Napier’s medical advice, his mix of astrology, magic, Christianity, and science. But by the waning years of the seventeenth century, academically trained doctors had largely succeeded in branding medical astrologers as quacks.

CAUSES CÈLÈBRES AND NEW PARADIGMS

It seems self-evident to admit that there was no incongruity at all between a “scientific” age and medical diagnoses based on demonological beliefs. The presence of demonic pathologies in academic medical milieus was no marginal and exotic aberration (Clark 1997). However, the guiding principle governing medical studies, namely differential analysis, proved to be the most intractable among all fields of learning to reconcile with the presence of a demonic agency. Historians know that it is difficult to reconstruct a coherent picture explaining the establishment of a

new scientific paradigm. Regarding medical care and the etiology of illnesses, witchcraft could be discerned as an interpretive proposition based on the principle of irradiation from a center. It has been argued that the Mary Glover and Anne Gunter cases (1601–1604) marked a turning point in the history of witchcraft in England because the unveiling of both women’s simulated illnesses “encouraged medical sceptics to advance their cause . . . and helped to increase the burden of proof” (Macdonald 1991, li). And in France, a similar emergence of ideas emphasizing empirical medical explanations for simulated cases of diabolical possessions extended from the Marthe Brossier case (1598) through the great scandals of Loudun (1633–1634) and Louviers (1643–1644), all of which spawned major controversies, including alternative diagnoses challenging the apparent proofs of diabolical illnesses and encouraging skeptical explanations.

PATIENTS AND PRACTITIONERS

Was the world of university-trained and town-based physicians representative of the reality of medicine and medical care in early modern Europe? Because 80 percent of its inhabitants did not live in cities, a meaningful understanding of health care systems in the past requires some knowledge of how they worked in the countryside. Unfortunately, our information is far from satisfactory with regard to where, when, and how healing practices were implemented in European villages.

In old Europe, medical care began within the household and the neighborhood, where older, experienced women practiced midwifery and pooled their wisdom to cure minor bodily afflictions. It is more difficult for social historians to assess how many health workers were available beyond the circle of neighborly first aid to cure the sick in rural areas. And certainly, numbers matter. We know, for instance, that the rural district of Veluwe in Holland had one medical practitioner for every 1,400–1,700 inhabitants in the sixteenth century. In the more urbanized parts of north Holland, this ratio was 1 to 500, and late sixteenth-century Norwich had ratios of 1 to 200. Clearly, the early modern European health system was not a total disaster.

But we must not forget the inadequate sanitation of old Europe. In seventeenth-century Tuscany, for instance, which enjoyed a relatively good sanitary system, numerous village communities petitioned the Grand Duke to find them a reliable *cenusico* (barber). Of course, in attempting to assess the medical context of witchcraft, numbers matter less than the quality of the medical care offered, and the range of healers, especially in rural areas, could be extremely diverse. University-trained physicians were rare, but there was a fair supply of less well theoretically trained medical practitioners. Beyond the circle of first aid, a net of surgeons,

barber-surgeons, apothecaries, and licensed mountebanks came into play to heal fractures, wounds, abscesses, and a range of minor afflictions.

Alongside these authorized health workers, an unofficial (and illegal) health system flourished: a net of male and female healers able to identify ordinary illnesses and to prescribe medicines for them, thereby providing an additional, sometimes substitutive health service. Workers in both systems generally drew on a common pharmacopoeia, based on herbal lore, minerals, and specific prayers. Admittedly, the practice of learned physicians was more interventionist and painful, but the principal difference between medical practitioners of these two systems was gender: official medical practitioners were all male, whereas most illegal healers were female. We have much evidence that people tried all the medical options locally available in their attempts to recover health, but it is difficult to say which system enjoyed a larger clientele and better reputation. To be sure, one reason why the unauthorized health service appealed to so many people in the past must have been the shortage of stable official, village-based medical practitioners, whose fees were probably also higher.

CURATIVE MAGIC

Whenever infants suffered a sudden illness or anyone experienced a prolonged wasting away of the body, such misfortunes could be contextualized in a scenario emphasizing personal enmities; in such cases people had stronger reasons to see themselves as victims of spells and to consult a cunning woman or man with a reputation for discovering witches. Heinrich Kramer wrote in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) that “such witches . . . can always be found at interval of one or two German miles and they seem able to cure anyone who has been bewitched by another witch” (Kramer 1996, 159). He was describing cunning women or men, whose very ubiquity greatly deepened the problem of the medical aspect of witchcraft. Kramer’s calculations could be generalized throughout early modern Europe, but it would be misleading to follow either his or the later and much stricter Reformation-era theological condemnations of such people as “witches.”

Cunning men and women were not “witches” but merely pundits of an illegal health system, and their polyvalent skills were not restricted to curing magical illnesses. They were rooted in their local communities, and people stubbornly sought their services despite all prohibitions by public authorities. Historians have learned about some famous healers who attracted patients from large areas. In sixteenth-century Tyrol, a magician who worked as an innkeeper and coppersmith drew clients from a zone extending from eastern Tyrol



Physicians treat victims of witchcraft, including one suffering from demonic possession who vomits toads and snakes. To the right, a witch invokes a demon while other witches attend a Sabbath. From G. A. Mercklin, Tractatus Physico Medicus, 1715.

to Bolzano and Merano in south Tyrol. The *stregoni* (male witches) of the Tuscan village of Galatrona, whose clientele ranged from Lorenzo the Magnificent to very ordinary Sienese people, extended their activity over a good part of early seventeenth-century Tuscany and probably passed their skills down. Unfortunately, we have no way of knowing the ratio between diseases reportedly caused by witchcraft and the surely much larger general morbidity anywhere in Europe.

COULD MEDICINE WORK?

If early modern medical prescriptions were effective against minor ailments, it is beyond doubt that its remedies and procedures were “ill-equipped to deal with organic disorders through drugs or surgery. Many men . . . died from incompetent diagnosis or treatment whose lives would have been saved today” (Thomas 1973, 251). Should this overt neglect of sanitation in the past suggest that our early modern ancestors did not “go to the doctor” with the same expectation to recover health as people living today? To decode the medical stories recounted by patients, mostly illiterate, and discover inner psychological meaning behind their “going to the doctor” is not an easy task. What remedies did they request? If medicine was often powerless to heal, did the sick really expect that a recovery was likely to

happen after narrating their misfortunes to doctors? This assumption has been questioned on several grounds: early modern people had a different mental equipment to face misfortune; their threshold of pain was higher, and their attitude about death more fatalist. “They might crave release from their illness, but they also recognized that the length of their days was measured by God” (Brockliss and Jones 1997, 305). No matter whether their disease was of natural or preternatural origin, early modern patients apparently consulted any kind of doctor who could offer them some psychological support.

Many medical practitioners provided effective therapy, whether orthodox or magical, to cure diseases that might have psychosomatic origins. Edward Jorden, discussing the medical value of charms, amulets, and holy water, observed that their success was due “to the confident persuasion which melancholic and passionate people may have in them” (Thomas 1973, 249). The best chance of any medical practitioner lay in a patient’s imagination, enhanced by the secret rituals with which cunning men surrounded their practice. Indeed, the knowledge of the placebo effect must have been familiar to both health systems.

THE TWO SYSTEMS SEPARATE

If therapeutics of the period achieved no substantial improvements, did the increase in medical knowledge induce any changes in the relation between medical practitioners and patients? We possess scattered but meaningful evidence about the evolution of the medical aspect of witchcraft, which suggests that it was the quality of medical service being offered that mattered most. It has been recently argued that as more advanced medical knowledge and official healing penetrated local communities, “the more the latitude and rationale for thinking and acting in terms of witchcraft decreased” (Gijswijt-Hofstra 1991, 110). This is certainly true as far as witchcraft accusations were concerned. There are also indications that increases in medical knowledge eventually changed the balance between the two health care systems. Early modern historians have tried to discern where and when, if at all, the clientele of the unofficial health system shrank as the web of authorized medical practitioners grew. Early-eighteenth-century Europe certainly witnessed a progressive masculinization of the discipline, and there are traces of professionalism that widened the gap between learned and popular medicine. It was a slow but steady parting of ways about curative magic that separated ordinary people from educated ones. Recent studies have shown a shift in cultural psychology stimulated by changes in material realities, including the rise of medicine as a commodity market, as a part of the birth of a consumer society. Another process of diffusion can also be discerned as new fashions and lifestyles eventually spread

from urban centers. There, educated and affluent patients sought out socially respectable university-trained physicians as a symbol of their distance from ordinary people.

OSCAR DI SIMPLICIO

See also: AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM, HEINRICH CORNELIUS; BROSSIER, MARTHE; CARDANO, GIROLAMO; CESALPINO, ANDREA; COUNTERMAGIC; COTTA, JOHN; CUNNING FOLK; GOODWIN CHILDREN; GUNTER, ANNE; HERBAL MEDICINE; JORDEN, EDWARD; LAUDUN NUNS; LOUVIER NUNS; MELANCHOLY; MENTAL ILLNESS; PARACELUSUS, THEOPHRASTUS BOMBASTUS VON HOHENHEIM; PIPERNO, PIETRO; SHAMANISM; WEYER, JOHANN.

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MELANCHOLY

A disease in early modern Europe that was synonymous with a nonviolent form of madness. The word *melancholy* has an extremely long and famous history that from ancient Greece crosses the Christian old regime and enters the contemporary *Diagnostic and Statistical*

Manual of Mental Disorders (4th ed., “Depression with Melancholy”). In the original sense it referred to a disease and a temperament. The Anglican divine Robert Burton summarized this latter implication in 1621 as follows: “Melancholy . . . is either in disposition, or habit. In disposition is that transitory melancholy which goes and comes upon every small occasion of sorrow, need, sickness, trouble, fear, grief, passion or perturbation of the mind. . . . In which equivocal and improper sense we call him melancholy that is dull, sad, sour, lumpish ill-disposed, solitary, and any way moved or displeased. And from these melancholy dispositions no man living is free” (Burton 2001, 143). An equation of the melancholic with the commonplace harmless mad would be a misleading oversimplification, incapable of grasping the assortment of characteristics included within that catchall mental disorder described by the melancholy syndrome.

Literally, melancholy was the “black bile,” one of the four humors flowing within the human body. It imitates earth, increases in the autumn, and prevails in adulthood. A balance of humors assures good health, but melancholics were thought to suffer from an excess of black bile. It could also favor the development of exceptional intellectual faculties. The Bordeaux judge and demonologist Pierre de Lancre was certainly not alone to maintain that black blood, from which the melancholy mood comes, is so sour that it may corrupt the brain, and its color, a symbol of darkness, makes Satan take advantage of melancholics. The interpretative power of melancholy was immense in literature, drama, and painting. Being a cultural artifact, it was highly changeable, and over time, it came to be characterized by a contrasting variety of attitudes and behaviors. For instance, the earliest opponents of religious enthusiasm in seventeenth-century England argued that it was caused by melancholy, but during the eighteenth century, orthodox controversialists claimed that such enthusiasm was a sort of madness.

Among other things, the melancholy syndrome became a European-wide mark of gentility. In England, it became a fashionable disease for late Renaissance courtiers after the appearance of Burton’s *Anatomy of Melancholy* in 1621: British patients of rank preferred to be melancholic rather than merely sad or troubled. Between 1597 and 1634, two-thirds (forty of sixty-two) of all of the mentally disturbed gentry patients of the Buckinghamshire physician Richard Napier complained of black bile, whereas only one-sixth of his ordinary patients bemoaned melancholy. Since Napier “sought also to articulate his patients’ maladies into categories that were at once scientifically useful and consistent with popular usage . . . Ordinary people merited more often the rude and common word mopish” (MacDonald 1981, 164). In Germany, in the course of the sixteenth century, “melancholy declined as a theme for painters

and became increasingly common in literature and life toward the end of the century” (Midelfort 1984, 114). As a medical diagnosis, melancholy became prominent through the growing influence of Galen’s humoral theories among German academic psychiatrists. This change is particularly evident with the treatment of mad princes. Humoral-based therapy replaced “the common practice around 1500 of simply locking or chaining an offensive prince. . . . By the late sixteenth century, princes were regularly subjected to . . . purging, bleeding, change of diet and were expected to change,” whereas poorer Germans, not unlike Napier’s ordinary English patients, “went mad with a difference” (Midelfort 1984, 125). In 1575 a Protestant landgrave (count) reported that a woman thought to be possessed was “more likely suffering from weakness in her head and silly melancholy thoughts”; however, this suggestion of melancholy came from a prince, not a villager (Midelfort 1984, 130). After 1600, most of the 200 male and female insane admitted to Juliusspital of Catholic Würzburg were described as “melancholic” (Midelfort 1984, 377).

Melancholy people, surrendering to the power of the Devil, might have been more prone to commit suicide; this phenomenon is well attested in England by the notable increase of suicides reported to the King’s Bench between 1500 and 1650. In sixteenth-century France also, suicides were frequently blamed on anxiety and melancholy.

MELANCHOLY AND FEMALE WITCHES

Because, according to the Scriptures, the agency of Satan could not be denied, early modern skeptics argued that the signs of disease caused by morbid humor, above all by black bile, revealed his work. In cases of bewitchment, all kinds of visions and hallucinations were much debated by physicians, theologians, and judges who maintained that senses could be cheated by passions and alteration of physical condition due to humoral unbalances. By the late sixteenth century, the very concept of witchcraft became an intellectual, religious, and political battleground, where melancholy eventually occupied a pivotal position.

The Dutch physician Johann Weyer first used melancholy for the strategic purpose of making witchcraft a sex-specific (and age-specific) crime. “Most often . . . that crafty schemer the Devil thus influences the female sex, which by reason of temperament is inconstant, credulous, wicked, uncontrolled in spirit, and (because of its feelings and affections, which it governs only with difficulty) melancholic; he especially seduces stupid, worn out, unstable old women. . . . Now . . . consider the thoughts, words, sights, and actions of melancholics, and you will understand how in these persons all the senses are often distorted when the melancholic humor seizes control of the brain and alters the mind” (Weyer 1991, 181, 183). Trying to

demolish the reality of the demonic pact and the Sabbat, Weyer wanted to show that the witches’ confessions were caused by disturbed minds. “For clinical reasons he linked delusion to gender; but at least this led him to exclude all women from the witchcraft population” (Clark 1997, 199–200). The medicalization of witchcraft was also championed by the Kentish intellectual Reginald Scot in 1584: “melancolie abuseth old women . . . abounding in their head, and occupieng their braine, hath deprived or rather depraved their judgement and all their senses” (Scot 1972, 30). Borrowing melancholy from Weyer, Scot similarly planned to employ it in order to discredit the confessions of old women.

But Weyer’s stance was not flawless and could not be adapted to a large number of accused witches. Such was the contention of Thomas Erastus and Jean Bodin: the former (a fellow physician) denied in 1572 that women’s brains were dulled by melancholy vapors; the latter refuted Weyer’s melancholia thesis shortly afterward within the context of a global demolition job. In *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (On the Demon-Mania of Witches, 1580), Bodin called Weyer an ignorant physician who did not even know that, according to Galen, women’s humor is contrary to adult melancholy because it derives from heat and dryness, whereas women are by nature cold and wet.

GENDER

Did more women than men suffer from milder forms of mental illness in early modern Europe? Is a superabundance of melancholic women confirmed by contemporary statistics? Of course, conclusive statistical evidence is hard for historians to get. According to Erik Midelfort (1999), in the Renaissance the medical language of melancholy and madness was not highly gendered; except for hysteria, physicians expected to find roughly the same maladies among men and women. However, the casebooks of Richard Napier registered more women than men among his mentally disturbed patients. We know that, on a European average, between 75 and 85 percent of all those accused of witchcraft were women. Frailty of mind, fickleness of behavior, and notorious lustfulness: such physical deficiencies, when combined with mental delusion engendered by melancholy, made the weaker sex the Devil’s favorite targets. From witchcraft trials comes much evidence both of women who felt themselves bewitched and of female witches who confessed they had made a pact with the Devil, lived with him as man and wife, flown to the Sabbat, and so on. In the former cases, historians might still be inclined to consider possessions as evidence of hysterical syndromes. In the latter cases, interpreting such narratives, when they are not clear and simple products of torture, poses a continuous challenge. Some seventeenth-century physicians,

magistrates, or theologians diagnosed these women, who were suffering from melancholy, as being mentally deranged. Today's psychologists and psychiatrists have sometimes speculated about the psychic balance of the accused. Certainly, it does not seem that European magistrates, even if they had trouble distinguishing demonic possession from madness, ever confused mad people—female or male—with witches.

Can one learn more by digging deeper in such material? Will clues emerge to better define the psychic identity of womanhood within the melancholic tendencies of women under trials? No doubt, witchcraft material will continue to provide grist to psychoanalytically minded historians.

OSCAR DI SIMPLICIO

See also: BEWITCHMENT; BODIN, JEAN; DISEASE; ERASTUS, THOMAS; EXORCISM; FEMALE WITCHES; FREUD, SIGMUND; GENDER; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; MENTAL ILLNESS; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; PSYCHOANALYSIS; SCOT, REGINALD; SKEPTICISM; VISIONS; WEYER, JOHANN.

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MENGGHI, GIROLAMO (1529–1609)

Mengghi was the most prominent exponent of exorcist theory and practice in Counter-Reformation Italy.

Called "Il Viadana" after his birthplace in the diocese of Cremona, Mengghi entered the Observant Franciscan

order around 1550. His career as a practicing exorcist and writer was spent in Bologna and Lombardy, bringing him the rewards of office: Pope Clement VIII appointed Mengghi head of the Franciscan Province of Bologna from 1598 to 1602. He died in 1609 in his native town of Viadana; the inscription on his tombstone relates the joy of the infernal hosts at the death of their most rigorous assailant and describes him as the greatest exorcist of his century.

Certainly he was the most prolific. Not long after his entrance into the Franciscan order, Mengghi composed the first of many exorcist manuals, the vernacular *Esorcismo mirabile da disfare ogni sorte de maleficii per un devoto religioso composto* (Wonderful Exorcism to Undo Any Kind of Maleficium, Composed by a Devout Religious), published in Venice in 1555. The novel aspect of this work was its announced focus on using exorcism as a weapon, not only against demonic possession but also against the more common negative effects of bewitchment or *maleficium* (harmful magic). Although he never took a university degree, Mengghi did edit the unpublished Latin exorcist writings of the Dominican inquisitor Sylvester Prierias (1456–1523), an anti-Lutheran polemicist and master of the sacred palace under Pope Leo X. Mengghi's future work would draw heavily on Prierias and on other experts in demonology and witchcraft, especially Michael Psellus, Johannes Nider, and the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486).

The most successful of Mengghi's works was the Italian *Compendio dell'arte essorcista* (Compendium of the Exorcist's Art) first published at Bologna in 1576. Literally a compendium, assembling opinions, stories, and examples from earlier authorities, it went through twelve editions by 1605 (fourteen, including two Latin editions in 1580 and 1601). His 1577 Latin *Flagellum daemonum* (Whip of Demons) appeared in twenty-one editions by 1608, with another eight between 1626 and 1727. These numerous editions and the many surviving copies testify to the popularity and wide demand for Mengghi's writings. Inventories of books owned by parish priests throughout Italy invariably included at least one of Mengghi's works, which served as basic manuals for the pastoral work of bringing relief to people suffering from the effects of *maleficium* or possession. He presented exorcism as just one of the "ecclesiastical medicines" offered by the Church; this category, which included blessings, sacramentals, and other clerical weapons against harm of negative supernatural origin, was central to the functionalist appeal of his work.

His later works, *Fustis Daemonum* (Club of Demons) of 1584 and *Fuga Daemonum* (Expelling Demons) of 1596, drew heavily from his own work in the field and appealed frequently to his own experience. The repeated statement, "Vidi con occhi miei" ("I saw with my own eyes"), asserted the authority of his position as an

expert and an eyewitness to vouch for the reality of the events he describes. There is a curiously empirical side to this type of argument from experience that, no matter how fantastic the alleged occurrence, was probably more compelling to his audience than his sophisticated scholastic arguments. Menghi described public dispossessions, some in front of learned audiences, including skeptical “enemies of adjuration” who were won over by the performance they witnessed. Throughout it was the expert, accomplished practitioner, the *esorcista perito*, who spoke, and his firsthand anecdotes were clearly designed to remind the reader of this fact. Clerics testifying in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Roman Inquisition trials frequently cited his works as an authoritative, learned source supporting their diagnoses of *maleficium* or possession.

Menghi’s career coincided with the post-Tridentine effort to reform the Church in “head and members,” which put special emphasis on the clergy. His works were aimed at correcting abuses in the practice of exorcism by providing clear guidelines as well as a theoretical justification for the efficacy and legitimacy of this office. The dedication of the *Flagellum Daemonum* of 1576 to the reforming cardinal of Bologna, Gabriele Paleotti, was indicative of the official and institutional context within which Menghi worked. The tactic of publishing both Latin and Italian versions indicated a reformer’s zeal to reach the widest possible audience. The revival of exorcism and the promotion of ecclesiastical remedies in late sixteenth-century Italy, a movement led by Menghi, provided an approved orthodox means of addressing popular fears of *maleficium* and thus contributed to the low level of witch hunting in Italy.

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See also: BEWITCHMENT; EXORCISM; ITALY; *MALEFICIUM*; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; NIDER, JOHANNES; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; PRIERIAS, SYLVESTRO.

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MENNONITES

With their highly spiritualized view of the relation between God and human beings, Mennonites allowed

the Devil no real influence in the natural world and attached very little importance to witchcraft.

In 1536 Menno Simons (Simonsz, 1496–1561) reorganized an Anabaptist community in deep disarray, one year after the disastrous failure to found a chiliastic New Jerusalem in the German town of Munster. Menno was a former Catholic priest who became an Anabaptist but rejected the millenarianism of the Munsterians and taught that the use of force was forbidden to Christians who wanted to lead a godly life. The only way to find God was through a spiritual search leading to a rebirth in Jesus. In the Mennonite perception, the Devil was not an anthropomorphic spirit but an almost abstract principle of evil. Within the parameters of this cosmology, it was impossible to conclude a pact with a demon, let alone have sexual intercourse with him.

By the end of the sixteenth century, most Mennonites lived in the Dutch Republic, where they were a tolerated religious minority. By the following century, the Mennonites had split over a variety of dogmatic disagreements, eventually forming three main groups, all with geographical names: the Frisians, the Flemish, and the Waterlanders (named from the region directly north of Amsterdam). The Frisians were the most orthodox group, the second was somewhat less stringent, and the Waterlanders were relatively the most flexible. It should be noted that these three groups were themselves subdivided into a multitude of microconfessions. It was their usual practice to ban anyone who refused to accept the interpretation of the religious dogmas of his or her particular congregation. The implications were quite serious: other members refused to speak with someone who was excommunicated. Despite this harsh ostracism, Mennonites never demanded the application of physical force against members who had gone astray; a person could be banned but should not be persecuted. In this sense, tolerance remained a leading principle.

Their immaterial perception of the Devil and their readiness to allow other people to choose their own road in matters of religion remained essential elements of Mennonite faith. To them, witchcraft was not really an issue; consequently, few of them ever took the effort to put his or her views on this matter on paper. Pieter Twisck (1565–1636), minister of a Frisian congregation in the Dutch town of Hoorn, did take witchcraft seriously, however. In 1620 he published a chronicle about “the downfall of the tyrants” in which he related numerous stories he had found in pamphlets and other sources from abroad, combined with some incidents he had witnessed himself. In 1639 Jan Jansz Deutel, a Mennonite printer, also from Hoorn, wrote a short treatise against witchcraft that was published only in 1670 by his son. In Deutel’s eyes, all stories about witchcraft were “fables, jokes, twaddle, lies and conceit.” God would never allow

anybody, neither the Devil nor a human being, to alter nature. A heartfelt trust in God was incompatible with a belief in witchcraft.

Abraham Palingh, a textile trader from Hoorn and member of its Waterlander congregation, expressed a similar view in a book he published in 1659. Antonius van Dale (1638–1708), a medical doctor from Haarlem, became the fourth Mennonite to write about these matters. An exponent of the early Enlightenment that blossomed in the Dutch Republic with the philosophy of Baruch Spinoza, van Dale's *De oraculis* (On Oracles) of 1683 tried to combat superstitious beliefs in oracles, demonic possession, and witchcraft. In the 1690s van Dale was involved—though indirectly—in the uproar that followed on the publication of Balthasar Bekker's *De Betoverde Weereld* (The World Bewitched, 1691–1693). *De oraculis* was translated into French (1687), English (1689), and German (1730). Voltaire used it as the basis for the entry on “Oracles” in his *Dictionnaire philosophique*.

HANS DE WAARDT

See also: ANABAPTISTS; BEKKER, BALTHASAR; DEVIL; ENLIGHTENMENT; MILLENARIANISM; NETHERLANDS, NORTHERN; ORACLES; PALINGH, ABRAHAM; VOLTAIRE.

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MENTAL ILLNESS

Many early modern Europeans included the Devil among the possible causes of madness, thus illustrating that the symptoms of mental illness are culturally relative and viewed as violations of conventional social norms and that mental illness is notoriously difficult to define. In 1810, a London physician registered the causes of insanity among admissions to Bethlem Hospital (“Bedlam”): “*A Table of the Causes of Insanity of about one third of the patients admitted into Bedlam: Misfortunes, Troubles, Disappointments, Grief* (206); Religion and Methodism (90); Love (74); Jealousy (9); Pride (8); Study (15); Fright (51); Drink and Intoxication (58); Fevers (110); Childbed (79); Obstruction (10); Family and Heredity (115); Contusions and Fractures of the Skull (12); Venereal (14); Small pox (7); Ulcers and Scabs dried up (5)” (Porter 1987, 33–34). Earlier diagnosticians would

have given an even longer list and included bewitchment.

Identifying the insane is easier than defining them. Which actions, thoughts, or emotions were considered abnormal? Not surprisingly, early modern people recognized the insane by the way they behaved: strange motions of the body, threatening or harming people, or going naked were commonplace indicators of madness. Lunatics were considered ill, but might be beaten if unmanageable or locked up if considered dangerous. The deranged were believed to be deprived of their souls and therefore no better than animals. In the late sixteenth century, London's Bethlem Hospital held about twenty babbling manacled madmen who attracted thousands of tourists each year. Figures on the insane are hard to get. Between 1597 and 1634, some 60,000 patients flocked to the “consulting room” of Richard Napier, physician and parson of a rural parish in Buckinghamshire; about 5 percent of them, 1,286 females and 748 males, appear to have been mentally disturbed (Macdonald 1981).

But were such unfortunates curable? Some hospitals were available for them, where they received mostly religious consolation. Therefore, no doubt for the poor, it seems difficult to prove Richard Burton wrong: “For the diseases of the mind, we take no note of them” (Burton 2001, 69). Was this omission regrettable? In recent decades, the “storm over psychiatry” has projected his influence onto historians. Was the eighteenth century really a disaster for the insane (MacDonald 1981)? Should the two centuries before Michel Foucault's “great confinement” of 1656 be viewed as a world relatively safe for lunatics, when the treatment of madness depended mostly on family care?

Our best information about the actual treatment of poor people's madness in early modern asylums overturns now-conventional Foucaultian wisdom about first venerating madmen as holy fools and then confining them en masse. Two converted rural monasteries in Protestant Hesse with extremely careful records from 1550 to the Thirty Years' War show a clear increase in the number of mentally ill patients admitted after 1580, rising from 13 percent to 28 percent of all residents. This post-Reformation transformation of medieval piety and charity “provided comfort for the helpless in ways so attractive that people clamored to be admitted” (Midelfort 1999, 358–365). Interestingly, they admitted about four times as many insane men (141) as insane women (33)—almost the exact reverse of the percentage of male and female witches—although the male/female disproportion was much less (8 to 5) in the Juliusspital of Catholic Würzburg over the same period (Midelfort 1999, 376–377).

Not unlike contemporary neuropsychiatry, early modern medicine identified madness as an organic disease. In fact, according to Galenic medicine, afflictions

of the mind were closely connected with bodily “distempers” and resulted from an alteration of proper humoral balance. Minor psychic disturbances were considered as forms of melancholy and treated with purging and bloodletting until the late seventeenth century, when research on the nervous system pioneered by Thomas Willis signaled the decline of humoralism.

MENTAL ILLNESS AND WITCHCRAFT

Although none of the poor madmen admitted to Hessian asylums was considered demonically possessed and although Tudor and Stuart Essex showed only “a very slight connection between mental derangement and witchcraft beliefs” (Macfarlane 1999, 183), possession by the Devil was, theoretically, a distinct phenomenon. It was admitted that a melancholic temperament might make the Devil’s work easier. But because a witch could have sent an evil spirit into a victim, the notions of possession and bewitchment were amalgamated. And unless fraud was involved, diabolical intervention offered a plausible explanation for the symptoms of possession: the afflicted person would fall into convulsions and contortions, displaying abnormal strength, vomiting pins, and speaking languages previously unknown. If demonic possession might explain any kind of insanity, tracing the history of madness becomes even harder.

Yet it seems clear that the heyday of witchcraft persecutions (ca. 1580–ca. 1660) deserves the label of a golden age of demoniacs. Close scrutiny of witchcraft and possession cases occasionally made physicians think that some demoniacs (and even witches) were mentally ill. In women, acute neuroses were attributed to a “wandering womb”: under pressure of internal vapors, “the womb moves up or sideways to crush the organs around it . . . physical and mental illness, fits of unconsciousness or hysteria, were likely to follow” (Wear 2000, 142). Around 1600, skeptical physicians like Michel Marescot in France or Edward Jorden in England blamed the symptoms of demonic possession on hysteria rather than witchcraft. Johann Weyer, in order to defend witches through an insanity defense, had previously “seized upon the exclusively legal language of *furor* and infused it with the medical discourse of melancholy” (Midelfort 1999, 226).

OSCAR DI SIMPLICIO

See also: BEWITCHMENT; EXORCISM; FREUD, SIGMUND; JORDEN, EDWARD; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; MELANCHOLY; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; PSYCHOANALYSIS; WEYER, JOHANN.

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MERGENTHEIM, ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORY OF

Within forty years, from 1590 to 1631, approximately 500 persons were executed for witchcraft in the region of Mergentheim, a small ecclesiastical possession in southwestern Germany owned by the Teutonic Order. Before the Great Plague (“Pest”) of 1626, the two major cities, Mergentheim and Markolsheim, had about 3,200 inhabitants. Half of them died in the Great Plague.

The Teutonic Order was an ecclesiastical order of knights whose extensive lands along the Baltic were secularized by Prussia during the Reformation in 1525; its surviving Catholic members continued to govern a few territories within the Holy Roman Empire, covering approximately 77 square miles. The Teutonic Order moved its seat from Prussia to Mergentheim, a little town located between Stuttgart and Würzburg of a round 2,000 inhabitants (the order still exists today, with its seat in Vienna).

Four major witch hunts took place in the area of Mergentheim. They all followed the same course, typical for most parts of Germany. A witch hunt started with a single complaint of *maleficium* (harmful magic), often against someone whose family had been involved in a previous case of witchcraft. This person was arrested, tortured, and forced to name other persons she (or he) had met during the witches’ Sabbat. These persons were then arrested and questioned about further participants. A chain of denunciations developed and continued to expand until the witch hunt finally collapsed, for various reasons that have never been examined accurately.

During Mergentheim’s first campaign, in 1590, a total of 68 people were arrested. We know that 9 of them were executed and 7 were released, but we do not know what happened to the other 52 people. In the second episode, during the years 1601–1602, 52 people were arrested and 43 were executed; the fate of the others is not known. In the third campaign, which took place in 1617–1618, no fewer than 213 persons were arrested. All but 13 of them were executed, and 3 of them died during their imprisonment. In the fourth and final witch hunt, from 1628 to 1631, another 136 people were arrested: 122 of them were executed, 10 were dismissed, and the other 4 died in prison. Overall,

of the 584 people who were arrested, 493 (or 84 percent) were female (Wohlschlegel 1990).

So far, only the last wave of persecution between 1628 and 1631 has been examined systematically (Midelfort 1972, 143–155; Wohlschlegel 1990), using records at Ludwigsburg and Stuttgart. Details about the first three waves of witch hunts are available in the so-called *Hexenkartothek*, drawn up by Nazi SS. Despite some double naming, its data about Mergentheim seem generally reliable:

arrested: 493 females + 91 males = 584
executed: 333 + 54 = 387
dismissed: 21 + 6 = 27
died in prison: 8 + 0 = 8
unknown: 83 + 10 = 93

The archives of the Teutonic Order in Vienna, which contain a great number of files, have not been evaluated systematically for evidence about Mergentheim's witch hunts.

Some details have been established: more than half of these women were married. Socially, these women came from all walks of life except the nobility; many of them came from mayoral and craftsmen families, and families of tavern owners made up a disproportionately large part. Their ages ranged from twenty to sixty. The ninety-one masculine defendants, whose ages ranged from eleven to seventy-five, came exclusively from the two larger towns, Mergentheim and Markelsheim; in the smaller villages, only women were arrested. A closer examination of the kinship networks among arrested people showed that "witch families" existed, in which up to eight people were arrested. It is interesting that a large share of the people who had previously profited from these witchcraft trials were themselves accused and arrested as the persecution continued.

Although Mergentheim's witch hunting occurred at times typical for these regions (the 1628–1631 cycle in particular corresponds to the greatest wave in southwestern Germany), neither the first major European persecution wave of the 1560s nor the last a century later affected Mergentheim. The causes for Germany's witch hunts, as discussed in recent literature, such as famines resulting from agrarian crises associated with the Little Ice Age, seem relevant in the case of Mergentheim, although we cannot prove the immediate cause of any of these four outbreaks of witch hunting.

Witchcraft trials were carried out in this area using the extremely formal procedure specified by imperial law. Judges were required to ask over 100 prescribed questions, and the answers were recorded. The judiciary of the Teutonic Order (whose lands were surrounded by Protestant territories) considered itself unable to carry out such procedures without assistance. In the last two witch-hunting campaigns, Mergentheim's government

consulted the largest nearby ecclesiastical ruler, the prince-bishop of Bamberg, who sent a judge with experience in witch procedures. The Bamberg judge worked remarkably quickly. Normally, only ten days elapsed between a suspect's arrest and her execution; it took longer only if the accused were pregnant or ill. As was customary at the time, the convicted witch or her heirs paid the costs of the procedure. However, although the financial records are unusually rich for the 1628–1631 wave, we have no evidence that the Teutonic Order profited in any way from this affair, despite the claim still made by people in Mergentheim that *Hexengeld* (witch money) financed the tower of their town church.

KARIN WOHLSCHLEGEL

See also: BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); FAMILY; FEMALE WITCHES; GENDER; GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; LITTLE ICE AGE; NAZI INTEREST IN WITCH PERSECUTION; SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF WITCHES.

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MERLIN

Merlin is the legendary magician who advised King Arthur. Merlin's origins lay in two Welsh figures, Myrddin, the author of bardic poetry, and Ambrosius, a wonder child and prophet from a medieval Welsh-Latin source. Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (History of the Kings of Britain) combined them to create Merlin, who is a central figure in the Arthurian legend and an exemplar of the all-powerful magician. Merlin explains the riddle of the dragons underneath a falling tower, transports Stonehenge to Salisbury Plain, and engineers Arthur's conception by transforming his father's (Uther Pendragon's) appearance.

Geoffrey of Monmouth used Merlin again as a wild man and prophet in *Vita Merlini* (Life of Merlin, ca. 1150), where he interacted with more localized Welsh characters rather than Arthurian heroes. Another Welsh-Latin source linked *Merlinus Sylvestris* (Merlin of the Woods) to *awenyddion* (the inspired) who prophesied while in a state of trance. These Welsh references formed the basis for the modern transformation of Merlin into a shaman figure. However, Geoffrey's Merlin was already an established narrative type combining elements of the wonder child/prophet who triumphed against impossible odds, the magician-engineer who created marvels, and the wise protector.

An independent tradition of Merlin romances began about 1200. Although indebted to Geoffrey, they added magical transformations, prophetic dreams, and

material from the Antichrist legend. A devil raped a nun in order to create a diabolical child. The baby Merlin was baptized and saved but was often referred to as “son of Satan.” Merlin possessed magic power, but he was a long way from the omnipotent figure of modern treatments, and a woman magician who took on the role of Arthur’s protector eventually imprisoned him.

Undoubtedly, some episodes were rooted in folk tradition, for example, the wonder child without a father, the building that could not stand until some secret was revealed, the mysterious helper-figure, the motif of the triple death, tears and laughter provoked by ironic occurrences, and shape shifting. Their very familiarity must have added to the impact of the Merlin figure and given an air of authority to pseudohistorical works such as Geoffrey’s. Merlin became important again during the nineteenth-century Arthurian revival. Here, he was unequivocally a powerful magician, and this image permeated subsequent reworkings in which the Arthurian legend functioned as an image of a lost world. Increasingly Merlin, and his spiritual descendents such as J. R. R. Tolkien’s magician Gandalf, were situated in a fantastic and romantic Dark Age Britain, which was viewed as a context for magic or for a struggle between ancient and modern ways of life. Often the Welsh sources and the romances were treated as a coherent tradition in which the remnants of a pre-Christian figure could be discovered. This ignored Merlin’s links with other figures and variations within the narrative material but remained an important feature in modern New Age reconstructions.

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See also: ANTICHRIST, THE; DIVINATION; FOLKLORE; SHAMANISM.

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METAMORPHOSIS

Assuming another shape or transforming a victim is called metamorphosis. Metamorphosis was usually an innate capacity, but it could also be acquired, either from the Devil or from another witch.

European witches mainly took the shapes of hares, cats, wolves, dogs, mice, bees, toads, flies, and certain types of birds, but they could also appear as inanimate objects (wisps of straw, cartwheels) or natural phenomena (lights, mists, small whirlwinds). A rough gender distinction is discernible in folk traditions,

though less so in trials: hares, cats, and the nightmare tended to be female witches, but werewolves were mostly male. According to one edition of the fifteenth-century *Evangiles des quenouilles* (Gospel of the Distaves), a werewolf’s son would inherit the same destiny, but his daughter would be a nightmare (Jeay 1985, 143–144).

Shape changing was recorded in folk traditions in parts of Europe from antiquity to the modern period, and it was mentioned in some of the earliest recorded confessions of witches: Matteuccia of Todi admitted going to the Sabbath in the shape of a fly in 1428 (Ginzburg 1990, 70–73, 299). Early modern courts often paid little attention to allegations of transformation, sometimes due to skepticism (or to mainstream Christian theology, which denied that metamorphosis was possible), but mainly because they were impossible to prove unless defendants confessed, which many did not (Briggs 2000, 90–91). Though witches’ metamorphoses have often been attributed to pathological delusions, drug-induced hallucinations, mistakes of perception, or irrational credulity, shared traditions about shape changing appear to have arisen from different cultural understandings of personhood and of human relations with the world of spirits (Napier 1986, 4–29).

Recent scholars have looked more closely at the cognitive systems, both intellectual and folkloric, in which metamorphosis was intelligible as a rational proposition. As Stuart Clark has demonstrated, the place and powers assigned to demons in the natural world enabled intellectuals to make sense of reported transformations by classifying them as illusions; though demons had no power to transform miraculously a human being, it was within their natural capacity to surround bodies with illusory forms and interfere with people’s senses and imaginations, so that transformations could be true in appearance but not in reality (Clark 1997, 157–167). Carlo Ginzburg situated shape-changing traditions within an archaic, shamanistic belief system relating to mediators who fell into trances and dreamed that their souls went out in animal shapes to the otherworld to secure benefits for their community (Ginzburg 1990). Eva Pócs emphasized the ambivalence of such ecstatic mediators in central, eastern, and southeastern Europe: they were capable of harm as well as good and were part of a dualistic system in which individuals born with cauls had spirit doubles in animal shapes and were opposed to supernatural figures with similar attributes (Pócs 1999). These traditions are well delineated in eastern, central, and southeastern Europe, as well as parts of the Baltic.

Western European shape-changing traditions show enough similarities to indicate common ancestry at some stage, but they are less often connected with clearly



Metamorphosis (shape changing) is common in European folklore. Witches assumed the body of animals, fish, and insects, but also of inanimate objects. Here witches have become on the left, various animals, and, on the right, a wolf. From Ulrich Molitor, De Laniis et phitonicis mulieribus (Concerning Witches and Fortunetellers, 1489). (Stapleton Collection/Corbis)

defined, potentially beneficial roles like those of the *benandanti* (do-gooders) or the Livonian werewolves. Scandinavian folklorists' research indicated that shape changing there was part of a wider scale of extracorporeal manifestations of aspects of the self in altered form; they were not confined to mediators or witches but could happen with variable degrees of intensity and visibility to almost anyone and did not require trances. A person's *hug* (thought, feeling, will) could wander away from the body in certain circumstances (such as intense longing) and be perceptible elsewhere, either invisibly or, if very strong, apparent in a shape (*ham*). One of the projections of the *hug* was the *fylgje* that accompanied a person as a sort of guardian spirit, which could take animal shape and was visible to people with second sight (Kvideland and Sehmsdorf 1991, 41–81). Anthropological studies of shape changing in contemporary societies related it to different cultural constructions of personhood, particularly where social role was a vital component, and states

of personal crisis could precipitate a corresponding instability of shape that may be both visible to others and experienced as a bodily transformation by the shape changers themselves (Jackson 1989, 102–118).

Shape changing was deeply rooted in narrative traditions. Personal experience stories were the most persuasive genre, but because transformations were always more told of than witnessed or experienced, the genre with the widest influence was the legend, a story told as a true report of specific people's experiences, which might be reported as news yet followed a traditional narrative pattern. Some of these memorably simple but highly adaptable story schemas endured over very long periods, in literature as well as oral tradition, and were sometimes reported as personal experiences by witches or their victims. St. Augustine's fifth-century account of Italian witches transforming travelers into pack horses by feeding them bewitched cheese (*City of God*, XVIII.xviii)

belongs to the same family as Homer's story of Circe transforming Ulysses's companions (*Odyssey*, X), Apuleius's *Golden Ass*, and a later medieval "true" story reported in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 2.2.4) about a witch in Cyprus transforming a sailor into a horse by giving him eggs to eat (Roberts 1996, 192–194). A related motif, of witches using a magic bridle to transform their victims into horses and riding them, was common in European legends from the Middle Ages and surfaced in the accusations of witnesses against witches in the early modern period (Thompson 1955–1958, Motif G241.2.1.1). Anne Armstrong testified in Northumberland in 1673 that she had been transformed into a horse in spirit by a witch who put a bridle on her head and rode her to the witches' meeting, where they appeared in the shapes of hares, cats, mice, and bees; a Cambridgeshire woman had made a similar accusation in 1659, but the judge refused to believe her (Ewen 1933, 358–361, 457). Witches' victims in eighteenth-century Hungary also told their own versions of this story, sometimes even with the same minor detail about the horse being tied to a post outside the meeting, which Anne Armstrong had also mentioned (Pócs 1999, 79–80, 93). A regular motif in legends about shape changers was the "analog injury" (or "repercussion"): a wound inflicted on the animal shape produced a corresponding mark on the human body (Thompson 1955–1958, Motif G252). It occasionally featured in trial records: one witness against Gerard Horiel of Jonvelle in 1610–1611 said she thumped a cat with a stick when it attacked her in bed one night, and afterward Horiel had a bruise on his nose for a month (Oates 1993, 282). However, it was also a detail that often crept into news reports of encounters with shape changers, as specific details were forgotten in transmission and replaced by the typical elements of familiar narratives (Oates 1989, 314–315).

Such stories were all the more persuasive when reported by credible informants; it was this that prompted St. Augustine to formulate a theory of illusory transformations provoked by demons (with God's permission), which accepted that witnesses reported truthfully, accounted for any effects observed, and at the same time denied that either the human soul or body could be really transformed except by God (*City of God*, 18.18). The *Canon Episcopi* (ca. 906) emphatically condemned the belief in shape changing, and that became the standard position in penitential texts. Twelfth- and thirteenth-century interpretations of transformations, including those of Gerald of Wales, Gervase of Tilbury, and Thomas Aquinas, built on St. Augustine's foundations and enlarged on the ways demons could make them seem to happen, for example, by borrowing

animals' bodies (Bynum 2001, 93–109). Commentators did not suggest that demons caused these deceptions in response to culpable human intentions until after the establishment of the idea of the witches' pact with the Devil. On the contrary, William of Auvergne in the mid-thirteenth century sought to demonstrate that suspected werewolves were unjustly blamed for eating people and were themselves innocent victims of the deceptions of demons (*De universo* [On the Universe], 2.3.13). It was not until the late fifteenth century that writers made any serious effort to account for the apparent transformations of diabolical witches and to explain away the *Canon Episcopi* (e.g., *Malleus maleficarum*, 1.10; 2.1.8).

With the proliferation of trials in the late sixteenth century came fresh reports of transformations, leading to more publications interpreting them. Intellectuals expressed varying degrees of belief, ranging from Jean Bodin's conviction that physical transformations were possible to Reginald Scot's skeptical dismissal of all the reports as untrue; however, few writers shared such extreme views (Clark 1997, 195–213). Some followed medical tradition, as Johann Weyer did, in attributing confessed transformations to melancholic delusions or the effects of drugs, though demons might sometimes be involved. Others, including the magistrates Nicolas Rémy, Pierre de Lancre, and Henry Boguet, refined the theory of demonic illusions to explain how witnesses saw the shapes that witches confessed they took (which medical theory could not easily account for). Either the demon went about in animal form committing harm and altered the witches' imaginations so that they dreamed they did those things in other shapes; or the witches were there in person and the demon altered observers' perceptions so they saw the witch as something other; or else he surrounded the witch with a cunningly fitted animal skin or an airy likeness of another species that would deceive observers' eyes.

Multiple interpretations of transformations were current in early modern Europe, and there was no single, unified folk view any more than there was unity among the learned. Aspects of demonology became common knowledge at all social levels: witches confessed that demons transformed them or gave them their magic wolf skins. Where some understood it as a roving spirit double in animal shape, others took it to be a form of magical disguise of the body or even a physical transmutation, as a boy in Franche-Comté did in 1643, when he testified that after hitting a wolf with a stick he saw it immediately turn back into the shape of a beggar, Claude Chastelan, who was executed after confessing (Oates 1989, 352–354).

Legends about shape changing continued to be told until the twentieth century in some areas. Scholarly interest in them did not disappear altogether with the gradual exclusion of demons from the material world

during and after the seventeenth century; the occult revival of the nineteenth century and the emergence of the disciplines of psychology, ethnography, anthropology, and folklore all stimulated new interpretations. But the emphasis was no longer on explaining how transformation could appear to happen, visibly and with material consequences, which, in the case of werewolves, were illusions that could bite.

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See also: ANIMALISTIC AND MAGICAL THINKING; ANIMALS; APULEIUS OF MADAURA; AUGUSTINE, ST.; *BENANDANTI*; BODIN, JEAN; BOGUET, HENRI; *CANON EPISCOPI*; CAUL; CIRCE; CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DEMONOLOGY; DEMONS; FOLKLORE; HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, MAGIC; HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, WITCHCRAFT; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; LYCANTHROPY; MALE WITCHES; NIGHTMARES; RÉMY, NICOLAS; TODI, WITCH OF; WEYER, JOHANN.

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MEYFART (MEYFAHRT), JOHANN MATTHÄUS (1590–1642)

Author of the *Christliche Erinnerung an gewaltige Regenten* (A Christian Reminder to Powerful Princes, 1635), Meyfart opposed witch hunting by underscoring the cruelties of witchcraft trials. Among all opponents of witch hunting, Meyfart was by far the most emotional, and his outrage was not just personal attitude but was inspired by specific cases in his environment. An orthodox Lutheran, he fervently accused the princes for their lack of compassion and their officials for inhumane cruelty. Although not the first author to attack witch hunters in the German vernacular under his full name (Trunz 1987, 212) (Johann Weyer and Anton Prätorius did this earlier), Meyfart's literary skills enabled him to invent the most powerful metaphors for this purpose. Whereas Weyer, Adam Tanner, and Friedrich Spee became entangled in juridical and theological discussions and appealed primarily to the reader's reason, Meyfart portrayed the hardships of the trials in full detail, constantly appealing to the reader's compassion. His descriptions of contemporary prisons were unprecedented, as was his ability to make the reader identify with those poor victims suffering all the fear and anguish of imminent torture. Meyfart not only taught rhetoric: he was a master of language, a poet, at times displaying the fervor of Jewish prophets.

Born in Jena, the son of a Lutheran pastor, Meyfart spent his youth in Thuringian villages where his father served as a pastor, attended the princely gymnasium at Gotha, and studied at Jena. He graduated in 1611 and turned to theology. In 1614, Meyfart matriculated at Wittenberg but returned to his father's house at Jena after contracting an infectious disease. Meyfart claimed later that his *melancholia hypochondrica*, which plagued him for the rest of his life, also began then. Meyfart became *adjunctus* at Jena's philosophical faculty before being appointed professor in 1616 at the Gymnasium Casimirianum of Coburg, the upper school of Prince Johann Casimir of Saxe-Coburg (ruled 1596–1633), where he taught for sixteen years. In order to become its director in 1623, Meyfart had to acquire a doctoral degree from Jena.

Now married, with children, Meyfart was a successful theologian and a public figure. However, he became entangled in a permanent feud with General Superintendent Caspar Finck (1578–1631). Relations worsened after 1626, as tensions and morbidity rose when Franconia experienced crop failure. Court preacher Nikolaus Hugo felt personally insulted by Meyfart's attacks against the clergy and particularly its conduct in witchcraft trials. In 1632, deeply embroiled in these quarrels, Meyfart received a call from the University of Erfurt, belonging to the prince-electors of Mainz, but recently conquered by Gustav II Adolf of Sweden. Meyfart became dean and eventually chancellor of the

Swedish university at Erfurt, where he spent the rest of his life, despite being stripped of his office during a Catholic interlude.

Although staunchly Lutheran, the tiny principality of Saxe-Coburg suffered a surprising number of witchcraft trials, about 178 during Johann Casimir's reign. Not just its clergy, but even more its lawyers and officials, the prince included, were supporters of witch hunting. In February 1629, Johann Casimir issued *Gerichts-Ordnung, die Hexerey betreffend* (Regulations for Witchcraft Trials) resembling those in neighboring prince-bishoprics. Meyfart wrote *Christliche Erinnerung* in 1631, when these terrible persecutions had already ceased in the Catholic bishoprics but continued uninterrupted in Saxe-Coburg and peaked that very year. The driving force behind the persecutions was the court preacher Hugo, who publicly attacked the *Schöppenstuhl* (court of lay judges) for its complacency. By 1631 the lawyers of the *Schöppenstuhl* had started referring to Meyfart's opinion.

However, his *Christliche Erinnerung* was not published until 1635, when Meyfart had reached the safety of Erfurt and witch hunting was over: therefore, it was no longer necessary. A generation later, when witchcraft trials resumed in Thuringia, it was forgotten; another generation later, when Christian Thomasius commissioned a reprint in 1703, witchcraft trials had already ebbed in Protestant northern Germany. It is hardly surprising that Meyfart saw the Jesuit Martín Del Rio as the main defender of gruesome witchcraft persecutions. More surprisingly, he hardly ever referred to Protestant authorities and instead quoted other Jesuits (Tanner and Spee) as defenders of humanity. Because Meyfart clearly aimed his book at a Protestant audience, it seems likely that he tried to become the Protestant Spee. But since his publication came too late, his emotional tone was—and to a modern reader, still is—irritatingly overwrought.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: DEL RIO, MARTÍN; GERMANY, NORTHEASTERN; PRÄTORIUS, ANTON; SKEPTICISM; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; TANNER, ADAM; THOMASIUS, CHRISTIAN; THURINGIA; WEYER, JOHANN.

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MICHELET, JULES (1798–1874)

Michelet was author of *La sorcière* (The Witch, 1862), an account of witchcraft in European history that stands outside of any known historical canon and yet addresses itself directly to the historian's task.

Michelet grew up in a poor Parisian family that struggled unsuccessfully to maintain a print shop founded during the French Revolution but blighted by Napoleonic censorship. A brilliant example of people newly empowered by the meritocratic standards of postrevolutionary France, he rose rapidly within the educational system, becoming a professor at the École Normale, chief of the historical section at the Royal (now National) Archives, and professor at the Collège de France by the time he was forty. His charismatic style of teaching won him the admiration of students, in whom he inculcated the values of the Revolution of 1789 in the hopes that they would form the generation capable of completing its work (Wilson 1972: I, chaps. 1–5). But his enthusiasm for the Revolution of 1848, and his refusal to take an oath of loyalty to Louis Napoleon's imperial government gave ammunition to the many historians who disliked his poetic historical imagination, poetic style, and radically liberal values. Driven from both teaching and archival positions, with no access to documents, Michelet composed a series of brilliant meditations in mythical naturalism—*The People, Woman, The Bird, The Insect, The Mountain, The Sea*, and so on.

In 1862, Michelet returned to a historical topic and composed one of his most famous and challenging books, *La sorcière*, which combined his extraordinary narrative abilities and his mythic voice with a wide knowledge of the documentation of earlier periods in French history. Book 1 traces the (imagined) experience of a serf's wife, at the bottom rung of feudal society, and follows her on her discovery of the magical forces of nature, forces unknown to the nobles and priests who dominated the social world. Her contact with this other world moved from the companionship of a helpful if mischievous imp to the great Satan, whose penetrating embrace transformed her vision of the world. All this was set out against the background of a viciously intrusive Church, inflamed by the

projections of its own moral corruption. This exceptional historical novel, in which Michelet never once questioned the existence of magic (indeed, he described it as real), defied all historical canons of narration and left many conventional historians at once fascinated and appalled.

Book 2, however, consists of three early modern cases of witch persecutions, well documented and well reconstructed. (One served as inspiration for both Aldous Huxley's 1952 book *The Devils of Loudun* and Ken Russell's 1971 movie *The Devils*.) By making an abrupt transition from a kind of imaginative mythical anthropology to the kind of detailed and masterful historical reconstruction that even the most positivist historian could admire, he wed his mythical vision to the historical documentation through his understanding of the moral madness that underlay the discourse of witchcraft persecution. The book's two parts were tied together mainly through Michelet's relentless anticlerical bias; *La sorcière* was, above all, a meditation on the corruption of the Church that could produce such inquisitorial minds and institutions and on the (profoundly Christian) understanding that suffering and humiliation could bring empowerment. For him, witchcraft and rebellion represented the two major forms of popular resistance: "From there [disappointed expectations that God would intervene in history and rid them of the brutal aristocracy that embittered their lives] the Black Mass and the *Jacquerie* [peasant rebellion]" (Michelet, 1959, 101).

In a sense, the book represented a mirror image of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486). Indeed, Michelet had a chapter on that demonology. It validated both his mythic heroine's rejection of her dominant culture and the counterreality she then discovered. At a time when conventional historians unanimously shunned this topic, Michelet permitted himself a bold and judgmental discourse that anticipated Nietzsche in assaulting the moral imagination of the Church:

As long as God punished himself, *brought his own hand down*, or struck with *the sword of an angel* (according to the noble antique formula), there was less horror; this hand was severe, that of a judge, and yet of a father. The angel, in striking remained pure and clear, like his sword. It was nothing like this, when the execution was done by disgusting demons. They did not imitate at all the angel that burned Sodom, but who first left. They stayed, and their hell is a horrible Sodom where the spirits, more soiled than the sinners handed over to them, draw odious joys from these tortures they inflicted. That is the teaching one finds on the *naïve* sculptures spread out over the doors of churches. They taught the horrible lesson of voluptuous pain.

Under the pretext of these torments, the devils pour out on their victims the most revolting caprices. Immoral notion (and profoundly guilty!) of a supposed justice that favors the worst, gives dominion to its perversity in giving it a toy, and corrupts the demon himself. (Michelet 1959, 46) (emphasis in the original)

In his journals at the time of *La Sorcière's* publication, Michelet wrote that he had announced the death of Christianity, a necessary precondition for making the best of what it had to offer possible.

The book met immediate resistance; after losing a legal case, Michelet had to eliminate two passages (in one he referred to the doctrine of the Trinity as boring and saints' lives as insipid) and find a new publisher. And yet, *La Sorcière* was Michelet's most popular book. As Roland Barthes pointed out (Barthes 1959), it was uncannily modern. What Michelet's positivist critics considered an insult—his *poésie*—reflected a level of empathy and understanding that finds far more appreciative audiences among modern historians, who are more familiar with the anthropologist's craft, more willing to link deeds to the *mentalités* of an age, and equally, but safely, anticlerical.

RICHARD LANDES

See also: HISTORIOGRAPHY; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*.

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MIDELFORT, H. C. ERIK (1942–)

An American-born historian, Midelfort's publications have molded the research of the current generation of scholars of witchcraft. Born into a family of physicians of Norwegian origin, he became interested in the problem of witchcraft while an undergraduate at Yale University (BA, 1964): the more he studied it, the less he understood. Bearing this experience in mind, as a graduate student choosing a dissertation subject, he picked witchcraft, then still considered a weird subject. However, there was the example of Wallace Notestein, whose dissertation on English witchcraft (1908) had not damaged his career as a major historian of Tudor-Stuart England, and who was still accessible at Yale University in the

mid-1960s. A year at Tübingen (1967–1968) proved to be most productive there. Midelfort confronted the puzzling microcosm of the German southwest, one of the most fragmented regions of the former Holy Roman Empire. Receiving little help from his academic adviser, Midelfort immersed himself in the literature and the sources and defined the topics and the geographical and temporal boundaries of his dissertation himself, completing his PhD at Yale in 1970.

The results of his research proved immediately influential. In 1968, he published the first international survey of witchcraft literature since the days of George Lincoln Burr. Its title, “Recent Witch Hunting Research, or Where Do We Go from Here?” sounds as unusual as its approach then indeed was. His comparative regional study of southwestern Germany (Midelfort 1972) has proved a classic. It not only surveyed all the major and minor witch hunts of this witch-ridden area but also analyzed the region’s lively contemporary debates. It put texts into social context, thus breathing life into an important area of early modern intellectual history. Keeping modern interpretations of social theory in the background, Midelfort conjured up a lively and more adequate picture of early modern debates. He was the first to acknowledge in English the overwhelming importance of Johann Weyer, who had endeavored to invent a comprehensive defense of accused “witches” prior to Reginald Scot and later opponents of witch hunting and witch beliefs by attacking the sixteenth-century Protestant orthodoxies head-on. Weyer’s claim that those who confessed to being witches—the most persuasive argument for the existence of witchcraft—we re simply insane triggered Midelfort’s long-standing interest in demonic possession and the history of madness in early modern Europe, ultimately leading to what is perhaps his most ambitious work (Midelfort 1999).

The application of psychological theory proved even more difficult than the application of social theory. By analyzing contemporary descriptions of these diseases, Midelfort abandoned the idea of using anachronistic diagnoses and tried to understand how contemporary physicians, lawyers, and divines interpreted these symptoms. Again, his method of contextualizing contemporary texts, such as an intriguing microstudy on Germany’s “mad princes” (Midelfort 1994), proved to be highly successful and were certainly suited to demolishing light-handed anachronistic interpretations, especially those by Michel Foucault. Another recent study on the late-eighteenth-century exorcist Johann Joseph Gassner, who used witchcraft to explain diseases, shattered a number of facile assumptions about the Enlightenment.

In 1970 Midelfort joined the History Department at the University of Virginia, becoming professor in 1987 and obtaining an endowed chair in 1996. Throughout this period, Midelfort mediated masterfully between

the academic cultures of the United States and Germany, producing English translations of major German scholars (e.g., Bernd Moeller, Peter Bickle, and Wolfgang Behringer) and, of course, Johann Weyer (Midelfort and Kohl 1998), while alerting U.S. students to the attractions of central European history. In Germany, Midelfort is a member of an international workshop on the history of witchcraft (AKIH) and coeditor of the publication series *Hexenforschung* (Witchcraft Research, 1995ff.) and of the *Dictionary of Early Modern Europe*. During his numerous stays in Germany, at conferences, as a visiting scholar, and as a research fellow, his accessibility, wit, and thought-provoking contributions have stimulated scores of younger German scholars. In the United States, he won many fellowships, and each of his major publications received awards, including two Roland Bainton prizes (1995 and 1999) and the Phi Beta Kappa Ralph Waldo Emerson Award for history (1999).

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; HISTORIOGRAPHY.

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MIDSUMMER EVE

According to folklore, the evening and night before summer solstice are filled with all kinds of magic. Good and evil forces were known to be more active on this evening than at other times of the year. Herbs, dew, and water from wells should be collected on this evening because of their healing qualities. But Midsummer Eve is also regarded as one of the year’s most important dates for black magic and witch merrymaking. Witches were thought to be particularly dangerous on Midsummer Eve, when they traveled through the air to their gatherings; that is why bonfires were lit to protect animals, crops, and humans against potential harm by keeping witches, trolls, and dragons at bay.

ST. JOHN'S DAY

Because Midsummer Eve was associated with many heathen practices, the Christian Church tried to ban many of the evening's traditional festivities while simultaneously giving the summer festival a Christian meaning. During the time of St. Augustine, around 400 C.E., the feast day of St. John the Baptist was moved close to the summer solstice in order to supplant pre-Christian celebrations.

Most traditional celebrations surrounding Midsummer Eve fell on June 23 (according to Christians, one day before St. John's birth), two days later than the actual summer solstice. Given the close proximity of these events, midsummer celebrations by both the people and the Church covered the entire period of June 21–24. The two traditions gradually merged with each other. Thus the magical significance of St. John the Baptist's Eve could result in a variety of rites—most commonly setting bonfires, rolling wheels of fire, and gathering magical herbs.

FOLKLORE AND MIDSUMMER

Throughout Europe, ancient folk narratives offered profuse descriptions of midsummer themes, in which all nature was filled with maximum-strength magical force on the longest day of the year. In late-fifteenth-century southern France, Canon Martin of Arles described how Basques lit Midsummer Eve bonfires, attempting to protect themselves and their crops from the destructive forces of witchcraft. Similar midsummer bonfires as antisorcery rituals have profoundly deep roots in several parts of Europe.

Especially in Slavic and Orthodox Europe, stories abounded of naked witches, oiled in witch lotions, who climbed up chimneys and flew through the air to witch Sabbats on the eve preceding St. John's Day. For such reasons, Midsummer Eve celebrations frequently occurred on Bald Mountain in the vicinity of Kiev. Witches were also said to have poured water, boiled with embers from Kupala's midsummer bonfire, over themselves or to have used an ointment made from gentian to improve their flying skills (Ryan 1999).

Other herbs, too, should be gathered on Midsummer Eve because of their professed magical powers. Such traditions can be discovered in both recipes and criminal cases from the Middle Ages. Herbs collected on the eve of St. John the Baptist were especially useful for their magical powers over love and human destiny. (For example, magical plants played a significant role in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, written at the end of the sixteenth century.) Herbs picked on this evening could be used for a number of different purposes: they could cure sterility and impotence, but they could also *cause* impotence. In a 1539 Swiss witchcraft trial near Geneva, the accused witch had fed her neighbor's cow a special kind of herb on Midsummer Eve, after which the cow suddenly died (Monter 1976, 56).

Numerous countries preserve mythological versions of the witches' Sabbats. An instance of this practice exists in the story of Jane Maxie, a young servant girl from a small village in Devon, in southwestern England, who was rumored to be a witch. Under interrogation in 1638, Jane described witch gatherings every Midsummer Eve: "those that would be witches must meet the divell upon a hill and then the divell would licke them, and that the place was black." On the following Midsummer Eve, "the divell would meet them againe, and licke them as before" (Sharpe 1996, 77).

In some countries correlations were made between Midsummer Eve and the burning of witches by placing a witchlike doll on top of the traditional bonfire, or perhaps a witch's broom and hat, to be destroyed as symbols of evil. This tradition, however, is more recent, dating from the end of the nineteenth century, long after the last witches had been burned at the stake in the Western world. Such straw dolls could also symbolize winter.

In the far north of Europe, where midsummer brings the midnight sun, celebrations of the sun played a special role after the winter's long darkness. Confessions exist from Scandinavian witchcraft trials in which the witch's activities were directly related to Midsummer Eve celebrations. For instance, Danish court records and folktales described witches from Jutland who traveled as far as the church of Troms County, in Arctic Norway, to celebrate Midsummer Eve, riding northward on cats. Upon arrival at the church, they played card games, danced, ate, and drank. "To ride to Troms" was a common expression in Denmark and especially in Jutland. At Troms Church, the witches gathered to take part in obscene amusements with the Devil and to renew their satanic pacts (Kristensen 1901).

IN COMPANY WITH THE DEVIL AT THE GREAT MIDSUMMER EVE FEAST OF 1662

The persecution of accused witches and sorcerers in eastern Finnmark during the winter of 1662–1663 was the worst of its kind anywhere in Norway (Lilienskiold 1998). More than thirty women and some young girls under twelve years old were brought before the court in the course of a few months. Eventually, eighteen women were burned at the stake, and three others were tortured to death before sentencing. Mari Olsdatter (who had not yet turned twelve, according to reports) was among the prisoners, largely because her mother had been burned as a witch several years earlier. Mari began by telling of her visit to hell, along with many other local witches. Satan himself presided from a pond of sulfur, showing her the general "character and grandeur" of the place, according to court records. After the women had been shown around Satan's abode, a party was held at a local mountaintop called Domen on Midsummer Eve 1662. This time as well, Satan was the

center of festivities, playing music for a circle dance on his red violin under the light of the flaming midnight sun on the top of Domen. Mari told in great detail about those who held hands while dancing. Following the dance, Satan served beer to the women from a silver bowl. This Midsummer Eve night at Domen came to an end when Satan accompanied each of the women homeward. Mari's confession and disclosure of who had taken part in the Midsummer Eve celebration with Satan resulted in the deaths of several women.

RUNE HAGEN;

TRANSLATED BY MARK LEDINGHAM

See also: CHARMS; COUNTERMAGIC; CUNNING FOLK; DEVIL; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; HELL; HERBAL MEDICINE; LAPLAND; LOVE MAGIC; MAGIC, POPULAR; NORWAY; POPULAR BELIEFS IN WITCHES; SABBAT; SHAKESPEARE.

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MIDWIVES

The link between midwives and witchcraft is one of many issues involved in the witch hunts in which a clear disjuncture separates learned theory from actual practice. As men, and generally childless men, demonologists had little experience with midwives, so they speculated that these women's knowledge must come from the Devil, whom they repaid with the bodies of children. Most men and women—even those who accused others of witchcraft—had too much respect for the midwives on whose skills they depended to believe they were in league with Satan and knew very well that these skills came from earthly training and years of practice.

The *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches) of 1486, Europe's most influential treatise on demonology and witch hunting, stated without doubt that witchcraft was particularly rampant among midwives: "No one does more harm to the Catholic Faith

than midwives. For when they do not kill children, then, as if for some other purpose they take them out of the room and, raising them up in the air, offer them to devils" (Kramer and Sprenger [sic] 2001, 189). The *Malleus* recounted several stories of midwives who murdered infants, offering their unbaptized bodies for magical purposes, in particular the concocting of ointment that allowed witches to fly. The *Malleus* took some of its stories of midwife-witches from the earlier *Formicarius* (The Anthill) by Johannes Nider, and its examples were repeated verbatim in some later demonological works, including those by Jean Bodin, Martín Del Rio, and Henri Boguet.

Why did demonologists link midwives and witches? One reason was that learned authors used traditional myths of Jewish ritual murder, in which Jews supposedly used the bodies or body parts of Christian children in various ceremonies to create a stereotype of the activities of witches. Witches, like Jews, sought the blood or fat of innocent children, and what better source of this than midwives? Midwives also had access to other body parts associated with births that were judged to have magical powers: the placenta, the umbilical cord, and the caul (a piece of amniotic membrane that sometimes covers or is attached to an infant's head at birth, widely believed to have magical properties and to mark the infant as distinctive). Thus, more than other women, they were used to handling materials that had special power. This connection and their vital role in bringing children into the world explained to demonologists why Satan would be especially interested in recruiting them, for no other type of woman could be more helpful to his cause.

Some scholars of witchcraft have used the writings of demonologists about the evil of midwives as evidence that the witch hunts were primarily an attempt by male religious, political, and medical authorities to eradicate female healers, midwives among them. Midwives, they argued, were often "wise women" who had a wide knowledge of the healing and contraceptive properties of herbs and other materials, which they handed down orally as part of women's traditional culture. The witch hunts enabled male physicians to gain control of the birth process and male authorities to suppress women who were independent and skilled in birth control and abortion.

There are several problems with this line of argument. One is that the chronology is wrong. Though a few male midwives made inroads among the upper classes in England and France during the period of the witch hunts, most physicians were completely uninterested in obstetrical issues, and female midwives continued to handle almost all births in Europe and North America. City governments, rulers, and in some places religious authorities did concern themselves with midwives, but generally they attempted to recruit more women into the profession and train them adequately,

not push women out. Women were barred from university medical training and formal apprenticeship as barber-surgeons, but this prohibition had begun long before the period of the witch hunts, and women's exclusion from medical schools continued into the late nineteenth or even twentieth centuries.

A second problem with viewing the witch hunts as a campaign against midwives is that doing so misrepresents the social and economic position of early modern midwives. Though midwives were generally middle-aged and older women—the population group most prevalent among those accused of witchcraft in many parts of Europe—the similarities stop there. Particularly in urban areas, midwives were well-respected, quite well trained, and relatively well paid. In many villages, women elected or otherwise chose the midwives, a clear indication of esteem for their skills. They were generally the wives or widows of artisans or shopkeepers, not marginal and dependent members of society. In many parts of Europe they were literate, for midwives' manuals were published in many European languages beginning in the early sixteenth century—some written by midwives themselves—and city or religious authorities often expected midwives to be able to read the ordinances and oaths of midwifery that they issued. The era of the witch hunts saw a sharp increase in infanticide cases and increasing penalties for abortion, but the accused was almost always the mother, not a midwife. Midwives did appear in cases alleging infanticide or abortion through witchcraft, but as expert witnesses, called in to assess whether a woman had been pregnant or whether supernatural causes might have led to the death of an infant. They also appeared as witnesses in other types of court cases, such as rape, premarital fornication, and infanticide by natural means, and judges took their opinions very seriously.

A third, and the most significant problem with this line of argument is that it mistakes demonological theory for the actual course of the witch hunts. The learned authors of demonological works were apparently the only early modern people who believed that midwives were especially likely to be witches, for their number among the accused was strikingly small. In all the English witchcraft trials, only a few of the original sources identified the accused as a midwife, and in the unusually well-documented Scottish cases, which number in the thousands, less than 1 percent of the accused were midwives. In New England, only one midwife was suspected of witchcraft, and none was tried for it; Anne Hutchinson, the religious leader expelled from Massachusetts Bay Colony for teaching beliefs contrary to those of the Puritan leadership—and for doing so as a woman—was sometimes labeled a witch or midwife or both in later literature, but there is no evidence that she was either.

Even in the central European heartland of witch hunting, where demonological theory had the strongest

impact, the statistical presence of midwives among those accused of witchcraft is negligible. There were a few spectacular cases, such as that of Walpurga Hausmännin, burned at the stake in 1587, who was accused of killing and eating unbaptized infants and causing stillbirths and the deaths of mothers in childbed. Her case was sensational enough to make it into one of the newsletters published by the Fugger family business; however, this merely indicates its unusual nature, not its typicality. A few of the midwives' ordinances that began to be issued in the fifteenth century—first in German cities and then elsewhere in Europe—did forbid midwives to use (in the words of a 1567 English ordinance) “any sorcery or incantation in the time of the travail of the woman,” but many made no mention of magic at all, though they went on for many pages about training, procedures, and fees. Actual court cases against midwives followed the same pattern as the ordinances, for, like physicians and barber-surgeons, midwives were occasionally accused of negligence or malpractice, but these cases almost never involved charges of witchcraft.

MERRY WIESNER-HANKS

See also: CAUL; CUNNING FOLK; DEMONOLOGY; FOLKLORE; FUGGER FAMILY; GENDER; HAUSMÄNNIN, WALPURGA; INFANTICIDE; *MALLEUS MALIFICARUM*; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; RITUAL MURDER.

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MILAN

The city of Milan and its surroundings offer a good example of the way witch beliefs grew in northern Italy between the late Middle Ages and the end of the seventeenth century, with inquisitorial activities directed

against magical practices increasing during the second half of the sixteenth century. Statistics are difficult to gather because the Holy Roman Emperor, Joseph II, ordered the destruction of all the Inquisition's records in 1788. Extant cases mention the executions of sixteen women and two men. This relatively modest number is due not only to the lack of information but also to the fact that a greater number of executions took place in towns and valleys around Milan.

Milan's first case of major interest involved a man called Giovanni Grassi of Valenza (Piedmont). He was arrested around 1375, brought to Avignon, and prosecuted by a Franciscan inquisitor who accused him of having dealings with the Devil. Grassi saved his life by confessing his crime. But ten years later he was arrested again in Milan and charged with similar accusations by a Dominican inquisitor in Sant'Eustorgio, where the Inquisition had its headquarters. Convicted as a second offender, or *relapsus*, Grassi was condemned to the stake and handed over to the city's *Podestà* (highest official), who duly burned him. In the very same years, Milan's Dominicans also judged two women, Pierina de Bugatis and Sibillia Zanni, for crimes linked to magical beliefs and deeds and condemned them to light penances. In 1390, like Grassi, they too were rearrested on the same charges. During their new interrogations, they confessed to participating in a *ludus* (game) paying homage to the *domina ludi* (Lady of the Game), called *Madona Oriente* (Lady of the East) or "Diana" or "Erodiade," borrowing these names from the now well-known *Canon Episcopi* (ca. 906). Their spells seemed different from those mentioned in later witchcraft trials: there were no confessions of killing babies, no blasphemy or descriptions of Sabbats; at one moment, Pierina mentioned a spirit called "Lucifello," who appeared and spoke to her in the shape of a man. Milan's new inquisitor seemed inclined to treat the two women's beliefs as real, beyond their unfortunate status as relapsed heretics. Both were condemned to death and handed over to the *Podestà*.

In the early fifteenth century, unlike the bloody repression of witches in the nearby diocese of Como, Milan offered little evidence of inquisitorial activity for either diabolism or *maleficia* (harmful magic). Around the mid-fifteenth century, we find many trials against men and women accused of heresy for beliefs and acts connected to magic and Devil-worshipping, but they took place in nearby valleys, not in Milan itself. These trials around 1450 were led by the inquisitor Luca di Lecco, whose sentences were not particularly severe, although several women were accused of having been seduced by the Devil to worship a *domina ludi*, now declared a demon, and of performing many heretical acts, such as stealing the Eucharist for their ceremonies. By the late fifteenth century, we find considerable confusion about the way to proceed in such cases, proved

by the fact that both prosecutors and prosecuted addressed protests to the Duke of Milan, Francesco Sforza. The inquisitor most active at this time, Paolo dei Filiberti, was often supported by Francesco Sforza, who mentioned in his letters that babies were slaughtered and even eaten at the Devil's orders.

Around 1460, Girolamo Visconti, a scholarly friar at Sant'Eustorgio, using the tradition of trials accumulated since the late fourteenth century in his convent, wrote two treatises about *lamiae* and *striae* (witches), in which he affirmed the reality of beliefs and practices attributed to witches. Like other Renaissance Italians, Visconti decorated his account of this new phenomenon with words taken from classical antiquity.

After 1484, when the papal decree *Summis desiderantes affectibus* (desiring with supreme ardor) was promulgated, trials for witchcraft increased in Milan. Under the rule of Ludovico il Moro and at the very beginning of the sixteenth century, Milan and its surroundings experienced the activities of Rategno, Bernardo of Como, whose deeds as inquisitor of Como affected Milan; a mountainous place named Tonale appeared in sources during those years as one of the best-known Italian locations for Sabbats. Many trials held from 1483 through 1485 in Bormio, ruled by Como, were mentioned in Heinrich Kramer's *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486).

During the first decades of the sixteenth century, many witchcraft trials took place in the Alpine valleys, especially in Valcamonica but also in Lugano and Mendrisio. These trials were all linked to the bishop of Como more than to Milan. A few cases were also reported in 1517–1518 around the city of Brescia and in two small towns, Orago and Lomazzo, not far from Milan. During the second half of the century, Milan's most distinguished figure was undoubtedly its cardinal-archbishop, St. Carlo Borromeo, who prosecuted witches with such intensity that his actions provoked a polite but firm intervention from the Roman Inquisition.

In Milan, the end of the sixteenth century and the first twenty years of the seventeenth century were still marked by witch hunting, with a handful of burnings being recorded in the city. The persecution of witches slowed and ended around 1640–1650. The last known execution occurred in 1641. Nevertheless, in the northern valleys, lay tribunals maintained a policy of ferocious persecution lasting until the beginning of the eighteenth century.

MARINA MONTESANO

See also: BORROMEIO, ST. CARLO; *CANON EPISCOPI*; DOMINICAN ORDER; INQUISITION, ROMAN; ITALY; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; RATEGNO, BERNARDO OF COMO; SPELLS.

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MILK

Milk has played a very important part in European witchcraft and popular magic, in pre-Christian and Christian mythology alike, generating a rich variety of magical measures and countermeasures. Innumerable beliefs and practices reveal the intimate connections between witches and milk. In Europe, milk witches spawned a rich variety of beliefs and rites, because village witchcraft grew from neighborhood conflicts, often between women. Cows and milk were basic for survival in early modern agriculture, and absolutely all work related to milk (except some cheese making) was done by women. Thus there was an automatic association among cows, milk, and the huge predominance of women among witches.

MYTHOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Beneath these associations lay Indo-European mythical legacies regarding milk and cows and some beliefs and rites related to supernatural beings and milk dating from pre-Christian times. Certain Indo-European deities, particularly such gods of thunder as Indra, Zeus, or Jupiter, were due a sacrificial offering of milk (the belief that a fire that came from lightning can only be put out by milk survives in several parts of Europe). Indo-European linguists have reconstructed traces of the original myth (assaults of the lightning-god against monsters of the underworld in order to obtain stolen cows) from some legends in southeastern Europe that describe lightning striking a devil who is concealing a cow, sometimes under an elderberry tree or "devil's tree." The topos of a dragon that snatches milk or steals a cow also appears in the Balkans: killing the dragon restores the milk from dried-up cows. Pre-Christian mythologies about milk witches or milk fairies are known to practically all European peoples, and some demonic female figures have cow or milk attributes: the milk churn belonging to German, Czech, Hungarian, or Scandinavian witches (this is how they can be recognized on Christmas night); Romanian witches who travel to their Sabbath on a milk bucket or churn; Celtic fairies who steal cows and milk; Romanian and eastern Hungarian fairies and witches who can take the shape

of a cow but can also saddle and thus ruin a cow; and Bulgarian witches who "pull the moon down" from the sky, which becomes a cow upon reaching the ground and can then be milked.

Features of pre-Christian mythologies persist in modern-day popular beliefs of various European peoples. A gift of milk is offered around the time of the winter solstice for the dead or demons who visit the living then (e.g., for the "Perchta" in southern Germany or Austria between Christmas and Twelfth Night). Among the peoples of the Balkans or among the Irish and the Scots, fairies of a definitely "deadly" character are associated with various milk rites, as are the pressing demons of the night called *mahr* or *mare* by Germanic peoples. In return for receiving milk, these beings increase the prosperity of the household and abstain from harming family members. Milk offerings associated with Bulgarian, Serbian, and Greek fairy cults occur in the context of healing rituals: healers offer the fairies a sacrifice containing milk when invoking them for assistance. Swiss and German folklore describes milk offerings given to the ghost of the house. Offering milk to a house snake, which impersonates the spirit of the ancestors, is recommended in most of Europe (if it is not fed milk, the head of the family will die). In the Balkans and some Slavic parts of Eastern Europe, the "fate women" who determined a baby's destiny at birth received an offering of food: on the first or third night after the birth, various foods, including milk, were prepared for them so that they would give the newborn a positive destiny.

MILK MAGIC AND FERTILITY RITUALS

The myth of vanquishing the cow-snatching demon—where the drought also ends when the cows are recovered—emphasizes the connections between rainfall and milk in Indo-European mythologies. Some beliefs of modern European peoples suggest that a magically induced absence or increase of rain induces a similar decrease or increase in milk yield. The practices of milk magic performed at sacred water springs, noted in German and French sources, draws on the same belief, as do the magical activities and practices of the rain magician or milk magician (the figure shows a witch milking the pillar and thus bringing rain). The correspondence between milk magic and rain magic is most clearly shown through the widespread beliefs in and rituals of dew picking in central and mainly southeastern Europe. The people of a village collect all the dew from the grass of the neighboring pasture by repeatedly pulling a tablecloth or other textile over the grass, usually during a spring or summer festival like Whitsun or Midsummer. The villagers thereby snatch the milk from the cows belonging to the neighboring village farmers; in accordance with the theory of limited goods, the increase in

their milk yield exactly equals the drop in milk production from the neighbors' animals. Fertility rituals connected to the occasion of the first milking or to the first milk and manifesting in pouring or spraying water are known in a several places in both western and eastern Europe.

WITCHES DOING MALEFACTION TO COWS AND MILK

The theory of limited goods also explains why it was customary throughout Europe to attribute milk snatching to witches: by depriving others, one increased one's own milk yield. According to legends known all over Europe, witches stole milk from their neighbors' stables or gardens or acquired it by stealing objects related to the cow; by picking up its footprint or dung; or by milking such objects as a fencepost, a pillar of the house, or a gatepost: through the principle of participation magic, one acquires milk through an attribute of the cow or her owner. The witch who steals milk or damages the cow harms others for his or her private benefit—a general theme about milk witches throughout Europe, from France to Scandinavia or Romania. Everywhere such witches snatched milk or else spoiled it and the related dairy products.

Both in the Europe of the witchcraft trials and in more modern times, related legends described the milk witches' operating methods, the ways of identifying them, and the means of remedying their damage. Many beliefs associated damages to cows and milk with certain "witching days": Walpurgis (central and western Europe); Midsummer (central and eastern Europe); St. Luca (central Europe); or St. John's Day (essentially all of Europe). Legends mention witches sneaking into stables or stroking the cows. Particularly in western and northern Europe, witches with the evil eye can do harm by appearing unexpectedly at the time of calving or churning, drying up the milk of either a human mother or a cow by their jealous looks. All over Europe, witches sent helping animals or familiars—principally a cat or a frog—in order to snatch the milk (but one also finds rabbits or hedgehogs in western and northern Europe and snakes in eastern Europe).

Because of the witch's malefice, a cow gives no milk at all or its milk is bloody; the production of dairy products (e.g., churning butter) may fail, or the result is inedible. Even in contemporary Europe, such spells are considered realistic dangers in several places. Wherever the institution of village witchcraft and its accompanying beliefs and rites remained active (as in



A witch milks an axe handle, from Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg's sermons on witchcraft published as Die Emeis (The Ants), 1516. Witches were accused of stealing milk, a serious crime in an agricultural society. The cow in the background links cows, milk, and the prevalence of female witches. (Cornell University Library)

some parts of present-day central and southeastern Europe), people knew and practiced innumerable magical methods to protect themselves against witches and prevent the spoiling of milk, as well as performed rites relating to milk on festive occasions. For example, on the first day the animals were herded out to pasture, villagers would protect them with prayers, spells, sacred water, sanctified poppies, a cross drawn over the stable, garlic tied to the cow's horn, thorny branches of rosehip, iron objects, or with millet scattered around the stable. It was a general principle in many places in Europe that no stranger should be present at the time of calving or churning.

Identifying the witch who had laid a curse on the milk, summoning her to the house and forcing her to cure the damage still formed part of the resolution of malefices within some twentieth-century European village communities. In most places, however, only folklore collections recorded these popular legends with a rich scale of variants. Essentially, these procedures required some technique of divination in order to identify the culprit and then force her to remove or cure the spell, usually carried out by a specialized witch doctor or healer, using various techniques to identify and symbolically harm some personal attribute of the suspected witch, who would then promptly appear at the house and be forced to remedy the spell. According to other widespread legends, the cats, frogs, snakes, and other creatures believed to be accomplices of the witch would be injured, thus provoking the witch to withdraw the spell. Other widespread legends from western and central Europe testify that it was also customary to harm the witch by analogy, damaging the milk or urine of the bewitched cow either by smoking it (hanging a boot containing the cow's urine over the smoke), beating the milk over the doorstep, immersing pointed or red-hot objects into the milk and stirring it, or even by spreading a coat or blanket over the cow and beating it.

ÉVA PÓCS;

TRANSLATED BY ORSOLYA FRANK

See also: EVIL EYE; FAIRIES; FAMILIARS; FOLKLORE; HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, MAGIC; HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, WITCHCRAFT; MAGIC, POPULAR; MIDSUMMER EVE; NIGHTMARES; SPELLS, WALPURGIS (WALPURIGS) NIGHT; WEATHER MAGIC.

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MILLENARIANISM

In the most general terms, millenarianism or millennialism is the belief in a radical transformation of *this* world into one of justice, peace, and fellowship; it focuses on collective, this-worldly salvation. In Christian prophecy it is the expectation of a 1,000-year period (hence its name), mentioned in the Book of Revelation, during which Jesus is to rule and holiness is to prevail. On the surface, millennialism would seem to have little to do with witchcraft. But two forms of millennialism show distinct predilections for a discourse of magic and witchcraft.

As opposed to an egalitarian vision of the millennium in which the "saved" inhabit a world without class distinctions, where everyone lives by honest labor with none to harry them (Isaiah 2), many versions imagine a world of magical fertility in which labor is not necessary. These magical millennial visions appeal to those who believe that the spiritual world can defy the laws of nature.

Millennialism also spawns intense magical practices among those believers convinced that the advent of this millennium is imminent. Such movements of *apocalyptic* millennialists often perform rituals that will bring on the transformation. The Ghost Dance that spread through various Native American tribes at the end of the nineteenth century promised that its proper execution would prompt nature to shed the white man and his world as a snake sheds a skin.

In general, apocalyptic time (the period of transformation from the current "fallen world" to the redeemed millennial kingdom) encourages magical thinking, since these are by definition stupendous times, when the cosmic struggle between good and evil reaches its climax and definitive solution. Charismatic prophets regularly exhibit thaumaturgic capacities that demonstrate both their cosmic power and their benevolence. This increases the size and devotion of their following and sets in motion certain kinds of "idol worship," in which the messiah figure commands absolute obedience from a following that, despite their initial act of independence in breaking with their culture of origin and joining the dissident movement, no longer exercise independent judgment.

Such groups often meet with strong, even violent opposition from those in power (whether indigenous or imperialist), and among their ways of resisting repression, we find magical procedures that ensure immunity

from the weapons of the enemy. Ghost Shirts were bulletproof, as were the very bodies of the Chinese Boxers (ca. 1900) who had gone through the proper initiation. The Anabaptist Thomas Münster, a leader of the German peasant revolt in 1524–1525 who preached the imminent end of the world, boasted that he would catch bullets in his sleeves. Such magical promises regularly led these movements into devastating failures when real bullets decimated the apocalyptic armies.

Apocalyptic time, however, also stimulates fear of malevolent witchcraft. Most apocalyptic scenarios contain cataclysmic phases in which vast destruction rains down upon humanity (e.g., *Revelation* 3–19). These tribulations result from the final and universal battle of good with evil, and, as a result, most apocalyptic expectations, whether they anticipate a coming millennium on earth or the end of the world, foresee cosmic battles. Such scenarios often begin with a metastasis of evil in the world, often led by an anti-messiah (Christian Antichrist, Muslim *Dajjal*). This evil figure (curiously like the mutant supervillains of comic books) has myriad minions who do his (almost never her) work in the world, preparing for his coming.

In the Christian West, from the fourteenth century onward, these apocalyptic fears often projected onto witches the role of minions of Antichrist. In their *anti*-apocalyptic phases, trying to discourage the sense of imminence, elites emphasized the terrors of the transition in order to discourage people from *wanting* the apocalypse to occur. In their apocalyptic phases, however, such elites often used the language of conspiracy and evil coming from below (chaos, anarchy), to fight against forces that threatened their dominion. This scapegoating technique targets certain people as the apocalyptic enemies. For Christians and Muslims, the primary apocalyptic scapegoat has been Jews, but at the end of the Middle Ages, Christianity added an ominous new enemy to its list of agents of Antichrist—a diabolic conspiracy of witches, primarily women.

Attacks on witches began in earnest in the early fifteenth century, in part because of an elaboration of a vast satanic conspiracy in which witches were perceived as agents in a cosmic plot by the Devil to destroy Christendom. The “witch’s Sabbat,” a parody and subversion of every element of Church ritual, was the centerpiece of the activity of the Devil and his servants, the witches. By the late fifteenth century, witchcraft accusations had become so common in some areas that Europeans could consider every “bad” thing that occurred (failed crops or business ventures, miscarriages, illnesses, accidents, etc.) as the *maleficia* (evildoings) of witches.

The apocalyptic dynamic here conflates the Devil’s minions with the Antichrist’s, and the panic behind the accusations sometimes reached frenzied levels, especially in Germany. The literary climax of this aggressive

paranoia came with the publication of the Dominican inquisitor Heinrich Kramer’s *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches) in 1486, with its ferocious misogyny and prurient fascination with the Devil’s female “agents.” Born of apocalyptic paranoia, the fear of witches became a hallmark of many subsequent apocalyptic episodes, especially in the early modern period, where a significant part of the elite embraced apocalyptic beliefs (Clark 1997). Indeed, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, intense apocalyptic episodes (the early Reformation) occurred, and even after the early expectations had passed, both Catholic and Protestant authorities, permeated with the language of guilt, sin, and fear of the Devil, found the language of coercive purity aimed at exterminating witchcraft a particularly attractive solution to the persistence of evil. As late as 1692, Cotton Mather delivered an apocalyptic sermon on the text of Revelation 12:12 to account for the activities of the Devil and witches at Salem, Massachusetts.

Witch-hunting episodes also illustrate a key aspect of the dynamics of apocalyptic time. In periods of waxing and optimistic expectation, women often played prominent roles in millennial movements. But with the waning of such expectations (and hence the popularity of the movement), women’s behavior, previously considered holy, became viewed as disorderly and dangerous. This perspective offered two hypotheses about the nature of early modern witchcraft persecutions: first, that their spread corresponded to more localized apocalyptic anxieties in the aftermath of earlier European-wide ones (early Reformation); and, second, that the ebbing of persecutions corresponded to an increasingly anti-apocalyptic attitude taken by elites. The “rationalism” that put an end to the participation of the educated elite in witch hunts may well have influenced the de-eschatologization of the Enlightenment.

RICHARD LANDES

See also: ANABAPTISTS; ANTICHRIST, THE; APOCALYPSE; BIBLE; DEVIL; ENLIGHTENMENT; JESUS; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MATHER, COTTON; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS.

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MILLER, ARTHUR (1915–2005)

Famous for writing *The Crucible*, his 1952 play about the Salem witchcraft trials, Arthur Miller brought a contemporary American meaning to the term *witch hunt*.

Having grown up in New York, against the backdrop of the stock market crash of 1929 and the Great Depression, Miller rose to prominence in the 1930s as one of the outstanding playwrights of his generation, espousing President Franklin Roosevelt's attempts to improve social conditions. The onset of the Cold War and the unscrupulous "Red Scare" campaign waged by Senator Joseph McCarthy and the House Committee on Un-American Activities to discover Communists in the government and the entertainment industry caused him to reconsider the citizen's role in resisting irrational but state-sponsored social pressures. The abject recantation of his friend and mentor, Clifford Odets, before McCarthy's committee, combined with Odets's willingness to implicate others, finally compelled Miller to write *The Crucible*.

The play took as its theme the well-known cycle of witchcraft trials that had convulsed Salem, Massachusetts, between June and September 1692. The parallels between McCarthy's persecution of U.S. Communists and the Puritan-inspired witch hunts of the late seventeenth century were obvious, but Miller's skills as a playwright allowed *The Crucible* to transcend simple political allegory and become one of the most frequently produced plays in U.S. theater. Although he made good use of original sources (including the three-volume typescript of the trials, lodged in the Salem Court House), Miller pointed out that this play was "not history in the sense in which the word is used by the academic historian." The characters were "creations of my own, drawn to the best of my ability in conformity with their known behavior," while his aim as an author was to enable the reader "to discover . . . the essential nature of one of the strangest and most awful chapters in human history" (Miller 1978, 2). As a result, he increased the age of Abigail Williams in order to make her sexual relationship with John Proctor more plausible and palatable; he reduced the number of young girls charged to just five, in order to permit greater narrative clarity and fuller dramatic characterization; and he reduced the numerous judges present at the hearings to only two.

Miller provided an unhistorical although dramatically satisfying ending. He conveyed the impression that Proctor's noble death gave the lie to the allegations and that the trials had burned themselves out by autumn of 1692; but that was not the case. Prosecutions continued until April 1693, and their final abandonment—a month later—did not reflect either a rejection of a belief in the reality of the Devil or of the efficacy of witchcraft and demonic possession.

Despite such historical license, Miller's play plausibly recreated the simmering sexual and social tensions present

in a tightly knit frontier community, where the problems created by greed, land hunger, and a domineering theocracy exploded—with devastating results—through the misconstrued actions of some thoroughly bored and repressed adolescents. Miller saw "bewitchment" as a mental state, here taking the form of mass hysteria that could be fomented by self-seeking and self-appointed "saviors" in order to gain power and influence over the frightened, the gullible, and the weak-willed.

In a case of life imitating art, Miller—probably on account of his authorship of *The Crucible*—was himself hauled before the House Committee in June 1956. He chose to echo the fictionalized sentiments of John Proctor, refusing to inform against his Communist friends and acquaintances and proclaiming that "I am trying to, and will, protect my sense of myself. I could not use the name of another person and bring trouble on him" (Martine 1979, 191). On May 31, 1957, he was found guilty of contempt of Congress, receiving a suspended jail sentence and a fine of \$500. However, as the "inexplicable darkness" and dread engendered by McCarthyism began to dissipate, the U.S. Court of Appeals quashed his conviction in 1958.

JOHN CALLOW

See also: BEWITCHMENT; LITERATURE; SALEM; WITCH HUNTS, MODERN POLITICAL USAGE.

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MIRACLES

Two criteria are necessary to define an incident as miraculous: it must stand in contradiction to what the observer knows from experience to be the common or natural way things happen, and he or she must associate it with some numinous power. What is regarded as miraculous, therefore, depends on the education of the observer and the worldview of the society he or she lives in. The histories of all higher religions abound in records of miracles, the main effects of which may be described as power over animate and inanimate nature; healing or reviving humans and animals; punishing disbelievers and evildoers; changing psychic states; and contacting the supernatural through visions, apparitions, voices, or dreams.

For Christians, the belief in miracles is of course guaranteed through the many marvellous phenomena recorded in the Hebrew and Christian Bibles. Most wonders worked by the saints—or, theologically, by God acting through the saints' intercession—are imitations of the deeds of Jesus. However, if a miraculous phenomenon occurs within a dualistic religion like Christianity, the problem arises: which numinous power caused it, God or the Devil? The positive or negative effects of the action in question cannot provide an answer, because God also does painful things to people he wants to correct, whereas the Devil helps people in order to seduce them. Therefore many miracles of saints and misdeeds of witches, taken by themselves, reveal the very same structure. When, for example, Saint Bridgit of Sweden (d. 1373) learned that a respected clergyman did not believe her revelations, she prayed to Jesus, who promised to castigate the man. Soon he became depressed and died from gout. But causing gout by an evil spell was also a common accusation in witchcraft trials, as late as when the last sorceress's stake was kindled in Germany in 1749 for Maria Renata Singer. Several comparable instances could be cited, which were done in very similar ways both by holy and unholy women: influencing the weather, multiplying food, and contacting the dead. Perhaps the ambivalence between divine and devilish help is especially clear when we consider a piece of trial testimony against the *Vaudois* (Waldensians, but used to label witchcraft) of Fribourg in 1430. There a woman is mentioned who had served God so well that whenever she asked him to avenge an offense she had endured, he did so immediately. Was this the prayer of a saint or of a witch? Was the following miracle God's work or the Devil's, whom the woman venerated as God?

The same problem arose when a man or, more often, a woman claimed to have benefited from internal miracles, such as illuminations by the Holy Spirit or supernatural visions and apparitions. Were these true manifestations of the godhead or illusions caused by the evil one? This difficult question was one reason that the discernment of spirits became more and more elaborate in the later Middle Ages. But it remained unreliable. In 1391, Do rothy of Montau was on the verge of being burned as a sorceress, according to the judgement of the competent ecclesiastical jurisdiction, because many priests did not believe that her miraculous voices and visions came from God; today, the Catholic Church venerates her as the patroness of Prussia. Joan of Arc, who presumed to hear the voices of Saints Michael, Catherine, and Margaret, was burned as a witch in 1431 and achieved sainthood in 1920.

As soon as these manifestations are no longer interpreted within a religious scheme but considered as natural or psychic phenomena or frauds that had been misinterpreted in either good or bad faith, the question

of the miraculous becomes obsolete. This criticism started with the Reformation, which confined miracles to biblical times; it was continued by the Enlightenment and carried further by such modern sciences as psychology and parapsychology explaining away the incredible. Today, the belief in miracles survives as a dogma within text-based religions, such as Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. In Catholicism, two miracles are still necessary for canonization, and Pope John Paul II presided over the canonization of more saints than any other previous pontiff. Nevertheless, one suspects that most Christian theologians and clergy often ignore miracles. The number of officially accepted wonders is small in the present and usually related to special places of pilgrimage like Lourdes, where a group of theologians and surgeons are specially deputed to supervise very critically the operations of the supernatural.

Writing in the mid-eighteenth century, after the era of the witch hunts, the Scottish *philosophe* David Hume epitomized the Enlightenment view of miracles: "No testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind, that its falsehood would be more miraculous than the fact which it endeavours to establish" (1748, pt. 1).

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See also: BIBLE; DEVIL; DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS; ENLIGHTENMENT; HOLINESS; JESUS; JOAN OF ARC; LIVING SAINTS; SUPERSTITION; VISIONS.

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MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE WITCH HUNTS

Witchcraft attracts popular interest; everyone "knows" something about it. Even if this knowledge differs from scholarly knowledge, it may not be "wrong"; scholars and the general public may simply have different interests. Nor is scholarly knowledge necessarily "right." Research develops, new discoveries are made, and accepted theories are overturned.

Nevertheless, there are several widely held beliefs about the European witch hunt that can be regarded as incorrect in the light of current scholarship. Often these beliefs derive from the scholarship of earlier generations:

theories that have been overturned still linger on. Partly this is because nonscholars have no immediate access to the latest research, but also particular ideas continue to be repeated because they serve a contemporary purpose.

The first set of misconceptions derives from movements of thought in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: the anticlerical tendencies of the Enlightenment and the Romantic movement. Those appealing to modern rationality and truths derived from nature were often hostile to what they saw as domination of life by churches committed to outdated and artificial intellectual traditions. Witch hunting represented everything they disliked about organized religion. As the modern world has become more secularized, some of these anticlerical tendencies have been enhanced. The ideas they have produced are often effective, but some are misleading.

1. Role of the Inquisition. The institution that, above all others, has symbolized religious obscurantism and oppression is the Inquisition. Its dominance in the discussion has given rise to several related misconceptions. The first idea is simply that “the Inquisition” was the main body responsible for witch hunting. In fact, although a few inquisitors helped to develop the witch hunt in its early stages (for instance, by writing the *Malleus Maleficarum* [The Hammer of Witches, 1486]), the Portuguese, Spanish, and Roman Inquisitions effectively prevented witch hunts during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in southern Europe. Executions were overwhelmingly the responsibility of secular criminal courts.

The second idea is that the papal Inquisition, which had been established to persecute the Cathar and Waldensian (*Vaudois*) heresies, moved on to hunting witches in order to keep itself in business. However, the chronology does not support this belief. It used to be believed that there were mass witch hunts in the early fourteenth century, shortly after the suppression of Catharism, but they have been shown to be based on documents forged in 1829 by Étienne Léon de Lamoignon-Langon.

The third idea is that the Inquisition burned witches in order to save their souls. In fact, the Inquisition’s preferred aim was to reclaim heretics to the true faith *without* burning them. Those whom it burned (or rather, whom it handed over to the secular authorities for burning) were *impenitent* heretics or else repeat offenders. Burning did not save their souls but simply punished them for their crime.

2. Role of torture. Along with the emphasis on the Inquisition comes an emphasis on torture. Torture was, of course, extremely important in witch hunts, so this is not entirely a misconception. However, the tortures that are reported in popular accounts of witch hunting or displayed in “museums of torture” in various parts of the world, are usually the most extreme and dramatic physical ones; the false implication is that these were normal.

3. Inevitability of conviction. The idea of torture points to the idea that trials of witches were so stacked against the defense that convictions were the only possible outcome. In fact, about half of suspected witches actually endured torture without confessing—when it was done strictly according to the official rules, which was often not the case. Even during large-scale witchcraft panics, there were always some acquittals, and many other cases were dropped before reaching trial. The idea of inevitable conviction is common because people are receptive to the idea that witch hunting was cruel and barbaric.

4. Financial profitability. Another common idea is that witches were accused in order to make money. Usually it is said that the authorities themselves stood to profit, but sometimes accusations by neighbors are said to have been motivated by the neighbor’s desire for the alleged witch’s land or goods. It is true that some courts could confiscate a criminal’s goods, but many other courts did not do so, and “confiscation” is a misleading term. Most witches were too poor to have any possessions worth coveting. A few active witch hunters like Matthew Hopkins received payment, but even he received only modest fees plus expenses; it was certainly not desire for money that made him a witch hunter. Some rich witches were accused because of resentment at their wealth and stinginess, but they were a tiny minority. The idea of witch hunting for money is attractive because it attributes to the witch hunters a motive that is readily understood in the modern world—but it is a modern myth projected onto our ancestors.

5. Swimming a witch. A misunderstanding of the “swimming test” (water ordeal) led some to believe that witches could be detected by dropping them in water. If they floated, they were guilty. If they sank, they were innocent—but they drowned. In fact, ropes were tied to suspects to pull them out of the water; moreover, this test had no legal value anywhere in Europe. This belief functions as an affirmation of our own cultural superiority: people today are cleverer or more sensible than the ignorant witch hunters. An early instance of a backlash against this belief from the 1850s comes from the Scottish explorer David Livingstone, who explained the swimming test to Africans as part of “the wisdom of my ancestors” in order to criticize some of their own traditional customs.

6. Witch hunting meant woman hunting. Witch hunting is often described as a more or less conscious device used by men for repressing women. In fact, although there is a clear relationship between women and witch hunting, it is quite complex. Feminist scholarship has done much to bring these issues, which traditional anticlerical scholars had ignored, to the forefront of the discussion; but the results have not gone as predicted. Witch hunters did not target women *as such*,

they targeted witches. At least 20 percent of all executed witches were men, and there are places where most of them were men. Moreover, the bulk of the testimony against female witches came directly or indirectly from other women.

7. The “Nine Million Witches” trope. As part of their stress on the enormity of the witch hunt, early feminist scholars were among those emphasizing the largest possible numbers for executions of witches. In the eighteenth century, Voltaire mentioned a speculative figure of 100,000 executions for witchcraft. A misreading by a late-eighteenth-century German archivist was extrapolated and inflated by Gustav Roskoff, a Viennese professor who published a widely read *History of the Devil* in 1869, into a statistical balloon of “9 million witches executed.” A pioneering anticlerical feminist, Matilda Joslyn Gage, took it from Roskoff in 1893 and inserted it into early feminist discourse. Although this number was a wild guess ultimately based on completely erroneous research, it achieved a wide circulation because those wishing to emphasize the importance of witch hunting tended to pick the highest of the various figures available. In more recent times, the figure of 9 million was frequently repeated by Nazi propaganda (which otherwise seldom agreed with feminists) and, turned back against them, facilitated comparison with the standard figure of 6 million Jews murdered in the Holocaust. The true number of executions for witchcraft will never be known precisely, but the currently accepted scholarly estimate is under 50,000—close to Voltaire’s figure. The importance of witch hunting does not lie primarily in the numbers executed, but in the climate of fear induced even by sporadic executions. “Overkill” seems the appropriate term here.

8. Midwives and healers. Two related misconceptions have to do with midwives. The first idea is that witch hunters especially targeted midwives when babies died. In addition to being a feminist idea, this one had an anticlerical element: the Church was believed to have been hostile to midwives because they tried to reduce the labor pains ordained for women to punish the sin of Eve. Some demonologies (including the earliest major one, the *Malleus Maleficarum*) did denounce midwives, believing that their access to babies gave them material for cannibalistic infanticide, but most ignored midwives. Some midwives were indeed accused of witchcraft, but too few to suggest that they were being targeted; most midwives seemed to have been well-respected people who were most unlikely to be accused by their clients or neighbors.

The second misconception involving midwives and healers is that an emerging male medical profession led an attack on traditional women healers—including midwives—by labeling them as witches. It appealed to an early generation of feminist historians in the 1970s, but no evidence supports it. Folk healers in early modern

society could be either men or women. Some of them were accused of witchcraft, often when their cures went wrong, or they had a dispute with a client or a rival healer. But the role of the medical profession in witch hunting was peripheral—they were far less important than lawyers, for instance, and they were among the first important early skeptics about witchcraft.

9. Witchcraft as a surviving pagan cult. Modern pagans of the Wiccan movement have supported the idea that the witches who were hunted in early modern times practiced a pagan religion that had gone underground with the coming of Christianity. Its members worshiped a horned god, “Dianus,” and were organized in covens of thirteen. When the Christian Church discovered this religion in the late Middle Ages, its members were persecuted for allegedly worshiping the Devil. Outline versions of this theory appeared occasionally in the nineteenth century, but it took enduring and detailed form in 1921 with a book by the Egyptologist Margaret Murray, *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*. It came at the height of a vogue for “pagan” survivals and had a convincing appearance of deep scholarship. The book was in fact fraudulent—Murray’s sources frequently did not say what she said they said—but that was not realized at the time. Murray’s theory became influential, though it was never universally accepted. Historians familiar with the records of witchcraft trials frequently criticized it, but often they could say only that they had found no evidence for the theory in their own research. The theory even gained a fresh vogue in the 1960s among historians interested in popular movements. The painstaking work of exposing Murray’s fraudulent use of sources was not undertaken until the 1970s (Cohn 1975).

By then, the modern Wiccan movement, whose founders wished to believe that they were inheriting an ancient tradition, had embraced Murray’s theory. *Witchcraft Today* (1954), the key book by the movement’s main founder, Gerald Gardner, announced that the author belonged to a coven of witches that had survived since pre-Christian times. The book had an approving introduction by Murray herself. Her theory thus gained a new lease on life, and the witch hunt became known as the “Burning Times” among Wiccans believing themselves to be successors of the witches. Some Wiccans still adhere to the theory, but many others have recognized that it cannot survive historical scrutiny.

10. Ergotism. Finally, we have an idea that depends on no past intellectual tradition but has achieved popularity through its very modernity. The idea is that the symptoms of demonic possession were caused by ergotism—eating rye contaminated by the ergot fungus. Those afflicted accused others of “bewitching” them, thus causing witch hunts. Some versions of the idea focus on Salem, whereas others extend it to all cases of demonic possession or even all witch hunting.

However, the ergotism theory has been discredited at Salem for various reasons, including its inability to explain why only the “afflicted girls” suffered from it (ergotism affects entire households, and men as much as women) and why their symptoms were often brought on by the presence of the accused witches. Nor has ergotism achieved much success in explaining cases of European demonic possession, which were rare exceptions to the normal pattern of witchcraft accusation based on neighborhood quarrels. However, the much-quoted fact that ergot is the source of lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) adds to its attraction: people are fascinated by the idea that their ancestors also experienced drug-induced hallucinations. The idea’s “scientific” appearance gives it high status in a world dominated by technology and populated by millions of literate drug users. The theory was first popularized in 1976 by a *New York Times* article headed “Salem Witch Hunts in 1692 Linked to LSD-Like Agent.”

In general, many of these ideas are attractive because they enable people to sympathize with the victims of witch hunting and to feel indignant at their cruel fate. It is perhaps natural to feel that there must have been some obvious fault in the witch hunters: they were wicked, ignorant, or both. Contemporary individualism has enhanced this tendency. Individuals who do not fit into the surrounding society and who struggle to overcome collective prejudice in order to realize their true worth are the heroes of numerous genres of modern culture. People identify with witches as misunderstood individuals of this kind. A willingness to empathize with people of the past, particularly victims of persecution, is laudable. However, historians wish to extend the same understanding to *all* the people whom they study—witch hunters as well as witches. Calling witch hunters wicked or ignorant cannot explain why they did what they did; moreover, many of them were clearly not ignorant, and some were considered pious rather than wicked. History is not an easy subject.

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See also: ACQUITTALS; BURNING TIMES; CONFISCATIONS OF WITCHES’ PROPERTY; CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST-1800); DRUGS AND HALLUCINOGENS; ERGOTISM; FEMALE WITCHES; FEMINISM; GENDER; HISTORIOGRAPHY; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; INQUISITION, PORTUGUESE; INQUISITION, ROMAN; INQUISITION, SPANISH; LAMOTHE-LANGON, ÉTIENNE LÉON DE; MALE WITCHES; MIDWIVES; MURRAY, MARGARET ALICE; NUMBER OF WITCHES; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; SALEM; SWIMMING TEST; TORTURE; VAUDOIS (WALDENSIANS); VOLTAIRE; WITCH AND WITCHCRAFT, DEFINITIONS OF; WITCH HUNTS, MODERN POLITICAL USAGE.

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MÖDEN, JOHANN (JAN)
 (CA. 1590S–1663)

Measured by sheer length of time and number of workplaces, *utriusque juris doctor* (doctor of both laws—civil and canon) Johann Möden seems one of the busiest jurists involved with seventeenth-century witchcraft persecutions in the Rhineland—an unusually energetic legal expert who hired his services out tirelessly in a dozen different places, working for Lutherans as well as Catholics. He epitomized the kind of entrepreneurial witch hunter that Friedrich Spee knew from personal experience.

Though we know much about his activities, his biography remains fragmentary. Möden was born at Koblenz in the 1590s, probably the son of a certain Herr Johann Möden who had lived in a high-status neighborhood since 1591. Matriculation registers show young Möden as a student from Koblenz (*Confluentinus*) enrolled at the Jesuit College of the University of Mainz in 1612 and 1613; in 1613 he began studying law at the University of Würzburg, where he probably received his doctoral degree in both civil and canon law. After Möden finished his studies, we know almost nothing about him, except that he married the daughter of a local official (*Schultheiss*) of Remagen and had his first child in 1619.

In 1627, Möden appeared on the regional scene of witchcraft persecutions. The outbreak of Archbishop Ferdinand’s “war against the witches” (Schormann 1991) in the electorate of Cologne offered unprecedented opportunities, which Möden exploited ingeniously. Thus, we see him assisting the notorious Dr. Franz Buirmann in the town of Ahrweiler in 1628–1629 at trials that led to the death of at least twenty-six people. Möden soon became a *commissarius* (commissary) himself, working until 1633 in more than 100 trials in the various territories of the counts of Manderscheid-Blankenheim, Manderscheid-Gerolstein, and Manderscheid-Schleiden. His first engagement took place in the northern districts of Manderscheid-Blankenheim, very close to Cologne territory. Möden next moved to further similar business in the adjoining *Herrschaft* (estate) of Satzvey.

Though in the following years there was a notable decline in prosecutions, Möden and his colleague Buirmann moved their business to the Rhenish parts of the electorate of Cologne. Herman Löher, from Rheinbach, described their activities in his locality as well as in Meckenheim, where Möden was responsible for

some seventy executions. In November 1637, Möden became acting mayor for one year of Münstereifel, where he had settled in 1629 and married his second wife about 1636. Although local notables became godparents for two of his children, Möden began to experience familial and economic decline. His second wife probably died by 1641, leaving him with enormous debts (he owed 1,465 Reichstaler to twenty-three creditors). We can therefore assume that Löher's description of Möden as needing money desperately because of his wife's obsession with pomp went beyond simple rhetoric.

In 1641–1642, Möden left Münstereifel, taking two of his seven children (the youngest born in 1640), and moved back to Koblenz. In professional terms, his decision proved useful. He conducted witchcraft trials at the Cologne exclave of Rhens from 1645 to 1647; in 1646, he started a long-lasting engagement in Winningen near Koblenz, a Lutheran exclave of the lower county of Sponheim. He also worked at the nearby lordship of Bürrsesheim in 1647 and gave his counsel on trials at the Sponheim county district town of Kastellaun in 1648. In 1649 he worked in the Cologne district of Altenahr and in 1653 in the county of Sayn-Hachenburg; in 1654 and 1656 he was again occupied with providing counsel for trials in Lutheran Kastellaun. When Winningen's persecutions finally ended in 1659, Möden disappeared as well. He died in Koblenz on February 24, 1663.

Möden practiced both as a Cologne-type commissary, exclusively in charge of the procedure, and later, in more southern territories, through the "mixed" method involving close cooperation with village committees and local officials. Like his colleague and mentor Buirmann, Möden combined working in a respectable field with earning respect, money, and a reputation for ruthlessness through a specialization in witchcraft trials. If a surplus of jurists existed in the seventeenth century, such careers as Möden's exemplify the possibilities of compensating for structural underemployment. A final assessment of his social achievement acquired in this manner is difficult. His and his first wife's popularity as godparents in Münstereifel could reflect prophylactic considerations by fearful neighbors. In his later Koblenz period (1641–1662), Möden never gained access to the inner circle of city councilors. After Trier's Archbishop-Elector Karl Kaspar von der Leyen (1652–1676) stopped witchcraft persecutions around 1653, Möden's ongoing business in neighboring territories could hardly give him any further respectability in his hometown. When he died, he left one adult daughter at home unmarried.

WALTER RUMMEL

Many thanks to Karin Trieschnigg (Münstereifel) for kindly offering me her overwhelming collection of information on the family history of Dr. Johann Möden.

See also: BUIRMANN, FRANZ; COLOGNE; COMMUNAL PERSECUTION; LÖHER, HERMAN; SPEE, FRIEDRICH.

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MODENA

The prosecution of witchcraft at the northern Italian city of Modena (in Emilia) was carried out by the Inquisition, mainly in the sixteenth century, and followed the usual patterns for Mediterranean ecclesiastical tribunals. Modena's significance is simply that its inquisitorial records are better preserved than in most other Italian cities. Although significant energies were devoted to the repression of magic in all its different forms, there was little attention paid to diabolical witches, and apparently only one of them was ever executed here, in 1539. Although some key components of the cumulative concept of witchcraft (the Devil, the Sabbat) were present by the end of the fifteenth century, its prosecution remained a rare occurrence in Emilia, except for a real panic in nearby Mirandola in 1522–1523. After a long interval when the Roman Holy Office battled the spread of Protestantism, sorcery and magic reappeared among the priorities of the Modenese Inquisition toward the end of the sixteenth century. However, by this time, the Roman Holy Office had practically ruled out the prosecution of witchcraft through its cautious attitude.

An Inquisition tribunal established in Modena a round the end of the thirteenth century was staffed by Dominican friars, dependents of the chief inquisitor for the duchy of Ferrara and Modena, then residing in Ferrara. Surviving trials from the Modenese branch include several early cases of magic attributed to demonic intervention, the most significant being that of Benvenuta Mangialoca, tried in 1370 for healing and divinatory magic using traditional popular remedies and the invocation of "spirits" (Biondi 1993). The court found her guilty of heretical magic, imposing relatively light spiritual penances but adding the humiliation of making her wear the special punitive robe of convicted heretics, with two yellow crosses. Her punishment

characterized Inquisition policy toward illicit magic and witchcraft in the following centuries.

After a long gap (1382–1495), the Modenese Inquisition's records resume, first fragmentarily and then in almost complete form after 1517. The tribunal's activity increased under the determined leadership of Bartolomeo della Spina, author of the *Quaestio de strigibus* (An Investigation of Witches, 1523) and vicar of the Inquisition from 1518 to 1520 (Ginzburg 1990; Bertolotti 1991). A substantial number of trials from 1517 to 1520 revealed the pervasive presence of magic in everyday life and the pivotal role of the clergy in its practice. Male *stregoni* (wizards), mostly literate and middle class, figured prominently among those prosecuted for conjuring demons (generally using books of necromancy), foretelling the future, or finding hidden treasures. Female sorceresses, who were often of lower status, performed love magic and healing magic, usually derived from popular traditions.

All practitioners of magic required some consecrated objects or Catholic rituals to reinforce their spells or incantations. The Modenese clergy frequently practiced magical rituals themselves, although they were seldom prosecuted because they enjoyed widespread acceptance in the community and active support from the local Church. When, in 1517, the Inquisition tried the Cathedral exorcist, Don Guglielmo Campana, who had performed an endless series of diabolical incantations, both the bishop's vicar and the cathedral chapter mobilized in his favor, forcing the court to pronounce a favorable sentence (Duni 1999). People from very different backgrounds intersected through the practice of magic; the humanist and poet Panfilo Sassi and a sorceress from a mountain village, Anastasia la Frappona, were both tried in 1519.

In the early sixteenth century, Modenese inquisitors did not condemn magicians and sorceresses as members of a diabolical sect, but rather for overestimating the powers of Satan and therefore implicitly worshipping him through their practices. The gravest punishments were exile from Modena (up to ten years) or imprisonment (for two or three years), besides varied penances and such "shaming rituals" as standing in front of church for several Sundays wearing the garments of convicted heretics.

The relative lack of interest in witchcraft on the part of the Modenese Inquisition contrasted sharply with the treatment of convicted witches in Mirandola, a tiny city-state some 20 miles north of Modena ruled by Count Gianfrancesco Pico, where at least ten people were burned at the stake in 1522 and 1523. Although it is impossible to understand fully this dramatic event due to the total loss of trial records, it is clear that the witch hunt of Mirandola marked a turning point for the entire area. By the 1530s, the Modenese records contain increasing references to diabolical witchcraft,

an escalation culminating in 1539 with the trial of Orsolina Togni, *la Rossa* (the red one), the first Modenese witch to confess the full range of stereotypical activities (the Sabbat, sexual intercourse with the Devil, apostasy, etc.) and the only witch ever sentenced to death at Modena. The presence of diabolical elements continued in the following decades, reaching its most complete expression in 1564 with the trial of Antonia Vignola. However, witchcraft became less of a priority for the Inquisition, which devoted its energies to destroying Modena's strong and well-rooted Protestant community in the 1560s and 1570s: the number of trials for magic and witchcraft declined from almost five per year in 1517–1523 to less than one per year between 1530 and 1570 (thirty-three and thirty-eight, respectively).

In the last twenty years of the sixteenth century, when the threat of Protestantism had passed, Modena's Inquisition returned to repressing magical practices, but from a different perspective. Its inquisitors now scrutinized the entire range of popular "superstitions," from healing rituals to divinatory magic, seeing them as abuses of supernatural powers to which only the Catholic Church had legitimate access. The goal was to redirect the requests of the Modenese faithful for supernatural assistance from the sorceress and folk healer to the priest, who alone could guarantee the orthodoxy of the supernatural remedies applied. Unfortunately, some of Modena's lower clergy showed clear signs of professional inadequacy. Unlike the days of Don Campana in 1517, priests and friars were now frequently prosecuted for magic and the abuse of sacraments: there were twelve trials between 1580 and 1600 (O'Neil 1984). Increased attention was also directed to female practitioners, especially prostitutes accused of casting love spells and using "superstitious" *orazioni* or prayers (O'Neil 1987; Fantini 1999). Meanwhile, references to "diabolical" witches disappeared. Clearly connected to the changing policy of the Roman Holy Office with respect to witchcraft after the 1580s, this trend is difficult to chart with precision, especially given our fragmentary knowledge of the massive records extant for the seventeenth century, which, to date, have been almost untouched by historical investigators. But if Modena was anything at all like Siena, no maleficent witches will ever be found in its seventeenth-century inquisitorial records.

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See also: CLERICAL MAGIC; INQUISITION, ROMAN; ITALY; POPULAR BELIEF IN WITCHES; SIENESE NEW STATE; SPINA, BARTOLOMEO DELLA.

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MOLITOR, ULRICH (1442–1508)

A jurist who served both at the episcopal court of Constance and later at the court of Sigismund, the count of Tyrol (often referred to as "Archduke Sigismund") Ulrich Molitor wrote an early treatise on witchcraft that stood as a counterpoint to the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486). Entitled variously *De Laniis et Phitonicis Mulieribus* (Concerning Witches and Fortunetellers) and *Tractatus de Pythonicis Mulieribus* (Treatise Concerning Women Who Prophesy), it first appeared in 1489 and was reprinted many times in both Latin (with "Laniis" changed to "Lamiis") and German. Although Molitor accepted that anyone who actually made a pact with the Devil and renounced God deserved death for apostasy and idolatry, he also argued that the powers attributed to witches were illusory, emphasized the role of the Devil and the fact that his power depended ultimately on God's permission, and noted the ease with which the Devil could be resisted. Ironically, Molitor's book was the first treatise on witchcraft to be illustrated with woodcuts, which depicted as real the very activities his word denied. Born in Constance, Molitor studied at the universities of Basel and Pavia, from which he earned a degree in canon law in 1470. Returning to Constance, he served first as a notary and then as vicar in the episcopal court. In 1482, he began working at the court of Sigismund, becoming an adviser and then in 1495 or

1496 chancellor of Tyrol. In 1497, he became a procurator of the *Reichskammergericht*, the recently created imperial chamber court. In addition to his most famous work, *De Laniis*, Molitor wrote a number of legal texts and a comedy.

DE LANIIS

In 1485, the papal inquisitor Heinrich Kramer conducted an extensive investigation of witchcraft in the area around Innsbruck, the capital of the county of Tyrol. Although it ended with the acquittal of all seven suspects actually prosecuted, Kramer investigated approximately fifty people, including some from the archduke's household. Sigismund apparently remained relatively aloof from these proceedings, but was sufficiently disturbed by them that he commissioned Molitor to clarify the issues for him.

This Molitor proceeded to do in the form of a dialogue involving himself, the archduke, and another jurist named Konrad Schatz. This form was a standard scholastic device, and Molitor used it to deliver a standard Christian message. Drawing on these recent events, at almost the same time that Kramer was composing the *Malleus Maleficarum*, Molitor developed an alternative perspective deeply rooted in the *Canon Episcopi* tradition of denying the reality of most experiences attributed to witchcraft and magic while insisting on God's ultimate control over the rest. After some discussion, all three concluded that witches could not affect the weather, cause illness or impotence, change into animals, fly to the Sabbat, procreate with demons, or foretell the future. Of course, such things were possible if God permitted them; but only the Devil had this limited power, and he worked mainly through natural processes and his power to create illusions to deceive people into thinking they had magical powers. Molitor acknowledged that some people did turn from God to the Devil and asserted that a real pact deserved death for apostasy and idolatry, but he ended by noting the Devil could be easily defeated through Christian devotion.

Like the *Malleus*, *De Laniis* treated witchcraft as something particularly associated with women, perhaps because the great majority of suspects in the Innsbruck investigation were women, resulting from a long-standing folk tradition linking harmful magic particularly (though by no means exclusively) with women. Unlike Kramer, Molitor did not try to explain this association, noting only that women turned to the Devil because of poverty, despair, hatred, or some other temptation. He concluded by exhorting women to resist the Devil's blandishments by remembering the story of the virgin Justina, who fought off three demons with the sign of the cross.

ILLUSTRATIONS

De Laniis was the first book about witchcraft to be illustrated with woodcuts showing witches and the Devil

engaged in various activities discussed in the text. Ironically, these pictures, which became models for future illustrations, depicted as real things those that Molitor's text argued were only illusions. Perhaps Molitor hoped the illustrations would draw credulous readers whose ideas would then be set straight by his words, but it seems almost certain that despite his skeptical text, the book became a wellspring of images that made witchcraft seem real, helping thereby to fix the impression that witches and their magic posed a real and potent threat to individuals and to the Christian community generally.

EDWARD BEVER

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; *CANON EPISCOPI*; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; INNSBRUCK; KRAMER, HEINRICH; LAMIA; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; TYROL, COUNTY OF; WEATHER MAGIC.

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MONSTERS

Monsters are real or imagined entities that serve as a binary opposition in the process of defining what is human. Whether they are live, described, depicted, or used as figures of speech, monsters function as representations of the other face of humanity, some bestial or demonic alter ego that must be repudiated and effaced in order for the authentically human being to assert its civilized selfhood. They are ugly because they are deformed, literally "out of shape," deviating from the beauty of standardized corporeal order. Another fundamental meaning of the monster—perhaps the most important aspect for an anthropological understanding of its mythological and social significance—is its hybrid character. Monsters create confusion and horror because they appear to combine animal elements with human ones; they posit a possibility of animal origins, of bestiality. They thus represent a call to antisocial instincts and a threat of regression that the civilized self must struggle to overcome in order to maintain the precarious barrier of civilization.

Witches, beings who transgress the confines between human and nonhuman, are also a kind of monster. The monster shares a number of characteristics and functions with the witch: they both may have a connection with supernatural forces; their appearance may indicate an evil done or about to be done; they may appear in times of social crisis; their wicked origins are attested to by their telltale bodies; they may have an "unnatural" connection with animals; they may be agents of divine or diabolical retribution; they may tempt good people off their path of righteousness; a possessed person may be monstrously deformed; and they are both associated with powers of transformation, illusion, deception, and diabolic intervention. Both the witch and the monster are also categories of narrative and appear in narrative traditions in which their identity ranges freely from physical to moral qualities and back again. Finally, the categories of the monster and the witch take on negative or positive connotations over time and in different places. For example, the siren of antiquity (half-woman and half-bird or fish), symbolizing the extremely negative consequences of succumbing to the lure of feminine charms, appears today in the form of a widely merchandized mermaid, presented as a role model for little girls

GENDER AND MONSTROSITY

Aristotle's scientific writings—authoritative texts well into the seventeenth century in Europe—established the medical precept that the cause of monsters was to be found in the struggle of the formal agent (male seed) to dominate the female matter. Depending on the strength, heat, abundance, or deficiency of the seed, its formative movement prevailed more or less efficiently over the generative secretion of the female (the menses). Because when it came to reproduction, "like should produce like," a baby that did not resemble its parents was already "a sort of monstrosity"; following this logic, the birth of a female was "a first departure" from a successful reproduction (Aristotle, *Physics* 4.767b–769b). Monstrosity was thus placed on a graduated scale of imperfection falling away from the realization of the intended perfect male form.

During its height of popularity in the early modern period, the pseudo-Aristotelian science of physiognomy, the art of reading a man's character from his physical features, further popularized the idea that, as one Italian author of the period put it: "Woman is a monster of nature, she is an imperfect man, as many Learned writers are pleased to determine, which we may deduce from all her parts" (Ghirardelli 1670, 624). Feminine qualities such as deceitfulness, vagueness, and capriciousness were thus considered monstrous signs of the naturally deformed female physiognomy.

FORM AND FUNCTION

The monster defines the limits of the human at both its "lower" and "upper" thresholds: half-animal or half-god,

what is other is monstrous. A monster is “not human,” then, and explicitly signals its foreign status with its body: too many limbs, or not enough, or not in the right place, or unnaturally formed. Certain characteristics of the monster are perhaps universal, but only those that describe the place it occupies in the social order and its relation to the interpretive community that defines it as such. In other words, a monster always indicates a transgression, a breakdown in hierarchy; it is quintessentially a symbol of crisis and undifferentiation. However, beyond these attributes a monster can take on any form: a baby born with birth defects, an extraordinarily talented or depraved person, a machine that moves or speaks, the state, women, peoples with different colored skin or unusual customs, an android, or an extraterrestrial.

The designation of a vulnerable member of the community as an agent of the sacred or the diabolical can provide an effective way to identify and contain the forces of evil or misfortune that could contaminate the entire community. Ritual slaying or ostracism of the dangerous element in the form of a sacrificial victim can act as a safety valve to tension that could otherwise erupt into destructive violence. From this perspective, both the monster and the witch have been viewed as scapegoats and their histories analyzed according to the scapegoat mechanism.

In addition to its mythological and poetic representations, the monster has appeared textually in the form of omens in prodigy books (Paré 1982), as a sign to be interpreted in the divination arts (Cicero, *De Divinatione*), as proof of the marvelous creativity of nature or God (Pliny, *Natural History Libri VII*; St. Augustine, *City of God*), as an object of scientific curiosity in the Aristotelian tradition, as illustrative figures in moralizing emblem books (Alciati 1985), and as a rhetorical figure or concept (Hobbes, *Leviathan*).

HISTORY OF THE MONSTER

In ancient times, the appearance of a monster, as an event happening outside the ordinary course of nature, was interpreted as an indication of divine will. *Monstrum* and *teratos*, the Latin and Greek roots of *monster*, did not signify a deformed being, but fell in the same category as other terms belonging to the divinatory sciences, only migrating later through association to the natural sciences. A *monstrum* (from *monere*, to warn or threaten) was by definition a terrible prodigy, not for what it was—a piteously deformed infant destined to die quickly by natural causes or by ritual sacrifice—but for what it foretold as a sign of coming calamity. How that sign was interpreted was purely a matter of historical context. For example, the ancient Chaldeans assigned one-to-one correspondences between limbs and exact events,

either auspicious or ominous portents: an extra finger meant abundant crops and so forth. The appearance of a monster thus presupposed an interpretive community, a social order to which it was addressed, and a priestly caste charged with deciphering its precise significance.

More recent “readings” of monstrous bodies, in addition to predicting political changes or calamitous wars, had precise propagandistic purposes. Martin Luther, for example, made great use of a famous monster baptized the *Mönchskalb* (the monk-calf), whose image appeared in numerous pamphlets as an emblem of Catholic depravity. Interpretation of monsters in the Renaissance was nothing less than an alternative political science, more popular and contemporary in nature than the erudite fare of princely counselors like Niccolò Machiavelli.

Monstrous births continued to inspire pious terror well into the modern period. In 1543 in Avignon, we are told, King Francis I ordered a woman to be burned along with her dog because she had given birth to an infant with canine features. The woman eventually confessed to having had intercourse with the dog; her monstrous progeny was thus interpreted as a sign of her wickedness and a divine punishment for her unnatural desires. As late as 1825, in Sicily, a baby girl born without a brain provoked such terror that those attending the birth threw her down a deep, dry well. She was saved only by order of the mayor (Taruffi 1881, 1:7:11).

Fear of monstrous births was also inspired by their supposed connection with demons, who were said to be responsible for parenting monsters through various techniques of “artificial insemination.” In demonology texts, such as Francesco-Maria Guazzo’s *Compendium Maleficarum* (A Summary of Witches) of 1608, demons and monsters were also linked by an obvious and relatively unproblematic correlation between moral depravity and corporeal deformation: the demon assumes a monstrous appearance; or to be more precise, demons *are* monsters, and monsters *are* demons. This association between evil and ugliness is widespread and deeply ingrained in the Platonic/Judeo-Christian tradition in which, conversely, truth and goodness are equated with beauty.

During the early modern period, monsters gradually lost their terrifying association with the forces of the sacred and became objects of wonder or curiosity to be put on exhibition in public squares and museums. Famous freaks of this period who traveled around Europe to show themselves included the double-bodied Lazarus and his brother Baptista who grew out of his side, and the giant Giovanni Bona. Stuffed animals made out of various animal parts pieced and sewn together to represent fantastic creatures such as hydras, basilisks, and dragons were sold by charlatans and were



David Ryckaert III (1612–1661), *The Witch*, shows a Dutch witch battling and sending off monsters and demons in hell. The zoomorphic monsters remind us of their bestiality and opposition to humans. (Erich Lessing/Art Resource)

in great demand. Scientific collections called “cabinets of curiosity” often contained specimens of monstrous animals or deformed human fetuses and even extended to live specimens such as the dwarves Sebastiano and Angelica Biavati, who lived their whole lives in a museum in Bologna on a permanent salary.

ZAKIYA HANAFI

See also: ANIMALS; CIRCE; DEMONOLOGY; DEMONS; DIVINATION; GENDER; GUAZZO, FRANCESCO MARIA; INFANTICIDE; LYCANTHROPY; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; METAMORPHOSIS; PRODIGIES; SCAPEGOATS.

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MONTAIGNE, MICHEL DE (1533–1592)

The best-known French author and thinker of the sixteenth century, Michel de Montaigne’s collection of personal reflections, the *Essays*, was popular in his lifetime and has undergone hundreds of editions and translations.

His *Essays* continue to be read today, and scholarly interest in their author—including his famous digression ridiculing belief in witchcraft—remains high.

Montaigne's family came from the Bordeaux region; they were wealthy and well connected. He was a relative of two writers on demonology, Pierre de Lancre, and (through his Spanish Marrano mother) Martín Del Rio. Educated in classical humanism, Montaigne became a judge at the *Parlement* (sovereign judicial court) of Bordeaux in 1557. He served until 1570, when he sold his position to Florimond de Raemond and retired to his country estate, seeking tranquility in order to reflect and write during a time of brutal civil war. His early retirement was frequently interrupted by politics and military ventures as well as by two terms as mayor of Bordeaux, making him a participant in as well as an observer of the events of his turbulent age.

Based on a firm belief in the unknowability of God's intentions and his readings of the classics, he adopted a position of skepticism, summed up in his famous rhetorical question, "Que sçay-je?" (What do I know?). He attempted to avoid the extreme positions of his day because their adherents claimed true knowledge. Because humans could not know the mind of God, Montaigne argued that they should follow the religion of their country. Montaigne primarily blamed the Protestants for the chaotic civil war that raged for thirty-five years, but he also criticized Catholic zealots who similarly mistook their extreme opinions for facts. Montaigne was an early example of the Gallican Catholic *politique*, holding that it was unjustified to label dissidents as heretics and to kill people for such disagreements. This position, which ultimately prevailed under King Henry IV, was attractive to many of his contemporaries (and to modern readers) but aroused bitter hatred from zealous Catholics.

In his writing, Montaigne touched frequently on popular credulity. His essay, "On the Lame" (1588), addressed the belief in witchcraft and the penalties meted out to convicted witches. Montaigne revealed his basic skepticism toward the supernatural, stating, "All miracles and strange happenings hide away when I am about." He mocked the works of demonologists. "My local witches go in risk of their lives, depending on the testimony of each new authority who comes and gives substance to their delusions." He then told about observing and conversing with a group of old women who had been convicted of witchcraft, through the courtesy of an unnamed prince who wanted to overcome his distinguished visitor's skepticism. (In this context, he never mentioned his experience as a judge in the *Parlement* of Bordeaux, because witchcraft cases were unheard of there in the 1560s.) Montaigne concluded, "In the end, and in all honesty, I would have prescribed not hemlock for them but hellebore. 'Their case seemed to be more a matter of insane minds than

of criminal behavior.' [quoting Titus Livy] . . . After all, it is putting a very high value on your opinions to roast a man alive because of them" (Montaigne 1991, 1166–1169).

Montaigne's opinions on witchcraft inevitably caused controversy, because belief in the power of the Devil and witches was an important part of the fight against Protestant heresy. The position that witchcraft was only a fantasy of old women was attributed to Montaigne (sometimes coupled with such heretics as Johann Weyer) and was mentioned many times in demonological writings as a particularly dangerous idea that gave impunity to witches. Martín Del Rio, the most authoritative orthodox Catholic demonologist, sharply criticized Montaigne's views, calling him an unbeliever who endangered the fight against the Devil through his opinions.

Pierre de Lancre, despite his admiration for Del Rio, defended his distant kinsman Montaigne against Del Rio's criticisms, stating that Montaigne "did not present this proposition as true . . . no more than his other opinions. . . . leaving all things in doubt, where it seemed bold to decide them absolutely" (Lancre 1622, 339). Nevertheless, family honor aside, de Lancre was concerned that judges might let such views deter them from their responsibility to punish witches.

Montaigne lived and died as a Catholic. He traveled to Italy, where he visited the shrine at Loretto, met with Juan Maldonado, and had an audience with the pope. He was also careful to submit his work to papal censors. He died long before the religious wars ended and did not see Henry IV's triumph.

JONATHAN L. PEARL

See also: DEL RIO, MARTÍN; FRANCE; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; MALDONADO, JUAN; MIRACLES; SKEPTICISM; WARS OF RELIGION (FRANCE); WEYER, JOHANN.

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MONTER, WILLIAM (1936–)

Professor emeritus of early modern European history at Northwestern University in Illinois, where he taught from 1963 to 2002, Monter has exercised considerable influence on a generation of witchcraft research.

After completing a dissertation on Geneva, Monter became interested in witchcraft research during the Vietnam-protest era, while reading both Carlo Ginzburg's and Hugh Trevor-Roper's utterly contradictory accounts of it in 1967. By 1969, Monter published a collection of essays and sources titled *European Witchcraft*. Three years later, following Erik Midelfort's example, he provided a historiographical survey, dividing witchcraft into three major currents: rationalist,

romantic, and social scientific. An active witness to the “ongoing renaissance in the historiography of European witchcraft” (Monter 1976, 9), Monter contributed one of the most important early comparative studies on a region labeled as “the borderlands during the Reformation,” including Calvin’s Geneva Unlike Alan Macfarlane or Mdelfort, Monter emphasized the importance of popular belief, and, unlike Keith Thomas, Monter’s study paid close attention to regional differences between such territories as the Franche-Comté and the Swiss Canton of Fribourg (both Catholic) on the one hand, and Geneva and Bern (both Reformed) and Montbéliard (Lutheran) on the other. Monter succeeded in destroying stereotypes about uniform patterns of persecution or of patterns depending on the form of religion. Furthermore, he insisted on putting his results into a European perspective.

Two recurrent themes in his publications deserve comment: that the “witchcraft of the Germanic core of the Holy Roman Empire” could be taken as “normative” (Monter 1976, 191; Monter 2002) and that Geneva’s Calvinists took a relatively moderate approach toward witchcraft (Monter 1976, 42–66). However, the Holy Roman Empire contained large territories with no executions of witches during the early modern period. Moreover, Geneva was located near the center of the Romance-speaking areas where the cumulative crime of witchcraft first emerged. The sixteenth-century urban republic was an angst-ridden society, driven by fears of plague-spreaders and witches; its “gentle Calvinists” killed more witches within their narrow confines than all popes in Rome together, or Luther’s princes in Saxony, or most European towns.

Monter’s publications are among the most illuminating on witchcraft and related subjects. His well-written survey *Ritual, Myth and Magic in Early Modern Europe* (1983) provided insights into the cultural fabric of different strands of Catholicism, Protestantism, and Judaism in all parts of Europe and their overseas colonies. It drew on recent research in all major European languages, and by treating witchcraft as one of many subjects, put it in perspective. In contrast to anthropologically oriented historians, Monter always emphasized the importance of “culture,” popular as well as religious or intellectual. In numerous essays, he drew attention to the significance of such subjects as sodomy, child witches (1993), or male witchcraft (1997), with predominance in places like Normandy or the Alpine regions that can hardly be explained socially. Subsequently, he explored the group dynamics of a possessed Lorraine village with a parish priest who was a future saint, proposing it as a Catholic counterpart to Puritan Salem (Monter forthcoming).

Viewed as a whole, his publications combined the rational, romantic, and social-scientific approaches to witchcraft that he long ago identified in the historiogra-

phy of witch hunting. Monter served on the editorial board of the *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition*.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: HISTORIOGRAPHY.

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MOON

The moon has occupied a pivotal role in myth, religion, and magic, assuming a divine or at least anthropomorphic nature (sometimes male, sometimes female) in the majority of belief systems since prehistoric times. As a measurement of time, the moon and its cycles designated the various phases in the agricultural calendar as well as indicated appropriate times for the gathering of marine produce and sailing the seas. As a celestial force endowed with personality or divinity and associated with time, the moon and its movements were naturally regarded as exerting an influence on humans and their destinies, occupying a central position in the astrological system.

In terms of witchcraft and the occult, the moon has a revered and powerful function in the practice of



The moon presides over a witches' dance (from an eighteenth-century chapbook). The moon has been linked to witchcraft since antiquity. Meetings and activities were most effective when coordinated with the phases of the moon, especially a full moon as shown in this illustration. (Bettmann/Corbis)

magic. In ancient Greece, witches regularly invoked Selene, goddess of the moon, in their rites and incantations, often calling on her to assist their work by either shedding or concealing its light. Later in her myth cycle, Hecate also became associated with the moon. In both Greek and Roman literature, witches such as Medea were described as working with the moon, and the practice of drawing down the moon was a renowned art of Thessalian witches in particular. This magical art was sometimes presented in literature as the means to assist in the performance of rituals that required secrecy and, therefore, darkness. An alternative motivation for the act was presented in

the *Pharsalia* (6.505–6.506) by the Latin author Lucan (C.E. 39–65) who referred to a lunar fluid, emitted by the descending moon, that coated earthly foliage, endowing it with miraculous properties. In a similar vein, the ancients believed in the magical properties of stones from the moon, which were worn for a variety of purposes, including as amulets, and sold by magicians. Pliny, in his *Natural History* (37.164), also mentioned *glossopetra*, which fell from the sky during the waning of the moon and was used by “moon-diviners.”

In early modern Europe, the moon continued to be regarded as a central part of a variety of forms of occult

practice. The idea of drawing down the moon continued as a belief as illustrated in the speech of Hecate in Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (Act 3, Scene 5). In alchemy, the moon was a major cosmic force, representing the metal silver and the feminine principle as well as being an astrological influence that required acknowledgement in particular operations; by working under a waxing moon, for example, one obtained purer metals. In folk magic, the moon and its phases marked propitious times for the working of spells and similar endeavors such as summoning fairies or other supernatural beings. The links between the moon and witchcraft also continued, with consistent references in the literature of the persecution era to Satanism, its practitioners (and victims), and the lunar cycles. The *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) stated that devils, who could only operate through the medium of natural forces, "molest men at certain phases of the moon" (1:5). It regarded men who were vulnerable to such situations as lunatics, thereby reflecting the age-old folk-tale tradition of lunar-inspired madness. Such thinking was closely aligned with the belief in lycanthropy, a state of transformation often regarded as being determined by certain phases of the moon. Witches were believed to meet at times designated by the cycles of the moon, the full moon being an especially favorable time for gatherings. This association between the witch and the moon was particularly strong in the artwork of the persecution era (and beyond), with consistent images of a full or crescent moon watching over the predominantly female figures and their activities. In a Victorian magical text, Charles Leland's *Arcadia: Gospel of the Witches* (1889), the author wrote of witches gathering once a month "when the moon is full" to worship the goddess Diana in a passage that clearly drew from ancient beliefs concerning the moon and one of its principal deities.

MARGUERITE JOHNSON

See also: ASTROLOGY; DIANA (ARTEMIS); DIVINATION; HECATE; LYCANTHROPY; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MENTAL ILLNESS.

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MORA WITCHES

The large village of Mora was the first center of Sweden's great witch hunt of 1668–1676. Because the earliest and until recently the most widespread source of information about the entire affair was an account written by Mora's vicar, Elaus Skragge, his parish became the Swedish equivalent of Salem. Skragge's account, which covered the August 1669 hearings into

suspected cases of witchcraft in the parishes of Älvdalen and Mora by the Witchcraft Commission, was translated into Dutch as early as 1670. It was published in German the same year; by the turn of the eighteenth century it had appeared in several editions, including English and French translations. There was a link to North America, where Cotton Mather was well aware of the Swedish witch hunt when discussing the possessed children of Salem (*Discourse on Witchcraft*, 1689; *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, 1693).

The early translations of Skragge's account have given rise to a greatly exaggerated view of the Blåkulla trials, due to misunderstandings and incorrect translations of the original text, which have influenced even relatively modern studies (e.g., Robbins 1959, 348). The first Dutch translation stated, with no support in the original, that eighty-four adults and fifteen children were put to death.

Skragge's account belonged to the initial phase of Sweden's great witch hunt, which afflicted Dalarna from 1668 to 1671. Official hearings began in Dalarna in the summer of 1668, when an eleven-year-old girl called Gertrud Svensdotter, who lived in the village of Åsen in the parish of Älvdalen, disclosed strange and terrible tales of widespread consorting with the Devil. Based on testimonies principally given by children, the local court passed eighteen death sentences, which were in due course referred to Svea High Court in Stockholm. In March 1669, it ratified seven death sentences, those passed on adults who had confessed their guilt, including two seventeen-year-old maidservants. Those whose death sentences were revoked included four children (Ankarloo 1990, 295). The death sentence was not usually passed on children under fifteen years of age, the only notable exception occurring in Stockholm in 1676, when the witch hunt finally came to an end. There a thirteen-year-old boy called Johan Grijs was executed because his perjury had caused a number of people to be sentenced to death.

From Älvdalen, rumors of witchcraft quickly spread to the neighboring parish of Mora. The increasing disquiet in the region resulted in a government decision to appoint a Witchcraft Commission, which held hearings in Mora in August 1669, presided over by Councillor Lorentz Creutz. The local community demanded the establishment of special courts of law. The Witchcraft Commission passed the death penalty only on those who had confessed (a prerequisite that was later abandoned at the culmination of the great witch hunt) and who proved to have had prolonged dealings with the Devil. This latter criterion enabled younger witches (for instance, two women in their twenties) to escape the death penalty. The hearings of the Witchcraft Commission lasted only a few days. The commission interrogated a total of sixty suspects in addition to an even larger number of children

(Ankarloo 1990, 295). In view of the large number of confessions that resulted, one suspects that torture was employed. The execution of those who had confessed took place on August 25, two days after the commission had departed from Mora. Of the twenty-three who had been condemned to death, fifteen were beheaded and then burned at the stake in Mora. Six others were executed in Älvdalen at the same time (Ankarloo 1990, 295). Hopes that the authorities would now take control of the situation proved to be in vain. The abduction of children to Blåkulla spread like wildfire, and other parishes requested government help to deal with the situation. Another Witchcraft Commission was appointed in 1671. A further fifteen people were executed (Ankarloo 1990, 296). That finally brought the witch hunt in Dalarna to an end, but in the rest of Sweden, the panic was only just beginning.

Julio Caro Baroja noted that one aspect of Elaus Skragge's account regarding the Blåkulla tales was unique in European tales of witches: namely, Satan's death and resurrection (Caro Baroja, 1965, 207ff.). The narrator of this occurrence was the afore mentioned Gertrud Svendsdotter. The record of the proceedings described her tale in great detail because it contravened accepted theological doctrine. Anders Nohr Moraeus,



Witchcraft at Mora, Sweden, including the flight of witches to Blåkulla, child witches, sex with the Devil, and the execution of witches. (Anonymous, Sabbat der Hexen von Mora, 1739–1745. Directmedia Publishing GmbH: Berlin, 2003)

the cleric present at the hearing, therefore instructed the girl about the nature of God and explained how the Almighty does not change, become ill, die, or the like. The girl had described how Satan fell ill at Blåkulla and had lain on a bed in the banqueting hall, grunting, groaning, and appearing to be so ill that his guests had wept and mourned for him. Despite the efforts of one of the most experienced witches to cure him with liniments and cupping, he continued to lose strength. Finally, he was led out to another chamber, but a ghost-like image of him remained in the bed, as though it was his dead body. At this point, Satan's son-in-law entered the room together with his wife and two of his daughters, and with tears and weeping they carried him out, as though to be buried. However, Satan suddenly regained life; rushing back into the room, he danced around with one of the young witches in his arms to the delight of the guests.

This tale has been interpreted as a misunderstanding of the biblical theme of Jesus's death and resurrection. The mention of Satan's son-in-law is of particular interest. At the beginning of the witch hunt, a number of references described Satan with a wife and children. In Älvdalen, these clearly referred to the vicar's own family. At one point, Satan was referred to as "Lasse," a nickname for the vicar, Lars Elvius. In the section of the records referring to Satan's death and resurrection, the names of Satan's two daughters, Sara and Margeta, were crossed out, but they were in fact the names of two of the vicar's daughters.

Elaus Skragge's report of Gertrud Svendsdotter's confession did not tell the entire story. The background to the Blåkulla trials took place in 1667, when Gertrud, then eleven years old, was herding goats together with a slightly younger boy on the banks of the river Österdalälven, near the village of Åsen. The children fought over a chunk of bread, and the boy, who came out the worst in the tussle, told the tale to his father so dramatically that before long the vicar, Lars Elvius, came to hear of it. The boy claimed that while the children were fighting, some of the goats had strayed out to an islet in the river, and Gertrud had fetched the goats by walking out on the water to the little island. In September 1668, the court concluded that Gertrud's walking on water was the first substantial indication of what turned out to be widespread witchcraft. It could equally well have become a miracle, but the record called it the work of the Devil. Satan had oiled the girl's feet so that she could wade out across the current without touching the riverbed.

In another episode from the girl's story, Satan showed Gertrud and the other witches "the whole world." In spite of the fact that they had calves to ride on, most of the journey was made by boat. During the boat trip, Satan instructed the youngest members of the party, including Gertrud, to keep the calves calm by scratching

them on their necks while Satan himself rowed the boat with mighty strokes of the oars. During the boat ride, they noticed a man who stood and scooped salt from the water onto the shore. Satan and the witches took a supply of salt with them before proceeding onward. After some days, they reached the shore, from whence they flew onward, passing towns, villages, and churches. On their return, Satan confiscated all the salt, so the only thing that Gertrude and the others had to show from their long journey was exhaustion. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, at the time of a religious revival, stories of Blåkulla were heard again in the province of Dalarna. This time, however, the destination was called Josefsdal, an adaptation of the biblical valley of Jehosaphat, *Josafats dal* (*dal* means valley).

PER SÖRLIN

See also: ANGELS; BLÅKULLA; CARO BAROJA, JULIO; CHILDREN; CONFESSIONS; DEVIL; MATHER, COTTON; PANICS; ROBBINS, ROSSELL HOPE; SALEM; SWEDEN.

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MORAVIA

Witchcraft persecution in Moravia in the late Middle Ages and the early modern centuries has not been

systematically researched, except for the northern Moravian witchcraft trials of 1678–1696. At present, the total number of known victims of the witch hunt in Moravia (including the northern Moravian witchcraft trials) was roughly 300 people, most of whom were executed. Considering the substantial losses of source material, especially records of town criminal courts before 1620, the real total was considerably higher.

Today part of the Czech Republic, Moravia (Morava) in the ninth and early tenth centuries was the center of the vast empire of Greater Moravia, which included Bohemia, Silesia, Slovakia, southern Poland, and northern Hungary. Later, Moravia became a margravinate in the Holy Roman Empire under the suzerainty of the princes and then kings of Bohemia.

Moravia's laws and juridical system in the medieval and early modern periods closely resembled those of Bohemia. Criminal courts in over 200 Moravian royal and patrimonial towns tried most of the region's witches until the battle of the White Mountain in 1620. Afterward, patrimonial courts took a more active part in prosecuting sorcery in Moravia alongside the town courts. The Land court, the only one with authority over all of Moravia, almost never heard any cases of sorcery. The Court of Appeal in Prague only established its authority to approve all death sentences from Moravian town and patrimonial courts in 1700. Like Bohemia, Moravia's first detailed legal regulation for the offense of witchcraft (sorcery) came only with the Josephina, the criminal code of Emperor Joseph I for Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, decreed in 1707, a time when witchcraft trials had almost ended in Bohemian crown lands.

Unlike Bohemia, Moravia lacks information about the activities of its fourteenth-century papal inquisitors. Moravia's most notorious inquisitor was certainly Heinrich Kramer (Institoris), author of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), who was named papal inquisitor to Moravia and Bohemia in 1500 by Pope Alexander VI at the instigation of the bishop of Olomouc, Stanislav Thurzo. Kramer settled in Olomouc, which boasted an important Dominican monastery, until 1505. He made no attempt to conduct witchcraft trials in Moravia; his task was rather to eradicate various Czech heresies. In April 1501, he published two tracts at Olomouc against them, but never began any inquisitorial trials against heretics in Moravia or Bohemia; his five years there were devoted to public disputes and literary polemics.

Inquisitorial procedure had long been known in Moravia, but as late as the first half of the seventeenth century it was used only by town courts in prosecuting capital crimes and then only in some southern Moravian towns owned by the capital city of Brno. Until the outbreak of the northern Moravian witch hunt in 1678, the offense of witchcraft meant simply *maleficium* (harmful

magic)—mostly poisoning people or cattle, causing illness or damage to property, and sometimes administering love charms. There was no diabolism, no apostasy, and no participation in witches' Sabbats. Moravia's first known trial for harmful sorcery occurred around 1350 at Brno: the accused women were required to swear a purification oath. Sporadic trials against performers of harmful magic dotted the final quarter of the fifteenth century. Moravia's first known execution for this crime occurred in 1494 (four years before the first such instance in Bohemia) at the southern town of Uherské Hradště, where a woman was sentenced to death for harmful sorcery, in addition to other crimes.

Only sparse information survives about Moravian witchcraft trials during the first half of the sixteenth century. Trials and executions increased gradually after mid-century. Before 1620, they were individual affairs, with one outstanding exception: the series of witchcraft trials from 1571–1576 in the patrimonial town of Velká Bíteš in southwestern Moravia, where at least twenty-two women were executed (fifteen of them in 1576) for harmful witchcraft, mainly poisoning humans or cattle or magically stealing milk. After 1620, Moravian witchcraft trials still usually remained individual affairs, even when mass witchcraft trials took place after 1651 in the neighboring principality of Neisse in Silesia, claiming hundreds of victims.

The single dramatic exception—by far the largest mass persecution of witches in Moravian history—was the northern Moravian witchcraft trials, which lasted from 1678 to 1696. They began at Easter 1678 in the lordship of Velké Losiny, after someone profaned the consecrated Eucharistic wafers, attempting to use them to perform magical spells. The guardian of Velké Losiny, Anna Sibyla (countess of Galle), called in a lawyer with vast experience in the field of witchcraft trials, Heinrich Franz Boblig (1612–1698), from the Moravian capital at Olomouc. Boblig came from a patrician family of Edelstadt; his father had been ennobled and served as mayor of the rich mining town of Zuckmantel in Silesia. He never completed his law studies (probably at Vienna University) and lacked a doctor's degree. By 1638, Boblig had become a judge in the Silesian principality of Neisse; his career culminated during the mass witchcraft trials, which took place there in 1651–1652. Sometime later, he moved to Olomouc. He came to Velké Losiny in September 1678 as chairman of the newly established special patrimonial court, charged with finding its alleged witches.

The first executions took place at Velké Losiny in August 1679. That same month, Boblig succeeded in becoming head of another newly established special patrimonial court of justice in the rich town of Šumperk (German Mährisch Schönberg), owned by a great Moravian and Silesian aristocrat, Prince Karl Eusebius of Lichtenstein. The dean of Šumperk,

Christoph Alois Lautner (1622–1685), opposed the proceedings of this special patrimonial court (among the first people accused were Lautner's housekeeper and the wife of his friend, the former mayor Kaspar Sattler).

Lautner came from a rather poor family in Šumperk; his father had been a soldier during the Thirty Years' War. Lautner studied theology at Landshut in Bavaria, then philosophy and law at the University of Vienna, and theology again at the University of Graz (Styria). He was ordained a priest at Olomouc in 1656, where he remained as a chaplain before becoming a village priest at Dolní Moravice by Rýmařov in northern Moravia (1658–1663), then a dean in the Silesian town of Osoblaha (1663–1668), and finally dean of his native Šumperk. Lautner was an extraordinarily well-read priest. His rich library reflected his various interests; unlike Boblig, he even owned and read the *Malleus Maleficarum*. Boblig recognized a dangerous opponent in Lautner and soon charged him with witchcraft. Consequently, Lautner was arrested in August 1680 with the approval of the bishop of Olomouc, Karl II of Lichtenstein. The bishop immediately created a special commission ("committee of justice") for the purpose of investigating witchcraft charges against Lautner and some other clergymen from his diocese: it contained four men, including Boblig. Lautner remained imprisoned for five years.

Meanwhile, Boblig's tribunals in Velké Losiny and Šumperk passed death sentences and executed several dozen persons, mainly women. Lautner's housekeeper Susanna and Maria (the wife of Kaspar Sattler) were executed for witchcraft in December 1682. Sattler was put to death for the same offense, together with his daughter Elisabeth in August 1683. Dean Lautner was first interrogated in August 1680, and his examination was repeated many times. The bishop of Olomouc approved his torture in June 1684. After numerous postponements and delays, Lautner was condemned by the episcopal "committee of justice" in September 1685 to be defrocked and then burned at the stake. After the bishop of Olomouc approved this sentence, Lautner was burned on September 18, 1685, in the bishop's patrimonial town of Müglitz, in the presence of an enormous crowd. In all probability, Lautner was the only Catholic priest ever executed in Moravia or Bohemia for the offense of witchcraft. Boblig's witchcraft trials continued after Lautner's execution, lasting until 1696, but with less intensity. Overall, roughly 100 people (mainly women) died during these northern Moravia witch hunts, including 48 people from Šumperk (27 women and 21 men).

We do not know when the last death sentence for witchcraft was carried out in Moravia; it probably happened during the first half of the eighteenth century.

PETR KREUZ;

TRANSLATED BY VLADIMIR CINKE

See also: BOHEMIA; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; KRAMER, HEINRICH; *MALEFICIUM*; ŠINDELÁŘ, BEDŘICH; TRIALS.

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MORE, HENRY (1614–1687)

More was an English theologian and believer in the reality of apparitions, spirits, and witches. More belonged to a small band of philosophers known as the Cambridge Platonists because of their metaphysical interests and beliefs. Though fascinated by the spirit of inquiry in the occult sciences, More maintained a devout Christian faith. Astrology, for example, he dismissed as "a fanciful study built upon very slight grounds" (*Enthusiasmus Triumphatus*, 1656). He exerted an important influence on the debates about witchcraft in the second half of the seventeenth century, representing the conservative view that skepticism in such matters was dangerously linked to atheism. Over time, however, his opinions lost favor and would be branded "superstitious" by eighteenth-century free thinkers.

More was born at Grantham in Lincolnshire, the son of a minor gentleman. His parents were strict Calvinists, but as he grew up, More inclined toward a more moderate faith. He was educated at his local

grammar school and in 1631 entered Christ's College, Cambridge, which was to remain his home and haven for the rest of his life. More was elected to a fellowship in 1639 and soon afterward took up holy orders. In the 1640s and 1650s, More remained staunchly loyal to the royalist cause but after 1660 refused all preferment and promotion offered in reward. Instead, More adhered to a life of contemplation, conversation, and composition; he was a prolific writer who translated his own work into Latin. He died in Cambridge in September 1687, much missed as an inspirational teacher.

More was remembered as a Christian mystic as well as a scientist in the providential tradition, an Anglican who spent his working life promoting a comprehensive natural theology suited to an age of science and experiment. The diverse subjects covered in his books included the doctrine of providence, the nature of the soul, idolatry, transubstantiation, the Kabbalah, and a commentary on the visions of the prophet Daniel. In 1653, More published his best-known contribution to witchcraft literature: *An Antidote Against Atheisme: or an Appeal to the natural Faculties of the Minde of Man, Whether There be no God*. It included the story of a Cambridge witch who refused to repent; at her execution, which More may have attended, an unnaturally strong gust of wind shook the gallows. He had certainly witnessed some trials of East Anglian witches in the mid-1640s. Despite its local anecdotal evidence, his book was also a serious work of theology, drawing upon such authorities as Jean Bodin, Johann Weyer, and René Descartes and lamenting that free thinking and discussion in religion was undermining God's order. He argued that because the existence of God and a spiritual realm was beyond question, then the power of witches must surely follow. Witches, in More's opinion, were powerless and poor but were tempted through weakness and impiety to follow the Devil's path. He believed that witches gathered in covens to make pacts with the Devil, a continental idea rarely known in England before his own time.

In his later years, More became a strong supporter of the credulous physician Joseph Glanvill (who had long admired More's own work). He reputedly edited Glanvill's polemical *Saducismus Triumphatus* (Sadducism Conquered) of 1681, which also connected skepticism with atheism; there is little doubt that More influenced it. Like Glanvill, More believed that accumulated testimonies demonstrating the reality of witchcraft would ultimately confound the skeptics and would offer a lasting antidote to atheism. The flaws in this line of reasoning were, first, that the data of hauntings and bewitchings could never be tested, and, second, that skeptics would never accept any evidence they considered to be ridiculous. As David Hume later argued, no testimony was sufficient to prove a miracle unless its falsity was more miraculous than the fact it sought to establish.

More died before his worst fears about the progress of atheism and the decline of the miraculous were realized;

but after 1700 it was clear that the occult medieval world of witches and spirits was crumbling as the foundation for Christian faith that More, Glanvill, and others of their generation believed it to be.

MALCOLM J. GASKILL

See also: ASTROLOGY; BODIN, JEAN; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; DESCARTES, RENÉ; GLANVILL, JOSEPH; KABBALAH; MIRACLES; OCCULT; SKEPTICISM; SUPERSTITION; UNIVERSITIES; WEYER, JOHANN.

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MOSES

Among the personages found in the Hebrew Bible, none was more venerated than Moses, and none, save perhaps Elijah, had a greater reputation for performing miraculous deeds and communing directly with God. Because his actions were considered part of the Israelite understanding of divinely shared power, Moses was not considered a magician or sorcerer or a practitioner of divinatory magic. Thus, when his staff was transformed into a snake (Ex. 4:2–3) or he struck the Nile with his staff and it turned into blood (Ex. 7:15–18) or he extended his rod to open the Red Sea (Ex. 14:13–31) or struck a rock to produce a stream of water (Num. 20:10–13), these events were seen as manifestations of God's power over creation, not a conjuration of forces by Moses. The storyteller, however, demonstrated a clear understanding of Egyptian magical practices in the narrative of the plagues (Ex. 7–11), indicating that, although magic was not part of the Israelite theological premise, the Egyptian audience for the match between Moses and the sorcerers would be impressed by the abilities of God's representative (compare Acts 7:22 for later tradition on this).

By tradition, Moses was the recipient of the divine judicial code contained in the Books of the Pentateuch that functioned initially for the Israelites and the later Jewish community as the basis for judicial procedure and their official system of justice. During the Christian era, the strength of this legal and authoritative tradition transformed these statutes into a divinely inspired set of injunctions upon which life was to be based and from which society's leaders could draw to solidify their own authority and preserve their people from error (Deut. 31:24–29). As a result, the laws against witchcraft (Ex. 22:18 [22:17]; Lev. 19:26; Deut. 18:10–14) were given the force of divine command and irrevocability because they were a part of the Mosaic code. In addition, the injunctions on these matters were used (along with the story of the suffering of Job and the principle of grace

in the New Testament) as the basis for the Protestant understanding of demonology and how to combat it.

During the Middle Ages and subsequently during the period of the Reformation, the figure of Moses became canonized into a dual character. He was both the quintessential lawgiver, having received through direct divine revelation the primal judicial code and the model for a divinely chosen secular leader. In the former role, he became the authoritative figure upon whom magistrates, judges, and exorcists based their commissions and upon whose code of justice they relied in dealing with criminals and those accused of witchcraft or dealings with demons. This was even the case with Protestants, who tended to rely more on the Gospels and Paul's concept of public office as a "divine ministry." The Protestant pastors of Strasburg, in their April 1538 treatise on witchcraft, enjoined godly rulers to "administer not their own judgment, but that of the Lord and they ought therefore to follow His Law" (i.e., the Mosaic code). Their combating of witchcraft therefore became a license to deal with social deviance, as they defined it, while using a theocratic underpinning as justification for their actions and beliefs.

As noted by the early-seventeenth-century English clergyman William Pemberton, Moses had two roles: he was a prophet of God and the ruler of God's people. In this latter capacity, he transmitted his authority down through the ages to kings and other rulers by means of God's instructions to Moses's successor Joshua (Josh. 1:1–9). Because these early leaders had been given the book of divine laws on Moses's death, it was attendant upon them to obey and enforce them vigorously. That model of leadership was in turn applied to later periods. Thus witchcraft, which violated both the first and third commandments (Ex. 20:3, 7), also threatened the entire system of law, and it became the paramount duty of secular leaders to eliminate it. In addition, and again based on the biblical narrative, Moses's achievements in combating magicians (Ex. 7:11–9:11) and usurpers of his power (Num. 16:27–33) became a portion of the argument, such as that made by Jean Talpin in 1567, that kings were to be venerated because of their ability to perform miraculous deeds, such as applying a healing touch to their subjects (compare Moses's raising a bronze serpent to cure his people of snakebite in Num. 21:8–9). As a result, the person and the tradition that surround Moses became singularly useful to religious and civil authority.

VICTOR H. MATTHEWS

See also: BIBLE; EXODUS 22:18 (22:17); JEWS, WITCHCRAFT, AND MAGIC; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (ANCIENT); MIRACLES.

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MOTHERHOOD

In local accusations, learned demonological treatises, and plays, the witch was often an inversion of what early modern people expected good mothers to be. Much like today, good mothers nurtured their children both physically and spiritually, cooked nutritious food for their families, and cared for them when they were sick. Unlike today, society also expected them to assist other women during childbirth. Conversely, witches poisoned their own or other people's children, nursed and nurtured demonic imps or animal familiars rather than children, dried up other women's milk or menstrual flows so that *they* could not mother, killed farm animals, and made food spoil. Issues of maternity and images of bad mothers emerge very often in witchcraft trials and the literature of witchcraft, including confessions by women admitting they were witches. This identification of witches with bad mothers was rooted in the circumstances of witchcraft charges, and may also be linked to deep-seated psychological ambivalence in people's emotions about mothers, as well as ambivalence about being a mother felt by mothers themselves.

Charges of witchcraft sometimes grew out of often long-standing quarrels among women, which generally emerged during activities in which women normally engaged. Women spent much of their time caring for children and animals and preparing food, often in the company of other women, and childbirth was experienced within a group of female relatives and friends. All these activities held possibilities for misfortune or tragedy: flocks of geese strayed into gardens and ruined them, cows lost their milk and the calves died, children became ill or injured, or mothers and children died in childbirth. Such incidents could easily be the origin of a witchcraft accusation, and the woman most likely to be accused was often one whom the others felt was somehow deficient in her own mothering: she was past child-bearing age, her own children had been sickly and died, or her own animals fell ill. Thus the accused had reason to project their own greatest shortcomings as mothers onto another woman who had bewitched them and their families. The male authorities who heard witchcraft cases largely shared women's ideas about what made a good mother. Although they added ideas drawn from demonological theory, they still described the

witch's actions and character as those of a bad mother who had turned to Satan in her desire for revenge on other people's children.

Lyndal Roper and Deborah Willis have noted that psychoanalytical theory, especially that of Melanie Klein, could be helpful in exploring links between motherhood and witchcraft that went deeper than openly acknowledged notions of good and bad mothering. Klein's work centered on the experiences of early infancy, particularly the development of such negative feelings as envy, aggression, fear, and hate that accompany the love and attachment an infant feels toward its mother. These negative emotions were suppressed as children learned it was unacceptable to express them openly but remained part of the subconscious and might emerge later in fantasies about or aggression toward mothers or other people one expected to be nurturing, such as caregivers. Both Roper and Willis warned that psychological theory developed through analyzing modern people must be used carefully when looking at individuals who lived hundreds of years ago, but because envy and anxiety played such a central role in witchcraft trials, it is useful to consider why they are such powerful emotions. Explaining people's fantasies lies at the heart of both modern psychoanalysis and modern studies of the witch hunts, so an etiology for the witch hunts that incorporates the psychic and emotional state of those involved seems more accurate than one that does not.

As an aid to understanding certain aspects of witchcraft, recent medical research about the experience of motherhood may be even more useful than theories about infantile development. Physicians and psychologists have studied what is now labeled postpartum depression or postpartum psychosis, in which hormonal and other changes in the mother's body after birth can lead to serious clinical depression or even delusions about oneself and one's children. In a few ghastly recent examples, this psychosis has led mothers to kill or attempt to kill their own children, explaining this behavior as a desire to keep them from harm or prevent them from doing evil. This same language occasionally emerged in the confessions of early modern women accused of witchcraft, who reported that the Devil had tempted them to kill their own children, though they generally denied giving in to this temptation.

Women who *were* found guilty of killing their own children were also sometimes accused of witchcraft, with authorities arguing that only the Devil could lead a mother to kill her own child. In Belgium, such women were executed in even more gruesome ways than "normal" witches, such as being impaled on a stake before being burned or having the offending hand cut off before being drowned. It is impossible to tell, of course, whether such women suffered from what would currently be labeled "postpartum depression," but that

is a distinct possibility; historians have frequently noted that behavior ascribed to divine or demonic forces in the early modern period is explained in medical or psychological terms today.

Given the sleep deprivation and other problems associated with new motherhood, many mothers who are not clinically depressed often feel ambivalence toward their infants, emotions that they feel guilty about and rarely express openly. Though the cultural context of the modern world and the world of the witch hunts is very different in many aspects, in both eras mothers were expected to be loving and nurturing, and those who were not were regarded as unnatural. Thus it is not surprising that women whose children had become sick or had died should have projected their negative feelings onto someone other than themselves, accusing a neighbor, acquaintance, or servant of witchcraft.

MERRY WIESNER-HANKS

See also: ACCUSATIONS; CHILDREN; CONFESSIONS; FAMILY; FEMALE WITCHES; FEMINISM; GENDER; INFANTICIDE; MIDWIVES; PSYCHOANALYSIS.

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MOUNTAINS AND THE ORIGINS OF WITCHCRAFT

Was witchcraft a phenomenon concentrated in the mountainous areas of Old-Regime Europe? Over half a century ago, Fernand Braudel's influential *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (1949) suggested that mountains constituted a world apart from civilization, the privileged shelter of witchcraft. Braudel's geographical determinism was later taken up by Hugh Trevor-Roper, who maintained that "mountains are the home not only of sorcery and witchcraft, but also of primitive religious forms and resistance to new orthodoxies" (Trevor-Roper 1967, 106); at high altitudes, thin air breeds hallucinations, and such natural phenomena as storms, cracking glaciers, or avalanches foster beliefs in the power of the Devil. No wonder that western Europe's great witch hunts began in the Swiss and French Alps and continued in other mountainous zones: the Jura; the Vosges;

the Pyrenees (both the Spanish and French sides); the Valtelline; or the northern mountain valleys of Italian bishoprics like Milan, Brescia, or Bergamo. Historians have long debated the association between geography and witch hunts. Today, the "mountain theory" concentrates on two issues: the association between the Alpine region and the origin of the craze and an indirect corollary to the mountain theory, a climatic interpretation of witch hunting in general.

ORIGINS

Historical research currently agrees that the geographical birthplace of witch hunting was largely confined to western Alpine areas, including Dauphiné, the Pays de Vaud, Savoy, the Val d'Aosta, Fribourg, Lucerne, and Bern. Between 1375 and 1440, primarily in three dioceses of western Switzerland (Geneva, Lausanne, and Sion) Europe's first fully developed cases of diabolized witch hunting occurred. Trevor-Roper provided an early version of the acculturation thesis to explain this location. Witch hunting happened, he said, because Dominican inquisitors had reached into backward and incompletely Christianized mountain communities, which were also haunts of heretics. His interpretation was soon opposed by Jeffrey Russell, who maintained that "witchcraft descended from heresy more than from sorcery and first appeared in the lowland cities where heresy was strong, only later spreading into the mountains where it gained strength from the lingering practice of ancient sorcery" (Russell 1980, 72).

Subsequently, Arno Borst claimed that both interpretations needed reappraisal. Borst's argument hinged on two preliminary questions. First, was the early-fifteenth-century Alpine territory really a backward place? By 1400, Borst argued, the Alpine region had become a very active crossroads between Italy and northern Europe and had begun to gear its economy to distant European markets. Second, if from an economic and institutional point of view the Swiss federation resembled the modernity of northern Italian or upper Rhineland areas, why did the first significant trials take place in the Simme valley, high in the Bernese Alps?

Borst claimed that this very dynamic social change engendered a social and a spiritual crisis, producing witch hunts as one of its side effects. Using the account of the trial of a well-off peasant named Stadelin by a Bernese patrician Peter von Greyerz (a judge in the Simme Valley between 1392 and 1407) as retold by Johann Nider in his *Formicarius* (The Anthill, 1437–1438), Borst described the introduction of witchcraft in the valley. Some episodes revealed that Stadelin's rise in social status contrasted with several misfortunes (dead babies; damages to animals and crops) of his fellow villagers; his jealous neighbors eventually blamed him for causing them through the intervention of the Devil. In the end, the original forms of

Alpine witchcraft involved the clash between an open and dynamic society and a closed one.

Borst proposed three conclusions: (1) we cannot dissociate demonological theories built by intellectuals from the superstitions of Alpine villagers; (2) mountain culture cannot be blamed for the origins of the craze; but (3) the phenomenon of early witch hunting was nevertheless specifically Alpine. During the 1430s, as papal inquisitors and secular judges carried out the earliest methodical witch hunts in the Swiss and French Alps, several texts (Nider's tract, the anonymous *Erroris Gazariorum*, the treatise of Claude Tholosan, and Martin Le Franc's *Defender of Ladies*) provided "important testimony to the revolution in thought about sorcery and witchcraft" (Kors and Peters 2001, 159) and marked the definitive formation of the idea of the witches' Sabbat (Ostorero, Bagliani, and Tremp 1999).

CLIMATE

When Peter von Greyerz asked Stadelin "how he was able to cause hailstorm and tempest, the criminal answered that he stood in a field saying certain words and begged the most powerful of all demons to send him a lesser demon to strike whatever Stadelin wished" (Kors and Peters 2001, 159). Here historians could spotlight some ways in which Christian doctrine was already transforming popular beliefs. But couldn't one of these Alpine *maleficia*—the weather-making witches—be associated with some more basic and deep-seated cause, specifically with the cooling of the global climate known as the Little Ice Age, which afflicted Europe intermittently between 1430 and 1770? In fact, in some of the harsher phases of climate deterioration, agricultural failures led to disastrous food shortages, subsistence crises, and hunger that overlapped with some of the fiercest episodes of witch hunting.

Recently, Wolfgang Behringer has used the extreme sensitivity of sixteenth-century Germans to a series of agricultural disasters provoked by meteorological changes to explain this chronological coincidence. If the first major witch hunt (in Wiesensteig in 1563) "served as an example for radical eradication of 'the evil,' between 1562 and 1565 an interesting debate emerged about the possibility of weather-making. In a small Imperial city, Esslingen, an Evangelical preacher, Thomas Naogeorgus, supported popular demands for witch hunts and urged the magistrates to extend its persecution . . . as a kind of regulation of the weather" (Behringer 1999, 367). A scholarly debate ensued about whether witches could raise such disastrous hailstorms. Behringer found the connections between the Little Ice Age and witch hunting primarily within the Holy Roman Empire, but occasionally elsewhere:

Where demographic pressure and economic depression lingered on, unstable governments were prone to

new demands for persecution with every change due to the Little Ice Age. . . . Contemporary court records and broadsheets tell us about the importance of meteorological events as triggering factors in the background of these persecutions. . . . During the third decade of the 17th century, when the Thirty Years War occupied the governing elites, organized witch hunts in the ecclesiastical territories of the Empire reached their peak. The climax of witch hunting again coincided with some extraordinarily dramatic meteorological events. (Behringer 1999, 370)

Most recently, the geographic/mountain theory has been widened into a hypothesis contrasting the big climatic difference between areas of moderate witch hunting (Italy, Spain, Southwestern France) with the areas of severe hunts, finding the cold as a factor more vague but richer than mountain theory (Bechtel 1997, 770).

If the age of witch hunting overlapped with the Little Ice Age, the nexus between the two phenomena seemed to be limited to a very loose chronological coincidence in most European states. Places like England, Scotland, Spain, or sub-Alpine Italy were certainly agrarian societies that also endured colder winters, subsistence crises, and occasional meteorological disasters, but villagers' imaginations rarely connected unusually severe storms with witchcraft. In England, "the storm at sea which affected a single ship might sometimes be attributed to witchcraft, but on land the action of a tempest was usually too indiscriminate for such an interpretation" (Thomas 1973, 668). Similarly, in Scotland, witchcraft was blamed "occasionally for storm raising; it was rarely held to be responsible for large-scale disasters in which the suffering might be random" (Larner 2000, 82). In sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain, Aragonese considered mountains to be the shelter of bandits and witches, but there is no trace of weather-making witches (Tausiet 2000); if "ritual . . . for calling up storms were included in the repertoire of witches" during the Basque craze of 1609–1614 (Henningsen 1980, 88), it remained utterly marginal. In Italy, although accusations of causing hailstorms were rife in the northernmost Alpine valleys, no witches were ever reported to have caused damaging meteorological phenomena in the Sieneese countryside, although agriculture there also suffered from many cold winters and wet summers. Historians have yet to explain this extremely uneven geographical distribution of witches' interference with the weather—or with such other human activities as sexual intercourse.

OSCAR DI SIMPLICIO

See also: ACCULTURATION THESIS; AGRARIAN CRISIS; DOMINICAN ORDER; HERESY; LITTLE ICE AGE; NIDER, JOHANNES; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; RURAL WITCHCRAFT; TREVOR-ROPER, HUGH; WEATHER MAGIC.

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MOURA, MANUEL VALE DE (D. 1650)

Vale de Moura wrote nine books, including *De incantationibus seu ensalmis* (On Incantations or Ensalmi [evil incantations]), published at Evora in 1620 (the only edition known). It was a long treatise about verbal magical healing, which briefly mentioned *maleficium* (harmful magic) and diabolical witchcraft. The author was obviously familiar with demonology; he described the diabolic pact, asserting that the Devil marks his followers and kills little children through witches. It was an erudite work filled with citations of Italian and Spanish theologians and canonists, Greek and Latin classics, the Church Fathers, and Holy Scripture.

Little is known about his biography. Vale de Moura was born in Arraiolos, studied theology at the Jesuit University of Evora, and later graduated with a degree in canon law from the University of Coimbra. In 1603, he entered the Inquisition as deputy (*deputado*) of the Evora tribunal.

The treatise *De incantationibus seu ensalmis* was divided into three sections. The first part attempted to refute the positions of João Bravo Chamisso, a lecturer at Coimbra University, who had asserted in 1606 that some words had intrinsic healing powers and that such power did not come from an implicit pact with the Devil. Vale de Moura presented a doctrine, which he believed defensible, regarding the legitimacy and efficiency of healing with words. He stated that the saints created blessings and holy words, to which the Lord gave His merits, and added that in the Hebrew Bible Solomon expelled demons from human bodies by pronouncing words. Vale de Moura suggested, following Cajetan and St. Thomas Aquinas, that many of these words had later been misused in vain ceremonies; although unapproved, they could still be tolerated because they resulted from Christian devotion. But, the author claimed, whenever it was not proved that natural effects or divine virtues underlay a healing ceremony, one might conclude that the healing originated in diabolical powers.

In the second part of *De incantationibus*, the author refuted the incorrect opinions presented in the first part and put forward his own doctrine. He condemned all healing of diabolical origin, stating that Devil's "benefits" were always injurious. He distinguished between sorcerers and *saludadores* (healers): the former act in ceremonies using words, holy objects, or herbs, and the latter act through personal virtue. He stressed that words had no intrinsic power to produce healing effects. Hence if they did produce such effects, they came from external virtues. He insisted that one must be careful about spells that supposedly resulted from divine revelation, as they might be either real or imagined and might sometimes come from God or good angels and other times from the Devil, especially when they were "fantastical" or "imaginary." Some effects were natural and were caused by excessive imagination. Vale de Moura believed those healed through their own supplications should not be condemned, as long as they made no pleas forsaking divine providence. Therefore, he says, it was permissible to cast spells, using holy words invoking God, in order to plead for health or tame a tempest, and always having steadfast faith that such pleas could be granted by God. However, the strongest argument Vale de Moura presented in his second part was that *all* healing through prayer was in general suspicious. Although holy words or church prayers were pronounced in such acts, they were nonetheless evil, for the Devil normally acted under the cover of sanctity.

The third part of Moura's book dealt more specifically with issues of jurisdiction over those who healed through spells. Vale de Moura asserted that only the Inquisition should be responsible for surveying such practices, because until proven otherwise, all healers

were suspected of heresy and should therefore be prosecuted by the one court with jurisdiction over heresy. Moura's aim throughout was to limit the sacred field and to place it solely in the hands of its official representatives. Thus he stressed the efficiency of the Church's invocative prayer and exorcism when done by ecclesiastics and insisted that holy words should be pronounced only in holy places. Thus there was no need to turn to private prayers by laypeople.

The impact of Vale de Moura's work was not great. In Portugal, few quoted it, although some Spanish inquisitors followed his advice. Vale de Moura's positions were not immediately adopted by the Inquisition. However, there would come a time, in the first three decades of the eighteenth century, when healers would suffer much from Portugal's Holy Office.

JOSÉ PEDRO PAIVA

See also: CUNNING FOLK; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DEMONOLOGY; DEVIL; DIABOLISM; INQUISITION, PORTUGUESE; PORTUGAL; SPELLS; WORDS, POWER OF.

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MUCHEMBLED, ROBERT (1944–)

A leading French historian of European witchcraft, Robert Muchembled has made numerous significant contributions to this topic at both the archival and synthetic levels.

A lifelong social historian working loosely within the French *Annales* tradition, Muchembled's earliest archival-based work on witch hunting deployed documentation from southern parts of the former seventeen provinces of the Netherlands, particularly the region of Cambrésis (Muchembled 1979, 159–261), in service of the "acculturation thesis." He incorporated this witchcraft research into a chapter ("The Repression of Witchcraft and the Acculturation of the Rural World") of his first book to be translated into English: a general survey titled *Popular Culture and Elite Culture in France, 1400–1700*. He has often employed witchcraft as an unusually vivid illustration of this process (e.g., Muchembled 1984). Over time, however, Muchembled has considerably softened the originally sharp contours of his dichotomy between a strongly dominant elite and their often-passive

subjects. The evolution of his position on cultural history can perhaps best be seen in what is probably the best-known and most widely translated among his many books, *L'invention de l'homme moderne*, between its first (1988) and second (1994) editions, where a "society of compromises" deployed various strategies—adaptations, bricolage, resistances—to accommodate civilizing and confessional norms to which they supposedly conformed. Some of his works (e.g., Muchembled 1995) ranged widely across cultural history, blending chapters on Norbert Elias's court civilization, the role of women (a latent concern of most major witchcraft specialists), urban festivals and violence, French raconteurs as cultural mediators, village sociability, legal forms of social control—and, of course, witchcraft.

As a witchcraft scholar, Muchembled has exploited some significant archival discoveries. Three in particular stand out. First, he pioneered a "ground-up" perspective on witch hunting by uncovering some early-seventeenth-century petitions from the "better" (and richer) inhabitants of some Netherlands villages, encouraging their sluggish rulers to increase prosecutions of local witches by offering to pay the costs of such trials (Muchembled 1979, 192–196). Second, he explored the gruesomely macabre history of the child witches of Bouchain in Hainaut, the earliest (but unfortunately not the worst) known wave of trials and executions of witches well under the legal minimum age anywhere in Europe (Muchembled 1990). Third, he presented a richly documented microhistory of a relatively late witch-hunting episode in a tiny village of Francophone Flanders (Muchembled 1981); among other merits, this work first called attention to the role of feminine gossip in establishing the *publica fama* that often underlay witchcraft accusations.

At a synthetic level, one cannot ignore Muchembled's vigorous polemic with his prominent Italian colleague Carlo Ginzburg over the cultural origins and significance of the Sabbat, which produced some light as well as much heat (Muchembled 1990). Subsequently, Muchembled's most important contribution has been his effort to expand and reshape his sociopolitical analysis of witchcraft from his original southern Low Countries regional perspective to a more truly panoramic European level (Muchembled 1993). He has also shifted his cultural history perspective from the witch and her accusers to her supposed accomplice, the Devil (Muchembled 2000). Both endeavors have subsequently taken the form of lavishly illustrated coffee-table books (Muchembled 1994, 2002), each the best of its particular genre; the latter is a by-product of a television program on the Franco-German channel *Arte*, born from a critique that Muchembled's *Devil* discussed innumerable twentieth-century films but lacked any illustrations.

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: ACCULTURATION THESIS; CHILDREN; GINZBURG, CARLO; HISTORIOGRAPHY.

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MÜNSTER, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF

The largest ecclesiastical territory of the Old Reich in northwestern Germany, the prince-bishopric of Münster had relatively few witchcraft prosecutions in comparison to neighboring territories, such as electoral Cologne. The bishopric spread across an area of roughly 11,000 square kilometers (4,247.5 miles) and contained about 200,000 inhabitants by 1700. Between the mid-sixteenth century and the end of the seventeenth century, about 450 such cases can be proven; about 170 cases ended with the execution of the defendant. One-third of those executed were men, a relatively high percentage. However, because of the fragmentary nature of the sources, our information is very incomplete.

The first documented witch burning in this territory occurred in 1544; the last provable execution came in 1699, when a woman was sentenced to death for fortunetelling and witchcraft. Three local witch hunts can be discerned from documents surviving in regional archives. In 1624, twenty people were executed for witchcraft in the town of Lüdinghausen within a few

months. In the county of Werne, in the southern part of the bishopric, the "witch craze" resulted in over sixty witchcraft trials, more than thirty of them in 1629. In 1629–1631, twenty-five accused witches died at the executioner's hands in the city of Coesfeld. Meanwhile, in the city of Münster, witchcraft trials are recorded from 1552 until 1644, with the worst persecutions occurring between 1627 and 1635.

The intensity of witchcraft prosecution differed by locality. The county courts, controlled by the government in Münster, pursued a relatively cautious policy with respect to witchcraft accusations that resulted in only a few trials, all carried out through a *processus ordinarius* (ordinary procedure). Only 27 of the 170 known executions were carried out by county courts; there were no mass prosecutions. However, some individual seigneurial courts became strongholds of prosecution, carrying out trials independently of the Münster government under the pretext of exercising their sovereign rights of criminal jurisdiction. These trials served as vehicles of self-assertion for local nobility and were mostly characterized by arbitrary procedures and infringements of legal requirements.

One peculiarity of the bishopric of Münster was the swimming test (the cold water ordeal), which was not only a mass phenomenon there but also was carried out in a unique way. The water ordeal, widespread in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Westphalia, continued the medieval tradition of ordeals. It followed the usual rules: an accused witch was declared innocent if she sank but guilty if she floated on the water's surface, because the "pure water" refused the witch's body that had become ethereally light due to her sexual intercourse with the Devil. Local courts usually arranged the test during an ongoing trial, where the ordeal served as an "indicator for torture." However, in the bishopric of Münster the test took another form. Here, some noble courts developed regular water-ordeal centers, where every subject could voluntarily ask to undergo the swimming test, on condition of paying a large amount of money to the noble judge. Because more than 200 "independent" water ordeals can be proven in the bishopric between the years 1590 and 1650, we can speak of a mass phenomenon.

This peculiar practice, unique to Europe, resulted from the same constellation of legal conflicts that had stimulated the prosecutorial zeal of some seigneurial courts in the late sixteenth and the early seventeenth centuries. The local nobility was in fierce conflict with the government of the prince-bishopric, trying more and more vehemently to conserve its traditional jurisdictional rights in reaction to the threat from Münster, while the central government fought to standardize administration and jurisdiction. Witchcraft trials offered the local nobility a welcome method for upholding their right of criminal jurisdiction. Similar

motives underlay the creation of water-ordeal centers at noble courts. The Münster government firmly opposed the swimming test, publishing several prohibitions of this practice. By systematically violating these prohibitions, the nobility (always by referring to their “good old right”) expressed their resolve not to bow to the policy of the central government. This conflict between the nobility and the regional government was literally carried out on the backs of their subjects.

GUDRUN GERSMANN

See also: COLOGNE; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); GERMANY, WEST AND NORTHWEST; ORDEAL; OSNABRÜCK, BISHOPRIC OF; SWIMMING TEST.

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MURATORI, LUDOVICO ANTONIO (1672–1750)

A proponent of reason and enlightenment who ignored or discounted the anxieties of the educated elites and attributed belief in witchcraft to the ignorance and credulity of uneducated people, Muratori was an Italian antiquarian, historian, and critic, editor of several multivolume collections of fundamental medieval historical documents. Trained in philosophy and both civil and canon law and ordained a priest, he managed the Ambrosian Library in Milan before becoming librarian of Rinaldo I of Este’s court in Modena.

As its title indicated, Muratori’s *Della forza della fantasia umana* (On the Strength of Human Fantasy, 1745) examined the phenomena of witchcraft as examples of the power of the human imagination (or fantasy) to distort and falsify reality. Muratori’s contempt for the intellect of common people was matched by his misogyny. He accepted the stereotype of the witch as female, and, following a strain of opinion dating from the *Canon Episcopi* (ca. 906), presumed that the phenomena of the Sabbat had no basis in external reality; these illusions were mostly suffered by women afflicted with a diseased and “filthy” imagination.

The most important chapter of Muratori’s treatise was the tenth. There he described treatises against black magic as “a great forest where there is some truth, much simplemindedness, a great number of impostures” and concluded that “perhaps some people believe too little about this vile art, which horrifies anyone who is a true Christian. But on the other hand, there are great numbers of people who believe too much about it.” Many phenomena attributed to demons by “incautious or weak fantasy” were either natural effects or outright fables (Muratori 1995, 100). Muratori did not contest the reality of demonic possession but called it a “truth mixed with many false suppositions”; most possession was

imaginary: “Exorcists certainly have power from God to cure those who are truly possessed; but they also have the misfortune to produce many imaginary [victims]; many are the tricks played by the frailty of female fantasy.” Outbreaks of possession in Milan and elsewhere when relics were shown during Church services were a localized custom (*uso*) or “observance” rather than evidence of demonic presence. “When the relic is covered up, all that great noise ceases and there are no possessed persons left. . . . The ruined fantasy of one woman pulls a hundred along behind her” (Muratori 1995, 104).

The same applies to ghosts (*fantasmi*), which were frequently sighted during outbreaks of plague and other times of universal fright: Muratori advised his readers to investigate skeptically, “to spare themselves an imaginary [*sognato*, dreamed] but real evil, accompanied by the loss of tranquillity and health.” Ordinary people should consult men who were wise and learned, rather than common rumors and the gossip and imaginations of silly women (*donniciuole*) (Muratori 1995, 104). It had also been proved that one person’s imagination could not produce physical effects on another person through the evil eye; besides, it made no sense for someone to communicate a disease while not suffering from it herself. Muratori derived his disbelief in the evil eye from his understanding of communicable diseases. Mentioning it reminded him of some precautions he had omitted from his recent *Del governo della peste* (Treatise on Managing the Plague): in the presence of plague sufferers, one should not only cover one’s nose and mouth but never swallow one’s own saliva, instead spitting constantly, as tobacco chewers do. Accusations of the evil eye and other witchcrafts have fallen on many “poor old women, even good and innocent Christians” and parish priests often vainly oppose these “vain and injurious rumors” (Muratori 1995, 105).

Muratori’s treatise continued a preoccupation with the power of imagination that had motivated discussions of witchcraft since the fifteenth century. In 1749, Girolamo Tartarotti investigated the question more nervously, insisting passionately that the unreality of witchcraft phenomena must not be construed as disproving the reality of demons or of magic.

WALTER STEPHENS

See also: *CANON EPISCOPI*; ENLIGHTENMENT; EVIL EYE; EXORCISM; GHOSTS; IMAGINATION; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; SKEPTICISM; TARTAROTTI, GIROLAMO.

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MURRAY, MARGARET ALICE (1863–1963)

Perhaps the most controversial twentieth-century author to investigate witchcraft, Margaret Murray's theories infuriated experts but persuaded much of the general public, inspiring much of the ritual and organization of modern neopagan witchcraft (the Wicca movement) from the 1950s onward.

Murray maintained that European witchcraft was an organized form of pagan worship originating in remote prehistory and surviving in secret throughout the Christian era. Its purpose was to ensure the fertility of crops, animals, and people by seasonal rituals and by periodic sacrifices of animals and human beings. She saw this as a joyful, life-enhancing religion that Christians had persecuted; she claimed it had had numerous secret followers, including several medieval kings and famous figures such as Joan of Arc. Although her theory gained very little support from professional historians, it reached the general public both through her entry in the authoritative *Encyclopedia Britannica* and indirectly through novels and films that exploited it.

Murray was born in Calcutta, where her father's business was based. She passed some of her childhood in England but received little formal education, despite her intelligence; her autobiography hinted that her life was one of middle-class inactivity and boredom throughout her teens and twenties. In 1894, when she was thirty-one, new horizons opened: she attended a course on Egyptology at University College in London and made such rapid progress that in 1899 she was appointed a junior lecturer in hieroglyphics on the recommendation of her tutor, Professor Flinders Petrie. The study of Egyptian antiquity became her life's work, and she earned considerable respect in this field.

The outbreak of war in 1914 disrupted academic life. Murray found herself with no students to teach and no possibility of fieldwork in Egypt. After a short spell as a nurse in a French military hospital, which badly affected her health, she turned to new studies, first the Grail legend and then witchcraft. She had "started with the usual idea that witches were all old women suffering from illusions about the Devil" but "suddenly realised that the so-called Devil was simply a disguised man" and immediately concluded that he was a masked priest of some ancient, primitive religion (Murray 1963, 104). Murray always treated this as her personal insight, achieved purely through reading primary sources; even

though others had previously put forward similar theories—including Jules Michelet, Charles Leland, and Karl Pearson, a professor at her own college.

Murray's theory about witchcraft was set out in an article in *Folk-Lore* in 1917 and then in a book, *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*, in 1921. Witches, she said, everywhere worshiped the same deity, a phallic "Horned God" dating from prehistoric times; they followed exactly the same ceremonies on the same dates; and they were organized in groups of thirteen ("covens"), each group obeying a male leader who impersonated the god and had sexual rights over them. She believed that from time to time the leader (or a substitute) would be willingly burned to death to ensure the fertility of crops; here, she was influenced by Sir James Frazer's study of the "Killing of the Divine King" in *The Golden Bough*.

In one sense, her view of witchcraft was resolutely rational. Reading trial records and other writings from the time of the witch hunts, she seized upon anything for which she could devise a natural explanation, however implausible, and accepted it as proven fact; anything magical or supernatural she simply ignored. So, if a text described an encounter with a black, horned, and cloven-hoofed devil, she would take this to mean a man in black clothing wearing an animal mask and with a peculiarly shaped boot; if a witch confessed to riding to the Sabbath on a "little horse," she would accept the horse as real, even if the witch also stated that this "horse" was a wisp of straw. This selectivity seriously misrepresented her sources.

Her work also suffered from a total disregard for chronology and cultural context, mixing evidence from many countries and many centuries; that was common practice among comparative mythologists of her period and was not criticized at the time, though it is now seen as a serious flaw. Furthermore, she was an enthusiastic system builder, erecting rigid universal rules on very weak evidence. One of her most influential notions was the coven of thirteen, yet she herself admitted that only one witch actually mentioned this number; she resorted to dubious manipulations of figures in the attempt to prove that it was widespread. Similarly, the four seasonal festivals she claimed were held annually everywhere (Candlemas, Beltane, Lammas, and Halloween) were only mentioned as a group in one source. Murray ignored the fact that even in England several other dates are also mentioned (e.g., the Lancashire witches met on Good Friday).

However, some aspects of her book provided a welcome change from much conventional wisdom on the subject. Many writers had explained witch hunting as the result of ignorance, hysteria, and the use of torture to obtain confessions; a small minority, such as the eccentric Montague Summers, believed that Devil worship had actually occurred, with supernatural

results. In comparison, Murray's interpretation seemed both novel and demystifying; it effectively eliminated both sides of this argument, opening the way to more rational discussion. This may explain why in 1929 she was invited to contribute the entry on "witchcraft" to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*; characteristically, she seized this opportunity to put forward her theory as if it were universally accepted.

Her second book, *The God of the Witches* (1933), written for a wider audience, was an emotional and openly anti-Christian defense of the "Old Religion" (not only was this term taken from Leland without acknowledgement, but her position was also disturbingly similar to contemporary Nazi propaganda on the topic of witchcraft). She painted a glowing picture of the devotion of witches toward their god and his human representative, expressed through feasts and dances, though reticent about their sexual orgies, which she had described in her earlier, more academic book. Such unpleasant activities as animal sacrifice and the killing of babies were mentioned only in passing, but the ritual killing of the coven leader was strongly emphasized.

Her third study of witchcraft, *The Divine King in England*, appeared in 1954, when she was ninety-two. It presented the sensational conspiracy theory that many kings, from Anglo-Saxon times to the early Stuarts, belonged to the "Old Religion" and had to be killed unless some prominent member of their family or court agreed to die as a substitute. In the same year, she also wrote an approving introduction for Gerald Gardner's *Witchcraft Today*. Gardner said that in 1939 he had been initiated into a coven in Hampshire whose practices were very like those Murray described; she took this as proof of her views, seemingly unaware of the alternative possibility that these "witches" (who were well-educated, middle-class people) could have simply read her books and copied what they found there.

Murray's last two books appeared in the year she died at the age of 100: an autobiography, and *The Genesis of Religion*, a rather sketchy work in which she first acknowledged the importance of goddesses in prehistoric cults.

Until the 1960s, most professional historians simply ignored Murray's work, presumably thinking her theory so self-evidently absurd as not to need rebuttal. However, a few historians (e.g., George Lincoln Burr in *The American Historical Review*) and folklorists (e.g., W. B. Halliday in *Folk-Lore*) had written strongly critical reviews of *The Witch-Cult*. In the late 1920s and the 1930s, C. L'Estrange Ewen researched numerous primary records of English witchcraft trials without finding any traces of an organized cult. But Murray simply ignored any adverse comments; her books grew steadily more dogmatic and extreme.

A time came, however, when historians finally realized how strong her influence was among the general

public; her two main books had been reprinted in paperback, popular writers and novelists had taken her ideas on board, the Wiccans were citing her to prove that their religion was ancient paganism. Silence was no longer appropriate. Norman Cohn and Keith Thomas included a few pages savagely criticizing Murray in their analyses of the general history of witchcraft beliefs (Cohn 1975, 107–115; Thomas 1971, 514–517); Ronald Hutton, while exposing the flaws of her theory, described the cultural influences that shaped it (Hutton 1991, 301–306; Hutton 2000, 194–201).

From the point of view of historical and anthropological studies, Margaret Murray's theory has proved valueless; however, she played a significant (though unintentional) part in the growth of twentieth-century paganism in Britain and the United States and in the image of the witch in modern popular culture.

JACQUELINE SIMPSON

See also: BURR, GEORGE LINCOLN; CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST-1800); HALLOWEEN; HISTORIOGRAPHY; MICHELET, JULES; MUSIC; SUMMERS, MONTAGUE; THOMAS, KEITH.

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MUSIC

Music plays an important role in both ancient and modern religions, and it is therefore unsurprising that it should have strong associations with magic and witchcraft. Music has been used throughout the centuries in a number of ways to enhance rituals and to produce altered states of consciousness allowing, it is sometimes alleged, contact with supernatural deities. Beyond this, classical and modern composers have chosen the theme of "witchcraft" for large numbers of their works, some of which will be discussed below. However, finding examples before the early modern period can be

extraordinarily difficult. One has to rely mainly on court documents and stage works from the sixteenth century, with an increasing abundance of material available up to the present time.

Margaret Murray was largely responsible for introducing witches' alleged musical activities to the public, which included them "singing most filthy songs" and generally performing "a kind of villanous musicke" (Michaëlis 1613, 336). Her descriptions of the music, mainly tortured out of Scottish and European victims, conformed to traditional folk gatherings gone awry, with dissonance and irregular rhythms suggesting the laws of misrule. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century drama encouraged this tradition, with suitably exaggerated stage directions in such works as Ben Jonson's *The Masque of Queens* and, most famous of all, Henry Purcell's opera *Dido and Aeneas*. The infernal music theme continued in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature with such works as Robert Burns's *Tam o' Shanter* and Johann Goethe's *Faust*, both of which incorporated music and have received numerous musical settings. Twentieth-century written accounts of music appertaining to witchcraft have often repeated Murray's interpretations, adding personal biases in Montague Summers's and Dennis Wheatley's descriptions of demonic music. Significantly, it was Gerald Gardner who introduced magical elements into the witch's music (Scire 1999). This trend has been reinforced by the otherworldly music introduced by authors such as Kenneth Graham in the episode with Pan in *The Wind in the Willows* or Karen Ralls-MacLeod in *Music and the Celtic Otherworld*.

"ROUGH MUSIC" IN CLASSICAL AND ROMANTIC EUROPE

Considerably more material can be found in the classical music repertoire, where the witchcraft theme has always been and still is popular. Even a superficial survey uncovers hundreds of works, including many compositions that may be divided into vocal/choral and orchestral/instrumental.

Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century stage works used a variety of music by different composers, and thus there is, for example, confusion about who wrote what concerning William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and Thomas Middleton's *The Witch*. In a more skeptical age, Purcell broke the mold of hideous music for witches with a stunningly beautiful anthem, *In Guilty Night*, but a century later Thomas Linley hinted at what the nineteenth century would provide in terms of harmonic and melodic dissonance in his *Ode on Witches and Fairies of Shakespeare*. Modeste Mussorgsky wrote a choral version of his famous *Night on Bald Mountain*, including the obligatory "Black Mass" scene, and Felix Mendelssohn, Robert Schumann, and Johannes Brahms also wrote choral and vocal works on similar

themes. The twentieth century saw a revival of Purcell's departure from the earlier haglike stereotypes. In an age of Wiccan themes, works such as John Corigliano's *Song to the Witch of the Cloisters* and Max von Schilling's poignant *Hexenlied* portrayed witches in a far more favorable light.

As one would expect, orchestral/instrumental music has obvious problems attached to it, since the absence of text forces one to rely on the composers' own program notes (when they exist). A few mainly anonymous witches' dances have survived from the seventeenth century, attached to productions of *Macbeth*. In the eighteenth century, Joseph Haydn's so-called *Hexen-menuet* (from his string quartet, the *Fifths*) had no real bearing on witchcraft whatsoever. However, in the nineteenth century, the expansion of the orchestra combined with interest in Gothic themes to create a dramatic increase in the number of works reproducing witchcraft themes. Hector Berlioz's *Songe d'une nuit du Sabbat* from his *Symphonie Fantastique* introduced violent syncopation, *col legno* (wood of the bow) playing, and general musical mayhem. This work was matched by Mussorgsky's famous *Night on Bald Mountain*, famously recycled in Walt Disney's *Fantasia*, and his "Baba Yaga" in *Pictures from an Exhibition*. Less well known were two contrasting works by Antonin Dvorak: *The Noonday Witch* and a piano piece for four hands called *The Witches' Sabbath*.

In the twentieth century, the Russian composer Anatol Lyadov wrote a jagged, infernal *Baba Yaga*, and Alexander Scriabin conceived a diabolical counterpart to his *Messe blanche* with the discordant *Messe noire* in 1913. Other twentieth-century works maintained the harsh sounds, including Franz Waxman's *Goyana* and Ian Ballamy's chamber work *Walpurgis Night*. Samuel Barber treated the theme more broadly to match the sorceress' range of emotions in *Medea's Meditation and Dance of Vengeance*. The influence of Igor Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* (a pagan scenario, not a specific witchcraft event) could be seen in many works after its first performance in 1913. The complete opposite of the evil aspects of witchcraft was stressed in James MacMillan's *The Confession of Isobel Gowdie*, which painted a picture in orchestral terms of the grief and sense of guilt felt at the execution of so many innocent women in the "burning times."

The interpretation of witchcraft in classical music has varied throughout the centuries. The dissonance and rhythmic angularities at the start of the early modern period swelled in the nineteenth century and receded in the twentieth, sometimes replaced by far more favorable portrayals at a time when witchcraft was revived in benign forms. One constant feature is that male witches have been very poorly represented, with just a few to be found, mainly in operas.

MUSIC AND WITCHCRAFT TODAY

One might ask what music is actually used by witches for their rituals and ceremonies in the third millennium. The results of an extensive survey in 2001 conducted in England, with some input from the United States, provided useful information. According to circumstances and the availability of musicians, either recorded or live music is played before, during, and after rituals. Before a ritual, it is usually recorded, and its task is to relax the participants; examples mentioned were Enya and Loreena McKennitt. During the ritual, the recorded music used was mainly instrumental or wordless, because words of songs might clash with the primary emphasis of the rituals. When recorded, the music was chosen for a number of different reasons: to build up energy, to bind the group, to aid altered states of consciousness, to encourage the visitation of spirits—and practically, to obliterate external noises from traffic or other distractions. Examples were thus extremely varied, taken from the popular classical, folk, World, or New Age repertoire. Examples included Richard Wagner, Carl Orff (*Carmina Burana*), Clannad, Native American chants, Carolyn Hillyer, and Nigel Shaw. When musicians were available, live music used whatever instruments were available—often the acoustic guitar. Even if the group did not contain musicians, drumming and chanting were frequently employed to build energy and create a trance-like state

of mind. After the ritual, music was also used for social purposes if live or as background sound for the feasting and possibly dancing that followed. Certain types of music were *not* popular at meetings: commercial pop, jazz, and “difficult” classical music. The reasons probably include the age of the participants, who were mainly above their mid-twenties and the feeling that such music was not suitable for joyful or emotional gatherings. It was of overriding importance to make music an important part of the religion, whether in its historical setting or in contemporary practices.

MELVYN J. WILLIN

See also: BURNING TIMES; MURRAY, MARGARET; OPERA; RENAISSANCE DRAMA, ENGLAND; SHAKESPEARE.

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NAPLES, KINGDOM OF

Relative to north-central Italy, the southern Kingdom of Naples participated only marginally in early witch hunts during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Chronicles did not record any persecutions in the south; the vast demonological literature, both Italian and European, contained no traces of activity in the south compared to references to northern Italy, where the large numbers of trials and the zeal demonstrated by inquisitors such as those in Como merited commendation from Heinrich Kramer, the author of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486). Except for a few late-sixteenth-century works such as Giovanni Lorenzo d'Anania's (Anania) *De Natura Daemonum* (Of the Nature of Demons, Venice, 1589), Leonardo Vairo's *De Fascino* (On Enchantments, Venice, 1583), and, later, medical examiner Pietro Piperno's *De magicis affectibus hominum dignotione, praenotione, curatione, medica, strategemmatica, divina, plerisque curationibus electis, et De Nuce beneventana maga* . . . (On Magical Ailments, Their Diagnosis, Prediction, and Treatment with Select Cures, Medical, Strategic, and Divine, and On the Walnut-Tree of Benevento; Naples, 1634), literature on the theme of witches remained underdeveloped and did not influence debate about their repression.

Although references to inquisitorial activity concerning witchcraft are scarce, it is possible to trace a general picture of the attitudes adopted by local ecclesiastical authorities toward witchcraft from documents conserved in the diocesan historical archives of Naples and from the sentences and abjurations conserved in the Trinity College Library in Dublin, which anticipated and in some ways inspired the changes in the official position outlined in *Instructio pro formandis processibus in causis strigum, sortilegiorum et maleficiorum* (Instruction for Conducting Trial Procedures Against Witches, Sorcerers, and Evildoers, ca. 1620).

Three witches (called *janare* or *magare* in southern Italy) were condemned to death in 1506 by the inquisitor-general of the Kingdom of Naples, and around 200 trials were initiated by Beneventan archiepiscopal curia, the outcome of which is unknown. Otherwise, nothing is known of the repression of witchcraft in southern Italy before trials were conducted in Naples in 1574, 1580, and 1590; between 1582 and 1601, 143 trials were held

in the capital (Romeo 1990, 20, 166–167, 179). In the rest of the kingdom, trials against superstition were recorded at Bitonto in 1594; at Capua, where 130 cases of magic were tried between 1600 and 1715; and at Gallipoli, where three sorceresses were tried for witchcraft in 1600. Throughout this region, judges—regardless of the gravity of the errors confessed—merely required the accused to repent, recant their errors, and accept spiritual penances (D'Ippolito 1996, 425–437).

Documents from the Holy Office conserved at Trinity College Library in Dublin contain numerous cases in which subjects of the Kingdom of Naples appeared spontaneously before the tribunal of the Inquisition in Rome to confess they were sorcerers or necromancers, together with a few inquiries from local ecclesiastical tribunals in Naples, Lecce, and Teano. These trials also provide evidence that pagan spirituality was so profoundly imbued with official Christianity that it was experienced and practiced without any sense of wrongdoing. The judicial sentences indicate that the inquisitors were principally concerned with punishing the error of “believing that it is right to serve the work of the devil” (Trinity College Library, Dataria, Vol. 1228, ff. 111–114). The nature of these offenses, mostly entailing minor suspicions of heresy, and the primarily spiritual penalties imposed were never very severe (e.g., whipping, confinement to a cloister for regular clergy, formal imprisonment for a brief period, or, at worst, five years in the galleys). The Congregation of the Holy Office demonstrated a “southern” orientation that seemed far less rigorous than the attitude of Milan's famous cardinal-archbishop, St. Carlo Borromeo.

In general, the severity of southern Italian authorities against superstitions was restricted to their definitions of what constituted illicit use of the sacraments and sacramental objects. At the same time, ecclesiastical authorities sought to strengthen the thaumaturgical-defensive system of sanctioned traditional rituals (especially exorcism) and increase such forms of popular devotion as the cult of saints while limiting their repressive action to intimidating marginal and subaltern segments of society to discourage them (without much success) from engaging in magic spells and syncretistic practices. In the late sixteenth century, a “campaign of aggression and intolerance” was directed

against superstitions, in line with Sixtus V's *Coeli et Terrae Creator* (Creator of Heaven and Earth, 1586) and *Immensa Dei Aeterni* (The Infinity of the Eternal God, 1587). Notwithstanding the gravity of the apostasies committed by the accused (participation in the Sabbat, homage to or pact with the Devil) and the atrocities they confessed (often spontaneously), no known cases involved accusations of diabolical witchcraft. The principal goal was instead to circumscribe and relativize the errors of the faithful: exorcism was preferable to burning at the stake because it transformed the witch into someone possessed by the Devil (Romeo 1990, 244).

Southern tolerance was also associated with the futile efforts of southern bishops to eradicate superstitions practiced by their clergy. Even after the Council of Trent, even higher-level southern monks lived in concubinage, moral laxity, and superstition. Numerous sentences from the Trinity College Library records detailed proceedings against members of the secular and regular clergy, including some cases against ordinary diocesan clerics accused of dealing with the Devil. A somewhat classical interpretation attributes such corruption among southern Italian clergy to the particular structure of the Church in the region, which was more receptive to it. This institution was controlled by laypeople and managed by refractory clergy who were often ignorant and superstitious, indifferent to the spirit of reform, and unresponsive to an inner religiosity founded on the purity of the evangelical message. These conditions are crucial to understanding the failure of the post-Tridentine Church's commitment to Christianizing the countryside. Ancient superstitions continued to thrive among the faithful. Southern bishops who lamented the presence of rites and cults of pagan origin frequently denounced them in the late seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth century (Tamblé 1996, 545). Twentieth-century anthropologists and folklore scholars studied these same beliefs and practices.

PAOLO PORTONE;

TRANSLATED BY SHANNON VENEBLE

See also: BORROMEO, ST. CARLO; D'ANANIA (ANANIA), GIOVANNI LORENZO; INQUISITION, ROMAN; ITALY; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; PIPERNO, PIETRO; SUPERSTITION.

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NASSAU-SAARBRÜCKEN, COUNTY OF

The county of Nassau-Saarbrücken, Lutheran since 1575, experienced only fifty-two witchcraft trials between 1578 and 1679, making it—like the Calvinist duchy of Pfalz-Zweibrücken—one of the territories in this region with a relatively mild pattern of witch hunting. Through strict regulation of the costs of witchcraft trials, the counts of Nassau-Saarbrücken succeeded in preventing the expansion and worst excesses of witch hunts, although they were not opposed in principle to the persecution of witches. Nassau-Saarbrücken's witchcraft trials were concentrated in areas subject to the criminal courts of the abbey of Wadgassen (nineteen trials), the lordship of Ottweiler (thirteen trials), and the lordship of Uchtelfangen (seven trials). In these three courts, other local lords shared criminal jurisdiction with the counts, although their respective rights were often in dispute. As in other German Protestant territories, women comprised almost all (95 percent) of the accused and executed witches in Nassau-Saarbrücken (Labouvie 1997, 45).

Summaries and statistics pertaining to the Nassau-Saarbrücken witchcraft trials have been studied as part of the Saar region (e.g., Hoppstädter 1959; Labouvie 1991, 1997). Unlike other major rulers in the Saar region (the elector of Trier, the duke of Lorraine, and the duke of Pfalz-Zweibrücken), the counts of Nassau-Saarbrücken ruled a relatively coherent territory as resident lords. They could thus exercise greater control over witchcraft trials than absentee rulers governing fragmented territories. The counts followed the Carolina (the 1532 code of criminal procedure for the Holy Roman Empire) on matters of evidence, the application of torture, and consultations with legal experts, and local customary laws (*Weistümer*) regulated the costs and length of trials and the arrest and imprisonment of suspects. The counts published no special witchcraft mandates: general ordinances of criminal procedure

governed court fees, wages of court officials, payments to witnesses, and the use of torture. However, complaints from the count's subjects about increasing costs of witchcraft trials led to promulgation of an official mandate at the beginning of the seventeenth century aiming to eradicate abuses and fix the level of wages and subsistence expenses of everyone involved in witchcraft trials.

Witchcraft allegations in Nassau-Saarbrücken between 1535 and 1734 were usually treated as cases of slander and did not trigger criminal proceedings—another reason for the relatively low number of witchcraft trials there. Unlike other Saar region territories, the terms for both female (*Hexe*) and male (*Hexenmeister*) witches were apparently established at an early date. Accusations of witchcraft came from both men and women, but with one exception, their targets were always women who were accused of making people ill or blind, bewitching dairying processes, or performing other serious acts of harmful magic.

The first known witchcraft trial took place in 1578 in Uchtelfangen following an accusation brought by court officials. The first witchcraft trials pursued with the help of organized village witch-hunting committees (*Hexenausschüsse*) also occurred in Uchtelfangen and nearby villages in the lordship of Ottweiler in 1595. Such witch-hunting committees were, however, much less widespread in Nassau-Saarbrücken than in other nearby states, for example, the duchy of Luxembourg, the electorate of Trier, or the territory of the imperial abbey of St. Maximin.

The witchcraft trials in the territory of the abbey of Wadgassen constituted a peculiar episode in the Nassau-Saarbrücken story. Although formally subject to the ultimate sovereignty (*Landeshoheit*) of the counts of Nassau-Saarbrücken, the abbey stood under the direct administrative authority (*Vogtei*) of the duke of Lorraine. This meant that it was forced—sometimes militarily—to seek advice in cases of witchcraft from the central legal tribunal in Lorraine (the *Change de Nancy*) rather than from the main court of the counts in Saarbrücken (the *Oberhof*). The dukes of Lorraine clearly pursued a long-term policy of establishing their own sovereignty over Wadgassen. Its witchcraft trials thus took place against a backdrop of conflicting priorities of its rival lords, whose territorial disputes were finally settled by treaty only in 1766.

Although the property of executed witches was not confiscated in Nassau-Saarbrücken, the trial costs were settled by surviving relatives, as the Carolina stipulated. Nonetheless, the question of paying trial costs when the property of the condemned witch was insufficient to cover them arose as early as 1595, at Uchtelfangen. Although the Carolina made the authorities meet the costs in such cases, the count of Nassau-Saarbrücken insisted that customary laws (*Weistümer*), which

required the heirs of the condemned to settle such costs, should be followed instead. His ordinance made it clear that trial costs must be settled at the local level, without intervention from the count's officials. Because neither local witch-hunting committees nor local lords were willing to take responsibility for paying the often horrendous costs involved in witchcraft trials, this ordinance significantly dampened local enthusiasm for witch hunting. In 1613, the count also repealed an earlier ordinance stipulating that witchcraft suspects must be kept only in prisons subject to his authority. Putting suspected witches in prisons belonging to lords of the relevant local criminal courts provided another means for the counts to avoid expenses in witchcraft trials.

The Thirty Years' War, which caused an 84 percent decline in population in Nassau-Saarbrücken, also brought its witchcraft trials to an end (Labouvie 1991, 252). A few trials occurred after 1648. In the last known case, a woman subject to the criminal court of Ottweiler claimed to be a witch in 1679. Legal advice on her case was sought from jurists at the University of Strasbourg, who recommended that the woman be questioned by clerics. Although the verdict is unknown, many indications suggest that she was treated mildly by the men who judged her.

RITA VOLTMER;

TRANSLATED BY ALISON ROWLANDS

See also: CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*); COMMUNAL PERSECUTION; GERMANY, WEST AND NORTHWEST; LORRAINE, DUCHY OF; LUXEMBOURG, DUCHY OF; PFALZ-ZWEIBRÜCKEN, DUCHY OF; POPULAR PERSECUTION; SAAR REGION; ST. MAXIMIN, PRINCE-ABBAY OF; TRIER, ELECTORATE OF

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NATIVE AMERICANS

Until very recently, virtually every native North American people believed in witches or evil shamans, who used their special access to potent spiritual power to attack enemies with disease, "accidents," bad luck in hunting, and other misfortunes. Witches were nearly as ubiquitous as life's troubles, and nearly anyone could be a witch; thus, people were always on the lookout for secret offenders who gave themselves away through antisocial behavior. Indians across time and space have

held common beliefs about witches, contributing to a shared historical pattern in which communities split into factions advocating different approaches to colonial encroachment and then charged members of the rival faction with witchcraft. When such factions gelled around the revitalization programs of religious prophets, accusations sometimes escalated into actual witch hunts marked by systematic executions. Witch hunts have been rare since the early twentieth century, but belief in witches is still common in some Native American communities.

Quite unlike European beliefs about the supernatural, which divided power into good and bad as personified in God and the Devil, Native Americans believed that all power was double-edged, capable of being put to positive or negative ends depending upon the person who wielded it. Individuals gained access to spiritual power sometimes by communing with a spirit during a dream but most often through a vision quest. During the vision quest, an individual—almost always male—fasted, deprived himself of sleep, imbibed hallucinogens, and sometimes tortured himself until he pictured one or more spirits, usually in the form of animals or meteorological forces such as the wind. The spirit taught the vision seeker its song, gave him fetishes that could be used to call for power whenever it was needed, and explained what taboos would void this gift. The guardianship of an especially powerful spirit enabled the seeker to become a shaman with the ability to affect cures, rain, divination, or other social benefits. But he, and sometimes she, also could cause accidents or make people ill or insane by magically implanting poisonously enchanted objects as mundane as hairs or fingernails into the bodies of their victims or by capturing one of the victim's two souls as it lay exposed during dreaming. Until recent times and sometimes today still, American Indians attributed many, if not most, of their illnesses to such evil-doing.

Among the Indian shaman's most important duties was diagnosing and treating witchcraft. The shaman would work himself into an ecstatic trance by fasting, dancing, contorting himself, and chanting, while people around him drummed and sang until he contacted his guardian spirits, who identified the root of the sickness. If the disease stemmed from an implanted magical item, the shaman would apply a tube to the violated area and suck out the object without breaking the skin. Sickness deriving from a captured dream soul required a more intricate cure because the shaman had to enter an even deeper trance to travel to the land of the dead to retrieve the patient's ghost. At other times, the shaman might trap the witch's dream soul in an insect or frog and then crush it dead.

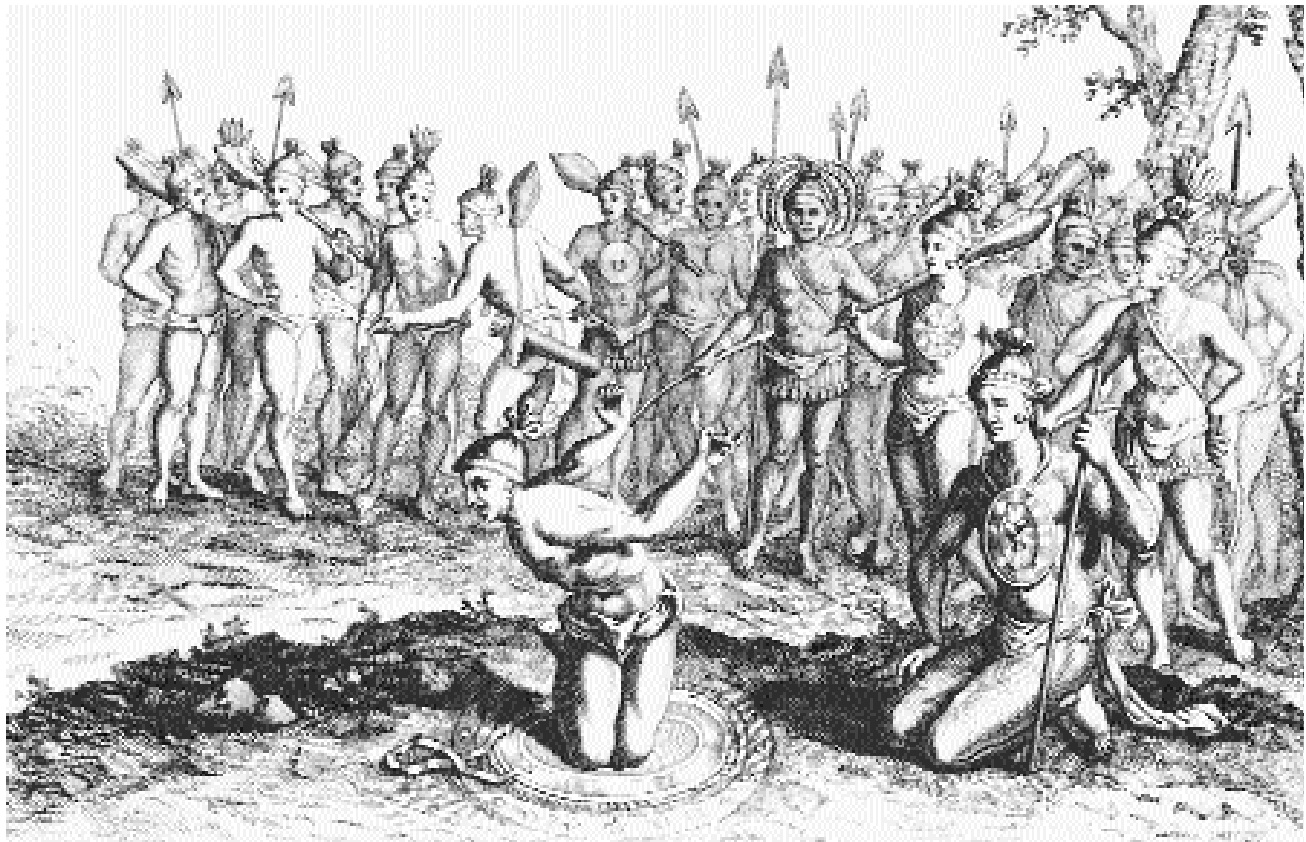
Indians also depended upon their shamans to identify specific witches, who went to great ends to remain anonymous. Nevertheless, everyone knew what types of

individuals turned to witchcraft. They were jealous, muttering underneath their breath at others' good fortune; hypersensitive, interpreting casual exchanges as insults; selfish, refusing to share food with their neighbors; and outcasts, who might be found wandering alone in the woods. Some of them either were the offspring of an incestuous relationship or participants in incest themselves. Others had been contacted during their visions by spirits oriented toward evil, such as Owl and Coyote in Apache belief, or the horned winged serpent found in Algonquian speakers' pantheon. Although the vast majority of Native American shamans were male and witches were defined as wicked shamans, a high percentage of accused witches were elderly women, as among Europeans. This disparity suggests an underlying hostility toward females who no longer could contribute to the group by reproducing or raising children and who, unlike old men, had little or no formal role in government, but sometimes tried to retain control over a household, apparently to their relatives' irritation.

Witchcraft suspicions were ubiquitous among Native Americans because of a tendency to read any violation of the people's unachievable consensus ideal as a sign of ill will. In the small-scale, face-to-face, and generally decentralized societies of Native America, cooperation was necessary to feed, defend, and govern. Therefore, everyone was under extreme pressure to suppress anger and disagreement with relatives and neighbors in favor of a moderate, pleasant attitude and willingness to share resources with anyone in want. For men, there were few outlets for social tension aside from war against foreign peoples and rough sport, and even fewer for women. Thus, when someone became sick or hurt following unsanctioned but inevitable family squabbles, love rivalries, or political disputes, people were quick to imagine that a witch on the other side was responsible.

The consensus ideal that bred suspicions of witchcraft also suppressed collective action against it. An accused witch was prosecuted only if community leaders agreed on the verdict. However, a witch was in grave danger when such consensus was achieved. A suspected witch was sometimes captured and tortured in order to remove his or her curses and then either warned, banished, or even killed. Customarily a witch was executed and left to rot unburied, but troubles with the witch did not end there. The witch's spirit lingered for a time in anticipation of finding a new host, and, if successful, it returned to plague the community with fresh vengeance.

The witch hunt has been one of the most violent manifestations of Native Americans' internecine responses to colonization, particularly epidemic disease, Christian missions, and harassment from Euro-American governments. European-introduced diseases like smallpox often wiped out most of an exposed community's population,



Chief of Florida Indians consulting a shaman before going into battle. Shamans were common among Native Americans, and functioned to attack enemies as well as to practice beneficent magic. (Ann Ronan Picture Library/HIP/TopFoto.co.uk)

leaving the traumatized survivors to try to determine what had happened. An unfamiliar disease causing such unprecedented mortality had to have a spiritual cause like witchcraft, as the Pima Indians of southern Arizona concluded in 1844–1845 when they killed four shamans in the aftermath of a cholera outbreak. Christian missionaries were less lethal than European diseases but nearly as disruptive. Indian neophytes neglected their people's customary rituals, broke their taboos, and partook of strange new religious forms and in the process turned themselves and their missionaries into obvious targets of witchcraft accusations.

The simultaneous appearance of disease and missionaries provoked particularly aggressive witch hunting, as in southern Ontario when the Hurons executed several French Jesuits and their followers during the 1630s and 1640s. However, witch hunts took their most dramatic forms when Indian societies came under intense pressure from white expansion, leading not only to epidemic disease and proselytization but also to land loss, warfare, alcohol abuse, economic dependency, and in fighting. By the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Indian communities in the path of American expansion typically divided into two factions: an accommodationist wing that agreed to land sales and

reservations in exchange for annuities, peace, and trade benefits; and a “traditionalist” wing that advocated some version of pan-Indian cooperation (including violent resistance), religious revitalization, and rejection of the alcohol trade and land sales. Traditionalists received their inspiration from religious visionaries who claimed revelation from the “Great Spirit” and a special ability to identify witches. Not surprisingly, usually those witches were accommodationists and their leaders. Witch hunts of this type accompanied the rise of some of Native America's most famous prophets: the Delaware Neolin among Ohio River Valley tribes during the 1760s as a prelude to Pontiac's famous uprising; the Seneca Handsome Lake among the Iroquois of upstate New York during the 1790s; and, most notably, the Shawnee Tenskwatawa among the Great Lakes and Ohio Valley tribes and the Creek Indians during the early nineteenth century in conjunction with Tecumseh's campaigns against the United States. Few other witch hunts are so well documented, but they continued to mark intratribal politics well into the twentieth century.

Many Indian groups continue to believe in witchcraft, mostly along traditional lines with some concessions to outside influences. Christian Indians

often associate witches with the Devil rather than traditional guardian spirits. Some people continue to attribute certain accidents, psychological disorders, and “traditional” ailments to witchcraft but acknowledge that “foreign” diseases can have other sources. They also believe that witches work only as individuals, not as part of the “witch societies” that were found during ancient times. Official executions of witches have been rare, but even into the late twentieth century, not unknown in some isolated cases. Most importantly, as the enduring antithesis of community values, the witch continues to define what those values are.

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See also: SHAMANISM.

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NAZI INTEREST IN WITCH PERSECUTION

Reports about the interest of SS (the *Schutzstaffel*—protection force or defense squad) leader Heinrich Himmler in research on witch persecutions were circulated as early as 1947 by the Berlin newspaper *Telegraf*. The information stemmed from an unknown librarian in Polish Poznan (formerly Posen), where a huge collection of books and some files from the SS were now stored, both giving credibility to such a project. In 1948 and 1951, further information came from a former concentration camp prisoner, Herbert Blank, who had been ordered by the SS to produce summaries of witchcraft trial documents. In 1952, an investigation dealing with the fate of German archival sources in Polish territory offered more hints about the project. However, information about Himmler's project vanished afterward, until Gerhard Schormann gave a firsthand account of the SS *H-Sonderkommando*'s (special unit H [*Hexen*-witches]) witchcraft-trial collection in his introduction to a short book (Schormann 1981). The news aroused widespread interest in Germany.

Since then, numerous scholars of both early modern Europe and Nazi Germany have used either the original

material preserved in the Poznan archives or the copy on film kept by the Frankfurt Bundesarchiv. After the fall of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in 1989, Jörg Rudolph discovered additional material in SS files, which had been kept secretly by the Stasi, the intelligence service of the former GDR, for political reasons. By 1999, a study group was able to present a collection of essays examining various aspects of the *H-Sonderkommando*, including, in addition to its political aims and ideological grounds, a critical assessment of the scientific value of the SS collection.

NATIONAL SOCIALIST VIEWS OF WITCHCRAFT AND WITCHCRAFT PERSECUTION

Though clearly reflecting his intention to use the witchcraft-trial material politically against both the Catholic Church and Protestant opponents, Himmler's interest was also deeply rooted in Nazi ideology. Like other intellectual National Socialists, the master of the extermination camps believed that the victims of late medieval and early modern witchcraft persecution had been pure descendants of the Germanic race. Witches were supposedly adherents and practitioners of a traditional Germanic religious cult, who for this very reason had fallen prey to persecutions instigated by Church authorities in their attempt to erase remnants of paganism. At bottom, this theory drew on anti-Semitism, pretending that the Catholic Church from its origins was penetrated by Jews and a “Jewish” commitment to destroy all racially superior beings.

Like so many other ideas and visions of National Socialism, the pagan interpretation of witchcraft stemmed from a long tradition of antimodern views. After the Enlightenment had disenchanting witch belief in the late eighteenth century, subsequent centuries, longing for romantic inspiration, discovered the “real truth” behind it. In France, Jules Michelet declared the witch to be the people's authentic medical service; in Germany, Jakob Grimm saw it as incorporating a lost Germanic culture. In England, Margaret Murray (1921) portrayed witchcraft as an ancient fertility cult. But nowhere did the materialization of the witch figure go farther than in Germany and Austria. When Hitler came to power in 1933, the neopagan vision of witchcraft displayed both a “white” interpretation and a “black” counterpart. The former claimed (like Michelet) that witches had been agents of popular medicine; the latter declared that people accused of witchcraft were really groups of Germanic warriors fighting demonic forces through ritual means. The military version, expounded by Vienna Germanist Otto Höfler, was, of course, highly agreeable to Himmler and his “Black Order,” the SS, whereas the more peaceful “white” version, advocated by Himmler's political opponent, chief ideologist Alfred Rosenberg, fell prey to internal party rivalries.

Independently of these differences, both factions agreed that Christianity had been responsible for slaughtering millions of Germanic victims. Hence, research about witchcraft trials became an act commemorating “racial losses” and honoring the “ordeal of Germanic heroes,” women and men alike. Given the apparent continuity of that confrontation, it also provided ammunition for an ongoing battle. Politically, therefore, witchcraft research figured as “scientific enemy observation,” with full responsibility for the project falling on the SS secret service (SD) and centered at first in the *Amt II Gegnerforschung* (research on enemies) within the central SS administration, the Reichssicherheitshauptamt (National Central Security Department).

Work started in 1935, after Nazi publication of an ideologically revised version of a traditional peasant calendar claiming Church responsibility for millions of slaughtered heretics and witches had been successfully refuted as a scandalously ignorant historical fake. This failure made it obvious that historically accurate antireligious propaganda must henceforth be put on an organized scientific basis.

ORGANIZATION AND PERFORMANCE

The SS witchcraft research group (*H-Sonderkommando*) took pains to conceal its activities, as its abbreviation (“H” for “Hexen”) showed. While the exploration of published literature continued, members began visiting archives within the Third Reich already in summer 1935, extending their investigations to occupied territories as well during the war. When doing so, they never officially revealed their membership in the SS, working under academic or private cover instead; otherwise, they would never have gained access to Church institutions, like the archiepiscopal archives in Trier.

Trial records and related documents were investigated following a fixed scheme, devised not only to establish the basic facts (number of victims, age, sex, and race(!)) but also to provide proof about who made the accusations and trials and especially about the responsibility of the churches. Secretaries later transferred the findings onto typed forms—hence the Polish title *Kartoteka* (card index) and organized it by localities, so that it could quickly be used to furnish local press campaigns. Within a more scientific framework, systematic studies were planned on racial and demographic aspects of the persecutions, on the use of torture, and on forgery in earlier historical accounts.

Though the project’s ideological limits are plain, its perspective from below granted at least theoretically new insights, in particular by focusing on the social context (if one replaces “race” with “social rank”). Furthermore, the SS researchers were not so narrow-minded as to overlook the close alliance between secular and Church officials within learned culture, but their ideology compelled them to use the notion of a

separate (and racially conceived) people’s culture. It is worthwhile to remember in this context that the idea of elite culture as opposed to popular culture would become a cherished approach of some social historians long into the 1980s, before yielding to rather more complex assumptions of differentiated intercultural relations. Meanwhile, the romantic image of witches being simply persecuted for being “wise woman” seems to be as lively as ever in feminist and neopagan circles. Truly modern, on the other hand, was the *H-Sonderkommando*’s intention to popularize its findings by exhibitions and articles in popular papers and by massive use of photographic material.

Despite its ambitious and modern aims, strategies, and approaches, the project’s results were disappointing. With 33,846 cases recorded by the end of 1943, when project work ceased due to the course of war, results lagged far behind the 500,000 or even millions of victims that had been expected. About the role of the Church, apart from confirming what was already known about its propaganda, the evidence rather suggested the reverse, that is, the support persecutions enjoyed from ordinary German people. Obviously, early modern society had been more deeply penetrated by Christianity than the adherents of racial paganism believed. The search for traces of suppressed Germanic cults could not find substantial evidence.

Besides conceptual shortcomings and dead ends, the intellectual mediocrity, indeed dilettantism, of the *H-Sonderkommando* rendered its products useless for antireligious propaganda. Recent reexamination of the material in comparison with the archival sources (Lorenz et al. 1999) demonstrated countless errors, which opponents of Nazi paganism would have been able to reveal as well: mistaken identification of cases, misreading and confusion of names of the accused, misunderstanding of context, and ignorance of what was really happening in local persecutions.

No wonder then that none of its ambitiously planned studies could be finished. Significantly, a personal attempt by SS officer Dr. Rudolf Levin, a leading member of the group, to exploit his product on the academic market by presenting it as a *Habilitation* (second dissertation, necessary to earn tenure) at the University of Munich was defeated by the academic tribunal. Even crisis management by the group’s gray eminence, prominent National Socialist historian and SS officer Professor Günther Franz, could not improve the situation.

The mediocrity of the group’s philologists tells something about their motives for participating in the project: to exploit it as a vehicle for an academic career otherwise not accessible. The “modernists” within the group, however, those in charge of distributing the product to the public, used it as a chance to develop techniques crucial for their future careers in postwar German press and marketing. Thus, the head of the SS

office on “scientific enemy observation,” Professor Dr. Franz A. Six, became a leading figure in West German marketing in the postwar era.

Given the scholarly deficits of the SS witchcraft trial collection, its usefulness for current research is limited. Except for its photographic copies, transcriptions, and extracts of original documents, the *Kartotheka* cannot be used to substitute for otherwise lost archival material. However, it does have advantages as a means for surveying or checking sources and getting hints about some rather irregular findings, such as the sixteen witchcraft executions it reported as taking place in 1629 and 1630 in the village of Sehlem near Trier. These cases were documented only by a note in the Sehlem parish register, quite an exception to the contemporary doctrine denying condemned witches both Christian burial or even recording them. Given their generally superficial procedure, the SS researchers in this case surely relied on a local informant, probably someone working through parish registers for the sake of racial genealogy.

WALTER RUMMEL

See also: COMMUNAL PERSECUTION; HISTORIOGRAPHY; MICHELET, JULES; MURRAY, MARGARET ALICE; POPULAR PERSECUTION.

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NECROMANCY

Derived from the Greek words *nekros* (dead) and *manteia* (divination), necromancy is a form of divination in which the dead are used. Necromancy usually involves some form of direct interaction with a corpse (or parts thereof) to invoke spirits of the dead in order to obtain an omen. This magical act presupposes belief in the afterlife, belief in the life of the soul after the death of the physical body, and the conviction that the spirit of the deceased is endowed with supernatural wisdom or knowledge.

Throughout Western antiquity, necromancy was widespread, with records of its practice in Babylon, Egypt, Greece, and Rome. The oldest literary account of necromancy is in Homer’s *Odyssey* (ca. 700 B.C.E.), in which the divine sorceress, Circe, instructed the hero Odysseus on summoning the deceased (primarily the ghost of the famous seer, Tiresias) for prophetic insight concerning his voyage home (X.488–540; XI.13–149). The Homeric passages contained many intricate details: the rites must be nocturnal and based around a pit and a fire; Odysseus must pour libations to a specified recipe; animals must be sacrificed and their blood drained for the ghosts to imbibe; and prayers must be recited to the ghosts and also to the gods of the underworld (who had to give their consent for the temporary release of the spirits). In a subsequent piece of Greek literature, the *Persians* (472 B.C.E.), the playwright Aeschylus described the practice of necromancy among the royal household of the Medes. This dramatic piece bore similar ritualistic traits to the Homeric description and reflected the Greek perception of Persians as exotic and inextricably linked with the practice of magic.

Roman sources regularly associated necromancy with the working of evil magic by wicked witches. The most infamous necromancer of antiquity was in Lucan’s Latin epic *Pharsalia* (65 C.E.). Lucan’s necromancer, the Thessalian sorceress Erichtho, practiced hideous rituals involving the mutilation and consumption of corpses in her magical pursuit of divination. Although Lucan reveled in the repugnant details of Erichtho’s rites, the graphic detail of his portrayal was also partially designed to reflect the contemporary societal and political condemnation of magic. Beyond the literary tradition, the *Greek Magical Papyri* (PMG) contain spells concerning necromancy, such as PMG IV.2006–2125 (fourth century C.E.), which involved the conjuration of a ghost to assist a magician in a variety of endeavors, including divination.

The practice of necromancy is condemned in the Hebrew Bible, for example in Deuteronomy 18:10–11 (where the necromancer is listed alongside a series of magic practitioners), I Kings 28:8, and Isaiah 16:19. The most famous biblical account of necromancy concerns the witch of Endor (I Sam. 28), consulted by Saul during the war with the Philistines. Saul, dismayed at his situation and bereft at the belief that God had abandoned him, went to the necromancer at night and implored her to reanimate the spirit of Samuel. The woman summoned Samuel, who confirmed God’s rejection of Saul and predicted the defeat and death of Saul and his sons. Theologians were intrigued by the account and various interpretations resulted. The Church Fathers Tertullian and St. Augustine regarded the apparition as real, but argued that it was the Devil who appeared to the necromancer, not the

spirit of Samuel. In contrast, St. Jerome regarded the apparition as a hoax and the so-called pythoness a deceiver. Interpretations of the story by early modern writers were similarly divided; Jean Bodin, the French demonologist, supported the explanation of Tertullian and St. Augustine, but Reginald Scot argued that she was merely a ventriloquist.

In the early centuries of the Christian era, necromancy was a common magical practice, despite its condemnation by the Church. Tertullian warned against becoming involved in activities “in which demons represent themselves as the souls of the deceased” (*De anima* 57.2), an important statement in view of its premise that necromancy was not, in fact, the reanimation of the dead but a process that unleashed demonic forces masquerading as ghosts. This definition characterized the term *necromancy* in the early Christian era and subsequent centuries. By the Middle Ages, necromancy came to be associated with demonology and other forms of malevolent magic.

By the fifteenth century, from when a few necromancers' manuals survive (Kieckhefer 1997), this art was not necessarily associated with the aim of conjuring demons or devils for the primary purpose of divination, but it now encompassed a series of rituals for a variety of aims, including the acquisition of “love” and power in addition to the infliction of harmful magic on others, such as insanity and personal problems. Richard Kieckhefer (1989, 153) explained that a principal stronghold of necromancy was the “clerical underworld.” The fact that clerics could be entrusted with the ritual of exorcism meant that they had access to specific texts that could also provide useful insights into the processes of invoking demons instead of driving them away. Clerics (and some members of higher ecclesiastical orders) also experimented with necromancy in order to verify certain aspects of their faith, such as the sacraments and purgatory. Various books on necromancy were available, including the *Table of Solomon* and the *Treasury of Necromancy*. The Dominican inquisitor Nicolas Eymeric, referred to the latter texts in his *Directorium inquisitorum* (Directory of Inquisitors, 1376); the books were, in fact, publicly burned by him (after he had read their contents). Eymeric recorded numerous rituals alleged to have come from texts such as the *Table of Solomon*, including inversions of Christian rites, such as genuflecting before the demons, baptizing icons or images, and perverting prayer formats. A century later, Joan Vicente, a cleric from Eymeric's region, used the *Table of Solomon* to perform necromantic rituals before the Inquisition caught him.

Not surprisingly, the Church took a severe position in regard to necromancy (among other forms of magic) and, in the late Middle Ages, numerous clerics were accused of practicing it. The contents of various texts on necromancy suggested that some formal education

was required to perform necromancy's most intricate and learned procedures, but the practice of necromancy was not the exclusive domain of the clergy. In 1324, for example, Dame Alice Kyteler was eventually found guilty of practicing sorcery, including summoning demons and the use of body parts for various *maleficia* (evil acts). Although Alice Kyteler escaped being burned at the stake, her assistant, Petronella of Meath, was not so fortunate. In a less spectacular or threatening context, and one in keeping with the original meaning of the art, there are accounts of cunning folk participating in necromantic rites in order to acquire information concerning the diagnosis and treatment of disease. Likewise, ordinary folk summoned the deceased to visit them in their dreams for a series of reasons, including advice on matters ranging from their love lives to finances.

The curiosity that appears to have been a major component of early modern European experiments in necromancy was perhaps best captured in an account of his experience with this so-called black art by Benvenuto Cellini, an Italian goldsmith and sculptor. In 1523, Cellini hired a Sicilian priest to locate a missing woman and was invited to participate in a necromantic rite; he described his reaction: “I, who had a great desire to know something of the matter, told him, that I had all my life felt a curiosity to be acquainted with the mysteries of this art” (*Autobiography*, 64).

A half-century later, a practitioner of so-called high magic, John Dee, astrologer to Queen Elizabeth I, was fascinated with contacting spirits. He sought an alliance with Edward Kelley, an alchemist, medium, and necromancer. Together they created a system of occultism known as Enochian magic, the magic of angels and demons, subsequently influential in the development of the philosophies of the Golden Dawn. A more adept spiritualist than Dee, Kelly invoked spirits, while Dee recorded the rites. Although rumors abounded that both men had been involved in grotesque acts of necromancy entailing tomb robbing, more accurate accounts indicated the use of various magical implements, such as a scrying mirror, and the evocation of angels.

MARGUERITE JOHNSON

See also: AUGUSTINE, ST.; BIBLE; BODIN, JEAN; CIRCE; CLERICAL MAGIC; CUNNING FOLK; DEE, JOHN; DEMONOLOGY; DIVINATION; ENDOR, WITCH OF; EYMERIC, NICOLAS; GHOSTS; GREEK MAGICAL PAPYRI; HOMER; KYTELER, ALICE; RITUAL MAGIC; SCOT, REGINALD; TRITHEMIUS, JOHANNES; VICENTE, JOAN.

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NETHERLANDS, NORTHERN

In the northern provinces of the Low Countries, the region that is now the Netherlands, trials for witchcraft were rare, with very few mass persecutions. The last Dutch witch was executed in 1608, making the Netherlands the first European state where witchcraft accusations ceased to be life-threatening. Both its economic situation and the attitude of its courts were instrumental in this remarkable development.

Until the outbreak of the Dutch Revolt in 1568, the northern provinces of the Low Countries were part of the Habsburg federation of seventeen provinces. After the Dutch Revolt, the northern provinces became an independent confederation, the Dutch Republic, which covered roughly the area of the present-day Netherlands. During the 1580s the southern provinces, located in what are now Belgium, Luxembourg, and parts of northern France, were reconquered by the Spanish army. But the war lasted for eighty years (1568–1648), during which time the boundaries of the new state shifted, depending on military developments.

Around 1500, the new demonology, making people who committed magical actions into accomplices of the Devil, reached the northern provinces of the Low Countries. But it should be emphasized that extreme views, such as those propagated in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), were never generally accepted there. Until the mid-sixteenth century, influential theologians maintained the traditional scholastic doctrine as articulated by St. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. These scholastics distinguished between explicit and implicit pacts. The former was a capital crime, but the implicit pact was made without realizing its horrible implications and should therefore be discouraged by other, less radical methods. It resulted from superstitious practices and thus was merely a sign system through which humans informed demons about their wishes. Superstitious actions therefore implied a demonic covenant, but human beings could perform them while unaware of this implication. Because the laws of nature bound the Devil, these superstitious acts had at best a limited effect. He could create illusions and make people believe that they had, for instance, flown through the air in the company of other people and demons. All this was sheer illusion, however, and it was sinful to believe in its reality. In learned circles in the Low Countries, the *Canon Episcopi* (ca. 906) remained dominant until at least the mid-sixteenth century.

Before 1500, accusations of witchcraft rarely evolved into open trials in the northern Netherlands but were usually handled as minor offenses. Witchcraft was in theory already perceived as a capital crime, but tradition made it extremely difficult to attain a conviction. The *talio* (retribution) was still valid in this period; therefore, individuals who accused others of witchcraft

ran the risk of being executed if they were unable to produce the necessary evidence. In at least one case (in Kampen 1515), a woman was indeed executed after failing to prove her allegations. Usually, the accused were allowed to buy off legal prosecutions by paying a fine or “composition.” Only after the introduction of the inquisitorial procedure did the authorities start investigations on their own initiative. The Burgundian dukes and their Habsburg successors strongly supported this development and restricted the possibility of resolving such quarrels through compositions. During the first half of the sixteenth century, Roman law finally entered court practice in the Low Countries. In 1554, the Flemish jurist Joos de Damhouder published his *Praxis Rerum Criminalium* (Practice of Criminal Matters), which was almost immediately acknowledged as the best manual for judges and lawyers. It taught them how to interpret the laws of the *Codex Justiniani* (Justinian Code), including those regarding witchcraft. Damhouder viewed witchcraft as a form of *lèse-majesté*.

Another important element was the conviction of many jurists that the prince was responsible for the welfare of his people and therefore should ensure that the conduct of his subjects followed Christian standards. Not only the Habsburgs, but even their lifelong opponent Duke Charles of Gelderland saw it as their duty to fight the power of the Devil and his human followers. But the rapid growth of heresy already provided more demonically inspired offenders than they could punish. Although repeatedly instructing their local representatives to prosecute witches and sometimes even taking the lead in a campaign to wipe out these heinous people, as Duke Charles did in 1514, their major concern was to stem the rising Protestant tide. Obviously, both the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V and his enemy Charles of Gelderland desired the eradication of witchcraft; they wanted their law courts to prosecute witches and punish them if proven guilty. But witchcraft was a difficult crime to prove; there were usually no eyewitnesses to the crime, and material evidence was generally also lacking. The only way to prove the guilt of a suspected witch was by forcing her or him to confess. Torture was almost always needed to extract such a confession, but the usual torture devices were not sufficiently effective. In 1502, for instance, the sheriff of Haarlem arrested a woman who was subsequently tortured. But she managed to withstand the pain, despite the use of “exceptional severity,” and in the end she was released. Only after Dutch hangmen had mastered special techniques, the so-called watching and walking, could they force witches into confession. It took several decades to learn this skill, but by 1550 it was known throughout the country.

In 1547, the countryside of the northeastern province of Groningen witnessed the first major

outbreak of trials, during which twenty women and one man were executed. In the 1550s, a wave of prosecutions affected the region between the Rhine and the Meuse Rivers. The total number of victims cannot be established, since most trials took place in small, semi-autonomous domains, where archives have been badly preserved. In the mid-1560s, especially in 1564, the number of trials rose once again, this time in the western province of Holland. Once again, we cannot establish an exact number of victims, because many relevant sources were lost during the tumult of the Dutch Revolt that began a few years later.

Despite this lack of precision, in the third quarter of the sixteenth century prosecutions seem to have reached their highest point in the northern Netherlands. Although the number of trials once again rose around 1590, this period was probably less bloody. After 1595, sizable persecutions occurred only in regions under Spanish control. In 1613, for instance, a

persecution began in the region around Roermond, a small town today in the southeastern Netherlands, in which at least thirty-nine women and one man were executed. But in 1613, Roermond was under Spanish control. This is also true of the chain of trials in August and September 1595 that swept over northern and central Brabant, ultimately reaching Brussels, taking the lives of twenty-nine women and three men; the Dutch did not conquer northern Brabant until 1629.

Some areas (for instance, the northern province of Friesland) remained completely free of witchcraft trials, and in other regions prosecutions began relatively late. No trials occurred in central or northern Brabant until 1585, the year Antwerp surrendered to the Spanish. The region around Antwerp subsequently suffered an economic collapse and severe subsistence problems. In the densely urbanized and highly developed coastal provinces, popular fear of witchcraft was largely decided by economic conditions. The years 1589 and 1595



Execution of the witch Ann Hendricks in Amsterdam, where witchcraft trials seldom occurred. (TopFoto.co.uk)

witnessed the first trials and executions in this region, but in booming Holland they stopped in that same period. In 1564, for example, the number of trials suddenly rose in Holland—but only in towns that depended on trade and shipping, at a time when the sound was blocked because of a war between Sweden and Denmark, thereby severing connections to the Baltic and blocking the grain supply, called the “mother trade” by the Dutch. In 1563, Brussels banned all imports of English wool, and Queen Elizabeth responded by excluding ships from the Low Countries from English ports. Consequently, the economy of towns that depended on the trade with the Baltic and England collapsed. In 1564, particularly vulnerable places like Amsterdam and its surrounding countryside or the port of Delft suddenly became centers of witchcraft trials.

After 1585, the economic focus of northwestern Europe shifted to Holland and more specifically to Amsterdam, where an unprecedented economic boom began. The relative security of subsistence removed much of the fear of witchcraft. During the seventeenth century, many people immigrated from nearby parts of Germany affected by large-scale witchcraft panics. But none of them pressed for a prosecution of witches in their new domicile. Dutch authorities could now easily repel any attempt to influence their policy in this regard. For instance, when Amsterdam’s Reformed ministers demanded in 1597 that the magistrates should suppress heresy and magic, they received the blunt answer that the Dutch had no desire to replace the Spanish Inquisition with Calvinist intolerance.

In the provinces of Holland and Zeeland, it became virtually impossible in the 1590s to convict someone for witchcraft if the defendant refused to confess freely. In 1593 the High Council, the appellate tribunal for the provinces of Holland and Zeeland, overturned a verdict of the court of Holland and Zeeland to torture two women. The High Council acquitted both women, and, as a result, it became virtually impossible to torture people suspected of witchcraft. A year later the court of Holland and Zeeland ruled in favor of a woman who had been convicted by a lower bench to undergo the swimming test (water ordeal). Its decision was based on advice from the professors of medicine and philosophy of Leiden University, which in turn was based on Johann Weyer’s *De Praestigiiis Daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils, 1563). According to the professors, most women who were accused of witchcraft were melancholics and were therefore likely to be rather fat, which would keep them afloat. They also deemed it conceivable that the Devil would lift them up to prevent them from sinking. It should be noted that both the president of the High Council and the rector of Leiden University

who drafted the university’s advice were members of the Family of Love.

The Low Countries produced very few proponents of the prosecution of witchcraft, with the notable exception of Martín Del Rio. Traditional scholastics like Jacob van Hoogstraten represented an old-fashioned approach to demonology and as such were not founders of a skeptical tradition. However, later opponents from the Low Countries were skeptics who did not believe that the Devil was recruiting an army of human followers. Two prominent early examples of this skepticism are Johann Weyer (born in 1515 as Johan Wier in Grave, a small town not far from Nijmegen) and Cornelis (Cornelius) Loos (born in 1546 in the town of Gouda in Holland). The Erasmianism that dominated the intellectual climate in the Dutch Republic offered perfect surroundings for this skepticism.

There was a market here for vernacular books that denied the reality of the pact and the satanic cult. The first translation of Reginald Scot’s *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) appeared in Leiden in 1609, albeit in an abridged form, which was reprinted in 1637 and 1638. In 1657 a translation of Friedrich Spee’s *Cautio criminalis* (A Warning on Criminal Justice, 1631) was published. It should be added, though, that King James’s *Daemonologie* (1597) also appeared in a Dutch translation in 1603, as did William Perkins’s *A Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft* (1608) in 1611. But the publication of works supporting the prosecution of witches was rather exceptional. A Puritan minister had made these translations of James’s and Perkin’s books, but they were never mentioned approvingly by leading Dutch Puritans; for instance, Gysbertus Voetius (1589–1676), professor of theology at Utrecht University after 1634 and the undisputed leader of Dutch Puritans, taught that it was morally wrong to prosecute somebody for witchcraft. Fully in line with the Dutch intellectual climate was the publication in 1660 of Weyer’s *Opera omnia* (Complete Works). Original Dutch treatises on witchcraft were also meant to erode the fear of witchcraft; for example, Daniel Jonctys’s plea to restrict the use of the rack (1651), Abraham Palingh’s warning against a resumption of the trials (1659), Herman Löher’s ego-document (a memoir, autobiography, diary, or personal correspondence in whose text the author is continuously present) (1676), and of course, Balthasar Bekker’s voluminous rejection of demonic power (1691–1693).

Together with economic prosperity, an Erasmian tolerance that was broadly shared by secular authorities explains why the judicial search for witches ended so much sooner in the Dutch Republic than elsewhere in Europe. The republic was nominally Reformed, but secular authorities usually declined the Calvinist

ministers' appeals to remodel society, if necessary by force. After 1594 the new jurisprudence regarding the crime of witchcraft spread from Holland and Zeeland to the other provinces; the last execution on the territory of the republic took place in 1608 in the town of Gorcum, the final victim a woman who had confessed to the local magistrates on her own initiative that she had committed a pact and had bewitched several people. At least 140 people lost their lives in witchcraft trials in the northern Netherlands, and that number rises to over 200 by including cases after the beginning of the Dutch Revolt in territories then under Spanish control but now part of the Netherlands. Considering that the population of these provinces rose from about 1 million to approximately 1.5 million between 1500 and 1600, the ratio of victims was remarkably low in comparison to other regions.

The early ending of the trials does not imply that belief in the reality of witchcraft also disappeared. Accusations of witchcraft or sorcery were still made long after legal prosecutions had ended (for that matter, they still are), and occasionally secular and ecclesiastical authorities had to deal with them, for example, through slander trials or similar procedures. Lynchings of supposed witches occurred in Amsterdam in 1624, Rotterdam in 1628, and at Huizen, a village southeast of Amsterdam, as late as 1746. People regularly asked church officials for help to undo what they saw as the effects of witchcraft. The only assistance that Reformed ministers could offer was prayers and communal fasting, but Catholic priests disposed of a far wider range of resources. In the 1580s the Catholic Church had crumbled away almost completely, but a small group of priests soon began building a network of clandestine parishes. These priests, the Jesuits especially, soon detected the value of exorcisms as propaganda and exploited this device to the fullest. Annual Jesuit reports to their superior in Brussels contained dozens of accounts about the exorcisms the Fathers applied to undo bewitchings of people, cattle, and houses and scores of other objects; to drive away demons; or to liberate people who had concluded a pact with the Devil.

Before, during, and after the trials, most accused witches were women, charged with a wide variety of destructive activities. However, in the eastern provinces about half of the accused were male. Most were suspected of attacking their enemies' cattle in the guise of werewolves. But in the trials, only a few men were formally charged with being werewolves. After 1610, lower courts were sometimes inclined to take action against supposed witches, but this never led to a conviction. In Holland, for instance, the fear of witchcraft revived again in the 1650s. In 1659, a woman was even formally accused of concluding a pact with the Devil and offering him her children. But in the end she was only put in the pillory and then released. In theory,

witchcraft remained a capital crime until the end of the Old Régime, but after 1608 this legal provision was only used to prosecute cunning folk and soothsayers, who were never put to death but only banished, and sometimes also flogged.

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See also: ACCUSATORIAL PROCEDURE; AMSTERDAM; BEKKER, BALTHASAR; *CANON EPISCOPI*; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; ERASMUS, DESIDERIUS; FAMILY OF LOVE; HOOGSTRATEN, JACOB VAN; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; JONCTYS, DANIEL; LÖHER, HERMAN; LOOS, CORNELIUS; LYNCHING; NETHERLANDS, SOUTHERN; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PALINGH, ABRAHAM; PERKINS, WILLIAM; PURITANISM; ROMAN LAW; SCOT, REGINALD; SKEPTICISM; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; SWIMMING TEST; WATCHING AND WALKING; WEYER, JOHANN.

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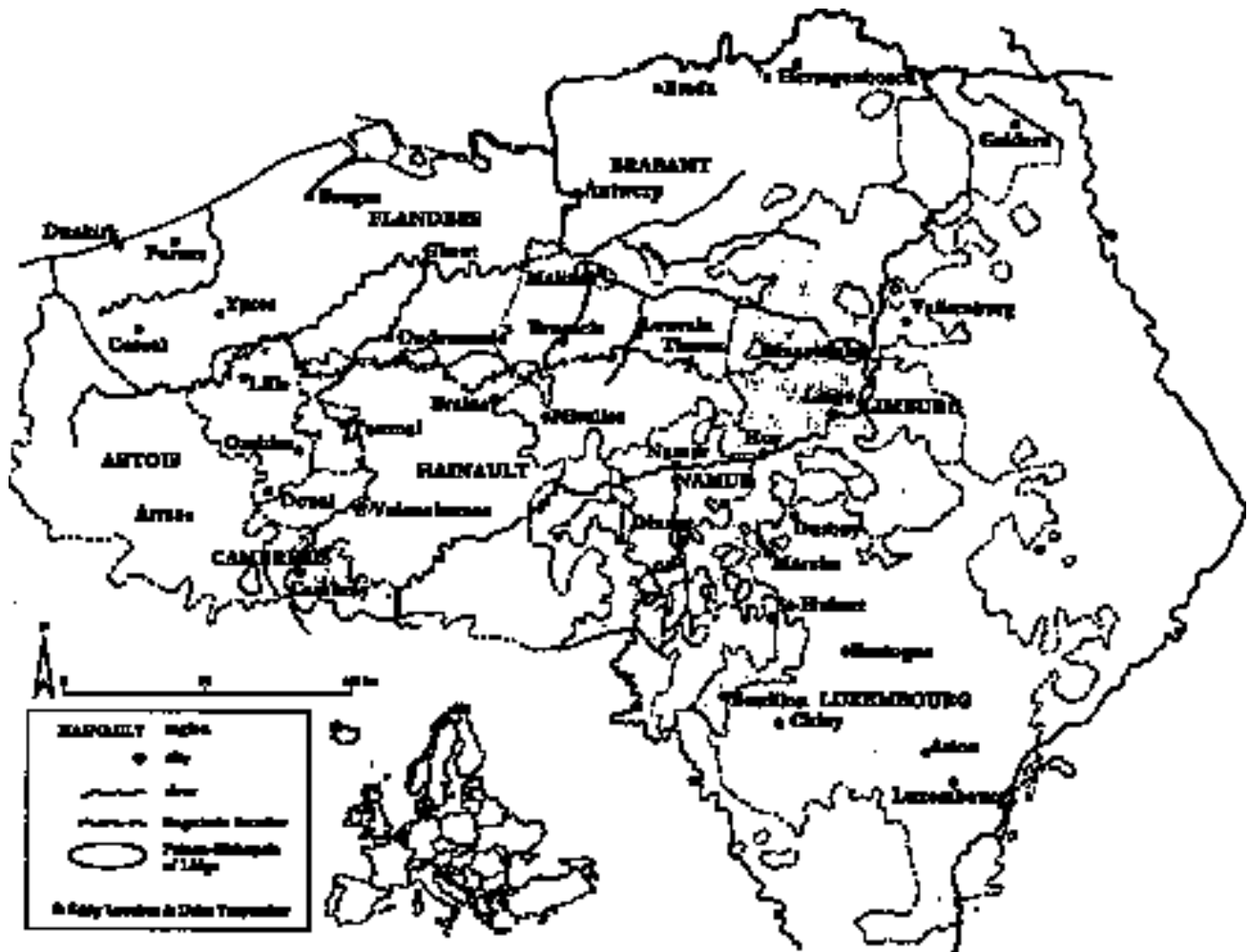
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NETHERLANDS, SOUTHERN

In the historiography of witchcraft, the southern Netherlands (contemporary Belgium), which remained under Habsburg rule until the end of the eighteenth century, has usually been qualified as a region of terrible, centrally organized witch hunts during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in total contrast to its neighbor, the so-called witch-free northern Netherlands. Recent archival research countered this statement and discerns a clear internal difference—chronologically as well as in terms of the intensity of prosecutions—between the Flemish-speaking part and the French- and German-speaking parts of the territory, which in general corresponds to present-day Belgium, minus the prince-bishopric of Liège.

TERRITORY (SEE MAP)

Before we look at the witchcraft trials in the southern Netherlands from 1450 to 1685, it is very



important to fix the territory of that region during this era. The southern (or Habsburg, or Austrian) Netherlands corresponds to the territory of the Low Countries that jurisdictionally did not belong to the Union of Utrecht after 1579. Regions that would later be connected with the Dutch Republic or (after Louis XIV) with France are here considered parts of the southern Netherlands. The territory of the southern Netherlands covered major regions such as Flanders, Artois (with Douai and Arras), Brabant (with Breda, Antwerp, Mechelen, Brussels, Louvain [Leuven], and 's Hertogenbosch), Maastricht, Roermond, Namur, Luxembourg, Limburg, Hainaut (Hainault), Lille-Orchies, Tournai, and Cambrai (Cambay). Recent research has shown that at least 2,564 (and perhaps even 1,000 more) witches were executed in the southern Netherlands during the period 1450–1685 (see Table 1). This number considerably exceeded the 160 witches executed in the northern Netherlands.

WITCHCRAFT TRIALS (1450–1685)

EARLY PHASE (1450–1480)

The ongoing impact of the famous trial of 1459 against the Waldensians in the city of Arras can hardly be overestimated. Fifteen persons were burned at the stake after they admitted to have taken part in obscene Sabbats and to have done homage to a black goat. The ever-increasing sorcery trials within the French-speaking regions south of the linguistic frontier were described in a similar way. Within the sources we find the words *sorcherie* (sorcery) and *vauderie* (Waldensian heresy) as inextricable synonyms: at Nivelles, a woman was banned in 1459 on suspicion of being a *vaudoise ou sorcière* (one who commits sorcery or heresy). Moreover, the crime of sorcery was increasingly mixed with fifteenth-century demonology. The pact with the Devil and his adoration by a sect had become standard items. The short-term consequences of the trials at Arras were substantial: already in 1460, large-scale inquiries were

TABLE N-1: TOTAL OF WITCHES EXECUTED IN THE SOUTHERN NETHERLANDS (1450–1685)

<i>North of the linguistic frontier</i>	<i>South of the linguistic frontier (French-speaking)</i>	<i>South of the linguistic frontier (French- and German-speaking)</i>
County of Flanders: 202	County of Artois, Cambrésis, Lille-Orchies, Tournai: 47	Duchy of Luxembourg: between 2000 and 3000
Duchy of Brabant: 57	County of Hainault: 28	
Limburg: 9	Duchy of Brabant: 31	
Roermond: 46	County of Namur: 144	
	Duchy of Luxembourg: minimum 2000	
in all: 314	in all: minimum 250	in all: between 2000 and 3000

begun at Tournai, Douai, and Cambrai about possible witches. This exaggerated fervor to persecute forced officials to act. Episcopal inquisitors became aware of the fact they must cope with a new phenomenon. Several tracts were published; in 1477 Jean Tinctor had his tract against the Waldensians translated from French into Latin at Bruges. Preachers influenced the common people in the late fifteenth century using demonological interpretations of sorcery and thus articulating the cumulative concept of witchcraft to make them believe that witches belonged to an organized sect serving the Devil. Peculiarly enough, this belief or interpretation of the crime of sorcery made no headway in the Flemish (Dutch)-speaking part north of the linguistic frontier. In the county of Flanders, sorcery was still punished only in combination with poisoning.

FIRST PROSECUTION AND RELATIVE CALM (1510–1560/1570)

In 1495 Ysabeau Packet, of Huy in the prince-bishopric of Liège, was accused of flying to secret nocturnal gatherings with other witches. After a short jurisdictional procedure, she was burned at the stake on suspicion of harmful sorcery. Witch burnings soon spread to the neighboring county of Namur: between 1509 and 1555 at least forty-eight persons were executed at the stake and thirty-one others banished on suspicion of *vaudoisie et sorcellerie* (heresy or sorcery). Also, fortunetellers were severely persecuted. In the duchy of Luxembourg, at least thirty-three people stood trial on suspicion of witchcraft between 1509 and 1579. Fourteen of them—all women—were burned at the stake. In Artois, French-speaking Flanders, and Cambrésis, officers of justice for the first time concentrated intensively on female witches in the years 1510–1530. Also in the French-speaking part of Brabant, witches were executed between 1539 and 1543 at Limal and Jodoigne and twenty years later at Incourt, Villers, and, once again, Jodoigne. The county of Hainaut burned its first witch only in 1549, but between 1559 and 1576 at least fourteen others followed at Braine-le-Comte. After 1520, the county of Flanders intensified its prosecutions of

sorcery. It took until 1532 to burn the first witches—a man and a woman—at the stake on suspicion “of having given themselves to the enemy of Hell” (Vanysacker 1988, 151). The aldermen of the city of Bruges thus became the first in Flemish-speaking southern Netherlands to execute witches by fire. Moreover, it is striking that in the 1530s, six witches were burned or decapitated in Flanders. During the same period, several fortunetellers were reproached for having made a pact with the Devil. In cases of recidivism, no mercy was shown. Nevertheless, there were no mass executions: after 1538, Flemish stakes were extinguished, at least for witches (although large numbers of heretics were burned), for a period of fifty years, except for two executions at Oudenaarde (1554) and Furnes (1567).

The Flemish-speaking part of the duchy of Brabant avoided witch hunting for a long time. Of course there are accusations of sorcery, but the custom of buying off prosecutions from the officers of justice generally prevented trials. Real trials only started at the end of the sixteenth century at Kempen, ‘s Hertogenbosch, and Malines, as well in Inner and Northern Brabant. Two exceptions were Tienen, where seven women were burned from 1552 to 1554 and 1560 to 1564, and Kasterlee, where a woman was tortured to death during a witchcraft trial in 1565.

SECOND AND GREATER WITCH HUNT (1570–1685)

After a period of relative calm, which lasted longer in some regions than in others, around 1570 new prosecutions based on cumulative witchcraft began. Once again the regions south of the linguistic frontier, and especially the German-speaking territorial jurisdictions of the duchy of Luxembourg, were the pioneers. Recent research has claimed that there were around 2,500–3,000 witchcraft trials in the duchy of Luxembourg between 1560 and 1683; at least 2,000 ended with the execution of the accused. The jurisdictions of Bitburg, Arlon, Gievenmacher, Luxembourg, and Remich were especially zealous. The French-speaking regions of Luxembourg (Bastogne, Chiny, Durbuy, Virton, Marche, Saint-Hubert, and Bouillon) reached their

highest point of persecutions between 1615 and 1630. War stopped most persecutions after 1630, except at Sugny, where eleven trials were held between 1657 and 1661. The last witch of the duchy of Luxembourg and of the whole southern Netherlands was executed in Anloy (near Bouillon) in 1685. Besides the county of Namur, where almost 100 witches died at the stake between 1560 and 1646, the French-speaking part of the duchy of Brabant also had its executions, especially at Nivelles and Genappe, with a minimum of twenty witches executed between 1572 and 1587 and another eight between 1594 and 1601. The county of Hainaut had its prosecutions: at Braine-le-Comte, there were twenty-eight trials between 1581 and 1613, with thirteen women burned at the stake. There were more sporadic prosecutions until 1640, the year in which the eighty-seven-year-old Anna Faulconnier died in jail.

Artois, Lille-Orchies, and Cambrésis had two peaks, in 1590–1600 and 1610–1620. After a period of relative calm, the stakes were once again lit in the decade 1630–1640. For twenty years, only female witches suffered, but from 1650 to 1660 many male witches were especially prosecuted. In the decade 1660–1670, witches again were exclusively female. In all, at least 245 people (203 women and 42 men) were prosecuted for witchcraft between 1550 and 1700. How many died is unknown, because the sources containing verdicts are lacking; we know only that at least 17 men and 30 women were executed. In the Artesian villages of Oisy and Arleux, there were at least 8 (perhaps 13) executions from 1612 to 1614, some of them Cistercian nuns at the abbey of Oisy-le-Verger. In Cambrésis, the villages of Quiévy, Bazuel, Rieux, Fressies, and Hem-Lenglet were especially known for their witch hunts. In addition, villages and cities such as Douai, Bouvignies (in 1679), Valenciennes, Bouchain, and Saint-Amand are to be mentioned.

North of the linguistic frontier, the actual witch hunts began only in 1589. In the duchy of Brabant, we find both the execution of Cathelyne van den Bulcke at Lier and trials against women and girls at Breda and 's Hertogenbosch, all in 1589. The county of Flanders opened in 1589 with the burning at the stake of Lievine Morreeuws in Furnes. For Brabant, Peelland, and Maastricht, the witch craze seems to have been relatively limited until around 1612, with forty-two executions. The year 1595 was especially bloody: from June until September, twenty-nine women and three men were executed in the Flemish-speaking part of Brabant. In the county of Flanders, the persecutions lasted until 1628, with at least 161 executions. The so-called *Westhoek*—with Furnes, Nieupoort, Diksmuide, Sint-Winoksbergen, Dunkirk, Hondschote, Broekburg, Cassel, and Ypres—was the principal home of Flemish witches. Such great cities as Bruges (in 1595) and Ghent (in 1601) also had their “witch years.” The region of Roermond, belonging to the southern Netherlands, had its witch hunt in 1613:

forty executions, with three more following in 1622. In the duchies of Limburg and Overmaas, Eysden had seven executions between 1609 and 1613, and Valkenburg had two executions in 1620.

Around 1630–1646, we see a new flash of prosecutions north of the linguistic frontier. Bruges and Malines had four and three executions, respectively, in 1634–1635 and 1642. The most striking characteristic of the witchcraft prosecutions in the county of Flanders is their late end: Nieupoort still had four prosecutions between 1650 and 1652; Olsene two in 1661; Heestert three between 1659 and 1667; and Belsele burned the last witch in Flanders in 1684. In all, there were at least twenty-three northern executions after 1650.

Within the southern Netherlands we must distinguish between the prosecutions north and south of the linguistic frontier. Namur, Luxembourg, Lille-Orchies, Artois, and Cambrésis had their first serious hunts during the first half of the sixteenth century, immediately followed by Hainaut, but the county of Flanders—without forgetting a first phase of prosecutions around 1530–1540—and the Flemish-speaking part of the duchy of Brabant still awaited their first big trials. The real witch hunt north of the linguistic frontier started only around 1589, lasting until 1612 (Brabant) or 1628 (Flanders); a second cycle began around 1630–1645, and—surely for Flanders—the last executions came after 1650. North of the linguistic frontier there were possibly some 308 witches executed, with Flanders, Brabant, Roermond, and Limburg accounting for 202, 57, 46, and 9 witches, respectively. The essential difference between the Flemish-speaking regions of the southern Netherlands and the northern Netherlands lay more in the chronology than in the intensity of witchcraft prosecutions.

A totally different situation existed south of the linguistic frontier: there witchcraft persecutions began much earlier and were much more violent. After an early first phase, most regions experienced a second peak from 1570 until 1630. Some of them, certainly Artois and Cambrésis, continued their witch hunts deep into the seventeenth century. Nevertheless Namur, with 270 trials and 144 executions between 1509 and 1646, and especially the German-speaking parts of Luxembourg, with between 2,500 and 3,000 trials and at least 2,000 executions between 1560 and 1683, were by far the worst witch-hunting regions in the southern Netherlands. Their proximity to the Trier of Archbishop Johann von Schöneburg, who ordered hundreds of executions between 1581 and 1591, and the direct influence of the witchcraft tract of his suffragan Peter Binsfeld surely influenced the attitude of Namur and Luxembourg toward the crime of witchcraft.

CONCLUSIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

With the exception of some isolated cases, trials in which the pact between a “cumulative” witch and the

Devil stood central were all held in the southern Netherlands before local secular benches of aldermen or feudal courts, not before episcopal courts or central bodies like the Council of Flanders or the Council of Brabant. Witchcraft trials followed normal criminal procedure, but the judges, influenced by demonology, accepted the combination of facts and especially the *punctum diabolicum* (the Devil's spot or mark) as indications of guilt, which permitted arrests, torture, and even condemnations. Death by fire, the typical punishment for witchcraft, necessarily had to be preceded by the suspect's voluntary confession.

If 80 percent of the witches executed in the European witch craze were female, the southern Netherlands was no exception. In Flanders, exactly 80 percent (162 of 202) of those executed were women. In the Flemish-speaking part of Brabant this figure rose to 94 percent. In Hainault, *all* executed witches were women, and in Namur women constituted an overwhelming 92 percent. Only two regions showed a somewhat different picture: in Luxembourg, according to Marie-Sylvie Dupont-Bouchat's now-disputed figures, "only" 75 percent of the executed witches were female, and in the region around Cambrai and Artois, only thirty of forty-seven known cases (64 percent) were women. This figure certainly has something to do with a relative scarcity of sources.

Recent publications have shown that despite excellent historical research, many fallacies persist about the witch hunt in the southern Netherlands. Thus, the statement that the central government decrees of July 20, 1592, and November 8, 1595, greatly stimulated the witch hunt, has become out of date. Those decrees did not mention cumulative witchcraft, and the central government, on the contrary, was reacting against excesses by local benches of aldermen. Also, the impact of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) on the prosecuting authorities in the southern Netherlands has been greatly exaggerated. Undoubtedly, the *Disquisitiones Magicae libri sex* (Six Books on Investigations into Magic, 1599/1600) of the Jesuit Martín Del Rio had far more impact on the witch hunt in his native region. It was this Catholic encyclopedia on witchcraft and on legal procedures in witchcraft trials, first published at Louvain, that made the theories of the *Malleus* known in the southern Netherlands a century after its publication.

In the Netherlands, witchcraft was far from exclusively a rural phenomenon. It began at Arras and spread to many large and small cities: Bruges, Malines, Ghent, Louvain, Antwerp, Breda, Roermond, Lille, Douai, Valenciennes, Nivelles, Bastogne, Durbuy, and Bouillon. Moreover, the influence of the learned city aldermen, who were well informed about the cumulative concept of witchcraft, which they studied in demonological tracts, was considerable. A letter from

the aldermen of Bruges dated 1596 to their "ignorant" colleagues at Courtrai demonstrated this point. These learned aldermen, often humanists, spread the new cumulative concept of witchcraft throughout the region. An analysis of the private libraries of the aldermen of Bruges shows that they were acquainted not only with the *Malleus* or with the "primitive" demonology of their fellow townsman Joos de Damhouder (1507–1581), but also with the later demonological tracts of Paulo (Paulus) Grillando (Grillandus), Jean Bodin, Nicolas Rémy, and Del Rio. This presence of the learned witchcraft concept in Bruges can also be found in the torture sessions and in the formulation of verdicts by the magistrates. In the spread of modern witchcraft concepts and practices (e.g., pricking for a *punctum diabolicum* on the body of the witch), an active role was also played by the touring executioners. In the wake of these touring professionals, one could draw a chronology of witchcraft trials within several regions. Biographical studies on main figures (witches, aldermen, and executioners) could also be illuminating.

DRIES VANYSACKER

See also: ARRAS; BINSFELD, PETER; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DEVIL'S MARK; EXECUTIONERS; EXECUTIONS; FEMALE WITCHES; LUXEMBOURG, DUCHY OF; TINCTOR, JOHANN; TRIER, ELECTORATE OF; URBAN WITCHCRAFT; VAUDOIS (WALDENSIANS).

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NEW ENGLAND

Sixty-one trials for witchcraft are known to have taken place in seventeenth-century New England, in addition to those that occurred during the 1692 Salem witch hunt (Godbeer 1992, 235–237). The notorious Salem trials have often distracted attention away from the many other prosecutions for witchcraft that occurred throughout the seventeenth century in New England, from the 1638 indictment of Jane Hawkins in Boston to the 1697 acquittal of Winifred Benham and her daughter in Connecticut. Some formal complaints never came to trial, and many suspicions were never recorded but lurked nonetheless in the minds of townsfolk and villagers, warping their interactions with neighbors or acquaintances whom they suspected to be witches. Belief in the reality of witchcraft and fear of those who might be using occult powers to harm their enemies were part of everyday life in colonial New England. Prosecutions for witchcraft were the tip of a cultural iceberg.

In New England, a witchcraft trial generally took place only after a gradual and often lengthy process during which local suspicions had accumulated and hardened into conviction that a particular individual was indeed a witch. These suspicions resulted from the convergence of otherwise inexplicable misfortunes with problematic personal relationships. Puritan ministers encouraged their flocks to see individual suffering as a punishment from God for sin and inadequate faith. But in common with the English and other Europeans, colonists often preferred to explain illness or mishap for which there was no clear explanation in terms of malign

occult forces that were apparently being wielded against them by their enemies. To blame a particular incident on witchcraft involved holding a specific individual responsible for one’s misfortune. People today who seek external explanations for suffering and misadventure often blame impersonal forces such as corporate power or oppressive governmental agencies, as befits the largely impersonal nature of our society. Premodern men and women were much more inclined to point the finger at individuals, reflecting the intensely personalized environment in which they lived. Most New England communities contained no more than a few hundred adult residents, so that each individual interacted with neighbors in a wide variety of contexts. We deal regularly with all sorts of people who are otherwise unknown to us, but colonial New Englanders lived in communities where “every social transaction was personal in the fullest sense” (Demos 1982, 312).

Most allegations in witchcraft trials related to mysterious incidents that people explained in personal terms. Accuser and accused were usually neighbors with a history of disagreement. The accused had often requested a loan or gift, perhaps of food or a household implement; the accuser had refused but then felt guilty for having done so, especially since communitarian values were accorded great significance among early New Englanders. The person who had refused the original request now shifted guilt onto the aggrieved neighbor by blaming him or her for subsequent misfortunes such as a child’s illness, the sudden death of livestock, or the inexplicable spoiling of food. The assumption underlying most accusations was that a person who felt aggrieved had resorted to witchcraft as a form of revenge.

There was no institutional outlet for the tension and hostility resulting from such disagreements. If a neighbor trespassed upon someone else’s property or committed assault and battery, a law had been broken and the malefactor would be dealt with accordingly; but refusing to give a neighbor food or lend a tool was not a crime, so that the animosity that resulted could not be expressed or mediated directly through civil or criminal proceedings. Allegations of witchcraft provided an indirect outlet for feelings of guilt and hostility that resulted from confrontations of this kind. Such allegations made good sense in a culture that habitually explained human experience in both supernatural and intensely personal terms. The stress laid by Puritan ministers upon the ubiquity of evil and of temptations to commit evil doubtless fostered suspicions that witchcraft lay behind many misfortunes.

Not all New Englanders were equally vulnerable to accusations of witchcraft. When people feared that they had been bewitched and sought to identify the malefactor, they often blamed men and women in their local communities who already had a reputation for occult

skill. These individuals (referred to by contemporaries as “cunning folk”) were known for their expertise in magical divination and also healing techniques that combined spells or charms with simple herbal remedies. Though ministers condemned any such activities as dependent upon the Devil’s assistance, many colonists were less concerned about issues of causation and valued the services provided by cunning men and women. Yet popular belief that occult power could serve both benevolent and malevolent purposes placed such practitioners in an ambiguous and vulnerable position: cunning folk might use their skills to harm as well as to help their neighbors and could easily become the target of suspicion if a disagreement in which they had been involved was followed by a mysterious stroke of bad fortune that befell the other party. Healers were especially susceptible to accusation if their patients grew sicker instead of recovering.

Women known for their “cunning” were much more likely than men to be accused of witchcraft. The power wielded by cunning folk was potentially dangerous whether in the hands of a man or a woman, but occult skill was especially threatening if the practitioner was female: the aura of power surrounding cunning folk contradicted gender norms that placed women in subordinate positions. Neither belief in the efficacy of folk magic nor its practice were gender-specific: men as well as women resorted to and functioned as cunning folk. Yet suspicions that magical skill had been used for malicious ends were much more likely to be directed against female practitioners. Most accused cunning folk were women. Their prosecution testified not only to the ambiguous place that occult practitioners occupied within New England communities but also to specifically gendered fears.

An overwhelming majority (around four-fifths) of those New Englanders tried for witchcraft were women. As in old England, roughly half of the New England men charged with this crime were married or otherwise close to accused women: they were, in other words, guilty by association (Karlsen 1987, 47–48). Except in a few regions, such as New France and Iceland, witchcraft was perceived on both sides of the Atlantic as a primarily female phenomenon. Puritan ministers did not teach that women were by nature more evil than men, but they did see them as weaker and thus more susceptible to sinful impulses. Clergymen reminded New England congregations that it was Eve who first gave way to Satan and then seduced Adam, when she should have continued to serve his moral welfare in obedience to God; all women inherited that potential for collusion with the Devil from their mother Eve. Yet some women were much more likely than others to be accused of witchcraft. Throughout the seventeenth century, women became especially vulnerable to such allegations if they were seen as challenging their prescribed

place in a gendered hierarchy that Puritans held to be ordained by God.

Women who fulfilled their allotted roles as wives, mothers, household mistresses, and church members without threatening assumptions about appropriate female comportment were respected and praised as handmaidens of the Lord, but those whose circumstances or behavior seemed to disrupt social norms could easily become branded as the servants of Satan. Especially vulnerable were women who had passed menopause and thus no longer served the purpose of procreation, women who were widowed and so neither fulfilled the role of wife nor had a husband to protect them from malicious accusations, and women who had inherited or stood to inherit property in violation of expectations that wealth would be transmitted from man to man. Women who seemed unduly aggressive and contentious were also more likely to be accused; conduct that would not have struck contemporaries as particularly egregious in men seemed utterly inappropriate in women. Behavior or circumstances that seemed disorderly could easily become identified as diabolical and associated with witchcraft: the Devil had, after all, led a rebellion against God’s rule in heaven.

Once New Englanders became convinced that a particular person was a witch and had accumulated sufficient evidence to justify a prosecution, they lodged a formal complaint with the authorities and so initiated a criminal prosecution. The penalty for witchcraft throughout the New England colonies was death, as laid down by Scripture. Yet convincing oneself and one’s neighbors of an individual’s guilt was not the same as convincing a court. Of the sixty-one known prosecutions for witchcraft in seventeenth-century New England, excluding the Salem witch hunt, sixteen at most (perhaps only fourteen) resulted in conviction and execution, a rate of just over one-quarter (26.2 percent). Four of these individuals confessed, which made the court’s job much easier. If they are omitted, the conviction rate falls to just under one-fifth (Godbeer 1992, 158).

New England laws defined witchcraft in theological terms, demanding proof of diabolical allegiance. Yet whereas the Puritan authorities depicted witches as heretics and servants of the Devil, ordinary men and women were more inclined to think about witchcraft as a practical problem: believing that their misfortunes were due to witchcraft, they wanted to know who the witch was, and they wanted her punished. The evidence presented in witch cases rarely made any mention of the Devil. That disjunction between legal requirements and the nature of most popular testimony led to acquittal in most cases. That deponents did not adapt their testimony to fit legal criteria suggests that ordinary colonists were very much focused upon practical threats to their safety when thinking about witchcraft and also that at least some people were much less thoroughly schooled

in official ideology than persistent stereotypes of early New Englanders would suggest.

Persons accused of witchcraft in seventeenth-century New England, excluding the Salem outbreak, were less likely to be convicted and executed than their counterparts across the Atlantic. The English statutes enacted against witchcraft in 1542 and 1563 had defined the crime as a hostile act rather than as heresy, so that the preoccupation of popular depositions with practical harm was less problematic. Continental law generally defined witchcraft in theological terms, but in many European countries, the courts used torture to extract the kinds of evidence that would justify conviction for diabolical heresy. The New England authorities, operating under English jurisdiction, had no legal recourse to torture when questioning defendants in witchcraft cases. (The Salem witch hunt was the only occasion on which New England courts gathered extensive evidence of diabolical allegiance; it was also the only occasion on which the authorities used psychological pressure and physical torture, illegally, to extract a large number of confessions.)

The depositions given against New England's accused witches generally fell into one of four categories. Most frequently, villagers and townfolk described quarrels with the accused individual that had been followed by misfortune or illness for which there was apparently no natural explanation; the witnesses claimed that the alleged witch had afflicted them as a direct consequence of these arguments. Second, deponents claimed that the accused had a reputation for skill as a fortuneteller or healer; this established that the accused had occult powers that, it was implied, had also been deployed for malign purposes. Third, witnesses described having used counter magical techniques such as boiling the urine of a bewitched child; if a neighbor suffered an analogous injury or was drawn inexplicably to the house in which the experiment was taking place, that information was offered up to the court as incriminating testimony. And finally, neighbors of the accused would describe generally suspicious behavior, such as extraordinary and perhaps superhuman strength.

These depositions show beyond any doubt the fear that alleged witches aroused among their neighbors, but they were mostly unconvincing from a legal perspective. Magistrates and the learned ministers whom they consulted during many of these cases dismissed testimony relating "strange accidents" following quarrels as "slender and uncertain grounds" for conviction (Hall 1999, 348). Clergymen denounced counter magic as "going to the Devil for help against the Devil" (Godbeer 1992, 81) and warned that Satan was a malicious liar, which hardly encouraged magistrates to rely upon testimony describing counter magical experiments. They were occasionally willing to conclude that divination or other magical practices that ministers

condemned as diabolical proved collusion between the accused witch and the Devil, but even here magistrates were mostly reluctant to convict unless there was explicit mention of the Devil in a confession or hostile depositions.

New England magistrates were ready and willing to convict and execute accused witches, should the evidence against them prove convincing. But as in their handling of prosecutions for other capital crimes, the courts refused to convict unless the evidence satisfied rigorous standards of proof, which meant either a voluntary confession or at least two independent witnesses to an incident demonstrating the individual's guilt. It was difficult enough to secure two witnesses for sexual offenses that carried the death penalty, but the challenge was compounded when dealing with an invisible crime involving alleged collusion with supernatural agents. Only in a minority of cases were New England magistrates convinced that the evidence before them satisfied the established criteria for conviction. At other trials, their fastidious adherence to evidentiary standards resulted in acquittal. Judges sometimes pronounced accused witches to be "suspiciously guilty" but "not legally guilty" of the alleged crime (Godbeer 1992, 173). In some cases, they overturned jury verdicts, rejecting the instincts of local jurymen who were convinced of the accused person's guilt.

The neighbors and enemies of accused witches who had given what they considered to be damning testimony were often infuriated by the reluctance of magistrates to treat their depositions as legally compelling. Sometimes they would confer with each other, gather new evidence against the acquitted individual, and then renew legal charges. Three individuals were each prosecuted on three separate occasions; another five appeared in court twice on charges of witchcraft. All these cases resulted in acquittal. Repeat prosecutions expressed unshaken belief in an individual's guilt and also dissatisfaction with the courts' handling of witchcraft cases. That dissatisfaction sometimes resulted in extralegal retaliation: Mary Webster of Hadley, Massachusetts, was brutally assaulted in 1684, a year after her acquittal, when townfolk became convinced that she had again bewitched one of her neighbors.

As the difficulty of securing a legal conviction for witchcraft became increasingly apparent, New Englanders became less and less inclined to initiate legal prosecutions against suspected witches: there were 19 witchcraft trials during the 1660s, but only 6 during the 1670s and 8 during the 1680s. That dramatic decline was not due to a lessening fear of witches, as would become clear in 1692, when official encouragement of witchcraft accusations in and around Salem Village unleashed a deluge of allegations. The witch hunt of 1692, which resulted in over 150 arrests and 19

executions, was atypical in its scale and intensity. Yet the fears and beliefs that underlay it merely expressed in extreme form assumptions and anxieties that were deeply rooted throughout New England culture.

The damaging controversy over the Salem court's reliance upon problematic testimony that led to the halt of the trials in the fall of 1692 reaffirmed and intensified judicial concerns regarding evidentiary issues. These combined with embarrassment as well as sincere distress over the problematic convictions of that year to discourage future prosecutions. Yet an end to witchcraft trials in New England by the end of the century did not signify an end to belief in and fear of witches. New Englanders continued to use counter-magic against suspected witchcraft throughout the eighteenth century and occasionally assaulted individuals whom they believed to be witches. In July 1787, as the Constitutional Convention was meeting in Philadelphia to design a new system of government that would embody Enlightenment principles, a mob outside in the city streets lynched a woman who was believed to be a witch.

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See also: ACQUITTALS; BERMUDA; COUNTERMAGIC; CUNNING FOLK; EVE; FEMALE WITCHES; GENDER; OCCULT; PERSONALITY OF WITCHES; PURITANISM; SALEM; TRIALS; WITNESSES.

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NEW FRANCE

During the seventeenth century, when witchcraft was a serious concern for the elites of Europe and New

England, New France was a recently established, tiny community. In 1660, there were only around 3,000 Europeans in Quebec. This number rose to around 10,000 by the end of the century—only one-eighth of New England's population at this point. The largest cities in New France were small towns by French standards, with Montreal at 500 and Quebec City at 800 in 1663.

The French were not eager to emigrate. Both the severe weather and the fear of attacks from Indians discouraged immigration to New France. Many who voyaged to Quebec did not stay, so the colony's early population was especially transient and unstable. This was different from old France, where towns and villages had existed for centuries and most people stayed in their communities. Those who came to New France were mostly young, unattached males from the Paris region and northwestern France, who were more urban in origins than the mainly rural French population.

This frontier community imported much traditional folklore and culture, which included a strong role for the Devil, magic, and supernatural occurrences. One popular legend was the *Chasse Galerie*, which was a wild ride across the night sky by souls destined for damnation. This was a widely diffused European legend, with many local variants; in Quebec, the hell-bound riders used canoes rather than horses. Belief in the presence and power of the Devil was widespread. The inhabitants of the Ile d'Orléans, for example, feared that, if someone were dying at night, the Devil would intercept the friend or relative who went in search of a priest, so that he could gain possession of the soul of the person who died without absolution. If possible, they would send two carriages for the priest, expecting that at least one could get through. In addition, any unusual climactic condition like comets or strange sounds could be regarded as a diabolical portent.

Religious authorities, perhaps trying to get more priests dispatched to the colony, complained about the ignorance of the settlers as well as their unwillingness to attend Mass or pay their tithes. Still, Catholicism lay at the core of life in New France, with the same mixture of folklore and Christianity that flourished in old France. A church at Beaupré near Quebec City, dedicated in 1658 to Ste. Anne, soon became a scene of miraculous cures. In 1700, after a remarkable cure, Jean Salois hung his crutches on the chapel wall, beginning a tradition that persists to the present.

Unlike the situation in Europe and New England in this period, New France produced few cases involving witchcraft that were serious enough to come to the attention of the courts. In 1658, a disappointed suitor, René Besnard, cast a spell on the marriage of his former sweetheart by tying ritual knots in a string. This *nouement de l'aiguillette* (tying a knot, a ligature), widely practiced and feared in early modern France, was a traditional way of causing male impotence. The couple,

frightened of the spell, could not consummate their marriage, and accused Besnard of causing “perpetual impotence . . . by *malefice*.” The court found him guilty, imposing a heavy fine and banishing him from Montréal. Both secular and religious authorities took this sort of spell casting seriously: the bishop of Montreal annulled the marriage. When both parties eventually remarried and, between them, had twenty-five children, it only confirmed the reality of the spell.

Another serious case, a few years later, involved another disappointed suitor. Daniel Vuil (or Will), a converted Protestant, was accused of causing the demonic possession of Barbe Hallay, who had rejected his marriage proposal. She was brought to Quebec City, where she was exorcized and freed of her demons through the care of the saintly Mother Catherine of Saint Augustine and the intervention of the martyred Father Jean de Brebeuf. Vuil was tried, convicted, and executed—though it is not clear whether it was primarily for blasphemy, for causing Barbe’s possession, or for trading brandy with the natives.

In 1685, Jean Campagnard was charged with several instances of making people ill through witchcraft, including a young woman who refused his advances. The local court found him guilty, but the colony’s appellate court, the Sovereign Council in Quebec City, established in 1663 as the equivalent of a French *parlement* (sovereign judicial court), overturned his conviction. These few cases do not compare to the record of New England, where sixty-one witchcraft trials took place and at most 36 witches were executed.

Several factors contributed to the remarkable paucity of witchcraft trials in New France. For one thing, by the time a viable community was established in Quebec, the French judicial elites were punishing very few people accused of witchcraft. Ordinary people still believed that witches were real and dangerous and accused their neighbors of trying to harm them by diabolical means, but the French judicial system was not responding strongly to these concerns.

Crucial differences also separated the social and demographic structures of New France and old France. Although most of its people lived by farming, Quebec’s inhabitants did not replicate the society of French agricultural villages. The settlements in Quebec stretched along the Saint Lawrence River between Quebec City and Montréal, with properties averaging around 90 acres. Houses were built close to the river on each property, around 300 meters apart. Although conditions were very harsh, within a few years these *habitant* (resident) farmers were substantially better off than their French counterparts.

Most early immigrants to New France were male. In 1660, New France had over six single men for every available European woman. The royal government responded by sending shiploads of women to the

colonies to marry and multiply. Not surprisingly, women, even widows with children, married with ease in Quebec. Marriages took place at much earlier ages, which tended to make families larger as well. Isolated older women were often accused of witchcraft in Europe, but this group did not exist in New France. The basic social unit there was the family farmstead, in which all the members worked together to clear the land, grow crops, and defend themselves against Indian attacks.

In Europe, most witchcraft accusations were made against women, supported by a long tradition of misogyny, but both old and New France emphasized male witchcraft. Quebec’s three most serious cases all involved accusations against single men who had been disappointed in their attempts to marry. This was clearly the result of the unusual gender ratios in New France, where patterns of settlement and a shortage of women produced a society that, at least in its early stages, differed significantly from the old village communities of Europe. These factors apparently underlay the extraordinary scarcity of formal witchcraft trials in New France.

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See also: FRANCE; IMPOTENCE, SEXUAL; MALE WITCHES; NEW ENGLAND.

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NEW GRANADA

The New Kingdom of Granada (Nuevo Rein de Granada), corresponding to the modern states of Colombia and Venezuela and parts of Panama and Ecuador, was characterized by an especially high incidence of witchcraft trials in comparison with other Spanish American jurisdictions. In 1547 an *audiencia*, or high court, was established at the capital Santa Fe de Bogotá. The first archbishop came in 1553 to Santa Fe to assume the episcopal inquisitorial jurisdiction. From the foundation of the tribunal at Lima in 1570, New Granada was subject to the Peruvian Inquisition until September 26, 1610, when the third tribunal in Spanish America was installed in the city of Cartagena with jurisdiction over northern South America, Central America, and the Caribbean Islands. At the end of the seventeenth century, the Cartagena tribunal declined and was abolished after the proclamation of

independence in 1811 and again in 1821 before the final achievement of independence of South America in 1824. Witchcraft trials occurred during the whole period of colonial rule, with peaks in the decades from 1610 to 1650 and at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Witchcraft, sorcery, and superstitions constituted the bulk of cases registered by the tribunal at Cartagena.

Witchcraft beliefs were widespread at all levels of New Granadan colonial society. In the period 1614–1690, 188 cases of superstitions were tried by the Cartagena Inquisition, of which 58 were witchcraft trials (Henningesen 1994, 19). Female defendants far outnumbered their male counterparts. After 1571, the indigenous population was exempt from the inquisitorial jurisdiction. Nevertheless, several witchcraft cases involving Amerindians can be traced even after the installation of the Cartagena tribunal. During the colonial period, a multiplicity of jurisdictions characterized the territory of the Cartagena Inquisition. In distant regions, both ecclesiastical and secular tribunals pronounced sentences in witchcraft cases. Also, the inquisitors were generally not very concerned with the superstitions of the poor, the Amerindians, or the slave population, even though the great majority of witchcraft accusations revolved around individuals of African descent. Often the accusations came from other members of the African population. Nonetheless, the ideas on witchcraft as recorded in trial documents correspond mainly to the European model of witches.

Witchcraft beliefs in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century New Granada included characteristic elements of both the European popular and demonological traditions: the witches were thought to be able to transform themselves into animals, fly through the air, and cause sickness and death through maleficent magic. Defendants reportedly took the shape of tigers, snakes, cats, and birds to fly at night. While their body remained lifeless at home, as if dead, their “soul” went through the air to suck the blood of children and to attend assemblies, where the witches venerated the Devil by kissing his anus. The tribunal at Cartagena was founded at a time when the *Suprema* (the supreme council of the Inquisition) in Madrid had ordered extreme caution to be exercised in dealing with witchcraft accusations. In periods of crisis, however, such as in the 1630s, the inquisitors at Cartagena gave full credit to the accusations. First, two women were arrested, and later, as the witch hunt spread throughout the province, a great number of people were imprisoned. Finally, two women of African descent were sentenced to die at the stake, but the *Suprema* ordered a copy of the documents to be brought to Spain and eventually revoked the sentence of the Cartagena tribunal. In the resulting auto-da-fé (act of

the faith), held in 1634, twenty-one witches were punished, mostly by scourging.

IRIS GAREIS

See also: INQUISITION, SPANISH; NEW SPAIN; PERU; POPULAR BELIEFS IN WITCHES; SABBAT; SPAIN; SUPERSTITION.

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NEW SPAIN

In New Spain, witchcraft cases were subject to the jurisdiction of the Inquisition. Following the Spanish conquest of Mexico in 1520, a monastic and later an episcopal Inquisition was introduced in the vice-royalty of New Spain; until 1570, all sectors of the population were subject to them. In 1571, a branch of the Spanish Holy Office was installed at Mexico City with jurisdiction over Central America, the Spanish dependencies in North America, and the Philippines. It was not abolished until 1820. During its most active period, from 1571 to 1700, it investigated about 2,000 cases (Alberro 1988, 195), including a considerable number of sorcery and witchcraft accusations. Amerindians were exempt from the jurisdiction of the Mexican Inquisition but remained under the control of ecclesiastical courts after 1571. The similarity of procedures that characterized these institutions soon led to a confusion of competencies and jurisdictions. Other evidence indicates that monastic and secular tribunals, especially in distant rural areas, sometimes acted on their own, independently of the Mexican Inquisition, but did not always keep records of their witchcraft cases.

In the course of this long period, witchcraft trials underwent substantial changes in New Spain, due to a changing assessment of the crime of witchcraft. Witchcraft and sorcery were severely punished before 1570, but after the installation of the Inquisitorial tribunal, they were no longer considered heresy, but only superstition. With regard to the nature of witchcraft,

trial documents suggested that in New Spain, the great majority of witchcraft and sorcery cases essentially involved individuals serving individual clients, either by magically curing people or inflicting harm on them.

From 1540 to 1700, the Mexican Inquisition tried 144 people for “superstition” (Henningesen 1994, 10, n. 1). No absolute data are available for the eighteenth century; but there is evidence of 60 cases qualified as “superstitious healing” being investigated by the Mexican Holy Office from 1701 to 1806, including 10 cases classified as sorcery (*hechicería*), and 5 as maleficent witchcraft (*brujería*) (Quezada 1989, cuadro 8). In addition, another source lists 125 different cases instituted by the Inquisition during the same period, including 20 cases of harmful witchcraft, 39 cases of sorcery, and 66 for other forms of superstition (Aguirre Beltrán 1963, 333–376). Evidently, more witchcraft cases were tried by the Inquisition in New Spain during the eighteenth century than in the seventeenth century, once all cases of superstition are included.

WITCHCRAFT TRIALS BY ECCLESIASTICAL INQUISITIONS

During the period before 1571, a peak in the frequency of trials occurred from 1536 to 1543, when Bishop Juan de Zumárraga served as apostolic inquisitor in Mexico. He conducted at least 152 trials, among which 23 dealt with accusations of sorcery and superstition (Greenleaf 1961, 14). The historical documents from these trials enable us to distinguish the witchcraft beliefs reflected in trials of Europeans, Africans, or the mestizo populations from those instituted against Amerindians. Accusations against the first group closely resembled the “superstitions” dealt with by other Spanish tribunals: divination (with or without invocations of the Devil), superstitious healing, and love magic (combined with incantations and the use of magic potions) were the most frequently mentioned offenses qualified as sorcery or superstition. Most defendants in this period (15 cases out of 20) were women (Greenleaf 1961, 112). All were slaves or belonged to the lower classes of colonial society. Trials from this period demonstrate vivid cultural exchanges among all ethnic groups of the colonial population, especially near the bottom of the social hierarchy. Spaniards, Africans, and Amerindians exchanged beliefs and practices of divination, magical healing, and love magic, and introduced such new elements as the use of Mexican hallucinogenic drugs. Intercultural contacts also connected practitioners of magic with their clients, as colonial magicians consulted Amerindian specialists in search of more effective practices or because of their knowledge of local herbal medicine.

However, a different picture emerged from the trials instituted against native Mexican people. The defendants—mainly men—were accused of sorcery and

idolatry; of transforming themselves into such fierce animals as jaguars, lions, or dogs; or of making rain and producing similar effects by magical means. Contemporary colonial descriptions labeled these abilities of indigenous specialists as witchcraft. The trials, however, drew a clear distinction between sorcery and witchcraft: the former supposed an implicit pact with the Devil and the latter an explicit pact and denial of the Christian faith. Additionally, witchcraft was associated with harmful magic. Consequently, the offenses of the Amerindians were usually qualified as sorcery rather than witchcraft.

WITCHCRAFT TRIALS BY THE SPANISH INQUISITORIAL TRIBUNAL

Lacking jurisdiction over Amerindians, the Mexican branch of the Spanish Inquisition also instituted many more sorcery trials than witchcraft cases between 1571 and 1820. Like the “European” defendants of the episcopal inquisition, the great bulk of accusations again dealt with love magic, superstitious healing, and divination. Divination was practiced to find lost objects, for diagnostic purposes in magical curing, for advice in daily life, and to foretell the future. Practitioners could be male or female, but considerably more women were accused of love magic. Some cases were classified as maleficent witchcraft, an offense usually committed by individuals trying to harm another person. According to their ethnic descent, they preferred European, African, or Amerindian methods, including the native Mexican procedure of magically causing the death of a person by breathing in his or her direction.

Very few accusations corresponded to the contemporary European model of witchcraft. In 1614, however, witchcraft accusations suddenly increased in the northern Mexican town of Celaya, following the inquisitor’s proclamation of the Edict of Faith (a list of types of heresy). The resulting inquisitorial trials, held a few years after a famous outbreak of witchcraft had preoccupied the Inquisition in Spain’s Basque country, offered a vision of witchcraft similar to early modern Spanish ideas on witches (*brujas*) and their deeds. As in Spain, the majority of Mexican witchcraft defendants were women of low social status. Although women of different ethnic descent were implicated in the Celaya cases, most were descendants of Spanish colonists. They were accused of assembling at night outside the town, where they allegedly adored the Devil in the form of a billy goat with an obscene kiss. A strange detail of this Mexican version of the witches’ Sabbath relates that the Devil, after the adoration, provided each of the witches with a portion of dung. His gift had special properties. Used as an ointment, it transformed the witches into animals (for example, geese) and enabled them to fly through the air; one woman became a parrot for her

solitary nocturnal excursions. At the trials, the defendants prided themselves on their exploits, including their ability to transport other people through the air to distant places. Several male defendants related their encounters with the Devil and confessed to signing an agreement with him, written in their own blood. Despite these well-known elements of the European witch stereotype, the colonial Mexican version of witchcraft suffered from a lack of coherence, with certain characteristic elements still present in the popular imagination, while the general picture had fallen into oblivion.

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See also: BASQUE COUNTRY; COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; DIVINATION; DRUGS AND HALLUCINOGENS; FEMALE WITCHES; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; KISS OF SHAME; LOVE MAGIC; NEW GRANADA; OINTMENTS; SABBAT; SORCERY; SPAIN; SUPERSTITION; WITCH AND WITCHCRAFT, DEFINITIONS OF.

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NEWBURY WITCH (1643)

Soldiers killed this anonymous woman during the English Civil War, possibly in the belief that she was a witch. Like many stories of witchcraft reported in the popular press, fact and fiction are difficult to separate. What may have been a very straightforward event was probably misinterpreted at the time and then subse-

quently embellished in order to make a sensational story or advance a political point.

In late September 1643, just after the Battle of Newbury in Berkshire, the royalist newspaper *Mercurius Civicus* reported that an angry old woman had left the royalist encampment outside Newbury and had crossed the River Kennet to present herself before the parliamentary army under the earl of Essex. There she had demanded to meet the general himself but had been denied. After a scuffle, she was arrested and charged with attempting to blow up the parliamentary army's magazine. It seems likely that she was executed as a spy or saboteur. At least, that was one version of what happened.

The following month saw this story change in at least three other newspapers. The most frequently repeated version was that parliamentary soldiers had been amazed to see an old woman sailing on a plank (or even, by some blasphemous miracle, walking on the water) and had captured her as a witch.

In wartime, it is likely that many suspected witches, including this one, suffered summary justice; England's worst panic, the Mathew Hopkins episode, lay in the near future. But her execution apparently did not go as planned. A cheap pamphlet published in 1643, *A Most Certain, Strange, and true Discovery of a Witch*, claimed that she caught the bullets fired at her and chewed them up, laughing and mocking the troops as she did so. They were now certain that she must be in league with the Devil and resorted to the customary magical countermeasure of "scoring the witch above the breath"; that is, cutting her forehead in the belief that drawing blood would rob the witch of her power. This done, a soldier placed his pistol beneath her ear and shot her at point-blank range, upon which, the pamphlet said, "she straight sank down and died, leaving her legacy of a detested carcass to the worms" (*A Most Certain, Strange, and true Discovery of a Witch*, 7) Though less gruesome than other wartime stories of this age, like Hans Jacob Christoph von Grimmelshausen's, the episode suggested that the carnage at Newbury had left British armies in a brutal state.

The pamphlet account, with a clear parliamentarian bias, also related that one of the soldiers who apprehended her first saw a tall, lean, agile woman traveling down the river. They set a trap for her. Some soldiers were afraid to touch her, but others obeyed the order to capture her and drag her before the military commanders. After they perceived that she was a witch, a firing squad of two marksmen was arranged. The first lead musket ball bounced off her body (as low velocity bullets sometimes did) and nearly hit the marksman in the face. Enraged, he ran at her with his sword. As the veins of her temple were cut, she realized that the Devil had deserted her. She stopped laughing and began instead to wail and moan, tearing at her hair.



Title page of pamphlet describing the witch of Newbury, caught walking on a plank in the water. (Glasgow University Library, Department of Special Collections)

At the dramatic climax, the propaganda message was delivered. The witch's last words were reported to be: "And is it come to pass, that I must die indeed? Why then, his excellency the earl of Essex shall be fortunate and win the field" (*A Most Certain, Strange, and true Discovery of a Witch*, 7). The defeat of a royalist witch was thus made into a prophecy of parliamentary superiority and provided proof that the Devil was on the king's side. The story of the witch of Newbury therefore revealed itself to have been a powerfully instructive fantasy or allegory, albeit one with little, if any, foundation in fact.

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See also: ANTICHRIST; ENGLAND; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; PAMPHLETS AND NEWSPAPERS; WARFARE.

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NIDER, JOHANNES (CA. 1380–1438)

A Dominican theologian and religious reformer active in the early fifteenth century, Nider wrote some of the most extensive and influential early accounts of witchcraft. His major work on this subject, *Formicarius* (The Anthill), written in 1437 and 1438, was printed in seven separate editions between 1475 and 1692. It was also an important source of information for the infamous *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches), written by the Dominican Heinrich Kramer and first published in 1486. The fifth book of the *Formicarius*, which dealt specifically with "witches and their deceptions" ("de maleficis et eorum deceptionibus"), was included in several later editions along with the *Malleus*. In addition to relating numerous stories of witchcraft in the *Formicarius*, Nider treated the topics of magic and sorcery in two other works, *De lepra morali* (On Moral Leprosy) and *Preceptorium divine legis* (Preceptor of Divine Law).

Born in the small Swabian imperial city of Isny in the early 1380s, Nider entered the Dominican Order at Colmar in 1402. At this time, Colmar (now in Alsace, France) was one of only two Dominican houses in German lands controlled by the so-called observant, or reform, movement. We can assume that Nider chose to enter the order at Colmar because he was attracted to the observant movement; he eventually became one of the most important observant Dominican leaders of his day. Following the normal course of Dominican education, Nider underwent his initial training at Colmar, then learned the liberal arts at a Dominican *studium generale* (house of studies; literally "general studies"), and finally received his theological education. He began studying theology in Cologne, possibly as early as 1410, but left before completing his degree and attended some sessions of the Council of Constance (1414–1418). In 1422, he petitioned to be admitted to study theology in Vienna, where he received his degree in June 1425.

Nider taught briefly at Vienna and then served as prior of the Dominicans in Nuremberg from 1426 or 1427 until April 1429, when he moved to Basel to undertake the reform of the Dominican priory there. While in Basel, he not only served as prior of the Dominicans but also became a leading member of the Council of Basel (1431–1449). He delivered the opening sermon of the council, served on its deputation for religious reform, and undertook several important missions to negotiate with the heretical Hussites in Bohemia. Moreover, under his leadership, several of the council's most important deputations and delegations met in his Dominican priory. In late 1434 or early 1435, however, Nider left Basel, returning to Vienna to teach theology. He was elected dean of the theological faculty in 1436. In 1438, he returned briefly to Basel, continuing on that summer to direct the reform of the

female Dominican convent of St. Catherine in Colmar. Upon his return journey, he died at Nuremberg on August 13, 1438.

Although an active intellectual figure for slightly over ten years, from 1426 until 1438, and although frequently occupied during this period with numerous other duties, Nider was nevertheless a prolific author who wrote at least fifteen major treatises, as well as numerous sermons and letters. His topics ranged from the reform of the religious orders to heresy, as well as general moral guides and treatises on the care of souls. Yet he is mainly known as an authority on witchcraft, above all for his most important work, *Formicarius*. This long treatise was composed in the form of a dialogue between a theologian, who was clearly Nider himself, and a lazy but curious student who posed questions on a wide range of moral and spiritual matters. The treatise took its title and its organizing symbol from Proverbs 6.6 (which also served as its opening line): “Go to the ant, O lazy one, and consider its ways and learn wisdom.” Throughout, the character of the student (the “lazy one” of the Proverbs) posed questions and demanded not just scholastic reasoning but also present-day examples to illustrate the theologian’s points. Thus the dialogue of the *Formicarius* often became a collection of morally edifying stories probably intended for use in sermons.

Because of this format, when Nider turned to the topic of witchcraft, he presented not just a purely theoretical, scholastic account of the powers of demons and the workings of sorcery but actual stories of witches and witchcraft that he had heard from other authorities (he never seemed to have actually encountered a witch himself). Many of these stories were set in various locations in the western Alps, mostly the territory of Bern in the diocese of Lausanne, where some of the earliest true witchcraft trials were beginning to take place at this time. Many of Nider’s stories of witchcraft came from a single source, the secular judge Peter of Bern, who had conducted numerous sorcery or witchcraft trials several years earlier in the Simme valley of the Bernese *Oberland*. Nider supplemented these accounts with information from a Dominican inquisitor of Autun who was active against witches, with personal discussions he had in Vienna with a former demonic magician or necromancer who had since reformed and now lived as a pious Benedictine monk, and with the account of certain delegates to the Council of Basel about the burning of Joan of Arc and several other women whom Nider regarded as witches.

The picture of witchcraft that emerged in the *Formicarius* contained most of the elements that became standard parts of the witch stereotype throughout the centuries of the great witch hunts in Europe. Nider described witches mostly as simple rustics who performed harmful sorcery of various sorts—causing

infertility or illness in people or animals, killing small children, damaging or destroying crops, or magically stealing crops from their neighbors’ fields. Witches performed this magic through the agency of demons, and the witches gained their power over demons by formally renouncing their faith and worshipping the Devil at secret nocturnal gatherings. At these ceremonies they also desecrated the cross and the sacraments, cannibalized the bodies of young children and babies, engaged in sexual orgies, and performed various other detestable acts. Notably, Nider’s witches did not fly to these gatherings; night flight was never mentioned in the *Formicarius* except as a delusion.

Although in the course of his stories, Nider described both male and female witches, and although he consistently used male pronouns when referring to witches in general, he is nevertheless the first major clerical authority to argue that women were more prone to witchcraft than men. Immediately after the discussion of Joan of Arc in the *Formicarius*, the lazy student expressed amazement that the weaker sex could be capable of such terrible crimes. Through the voice of the theologian, Nider responded that, shocking as it seems, learned authorities knew that it was not rare for women to wield such demonic power. He then explained how women were more prone to the temptations of the Devil, due mainly to their weaker physical, mental, and moral nature, and produced several biblical, patristic, and classical citations to this effect. Thus, women were more easily seduced into the crime of witchcraft than men. This section of the *Formicarius* served as a basis for the even more extreme misogyny of the later *Malleus Maleficarum*.

Interestingly, alongside tales of nocturnal conventicles and diabolic cults of witches, Nider also presented several accounts that lacked these more extreme flourishes. Most of these stories centered on the figure of a single “great witch,” a man named Staedelin, of whom Nider heard from Peter of Bern. Although called a witch (*maleficus*), Staedelin was not presented as a member of any cult, and although his magic was demonic in nature, he does not appear to have surrendered his soul to the Devil or to have apostasized. Rather, these stories seemed much more “realistic” and probably more accurately depicted certain common magical practices and beliefs that existed before the emergence of the full stereotype of witchcraft. The *Formicarius*, therefore, seemed to represent almost the exact moment when the more developed stereotype of diabolic witchcraft superceded earlier ideas of simple demonic sorcery, at least in the minds of some clerical authorities.

Nider also discussed magic and witchcraft in sections of his moral treatises *De lepra morali* and *Preceptorium divine legis*. Lacking the narrative quality of the *Formicarius*, these treatises generally presented a

more purely theoretical account of the supposed workings of demonic magic, particularly of the various powers and natural abilities of demons, and of the necessity and workings of the pacts that supposedly bound demons to the human sorcerers or witches who commanded them.

MICHAEL D. BAILEY

See also: BASEL, COUNCIL OF; DOMINICAN ORDER; FEMALE WITCHES; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; HUSSITES; JOAN OF ARC; KRAMER, HEINRICH; LAUSANNE, DIOCESE OF; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; PETER OF BERN; SABBAT.

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NIGHT WITCH, OR NIGHT HAG

A witch believed to wander in the night is called a night witch or night hag.

The origins of the night witch can be traced back to ancient times. In Hebrew belief, for example, the female demon Lilith was associated with the night and its denizens. Lilith, the baby-snatching demon whose presence was a constant threat to mothers and their newborns, subsequently became a powerful force in early modern European demonology; her various powers included the ability to steal semen from sleeping men. In Roman literature of the imperial era, the image of the witch who worked her evil at night was prevalent. In the *Satyricon* (§ 63), Petronius (d. C.E. 65) described the work of the *strigae* (witches; etymologically connected with *strix*, or screech owl), whom he later called *nocturnae* (literally, "women of the night"). These night witches were described as having worked magic on a youth (replacing his innards with straw) and also causing insanity and later death to a valiant man who attempted to drive them away. The connotations of the night have contributed significantly to the belief in and depiction of the night witch, for it is at night that "life

is considered to be in a state of suspended animation, a necessary lull during the hours of the dominion of death" (Caro Baroja 1964, 5).

In Greece and Rome, ghosts and certain deities associated with witchcraft, such as Hecate, were thought to haunt crossroads and similar frightening places at night. Such beliefs remained and were altered and elaborated upon throughout the centuries. In the Basque region, for example, there are various stories about the nocturnal activities of witches, including ones not necessarily relating to evil acts, such as horseback rides in the dark hours. The witch's association with cats (in addition to owls and wolves) was partially based on the belief that witches, like cats, were particularly active at night. The conviction that witches could transform themselves into cats gave rise to various stories (and court cases) involving *maleficium* (harmful magic) directed against infants and children, as well as other random acts of evil. In 1608, Francesco Maria Guazzo, citing Nicolas Rémy, commented: "Remy (II, 5) writes nearly all those who came into his hands charged with witchcraft told him that they changed themselves into cats whenever they wished to enter other people's houses in secret, so that they could scatter their poison there by night" (*Compendium Maleficarum* [A Summary of Witches] 1.8).

The idea of the witch who transformed herself at night predated the early modern European age, as evidenced in the poem by Propertius (ca. 50–ca. 16 B.C.E.) in which he described the activities of a witch who "can change her form into that of a night-prowling wolf" (4.5.14). Similarly, Ovid (43 B.C.E.–C.E. 17) described the witch Dipsas, whom he suspected of performing shape-shifting magic to transform herself into a nocturnal bird (*Amores* 1.8.13–14). In the *Fasti* (6.131–146), Ovid described owl-like birds, which he suggested were old women transformed, who traveled at night in search of unprotected babies to devour. Norman Cohn (1993, 64) noted the existence of similar beliefs among the Germanic peoples prior to Roman and, later, Christian influences. During the Early Middle Ages, belief in the *strigae* continued throughout Germany, and the images that characterized their descriptions in Latin literature, namely, metamorphosis and cannibalism, were reflected in indigenous Germanic folktales. Those gripped by nightmares or suffering from night paralyzes could also find an explanation in the presence and effects of the night witch. Sensations of heaviness, suffocation, and general discomfort were once ascribed to the night witch sitting on a person's chest (hence the term *night hag* or *old hag syndrome*).

The definitive expression of the activities of the night witch was, arguably, participation in the Sabbath, the gathering of witches in remote places that invariably took place at night. Again the motif of metamorphosis was prominent in the conceptualization of the Sabbath,

with stories abounding of witches traveling to the specified location in the form of wolves, cats, owls, and bats. Belief in organized groups of witches flying to the Sabbat, which began to dominate the relevant literature of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, has its origins in earlier convictions about women of the night and nocturnal hags; for example, John of Salisbury, in his *Policraticus* (*The Statesman*, 1159) recorded gatherings in honor of Herodias, in which women (*lamiae*, a classical correspondent for *strigae*) banqueted on babies, “some of them being dismembered and gluttonously devoured” (2.17).

MARGUERITE JOHNSON

See also: CANNIBALISM; CATS; CROSSROADS; DIANA; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; GHOSTS; HECATE; JOHN OF SALISBURY; LAMIA; LILITH; METAMORPHOSIS; NIGHTMARES; PEOPLE OF THE NIGHT; SABBAT; STRIX, STRIGA, STRIA; WITCH AND WITCHCRAFT, DEFINITIONS OF

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NIGHTMARES

The origin of the word *nightmare* can be found in the ancient Germanic and Nordic belief in the *mara*, a supernatural being, usually female, who lay on people's chests at night, suffocating and paralyzing them. The same concept is also present in Slavic cultures: we find the *zmora* in Poland, *kikimora* in Russia, and *morica* in Croatia, which suggests that the *mara* concept may have Indo-European roots. All these terms describe a sleep disturbance phenomenon classified today as sleep paralysis, which has been the subject of intellectual debate for nearly 2,000 years. The physician Galen, writing in the second century C.E., was the first to propose that the experience was caused by gastric disturbances. His explanation remained the dominant physiological explanation for the nightmare right down to the twentieth century. That great Elizabethan witchcraft skeptic Reginald Scot explained: “the mare, oppressing manie in their sleepe so sore, as they are not able to call for helpe, or stir themselves under the burthen of that heavie humor, which is ingendred of a thicke vapor proceeding from the cruditie and rawnesse in the stomach” (Scot 1972, 49).

Scot's views on the nightmare formed part of his attempt to debunk popular beliefs about witchcraft. Nevertheless, not only in England but also in many other parts of Europe, the nightmare experience was often attributed to the nocturnal visits of witches. It was widely believed that they came and straddled those whom they wished to torment, giving rise to the English expressions “hag-ridden” and “witch-ridden.” The physical sensations of paralysis, pressure, and suffocation were frequently accompanied by aural hallucinations and visions of suspected witches.

Examples of people interpreting the nightmare experience in terms of witchcraft can be found in the court records of several European countries. Trial depositions from seventeenth-century Augsburg, Germany, referred to witches' *trucken*, or pressing. In 1666 a pregnant woman named Anna Maria Cramer testified that a witch kept visiting her at night and lying upon her; in 1685 a man testified that his wife complained of feeling someone pressing her at night (Roper 1994, 209). When in 1609, Jean Grand Didier, from the duchy of Lorraine, went to sleep after having exchanged harsh words with a suspected witch, he felt a heavy weight upon him and saw several people in his bedroom, including the suspected witch, whom he imagined had tried to throttle him (Briggs 1996, 115–116).

In parts of western England, occasional accusations of witchcraft resulting from nightmare attacks still reached the courts in the nineteenth century; most concerned people prosecuted for assault after drawing blood from witches whom they believed were “hag-riding” them. In 1871, for example, a twenty-three-year-old farmer from the county of Dorset was sentenced to six months' imprisonment after having beaten an eighty-five-year-old woman he accused of persistently “hag-riding” him. In the previous decade, a Somerset couple, the Clapps, were prosecuted after having drawn blood from an elderly neighbor. The court heard how “between 12 and 1 o'clock, the old lady came into defendant's bedroom, and lay on her feet, when she suddenly felt her body grow stiff. After this complainant laid half across Mr. Clapp's chest, which he stated deprived him of the power of breathing, and rendering him quite helpless” (Davies 1997, 40–50).

The nightmare experience or sleep paralysis may seem to play only a minor role in witch accusations and beliefs, but the very physicality and perceived reality of such supernatural aggression was a potent confirmation of witchcraft. The nightmare experience represented an intimate, brutal assault. People awoke sore, sweating, and tired from the ordeal, and the vivid nature of associated hallucinations helped reinforce the supposed powers of witches.

OWEN DAVIES



In Henry Fuseli's most famous painting, *The Nightmare* (*The Incubus*), a demon lies on a woman's chest, suffocating and paralyzing her. (Snark/Art Resource)

See also: NIGHT WITCH, OR NIGHT HAG; SCOT, REGINALD.

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NIGHTSHADE

Atropa belladonna is an excellent example of a poisonous and medicinal herb believed to be used by witches in the compounds called witches' brews. One finds it mentioned in various demonological and witchcraft texts among the general lists of constituents of such poisonous compounds. For example, Johann Weyer mentioned the use of belladonna in witches' compounds

in his 1563 book *De praestigiis daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils). In Book 3, chapter 17, Weyer, himself a physician and thus familiar with medicinal plants, wrote that witches were thought to use belladonna, hemlock, and aconite, among other poisons, citing Italian examples from Giambattista Della Porta and Girolamo Cardano, supplemented by an illustration of nightshade's effects on the son of one of his Rhineland colleagues. Traditional names for the plant reveal more of this commonly held folklore. The plant has been called Devil's cherries, naughty man's cherries, and Devil's herb. The word *belladonna* perhaps derives from the herb's ability to cause dilation of the pupils; women used it in infusions to make their eyes look larger. There was even a folk belief that the herb could take on the form of a beautiful woman, which may offer another source for the plant's name.

Witches used brews compounded with poisonous herbs such as belladonna for various supernatural purposes. A witch might have administered belladonna as a poison in a drink. One might also have compounded poisonous herbs, including nightshade, with grease to make a flying ointment. This last belief is supported by the nature of the chemical constituents of nightshade, which include hyoscyamine and atropine, as well as scopolamine. Such drugs produce effects on the circulatory system and can make the individual who uses them feel as though he or she is flying or floating. Aside from its uses in witchcraft, belladonna was also considered an herb that belonged exclusively to the Devil, who was said to tend it personally. Folklore held that the Devil was so fond of his belladonna that he rarely left it alone, stopping his gardening duties only on Walpurgis Night to attend the famous witches' Sabbat.

JANE P. DAVIDSON

See also: DRUGS AND HALLUCINOGENS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; HERBAL MEDICINE; OINTMENTS; POISON; WALPURGIS (WALPURIGS) NIGHT.

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NODÉ, PIERRE

A Minim friar in Paris during the French Wars of Religion, Nodé published a book in 1578, *Declamation contre l'erreur execrable des maleficiers*

(Declamation Against the Execrable Error of Evildoers). Typical of the intellectual position of zealous Catholics in those troubled times, Nodé lamented that the chaotic conditions of his world were a sign of its imminent end. Like so many others, he considered the troubles caused by the rise and spread of Protestantism in France as the work of the Devil. It was incumbent on all believers in God (Catholics) to fight back and exterminate their enemies. Nodé appealed to the monarch, high nobles, and high court justices to join the battle wholeheartedly.

According to Nodé, witchcraft and magic were an epidemic in his time. Witchcraft involved such horrible sins as apostasy, blasphemy and *lèse-majesté divine* or “treason against God.” French Catholic demonologists frequently made this last charge (borrowed from French legal jargon condemning heretics) as an important argument for imposing the death penalty for witchcraft, even if the witches had harmed no one.

Nodé bemoaned the lack of commitment by the king and high nobles to eradicate heretics and witches. Judges had the responsibility and the duty to pursue actively these “diabolical monsters.” As Nodé stated, “The civil law wishes their bodily death, the holy canons order their spiritual death, and God commands both against them so that this race of perverse malefactors is exterminated from Heaven and earth” (Nodé 1578, 46).

He was clearly angry and frustrated because French royal authorities were not taking this task to heart. French writers on demonology and heresy complained constantly that the French legal system did not pursue witches aggressively. Either “indiscreet pity” or incredulity was extremely dangerous. “It would be far better to exterminate such people from the earth and wipe out all memory of them,” Nodé expostulated, “rather than wait for a great disaster and calamity” (Nodé 1578, 55).

Nodé’s equation of the Protestant heresy with witchcraft, in the context of the anarchic conditions of the civil wars and the perceived presence of the apocalypse, was typical of these writers and preachers. The violence of the polemical wars matched the military violence of the times.

Following conventional wisdom, Nodé’s work examined many aspects of the complex of beliefs comprising witchcraft: the transportation of witches over great distances, werewolves, maleficent crimes, and sexual dysfunction, always linking these evils to the current rise in heresy and unbelief. He also reported a very interesting case. Stating that the Devil could make people hate food, he told of a young woman who died after not eating for four months. The poor anorexic girl died in “extreme languor, dry as wood, thinner than a heron, pale as a sheet and thinner than parchment that shrivels near a fire” (Nodé 1578, 32). Some supernatural evil force must have caused something so extraordinary.

Throughout his tirade, Nodé trotted out clichés stressing the intimate connection between the heresy of the day and Satan’s machinations that were central aspects of Catholic rhetoric during the Wars of Religion, hoping—vainly—to stimulate more active persecution of witches (and Protestants) by the state.

JONATHAN L. PEARL

See also: APOCALYPSE; BOUCHER, JEAN; DEMONOLOGY; FRANCE; HERESY; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; WARS OF RELIGION, FRANCE.

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NÖRDLINGEN, IMPERIAL FREE CITY

Thirty-three individuals—all but one of them women—were burned at the stake as witches in the Lutheran city of Nördlingen, Swabia, between 1589 and 1594. It constituted one of the most severe witch hunts seen in a Protestant imperial free city. The main reasons for this persecution were the zeal of the city councilors who tried the witches and the fact that they treated witchcraft as a *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime), subject to none of the usual safeguards for the protection of the accused. Torture was therefore used to excess, usually forcing accused individuals to confess to witchcraft and denounce others as their accomplices. Records of virtually all trials, which formed part of a wave of witch hunts that occurred in Germany between 1585 and 1595, survive in Nördlingen’s city archive.

Before 1589, Nördlingen had experienced only two witchcraft trials, in 1478 and 1534; both times, the alleged witches were released unpunished. The late-sixteenth-century persecution was triggered by Ursula Haider, a mentally unstable woman who in 1589 had the misfortune to nurse the three children of knifsmith Martin Hindenach, all of whom died of smallpox. Haider had claimed that she was plagued by the Devil even before 1589. Now she confessed that she had killed the second Hindenach child at the Devil’s command, chiefly because its corpse had apparently bled as she held it: contemporaries believed that a body would bleed when touched by its murderer. She was arrested on suspicion of witchcraft on November 8, 1589. Under interrogation, she confessed to other acts of *maleficium* (harmful magic) and claimed that she had seen other Nördlingen women at witches’ Sabbats, thus creating the potential for further trials. Haider was executed with two of the women she had denounced on May 15, 1590. That year, fourteen more Nördlingen

women were arrested, mostly on the basis of denunciations: twelve were burned alive, one was burned after dying under torture, and one (Apollonia Rorendorfer) was released after refusing to confess.

Apart from one execution in 1592, there was a lull in the intensity of persecution from May 1591 until 1593, when sixteen more Nördlingen inhabitants were arrested. Thirteen of them (twelve women and one man) were executed, the bodies of two women who died under torture were burned, and one (Maria Holl) was released in 1594. The impetus for the 1593 trials came mainly from Nördlingen inhabitants who believed themselves to be victims of *maleficium*. Once restarted, however, the process of persecution again relied on denunciations for its continuation. Villagers from outside Nördlingen had a better chance of escaping execution: of nine women arrested as alleged witches at Goldburghausen, Itzlingen, and Sechtenhausen in 1590 and 1593, only one was executed. The council's "leniency" in these cases probably stemmed from its desire to avoid legal disputes with the count of Oettingen, who ruled the area around Nördlingen, over the right to try witches.

Nördlingen's witchcraft trials did not result from social conflicts: those executed came from a wide range of social backgrounds, from the poor and socially marginal to wives or widows of councilors. Nor did the council target particular individuals as witches: around one-third of all suspects were accused of *maleficium* by their fellow inhabitants, and suspects tended in the course of forced denunciations to name alleged Sabbat attendees on the basis of personal vendettas and preferences. However, the city councilors were responsible for the severity of the witch hunt. In 1589 they could either have dismissed Haider as insane or ignored her claims to have seen other women at Sabbats, thereby depriving the hunt of its momentum. They did neither because they were convinced of the reality of witches' Sabbats and of the need to rid Nördlingen of this evil. Crucially, they decided from the outset to treat witchcraft as a *crimen exceptum* and therefore to subject many accused women to extremely severe torture. Mayor Johann Pferinger and jurist Wolfgang Graf, both newly appointed in 1589 and desirous of making their mark, played leading roles in driving the witch-hunting zeal of the council. The active or tacit support of the persecution by a significant proportion of Nördlingen's inhabitants also helps account for its severity. Their anxiety about witchcraft may have increased before 1589 after a series of agrarian crises: it was doubtless heightened afterward by the sight of so many alleged accomplices of Satan burning at the stake.

The immense courage of Maria Holl was instrumental in finally ending Nördlingen's witchcraft trials. The wife of innkeeper Michael Holl, Maria was arrested on the basis of six denunciations on November 2, 1593. Despite

suffering sixty-two bouts of torture with thumbscrews, leg-screws, strappado, and the rack, Maria refused to confess. On that basis and because her relatives from Ulm petitioned the Nördlingen council on her behalf, the council reluctantly released her on October 11, 1594. She was not the first Nördlingen woman to refuse to confess: Apollonia Rorendorfer had shown similar steadfastness in the face of savage torture in 1590. However, Holl's case increased concern on the part of some councilors and inhabitants of Nördlingen that denunciations were an unsafe basis for pursuing witchcraft trials. After three more executions for witchcraft in 1598, there were no more witchcraft trials in Nördlingen. Maria Holl died at the age of eighty-five in 1634. By then one of the richest women in Nördlingen, she had outlived three husbands and all the men who had been involved in her trial for witchcraft forty years before.

ALISON ROWLANDS

See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; EXECUTIONS; GENDER; GERMANY; GERMANY, SOUTHEASTERN; GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; IMPERIAL FREE CITIES; *MALEFICIUM*; MENTAL ILLNESS; SABBAT; TORTURE; TRIALS.

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NORMANDY

Famous for the trial and execution of Joan of Arc in its capital, Rouen, this northern French province now seems most noteworthy in the history of European witchcraft as the leading punisher of male witches in western Europe. From the early 1540s until well after Louis XIV supposedly decriminalized witchcraft in France, Normandy's appellate court, the *Parlement* of Rouen, investigated primarily men for the crime of *sortilège* (diabolic magic). And, by French (or at least Parisian) standards, Norman judges punished them severely: although such other French *parlements* as Toulouse (1562) or Paris (1568) confirmed death sentences for

witchcraft sooner than Rouen (1574), Norman parliamentary records from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries identified almost 400 accused witches and about 100 burnings for witchcraft. Almost three-fourths of these defendants were men, as were about two-thirds of those executed (Monter 1997, 572, 584).

The predominance of men among accused witches in Normandy increased over time. When the *parlement* first encountered one or two witches each year (1564–1578), men outnumbered women by only 15 to 10. But the disproportion between male and female witches grew steadily larger after 1600. Under Louis XIII, it surpassed 4 to 1, and by the late 1640s, when the *parlement* again averaged one or two witchcraft cases per year, women had almost disappeared. If certain types of women like old widows reappeared frequently among suspected witches elsewhere, so did certain types of men in Normandy. By far the most feared male witches in this cheese-producing region were shepherds, some of whom possessed veritable arsenals, featuring such items as toad venom and stolen Eucharists, suitable for performing both offensive and defensive magic. Priests were also heavily represented among Norman witches; between 1598 and 1647, seven Norman priests were burned for *sortilège*, another was given a life sentence to the galleys, and a half-dozen others were permanently banished from the Kingdom of France with loss of their benefices (Monter 1997, 582–583). A third dangerous occupational group was Normandy's blacksmiths, who exercised their skill in harming as well as healing horses.

The chronology and severity of Norman witchcraft persecution seemed unremarkable. Repression accelerated sharply here in the 1580s, as it did elsewhere in France. Between 1585 and 1610 the Rouen *parlement* judged over five witchcraft trials each year and upheld over 60 percent of lower-court death sentences for this crime; it ordered at least one witch burned every year until 1615 (Monter 1997, 572–573). However, this court placed little emphasis on the witches' Sabbath; although as many as ten witches were executed in the very worst years, they came from scattered places, and in Normandy no single episode ever grew into a serious panic. At the same time, Normandy experienced no scandals involving sadistic tortures, professional witch finders, "ducking" suspected witches (the swimming test, or water ordeal), or other clearly illegal practices; everything here seemed orderly and regular, except for the oddity that most accused witches were men. When the French phenomenon of bewitched convents finally reached Normandy in the 1640s, it was relatively unspectacular—and the most important female defendant (Madeleine Barent) was never executed, despite her repeated confessions.

Although witch hunting had all but disappeared in most other parts of France by the time Louis XIV began

his personal reign in 1661, Normandy kept putting its shepherd-witches on trial from 1670 until after 1700. Louis's government tried but ultimately failed to shut it down; despite the royal legislation supposedly decriminalizing witchcraft in 1682, the Rouen *parlement* was still burning them for sacrilege and "so-called *sortilège*" in 1694 and 1703, and sending them to the galleys even afterward. In 1718, Louis XIV's German sister-in-law remarked that "at Paris people don't believe in witches and we hear nothing about them; at Rouen they believe that witches exist, and there one always hears about them" (Monter 1997, 594).

Certainly the Norman *parlement* never displayed the scornful skepticism of their upriver Parisian colleagues about witchcraft. But compared with "offshore Normandy"—the Channel Islands, governed by England but speaking only French during the age of witchcraft trials—the *Parlement* of Rouen seems quite gentle in its treatment of witches. In terms of size and population, its judicial district was a hundred times greater than the Channel Islands (and its legal records are as rich as theirs), yet more women were burned as witches in the Channel Islands than in Normandy. The key to this grotesque discrepancy is that the Channel Islands enjoyed complete legal autonomy while Normandy had a scrupulous, if credulous, appellate court.

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: CHANNEL ISLANDS; FRANCE; JOAN OF ARC; LOUVIERS NUNS; MALE WITCHES; *PARLEMENT* OF PARIS.

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NORTH BERWICK WITCHES

The cluster of witchcraft trials that occurred in Scotland in 1590–1591 in East Lothian and Edinburgh was sufficiently widespread and severe to merit the term "witch panic." From late November 1590 until December 1591 the hunt developed, as local magistrates and then the king and privy council uncovered what they believed to be conspiracy and treason by many women (and some men), led by the politically powerful earl of Bothwell.

The causes of the panic were long-term as well as immediate; some of the women and men who were interrogated, tried, and executed in 1590–1591 were accused of witchcraft activities stretching back as far as seventeen years. In 1586, Andrew Melville, the leading Presbyterian, returned from England along with fellow hard-line Protestants intent on creating a godly, disciplined nation. They soon established Presbyterian kirk sessions (parish disciplinary committees) in lowland and northeastern Scotland, where ministers and elders tried to enforce church discipline on a sometimes

resistant population by investigating social disorder, sexual offenses, and popular magical practices. In certain areas, including East Lothian and Edinburgh, many people retained remnants of old Catholic beliefs and rituals. For the Kirk (the national—Presbyterian—Church of Scotland), Catholicism and magical beliefs were indistinguishable. The Kirk found an identifiable enemy in the North Berwick witch hunt: an underground network of witches inspired by the Devil and intent on overturning church and state.

The chain of events began in November 1590 when a servant girl who was a healer was accused by her master of witchcraft, tortured, and found to have the Devil's mark. The scope of the investigations widened, and a treasonable conspiracy involving some forty people was soon discovered against King James VI and his newlywed wife Anne. The network contained assorted practitioners of maleficent witchcraft, love magic, divination, and healing, including a long-established and respected healer, Agnes Sampson, and a schoolmaster, Dr. John Fian. Torturing some of the accused revealed a momentous tale of treasonable witchcraft. The accused came from a wide social range—peasants, servants, urban bourgeoisie, and aristocracy—and showed that belief in and practice of magic was prevalent throughout Scottish society.

The renegade earl of Bothwell, Francis Stewart, whose relations with the kirk and his cousin, the king, were highly unstable, was accused of involvement in the plot; he fled to escape trial and began an insurrection against James that ended with his forfeiture and banishment. Kirk and crown were temporarily allied against this supposed witchcraft conspiracy. James Carmichael, minister of Haddington, located in the area where many of the accused lived, helped King James. Carmichael was an ardent Presbyterian returned from exile with Melville, and one of the kirk's leading reformers and intellectuals.

A number of legal records of interrogations (sometimes under torture) survive from November 1590 to mid-1591. They produced stories that became more elaborate and coherent as the weeks passed, ultimately cohering into one story of a large-scale treasonous conspiracy involving personal appearances of the Devil at the witches' Sabbats. The stories mixed reality with fantasy: witches made pacts with the Devil and conspired to raise storms to prevent Anne's fleet from reaching Scotland and then James's from reaching Norway. After James and Anne returned safely, the witches planned James's death, using such familiar magical techniques as melting a wax image and poisoning his clothes. James was initially skeptical of the witchcraft threat but eventually took it seriously. Although later historians have been too ready to interpret the witchcraft conspiracy from the authorities' point of view, the evidence for its reality began to disintegrate by mid-1591, as witnesses

began to revoke their confessions, asserting them to be false and compelled by torture. There were indeed networks of acquaintance among those implicated in the accusations, but these ordinary links, some indeed based on shared practices of magic and witchcraft, were present in Scottish society from top to bottom.

Surviving trial records of the four most prominent accused witches show Scottish authorities reacting as the fearful and uncontrolled powers of magic, embodied in particular social types, threatened to overturn established social relations: a peasant wise woman with uncanny medical and political knowledge; a subversive schoolmaster in league with the Devil; respectable townswomen revolting against both class and sexual subordination; and Bothwell, who epitomized the sort of aristocratic rebellion against royal power that had plagued James for a decade and Scotland for generations. Socially insignificant accused witches were easily dealt with, but higher up the social scale, resistance to arrest and conviction mounted. In May 1591, Barbara Napier, a well-connected Edinburgh bourgeois, was acquitted of attending the North Berwick Sabbat, though she was convicted on other capital charges. James reacted angrily, and after threatening the assize with "wilful error" in blocking the operation of justice, he obtained a guilty verdict. The trial of Euphame MacCalzean, another wealthy Edinburgh woman from a well-connected legal family, involved a two-week long struggle to obtain a conviction and execution by the exceptionally cruel sentence of being burned alive.

The government seized the opportunity to destroy Bothwell that his contact with witchcraft offered. Bothwell was convinced that his enemy Chancellor Maitland was behind the witchcraft charges, and there is evidence that the government kept the main witness against Bothwell, a man later executed for witchcraft, in protective custody. Brought before the king and privy council in April 1591 to answer charges of treasonable conspiracy with a lately executed witch, Bothwell avoided trial in May when his peers refused to assemble to try him and escaped custody in June when Euphame MacCalzean was executed. In 1593, when he was finally tried for witchcraft, he was acquitted. When accused witches mentioned Bothwell in depositions, they clearly saw him as James's great adversary, so prominent that he became elided with the Devil himself.

Information about the witch hunt reached London in late 1591, while Scotland's witchcraft trials were still proceeding, with a pamphlet called *Newes from Scotland*, composed from materials probably supplied by Carmichael. Its lurid account of the witchcraft conspiracy offered maximum propaganda for King James, struggling heroically and single-handedly against diabolical agents, and contrasted James's



The North Berwick witches and witchcraft; nautical witchcraft, the Devil preaching, witches brewing in a cauldron, the earl of Bothwell reclining, witches eating and drinking in a cellar. (Fortean Picture Library)

divine-right legitimacy with the witches' diabolical subversion. It made no mention of Bothwell, who was still threateningly at large. The witch hunt also inspired James's *Daemonologie* (Demonology), probably written in 1591 but not published in Edinburgh until 1597, during a later witch hunt. James's account of witches' practices included details that he acquired from personally interrogating some of the North Berwick witches and that reappeared in trial records. *Daemonologie*, in orthodox fashion, made explicit the political threat to the established authorities that witchcraft represented. James's book had a baleful long-term effect on Scottish witch hunting by locating witchcraft within a theological framework and defining it as involving a pact with the Devil.

Historians have argued over what part, if any, Privy Council orders of 1591, 1592, and 1597 may have played in prolonging or exacerbating witch hunting after the North Berwick panic. What now seems clear is that the North Berwick witch hunt was a separate event

from the next Scottish witch hunt of 1597 and that the government did not lose control of witchcraft prosecutions.

The witch hunt begun in North Berwick induced a brief lull in hostilities between Scotland's Presbyterian party and its monarch, while they cooperated in pursuing witches who represented each one's deepest fears: Catholic and magical beliefs and practices for the kirk, lawlessness and insurrection for James and his government. It was through witchcraft accusations that Bothwell's political threat was destroyed. When Parliament ratified Bothwell's forfeiture in 1592, it also finally gave the Kirk what it had long sought, legal sanction for Presbyterian church government, though the struggle between church and state would continue.

LAWRENCE NORMAND

See also: DENMARK; DEVIL'S MARK; IMAGE MAGIC; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PANICS; SABBAT; SCOTLAND; WEATHER MAGIC.

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NORWAY

Almost all witchcraft trials in Norway, which was under Danish rule from 1388 to 1814, took place from 1551 to 1700. With few exceptions, they occurred after the implementation of the Reformation, which reached Norway from Denmark in 1537 after the king had turned Lutheran and Norway's last Catholic bishop had fled. Until the Reformation, the crime of witchcraft had been defined solely as *maleficium* (harmful magic); in medieval Norwegian (and Danish) laws, it deserved capital punishment only if it had caused death or injuries to people or animals. However, the medieval statutes on witchcraft in Norwegian customary law (*Landsloven*, or "Laws of the Lands") do not seem to have been applied until after 1540. The only case of medieval witchcraft dates from 1325, when a woman accused of love magic suffered penance ordered by the bishop of Bergen. In 1520, King Christian II introduced new laws involving harsher procedures in many criminal cases, including those involving witchcraft, that were not put into effect. Nevertheless, continental practice strongly influenced procedures in witchcraft cases as the death penalty came into use.

As one consequence of the Reformation, the Mosaic laws—including Exodus 22:18 (22:17; "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live")—were introduced into criminal codes throughout Scandinavia. This process followed somewhat different courses in different states. In Sweden, the penalties of the Pentateuch were simply added to the existing law of the land as an appendix. In Denmark and Norway, the Mosaic prohibitions were introduced piecemeal during the century after 1540, with various articles punishing specific deeds; most of the Mosaic laws had been incorporated into the Norwegian legal framework by 1630.

Church and state cooperated closely in this confessional age: the king's laws about witchcraft were read from the pulpit every Sunday, and pastors reminded their congregations that the whole kingdom would suffer from God's wrath unless these creatures of the Devil were brought to justice and suitably punished. The Lutheran clergy cooperated closely with the new Lutheran regime to recommend strong actions against the enemies of God. Witches ranked among the very worst kind conceivable: a *crimen maiestatis laesae divinae*, being a traitor to God, was even worse than being a traitor to the king. Such reasoning made it possible to legitimate the use of torture in witchcraft cases.

In 1584, the Danish king, responding to a petition from the Lutheran bishop of Stavanger, introduced the fully formed concept of demonology into the criminal code of Norway, ordering local authorities to prosecute all kinds of witchcraft, including "superstitious" healing practices that medieval legislation had ignored. This statute, introduced in the diocese of Bergen in 1593, seems to have been known throughout Norway. Finally, a new general witchcraft code was introduced for Denmark and Norway in 1617. It divided the crime into three parts: the pact with the Devil, *maleficium*, and healing practices. Death by beheading was to be employed on persons convicted of the first two categories.

WITCHCRAFT AND CRIME

Norway's recorded witchcraft trials began about 1540. Although there were no mass persecutions until after the enactment of the Witchcraft Code in 1617, an increasing number of trials took place after 1570. The best-known case involved Anna Pedersdotter, a clergyman's wife in Bergen, who, after two trials in 1575 and 1590, was burned at the stake. Bits and pieces of information show both torture and the water ordeal (swimming test) being used in Norwegian witchcraft cases since the sixteenth century, although Danish and Norwegian laws formally permitted neither.

The total number of cases known numbered about 880. In about 780 of these cases, a man or a woman was accused of some kind of witchcraft; the other 100 were defamation suits, initiated by a person who had come under suspicion for witchcraft in a local community.

These cases therefore might not be considered as ordinary witchcraft trials, but they nevertheless are of great interest in completing our knowledge of the ways witch beliefs were dealt with by the parties involved in Norwegian communities.

We know that approximately 310 persons suffered the death penalty for witchcraft in Norway; almost 90 percent of these executions took place during the years 1601–1670 (Næss 1990, 371). Allowing for lacunae in the documents, the total number was about 330. This number can be assessed relatively precisely because public accounts providing detailed information about all expenses paid for imprisonment, and executions have been preserved almost completely from most parts of Norway. Many witches were burned at the stake; but many others, having been “pardoned” by the regional governor or the king from being burned alive, were simply beheaded by the executioner’s axe or sword. Typically, the vast majority of people, both among the accused and those suffering the death penalty, were women; only about one in five were men.

Despite all the attention it has received in recent research, witchcraft was far from the most common kind of offense involving capital punishment in post-Reformation Norway. One consequence of the introduction of Mosaic laws was that capital punishment became customary after convictions for murder or manslaughter, theft, adultery, incest, infanticide, bestiality, treason, or blasphemy. Minor sexual and moral offenses also received severe punishment. In Rogaland County, where most seventeenth-century records have been preserved, during the years 1610–1660 no fewer than 223 people were sentenced to die. Most had been convicted of incest (59), theft (54), manslaughter or murder (51), and infanticide (12); only 14 (or less than 7 percent) had been charged with witchcraft. However, 63 of them escaped, and 45 others were pardoned, receiving milder forms of punishment, often banishment from the county or the kingdom. Only 115 people were effectively put to death; but because witches were never pardoned and, being women, rarely escaped, 13 of them (over 11 percent) had been convicted of witchcraft. Because Rogaland contained about 6 percent of Norway’s total population of about 440,000 inhabitants in the 1660s, it would seem that about 2,000 people were publicly executed, 216 of them for witchcraft, in this small country on the outskirts of Europe in the seventeenth century (Næss 1990, 369–370, 377). And it is worth remembering that the frequent use of capital punishment for many other crimes continued in eighteenth-century Norway, when no more witches were executed.

THE TYPOLOGY OF WITCHCRAFT

The stories told by the victims to Norway’s bailiffs, sheriffs, priests, and judges provide a fairly comprehensive

picture of the various concepts of witchcraft. The accusation of diabolism (pacts with the Devil and participation in the Sabbat) was invariably put forward during the interrogations by bailiffs and pastors urging the accused to confess. Details in Norwegian confessions obtained through the use of torture described meetings with the Devil and other witches on various widely scattered mountains like Domen (in far northern Finnmark), Dovre (in southern Norway), Lyderhorn (near Bergen), and even Blåkulla in Sweden. Because witches flew to the mountain closest to their own community, Blåkulla was mentioned solely in trials from southeastern parts of Norway close to the Swedish border.

There were a total of 789 specific accusations, including 263 for white magic, 398 for *maleficium*, and 128 for diabolism (Næss 1990, 373). The first group comprised various kinds of white magic and healing practices involving formulas and rituals; the use of herbs and strange substances like teeth, toes, and animal tails; and the use of “superstitious” prayers vaguely remembered from Catholic times, naming Jesus and Mary or other holy persons and distorted elements from biblical texts. The step from practicing white magic to suspicion of *maleficium* was often a short one. If the treatment of a patient by a wise woman brought about sickness or even death, she was quickly suspected by the public to be a witch. Over half of these accusations found in the cases tried involved *maleficium*. The evils allegedly done by the accused included the usual charges: manslaughter, killing or injuring of people or cattle, destruction of crops, impotency, and loss of wealth. Because fishing was an essential part of Norway’s economy, its witches were also accused of causing storms and tidal waves that made ships sink and crews drown.

THE LEGAL SYSTEM

As elsewhere in Scandinavia, Norwegian criminal cases followed accusatorial procedures. The offended party indicted the aggressor. In cases involving the public interest, such as witchcraft, the bailiff acted as prosecutor. He could even begin a prosecution when only rumors of witchcraft were at hand. A case was proved when at least two independent witnesses had sworn on the Bible that the accusation was true. Such testimony was often difficult to obtain in witchcraft trials, so the court, often after a request from the bailiff, accepted it as sufficient proof if many people testified that they suspected the accused person of being a witch, even though they did not dare to swear to its truth. Accused witches found it difficult to employ the traditional means of defense, the compurgation, or oath of denial, by which a person in cases the court considered dubious could be acquitted if a certain number of people swore that they believed the accused to be innocent. Although the court gave several accused witches this

opportunity, they found it impossible to persuade enough neighbors to swear to their innocence because they feared becoming charged with witchcraft themselves if they did so.

A bailiff had an enormous influence on the way criminal cases were handled. He acted as public prosecutor on behalf of the king and administered the court. The bailiff imprisoned accused persons; he was responsible for their examination; and he often brought in priests, or sometimes an executioner, in order to help secure a confession. The court justices were twelve local farmers, assisted by a secretary (*soreskriver*) who gradually during the 1600s ended up as the real judge.

THREATS, TORTURE, AND CONFESSIONS

The large number of men and women being accused of *maleficium* and pacts with the Devil can only be accounted for by taking the practices employed by the authorities into account. Facing harsh interrogations, being threatened with going to hell by the pastors, being told what to confess under torture, many of the accused told the stories they knew in advance that they were expected to tell. Even though it was illegal to resort to torture before a sentence had been passed, courts nevertheless employed torture in several cases known to us so as to extract confessions from accused witches.

In order to further strengthen the evidence, suspects were submitted to the water ordeal. First documented in Norway in 1606, the water ordeal was recorded about forty times, although it was probably used much more frequently. Only a few instances are known in Norway in which courts searched for the Devil's mark on the accused's body. Defendants knew what suffering they might expect. According to the minutes of the judge, one imprisoned woman said to another: "Should you choose not to confess at once, they will try you on the water and next you will be put on the rack. After having extended your limbs they will increase your pains by pinching you with red-hot iron tongs." Another woman told the judge that she had willingly confessed at first because she preferred to shorten her life quickly instead of being exposed to the gruesome torture that awaited her.

REGIONAL DIFFERENCES: THE CASE OF FINNMARK AND CHAIN PROCESS

In most of Norway's eighteen counties, one finds that the number of persons burned or beheaded for witchcraft varied between six and fourteen. There were three exceptions: Hordaland killed twenty-two witches and Rogaland twenty-five; but Finnmark stands in a category by itself, executing about ninety-two witches, 30 percent of Norway's total. The relatively high figures from Rogaland and Hordaland reflect the fact that

witches were tried in these counties sooner than in the rest of Norway.

Finnmark, in the far north, had a very small population, no more than about 3,000 persons by 1600, both Norwegian and Sami. The latter ethnic group, however, was barely visible in Finnmark's witchcraft trials; its total of approximately 138 convicted witches includes only 27 Sami men and women (Hagen 1999, 44). Finnmark's contemporary authorities considered Norwegian women much more likely than the less-Christianized and nomadic Sami to practice *maleficium* and enter into pacts with the Devil. The governor, bailiffs, and pastors allowed frequent use of torture and the water ordeal in these cases. The consequences were horrifying: per thousand population, Norwegian women in Finnmark ranked among Europe's most intensely persecuted groups. Chains of accusations caused most of these arrests.

In Norway, no one willingly confessed to have made a pact with the Devil to perform evil. Persons convicted were strongly exhorted to denounce accomplices, who were then promptly indicted. Many local courts accepted such denunciations as independent accusations; two or more sufficed to pass a death sentence, even though this practice contradicted sixteenth-century laws. One case led to new trials due to denunciations from the first woman accused. The case against Gunvor Omundsdatter in Vardø in Finnmark in 1651 lasted for two years before she was burned at the stake, convicted of attending the Sabbath and causing storms that made ships and crews sink. A total of 21 other women were involved in this case, either because they denounced Gunhild or because she denounced them. The great majority of the approximately 92 people (almost all women) who suffered capital punishment in Finnmark were the victims of such chain processes (Hagen 1999, 44–45). In addition, three women died before sentencing, and one Sami man was killed (by another man) during the trial. In total, we know the names of 353 persons denounced by other Norwegian witches. A majority of the death sentences in Norway resulted solely or partly from denunciations.

THE SOCIAL CONTEXT

Although high-ranking persons were occasionally accused and even convicted, as with Anna Pedersdotter at Bergen in 1590, the great majority of people indicted for witchcraft in Norway were old and on the same economic level as others in the community. Most of the accused, men or women, seem to have been from forty to sixty years of age, older than the average life span of people at that time. The typical process leading to accusations for witchcraft included quarreling with neighbors for many years over matters relating to accidents and deaths. Rumors of witchcraft led to suspicion and to accusations.

THE END OF NORWAY'S WITCHCRAFT TRIALS

The period of witch hunts in Norway largely coincided with Denmark's seventeenth-century wars. After the peace between Sweden and Denmark in 1660, relatively few persons were burned; Norway's last execution took place in 1695. After absolutism was introduced in Denmark in 1665, the largely Danish judges and other civil servants began to govern Norway by the 1670s, at both the central and local levels, in a far more modern and professional way than they had in previous decades. New rules imposed on local bailiffs and judges included stricter demands for documentation at all levels about each kind of case handled by a civil servant. The new generation of civil servants brought new and more critical attitudes about proof and evidence in all public matters. This attitude soon spread among judges and governors.

Meanwhile, Norway's old accusatorial legal system was replaced by an inquisitorial system, in which cases were decided by a judge's personal assessment of all evidence brought before him and after personal examination of both the accused and the witnesses. When this way of handling court cases was introduced in Norwegian witchcraft trials, it soon turned out that judges almost always found the evidence insufficient to sustain the accusations and consequently acquitted the persons accused. Although relatives of accused witches had formerly hesitated to defend them in public, from the 1660s onward several men appeared as defense council for the accused, further reducing the possibilities for starting a successful witchcraft trial. So, in a very short period of time, the whole mental climate about witchcraft changed dramatically in Norway.

HANS EYVIND NÆSS

See also: ACCUSATORIAL PROCEDURE; BLÅKULLA; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; DENMARK; EXECUTIONS; EXODUS 22:18 (22:17); LAPLAND; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); PEDERSDOTTER, ANNA; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; SWEDEN; SWIMMING TEST; TORTURE; TRIALS; WEATHER MAGIC.

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NUMBER OF WITCHES

Wildly exaggerated figures are often cited for the number of witches executed in Europe, with a preposterous total of 9 million women still enjoying particular favor. This claim ultimately derives from an absurd calculation by an eighteenth-century anticlerical lawyer, Gottfried Christian Voigt, who multiplied up a mere twenty trials in one German city on the assumption that persecution levels had been constant across Europe for many centuries. It was given wider circulation by Gustav Roskoff's 1869 *History of the Devil*, much cited by Protestant and anti-Catholic writers, and was subsequently picked up by the German neopagan movement and by elements in the Nazi party.

American feminists seem to have relied on its appearance in a book by Matilda Joselyn Gage, *Woman, Church, and State* (1893), where she at least stated that only "the greater number" of this imaginary multitude were women. A connection is also made between "the burning times" and Margaret Murray's thesis of witchcraft as an ancient pagan religion under sustained attack from the western Christian Church, for which the idea of massive casualties over a long time span is a particularly convenient fiction. The myth of this early holocaust is probably indestructible, but historians are hampered in their responses by their inability to give

any truly authoritative statistics based on the sources. Records of witchcraft trials across most of Europe are simply too patchy, so that reliable counting is only possible in a few exceptional jurisdictions, not on a national or European scale. Many of the suspiciously round figures given in contemporary sources also turn out to be far too high or lack any basis in fact at all. Few historians now subscribe to the idea of a massive persecution that traumatized either urban or rural society across the Continent, preferring instead to stress the localized, highly variable nature of the phenomenon.

The current estimates suggest a figure of, at the most, 50,000 legal executions in Europe (including Russia) between approximately 1400 and 1780, with perhaps 100,000 persons having been tried for witchcraft before properly constituted courts. The great majority of trials occurred in a much shorter period, around 1570–1630; in most of western Europe between 75 percent and 90 percent of trials took place over these years. In Poland and Hungary, by contrast, the trials peaked in the first half of the eighteenth century. Eastern Europe presents special difficulties because record destruction (above all in Poland) has been so serious, but the high figures once cited for Poland were generated by the same fallacious method that Voigt used in eighteenth-century Germany, that is, multiplying from a few local cases. Although a margin of error must always remain, it is hard to see how the figures could be plausibly increased by more than 20–30 percent on the most generous assumptions about missing evidence.

Unauthorized lynchings and the use of forms of popular justice such as the swimming test represent a separate problem, one that defies any statistical approach, despite the survival of occasional prosecutions of the perpetrators. On current evidence, there must at least have been hundreds of killings and very extensive witch-finding activities; total figures for lynchings may well have been in the thousands, although they are unlikely to have been so high as to alter the overall picture radically. Some of the most striking outbreaks of this kind were in countries like France, Spain, and England, which had low rates of legal executions, thus making unofficial local action an attractive and effective alternative. Rulers and governments always disapproved of such irregular procedures, and over the course of the seventeenth century they reacted with growing effectiveness to punish those involved where they could be identified. Nevertheless, a small number of physical attacks and killings persisted in parts of rural Europe until the late twentieth century.

The apparent lack of witchcraft persecution before 1400 may be deceptive because there could easily have been many trials in local courts and lynchings for which little evidence has survived. A scattering of references to individuals punished for witchcraft may well imply that such action was quite common. No reasonable estimate

of numbers can be given: the victims, unlike later witches, would not have been accused of belonging to a diabolical sect, although the local names for witches were already applied to some of them. Systematic persecution began with small numbers of trials in Savoy and the Dauphiné from around 1400, followed by bigger waves in the 1420s and 1430s. At the least, these Alpine regions must have seen several hundred trials in the decade after 1428, with a high ratio of capital sentences. These persecutions coincided with the emergence of the full-blown theory of a diabolical conspiracy, apparently propagated by the Dominicans. They were, however, followed by something of a lull over the next fifty years, when most trials seem to have been scattered local affairs, with the odd case involving twenty or more, as at Metz in 1456–1457 and Arras in 1459–1460. A second wave of larger-scale persecutions began in the 1480s and 1490s, again primarily around the Alps, continuing until about 1520 in the valleys on the Italian side. Although it is impossible to verify the figures from legal records, groups of trials involving up to sixty executions are said to have occurred in several places; the total cannot have been much short of 1,000 and could easily have reached 2,000. This second peak was again followed by a relative decline that lasted until the 1560s, despite scattered outbreaks like the one in Denmark in the 1540s.

In the 1560s, persecution began to increase again and soon reached unprecedented levels as it spread away from its Alpine heartland to cover virtually the whole of Europe. The vast majority of the trials in western and central Europe occurred in the half-century from 1580 to 1630, with a total of around 40,000 executions dwarfing anything seen before or since. The next fifty years were far milder, with most of the trials occurring in a few spectacular outbreaks (notably the Matthew Hopkins crusade in England, the 1661–1662 hunt in Scotland, the *Zauberer-Jackl* [Sorcerer-Jack] trials of Salzburg, the county of Vaduz between 1648 and 1680, and the Swedish hunt of 1668–1676). Each of these episodes involved hundreds of trials, but conviction rates were usually lower, so that the total of executions in these five instances may have been around 1,000. Elsewhere, growing judicial caution resulted in a massive reduction in the numbers of individual and small-scale trials, so that after 1630 the average rate of persecution probably fell to less than one-tenth of its peak levels in the preceding period. After 1680, there was no more than a trickle of isolated cases apart from the belated persecutions in eastern Europe.

For the period from the 1560s to the 1630s it becomes possible to analyze the statistics in more complex ways, notably to establish comparative rates of intensity across different regions. There are major problems of definition here because so much of Europe,

notably in the Holy Roman Empire, was divided into very small political units unlike modern nation-states. The attribution of more than 20,000 executions to the German lands conceals an exceptionally varied picture. In a region with hundreds of separate territories, about 10,000 of these executions occurred in a dozen locations, some of them quite small, whereas other rulers displayed extreme caution or refused to convict witches at all. A simple comparative measure sets estimates of executions against total population for the end of the sixteenth century. On this reckoning there are striking differences between larger regions: modern Luxembourg had about 5 executions per 1,000 people; followed by Switzerland, with 4 executions; the Spanish (southern) Netherlands, with 2; Denmark, 1.75; Germany, 1.5; Scotland, 1.4; Hungary, 0.27; Italy, 0.2; and England and the northern Netherlands both about 0.13. France and Spain hardly register on the scale, at around 0.04 per 1,000 people. The differences become far greater when very small areas are included; modern Liechtenstein (the county of Vaduz) is way out in front, although per capita totals in a few smaller autonomous German territories were even higher, with the extraordinary figure of 100 per 1,000 inhabitants, 300 executions for a population of only 3,000. The electorate of Cologne led the middle-sized category at 10 (2,000 per 200,000 people), with the duchies of Lorraine and Luxembourg both over 5 (each around 1,600 per 300,000 inhabitants), and the electorate of Mainz not far behind. Although all these figures rest on calculations for both trials and total populations that are very approximate, the orders of magnitude seem fairly well established. Some of the lower figures, including those for the large monarchies of France, Spain, and England, are rather deceptive, because these regions had abnormally low rates of convictions and capital sentences. If the measure were in terms of trials rather than executions, their coefficient would move up quite sharply. Less than 10 percent of some 1,300 witches whose cases went to the *Parlement* of Paris (sovereign judicial court, with jurisdiction over approximately one-half of France) on appeal were executed, but hundreds were flogged or banished. In England the county of Essex was unusually active, with executions running at 0.82 per 1,000 people; if trials are considered, however, the figure was 4.

What the numbers also show are very different patterns. At one extreme were regions like Lorraine, Luxembourg, and the pays de Vaud, where there were no large crises, and trials were spread fairly evenly across several decades and quite wide areas. At the other extreme, there were the series of intense short-term persecutions, such as at the imperial abbey of St. Maximin, just outside Trier, where at least 400 people (out of a population of only 2,200) were executed as witches from 1586 to 1596. Alongside famous German cases

such as Bamberg (900) and Würzburg (1200), both with two surges within little more than a decade, one must place the Scottish and Danish witch hunts, the panic around Bouchain in the Spanish Netherlands, the Hopkins campaign in England, the various post-1650 cases mentioned above, and many others. Across much of Europe a mixed pattern is evident, with a series of isolated trials but also sudden bursts of more intense activity. In areas like the Franche-Comté or the Labourd, the victims were counted in scores rather than hundreds, but the dynamics were those of true witch hunts. The great persecution was thus a composite affair, which combined endemic suspicions within local communities with terrifying bursts of witch hunting, and the elites were heavily involved in the latter as both instigators and victims.

ROBIN BRIGGS

See also: CHRONOLOGY OF WITCHCRAFT TRIALS; HISTORIOGRAPHY; LYNCHING; MURRAY, MARGARET ALICE.

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NUREMBERG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY

Nuremberg, one of the more important imperial cities of the Holy Roman Empire, unusual because of the skepticism of its leading citizens toward diabolical witchcraft and for the city's avoidance of witch hunts.

The inhabitants of Nuremberg (Nürnberg) embraced Lutheranism early on, despite the city's temporary role as the residence of the imperial government (*Reichsregiment*) in 1522–1524. By then, this rich town of about 30,000 inhabitants had reached maximal importance. Its merchants controlled mining activities in surrounding areas, and its craftspeople prospered in the metal industry and other handicrafts. Humanist Johannes Cochläus portrayed Nuremberg as the center of Europe, due to its geographic position as well as to the ingeniousness of its artisans: Erhard Etzlaub had recently invented maps indicating European travel

roads; Peter Hele had invented the portable clock, useful for travelers and merchants; and there were of course Albrecht Dürer and his school, the most daring artists of their time, not to mention Hans Sachs, the shoemaker-poet, and the *Meistersingers*.

Nuremberg was presumably founded around 1000 as a royal castle, but when a royal mint was introduced soon afterward, a suburb developed. By 1200 Nuremberg had its own law and soon after became one of the first German towns with a self-governing council. It was already almost “free” when the council received high jurisdiction in 1320. During the reign of Emperor Charles IV of the Luxembourg dynasty, the “Golden Bull” of 1356 granted Nuremberg the right to host the first imperial diet of each emperor. After 1424, Nuremberg’s prestige soared when emperor Sigmund decreed that this city would harbor the imperial symbols (*Reichsinsignien*), which indeed remained the case until 1796. As one of the few imperial cities, Nuremberg managed to get rid of all feudal remnants, simply by buying the Hohenzollern castle, and constructed its own territory, like an Italian city-state. Nuremberg’s governing families indeed acquired noble status, and it was one of the few German towns where humanism was an urban phenomenon, with Willibald Pirckheimer as a figure of almost “national” importance. Nuremberg even founded a university at Altdorf, within its territory. However, the city suffered terribly during the Thirty Years’ War and never again regained its former importance. Occupied by Bavarian and Prussian troops in the 1790s, it was swallowed by the Kingdom of Bavaria in 1806.

Nuremberg’s attitude toward witchcraft was explored thoroughly by Harmut Kunstmann in 1970. The results of this legal dissertation were then surprising, because contrary to common expectations, Nuremberg experienced no witch hunts. Nuremberg’s legal sources are exhaustingly rich, and it is unlikely that any trial escaped Kunstmann’s attention. It held several dozen sixteenth-century sorcery trials (the death penalty was imposed for poisoning and sorcery in 1520), and there were frequent allegations of witchcraft among the populace, but Nuremberg’s spirit of humanism and capitalism prevented any witch hunts. However, it had a few scattered witchcraft trials in a narrow sense, in which the city councilors proved to be extremely reluctant; one of them, Dr. Johann Hepstein, even ridiculed the existence of witches. Their attitude was reflected in contemporary art and literature: poet Hans Sachs also claimed that witchcraft was nothing but a devilish illusion, and the famous sketches of witches by Albrecht Dürer and his school should be interpreted likewise. Dürer was a councilor and part of Nuremberg’s governing elite, in touch with leading humanists and Venetian and Dutch artists, and it is extremely unlikely that he believed in witchcraft in such an environment. Humanist Willibald

Pirckheimer ridiculed recent ideas of witchcraft in his satire on Luther’s opponent, Johannes Eck, *Eckius dedolatus* (Eck Cut Down). In 1536, the Nuremberg council issued a decree against “Sorcery, Witchcraft, and Divining” that explicitly designated these crimes as frauds. In 1590, a man was executed who had previously served the executioner of Eichstätt and had tried to launch a witch hunt in Nuremberg. Nuremberg’s magistrates took this occasion to demonstrate the town’s attitude toward witchcraft.

Like other upper German imperial cities, Nuremberg’s situation reversed after the Thirty Years’ War, when economic decline prevented any recovery of its former importance. New anxieties entered cities with populations that had shrunk to half their former size. In 1659, two women were executed for witchcraft, and a man was executed in 1660. But although it saw some serious cases until the end of the seventeenth century, Nuremberg had no more executions. All in all, this imperial free city represents the case of an urban environment where the rule of law prevailed and a skeptical attitude toward fantastical crimes was common. Nuremberg became a safe haven for refugees from the Franconian prince-bishoprics, and the town was sufficiently rich and self-confident to withstand all attempts by neighboring princes to force it into cooperation. Among urban elites, it was usually lawyers and artists rather than theologians who distanced themselves from popular beliefs about witchcraft and who maintained Nuremberg’s position as a beacon of independence and freedom. And because Nuremberg dominated the imperial cities of the Franconian circle, its influence prevented atrocities among them, either through legal opinions (as in the case of the small imperial city of Weissenburg) or just by serving as an example generally.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: DÜRER, ALBRECHT; GERMANY; GERMANY, SOUTHEASTERN; HEPSTEIN, JOHANN; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; IMPERIAL FREE CITIES; SKEPTICISM.

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NUSS, BALTHASAR (1545–1618)

Count and judge at witchcraft trials, born in Brückenau, Nuss ranks among the most notorious German witch hunters. In Fulda, the largest prince-abbey in the Holy Roman Empire, at least 203 people died during the trials he led from 1603 to 1606. In contrast to most witch hunters, Nuss was eventually imprisoned for his crimes and finally beheaded in Fulda after spending twelve years in jail. In literature, he has commonly been referred to as “Ross,” although court records invariably called him “Nuss.”

Nuss (who had murdered a priest in his youth) owed much of his career to his mentor, Prince-Abbot Balthasar von Dernbach (1548–1606). When von Dernbach returned to Fulda after twenty-six years in exile, he appointed his old protégé, Nuss, to judge cases involving witchcraft. Nuss immediately began conducting trials in 1603. Würzburg's law faculty instructed the judge of the trial procedures to be followed, but Nuss violated these persecution-friendly rules. Especially spectacular was the trial of Marga Bien, whose husband complained about Nuss to the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court) but was ultimately unable to prevent her from being burned at the stake.

Nuss did make one grave mistake. In March 1604, he summoned six women belonging to Fulda's upper class, who had already fled with their families. Their summons was publicized in the particularly embarrassing form of an edict. However, none of them returned to Fulda, and several of their relatives filed suit for unlawful trial conduct against Nuss and von Dernbach in the *Reichskammergericht*. Before the court reached a decision, the prince-abbot died in spring 1606. His successor, Friedrich von Schwalbach, ended the witchcraft trials and fired Nuss. Three months later, after discovering that Nuss had embezzled 2,358 guilders, almost half the proceeds from the trial costs paid by the victims' families, Schwalbach had him arrested. The families of the six upper-class women accused in 1604 now returned to Fulda and filed suits against Nuss. After one year of imprisonment, Nuss's formal trial had not yet begun; the former judge appealed to the *Reichskammergericht*, which denied his request for release. After Nuss's second appeal in 1609, the court in Speyer reduced his sentence.

Prison conditions were such that Nuss and his wife produced four of their seven children while he was in jail. He suffered a series of strokes in jail and became increasingly handicapped, to the point at which he was eventually unable to walk and could barely speak. His wife lobbied Fulda's government on his behalf, but in vain. Nuss also received support from a nephew who was a lawyer in Frankfurt. In 1615, Würzburg's law faculty sentenced Nuss to indefinite state custody and ordered him to repay the money he had embezzled. This decision was not severe enough for the court in Fulda: instead, his files were sent to Ingolstadt as part of a second file sharing. In November 1618, Ingolstadt

sentenced Nuss to death. He was beheaded in Fulda at the age of seventy-three.

Nuss was the second German witch hunter to be executed. Five years earlier, Gottfried Sattler, a Bavarian witch judge in Wemding, had already been executed at Munich. A similar case also occurred later in Osnabrück. In 1650, Dr. Wilhelm Peltzer was jailed for his misconduct as that town's chief witch hunter. As with Nuss, the imperial chamber court became involved, but again without resolving the case; Peltzer died in prison, insane. Beheading a witch-hunting judge also proved to people that some witchcraft trials had been illegitimate and suggested that the traditional argument that God would not allow innocent people to be executed was apparently wrong. To Adam Tanner, the first major Jesuit opponent of witch hunting, Nuss's execution demonstrated the danger posed to innocent people by unjust judges. Friedrich Spee was also familiar with Nuss's case, citing Ingolstadt's death sentence (copied from Tanner) in his *Cautio Criminalis* (A Warning on Criminal Justice) of 1631. Spee could have learned about Nuss's witchcraft trials as early as 1612, during his Jesuit novitiate in Fulda. During the nineteenth-century *Kulturkampf* (culture war), Catholic scholars of witchcraft used the example of Balthasar Nuss to demonstrate that Catholic territories could end unjust witchcraft trials on their own and even punish those responsible.

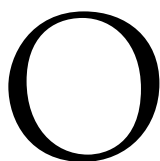
PETER OESTMANN;

TRANSLATED BY JONATHAN STICKNEY

See also: FULDA, PRINCE-ABBEY OF; GERMANY, WEST AND NORTH-WEST; OSNABRÜCK, BISHOPRIC OF; *REICHSKAMMERGERICHT*; SATTLER, GOTTFRIED; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; TANNER, ADAM.

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OBRY, NICOLE (CA. 1550–?)

Nicole Obry (Aubry/Aubray) was the main actor in an extraordinary drama of demonic possession and exorcism in 1566. She was then fifteen or sixteen years old, the daughter of a baker in Vervins, a small town in northeastern France. In the fall of 1565, after seeing the ghost of her grandfather, she began to show symptoms that were diagnosed as demonic possession. She was exorcised in Vervins, but because all her thirty demons could not be made to leave her, she was brought to the diocesan capital at Laon in January 1566. Laon was a religiously mixed city, with an active Protestant minority. This was a very tense point in the religious wars. After the temporary end of organized religious warfare in 1563, propaganda and random violence continued. Organized warfare resumed in 1567, not long after this case was concluded.

In Laon, Nicole was exorcised in public (unlike any previous case of this sort in France), on a specially built scaffold in front of the cathedral. She was brought to the ceremonies in great processions, carried by eight or ten men who struggled to control her convulsions and deathlike trances. The exorcisms drew huge crowds. Her main demon was forced to identify himself as Beelzebuth, one of Satan's chief lieutenants. Speaking through Nicole, Beelzebuth also revealed that he was the prince of the Protestant heretics, referring to them as "my Huguenots" and delivering sermons against the heretics. The intimate connection between Protestants and the Devil became a recurrent theme in French Catholic polemic throughout and even beyond the age of the religious wars.

Laon's Protestants were skeptical from the outset. The prince of Condé, their military commander in the recent war and the most prominent Protestant nobleman in France, attempted to halt the exorcisms; he even tried to convert Nicole, but the king ordered her released. The exorcisms, now conducted personally by the bishop, continued. Interestingly enough, unlike many later French cases, no witch was accused of sending the demons into the possessed. The strongest weapon in the bishop's armory was the communion wafer, the Host. It is almost impossible to overemphasize the role of transubstantiation in France at this time. The ultimate charge against Protestants was that they fed

consecrated Hosts to dogs; at the same time, superstitious (but Catholic) shepherds in northern France really did sometimes feed consecrated Hosts to animals precisely because of their supposed miraculous properties.

On February 8, 1566, Beelzebuth and the rest of the demons dramatically left Nicole's body in front of thousands of observers. A plume of smoke was observed rising from her body. This sensational spectacle was one of the most widely publicized acts of the early stages of the religious wars. It was regarded as a great Catholic victory, known across France as the "Miracle of Laon." Catholicism's ability to exorcise demons proved that the Catholic Church was the only true Christian church. Catholic polemicists seized on this incident because the supernatural power of the Host confirmed the correctness of the Catholic view of the sacraments. Pamphlets and books by Guillaume Postel, Jean Boulaese, Charles Blendec, and Florimond de Raemond described this miracle in order to attack Protestantism and defend the Catholic Church. Raemond, who had flirted with Protestantism, converted back to Catholicism as the result of witnessing the exorcism. For Postel, this miracle confirmed the role of consecrated priests and the traditional Catholic hierarchy.

This colorful event introduced the Devil as a key player in Catholic propaganda. For the next two generations, demonology in France was highly political, tied to Catholic attempts to demonize their adversaries. In 1599, supporters of the Catholic cause attempted to block the Edict of Nantes, the religious compromise that was to end violence, by recreating the "Miracle of Laon" in Paris. This attempt, however, proved a fiasco. Although Marthe Brossier was regarded as a fraud, people still continued to believe in demonic possession, and such spectacular public exorcisms as the Loudun nuns endured as popular theater in France far into the seventeenth century. Nicole Obry's miracle was quoted, if not repeated.

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See also: BROSSIER, MARTHE; DEMONOLOGY; DEMONS; EXORCISM; FRANCE; GHOSTS; LOUDUN NUNS; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; WARS OF RELIGION (FRANCE).

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OCCULT

The term *occult* covers the qualities in nature hidden from ordinary human observation and understanding and the forbidden practices or rituals used to discover and manipulate these qualities. Occult practices include astrology (understanding the influence of the stars and planets on human lives), magic (the use of intrinsic and extrinsic, natural or supernatural powers to produce effects), alchemy (the study of the means to transform baser metals into gold), and divination (the means for understanding or divining a foreordained destiny). Typically, practitioners of the occult are in awe of the power of nature and are fascinated with the possibility of mastering it—usually for their personal gain. The occultist may also feel some sense of psychological, intellectual, or social superiority over others, or he or she may gain greater acceptance in societies that value occult knowledge (especially with regard to healing and protection against disease).

THE OCCULT, RELIGION, AND SCIENCE

Some historians have argued that magic, which involves the coercion of God, should be contrasted with religion, which involves the supplication of God by prayer. In practice, it is not always possible to distinguish the occult from religion. Both phenomena are based on a belief in the unity of nature, which includes God and the angels at one extreme and human beings and the terrestrial world at the other. In this sense, human beings are a special link in the great chain of being, and they can participate in some of the divine mysteries. Therefore, partial revelation of the occult was a key element in the Hellenistic cults of the ancient world. In contrast, Christians, who emphasized the fallen state of humanity and its tendency to sin, tended to regard the followers of these pagan religions as heretics and devil worshippers, and they attacked all attempts to delve into what they regarded as divine mysteries, such as the miracles of nature. As a result, the limits of natural knowledge were circumscribed and policed, and many occult practitioners were forced into silence or outward conformity. However, Christian occultists have claimed that they are serving God or that they derive their power from the divine. In many cases, the "spells" and symbols they employ in their rituals, as well as their aims, are similar to religious imagery and ritual.

Modern occultists tend to be associated with Satanism or with pseudoscience, although the nineteenth-century followers of the Order of the Golden Dawn were drawn to its mystical religiosity.

It is also important to note the relationship between the occult and science, for the two categories often seem historically indistinguishable. For example, mathematical knowledge was the basis for some medieval technology that appeared to imitate and master nature and shaded imperceptibly into natural magic. Sir Isaac Newton's (1642–1727) alchemical investigations complemented his search for the hidden quality that came to be known as gravity. The difference between the two is that all natural phenomena can be studied and understood, whereas the occult can never be fully understood or systematically investigated because the full source of its power is by definition hidden from the human mind. Moreover, occultists have usually formed private and closed social networks, and they sometimes withhold their arcane knowledge from the world.

Until secular authorities sanctioned them in the modern era (that is, since ca. 1750), occult texts circulated secretly, and many occult practitioners, including witches, were persecuted in the belief that all magic and most astrology were demonically inspired. However, there is a correlation between social status and the degree of tolerance of occultists. From the Middle Ages onward, magicians and astrologers could hold privileged positions at court. Indulgent princes and popes permitted learned men (as opposed to ignorant women) such as Michael Scot (ca. 1175–ca. 1235) and Michel de Nostredame (known as Nostradamus) (1503–1566) to practice their craft in relative freedom. For most people in the modern secular era, the occult has lost its potency and has become a matter of personal curiosity or an object of antiquarian or historical interest.

THE ANCIENT WORLD

The Greek philosopher Plato made a distinction between what was apparent and what was real in the universe, and he suggested how essential parts of nature were transmitted from the higher being by celestial intelligences known as *daemones*. In the *Timaeus* he discussed some of the numerological codes that formed the basis for an understanding of the world. His pupil Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.), whose works heavily influenced the Western scientific and philosophical tradition up until the seventeenth century, thought that the natural world was ordered in a unified and fairly regular way. Therefore, nature's secrets were open to investigation and reasonable enquiry by humans in terms of the four essences (earth, air, fire, and water). However, both men provided occultists with some justification for secret or mystical forms of enquiry. For example, Aristotle allowed for the existence of a fifth essence

inherent in the stars and planets that influenced earthly matters and provided the basis for astrology. Plato half-seriously suggested that initiation into pure philosophical truth could be compared with initiation into a mystery religion. Neoplatonists took up this suggestion more seriously and blended it with the religion of the first Iranian (Persian) empire, named after the prophet Zarathustra (better known by the Greek form of his name, Zoroaster), who saw all existence as the gradual realization of a divine plan. The Zoroastrian magi (priests) were adept in astrology and the arts of divination, and one branch of the occult was named after them: magic. Neoplatonists such as Plotinus (ca. 205–270), Porphyry (ca. 232–303), and Iamblichus (ca. 250–ca. 330) and the members of Hellenistic cults cultivated a form of gnosis (the special knowledge of spiritual mysteries). They read the revelations attributed to the Egyptian god Thoth, called *Hermes Trismegistus* (Thrice-Great Hermes), that concerned philosophy and the understanding or manipulation of astrology, alchemy, natural history, medicine, and magic. In this way, they argued that only a pious and sequestered magus assisted by the *daemones* could unlock natural and supernatural mysteries. Curses, spells, and enchantments that incorporate divine figures such as Isis have been discovered on stones, amulets, and scrolls from ancient Egypt and Greece also indicate the way in which occult power was associated with the divine will.

The Romans were heavily influenced by Greek writings on the occult, and they were no less fascinated by magic, astrology, and divination as transmitted by the books attributed to *Hermes Trismegistus* (known as the *Corpus Hermeticum*) or Pythagoras—a mathematician who was also considered to be the first practitioner of learned magic. Augury (divination) was widely used and was based on natural occurrences such as thunder and lightning, the flight of birds, and the movement of the planets. However, Pliny the Elder (ca. 23–79), like Cicero (106–43 B.C.E.), Seneca (ca. 4 B.C.E.–C.E. 65) and Galen (ca. 130–200), was skeptical about just how many marvelous things in nature, which seemed out of the ordinary course of nature described by Aristotle, could be ascribed to magic and other occult phenomena. Nevertheless, he recorded many examples of what would be called “natural magic” in his *Natural History*, thereby confirming a trend toward cataloguing the bizarre in nature and providing a basis for later occult investigations.

THE MIDDLE AGES

Early Christian writers such as St. Augustine of Hippo regarded Hellenistic cults as little more than centers of demonic magic. In Judeo-Christian thought, the benign Neoplatonic *daemones* who were neutral spirits intermediate between gods and human beings were recast as

angels who had turned against God. Augustine discouraged speculation about the deeper mysteries of nature, such as monstrous births and other such omens, portents, and prodigies, and he deplored the way in which the practice of magic led people to ally themselves with Satan. As well as the often-quoted scriptural text of Exodus 22:18 (22:17; “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live”), a locus classicus of such medieval hostility toward magicians was the story of Simon Magus of Samaria (Acts 8:9–24), whose iniquity stemmed from his attempts to rival the power of God in his miracle making. Subsequent Christian polemicists, following Augustine’s views, fostered a distrust of intellectual curiosity, which was viewed as a dangerous and vain pursuit, leading as it did to pride, sin, and, ultimately, heresy (indeed, the occult was often associated with Judaism, and nocturnal assemblies of witches in the presence of the Devil were called “synagogues” for part of this period). Many members of the Latin Church, especially the scholars of the new universities known as the Scholastics, therefore attempted to set a limit on human knowledge. They left many of the deeper mysteries of the universe to God’s will and understanding, and they condemned occult dabbling as a form of “superstition”—in the original sense provided by Saint Thomas Aquinas: a perversion of correct religious devotion.

However, stories of Jesus’s miracles on earth, the wonder-working capabilities of prayer and adjurations, and the intensification of eucharistic devotion from the thirteenth century muddied the boundaries between *mira* (wonders) and *miracula* (miracles) and appeared to sanction some occult techniques based on mechanical and scientific knowledge and directed toward “holy” ends. This relationship was exacerbated from the twelfth century onward by the Europe-wide diffusion of Latin and vernacular translations of Arabic texts on the occult and science such as the *Picatrix* (the Latin translation of “The Aim of the Sage”). These collections of “secrets,” which were supposedly imparted by a sage and often written in code or obscure language, may have encouraged readers to distinguish more sharply between natural magic and demonic magic and to increase interest in the former. However, such texts also opened the way for the study of necromancy (the conjuring of spirits), which was an explicitly demonic technique for controlling nature through Latin incantations and quasireligious ritual, usually undertaken by educated clerics.

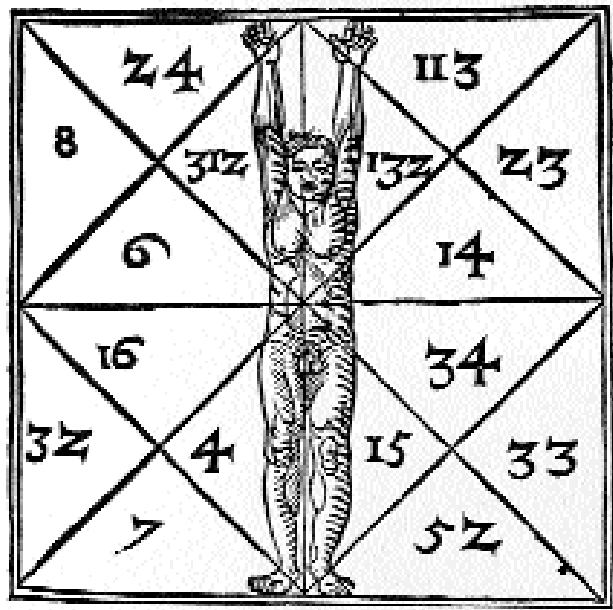
During the Middle Ages, horoscopes, medical self-help manuals, books of charms, manuals for divination, and alchemical manuscripts were read with increasing frequency by laypeople as well as clerics. These works comprised discussions of the influence of planets and stars on terrestrial affairs; recipes for procuring a lover; lists of enchantments for causing harm or ensuring personal protection; lists of

protective amulets and gemstones; necromantic formulas and rituals; and instructions for the practice of oneirancy (the interpretation of dreams), chiromancy (the reading of palms), and onomancy (calculation through names). The effectiveness of such phenomena relied upon a variety of assumptions and claims. For instance, occult techniques and recipes were attributed to a classical authority or venerated figure such as Hermes Trismegistus, Virgil, or Albertus Magnus (Albert the Great, ca. 1200–1280), or to demons, as in the case of necromancy. It was often claimed that such spells had been employed successfully on many previous occasions, and there was an assumption that there was clearly some “occult” or hidden quality in the form of words, markings, or material used. In short, many people attributed a large number of occult phenomena to natural but obscure causes, practiced their art in secret or under royal protection at court, and ran an intermittent risk of secular or ecclesiastical prosecution, particularly if such arts caused harm to others.

THE OCCULT RENAISSANCE

From the beginning of the fifteenth century there was an increase in the production of these occult manuscripts. Moreover, after the establishment of printing presses in the cities and monastic or university centers of Europe, books of marvels and “secrets” as well as learned treatises on natural magic ranked among the most popular texts of the literate or listening public. Magic, astrology, and alchemy were openly studied and practiced at many late medieval and Renaissance courts, such as those of the emperors Frederick III (ruled 1440–1493) and Rudolf II (ruled 1576–1612); Pope Urban VIII (ruled 1623–1644); Cosimo de’ Medici in Florence (1389–1464); and Elizabeth I of England (ruled 1558–1603). It has been argued that the occult sciences found favor in court because they provided a useful weapon in the armory of courtiers who sought to eliminate enemies and gain the ear of a ruler. However, astrologers such as William Lilly in seventeenth-century London cast horoscopes for maidservants as well as the nobility, and the vast literature about wonders and witches in northern Europe also suggests that there was a popular interest in the occult.

In contrast to the Middle Ages, this was an “age of wonders” when learned men and women sought to uncover the hidden powers of the universe by turning sharper eyes on nature (the macrocosm) and human experience (the microcosm). It is clear that this change was partly due to the revival of classical learning that lay at the heart of the Renaissance and was also a function of the longing for a more primitive, purified, and intensely mystical Christianity. The philological or historical investigations of this period were fueled by a



Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim, *De Occulta Philosophia* (On Occult Philosophy), 1531—delineation of a horoscope chart founded on bodily characteristics. Divination was an important occult practice. (Bettmann/Corbis)

desire for greater understanding of the Word of God. They also provided a basis for renewed interest in the Kabbalah (Hebrew mysticism), the *Corpus Hermeticum*, Aristotelianism, Neoplatonism, or the science of the ancients. A typical Renaissance magus such as the Florentine philosopher Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499) used his knowledge of Greek to translate works ascribed to Hermes Trismegistus. On the basis of this work and his Platonic studies, he outlined a form of astral magic that channeled the power of the stars and planets imprinted on the earth by celestial spirits. The German humanist and occult philosopher Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim explored many of the texts and traditions employed by Ficino. In his *De occulta philosophia* (On Occult Philosophy; first complete edition, 1533), he defended the invocation of demons so long as they were good and the agents of divine miracles. The Neapolitan philosopher Giambattista Della Porta made a distinction between natural and demonic magic, and he aimed to uncover the natural properties in supposedly demonic magic. He explained that his popular *Magia naturalis* (On Natural Magic, 1558 and 1589; translated into English as *Natural Magick* in 1658) was intended to be a “survey of the whole course of nature” (Debus 1978, 13).

Renaissance occultists sought to understand the harmony in the universe and to use its powers to bring concord and unity to the political and religious divisions of Europe. Such philosophical and political

arcana, although clearly attractive to rulers such as the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II, whose territories teemed with religious sects and whose court was filled with magi, were often condemned by the Church, and many magi were keen to distance themselves from accusations of sorcery. Therefore, Agrippa published a retraction of his ideas *before* he published the *De occulta*, and the Englishman Dr. John Dee, who practiced necromancy and studied mathematical or natural magic, defended himself against accusations that he was a “conjurer” by protesting that all of his studies had been directed toward God and emphasizing that many wondrous feats were naturally, mathematically, and mechanically contrived.

However, in seeking to reduce the scope of demonic magic and to lend authority to their own natural magic, the occultists undermined some of the theological bases for demonic magic and therefore the keystone in the Catholic and Protestant churches’ campaigns against witchcraft. For example, Giambattista Della Porta supplied a naturalistic explanation for the demonic “witches’ salve” (which was supposed to allow its users to fly to Sabbats or meetings). Consequently, he was investigated by the Inquisition and attacked by Jean Bodin in his book *De la Démonomanie des sorciers* (On the Demonomania of witches, 1580). These attempts to reduce the scope of the Devil’s actions in the world were helpful to such early skeptics of witchcraft as Reginald Scot and Johann Weyer—a former student of Agrippa. However, the skeptics and occult connoisseurs had an unshakeable faith in Scripture and the learned texts of the occult heritage, and they betrayed an enormous condescension toward illiterate men and women whose healing techniques and claims to supernatural power they characterized as mere “superstition.” Thus, their highly selective attacks on peasant beliefs strengthened the Church’s authority to pursue witches and may have strengthened the social position and professional exclusivity of learned magicians, alchemists, and court astrologers.

THE MODERN SECULAR ERA

Technological and scientific discoveries in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as well as the development of competing models of the cosmos, gradually undermined traditional beliefs about the world and discredited the authenticity of some of the ancient texts that formed the basis for occult activity. The growth of scientific academies in the seventeenth century further widened the scope for natural philosophical investigation, gradually stripping natural magic, astrology, and alchemy of their scientific credibility. The English politician and philosopher Francis Bacon (1561–1626) discussed occult qualities in nature, but he argued that true science should take the “mystery” out of things, and he thought it possible to reveal the causes of occult phenomena and to harness this knowledge for the

benefit of the growing nation-state. Scientific pioneers were far from uniformly antioccultist; Galileo cast horoscopes for rich German students, and Isaac Newton expended enormous effort on alchemical experiments. One of Galileo’s late-seventeenth-century successors as mathematician at the University of Padua continued to practice magic while maintaining an outward appearance of scientific “respectability.” Other occultists contributed to modern technological developments. For instance, a mathematician and alchemist at the ducal court in Dresden made the discovery of porcelain manufacture in 1707.

The notion of occult powers continues to hold an attraction for many people. No doubt, there are some who still seek to understand and control the hidden forces in nature, and if the contents of the Internet and the lists of published books are reliable guides, there are probably many more who seek some form of occult “re-enchancement” in a predominantly secular Western world.

STEPHEN BOWD

See also: AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM, HEINRICH CORNELIUS; ALCHEMY; AMULET AND TALISMAN; ASTROLOGY; AUGUSTINE, ST.; BODIN, JEAN; DEE, JOHN; DELLA PORTA, GIAMBATTISTA; DEVIL; DIVINATION; HERMETICISM; KABBALAH; MAGIC, LEARNED; MAGIC, NATURAL; MIRACLES; NECROMANCY; SCIENCE AND MAGIC; SCOT, REGINALD; SIMON MAGUS; SPELLS; SUPERSTITION; WEYER, JOHANN.

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OFFENBURG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY

Eighty-nine accused witches lost their lives in this Catholic imperial free city in southwestern Germany, which belonged to the Circle of Swabia and shared a curial vote with the cities of Gegenbach and Zell am Harmerbach. Offenburg had approximately 2,400 inhabitants in 1803. Its early modern history was strongly influenced between 1550 and 1635 by its proximity to neighboring Ortenau and the consequent Austrian influence. Research on Offenburg's witchcraft trials goes back to Franz Volk's "excellent study" in 1882 (Midelfort 1972, 128). Chronologically, there were three distinct phases: before 1608, the wave of trials in 1608, and the great witch hunt from 1627 to 1630.

The first witchcraft trials were mainly isolated incidents; the city council remained relatively reserved. Although fifteen people were executed for witchcraft in neighboring Ortenau between 1595 and 1599, only four witches died in Offenburg during the same time. Consequently, Offenburg's guilds complained about the council's lax stance to the imperial commissioner, the governor of Lower Alsace. In 1599, he ordered the city to pursue witches, but nevertheless follow the Carolina (the imperial law code, 1532). After the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II and the *Reichshofrat* (imperial aulic court) confirmed this decision in 1602, Offenburg's next witchcraft trials began in 1603. The family of Barbara Pfäffinger, one of the accused, immediately got the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court) in Speyer to intervene on her behalf. While a messenger awaited permission to give the council the court's decision, Barbara Pfäffinger was already being secretly arrested and tortured. The council then justified its actions to the *Reichskammergericht* by saying that it had merely carried out the *Reichshofrat's* decision. No large-scale witch hunt ensued.

Sixteen witchcraft trials, leading to between eleven and fourteen executions, took place in summer and fall 1608. Imperial Commissioner Earl Sulz approved the council's trial procedure. The council also addressed the *Reichskammergericht* in Speyer to protect itself before victims of the coming persecution could file suits and additionally sought advice from legal scholars in Freiburg and Hagenau. Nevertheless, Offenburg's 1608 witchcraft trials produced five suits against the city in the *Reichskammergericht*. In each case, the families of persecuted women complained about trial procedure

and unbearable prison conditions. In fact, more witchcraft trials reached the *Reichskammergericht* from Offenburg than from any other imperial free city. After the court again intervened on behalf of the accused, the council terminated its trials at the end of 1608. However, Offenburg did not complain to the imperial aulic court about "obstruction" from the chamber court.

Almost twenty years later, Offenburg's witchcraft trials resumed in November 1627. Some women arrested in Ortenau denounced women in Offenburg for allegedly participating in the witches' Sabbat. Many of the accused were daughters of women burned as witches in 1608. Within three years, sixty people were put to death. There were three distinct phases within this trial wave: twelve people were executed between November 1627 and January 1628; seven further executions followed in mid-1628; and then, after a four-month break, forty more executions took place from late 1628 until early 1630, thirty-two of them in 1629.

The end of Offenburg's witchcraft trials has been mistakenly attributed in older literature to Swedish military occupation. However, the Swedish army reached Offenburg only in September 1632, but the decisive turning point had occurred in late 1629. After social boundaries had fallen at the witch hunt's apex when an influential alderman, Hans Georg Bauer, was executed, the trials lost momentum in December 1629, when a woman, Agnes Gotter (known in Offenburg as "Gotter Ness"), twice survived torture in a searing metal hot seat. Previously, no prisoner had ever survived this torture twice. Offenburg's uneasy magistrates released her and suspended further trials until after Christmas. In early 1630, two alleged witches already sentenced to death withdrew their confessions and were then released, bringing Offenburg's witch hunt to an abrupt end. Further trials took place in 1631, 1639, 1641, and 1642, but all were isolated incidents; there were no further large waves of persecution.

PETER OESTMANN;

TRANSLATED BY JONATHAN STICKNEY

See also: AUSTRIA; CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*); CONFISCATIONS OF WITCHES' PROPERTY; GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; IMPERIAL FREE CITIES; *REICHSHOFRAT*; *REICHSKAMMERGERICHT*; RUDOLF II, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR.

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OINTMENTS

Early modern witch beliefs held that witches flew to the Devil's Sabbath by use of ointments that they smeared on themselves or on a broom or pitchfork. Demonologists like Martín Del Río held that these ointments were efficacious only because of the action of demons, but skeptics like Giambattista Della Porta argued that they had natural properties that caused witches to dream that they could fly and participate in fantastic rites. Modern researchers have found that recipes for ointments contained in late medieval and early modern literature did include potent hallucinogens that were both extremely toxic and fat soluble, so utilization in the form of a fat-based salve was both possible and prudent. Although use of these unguents was not as widespread as the demonologists insisted or as some historians have argued, some late medieval and early modern Europeans used them to induce a profound trance state in which they vividly imagined fantastic experiences that seemed real and that demonologists interpreted as participation in diabolical rites. Furthermore, there is evidence that some people smeared these salves or closely related ones on an unsuspecting victim as a form of sorcery that would induce numbness, disorientation, delusions, and hallucinations.

Among the hallucinogenic plants native to the European continent, members of the *Solanaceae* family almost always became the active ingredients in recipes for witches' flying potions given by both demonologists and skeptics. The psychoactive alkaloids the plants contained are extremely toxic, and an overdose could easily lead to death. However, they were also fat soluble, and in that form readily absorbed through the skin, which was far safer than ingestion while still delivering a powerful dose. Probably any fat would have worked; but at least some of these recipes employed fat from babies or corpses, so they were one source of the idea that witches killed infants and dug up fresh graves.

Some users reportedly smeared the ointments all over their bodies, but they would have been absorbed particularly well through mucous membranes. A more efficient method involved smearing and then "riding" a broomstick or pitchfork, which would have concentrated the application in the anal and female genital areas. Because the ointments often induced a sensation of flight, this probably originated the notion that witches flew on broomsticks.

Many recipes called for a mixture of different *Solanaceae* plants, which themselves contained different combinations of psychoactive alkaloids. Because the different alkaloids probably induced somewhat different psychological effects, the recipes appear to have been tailored to promote specific experiences. Furthermore,

the recipes contained other ingredients beside hallucinogens and fats, and specific purposes for them have also been suggested: wild celery to induce a deep sleep after the hallucinogenic fireworks and cinquefoil, parsley, or smallage to purify the blood and avoid a buildup of the toxins.

Hallucinogenic ointments also appear to have been used as weapons. Because the alkaloids in the *Solanaceae* block the neurotransmitter acetylcholine in the peripheral nervous system, smearing an ointment on the skin could well create a loss of feeling there, and the effects on the central nervous system would have created terrifying delusions and hallucinations in a victim who either had no idea what had happened or thought he or she had been attacked by a witch. The incidence of this tactic should not be overestimated, but because some early modern sorcerers are known to have practiced harmful magic and used poisons, the possibility in any particular case cannot be dismissed out of hand.

Not all recipes and pots of ointments brought forward as evidence of witchcraft appear to have contained powerful hallucinogens, and it is not clear whether they were simple frauds; they were produced simply to satisfy inquisitorial demands, to end the torments of torture; or they worked purely through the power of suggestion. These possibilities have led some historians to deny that they were used at all. However, we possess enough credible eyewitness accounts and instances in which physical ointments were found, to argue that some people did use such salves to induce profound trances in which they vividly imagined fantastic experiences (Sidkey 1997, 190–194). Although these instances did not constitute the diabolic conspiracy posited by demonology, they were probably one of its more important sources.

EDWARD BEVER

See also: DEL RÍO, MARTÍN; DELLA PORTA, GIAMBATTISTA; DEMONOLOGY; DRUGS AND HALLUCINOGENS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; INFANTICIDE; MALEFICIUM; POISON; SABBAT; STICKS.

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OPERA

Since the birth of opera in its current form in Renaissance Italy, notably Florence, it has often been used as a medium to reflect human situations and emotions in exotic or unusual circumstances. It is therefore not surprising to find numerous references to witchcraft and related subjects—sorcery, magic, pagan rituals, and so on—in operatic works from the seventeenth century to the present. The repertoire contains a large number of different portrayals of witches that indicate a similarly wide range of emotions and characteristics. There were changes in these trends throughout the centuries, but at the time of the earliest operas the witches were portrayed as evil hags, often with grotesque qualities. These stereotypes were often accompanied by discordant music and harsh, exaggerated rhythms that highlighted their place outside society and concord. However, sorceresses often displayed more complicated traits, for example, grief at their rejection, usually by men, and finally anger and revenge. As we approach the present, operatic witches were treated increasingly sympathetically, expressing a broader view of femininity and regret at past abuses. Male sorcerers and wizards were uncommon, and with a few exceptions (above all, Faust), tend to be given less depth of character.

Henry Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* was the earliest opera to provide specific parts for witches and to offer a leading role for a powerful sorceress. His witches had "horrid" music to accompany their dances and songs, employing unconventional harmonic and rhythmic features. His Dido was a majestic character whose music highlighted her importance in the plot. Although "furies" and "aerial spirits" appeared in other seventeenth-century operas (including Purcell's *The Indian Queen*), it was another classical sorceress, Medea, who inspired European composers at the time, notably Francesco Cavalli (*Jason*) and Marc-Antoine Charpentier (*Médée*). The emphasis on stage spectacle did not provide composers with much encouragement to explore detailed personalities. In the first half of the eighteenth century, this was still the case to some extent, but the famous German composer George Frideric Handel wrote approximately fifty operas, five of which might be termed "magical," containing characteristics normally associated with sorcerers and sorceresses, witches and wizards: *Rinaldo*, *Teseo*, *Amadigi*, *Orlando*, and *Alcina*. The latter's music displayed for the first time in opera a sorceress who was a fully formed character displaying majesty and passion, evil and vengeance.

In the latter part of the century, the towering figures of Joseph Haydn and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

dominated, but neither wrote music specifically for witches. Of Haydn's approximately twenty operas, only one (*Armida*) portrayed a sorceress with any depth of feeling, and Mozart's Colas in *Bastien und Bastienne* was more a cunning man than a wizard. However, his justly famous *The Magic Flute* provided important parts for both the sorceress Queen of the Night and the sorcerer Sarastro. At the end of the century, Luigi Cherubini wrote the three-act opera *Médée*, preparing the way for the dramatic characterizations that would be demanded in the following centuries. Its use of minor chords, harsh chromaticisms, and the use of bass instruments enhanced the atmosphere, rising to a hellish fortissimo as Medea summoned the dark forces.

By arousing strong emotions and emphasizing the importance of the creative imagination, the Romantic movement had a direct influence on cultural taste in the nineteenth century. The world of legend and folklore became increasingly popular, with direct and indirect references to the supernatural and witchcraft. Throughout this century, most European countries produced composers who wrote operas on these themes. In Italy, the great tradition of bel canto reached new heights in terms of its portrayals of witches through the works of Arrigo Boito (*Meffistofele*); Giacomo Puccini (*Le Villi*); and above all Giuseppe Verdi, whose *Macbeth*, *Il Trovatore*, and *Un Ballo in Maschera* each contained many scenes providing his characters with important roles that the music enhanced. In *Il Trovatore*, Azucena, the daughter of a witch burned at the stake, sang a fiery invocation for the destruction of her enemies; in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Ulrica's dark and austere role balanced the other personalities' lightness. Verdi specified himself how important he believed the witches' roles to be in *Macbeth*.

Apart from an orgy of evil spirits in Giacomo Meyerbeer's *Robert le Diable* that was reminiscent of a witches' Sabbath and its obligatory inclusion in Charles Gounod's *Faust*, there was little witchcraft activity in nineteenth-century French opera. This was similarly true of Russian opera, because the title of Pyotr Tchaikovsky's little-performed *The Sorceress* is totally misleading. A folklore theme can be found in Mikhail Glinka's *Ruslan and Ludmilla*, where an evil sorceress (or fairy) Naina was feared for her evil powers, and there was an allusion to witchcraft in Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov's *A May Night*. English opera provided very few examples apart from the comic works of W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan, including *The Sorcerer* and *Ruddigore or The Witch's Curse*. However, Germany produced a preponderance of such works.

The German operatic tradition of this period centered on three composers: Carl Maria von Weber, Engelbert Humperdinck, and Richard Wagner. Although Weber's *Der Freischütz* did not contain witches per se, its overriding theme was so steeped in

supernatural elements, including spell casting in the Wolf's Glen and the appearance of the Devil (Samiel), that its omission would be unthinkable. Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel* (based on the Grimm brothers' *Kinde—und Hausmärchen*) and his *Königskinder* both featured witches in prominent roles. They were both somewhat stereotypical old hags, portrayed by the composer with awkward, leaping music that took on a particularly humorous quality in the former work because of its caricatural qualities. In the latter, the witch used *Sprechgesang* (speech-song), combining pitched notes with spoken dialogue. Wagner's works provided a very different picture, because intense characters who were given, in some cases, very deep and varied emotions, replaced the nameless hags. The three "Norns" in *Götterdämmerung* spun the web of destiny and had powers of divination similar to the witches in *Macbeth* or the Fates in Greek mythology. There was a connection to witchcraft in *Tannhäuser*, because the orgiastic aspects of the "Venusberg" revels could be associated with witches' Sabbats; Venus had an allure similar to Circe's, as both tried to prevent their men (Tannhäuser and Odysseus) from leaving them. In *Lohengrin*, the character Ortrud practiced sorcery for reasons of power, and in *Parsifal* one was introduced to a magician (Klingsor) and the impressive and complicated character of Kundry, who combined sexual and evil passion with pathos and regret.

The late twentieth century witnessed a decline in the number of operas being composed, partly because of the huge costs involved in staging such productions and also because of a reaction against the large-scale works of the nineteenth century. However, at the start of the century, this was not the case: such works as Antonin Dvorak's *Rusalka*, including a part for the witch Jezibaba, and *Armida* were composed. Sergey Prokofiev wrote two operas containing witchcraft issues, the comic *Love for Three Oranges* and the brutal and intense *Fiery Angel*. The latter contained an orgy scene in a convent, an interrogation by the Inquisition, and the final execution of the possessed woman (or witch). There are connections to be made here with Krzysztof Penderecki's *The Devils of Loudun* (1969), where similar atrocities took place. In Germany, Wagner's son Siegfried composed the deeply moving *Schwarzschwane* on the theme of a woman abused and executed as a witch, and Richard Strauss included the sorceress Aithra in *Die Aegyptische Helena*. In the United States, Charles Cadman wrote *A Witch of Salem* in regret concerning the Salem witchcraft trials, and in Britain Sir Michael Tippett composed *The Midsummer Marriage* in praise of paganism, nature, and male–female polarity integral to modern witchcraft, Wicca.

MELVYN J. WILLIN

See also: CIRCE; CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST-1800); FAUST, JOHANN GEORG; MEDEA; MUSIC.

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ORACLES

Derived from the Latin noun *oraculum*, meaning a divine announcement or a prophetic declaration; and the Latin verb *orare*, meaning to entreat, pray and ask assistance, oracles, as this etymology indicates, are intrinsically linked with the spoken word—a proclamation understood to come from a divine or supernatural force and to be delivered to a chosen representative.

Oracles have played a long and highly significant role in both religion and magic, as illustrated by the Delphic oracle of ancient Greece, the preeminent seat of oracular power in the ancient Mediterranean. Situated in a deep cleft on the southwest spur of Mount Parnassus, the Delphic oracle was the principal seat of Apollo, the Greek god of prophecy. Here resided the Pythia, the priestess of Apollo, whose role was to commune with the god in order to answer questions put to her by inquirers. In typical oracular fashion and tradition, the utterances of the Pythia were ambiguous, partly because of the belief that the gods do not converse in the manner of mortals. Thus, oracles required specialized interpreters in the form of priests, who unraveled the ecstatic utterances of the divinely inspired priestess. Despite the influence of the Delphic oracle in the lives of both private individuals and state officials, its power began to be questioned by the fifth-century B.C.E., provoking a gradual decline in this once-great seat of oracular wisdom (although records from the site indicate that petitions were still made to it as late as the fourth-century C.E.).

The early Church Fathers railed against so-called pagan oracles, believing that they represented Satan's trickery. Although it was a tenet of Christian belief that only God possessed the omnipotence for oracular vision, this belief did not prevent the Devil from sometimes dispatching predictive information to give credibility to wicked practitioners of the magical arts. Because of this general repulsion toward non-Christian oracles, The Roman Emperor Constantine (274–337) ordered the ransacking of various shrines, such as those at Delphi and Dodona, and Emperor Theodosius (ca. 346–395) continued his policy.

In early modern Europe, the association among oracles, divination, devil worship, and witchcraft in general was cemented. Scholars cited such early Church Fathers as St. Augustine to argue that evil spirits could deceive humans into believing they could predict events. The *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), for example, described the evils of such pagan customs: "Another species of divination is practised by Pythons, so called from Pythian Apollo, who is said to have been the originator of this kind of divination, according to St. Isidore. This is not effected by dreams or by communication with the dead [necromancy], but by means of living men, as in the case of those who are lashed into a frenzy by the devil, either willingly or unwillingly, only with the aim of foretelling the future, and not for the perpetration of any other monstrosities" (Part 1, Question 16).

Despite such protests, the art of divination, expressly that of externally inspired utterances, flourished. The most famous prophet operating in a fashion similar to the oracular priestesses was the French physician Nostradamus (1503–1566). His method for attaining oracular insight was the technique of scrying, a method he believed to have been practiced by ancient Greek oracles:

Gathered at night in study deep I sate,
Alone, upon the tripod stool of brass,
Exiguous flame came out of isolation,
Promise of magic that may be believed.
(*Century* 1.1)
The wand in hand taken at the midst from
BRANCHUS/the branches,
The holm-oak damp from the water and the hem
and the foot,
A certain apprehension and voice, quivering
through the wand's handles,
Radiance divine. The augur settles close by.
(*Century* 1.2)

Each of these quatrains was an invaluable source for Renaissance preparations to access oracular sight, provided by one of its most significant sixteenth-century practitioners. Nostradamus used a magical implement (a wand), similar to the forked rod employed for divining water, and a brass scrying bowl filled with water. The ceremony always took place at night; the seer stared into the bowl, then divided the water's surface with his wand and awaited the emanation of messages. His method corresponded quite closely to descriptions of ancient oracular practices recorded by the fourth-century Neoplatonic mystic, Iamblichus (ca. 250–ca. 330) in *De Mysteriis Aegyptiorum* (On the Egyptian Mysteries): "The woman also who conveys the oracles in verse at Branchidai, whether she is holding the wand that was first given by a divinity and becomes filled with the divine light . . . or whether she dips her feet or

the border of her robe in the water, or receives the god by breathing in vapour from the water, she becomes by all these ways ready for the reception, and partakes of him from without" (Ficino 1972, 127). Marsilio Ficino's Latin translation of Iamblichus, printed at Venice in 1497 and reprinted at Lyons in 1547, gave Nostradamus his information, illustrating the Renaissance revival of ancient oracular traditions.

By the seventeenth century, the belief in oracles among intellectuals began to be seriously rejected, although it remained a topic of discussion (primarily treated as a remnant of the paganism of classical antiquity). Pierre Bayle (1647–1706), in the *Pensées diverses écrites à un Docteur de Sorbonne, à l'occasion de la comète qui parut au mois de décembre 1680* (Miscellaneous Thoughts Written to a Doctor of the Sorbonne on the Comet That Appeared in the Month of December, 1680, 1683) and in the *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (Historical and Critical Dictionary, 1697), and Bernard le Bovier Fontenelle (1657–1757), in the *Histoire des Oracles* (History of Oracles, 1687), both contributed significantly to philosophical skepticism and thereby to the disbelief in such ancient systems of supernatural prophecy.

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See also: DIVINATION; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; NECROMANCY; SIGHT, POWERS OF (SECOND SIGHT); SKEPTICISM.

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ORDEAL

Like many non-European peoples, the Indo-Europeans believed that numinous powers would intervene in juridical contentions and decide them, if certain rituals were followed. Only faint hints of such a belief existed in ancient Greece and Rome, where ordeals never became part of the official legal systems; it is remarkable that neither the Bible nor Roman law knew of any of the various types of ordeals used in the Middle Ages and beyond. It is strange that the most prominent legal ordeal mentioned in the Bible was never applied in Western Christian civilization. It was directed against a woman whose husband suspected her of infidelity, and

required her to drink spoiled water; if she vomited it, she was stoned to death (Numbers 5: 11–31).

However, the Teutonic tribes must have used various kinds of ordeals before their conversion to Christianity, because their early medieval law codes (*leges barbarorum*) contained many provisions about *ordalia* or *judicia Dei* (the judgment of God). Ordeals were part of the official legal systems of early medieval kingdoms; in a capitulary of 809, Charlemagne even ordered everyone “to believe in the ordeals without any doubt.” Though some popes showed a rather skeptical position on this question, several synods explicitly approved of ordeals (e.g., Mainz 847, Seligenstadt 1023, Reims 1119).

The usual way of proving something in an early medieval court was through collective oaths; only if this were not possible would the judgment of God be appealed to. Therefore, all ordeals except the duel were done in the presence and with the help of priests who sang paraliturgical formulas and blessed the necessary instruments, which were ecclesiastical property and whose use was permitted by episcopal privileges. Laypeople had to pay an additional fee for this ecclesiastical assistance, beyond the cost of a secular trial.

Depending on region, social standing, and the matter being disputed, a divine decision was sought through different kinds of tests. Among the ordeals affecting both parties, probably the oldest and most widespread one was the judicial duel (which, like the outcome of a battle, was interpreted as a manifestation of God’s will). With very rare exceptions, it was reserved to male fighters—either the persons directly interested or paid champions. In the ordeal of the cross, plaintiff and defendant both stood with uplifted arms before a cross; whoever dropped his arms first lost his case. All other ordeals were one-sided and affected only the accused; most were based on the employment of “pure” elements of nature. The defendant had to walk through fire or over red-hot iron ploughshares or carry a piece of fiery metal a certain distance within a church. Or he had to plunge an arm into boiling water in order to find a small stone or ring thrown into the cauldron. It was not expected that even the innocent could do such things without being injured, but if he was indeed not guilty, his wounds should heal within three days. If they worsened, God had proved him guilty, and the court punished him.

Though generally the secular courts ordered these kinds of ordeals, it is clear that the assisting priest had much, if not decisive, power, because it was his task to judge whether a wound was healing or had become inflamed. When the ordeal by cold water (swimming test) was applied, the accused was bound and thrown into a pool: if the pure element of water refused to accept his body, that is, if he remained afloat, he was considered guilty. If he could manage to stay for some time under the surface, this was reckoned as a sign of

his innocence. In the ordeal of consecrated bread or cheese, a large portion of one of them had to be swallowed, big enough to cause suffocation or to prove guilt if the accused hesitated because of a bad conscience. As a variant of this ordeal, reserved mostly to the clergy, a priest administered the Eucharist, which might cause similar problems to pious people (because they believed in the Eucharist). In some instances, lots were also used in ordeals; a special case was the Psalmbook, whose movement, when hanging from a thread, was expected to indicate the delinquent. Finally, the bier-right was based on the assumption that the corpse of a murdered person would begin to bleed afresh when the killer approached.

The practice of ordeals, which were sometimes sought by the accused themselves as a method of legal compurgation, seems to have had its heyday during the twelfth century. But this was also a period of a growing resistance within a new generation of academically trained intellectuals, among whom Peter the Chanter (d. 1197), master at Paris, played a leading role. They criticized the uncertainty and irrationality of such procedures, and the growing importance of the auricular confession led to the conviction that an avowal should also be indispensable in court. When the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) forbade priests to participate in ordeals, its action led to the increased application of torture as a means of finding the truth. Both the abolition of ordeals and the introduction of torture were based on papal decisions by Innocent III and Gregory IX. However, it took several decades until the council’s canons were implemented into local law, and even afterward there are numerous records showing that ordeals—particularly the swimming test—continued to be practiced in a semiofficial way in several parts of Europe until the nineteenth century.

Like other people suspected of a major crime, presumptive heretics, sorcerers, and witches underwent ordeals, but infrequently. During the Middle Ages, the ordeal of fire seems to have been chosen most frequently in that case, perhaps in a form of anticipation, as burning was the conventional punishment for that crime. The *Longobard Edictum Rothari* (Lombard Law of Rothari, 198) prescribed a judicial duel when the accusation of sorcery was raised; the Thuringian Law (par. 55) allowed a woman suspected of poisoning her husband to clear herself by the ordeal of the red-hot ploughshares or through a champion fighting a duel for her. According to Addition 16 to the Laws of the Bavarians, the water ordeal was to be applied in cases of hexing (*maleficium*). During the High Middle Ages, ordeals were sometimes used in order to discover heretics, as we learn from St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), who recorded the detection of a group of Cathars at Cologne by the *judicium aquae* (water ordeal) in a sermon (Super Cantica 66.5.12).

In 1484, Pope Innocent VIII still had to forbid Duke Sigismund of Tyrol to allow ordeals in cases of witchcraft. The *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) mentioned that the ordeal of the red-hot iron was used in Fürstenberg in the Black Forest in 1485, when a woman suspected of sorcery offered herself for compurgation with a red-hot iron and thereby won her case. But Heinrich Kramer, the author of this famous manual, opposed this method of proof and explicitly preferred torture. The judge, however, should propose the possibility of an ordeal, because the witch usually would agree, certain to be protected against harm by her demon. Her willingness to undergo an ordeal would betray her all the more (*Malleus* 3.17f.). In order to eliminate any help from the Devil, another popular juridical manual, the *Layenspiegel* (1509) by Ulrich Tengler, similarly did not accept the ordeal for witches, and the same position could be found in many later juridical texts.

Nonetheless, from the second half of the sixteenth century onward, the swimming test seems to have been used quite frequently in several parts of Europe to discover witches. Oudewater in Holland was famous for its witch ordeal scales, seemingly a postmedieval invention: if an accused person was lighter than expected, he or she was declared guilty. However, other types of ordeal fell into disuse after the sixteenth-century Reformations.

Beyond Europe, in parts of Africa and Madagascar, the poison ordeal was and is applied often at the suspicion of sorcery. If the substance (made from the fruit of the tanghin-tree) given by the witch doctor to the suspected person causes vomiting, he is innocent, if it produces vertigo or trance, his guilt is considered proved.

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See also: COURTS, SECULAR; INNOCENT VIII, POPE; KRAMER, HEINRICH; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (MEDIEVAL); *LAYENSPIEGEL*; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; SWIMMING TEST; TORTURE.

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ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS

The first true witch hunts began in western Europe in the early fifteenth century. The earliest series of trials took place in Italy and in French- and German-speaking regions around the western Alps. Of course, concern about harmful sorcery had deep roots in medieval Europe, and both officially sanctioned prosecution and popular persecution had been brought to bear on its supposed practitioners long before. But only in the fifteenth century did the full stereotype of diabolical witchcraft develop, which would endure throughout the period of the major witch hunts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Of particular importance for the ensuing hunts was the clear development, in the stereotype, of cultic and conspiratorial aspects of witchcraft. That is, witches were held to be members of organized groups engaging in a diabolically directed plot to undermine and destroy Christian communities and ultimately Christian civilization. Although individual trials for witchcraft might resemble earlier trials for harmful sorcery, full-fledged witch hunts were possible only after the notion that witches operated as part of an organized, conspiratorial cult began to become established. A hunt would develop out of a single trial or a relatively contained group of trials, either when authorities became convinced of the existence of large numbers of witches operating in a given area or when convicted witches would accuse, or be forced to accuse, others of membership in their sect. Ultimately, witch hunts arose due to the confluence of particular aspects of western European legal procedure, certain notions of demonic power and activity drawn from standard Christian demonology, and the widespread belief in the real efficacy of harmful magic or *maleficium*.

Concern over harmful sorcery and official sanctions against such magic were longstanding in medieval Europe, and legislation against what were perceived to be malevolent forms of magic existed in classical antiquity as well. In Christian Europe, condemnation and attempts to repress such magic arose from two distinct traditions, the religious and the secular. From the earliest days of Christianity, clerical authorities were convinced that much, if not most, supposed magical activity in the world was actually the result of demonic forces. Magicians who claimed to manipulate natural, if occult, forces were suspected instead of invoking and supplicating demons. Early Church Fathers such as St. Augustine condemned the practice of supposedly

demonic magic as a serious crime against the Christian faith, and early Church legal codes condemned magic for this same reason. Throughout the Early Middle Ages, Christian penitentials, handbooks of penance used by priests in confession, contained condemnations of magic. The penalties prescribed for such practices, however, were by later standards relatively light. Christians who performed magic were to be made to recognize and confess their sins and do penance. In cases of extreme recalcitrance, excommunication might be required. Such penalties generally held force through the twelfth century. Thereafter, the Church's greater concern over heresy and the perceived need to combat heretics more actively began to feed into an increasingly severe response to magic.

In addition to clerical concerns and ecclesiastical legislation against magic, there was also a substantial body of secular legislation in the early medieval period. By no means were secular concerns distinct from ecclesiastical ones. Lay rulers generally accepted the clerical association of magic with demonic invocation and attempted to enforce Christian morality in their legal codes. Nevertheless, in the most general sense, it can be said that, although clerical concerns focused on the supposedly demonic nature of much magic, secular legislation was more concerned with the harmful effects to which magic could supposedly be put. Secular law codes were therefore more narrowly concerned with the crime of *maleficium*, or harmful sorcery. Many of these law codes prescribed execution as a potential punishment in cases involving malevolent magic. Such condemnation stemmed both from traditional Germanic laws against harmful sorcery and from the relatively stringent late-imperial legal codes against magic and magicians. Despite the existence of such legislation, however, prosecutions for harmful magic remained limited throughout the early medieval period. A key factor was the use of accusatorial procedure in most European courts prior to the twelfth or thirteenth centuries.

Under accusatorial procedure, an aggrieved party would initiate a case by making an accusation of a crime. This person then also assumed the responsibility of proving the guilt of the person or persons accused. If the accused was judged innocent, however, then the accuser was subject to punishment. This procedure served to limit the number of entirely specious accusations. With crimes that supposedly involved the use of magic, which was secretive by its very nature, clear proof of guilt was often impossible to attain. In these cases, the accused might be forced to undergo a judicial ordeal. In theory, this practice placed the determination of guilt or innocence in the hands of God. In fact, the practice was highly subjective, and certainly no accuser could be sure of ultimate vindication by these means. In sum, aspects of accusatorial procedure tended to stifle the potential for widespread accusations of harmful

sorcery and would have made difficult the sort of panic and chain-reaction accusations that typified later witch hunts. Beginning around the twelfth century, however, and continuing through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, European courts, both ecclesiastical and secular, increasingly moved away from accusatorial procedure and instead adopted inquisitorial procedure as their basic method of operation.

In contrast to accusatorial procedure, under inquisitorial procedure, the onus of proving guilt or innocence for a suspected crime fell on officials of the court rather than on the person who brought the initial accusation. In addition, the court could initiate an investigation or trial, even if no accusation of a crime had been made. In many ways, courts operating under inquisitorial procedure functioned in a more sophisticated way than those under accusatorial procedure in terms of the collection and evaluation of evidence. Yet in cases of suspected sorcery, still a highly secretive crime, visible evidence or eyewitnesses were almost always rare. In such cases, the best means of obtaining a conviction was through the confession of the suspected party. Because it was recognized that people would seldom willingly convict themselves of a serious crime, the use of torture was prescribed in order to extract the truth from suspects. Limitations and controls on the application of torture were established, but they could easily be ignored by overzealous magistrates eager for convictions. Especially in situations in which the nature of the crime aroused widespread anxiety or panic, as was the case with witch hunts, judicial controls on the use of torture were frequently set aside. Unrestricted torture allowed magistrates to extract confessions and to secure convictions for virtually any crime that they might suggest to the accused. The widespread use of inquisitorial procedure and of torture in the courts of western Europe therefore provided a necessary basis for the later functioning of witch hunts.

The existence of a legal and procedural basis alone, however, did not give rise directly to witch hunting. Rather, the basic level of concern over supposed magical activities had to increase among both religious and secular authorities, as did the conviction that practitioners of harmful sorcery were members of heretical and conspiratorial demonic cults. Initial signs of a new level of concern in these areas become evident in the early fourteenth century. The trial of Lady Alice Kyteler of Kilkenny, Ireland, is often seen as a sort of proto-witch hunt from this period. Lady Alice had married a succession of wealthy men. Her first three husbands died under mysterious circumstances, and when her fourth husband began to sicken, she was accused of bewitching these men and then murdering them through sorcery. In 1324, Bishop Richard Ledrede took up the case, and ultimately Alice and a group of suspected accomplices were convicted not just of using harmful

magic but also of renouncing the Christian faith and gathering together as a cult to worship and offer sacrifices to demons. Although one member of this group was burned at the stake, Alice escaped punishment by fleeing to England, and her trial did not trigger any similar accusations in Ireland at the time. Nevertheless, the case revealed a connection being made between harmful sorcery and demonic invocation as well as the cultic worship of a demon.

A similar foreshadowing of later aspects of witch hunts can be seen in the trial of the Knights Templar for heresy, sodomy, and idolatry and the ultimate suppression of the Templars as a military and religious order. In actuality, the case was politically motivated. In 1307, officials of King Philip IV of France brought a range of charges against the Templars so that the royal government could seize the tremendous wealth and property controlled by the knights. Several key Templar leaders were arrested and questioned under severe torture. Ultimately, most confessed to a range of charges involving heretical beliefs and renunciation of the Christian faith, homosexual practices, and the worship of a demon in the figure of a head known as Baphomet. Succumbing to French pressure, Pope Clement V officially suppressed the order in 1312, and in 1314 the Templar grand master, Jacques de Molay, and other leaders were burned at the stake. Although charges of sorcery did not figure significantly in the trial of the Templars, the case nevertheless serves as an example of procedures that would later characterize witch hunts—extreme and unfounded accusations and false confessions secured through the use of torture (many Templars recanted their initial confessions, but this only exposed them to the charge of being relapsed heretics).

The cases of the Templars and of Alice Kyteler also revealed another important aspect of the rise of eventual witch hunts in western Europe, namely, that in the early fourteenth century, charges of harmful sorcery and the cultic worship of demons were being brought against relatively high-status defendants. Charges of the use of sorcery at princely courts occurred throughout the Middle Ages, but the number of clearly political sorcery trials seems to have risen in the early fourteenth century, thereby heightening concerns about the potential threat posed by harmful sorcery among powerful classes across Europe. Not even the papal court was immune. In 1258, Pope Alexander IV had ordered all papal inquisitors to refrain from involving themselves in cases of sorcery, unless the sorcery clearly entailed some form of heresy. In 1320, however, Pope John XXII, deeply concerned over matters of sorcery at least in part because he feared his own political enemies were using magic against him, ordered inquisitors to extend their investigations to include all matters of sorcery that seemed to involve the invocation and worship of

demons, and in 1326 he formally excommunicated any Christian found guilty of practicing sorcery that involved invoking demons.

Concerns about the demonic, heretical, and ultimately cultic nature of much magical activity were rising among clerical authorities throughout the fourteenth century. In the early part of the century, the inquisitor Bernard Gui evinced a clear but still relatively slight concern over sorcery. In his inquisitorial handbook *Practica inquisitionis heretice pravitatis* (The Practice of the Inquisition of Heretical Depravity), written around 1324, Gui devoted only a small section to a discussion of sorcery, and, although he considered sorcery to be an aspect of heresy, did not discuss the nature of heretical sorcery in detail. Fifty years later, however, the inquisitor Nicolas Eymeric, in his handbook *Directorium inquisitorum* (Directory of Inquisitors), written in 1376, presented an extended argument about the necessarily heretical nature of demonic magic. The very act of invoking a demon, Eymeric argued, constituted an act of worship even if no other overt signs of worship were present. Hence, all acts of demonic magic automatically entailed idolatry and therefore were evidence of heresy. Eymeric's arguments proved definitive for many clerical authorities who came after him and provided the basis for inquisitorial action against suspected sorcerers throughout the entire period of the witch hunts.

Once the practice of supposedly demonic magic was firmly established as entailing the worship of demons and thus as a form of heresy, it was perhaps natural that suspected practitioners of sorcery should have become suspected also of operating in organized cults just as other supposed heretical groups were thought to do. Throughout the later fourteenth century and on into the fifteenth, the number of trials for harmful sorcery rose significantly, and critically, in the course of these trials, elements of diabolical heresy were grafted onto charges of simple *maleficium*. These elements of diabolism included the notion that witches were members of demonically organized cults that met secretly to feast, dance, and worship demons or the Devil. They also supposedly engaged in sexual orgies with each other, with demons, or with the Devil, and they performed a number of other horrific acts, such as murdering and eating babies or small children and desecrating the cross and the Eucharist.

The reasons for the rise in the number of trials during this period are uncertain. To some extent, the apparent rise may be a result of better survival of sources from this era. However, contemporary authorities clearly believed that sorcery and witchcraft were a growing threat in the world, which seems to have been reflected in an actual increase in the numbers of accusations and prosecutions. Many studies have revealed that accusations of witchcraft and witch hunts often originated in economic or social disruptions at the local

level: agrarian failures; persistent inclement weather; new economic or commercial patterns in a region; or disputes between neighbors over property, social standing, or any number of issues. An overall rise in trials might be explained by a generalized economic or social crisis that exacerbated such local conflicts. Attempts to link particular rises in prosecutions for witchcraft to more generalized crises of this nature, however, have revealed disjunctures as often as they have uncovered clear connections.

Another general factor underlying growing concern over witchcraft in this period was the drive for religious reform originating in the Church. Many clerical authorities were convinced that Christian faith was declining in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, and that a general moral and spiritual rejuvenation was needed throughout Christian society. Extremely popular preachers such as Vincent Ferrer and Bernardino of Siena carried this reformist message to the people through the medium of popular sermons. The threat posed by witches to Christian society was a key theme employed by such men. Not surprisingly, a number of early witchcraft trials occurred in Dauphiné and western Switzerland in the wake of Ferrer's journeys through these regions, and Bernardino was associated with several witchcraft trials in Italy.

Most witchcraft trials in this period began with accusations of simple *maleficium* without any hint of other heretical or diabolical elements. Accusations were usually made by people against their close acquaintances or neighbors, in other words, people with whom they would have come into social or economic conflict, and these sorts of tensions generally underlay initial charges of *maleficium*. Once a case was brought to court, however, trained judges, ecclesiastical or secular but equally familiar with concepts of demonic magic and heresy, would introduce notions of diabolism. Once these notions were fully overlaid onto the supposed practice of harmful sorcery, the stereotype of witchcraft emerged, and actual witch hunts were possible. Thanks to the notion of witches operating as members of demonically organized, conspiratorial cults, accusations and trials could now originate not from individual conflicts, but from a general sense of threat to the community. A single accusation might fuel many more, and individual suspects could be expected, under torture or threat of torture, to name fellow members of the large cult of witches that authorities or the entire community might suspect was operating in a region.

The earliest series of witchcraft trials and witch hunts took place in the early fifteenth century in regions of Italy; in Savoy and Dauphiné; in the territories of the Swiss cities of Bern, Fribourg, and Lucerne; and in the diocese of Lausanne and Sion (roughly the present Swiss cantons of Vaud and Valais). In many of these regions, witchcraft trials grew directly out of earlier

trials of Waldensian heretics, and the mechanisms used by authorities to uncover and root out heretics were taken over and applied to witches as well. In particular, close cooperation between secular and ecclesiastical authorities seems to have typified many early witch hunts. At the same time, some of the first sources to describe the notion of cultic, conspiratorial witchcraft were being written in these regions. The Lucerne civic chronicler Hans Fründ described the supposed activities of a cult of witches in Valais in 1428. Around 1436, the French secular judge Claude Tholosan produced a treatise on witchcraft based on his experience conducting witchcraft trials in Dauphiné. Probably also in the middle of the decade, an anonymous clerical author, most likely an inquisitor, penned the *Errores Gazariorum* (Errors of the Gazars or Gazarii; i.e., Cathars, a common term for heretics and later witches), describing the errors of that heretical sect of witches, and in 1437 and 1438, the Dominican theologian Johannes Nider wrote extensive accounts of witchcraft, largely based on trials conducted by the secular judge Peter of Bern in the Simme valley of the Bernese *Oberland*, a mountainous region south of the city. Nider collected many of his accounts of witchcraft while at the Council of Basel, a great ecumenical council of the Church that met from 1431 until 1449 in the city of Basel, just to the north of the regions where the greatest early witch-hunting activity took place. This council, which drew clerics from across Europe, served as a sort of clearinghouse for ideas and concerns about witchcraft and helped to spread the initially fairly localized concern over cults of witches and the dynamics of witch hunting to other regions of Europe. Once the idea of conspiratorial cults of witches became widely established across Europe, witch hunts could and did occur in almost every region of the Continent.

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See also: ACCUSATIONS; ACCUSATORIAL PROCEDURE; BAPHOMET; BASEL, COUNCIL OF; BERNARDINO OF SIENA; CHRONOLOGY OF WITCHCRAFT TRIALS; DAUPHINÉ, WITCHCRAFT TRIALS IN; *ERRORES GAZARIORUM*; EYMERIC, NICOLAS; FRÜND, HANS; GUI, BERNARD; HERESY; IDOLATRY; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; ITALY; JOHN XXII, POPE; KYTELER, ALICE; LAUSANNE, DIOCESE OF; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (MEDIEVAL); MOUNTAINS AND THE ORIGINS OF WITCHCRAFT; NIDER, JOHANNES; ORDEAL; PETER OF BERN; SAVOY, DUCHY OF; SWITZERLAND; TEMPLARS; THOLOSAN, CLAUDE; TORTURE; TRIALS; VALAIS; VAUD, PAYS DE; *VAUDOIS* (WALDENSIANS); WITCH HUNTS.

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ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY

Nearly all early modern witchcraft trials occurred in European and American regions where Roman Catholicism or Protestant denominations prevailed; state- or church-sanctioned witchcraft trials were less frequent in Orthodox Christian areas.

Orthodox churches are those Christian churches of the East and of eastern and southeastern Europe that accepted the primacy of Constantinople rather than Rome after the schism of the eleventh century. Slavic Orthodox churches, plus Moldavia and Wallachia, were founded by the missionary activity of the Greek Church from the ninth century onward. The Russian Church in Muscovy became the largest, and, after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, also the only substantial national Orthodox Church in an independent country. It was effectively autocephalous after its rejection of the reunion of the Orthodox churches with the Latin western Church that had been agreed in a Decree of Union at the Council of Florence in 1439, but was thereafter largely repudiated in most Orthodox areas. The Russian Church elected a metropolitan of Moscow in 1448 without reference to Constantinople and established the Patriarchate of Moscow in 1589.

The establishment of the Russian and southeastern European Orthodox churches was accompanied by

other external cultural influences from Byzantium, including the magical and divinatory beliefs and practices that were a notable feature of Byzantine popular culture but excluding, for the most part, the intellectual interest in magic of such Byzantine philosophers as Michael Psellus (1018–ca. 1078). At the level of popular belief, Orthodox Christians had a good deal in common with Latin Christians, although the details of indigenous pagan survival differed. Literary evidence suggests that both in Byzantium and Russia, magic was usually regarded as demonic, and the notion of the pact with the Devil was familiar. At a more official level, the teaching of the Orthodox Church before the schism with Rome was essentially the same in matters of witchcraft and magic as that of the Latin Church.

Insofar as there was an official attitude, it derived from the opinions of the early Church Fathers and acts of the various early councils and synods, which tended to equate witchcraft with paganism. Reflecting the ambivalence of Jewish attitudes toward magic, divination, and witchcraft expressed in Scripture, the Church Fathers were not unanimous concerning the reality of witchcraft. Jewish views ranged from the outright condemnation of Exodus 22:18 (22:17; "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live") and the "abominations" listed in Deuteronomy 18:10–14 to the frequent references to magical practices and belief in their efficacy. Patristic opinion did, however, agree in condemning magical practices and was supported in this by the tradition of Roman law. Among the early theologians who did appear to believe in the reality of witchcraft, St. Augustine of Hippo, with his extensive knowledge of the magic as well as the philosophy of the ancient world, did most to elaborate a theological view; but as a Latin, his writings had less influence in the East (where he was sometimes regarded with suspicion) than in the West. Augustine's works were unknown in Russia until relatively modern times.

The teaching of the early Church relating to magic and witchcraft, often found as condemnations in patristic sources (e.g., St. Basil and St. John Chrysostom) or expressed as prohibitions (especially to the clergy) in early collections of ecclesiastical law, was summarized at Constantinople in the acts of the Trullan Synod (692), which formalized the work of the fifth and sixth ecumenical councils (Constantinople II and III) but was later rejected by the Latin Church. This synod regulated marriage and sexual behavior. It also forbade association with Jews; mixed bathing; attending horse races, mimes, or animal shows; theatrical dancing; consulting diviners, sorcerers, cloud-chasers, or purveyors of amulets; celebrating the Calends, Vota, and Brumalia (Greek festivals in honor of Pan and Dionysius); wearing comic, satiric, or tragic masks; or jumping over fires at the beginning of the month. One cannot be sure how far this list represented genuine current concerns, but

superstitions, astrology, amulets, and magical practices certainly occupied a large part of Byzantine life.

Apart from a revealing twelfth-century Greek commentary on the Trullan Synod by the Greek canonist and patriarch of Antioch, Theodore Balsamon (Fögen 1995), there was relatively little theological or canonical discussion of magic and witchcraft thereafter in the Orthodox churches; the acts of the Trullan Synod remained the basis of Russian ecclesiastical opinion on the subject until at least the eighteenth century. The reasons are not entirely clear. Certainly the belief in and practice of magic and witchcraft at all levels of society in the East was no less widespread than in the West and the official attitude of the Church no less hostile; in the later Byzantine era, legal jurisdiction in this field was firmly in the hands of the patriarchal court, and cases came up regularly.

By contrast, witchcraft became a matter of anxiety in the medieval Latin Church, where a considerable debate developed on the relation of witchcraft to heresy and demonology. This debate, which continued beyond the Reformation in both Catholic and Protestant churches, never occurred in the Eastern Orthodox churches. Although Byzantium certainly had numerous trials for practicing magic, Orthodox Christendom generally avoided the witch hunts and witchcraft trials of early modern western Europe. Indeed, the Orthodox churches under Turkish domination after 1453 could not promote witch hunts even had they so wished. Outside Muscovy, the other two Orthodox eastern Slav territories, the Ukraine and Belorussia, were under Polish rule until 1650, and the treatment of witches there was largely dependent on Polish practices and prevailing local laws.

In Kievan Russia from the tenth century onward and later in Muscovy, magicians were usually identified with practitioners of pagan rites; witchcraft, or any manifestations of magic or divination, were condemned in princely law codes and canon law collections as pagan, demonic, and “Hellenic” (i.e., Greek pagan). Russian penitentials, episcopal denunciations, and lists of banned books, often derived from the fourth-century *Constitutiones Apostolorum* (Apostolic Constitutions), were as varied as their Western counterparts; most Russian catalogs of sins, again like their Western counterparts, condemned sexual behavior, magic, poisoning, and employing demonic assistance. More than a millennium after the fourth-century *Canons of Laodicea* had condemned the practice of magic by the clergy, the acts of the *Stoglav* (Hundred Chapters) council, convened in Moscow by Ivan the Terrible in 1551 to deal with ecclesiastical abuses, specifically forbade the parish clergy, under pain of ecclesiastical ban, from involvement in magical practices. The *Stoglav* specifically classified magical practices and texts as heresy. Its decisions mostly cited the Trullan Synod and the various lists of

“true and false books” that had their origin in the Greek Church but had been updated in Russia.

Information about punishments for witchcraft and magical practices is sparse and often contradictory. Russian chronicles described many occasions when pagan magicians were put to death by civil authorities or local communities, but perhaps as much for political as religious reasons. Ecclesiastical punishments for magical practices were often relatively mild, and early princely law in Kievan Rus’ regarded magic and divination as matters mostly involving women and preferably corrected by husbands. The extensive manual of family and household management, the *Domostroi*, suggested that this view still prevailed in sixteenth-century Russia.

Muscovite Russia’s first important attempt at a written legal code, Ivan the Terrible’s *Sudebnik* of 1550, never mentioned witches, magic, or superstitious practices. A later version of it from 1589 mentioned witches when specifying levels of compensation for offenses against the honor (*beschestie*) of various social categories: witches came at the very bottom, with harlots. Male sorcerers were not mentioned, although they were certainly common in Russian society, implying that illicit magic still remained within Church jurisdiction. Codified Russian law changed in 1649 with the *Uozhenie*, the code introduced by Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich (which incorporated many provisions for offenses previously under canon law), and in 1715 with the military code (*Voinskii artikul*) of Peter the Great. These codes, either implicitly (in the *Uozhenie*) or specifically (in the *Voinskii artikul*) made witchcraft a crime against the sovereign or state and punishable by death. Russia’s criminalization of witchcraft and the evident fear of witchcraft among seventeenth-century tsars considerably diminished the Church’s traditional role. Most accusations of malefic magic or witchcraft in Muscovite and early imperial Russia were now brought under the *slovo i delo gosudarevo* (word and deed of the sovereign) procedure, a kind of “hue and cry” designed to identify crimes against the sovereign.

The overlap between ecclesiastical and state jurisdiction and the close association of witchcraft, heresy, and treason can be seen in the accusations brought by senior bishops against Maxim the Greek (the ex-humanist Michael Trivolis) in his trials in 1525 and 1531. They charged him with having “evil intentions” toward the grand prince, communicating with the Turks in order to help them wage war against Russia, indulging in heresy and in Hellenic and Jewish black magic and witchcraft, and practicing sorcery against the grand prince. Half a century later, Prince Andrei Kurbskii, who had fled Muscovy, protested in a public epistle to Ivan IV that the tsar had “falsely accused the Orthodox of treason and magic and other abuses.” Ivan replied: “As for your mentioning ‘treachery and magic’—well, such dogs are executed in all countries.” Ivan’s court

physician and astrologer Elisaeus Bomelius was tortured to death for treason; under interrogation, he implicated several highly placed persons, including Archbishop Leonid of Novgorod, whom he accused of running a coven of fifteen witches; Leonid was found guilty and disgraced, and the witches were burned.

The identification of witchcraft with heresy, evident in the common use in some parts of Russia of the word *heretic* for the more usual *koldun* (the male witch in most villages), meant that non-Orthodox, by definition “heretics,” could often be accused of witchcraft. A striking example is the case of the False Dmitrii, the early seventeenth-century pretender to the Russian throne, who married a Polish noblewoman, adopted Polish manners, and briefly seized power in Moscow with Polish help. Contemporary accounts described him practicing “gypsy sorcery and every kind of devilish magic . . . like Julian the Apostate who did sorcery with devils” and “cast spells with devils”; indeed, he was reportedly buried as if he were a magician, and his Polish wife Marina, called an “evil heretic atheist,” was popularly supposed to have escaped from a mob by turning herself into a magpie and flying away.

Nevertheless, these examples of witchcraft fears in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Muscovy cannot compare to the scale of the witch hunts in many parts of western Europe. Despite infrequent clerical involvement and concern and the occasionally religious coloring of accusations, Muscovy and Orthodox Europe saw few religious polemics and had no ecclesiastical tribunals resembling western Inquisitions. However, they did prosecute “religious crimes,” and their punishments could be severe; in the 1660s, Grigorii Kotoshikhin, a senior Russian official who fled to Sweden and wrote a hostile account of the internal politics and manners of the contemporary Russian court, stated that the *Razboinyi prikaz* (the ministry for suppressing crime and sedition) dealt with *koldoustvo* and *chernoknizhstv* (sorcery and black magic), which it lumped together with blasphemy, theft of church property, sodomy, and false interpretation of Scripture. Kotoshikhin claimed that the penalty for all these crimes was to be burned alive (for men) or beheaded (for women).

The first article of the first chapter of Peter the Great’s 1715 code of military law (*Voinskii artikul*) was entitled “On the Fear of God” and states that, depending on the nature of the offense, any soldier found to be an idol worshipper, black magician (*chernoknizhets*), gun charmer, or superstitious and blasphemous enchanter (*charodei*) would be placed under close arrest, put in irons, made to run the gauntlet, or be burned to death. It specifies that death by burning was the normal punishment for black magicians who had harmed anyone by sorcery or had dealings with

the Devil. Whoever had not harmed anyone or had dealings with the Devil should be punished by one of the other punishments and made to do public church penance. Its second article states that anyone who hired a magician or encouraged anyone else to do so in order to harm someone should be punished in the same way as the magician. Many cases were in fact punished with such lesser ecclesiastical penalties as public penance. Peter’s military code was based largely on the Swedish military code introduced by Gustav II Adolf in 1621–1622, written when fear of witchcraft in Sweden was strong, and partly on the Carolina (*Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*), the 1532 law code of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. Peter’s *Voinskii artikul* indirectly copied the old Roman law distinction between magic that harmed and magic that did not, and the punishment of the former by burning from article 109 of the Carolina (which omits the demonic/nondemonic distinction). The *Carolina*’s requirement that confessions could be extracted by torture was already normal practice in Russia.

The confusion of civil and ecclesiastical law was compounded by Peter the Great’s Church reforms. In his *Ecclesiastical Regulation* of 1721, Peter abolished the patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church and established a synod to govern it instead. Insofar as it served as a court, the synod was essentially a branch of the state apparatus and blurred the distinction between civil and ecclesiastical authority even further while depriving the Church of jurisdiction in many areas. In this period, the only specific Russian laws against witchcraft were found in Peter’s military code, although in 1722 the synod obtained Peter’s confirmation of its jurisdiction in cases relating to marriage, blasphemy, heresy, and *volshhebnye dela* (magical matters). This created a curious situation, in which cases of harmful magic could be tried in the highest ecclesiastical court, the Synodal Court, under military law. Peter’s Church reforms also required the clergy to report anything learned from penitents in confession, and bishops were obliged to send annual reports on superstitious practices in their dioceses.

The severe treatment prescribed by the state for those suspected of practicing magic and witchcraft continued after Peter’s death. *Ukazy* (edicts) of March 20 and May 25, 1731, in the reign of the Empress Anna, prescribed death by burning for “deceivers” who practiced magic, and the knout, or in extreme cases death, as the punishment for consulting magicians (the phrasing indicated that male magicians were envisaged). The use of the word *deceivers* (*obmanshchiki*) suggested that the law now regarded witchcraft as a species of fraud, as elsewhere in Europe under the influence of the Enlightenment, even if the punishment was still associated with older views of magic and heresy.

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See also: AUGUSTINE, ST.; BALKANS; CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*); ENLIGHTENMENT; EXODUS 22:18, (22:17); HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, MAGIC; HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, WITCHCRAFT; JEWS, WITCHCRAFT, AND MAGIC; MAGIC, POPULAR; POLAND; RUSSIA; UKRAINE, WITCHCRAFT.

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OSBORNE, JOHN AND RUTH (1751)

This elderly English couple was subjected to mob violence at Tring (Hertfordshire) in the summer of 1751. Ruth Osborne, aged about seventy, died as a result of the treatment meted out to her. One of the ringleaders, Thomas Colley, was subsequently convicted for murder at the Hertford assizes and executed at Tring on August 24, 1751, his body left to rot on a gibbet.

The incident has yet to be researched in detail, but it obviously opens up some important issues about witchcraft and witch beliefs in mid-eighteenth century England. There were several incidents of mob action against witches in Hanoverian England, but the Osborne case was unusually well documented because it prompted two printed pamphlets. The English witchcraft statutes had been repealed not long before (1736), but there was obviously widespread fear of and belief in witches among the population at large. Ruth Osborne had supposedly committed a number of acts of *maleficium* (harmful magic), and her husband, some fourteen years younger than she, had a reputation for being a wizard, so that none of the local farmers would employ him. In particular, a farmer turned innkeeper named John Butterfield was convinced that the Osbornes had killed his cattle by witchcraft, a tragedy that had led him to give up farming. Butterfield seems to have orchestrated

the violence against the Osbornes; Colley claimed at his trial that it was the drink Butterfield supplied that caused him to take a leading part in the violence against the couple. This violence was well organized: the intention to "duck" the Osbornes (i.e., subject them to the swimming test) was announced publicly in a number of towns in the area, and some 5,000 people turned up to participate or watch. The Osbornes had taken refuge in the vestry of the parish church but were dragged out. Ruth was thrown into a pond, and Colley repeatedly pushed her further in with a stick. A local doctor subsequently called to the scene confirmed that she had died from drowning.

The pamphlet accounts of Colley's trial and of his subsequent execution very much followed the norms of polite Enlightenment society, stressing the dreadfulness of the events and the ill-advisedness of belief in witchcraft. It was particularly important to present Colley as coming round to a repentant and enlightened state of mind, in which he was able both to realize the enormity of his crime and accept that there was no such thing as witchcraft. In particular, an unnamed gentleman visited Colley in prison, hoping to convince him that his views on witchcraft were totally erroneous. Interestingly, Colley told this gentleman that he had witnessed a similar swimming of a witch, which also resulted in her death, in a neighboring county only a few years previously; because no legal action had been taken against any participants in that event, he thought such practices were legal. Throughout, one senses a tension between the rejection of witch beliefs among the educated, polite world of the gentry and their continuation among the population at large.

The authorities, obviously fearing that Colley might be rescued by mob action, had him accompanied to his place of execution by over 100 troopers from the Horse Guards. The soldiers were jumpy, and thinking they were being fired on, were thrown into confusion when one of their number accidentally discharged a pistol. In the event, there was no riot in support of Colley. Yet the pamphlet describing his execution recounted how the event attracted a large crowd of spectators, many of whom commented on the injustice of hanging a man for killing a witch.

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See also: ENGLAND; PAMPHLETS AND NEWSPAPERS; POPULAR BELIEFS IN WITCHES; SWIMMING TEST.

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OSNABRÜCK, BISHOPRIC OF

An ecclesiastical territory situated in the northwest of the old Reich, the prince-bishopric of Osnabrück had approximately 120,000 inhabitants at the end of the eighteenth century. Because of the questionable situation of Osnabrück's sources, it is unclear when its witch hunt started. Its first provable witchcraft execution dates from 1501. Because many early records were lost in a fire that completely destroyed the city of Osnabrück in March 1613, we will never know how many witchcraft prosecutions were pursued here in the sixteenth century.

With regard to witch hunts, the bishopric of Osnabrück shows a distinct separation between parts of its territories that had high and low prosecution rates. Available sources suggested that very few witchcraft trials took place in the seven rural offices of the prince-bishopric, although a certain number of undetected cases must be added because of lost materials. Gisela Wilbertz, who produced the best work on this subject, mentioned ninety trials between 1538 and 1669. Over half of them (fifty-three) ended with the execution of the defendant; only four men were executed alongside forty-nine women. We can safely assume that only individuals were accused: the prince-bishopric of Osnabrück had no known mass trials.

However, the self-governing city of Osnabrück became a regional center of witchcraft prosecution: at least 276 people were put to death in several major witch-hunting waves between 1561 and 1639. By the mid-1580s, more than 130 people had already fallen victim to Osnabrück's witch hunts; soon afterwards, 22 women were sentenced and executed as witches in 1590 and 17 more women in 1592. Because of the fragmentary state of our sources, we cannot reconstruct the dynamics of any of Osnabrück's witch hunts.

The witch hunt in the city of Osnabrück reached a new peak between 1636 and 1639. The *spiritus vector* (driving force) behind this wave of prosecutions was the mayor, Dr. Wilhelm Pelzer, who was eventually removed from his position because of his judicial excesses and was imprisoned after 1651. The multiplication of witchcraft prosecutions in Osnabrück during these years must be seen against a background of two conflicts. One was the city's tenacious struggle with Gustavus Gustavson, an illegitimate son of the famous Swedish king Gustav II Adolph, attempting to protect its municipal autonomy against a foreign Protestant sovereign; the other involved internal city rivalries. Mayor Pelzer wanted to defend the city's independence against Gustavson at any price and used the witchcraft trials as a political measure. In the same way, he tried to

deprive his rival Dr. Modemann (a follower of Gustavson) of his power: Dr. Modemann's eighty-two-year-old mother, Anna Modemann, was accused of witchcraft along with other patrician women.

There was resistance within the city to Dr. Pelzer's arbitrary policies. Pastor Gerhard Grave, a relative of the executed Anna Modemann and preacher at the Church of the Virgin in Osnabrück, condemned from his pulpit, among other things, the use of the swimming test (cold-water ordeal) in witchcraft trials, regarding this ordeal as illegal. Pelzer took draconian measures to silence Grave, closing his church *cum maximo scandalo* (with very great scandal) in order to continue and intensify the use of the swimming test. For his part, Grave retaliated by making the events surrounding the water ordeal at Osnabrück into a pamphlet printed at Rinteln in the 1640s by Petrus Lucius. Today almost unknown, it was then considered a major attack against the water ordeal.

Another Osnabrück critic of the swimming test was Conrad von Anten, a lawyer at the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court), the highest appellate court in the Holy Roman Empire. His work about the *Mulierum Lavatio* (The Bathing of Wives), published in 1590, was based on personal experiences witnessing such persecutions; his own wife, Anna Schreiber, also from Osnabrück, had been accused and tortured as a witch. Based on his own experiences, von Anten's erudite treatise scathingly criticized the water ordeal for its degrading character. Besides publishing this book, von Anten also sued both the mayor and city council of Osnabrück in the *Reichskammergericht* for the annulment of his wife's *Urfehde*, her oath to the judge not to exact revenge against her accusers, and also for damages she suffered from personal injuries. Osnabrück's last witchcraft trial apparently occurred in 1639.

GUDRUN GERSMANN

See also: GERMANY, WEST AND NORTHWEST; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; MÜNSTER, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; ORDEAL; *REICHSKAMMERGERICHT*; SWIMMING TEST; URBAN WITCHCRAFT.

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OVERBURY, SIR THOMAS (1581–1613)

Trials for the supposed murder of Thomas Overbury exposed the recourse to magic among the social and political elite of early seventeenth-century London.

Born into a prosperous Gloucestershire gentry family, the son of a successful judge, Overbury earned his BA

at Oxford and then entered the Middle Temple in London to begin his legal training. In 1601, however, while visiting Edinburgh, he met and befriended another young gentleman, Robert Carr, at that time page to the earl of Dunbar. Carr came south with James VI and I in 1603 and became a leading royal favorite, becoming Viscount Rochester in 1610. Overbury, the more polished of the two, acted as a sort of mentor for Carr, hoping that Carr's rising fortunes would enhance his own.

By 1610, Carr was involved with Frances Howard, countess of Essex. The countess, whose life has formed the basis for several books (most recently Lindley 1993), planned to divorce her husband and marry Carr. Her granduncle, the earl of Northampton and leader of the powerful Howard faction, approved of this plan, but Overbury opposed it, fearing that his own influence over Carr would be replaced by that of the countess. Overbury had to be removed. His imprisonment in the Tower of London was engineered; both the new governor of the Tower and Overbury's jailer, Richard Weston, were Howard clients. While imprisoned, and probably without Carr's knowledge, Overbury was gradually poisoned. A woman named Anne Turner helped supply the poisons, Weston and an apothecary named James Franklin administered them, and a gentleman named Gervase Hewlys was also involved. Overbury died on September 14, 1613, his death being attributed by a consequent coroner's inquest to natural causes. Frances Howard divorced the earl of Essex on grounds of nonconsummation due to his impotence (the proceedings scandalized Jacobean high society) and married Carr, by this time the earl of Somerset, in December 1613.

By 1615, reports reached court that Overbury had, in fact, been murdered, and proceedings were opened against Turner, Hewlys, Franklin, and Weston that November, with the earl and countess of Somerset being tried in May 1616. All four commoners were convicted and executed; the earl and countess were found guilty but pardoned, being eventually freed in 1621.

The significance of the Overbury case in the history of witchcraft lies in some of the evidence that emerged during the trials of his murderers. It was revealed that in the period preceding her divorce, Frances Howard had consulted various cunning men and other magical practitioners, both to procure magical substances to render her husband impotent (apparently he had appropriate ointments rubbed onto his linen) and to win the love of Robert Carr. In particular, she had been an active client of the astrologer and quack doctor Simon Forman (1552–1611), who had built up a large practice, especially among well-connected ladies, knew many court scandals, and also had a reputation for dabbling in poisons. Like Anne Turner, he lived on the margins of court society and profited from its vices and was

therefore an excellent contact for Frances Howard. Turner became Frances Howard's confidante in 1610 and introduced her to Forman. The two women visited him on several occasions, turning for help after his death in 1611 to another magical practitioner named Savery. When at Turner's trial the judge produced damning evidence of magical dabblings, the packed audience was most scandalized by obscene copulating figures (supposedly aids to love magic) made of lead, brass, and wax, and various parchment charms, one of them with human skin attached to it. A crack in the scaffolding holding spectators while these exhibits were being shown fueled fears that the Devil was in the courtroom. There were reports of a list in Forman's handwriting naming those court ladies who had sought love potions from him.

The Overbury murder trials therefore made two important points. The first was that, even in the early seventeenth century, upper-class people were still willing to use magic to settle their problems and to consult magical practitioners, up-market cunning folk in effect, to help them. The second was that although witchcraft and associated beliefs are often thought of as essentially the products of a rural society, there was clearly a large, and still largely unresearched, network of cunning folk, astrologers, and other forms of magical practitioners in London. In both respects, Overbury's murder prefigured the Affair of the Poisons at Louis XIV's court over fifty years later.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: AFFAIR OF THE POISONS; CUNNING FOLK; ENGLAND; IMPOTENCE, SEXUAL; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; LOVE MAGIC; POISON; URBAN WITCHCRAFT.

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OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITIES

In contrast to the situation in other European states, where theology faculties were occasionally called upon to pronounce on witchcraft cases or on the concept of witchcraft more generally, English universities never offered professional opinions on witchcraft in specific instances. Moreover, the English common law, under which English witches accused on capital charges would be tried, was not studied at Oxford and Cambridge but rather at the Inns of Court in London ("civil," that is, Roman law, was offered at both universities, and it was there that ecclesiastical court judges gained their qualifications). Therefore, there was no law faculty to comment on witchcraft cases at English universities, and the Inns of Court do not seem to have been consulted institutionally about witchcraft.

Both English universities enjoyed parallel developments in the early modern period. After a post-Reformation slump, they enjoyed a boom for ninety years after 1550. Matriculations at the two institutions rose to over 900 annually by the 1580s. After a downturn in the 1590s, matriculations rose again to over 1,000 by the 1630s. They fell with the civil wars, and despite a recovery in the 1650s never regained their prewar levels in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The post-1550 boom was driven by a perceived need for a university-trained clergy, a goal virtually attained by the outbreak of war in 1642, and by a new fashionableness of a university education among the gentry.

Oxford and Cambridge Universities were, of course, responsible for spreading educated views of witchcraft both through theology and through the teaching of classical languages, because Greek and Roman literature furnished many examples of witchcraft and related phenomena. But Cambridge made two specific and important contributions to English witchcraft. The first was its role as a hotbed of advanced Protestant views during the Elizabethan and early Stuart periods. A by-product of this focus was the emergence of a number of clerical intellectuals who published works on demonology, usually along with other writings. The most influential of these intellectuals was William Perkins, whose important *Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft* was published posthumously in 1608. Other Cambridge-based or Cambridge-educated demonologists included George Gifford, author of two tracts on witchcraft; Henry Holland, whose *Treatise against Witchcraft* was published in 1590; James Mason, author of *The Anatomie of sorcerie* of 1612; the physician John Cotta, whose *Tryall of Witch-Craft* appeared in 1616; and Richard Bernard, author of *A Guide to Grand Jury Men with respect to Witches* (1627), a book exemplifying a distinctive English demonological style. Cambridge's second great contribution was to foster,

in the 1640s and 1650s, what soon became a very influential body of Platonic and Neoplatonic thinkers. The most important of them was Henry More, a powerful and respected thinker, who was responsible for the emergence of Joseph Glanvill's *Saducismus Triumphatus* (Sadducism Conquered), an extremely important defense of the belief in witches and spirits, in its full form in 1681. More's own *Antidote against Atheisme* of 1653 pioneered the approach Glanvill and other later defenders of witch beliefs used by assembling apparently authenticated accounts of witchcraft, possession, and other supernatural happenings to prove the reality of the spirit world.

Oxford, however, had the distinction of direct involvement by a large body of its academics in a witchcraft case, the episode involving Anne Gunter, the daughter of a Berkshire gentleman who began showing signs of being bewitched in late 1604. Her case subsequently came to the attention of King James I, and she, together with her father, was subsequently tried for false accusations of witchcraft by the Star Chamber. Anne's sister Susan was married to Thomas Holland, then Regius Professor of Theology and Rector of Exeter College. Anne was lodged in the college for a while, and a number of academics, including some major university figures, gave evidence to Star Chamber, most of them arguing for the reality of her sufferings.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: COTTA, JOHN; DEMONOLOGY; ENGLAND; GIFFORD, GEORGE; GLANVILL, JOSEPH; GUNTER, ANNE; MORE, HENRY; PERKINS, WILLIAM; UNIVERSITIES.

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P

PACT WITH THE DEVIL

A purported contract, either implicit or explicit, between accused witches (and sometimes magicians) and the Devil, according to which a person pledged her or his soul to Satan in return for worldly gain, healing and magical powers, or arcane knowledge, was considered a pact with the Devil.

As an essential element of the cumulative or elaborated concept of witchcraft, the pact with the Devil gradually became one of four essential legal proofs (alongside *maleficium* [harmful magic], transvection and metamorphosis, and attendance at the Sabbat) in accusations of witchcraft. An explicit or express pact was not limited to a legal document, often supposedly composed in a person's blood, but also included an array of ritual acts of homage (e.g., kissing the Devil on the buttocks—the kiss of shame), with a material (e.g., monies that later turned out to be potsherds or clumps of dung) or sexual consideration literally reifying the covenant. Figuratively, the rituals were a perversion of feudal ceremonies associated with fealty (e.g., charter, kiss, exchange of a clump of earth) and marriage (e.g., dowry, consummation) concluded between legally (if not socially) equal partners; hence, the Devil was often iconographically depicted as a nobleman who propositioned the prospective witch. The ready familiarity of these legal and ritual concepts, their congruence with existing gender roles, and a strong literary tradition and the reintroduction of Roman law all help to explain the easy reception and centrality of the idea of the pact in late medieval and early modern Europe, especially on the Continent.

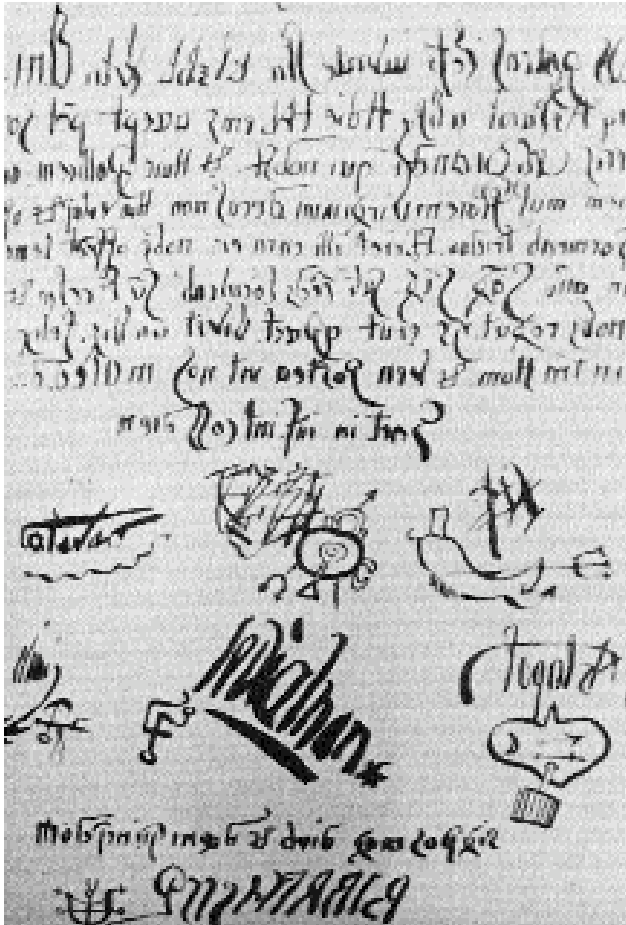
EARLY HISTORY

The Western tradition of contract law emerged in Roman jurisprudence in classical antiquity. One of the earliest inferences to the possibility of entering into a private commercial contract with the Devil is found among St. Augustine's works in the fourth century. However, not until a number of legendary incidents were translated into Latin in the ninth century did the idea become widespread. Foremost among these was the story of the monk Theophilus, known both on the Continent and among the late Anglo-Saxons. A Jewish magician persuaded Theophilus to transfer his alle-

giance to the Devil in a written agreement in return for magical powers—an early indication of the anti-Semitism inherent in diabolical belief structures.

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, scholastic theologians accentuated a view of all magic as demonic and implied the necessity of a Devil's pact as a precondition to gaining magical abilities. Previously, medieval necromancers operated under the assumption that they could command the spirits of the dead and the demons they summoned. However, Thomas Aquinas forcefully argued for a contractual reciprocity inherent in any concourse with the Devil, emphasizing the existence of tacit agreements or express pacts, either the implicit *pactum tacitum* or a *pactum expressum*, the latter literally a verbal or written contract. Reciprocity implied that the magician was guilty of apostasy, because mortals had little to offer Satan other than their service or their soul, thereby logically condemning all parties to pacts as demon-worshippers and justifying their persecution by inquisitorial officials as heretics. Gradually, as demonologists came to view the contract as essentially one-sided rather than one conducted between equals, the relationship between necromancer and spirit shifted, and “as the master-magician was transformed into the servile witch, the sex of the malefactor changed from male to female” (Levack 1995, 35). Heiko Oberman's theory of an alternate and skeptical Augustinian tradition notwithstanding (a demonological *via moderna* [modern way], exemplified by the *Canon Episcopi* [ca. 906] and the Tübingen scholar Martin Plantsch), the Thomist *via antiqua* (old way) became the dominant ideology by the fifteenth century, echoed in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) as well as in later works by Martín Del Río and others during the second (or bastard) scholasticism of the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries.

The especial significance of this tradition was to render all forms of magic suspicious and encourage their persecution. Initially, secular law codes (such as the *Cardina*, 1532) had condemned *maleficium* only, but by 1582, the pact with the Devil was recognized as a material element of accusations for witchcraft in the law codes of Württemberg, the electorate of Saxony, and the County Palatine of the Rhine. Medieval England, where reception of the *Malleus* was generally



Pact between Urbain Grandier and various devils, introduced as evidence in his trial in Loudun in 1634. The pact is in mirror writing because devils do everything opposite to Christians. (Reprinted from Mephistopheles: the Devil in the Modern World, by Jeffrey Burton Russell, Cornell University Press, 1986)

slow, was exceptional in this regard. Explicit mention of a diabolical compact remained completely absent from English law until 1604; the first English trial reference to an oral pact with the Devil dates from 1612; the first sworn evidence indicating a written pact dates from the investigations of Matthew Hopkins, witch-finder general, in the 1640s.

ELITE AND POPULAR BELIEFS

Some historians have suggested that there never were pacts with the Devil, but rather that they were imaginative inventions, part of the cumulative or elaborated concept of witchcraft developed by demonologists, jurists, and theologians and, hence, completely alien to the popular consciousness. In fact, there were actual persons who believed themselves possessed of extraordinary powers to heal, perform love magic, fly in out-of-body ecstasies, or engage in night battles against phantoms to defend agrarian fertility. There were also

isolated individuals who contracted actual written pacts with the Devil. Obviously, the vast majority of those accused of contracting a pact probably did not do so, and in most cases, the implication is of a tacit or oral contract in any case. However, indications of written pacts should not be dismissed lightly for want of evidence, since their destruction as blasphemies was required, as reported by Martín Del Rio and others. Most contemporary demonologists—including the skeptical Johann Weyer—despondently confirmed their existence.

Additionally, although the evidence is extremely rare, archivists and historians have identified several surviving written pacts in the archives. The most famous of these are the pacts of Johann Haizmann with the Devil, discovered by the Viennese archivist Rudolf Payer-Thurn in 1920 and subsequently described in an article by Sigmund Freud. Convincing circumstantial evidence witnessed by contemporary legal investigations into four Devil's pacts have been located in the archives of the University of Tübingen alone, along with the actual written pact of the student David Leipziger, composed in 1596. Two pacts written in lemon juice by the demoniac Katharina Rieder in 1668 were discovered in Munich using quartz-lamp technology. A gender distinction readily emerges from an examination of these pacts. The pacts contracted by males for money or career advancement tend toward a Faustian model and were probably influenced by the first vernacular printed edition of the tale in 1587, which was immensely popular. However, the female Rieder-pact and its surrounding circumstances more closely resemble the witch model, to include copulation with the Devil, apostasy, and demonic possession, though here once again, given their timing, one should not preclude the possible influence of the Faust legend. A third influence can be traced to the common contemporary practice of contracting obligations with the saints, usually in return for individual healing or communal assurance for agrarian fertility—hence, legal condemnations of the practice of throwing saints' statues into rivers when communes felt they had failed to deliver on their presumed contractual obligations. In a literal inversion of the pact with the Devil, Elector Maximilian I of Bavaria contracted himself, his son, and his daughter-in-law to the Virgin Mary in their own blood in the mid-seventeenth century, and the contracts are still preserved at the dynastic cult shrine at Altötting.

SIGNS OF SKEPTICISM

As the publication of the Faust legend increased the likelihood of persons contracting actual written pacts, and just as persecutions for witchcraft approached their climax in western Europe, a number of skeptics entered into the debate on the cumulative concept of witchcraft,

challenging its fundamental precepts. Foremost among these were Johann Weyer, who thoroughly debunked the efficacy of such contracts according to the precepts of Roman law and current medical theory in his *De praestigijs daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils, 1563), and Reginald Scot, who refuted the possibility of pacts outright in his *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584). Weyer, sometimes considered to be the father of the modern insanity defense in Freudian psychoanalysis, developed the hypothesis of pacts as “leonine” contracts—that is, unfair contracts benefiting the Devil only, who failed to live up to his promises to the witch—thereby rendering them null and void, because they rested upon coercion. Weyer’s arguments did suffer from certain inconsistencies because he too ultimately had to admit certain powers to the Devil, as well as to recognize the existence of attempted pacts, despite their legal invalidity. Nevertheless, Weyer’s influence was great, as was that of Scot in England, so that by the mid-seventeenth century, numerous jurists, scholars, and theologians could successfully assert the illusory nature of pacts with the Devil, resulting in increased employment of the insanity defense in cases of witchcraft and especially demonic possession and suicide.

DAVID LEDERER

See also: AQUINAS, THOMAS; AUGUSTINE, ST.; *CANON EPISCOPI*; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DEMONOLOGY; DEVIL; FAUST, JOHANN GEORG; FREUD, SIGMUND; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; KISS OF SHAME; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); MAXIMILIAN I, DUKE OF BAVARIA; NECROMANCY; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; ROMAN LAW; SCOT, REGINALD; SKEPTICISM; THEOPHILUS; WEYER, JOHANN.

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PADERBORN, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF

A prince-bishopric of the Holy Roman Empire with a population between 60,000 and 80,000, Paderborn was located in southeastern Westphalia in between two regions of intensive witchcraft persecution: the county of Lippe to the north and the electoral duchy (*Kurkölnisches Herzogtum*) of Westphalia to the southwest. Paderborn’s power structure was split among three estates with extensive rights of self-determination: the cathedral chapter; the nobility; and representatives of its numerous, but largely agrarian, towns. The prince-bishop’s sovereign criminal justice system did not control the entire territory; sizable areas remained under the autonomous judicial authority of the cathedral chapter and of various noble families, the highest being the lords von und zu Büren and von Westphalen zu Fürstenberg.

Between 1510 and 1702, witchcraft trials against 260 persons are known to have taken place in Paderborn. In 204 cases, these trials ended in execution or death in prison; eighteen prisoners were released; and the outcome of the rest is unknown. Seventy percent of those prosecuted were women; children were occasionally prosecuted. These numbers are only a minimum: although both major noble rulers, von Büren and von Westphalen, left excellent sources, the area’s other legal systems did not.

As early as 1500, the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) was known among Paderborn’s clergy. Isolated trials took place around 1510 and after 1555, before becoming endemic after 1572. Three main waves of persecution, similar to those in the duchy of Westphalia and other Catholic areas, occurred first in the 1590s and then between 1628 and 1631 and between 1656 and 1659. The first two immediately followed crises caused by extreme inflation or plague.

In 1598, the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court) intervened against Paderborn’s cathedral chapter, thus preventing further executions, although the canons made reprisals against the relatives of the accused. In 1603 and 1604, Bishop Dietrich von Fürstenberg (ruled 1585–1618) caused a great stir by conducting trials against the prior, subprior, and two monks from the Augustinian convent in Dalheim, following allegations by confessed witches that all four clerics had participated in a witches’ Sabbat. After one monk died during a year in prison, Würzburg’s law faculty issued an opinion that saved the others’ lives. This case, reminiscent of discussions going on at the same time in Bavaria, was still remembered at Paderborn and the abbey of Corvey as late as 1630; in a rather

disguised manner, Friedrich Spee alluded to it in his *Cautio Criminalis* (A Warning on Criminal Justice, 1631).

The high point of persecution, around 1630, produced approximately ninety-five victims, fifty of whom were executed in Büren between March 17 and April 15, 1631, shortly before the *Cautio Criminalis* appeared in print in May 1631. Its author, Friedrich Spee, had taught moral theology at the Jesuit university of Paderborn since 1629. Spee had his share of enemies in Paderborn (including Suffragan Bishop Johann Pelcking), but he also had influential friends, who helped get his book published or recommended it. From 1619 to 1650, Paderborn's bishop was the archbishop of Cologne, Ferdinand of Bavaria, who had not visited Paderborn since the early 1620s. Because source materials are so scarce, it is unclear to what extent the archbishop's representatives and the estates used their administrative freedom either to promote or to prevent witch hunts in the prince-bishop's jurisdiction.

Between 1656 and 1660, a wave of demonic possession among young women in the town of Brakel aroused widespread attention after a Jesuit exorcist, Paderborn theology professor Bernhard Löper, turned the possessions into an uncontrollable epidemic. Löper used the exorcisms to demonstrate the superiority of Catholicism but could not expel the ghosts he had summoned, while the possessed and their families demanded a witch hunt against their enemies. Unsure how to judge the alleged demonic possession, Bishop Dietrich Adolf von der Recke (ruled 1650–1661) asked the Holy Office (the Congregation of the Inquisition) in Rome for guidance: one of his canons, Ferdinand von Fürstenberg, was close to the current pope, Alexander VII. A Roman exorcism expert advised Paderborn's clergy to reduce fear of the Devil and his powers through better pastoral care instead of heeding calls for witch hunts. After reading Löper's reports, Alexander VII doubted that the girls were possessed. But Roman skepticism about the credibility of the possessed and of witches' Sabbats found few supporters in Paderborn, especially when Löper denounced the bishop as a witches' lawyer. Von der Recke and his councilors then permitted witchcraft trials that eventually led to at least fifty executions from 1657 to 1659.

The trials began so slowly that a group of enraged men actually beat nine alleged witches to death on a public street. Paderborn's rulers caught the murderers, put them on trial, gave them death sentences, and following Rome's suggestion, put the more rabid of the possessed in solitary confinement in order to care for their spiritual needs.

These events ended Paderborn's last major wave of persecutions. Von der Recke's successor, the same Ferdinand von Fürstenberg (ruled 1661–1683), brought his Roman attitudes to Paderborn with him. In

1675 he authorized the execution of a man who used a consecrated Host to perform magic—a form of sacrilege punishable by death at Rome far into the eighteenth century. However, the situation in von Westphalen zu Fürstenberg's private jurisdiction was quite different. After a twelve-year-old boy was executed by cutting his arteries in 1694, one of the last witch hunts in Westphalia took place between 1700 and 1702, with twelve people accused and at least three women and two men receiving the death penalty.

RAINER DECKER;

TRANSLATED BY JONATHAN STICKNEY

See also: COLOGNE; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES

(HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); EXORCISM; FERDINAND OF COLOGNE; GERMANY; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; *REICHSKAMMERGERICHT*; SPEE, FRIEDRICH.

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PALATINATE, ELECTORATE OF

The widely dispersed territory of the electoral Palatinate, ruled by the older line of the Wittelsbach dynasty at Heidelberg, was situated in Germany between the upper and mid-Rhineland. Until the Thirty Years' War, the electorate also included the Upper Palatinate in northeastern Bavaria. Although the electoral Palatinate played a key role in supporting witchcraft trials in the late Middle Ages, it took the lead in opposing them during early modern times.

Soon after the new belief in diabolical witches had developed in the Swiss Alps during the first half of the fifteenth century, the electoral Palatinate became, as far as we know today, the first German territory to adapt this new belief and start its own witch hunts in 1446–1447. The Palatinate had both territorial and dynastic links with some core areas of the new witch beliefs. However, conditions for a favorable reception of a modern approach to witchcraft were exceptionally good at Heidelberg, especially with the university, which had demonologists such as John of Frankfurt and Nicholas of Jauer. Moreover, the Palatinate had been extremely active in purging heresy; the elector Palatine, its secular ruler, had played an active role, making considerable personal efforts. Even though theologians prepared the witchcraft cases, the electoral Palatinate adopted not the ecclesiastical procedure of witchcraft inquisition, but the secular witchcraft trial developed by Swiss cities. Final decisions and

responsibility in the witch hunt belonged to the elector. More persecutions were documented in the Palatinate until the beginning of the sixteenth century.

However, when the first big wave of witch hunting in the early modern period began around 1560, the by-then-Calvinist Palatinate distanced itself from the common German trend by refusing to carry out witchcraft trials. This refusal remained characteristic afterward. It was due solely to the steadfastness of its administration that persecution of witchcraft never reached the electoral Palatinate from neighboring areas. Because this territory was in the middle of the main regions where witch hunts abounded, such external facts as the climate, geography, or economic position of the Palatinate cannot explain its opposition to the persecutions. And the Upper Palatinate, belonging to a different geographical region, also had no witchcraft persecutions while under the reign of the electors at Heidelberg. The absence of witchcraft trials was not a passive attitude, therefore, but an active policy of the electoral government to defend itself against internal and external opposition. From the outside, electoral policy was confronted with denunciations of Palatinate subjects by foreign witches and demands for persecutions by neighboring rulers. Serfs from the Palatinate became involved in foreign witchcraft trials and had to be defended, and many foreign subjects who fled to the Palatinate from persecutions in their home territories were allowed to settle. The intellectual elite of the electoral Palatinate included a strong group of supporters of the witchcraft trials, who demanded punishment especially for the apostasy and blasphemy of the witches. This group comprised most of the electorate's leading Reformed theologians and prevailed only at the end of the sixteenth century. The debates on the matter of witchcraft created a remarkable scientific discourse, including significant tracts by Thomas Erastus, Hermann Witekind, and Antonius Prätorius. Another dangerous demand for persecution came, as elsewhere in this region, from the populace. They made several accusations of witchcraft that could have started persecutions, but the Palatinate's administration refused all these demands.

Despite all the influence the prince-electors had on politics, the actual governing board was the Palatinate council (*Hofrat, Oberrat*) led by the chancellor. Extremely well-trained civil lawyers dominated this council. It acted as a unified organization that for the most part perpetuated itself, thereby ensuring a remarkable degree of continuity, despite several changes of confession (religion). So the refusal to persecute witches, once established in the 1560s, was maintained and even deepened over time. This policy drew important support from the faculty of law at Heidelberg University, where most councilors and government officials were trained. But of central importance for

implementing this approach toward witchcraft was the Palatinate government's relatively good administrative control over punishing capital crimes. The *Hofrat* at Heidelberg, which oversaw all procedures of the lower courts, ultimately decided all important cases of criminal justice; usurpations of high justice by the populace, as in the electorate of Trier, were unimaginable.

The Reformed Church, established in the Palatinate in the 1560s, could not have been responsible for official disapproval of the persecution of witchcraft. Several Reformed territories in Europe (e.g., Scotland) had severe witchcraft persecutions. Opponents of the persecutions in the electoral Palatinate cannot be squeezed into one single intellectual tradition. Instead, one could develop a model for the electoral Palatinate showing several lines of tradition converging to build up an autonomous regional tradition, which is perhaps best described in Hermann Witekind's *Christlich bedencken und erinnerung von Zauberey* (Christian Thoughts and Memories about Sorcery, 1585). One finds traces of the so-called *Canon-Episcopi* tradition of southwestern Germany (Mdelfort 1972), here in its Reformed version, as well as traces of the humanistic tradition led by Johann Weyer (who was highly regarded in the Palatinate), whose sons Dietrich and Johann reached very high positions in the electoral government. But one must also recognize that the attitude of the Palatinate opponents of witchcraft persecution was mainly rooted in commonly accepted theological and legal norms; many traditional lines of the discourse on witchcraft that were opposed to the persecutions fit into this framework.

Strict observance of formal legal procedures in witchcraft trials saved the electoral Palatinate from rash executions by holding steadfast to ordinary methods (*processus ordinarius*). This demanded a considerable accumulation of proof before proceeding to torture, one nearly impossible to obtain in witchcraft trials. In the Palatinate, commonly used evidence like denunciations and the *mala fama* (bad reputation) were insufficient; the Devil's mark, the absence of tears, or the so-called water test (water ordeal; swimming test) were all inadmissible as evidence. Legal objections usually were in the foreground in official Palatinate arguments because they were unanswerable in imperial law. The electoral Palatinate was not completely alone in this policy. In most other large secular territories of the Holy Roman Empire, like the nearby duchy of Württemberg, an increasingly professional and centralized administration of law in the early modern state usually restricted the number of witchcraft trials and stopped any mass persecutions "to safeguard the dignity of the entire judicial apparatus" (Soman 1989, 14). But the existence of a powerful group strongly disapproving of the persecutions, like that found in the electoral Palatinate, was extremely unusual.

The specific difference here lay in a stronger criticism of the belief in witchcraft. Their fundamental opposition to the belief in witchcraft was based on the theocentric assumption of an almighty God, strongly emphasized by Reformed confessionality, leaving little room for supernatural interference by diabolical agents. God alone ruled the world: sorcery was no more than an illusion of the Devil. The opponents of the persecutions therefore rejected any trials concerning supernatural elements like witches flying or fornicating with devils, because they were impossible. If the damaging effects of *maleficium* (harmful magic) were nonetheless legally punishable, this meant murder through poison or other offenses rationally possible. In the end, only separation from God and the pact with the Devil remained. But, as with all other forms of heresy, Palatinate authorities rejected the death penalty for spiritual crimes. In so doing they went beyond a Calvinist standpoint, as the opposition of Palatine theologians in the second half of the sixteenth century showed. However, using a missionary approach of “convert them, don’t burn them,” curiously like that of the Spanish Inquisition, Palatine opponents of the persecutions demanded to lead those gone astray back to the true belief through pastoral care. In cases in which conversion was ineffective, as a last resort, banishment from the territory was the correct solution. The opponents of persecution supported disciplinary enforcements against people who practiced magic, but not with fire and sword, any more than for Anabaptists or refractory Catholics.

Because the approach toward witchcraft in the electoral Palatinate depended largely on its government, it became unsure when this region was occupied by Catholic troops in the course of the Thirty Years’ War. From 1622–1623 until 1649, Spain and the emperor governed the part of the electorate west of the Rhine River, while Bavaria held those parts to the east. We can make no certain claims about witchcraft trials under Spanish occupation; but we have ample indications that from 1629 onward, a wave of witchcraft persecutions affected the Bavarian-ruled palatinate, apparently influenced by large persecutions in neighboring territories. Burnings occurred, although their exact numbers are unknown. The Bavarian government in Heidelberg, now controlling criminal justice, took up the persecutions with the support of Prince-Elector Maximilian. At that time, examples of witchcraft trials using procedures contrary to established laws occurred in the electoral Palatinate.

Interestingly, those forces in Munich opposed to witchcraft trials (who controlled Bavarian central administration) had no means to exert significant influence over these persecutions in far-off Heidelberg, for personnel and administrative reasons. The councilors and government officials that Bavaria

installed in the Rhine Palatinate were mostly Catholic foreigners from the vicinity of the electoral Palatinate, distant from Bavarian traditions and therefore unaware of the moderate approach now dominant in Munich. So in the electoral Palatinate on the Rhine, the tradition against persecutions ended when its old government fled, while the Bavarians never extended their cautious approach to the Palatinate. Quite different however, was the situation in the Upper Palatinate, where no new persecutions occurred under the Bavarian government. Here the personnel from the electoral Palatinate remained largely intact, being replaced only slowly by Bavarians bringing Bavarian traditions with them. The radical rejection of persecutions by Calvinist authorities was thus gradually transformed into the cautious approach of the Bavarian Catholics, with minimal consequences.

After their return to Heidelberg in 1649, the Palatinate Prince-Elector Charles Ludwig and his government resumed the traditional rejection of persecutions, whose foundations were now strengthened and broadened by increasing religious tolerance and further humanization of penitential procedures.

JÜRGEN MICHAEL SCHMIDT

See also: ANABAPTISTS; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; *CANON EPISCOPI*;

DEVIL’S MARK; ERASTUS, THOMAS; GERMANY, SOUTHEASTERN; GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; *MALEFICIUM*; MAXIMILIAN I, DUKE OF BAVARIA; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; POPULAR PERSECUTION; PRÄTORIUS, ANTON; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; SWIMMING TEST; UNIVERSITIES; WEYER, JOHANN; WITEKIND, HERMANN.

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PALINGH, ABRAHAM (1588/1589–1682)

Palingh was the author of the most prominent Mennonite book about witchcraft, *’t Afgerukt mom-aansicht der tooverye* (The Mask of Witchcraft Pulled Off), published in 1659. Palingh was probably born in Beveren, a small town near Antwerp, and died at Haarlem.

The Spanish army's recapture of the provinces of Flanders and Brabant in the 1580s led to a Protestant exodus to places with more religious freedom. Palingh's family moved to Haarlem, a center of textile industry in Holland. His father, Andries Palinck, first appeared there in a document from 1602. Most Mennonites were craftspeople, and many of them were textile workers. Andries was a weaver and also one of the ministers of a Mennonite congregation in Haarlem. Except for a document from 1618 mentioning Abraham Palingh as consoler of the sick in this congregation, we know little about his early years. As an adult, he understood Dutch, French, and German but not Latin, which implies that he received only a primary education. He became a small trader in textiles; he married twice and had two sons, Andries and Jan. His profession brought him into contact with another textile trader, Herman Löher, whose *Hochnötige unterthanige wemütige Klage der Frommen Unschültigen* (Much Needed, Humble, and Woeful Complaint of the Pious Innocent) was published in 1676 and whose life history Palingh had summarized in his earlier book.

As a religious dissenter who could not read or speak Latin and did not belong to the most prosperous layer of craftspeople and shopkeepers, Palingh stood outside the cultural, economic, and political elites. But his book was nevertheless well received. After 1594 it was virtually impossible to prosecute anybody for witchcraft in the Dutch Republic. But in the 1650s, some local judicial authorities again showed some willingness to receive accusations of maleficent magic, leading Palingh to write his treatise in order to convince the courts and other authorities not to permit any renewal of witchcraft prosecutions. In February 1659, his book was indeed used by the defendant in a trial against a woman accused of having concluded a pact with the Devil.

In his book, Palingh mentioned several authors who supported the persecution of witches, but he countered their arguments using only biblical texts, mentioning no other authority except Erasmus, whose name appeared only once. He specifically refuted the views of Agricola of Sttard, Jean Bodin, William Perkins, and the Jesuit Paul Laymann. (Palingh was unaware that Laymann had not written the treatise he was attacking.) His line of reasoning was first and foremost practical. As a true Mennonite, Palingh argued that magic had no effect and that the Devil could not change the course of nature and therefore could not cause any disaster. He found the whole image of an anthropomorphic Devil who conversed with human beings ridiculous. As a merchant, he expressed amazement at the Devil's business policies as described by demonologists, finding it extremely stupid to invest time and energy training employees who would be executed shortly afterward. He also mocked the professional tactics of the Devil's followers, citing the habits of Livonian werewolves

who, according to Bodin, had to pass through a river in January without wearing clothes in order to transform themselves into marauding animals. Palingh considered the idea of people preparing to dive naked into a river, in midwinter, in a northern country like Livonia, simply preposterous.

Fellow Mennonites apparently found Palingh's negation of the powers of the Devil quite acceptable. Unlike the Reformed minister Balthasar Bekker some thirty years later, Palingh was never attacked by coreligionists for denying that spirits could interfere with created matter. Incidentally, Bekker mentioned Palingh's work very favorably in his *De Betooverde Wereld* (The World Bewitched, 1691–1693). In the 1660s, Palingh also published two pamphlets defending the position of his congregation on problems then under discussion among Mennonites, matters having no connection with witchcraft or demonic powers. His participation in this debate suggested that the members of his congregation considered him a valuable defender of their views. His book was reprinted in 1725.

HANS DE WAARDT

See also: AMSTERDAM; ANABAPTISTS; BEKKER, BALTHASAR; BODIN, JEAN; DEMONOLOGY; DEVIL; ERASMUS, DESIDERIUS; LAYMANN, PAUL; LÖHER, HERMAN; MENNONITES; NETHERLANDS, NORTHERN; PERKINS, WILLIAM.

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PAMPHLETS AND NEWSPAPERS

Witchcraft pamphlets—in effect, occasional newspapers—were based on accounts by witnesses of witchcraft-related events or sometimes on court documents. They were important because they spread stories of witchcraft. Such pamphlets were a Europe-wide phenomenon that badly needs a comparative study. In Germany they reported trials such as that of the Pappenheimer family (1600), later translated for Dutch and English readers. The Swedish Mora trials (1668–1670) were publicized through a Dutch translation of a Swedish pamphlet, subsequently retranslated and anthologized by such English demonologists as Joseph Glanvill and read as far away as America; it was also translated into German and French. English pamphlets, currently the best-studied vernacular genre, cost from a penny to a few shillings in English money; although for many a substantial purchase, they were accessible to all but the poorest. Price depended on the number of pages and special features like illustrations. It seems likely that they were circulated among groups

of people or read out to reach a wider, often illiterate, audience.

English witchcraft pamphlets offered a considerable range of form and diversity of content. The first to report a witchcraft trial was produced in three parts in London in 1566, although it is not clear whether the parts were sold separately. Based on pretrial examinations of suspects, an account of the courtroom testimony of their supposed victim, and the confession on the scaffold of the only person to be convicted and hanged, it tells the story of three women from Hatfield Peverell, a small Essex village, who were accused of a variety of *maleficia* (evil acts). Assize court records told us that one, Elizabeth Fraunces, pleaded guilty in court to paralyzing an infant (and was imprisoned accordingly), but the pamphlet records her pretrial confession. She admitted a far greater number of offenses than remain on record, some of them linked with her unwanted pregnancies and unwanted marriage. Apparently she was not prosecuted for these offenses, and so no trace of them remained outside the pamphlet, *The Examination and Confession of certaine Wytches* (London, 1566). The pamphlet gave us information we would otherwise lack and dramatized for us the gendered psychological issues behind a specific confession of witchcraft. By giving details of the suspect's life and of the dynamics of accusation and confession, it helped explain her willingness to confess in a way that other surviving records did not.

The pamphlet also deals with Agnes Waterhouse, who was named in a later pamphlet as Elizabeth's sister, and Agnes's daughter Joan. In the pamphlet, both are accused of afflicting a young girl, Agnes Browne, whose dramatically recreated court performance suggested to the reader that both women had preyed on this innocent. Agnes Browne had, she said, been tormented by a talking black dog with a monkey's face, which tempted her to suicide. Although assize records showed (and the pamphlet confirmed) that Agnes Waterhouse confessed to and was convicted of another offense and hanged, the court records and pamphlet differed in their account of Joan. Assize records showed that Joan was acquitted of bewitching Browne, but the pamphlet ended its report with the jury deliberating the case and implied that she would be found guilty. Here the pamphlet gives vividly represented detail of the case but fails to record fairly the outcome of the trial; it suggests, as pamphlets often do, that all the accused were guilty.

Agnes Waterhouse's scaffold confession also offered information, unavailable elsewhere, about those likely to be convicted of witchcraft. The pamphlet adds to assize records by telling us that Agnes was very poor, was sixty-four years old, and, before her death confessed that she prayed in Latin, suggesting an old, marginalized woman who had not accepted Protestantism. Like Elizabeth Fraunces, Agnes Waterhouse had gone begging in her community, and where charity had been denied,

she said she had punished those who refused her. From this short pamphlet, the reader gains a wealth of information and conjecture about accusers, witches, and their communities, as well as—in this case—two poems and an epistle on witchcraft giving a pious commentary on the subject. It is also possible, by comparison with other records, to offer an assessment of the reliability of stories told in pamphlets.

Pamphleteers can be accused of sometimes sacrificing truthful reporting for a good story, but they also provided details that, where they can be checked, are often confirmed. They wanted to entertain purchasers but also to inform. They were usually anonymous, probably hack writers working for publishing houses in London, sometimes writing whole booklets, sometimes only prefaces for existing documents. Another pamphlet of 1566, *The Examination of John Walsh* (London), was an almost verbatim transcript of a still-surviving church court interrogation of a "cunning man," but the preface (probably by the publisher John Awdeley) added a violently anti-Catholic address to the reader that drew out suggestions in the main text that Walsh was a Catholic and had learned his craft from a priest. This may well illuminate the motives of his accusers and questioners, by associating him with worldwide popish superstitions scorned by proper Elizabethan Protestants.

A Scottish pamphlet of the early 1590s, *Newes from Scotland* (London, 1591), had a similar political undertone but illustrated more graphically the dangers of trusting journalistic sources. It was a narrative (rather than a document-based) account that reported the activities of a large number of witches who intended to harm the Scottish King James VI. These supposedly centered around a satanic ritual in North Berwick kirk. The pamphlet's detailed but highly selective account naively reflected the assumptions of the questioners, including the king. In short, it is invaluable as an official version of events: that the king of Scotland's authority and godliness were confirmed by the attack of Satan's agents upon him. It is, however, almost impossible for a modern reader to assess what really occurred: a very complex background of political feuding that undoubtedly influenced events went completely unreported, buried by propaganda.

Most pamphlets were fairly brief—eight or twelve pages—but they were sometimes lengthened by demonological or sociopolitical commentary. *A true and just Recorde* (London, 1582) was just over 100 pages long, and Thomas Pott's vast *The Wonderfull Discoverie of Witches* (London, 1612) was nearly 200. Both contained pretrial records relating to large groups of witches. The first was probably produced by and for Brian Darcy, a magistrate involved in questioning all the accusers and suspects; an assize court clerk, on the instruction of the judges, compiled the second. In both cases, an attempt was made to prove that there were a great number of witches at large:

the preface of *A true and just Recorde* favored legal reform to burn rather than hang witches, whereas Potts attempted to portray the judicial process as it stood as both merciful and just. Both pamphlets thus had an agenda and used large numbers of witchcraft cases as “data”: illustrations of demonological and political arguments that might or might not be supported by a mass of relatively unmediated documents. Editorial tampering did, however, occur, and readers must be alert.

Witchcraft pamphlets were extremely important in circulating stories of witchcraft, upon which other cases or arguments about them might then be based. In 1619, a pamphleteer writing up *The Wonderful Discoverie of the Witchcrafts of Margarett and Phillip Flower*, an account of the murder by witchcraft of two children of the earl of Rutland, cited several pamphlets, including Potts’s, among his sources to show that witches gave their souls to the Devil. As early as 1584, Reginald Scot in his *Discoverie of Witchcraft* discussed *A true and just Recorde*, among other accounts, both English and European, from which he drew the conclusion that there were no witches as conventionally defined. By 1718, Francis Hutchinson, the noted skeptic, had amassed a collection of instances of witchcraft in pamphlets and quoted at length in his *Historical Essay Concerning Witchcraft* from those reporting the hotly contested case of Jane Wenham (1712). With a much wider range of sources for the study of witchcraft, we are less inclined to regard pamphlets as straightforward reports, but they remain a uniquely valuable repository of stories about witchcraft.

MARION GIBSON

See also: CONFESSIONS; DEVIL BOOKS; ENGLAND; ESSEX; GLANVILL, JOSEPH; HUTCHINSON, FRANCIS; LANCASHIRE WITCHES; MORA WITCHES; NORTH BERWICK WITCHES; PAPPENHEIMER FAMILY; SCOT, REGINALD; ST. OSYTH WITCHES; WENHAM, JANE.

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PAN

In Greek mythology, Pan was a rural god specifically in charge of forests, flocks, and shepherds. He was also a

hunter and the inventor of a type of shepherds’ pipe. He was born with horns, a goat’s beard, feet, and a tail, and his body was covered with hair. His appearance was thus so frightening that even his own mother ran away at the sight of him, and when humans encountered him unexpectedly, they often fled in terror. Hence the Greek and then English word *panic*. The supposed derivation of his name from the Greek for “everything” is a false etymology.

Pan was not the only horned divinity in Europe. The Greek god Zeus was sometimes depicted with horns, for example, and the Gallic Cernunnos had stag’s horns. During the Middle Ages, it became common for Jews to be depicted as having horns and a tail, and in a fifteenth-century manuscript, Waldensian heretics are shown worshipping Satan in the form of a goat. So the distinctive animal traits often associated with Satan, especially the presiding Satan of the witches’ Sabbat, had precedents in both pagan mythology and popular hostile depiction of outsiders.

Artists of all kinds rapidly adopted the visual identification of Pan with Satan, and it became a cliché of his representation, even though written accounts of the Sabbat described the Devil as taking other animal forms as well, such as a dog, cat, or bull. Thus, the woodcuts in Francesco-Maria Guazzo’s *Compendium Maleficarum* (A Summary of Witches, 1608) showed Satan in Pan-form receiving the worship of male and female witches, and Jan Ziaruko’s engraving for Pierre de Lancre’s *Tableau de l’inconstance des mauvais anges et demons* (Description of the Inconstancy of Evil Angels and Demons, 1612), one of the best known of the French demonological treatises, depicted Satan as an enthroned goat overseeing the detailed wildness of witches’ behavior during a Sabbat. Once established, of course, the image was reproduced over and over again. The eighteenth-century occultist Eliphas Lévi (Alphonse Louis Constant) helped perpetuate it in a form that became famous: an androgynous winged Baphomet enthroned, with rearing horns, a goat face, and a pentagram in the middle of his forehead. Goya (Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes) too subscribed to the image. *Ensayos*, one of his *Capricho* series, showed witches practicing flying, watched over by an enormous black he-goat, and his most frequently reproduced picture had female witches worshipping a goat-shaped Satan.

Pan as Pan (rather than a type of Satan) was largely forgotten by literature, however, until the nineteenth century remade him into a divinity associated with the wilder and more exciting (that is, sexual) aspects of nature. From then on, English poets in particular used him as a shorthand image for their collective and individual thoughts about nature in the raw. Prose



Pan, a horned god who, because of his horns, goat's beard, hairy body, and terrifying appearance, is associated with the Devil. (TopFoto.co.uk)

writers also took up the theme but transmuted the god into a symbol of aggressive rebellion against conventional morality, most notably perhaps in the early twentieth century when Aleister Crowley, identifying himself at one point with both Pan and the Egyptian god Seth, envisaged him as the god of homosexual passion.

But Margaret Murray finally returned Pan to his older self. In 1931, Murray published a book, *The God of the Witches*, a sequel to her *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe* (1921), which argued that the horned god was the oldest male deity in Europe and that his worship by men and women had been misinterpreted as the adoration of Satan by witches and therefore persecuted by the Church. Several scholars have demolished her theory, but the Pan image lingers on in the worship of the horned god by some modern Wiccans.

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BAPHOMET; CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST-1800); GOYA Y LUCIENTES, FRANCISCO JOSÉ DE; GUAZZO, FRANCESCO-MARIA; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; MURRAY, MARGARET ALICE; SABBAT.

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PANICS

There is much confusion about what constituted a witch panic. The most obvious examples occurred when very large numbers of accused witches were arrested and burned in one place within a short time. But when did a witch scare develop into something we could legitimately call a panic? One standard (Monter

1976, 89–92) suggested that ten deaths for witchcraft at one place in one year constituted at least a small panic, but there is no consensus among scholars. However, trying to measure witch panics seems like measuring exactly how many people are needed to make up a crowd. The larger witch panics were, the vaguer the estimates become about their actual size—almost exactly like newspaper or police estimates about the size of mass demonstrations. Nevertheless, we can offer a few plausible generalizations about when and where Europe's major witch panics occurred.

In Europe's worst witch panics, more than 100 witches were burned in relatively small regions within two or three years. Such episodes were extremely rare; so far as we know, they were confined to a handful of places in present-day Germany. The panic that lasted from October 1628 until March 1630 in the small town of Mergentheim provides a particularly well-documented and ghastly example (Midelfort 1972, 143–155). In all, exactly 117 witches were burned on 32 separate occasions (no more than 6 witches were ever burned together, probably because of limited jail facilities and the danger of controlling such conflagrations). Four more died in prison, probably from excessive torture. Although many accused witches were never imprisoned at Mergentheim, no imprisoned witch was ever acquitted until February 1630.

Some German witch panics were even larger and lasted considerably longer. Ellwangen, capital of a larger territory than Mergentheim, held seventeen execution days for witches in 1611 and seventeen more in 1612; the exact number who were burned in these two years is uncertain, but it probably exceeded 250. This panic continued into 1613, with six more execution days, and did not cease entirely until 1618 (Midelfort 1972, 98–115). Few cases surpassed Ellwangen in sheer ferocity. Perhaps Germany's worst witch panic afflicted the electorate of Cologne for nearly a decade after 1627, because the government orchestrated it through a network of special commissioners resembling a separate bureaucracy (Schormann 1991), but we have no reliable estimate of its exact dimensions.

Such large panics, with twenty or more burned in a single year, accounted for about 40 percent of the more than 3,200 witches known to have been executed between 1562 and 1666 throughout Baden-Württemberg, which included both Mergentheim and Ellwangen; years with ten or more executions accounted for 70 percent (Midelfort 1972, 72). It is likely that such ratios might be replicated on a macroscale. A rough estimate of Germany's eight or nine largest known witch panics, or "super-hunts," nearly all of them conducted (as at Mergentheim or Ellwangen) by ecclesiastical princes, suggests comparable results: in a country with over 300 separate governments, this handful of states apparently accounted for almost 40

percent of the more than 20,000 witches executed in Germany. Because Germany executed more than half of all witches throughout Europe, this handful of major panics probably accounted for at least one-fifth of all witches executed anywhere in Europe between 1560 and 1680.

At the same time, tiny villages occasionally suffered even more from witch panics than the very worst German cases. Consider the case of little Gollion, a completely unremarkable Protestant French-Swiss village of fewer than fifty households in the Pays de Vaud (Taric Zumsteg 2000). Within sixteen years (1615–1631), Gollion experienced six separate outbreaks of witch hunting, during which a total of twenty-five people were executed; nine of them died in one two-month span. Thus, within a generation, roughly one-fourth of Gollion's adults were burned as witches (almost 40 percent of them men). This ratio clearly surpasses even such disasters as Mergentheim, where, in a population of about 1,250 adults, about every tenth adult (and perhaps every sixth adult woman) was burned. However, Gollion is the worst case yet studied on such a microscopic level.

LARGE WITCH PANICS WITH FEWER BURNINGS

Major witch panics involving hundreds of burnings per year never occurred outside Germany. Sloppy scholarship has exaggerated their frequency elsewhere in Europe (and inside Germany as well) by accepting uncritically the numbers of witches burned found in sensationalist contemporary pamphlets, which deliberately exaggerated the extent of witches and witchcraft. These vast numbers of witches burned invariably shrink drastically upon closer inspection. For example, the well-known demonologist and judge Pierre de Lancre boasted of making several hundred Basque-speaking witches confess their crimes in 1609; well-known scholars (e.g., Trevor-Roper 1969, 112) deduced that this judge burned almost a hundred witches in only four months—but a careful reading of de Lancre's text identifies barely a dozen witches burned, including three priests (Monter 2002, 41–42). They were, however, enough to trigger a witch panic that soon involved two countries.

As the example of de Lancre suggests, simply counting the number of witches burned is not the only or always the best guide to using the phrase *witch panic* appropriately. It can be legitimately applied in parts of Europe outside Germany where fears of witchcraft obsessed entire regions for several years, even if large numbers of witches were not burned. The hysteria in Basque lands on both sides of the French–Spanish border between 1609 and 1614 provides the best example. Although probably only a dozen witches died on each side of the border, it has been called, with some

justification, Europe's largest witch panic, simply because of its unprecedented scale: in addition to the hundreds of Basque confessions mentioned by de Lancre, the Spanish Inquisition eventually heard almost 2,000 spontaneous confessions of witchcraft, overwhelmingly from children. At least, that is what local interpreters told their employers, because neither the French judges nor the Spanish inquisitors understood Basque. It required sustained efforts by responsible authorities in both France and Spain to prevent their out-of-control officials from doing further damage and finally to calm things down.

The child-driven Swedish witchcraft hysteria lasting from 1668 to 1675 provides another equally well-known and instructive example of a truly large-scale witch panic. This panic spread extremely widely, eventually reaching most of northern Sweden and extending as far south as Stockholm. Exactly like the Basque episode, it involved thousands of children describing their experiences at the witches' Sabbat; unfortunately, in this instance, well over 100 witches were executed before it too could be brought to an end—by executing an adolescent accuser for perjury.

WHEN DID THEY BEGIN AND END?

Nothing resembling the Mergentheim panic occurred in fifteenth-century Europe. As early as the 1420s, large numbers of people were being arrested for witchcraft in Valais or Dauphiné; but local political circumstances and the repression of heresy often help explain such outbreaks, as they do in the first urban instance, the mid-fifteenth century *Vauderie* (Waldensianism, but used to label witches) of Arras. In general, it seems problematic to talk about witch panics in the age of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486); when Inquisitor Heinrich Kramer arrested fifty women in the Tyrol in 1485, he certainly provoked an extreme reaction—but it was directed more against him than the accused witches (much later, something analogous apparently happened to de Lancre also).

Probably the last major witch panic in Europe was the *Zauber-jackl* (Sorcerer Jack) affair that affected the independent prince-archbishopric of Salzburg from 1677 to 1680; although slightly later than the Swedish case and located in Catholic rather than Protestant Europe, it was similarly child-driven. Here, however, adolescent boys were targeted as witches by the authorities rather than used by them to accuse others. Americans regard Salem Village in 1692 as a major witch panic; it does meet the criterion of twenty deaths in one place within a year, and it occurred even later than Salzburg. Although numerous witchcraft trials were held after 1700 in eastern Europe, no later episodes that deserve to be called major "witch panics" have yet been uncovered.

We know that firm actions by such high-level authorities as the Spanish Inquisition, the *Parlement*

(sovereign judicial court) of Bordeaux, or Sweden's high court of appeals eventually stopped Europe's most widespread witch panics. However, relatively little work has been done so far on why Germany's major witch panics stopped. One explanation uses a list of the 160 people burned as witches on 29 occasions at Würzburg between 1627 and 1629 to argue that they stopped when they became dysfunctional after the traditional stereotype of a witch broke down (Midelfort 1972, 179, 182). In this instance, adult women formed 85 percent of the total in the first five burnings and almost 70 percent of the first fifteen groups. But in the next fourteen clusters, the stereotype collapsed completely: adult women now comprised less than one-fourth of the witches being burned, far outnumbered both by young children (mainly boys) and adult men. However, such clear examples seem unusual.

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: ARRAS; BASQUE COUNTRY; COLOGNE; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); ELLWANGEN, PRINCE-ABBAY; GERMANY; INQUISITION, SPANISH; KRAMER, HEINRICH; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; MERGENTHEIM, ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORY OF; MORA WITCHES; SALZBURG, PRINCE-ARCHBISHOPRIC OF; VAUD, PAYS DE; WITCH HUNTS; WÜRTEMBERG, DUCHY OF; WÜRZBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF.

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PAPACY AND PAPAL BULLS

In the development of witch persecution, the Roman papacy and its decisions on official doctrine played a central role. The nineteenth-century denominational approach to Church history presented the attitudes of the popes in a one-sided fashion, either polemically or apologetically. Overinterpretations resulted, rectified by subsequent research and the study of original texts during recent decades. On the whole, our evaluation of

the papacy's role in creating and upholding the doctrine of witchcraft has become more nuanced, but no generally accepted academic consensus on the subject has yet been reached.

The papacy, which gradually developed from the increasing prominence of the bishop of Rome after the fifth century, reached its full stature in the tenth and eleventh centuries, becoming the ultimate authority of the Latin Church in all matters of doctrine, including the issues of demonology and witchcraft. In the Middle Ages, the legal decisions of the Holy See theoretically demanded absolute obedience, but papal infallibility in doctrinal issues was not entirely indisputable. Only after the end of the conciliar movement and the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation was the pope's absolute doctrinal authority uncontested within the post-Tridentine Roman Catholic Church. Papal statements on the doctrine of witchcraft must also be understood in the light of the dogmatizing of the pope's power of jurisdiction and infallibility in 1870—a declaration that retroactively covered doctrinal statements made by previous Roman bishops and implied their universal validity.

In the Early Middle Ages, the entire western Church, including its popes, was preoccupied with overcoming the relics of paganism. Gregory I (ruled 590–604) attempted a synthesis of popular pagan desiderata with the claims of the Christian faith, particularly by nurturing reverence for relics of saints and the whole area of the miraculous; Christian churches were now built over the foundations of antique temples, thus creating a continuity of religious cults on sites that were not initially Christian. During Charlemagne's reign (768–814), the Frankish kingdom attempted to stamp out the remnants of paganism by issuing capitularies, which were accepted by the popes at imperial synods. Numerous regulations combated the practice of sorcery and opposed such judicial problems as vigilante justice against alleged sorcerers and witches. This attitude characterized Church and civil authorities until the High Middle Ages; papal bulletins on witchcraft were essentially restricted to specific issues, for example, a letter from Pope Gregory VII to King Harold of Denmark strictly prohibiting the lynching of alleged witches.

By the thirteenth century, several developments provoked a tighter organization of the Roman Church: the great Church law compilation, the *Decretum gratiani* (Gratian's *Concord of Discordant Canons*, known as the *Decretum*, 1130–1140 revision), and the first comprehensive textbooks and *summae* (summaries or compilations of theology or canon law) appeared, systematically recording theology in its entirety; in the thirteenth century, the Church was drawing up its own profile even as it began contending with heretical movements from within. The *Decretum gratiani*, accredited and advanced by the papacy, incorporated many stipulations

concerning witchcraft, mainly compiled from early medieval texts; it laid the foundation for legal considerations that subsequently influenced the cumulative concept of witchcraft. Because the *Decretum gratiani* never mentioned such things as witches' Sabbats or a witchcraft sect and rejected the belief in witches flying, in accordance with the Frankish capitularies (*Canon Episcopi*, ca. 906), it rather restricted the evolution of the concept of witchcraft. However, canon law also contained sufficient clauses about heresy in general and its subsequent prosecution to provide substantial support for advocates of severe witch persecution.

An initial turning point toward more severe persecution of witchcraft occurred under Pope Alexander VI (ruled 1492–1503), who issued an ordinance to the Dominicans and Franciscans, to whom the new papal inquisition had been assigned, that sorcery and divination should be prosecuted only when accompanied by a strong suspicion of heresy. This ordinance, incorporated into the *Corpus iuris canonici* (Body of Canon Law, Bk. 6, c. 5, 2), implied certain parallels between sorcery or divination and heresy, which was the Church's primary enemy. Until the beginning of the fourteenth century, further instructions remained sporadic and specific, for example, in 1303, Boniface VIII (ruled 1295–1303) intervened against a bishop of Coventry accused of paying homage to the Devil, and in 1318, John XXII (ruled 1316–1334) took action against individual sorcerers. However, after the prohibition of the Templar order for political reasons, which was justified with the claim that the Templars formed a diabolical sect that must be eliminated, John XXII suddenly adopted a more radical attitude, thus multiplying anti-sorcery precedents.

John XXII resided at Avignon, in an environment rife with suspicion of witchcraft at the French and other courts, where the pope was seen as a possible victim of the black arts. Thus, he took a personal interest in the prosecution of alleged sorcerers. In 1320, the inquisitors of southwestern France (which harbored large concentrations of Cathars and Albigensians), received orders to deal severely with people who practiced divination, the black arts, and demonic sacrifices. Here, heresy became more closely associated with sorcery. His bull *Super illius specula* (Upon His Watchtower) in 1326 proved more fundamental and effective. For the first time, it considered a pact with the Devil as the worst crime of alleged sorcerers. Subsequently, demonological ideas predominated when describing practices previously classified as superstition.

It has justifiably been claimed that this papal bull contained no echoes of the cumulative concept of witchcraft, and this constitution never led to witchcraft trials like those of the fifteenth and subsequent centuries. Its significance lay in the unambiguous classification of all occult practices as heresy, because

they involved homage to the Devil. An ominous step was taken from individual sorcerers toward the great diabolical conspiracy of sorcerers and witches, the existence of which was alleged by later inquisitors. At the same time, linking ecclesiastical trials for heresy with secular implementations of death sentences made sorcerers more vulnerable to the death penalty than previously. This policy was continued by John's successor Benedict XII (ruled 1335–1342), the former inquisitor Jacques Fournier. Although his instructions were generally restricted to resolving individual cases of sorcery, its associations with heresy became more firmly established. Subsequent popes showed relatively little interest in sorcery or witchcraft while the cumulative concept of witchcraft was being created, although some, including Martin V (ruled 1417–1431) and Eugenius IV (ruled 1431–1447), issued statements on the subject that prefigured aspects of subsequent bulls condemning witchcraft. Another decree directed at southern France and defining sorcery as heresy, employed the phrase *summ̄is desiderantes affectibus* (desirous with supreme ardor), later made notorious by Innocent VIII (ruled 1484–1492). A bull of 1437 ordered severe measures against persons who made pacts with demons, worshipped them, and practiced harmful occult arts with their aid, even raising tempests. However, it was very general in character, being addressed to all inquisitors.

The most famous papal bull encouraging witchcraft persecution directly was the *Summis desiderantes affectibus* issued by Innocent VIII in 1484. It was composed at the specific request of Heinrich Kramer (Institoris), papal inquisitor for southern Germany, to help him overcome both ecclesiastical and secular resistance by supporting his enterprises with papal prestige. In one way, this bull was less significant than the standards of Eugenius IV on demonic witchcraft, because its instructions were merely regional rather than universal. Its use by Kramer in the introduction to his *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), giving his book a false appearance of papal approval, was at least as significant as the bull itself. At first glance, *Summis desiderantes affectibus* appears to be committed to a traditional, noncumulative concept of witchcraft. It never mentioned the notion of witches flying and placed no emphasis on women as the embodiment of witchcraft, which was so characteristic of the *Malleus Maleficarum*. Nevertheless, it contributed to the increase in witchcraft trials. Not only did it remind readers of the peculiar heinousness of the crime of witchcraft, justifying the Church's mission to hunt down and punish such offenders, but it also threatened to penalize anyone who resisted the Inquisition in this matter. For these reasons, the bull of Innocent VIII encouraged witch persecutions in the future. Opponents of the trials had to contend not only with the theological position of the *Malleus* but also with

papal promotion of inquisitorial trials against sorcerers and witches.

In the sixteenth century, inquisitorial witchcraft trials decreased drastically throughout northern Europe. The popes, however, were not silent on the problem of witchcraft. Julius II (ruled 1503–1513) encouraged stronger persecution of sorcerers in the diocese of Cremona, against the wishes of local clerics. Leo X (ruled 1513–1521) confronted the Republic of Venice, which sought to hinder papal inquisitors acting against witches and sorcerers. Adrian VI (ruled 1522–1523) confirmed a bull of Julius II regarding the inquisition of Lombardy. Some decrees of the Council of Trent dealt with witchcraft: the guidelines set out in the *Dominici gregis custodiae* (Guardians of the Lord's Flock, 1564) put all books on divination, sorcery, potions, prophecies, spells, and other magic practices on the Index (list of prohibited books).

During the great wave of frenzied witch hunting of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, conducted mainly by Catholic prince-bishops in Germany, the papacy adopted moderate policies. Without ever directly questioning its demonological and judicial aspects, Rome displayed considerable skepticism about the cumulative, constantly intensifying concept of witchcraft. *Instructio pro formandis processibus in causis strigum, sortilegiorum et maleficiorum* (Instruction for Conducting Trial Procedures Against Witches, Sorcerers, and Evildoers) by Pope Urban VIII in 1635 prescribed the traditionally more cautious attitude of the Roman Inquisition for the German empire. Apparently written in reaction to the horrifying reports of massive witchcraft trials in Germany that had gradually reached Rome, it tried to prevent them by requiring proof of black magic before decreeing a death sentence and prescribed less severe punishments for harmless magic. However, Urban's distinctly moderate *Instruction* could not be enforced in many Catholic regions of Germany, where serious witch hunts continued for a long time with support from the local clergy. In regions to which Rome had direct access, relatively few prosecutions occurred.

Because of the legal and theological traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, certain elements of witchcraft theory endured into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, although they had no practical significance. The *Corpus iuris canonici* remained valid until 1917, so that judicially speaking, the *impotentia ex maleficio* (weakness from harmful magic) delusion about witches flying was still an offense; sorcery, divination, and the like could still be considered heresies for which the Church could execute appropriate punishments. The scholastic concept of demonology was indirectly confirmed when Leo XIII declared Thomas Aquinas to be the normative theologian of Roman Catholicism, and the validity of earlier papal bulls became problematic

after the promulgation of the dogma of infallibility of 1870. Such theoretical statements have had no practical consequences for many centuries, although occasional reports of severe exorcisms by Roman Catholic priests remain a phenomenon distantly related to the complex of the witch hunts.

JÖRG HAUSTEIN;

TRANSLATED BY HELEN SIEGBURG

See also: *CANON EPISCOPI*; GRATIAN; HERESY; INNOCENT VIII, POPE; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; INQUISITION, ROMAN; JOHN XXII, POPE; KRAMER, HEINRICH; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (MEDIEVAL); LYNCHINGS; *MALLEUS MALIFICARUM*; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH; TEMPLARS; URBAN VIII, POPE.

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PAPPENHEIMER FAMILY (1600)

Certainly the most famous clan of cesspool cleaners in early modern Europe, this wandering Swabian family became the principal target of a Bavarian crackdown on witches and other dangerous vagrants in 1600. They suffered punishments that were remarkably cruel even by contemporary standards.

There were several reasons for the exemplary sadism shown to this family of licensed beggars who also earned money as itinerant glaziers, tinkers, and cesspool cleaners. They and their chief "accomplices" were unusual witches: to begin with, most of them, including the ringleader, were men. The Pappenheimers were not Bavarians but foreigners; worse still, they were not members of a settled village community. After being arrested on charges that they had helped a convicted thief murder seven pregnant women in order to make "thieves' candles" from the fingers of unbaptized babies,

the Pappenheimers—father Paulus, mother Anna, two grown sons, and a ten-year-old boy—were taken to Munich by express order of Duke Maximilian and subjected to repeated bouts of relentless torture.

In an "indissoluble amalgam of falsehood and truth, which assembled rumors and reports from two decades" from various parts of Bavaria (Kunze 1987, 149, 154), the Pappenheimers ultimately became scapegoats for a variety of other crimes besides witchcraft. They admitted close to 100 murders, almost ten per year, although not a single corpse was ever found (they explained that they always burned them); they further confessed setting dozens of fires and committing several hundred thefts, many of them from churches. (They claimed they sold such sacrilegious goods to Jews, who were prohibited from living in Bavaria, however.) And of course, the Pappenheimers confessed to witchcraft. Before they were through, they had denounced almost 400 "accomplices," once naming 99 of them at a single torture session; following customary stereotype, 80 percent were women, and 10 percent of the women were midwives (Kunze 1987, 342f, 345).

The chief engineer of the Pappenheimer family's destruction was the ambitious leader of Bavaria's witchcraft "zealots," the chancellor of the court council, Dr. Johann Sigismund Wagnerækh (ca. 1570–1617), whose ideological commitment compensated for his modest standing within Bavarian society. Like Duke Maximilian, Wagnerækh had studied at Ingolstadt during the 1590 witch hunt. He not only directed the Pappenheimers's questioning under torture, but when a tailor arrived at court with a petition to free some of their imprisoned "accomplices," Wagnerækh immediately had him arrested and tortured, and he soon confessed to witchcraft also.

Because Duke Maximilian desired to show his government's teeth to Bavaria's "dangerous classes" by enforcing his drastic laws against them to the fullest, the executions in June 1600 of Paulus Pappenheimer, his wife and their two adult sons, together with two of their Bavarian "accomplices" (including the unfortunate tailor-petitioner), makes truly gruesome reading. At the place of execution, the body of each was torn six times with red-hot pincers, the mother had her breasts cut off, the five men had their arms and legs broken on the wheel, and finally Paulus became one of very few western European criminals to be impaled on a stake, like Vlad the Impaler's Moldavian victims. After these preliminaries, all six were burned alive. For sheer savagery, no other single episode of early modern Europe's theater of judicial terror ever quite matched it.

These brutalities were widely publicized. Woodcuts, printed broadsheets, and chronicles reported them. Bavarian Jesuits passed the news to their demonological colleague Martín Del Rio, who mentioned it in his next edition of his *Disquisitiones Magicae libri sex* (Six

Books on Investigations into Magic). “A chronicler of Freising included them in his world chronicle a few years later among the most important events of the century,” while “as late as 1744 they were referred to in a book published at Leipzig” (Behringer 1997, 232). Although six more “conspirators,” including the Pappenheimers’s ten-year-old son, were burned at another spectacle at Munich in December 1600, the Pappenheimers’s fate did not begin any Bavarian witch hunt: as soon as some of the arrested “accomplices” came from respectable Bavarian families, their relatives protested and the whole investigation was quietly dropped.

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; EXECUTIONS; GERMANY, SOUTHEASTERN; MAXIMILIAN I, DUKE OF BAVARIA; TORTURE.

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PARACELSUS, THEOPHRASTUS BOMBASTUS VON HOHENHEIM (CA. 1493–1541)

Paracelsus was a prophet, philosopher, alchemist, and Renaissance magician.

The fascination of the Swiss Paracelsus stems both from what is known and from what remains unknown about his bizarre and nomadic life as an eccentric and rebellious physician. At times he was considered an impostor, at other times a prodigious healer of fatal diseases who was accused of practicing diabolical arts. His works combined high culture and popular traditions, wide-ranging scientific interests, and an unusual reliance on everyday experiences and myths. Throughout his life, he refused to pursue a normal, professional career, attacked the university teaching of his day, and attempted to revolutionize both the medical and natural sciences by promoting the virtues of alchemy within the context of an original philosophical interpretation of the universe and of illness. Paracelsus challenged the Aristotelian and classical paradigm by introducing new principles of knowledge, which he adopted from the Hermetic tradition and from popular health care. He believed in witchcraft, demons, and evil spells; in the witches’ Sabbath; and in their ability to take animal shape. Nevertheless, the originality of his ideas led him to reject the practice of burning witches at the stake, which he deemed an inadequate response to a phenomenon that was, after all, “natural.”

LIFE AND WORKS

Theophrastus von Hohenheim, also known by his grandfather’s name as Bombast, but only later as Paracelsus (which perhaps meant “beyond Celsus,” one of the most renowned naturalists of antiquity), was born about 1493 in Einsiedeln in central Switzerland. His father, Wilhelm Bombast de Riett, was a physician and the illegitimate son of a Swabian aristocrat. When the family moved to Villach in Carinthia, Theophrastus first came into contact with the world of the mines. He also started taking lessons with religious teachers, one of whom may have been Johannes Trithemius, who was suspected of having practiced black magic. From 1507 to 1511, Paracelsus attended lectures at several European universities but soon became bored listening to the commentaries of distinguished professors. He therefore chose to travel Europe, perhaps as an army surgeon following military troops. Around 1520, he wrote his first work, the *Eleven Treatises on the origins, causes, symptoms, and treatment of the diseases*, and in 1524 he moved to Salzburg. He was sympathetic toward the peasant revolts and soon obtained some fame for his prophecies. Despite his interest in theology, ethics, and politics, he never joined any organized religious group. In 1526, the city of Strasbourg offered him citizenship, and he began practicing medicine, meanwhile dedicating himself to writing a vast work on medicine, which he never completed, and several treatises, including the *Libri Archidoxis* (Archidoxes of Magic: Of the Supreme Mysteries of Nature, of the Spirits of Planets, Secrets of Alchemy, Occult Philosophy, Zodiac Signs).

During the following year, Paracelsus moved to Basel, where he cured the publisher Johann Froben and the humanist scholar Erasmus. Yet this brief period of fortune did not last. Paracelsus started a career as a public teacher but soon made enemies at the local university because of his incessant attacks against mainstream medicine. Consequently, he was reduced once again to living almost as a traveling pauper, which did not, however, prevent him from acting as a prophet and from writing numerous texts, which mostly remained in manuscript form until after his death. They include a work on syphilis, the *Paragranum* (an outline of his theories garnished with some severe attacks on mainstream medicine) and the *De divinis operibus et secretis naturae* (On Divine Works and the Secrets of Nature), a collection of treatises written after 1529 and printed between 1589 and 1590, which probably was to become the first volume of his unfinished *Philosophia Magna* (Great Philosophy). Paracelsus completed his *Paramirum* during a stay in the Swiss City of St. Gallen, in 1531–1532, where he was a guest of the humanist and mayor Joachim Vadian. Subsequently, Paracelsus



Eminent Renaissance magician, physician, alchemist, Hermeticist, and philosopher Paracelsus (Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim) believed in witchcraft but disapproved of executing witches. (Archivo Iconografico, S.A./Corbis)

dedicated himself mostly to social questions and to caring for the poor. Moving between Austria, Switzerland, Tyrol, and Germany, he wrote various works on politics, theology, surgery, astronomy, professional diseases, and thermal cures. In 1537, he was received at the imperial court, where, despite his fame, he failed to obtain favor. Returning to Villach, he wrote the *Trilogy of Carinthia*, his first violent diatribe against Galen's disciples. Poor, ill, and unable to publish his writings, Paracelsus died in Salzburg in 1541.

FORTUNE

The first person to write about Paracelsus was his disciple and assistant Johannes Oporinus (1507–1568), who became a publisher in Basel and printed several of his master's manuscripts. Oporinus described Paracelsus as both sophisticated and vulgar, ingenious and coarse, attracted by the pleasures of wine but not by those of the flesh. The first to condemn him was Thomas Erastus (in 1572), a theologian and physician, who was profoundly convinced of the existence and power of witches. In a severe attack on Paracelsus's works, Erastus defined him as a follower of Satan,

grouping him with other philosophers and naturalists such as Pietro Pomponazzi and Marsilio Ficino.

The final years of the sixteenth century saw the beginnings of Paracelsus's fame, largely thanks to the writings of Petrus Severinus (*Idea Medicinae Philisophicae*, 1571) and Oswald Croll (*Basilica Chymica*, 1609) and to the publication of his works. There was a fashion for *spagyric* medicine, a form opposed to official Galenic practices that followed Paracelsus's example in allowing the treatment of syphilitic patients with chemical compounds (the term is derived from two Greek words referring to the extraction and elaboration of metals). Paracelsus was particularly respected in England (Francis Bacon was among his admirers), as well as elsewhere in Europe, where his fame grew, despite disapproval and censorship, thanks to the Rosicrucian sect. Daniel Sennert, a professor at Wittenberg, wrote a work in 1619 in which he hoped to reconcile the Galenic tradition and Paracelsus's chemistry. Joan (Jan, Jean) Baptista van Helmont (1579–1644), known for his revolutionary discoveries in the field of illnesses, adopted some important concepts from Paracelsus. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe gave Paracelsus and his assistant Oporinus immortal fame when he chose them as models for his Faust and for Wagner. Paracelsus's twentieth-century admirers included the psychoanalyst Carl Jung and Marguerite Yourcenar, who chose some of his features for the protagonist Zénon of her *L'Oeuvre au noir* (The Abyss, 1968). The poets Robert Browning and Ezra Pound also dedicated works to Paracelsus.

THE INTERPRETATION OF NATURE AND OF WITCHCRAFT

Classical Western medicine, inspired by Hippocrates, Galen, and the Arabs and operating within the framework of Aristotelian natural philosophy, assumed that illnesses resulted from an imbalance of the bodily fluids (blood, yellow bile, black bile, phlegm) and of the fundamental physical qualities (hot, cold, dry, and humid). Paracelsus, on the contrary, stated that the universe was a web of relations linking human beings, nature, and the stars (which did not influence behavior on earth). In order to cure the sick, he argued, it was necessary to observe the sky, live virtuously, know alchemy, and understand the secrets of plants and minerals, which were revealed in their *signatura* (signs). The appearance of a particular herb, for instance, indicated its use for medical treatment. All of life, according to Paracelsus, stemmed from the union of three essential metals (sulfur, salt, and mercury), which, through their combustion and corruption or by being in disharmony with one another, determined the course of an illness. Medical treatment required wisdom, close observation, and the application of similar substances (a principle rejected by traditional medicine, like his use of chemical compounds). Other

factors also influenced diseases: the power of imagination, God, demons, and human intentions, which could take the form of evil spells or witchcraft.

Paracelsus did not reject popular medicine, nor did he attribute madness, physical deformity, mental illness, and fatal diseases to such remote causes. In a world he believed to be populated by spirits, half-human figures, dwarfs, and nymphs (some of them benign and even friendly toward human beings), there was also space for witchcraft, which he treated in the short treatise *De sagis et eorum operibus* (On Witches and Their Works, a text that formed part of *De divinis operibus*). Without referring to the pact with the Devil, he argued that witches were born as such because of a certain predisposition and because of their astral “ascendant.” Just like devils, they performed their harmful deeds with the help of the secret forces of nature. Only the virtuous could resist the Devil, whereas witches (whom he described stereotypically) usually followed their instructions, thus causing storms, illnesses, and sexual mishaps. Devils and witches (who could fly and also take different shapes with the help of ointments) held their meetings on top of the remote Heuberg (in the Swabian Alps), where they fornicated, reproduced, held their rites, and prepared evil deeds.

They could, however, be fought by physicians through the use of opposite magical practices, which Paracelsus considered legitimate. He disapproved of witchcraft, devils, and their spells and considered them worthy of punishment, but he was also opposed to burning witches on the stake, arguing that they should be educated and taken care of instead. Later in the sixteenth century, Johann Weyer argued this position far more convincingly. Ever since Erastus, many scholars have asserted that, by combining popular traditions with a strong opposition to the dominant culture, Paracelsus helped to naturalize black magic. Although this statement is not untrue, it must also be said that, by abandoning official explanations of illness, he helped to shape an attitude common among physicians at the end of the sixteenth century (precisely when Paracelsus’s works began to reach a wider audience): they rejected Galenism, feared the Devil, and explained certain fatal diseases through their belief in witchcraft.

VINCENZO LAVENIA

See also: ALCHEMY; COUNTERMAGIC; ERASTUS, THOMAS; FAUST, JOHANN GEORG; HERMETICISM; MAGIC, LEARNED; MAGIC, NATURAL; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; SCIENCE AND MAGIC; TRITHEMIUS, JOHANNES; WEYER, JOHANN.

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PARIS, UNIVERSITY OF

The University of Paris, a main center of scholastic theology and philosophy during the Middle Ages, took a leading role in condemning the practice of magic. In September 1398, the theology faculty of the university, meeting in the Church of St. Mathurin, approved a set of twenty-eight articles declaring the practice of ritual magic to be heretical. In 1402, Jean Gerson the theologian, political theorist, and devotional writer who was chancellor of the university at the time, included the document in a somewhat altered form in his treatise against magic, *De erroribus circa artem magicam* (Concerning Misconceptions about Magical Arts). The articles were later used to condemn the practice of witchcraft.

The faculty took this action in response to what the document referred to as “newly arisen superstitions.” The practice of ritual magic—the summoning up of demons in order to put them at the service of human beings—had flourished during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, especially at the universities and at the courts of European rulers. In the thirteenth century, William of Auvergne claimed that he had seen magical books when he was a student at the University of Paris, and in 1277 the archbishop of Paris had condemned “books, rolls, or booklets containing necromancy or experiments of sorcery, invocation of demons, or conjurations hazardous for souls” (Kieckhefer 1990, 157). Magicians defended their rituals on the grounds that they were commanding demons, and they insisted that they were not violating Catholic doctrine. In making this pronouncement, the faculty intended to “assure that this monstrosity of horrid impiety and dangerous contagion will not be able to infect the Christian realm, which formerly has been free from such monstrosities” (Weyer 1991, 577).

Citing St. Augustine’s condemnation of superstitious observances, the faculty attacked “this wicked, pestilential, death-dealing abomination of mad errors, along with all the attendant heresies” (Weyer 1991, 577). The theologians declared that the claims made by ritual magicians to justify their practices were erroneous and in some cases blasphemous. The second article, for example, declared it to be idolatrous to give or offer demons anything in their honor. The third article declared it to be idolatry and apostasy to make an implicit or explicit pact with demons. By “implicit

fact” the theologians meant every “superstitious ritual, the effects of which cannot be reasonably traced to either God or nature” (Levack 2004, 48). Other articles condemned offering incense and smoke and making sacrifices and immolations to demons. Yet another denied that images made of bronze, lead, or gold, of white or red wax, or of other material, when baptized, exorcized, and consecrated, had tremendous powers on those days of the year identified in magical books. The twenty-third article condemned the claim that some demons are good, that others are omniscient, and that still others are neither saved nor damned.

The Paris faculty made its pronouncement just before the first trials for witchcraft took place at the *Parlement* of Paris (sovereign judicial court, with jurisdiction over approximately one-half of France). The articles did not say anything about witchcraft as it came to be defined during those trials. The faculty was concerned about theological justifications of ritual magic, not the practices of the women and men who allegedly used magic to bring widespread harm to their neighbors and who also worshipped the Devil in nocturnal orgies. Nevertheless, the Paris faculty’s condemnation of magic as heretical and idolatrous provided authoritative support for later condemnations of witchcraft, especially since it included references to *maleficia* (harmful magic) as well as pacts with the Devil. The *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) made numerous references to it. In the sixteenth century the condemnation was reprinted in the preface to Jean Bodin’s *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (On the Demon-Mania of Witches, 1580), and quotations from it appeared in Lambert Daneau’s *Les sorciers, dialogue tres-utile et necessaire pour ce temps* (Witches, a Very Useful Dialogue and One Necessary for the Present Time, 1574) and Martín Del Rio’s *Disquisitiones Magicae libri sex* (Six Books on Investigations into Magic, 1599/1600). Johann Weyer, the sixteenth-century skeptic regarding witchcraft, also devoted the final chapter of his massive *De Praestigiis daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils, 1563) to this document. It provided support for Weyer’s own condemnation of ritual magic.

BRIAN P. LEVACK

See also: DEMONS; GERSON, JEAN; IDOLATRY; IMAGE MAGIC; RITUAL MAGIC; SUPERSTITION.

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PARLEMENT OF PARIS

The *Parlement* (sovereign court) of Paris, the most prestigious court in France, had an enormous influence on witchcraft trials in the kingdom. Its authority in criminal cases stretched over nearly half the country. Although the records of the appeal hearings before it are rather brief, they do extend over virtually the entire period of serious witchcraft persecution, enabling historians to draw important conclusions about both the court’s own practices and events across a wide region.

The statistics reveal a sharp increase in trials from the 1570s to a plateau that lasted until the 1620s; they also indicate that the *parlement* released many suspects and commuted the majority of death sentences, even though the lesser courts were relatively lenient. The Parisian judges were very concerned about procedural irregularities, eventually moving to enforce an automatic appeal in all witchcraft cases. From around the time this right was fully effective (1624), the court had virtually abandoned death sentences for witchcraft, setting a pattern that several other *parlements* followed, before the royal government ultimately put a stop to all trials across France.

The Paris *parlement* was an elaborate organization, with overlapping political, judicial, and financial roles and a complex internal hierarchy. By the early seventeenth century, it held over 200 judges who had inherited or purchased their positions; they formed a *Grand’ Chambre*, five chambers of *Enquêtes*, and two of *Requêtes*. The *premier president* (presiding magistrate) was an enormously influential figure in national politics, so this appointment was closely guarded by the crown, and a *procureur-général* (public prosecutor) and two *avocats-généraux* (deputy prosecutors) were also charged with representing the royal interest and were known as *les gens du roi* (the king’s men). The major business of the *parlement* was that of supervising legislation and managing the application of property law, with criminal jurisdiction as a relatively secondary function. The hearing of criminal appeals was delegated to a special chamber called the *Tournelle*, staffed on a rotating basis by councilors from the other chambers. The *ressort* (jurisdiction) of the *parlement* covered a huge area, stretching from Poitou and the Auvergne to Champagne and Picardy, or close to half of France, and all those convicted of serious crimes in lesser courts within this area were entitled to appeal for a final hearing in Paris. Before Jean-Baptiste Colbert sponsored a new criminal code in 1670, the rules were essentially those specified in the 1539 Ordinance of Villers-Cotterets, which defined the use of the so-called inquisitorial procedure. Under this system, preliminary

hearings gathered evidence from witnesses and through an interrogation of the suspect; if specified standards of proof for an immediate conviction were not met, a court might still decide there were sufficient grounds to subject the accused to torture. When the *Tournelle* heard cases on appeal, the defendant appeared in person, accompanied by papers from his original trial, which were passed to a councilor who acted as *rapporteur*, summarizing the case and making a recommendation to his colleagues, who often also interrogated the accused.

This system meant that appeals were often a costly business, requiring the accused to be brought to the *Conciergerie* in the Parisian *palais de justice* (the seat of the *parlement*) under guard and then held there until the case was decided. Nevertheless, the *parlement* was eager to assert its authority in this fashion, especially when it suspected that the lesser courts had committed procedural abuses. The Parisian judges had a very keen sense of their own status and the prestige of their institution; furthermore, they saw themselves as embodying the higher rationality of the educated elite. They also had a distinctive position where religious values and secular ones overlapped. The court remained strongly Catholic during the Wars of Religion and then split in two between 1589 and 1594, with some councilors remaining in Paris under the Holy (Catholic) League, while the majority formed a royalist *parlement* at Tours. Despite such differences of opinion, the great majority of councilors seem to have favored a moderate Gallican position, hostile to encroachments by either the papacy or the institutional French Church.

The councilors' suspicions of ecclesiastical interference on all fronts almost certainly predisposed them toward a pragmatic rationalist position on issues such as witchcraft. It is unclear whether this was already true in 1491, when the *parlement* struck an early blow against local abuses by posthumously rehabilitating the accused from the sensational affair of the *Vauderie* of Arras thirty years before. This involved a curious jurisdictional anomaly, because Arras—which belonged to the duke of Burgundy, not the king of France—was subject to the Parisian appellate system (Cohn 1975, 230–232). Very early in the major period of persecution, in 1587–1588, the revelation of numerous abuses in trials from the Ardennes led the *gens du roi* to propose that all witchcraft cases should automatically be appealed before the *parlement*. The political crisis of the following years prevented an immediate decision in this sense, but between 1600 and 1604, a new series of abuses led to the formal adoption of this position. Finally, in 1624, the court took effective steps to implement its decision by circulating a printed text to all lower courts, on the eve of its less public move to abandon death sentences for witchcraft (Soman 1992, VII and XII).

The painstaking research by Alfred Soman revealed that the *parlement* heard a minimum of 1,288 appeals from convicted witches between 1540 and 1670; if cases of magicians are included, the number rises to 1,481 (Soman 1992, XIII, 42). Just over 40 percent of the witchcraft suspects had been condemned to death in the lower courts, but the *parlement* confirmed only one-quarter of these sentences, so that just above 100 individuals went to the stake, barely 10 percent of appellants. Two-thirds ended up either banished or released, in roughly equal proportions. These proportions did not change dramatically over the period; the two statistical features that stand out are an increase to 20 percent executed in the 1590s and then a downward trend after 1610. Just over half the appellants were men, in proportions varying from roughly two-thirds in the western part of the *ressort* to one-third toward the eastern border, and there is little evidence of gender bias in the sentences handed out. Most remarkably, of 185 suspects sent to the torture chamber, only one actually confessed, a woman who was merely shown the instruments of torture in 1587. Although statistical precision is impossible because the surviving documents are so laconic about details of cases, the local cunning folk (*devins* and *devineresses*) appear to have been prominent among the accused. The *parlement* clearly took a cautious view of witchcraft charges from the very start, which quite rapidly developed into more extensive skepticism. There was some continuity with attitudes toward other crimes, because the court was inclined to moderate sentences generally, but one should note that in another great persecution that began in the late sixteenth century, some 70 percent of death sentences for infanticide were confirmed (Soman 1992, *passim*). Witchcraft charges seem to have caused special disquiet for two key reasons: the high level of local abuses apparent from the very start, and the legal difficulties of proof when direct evidence from eyewitnesses was virtually ruled out by the very nature of the alleged crime. The *Tournelle* evidently feared that such charges could become a convenient method for settling scores between peasants whom they saw as both superstitious and mendacious.

The repeated evidence that local judges broke the rules, denied the accused their rights, and even resorted to the wholly illegal swimming test could only increase misgivings in the *parlement*. A series of reprimands were handed down whenever such misbehavior was detected; judges might be called to Paris to explain themselves, or special restrictions were placed on the rights of individual courts to hear certain types of cases. A marked drop in the number of witchcraft appeals after the late 1620s suggests that awareness of this watchfulness from the *parlement* had a major effect on the subordinate courts. This must have been reinforced in 1641, when the *lieutenant de justice* and two other officials of the court

at Bragelonne were convicted of murdering a suspected witch and were hanged in the *place de Grève* in Paris; news of this drastic punishment was publicized throughout the whole *ressort*. In a further case from eastern France, the *seigneur* (lord rural estate owner), *procureur fiscal* (fiscal representative or attorney), and another individual from Viviers-sur-Artaut were hanged in effigy in 1647, having fled after a suspect was lynched (Mandrou 1969, 354–356; Soman 1992, XII, 197). By this time, few observers could doubt either the skepticism of the *parlement* or its determination to enforce its authority. In a fascinating conversation from 1643, the *curé* (chief parish priest) of Nanterre recorded asking his friend, the councilor Laisné, why the court no longer convicted witches; he was told that it was very difficult to secure adequate proof, so they convicted them solely for any proven harm they had done or for open sacrilege (Mandrou 1969, 360–361). This policy was still applied in the last major series of cases heard by the *parlement* in 1687–1691, involving nine shepherds from the Brie region accused of poisoning animals and of sacrilege; four were sent to the galleys, three banished, and two sentenced to death (Mandrou 1969, 500–507). Such relative severity, in an exceptional set of circumstances, should not be allowed to obscure the notable success of the *parlement* in securing the rule of law and damping down any threat of mass persecution under its jurisdiction.

ROBIN BRIGGS

See also: APPEALS; ARDENNES; ARRAS; CUNNING FOLK; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; FRANCE; INFANTICIDE; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; LYNCHING; MANDROU, ROBERT; PROOF, PROBLEM OF; SKEPTICISM; SWIMMING TEST; WARS OF RELIGION (FRANCE).

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PAULUS, NIKOLAUS (1853–1930)

A Catholic priest from the Alsatian village of Krautergersheim, Paulus managed to produce innovative pieces about the role of women in witchcraft persecutions despite a lack of formal academic training, publishing one of the first essays to explore the gender issue seriously. Inspired by the Catholic historian Johannes Janssen (1829–1891), Paulus spent years in

Munich libraries and archives studying sixteenth-century confessional theology. Driven by the Catholic minority position in the German *Kulturkampf*, or culture wars, under the Prussian-dominated German Second Empire, all of Paulus's essays were utterly biased.

Paulus's other writings treat such topics as witchcraft trials in Rome or the participation of Lutheran authorities in witch hunts. Most of his pieces were republished at Munich in 1910 in a collection entitled *Hexenwahn und Hexenprozess vornehmlich im 16. Jahrhundert* (Witch Craze and Witch Trials, Especially in the Sixteenth Century).

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: GENDER; HISTORIOGRAPHY.

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PEDERSDOTTER, ANNA (1590)

The trial of Anna Pedersdotter, widow of the Lutheran theologian Absalon Pedersen Beyer, is the most famous prosecution in the history of Norwegian witchcraft. The charges against Anna arose out of the opposition that had developed in the town of Bergen to the efforts by her husband and other clergymen to destroy Roman Catholic images. Instead of charging the clergy, who often had influential patrons, their opponents accused their wives. In 1575, a year after Absalon's death, charges of witchcraft were brought against Anna in a secular court at Bergen, but she was acquitted.

In 1590, however, Anna was charged once again with witchcraft. The family of the woman engaged to Anna's son objected that, although Anna had been acquitted, her neighbors still suspected her. The case against Anna was therefore reopened. The main charges brought against her were for practicing maleficent magic. Anna was accused of inflicting illnesses on various persons who had crossed her, including the wife of a cabinet-maker whom she had falsely accused of witchcraft. The husband of a woman who had contracted a fatal illness claimed that Anna had bewitched her when she picked up a coin that Anna had dropped at her feet. Anna was also charged with causing the death of a young boy by giving him a bewitched cookie. As the trial developed, however, Anna was also charged with devil worship. Her servant, Elena, testified that Anna had turned her into a horse and had ridden her to the Sabbath at a mountain called Lyderhorn. At this location, a famous meeting place of witches in Norwegian folklore, a group of witches allegedly plotted to raise a storm to destroy all ships arriving at Bergen. At subsequent meetings, it was charged, they plotted to burn the town

or cause it to be flooded. A man in white, who claimed that God would not allow it, dispersed this assembly of witches.

The charges of diabolism introduced at Anna's second trial seem relatively bland compared to those that emerged in many German, French, and Swiss trials. The Sabbat Anna allegedly attended involved no promiscuous sexual activity, infanticide, cannibalism, or blasphemous misuse of the Eucharist. Nor was Anna tortured to make a confession, as happened in a few other Norwegian witchcraft trials. Anna's conviction was based mainly on charges of maleficent magic, not devil worship. Even the confessions of two previously executed witches, who had claimed that they had seen Anna at the Lyderhorn, said more about her magical powers than her activities at the Sabbat. The court was also persuaded that a storm that had arisen when Anna was supposedly at the Lyderhorn was caused by her magical powers.

The case of Anna Pedersdotter owes its modern-day fame to a play by the Norwegian author Hans Wiers-Jenssen, an English translation of that play, *Anne Pedersdotter*, by John Masefield (1917), and a Danish film, *Day of Wrath*, directed by Carl Theodor Dreyer (1943). The play and the film took numerous artistic liberties with the historical record but nonetheless addressed two important themes in the history of witchcraft. First, they explored the ways in which tensions within families, in particular, relations between mothers and daughters-in-law, could result in witchcraft accusations. In the play and the film, Absalon's mother, Merete Beyer, had never approved of her son's second marriage to the young and beautiful Anna. When Anna fell in love with Martin, Absalon's son by his first marriage, the relationship between Anna and Merete deteriorated. When Absalon died suddenly upon discovering that his wife and son were having an affair, Merete charged Anna with having caused Absalon's death by witchcraft. Second, the play and film also explored the way in which Anna gradually came to the realization that she was a witch. Having learned from her husband that her own mother had been accused of witchcraft and spared by Absalon's intervention, she began to believe that she had acquired her mother's powers. Her success in winning Martin's affection and in wishing her husband's death reinforced this realization, leading her to confess at the end of the play.

BRIAN P. LEVACK

See also: BEWITCHMENT; CONFESSIONS; FAMILY; FILM (CINEMA); NORWAY; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; SABBAT; WEATHER MAGIC.

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PEÑA, FRANCISCO (CA. 1540–1612)

Peña is known for editing in 1578 a revised and updated edition of Nicolas Eymeric's authoritative *Directorium inquisitorum* (Directory of Inquisitors, 1376), which became the first in a series of annotated transcriptions of treatises on inquisitorial procedure.

Born in Villaroya de los Pinæres, in the Aragonese province of Teruel, Spain, Peña studied at the University of Valencia, earning a master of arts degree. Peña probably left Valencia for Rome during the pontificate of Pius V, armed with an official recommendation from King Philip II to the papal court. He pursued his studies at the University of Bologna, earning his doctoral degree in 1573. Afterward, Peña continued his theological and juridical studies. In 1581 he edited Ambrogio Vignatès *Tractatus de haeresi* (Treatise on Heresies), along with *Allegatio in materia di haeresi* (Allegations in Matters Concerning Heresies) by Juan Lopez de Vivero. In 1584 followed, among other publications, an edition of Bernardo of Como's *Lucerna inquisitorum haereticae pravitatis* (A Lantern for Inquisitors of Heretical Depravity). Peña's own treatise, *Introductio seu praxis inquisitorum* (Introduction, Or the Practice of the Inquisitors), was not printed until 1655, when it first appeared in Cesare Carena's *Tractatus de officio sanctissimae inquisitionis* (Treatise of the Holy Inquisition).

From the time Sixtus V appointed him auditor of the papal Rota in 1588 (he became its dean in 1604) until his death, Peña worked in Rome as a judge, also becoming a patron for young men commencing their careers at the papal court. During this period, Peña served both as a consultant to the Spanish embassy in Rome and as a papal adviser on Spanish affairs.

Despite his noteworthy diplomatic service for the Spanish crown in Rome, Peña's modern fame rests largely on his edition of the *Directorium inquisitorum*. The exact circumstances surrounding the decision ordering Peña to revise this fourteenth-century inquisitorial guide are unclear. Papal sponsorship was probably part of a general need to revise and update antiquated ecclesiastical texts and decrees for use by the Congregation of the Holy Office. Gregory XIII approved the revised edition, and other papally sponsored texts of this period also confirm this assumption. Peña worked on Eymeric's *Directorium* for several years, and his commentaries constantly pointed out textual variations among the different manuscripts. Peña's edition of the *Directorium* was a one-volume text divided into three parts. The first short part included 26 lengthy commentaries by Peña, and its larger second part contained 83 commentaries. Its final

section, the actual handbook of inquisitorial procedure, contained 131 questions from Eymeric and 180 commentaries from Peña. The work was completed by a selection of papal decrees collected by Peña, a summary, and an index of topics. Peña took a particular interest in the subject of witchcraft and referred to much of the orthodox literature from previous centuries, especially the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486).

LOUISE NYHOLM KALLESTRUP

See also: EYMERIC, NICOLAS; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; RATEGNO, BERNARDO OF COMO.

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**PEOPLE OF THE NIGHT
(NACHTVOLK)**

When Carlo Ginzburg first presented his famous *Benandanti* (do-gooders) in 1966, many scholars initially suspected that it somehow proved the existence of a sect of witches. These charismatic individuals from early modern Friuli experienced ecstasies and worked as healers and witch finders. They supposedly fought imaginary air battles against witches to defend the crop harvest and decide the fate of their communities (Ginzburg 1983). Shamanistically gifted individuals have also been discovered in many corners of Europe. In field studies on Dalmatian islands in the early 1950s, *Krsniki* were still considered opponents of witches and were feared and sought for their divinatory powers (Boskovic-Stulli 1960).

Starting from the Hungarian *Táltos* (shaman), Gábor Klaniczay collected similar ideas throughout eastern Europe, from the Friuli over the Balkans down to the Black Sea, demonstrating that Ginzburg’s seemingly bizarre findings formed part of a much wider puzzle (Klaniczay 1990), thereby making possible a new access to the world of European fairy tales, where archaic folklore meets literature. The nocturnal ride with Diana, the

journey to Venus’s mountain, the game of the good society (*ludus bonae societatis*), strange goddesses, and contact with the deceased, together with gaining prophetic or healing powers, are present in early modern sources as well as non-European cultures (Ginzburg 1991).

The traditional theological device for interpreting such phantoms was the famous *Canon Episcopi* (ca. 906). This key text influenced later notions, although it remains unclear whether learned references or personal experiences were added to texts such as the instruction by the Dominican Bernard Gui, in the chapter on sorcery of his handbook for inquisitors, to ask women whether they believed they flew with the fairies on certain nights (Hansen 1901, 48). Many traces of popular beliefs exist in trial records of inquisitors or secular courts, including two Inquisition trials from Milan in 1384 and 1390 in which women confessed nocturnal flights with a “Good Lady” as their own real experiences (Muraro 1976). Nicholas of Cusa (1401–1464), philosopher and bishop of Brixen, discovered beliefs in a *domina Richella* in remote Alpine valleys, noting in sermons of 1457 that she was called *Holda* in German (*Nicolai Cusae Cardinalis Opera*, 2 [Paris 1514], fol. 170v–172r). A Danish folklorist found traces of a fairy cult recorded in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century trial records from Sicily by the Spanish Inquisition (Henningsen 1990). Although there is room for argument, such images open the gates to Europe’s *Dreamtime*, a sphere, according to Australian Aborigines, where the boundaries between myths and reality or past and present become fluid (Duerr 1985). Numerous motifs of fairy tales, as classified in Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson’s “Motif-Index of Folk Literature,” appeared in trial records as experienced “facts.” Vladimir Propp (1968) concluded that the roots of fairy tales were connected with layers of human consciousness, where linear perceptions of time and Euclidean space became meaningless.

Chonrad Stoeckhlin, a shaman-type diviner in the northern Alpine valley of Oberstdorf, who involuntarily triggered a large-scale witch hunt in the prince-bishopric of Augsburg in 1586, claimed to fly with the *Nachtschar* (phantoms of the night) to certain places during the Ember nights (Ember Days were those of special prayer and fasting at the beginning of the four seasons), and during these ecstasies he gained knowledge about the identity of the witches (Behringer 1998). Hitherto unknown to historians of witchcraft, the *Nachtschar* is inextricably intertwined with the notion of the *Nachtwolk*, or night people, in folklore research. When Austrian and Swiss folklorists began collecting folk narratives and fairy tales, they found an astonishing variety of stories about “people of the night” in an area reaching from the Oberstdorf valley where Stoeckhlin lived into western Austria and all across Switzerland into Valais, the very region where

the witches' Sabbat was discovered in the fifteenth century, then partly ruled by the duchy of Savoy. Research into such forms of folk belief could therefore fill gaps in our understanding of the invention of the witches' Sabbat.

The "people of the night" emerge almost everywhere in local narratives from Vorarlberg, the Grisons, and Valais (Beitl 1965). However, ethnographic field studies had independently detected them in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (maps in Liebl 1971, 258–259). Unlike terrifying stories of the "wild hunt," where demonic creatures frighten and threaten those who watch them, the "people of the night" fascinated observers with music of unearthly beauty and never harmed anyone. They could even perform the miracle of the bones, restoring devoured cattle to life the morning after their orgiastic nightly festivities, feasting and dancing at remote Alpine locations. They invited observers to their nocturnal gatherings and invested them with such supernatural abilities as fortunetelling and healing.

According to folk belief, the "people of the night" are the "good society"; they harm only when they feel attacked but otherwise bring people good luck. Sometimes they resemble a fairy society, but other narratives make them seem part of the Otherworld. Well into the seventeenth century, the "people of the night" were not confined to fairy tales: a good number of ecstasies actually claimed to have seen them, received regular visits from them, flew with them, or even belonged to the *Nachtvolk* themselves. A citizen of Lucerne, Renward Cysat (1545–1614), collected dozens of stories from his friends in order to attack this widespread superstition. But Cysat's polemic made it perfectly clear that those whose houses the night people visited were envied and considered lucky by their neighbors. This case serves to show how belief systems were reduced to fairy tales and may also indicate that it was more than inquisitors' fantasies that formed the idea of witchcraft.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AUGSBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; *BENANDANTI*; *CANON EPISCOPI*; DIANA (ARTEMIS); FAIRIES; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; FOLKLORE; GINZBURG, CARLO; GRIMM, JACOB; GUI, BERNARD; HOLDA; SHAMANISM; STOECKHLIN, CHONRAD; *TALTOS*.

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PERKINS, WILLIAM (1558–1602)

Perkins's place in witchcraft history is assured by his large work of demonology, *A Discourse of the damned art of Witchcraft: so farre forth as it is revealed in the Scriptures, and manifested by true Experience*, published at Cambridge six years after the author's death, having initially been written as a series of sermons presumably delivered during the 1590s. It was brought to press and prefaced with an "Epistle Dedicatorie" by an obscure Cambridge-educated clergyman, Thomas Hckerling, then minister of Finchingfield (Essex), who was also responsible for editing and publishing a number of Perkins's other works in the years following his death.

The leading English Protestant theologian of his day, Perkins was born in rural Warwickshire and entered Christ Church College, Cambridge, where the great Protestant scholar and preacher, Lawrence Chaderton (1536–1640), taught him. Perkins, on his own account, experienced a somewhat dissolute youth before reforming himself and going on to become a fellow of his college and establish himself as a gifted preacher and prolific writer. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, continental Protestant authors frequently cited his works, which had been translated

into Latin and several European languages. In England, they were widely read and influential well into the eighteenth century.

The *Discourse* lay firmly in the mainstream of Protestant demonology, although it had an unusually heavy reliance on Scripture rather than on other forms of authority. Perkins seldom referred to classical authors, the Church Fathers, other demonologists, or contemporary cases. Rather than *maleficium* (harmful magic), Perkins stressed the centrality of the demonic pact as the central issue in witchcraft (although, like other Protestant demonologists, he was slightly embarrassed by the lack of any scriptural reference to it). Like many other authors, he deplored the popular tendency to attribute a wide range of misfortune to witchcraft rather than to divine providence. Perkins was very much concerned with popular “superstitions,” which impeded correct religious understanding, and lost no opportunity to ridicule Catholic practices he regarded as either superstitious or just as devilish as witchcraft.

In particular, he took a very strong line against cunning folk, those “good” witches to whom the ignorant population (Perkins’s term) flocked so eagerly. Perkins felt that cunning folk, like other conjurors and magicians, derived their powers from the Devil as surely as did the malefic witch. Thus, Perkins could assure his readers that “this must always be remembered, as a conclusion, that by Witches we understand not those onely, which kill and torment: but all Diviners, Charmers, Jugglers, all Wizzards, commonly called wise men and wise women” (p. 256). Such magical practitioners were, indeed, worse than malefic witches, because they pretended to do good and therefore deluded the ignorant populace and led them further from godliness. Perkins, in fact, ended his *Discourse* by stating that “death therefore is the iust and deserved portion of the good Witch” (p. 257).

English court records suggest that Perkins’s recommendation in this respect was not taken to heart by those responsible for administering English witchcraft trials: cunning folk usually suffered the relatively light penalties of penance before the ecclesiastical courts and fines before secular courts. But, more generally, Perkins’s opinions on witchcraft remained influential for over a century, and English advocates of witch hunting drew considerable comfort from the fact that so eminent a man had written in support of their cause. In his justification of the Salem trials of 1692, *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, Cotton Mather cited Perkins’s work extensively, and close study would probably reveal citations among continental Protestant writers on witchcraft. Further proof of the status of the *Discourse* comes from its place as the prime target of an important skeptical work, Sir Robert Filmer’s *An Advertisement to the Jury-men of England, touching Witches: Together with a Difference between an Hebrew*

and an English Witch (London, 1653). Filmer, an advocate of absolute monarchy and a royalist in the Civil War, especially attacked Perkins’s emphasis on the pact, which Filmer obviously regarded as similar to Puritan views on covenant theology, to which this royalist gentleman was extremely hostile.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: CUNNING FOLK; DEMONOLOGY; ENGLAND; FILMER, SIR ROBERT; MATHER, COTTON; PURITANISM; SUPERSTITION.

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**PERREAUD, FRANÇOIS
(1572/1577–1657)**

A Huguenot minister of attested probity and reliability, Perreaud wrote two short treatises on demonology published together as *Démonologie ou traité des demons et sorciers, ensemble l’Antidemon de Mascon* (Demonology, or a Treatise on Demons and Witches, including the Anti-Demon of Mâcon) in Geneva in 1653. The first, *Démonologie*, served as a kind of lengthy, self-contained introduction to the second, *L’Antidemon de Mâcon*, which provided a long and mostly circumstantial account of a poltergeist haunting, to which Perreaud and his whole household had been subjected for just over three months at the end of 1612. The latter treatise caught the eye of Sir Robert Boyle, a future member of the Royal Society, who heard the details from Perreaud himself and as a result sponsored an English translation, which appeared in 1658.

DÉMONOLOGIE

The *Démonologie* began with a short preface in which Perreaud explained that in 1652 he visited Bern for the first time for fifty years and there congratulated the city on passing a law against witches. Attacks at the hands of Catholics who blamed the Reformed religion for an infestation of witches in the Pays de Vaud and personal experience of an evil spirit caused him to write his treatise in order “to explain by reliable grounds and principles what one must believe [in relation to witches], the strength and weakness of evil spirits, and the proper remedies and safeguards one may take against them” (Perreaud 1653, 3).

The treatise was divided into twelve short chapters and read like an extended sermon. Perreaud argued that Scripture and human experience all over Europe prove

that both good and bad angels exist and that evil spirits were necessary in God's scheme of things to punish sin and test the faith of believers. Maintaining that witches did not exist was merely one of Satan's tricks. Nevertheless, it was as dangerous to be overcredulous as it is to be unbelieving. Certain phenomena, such as unexpected hailstorms and tempests, might have natural explanations. Deliberate fraud must not be discounted. Malicious accusation, too, was always possible. Demons, however, could act only with God's permission; so if storms do occur, they are likely to be signs of God's anger at our sins.

The word *demon* meant "someone who knows," Perreaud said—actually, it came from a Greek word for an intermediary spirit or deity—and demons possessed two qualities: the power to know and the power to act. Thus, demons could predict the future, because they were immensely skilled at interpreting signs and drawing correct inferences from past actions. But they worked principally through illusions and might persuade people to believe their illusions by manipulating their imaginations or affecting their sight and hearing. Consequently, witches merely imagined they flew to their Sabbats because Satan made use of their proclivity to melancholia to manufacture illusions in their brains.

Demons could do things that were impossible for humans, such as making dead bodies move and speak believably or creating false bodies from congealed air for the same purpose. If witches did in fact fly, it was because they were carried by evil spirits who bore them up, much as a wind carried heavy objects through the air. Satan's aim in all this was the destruction of humanity. He misled people through idolatry as manifested in the Church of Rome or those who claimed to cure diseases by popular magic. The end of the world was not far off, so Satan was constantly inventing new stratagems to ensnare and destroy the faithful. He could not be restrained by superstitious means such as crosses or holy water. A strong faith in God, prayer, vigil, and fasting were the appropriate weapons for a true Christian.

There was nothing in Perreaud's treatises that was in the least novel or unorthodox, and little (save his conclusion) that was distinctively Protestant. Protestant demonologists often quoted from Catholic sources as texts worthy of credence, and Perreaud cited Pierre de Lancre more than once. As an example of the demonological genre, therefore, Perreaud's treatise was limited. As a prefatory sermon to his account of his poltergeist experience, however, it was of immediate interest, because it took on the air of a personal conversation between Perreaud and the reader, a warning of the dangers from preternatural forces whose attentions he himself suffered, and a reassurance to anyone who might find him- or herself one day in a similar position not to

be disconcerted or frightened, because these events were not beyond our courage or our endurance.

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART

See also: DEMONOLOGY; DEMONS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; IDOLATRY; IMAGINATION; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; POLTERGEIST; VAUD, PAYS DE; WATER, HOLY.

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PERSONALITY OF WITCHES

Unfriendly, abusive, and, to a lesser degree, antisocial or deviant people run a particular risk of being suspected witches in cultures that believe in witchcraft. Witches are thought to be people who have secretly turned against their communities, engaging in antisocial activities and inflicting harm on their neighbors, so people who believe in them are naturally prone to suspect people who manifest hostility or evince alienation from the community. Early modern European theories about witchcraft were somewhat atypical because they stressed the range of people who might become witches, but they also emphasized hostile and antisocial behaviors. Early modern popular suspicions targeted people, usually women, whose behavior and attitudes made them seem most likely to be responsible for harm suffered by others in their community. However, in early modern Europe as elsewhere, because witches were thought to practice their rites secretly and to inflict harm through occult means, the essential issue was not the suspect's overt behavior but his or her inner orientation. Although cultural images generally emphasized the witch's hostility and perversity, actual witch suspects were not necessarily belligerent or antisocial. Most theories about why people in a broad range of societies feel so threatened by the presumed hostility of witches approach the issue as one of victimization due to cognitive malfunctions on the part of the accuser, manifesting the displacement of other social processes or the dictates of a culturally prescribed narrative. Consideration of the role of personality in witch beliefs, however, raises the possibility that witchcraft beliefs were a way to categorize and cope with people whose habitual use of harmful ritual magic or malevolence in interpersonal disputes threatened the integrity of small-scale communities and the well-being of their members.

CULTURAL IMAGES OF WITCHES' PERSONALITIES

Twentieth-century anthropological studies found that the idea that particularly hostile or otherwise antisocial people were thought to be witches was extremely widespread. In Africa, for example, the Azande believed that

witches were spiteful or dour and quarreled with, threatened, and extorted favors from others. In North America, the Navajo held that witches were particularly mean spirited, while the Tangu of New Guinea said witches were surly, selfish, and unsociable, and took without reciprocating. This lack of respect for the social rules of reciprocity was seen to manifest not only hostility to the other person but also an antisocial disregard for the conventions that held society together. Similarly, the Navajo suspected not only hostile people but also people whose ambition or willfulness disrupted the smooth functioning of society, and the Nupe, Gisu, and Mandari in Africa considered any atypical behavior to be suspect. The Azande added dirtiness and other disregard for socially prescribed hygiene to hostility in their concept of witchcraft. These cultures and the innumerable others that included witchcraft beliefs naturally varied greatly in the specific social norms they thought witches breached and to a lesser extent in the specific ways witches expressed hostility. Nevertheless, the association of a hostile personality with witchcraft is very strong across cultures, and the association of witchcraft with more diffuse socially disruptive behaviors, while less strong, is still significant.

Late medieval European theologians describing witches in their demonologies were primarily concerned with their supposed clandestine activities and so discussed their personalities mainly in regard to their motives for becoming witches. Because they wanted to show how widely the Devil cast his net, they emphasized the range of reasons people succumbed to his temptations and, by implication, the variety of people who might be witches. Even so, though, their characterizations conformed broadly to the cross-cultural norms. For example, the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) emphasized five personality characteristics that were supposed to lead people into witchcraft: malice, vengefulness, lust, avarice, and gloominess. The first two are forms of hostility, the last two have direct counterparts in witch beliefs of some other cultures, and the middle one, lust, was considered particularly antisocial (sinful) in medieval Christian morality. Even when such learned discussions tried to emphasize the breadth of types of people who became witches, they still conformed broadly to cross-cultural conceptions.

PERSONALITIES OF WITCH SUSPECTS

Anthropological accounts of witchcraft in various cultures have suggested that in practice, suspected witches did not necessarily display overt hostility or perversity, for some suspected people seemed friendly and conformed to social strictures, whereas others who were combative or deviant may not have been considered witches. However, these discrepancies did not mean that personality was unimportant, just that what was at

issue was not so much a suspect's overt behavior and attitudes as his or her inner convictions. Thus, a friendly person's friendliness had to be shown to be hypocritical in order for an allegation of witchcraft to carry weight. Conversely, a moderately belligerent or antisocial person's behavior did not become evidence of witchcraft if it was understood to be the full manifestation of that person's character.

We actually have better information about what kinds of late medieval and early modern people were suspected from popular practices than from demonologies written by learned men, because our main sources for the former are trial records. Records of mass panics are not much help: suspects were drawn in because of testimony obtained through torture, and the courts conducted proceedings in an atmosphere of mass hysteria. Records of small trials of one or only a few suspects are more useful. Although elite fears influenced small trials, they offer a relatively straightforward record of proceedings that were often initiated by commoners, almost always drew on their knowledge and ideas, and were generally conducted according to proper judicial procedures. These records suggest that popular beliefs were closer to the cross-cultural norm than the learned discussions. Most trials began because the accusers thought they had been harmed rather than because they were concerned about a diabolical conspiracy; thus many of the accused were people, especially women, who had reputations for chronic contentiousness. More generalized antisocial behavior sometimes led to a trial but more often played a role as supporting evidence about a suspect's reputation. Some suspects had good reputations and apparently amiable dispositions, but as long as standard judicial procedures were followed, they were far less likely to be tortured, convicted, or executed than suspects with long histories of belligerence.

These European trial records also contain significant information about people who have been less prominent in anthropological research, people who freely confessed to being witches. Social scientists' assessments of them have generally taken the fact of confession to be *prima facie* evidence of a pathological personality and therefore tended not to probe what these people were like apart from their willingness to confess. Their most common assessments have been that confessed witches were either mythomanics, hysterics, or just senile. However, the disappearance of hysteria as a psychological diagnosis, recent reconsiderations of the appropriateness of using modern Western psychological categories to classify people in other times and places, and a new understanding of the influence of cultural expectations on perceptions and experience make such judgments dubious; stories that sound bizarre to modern Westerners may not indicate pathology in another cultural context. In their personalities, beyond a readiness to implicate themselves, confessed witches

actually appear on the whole to have been fairly typical witch suspects, known for their combativeness and general antisociability. If anything, a higher proportion were people who conformed to their culture's image of witches, because that image would have informed their self-definition as witches.

PERSONALITY AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS IN SMALL-SCALE SOCIETIES

Social scientists have traditionally looked to witches' personalities to help explain why they were victimized, seeing them as objects of clerical misogyny, scapegoats for social-historical turmoil, explanations for otherwise inexplicable personal misfortune, exemplars of social boundaries, obstacles to patriarchy, or as characters in culturally constructed narratives. In all these approaches, the crucial elements were the accusers and their motives; the suspects' personalities mattered only insofar as they served to focus the victimization process. Looking at the problem from the point of view of the suspects' personalities, however, suggests another line of reasoning. First, in most societies, some people actually did consciously employ harmful ritual magic or unconsciously project malevolent attitudes as tactics in interpersonal disputes. Second, malefic ritual magic often did involve, and unconscious projection of a menacing persona may well have involved breaking social norms or other perverse actions that toughened the "witch's" psyche while intimidating others. Third, people who engaged in harmful magic or who chronically projected a malevolent attitude may have caused harm through physical agents or psychological manipulation; they definitely strained the bonds of community that were vital for the survival and prosperity of small preindustrial communities. Consequently, although witchcraft beliefs exaggerated, distorted, and even invented many of the activities and dangers ascribed to witches and were definitely abused, there was probably real survival value for the small-scale communities on the margin of subsistence where witch beliefs generally originated and flourished in identifying and placating, isolating, disciplining, or eliminating people who consciously utilized harmful magic or those who unconsciously projected a malevolent persona in interpersonal disputes.

EDWARD BEVER

See also: ACCUSATIONS; ANTHROPOLOGY; BEWITCHMENT; CONFESSIONS; DISEASE; FEMALE WITCHES; GENDER; MALEFICIIUM; MALLEUS MALIFICARUM; MELANCHOLY; MENTAL ILLNESS; POPULAR BELIEFS IN WITCHES; PSYCHOANALYSIS; RITUAL MAGIC; SCAPEGOAT WITNESSES.

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PERU

In Peru, witchcraft cases were tried by the Inquisition, first by the episcopal Inquisition and from 1570 by the tribunal of the Holy Office sitting in Lima. This tribunal was abolished in 1818. All sectors of the colonial population except the Amerindians were subject to the Inquisition. From the beginning until the end of Spanish colonial rule in Peru, the native population was exempt from the jurisdiction of the Inquisition but remained under the control of ecclesiastical courts. The Lima inquisitorial tribunal subsumed witchcraft (*brujería*) and sorcery (*hechicería*) trials under the greater category of "superstition." Consequently, the Peruvian Inquisition imposed no death penalty for witchcraft during the colonial period. An extremely broad geographic area fell under the jurisdiction of the Lima tribunal: When the tribunal was established in 1570, all South American Spanish possessions were subject to the Peruvian inquisitorial court. In 1610, after the foundation of a tribunal at Cartagena, the northern part of South America came under a separate jurisdiction, but all regions south of the vice-royalty of New Granada (modern Colombia, Venezuela, and parts of Panama and Ecuador) remained subject to the Lima tribunal. Evidently, the enormous geographical extent of this court's jurisdiction made more effective control possible only in the urban centers of the vice-royalty. To a certain degree, this situation may have accounted for the fact that in Peru, witchcraft and sorcery cases were mainly an urban phenomenon. Generally, the defendants had a low social status and—with regard to the total number of cases—there was a clear majority of trials instituted against women.

STATISTICAL DATA

From 1570 until 1818, that is, during the whole period of its existence, the Lima tribunal instituted 1,566 cases for matters of faith, of which 209 were subsumed under the category of superstition. That is, 13.3 percent of the total number of trials (Millar Carvacho 1998, 230). The majority of the superstition cases were sorcery (*hechicería*) trials. No witchcraft (*brujería*) trials are reported in the records of the Peruvian Inquisition. For

the first period of inquisitorial activities in Peru, from the Spanish conquest in 1532 until the foundation of the Lima tribunal in 1570, no exact data are available. In any case, there is no evidence of important witchcraft or sorcery trials. From 1570 until the end of the 1580s, sorcery or witchcraft had lesser importance than in the next period from 1590 to 1700. The highest incidence of sorcery cases in this period was recorded for the 1590s. In that decade, twenty-six persons were tried, twenty men and six women (Castañeda Delgado and HernándezAparicio 1989, 374). At the end of the sixteenth century, the pope urged the Spanish Inquisition to prosecute all sorcery accusations under suspicion of heresy. In 1629, a special edict was published inviting denunciations of those who practiced witchcraft and sorcery (Medina 1887, 2:35–40), which produced an increasing number of accusations and trials. At the same time, Peru's economic crisis of the 1630s may also have played a part in the increasing inquisitorial activities against all sorts of superstition, as more people probably consulted sorcerers in search of help in a desperate situation. The next period, which continued through the eighteenth century until the end of the Peruvian Inquisition in 1818, was characterized by a high percentage of sorcery trials. Behind bigamy cases, which occupied the first place with 26.15 percent, the Lima Inquisition's ninety superstition cases held second place with 23.07 percent (HernándezAparicio 1993, 391).

DEFENDANTS AND OFFENSES

Most of the defendants were women of a low social status, often widowed, abandoned, or unmarried, who therefore lived at the margin of colonial society. Thus, the majority of the offenders were accused of trying to improve their situation or that of their clients. For example, magical practices were employed to bring a husband back to his wife or to procure a new partner for a client. Many cases also revolved around the precarious financial situation of clients and defendants. In accordance with the mixed ethnic profile of the people involved in sorcery cases, the magical practices were mainly based on contemporary European love magic but at the same time included indigenous Peruvian incantations and magical procedures, such as the use of medicinal plants in magical healing. Since the early seventeenth century, the offenses described in the sorcery trials show that by this time, European and Amerindian elements had merged into a new colonial Peruvian model of magic. African elements were less dominant, although a considerably high proportion of the defendants were of African descent. The majority of the defendants were classified as Spanish or Creole, followed by the so-called quadroons (*cuarterones*), Europeans with one-fourth African ancestry. Although male defendants more often used magical procedures in search of fortune and wealth, female defendants

more frequently practiced love magic and magical healing.

FORM AND NATURE OF MAGIC IN PERU

Magical procedures were quite similar despite differences in gender or in the ethnic or social profile of the defendants: Invocations of demons or of saints who specialized in different kinds of magic were often combined with various incantations, the fabrication of charms, and magic potions. In cases of love magic, the practitioners frequently addressed Saint Martha or the "limping devil" (*diablo cojuelo*), whereas St. Cyprian was invoked in healing sessions. Spanish spells were often used in combination with typical Peruvian materials, such as coca leaves. The use of coca leaves in divination, magical curing, and sorcery was widespread within all levels of society, including with Spanish, Creole, or African women. Coca leaves were also regularly consumed as a stimulant. In magical procedures, coca leaves were often addressed as Incas (pre-Columbian rulers of Peru), Coyas (Inca-princesses), or as "mother Coca" (Mama Coca); in other words, the practitioners, mostly of European descent, invoked an Andean deity. Despite the invocations of the Devil or specific demons, all these cases were defined as sorcery, not witchcraft. Some male and female defendants were even accused of signing contracts with the Devil in order to secure his help in their endeavors to find treasure or love or simply to improve their situation. The Peruvian Inquisition classified these offenses mainly as fraudulent superstitions, notwithstanding the fact that the defendants were accused of an implicit or an explicit pact with the Devil. Peruvians accused of witchcraft were not charged with several activities attributed to early modern European witches: they did not allegedly attend nocturnal assemblies to worship the Devil, perform harmful magic, or fly through the air.

Only a few witchcraft trials are recorded in the viceroyalty of Peru. They were instituted not by the Inquisition but by a parallel institution, the so-called Extirpation of Idolatry. Founded in 1610 in the archbishopric of Lima to prosecute cases of idolatry, sorcery, and witchcraft among the Amerindian population, this ecclesiastical court tried a few Amerindians as witches (*brujos*). These individuals were thought to possess the ability to fly through the air, transform themselves into animals, especially birds, and perform similar deeds. Furthermore, they were accused of bloodsucking witchcraft or of practicing other kinds of harmful magic. All these elements formed part of the native notion of witchcraft in the Andes and were reported in seventeenth-century Spanish colonial historical sources. As a new element, the Spaniards introduced the witches' Sabbath from the European demonological tradition. Eighteenth-century indigenous testimonies reflected

the fusion of the early modern European and the native Peruvian notions of witchcraft. Records of witchcraft and sorcery trials from the late colonial period instituted by ecclesiastical courts against Amerindians show that even in some rural regions, distant from the capital of the colony, several characteristic elements of the European demonological tradition had merged with popular ideas on witchcraft into an hybrid Peruvian concept, almost identical to the demonological stereotype of witches.

IRIS GAREIS

See also: FEMALE WITCHES; IDOLATRY; INQUISITION, SPANISH; INVOCATIONS; LOVE MAGIC; MAGIC, POPULAR; NEW GRANADA; NEW SPAIN; SORcery; SPAIN; SUPERSTITION.

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PETER OF BERN (FL. CA. 1400)

A Swiss lay magistrate, Peter of Bern was mentioned several times by Johannes Nider in his *Formicarius* (The Anthill, 1437–1438) as an accomplished witch hunter.

Formerly identified as the patrician Peter of Gruyères (or von Greyertz), active 1392–1406 in the upper Simme valley (Simmenthal) of Switzerland; Peter's identity now appears problematic. Regional archives

between 1392 and Nider's *Formicarius* show at least three judges named Peter (Hansen 1901, 91 n. 2; Borst 1992, 108–120; Chène 1999, 223–231). In short, we are not certain who exactly Peter was.

The tales that Nider claimed Peter told him featured two varieties of evildoers: a sect of apostate infanticidal cannibals, male and female, with most of the characteristics later attributed to "witches"; and a dynasty of individual males, who conformed to the older stereotype of the necromancer or sorcerer (Chène 1999, 243–244). Nider conflated several confessions that Peter extorted from his defendants with more recent information he had learned at the Council of Basel, reinterpreting Peter's stories in the light of current ideas to help shape a more "modern" notion of witchcraft beliefs (Bailey 2003, 41–45).

The most famous confession introduced the witches' "cauldron." According to Nider, Peter forced a defendant to confess that her sect of heretics stealthily killed babies in their cradles, so that they seemed to die of natural causes. Later the children were exhumed and boiled in a cauldron, according to an unspecified ritual. When ingested, the broth provided magical knowledge and power, conferring leadership over the "sect." From the sediment in the cauldron, the heretics prepared unguents useful to their arts. (Heinrich Kramer would interpret this unguent as the "flying" ointment that induced demons to transport witches aerially.) Peter forced another defendant to embellish the story, describing ingestion of the broth as the central moment in an initiation that included renunciation of Christianity and ritual homage to the Devil. Peter's tales of protowitches showed influences of late medieval myths identifying Cathar and Waldensian heresies as cannibalistic secret societies (Borst 1992, 115–118, following Cohn 1975).

The central moment of the initiation was counter-Eucharistic: by drinking a broth made from the flesh of murdered babies, the novice witch absorbed heresy through powerful mental images. The ceremony was also an antibaptism, requiring formal renunciation of baptism; not coincidentally, the broth was normally made from babies lacking baptism. By asserting that witches mostly victimized unbaptized babies, Nider (through Peter of Bern), like other early theorists, implied that baptism protected babies from harm, including witchcraft.

Yet the theory was not perfect: to explain why witches sometimes killed baptized babies, Peter blamed parents for not reinforcing baptismal protection with nightly prayers and signs of the cross. Peter was even more obsessed by the efficacy of sacramental crossing than by baptism. One tortured defendant confessed striking victims with hail and lightning yet admitted being powerless against anyone protected by the sign of the cross. Peter crossed himself constantly, and so when

he injured himself badly in a fall, he attributed the lack of divine protection to his own negligence: losing his temper and even naming the Devil, he canceled the protection gained earlier by crossing himself. This comforting scenario was corroborated by the “confession” of a man Peter burned at the stake (Stephens 2002, 190–206, 241–252).

Nider’s portrayal of Peter’s obsessive interest in infanticide, cannibalism, ritual, and demonic encounters reflected deep insecurities about the efficacy of the Church’s sacraments and sacramentals, particularly baptism, the Eucharist, and the sign of the cross. Nider’s detailed anecdotes of Peter’s exploits, intended to allay widespread clerical anxieties, probably exacerbated them, particularly after Heinrich Kramer quoted them in *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486).

WALTER STEPHENS

See also: BASEL, COUNCIL OF; CANNIBALISM; CAULDRON; INFANTICIDE; KRAMER, HEINRICH; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; NIDER, JOHANNES; OINTMENTS; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; SACRAMENTS AND SACRAMENTALS; *VAUDOIS* (WALDENSIANS).

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PFALZ-ZWEIBRÜCKEN, DUCHY OF

Thorough research into the witch persecutions that occurred in the duchy of Pfalz-Zweibrücken is not yet complete, but it appears that there were only a few episodes of witch hunting in this initially Lutheran and then Calvinist territory from 1575 to 1590 and 1629 to 1633. As elsewhere in western Germany, the persecution was concentrated mainly in areas in which jurisdictional rights were divided among different lords

(as was, for example, the case at the criminal court of Neunkirchen/Nahe, where there were about thirty-six witchcraft trials) and in areas in which rights of lordship were a matter of dispute (such as those subject to the criminal court of Hornbach, where there were approximately thirteen trials). In those parts of the Nahe and Saar regions that were subject to the territorial authority of Pfalz-Zweibrücken, witch hunts were pursued by the combined efforts of *Hexenausschüsse* (witch-hunting committees organized at the village level) and minor lords with rights of criminal jurisdiction. In those territories bordering the duchy of Lorraine, however, witchcraft trials were investigated ex officio; this happened at the criminal court of Hornbach. No trials are known to have occurred in the areas bordering Alsace and the Palatinate, such as Amt (district) Bergzabern. As was the case in other Protestant territories, women were clearly the main focus of witchcraft trials in Pfalz-Zweibrücken. Only a tiny proportion of the trial records have survived; references to trials can, however, be found in records of ecclesiastical visitations and in the trial records of the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court).

THE ATTITUDES OF THE DUKES OF PFALZ-ZWEIBRÜCKEN TOWARD WITCH PERSECUTION

As early as 1532, Duke Wolfgang of Pfalz-Zweibrücken (1532–1569) asked the Lutheran reformer Johannes Schwebel for advice about how to proceed in cases of accusations of witchcraft. In response, Schwebel advocated a cautious approach, recommending only the legal prosecution of allegations of murder and harm caused by magical means. Schwebel’s answer was in line with the precepts of clause 44 of the Carolina (the code of criminal legal procedure issued by Charles V for the Holy Roman Empire in 1532). The Carolina’s definition of the crime of sorcery and its regulations regarding trial procedures and the settling of trial costs constituted the main influences on witchcraft trials in Pfalz-Zweibrücken under the next two dukes, Johann I (1569–1604) and Johann II (1604–1635), who did not promulgate any ordinances relating specifically to the conduct of witchcraft trials. A clear process governed all criminal cases. The ducal chancellery authorized the arrest, interrogation, and torture of alleged witches, sometimes including a detailed list of questions that were to be put to the suspect. On the whole, the chancellery lawyers adopted a “wait-and-see” attitude toward accusations of witchcraft and encouraged local officials to treat such accusations with moderation. Despite their efforts, witchcraft trials became endemic during the rule of Duke Johann I between 1574 and 1590 (in Hornbach and Neunkirchen/Nahe), although Johann consistently tried to limit the spread of the trials by ordering arrested women released on bond, by

concerning himself especially with the issue of the correct settlement of trial costs, and by attempting to prevent trials that were not carried out in accordance with the Carolina. Johann I's moderate stance led opponents to bring lawsuits against him at the *Reichskammergericht* in 1592 and 1594, accusing him of being extremely skeptical with regard to witchcraft trials. His insistence on strict adherence to the Carolina was met with particularly vehement opposition from minor lords who possessed rights of criminal jurisdiction.

WITCHCRAFT TRIALS AT THE CRIMINAL COURT OF NEUNKIRCHEN/NAHE: A CASE STUDY

The criminal court of Neunkirchen/Nahe belonged to the count of Veldenz and was held as a fief by the dukes of Pfalz-Zweibrücken: the four villages of Neunkirchen, Gonneseweiler, Selbach, and Eckesweiler were subject to its jurisdiction. The lords of Sötern in part held rights of jurisdiction. As a result of the involvement of *Hexenausschüsse*, seventeen witchcraft trials occurred in Gonneseweiler in 1580, in the course of which ten women were executed. In 1589, working in conjunction with the local *Hexenausschüsse*, Georg Wilhelm of Sötern had six women of Selbach arrested: four of them were forced through horrific torture into making confessions of witchcraft and were subsequently executed. Georg Wilhelm and the *Hexenausschüsse* forced the relatives of the executed women and the two remaining women (who were released) to meet the extremely high trial costs of approximately 900 florins. The six families thus affected were ruined financially and reduced to begging for a living.

Duke Johann I of Pfalz-Zweibrücken then intervened against this clear breach of the law and forced the *Hexenausschüsse* and Georg Wilhelm to reimburse the families for their forfeited property. Georg Wilhelm and his son, Conrad, promptly brought a lawsuit against Johann I at the *Reichskammergericht*. The verdict is unknown, but no more witches were tried at the criminal court of Neunkirchen until 1629, again on the initiative of local *Hexenausschüsse* and the lord of Sötern, Johann Reinhard. At least nine people were executed in 1629–1630. In 1633, further trials were pursued against six individuals featuring the imposition of excessive costs, fraud, bribery, and the manipulation of legal proceedings. Local witch-hunting committees were also active in the Pfalz-Zweibrücken areas of Meisenheim, Lichtenberg, and Zweibrücken.

REASONS FOR THE PFALZ-ZWEIBRÜCKEN TRIALS AND THEIR CESSATION

The first witchcraft trials in Pfalz-Zweibrücken were triggered by the intensification of ecclesiastical visitations, during which popular magical practices, previously

categorized as “superstitions,” were criminalized and linked with the crime of witchcraft. Despite this, relatively few accusations of sorcery ended in witchcraft trials, primarily because the moderating influence of the ducal chancellery prevented the escalation of witch hunts. The trials at the criminal court of Neunkirchen/Nahe were in all probability triggered by the mass persecution of witches in the neighboring territory of the electorate of Trier in the late sixteenth century. Strict adherence to the Carolina and the close links between the dukes of Pfalz-Zweibrücken and the authorities in the Palatinate, who were opposed to witch hunts, ensured that mass witchcraft trials never occurred throughout the duchy. Members of the collateral line of Pfalz-Birkenfeld also adopted a critical attitude toward witchcraft trials. The devastating effects of the Thirty Years' War, which wiped out almost 90 percent of the population of the Pfalz-Zweibrücken territories in the Saar region, ensured that no further witchcraft trials took place there.

RITA VOLTMER;

TRANSLATED BY ALISON ROWLAND

See also: CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITUTIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*); COMMUNAL PERSECUTION; FEMALE WITCHES; GERMANY, WEST AND NORTHWEST; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; PALATINATE, ELECTORATE OF; POPULAR PERSECUTION; *REICHSKAMMERGERICHT*; SAAR REGION; SORCERY; TRIER, ELECTORATE OF.

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PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA, GIANFRANCESCO (CA. 1469–1533)

Author of the best-known Italian Renaissance dialogue on witches, Gianfrancesco was the son of Galeotto I of Mirandola and of Bianca Maria d'Este, illegitimate daughter of Niccolò III of Ferrara, and the nephew of the famous Renaissance philosopher Giovanni Pico della Mirandola. Only six years younger than his uncle, Gianfrancesco thrived on the cultured society that Giovanni frequented. After Giovanni died in 1494, Gianfrancesco wrote a biography that introduced the first edition of his uncle's works (Bologna 1496). Although they agreed in some matters, including their views concerning judicial astrology, their philosophical positions were generally very different.

We know little about Gianfrancesco's childhood; he may have studied in Ferrara or Milan, where he participated in a tournament at the Sforza court in

January 1491. Two months later, Gianfrancesco married a Neapolitan heiress, Giovanna Carafa, and used her dowry to purchase the hereditary title to the tiny principality of Mirandola from his uncle Giovanni. From 1491 to 1499, Gianfrancesco dedicated himself to studying humanist philosophy, meeting the most important contemporary intellectuals and politicians, and composing numerous literary and philosophical works that were published at the beginning of the sixteenth century. His letters circulated in manuscript form before being translated into French in 1498 and into English by Thomas More in 1510. The friendships established through his uncle's connections in the cultured court societies of Bologna, Ferrara, Florence, and Mantua were very important to Gianfrancesco's career. But the most important influence was his encounter with the friar Girolamo Savonarola, whom Gianfrancesco met in 1491. In 1497, Gianfrancesco defended Savonarola twice in response to attacks by a Franciscan monk, Samuel de Cassini (Cassinis); the next spring, he composed a third defense in the vernacular directed at Florentine public opinion, but his work could not save Savonarola from being burned at the stake in May 1498. Gianfrancesco never stopped defending Savonarola, nor did he stop inviting disciples like Pietro Bernardini or Fra Luca Bettini to stay with him. He worked on composing a *Vita Hyeronimi Savonarolae* (Life of Girolamo Savonarola) until his death.

In 1499, Gianfrancesco's father, Galeotto I, died. Gianfrancesco's life became enwrapped in a long twisting struggle to claim the hereditary principality as Galeotto's eldest son, while his mother—aided by the French and the Milanese—favored Gianfrancesco's younger brothers. In 1502, after a long siege, the castle of Mirandola fell into the hands of his brothers; Gianfrancesco was imprisoned and later exiled. For eight and a half years, Gianfrancesco traveled to various Italian cities, serving the emperor and the pope while remaining in contact with important German humanists. The recovery of the castle of Mirandola became part of a plan to conquer the city for the Papal States by Pope Julius II, who personally conducted its siege and capture from December 1510 to January 1511. Gianfrancesco's satisfaction was brief; the Milanese commander Gian Giacomo Trivulzio soon seized Mirandola and expelled the heirs. In 1514, with the mediation of the imperial vicar, they reached an agreement, giving the land and some rural villas to the brothers.

Gianfrancesco composed a dialogue about witches, *Strix, sive de ludificatione daemonum* (The Witch, or the Deceptions of Demons), published in Bologna in 1523, with the practical purpose of justifying a violent repression he had recently conducted in Mirandola against numerous witches in 1522 and 1523, earning an indignant reaction from the population of the castle and the nearby villa. Although created for specific

personal political purpose, his treatment became immediately popular. A vernacular translation by Fra' Leandro Alberti appeared in Bologna in 1524; *Strix* was translated again in Tuscany in 1555, appearing in the canonical work of Turino Turini. Gianfrancesco's text was also included in a collection of theoretical works published in Padana during the first half of the sixteenth century, alongside works by two Dominicans, Silvestro Prierias and Bartolomeo della Spina, both inquisitors and papal theologians.

One can immediately distinguish Gianfrancesco's account by its originality. He wrote not as an inquisitor but as a scholar who attended these trials in his capacity as count of this small principality and wanted to answer an important question: was this "cult of Diana," consisting of ten people in Modena and Mirandola, the same bacchanal pagan assembly of antiquity described as a superstition by the *Canon Episcopi* (ca. 906) and included in Gratian's *Decretum* (Concord of Discordant Canons, known as the *Decretum*, 1130–1140 revision), or was it instead a new form of heresy? Gianfrancesco argued in dialogue form, with the participation of four people: Fronimo (the scholar, wise and sensitive, that is, Pico himself) and Dicasto (the judge, modeled after the Dominican inquisitor Girolamo Armellini) in conversation with Apistio (an unidentifiable skeptic), who at the conclusion became Pistico (the believer), now persuaded of witchcraft's satanic nature; a witch entered in order to testify about the "cult of Diana." In a text rich with the quotation and reinvention of pagan ceremonies, the author linked modern witches' Sabbats with many antiquated beliefs, but differentiated them in some important rituals, especially the presence of devils. Modern witchcraft differed from the beliefs described by the *Canon Episcopi*, but the origins of both heresies were embedded in ancient paganism. Recent studies about the historical context in which these witches were tried have illuminated the jurisdictional conflicts among the inhabitants of Mirandola that aggravated the cruelty of the repression; but Gianfrancesco's dialogues demonstrated that this persecution of witches was motivated above all by intellectual and ideological convictions.

GABRIELLA ZARRI;

TRANSLATED BY JESSICA BOTHWELL

See also: *CANON EPISCOPI*; CASSINI (CASSINIS), SAMUEL DE; DIANA (ARTEMIS); GRATIAN; PRIERIAS, SILVESTRO; SPINA, BARTOLOMEO DELLA.

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PIEDMONT

The early history of witchcraft in the Piedmontese state was dominated by developments that occurred mainly in its western and northern French-speaking parts, including the Val d'Aosta. The central role of the dukes of Savoy-Piedmont in helping create the doctrine of the witches' Sabbat at the time of the Council of Basel is now well-known (Ostorero et al. 1999), and considerable evidence about fifteenth-century trials in the northwestern parts of Savoy-Piedmont has been preserved at Turin among the fiscal records of ducal officials. However, this entry will focus primarily on the Italoophone territories comprising the present-day Piedmontese region, created after the unification of the Kingdom of Italy in 1860, when Nice and Savoy went to France.

During the time of recorded trials for sorcery and witchcraft (local records date from 1292), the House of Savoy subjugated many local lordships. In the thirteenth century, Piedmont was composed only of Turin, Aosta, and Savoy, but in the fifteenth century included within its borders Cuneo, Vercelli, Biella, Ivrea, Tenda, and Nice. The state added Asti, Alba, and Saluzzo in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the first decades of the eighteenth century, when Piedmont's rulers became kings, it annexed (through international treaties with France, Austria, Spain, and England) Alessandria, Tortona, the Lomellina and Novara (taken from the duchy of Milan), and the Monferrato of Acqui and Casale (taken from the duchy of Mantua). The present Piedmont region took form only after the unification of the Kingdom of Italy, when the territories of Nice and Savoy went to France, and Liguria (acquired in 1815) broke away from the Piedmont.

In his constitutions of 1430, the Savoyard Pope-Duke Amadeus (Amedeo) VIII (1383–1451, ruled 1416–1451) established the death penalty for heretics and casters of harmful spells (*sortileges*); by that date, Dominican Friars had not yet assigned inquisitors to

Torino, Vercelli, Alessandria, Novara, Savigliano, and Ivrea. As late as 1673, Duke Carlo Emanuele II reaffirmed the death penalty for anyone who cast spells and charms. Important information has also been obtained by consulting both state and municipal archives, which sometimes document expenses for building scaffolds or stakes (Centini 1995, 31–32) or still keep important trial records (Merlo et al. 2004). From published documents (Centini 1995, 32–52), we learn that the oldest case of witchcraft known in Piedmont dates back to 1292: a woman from Villafranca, who was forced to pay a fee for *sortilegia in visione stellarum* (casting spells while stargazing). A certain Lorenza di Cumiana was the first sorceress burned at the stake, in 1321; Bertolotto, her accomplice, was hanged.

Many fourteenth- and fifteenth-century trials were held, often in Alpine regions: the valleys of Lanzo and Susa, the Canavese, Bardonecchia, Pinerolo, Cuneo, Mondovi. Overall, between 1292 and 1417, twenty-six persons were put on trial (eight of them men) and seven received death sentences. Between 1421 and 1445, many more charges and sentences are documented: thirty-one people were investigated (eleven of them men), with twenty-five death penalties. Between 1461 and 1479, we find thirty-five accused people (including seven men) and nineteen executions. Because of inaccuracies in the sources, we exclude thirty-two mountain dwellers accused of casting spells in Savoy in 1436, several women who were tried as witches in the Canavese between 1350 and 1390, and almost forty townsfolk in Andezeno in the late fifteenth century, where Catharism overlapped with accusations of devil worship, promiscuity, etc.

During the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, the phenomenon seemed to decrease in the modern Piedmontese geographical area; for example, only four witches were tried at Turin during the lengthy French occupation before 1559. Between 1530 and 1682, not counting sketchy data, we note only thirty-three sentences (only five concerning men) and fourteen executions.

Overall, from 1292 to 1742, we have—besides many uncertain cases—a total of 242 people under investigation for witchcraft in Piedmont, including 120 women and 30 men; capital sentences and deaths in prison totaled 82. Centini (2004) found for the period from 1329 through 1740 a total of 102 people under investigation; trials, 79; capital sentences, 49; amputations, 2; fines paid, 12.

In Piedmont, the bishops' ancient power to judge in matters of faith, including heresy and witchcraft, was never taken away; the records of diocesan synods from the 1550s offer substantial evidence about practices of popular magic; the bishops assigned punishments to witches, magicians, wizards, and fortunetellers (Corrain

and Zampini 1970). Although dossiers of trials held before episcopal courts have disappeared from many diocesan archives, some information can be extrapolated from annals and chronicles. One set of court records from the bishop of Acqui (which became Piedmontese only in the eighteenth century) includes fifty-seven persons put on trial for illicit magic between 1585 and 1727. They include thirty-six men and only twenty-one women; most of these men were soldiers, quartered in Monferrato during the time of the succession wars around 1630. Their punishments never exceeded canonical penances, fines, and gifts to charities (Panizza 1994, 178–179).

St. Bernardino of Siena, during one of his sermon campaigns in Piedmont (probably in 1417 or 1418) alleged that Piedmontese witches had already killed five inquisitors in previous years, so that no one wanted to serve in those places and “*mettervi mano*” (meddle with them). Bernardino explained how such *male genti* (evildoers) performed the nefarious practice of the *barilotto*—communal drinking from a keg of wine polluted with the pulverized corpse of a baby, which was passed around and shared during their Sabbat as a sign of their fealty to Satan. The gray friar’s passionate exaggerations, however, did capture a kind of local Piedmontese color: the fact that it was, historically and geographically speaking, in the front line among those territories between France and Italy where Catharism had existed in the Western Alps.

The confessions of Piedmontese sorcerers under investigation revealed their desire to master the magical arts, sometimes as a way to manipulate the ruling powers. Magic spells bedeviled the court of Savoy as far back as the time of Pope-Duke Amadeus, and similar spells continued to be cast on the lives of the Savoy kings, deeply worrying the Turinese court in the first thirty years of the eighteenth century. Another good late example was the 1752 case of several residents of Alessandria who were involved in various underground activities, including trafficking in books of magic and necromancy, stealing various body parts from hanged men, and making talismans that their friends (men, mostly soldiers) used mainly to look for hidden treasures in the hills (Panizza 1989, 36–37). Testimony about witchcraft in seventeenth-century rural Piedmont, beyond its traditional contexts of popular magic, offered tantalizing bits of evidence about the survival of practices and rituals apparently connected to ancient heresies that once flourished in the mountains (Gremmo 1994, 12–17, 22, 50).

GIAN MARIA PANIZZA;

TRANSLATED BY DANIELLA CATELLI

See also: BERNARDINO OF SIENA; ITALY; MOUNTAINS AND THE ORIGINS OF WITCHCRAFT; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; RURAL WITCHCRAFT; SAVOY, DUCHY OF.

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PIPERNO, PIETRO

Seventeenth-century Italian philosopher and physician from Benevento, Piperno was author of *De magicis affectibus horum dignotione, praenotione, curatione, medica, stratagemmatica, divina, plerisque curationibus electis, et De Nuce beneventana maga . . .* (On Magical Ailments, Their Diagnosis, Prediction, and Treatment, with Select Cures Medical, Strategic, and Divine, and On the Walnut Tree of Benevento), published at Naples in 1634 in five books and reprinted in 1647 with an added sixth book. The appendix was reprinted in 1640 at Naples, along with a treatise in Italian on the same subject (*Della superstiziosa noce di Benevento: Trattato storico . . .* [On the Magical Walnut Tree of Benevento: A Historical Treatise]), containing sensational anecdotes.

Reasoning from effects to causes, the work enlisted the symptomology of diseases to prove that demons exist. It discussed witchcraft as the means whereby demons caused disease and possible remedies, both

natural and supernatural (e.g., exorcism, prayers, blessed amulets), for curing ailments. Like other treatises that defended the reality of demons against skeptical detractors, Piperno's book addressed the vexed question of the relative power of the human imagination. His "extremely unoriginal" (Mori 1994, 181) work relied heavily on citations from sixteenth-century demonologists and exorcists. An appendix discussed the infamous walnut tree of Benevento, the supposed meeting place of witches and demons, mentioned by St. Bernardino of Siena and other fifteenth- and sixteenth-century writers on witchcraft. According to Piperno, the tree emitted natural, intoxicating effluvia that predisposed witches to commit the horrors of the Sabbat.

Piperno's son Nicolò composed a play on the legend of the tree, *La noce maga di Benevento* . . . (The Magical Walnut Tree of Benevento), which was staged in 1665 and 1666 at Benevento and Rome and published in 1682.

WALTER STEPHENS

See also: BENEVENTO, WALNUT TREE OF; ITALY; SABBAT.

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PITTENWEEM WITCHES

A small fishing village on the coast of Fife in Scotland, Pittenweem, like most other Scottish villages and towns, accumulated a history of magical operators, often dubbed witches, and dealt with either by the local kirk session (parish disciplinary committee) or by the criminal courts. Because of the nature of the records, Pittenweem's witches emerged quite late, at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century. Several complaints involved villagers consulting witches rather than being witches themselves. In January 1693, Margaret Greenhorn, a servant, was referred to the presbytery for consulting a man about things lost, and the minister investigated her again five years later on a similar charge. In May 1697, Agnes Adamson was rebuked for consulting, and the minister took the occasion to lament "how common this scandalous sin is of consulting persons reputed sorcerers anent things secret

or lost" (Ms. record, Scottish Record Office, CH2/183, p. 143). Not that parishioners always accepted their rebukes mildly. In April 1698, Jean Durkie was accused of consulting; when the session censured her, she cursed both minister and elders roundly. In May 1704 she was in trouble again for asking a woman (Nickolas Lowson) to teach her how to be a witch.

It was in this year, 1704, that Pittenweem began to suffer its most notorious (but atypical) witchcraft episode. In March, it was alleged that sixteen-year-old Patrick Morton, the son of a local blacksmith, had annoyed Beatrix Laing, long reputed to be a witch, by refusing to make her some nails. Next day, while passing her house, Patrick noticed a wooden vessel with some water and a fire coal in it, which he took to be a magical charm directed against himself. At once he became so weak that he took to his bed, and there he lay for several weeks, becoming more and more emaciated as time passed. Then at the beginning of May he started to have fits. His body would distort itself into remarkable and unnatural positions, and his tongue would be drawn back right into his throat. Even so, he was able to let people know the names of those he claimed were inflicting these magical torments upon him: Nickolas Lowson, Beatrix Laing, Janet Cornfoot, Margaret Wallace, Isobel Adamson, Margaret Jack, and Thomas Brown, all of whom were arrested and imprisoned, probably in the church steeple, the common place of confinement in places that did not have a town jail.

They were examined by the kirk session on May 29, 1704, and four of them confessed they had made a pact with the Devil, renounced their baptism, and attended meetings along with several others whom they named. This was serious, so the affair was referred to the presbytery, then to the General Assembly, and finally to the Privy Council of Scotland, which was asked for a commission to try the accused. The Privy Council sent three men to Pittenweem to investigate, as a result of which they decided not to proceed with prosecutions and ordered the prisoners' release. The women were set free. Thomas Brown, however, had died in prison. It appears that the local minister had been reading to Patrick Morton an account of the recent Bargarran case in which a young woman had accused several people of bewitching her. We cannot be sure when the minister started his reading, but Patrick did not begin to exhibit signs of demonic possession until halfway through his illness, so it looks as though Patrick may have faked his symptoms in imitation of "the Bargarran imposter," as the young woman involved in that case was called.

The release of the prisoners did them little good. Emotions were running high in Pittenweem, and Beatrix Laing continued to be persecuted by the townsfolk, who imprisoned her for five months and then, when she escaped, prevented her from returning to her own house. She was thus forced to live as a beggar.

Another of the accused, Janet Cornfoot, suffered much more. Escaping from Pittenweem to a nearby village after being tortured, she was sent back by its minister. On her return, a mob lynched her, first pelting her with stones while she was hanging from a rope and finally pressing her to death beneath a heavy door heaped with stones. This outrage reached the ears of the Privy Council, which ordered the arrest and prosecution of those involved, particularly the local magistrates who had signally failed to keep order. Despite a flurry of indignant pamphlets, nothing was done; the council did not pursue the matter further.

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART

See also: BEWITCHMENT; LYNCHING; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; SCOTLAND.

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PLAGUE

From earliest times, epidemic disease has been associated with preternatural and supernatural forces and powers. Most Europeans, whose understanding of disease, famine, and war was largely drawn from the Bible, were convinced that epidemics were not purely natural phenomena. Disease was frequently seen as a tool God used to chastise wicked people. Certain biblical passages (but rarely the book of Job) facilitated this understanding of disease.

The plagues of Egypt included epidemic disasters God employed to force Pharaoh to free the children of Israel. However, these stories communicated more to medieval and early modern Christians than just God's power over his creation. The biblical account also stressed the ability of Pharaoh's "magicians" to perform acts that mirrored—though never defeated—the miracles Moses performed (Exod. 7:6–11:10). Because many of these miracles were connected with disease, commentators deduced that God was directly involved with large-scale epidemics. Similar conclusions could be drawn from the death of 24,000 Israelites from plague for their sexual immorality and idolatry in consorting with Moabites and worshipping Baal (Num. 25:1–9)—another direct connection between plague and God's wrath. Israel's enemies were beset with plague and were also struck by famine after capturing the Ark of the Covenant (1 Sam. 5:1–6:18). The obvious conclusion was that epidemics were associated with God's wrath and that disease could be averted by avoiding an evil that had aroused God's anger.

Christianity made the link between disease (and the ability to prevent or cure it) and religion even more explicit. Jesus and the Apostles proved their divine mandate by their miracles, most of which cured physical or psychological ailments (disease and possession). Moreover, introducing demons and an explicit Satan (absent in the Hebrew Bible) powerful enough to tempt Jesus in the wilderness added a new and menacing dimension to beliefs about illness. The Christian Church continued these ideas through the cults of martyrs and saints, placing great emphasis on their power over disease and even death. Also, saints' lives often revolved around conflict with Satan or his demonic minions. Evil personified was closely connected with illness.

The historical record also persuaded Christians that humans played an active part in propagating epidemic disease. Although Thucydides believed that the great plague that struck Athens during the Peloponnesian War (431–404 B.C.E.) was natural, he noted that others attributed it to evil forces, especially intervention by Athenian enemies. During the great pandemic that ravaged the Byzantine Empire, Emperor Justinian (ca. 482–565) clearly believed that the plague resulted from tolerating heresy and sexual immorality, especially homosexuality. More importantly for western Christians, during this pandemic, Rome was saved through a procession led by Pope Gregory I (540–604). The appearance of the Archangel Michael (still commemorated on top of Hadrian's Tomb) halted the advance of the disease and confirmed the power of prayer and procession in controlling plague.

PLAGUE AND SCAPEGOATS

Into this environment of disease, the demonic, and religion, the Black Death erupted from 1347 to 1351. During numerous subsequent outbreaks, various reactions emerged that affected future responses to plague. From France to Switzerland and Germany, Christians persecuted Jews as plague spreaders. This intensification of earlier anti-Semitism included accusing Jews of poisoning wells to cause plague. The pope and most of the ecclesiastical hierarchy categorically condemned such charges as irreligious nonsense. But the methodology and rationale behind the accusation are fascinating: Jews were accused of conspiring with lepers (ritually impure outcasts), the infidel rulers of Islamic Spain, and, most important, with Satan himself—that is, with internal and external enemies as well as the Great Enemy. These coconspirators provided the poisons used by the Jews. Thus, from the very first outbreaks of plague in the late 1340s, Christians were convinced that its "causes" lay within, including such "enemies" as Jews, Muslims, lepers, unbelievers (heretics), and such immoral people as prostitutes or homosexuals.

This persecution became a fixed pattern. Avoiding an impending outbreak or ending one required identifying

and eradicating those responsible for provoking God's wrath. Then the survivors relied on penance, prayers, processions, and fasts to appease God. In other words, confronting a basically untreatable epidemic disease, western Europeans attempted to identify those who had "caused" it and thereby limit or eliminate it by sacrificing them. Moreover, plague remained enduringly connected to evil (the demonic).

PLAGUE-SPREADING CONSPIRACIES

Two later plague outbreaks revealed the capacity of Europeans to differentiate between evil people and demonic pacts. From about 1530 to about 1640, a region centered on Geneva, stretching from Lyons to Milan and from Neuchâtel to Turin, experienced frequent accusations that individuals had conspired to spread plague. Interestingly, the governments involved consistently refused to consider the conspirators "demonic." Many features of these conspiracies suggested witchcraft. For example, the conspirators used greases and powders to spread the plague. They took an oath saying, "if I reveal any details, may my soul be given to Satan." And most of them were poor, marginalized women.

Nevertheless, other features encouraged a purely natural understanding of these conspiracies. Barber-surgeons, who mixed the greases and powders or gave instructions for preparing them, led the conspirators. The conspiracies never involved orgiastic rituals and never met Satan. Their goal was to allow plague workers greater opportunity to loot the homes of wealthy people. Thus, even though the conspirators' behavior somewhat resembled a demonic pact, the magistrates consistently saw a purely natural conspiracy based on simple greed.

Only twice did Catholic clerics attempt to interpret plague-spreading behavior as demonic witchcraft, and Catholic officials took neither seriously. In Lyons, a Catholic writer alleged that the plague spreaders were Protestants allied with Satan, but the royal governor and magistracy ignored his charge. In Milan, during the 1630 outbreak made famous by Alessandro Manzoni, some clerical chroniclers implied a demonic connection behind the conspiracy. However, they merely suggested that plague spreading was "diabolical" (evil), not witchcraft involving a demonic pact. Plague-spreading conspiracies remind us that the early modern world was not determined to find supernatural causes for every natural event—even a plague outbreak. Although everyone involved in plague-spreading conspiracies believed that the presence and progress of plague was providential and almost certainly a sign of God's displeasure, no immediate or necessary links were made to demons and witches.

Explicit charges of spreading plague are largely absent from witchcraft accusations, although witches

were routinely accused of causing disease and ill health in both animals and people. Even when Geneva simultaneously experienced plague, a plague-spreading conspiracy, and a witch hunt in the 1570s, the link was rarely made explicit, if at all. One possible explanation is that plague was seen first and foremost as a direct expression of divine judgment and chastisement rather than an evil that God simply allowed. Protestant theology precluded ascribing that much power to Satan, let alone his earthly minions (witches). History and Scripture suggested that life's greatest disasters—massive earthquakes, large-scale famines, devastating floods, horrendous epidemics—were acts of divine providence; Satan might be the prince of this world, but there were limits to his power. Thus, even if an occasional connection was made between individual witches and a specific plague outbreak, it never created a witch hunt. It was simply considered an extreme example of *maleficium* (harmful magic), less important than the judges' emphasis on the stereotypical aspects of demonic pacts and Sabbats.

WILLIAM G. NAPHY

See also: BIBLE; DEVIL; DISEASE; GENEVA; HOMOSEXUALITY; MIRACLES; MOSES; POISON; SCAPEGOATS.

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PLANTSCH, MARTIN (CA. 1460–1533/1535)

Considered one of the most prominent representatives of a moderate understanding of witchcraft during the transition to early modern times, Plantsch studied theology at Tübingen under Gabriel Biel (ca. 1410–1495), who is generally considered the most significant late

scholastic representative of the *via moderna* (modern way). A strict nominalist (nominalism postulates the freedom of the divine will as the highest principle), Plantsch became university principal at Tübingen in 1490 and lectured as doctor of theology after 1494.

Prompted by a witchcraft trial in Tübingen in 1505, Plantsch undertook a thorough theological investigation of the subject of witchcraft, producing a series of sermons that were printed in 1507 as an *Opusculum de Sagis Maleficis* (A Brief Work on Evil Witches). This extensive piece of work, the style of which was more academic-scholastic than rhetorical, considered all the prevalent contemporary aspects of the doctrine of witchcraft. Like the lawyer Ulrich Molitor, who had some impact shortly before, Plantsch upheld certain aspects of the belief in witches, such as their ability to work *maleficia* (harmful magic) and influence the weather, but rejected the notion of witches actually flying and the resulting consequences. Thus, Plantsch must be ranked among the initiators of the *Canon Episcopi* (ca. 906) tradition, which was particularly widespread in southwestern Germany. Further aspects of his nominalist viewpoint included his claim that God's permission was necessary for any actions by witches and his admonition to victims of witchcraft not to use any countermagic. However, Plantsch's scholastic background was evident in the fact that he adopted such aspects of medieval demonology as incubi and succubi.

To what extent Plantsch was actually involved in propagating these ideas is difficult to evaluate, but his reputation as principal and theology professor at Tübingen University and as a gifted preacher undoubtedly gave him a certain level of influence. Furthermore, Plantsch was in contact with such well-known figures in both theology and the arts as Johannes Reuchlin; another humanist, Heinrich Bebel, wrote a short poem for the preface to Plantsch's *Opusculum*. Because of his close relationship with Reuchlin, Philip Melancthon may have acquired his comparatively moderate attitude toward witchcraft during his studies at Tübingen. In the late medieval dispute on the "new" understanding of witchcraft, Plantsch presented his views as the "Catholic truth." Like the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), but with more formal authority and correctness, the Tübingen professor of theology declared his attitude toward the issue of witchcraft to be correct doctrine—a view, however, at odds with the *communis opinio* (common opinion).

JÖRG HAUSTEIN;

TRANSLATED BY HELEN SIEGBURG

See also: CANON EPISCOPI; DEMONOLOGY; INCUBUS AND SUCCUBUS; MALLEUS MALEFICARUM; MOLITOR, ULRICH.

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**PLEIER (PLEYER, BLEIER),
CORNELIUS (1595–16??)**

Pleier was a physician who published the *Malleus judicum* (The Hammer of Judges), an anonymous pamphlet opposing witchcraft trials, in 1628.

The son of a Lutheran cleric in Coburg, Pleier received his doctorate at Basel in 1620; he was named municipal physician of Coburg in 1622 and professor at the local *Gymnasium Casimirianum* in 1623. In 1624, he became municipal physician at Kitzingen am Main but lost his position in 1629 during the bishop of Würzburg's recatholicization. Pleier later converted to Catholicism. His exact date of death is unknown.

Pleier was responsible for two medical publications. The anonymous pamphlet, allegedly written by a "Catholic Christian," entitled *Malleus judicum, Das ist: Gesetzhammer der unbarmherzigen Hexenrichter, Aus dem besten Ertz Göttlicher, Natürlicher und Weltlicher Rechten* (Hammer of Judges, in Other Words, a Legal Hammer Against Pitiless Witchcraft Judges, Taken from the Best Divine, Natural, and Human Laws) appeared between 1626 and 1629. The copy in the state library of Bamberg contains a handwritten remark naming Pleier as the author. Pleier based his work on Johann Weyer's *De praestigiis daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils, 1563) and frequently cited Hermann Witekind's (pseud. Augustin Lercheimer) *Christlich bedencken und erinnerung von Zauberey* (Christian Thoughts and Memories about Sorcery, 1585) and Anton Prätorius's *Von Zauberey und Zaubernern Gründlicher Bericht* (A Thorough Account of Magic and Magicians, 1598). In polemical form, Pleier criticized judges, torture, and cruel prisons and demanded "Christian reforms" instead of executions from the authorities. The well-known witchcraft commissioner Heinrich von Schultheis voiced his objections to the *Malleus judicum* in 1634, which entered the collection of Johann Reiche in 1703.

GUNTHER FRANZ;

TRANSLATED BY JONATHAN STICKNEY

See also: PRÄTORIUS, ANTON; SCHULTHEIS, HEINRICH VON; SKEPTICISM; WEYER, JOHANN; WITEKIND, HERMANN.

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POISON

Poisons have been strongly associated with witchcraft and sorcery throughout the world since antiquity, because they manifest a desire to cause harm; involve secret, often ritual, preparations; and work through a hidden, or occult, process. Even though the defining feature of magic and witchcraft is spiritual or supernatural agency, they actually make extensive use of physical substances. They may be incorporated into secret rituals performed at a distance, but they may also be used to "carry" a spell by being brought to or concealed near the target or by being introduced directly into the victim's body. Such substances may contain intrinsically toxic chemicals or psychoactive agents that are not inherently toxic but open the victim to suggestion; they may even be chemically inert, deriving their power purely from the sorcerer's confidence in and the victim's fear of their magical properties. The inherent uncertainty of allegations of poisoning along with the important role of psychological factors in many cases have led some social scientists to treat fear of poisoning as more significant than the use of poisons. There is no question that such fear is an important phenomenon in its own right, but strong evidence from both anthropology and history suggests that this fear is rooted in the fact that poisons have been used as a real and potent form of interpersonal attack in a wide variety of social settings.

Anthropologists have found varying degrees of association between sorcery and poison in Australia, Oceania, Africa, and the Americas. In some cases, sorcerers use chemically active agents in connection with magic rituals while attributing the poison's power at least as much to the magic as to the substance's intrinsic properties. In other cases, poisons are understood to work without magic, and sorcerers may use them separately, or even as a backup if their regular spells do not seem to be working. In the West, the connection between magic and poisoning goes back to antiquity. There is a linguistic link between poison and magic in both the Greek word *pharmakon* and the Latin *veneficium* (poisoning), and the association was made by the second-century *Epistle of Barnabas*, St. Augustine, Isidore of Seville, and the Venerable Bede. During the

High Middle Ages, magicians flourished at courts, with their intense rivalries and intrigues, and some practitioners provided poisons along with more esoteric services. Similar practitioners operated at the popular level as well, and there is considerable evidence that both specialized sorcerers and ordinary people continued to employ poisons in the early modern period. Allegations of poisoning were among the most common accusations precipitating witchcraft trials, and in German courts the term *veneficium* came to be used routinely as a term for witchcraft.

The types of poisons used included both refined products like arsenic, rat poison, and lye, and locally occurring fauna such as ergot-infested wheat, toxic mushrooms, and parts of various flowering plants. The efficacy of the former was basically a function of dosage, so anyone who could purchase them could use them. Employing the latter was more difficult because the plants had to be located and in some cases picked at a particular stage of growth, the potent parts had to be known, and they had to be prepared in a way that made them effective while not alerting the person consuming them. Poisons were most commonly introduced in food or drink served, lent, or bestowed as a gift, but they could also be secretly introduced into the victim's food stocks or, in Germany, beer cask, which was often kept open near the door. Another form of delivery of psychoactive agents was as a salve smeared on the victim's skin, which caused local numbness and general disorientation that could easily be interpreted into a variety of somatic complaints. The generally surreptitious nature of poison contributed to a strong element of suspicion in neighborly relations in early modern Europe, and it was not uncommon for people to routinely feed pieces of food received from neighbors to household animals before consuming the rest themselves.

The gradual substitution of *veneficium* for "witchcraft" in legal terminology not only reflected the important role of poisons in witchcraft beliefs but also contributed to the gradual decline of witchcraft prosecutions. First, it led to the separation of the physical crime, which even leading skeptics like Johann Weyer and Reginald Scot considered a felony, from the religious and spiritual offenses. Second, the continued prosecution of poisonings and the increased regulation of poisons reduced one of the most common fears that had contributed to witchcraft suspicions.

EDWARD BEVER

See also: AFFAIR OF THE POISONS; HEMLOCK; *MALEFICIUM*; NIGHTSHADE; OINTMENTS; PLAGUE; POTIONS.

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POLAND

Witchcraft prosecutions peaked in the Polish Crown lands between 1650 and 1750, about a century later than most of Europe, with the exception of Hungary or Russia. Estimates of the number of deaths attributable to the prosecutions have ranged from a few thousand to 30,000. The subject has received relatively little scholarly analysis, and serious research has been hampered by the loss of many court records during World War II. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth of the early modern period included territory that now comprises much of Ukraine and Belarus, plus Lithuania and parts of Latvia. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, witchcraft trials were held before clerical courts, where death sentences were not usually passed. From the sixteenth century, however, jurisdiction passed increasingly to secular courts, where the death sentence (burning at the stake) was common. Legal persecution ended in Poland only in 1776, with the repeal of the witchcraft statutes. However, illegal reprisals persisted into the nineteenth and even twentieth centuries. One of the most obvious explanations for the late peak in the number of trials is the crises and invasions that Poland experienced in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The best extant records come from the area around Poznań, known as *Wielkopolska* (Greater Poland), and from Gdansk (Danzig), Cracow, Lublin, and Bydgoszcz.

GEOGRAPHY AND STATISTICS

The statistics quoted by the majority of historians of the European witchcraft prosecutions have been derived from Bogdan Baranowski's estimate of a total of 15,000 deaths, found in the French summary of his work *Procesy czarownic w Polsce w XVII i XVIII w.* (Witchcraft Trials in Poland in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries). Baranowski, using a figure of 1,250 Polish towns, supposed that each town court tried an average of four cases of witchcraft during the period and sentenced two people to death from each trial. He added 5,000 deaths to reflect the illegal murders of people suspected of witchcraft, making a total of 15,000 deaths

throughout the period (Baranowski 1952, 178). His calculations included only the territory known as the Crown lands of Poland, excluding both Silesia and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. However, in an epilogue to the first Polish translation of Kurt Baschwitz's work *Czarownice: Dzieje procesów o czary* (Witches: A History of Witchcraft Trials), published in 1963, Baranowski revised his statistics down to a few thousand. Trials for sorcery or magical practices were also heard prior to the sixteenth century, but according to extant records, the peak of the persecution was between 1650 and 1750 (from work carried out on *Wielkopolska*). There appear to have been more trials in the western areas of Poland and fewer in areas to the east, where Orthodoxy replaced Catholicism as the predominant religion. This geographical and chronological diffusion may be merely a reflection of the extant records rather than an accurate account of the prosecutions.

The percentage of cases in which the death sentence (burning at the stake) was passed varied substantially geographically, from close to 100 percent in some towns of Greater Poland to under 50 percent in those privileged towns (e.g., Cracow and Lublin) where appellate systems were in place. However, in private towns (that is, owned by a noble, a king, or the Church), final jurisdiction was often in the hands of the manorial lord. Therefore, because charges were often instigated by him or at his instruction against his peasants, the sentences were frequently carried out on the morning following the trial. Those tried were almost exclusively peasants, because only their peers could try the nobility. Occasionally minor noblewomen appeared in trials, but that was rare.

In the nineteenth century, an attempt was made to centralize the archival collections, and many records were moved to Warsaw to the Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych (AGAD; Central Archive of Old Records). Due to extensive bombing during World War II, up to 90 percent of these records were destroyed. Thus, where records have not survived, our information is necessarily based on the work of authors writing before 1939 who were familiar with the lost sources. Another collection of primary material comes from an unexpected source, which has barely begun to be used in Poland: during World War II, the *H-Sonderkommando* (Special Unit H [*Hexen* = witches]), under instructions from Heinrich Himmler, extended their collection of witchcraft trial records into the occupied territories. This collection, known as the *Himmlerkartoteka* (Himmler card index), is held in Poznań, with a copy in Berlin.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE TRIALS

The earliest literary mentions of individuals employing witchcraft in Poland appeared in the chronicles of Marcin Bielski and Jan Długosz. They tended to

describe individuals whose practices were more commonly regarded as sorcery or slanders against women. In many trials before fifteenth-century clerical courts, the accused was charged with causing impotence, divination, or illness. In other cases, men sought to dissolve marriages because their wives had reputations as witches. In Poland, as in the West, clerical courts almost never passed death sentences (although the first execution in Poland, in 1511, occurred in an ecclesiastical court, with the initial execution pronounced by a secular court in 1544); instead, the accused were required to apologize, swear not to repeat the crime, and pay a suitable fine. Banishment became more common in the sixteenth century, when the charges made against those accused of witchcraft became more elaborate. Rituals that had previously been encouraged even by the town authorities (for example, in Biecz, a well-known witch called *Mater Diabolica* [diabolical Mother] Zachariaszek had been hired as late as 1600 to find stolen goods) now became unacceptable. In the secular trials from the sixteenth century, especially those from Kalisz and Poznań, starting in 1544, charges were generally made against the so-called cunning folk. Confessions included descriptions of invocations of a pseudoreligious nature to the Virgin Mary and the saints and the use of herbs to restore ruined beer or to make cows produce more milk.

At the court of the Polish king Sigismund II Augustus (ruled 1548–1572), rumors of the deployment of witchcraft took on a political nature (as in Russia). They never reached any judicial court but instead served to ruin the reputations of those involved. The accusations were leveled first at the king's mother Bona Sforza, an Italian (a typical xenophobic tactic against foreigners). Foreigners were more often perceived to use magic in the context of warfare. A witch employed by Bona was arrested on the orders of King Sigismund, who was ready to try her and sentence her to death. She was taken to Brest, but the king

was also on his way there. His astrologer Proboszczewicz advised him that he would be in danger from fire in that city, so he moved the witch to Dubnik, where the sentence was carried out. In turn, the king's wife, Barbara Radziwiłłówna, was accused of employing love magic to seduce the king. Sigismund Augustus appears to have been particularly susceptible to these practices, because his later mistresses, Susanna Orłowska and Barbara Giżanka, were also thought to have been witches.

This sample of 251 trials involved 511 defendants, 96 percent of whom were female. The largest outbreaks came at Kalisz (1650–1680), Gniezno (1670–1690), and Grodzisk (1710–1720). There was a steady trickle of trials heard at Kleczew. The maximum number of deaths (24) occurred between 1707 and 1711. From this sample, only four places, including Poznań, heard more than twenty trials.

After the major disruptions of Poland's mid-seventeenth century "deluge," witch hunting gathered momentum during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The reasons suggested include cultural backwardness, although in light of Poland's intellectual achievements in the Renaissance and highly developed relations with western Europe, this is a debatable viewpoint. A better reason employs the social-strain gauge theory of witchcraft: the wars and economic disasters that ravaged Poland left behind a new level of fear and suspicion, increased by severe competition for resources. In this heightened atmosphere, accusations of witchcraft were more likely to surface and be pursued vigorously.

ACCUSATIONS

By the late sixteenth century, Polish witchcraft trials began to contain mentions of the Devil. Eventually, suspicion of concrete harm or *maleficium* was no longer required for a charge to be brought; that of making a pact with the Devil sufficed. Accusations displayed many features common to western European witchcraft, such as love magic, causing harm to people or animals, and attendance at the Sabbat. Charges also included inflicting devils upon someone, which could be done through food or drink. A particularly Polish feature was that of *koltun*, or a condition of matted hair, known as *Plica Polonica*, which was also believed to be the result of bewitchment. Victims would not cut off their hair for fear of death or blindness. Court charges involving *koltun* persisted well beyond the repeal of the witchcraft acts in 1776.

In a collection of trials from Grodzisk, Greater Poland (1707–1737), and also at Kleczew, the accused admitted to stealing the Host and then beating it until it bled and the Christ Child appeared. The blood was then used in various spells. This echoed the bleeding

TABLE P-1 PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF TWENTY-FIVE TOWNS IN WIELKOPOLSKA

Dates	Trials	Accused Women/Men
1500–1575	6	6/0
1576–1600	8	10/0
1601–1625	15	18/3
1626–1650	14	25/1
1651–1675	36	81/1
1676–1700	78	188/5
1701–1725	47	75/5
1726–1750	38	62/5
1751–1775	6	16/0
1776–1800	3	9/1

Host accusations, usually leveled against Jews in Germany, Poland, and elsewhere in the medieval period. Coincidentally, the peak in the number of witchcraft trials coincided with an increase in accusations of the blood libel (the baseless charge that Jews used Christian blood for religious purposes) in Poland. Usually powders of varying colors were used to harm people, animals, or crops, but sometimes manure and other elements were said to have been buried under the intended victim's threshold.

The witches' gathering, or Sabbat, took place on *Łysa Góra* (Bald Mountain). However, like Sweden's Blåkulla, this did not refer exclusively to the mountain bearing that name in the *Góry Świętokrzyskie* (Holy Cross Mountains). In the trial records, it indicated any local area that was a supposed meeting place. Feasts of abhorrent food were served, weddings were celebrated between witches and devils, and the witches usually were reported to have had sex with their devils. In contrast to popular belief, Polish trial records rarely mentioned diabolic ceremonies, orgiastic behavior, or boiling babies for their fat. Moreover, the traditional concept of the Devil's pact was replaced by sexual consummation between an individual devil and a witch. These devils were often named and described as brightly clothed. The Devil's mark is rarely found in trial accounts, but there are descriptions of the Devil biting the accused in a particular finger. Silence during torture was ascribed to the presence of the Devil, who purportedly prevented the accused from confessing.

THE CRIME OF WITCHCRAFT

Witchcraft was prohibited and punished in several statutes, the first of which appears to come from the Synod of Buda in 1279. A provincial law was passed that forbade anyone other than a bishop to give penance to a practitioner of witchcraft. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, episcopal courts heard most of the cases. Jurisdiction was removed ostensibly from the secular courts and placed under the clerical authorities under the Cracow Constitution of 1543; subsequent royal decrees from 1672 and 1713 confirmed this. Nonetheless, municipal secular courts held most Polish witchcraft trials because they involved material harm. Village courts were ordered to refer such cases up to municipal courts, and indeed the statute of 1745 forbade village judges from trying such cases on pain of death. Many town courts in Poland used Magdeburg Law, which was often quoted in cases, along with some modern legal authorities, including the Flemish jurist Joos de Damhouder and the Saxon jurist Benedict Carpzov (II). Polish courts also had the custom of referring to the breaking of the biblical commandments, especially Exod. 22:18 (22:17; in the King James Version, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live").

There was a similar pattern to the case procedure. Another individual usually brought charges against the accused. The accused witch was questioned and then tortured. After torture, her confession was confirmed, and often the torture was repeated. The use of torture was apparent in virtually every case from *Wielkopolska*, even those involving children. It took such forms as burning the accused with straw, racking, and burning candles under the arms or against the lips. It was supposed to be employed only three times, but there were many exceptions to this rule. Those who died in the course of torture were often declared to be witches, buried under the gallows, and denied burial in consecrated ground.

A controversial case, said to have taken place at Doruchów in 1775, has been the subject of much speculation (Tazbir 1966). An eyewitness account that appeared in 1835 described the case. The author gave a full description of the trial, torture, and execution of fourteen women. No trial record is extant, although there is a reference to the trial of six women in the same area in 1783. It was said that disgust at the Doruchów case hastened the end of the legal persecution. In the *Sejm* (Parliament) of 1776, torture and the trying of witches were forbidden by statute, at the representation of the castellan of Biecz, Wojciech Kluszewski.

However, there was another controversial claim involving an even later case, from 1793, sometimes mentioned as the last case in Europe. Its inclusion in Georg Wilhelm Soldan's work has ensured exposure. It was said in 1801 that when a Prussian commission arrived at a certain town in Poland in 1793, it saw the remains of stakes and was told by the town magistrate that two witches had been burned there. The account has been contested by Polish historians, who have dismissed it as German propaganda because the vague terminology used in describing the event provokes doubt about its authenticity. However, there were accounts of slander cases and even lynchings involving witchcraft long after that date, including the famous case of Krystyna Ceynowa of Chaupy, who was drowned in 1836 after several duckings (the swimming test). Other women were still occasionally ducked in ponds or rivers in the nineteenth century.

POLISH DEMONOLOGY

Descriptions of demonology, witchcraft, and magical remedies appeared in a variety of Polish printed sources, from early treatises to the calendars and encyclopedias of the late eighteenth century. The most important work was the first translation into any European vernacular of *Malleus Maleficarum*, under the title *Młot na czarownice* (The Hammer of Witches) by Stanisław Zambkowicz, secretary to the castellan of Cracow, in 1614. The author translated only the second part and provided a short introduction. He dedicated the book to Prince Ostrogski and published it in Cracow. The

printing house of Wojciech Regulus in Poznań published several works that were influential in the witchcraft debate. Among those was an anonymous work, which was an adaptation of, or heavily influenced by, the work of Friedrich Spee, titled *Czarownica powołana* (A Witch Denounced) in 1639. It was the most famous among several works attacking abuses perpetrated by the judiciary in witchcraft trials. Daniel Wisner, Serafin Gamalski, Bishop Józef Andrzej Załuski, and Bishop Kazimierz Florian Czaratoryski also attacked the judiciary. Of particular note are the works by Jan Bohomolec and Benedykt Chmielowski.

WANDA WYPORSKA

See also: ACCUSATIONS; BARANOWSKI, BOGDAN; CAROLINA CODE; CARPZOV, BENEDICT; CHRONOLOGY OF WITCHCRAFT TRIALS; CONFESSIONS; COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; COURTS, SECULAR; CUNNING FOLK; DANZIG (GDANSK); DEVIL; EXECUTIONERS; EXECUTIONS; HUNGARY; JEWS, WITCHCRAFT; AND MAGIC; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); LITHUANIA, GRAND DUCHY OF; LOVE MAGIC; LYNCHING; *MALEFICUM*; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; NAZI INTEREST IN WITCH PERSECUTION; ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; POZNAN; PRUSSIA; RITUAL MAGIC; RITUAL MURDER; RUSSIA; SABBAT; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC; SILESIA; SOLDAN, WILHELM GOTTLIEB; SOURCES FOR WITCHCRAFT TRIALS; SWIMMING TEST; TORTURE; TRIALS; UKRAINE, WITCHCRAFT TRIALS; ZIARNKO, JAN.

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POLTERGEIST

A spirit or ghost that makes itself known by loud noises or movements is known as a poltergeist.

In some witchcraft trials one could observe a poltergeist pattern: inexplicable sounds are heard, inanimate objects move of their own accord, and people are lifted into the air in inexplicable ways. A well-known example is the case against the drummer of Tedworth, who was held responsible for the strange phenomena in the home of John Mompesson, a magistrate of Tedworth, Wiltshire. The phenomena continued from March 1662 to April 1663, and began after Mompesson, in connection with a forgery trial, had confiscated the drum of a vagrant confidence trickster, William Drury. The magistrate kept the drum in his own home after releasing Drury. The situation became even more annoying when the strange phenomena continued in Mompesson’s home after the drum had been destroyed, particularly affecting his ten-year-old daughter. In the meantime, the confidence trickster had been sentenced in Gloucester to transportation to Virginia for stealing pigs, but he escaped by jumping overboard from the convict ship. At the beginning of 1663 he reappeared with his trickery and a new drum a few miles from Tedworth. Mompesson had him arrested and charged with practicing witchcraft; although several of the local gentry testified against him, Drury had to be acquitted for lack of evidence. The celebrity of the case was due first and foremost to the Reverend Joseph Glanvill, chaplain to Charles II and a Fellow of the Royal Society, who went to Tedworth to investigate the matter and later described it in his *Sadducismus Triumphatus* (*Sadducism Conquered*, 1681), which gave the author a reputation as a father of modern psychical research.

An unspecified number of similar cases can be found among European witchcraft trials. From Denmark we have the famous case of the haunted house in Køge (*Køge Huskors*), where a rich merchant’s house in this Zealand city was haunted by what we would call poltergeist manifestations. They did not cease until 1613, after seven local witches had been burned. During their trial they confessed that they had conjured the Devil up from a well and sent him into the merchant’s house in the form of a rat. Many years later his widow wrote an account of the events, which was later published by the

minister Johan Brunsmand in 1674 and translated into both Latin (1693) and German (1696).

The last Danish witchcraft trial, which took place in 1708 at the district court of the estate of Schelenborg on Funen island, also involved poltergeists; fourteen-year-old Anna Lauridsdatter was finally sentenced to the workhouse for life, and an adult woman, Karen Madsdatter, whom she had named as her mentor, was condemned to the stake. On the farm where Anna was a servant, heavy flour bags, kneading troughs, and many other objects were observed flying around without anyone being able to see who was moving them. At the Funen County Court, though, the judges partly overturned the local court's verdict. The adult woman was acquitted but was sentenced to make a public apology for the scandal she had caused with her false confession. The lower court's conviction of the young girl, however, who would not retract her statement, was upheld. She insisted that she had renounced Christianity and that the Devil, in the shape of a dog or a cat, had carried out her sorceries at the farm after she had invoked him. The enlightened high court judges tried in vain to get Anna Lauridsdatter to admit that she had performed these acts herself, but although she had been caught in the act several times, she denied it vehemently.

The descriptions of poltergeist phenomena in these trials were fairly constant. What changed were the explanations. During the witch persecutions, they were explained as witchcraft and the work of the Devil. During the Enlightenment, authorities tried to expose the phenomena as fraud or lies—as something that had not taken place in reality. Today they are sometimes explained by a parapsychological theory that claims that such phenomena always happen in connection with young women on the threshold of their teenage years, which are apparently related to certain psychical forces that are released in that connection.

GUSTAV HENNINGSEN;

TRANSLATED BY JAMES MANLEY

See also: GHOSTS; GLANVILL, JOSEPH; SALEM; SPECTRAL EVIDENCE.

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POMPONAZZI, PIETRO (1462–1525)

Born in Mantua, this Aristotelian philosopher of the Renaissance studied at the University of Padua, where he earned his degree in 1487 and taught natural philosophy from 1488 until 1509 before moving to Ferrara and then to Bologna in 1511, where he died in 1525. Often (although incorrectly) denounced as an "atheist" who denied the immortality of the soul, he was also extremely skeptical about the supernatural phenomena that underpinned witchcraft theory in his age.

Pomponazzi owed much to Aristotle, as his numerous works show. At Bologna, he wrote his most famous (or notorious) work, *De immortalitate animae* (On the Immortality of the Soul, 1516). Here the original elements in Pomponazzi's position were derived from Aristotelian philosophy. He affirmed that no philosophical arguments derived from reason could demonstrate the hypothesis of the soul's immortality. Many works were written to refute Pomponazzi's conclusions. Although he never actually denied the immortality of the soul, his analysis led some of his followers to reject the dogma. Pomponazzi claimed to accept the authority of the Church in all matters of faith but refused to allow such considerations to influence his judgments in the realm of philosophy, whose autonomy he staunchly defended. He sought to reconcile his position with the dogmas of the Church by distinguishing between faith and knowledge, asserting that what is true in theology may not be true in philosophy. Some denounced him as a heretic.

With respect to witches and demons, Pomponazzi's main work is *De naturalium effectuum causis sive de incantationibus* (Of the Causes of Natural Effects, or of Incantations), written in 1520. Pomponazzi sought and found natural explanations for apparently wondrous events. He accepted the existence of angels and demons, but he argued the existence of natural causes to explain many apparently supernatural events. Pomponazzi was enough of a Christian to say that demons exist, but enough of an Aristotelian to deny that they can act on humans. By describing a natural world that had no need of demons, Pomponazzi influenced witchcraft skeptics such as Johann Weyer, Reginald Scot, and others. But, although he took a generally skeptical stance about the possibility of witchcraft, we should not exaggerate his radicalism; Pomponazzi accepted astrological influences and believed that words used in incantations or characters in talismans worked through some power of imagination (*vis imaginativa*) flowing from operator to patient.

Through such arguments, he revealed his desire to investigate nature in order to discover the real causes of odd events and to reject all ideas of occult causation. Any marvels or apparently strange events were, therefore, due to natural laws. Pomponazzi repeatedly

claimed that his theories relied on Aristotle in exactly the same way as he had done with the immortality of the soul, yet he declared his desire to subject all his arguments to the Church's approval (however, *de incantationibus* was printed at Protestant Basel in 1556 through the efforts of an exiled Italian scientist, Guglielmo Grataroli).

Likewise controversial was Pomponazzi's book, *De fato libero arbitrio, praedestinatione et providentia Dei* (Of Arbitrary and Free Will, Predestination, and the Providence of God), written at the very moment (1520) when Martin Luther was so dramatically challenging free will, but not published until 1567. It dealt with determinism and predestination, another of Christianity's important but insoluble dilemmas. Here Pomponazzi first affirmed determinism but later managed to combine and reconcile traditional and progressive features. Thus, human free will coexisted with God's foreknowledge without being incompatible or contradictory. He maintained that divine omniscience did not preclude free will. His attempts to save human freedom without rejecting St. Augustine were unconvincing but original. Among Pomponazzi's many critics who wrote treatises against Pomponazzi's theories, the outstanding ones were Gasparo Contarini and Agostino Nifo.

MICHAELA VALENTE

See also: AQUINAS, THOMAS; CARDANO, GIROLAMO; DELLA PORTA, GIAMBATTISTA; SCOT, REGINALD; SKEPTICISM; WEYER, JOHANN.

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**PONZINIBIO, GIOVANNI
FRANCESCO/GIANFRANCESCO
(FIRST HALF OF THE
SIXTEENTH CENTURY)**

In his *Tractatus subtilis, et elegans, de lamijs, et excellentia utriusque iuris* (Subtle and Elegant Treatise on

Witches and the Excellence of Both Civil and Canon Law), written in 1519–1520, this somewhat skeptical lawyer from Piacenza denied the witches' flight to their nightly reunions because, he argued, demons no longer possessed powers after Jesus's death and so could not carry witches through the air. Although he dismissed Sabbats as nothing more than the fantasies and illusions of ignorant people from the lower social classes, he at the same time recognized that Sabbat-like gatherings must exist because the worship of the Devil formed the antithesis of the Christian religion and the sacraments. Ponzinibio was in no way a disbeliever in sorcery. He stated that men could be bewitched by incantations and *maleficia* (harmful magic) or by the evil eye. Thus he posited that it was untrue that witches carried the Sacrament to the Sabbat, offered it to the demon, and did the other things recorded in inquisitorial trials; and that it was not true that witches entered houses at night to suck children's blood, because a just God permitted no one to be injured unjustly and that everyone, even unborn children, had a guardian angel.

As a civil lawyer, Ponzinibio was profoundly angered by the injustices of inquisitorial procedure, whether applied to heretics or to sorcerers who had been defined by the theologians as heretical. So Ponzinibio attacked the whole system in his treatise: according to him, civil law had the same authority as canon law to discuss theological questions. He was very critical of the procedures used in witchcraft trials, urging judges to verify the authenticity of the accuser's testimony and the defendant's confessions, in addition to ignoring everything about the Sabbat and witches flying there.

By asserting the equality of Roman law with canon law even in theological matters and the consequent necessity of adding lay assessors to inquisitors, Ponzinibio aroused the wrath of inquisitors and theologians. Within a few years, the Dominican Bartolomeo della Spina criticized him vehemently in *Tractatus de pre-eminentia sacre Theologiae super alias omnes scientias* (Treatise on the Supremacy of Sacred Theology over All Other Sciences). For centuries, Spina pointed out, university faculties of theology had always ranked theology as the supreme science, by which such questions as witchcraft should be decided. In 1525, in three succeeding *Apologiae in Ponzinibium de lamijs* (Defense from Ponzinibio's On Witches), Spina refuted the lawyer's theories, relying on the Bible, the Church Fathers, and the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486). In his second *Apology*, Spina accused Ponzinibio of being a heretic, demanding that he renounce his theories and that inquisitors burn his treatise. Nevertheless, Ponzinibio's tract was reprinted (by Protestant heretics) at Frankfurt in 1592, together with Paolo Grillando's

Tractatus de haereticis et sortilegiis (Treatise on Heretics and Sorcerers).

DRIES VANYSACKER

See also: FLIGHT OF WITCHES; GRILLANDO, PAULO; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; ROMAN LAW; SABBAT; SPINA, BARTOLOMEO DELLA.

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POPULAR BELIEFS IN WITCHES

Some wicked women . . . believe and profess that, in the hours of night, they ride upon certain beasts with Diana, the goddess of pagans, and an innumerable multitude of women, and in the silence of the night traverse great space of earth, and obey her commands as of their lady, and are summoned to her service on certain nights. But if only they alone perished in their faithlessness, without drawing many other people with them into the destruction of infidelity, for an innumerable multitude . . . believe this to be truth. . . . (Kors and Peters 2001, 62)

With frustration, the *Canon Episcopi* (ca. 906) illustrated the existence of some deep-rooted and centuries-old popular beliefs about witches. Time and again, we must ask some essential questions about witches: Who were they? What did they look like? What were they supposed to do? Why did people believe in their powers? And, not least, did witches really exist?

DEFINITION

For most early modern people, a witch was someone who had performed some hostile act. But historians are wary of adopting restrictive definitions that could mislead them in understanding the surviving sources. An analysis of the language used in the trials can take us far because contemporaries often used a term like *witch* interchangeably with other *dramatis personae*. Specialized practitioners, similar to a sorcerer, a healer, or a soothsayer, acted in opposition to the witch. In this broader sense, *witch* could be extended to almost any operator within a complex ideology that was basically designed to explain unexpected misfortune. Therefore,

in this larger meaning, a witch could refer to any person with specific abilities for casting spells, magical healing, fortunetelling, or finding lost objects.

THE MALEFICENT WITCH

From a deep reading of witchcraft trials, two black-and-white opposed categories emerge: the just and the wicked, the forces of good who fight against the forces of evil. Theologians ruminated on the reciprocal necessity of these binary opposites. Tuscan villagers expressed such a vision of the world with the oft-repeated expression, "since I can distinguish the good from the evil." A witch, then, might be seen simply as the personification of a "primary factor" intrinsic to human nature: the evil. But throughout early modern Europe, the witch usually remained only a bit player, not a protagonist. In daily life within the village communities of old Europe, it was generally necessary to coexist with witches, even if sometimes it became unavoidable to destroy such evil people.

APPEARANCE, SEX, AND AGE

The nineteenth- and twentieth-century archetypal fairy-tale witches were old, female, and ugly. This picture resembled the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century stereotype shared by all social classes, although it tended to collapse during the largest witch hunts, whose victims included men, young women, and even child witches. Though this stereotype remained generally valid in ordinary situations, ugliness should be discounted from the identikit of a witch; behavior and personality were the determining criteria orienting people's judgment. No wonder that in order to distinguish witches from harmless neighbors, contemporaries often resorted to other devices, like looking for the Devil's mark or using the water ordeal (swimming test).

It remains emphatically true that, so far as we can determine, most witches were indeed females beyond childbearing age. As to age, 173 women in a sample of 304 witches from such diverse places as Geneva, Essex, Württemberg, the Department of the Nord in France, and Salem were older than fifty (Levack 1995, 142). But such statistics must be squared with the important fact that a good number of people tried as witches had been suspected for many years, even decades. As to gender, an identikit should not ignore the fact that in many countries (including Germany, the heartland of witch hunting), men amounted to over 20 percent of accused witches or that in some places they might even have been a majority.

THE MAKING OF A WITCH

The witch was a social construction, and his or her identity was the outcome of complex relations with his or her social environment. Because historians, inquiring about the origin of a witch's evil reputation, usually

face severe deficiencies in their source materials about the witch's early life, general explanations can easily become overly schematic. It has been suggested that "once we start aggregating, the variables multiply so fast that chaos theory, with its pattern of unpredictability, is the scientific model which best fits the case" (Briggs 1996, 53). What can be said about the kinds of people who were most vulnerable to accusations of witchcraft? Meticulous research suggests that most witches cannot be described as "outsiders," migrants (such as shepherds), forest dwellers, peddlers, or wandering beggars. Instead, the great majority of suspects were long-term neighbors of their accusers, inserted within the dynamics of a village community. The popular belief that the power of a witch was handed down by blood from parents to child within certain families did not contradict the assertion that witchcraft was an art that had to be learned.

PERFORMANCES

In a way, witches were performers, and witchcraft was a performance art. Maleficent witches possessed the power to commit a great variety of social crimes; we badly need a comparative profile of these *maleficia*. Future research must sort out and analyze basic uniformities in order to describe and, if possible, explain the huge range of local peculiarities. It appears a thorny task to distinguish power on an individual basis (England, Tuscany, Hungary, Scotland) from power on a collective basis (mostly Germany and northern Europe). Witches mostly performed their misdeeds against neighbors through the intrinsic powers of their speech, touch, or gaze. The words spoken by witches—which in most instances were religious in origin—were perceived as powerful but did not require any special knowledge or information. Most attacks of witchcraft can be summed up as a set of words (often curses) spoken in a crisis by someone with a dubious reputation. In sixteenth-century Lorraine, Jean Regnauldin had earned the enmity of a suspect woman by testifying against her on a previous occasion, so she uttered threats against him, wishing that he might have the bar of a door across his stomach. That night "something like a person climbed on his bed and grasped him by the throat with such force and violence that he thought he was about to be strangled" (Briggs 2002b, 14). The nightmare of being attacked in one's own bed was a recurrent feature in witchcraft reports. During the Basque craze (1609–1614) or in Sweden (1668–1676), this phenomenon even took the dimension of a vast Sabbat-dream epidemic.

COEXISTING WITH WITCHES

Maleficent witches were pivotal constituents of an ideology that functioned in a symbiosis with other performers, such as the white witches or "cunning folk"

(randomly female or male) who were consulted as counterwitches, healers, and diviners. Willem de Blécourt, adapting the chessboard metaphor from anthropologists, maintained that within the web of relations that regulated communal conflict, if any one piece was separated from the others, its meaning became incomprehensible. Some magical specialists performing within the spectacle of witchcraft were also called witches, through a process of lexical assimilation shared by the Roman Inquisition and Protestant authorities. Antiwitch procedures were extremely widespread but basically uniform throughout Europe, and they mainly targeted divinatory and curative magic. The counterwitch, as well as the witch, was believed to possess special powers rather than knowledge. Their power was strengthened by a secrecy that their customers were careful to respect, lest something go wrong with the counterspell. Because the objects and words (most often specific prayers) considered to have special power were practically limitless, customers did not ponder much about the meaning of these magical techniques, provided they were effective—and the ubiquity of countermagic throughout Europe should convince historians that such methods frequently worked.

White magic certainly remains a demanding topic for researchers. The power of the healer was two-edged and therefore a source of both hope and fear. Although a white witch might occasionally have been accused of casting spells, this "symbiotic" coexistence between the harmless witch and the malefic one hid many pitfalls. Historians must be wary of being sidetracked by the popular contention that those who know how to heal also know how to harm, an idea consequently implying that a white witch who failed to perform a remedy might eventually be suspected of witchcraft. Unfortunately, many witchcraft trial depositions cannot tell us how often accused witches had been active healers in their villages or were merely evildoers compelled to lift spells that they themselves had cast.

Moreover, the strong antimagic healing campaign by both secular and ecclesiastical hierarchies in the late sixteenth century may have caused an anomalous drift in the system. This blurring in the sources could probably be reduced by carrying out a closer scrutiny of the reputation enjoyed by the witch doctor within the community in normal times, uncorrupted by the distorting mirror of witchcraft trials. In truth, cunning men might have been consulted with trepidation, but were they really accused by their neighbors of using their power maliciously? In the villages of late-sixteenth-century Siena, for instance, several female healers generally considered by their neighbors as godly persons (*spirituale*) were denounced to the inquisitors for magical healing because their customers were refused absolution by their confessors for not doing so. But such healers were never suspected of committing the sort of deeds

attributed to a neighborhood maleficent witch (*strega*). And no such ambiguity ever affected the behavior of Tuscany's most powerful cunning folk and soothsayers, all males, who had a regional reputation and were never accused of harmful witchcraft.

DESTROYING WITCHES

In most regions of early-seventeenth-century Europe, "it was not a meaningless coincidence when a small child, who had previously been healthy, fell ill and died, nor an inexplicable misfortune when a pig began to sicken" (Henningsen 1980, 30). Such things were sometimes attributed to an evil acquaintance. But if all steps for controlling the witch through ordinary ritualized procedures failed, the quality of the human village relationships acquired a dramatic Mozart-like *re-major* tonality, as people resolved to charge the witch formally and demand retribution for the harm they had suffered.

ACCUSATIONS FROM BELOW

It is now generally acknowledged that the impulse to prosecute maleficent witches usually came from ordinary people. But why were some misfortunes, such as the sudden death of a baby, explained in personal terms by blaming a neighbor as the perpetrator, and others not? The etiology of witchcraft led the victim to locate the misfortune in the web of social relations and to personalize the responsibility. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that the motif of retaliation permeated so many witchcraft trials so deeply, appearing as a corollary of personalistic thought. Witchcraft accusations should be seen in relation with this particular misfortune syndrome. The patients of the Oxford physician Richard Napier rarely accepted chance as a cause of their misfortune. Would they have accepted the concept of divine providence proposed by British clerics then, or even a century later? Much like in the time of the *Canon Episcopi*, "there is little evidence that popular beliefs changed in response to religious instructions, either before or after decriminalisation, and there is much to suggest that they continued in their earlier form. Indeed, the frequency with which local communities took illegal counter-actions against suspected witches suggests strongly that popular witch beliefs persisted for many generations after the trials had stopped" (Levack 1999, 46). Still, historical research struggles discontentedly with a lack of consensus about whether or not the impulse to prosecute witches also stopped from below.

DEVIL WORSHIPPING AND "ALLIED BELIEFS"

Researchers are today in agreement that throughout Europe, on the Continent as well as in the British Isles, popular classes thought in terms of *maleficium* (harmful magic): for them, a witch was someone with the super-

natural ability to harm others. On the whole, demonic elements remained marginal at the popular level. Most essential ingredients in the formation of witch beliefs, for example, the English belief that witches kept "familiars" in their houses who sucked their blood or the Basque belief that such spirits were usually toads, came from pagan religion and folklore. Although the role of imps in continental Europe badly needs research, the casebooks of the Oxford physician Richard Napier point to a widespread notion of imps and spirits, described as being like mice, cats, dogs, bees, toads, and so on. Were such ideas part of pre-Christian lore, like weather spirits or forest gods? Napier's patients often appear convinced that they embodied both a good spirit and an evil spirit. Fairies as well could be either wicked or mischievous people. No doubt, villagers inhabited a mental world where religious rituals coexisted with other important areas of allied beliefs, including the presence of witches, ghosts, and fairies. It was a world lacking homogeneity, even if there were probably interconnections of strands of beliefs (Larner 2000) that historians can reconstruct only with difficulty. Beliefs about fairies exemplify this ambivalence: they were liminal creatures, midway between good and evil, and had to be treated with caution. Occasionally, historians encounter archaic fantastic beliefs revolving around particular people, basically all performing some form of magical healing, like the *Krsniki* (Christians) in Slovenia, the *Benandanti* (do-gooders) in Friuli, the *Nachtscahr* (phantoms of the night) in the Bavarian Alps, the *donas de fuera* (women from outside) in Sicily, or the *táltos* (shamen) in Hungary. The extravagant popular perceptions (Behringer 1998) of these healers might be local variants of a Europe-wide belief in fairies. Such archaic survivals include tales of ecstatic experiences of flight in unconscious states.

This enormous variety of European convictions and magical practices (to which many others could be added, including such basic notions as cannibalism or metamorphoses into animals) certainly pose serious challenges to historical reconstruction. With current technology, future trends of research can compare thousands of witchcraft trials in order to facilitate a detailed morphological analysis of such archaic survivals, mapping their geographical and chronological variations—and possibly provide an explanation of their meaning for ordinary people. In the eight centuries between the *Canon Episcopi* and Voltaire, were these pre-Christian notions altered under the pressure of the conquering medieval and post-Reformation Christianity? We know that the specific concept of the witches' Sabbath was formed shortly before 1450 in a large Alpine area, where such notions were still thriving in the early modern period. It remains unclear how far this new demonological doctrine represented a willful "mistranslation" and appropriation of popular notions by literate

clerics and laypeople. But popular beliefs in malevolent spirits fitted extremely well with the Christian image of demons, and such customs as folk dances played a role in the construction of the Sabbat.

We know that during the heyday of witchcraft trials, some important confessions about the nocturnal rides, pacts with the Devil, the repudiation of Christianity, secret nocturnal meetings, desecration of the Eucharist and the crucifix, sexual orgies—even about sacrificial infanticide and cannibalism—were not made under torture or extreme psychological pressure. How should we interpret such unforced confessions? With hundreds of voluntary Basque confessions to explain, Gustav Henningsen maintained that during a witchcraft trial, an accused person not infrequently suffered a reversal of identity, accepted the negative personality pattern, combined his or her imagination with what he or she already knew about witches, and fabricated the confession expected of him or her.

DID WITCHES REALLY EXIST?

The horns of this dilemma concern the question of the self-awareness of being a maleficent witch, as well as the recurring theme of the existence of some sectarian organization practicing the complete inversion of Christianity. In the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), the belief that witches formed a sect with its own rites of initiation and abjuration was expounded systematically. Despite the earnest insistence of some contemporary Wiccans, the evidence does not support the widespread contention that the witches of old Europe formed organized groups to perform rituals or for any other purpose. Apart from the fact that “witches” did exist as living healers, and apart from the fact that people “knew” who they were, did the maleficent village neighborhood witch live up to her role? Was she aware, did she internalize such an identity? Keith Thomas suggested that some of them used witchcraft to improve their condition when all else had failed; it is also possible that some Scottish suspects of witchcraft “accepted their own reputation and even found ego-enhancement in the description of a ‘rank witch’ and the power that this gave them in the community” (Larner 2000, 94).

OSCAR DI SIMPLICIO

See also: CONFESSIONS; COUNTERMAGIC; CUNNING FOLK; DEVIL; DIVINATION; FAIRIES; FAMILIARS; GHOSTS; LYCANTHROPY; MAGIC, POPULAR; METAMORPHOSIS; MORA WITCHES; NIGHTMARES; OINTMENTS; PEOPLE OF THE NIGHT; PERSONALITY OF WITCHES; RURAL WITCHCRAFT; SABBAT; SORCERY; VAMPIRE; VISION; WITCH AND WITCHCRAFT, DEFINITIONS OF; WORDS, POWER OF.

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POPULAR PERSECUTION

The term *popular witch persecutions* demands precision. Given the widespread belief in the malevolent character and power of witches in Latin Christianity, it seems almost trivial to conclude that persecutions, especially in times of crisis and disorder, were profoundly popular. Similarly, it is plain that governmental judicial action against witches relied on this popularity to produce evidence supporting specific accusations, apart from the rather unusual self-propelling persecutions, based primarily or exclusively on evidence produced by torture (as, for example, around 1627 at Bamberg and Würzburg in Franconia), in which the confession of alleged “accomplices” sufficed to nurture further trials.

But German witchcraft trials usually had a social basis and responded to popular demands. Due to their preoccupation with judicial procedures, older historical perspectives and especially traditional legal history disregarded such social contexts. But even witch hunts started by the authorities with so-called general inquisitions only *reacted* to rumor and unrest among their subjects, who already knew which suspects should be accused, condemned, and burned. With the overwhelming evidence produced by social historical research since the 1970s and the corresponding shift in perspective, one cannot seriously maintain the simplistic notion that witch hunting proceeded essentially from “above” (Horsley 1979). Regardless of their mode of introduction (whether by private accusation or official inquisition), witchcraft trials relied upon a broad variety of popular incentives. Leaving aside the role of propaganda (invariably from elite culture), persecutions always combined pressure from below and (re)action from above.

The question, then, is, what qualified a witch hunt as “popular” in terms of active participation and not only in terms of attitudes? What were the features of popular participation, apart from furnishing the authorities with accusations and evidence? How can we assess the relationship between subjects and authorities, once the latter gave way to the demands of the former, and, finally, what was the impact of such cooperation on the trials?

LEVELS, STRUCTURES, PATTERNS

Long before formal charges were presented, popular action against witches started with socially ritualized strategies of reconciliation or countermagic, which frequently involved a specialist. If such actions failed and formal appeal to the authorities was impossible, such forms of self-help as beating or even lynching could be practiced. Continuous protests over years, particularly public scolding, seem to have been frequently practiced.

When seeking aid from official justice instead of militant self-help, individuals approached a local court or a local official with specific charges or at least a general

demand for action against suspects. It was most desirable to make the authorities not only start inquiries but also transform the charges into *ex officio* accusations (magisterial approach). Private accusers could thus avoid the responsibility of paying for any financial and physical damage if the accused was found innocent. However, especially in territories of medium size, the authorities, though basically willing to support inquiries, preferred to keep such accusations private, with all financial risks remaining fully on the original accuser. Such considerations could deter accusers from pursuing further action until the community assumed full judicial and financial responsibility.

Partly because of such peculiar problems and partly because of the scope of action the population demanded, witch hunts often started only after subjects and communities had delivered formal addresses to the authorities. Thus, in 1598, the jurors of the county of Vaduz (modern Lichtenstein) demanded a public audience day to present their charges against specific persons. While getting official approval for persecutions, such meetings and petitions also arranged the terms to fit popular interests: complete competence to local officials without central supervision, extensive use of torture to speed up procedures and minimize the risk of liberating prisoners, and generous confiscation standards to avoid having communities pay the sizable costs of such operations.

In pursuing these ends, interested groups (e.g., parents of bewitched children in Swedish Mora, provincial estates in Vaduz or Jülich-Berg, and whole village communities in several parts of the Holy Roman Empire) confronted magistrates and rulers with their demands. To overcome governmental or magisterial resistance, proponents drew extensively on Christian discourse (e.g., references to Exod. 22:18 [22:17]), reminding authorities of their duties before God, threatening divine wrath, and painting terrible scenes of the consequences of the witches’ reign. Political pressure also played a role: subjects threatened to withdraw their oath of loyalty, and peasants threatened emigration (Scotland, the electorate of Trier) if the trials they demanded were not granted. More subtle strategies presented such demands on occasions of raising taxes or addressed princes by emphasizing the efforts in neighboring territories, thus exploiting political and confessional rivalry. If local officials supported princely objections against unrestricted persecutions, physical action reinforced verbal efforts: complaints about “hard pressing” from subjects often appeared in reports about such situations, although they also served to justify local officials in doing what they wanted anyway.

In several western regions of the Holy Roman Empire, including the southern Netherlands, popular promotion of witch hunts went as far as creating

communal committees. Formally and legally, they acted as a collective accuser, financially backed by the community, thus relieving individual accusers from the responsibility of paying the costs in case trials ended without condemnation. In practice, these committees did much more than present formal charges to courts or officials: their members collected evidence, hired notaries and lawyers, arranged for hearing witnesses, and even arrested and guarded the accused themselves. They exploited such functions to the point of continuing formal interrogations with their own methods, thus ensuring a high degree of success. Finally, the committees organized executions and accounted for all costs.

These committees represented the triumph of popular witch hunting. In certain regions of the electorate of Trier and in the nearby duchy of Luxembourg, they also produced numerous “unauthorized” trials, coming close to legalized lynching and social tyranny. But even when they were subjected to governmental control, the close alliance between village committees and local authorities guaranteed that the former had the final say: these committees of peasants, through continuous abuses of power and massive social support, determined who was to be accused. In rare cases, some victims obtained revenge (their justice), either by themselves denouncing their opponents as alleged accomplices or by their families demanding a similar fate for other members of the community through a simple but conclusive analogy.

This picture would be incomplete without considering the contribution made by instigators fueling popular fears about witches. Government ordinances trying to calm popular temper for reasons of political expediency were quick to denounce the “restless subjects” responsible for such disorder. But members of elite culture, like local priests (for example, in Cambrésis or Luxembourg) or preachers, sometimes assumed the role of instigators as well. In major western monarchies, which never tolerated such village committees, traveling witch finders made a temporary career of promoting and organizing real campaigns in villages and regions (Essex, Languedoc, Catalonia), drawing heavily on popular support. The Jesuit Friedrich Spee even reported entrepreneurial witch hunters in the electorate of Cologne who sent subordinates to villages stirring up peasant support for persecutions, so that their master’s “accidental” arrival there sufficed to start trials. Nevertheless, the role of such figures should not be exaggerated: English villagers had less need of Matthew Hopkins than he had of them.

The range and success of popular persecutions demonstrated how local conditions could override governmental policies. Hence, the crucial importance of local officials, notaries, and clerks, who protected committees against critical supervision from above. Town

magistrates and minor lords were important allies as well. Political reasons sometimes induced magistrates to start witch hunts to appease the population (for example, in Reutlingen and Lemgo), whereas minor lords realized that supporting popular demands for trials could help to defend or even extend their judicial rights against the territorial princes’ desire for governmental centralism. Not surprisingly, therefore, popular pressure was rarely directed against feudal lords. Such alliances between parts of the population and local authorities created a type of unauthorized and technically illegal trials (Votmer 2002; Kamen 1993).

Judicial localism did not interfere with inquisitorial procedure. On the contrary, the latter actually furthered social participation by using social evidence (e.g., testimonies about a suspect’s reputation) in witchcraft trials. However, when localities successfully avoided the requirements of imperial law and allowed local courts and village jurors to exercise their traditional rights and customs, popular input on the trials increased.

Judicial localism prevailed in most European states (for example, Poland), where we know of intense popular influence on persecutions. It therefore seems to have been an essential prerequisite to fulfill what at least part of the population wanted. However, we should not overlook the dissenting minorities, which for obvious reasons had to disguise themselves behind silence. Much scandal was required, often bloodshed, before governmental interest in local affairs encouraged those groups to express their opinions, thus revealing that “popular” persecutions were almost never unanimously popular.

WALTER RUMMEL

See also: ACCUSATIONS; BUIRMANN, FRANZ; COMMUNAL PERSECUTION; CONFESSIONS; COUNTERMAGIC; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; LYNCHING; MÖDEN, JOHANN; POPULAR BELIEFS IN WITCHES; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; STEARNE, JOHN; WITCH FINDERS; WITCH HUNTS.

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PORTUGAL

Portugal was a country without "witch hunts." It experienced thousands of recorded witchcraft accusations, much surveillance by judicial authorities, and considerable repression, but there was no "witch hunting." Although various tribunals (secular, episcopal, and, after 1536, the Inquisition) prosecuted several thousand people, only around ten cases of capital punishment are known between the mid-sixteenth century and the end of the eighteenth century. Most sentences involved exile, confinement, fines, and shaming rituals (e.g., public exposure at church doors or wearing distinct clothing). In other words, repression was not harsh. Hence, in the early modern period, Portugal avoided the witch panics and fears that afflicted many other parts of Europe. Most Portuguese victims were healers and sorcerers who practiced love magic or divination, not women accused of going to Sabbats or bringing death or illness to their neighbors. On the other hand, judicial prosecution reached its peak here in the first half of the eighteenth century, at a moment when persecution had practically ended in the places where witch hunts had been most violent.

A number of factors combined to produce such an unusually mild degree of repression: first, the education received by Portuguese elites at Coimbra University, with its strongly neo-Scholastic Thomist basis; second, a united, prestigious, and powerful Portuguese Church, undisturbed by the Protestant Reformation; third, the Church's patient Christianization of rural Portugal throughout the early modern era; fourth, a well-established anti-Jewish tradition throughout Portuguese society, which concentrated the Inquisition's attention on combating crypto-Jewish converts; and, finally, the specificity of Portuguese judicial procedure, namely, the absence of any attempt to treat witchcraft as an "excepted" crime (*crimen exceptum*).

In Portugal, forms of superstition were treated as crimes *mixti fori* (of mixed courts). In other words, those who practiced such superstitions could be prosecuted by the crown courts, by ecclesiastical courts, and, from 1536, by the Inquisition. Crimes of heresy were reserved for the latter.

The earliest legislation for this type of crime was ecclesiastical. The Braga Synod of 1281 prohibited divination or any other "deeds of magic." In fact, episcopal surveillance was maintained throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as can be seen in provisions of the Lisbon and Braga Synods of 1393 and 1439, respectively. Episcopal legislation increased after the beginning of the sixteenth century; diocesan constitutions introduced specific sections on how to deal with the problem of "superstitions," especially forbidding divination. Convicted magicians were excommunicated, as they had been in the Middle Ages. Nonetheless, during the sixteenth century, these constitutions referred only briefly to crimes of superstition. The use of holy objects in witchcraft, invocation of evil spirits, divination, and magical healing practices were forbidden, but the sentences proposed were lighter than in previous royal legislation. By the seventeenth century, the list of forbidden practices was extended and the degree of seriousness attributed to them increased. (The first constitutions regulating such practices came from the diocese of Guarda, printed in 1621.) Monetary fines, imprisonment, and exile were some of the means at the disposal of the ecclesiastical judges ruling on these cases.

Crown competence over illicit magical practices began with legislation in the reign of King João I; his royal edict of November 1385 forbade a series of practices, including pacts with the Devil, charms, and divination, all punishable by exile. Afterward, all the kingdom's law compilations included provisions on this matter. The *Ordenações Afonsinas* (issued by Afonso V in 1446) suggested capital punishment for those practicing witchcraft, with lesser sentences for divination and other forms of superstition. The *Ordenações Manuelinas* (issued by Manuel I in 1512) added more detailed descriptions of the condemned practices and classified punishable crimes into four levels. The first included the most serious crimes, such as using holy objects for purposes of illegal magic, invoking evil spirits, or performing love magic, all of which deserved capital punishment. The second encompassed divination, as well as possessing objects linked to the world of the dead and using them to harm others; such offenses were punishable by exile, branding on the face by hot irons, and monetary fines. The third group covered healing practices, and the fourth forbade healing or blessing animals without possessing a special license from the king or the bishops. Such minor cases were punishable by monetary fines and exile, depending on the accused

person's social condition. Manuel's code completed Portugal's secular legal framework for these crimes; the *Ordenações Filipinas*, issued in 1603 by Filipe II (Philip III of Spain), added nothing new.

The Inquisition's ordinances (*Regimentos*) defining the extent of its justice did not originally cover such matters. The first to do so were the ordinances of 1640, although there were some earlier letters from Portugal's inquisitor-general, Cardinal Henrique, which included provisions about divination. The 1640 ordinances forbade witchcraft, divination, and superstition whenever diabolical machination was presumed to exist. In case of a relapse, capital punishment was foreseen, always to be executed by royal courts. Less serious crimes were punishable by exile, prison, whippings, and defamation. In 1774 Portugal's last Inquisition ordinance was published, marking the end of state repression of magic and superstitious deeds by envisaging them as "idealistic and fantastical crimes" and declaring their perpetrators "impostors" who needed to be reeducated.

However, this legal framework tells us nothing about how royal or inquisitorial prosecutions were carried out in practical terms. Little is known about practices of royal justice, because all original documentation has been lost. We know that several kings (Duarte, Afonso V, João II, João III, and Sebastião) issued letters of pardon to witches prosecuted by royal courts. Other documents reported royal investigations of the practice of such crimes and told us of witches in crown prisons, but none bore specific information about such actions. However, one extremely violent episode of repression against witches was carried out by a royal court: in 1559, a trial ordered by the duke of Aveiro's judge sentenced six women to the stake in Lisbon. It was followed by an official inquiry in the Lisbon area, ordered by the Queen-Regent Catalina, which subsequently resulted in another execution. That was as close as Portugal ever came to a witch hunt.

The actions of Portugal's ecclesiastical courts are better known. Both bishops in their dioceses, mainly during their pastoral visits, and the Inquisition through the prosecution of the practitioners of such deeds left copious traces of their intervention (the Inquisition's first trials against sorcerers were held in 1541). As far as the number of prosecutions is concerned, bishops were apparently much more active: between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, several thousand individuals were prosecuted. In the diocese of Coimbra, our best-known example, around 2,000 cases were denounced during the bishop's visits between 1640 and 1770. Although it investigated many fewer cases, the Holy Office's treatment of these crimes was far more severe. Nonetheless, of the 912 cases brought before its three courts between 1540 and 1774 (370 at the Coimbra tribunal, 288 at Lisbon, and 254 at Évora), only four were "released to the secular arm," that is, sentenced to

death: a man at Évora in 1626, a woman at Coimbra in 1694, another man at Lisbon in 1735, and another woman at Évora in 1744.

The first half of the eighteenth century marked the summit of repression in Portugal, as the number of cases prosecuted both by episcopal justice and the Inquisition increased greatly, especially the persecution of healers. At this time, Christianization campaigns condemned practices and beliefs that were widely disseminated among the Portuguese; but they were carried out with much patience, seldom employing violent measures.

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See also: BEWITCHMENT; BRAZIL; COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; CUNNING FOLK; DIVINATION; GEOGRAPHY OF THE WITCH HUNTS; INQUISITION, PORTUGUESE; LOVE MAGIC; SUPERSTITION; WITCH HUNTS.

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POSSESSION, DEMONIC

The western Christian tradition shares with many other religions a belief that evil spirits can inhabit the body, causing dramatic physical and behavioral changes. Possession is sometimes said to be caused by witchcraft or a curse; at other times, its agonies are seen as God's punishment of a person's own sin. Devils can also possess a person spontaneously, with God's permission. In early modern Europe, the diagnosis of possession occurred on its largest scale in Christian history. Alleged witches were executed for causing possession, and some demoniacs assumed the role of oracles, as their "demons" discoursed on religious controversies or foretold the future.

SYMPTOMS OF POSSESSION

Most theologians agree that possession is a condition of the body manipulated by demons, not of the soul. Symptoms of demonic possession in the New Testament have influenced understandings of the phenomenon throughout Christian history: they include loss of sight (Matt. 12:22), hearing (Mark 9:25), or speech (Mark 9:17, 25–29; Matt. 12:22); superhuman strength (Luke 8:29; Mark 5:3–4); mania or suicidal tendencies (Mark 9:17–22); and falling “as if dead” (Mark 9:26–27). Beyond biblical precedents, criteria for diagnoses of possession have derived from an accumulation of authorities: Francesco Guazzo’s *Compendium Maleficarum* (A Summary of Witches, 1608) listed around fifty possible signs of possession, including speaking in languages unknown to the sufferer, grotesque bodily distortions, and strange movements under the skin. For the female possessed, symptoms of the Devil’s presence have been seen in the light of assumptions about natural female capacities and limitations: uncanny strength, knowledge of theology or foreign languages, talking in a “manly” voice, blaspheming, or a fondness for drinking songs are all recorded as typical symptoms of diabolic activity in women. Revulsion in the face of Christian symbols or rituals has often been depicted as decisive evidence that demons, not a natural ailment, are the cause of the person’s condition. In the early modern period, naturalist explanations maintained that all signs of possession, however strange, could have physical causes such as melancholy or “the mother” (hysteria). Indeed, the Catholic Church traditionally advised clerics to consider medical explanations of apparent possession to prevent frivolous or fruitless exorcisms. Historically, almost all mysterious or spectacular conditions, especially those with a mental or behavioral aspect or those that follow an unpredictable course, have at some time been seen as signs of possession.

However, we cannot assume that everyone diagnosed as possessed really did present with those symptoms or traits that were recorded as decisive. Aside from the fact that many accredited symptoms of possession seem implausible to most modern readers, historical actors have often “seen” possession for quite specific, if unconscious, reasons. By the time we reach surviving accounts of diagnosed demoniacs, their condition has usually progressed from an amorphous collection of physiological and psychological disturbances to a neatly categorized set of responses to preselected criteria, designed to help clerics and physicians decide what to do with them and who should treat them.

Many of those diagnosed as possessed were probably suffering from something, if only a kind of delirium. A modern association of possession with different forms of mental illness, such as posttraumatic conditions, does not seem out of order; but for historical cases, it

raises complex and ultimately unsolvable questions about the limits of retrospective diagnosis. Suggestions that apparent possession might be caused by food poisoning do not stand up to critical scrutiny. In the last analysis, possession remains for Christians a spiritual affliction that can only be legitimated through clerical diagnosis and cannot therefore be reduced to the spiritual equivalent of some biologically identifiable disease. Rather, its epidemiology in any given era is related to the significance attached to its perceived causes and claimed cures.

REASONS AND CAUSES

Christian belief holds that, with God’s permission, possession can occur when a demon or demons enter the body of a person made vulnerable through her or his own sin; when demons are sent by outsiders, notably witches; or when demons attack human beings of their own accord to spread their malice. Whatever its precipitating cause, a diagnosis of possession is usually recorded for some exemplary purpose, as a medium of divine instruction. For example, possession fulfils the purpose of exposing the sin of witchcraft; it can be a torment sent to test the faithful or punish sin; or a successful exorcism can show the Devil’s fear of the Christian deity. All these causes share the notion that God “uses the powers of evil to promote His own wise and mysterious purposes” (“Demonic Possession,” *Catholic Encyclopedia*). In Christian history, therefore, possible public responses to possession, especially in the form of exorcism, have mattered almost as much as the reasons for its diagnosis.

Jesus’s exorcisms served publicly to prove his divinity, and gospel accounts do not dwell on the moral condition of the possessed. New Testament demoniacs were not generally represented as suffering for their or others’ sins: they were simply victims of “unclean spirits.” Nor were possessing demons yet assimilated with the image of the Devil as the Hebrew Bible’s adversary of God: they were still incursions from a morally ambiguous spirit world, which could only be influenced by spiritually gifted people. Through the mouths of biblical demoniacs, “devils” gave reluctant testimony of Jesus’s divinity (Matt. 8:29; Mark 1:24–25; Mark 5:7; Luke 4:34, 41; Luke 8:28). These examples and the story of the girl possessed of a “spirit of divination” (Acts 16:16–18), have underscored the historical notion that the possessed are granted special insight, including an understanding of holy mysteries. Because John 8:44 refers to the Devil as the “Father of Lies,” however, theological commentators have generally argued that, although devils may sometimes speak the truth, they will also “mix honey with poison,” adding evil fabrications to lead the faithful astray.

In antiquity, possession and exorcism contributed to the spread of Christian cults. Many early Christian

proselytizers undertook exorcisms to demonstrate the special claims of the new religion, and the behavior of some demoniacs was a litmus test for the authenticity of holy relics. The primary function of these “seismographs of sanctity” (Brown 1977, 13) was not to be healed by exorcists; rather, their “devils” might be almost permanent fixtures at new holy sites, there to proclaim wildly the invisible potency of an apparently mundane object, such as a saint’s bone or garment.

In the context of Christian martyrdom, possession offers the opportunity to display a martyr’s willingness to endure the Devil’s torture from within. Historical accounts sometimes parallel possession with the torments of St. Anthony or even Job, who were not possessed but whom demons tormented to test their faith. Possession in this sense overlaps with *obsession*, a term that usually meant torment by devils from the outside but that is also used interchangeably with (or even, in many Latin texts, instead of) *possession*.

By the later Middle Ages, possession was increasingly understood as something suffered either as punishment for one’s own sins or as the consequence of another’s sins. Early modern commentators listed as typical causes of possession such sins as infidelity, the use of magic, contempt for religion, and causing harm to others. Parents cursing children was also cited as a common cause. The fact that possession could be punishment for using magic, however, alerts us to the possibility that witches themselves might be seen as possessed, even though they were also believed capable of causing possession in innocent victims. The moral position of the possessed, whether victims or sinners, is rarely clear: their standing depends on the significance God assigns to their possession; so possession in Christianity has more than one potential meaning or function.

EARLY MODERN POSSESSION

The early modern era has been called the “golden age of the demoniac” (Monter 1976, 60). Although a vast “hinterland” of possession (Clark 1997, 390) apparently existed throughout the Middle Ages and beyond, what was distinctive about this period is the simultaneous proliferation of many different forms of possession, interpreted and exploited for a wide range of purposes. Possession occurred across Europe and in its colonies, among members of the Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed churches. The rise in publicized possessions intersected with several social phenomena, including local campaigns against so-called superstition, fear of witchcraft and the occurrence of witch hunts, interconfessional conflict, heightened anxiety about the end of the world, a rise in public prophesying, and the pursuit of holiness through direct divine inspiration. In this era, all these phenomena—none of which was entirely new—were inflected by an intense fear of demons: in combination, they helped generate a virtual epidemic of possession.

Possession affected individual adults and children. It occurred among sexually mixed groups of all ages, as well as in female convents. Some individual demoniacs claimed attention through dramatic public exorcisms, making scandalous witchcraft accusations or prophesying. Catholics used exorcism most extensively; but widespread anxieties about the encroachments of the Devil in the world and the peerless example of Jesus’s own exorcisms meant that even those churches following strictly biblical precedents might legitimately employ exorcism as a form of proselytism. A conservative estimate, based on published sources alone, would suggest that several hundred cases of possession were diagnosed, involving hundreds of exorcists to remedy them, with many thousands of people witnessing major public exorcisms.

Although our knowledge of publicized cases tells us about the uses of possession for those who were not possessed—exorcists and their public—the experiences of the possessed themselves are of primary importance. It is hard to say why so many people in this era experienced what came to be seen as possession: even now, explanations of psychosomatic afflictions are rarely simple, and the geographical diversity and multiple forms of possession in this period make conclusive analysis especially difficult. At a time of such turbulent change, any number of circumstances could have induced real psychological discomfort, especially among socially marginal figures. In this regard, the story of Françoise Fontaine, whose first signs of possession appeared after royal soldiers raped her during the French religious wars, may stand for many. Publicized possessions also appear to have fed an unconscious awareness of the possibility of becoming possessed oneself. Critics of possessions leveled charges of “copycat” displays, and although the causes of outbreaks were doubtless more complex, knowledge of role models cannot be discounted as an influence.

WITCHCRAFT

From the late fourteenth century, campaigns against alleged superstition led to a growing “demonization” of popular healing methods, with several apparent implications for the history of possession. The clerical view that local healers might be guilty of witchcraft appears to have encouraged local people to seek help from priests. Villagers also appear to have become more inclined to see witchcraft and demons in otherwise inexplicable diseases, in many cases pointing to a diagnosis of possession. The notion that a witch had to be identified before bewitchment of any kind could be cured fed into this impulse. Priests influenced by demonology also appear to have been more interventionist in diagnosing possession. For example, in 1565, Nicole Obry’s family originally accepted her self-diagnosis that the spirit of her dead grandfather

possessed her and used such remedies as holy water and pilgrimages to help her. Only when a Dominican diagnosed the presence of a demon and proceeded to public exorcism did her story reach beyond her village. In the late sixteenth century, the wide dissemination of exorcism manuals among senior and junior clergy alike probably contributed to a wider diagnosis of possession at the local level.

Most people believed that devils could enter one's body and that witches could make this happen. Although some critics doubted that witches could send devils into other people, arguing that this attributed too much power to witches, Jean Bodin argued that it was possible, with God's permission. (Bodin 1580, fol. 76r and 160v). In cases of possession, witchcraft now became by far the most common diagnosed cause. Contemporary commentators noted the phenomenon: Father Gerard Grudius, describing the exorcisms he performed at Annonay in 1581, remarked "It is a great pity to see today that witches have such power, which is a bad sign" (quoted in Benedicti 1611, 70). Another exorcist at Loudun wrote in 1634: "In these unfortunate times we see that most possessions occur through malefice, God permitting that demons afflict the bodies of the most innocent through the intervention of witches and magicians" (Tranquille 1634, 68.)

Rather than simply expelling demons, clerics used exorcism in witchcraft show-trials to elicit information from the "possessing" devils. The Roman Ritual of 1614, published in part to curb such excesses, nonetheless explicitly permitted interrogation of the possessed, since the more one learned about the Devil's *modus operandi*, the easier it became to expel him. Exorcists stretched this concession by continually asking "demons" for testimony about the source of their victim's affliction. Because this apparent solicitation of the Devil offended some observers, exorcists reinforced demonic testimony with evidence from the possessed, speaking "as themselves" between bouts of demonic activity. Thus, the scriptural example of devils correctly identifying Jesus together with the pervasive Renaissance idea of the Devil as a natural magician who could do, see, and know beyond human capacities served as counterweights to fears of demons telling lies. In several notorious cases, mainly in France, the "devils" of the possessed told about the location of magic charms, which they said had to be found before they would leave the bodies of their victims. Such exorcisms sometimes lasted for months or even years, as "devils" postponed their departure dates. Thus, possession became a virtual profession for some, physically draining and frequently coerced.

POSSESSION AND PROPAGANDA

The premium on signs of direct divine action and intense rivalry between Christian churches in this period enabled exorcists to make demonic possession a

high-profile public issue. The possessed, successfully exorcised, took a prominent role in trying to convince audiences of the rightness of one church or another: marginalized Jesuits and Puritans in England used the possessed to show God's favor, and Catholic zealots on the Continent mobilized the possessed against Protestant and Catholic doubters alike. The logic of asking demons to defend a claim of divine favor was shaky, but the very paradox of "devils" being forced to acknowledge the power of God acting through a particular cleric or church made these performances convincing to many observers. (The risks to credibility were obvious, however, even to broadly sympathetic viewers. When an exorcist in the Catholic Low Countries ordered a devil to admit that the Catholic Church was the true church, another Catholic critic wrote that "if the bedevilled had said the contrary, they would have made a marvellous parade of it" [Lottin 1985, 129–130]). The displays of demoniacs also appeared to many as clear signs of the advent of the Antichrist, a harbinger of the Last Days, with possession offering significant evidence of Satan's malice loosed on the world (Clark, 1997, part III).

Each exorcist relied on the possessed to exhibit enough demonic revulsion and torment to prove his charismatic power to confront the Devil. Symbiotic relationships developed between the possessed and exorcists, who exhibited what psychologists call "codependency" and possibly a degree of mutual exploitation. Skeptics, voicing opinions heard since antiquity, compared their public displays to traveling shows or bear baiting and made accusations of sexual liaisons between female possessed and their exorcists. The demoniacs were often socially marginal figures—young women and youths—but they rarely came from the very lowest social strata and usually enjoyed at least minimal support among the elite. The possessed in sixteenth-century Augsburg, for example, included maids of elite families, whose exorcisms demonstrated the power of Catholic ritual in a confessionally divided city (Roper 1994).

POSSESSION AND SPIRITUALITY

European Catholicism underwent a major spiritual revival in the early modern period, with a rising cult of so-called living saints, charismatic figures who became a focus of veneration. Such people had characteristics in common with the possessed: possession was seen as a phenomenon akin to ecstasy, characterized by trance states and a capacity to expose otherwise inaccessible knowledge, such as news from purgatory or other people's hidden sins and private thoughts. Insofar as such displays by the possessed were deemed licit, these people functioned as a type of church-sanctioned witch, in a time when traditional witches were being persecuted. Indeed, the possibility of witchcraft accusations

against the possessed (and ecstasies) was ever-present. And although demonic possession offered some of these people, mostly women, an opportunity to display God's favor through their visible capacity to suffer, a sense of taint surrounded possession. Ecstasy and possession were considered legitimate only if the suffering was entirely involuntary, so any signs of personal pride in public success could create suspicions of witchcraft. No clear line separated possession, ecstasy, and witch status: categories were determined in an ad hoc manner, often subject to such extrinsic factors as patronage. Exorcists sometimes used their rite to test ecstasies, with the aim of summoning any devils lurking behind apparent displays of holiness; even St. Teresa was exorcised to ensure her holiness was not demonic. Possessed women and ecstatic mystics were extremely ambiguous figures: their resistance and suffering made them appear holy in times that craved holiness, but they were also highly suspect in times that saw the Devil everywhere.

It is not difficult to situate demonic possession in convents within the context of the increasingly rigorous religious standards imposed by the post-Tridentine Catholic Church; it is less easy to draw a line between possession as a conscious or unconscious response to this environment. At one extreme of the religious spectrum, a desire for self-mortification led some religious women to overdo their physical suffering in a way that simply turned their minds. This happened in possession cases in New Spain, at Lille in 1613, and at Montdidier, under the influence of Madeleine de Flers, an ecstatic who was allegedly possessed herself but who was also said to have caused other nuns to fall into possession. Other nuns appear to have pretended to be possessed or convinced themselves they were possessed to escape religious life, and this possibility was noted by contemporary authors. And one possessed woman in Germany "seems to have found in demon possession a way of expressing the two violently contradictory ways she felt about religion" (Midelfort 1989, 113–127)

FRAUD AND SKEPTICISM

In the thirteenth century, Abbot Caesarius of Heisterbach had a monk in one of his dialogues remark, "I do not deny that some have pretended to be possessed for worldly gain, but in many cases there is no pretense" (Caesarius von Heisterbach 1929, 333). Yet it is impossible to know how many demoniacs have been consciously fraudulent: the question is clouded both by the problem of perception in a Christian culture—one needs to believe in order to see—and because most recorded confessions of fraud tended to follow some kind of threat or coercion. The many proofs and signs of possession also make it open to suspicion of fraud: demoniacs in the early modern era quaked seemingly on cue in the presence of mundane items (such as unblessed water) presented to them as holy, and the stop-start quality of symptoms in the presence of

clerics was interpreted as collusion. Nor did those seen as possessed always embrace the diagnosis: Louise Capeau at Aix protested that she was not possessed, and the duke of Jülich-Cleves was a unique case of a major ruler who underwent exorcism for six months against his wishes in 1604. In both cases their protests were interpreted as proof of the Devil's presence. It could be said that a secularist search for the "reality" behind the displays of the possessed misses the point. The historical reality was what the documents described: situations of extreme passion, confusion, coercion, and suggestibility. Pressure to prove fraud arose within specific politico-confessional contexts, giving diagnoses a significance beyond the immediate question of how to treat the possessed. Literature voicing skepticism about demonic possession, originally embedded in such contexts, became part of a growing tradition that has helped shape both outright modern rejection of possession and ambivalence among Christians. Ironically, though, there are modern examples of secular doctors sending people who claim to be possessed to exorcists, who are sometimes able to cure them, as if by placebo.

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See also: AIX-EN-PROVENCE NUNS; AUGSBURG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY; BEWITCHMENT; BIBLE; BODIN, JEAN; CARPI, POSSESSION IN A POOR CLAIRE'S CONVENT; CONVENT CASES; DARRELL, JOHN; DEMONS; DEVIL; EXORCISM; FÉRY, JEANNE; GUAZZO, FRANCESCO MARIA; GUNTER, ANNE; JESUS; LIVING SAINTS; LOUDUN NUNS; LOUVIERS NUNS; MELANCHOLY; MENTAL ILLNESS; NEW SPAIN; OBRY, NICOLE; ORACLES; PADERBORN, BISHOPRIC OF; RANFAING, ELISABETH DE; SALEM; VALLÉES, MARIE DES.

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POTIONS

From the Latin *potare*, meaning "to drink," potions are a fundamental element of witchcraft and magic, having an ancient history in both literary depictions of the occult arts and their actual practice. In ancient Greece, the use of *pharmaka* (drugs or potions) was not always magical, and the term *pharmakeia* (the administering of

drugs or potions) can be divided into three main categories: magical uses, poisoning without magic, and the practice of medicine or healing.

The first recorded use of *pharmaka* by a witch occurs in book 10 of Homer's *Odyssey* (seventh-century B.C.E.), describing the sorceress Circe administering *kaka pharmaka* (evil drugs) and *pharmaka lygra* (dangerous drugs) to Odysseus's men, the results of which transformed them into pigs. In addition to the magic of transformation, Circe practices the art of rejuvenation, which is also achieved by using another potion or *pharmakon* to return the men to their previous form, but with a more youthful demeanor. The other major practitioner of potions in Greek literature was the sorceress Medea, whose magical poisons were the cause of several often-violent deaths throughout her myth cycle, including death by self-combustion. The *Argonautica* by the poet Apollonius (second-century B.C.E.) depicts Medea's early career as a sorceress in the art of *pharmakeia*. She kept a casket full of *polla pharmaka* (many drugs), some of which healed and some of which killed; in one particularly evocative passage in book 3, Apollonius describes one of Medea's potions called *pharmakon Prometheion* (the charm of Prometheus). This potion came from a magical plant that sprang from the fluids released from the Titan's veins while he was being perpetually torn open by an eagle, a punishment by Zeus for his insolence. To prepare this potion, one had to bathe in seven streams, sing rituals to Hecate, then be clothed in black, and cut the plant in darkness. This process clearly illustrates the symbiotic relationship between potion making and ritual, and Apollonius's description emphasized the ancients' differentiation between such occult arts and the more straightforward work of the herbalist.

The tradition of actual potion making in antiquity was best illustrated by the *Greek Magical Papyri* (PGM), which offered a collection of spells from Greco-Roman Egypt between the second-century B.C.E. and the fifth-century C.E. Herein were recipes for numerous magical outcomes, involving the use of a variety of substances ranging from basic ingredients to such exotic, hard-to-find, and expensive substances as myrrh, crocodile teeth, and body parts of wild animals (for example, a wolf's head). One of the recurring spells from the *Papyri* was a love potion or philter (e.g., PGM 4:2441–2621), a spell of attraction consisting of various animal and insect parts, including "the fat of a speckled goat that is a virgin" and "moon beetles" as well as frankincense and onions. The recipe told the spell caster how to prepare the ingredients, such as thorough pounding in a mortar and placement in a lead container. The instructions for the potion's use were complex, involving the enactment of the spell at a precise location (a high roof) and a specific time

(moonrise) together with a series of lengthy invocations to Hecate in her various guises.

The use of potions, particularly for love, was sufficiently widespread in antiquity that authors opposed to magic regularly advised unsuspecting men against allowing women to dabble in such things. For example, Plutarch's *Moralia* 139.5 (second century C.E.) warns husbands to be wary of love potions (*philtera*), which he aligned with sorcery (*goeteia*) because they could, at the very least, undermine male authority in the household. The inherent danger of such magic was illustrated in the references to the adverse affects on the object of the spell: Suetonius (69–140 C.E.) describes how the Roman Emperor Caligula went insane after imbibing a philter dispensed by his wife, Caesonia.

The use of potions in early modern Europe, as in antiquity, involved a sometimes-vague definition in terms of the practitioners, blurring the lines of classification among healers (or doctors), herbalists, poisoners, and witches. The stereotypical view of the woman healer or herbalist executed or ostracized on charges of witchcraft testified to this skewed taxonomy; as Scotland's Sir George Mackenzie observed in 1678: "Not only witches but even naturalists may give potions that incline men and women to lust" (*Laws and Customs of Scotland in Matters Criminal*). Nevertheless, evidence of making potions was a topos of witchcraft literature, trials, and records. Amid numerous accounts of potion making was a reference to the use of human parts, "especially the bodies of those who have been punished by death or hanged," in Francesco Maria Guazzo's 1626 *Compendium Maleficarum* (A Summary of Witches, book 2, chap. 2). Guazzo continued in the same vein: "For not only from such horrid material do they [witches] renew their evil spells, but also from the actual appliances used at executions, such as the rope, the chains, the stake, and the iron tools." He also described some of the ingredients used in deadly potions, including "leaves and stalks and roots of plants; from animals, fishes, venomous reptiles, stones and metals," and explained that "sometimes these are reduced to powder and sometimes to an ointment" (2:3). Such deadly potions and, more significantly, those who used them, were often blamed for spreading outbreaks of the plague, as exemplified by an incident in Geneva in 1545, when a witch hunt was orchestrated after a man had confessed to having started a pestilence by anointing the foot of a hanged man as well as several door bolts with such a potion.

One of the most common beliefs connected the use of potions in witchcraft with the witches' flight. Ointments used for flying supposedly included the fat of children as well as assorted narcotics. Among the most detailed account of flying potions was that given by Jean de Nynauld in 1615 in his *De la lycanthropie, transformation, et extase des sorciers* (Lycanthropy,

Metamorphosis, and Ecstasy of Witches). Nynauld specified, however, that the potions used only gave the impression of flying: for such a sensation, a witch could take belladonna (deadly nightshade), eat the brain of a cat, or if a more exotic potion was unavailable, get drunk. For the hallucinogenic effect of travel to a Sabbat, Nynauld explained that a witch could prepare a potion also composed of baby fat plus, among other ingredients, the juice of water parsnip and, again, belladonna (which does produce hallucinogenic effects). Despite the doubts by authors such as de Nynauld that witches could actually fly, popular belief in many countries maintained they could—aided, of course, by Satan. Artwork both before and during the persecution era consistently combined the image of the witch with potion making and flying, specifying the flight-inducing powers of the witches' concoctions. In a chiaroscuro woodcut by Hans Baldung [Grien] of 1510, four witches were depicted: three involved in the process of potion making and one, in the air, riding a demonic goat. The stereotypical implication of the image was the direct association between the airborne witch and the potion of her "sisters," the vapors of which curled into the air, whirling about in a "flying" motion.

The more fantastic accounts of witchcraft include many references to the Devil's role in providing both potions and powders to the witch. The powders often came in different colors, each denoting the substance's specific use. Alternatively, the witch could make her own potions or powders, sometimes at the Sabbat, from such ingredients as toad venom, body parts (particularly from stillborn babies), and stolen Hosts. The belief that such substances could heal as well as harm indicated the contradictory societal perceptions of the witch's powers; she could be sought by a desperate client to provide a cure beyond the abilities of more official healers or medical practitioners, thereby simultaneously signifying the role of the witch as a potentially viable alternative to the curing powers of God.

Potions, along with amulets and spells, were also believed to prevent or ease the pain of torture. This, unfortunately, often led to the torture of the accused being prolonged, usually until a full confession was obtained.

MARGUERITE JOHNSON

See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BALDUNG [GRIEN], HANS; CIRCE; DRUGS AND HALLUCINOGENS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; *GREEK MAGICAL PAPYRI*; HECATE; HEMLOCK; LOVE MAGIC; MEDEA; NIGHTSHADE; OINTMENTS; PLAGUE; POISON; SPELLS.

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POZNAŃ

Poznań, the capital of Wielkopolska (Greater Poland), is famed as the location of both ecclesiastical and secular courts that heard some of Poland's earliest witchcraft trials (fifteenth century) and the purported last trial in Europe in 1793. This case remains a subject of controversy; Polish historians have dismissed it as German propaganda in the wake of the partitions of Poland, but its inclusion in Wilhelm Soldan's widely used history has ensured subsequent citation. It was reported in 1801 that when members of a Prussian commission reached a certain town in Poland in 1793, they saw the remains of stakes, and the town magistrate told them that two witches had been burned there. Polish historians are convinced that the vague terminology used to describe the event makes its authenticity dubious. This case was mentioned in the *Himmlerkartoteka* (Himmler card index), a collection of trials gathered by the *H-Sonnderkommando* (Special Unit H [Hexen = witches]) on the orders of Heinrich Himmler, whose more than 30,000 cards are now housed in the state archive in Poznań. The archive also contains records from the *województwo* (palatinate) of Wielkopolska (Greater Poland).

CASES

Accusations of witchcraft were heard by Poznań's ecclesiastical courts as early as 1430 (*Acta* number 1016), and over a dozen sentences were passed down over the next century. Cases were brought on charges of counter-magic, preventive practices against illness, causing illness, attempted murder by female spouses, increase of crop output, and causing impotence. Poison was still largely synonymous with witchcraft, as a case from 1517 reveals (*Acta* number 1709). Witchcraft accusations were also used as a mechanism to dispose of unwanted spouses, as illustrated by the case of Malgorzata Zawarta, whose husband accused her of witchcraft. It was also claimed that she used the finger of a hanged man to improve beer fermentation. She was sentenced to death but was later pardoned (*Acta* number 1016). An ecclesiastical court probably passed the first death sentence in 1511, but they were rarely

carried out. The majority of cases ended in recantation or another form of punishment, such as an offering to the Church. Ecclesiastical courts continued to hear cases until the mid-sixteenth century. Secular courts (despite jurisdiction having passed officially to the ecclesiastical courts in 1543) heard their first cases of witchcraft in 1544, those of Dorota Gnieczkowa (sentenced to death at the stake) and Agnieszka of Żabikowo. In a similar fashion to the cases heard before ecclesiastical courts, accusations consisted largely of pouring wax to divine the identity of a thief, washing cows with herbs to protect the milk yield, or other harmless practices. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, trials began to include details of diabolic practices, and death at the stake was the usual sentence.

DEMONOLOGY

Poznań contained printing houses of various Christian confessions, which published some of the most important treatises, as well as many legal codices, including *Speculum Saxonum* (Law of the Saxons); Chelmno Law; Magdeburg Law; Polish Crown Law; and a collection of Roman, Canon, and Saxon laws. Of particular note was Wojciech Regulus's publishing house, responsible for the publication of an anonymous work in 1639, *Czarownica powolana* (A Witch Denounced). It was considered by some to be the first vernacular translation of Friedrich Spee's famous *Cautio Criminalis* (A Warning on Criminal Justice) of 1631, but it differed from Spee's work in many respects. It was published in the same year as Daniel Wisner's *Tractatus brevis de extramagi, lamii, veneticis* (Brief Treatise on Magic, Witches, and Poisoners), which also criticized the abuses committed by the judiciary during witchcraft trials. This work, significantly, was dedicated to Łukasz and Krzysztof Opaliński. The latter wrote a satirical verse ridiculing the tendency to attribute all misfortune to witches, who were generally harmless peasant women. Another work critical of judicial abuses was Serafin Gamalski's *Przestrogi duchowne* (Clerical Warnings), published posthumously in 1742. The author claimed to have heard the confessions of those accused of witchcraft and was convinced of their innocence. A common feature of these Poznań authors was their emphasis on the large number of witchcraft executions, which, however, is not corroborated by the extant trial records.

WANDA WYPORSKA

See also: BARANOWSKI, BOGDAN; CLERGY; COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; DEMONOLOGY; NAZI INTEREST IN WITCH PERSECUTION; POLAND; SPEE, FRIEDRICH.

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PRÄTORIUS, ANTON (1560–1613)

A German Reformed parson, in 1598 Prätorius published the important treatise *Von Zauberey und Zauberern Gründlicher Bericht* (A Thorough Account of Magic and Magicians), which clearly opposed witchcraft persecution and demanded abolishing torture immediately; he was one of the first authors in Germany to propose this radical solution.

We know little about his early years or his education. After 1581, he was recorded as teaching in Lippstadt, later becoming headmaster of the Latin school in Kamen. He appeared in 1587 as a Lutheran deacon at Worms and in 1589 as a Reformed deacon at Oppenheim in the electoral Palatinate. In 1592, Prätorius became parson of Dittelsheim, a Palatine village, moving in 1595 to Offenbach am Main in the county of Isenburg-Büdingen. From 1596 to 1598, he held the post of court chaplain at Birstein before returning to the electoral Palatinate as parson of Laudenschlag, where he remained for the rest of his life.

The cause that provoked Prätorius's treatise against witchcraft persecution was the abominations of the trials he had personally witnessed because of his position as court chaplain in Birstein. In 1597, he was directly involved in the trials against four women accused as witches. Despite vigorous intervention in their favor, he was unable to save their lives. Shaken by this experience, Prätorius wrote his book and returned to serve in the electoral Palatinate, which rejected persecution. Prätorius originally published his treatise under the name of his son Johannes Scultetus. When the book sold out quickly and was republished in 1602 and 1613 in rewritten editions, he used his own name. (Another edition in 1629 simply reprinted the 1602 edition.)

Prätorius was skeptical of the belief in witchcraft, not only criticizing the procedures of its persecution but also denying the reality of witchcraft. He named Benedikt Pererius, Johann Georg Goedelmann, Otto Melander, and especially Hermann Witekind from the electoral Palatinate as his most important predecessors and role models. Moreover, the electoral Palatinate's rejection of witchcraft persecutions obviously influenced Prätorius through his contacts and employment.

Prätorius showed an intimate knowledge of most contemporary treatises on witchcraft but commented on them only briefly. He founded his arguments mainly

on the Bible, following common exegetical practices among Reformed theologians. Like other skeptics, Prätorius's viewpoint was theocentric: God is almighty; only he could override the laws of nature in his creation, and neither the Devil nor wizards possessed any physical powers that transcend nature. Physical harm through magic thus could not be real. Nor were any of the three elements (the witches' flight, participation in the Sabbath, and sexual intercourse with the Devil) that constituted witchcraft in the strict sense; all of them existed only in fantasy. Here Prätorius did not rely on the Bible alone but founded his argument also on the empirical reasoning of Hermann Witekind, typical of Reformed discourse in Germany.

According to Prätorius, all witches were guilty of the spiritual crime of apostasy and the diabolical pact. Their crimes were most horrible and would be punished by God with eternal damnation if the sinner did not repent. This did not, however, justify the death penalty by secular justice. Although unlike Witekind, Prätorius relied mostly on the Hebrew Bible and affirmed the validity of the Mosaic laws, he emphasized with Johann Weyer that the death penalty of Exodus 22:18 (22:17) was not directed indiscriminately against all kinds of sorcerers, but only against poisoners. With any spiritual crime, the sinner could always repent, after which God no longer desired his physical destruction. In principle, sorcery must be punished by secular justice, but in cases of conversion, not with the death penalty. He thus adopted the social-disciplinary position of his predecessors, not deterring sorcery post facto through criminal justice but preventing it by restoring true Christian faith and conduct among the people.

Concerning procedural law, Prätorius began by rejecting the idea of witchcraft as a *crimen exceptum* (excepted crime). For him, correct legal proceedings began with humane conditions of incarceration. His critical descriptions of the often-inhumane conditions of early modern imprisonment could be considered standard. However, his arguments against torture were quite revolutionary: based on his personal experiences in prosecuting witchcraft, Prätorius demanded nothing less than the immediate abolition of torture in European criminal proceedings. None of his predecessors had demanded this in such radical fashion. This achievement secured Prätorius an important place in the history of German criminal law, even though he did not argue for open assessment of evidence as a replacement for torture, thus making his argument less forceful.

JÜRGEN MICHAEL SCHMIDT

See also: EXODUS 22:18 (22:17); GOEDELMAN, JOHANN GEORG; PALATINATE, ELECTORATE OF; SKEPTICISM; WEYER, JOHANN; WITEKIND, HERMANN.

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PRÄTORIUS, JOHANNES (1630–1680)

Prätorius (whose real name was Hans Schulte and who should not be confused with Anton Prätorius, who used the pseudonym Johann Scultetus) was a graduate of Leipzig University, a polymath, and a Baroque poet. Under numerous, deliberately amusing pseudonyms (such as Steffen Läusepeltz, or "Stephen Lice-Fur"), he published more than fifty treatises and collections of myths and fairy tales, dealing predominantly with occult themes and folk beliefs or superstitions. In his *Bockes-Berges Verrichtung* (Performance at the Blocksberg), published in 1668, Prätorius provided a compilation of popular and learned ideas about magic, sorcery, and witchcraft. As a result of its use by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and the brothers Grimm, this compilation also influenced nineteenth-century German literature.

Prätorius was born in the Lutheran village of Zethlingen in Sachsen-Anhalt. After attending grammar school at Halle, he matriculated at the University of Leipzig. He pursued various branches of study in the natural sciences, graduating with a master of arts degree in 1653. After giving several unsalaried lecture series on astrology, chiromancy (or palmistry), and geography at the university, he was named poet laureate, a title he valued very highly, in 1659. Remaining in Leipzig until he died of the plague a few days after his fiftieth birthday, he used the resources of the university's library (housed in the so-called *Paulinum*) as the basis for his many treatises and

anthologies. The works of Prätorius had considerable influence on other German writers; Hans Jacob Christoph von Grimmelshausen had already drawn on them before Prätorius's death, and Goethe, Friedrich von Schiller, and Clemens Brentano also valued the treatises of Prätorius as treasure troves of material to be utilized in their own publications (Goethe, for example, drew on the *Bockes-Berges Verrichtung* in creating his immortal Walpurgis Night scene in part 1 of *Faust*, published in 1808). Prätorius's collection of stories about the Silesian mountain spirit Rübezahl remains well-known to this day.

After Prätorius had announced its publication several times, in 1668 finally appeared the *Bockes-Berges Verrichtung/oder ausführlicher geographischer Bericht von den hohen trefflich alt- und berühmten Bockes-Berge. Ingleichen von der Hexenfahrt und Zauber-Sabbathe, so auff solchen Berge die Unholden aus gantz Teutschland jährlich den 1. Mai in Sanct Walpurgisnacht anstellen sollen* (Performance at the Blocksberg, or Detailed, Geographical Report of the High, Excellent, Old, and Famous Blocksberg. Also Treating of the Witches' Journey and Magical Sabbath, That the Witches from All over Germany Supposedly Attend Every Year on This Mountain During Walpurgis Night, the First of May). Prätorius used a travel narrative, written by another author in 1653, to begin the German version of his treatise: it described a journey over the Blocksberg (which lay in the Harz region) and other nearby places. The rest of the work was divided into two main parts. Here Prätorius used the *Blocksberg* of the title (also known in German as the *Brocken*), presented as the chief meeting-place of German witches, as a thematic introduction to a broader discussion of witchcraft belief. Prätorius devoted the first part of the work to describing various sinister places, such as those where witches supposedly gathered, and accursed caves, lakes, or mountaintops that were supposedly haunted by ghosts and spirits.

The second part of the work was divided into eight chapters. Here Prätorius presented "reports" about the flights of witches and the supposed activities of witches at their gatherings, or Sabbats, and told stories of various horrible occurrences that had allegedly involved the practice of harmful magic. He went into great detail on the themes of the Devil's sexual relationships with witches and of incubi, succubi, and changeling children, drawing on the Tannhäuser legend of the *Mons Veneris* (Venusberg, or Venus Mountain), written by Heinrich Kornmann in 1614. Prätorius also discussed the possibility that witches could change themselves into animals. He concluded the work with a collection of popular stories about ghosts and spirits, including tales of the mountain-spirit Rübezahl and of the "furious army," a horrific-looking group of spirits of dead men who were believed to travel at night, marauding and generally terrifying the living.

The *Blockes-Berges Verrichtung* offered a compendium or textbook of witchcraft, aimed at an interested public. In composing it, Prätorius used a vast range of ancient, medieval, and contemporary writings and treatises, including authors from both sides of the debate about witchcraft belief. Prätorius drew uncritically on their work, using any stories that seemed to fit best into his own compilation. Thus, he drew both on the work of the skeptic Johann Weyer and used material from the hard-line *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, whose author he mistakenly cited as Jacob Sprenger). He took information pell-mell from Catholics and Protestants—Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg, Ulrich Molitor, Olaus Magnus, Girolamo Cardano, Paulo Grillando, Jean Bodin, Nicolas Rémy, Lambert Daneau, David Meder, and Benedict Carpzov, among others. Prätorius was genuinely convinced of the real corporeal existence of the Devil and the demons and evil spirits who served him; he believed that witches really made pacts with the Devil and had intercourse with him, changed themselves into animals, flew to Sabbats, and performed harmful magic.

RITA VOLTMER;

TRANSLATED BY ALISON ROWLANDS

See also: GRIMM, JAOCB; SABBAT; WALPURGIS (WALPURIGS) NIGHT.

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PRICKING OF SUSPECTED WITCHES

A common way of detecting the "Devil's mark," an insensitive spot that would not bleed when pricked with a pin, was called pricking. If such a mark was found, it provided important evidence for prosecuting a witch.

The insensitive spot was only one kind of Devil's mark. Other marks were detected by means other than pricking: a protruding teat with which English witches were believed to suckle their "familiar" (the witch's mark); an area of discolored skin, sometimes perceived as the shape of a small animal or as the imprint of the Devil's claw; a mark in the eye, which a few witch detectors claimed to have special powers to see; or simply a mark that the suspect confessed to possessing and that therefore required little or no physical verification.

Physical verification by pricking was often a lengthy process involving an experienced pricker and

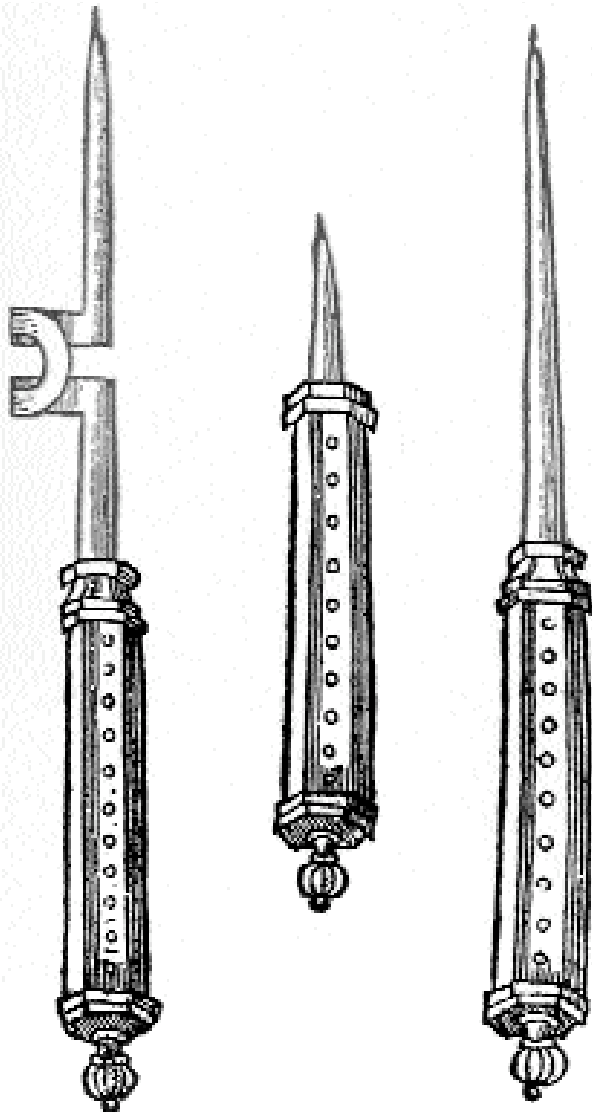
numerous witnesses. The suspect would be blindfolded, partially or wholly stripped, and pricked with pins until a spot was found where a pin could enter undetected. Sometimes their body hair would be shaved. The pins varied in length from two fingers' breadth to 3 inches, occasionally more. In one French case from 1624, a pin of four fingers' breadth sank into a suspect's buttock irrecoverably. Jean Bodin, citing Revelation 14:9, expected the mark on the forehead or hand. In practice, prickers found marks in a variety of locations, with the back, shoulder, buttock, or thigh being common. Theologically the Devil's mark was equivalent to Christian baptism, which could be administered only once, but two or more marks were often found.

Church ministers or gentlemen supervising pretrial investigations might do their own pricking of suspects. The court might commission physicians, surgeons, or quasi-medical men (such as barbers). Executioners' anatomical expertise could be used for pricking as well as judicial torture. Judges or court officials might do their own pricking. A few courts commissioned women prickers; one Franche-Comté case called them *chirurgiennes*. Some regions had itinerant professional prickers; in 1621, a hangman based at Rocroi, near the French border with the Netherlands, admitted he had done this service for pay 231 times.

With practice, it was probably easy to find insensitive spots. Many "marks" were probably birthmarks or warts, both of which could be insensitive. Most suspects were older people who had spent a lifetime in physical labor and whose nutrition was sometimes poor; many of them had old scars or circulatory or arthritic problems associated with losses of local sensation. It would be interesting to know what proportion of witchcraft suspects might have had physical features vulnerable to the pricker. One Scottish pricker in northern England claimed to find marks on twenty-seven out of thirty suspects brought to him, which might be some indication. This pricker, however, was a professional and, like his colleague at Rocroi, seems to have been a fraud.

With amateur prickers, the problem was more likely to be self-deception; if they were convinced that the mark existed, they would be less rigorous in their search. Did the pin *really* enter so deeply and was there *really* no pain? Occasions when the suspect felt and expressed pain were sometimes recorded, but they represented failures on the pricker's part; probably most such occasions were passed over silently. Some suspects' claims to feel pain were rejected because they could not identify the spot precisely enough or simply because no blood flowed from it. Ultimately, pricking depended more on belief and perception than on physical evidence.

Technically, pricking was not "torture." The aim of judicial torture was to inflict pain in order to secure a



Courts employed pricking with pins to detect the Devil's mark, the insensitive spot on a witch's body where the Devil had marked his servant. (TopFoto.co.uk)

confession: pricking, by contrast, aimed to inflict *no* pain in order to secure physical evidence. Some pricking may have been connected with the popular belief that scratching them to draw blood could counteract witches' magic, and here pain would be expected. In practice, pricking was a coercive procedure that could help to break down a suspect's resistance and make a confession easier to obtain. Numerous witches began to confess after they were told that a mark had been found. This was particularly important for women, for whom being stripped, shaved, searched intimately, and pricked by men could be a form of symbolic rape.

Unlike the swimming test, which resembled a judicial ordeal (an appeal to God to display the truth), pricking seems to have had no medieval antecedents and has not been traced back further than the mid-

sixteenth century; unfortunately, many reports of the finding of the "mark" leave the discovery method unspecified. Pricking undoubtedly gained in importance during the early seventeenth century, above all in Protestant regions, where the Devil's mark seemed relatively more important than among Catholics. For example, the Inquisition did not use pricking.

The belief that the Devil might remove his mark in order to protect witches may have been a largely Catholic one. In 1631, the Jesuit Friedrich Spee complained that if the pricker failed to find a mark, the judge would decide that the Devil had removed it in order to protect the witch. This could occasionally be used against a suspect, enabling the prosecution to claim that a suspect was still guilty even though no mark had been found, which seems to have happened with another Jesuit, Urbain Grandier, in Loudun in 1634. But more often, the belief in the mark's erasability seems to have discouraged courts from seeking it. Some suspects even volunteered to be pricked in the belief that it would prove their innocence.

Usually of lower-class origins, professional prickers were among the few people who clearly stood to profit financially from witch hunting. During periods of intense witch hunting, they could make a windfall profit by offering their services to worried local authorities. They flourished particularly in seventeenth-century Scotland, where about ten professional prickers are known. Payment by results opened a temptation to outright fraud, for which five Scottish prickers were prosecuted or reprimanded. Two turned out to be women dressed as men. The activities of an unnamed Scottish pricker in the north of England in 1650 are particularly well documented. He pricked many women brought to him through neighborhood denunciations, charging 20 shillings apiece, and his evidence seemed to have been central in their trials. He had presumably begun his career in the Scottish panic of 1649. He was executed for fraud in Scotland after reportedly confessing responsibility for the deaths of 220 witches (the Rocroi hangman, who may hold the European record by discovering a mark 231 times, was sentenced to perpetual service in the galleys by the *Parlement* of Paris).

In 1631, Friedrich Spee warned that prickers should be watched carefully because they were prone to fraud: they would cry out that a mark had been found, or would use a retractable bodkin. An illustration of such a bodkin was published by Reginald Scot in 1584, though he cited it as a general proof of the possibility of fraud in witchcraft accusations and did not specifically mention pricking. Most prickers seem to have preferred ordinary needles, rather than bodkins with handles. The exposure of frauds fueled skepticism about prickers by the mid-seventeenth century, even among the medical profession: for example, Genevan surgeons searched over a dozen suspected witches after 1622 but

never found an unambiguous Devil's mark. The practice was never banned but faded away along with the witchcraft trials.

JULIAN GOODARE

See also: BODIN, JEAN; DEVIL'S MARK; EVIDENCE; FAMILIARS; LOUDUN NUNS; PROOF, PROBLEM OF; SCOT, REGINALD; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; SWIMMING TEST; TORTURE; WITCH'S MARK.

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PRIERIAS, SILVESTRO (CA. 1456/1457–CA. 1527)

Theologian and inquisitor best known as the first Roman respondent to Martin Luther, Silvestro Mazzolini da Prierio or Prierias (as he is usually called, after his birthplace in Piedmont, Italy) wrote several influential works on witchcraft and demonology that helped fuel witch hysteria in early modern Europe.

Born in 1456 or 1457, Prierias entered the Dominican order in 1471, joining the reformed Observant branch of Lombardy. After studying philosophy and theology at the *studium generale* (house of studies) in the convent of San Domenico in Bologna, he began his teaching career there in 1489 as master of studies, later serving also as its regent master (1499–1502). In 1508 came appointments as both vicar general of his Lombard Dominican congregation and inquisitor for Brescia, Crema, and environs, a position the friar held until 1511, when he was transferred to Sant'Eustorgio in Milan as inquisitor for the busier territories of Milan, Piacenza, and Lodi. The Observant Dominicans lost control of Sant'Eustorgio in 1512, and Prierias moved to Cremona as prior of the convent of San Domenico. In 1514, he was sent to teach theology in Rome where, in the following year, Pope Leo X appointed him to the chair of theology at the University of Rome, while also naming him master of the sacred palace (i.e., official theologian of the papal curia) as well as Roman inquisitor, responsible for all inquisitional activities of the tribunal at Santa Maria sopra Minerva. In 1518 the pope assigned to Prierias the task of evaluating the orthodoxy of Martin Luther's *Ninety-Five Theses*; the Dominican's resultant critique, the *Dialogus* (Dialogue), as well as subsequent

elaborations and responses, set in motion the process that soon led to Luther's condemnation as a heretic. Prierias died in Rome, most likely in 1527.

Among Prierias's other major works are the 1503 *Rosa aurea* (Golden Rose), a preacher's handbook reprinted nineteen times in the sixteenth century, and the 1514 *Summa summarum de casibus conscientibus* (Complete Compendium of Cases of Conscience), better known as the *Summa silvestrina* (Silvester's Compendium), a theological, moral and canonical handbook for confessors, reprinted twenty-nine times.

Most important for our subject, however, are his early treatises on the Devil, demonic possession, and exorcism, the *Tractatus de diabolo* (1502, reprinted 1573); the *De strigimagarum, demonumque mirandis* (Concerning the Prodigies of the Witch-Magicians and Demons, 1521, reprinted 1575); and the various relevant entries (e.g., *Haeresis*, *Maleficium*, *Superstitio* [Heresy, Sorcery, Superstition]) in the *Summa silvestrina*, some of which represent the core of Lenten sermons collected in his *Quadragesimale aureum* (Golden Lenten Sermon Series) of 1515.

Prierias's interest in demonology and witchcraft surfaced early in his Dominican career and remained a constant preoccupation thereafter. Already as regent master in Bologna, if not sooner, he participated in exorcisms and witchcraft trials and summarized the fruit of this experience in *De diabolo*. Prierias's approach was consistently hard-line; his goal, to overcome the leniency toward witchcraft and related activities encouraged by traditional interpretations of the Church's central legal text on the matter, the *Canon Episcopi* (ca. 906), which consigned such phenomena merely to the realm of personal delusion and harmless superstition. Prierias acknowledged that in earlier centuries this may have been true but warned that recent times had seen the birth of a new, internationally organized sect of heretics consisting of antinomian, devil-worshipping women and men who, through nocturnal flight, gathered for orgiastic Sabbats, engaged in sorcery, and wrought acts of malevolence against private citizens and the established Christian order.

Prierias told us that he wrote his longest work on the subject, the *De strigimagarum*, because he had encountered alarming skepticism among his peers while serving as judge in a Roman witchcraft trial. Besides its intransigence, *De strigimagarum* was noteworthy for the neologism introduced by its author, namely, the term *strigimagus*, created to enforce the view that the two hitherto distinct categories of persons, the common witches (*striges*) and the more prestigious scientific-philosophical magicians (*magi*), were in fact equally diabolical and deserving of elimination. However, beyond this, the work added little to earlier works by other writers or by Prierias. Ultimately, Prierias's efforts helped to heighten Christendom's awareness and

fear of this “new sect” of witches. However, the theologian-inquisitor was only partially successful in his own homeland: although early modern Italy prosecuted witches, their punishments were usually lenient, and actual executions were few, relative to the rest of Europe.

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See also: *CANON EPISCOPI*; DEMONOLOGY; DOMINICAN ORDER; ITALY.

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PRODIGIES

Prodigies are phenomena—natural or supernatural, but often marvelous or wonderful—that are interpreted as signs of future events, usually disastrous.

“Prodigies” include monsters, deformed births, comets, wars, famines, pestilence, earthquakes, ghosts, dreams, demons, and witches. Belief in prodigies rests on belief in a theocentric (God-centered) and unified universe. In this way, the divine plan may include unusual events or creatures on earth that people interpret as punishments or as spurs to action and moral reformation. Similarly, aberrations in the natural order are considered to be the result of human discord and sin. Such wonders can also be given scientific or natural explanations, but in the Western tradition, theological or eschatological (related to the Last Judgment and the end of the world) explanations have predominated. The literature of prodigies is large, reaching its peak in Europe during the religious and political unrest of the early modern period between 1450 and 1750.

PRODIGIES IN ANTIQUITY

Such classical authors as Aristotle, Virgil, Seneca, Pliny the Elder, and Plutarch recorded numerous prodigies. Cicero attempted to categorize and explain prodigies in *De divinatione* (On Divination). He explained that the meaning of “prodigy” derives from the way in which such wonders “predict” (*praedicunt*), but argued that some wonders should not be given a prodigious interpretation.

The Judeo-Christian tradition is full of prodigious events. For example, in the Hebrew Bible, plagues of locusts, frogs, and caterpillars rain down upon such wicked kings and nations as Pharaoh and the Philistines. In the New Testament, the Gospels of

Matthew, Mark, and Luke also provide lists of prodigies and portents of future calamities. Jesus’s warning of the impending days of vengeance (Luke 21:25), “And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars,” was often cited by medieval and early modern doomsayers. Moreover, according to the Revelation of St. John, the four horsemen who would appear at the Apocalypse would rain down war, famine, and plague on the earth. Indeed, a medieval prophetic legend, the Fifteen Signs before Doomsday, described a succession of prodigies that would appear in the fortnight before the Last Judgment. The book of Revelation also describes how the binding up of Satan at the second coming of Jesus would last 1,000 years. As a result, medieval and early modern Europeans believed that an upsurge in prodigies, including false prophecy, magic, and witchcraft, was caused by the Devil, who was angered at the thought that he had little time left and was hastening to do as much damage as he could. The approach of the millennium was also signaled by the appearance of the Antichrist, with whom many prodigies were associated. St. Augustine, following Pliny the Elder and Cicero, found the preoccupation with the evils that were supposed to follow specific wonders disagreeable, because it detracted from the more general wonder and beauty of God’s plans and led people to expect an imminent Apocalypse. However, later medieval and early modern writers enthusiastically embraced the biblical emphasis on prodigies as divine messages and signs of things to come.

MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN PRODIGIES

Much of the classical tradition of prodigy literature was transmitted through the writings of the encyclopedist Isidore of Seville and Albertus Magnus (ca. 1200–1280), as well as by the authors of numerous texts on herbs (herbals) and strange animals (bestiaries). Although the scope for wonderful yet essentially regular species widened as natural causes were investigated under the influence of Arabic and Greek texts, most medieval writers accepted God’s prerogative to suspend the normal laws of nature and produce prodigies. Therefore, singular events such as the conjunction of planets (e.g., Mars and Saturn in 1484), bright comets (e.g., Halley’s Comet of 1066), and snow in summer or plagues of mice were interpreted as threatening and divine messages.

Religious disputes and political tensions contributed to a spate of prodigy literature during the sixteenth century. There was an enormous range of texts, from single-sheet woodcuts of monstrous births with a brief interpretation—such as that of a two-headed child born to Jewish parents in Venice in 1575—to large and apparently disorganized encyclopedias of prodigies such as Conrad Wolffhart’s (pseud. Lycosthenes) 1557

Prodigionum ac ostentorum chronicon, quae praeter naturae ordinem (Chronicle of Prodigies and Portents That Are Outside the Order of Nature). It was translated into English and updated in 1581 by Stephen Bateman as *The Doome warning all men to the Judgemente*. Some of the prodigies that they described had precise scriptural foundations. For instance, a seven-headed monster was interpreted as a clear warning of the seven-headed mount of the whore of Babylon described in Revelation 17:3–18. Other prodigies, such as an earthquake in the Italian city of Venice in 1511 in which certain statues on public buildings were damaged, were given more localized political interpretations by witnesses.

Prodigies were often related to providences (punishments of the ungodly), and consequently the early modern fascination with such curiosities was sharpened by confessional strife. Protestants and Catholics directed the accusation of being Antichrist against each other. For instance, Martin Luther considered the Roman papacy to be Antichrist, whereas Catholics viewed Luther as the Antichrist or at least one of the signs of his coming. The advent of the Antichrist was also taken as the surest of many signs that the struggles of the English Reformation were part of the last and decisive confrontation between good and evil described in Revelation.

Because witches and prodigies both had eschatological significance and scriptural justification, they were often discussed in the same breath. In addition, early modern men and women believed that many prodigies had demonological causes and associated them with the final struggle between good and evil. One demonologist detected signs of the Antichrist's activities in the rise of witchcraft, explaining in 1623 that the Antichrist had in fact been born twelve years before. According to the influential Catholic theologian St. Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621), the Antichrist would be a “noted magician” (magus). Conrad Wolffhart and Stephen Bateman both cited witchcraft trials in their books as signs of mankind's future destruction.

The English politician and philosopher Francis Bacon (1561–1626) dismissed such prodigies as “monstrous births” as irregular but naturally occurring variations. Popular skepticism about prodigies is particularly evident from the mid-seventeenth century, when the prodigious interpretation of comets, for instance, was often condemned as a facet of vulgar superstition or of overzealous Christian belief. However, “scientific” explanations of the return of comets could still coexist with a divine, if less frequently used, prerogative to warn men and women of future doom. In the modern “scientific” age, one catches a few echoes of the eschatological understanding of natural events in recurring fears about “apocalyptic” disasters such as asteroid impact and global warming.

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See also: ANTICHRIST; APOCALYPSE; ISIDORE OF SEVILLE, ST.; MILLENARIANISM; MONSTERS; OCCULT; ORACLES.

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PROOF, PROBLEM OF

The issue of proof is central to any analysis of the witch hunts. Investigators who argue that the hunts were campaigns to control certain types of people imply that proof of witchcraft was not particularly important in the persecutions. In this view, if authorities wished to discourage women from asserting their views, for example, they would attack assertive women, with the accusation of witchcraft a mere cover. But if the hunts are considered as efforts to uncover criminals responsible for actual, perceptible damage to humans, animals, or property, proof must play a large role in any discussion.

Questions of evidence and proof in the courts are also related to the use of torture. Understanding it as a repressive mechanism or as a warning to others not to engage in certain behavior also supports the conclusion that the witch persecutions were largely ways of marking acceptable social boundaries. But insofar as the application of torture in criminal cases on the European Continent and Scotland (it was rarely used in Scandinavia or England) may be seen as an attempt, however crude, to get at the truth, then the hunts become drives to eliminate perceived evildoers. The two major Continental law codes in force during the witch hunts, the German *Carolina* of 1532 and the 1539 French statutes of Villers-Cotterets, made clear that torture was to be used only in specific circumstances, when several clues (*indicia*) appeared to connect a suspect to a crime. For instance, Hans is found stabbed to death, Fritz owns a knife that fits the wounds, and the two men were seen arguing shortly

before the homicide. If Fritz does not confess voluntarily, the courts might order him tortured.

To pass a guilty sentence in a capital case, Continental courts usually insisted on “complete proof,” which was either the testimony of two eyewitnesses or a confession, sometimes dubbed the “Queen of Proofs.” These standards appeared along with the new “Romano-canonical,” or inquisitorial courts, beginning in the eleventh century. The requirement of complete proof could often be satisfied only through a confession; hence, on the Continent, pressure mounted to obtain one when *indicia* existed. In all types of criminal cases, a suspect’s generally poor reputation constituted an *indicium*. But *indicia*, especially in troubled times or in a jurisdiction operating without the supervision of appellate courts, might be as minor as an ugly appearance.

Juries in England did not require “complete” proof, so courts there had little need to use torture. However, standards for conviction were not necessarily higher. In fact, courts in both old and New England sometimes found defendants guilty of witchcraft on the basis of reputation and circumstantial evidence, for example, that a quarrelsome woman passed by a baby who fell ill and died.

Whether or not torture was used in judicial proceedings, witchcraft was regarded as an extremely serious crime throughout Europe and North America from roughly 1430 far into the 1700s. It was simultaneously like and unlike other capital crimes: no other offense was ostensibly carried out with the help of a supernatural power, yet the damage that resulted was similar to the injuries inflicted for other reasons. Detailed case studies of witchcraft trials have shown that although the charge of allying with the Devil usually received close attention from authorities, witnesses focused on the damage defendants had allegedly done to creatures and things. Thus, suspects in witchcraft trials received much the same treatment as in other felony cases. However, the means of identifying suspects was often different, because people who had supposedly attended a witches’ Sabbath might be pressed under torture to name others who had taken part. Yet even this chain reaction effect was not peculiar to witchcraft trials; members of a gang of thieves, for instance, might have undergone similar treatment. These two kinds of charges seem interwoven in at least one large case, the *Zauberer-Jackl-Prozess* (Sorcerer-Jack-Trial) held at Salzburg from 1677 to 1680.

Lower courts might quickly turn to torture and accept its results, especially if great fears of witches affected a given area. Higher courts often had higher standards of evidence. Removed from the emotional ground of unexplained destruction and from the reputation anyone bore in a face-to-face community, appellate justices based their decisions on written evidence,

sometimes supplemented by personal interrogation of defendants. French appellate courts (*parlements*), for instance, began to overturn all death sentences for witchcraft by local tribunals in the 1620s. Similar trends appeared later in Denmark, Sweden, and Scotland.

Likewise, urban courts displayed more skepticism about proofs of witchcraft than their rural counterparts. No convictions are recorded for Frankfurt, Germany, for example, although several cases dragged through the city’s courts for years. Conviction rates in Geneva were much lower than in close-by rural areas. The issue of reputation was less important in a city than in a village; in the former setting, high mobility meant that status rested largely on documents or direct testimony about actions. Circumstantial evidence figured less strongly in places where hundreds of people might have been nearby when someone’s baby died unexpectedly. What might be called the social geography of evidence was terribly, perhaps even decisively, important.

For various reasons, standards of proof in witchcraft cases declined in many parts of western Europe during the witch hunts. Fear of witches might heighten suspicion of anyone, whether a social deviant or not. If a vehement witch hunter stirred an area into action against witches, news of trials close by sometimes prompted both local peasants and officials to read events in the worst possible light.

Some well-documented hunts show that lowered standards of evidence evoked widespread objections; in turn, such criticisms helped to end trials in many locations. Prompted in some instances by the vehement objections to the misuse of torture that Friedrich Spee made in 1631, seventeenth-century German judges finally found that they could no longer tell who was a witch, because anyone could be accused, and given the harsh methods of the torture chamber, almost anyone could be made to confess. Once the number of people handled in this way reached a certain level, it became clear that innocent residents had been convicted. At that point, the problem of what constituted reliable proof was unmanageable, and hunts collapsed on the spot.

The witchcraft trials of 1692 in Salem, Massachusetts, provide another vivid example of this trend. Earlier in New England, juries had infrequently returned guilty verdicts in witchcraft cases, and when they did, judges sometimes overturned them. But in a tense atmosphere of political insecurity and Indian attacks, juries in Salem Village accepted “spectral evidence” as proof of witchcraft in one fatal year. Witnesses testified that defendants’ specters had attacked them, even when the accused had demonstrably been elsewhere. But in 1693 the members of one jury repudiated their decisions of the previous months, saying that they had relied on “such evidence against the accused, as, on further consideration and better

information, we justly fear was insufficient for the touching the lives of any” (Kors and Peters 2001, 437).

In place after place, the witch hunts subsided over the issue of proof, despite continuing references to the power of the Devil and his minions. When large numbers of people were accused (several hundred were named, at least unofficially, in the Salem affair) and the standards of proof were quite low, anyone might be convicted. Witch hunts sometimes fell, in effect, from their own weight.

A focus on how standards of proof in witchcraft cases declined and finally rose suggests that the trials were not about disciplining any category of people; they resembled other contemporary criminal processes in their examination of evidence, except that panics about witchcraft were more likely than other crimes to afflict a given area. Witches could allegedly fly and gather anywhere in great numbers in an instant, so that their danger seemed acute to many Europeans, particularly when assiduous witch finders, news of other trials, or general anxiety highlighted their activities. The erection of new social boundaries or definitions cannot be correlated with witch hunts. Sometimes they occurred where such change never happened, but in regions of great social realignment they may have been minor or completely absent. Instead, the witch persecutions centered on the issue of proof.

ROBERT W. THURSTON

See also: CONFESSIONS; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; EVIDENCE; GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; NEW ENGLAND; SALEM; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; TORTURE.

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PROTESTANT REFORMATION

The Reformation, which began in Germany by 1520 and quickly spread to the whole of central, western, and northern Europe, had considerable impact on the history of European witchcraft trials. By the mid-fifteenth century the concept of witchcraft had already acquired clear contours, and the first substantial prosecutions of this new “sect” had already begun. Meanwhile, the Inquisition’s longstanding preoccupation with older kinds of heretics took a back seat in Germany, where such trials had petered out entirely long before the Reformation began. Both ecclesiastical and secular authorities who retained their allegiance to Rome turned their undivided attention to fighting the Reformation.

The Reformation did not end the witch hunts; instead, most of the new Protestant churches evolved distinctive theological frameworks for persecuting alleged witches. After its consolidation at the Council of Trent (1545–1563), the Roman Catholic Church refurbished its late medieval doctrines. By the late sixteenth century, alleged witches and sorcerers were persecuted with varying intensity by every confessional denomination, except the underground Anabaptist sects. The climax of the witch persecution occurred between the Peace of Augsburg (1555) and the Peace of Westphalia (1648). Certain historians have extended the Reformation period into the seventeenth century, which suggests that the Reformation was an essential element in the increased frenzy against witches. However, it is more helpful to distinguish between the pre-1560 reformations and the subsequent confessional period (late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries), when conditions were entirely different in the Holy Roman Empire, where most witch hunts occurred.

Except in Upper Germany, where Heinrich Kramer had already conducted extensive witchcraft prosecutions, Protestantism generated a reserved attitude toward witchcraft trials. The phenomenon was approached primarily through expositions of the first commandment, as a continuation of earlier attacks on superstition by medieval preachers. Their aversion to Dominican Scholasticism and to the papal Inquisition contributed to the fact that the early reformers, at least Martin Luther and the Swabian reformer Johann Brenz, opposed the cumulative concept of witchcraft. With Philipp Melancthon and Jean Calvin, humanist influences increased their skepticism toward certain elements of the concept of witches. Because the Reformation was predominantly concerned with the beliefs and practices of laypeople, forms of superstitious practices came under constant scrutiny. Early Protestants widened their interpretation of violations of

the first commandment to include reverence paid to saints and idolizing elements of creation, as well as to astrology and everything that distracted people from real faith in God. Every Christian was exposed as a radically superstitious being.

The background for this was the idea, shared by all streams of the Reformation, of human beings' inherent sinfulness and consequent inability to obtain righteousness before God with their own strength, necessitating complete dependence on God's forgiveness and grace. In the early stages of the movement, all Reformers favored spreading the Gospel without force, and Luther's rejection of civic punishment for heresy was one reason for his criminal conviction in 1520. Finally, the strongly eschatological aspect of the early Reformation assumed that the end of the world was imminent and led to a strong conviction that the reformation of the Church was the last great event in world history, one that would transform the whole Church in accordance with God's will. In Luther's later works, we find the assertion that sorcery and superstition had decreased when the Gospel began to "run its course," but that evil was again increasing, since the Reformation had not prevailed everywhere.

The concept of witchcraft survived the Reformation not because, as liberal nineteenth-century Protestantism asserted, some medieval "relics" were unintentionally retained. Rather the Reformation was subject to a premodern interpretation of the world to a significantly greater degree than "enlightened" or "disenchanted" Protestant theology was willing to admit. When Ernst Troeltsch distinguished "old" and "new" Protestantism around 1900, his principal criterion was the strong supernaturalism of old Protestantism. This, in fact, explained why concepts of sorcery and witchcraft, varied though they were, could be retained in Protestantism until the eighteenth century.

Further developments in the Reformation movement strengthened this phenomenon. In 1530, the failure of an attempted consensus between different reform movements within the church became apparent, and separate church structures soon evolved in German Protestant territories, England, and the Scandinavian countries. Their disciplinary regulations generally included clauses prohibiting sorcery but did not define this concept. In every Protestant region (as in places retaining allegiance to Rome), regulations treated witchcraft, divination, and similar violations of the first commandment as serious religious offenses.

At the same time, there was growing pressure to apply religious discipline in order to display the success of the respective confession and to enforce its requirements. The particular Protestant emphasis on the prohibition of even harmless sorcery and the misuse of Christian symbols and subject matter (often called white magic) enormously widened the circle of possible

offenders. On the one hand, this element of Reformed doctrine encouraged witchcraft trials and was adopted later by the Catholics; on the other hand, the Reformation stressed the individual believer's direct relationship to God, an aspect that discouraged mass persecution. Thus with regard to sorcery, the central message of the Reformation was that people should not blame misfortune or affliction on witches and sorcerers but accept that even unnatural sickness was due to the direct will of God. In following decades, this argument of the requirement of God's permission for witchcraft combined with widespread rejection of the concept of witches flying and holding Sabbats—both of which are specific to the Reformation—reduced the prospects for large-scale witch hunts in Protestant Europe.

By the end of the Reformation movement around 1555, a theological system had developed that conformed to its original ideas but left the issue of witchcraft unresolved. Therefore, during the subsequent confessional period, a relatively open discussion of the doctrine of witchcraft was possible within Protestantism, in sharp contrast to the doctrinal tradition of the Roman Catholic Church after the condemnation of Cornelius Loos in the 1590s. Protestant opponents of the witchcraft trials such as Johann Weyer, Anton Prätorius, Johann Matthäus Meyfart, and numerous others were not considered outsiders by supporters of severe witch persecution. However, by 1600 the concept of witchcraft had changed within Protestantism, because Protestant (and in particular, Lutheran) theology had reverted to the Scholastic interpretation of Aristotle and now accepted the cumulative concept of witchcraft, including the notion of witches flying and holding Sabbats.

Nevertheless, even orthodox books on doctrine, such as those of Johann Gerhard, contain no statements that exceed God's permission for practicing witchcraft. Much Protestant exegetical literature of the confessional period interpreted the biblical statements on witchcraft with a reservation not unlike that of the Early Middle Ages; in addition, the great increase in the philological knowledge of Protestant exegetes encouraged doubts about the validity of the contemporary concept of witches. Thus the theological spectrum of the Reformation was considerably broad; by the late sixteenth century, a cautious graduation separated the strong Lutheran theology as expressed in the *Formula Concordiae* (Formula Concord) of 1577, Melancthonian Lutheran theology, and Reformed Calvinism, which already partly rejected elements of supernaturalism and thus started a theological development that led to a radical rejection of the fundamentals of the witch hunts. However, witchcraft trials occurred in nearly all territories and states of the various Protestant denominations, with the Calvinist electoral Palatinate being the most important exception. Within

Germany, the focal point of witchcraft persecution, Reformed territories usually conducted fewer trials than Lutheran states.

Church historians have evaluated the Reformation's role in the history of witchcraft trials from various perspectives. In the early nineteenth century, Protestant historians firmly rejected any notion of confessional "guilt" for mass prosecutions; in the late nineteenth century, Catholics claimed exactly the opposite, that the Reformation laid the foundation for the hysteria about witches. The consensus from these debates is that the Reformation undoubtedly permitted a continuation of witchcraft trials and that this was not unintentional and was theologically motivated. However, relatively recent empirical studies (Midelfort 1972) suggested that, at least in Germany, Catholic territories pursued these prosecutions with somewhat greater intensity than most Protestant territories. One reason for this lay in the theological emphasis on an inscrutable divine Providence that characterized the Reformation; in addition, Protestantism had several leading figures, not all of whom were interested in witchcraft trials. However, a comprehensive study of the influence of the Reformation on the history of witchcraft trials, based on the insights gained over the last fifty years, is still a desideratum for historians of Christianity and of the witch hunts.

JÖRG HAUSTEIN;

TRANSLATED BY HELEN SIEGBURG

See also: ANABAPTISTS; APOCALYPSE; BRENZ, JOHANN; CALVIN, JOHN; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; KRAMER, HEINRICH; LOOS, CORNELIUS; LUTHER, MARTIN; MEYFART, JOHANN MATTHÄUS; PALATINATE, ELECTORATE OF; PRÄTORIUS, ANTON; SUPERSTITION; WEYER, JOHANN.

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PRUSSIA

Witchcraft trials were common in early modern Prussia, being held in at least fifty places, but the

destruction of the Prussian archives in the twentieth century prevents an accurate estimate of the number of trials and executions. However, sources do exist in the Polish state archives in Gdańsk and in Bydgoszcz and in the library of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Gdansk (Danzig).

The political and ethnic history of this region, like so much else in eastern Europe, is complex. The Teutonic Order, which forcibly Christianized this territory, favored German colonization in the area. In effect, the population that developed mixed native Prussians with Germans, Poles, and Pomeranians. After Poland's King Casimir IV defeated the Teutonic knights in 1466, their lands were divided into Royal Prussia, which was incorporated directly into Poland, and a vassal-state ruled by the order. The latter part became the duchy of Prussia in 1525, when the grand master of the Teutonic Order converted to Protestantism. This entry examines the territory of ducal and Royal Prussia proper and excludes the Brandenburg section of the Prussian state. Ducal and Royal Prussia's population in the sixteenth century was between 500,000 and 800,000; by the late eighteenth century, Prussia's population was between 2 and 2.5 million.

THE LAW

Although the Chełmno Law was commonly recognized, it had no uniform codification and hence was locally applied in the three most popular revisions, its Lidzbark, Nowe Miasto, and Toruń versions. All Prussian laws penalized witchcraft with death by burning. The Teutonic knights, who were technically friars, ran ecclesiastical courts, which commonly heard cases of misdeeds against God and religion, witchcraft included, before and after accepting Polish suzerainty in 1466. Because witchcraft was treated relatively mildly under canon law (fines or penance usually involving public display of the sentenced clad in humiliating attire, commonly in front of the church at the time when the locals gathered for Mass), sorcery cases increasingly reached municipal and other secular courts; many autonomous Prussian towns passed so-called Willkür (discretion; arbitrary action), city and village statutes against witchcraft. Some of these statutes stipulated that witches be burned alive, some sent the witch to the block before burning, and some decreed banishment for life. After 1532, ducal Prussia followed the Carolina (the *Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*), the imperial law code promulgated in that year, and Royal Prussia recognized it on an auxiliary basis. Prussian laws were not reformed until the mid-eighteenth century. In 1746, King Frederick IV granted Samuel von Coccei the authority to reform the Prussian legal system, and a royal decree in 1750 made all death sentences, corporal punishments, and torture subject to royal approval, although torture was not abolished until 1754, well after the end of

witchcraft trials. The motivation for this judicial reform was state centralization, not humanitarian considerations. Royal Prussia abolished witchcraft as a crime only in 1776, due to the constitution adopted by the Polish parliament.

TRIALS IN PRUSSIA

Because of the ruination the Prussian archives suffered in World Wars I and II, the history, intensity, and extent of witchcraft trials in Prussia can be reconstructed only fragmentarily; occasionally an older work (Lilienthal 1861) provides information that has since been destroyed. Our earliest surviving Prussian evidence comes from the bishopric of Chelmno, where sorcerers were given ecclesiastical penances and occasionally banished. Exile was a means to maintain peace and order within a village; as late as 1724, the need to do this was stated explicitly as the grounds for a sentence of banishment given by a local court in Starogard.

Of course, witches were frequently put to death: for example, the Cistercians had two women beheaded and burned at Oliwa in 1662 (Rozenkranz 1993) and three more in 1664 (Bogucka 1997). On rural estates owned by self-governing towns, witchcraft convictions seem much more frequent and severe. In the towns, such trials appear even more numerous. The accusations were absolutely stereotypical: casting spells on humans or animals, acting in alliance and fornicating with the Devil, and producing poisons. Despite massive destruction, surviving sources indicate that witchcraft trials were held in some fifty Prussian localities (Bagart, Biały Bór, Braniewo, Bydgoszcz, Chojnice, Czerniejewo, Fordon, Gdansk, Głębock, Gniew, Grudziądz, Jantar, Kętrzyn, Królewiec, Kwidzyń, Młynary, Mrągowo, Nowe, Nowy Dwór Gdański, Olecko, Oliwa, Orneto, Ostróda, Pasztek, Pieniężno, Prabuty, Pszczółki, Puck, Rębielicz, Romankowo, Rudno, Skarszewy, Staniszewo, Starogard, Stary Targ, Straszyn, Subkowy, Szestno, Szczodrowo, Szczytno, Szpengawsk, Tczew, Toruń, Trąbki, Tropy, Tuchola, Ujeścisko, Wejherowo, Włocławek, and Zalewo).

Any figures for Prussian witchcraft trials can only be estimates. Furthermore, the number of people convicted for witchcraft cannot be determined because the materials in our possession frequently mention the initiation of a trial or represent only fragments of court files, without final sentences. However, some fragmentary information suggests that witchcraft trials were relatively frequent in Prussia, the only largely Germanophone Baltic region, just as they were in other Germanic enclaves in eastern Europe. In 1571, according to Hans Spatte's reliable chronicle from Gdansk, Prussian prisons held 134 women convicted of witchcraft, and 60 of them were burned (Simson 1902). This fairly early and possibly greatly exaggerated number of

arrests could have been caused by a massive hunt for Prussian folk healers who might have bewitched the young mentally ill Prince Albrecht. A record of criminal cases for the year 1595 lists 655 trials in Prussia, including 50 for witchcraft (this figure of 8 percent is relatively high in comparison with other German evidence, but not remarkable) (Wunder 1983).

A few localities produced numerous trials. For example, Fordon (now a district of Bydgoszcz), a place with only 271 inhabitants in 1674, held 73 witchcraft trials between 1675 and 1747, mostly coming from three neighboring villages (Żołędowo, Jastrzębie, and Niemcz). Another town of equal size, Nowe, recorded 28 persons accused of witchcraft. In one quite small Prussian city, Braunsberg, over 120 witchcraft trials are known before 1772. Its Old Town banished several sorcerers between 1534 and 1604 before burning its first witch in 1605 and its last in 1670; its New Town (whose records began only in 1600) burned its first witch in 1610 and its last one in 1686. Overall, trials came in small clusters (a maximum of 6) and under half of those tried (58 of 122) were executed. In Braunsberg, witches agreed that the Devil had no nostrils (Lilienthal 1861, 99). Prussia's last witchcraft trial took place in 1767, with the last execution for witchcraft in 1767 (in Oliwa).

Despite the formal abolition of witchcraft prosecution imposed in the second half of the eighteenth century, attempts to put witches on trial in Prussia were made as late as in the nineteenth and even twentieth centuries. When unsuccessful, such attempts sometimes ended in lynchings. In 1811 a woman accused of witchcraft (in connection with the great fire of the town) was executed by burning in Reszel. The court, however, did not consider the case in terms of witchcraft, but arson. In 1836, a woman suspected of witchcraft in the village of Chałupy was dunked, and she drowned. The justice administration judged the lynching severely and sentenced the ringleader to prison for life. Several claims of witchcraft were filed with the court of Puck as late as in the pre-World War II period. The court, however, dismissed the suits; witchcraft trials then disappear from the records. All that remains of the trials are local topographical names, such as Łyse Góry (Sabbat Hills), Góry Czarownic (Witch Hills), and Stawy Czarownic (Witch Ponds).

KRZYSZTOF SZKURŁATOWSKI

See also: COURTS ECCLESIASTICAL; DANZIG (GDANSK); DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES; GERMANY, NORTHEASTERN; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); POLAND; ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH; TRIALS.

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PSYCHOANALYSIS

Because psychiatry is traditionally associated with pastoral care and demonic possession with hysteria and insanity, psychoanalysis has proven a particularly fruitful interdisciplinary method for investigating the witch hunts in late medieval and early modern Europe. Psychoanalysis is the psychiatric method of studying the individual subconscious as a case history in order to diagnose disorders of the mind. The reasons for its usefulness as a historical tool are essentially twofold.

First, since the nineteenth century, seminal figures in psychiatry repeatedly and consciously referred back to the witch hunts and demonology as historical examples to justify their own contemporary theories. They eulogized the sixteenth-century skeptical witchcraft theorist Johann Weyer as the father of modern psychiatry, struggling against ignorance and superstition. In 1801, Phillipe Pinel praised Weyer in his *Traité médico-philosophique sur l'alienation mentale ou la manie* (Medical-Philosophical Treatise on Mental Alienation).

To his fellow "enlightened" physicians, Pinel explained the therapeutic value of exorcism: it offered an emotional shock treatment to cure deluded sufferers of demonic possession through cathartic ceremonies imbued with strong emotional connotations. The first man to hold an academic chair of psychiatry in France, Jean-Martin Charcot, coedited *Demoniacs in Art* (1887), which contained artistic representations of the possessed from the fifth to the eighteenth century. With a romanticized perception of Weyer, Charcot developed an analytic method known as "retrospective medicine," using his own theories about hysteria to analyze historical cases of possession.

Sigmund Freud, the foremost pioneer of psychoanalysis, learned about retrospective medicine while studying with Charcot in Paris in 1885. Freud also read widely in early modern medicine, theology, interpretations of dreams, and demonological literature. He developed a lifelong admiration for Weyer and incorporated the tenets of retrospective medicine into his own analyses of hysteria. Later, Freud made a detailed study of the demonic possession of Johann Christoph Haizmann, a seventeenth-century painter—arguably the first work of psychohistory. Since that time, numerous scholars, with varying degrees of success, have applied psychoanalytic methods and categories to explain subconscious motivations among witch hunters, accused witches, and demoniacs. Two noteworthy examples studied witch persecutions in early modern New England (Demos 1982) and offered a gender analysis of witchcraft trials in Augsburg (Roper 1994).

A second reason why a psychoanalytic perspective has enriched historical analysis of the witch hunts lies in the precocious sixteenth-century evolution of psychiatry and psychology as subjects of systematic investigation. Casuists and demonologists of all confessions (Weyer, for example, was Protestant) undertook such investigation; however, the Catholic Society of Jesus produced many early prominent leaders in this field. Indeed, Martín Del Rio, a prominent Spanish Jesuit and demonologist, coined the term *psychiatry*. In his *Florida Mariana* (The Flowers of Mary) of 1598, Del Rio specifically described Jesus as a psychiatrist (*psyche + iatrus* = "healer of souls") who authorized his representatives on earth to heal troubled or afflicted souls through various cathartic religious rituals and sacraments (e.g., baptism, auricular confession, pilgrimage, exorcism, etc.); Del Rio and other theologians literally touted such methods as "spiritual medicine." Widely recognized by contemporaries throughout Europe as "spiritual physic," its practitioners (referred to by the Italian exorcist, Giralomo Menghi, as *medici spirituale*) supplemented ordinary "physicians of the body" (*medici corporale*). In Catholic Europe, "spiritual physicians" were no mere allegory to "real" doctors; their domain was officially recognized by jurists and

even by physicians. Their perceived efficacy in treating both psychic and somatic illnesses agreed with orthodox perceptions of natural philosophy, Galenic humoral pathology, Aristotelian physics, and the Catholic casuistry of moral theology. As a relatively coherent psychiatric system, “spiritual physic” had strong social and moral components.

The twisted path from “spiritual physic” to modern psychoanalysis is complex, but there is a continuous emphasis in both on sexuality, sin, morality, and emotions. The earlier form provides some important keys to supplement the potential of psychoanalysis for studying the historical mentality behind witchcraft trials, especially how the closely related rituals of judicial confessions and torture aided in construction of the self. Finally, “spiritual physic” offers a frequently ignored historical argument that psychoanalysis, as a scientific method, has been linked for many centuries with medicine and pastoral care.

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See also: DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DEMONOLOGY; EXORCISM; FREUD, SIGMUND; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; MENTAL ILLNESS; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; WEYER, JOHANN.

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PURITANISM

A movement that shaped many of the ideas English demonologists held in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Puritanism also lent support to the prosecution of witches in England during the 1640s and in New England in 1692. Conversely, under some circumstances, Puritanism made it more difficult for courts to convict witches.

The term *Puritan* is applied to English Protestants of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries who sought to make the English Church more fully Protestant and thus bring it into greater conformity with the Reformed or Calvinist churches on the European continent. Puritans were dissatisfied with the Elizabethan Settlement of Religion of 1559, claiming that it left the Church only partially reformed. They sought therefore to remove the vestiges of popery from English religious services, such as the wearing of vestments by the clergy, genuflection, the use of the sign of the cross, and bowing at the mention of the name of Jesus.

Puritans were divided on the issue of church government. Moderate Puritans were willing to work within the established episcopalian system of church government (i.e., a hierarchy of archbishops, bishops, and archdeacons), but more radical groups advocated the introduction of either a presbyterian system, in which a hierarchy of clerical synods and assemblies governed the church, or a congregational system, in which individual congregations possessed considerable autonomy and were only loosely associated in a national church. Presbyterians attempted without success to introduce their system of church government during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558–1603). Only during the Puritan Revolution of the 1640s did the Westminster Assembly authorize the introduction of presbyterianism. That system, however, was soon replaced by a congregational structure of church government during the 1650s. Members of Protestant sects that wished to separate from the Church of England are generally not classified as Puritan, and after 1660 it is customary to refer to the heirs of Puritans, such as Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, and Quakers, as dissenters rather than Puritans.

Puritans were often identified by their religious fervor and the intensity of their commitment to religious reform. They were the “godly” ministers and laymen, the more zealous or “hotter” sort of Protestants, “saints” who were confident that they were members of the elect. As members of a godly community, Puritans practiced a rigorous moral discipline and sought to impose that same discipline on others. Because Puritans remained within the Church and only occasionally were prosecuted for nonconformity, it is often difficult to distinguish between them and the more orthodox English Protestants who are later referred to as Anglicans. Nevertheless, many prominent English demonologists between 1587 and 1646 (e.g., Henry Holland, George Gifford, William Perkins, Alexander Roberts, Richard Bernard, and John Gaule) acquired reputations as godly ministers and were sometimes referred to as Puritans. Theologically these men were all staunch Calvinists who resisted the efforts of Arminians (named for the Dutch theologian Jacobus Arminius) to weaken or modify the central Calvinist doctrine of predestination. Perkins, whose status as one of the most respected English theologians survived long after his death in 1602, provided inspiration for an entire generation of Puritan divines, including the most famous New England demonologist, Cotton Mather.

These “Puritan” demonologists agreed on most major questions regarding witchcraft and diabolism. First, like all good Calvinists, they proclaimed the sovereignty of God and the dependence of all demonic activity on divine Providence. The Devil worked only with the permission of God, and witches exercised no power of their own. Second, they emphasized the

demonic or spiritual nature of the witch's crime, focusing on the pact with the Devil rather than on *maleficium* (harmful magic), which was the exclusive concern of the English witchcraft statute of 1563 and the primary concern of the statute of 1604. Their concern with the diabolical nature of witchcraft, which usually did not include references to the witches' Sabbat, also led them to argue that the white magic performed by healers and cunning folk, which they classified as superstition, was just as dangerous as *maleficium*. Third, these ministers, like many Protestant demonologists on the Continent, identified witchcraft with Roman Catholicism. This tendency was reinforced by the Protestant classification of Catholic religious ceremonies as magical and the Protestant claim that many witches were papists. In his *Treatise against Witchcraft* (1590), Holland compared saint worship to devil worship and the sign of the cross to witchcraft. Finally and most distinctively, these Puritan demonologists placed a strong emphasis on the Apocalypse and the identification of witchcraft as the work of the Antichrist and the Devil during the final days. Roberts, for example, in *A Treatise of Witchcraft* (1616), declared that witchcraft was one of the dreadful evils prophesied for "these last days and perilous times" (Clark 1997, 325). The most powerful expression of this apocalyptic witchcraft literature was Cotton Mather's *Memorable Providences Relating to Witchcrafts and Possessions* (1689), in which he claimed that demonic possession and witchcraft were signs of the Devil's activity during the final days.

The most obvious disagreements among these English "Puritan" demonologists concerned their recommendations for proceeding against witches. Gifford, Bernard, and Gaule all urged considerable caution after observing miscarriages of justice in their native counties. The others took a harder line, including Perkins, who in *A Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft* (1608) listed numerous proofs of diabolical activity that could result in a witch's conviction. He urged the execution of witches without exception because they depended on Satan as their God. Roberts defended the prosecution of Mary Smith in King's Lynn, Norfolk. The main concern of most of these godly ministers, however, including Perkins, was to prevent their parishioners from falling into theological error, not bringing accused witches to justice.

Puritanism did, nevertheless, inspire some ministers and lay magistrates to prosecute witches as part of a campaign to purge society of its diabolical contaminants. These efforts became most evident in England when Puritans gained control of the church and local government during the English Civil War. The largest witch hunt in England's history, the campaign Matthew Hopkins and John Stearne conducted in East Anglia in 1645–1647, can be attributed at least in part to Puritan

zeal. The religious orientation of Hopkins cannot be ascertained, although his reference to the marriage of the Devil to witches according to the order prescribed in Book of Common Prayer (the service book of the English Church) suggests Puritan sympathies. John Stearne, however, who served as Hopkins's assistant, was clearly a zealous Puritan layman, and in his treatise, *A Confirmation and Discovery of Witchcraft* (1648), Stearne described the prosecution of witches as a spiritual duty. Puritanism was pervasive in Essex at that time that Hopkins and Stearne were actively trying to discover witches. Many of the parishes in that county had replaced "scandalous" ministers with godly Puritans during the early years of the Civil War. A widespread iconoclastic campaign in Essex and Suffolk to destroy statues and paintings that Puritans considered idolatrous provides further evidence of the strength of Puritanism in the area where Hopkins and Stearne were most active. Millenarian sentiment was also strong in all Puritan counties during these years, especially in Essex. The strength of Puritanism in these areas helps to explain why local communities invited Hopkins and Stearne to discover the local witches they feared were in their midst and why those same communities encouraged or facilitated their prosecution.

In New England, where Puritanism was dominant from the settlement of Massachusetts Bay Colony by nonseparating Congregationalists in 1628 until the end of the seventeenth century, the connections between Puritanism and witchcraft were different from what they were in England. Owing to Puritan influence, the crime of witchcraft in Massachusetts was defined in demonic terms, and consequently witches could not be convicted without evidence of having made a pact with the Devil. This definition of the crime led to the acquittal of a great majority of witches accused by their neighbors of *maleficium* before 1692. In that year, however, the fits experienced by a group of young girls in Salem Village led the Salem community to attribute their afflictions to witchcraft, thus initiating a large witch hunt in which more than 150 individuals were arrested and 19 executed. Puritanism contributed to the Salem witch hunt in three related ways. First, the Puritan belief that God spoke to his chosen people of Massachusetts through signs and events in their daily lives—the remarkable providences that Mather discussed in his treatise of 1689—led them to interpret the afflictions of the girls and also the Indian war that had recently devastated the colony as signs of God's disfavor. The sermons of Samuel Parris, the minister in Salem Village, and his predecessor Deodat Lawson prior to the trials also encouraged their parishioners to believe that the misfortunes lay within the community itself and were the result of God's punishment. The accusation and prosecution of witches at Salem can thus be seen as a Puritan response to these supernatural

signs of divine anger. Second, the girls whose fits triggered the episode were brought up in pious Puritan families (some were members of the Parris household), suggesting a link among Puritan religiosity, demonic possession, and witchcraft accusations. Third, residents of Salem Village made many of the accusations against people who had apparently assimilated the commercial values of nearby Salem Town and who therefore posed a threat to the traditional Puritan values that the farmers of Salem Village were struggling to maintain.

The trials originally won the support of the Puritan ministers of the Boston area, under the leadership of Cotton Mather, who in a letter to the governor of the colony on June 15 urged the vigorous prosecution of the witches. In the end, however, it was a sermon by the Puritan minister Increase Mather, Cotton's father, in October that helped to stop the trials. The sermon, which was soon published as *Cases of Conscience Concerning Evil Spirits Personating Men* with endorsements by fourteen Massachusetts ministers, called for procedural caution in the trials on the grounds that the Devil might have made the girls see the specters of innocent people afflicting them. This skepticism regarding the validity of spectral evidence, itself a reflection of Puritan beliefs regarding the nature of demonic power, led to the termination of the trials and the release of the witches still in prison. The contrasting positions taken by Increase and Cotton Mather during the Salem witchcraft trials demonstrate that the relationship between Puritanism and witchcraft in New England, just as in England, cannot be expressed in simple terms. A determination to rid the world of the

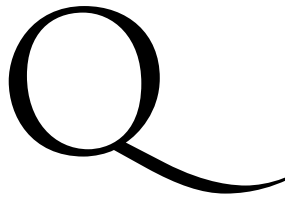
Devil's confederates may have led many Puritans to support the prosecution of witches, but the Puritan belief in the limitations of demonic power by a sovereign God ultimately helped to bring them to an end.

BRIAN P. LEVACK

See also: APOCALYPSE; DEMONOLOGY; DIABOLISM; ENGLAND; ESSEX; GAUTE, JOHN; GIFFORD, GEORGE; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; *MALEFICUM*; MATHER, COTTON; MATHER, INCREASE; NEW ENGLAND; PERKINS, WILLIAM; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; SALEM; SPECTRAL EVIDENCE; STEARNE, JOHN.

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QUAKERS

From its beginnings in the late 1640s and early 1650s, the Quaker movement was regularly associated with demonism and witchcraft. Opponents frequently accused Quakers of using bewitched objects in order to make new converts; tales of enchanted ribbons, bottles, and strings figured prominently in early anti-Quaker literature. The leadership of the new sect was particularly susceptible to such accusations. George Fox, for example, whose charismatic and forceful personality was crucial to the formation and survival of the early movement, was routinely represented as a sorcerer or witch, employing a wide range of diabolical devices in his search for proselytes. Women and the impressionable young were considered particularly vulnerable to such approaches.

The strange actions and habits of the Quakers provoked yet further comparisons with the behavior usually attributed to witches and the possessed. The act of quaking bore obvious similarities with the fits suffered by those who were thought to be possessed by demons; indeed, numerous ex-Quakers either claimed to have been bewitched or, like James Nayler, reputedly suffered this fate. The unconventional behavior of others was equally suspicious. Some were accused of necromancy by seeking to raise the dead. Their habit of meeting frequently in dark, secluded places in the dead of night (usually to avoid detection and molestation) fueled popular suspicion that such nocturnal gatherings were in fact diabolical Sabbats.

Occasionally, such suspicions mushroomed into full legal proceedings against Quakers for witchcraft. In 1659—a year characterized by intense social, religious, and political anxiety in England—trials of Quakers took place at Cambridge, Sherborne (in Dorset), and Dartmouth (in Devon) in which members of the sect were variously accused of meeting with the Devil and employing witchcraft. In addition to such official actions, Quakers were also frequently subjected to popular shaming rituals such as ducking and pricking, procedures normally applied to suspected witches.

Quakers responded to such treatment by accusing their opponents—particularly the clergy, whom they saw as orchestrating these events—in kind. Fox and his deputies repeatedly accused their persecutors of acting like the Old Testament magicians Jannes and Jambres and the New Testament witches Elymas and Simon

Magus. The Quaker conception of witchcraft, however, like that of other contemporary radical sects, differed from the established one by defining it as an act of spiritual apostasy. The Quakers rarely, if ever, suggested that their enemies employed physical spells against them, but rather stressed the extent to which the spirit of witchcraft motivated their actions.

The widespread association of the Quakers with witchcraft was long-lasting and frequently revived during times of acute religious and political crisis. Their treatment as surrogate witches owed much to the fact that they were widely feared and reviled, especially by those in authority, who accused them of attempting to invert the social and political order. Symbolically, in the eyes of the establishment, Quakers shared many characteristics with witches and were often perceived in conspiratorial terms as part of a wider Catholic or Jesuit-inspired plot to subvert the Protestant nation (association with Catholicism provided further evidence of their diabolical nature and intent). Their prosecution in large numbers after the Restoration might well, then, have represented an important shift in official attitudes: the threat posed by them and others who refused to conform to the restored Anglican church now replaced that previously attributed to witches. The decline of trials for witchcraft in this period and the concomitant legal assault on religious dissent are certainly highly suggestive, though still unproven.

PETER ELMER

See also: ENGLAND.

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R

RABANUS MAURUS (CA. 780–856)

An early medieval commentator on magic, Rabanus (properly Hrabanus) Maurus was a German Benedictine monk who, after twenty years as abbot of the important and influential monastery of Fulda, became archbishop of Mainz. Regarded by his contemporaries and his immediate posterity as a great teacher, he lived at a time when the Carolingian Empire was under threat from dissident and hostile forces both at home and abroad. He played an important role in church reorganization and monastic reform, convinced that active and well-educated clergy represented the best hope for the future of the Church. He wrote voluminously, principally exegetical treatises, pastoral essays, and encyclopedic compilations. In *De institutione clericorum* (The Education of the Clergy), he described the grades and appropriate clothing of ecclesiastics, described and discussed the liturgy, and outlined the education of a preacher. *De universo* (The Whole of Creation) was a major compilation in twenty-two books that uses a very large number of excerpts from other authors, whose work Rabanus interprets and expands according to his own system and understanding. Rabanus also wrote poetry, although none of it can be called exceptional. The ascription of the well-known hymn “Veni, Creator Spiritus” to him is very dubious.

DE MAGICIS ARTIBUS (ABOUT MAGICAL ARTS)

Magic appeared in several of Rabanus’s writings, but his principal thoughts on the subject were gathered into this short essay. It exists in a single manuscript copy, and although it was highly derivative, it offers us an invaluable insight into the alarm felt by a conservative ninth-century priest surrounded by constant evidences of magical practices in a scarcely converted society. Not surprisingly, therefore, Rabanus opened with the remark that the condemnable arts of magic, incantations, and various other superstitions were to be found among “pagans and false Christians” who practiced divination and other wrongheaded observances. These arts had proved powerful because they had been passed down to humankind by evil angels all over the world for many centuries, and they included knowledge of the

future and of things pertaining to hell or the underworld, various methods of divination, and necromancy. But all this was mere magical trickery.

“Magicians,” said Rabanus, “are people who, in the vernacular, are called ‘workers of harmful magic’ [*malefici*] because of the gravity of their misdeeds. These people, with God’s permission, stir up the elements, and throw people’s minds into confusion, (although less so in those who have faith in God), and kill without any blast of poison, but merely by physical violence” [*Patrologia Latina* 110.1097].

Rabanus went on to describe various kinds of divination—necromancy, hydromancy, geomancy, and so forth—supporting all his remarks by copious references to classical literature and the Bible. A Christian should avoid all these arts, he said. He discussed the contest between Moses and Pharaoh’s magicians and the appearance of Samuel, conjured by the witch of Endor at King Saul’s request, concluding that (apart from Moses) the pagans were dependent on illusions created by Satan. Evil spirits could move much faster than human beings because they were made of air rather than earth, and they could therefore be aware that much more quickly of things that they were then able to announce as though they had known them in advance of their happening. This was also how they were able to perform apparent wonders; for their subtle aerial bodies enabled them to penetrate human bodies and therein create fantasies, whether the person was awake or asleep. Sometimes the spirits’ ability to predict the future rested simply upon their knowledge of signs in nature, much as a physician could predict disease in a way that seemed amazing to anyone not trained in medicine. But evil spirits generally deceived (and were deceived) in their predictions either because of their malicious dispositions or because nature foiled their expectations by producing unexpected weather or temperatures.

“We must therefore be alert,” he wrote,

and with all earnestness be on our guard lest in our time, (in which we see the Christian religion spread over the whole world), the slackness of teachers and idleness of the educated—those few who still survive—destroy the proper worship of the true

God; and lest those who have been corrupted by the demons' illusions bring false divinations among the people of God, and lead astray those who live in the country, and those who have neither learning nor experience. (*Patrologia Latina* 110.1107)

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART

See also: AUGUSTINE, ST.; DEMONS; DIVINATION; ISIDORE OF SEVILLE, ST.; MOSES; NECROMANCY; WITCH OF ENDOR.

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RAEMOND, FLORIMOND DE (1540–1601)

Best known for his history of the rise and decline of Protestantism, Florimond de Raemond offers a particularly interesting example of the complexity of attitudes toward witchcraft in late sixteenth-century France. Born into the Bordeaux judicial elite in 1540, Raemond was educated at the Protestant-oriented College of Presles in the University of Paris. Apparently drawn to Protestantism in the 1560s, he renewed his commitment to Catholicism after witnessing the exorcism of Nicole Obry in 1567. Raemond was closely associated with the most famous witchcraft skeptic among the judges of the *Parlement* (sovereign judicial court) of Bordeaux, Michel de Montaigne, whose seat he purchased in 1570 and for whom he maintained a high regard his whole life. But Raemond was also married to a sister of the most bloodthirsty and credulous judge at Bordeaux, the demonologist Pierre de Lancre. Unlike most of his Bordeaux colleagues, Raemond adopted his brother-in-law's views about witches rather than those of Montaigne.

Raemond was an active writer, publishing several works on contemporary issues. His 1597 work *L'Anti-Christ* shows his thought well. Interestingly, he began from a skeptical viewpoint about human ability to understand the mysteries of God, directly acknowledging his debt to Montaigne. But, unlike Montaigne, this position led him to embrace the authority of Catholic dogma. Raemond stated that belief in the Antichrist was an article of faith and that all loyal Catholics had to fight against the Devil and his allies, the Protestant heretics. In the current violent and corrupt age, he said, heresy had come to flourish not just in secret places but also in broad daylight. One signal proof of the arrival of the Antichrist, the ally of the heretics, was the expansion of witchcraft. Although the *Parlement* of Bordeaux seems to have been the very last French appellate court to approve an execution for witchcraft (the first documented instance came in 1594), Raemond insisted that the court had been active and severe, claiming that so many witches had been turned up that there were not enough

judges to conduct all the trials and that the prisons were full of accused witches. He died before his brother-in-law Pierre de Lancre would fulfill this prophecy.

Raemond's Catholicism resulted from a deep personal conversion; he adopted positions very unlike the moderate Gallicanism held by most of his judicial colleagues, even arguing that France needed a real inquisition, like Spain's, to deal with heretics and witches. Raemond blamed all the troubles of his day on the Reformers, followers of a false diabolical sect. The Protestants who died for their faith were not martyrs, he claimed, but people who were "possessed by the Devil." (Raemond 1957, 792).

Another of Raemond's works, published posthumously, repeated these arguments, calling Martin Luther "if not the Antichrist, at least his advance rider" (Raemond 1605, 234) and tying Protestantism closely to the work of the Devil, the coming of Antichrist, and thus to the Apocalypse. In both works, Raemond discusses the exorcism of Nicole Obry, which he witnessed and which turned him back to Catholicism. He called the exorcism "A famous miracle and one of the greatest that the human eye had ever seen, and that Devils themselves could not explore (Raemond 1605, 140)." The special ability of the Catholic Church to produce this sort of modern miracle validated the Church's claims and became an important weapon in the fight against heresy as well as witchcraft.

JONATHAN L. PEARL

See also: ANTICHRIST; FRANCE; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; MONTAIGNE, MICHEL DE; OBRY, NICOLE; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; WARS OF RELIGION (FRANCE).

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RAIS, GILLES DE (1404–1440)

Better known as "Bluebeard," Gilles de Rais was a nobleman from southwestern France whose dramatic career combined chivalric ideals with the harsh realities of war and set dramatic displays of personal piety against the most disturbing allegations of child abuse and devil worship. Orphaned while still young, he greatly increased his lands through a combination of inheritance, dynastic marriage, banditry, and simple extortion to become one of the foremost nobles in France, controlling chains of fortresses dominating the Loire Valley from Angers to the Atlantic seaboard.

In 1427, he led his troops against the English forces around the Mayenne and Sarthe Rivers. In 1429, he was

named one of the chief commanders of the army that would be led by Joan of Arc. Their brief but dazzlingly successful partnership appears to have been based upon mutual trust, utterly untarnished by any form of jealousy. Rais quickly proved himself an extremely brave and loyal knight and a thoroughly competent general. He distinguished himself in raising the siege of Orléans on May 8, 1429, and at the battle of Patay on June 18, 1429. Rais was chosen to carry the ampoule of holy oil to Reims for the anointing of Charles VII at his subsequent coronation on July 17, 1429. The king created him marshal of France that same day as a reward for his services. He fought beside Joan during her unsuccessful attack on Paris on September 8, 1429, and it was to him that she called when she fell wounded.

During the following year, Rais became embroiled in internecine struggles for power at court. He was stationed in the French garrison at Louviers, only a few miles from Rouen, during the critical weeks when Joan faced her interrogators on a charge of heresy. It is not clear whether he contemplated making a rescue attempt. Like the king, however, he offered no ransom for her. In 1432, he distinguished himself by breaking the English blockade and relieving a beleaguered French garrison at Lagny. This would be his last significant action during the Hundred Years' War; in 1433, his patron, Georges de Tremoille, fell from power at court, effectively ending Rais's military career. Deprived of royal favor, he now waged a private war on the Burgundians, amassed an enormous private library, and founded a religious college dedicated to the Holy Innocents. On May 8, 1435, the sixth anniversary of the city's liberation, he staged *The Mystery of the Siege of Orleans*. Not only did Rais write the play, but he also performed a leading part on stage, together with 500 other actors, and paid for food and drink for everyone from his own purse. As a result of such extravagances, and of the enormous sums he bestowed upon churches under his patronage, he became deeply indebted. Possibly as a result, he made the acquaintance of a Florentine magician, Francesco Prelati, and they embarked upon many experiments to discover the secrets of the philosophers' stone.

In November 1439, Charles VII issued a grand ordinance proclaiming the establishment of a royal army and an end to the depredations of the free companies and brigands, who were ravaging France. Gilles de Rais, with his private armies and castles, was a prime target of the legislation. Desiring to revenge himself upon his political rivals, particularly the duke of Brittany, Rais effectively invited exemplary punishment in May 1440 by seizing a castle belonging to one of the duke's agents and dragging the man's brother—a priest—from church during mass and chaining and imprisoning him. This last act outraged the ecclesiastical courts. Ignoring a fine for his misconduct, Gilles now became

the target of an investigation by the bishop of Nantes, which centered on allegations, dating back several years, of witchcraft and child abduction.

Arrested on September 14, 1440, and accused of performing necromantic invocations of demons with Prelati in hope of obtaining wealth, power, and knowledge from devils, Rais was also charged with the ritual murder of countless children. He was brought before the tribunal to hear depositions gathered from his former servants. Although his opening defense was haughty, challenging both the competence of his judges and their impartiality, his attitude toward the court soon underwent a profound change. Having been excommunicated from the Church and having almost certainly been tortured within an inch of his life, he publicly begged forgiveness at his next appearance before the tribunal, just two days later, for his previous insulting behavior and confessed to having practiced alchemy, devil worship, sodomy, and infanticide. The first part of this public confession inspired feelings of clear revulsion, but its conclusion, emphasizing his piety and offering himself as an object of pity, persuaded his judges to lift the sentence of excommunication.

Now a humble penitent rather than a proud nobleman, Rais sought to provide the clergy and people of Nantes with a parable of redemption, showing how an evil life could still demonstrate the miraculous and providential intervention of God, who had saved his soul through the act of sentencing him to death. Accordingly, Rais was hanged beside the bridge at Nantes on October 26, 1440, impressing the assembled crowd with his contrition and bravery. His abject confession enabled him to save his body from the flames and to obtain Christian burial at a nearby Carmelite Church and allowed his heirs to enjoy his estates.

Set against the backdrop of Joan of Arc's canonization, radical reassessments of Rais's life and career began in the 1930s. Aleister Crowley saw him as a man of science destroyed by an intolerant Roman Catholic Church (Crowley 1930, viii, xviii). Margaret Murray saw both Joan of Arc and Gilles de Rais as members of an underground pagan religious tradition who had willingly sacrificed themselves, going to their deaths as victims required by the "Old Religion" that their royal master might live and reign for a further span of years (Murray 1961, 193, 197). French writers have produced less bizarre theories than those of Crowley and Murray, but remain only slightly less titillated by his trial than by that of St. Joan (Bataille 1972a and 1972b).

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See also: INFANTICIDE; JOAN OF ARC; MURRAY, MARGARET ALICE; NECROMANCY.

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RANFAING, ELISABETH DE (1592–1649)

The Venerable Mother Marie-Elisabeth de La Croix de Jésus, founder of the religious order Notre-Dame-du-Refuge, began her religious career as a demoniac.

As a pious widow in her twenties, the Lorraine noblewoman Elisabeth de Ranfaing experienced inner torment when a suitor, Charles Poirot, asked to marry her. She saw Poirot's interest in her as a diabolical plot to prevent her from fulfilling a vow of chastity. Exorcists diagnosed her torment as possession and exorcised her in public. On the basis of Ranfaing's claims during her exorcisms, Poirot and a woman accomplice were convicted of witchcraft and executed in 1622. Ranfaing's behavior impressed elite patrons seeking to promote the current Catholic spiritual revival. With their support, she founded in 1624 an order for the reclamation of prostitutes, Notre-Dame-du-Refuge, which was formally instituted by a bull of Urban VIII in 1634. A secret circle of followers, called Médaillistes, worshiped her as a living saint. Some Jesuits who resented the involvement of other Jesuits in her group attacked this cult, which disbanded in 1648. Her order opened sixteen houses across Lorraine, France, and Sicily but did not survive the French Revolution.

Ranfaing's story is one of several from this era in which demons played a vital role in the cultivation of perceived sanctity. Not only was Ranfaing said to be possessed by demons who tortured her—a "standard" feature of possession—but she also alleged that her torment was caused by a witch. Thus, her state of possession did not result from her own sin, and her own intense struggles against her unacknowledged feelings of attraction to her physician Poirot were interpreted as signs of possible sanctity. In a term indicative of the seventeenth-century Catholic preoccupation with virtue through suffering, Henri-Marie Boudon described Ranfaing as "the great sufferer of her age" (Boudon 1686, 17).

A widow with three daughters living in secular society, Ranfaing was not the most obvious candidate to become a living saint, yet she found friends among the ducal household of Lorraine. This support existed regardless of—or perhaps because of—her controversial witchcraft accusations against Poirot and a Minim Provincial; her only local contemporary who actually became a saint (Pierre Fourier) expressed skepticism about Ranfaing's possession. Outside Lorraine, the authenticity of her possession was challenged in print by a young Minim ([Pithoys] 1972). In an era of moral enthusiasm, her mission to preserve herself, and later other young women, from sin gained widespread approval. The convent's benefactors included Duke Charles IV of Lorraine; Jean de Porcelet de Maillane, count-bishop of Toul; Eric of Lorraine, count-bishop of Verdun; Pierre Coton, the Jesuit confessor of Louis XIII; and Cardinal Pierre de Bérulle. Ranfaing was a friend of the mystic Mother Alix le Clerc, who herself suffered from persistent demonic torments.

Ranfaing fascinated a group of male and female admirers, religious and lay, who believed she enjoyed direct communication with God and saw her as the means to their salvation. The enemies of this group called them the Médaillistes, from the little religious medals, blessed by Ranfaing herself, that they wore and sold. In some ways, the Médaillistes resembled other secret sodalities that emerged around the post-Tridentine Jesuit order, becoming a common feature of early modern Catholicism. Their members practiced mortifications and intensive prayer, as well as frequent communion.

The fact that Ranfaing had become known initially through her possession by demons left her vulnerable to those who felt threatened by her cult. In 1628, two years after she had been delivered of her demons and six years after Poirot's execution, a provincial of the Capuchin order still referred to her disparagingly as "this possessed woman" and accused her followers of using their medals and other paraphernalia for magical purposes. In the mid-1640s, an internal Jesuit conflict finally disbanded her cult by claiming that those Jesuits who followed her had become a sect of magician-priests, serving a woman whose possession by demons had left her in a state of moral and spiritual ambiguity. Her four main Jesuit followers were expelled, and other Jesuits were warned to avoid her. Nonetheless, one Jesuit follower, Jean d'Argombat, began a hagiographic account of Ranfaing's life, which remained incomplete at his death in 1654.

SARAH FERBER

See also: BÉRULLE, PIERRE DE; COTON, PIERRE; DEMONS; EXORCISM; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); LIVING SAINTS; LOUDUN NUNS; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; VALLÉES, MARIE DES.

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RATEGNO, BERNARDO OF COMO (D. 1510)

Rategno was a Dominican inquisitor, author of the inquisitorial manual *Lucerna inquisitorum haereticarum pravitatis* (A Lantern for Inquisitors of Heretical Depravity) and the witchcraft tract *Tractatus de strigibus* (Treatise on Witches, ca. 1510). Active in northern Italy in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, Rategno earned the reputation of being a ruthless persecutor of witches. His treatises, essentially reference guides for inquisitors, justify the prosecution of witches (*Tractatus de strigibus*) and outline the proper procedures for such prosecution (*Lucerna*). Both works offer modern scholars important sources for Italian witch beliefs and early witchcraft trials.

We know little about Rategno. A member of the Dominican Congregation of Lombardy, he preached frequently in the diocese of Como in the late fifteenth century and served as inquisitor there, engaging in a zealous prosecution of witches from 1505 until 1510, when he probably died. While serving as inquisitor, he composed both of his treatises, which were first published—together—at Milan in 1566 and reissued at least three times before 1700. The renowned Spaniard jurist Francisco Peña published a 1584 Roman edition with commentaries.

Although Rategno never explicitly cites the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), scholars have noted similarities between the main arguments of *Tractatus de strigibus* and those in the notorious German tract. Rategno's descriptions of the witches and their diabolical assembly, the so-called game (*ludus*), agreed with those of other northern Italian demonologists and, like them, reflected local witch beliefs. For instance, Rategno refers to the witches' rite of feasting on the meat of an ox that the Devil later resuscitated—

also described in other witchcraft tracts by Girolamo Visconti and Bartolomeo della Spina and found in the records of a witchcraft trial at Modena in 1519.

In *Tractatus de strigibus*, Rategno defined the term *witch* and included a description of witches' crimes. Rategno's "modern" witches, mostly women, renounced the Christian faith and surrendered themselves body and soul to the Devil. They were physically transported to their diabolical meetings, where they engaged in blasphemous, heretical rites and copulated with demons. The witches inflicted harm on livestock, crops, and other persons' health by magical means. The Devil also helped them bring about impotence and other impediments to the consummation of legitimate sexual relations. According to Rategno, their dreadful transgressions, and especially their apostasy and devil worship, justified severe punishment from inquisitors. He ended the *Tractatus de strigibus* with a brief discussion of appropriate judicial procedures for witchcraft cases, a matter he developed more fully in the *Lucerna*.

Throughout *Tractatus de strigibus*, Rategno denied that the misdoings confessed by witches were illusions, though he conceded that they may be at times. Drawing on witnesses' testimonies from trials he had conducted in the region of the Valtelline (Valtellina; Vetlin), he concluded that the witches' transgressions were real. Rategno avoided contradicting the authoritative *Canon Episcopi* (ca. 906), which stated that at the time of the Council of Ancyra (Ankara) in 314, women deceived themselves by believing they rode at night with the goddess Diana. Rategno argued, however, that in more recent times, witches might be physically transported to diabolical meetings where they would perform terrible crimes.

Using records of witchcraft trials he found in Como's inquisitorial archives, Rategno argued that the diabolical sect of witches had only come into existence some 150 years earlier. Although our earliest surviving records of witchcraft trials in the region of Como date from the 1450s, modern scholars have used Rategno to prove that witches had been prosecuted in this region since the mid-1300s. Rategno's assertion was reinforced by a certain legal opinion (*consilium*) attributed to the renowned fourteenth-century Italian jurist Bartolo of Sassoferrato, which discussed the trial of a witch found at Orta, a village northwest of Novara. But in 1975, Norman Cohn identified this *consilium* as a late-sixteenth-century forgery, perhaps based on the *Tractatus de strigibus*, by the Novarese jurist Giovanni Battista Piotta (or de' Ploti).

TAMAR HERZIG

See also: *CANON EPISCOPI*; HISTORIOGRAPHY; ITALY; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; NIDER, JOHANNES; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; PEÑA, FRANCISCO; PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA, GIANFRANCESCO; POPULAR BELIEFS IN WITCHES; SABBAT; SPINA,

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REBELS

Witches were often depicted as rebels, although very few of them actually assumed that role. Demonologists and witch hunters considered witches to be heretics and apostates and therefore guilty of treason against God. In this regard, witches were compared with their alleged master, the Devil, who began his malevolent career with an act of rebellion against God. "The most notorious traitor and rebel that can be is the witch," wrote the English demonologist William Perkins, "for she renounceth God himself, the king of kings, she leaves the society of his Church and people, she binds herself in league with the Devil" (Perkins 1613, 651).

Witches were also accused of rebellion against human political authority. Demonologists linked the crime of witchcraft and political rebellion by citing the Hebrew Bible, which declared that "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft" (1 Sam. 15:23). In the fifteenth century, secular and ecclesiastical authorities often claimed that peasant rebellions were manifestations of witchcraft. At the Council of Basel (1431–1449), the bishops believed that rebels in the countryside belonged to a satanic conspiracy and consequently took steps to eradicate witchcraft. The reference in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) to sorcerers who were archers reflected fears in German lands of Swiss archers who had defeated the army of the Holy Roman Empire in 1477. It also revealed the fear that peasants from southern Germany might obtain Swiss military assistance in an uprising against the empire. Throughout the period of witch hunting, Bohemian rebels against Habsburg rule were often accused of worshipping the Devil. Accounts of a massive diabolical conspiracy in the Pays de Labourd in southwestern France

were conditioned by the fact that this area was a center of Basque resistance against the French monarchy.

The identification of witchcraft with rebellion was particularly strong in Scotland. In 1590, a group of Scottish witches were accused of having tried to kill their king, James VI, and his new bride, Anne of Denmark, as they sailed for Scotland across the North Sea. In this case, charges of witchcraft became closely associated with charges of treason. Shortly after the restoration of Charles II in 1660, Scottish royalists tried to link the Covenanters, who had rebelled against King Charles I, with witchcraft. At a drunken ceremony in the town of Linlithgow in 1661, magistrates attached an inscription reading, "Rebellion is the mother of witchcraft" to a chest representing the Ark of the Covenant (Kirkton 1817, 126).

The connection between witchcraft and rebellion was not as strong in England as in Scotland, but during the English Civil War (1642–1646), a radical clergyman, Thomas Larkham, was accused of witchcraft, rebellion, and treason. The philosopher Thomas Hobbes, who denied that witches had any real power but thought they should be prosecuted for claiming to be witches, considered witchcraft a crime of disobedience and rebellion. During the Jacobite uprising of 1715, the clergyman White Kennett preached a sermon entitled "The Witchcraft of the Present Rebellion." This indictment of both Scots and English who had tried to overthrow King George I reveals that the rhetorical association between the two crimes remained strong even at a time when the crime of witchcraft was no longer being prosecuted.

Although witches were often accused of rebellion and treason, few can be shown to have actually participated in any kind of political conspiracy, protest, or rebellion. The recognition that most witches were scapegoats for the misfortunes experienced by their neighbors makes it unlikely that many witches were in fact rebels. Only occasionally did accused witches actually engage in activities that could be viewed as rebellious. Practitioners of ritual magic, who were occasionally tried for witchcraft, sometimes directed their maleficent magic at political leaders whom they wished to depose or replace. In colonial Peru, witches served as defenders of native Andean culture during the period of Spanish rule, encouraging disobedience to the parish priests and local political authorities. If one were to extend the definition of rebellion to include defiance of conventional social norms and standards of feminine behavior, a large number of witches might qualify as actual rebels.

BRIAN P. LEVACK

See also: BASEL, COUNCIL OF; BASQUE COUNTRY; HOBBS, THOMAS; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; PERKINS, WILLIAM; PERU; RITUAL MAGIC; SCAPEGOATS; SCOTLAND.

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REICHSHOFRAT (IMPERIAL AULIC COURT)

The *Reichshofrat* (imperial aulic court) (est. 1497–1498), was the Holy Roman Empire's second highest appellate court, after the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court). In addition to its legal duties, this court also had an advisory and administrative role. In contrast to the *Reichskammergericht*, the *Reichshofrat* did not have a permanent seat. Instead, it traveled with the emperor, sitting wherever he resided. During the age of witch hunts, this was usually Prague or Vienna.

As Vienna's Hage House, Court, and State Archive has only recently begun editing a modern index of files, the *Reichshofrat* has not yet been researched as extensively as the *Reichskammergericht* in Speyer. Because of its close ties to the emperor's court and its mostly Catholic officers, the *Reichshofrat* was seen as an imperial tool in religious and constitutional disputes by the late sixteenth century. With its greater political power, the *Reichshofrat* was mainly occupied with settling political disputes, rather than private conflicts, as the *Reichskammergericht* did. However, its exact role remains unclear, despite theories that a north–south conflict and religious differences were responsible for the antagonistic relationship between the two courts. The assertion that the *Reichshofrat* seemed downright medieval in the sixteenth century certainly deserves closer examination. The court's organization, however, is known. In the Aulic Court Order of 1539, a president was appointed to represent the emperor. The court's procedures were probably less elaborate than those of the *Reichskammergericht*, therefore making the *Reichshofrat* considerably quicker at resolving disputes.

Friedrich Spee mentioned the *Reichshofrats* role in German witchcraft trials. In the preface to his second edition of *Cautio Criminalis* (A Warning on Criminal Justice) in 1632, Spee (writing as his former student, Johannes Gronaeus) claimed that numerous members of both the *Reichshofrat* and the *Reichskammergericht* had requested a new edition of his book to "ready the way to further prove and research the truth." The *Reichshofrat* was apparently considered an opponent of witchcraft

trials, as was the *Reichskammergericht*. A remark by Melchior Goldast in his posthumously published work on the confiscation of witches' estates further illustrated this perception: Goldast demanded that the *Reichshofrat* encourage lax estates to conduct witch hunts.

Unlike those of the *Reichskammergericht* in Speyer, the *Reichshofrats* decisions regarding witchcraft are not well known. First, the famously antagonistic relationship between these two courts shows up even in the matter of witches. Offenburg's guilds complained to an imperial commissioner in 1599 about their city council's restrained persecution practices. In the name of the *Reichshofrat*, the commissioner demanded that the city start conducting witchcraft trials, but only in adherence with the Carolina Code, the imperial law code. When the *Reichskammergericht* repeatedly intervened on behalf of the accused at the high point of persecution in 1608, Offenburg's council complained to the *Reichshofrat*. The *Reichshofrats* position regarding witches seemed rather ambivalent. Other trials, in which plaintiffs unsuccessfully tried to take action against unlawful prosecution first in the *Reichshofrat* and then in the *Reichskammergericht*, give the same impression of ambivalence.

The *Reichshofrats* successful intervention in witchcraft trials in Bamberg and the electorate of Cologne stands in clear contrast to the above examples. In the prince-bishopric of Bamberg, the *Reichshofrat* intervened often in 1630 and 1631—once on behalf of Dorothea Flöck, who had been imprisoned for witchcraft and was executed during the ongoing aulic processes. Nevertheless, the numerous *Reichshofrat* cases from Bamberg seem to have hastened the end of that city's witchcraft trials, helped by several personal interventions by Emperor Ferdinand II and Pope Urban VIII and the sudden end of Würzburg's hunts.

In the electorate of Cologne, the *Reichshofrat* also intervened on behalf of those persecuted for witchcraft. Its May 1639 *inhibition de non ulterius procedendo* (order to stop proceeding) on behalf of Gerhard Urbach, who had been arrested for sorcery, led to a noticeable reduction in the number of witchcraft trials; until then, an excessive number had been conducted (Schormann 1991, 165). To prevent further complaints to the *Reichshofrat* from victims of persecution, the electorate of Cologne's court ordered that everything having to do with witchcraft be conducted henceforth "according to legal order." Because it was so closely tied to the imperial court, the *Reichshofrat* had greater political authority than the *Reichskammergericht*.

Perhaps the *Reichshofrats* biggest case concerning witchcraft involved the protest by families of victims executed for witchcraft in the county of Vaduz that went to Emperor Leopold I and eventually to the *Reichshofrat*. The court accepted the accusations of excessive torture and extortion against the count of

Vaduz, Franz Carl von Hohenems, and ordered him removed from office (Monter 2002, 33).

Whether or not its interventions on behalf of persons persecuted for witchcraft were always as successful as those in Bamberg and the electorate of Cologne, and exactly what the antagonistic relationship with the *Reichskammergericht* regarding witches entailed, will become clear once the files in Vienna have been thoroughly examined.

PETER OESTMANN;

TRANSLATED BY JONATHAN STICKNEY

See also: BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*); COLOGNE; GOLDAST, MELCHIOR; HOHENENS, FERDINAND KARL FRANZ VON, COUNT OF VADUZ; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; OFFENBURG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY; *REICHSKAMMERGERICHT*; SPEE, FRIEDRICH VON; VADUZ, COUNTY OF.

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REICHSKAMMERGERICHT (IMPERIAL CHAMBER COURT)

Founded by the Diet of the Holy Roman Empire at Worms in 1495, the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court) was—together with the *Reichshofrat* (imperial aulic court)—one of the two highest courts of the Holy Roman Empire. In the mid-nineteenth century, Paul Wigand used a few cases to argue that the imperial chamber court had assisted people against witchcraft persecution, reprimanding lower courts that had permitted unbearable conditions of incarceration, used magical drinks to get confessions, or performed water ordeals (the swimming test) (Wigand 1851, 73–82). Recent research has largely upheld this assessment while greatly deepening our knowledge of the amount and the contents of the imperial chamber court's judgments in matters of witchcraft (Oestmann 1997).

COMPETENCE

The imperial chamber court dealt with witchcraft through several indirect means. Its types of proceeding

included litigation over jurisdiction, appeals in cases of verbal injury to reputation (*actio iniuriarum verbalis*) or of bodily injury (*actio iniuriarum realis*), grievances for annulment, and pleas for mandates. The suits concerning annulments and mandates were especially important.

The judges, or assessors, of the imperial chamber court intervened in several witchcraft cases, because they claimed the highest jurisdiction in the Holy Roman Empire and tried to enforce a correct proceeding for every subject. However, with regard to criminal law, its jurisdiction remained limited: Charles V's criminal code of 1532 (the Carolina Code: [*Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*]) included a clause leaving the possession of criminal jurisdiction to the princes and other imperial estates. Nonetheless, an imperial chamber court law of 1555 permitted anyone to apply to the *Reichskammergericht* in cases involving severe violations of general rules of criminal procedure.

DECISIONS

About half of the 131 legal proceedings instituted by victims of witchcraft trials against local and territorial authorities were mandate lawsuits (*mandata*). The next most frequent forms were legal proceedings for annulment (*querelae nullitatis*) and suits where the assessors issued a *citatio super injuriis* in cases of bodily injuries. In general, the immediate result of a mandate lawsuit was a notification by the imperial chamber court that the plaintiff was now under the emperor's protection. In most cases, these mandates were subsequently confirmed by final sentences. In suits for annulment, we have only the texts of four final sentences, all nullifying the original sentences.

It was the imperial chamber court's chief interest to use its influence in criminal jurisdiction only when principles of legal procedure had been exceeded. A contemporary scholar (using the pseudonym Adrian Gylman) wrote that not all pleas for mandates in witchcraft cases were successful (Fuchs 1994, 58). It is evident that the court made a strict separation between ordinary witchcraft trials and those it considered irregular.

Within the texts of their rulings, the imperial chamber court's assessors seldom indicated the reasons for their decisions. But with regard to mandates, it is nevertheless possible to see that the Carolina Code provided their principal guidelines: Only qualified persons should participate in examining and judging crimes. Every judge should have sufficient evidence before ordering the torture of a suspected witch. In examining crimes, magical procedures were strictly forbidden. And prison conditions should not harm people's health.

Many of the imperial chamber court's assessors obviously had no doubts that witchcraft was a severe crime. In 1588, an assessor's vote that led the court to

pass sentence even called witchcraft an extraordinary crime (*crimen exceptum*) (Fuchs 1994, 50–58). But it is clear that even this was no reason for the court to tolerate transgressions of the *p rocessus ordinarius* (ordinary procedure).

EFFECTS

It remains unclear how far the imperial chamber court's selective interventions affected the prosecution of witchcraft in the Holy Roman Empire. Some of the mandates in favor of the victims may have induced local and territorial authorities to abandon witchcraft trials completely; in the county of Eastern Frisia, for example, such trials seem to have been abolished permanently after local authorities received writs of mandate to stop torturing some women. But even here it is not possible to establish a clear causal link from the mandates to the cessation of witchcraft trials. And in other territories, witchcraft trials did not end after mandates had been issued against their legal malpractices.

In general, we can say that the imperial chamber court tried to stop legal abuses in criminal procedure within the territories of the Holy Roman Empire. The court helped some victims of witchcraft trials. However, it is evident that their number was very small, measured against the bulk of witchcraft trials in the empire. This must be attributed to the fact that the imperial chamber court had only limited competence in criminal affairs—and by no means were all of its assessors opposed to witchcraft persecutions.

RALF-PETER FUCHS

See also: CAROLINA CODE; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; *REICHSHOFRAT*; SWIMMING TEST; TRIALS.

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RÉMY, NICOLAS (CA. 1530–1612)

Best known for a work of juridical demonology in Latin, the *Daemonolatria* (Demonolatriy), Rémy was

born at Charmes in the duchy of Lorraine. He studied law at Toulouse and worked in France from 1563 to 1570 before returning to his native duchy. In Lorraine, he became privy councilor to Duke Charles III in 1575, served as an *échevin* (supervisory judge) at the ducal court of Nancy from 1576 to 1591, and was ennobled in 1583. Rémy ended his career serving as Lorraine's chief prosecutor, or attorney general of Lorraine, from 1591 until resigning in favor of his son Claude-Marcel in 1606 (Cullière 1999, 73–78).

The author of other works, including histories, Rémy composed the *Daemonolatria* at his country estate after fleeing Nancy during an outbreak of plague in 1592; it was published at Lyons in 1595 (Rémy 1998). He dedicated the book to Duke Charles III's paralyzed son Charles, cardinal of Lorraine, bishop of Metz and Strasbourg, and regional apostolic legate for Metz, Toul, and Verdun, who later suffered from bewitchment. *Daemonolatria* was reprinted eight times, with two German translations. Together with other Catholic works on demonology and witchcraft written around the same time, including those by Henri Boguet, Pierre de Lancre, and Martín Del Rio, most of them the products of specific regional prosecutions, confessions, and executions, Rémy's book helped displace the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) as a guide to judges in witchcraft trials at the height of the prosecutions around the turn of the seventeenth century.

Rémy based the *Demonolatriy* both on his immense reading in both ancient and recent literature and on local court records. On the title page, he claimed he had judged 900 witches in fifteen years (later reduced to 800 in the text), and he mentioned over 125 of them (some of whom were not tried in Lorraine) by name. Rémy seems to have been an unusually meticulous author, citing individual confessions, mentioning convicted witches by name, and noting the date and place of each execution (not always consistently) in the margins. Historians (Briggs 2002) now believe that Rémy's numbers were considerably exaggerated—a piece of late-humanist bombast—and that "900" should be translated as "many." However, abundant fiscal sources in the archives confirm only a handful of Rémy's names and dates, but the vast majority of the more than 125 names the *Demonolatriy* mentions remain impossible to verify. In book 1, Rémy observed that many of the details of witchcraft confessions should be kept out of the public record lest the curious public discover the secrets that would lead to their own damnation. He did not follow his own advice.

Rémy relied heavily on the work of earlier demonologists, particularly Jean Bodin (whom he may have met in Toulouse). Like Bodin, Rémy considered the



Nicolas Rémy's witchcraft treatise Daemonolatria (Demonolatriy), often served as a guide to judges in witchcraft trials and went through eleven editions. This illustration (from the 1693 German edition) depicts a Sabbat at the Blocksberg (a mountain in Germany where witches gathered). Witches administer the kiss of shame to the Devil (the goat), while others dance with demons around the mountain. (Cornell University Library)

prosecution of witches a religious as well as a secular obligation, and his book appeared to be irrefutable both as sound Catholic doctrine and as scientific legal evidence. A trained jurist, he also cited Scripture, Roman law, and recent legislation, justifying the prosecution of suspected or accused witches and placing great reliance on the confessions of convicted witches. The *Demonolatriy* is also especially important for Rémy's articulate insistence on the immunity of civil magistrates not only from acts of witchcraft and diabolical sorcery but also from demonic temptation by virtue of their legitimate office and because of the divine sanction of princely rule. Even witches in legitimate custody were immune to the temptations of their demons.

Rémy's insistence upon the virtually priestly character of civil magistrates was consistent with contemporary ideas of the divine justification of civil rule.

Rémy divided the work into three sections: the first dealing elaborately and in great detail with demonic powers and the means by which demons tempted humans to become witches, the second with the activities of witches (chiefly with their use of poisons), and the third with further examples and conclusions, expressly condemning those who denied the reality of witchcraft.

Rémy asserted that demons not only tempted humans into their service by promises of rewards and power but also coerced them into their service by striking fear into their hearts, citing a confession made in 1586 to the effect that a demon had compelled one Claude Morèle into its service as a witch by threatening to kill Morèle's wife and children. Although the book was directed at a learned public and written in learned Latin, Rémy did not organize it systematically. Rémy's vast learning, his citation of hundreds of cases, and his elaborate descriptions of demons' influence over witches made for a disorganized work, in which one anecdote leads to another and references to classical authors and literary figures are made to seem contemporary. In spite of its difficult language and flawed construction, the work remained one of the most used and respected sources for demonological and legal ideas for nearly a century.

Leaving his book aside, it is possible to measure Rémy's influence on witchcraft persecutions in the duchy of Lorraine during his time as attorney general, thanks to remarkably complete fiscal records (every witch had to be publicly executed, creating budgetary expenses that were invariably recorded). Witchcraft trials had begun to multiply in Lorraine in the 1570s, starting before Rémy became one of three judges at the ducal court of Nancy. One can measure a rapid increase in witch burnings in the 1580s, before Rémy took office as chief prosecutor. His advent spelled neither an increase nor a decrease in Lorraine's witchcraft trials; they remained at a remarkably stable level for the forty years after 1590 (more than twenty recorded executions each year, with records about 90 percent complete). These forty years exactly coincided with the period when the two Rémys, father and son, directed official persecutions in Lorraine. So far as possible, they practiced what the *Demonolatriy* preached and made their duchy into the single worst witch-hunting state of French-speaking Europe. They did not begin this process, but they maintained it in Lorraine at brutally high levels.

WILLIAM MONTER AND EDWARD PETERS

See also: BODIN, JEAN; BOGUET, HENRI; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DEMONOLOGY; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; LORRAINE, DUCHY OF; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*.

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RENAISSANCE DRAMA, ENGLAND

English dramatists from the late 1580s to the 1640s were keen to exploit the fuzzy categories of witchcraft and magic as a familiar source of character types, plots (many of them comic), and theatrical spectacle and as a way of affirming conventional gender relations and the political status quo. Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) was an important source for details of witchcraft, though dramatists generally used sources indiscriminately. Magical and witchcraft materials appeared in plays throughout the period, though some periods, such as the mid-1590s, saw a surge in the fashion for witchcraft plays. Witchcraft motifs persisted because they lent themselves to a variety of dramatic treatments, from the burlesque and comic to the intellectual and tragic. Both female witchcraft and male magic (the latter treated more sympathetically) provided opportunities for theatrical spectacles. They were often associated with comedy, because both comedy and witchcraft in different ways pursued social disorder. The frequency of witchcraft motifs in plays bore little relation to the periods of greatest witchcraft prosecution in England, and in general, playwrights, if they took witchcraft seriously at all, were interested less in the actualities of witchcraft prosecutions than in witchcraft as a symbolic social system representing women's illicit challenge to patriarchy.

Endymion by John Lyly, performed at Elizabeth I's court in 1588 by boy actors, was the first of many plays representing female magic as a threat to patriarchal marriage and the established political order, here embodied in Cynthia, who represented Elizabeth. Its sophisticated, learned mode presented female figures associated in benevolent and malign ways with the powers of the earth, flowers, and herbs. Dipsas the sor-

ceress is a literary descendent of Medea in book 7 of Ovid's *Métamorphoses* (1–8 C.E.), with power to control the operations of nature and restore youth to old age. Dipsas's magic is contained and transformed by the true sovereignty and divinely appointed power of Cynthia, and in the end, Dipsas submits to Cynthia.

Magic's challenge to established authority was invariably defeated in plays of the period, in plots that finally contained, dispelled, transformed, or destroyed its threat. The combining of learned and popular witchcraft lore in Lyly can also be found in Christopher Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* (ca. 1589). In this play, Marlowe probed the early modern period's concern with the reality, extent, and seriousness of magic's powers. He deployed three perspectives on Renaissance magic: orthodox demonology, condemning it; "high," intellectual magic, celebrating its occult truths and mysteries; and popular magic, assuming the closeness of devils and their powers to transform or cause mischief (Roberts 2000, 62). The mixture of magical materials found in *Dr Faustus* was typical of many witchcraft plays of the period, though few deployed those materials as cogently as Marlowe did to produce not only popular spectacle and learned disputation but also a sense of the protagonist's interiority as he fantasizes the power that will flow from magic, then struggles with its failure. A compact with the Devil was also a motif in George Chapman's *Caesar and Pompey* (ca. 1605), the anonymous *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* (ca. 1602), and Barbabe Barnes's *The Devil's Charter* (1606). Robert Greene was quick to imitate Marlowe's play in his *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (ca. 1590), in which a male magician performs amazing feats, though, unlike Dr. Faustus, he finally renounces his magic and turns to God. The male magician was to reappear in plays throughout the period, including William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (ca. 1611).

The 1590s also saw the appearance in plays of the wisewoman, a figure from popular culture. Both John Lyly's *Mother Bombie* (ca. 1590) and Thomas Heywood's *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* (ca. 1604) survive, though only the titles remain of *Mother Redcap* (ca. 1597), *The Witch of Islington* (ca. 1597), and *Black Joan* (ca. 1598), also possibly a wisewoman play. Female practitioners of magic were usually depicted as wicked and male ones as good, and they were sometimes contrasted in the same play: Prospero and Sycorax in *The Tempest*, Edward the Confessor and the Weird Sisters in Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (ca. 1605), and Reuben the Reconciler and Mother Maudlin the witch in Ben Jonson's *The Sad Shepherd* (ca. 1636). Women with ambitions to employ magic were denigrated as witches and interpreted as sources of disorder aiming to destroy the reasonable order of male rule. Shakespeare's *Henry VI, Part I* (ca. 1590) contains the strong, eloquent

The Witch of Edmonton

A known true S T O R Y.

Composed into

A TRAGICOMEDY

By divers well-esteemed Poets;

William Rowley, Thomas Dekker, John Ford, &c.

Acted by the Princes Servants, often at the Swan-Hill in Drury-Lane,
once at Courts with singular Applause.

Went forth first.



London, Engraved by J. Coulter for Edward Blount at the Angel

The English Renaissance drama *The Witch of Edmonton*, 1621, featuring the witch Mother Sawyer. (TopFoto.co.uk)

warrior woman, Joan la Pucelle, champion and inspirer of the French against the English. Shakespeare started by making visible the social and ideological processes by which opposed identities of witch and saint are assigned to Joan by the English and the French, respectively, but by the end of the play, he has placed Joan in the former category by showing her invoking demons to support her failing powers. Even so, in Joan he suggested the possibility of women exceeding the limits that gender conventionally placed on them.

Shakespeare made more use of the discourses of witchcraft and magic than any other dramatist of the period, drawing on them as a source of metaphor, analogy, and ideas, and his notions of magic were strongly gendered. The witches of *Macbeth* bore little resemblance to contemporary village witches; instead, they symbolized the disturbing idea of female power. The question of the reality of their power and agency was insoluble: Witches might be either supernatural agents (as the added Hecuba scenes would suggest) or merely representatives of female powers of intuition and foresight that a male warrior society marginalized. However, Shakespeare extended the idea of female dominance to Lady Macbeth, whose deliberate rejection of her femininity went along with political

insubordination and the destruction of the patriarchal order. Shakespeare regularly went beyond the stereotype of the witch to fashion the more threatening, gender-transgressing figure of the dominating woman with a masculine spirit, including Margaret in the *Henry VI* plays (ca. 1590) and in *Richard III* (ca. 1591), Lady Macbeth, and Paulina in *The Winter's Tale* (ca. 1609); witchcraft was merely a suggestion to account for their woman-exceeding powers (Willis 1995, 167).

The Wonder of Women, or The Tragedy of Sophonisba (1604–1606) by John Marston resembled *Macbeth* in its scheme of gender oppositions, with Sophonisba, the epitome of beauty and sexual propriety, opposed to the witch Erichtho, with supernatural powers and necrophiliac desires. Marston's portrayal of Erichtho was lifted directly from book 6 of Lucan's *Pharsalia*: Like in the original, Erichtho can control the environment and deploy charms that compel even the gods of the underworld. Her sexual skills, though, were drawn from seventeenth-century witchcraft beliefs. The sharply contrasted female figures served to demonstrate the dangerous instability of men's feelings toward women, whether good or bad. At the same time, Marston made the most of the sexual turns of the plot, including having the hero have sex with Erichtho as a succubus.

Plays that dramatized a coherent gender ideology were in the minority, though they have been given a prominence in recent studies. Ben Jonson's *Masque of Queens* (1609), written for private performance at court, with Queen Anne and her female courtiers appearing as the queens, drew on both classical and contemporary witch lore for the witches in its anti-masque (a grotesque parody of a masque). Its logical structure, opposing the subversive disorder of the witches against the heroic virtues of the queens, seemed to depend on conventional gender politics, though the queens' being women warriors in a court with James I as sovereign made its gender argument more complex.

More typical of witchcraft plays of the period was the hugely popular and anonymous *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*. It was written sometime before 1604, was printed six times in the seventeenth century, and was regularly performed, including once before James I in 1618. A Dr. Faustus figure is the "merry devil" of the title; his pact with the Devil has reached its end, but he goes on to renounce the Devil and turn instead to a love intrigue in which his tricks are purely natural. Also opportunistic in its use of magic and witchcraft for entertainment purposes was *The Witch* (1609–1616) of Thomas Middleton. Its lurid, comical witches include Hecate and three others who are dedicated to causing mischief around the sexually hypocritical court. They indulge in every evil activity that Middleton could cram in from his sources, including Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft*: boiling unbaptized babies for their fat,

transvection (the flight of witches), and comic sexual license. Hecate complains about sons who would rather “hunt after strange women still / Than lie with [their] own mothers” (Corbin and Sedge 1986, 94). The play’s disappearance from the repertoire may have owed more to its possible allusions to the Essex affair of 1610–1617 (a sordid scandal involving love magic and poison that centered on Frances Howard and Robert Devereux, the third earl of Essex) than to any failure to entertain.

The more serious the threat a witch presented, the more firmly she was removed from the play’s conclusion. Mother Sawyer in *The Witch of Edmonton* (1621), by Thomas Dekker, John Ford, and William Rowley, is executed, like her historical original, because her community blames her for its disorders. This play was unique in dramatizing the social process by which a witch was created, and it presented a potentially skeptical view of witchcraft alongside the familiar credulous one. The witch got a chance to condemn the social evils around her. In Ben Jonson’s *The Sad Shepherd*, the forest-dwelling witch Mother Maudlin may also have represented a critique of Robin Hood’s quasi-aristocratic society, though as the play was not finished, it is hard to tell. One of the last witchcraft plays of the period, *The Late Lancashire Witches* (1634) by Thomas Heywood and Richard Brome, was conventional in conception though strikingly action-packed and carnivalesque. It ignored the real Lancashire witchcraft trials and presented the witches as overturning society’s sexual order. Because their appetite for mischief produced comic results, they were left unpunished at the end.

LAWRENCE NORMAND

See also: DEVIL; DRAMA, DUTCH; DRAMA, ITALIAN; DRAMA, SPANISH; ENGLAND; FAUST, JOHANN GEORG; FEMALE WITCHES; GENDER; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; JOAN OF ARC; LANCASHIRE WITCHES; MEDEA; REBELS; SCOT, REGINALD; SHAKESPEARE, WILLIAM.

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REVENANTS

According to usual folklorist terminology, revenants, that is, dead people returning to the world of the living (from Latin *revenire*), are different from ghosts because the former possess a material body, albeit of some alien substance, whereas the latter are incorporeal. In German, a revenant is called *Wiedergänger*, *Lebender Leichnam* (living corpse), or *Untoter* (undead); in Old Norse, a revenant was called *draug*. Several texts from Iceland showed these material specters as malignant and dangerous beings, against whom apotropaism, fighting, or destroying was necessary. The men and women who become revenants may have failed to find their way into the otherworld because they had died prematurely, because their corpses were unburied, or because they had an evil character. A special case of the revenant is the vampire, a reanimated corpse fond of drinking blood. Some other mythological figures, especially mountain-dwelling dwarfs, may also be a form of revenant. However, continental sources do not always make a sharp division between a corporeal revenant and a nonmaterial specter. We learn from the autobiographical *Arndt Buschmann’s Miracle* that when the peasant Arndt Buschmann’s deceased great-grandfather appeared to Arndt in November 1437, he did so at first in the form of a seemingly real dog, only after conjuration taking the form of a human-shaped ghost.

Christian writers of the Middle Ages and later explained such phenomena as the appearance of the souls of impious or sinful persons who craved help by the living through prayers, alms, and masses. They were allowed to leave their after-death dwelling place, purgatory, through God’s special grace, in order to get a chance to shorten their penance. Such records began to be written down frequently from the twelfth century onward, peaked in the late Middle Ages, and became discredited after the Reformations.

Whereas pagan revenants were frequently dangerous, the Christian cult of the dead created a legend of the “helpful dead.” These were people who became revenants only for some special purpose, as in a popular legend from the later Middle Ages in which a knight who often prayed for the dead is attacked by his enemies in a churchyard; the skeletons open their graves and drive away his aggressors. In another example, in the legend of St. Fridolin of Säkingen, a cooperative corpse accompanies the saint to court so that his testimony can help the saint win his case. But medieval

Christians also told stories about aggressive corpses: The original form of the “dance of death” was a dance in which the dead took the living with them.

Collective apparitions of the dead formed a widespread element within European folk traditions. On stormy nights, at certain times of the year (mostly during winter), an army of the dead rode through the skies, variously called *exercitus ferialis*, *familia Harlechini*, or *Mesnie Hellequin*. The army was ruled by the Wild Hunter (*Wütender Jäger*), also identified with King Herla, Theodoric of Bern, Frau Perchta, or some similar figure. It is obvious that this leader of the dead was a replacement for some pre-Christian psychopomp (a deity who accompanies the departed into the other world). Portentous battles between dead men have often been seen in the air, from classical antiquity until modern times. The Christian interpretation declared these soldiers to be souls who had to endure this form of terrestrial purgatory. This motif entered medieval literature in partly secularized variants, for example, e.g., Andreas Capellanus’s *De Amore* (On Love 1184–1186, I, 15), Boccaccio’s *Decameron* (1349–1353, V, 8), or, in the sixteenth century, Pierre Ronsard’s *Hymne des Daemons* (Hymn of the Demons 1555, verses 347ff).

Connections between witchcraft and revenants were limited to cases of necromancy. That sorcerers and sorceresses could also become revenants is not remarkable within the Christian worldview, but it was a possible fate of all kinds of sinners, though according to the Old Norse sources, sorcerers were especially likely to become phantoms.

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See also: FOLKLORE; GHOSTS; NECROMANCY; NIGHT WITCH, OR NIGHT HAG; VAMPIRE.

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RIEZLER, SIGMUND (1843–1927)

The son of a Munich merchant, Sigmund Riezler received his academic training from Heinrich von Sybel (1817–1895) and Wilhelm von Giesebrecht (1814–1889), both students of Leopold von Ranke. However, the liberal Riezler criticized historicism because of its lack of attention to the darker sides of history, and he remained interested in culture, as well as politics and economy, as he demonstrated masterfully in his *Geschichte Bayerns* (History of Bavaria, 8 vols.). Riezler

started his career as an archivist and librarian, and despite his massive book on witchcraft and considerable resistance from the Catholic Bayerische Volkspartei in parliament, he was appointed to the first chair of Bavarian history at the University of Munich. In 1901, he was even raised to the nobility as Sigmund von Riezler, and he became a privy councilor of Bavaria’s Prince Regent Luitpold three years later. Although specializing in his native Kingdom of Bavaria, Riezler was not considered a provincial historian, and he was made coeditor of the *Historische Zeitschrift*.

Riezler’s *Geschichte der Hexenprozesse in Baiern: Im Lichte der allgemeinen Entwicklung dargestellt* (1896) was innovative in a number of ways. It was a comparative regional study, focusing on the former duchy/electorate of Bavaria, about two generations before this type of study became fashionable. Riezler put witchcraft into the wider context of the culture of the Counter-Reformation (as the subtitle of the book indicates) and related it to the spirit of particular decades and the character of particular actors: princes, lawyers, or theologians. By rearranging the subject on a regional level, a completely new and more coherent picture of the age of witchcraft trials emerged. The Middle Ages evaporated, and the decades around 1600 moved to the center of the story. Instead of denouncing the actors and authors, Riezler really scrutinized their texts and deeds, and—despite his strong liberal and rationalist bias—he employed the hermeneutical approach of “understanding,” always illustrating his interpretations with exact quotes from the sources and even editing a number of them, for example, a new document on the trials against the Waldensian witches in the fifteenth century or on an interrogation scheme of 1622. It seems that Riezler was one of the first researchers who systematically worked with trial records.

Some of Riezler’s suggestions for study have yet to be fully explored, for instance, the differences between Latin and Orthodox Christianity. He provided a thorough discussion of previous publications on his subject and a clear outline of his methodology. He considered himself a pathfinder and acknowledged only the American researcher George Lincoln Burr as a peer in historiographic expertise. (Joseph Hansen’s massive volumes were still to come.) Even after more than a century, his work is an admirable achievement, and—last but not least—a good read.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; BURR, GEORGE LINCOLN; HAUSEN, JOSEPH; HISTORIOGRAPHY; WITCH HUNTS.

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RINGS, MAGICAL

Since ancient times, rings have been both symbols and genuine tokens of magic, considered as amulets possessing power, even divinity. Uncountable are the mentions of magical rings in ancient and medieval literature. Rings warded off hunger and thirst; made one beautiful or ugly, young or old; foretold the future; protected against injury; or brought their wearer love. Rings could make the wearer invisible or give the strength of twelve or more men even to dwarves. Medieval literature even offered directions for manufacturing rings that would ensure victory in fencing contests, although only in Tolkien's twentieth-century pseudo-medieval world does a ring provide enough power to rule the universe (Middle Earth).

Legends affirmed that such magical rings had been made by supernatural beings. Their effects were as various as the materials from which they were formed and the ways either mortals or supernatural beings came to possess them. A ring could be a gift from a supernatural being; dwarves were famous for their artful forging. But elves, nature spirits, helpful animals, or even the Devil could provide a magical ring. Such gifts, with their magical properties, might, however, bind the recipient to the provider even beyond death, like Charlemagne to Fastrada in the legend.

The notion of a magic ring and its various effects derived from several concepts. Strongly connected to such rings, which in most cases contained some precious jewel, was the medieval belief in the power of magical stones. Surviving examples of magical rings, mostly set with precious stones, come from various parts of late medieval Europe: A British example, with five diamonds and a ruby, promises luck to whoever wears it; another example, from fourteenth-century Italy, contains a "toadstone" (actually a fossilized fish) set in gold and inscribed with two Gospel verses.

RINGS AS HABITAT OF DEMONS

The powers of such magical rings supposedly came from demons and spirits dwelling inside them. To put a spirit into a bottle, or more often into a ring, was a much-admired art in medieval times. Solomon reputedly tamed legions of spirits with his magic ring; many medieval magicians and other powerful men, including some popes, supposedly possessed demonic helpers enclosed in rings. Early modern times ascribed these rings to witches, who were able to seduce honest people with their help.

RINGS IN CEREMONIAL MAGIC

In ritual and ceremonial magic, rings represented the angel or spirit that the magician intended to evoke.

John of Morigny, in his fourteenth-century *Liber visionum* (Book of Visions), gave instructions for making and consecrating a "ring of power." Such a ring had various uses: Wearing it enabled one to experience prophetic dreams from the Virgin Mary, win disputations, or disperse evil spirits. In the medieval series of texts known as the *Liber de angelis* (Book of Angels), magic rings corresponded to the planets. For example, the texts include instructions to make a ring on which is written the character or magical sign and the name of the angel of the Sun. At every sacrifice, this ring was to be worn on the little finger of the left hand.

In late medieval medicine, a whole range of objects—jewels, rings, pilgrim badges, and brooches—were carried on the person by individuals of both sexes and all social groups to guard against sudden death, disease, and the attacks of human enemies or diabolical agents. A fifteenth-century duke of Burgundy wore a ring with a stone that could detect poison. Many of these surviving objects carry inscriptions testifying to their effectiveness in warding off particular diseases, for instance, epilepsy and plague. Written medical sources offered plentiful corroborative evidence for the success of such amulets in warding off and occasionally healing diseases.

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See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; CHARMS; DEMONS; *GRIMOIRES*; RITUAL MAGIC; ROYAL HEALING.

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RITUAL MAGIC

The most unorthodox form of the occult sciences, ritual magic was performed primarily by monks, priests, and other learned men and was tolerated for most of the Middle Ages. Many secular and ecclesiastical princes had astrologers, diviners, and magicians in their courts, although by the fifteenth century there were calls for the suppression of these crafts. Ritual magic's opponents associated it with demonic activity, whether or not its practitioners explicitly invoked demons. Because the powerful continued to patronize learned sorcerers, critics began to project their discourse about demonic sorcery onto unlearned women practitioners. The efforts to demonize high magic therefore helped lay the groundwork for the witch hunts.

ORIGINS AND MEDIEVAL DEVELOPMENT

Ritual magic's origins lay in classical antiquity as a means of harnessing the power and knowledge of spirits,

or *daemones*, thought to reside in and operate the heavens. Early Christians soon reshaped it to fit a Christian cosmology, turning Roman *daemones* into angels and demons. Christian ceremonies, prayers, and holy objects replaced or were added to ancient conjurations to produce a highly elaborate set of rituals that aimed to communicate with and manipulate the supernatural realm. Throughout the High Middle Ages, Muslim and Hebrew texts were added to the mix. Because ritual magic was a highly learned art, its practitioners needed to possess Latin and a fairly extensive knowledge of Christian liturgy. They had to be precise in the recitation of dense texts and extremely careful in the preparation of the necessary equipment. Secrecy was critical, and translation of ritual magic texts from Latin into the vernacular was thought to divest them of their power.

The goal of all ritual magic was to summon supernatural beings for a variety of purposes through the

precise performance of prayers and rituals. It was believed that angels and demons possessed superior knowledge to humans and had the ability to transport themselves, invisibly and speedily, anywhere in the cosmos. Through proper ceremonies, ritual magicians hoped to compel these beings to provide secret knowledge, the location of hidden treasure, transportation to exotic places, marvels to impress friend and foe, the means to compel love, and even the ability to reanimate the dead. A few promised techniques to achieve the beatific vision. Often, special equipment was required: waxen images, amulets, consecrated pens, untouched parchment, magic circles, swords, candles, crystals, mirrors, or fingernails, although the central operation was the recitation of texts. Prior to recitation, the practitioner usually had to perform long, complex rites of purification.



Ritual magic, practiced in a magic circle with the help of a text and various other aids. Manuscript initial, 1481. (Archivo Iconografico, S.A./Corbis)

Ritual magic frequently fused with natural magic, especially astrology, and the conjuring of angels and spirits required awareness of the system of correspondences that purportedly governed the operations of the cosmos. Ritual magic remained popular through the medieval and early modern periods, and many unscrupulous practitioners made a good living pretending to call up spirits for naive clients.

Ritual magic that explicitly called upon demons was called necromancy and was routinely condemned by Church leaders. By the fourteenth century, necromancy had become a major underground activity for underemployed clergy or university students. Convinced that Holy Orders imbued them with the spiritual power to exorcize or expel demons from the possessed, clerical necromancers further assumed that they could control these malevolent spirits. Many ritual magicians, however, preferred to identify their supernatural assistants as angels, spirit beings, the Virgin Mary, Jesus, or God the Father himself. The fourteenth-century Honorius of Thebes contended that because only godly men could command the spirits, the Church's persecution of magicians was misguided.

Many medieval ritual magic manuscripts have survived, such as the *Key of Solomon*, the *Sworn Book of Honorius*, the *Book of Angels*, and the *Ars notoria*, which called upon God or angels to provide the wisdom of the cosmos. Later seventeenth- and eighteenth-century *grimoires* (magicians' books for invoking demons) have much in common with their medieval predecessors, because occultists assumed that ancient sorcerers such as Solomon had possessed access to the secret names of God and angelic beings. Manuscripts that appeared to be ancient were highly treasured; to be effective as magical objects, moreover, they had to be meticulously copied by the magician's hand with consecrated pen and paper.

ATTEMPTED DEMONIZATION OF RITUAL MAGIC

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, many polemicists and some authorities began serious efforts to suppress the practice of ritual magic, which had become thoroughly intertwined with courtly culture. In 1390, the *Parlement* of Paris (sovereign judicial court, with jurisdiction over approximately one-half of France) condemned sorcery as a civil offense, and it began trying some local magicians, adding diabolical elements to the charges of illicit magic. Eight years later, the University of Paris decided that demon-assisted sorcery was heretical, since it required a pact with the Devil. Laurens Pignon, a Dominican confessor to the dukes of Burgundy, composed a treatise in 1411 warning the Burgundian court against its fascination with ritual magic. In the process, he demonized all magical practices and blamed the Orléans-Burgundy

rift on princely dabbling in the occult. Thus, learned opposition to courtly ritual magic helped influence the development of the witch stereotype and of judicial action against it. The trial in 1440 of Baron Gilles de Rais helped reinforce suspicion that ritual magic involved diabolical agency and led to the sacrifice of children.

RENAISSANCE NEOPLATONISM AND RITUAL MAGIC

Like the other occult sciences, ritual magic enjoyed a revival in the later fifteenth century thanks to Renaissance humanists' interest in Neoplatonism, as well as to the needs of princes to gain some predictive ability over their rivals. A major dispute arose, however, among ritual magic practitioners as to whether the printing of such texts vulgarized them. The physician Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim raised the ire of many contemporaries in 1531/1533 for publishing many conjurations and recipes in his *De occulta philosophia* (On Occult Philosophy). This work praised the occult sciences and ritual magic, and through it Agrippa's reputation as a magus was elevated, although many opponents blamed him for making magic easier to perform.

For Agrippa, the three worlds—elemental, celestial, intellectual—each received influences from the one above it through rays of divine virtues that traveled downward. Because ritual or ceremonial magic involved the angelic beings of the highest realm, it was the pinnacle of the natural order. For Agrippa, ritual magic was the highest form of philosophy and relied entirely on benevolent angelic beings and natural cosmic forces, without diabolical agency. It required complete inner purity on the part of the practitioner combined with profound training in natural philosophy, mathematics, astrology, and theology.

It is hardly surprising that the Reformation quickly demonized such views. After his death in 1535, Agrippa became the subject of diabolical rumors as a proto-Faustus. His public disavowal of the invocation of demons as a horrible perversion of true magic proved to little avail, as did his condemnation of inquisitors who persecuted women for black magic. Like most ritual magicians, Agrippa did not believe women could perform any kind of serious magic effectively.

Were the experiments of ritual magicians "successful"? In the 1580s, the English alchemist John Dee conducted with Edward Kelley (ca. 1554–1595) a series of crystal-gazing experiments (scrying) during which Kelley purported to see spirits; Dee, the actual crystal-gazer, saw nothing but believed the reports of his partner. The firsthand account of a "successful" necromantic experiment performed in the Roman Coliseum by a Neapolitan priest for the artist Benvenuto Cellini was only one of many contemporary tales suggesting

that ritual magicians could produce some effects that astonished their clients. On the other hand, Gilles de Rais's confession that he always arrived too late to see the spirit beings summoned by his professional necromancers suggests that many practitioners relied heavily on the gullibility and suggestibility of their clientele.

THE REFORMATION AND RITUAL MAGIC

Despite the protests of ritual magicians, their art was demonized by both Catholic and Protestant polemicists, primarily because of its close associations with both learned necromancy and popular conjurations. After about 1580, the various Mediterranean Inquisitions began to prosecute cases of illicit magic with great vigor, while many secular states passed laws against the invocation of spirits, divination, or magical healing. England's Parliament passed such a statute in 1563, although enforcement was generally lax. Even the 1604 English statute condemned only the invocation of evil spirits, not the invocation of supernatural beings in general. Despite the antimagic polemics and the dangers to magicians posed by the witch hunts, learned magic survived, enjoying something of a revival after the decline of witch persecution; in the eighteenth century, Giacomo Casanova found no lack of clients.

When performed seriously, ritual magic, like its cousin alchemy, was no shortcut to riches or an easy game for charlatans. Following its intricate and demanding prescriptions and its elaborate, daylong invocations and prayers could produce unusual or visionary experiences in a practitioner. Ritual magic's centuries-long endurance testifies to the compelling power of the magical-religious act and of the deep desire to change the hand that fortune has dealt. It also illustrates the permeability of the boundaries between perceived reality and fantasy and helped condition people to believe the strange stories of magical flight, Sabbat banquets, and magical acts arising out of the witchcraft trials.

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See also: AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM, HEINRICH; ALCHEMY; ANGELS; ASTROLOGY; CLERICAL MAGIC; DEE, JOHN; DEMONS; DIVINATION; FAUST, JOHANN GEORG; GERSON, JEAN; *GRIMOIRES*; INVOCATIONS; LOVE MAGIC; MAGIC, LEARNED; MAGIC, NATURAL; NECROMANCY; OCCULT; PARIS, UNIVERSITY OF; RAIS, GILLES DE.

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RITUAL MURDER

To kill a member of an ethnic or religious group different from one's own and collect his or her blood in order to be able to benefit from his or her virtues is to commit a ritual murder. Because blood is a constitutive element of groups, the accusation of ritual murder as "blood libel" is extremely old. One might add that logically the charge is absurd, because it implies that the perpetrators of such crimes consider their victim's blood to have qualities superior to their own. However, there are examples of ritual murder accusations dating back to Mesopotamia in the Bronze Age and also ancient Rome, where pagans cast aspersions on Christians because of their celebration of the Eucharist as the body and blood of Christ (Cohn 2000, 1–15). Later, other Christian dissident groups—Manichaeans, Cathars, or Waldensians—bore the brunt of these charges.

Despite the magical character of ritual murder, the accusation of ritual murder belongs more to religion than to sorcery. The charge, frequently made in the Christian-Latin West beginning in the tenth century, was largely a matter of Christians asserting their separateness from Jews, who were presented as dangerous. However, beginning with the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) and the elaboration of the concept of transubstantiation, Jews were accused of sinning against the Eucharist with the help of "bad Christians." Jews were accused of making pacts with the Devil, collaborating with sorcerers, and using the blood of Christian infants for magical purposes (Trachtenberg 1943). Thus, the charge of ritual murder linked Jews and witches. Christians believed both were magicians who needed to murder children.

From the twelfth through the sixteenth centuries, commencing with the English case involving William of Norwich, there are sixteen documented cases of persecution for ritual murder. Ritual murder charges spread eastward from England and France and peaked in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Accusations in eastern Europe began at the end of the fifteenth century



Depiction of Jews, identified by their purses and circular patches, taking blood from the child, Simon of Trent, in 1475. Fifteen innocent Jews were burned for ritual murder, an anti-Semitic libel. Both Jews and witches were thought to murder children. (Fortean Picture Library)

and increased in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, especially in Poland. The blood libel died out in England and France after the fourteenth century with the expulsion of the Jews (Hsia 1988, 2–4). Two types of charges appeared in the late Middle Ages, one against Jewish communities, as in the case of Little Simon of Trent in 1475, and the other against converts, as in the case of Santa Nina de la Guardia in Toledo, 1490–1491.

Approximately 100 cases of accusations of ritual murder can be enumerated in Poland between the end of the sixteenth century and the Third Partition of Poland in 1795. The motivations for these charges, as for those that would appear again in the nineteenth century, were not related to witchcraft but employed anti-Semitism for political objectives (Tollet 2002).

Despite the refutation *in petto* (privately) of ritual murder accusations by Cardinal Laurent Ganganelli (the future Pope Clement XIV) in 1759, this calumny had an extremely long life in east-central Europe (Tollet 2003). The last known serious affair dates from 1946 and caused a pogrom at Kielce, in Poland, in which the victims were survivors of the Nazi camps or of exile in the Soviet Union (Hillel 1985). Not until the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) did the Roman Catholic Church declare in conciliar records that the accusation

of ritual murder was unfounded. Belief that Jews practice ritual murder and use human blood has been widely accepted in the late-twentieth-century and the twenty-first-century Muslim world.

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TRANSLATED BY KARNA HUGHES

See also: BLOOD; INFANTICIDE; JEWS, WITCHCRAFT, AND MAGIC.

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ROBBINS, ROSSELL HOPE (1912–1990)

The compiler of the first English-language encyclopedia of witchcraft was born in Wallasey, Cheshire, England, and educated at the University of Liverpool and Emmanuel College, Cambridge. Robbins came to the United States in 1937 on a fellowship. He became a U.S. citizen and served in the U.S. Army in World War II, working with the War Department on issues concerning the treatment and repatriation of prisoners of war. After the war, Robbins taught at Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn (now the New York Polytechnic Institute). From 1954 until 1969, he held visiting professorships at several colleges and universities in North America. Robbins was International Professor at the State University of New York at Albany from 1969 until his retirement in 1982. Also trained in music, he specialized in medieval poetry, devoting particular attention to the edition and analysis of Middle English verse.

However, Robbins's best-known work was in the field of witchcraft. Much of his time as an independent scholar was spent surveying the extensive witchcraft

collection at Cornell University, one of the world's foremost collections of primary sources on the subject. In 1959, he published the *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*. The work enjoyed considerable popularity and was reprinted numerous times, most recently in 1984. It was translated into Spanish in 1988 and into Russian in 1996. Robbins also published *Witchcraft: An Introduction to the Literature of Witchcraft* in 1978, a reprint of the introduction he wrote for the catalog of the Cornell Witchcraft Collection, which had been published the previous year.

Robbins's *Encyclopedia* is still a useful reference work. It contains entries on most of the authors, works, and topics familiar to scholars of the primary sources, particularly treatises. Its paraphrases and assessments of the treatises' argumentation and its biographical information on the authors, where known, are generally accurate. Its coverage of witchcraft trials is much less extensive and, given the advances in archival research since 1959, obviously inadequate.

Robbins's own explanations of witch hunting were simplistic and were probably refracted through the contemporary experience of Nazi persecutions: He emphasized alleged ideological and financial incentives for "the Inquisition" to invent a new heresy of witchcraft after exterminating the Waldensians and the Cathars (Robbins 1959, 8–9, 15–17, 271; 1978: 20–21, 32). But these theories do not obtrude excessively into the entries of his *Encyclopedia*. One can still agree with Sir Keith Thomas's assessment that it "contain[s] many trivial errors of fact. Its central thesis is disputable . . . but it rests upon a basis of genuine scholarship, contains a valuable bibliography and is a serious contribution to the subject" (Thomas 1971, 436n; cf. 456–457).

Robbins bequeathed his personal library to the University of Rochester, where it now forms part of the medieval collections of the Rush Rhees Library.

WALTER STEPHENS

See also: HISTORIOGRAPHY.

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ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

In the aftermath of the Protestant Reformation, the Catholic Church and the papacy reaffirmed themselves as the sole authentic interpreters and heirs to the Western Christian tradition. Since late antiquity, this tradition had always considered witchcraft a heresy and apostasy, treating it primarily as a ritual of devil worship and a form of faith in demonic powers rather than as a magic art or a manner of casting evil spells against others. Such traditional doctrines about the Devil and his followers survived largely unaltered throughout the sixteenth century, as the Catholic Church introduced few doctrinal changes concerning witchcraft and the power of witches. One must remember, however, that the belief in witchcraft could hardly have affirmed itself in early modern times without the support of the papacy and its most illustrious theologians, without the legal procedures employed by the papal Inquisition as it extended canonical jurisdiction, or without the normative decisions of Church councils. To what extent were the Roman Catholic Church and the papacy responsible for the witch hunts that took place throughout the Western world?

Influenced by doctrinal controversies, past historians frequently accused the Catholic Church of having legitimated these massacres and of having supplied doctrinal and juridical weapons to witch hunters. Currently, scholars usually advocate more moderate positions: In the early modern period, all Christian churches and secular powers continued to persecute witches, with no substantial differences among them. Besides, the modern Inquisitions were very skeptical about *maleficia* (harmful magic) and reluctant to impose capital punishment on those accused of devil worship, sorcery, or the creation of evil spells. After the Reformation, the Catholic Church relied just as much as other Christian movements in the West on the practice of catechism to free the masses from superstitious beliefs. While the Church never officially pronounced itself against the belief in witchcraft, it certainly felt compelled to defend its own rites and sacramental practices against the "competition" of sorcerers, pseudosaints, and popular healers. The Catholic Church preserved the rites of exorcism and blessing, which had been abolished by the Reformation and which, some scholars have argued, provided efficient means of reassuring the masses, while preserving many superstitious elements, as Protestants polemically stressed. Generally speaking, the Devil continued to exist for the Catholic Church; he kept subjugating people's souls and taking possession of their bodies (a phenomenon described in the Gospels), but he was deprived of a part of his power to influence nature and to plot against the faithful.

FROM LATE ANTIQUITY TO THE MIDDLE AGES

The oldest books of the Hebrew Bible have remarkably little to say about Satan, devils, or their curses. According

to the norms indicated in some sections of the Pentateuch, God called for a thorough repression of witchcraft (Exod. 22:18 [22:17]; Lev. 19:31; Deut. 18:9–11). The situation is different in the New Testament: Jesus was tempted by Satan, expelled evil spirits from the bodies of the possessed, and explained evil by describing it in its diabolical form. The Acts of the Apostles also refer to exorcisms and abound with descriptions of demons and black magic. Simon Magus, for instance, who appears in the Acts, became to the Christian tradition (also thanks to the Apocrypha) an emblem of the heretic who relies on spells and black magic. The Book of Revelation also attributes to demons or fallen angels a far-from-marginal role in the realization of divine providence, which would bring about the end of the world. Since its origins, the Church therefore lived in fear of the Devil—the source of all evil and sin, its absolute enemy—and relied on exorcism (including the rite of baptism) to counter Satan's power over the faithful.

During late antiquity, the Christian mission consisted largely of expelling demons, promoting sanctity, and recalling the reliability of effective divine protection (Brown 1972). In this context, sorcerers became disturbers of public order, and the Christian emperors soon imposed laws punishing their crimes severely. However, accusations of working evil spells, persisted and took new forms over time. Whereas in earlier times, pagan writers had frequently accused Christians (and Jews) of practicing incomprehensible rites and committing horrible infanticides, now it was the Christians who treated the religious cults of the gods of antiquity as demonic rites and who attributed to the earliest heretics precisely the same awful crimes of which the first Christian communities had been suspected. This led to the idea that there could be pacts with the Devil and that practicing magical rites was tantamount to renouncing the true faith (apostasy) in favor of devil worship. St. Jerome (ca. 340–420) recalled that devils could take physical shape; St. Augustine specified that evil deeds committed by devils were authorized by God but could nevertheless come about through human evocation. Satan did not have unlimited powers, and frequently his exploits were illusions. Yet evil spells existed, according to St. Augustine, and devil worship was a frequent practice among heretics and others who had abandoned the consolations of the true faith. Besides, the Council of Elvira (306) had already officially recognized the belief in the power of evil spells.

Three centuries later began the spread of the legend of Theophilus, a man who, during the fourth century, had made an agreement with the Devil, to whom he had promised his soul at the moment of his death in exchange for a bishopric, worldly pleasures, and the power to take revenge on his enemies. The tale of

Theophilus contributed to the spread of a new belief, according to which it was possible to sign pacts with the Devil and to renounce eternal salvation in exchange for supernatural powers. By the High Middle Ages, popes and bishops oscillated between the idea that witchcraft was merely an illusion and the opposite hypothesis that devil worshippers could obtain real and terrible power to harm others (causing, for instance, male impotence and natural disasters). The latter ideas, which could be found throughout most of Europe, were indispensable in forming the myth of the witches' Sabbat.

PAPACY, INQUISITION, AND THEOLOGY: PACTS AND WITCHES' SABBAT

The Roman Catholic Church is a religious institution that has always maintained its own juridical apparatus and its own tribunals. The foundation of Church legislation lies in canon law, which was first systematically defined in the latter half of the twelfth century by the lawyer Gratian in his *Concord of Discordant Canons*, known as the *Decretum*, a collection of citations from saints and Church Fathers, laws, pastoral decisions, and conciliar decrees. Subsequent normative decisions coalesced around the *Decretum*, which the papacy then imposed as official laws and terms of reference for the Church. The *Decretum* included a tenth-century text known as the *Canon Episcopi* (ca. 906), which urged priests to oppose the widespread superstition and false belief that some women flew at night on the backs of animals, following a goddess to reach Satan. For several centuries, this text prevented the Church from accepting as true the tales that ultimately created the bloodthirsty myth of the witches' Sabbat.

Nevertheless, the Christian model of witchcraft imposed itself as a consequence of the belief in pacts between apostates and demons and the belief that sexual intercourse was possible between humans and devils. Among the advocates of this idea was St. Thomas Aquinas, the premier theologian of the medieval Latin Church, who argued that demons could either assume a passive role as *succubi* or an active part as *incubi* and unite themselves sexually with humans, ordinarily women, thus exchanging semen with the scope of procreation. Although Aquinas's works made no mention of the witches' Sabbat, his doctrines on witchcraft marked an important turning point. Sorcery, clairvoyance, evil spells, black magic, and ultimately all kinds of effective magic rites were based, according to Aquinas, at least *implicitly* on a pact with the Devil.

This assumption led to the idea that all forms of magic and witchcraft were heretical and thus supplied the newly founded tribunals of the Inquisition with a legitimating principle that allowed them to proceed against witchcraft, black magic, and superstition as well as against actual and overt crimes of heresy. The Fourth

Lateran Council (1215), which preceded the creation of the tribunal, had been dedicated to heresy, not witchcraft; it had sought to crush the Catharist heresy, which upheld a body of Manichaean doctrines by believing in the absolute opposition between the forces of good and evil (according to which the Devil was deemed capable of opposing God). The papal Inquisition, founded on the basis of the popes' right to delegate judges who could act outside of traditional episcopal jurisdictions, fought Catharism and other recent forms of heresy. With the appointment of Conrad of Marburg as a judge (1231), however, the prosecution of heretics became closely intertwined with the struggle against witchcraft—with fatal results. Conrad acted according to the principles of the Inquisition, which did not require private charges against the accused and which could employ torture in order to obtain a confession, the supreme proof of guilt. The bloodthirsty Conrad started trials all over Germany and, more important, inspired a papal bull giving additional legitimacy to the belief in devil worship: Gregory IX's *Vox in Rama* (A Voice in Rama, 1234).

The originality of this text, which discussed devil cults, witches' banquets, and animal metamorphoses, lay not in its contents but in the fact that it quoted juridical proofs obtained by the Inquisition and declared them true. Later, in 1258, Alexander IV reduced the Inquisition's powers in its fight against witchcraft and superstition, limiting prosecution to cases in which the criminal's heretical intent (the so-called flavor of heresy) was undisputed. His declarations, however, were succeeded by a new wave of trials against sorcerers and witches during the first decades of the fourteenth century and, hence, against a very different political, social, religious, and juridical background. An increasing fear of conspiracies against Christianity and the papacy culminated in acts of intolerance directed against minorities: lepers, Jews, Waldensians, Cathars, and Knights Templar were accused of diabolical deeds, murder by poison, and attacks against the bastions of the true faith and the papacy. From Avignon, John XXII's bull *Super illius specula* (Upon His Watchtower, 1326) authorized the Inquisition to proceed against agents of evil, whose diabolical crimes had already been defined and distinguished in a papal *consulta* of 1320.

Throughout the following century, the number of witchcraft trials imposed by the Inquisition was very small compared to the number directed against heretics. Nevertheless, the Church's intolerance toward necromancy and erudite magic grew (a trend well expressed in Nicolau Eymeric's manual *Directorium inquisitorum* [Directory of Inquisitors, 1376]). The model of the witches' Sabbat spread during the second half of the fifteenth century and eventually led to the greatest witch hunts in Western history. According to

one theory (Bossy 1988), a source of the myth of the Sabbat (as a formal counterreligion based on the cult of Satan) was the nominalist obsession with sins committed against God, the father and ruler of the universe. Thus, nominalist theologians such as Jean Gerson shifted the concerns of the faithful and the judges from the damages caused by evil spells toward the sin of heresy, which included superstitious devil worship.

Although there is some validity to this explanation, it nevertheless needs to be stressed that in the long run, the lack of concern with the physical harm brought about by malefices did not provoke an increase in witchcraft accusations but, on the contrary, led to their decrease. At the same time, the practice of treating witchcraft primarily as a crime of heresy led to the application of the canon law, which meant that if the trials were conducted correctly, repentant criminals could obtain forgiveness after a first conviction.

Undoubtedly, the preaching of the mendicant orders (the Dominicans and the Franciscans) did much to nourish general fears of demons and witches. Heinrich Kramer, author of the infamous *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), was a Dominican. His order dictated the contents of the papal bull in which Innocent VIII, in 1484, approved the idea that a new sect of heretical witches (unknown at the time of the *Canon Episcopi*) had infected Europe, constituting a threat to Christianity and deserving to be burned at the stake. Consequently, the number of trials concerning witchcraft and witches' Sabbats increased dramatically in both ecclesiastical and secular courts. There was an ongoing dispute within the Church between those who accepted the positions of the *Malleus* (which claimed that witches could fly and that they met during Sabbats) and their more cautious opponents, who distanced themselves from the trials (the latter included the eminent theologian Thomas de Vio, Cardinal Cajetan, who expressed his ideas in a commentary on St. Thomas in 1520). The number of trials decreased after the first two decades of the sixteenth century, when the Reformation created an enormous increase in heresy trials, often by secular courts. The Spanish Inquisition, which deemed the Jews its prime enemies, showed little concern for witchcraft; its Roman counterpart, founded in 1542 to fight Protestant heresy, soon had to struggle once more with popular superstitions and the belief in evil spells.

THE EARLY MODERN AGE: EXORCISM, WITCHCRAFT, AND SUPERSTITION

In their religious controversies, Catholics and Protestants hardly ever accused each other of witchcraft. Protestants accused the pope of promoting superstition; Catholics replied by comparing the leaders of the new churches to demonic figures. But the rupture of the religious unity of Western Europe had no

immediate impact on witch hunts. Violence against witches reached its peak between the late sixteenth and mid-seventeenth centuries, long after the division between Catholicism and Protestant confessions had been established. How can we explain this? And what was the Catholic Church's role in promoting the immense spread of witchcraft trials during the beginning of the early modern period? According to many scholars, there was little substantial difference between the numbers of witch hunts in areas that remained faithful to Rome and in those that had converted to Lutheranism or Calvinism. Religious quarrels nourished a sense of instability and a feeling of imminent threat to Christianity that went beyond doctrinal differences, which perhaps best explains the origin of witch hunts within the context of modern religious controversies.

Catholics and Protestants persecuted witches in often similar manners but on the basis of different legal conventions. Each group included ardent advocates of witchcraft trials as well as skeptics promoting judicial moderation and seeking to convince ordinary people to see the origins of evil in the mysterious ways of divine providence rather than in the evil spells of witches. After the Council of Trent (1545–1563), the Roman Catholic Church aimed to eradicate superstition and to educate the faithful in ways similar to those of the Reformed churches, which were equally active in promoting unprecedented standards of Christian discipline. Once again, these efforts constitute a joint background against which one needs to explain the presence of witch hunts. Yet Catholicism also had its own, distinctive characteristics. It maintained its tribunals, which were partly concerned with witchcraft (increasingly so, after Protestantism ceased to be perceived as a serious threat), and it preserved a large number of sacraments, rites of blessing, and forms of exorcism, which Protestant churches, with a few partial exceptions, had abolished. The preservation of sacramental rites and exorcisms allowed the Catholic Church to reassure its followers and to calm their fear of the Devil more successfully than did the Protestant churches (Thomas 1971). This hypothesis seems to be confirmed by the fact that in the Mediterranean countries, where the Holy Office and the Roman Church dominated jurisdiction over witchcraft, there were fewer witchcraft trials than in many Catholic parts of northern Europe, which were in close contact with Protestantism.

Recently, historians have stressed that the Roman Inquisition and its Spanish and Portuguese counterparts were overtly skeptical as far as accusations of witchcraft were concerned (Henningsen 1980; Romeo 1990; Tedeschi 1991). They preferred not to send accused witches to the stake and adopted some very intelligent measures: Accusations of complicity were rejected; the existence of *maleficia* had to be proved; the criminal

could be absolved if found guilty for the first time; and tales of participation in witches' Sabbats were not credible. Furthermore, the Catholic Inquisitions claimed competence over witchcraft and usually prevented secular courts from interfering in such cases. In a papal bull from 1586, Sixtus V declared that all magical practices, including sorcery, divination, and working of spells, were heretical and, thereby, gave the Holy Office the exclusive right to judge all such cases. By the seventeenth century, the Roman Inquisition, inspired by Desiderio Scaglia, had established precise guidelines for the treatment of witchcraft, extremely similar to Spanish precedents.

This trend toward moderation, however, was not steady or unbroken. For instance, in 1623 Pope Gregory XV ordered that witches ought to be sent to the stake at their first conviction, thus contradicting canon law. His bull had almost no direct consequences, but it showed clearly that not all Catholic policy-makers shared the Holy Office's skepticism concerning witchcraft. In 1631, when the Jesuit Friedrich Spee wrote a book condemning the practice of burning witches at the stake, equally common in Catholic and Protestant parts of Germany, it was published anonymously, in a Protestant city, and was utterly ignored by the Roman Church—although its positions basically reiterated, in more radical form, ideas already expressed in previous treatises of moral casuistry. The Catholic Church was ready to disregard tales of witches' Sabbats and *maleficia* and even, in many cases, instances of demonic possession, treating them as the effects of illusions, illnesses, or female weakness.

However, Catholicism never abjured the belief in the power of witches and maintained a complex set of doctrines concerning the Devil, doctrines that have survived until the present. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, some cases of demonic possession were used (above all in France) for purposes of anti-Protestant propaganda by demonstrating the superiority of Catholicism, the sole faith capable of expelling demons. Pope Paul V's official *Rituale romanum* (Roman Ritual) of 1614, prescribing how the clergy should practice the rite of exorcism, referred to evil spells (as did its revisions in subsequent centuries, including the twentieth). Exorcists could interrogate the spirits that had taken possession of the human bodies about the origins of these evil spells; sometimes this inquiry led to shocking accusations of witchcraft, occasionally involving entire Catholic monasteries. Several works on exorcism, which contained a wide range of unlikely tales and of superstitious medical recipes, were censured only in the eighteenth century. Control over female sexuality was especially intertwined with cases of demonic possession. It was difficult to distinguish between different kinds of spirits, to separate instances of saintly exaltation from demonic manifestations, and to draw a line between magical rites and exorcisms.

Catholicism, the least formally “rational” of all Christian churches, has always fought superstition and practices of erudite sorcery as if they were competitors to the Church’s own, exclusive efforts to reassure the masses through correct rituals.

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See also: ACCULTURATION THESIS; AQUINAS, THOMAS; AUGUSTINE, ST.; BIBLE; *CANON EPISCOPI*; CONRAD OF MARBURG; COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; COURTS, SECULAR; DEMONS; DEVIL; DOMINICAN ORDER; EXORCISM; GERSON, JEAN; GRATIAN; GREGORY IX, POPE; HERESY; INCUBUS AND SUCCUBUS; INNOCENT VIII, POPE; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; INQUISITION, PORTUGUESE; INQUISITION, ROMAN; INQUISITION, SPANISH; JOHN XXII, POPE; MANICHAISM; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PAPACY AND PAPAL BULLS; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; SABBAT; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC; SIMON MAGUS; SKEPTICISM; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; SPELLS; SUPERSTITION; TEMPLARS; THEOPHILUS.

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ROMAN LAW

Roman law constitutes the written and promulgated laws of the Roman Republic and Empire, from the *Twelve Tables* of the mid-fifth century B.C.E. to the codification by the emperor Theodosius II in 438 C.E. and that of Justinian (ruled 527–565) between 530 and 534. Although the Theodosian Code served as the model for many of the Germanic law collections between the fifth and the ninth centuries, the systematic study, teaching, and application of Roman law in western Europe began with the study of Justinian’s *Institutes, Code, and Digest* in the late eleventh century and continued until the end of the eighteenth century. The *Twelve Tables* has had to be reconstructed from other sources, because no original text has survived. The collections of Theodosius and Justinian excised many older laws. The interest in law on the part of Roman biographers, historians, encyclopedists, and others, however, makes it possible to gain an extensive understanding of the operation of the law. The texts of Roman law regarding magic and sorcery informed learned legal discussions of magic and witchcraft in Europe until the early eighteenth century.

Table VIII of the *Twelve Tables* says nothing about noninjurious magic, but it condemns to death a person who utters a wicked charm that injures another or that removes the grain harvest from someone else’s field. This reflects a limited idea of injurious magic and acknowledges the harm caused by magical means. Later republican law prohibited the secret, nocturnal Bacchanalian rites in 186 B.C.E., once again emphasizing the evil intention of the activity. In 81 B.C.E., the dictator Lucius Cornelius Sulla enacted the *Lex Cornelia de sicariis et veneficiis* (Law of Cornelius on Assassins and Poisoners/Sorcerers), whose interpretation was later expanded to various forms of harmful or forbidden magic and was included in Justinian’s codification (*Institutes* 4.18.5, *Code* 9.16, and *Digest* 48.8).

Examples of a new and broader concept of magic, one that connected it to learning and magical books and reflected the magical ideas of the wider Hellenistic world, were widespread in the Latin literature of the early empire, particularly book 30 of the *Natural History* of Pliny the Elder (24–79 C.E.) and in the writings of Roman jurists, many of which are collected in Justinian’s *Digest*. References to the law in nonlegal sources indicated that many individuals were tried and convicted under the *Lex Cornelia* and other statutes, including one that condemned both the teaching of magic and the possession of magical books.

The best-known single case in imperial Roman law was that of the North African philosopher Apuleius of

Madaura, who was tried and exonerated under the *Lex Cornelia* for divination and sorcery in 156–158 C.E. The case is known from Apuleius's reworking of his oration in his own defense, which offers a broad portrait of competing views of magic in the second century.

In imperial Roman law, the sorcerer, illegal diviner, and general magician are termed *maleficii* (evildoers), a designation that survived and was eventually applied exclusively to diabolical sorcerers and witches from the fifteenth century on. In the Theodosian Code of 438, book 9, title 16, under which imperial laws concerning magic were organized, is *De maleficiis et mathematicis et ceteris similibus* (Concerning Magicians, Astrologers, and Others Like Them). Soothsayers and those who consulted or harbored them were subject to severe punishment. Those who injured others by magic (including erotic magic) were designated as enemies of the human race. Magicians were regularly included among those convicted criminals who could never be pardoned and were considered guilty of the excepted crimes (*crimina excepta*).

As the Roman Empire was Christianized during the fourth century, a number of specifically Christian ideas concerning demonic magic also found their way into imperial legislation and practice, particularly in the *Interpretations* that are appended to the laws of the Theodosian Code. Later Christian legal authorities found learned Roman law perfectly compatible in this instance with Christian theology and canon law.

EDWARD PETERS

See also: APULEIUS OF MADAURA; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; *DEFIXIONES*; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (ANCIENT); LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (MIEVIAL); *MALEFICIUM*.

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ROSA, SALVATOR (1615–1673)

An Italian painter and poet, born near Naples, Salvator Rosa is best known for his "protoromantic" landscapes, battle scenes, and genre pieces. He dedicated a smaller share of his work to witchcraft themes. During the 1640s, when living in Florence, Rosa created a closely related group of five preparatory drawings and eight paintings addressing the subject of witchcraft. Initially working for Cardinal Giancarlo de' Medici but seeking independence, Rosa soon sold his paintings, including

his scenes of witches, to other members of the Tuscan and Roman elite. Later, in Rome, Rosa revisited the witchcraft theme in a drawing from the 1660s and in a painting of the biblical witch of Endor, now at the Louvre in Paris (Mahoney 1977, 28.1–5, 82.2 recto; Salerno 1975, 72–82, 210).

ARTISTIC AND INTELLECTUAL ENVIRONMENT

During his training in Naples, his first years in Rome (1635–1640), and while living in Florence, Rosa must have been exposed to nocturnal cabinet pieces (small paintings intended to adorn the walls of a small, intimate room) depicting hell, witchcraft, and sorcery displayed in the studios, shops, and collections in these cities. Though artists who specialized in this genre came chiefly from France, Germany, or the Netherlands, local colleagues also sometimes produced such works. Although they certainly inspired Rosa, his sudden preoccupation with representing witches while in Florence is best explained by the stimulating intellectual environment of the Accademia dei Perocci (Academy of the Afflicted), a typical Italian circle of men of letters, artists, and scientists, of which he was a founding member.

Inquiry into witchcraft and related phenomena in scientific research, theological expositions, and literary writings was highly respected among educated elites in early modern Europe. Even though the question of their reality was fiercely debated, this did not prevent skeptics and believers alike from appreciating their entertaining qualities. Artists representing different demonological subjects were also valued members of these learned circles, and Rosa's Florentine virtuosi colleagues were no exception. The physician Francesco Redi, the painter Lorenzo Lippi, and the philosopher Giovanni Battista Ricciardi all dedicated plays and poems to witchcraft themes. Rosa not only painted witches but also wrote an ode, "La Strega" ("The Witch"), set to music by Marcantonio Cesti. In contemporary documents, Rosa's images of witches, like demonological items in treatises, are called *capricci* and were described as precious objects to satisfy curious minds.

WRITTEN SOURCES

The sources of Rosa's academy's witchcraft lore have yet to be investigated carefully. They include many classical authors (for example, Virgil, Horace, Lucan, Apuleius, Petronius) as well as the sixteenth-century "moderns" Ludovico Ariosto and Torquato Tasso. Demonological tracts were also consulted; a letter by Ricciardi explicitly recommends the work of Martín Del Rio.

Cultivation of ethnological knowledge may also have played a role. For example, the artist's biographer Filippo Baldinucci related that Rosa lent Lippi his copy of a collection of fairytales published in Neapolitan dialect.

THE ICONOGRAPHIC TRADITION

Rosa's witchcraft scenes are typically set in his trademark dramatic landscapes. He is often credited with introducing the northern European type of old-hag witch, created by such artists as Hans Baldung [Grien] and Jacques de Gheyn II, into Italian art, citing his much-copied painting of a nocturnal scene with witches performing incantations (Galleria Corsini, Florence) as an example. However, his witches' scenes show that Rosa was essentially a virtuoso, digesting a vast array of visual examples from both the northern and Italian traditions. Apart from Baldung's old hag, Rosa also included a beautiful enchantress à la Dosso Dossi, *Lo stregozzo* (The Witches' Procession) from an early-sixteenth-century Italian print usually ascribed to Agostino Veneziano, *The Witches' Kitchen* by Pieter Brueghel the Elder, and the matrons from the indoor incantation scenes by Sigismondo Coccapani and Frans Francken II. Rosa may have known some works in the original, but copies and variations in drawing, prints, and painting were common and circulated freely. Inspired by manifold visual as well as literary sources, Rosa seems to have reflected on the variation within witchcraft iconography by exploring and enhancing many different types. In a series of four *tondi* (circular paintings) (Cleveland Museum of Art), Rosa gave a sample book of witchcraft iconography. The first of two nocturnal scenes is similar to the Corsini painting, the second depicts a gathering of male witches. In the two day scenes, we see, respectively, a young, beautiful *maga* enchanting birds, fishes, and frogs, and a procession of female witches attacking crocodiles, their mistress riding an owl. The picture in the National Gallery of Art, London, is truly a painted anthology of acts of witchcraft, sorcery, and magic.

MACHTELD LÖWENSTEYN

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BALDUNG [GRIEN], HANS; BRUEGHEL, PIETER THE ELDER; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; FRANCKEN II, FRANS; GHEYN II, JACQUES DE.

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ROYAL HEALING

Royal healing was a custom, dating from the Middle Ages, whereby the monarchs of France and of England touched the swellings of sufferers from the disease known as "the King's Evil," or scrofula, in the popular belief that the royal touch could effect a cure.

The term *morbus regius*, or "the king's disease," was known in the Middle Ages from classical and biblical sources, usually referring to jaundice or leprosy. By the mid-thirteenth century, the term had become associated with the disease of *scrofulae* (swelling of the lymph nodes, or similar swellings on the face or neck), although this was sometimes also confused with the symptoms of leprosy. Gilbert the Englishman, a professor of medicine at Montpellier, noted that *scrofulae* were so called because the swellings (*scrofulae*) multiplied like a sow's piglets (from the Latin *scrofa*, a breeding sow) and that these were popularly known as "the king's disease" because kings could cure them (Barlow 1980, 12–13).

The ability of rulers to cure disease was closely related to contemporary political ideology, in which a high level of sanctity was believed to reside in the royal office, especially after a monarch had been consecrated and anointed with special oil of divine origin. France and later England both had legends concerning the holy oil with which their kings were anointed as part of the coronation service; kingship in both countries became closely linked to the royal healing power.

ROYAL HEALING IN FRANCE

The beginnings of royal healing in France are surrounded by mystery and controversy. Most evidence suggests it began during the reign of Robert II "the Pious" (996–1031) and was continued by Louis VI (ruled 1108–1137). The belief that the French king could heal was discussed at universities, but it is unknown whether healings were organized or regular, or whether the monarchs in question "touched" or healed *scrofulae* in particular (Bloch 1973; Barlow 1980; Buc 1993). Gilbert the Englishman made his statement about kings healing *scrofulae* sometime around 1250; evidence from 1261 shows Louis IX (ruled 1226–1270) touching the swellings of the scrofulous and signing them with a cross in order to effect a possible if not automatic cure (Barlow 1980, 11–12). Although Louis IX had a reputation for personal holiness, the ability to cure resided in the royal office through consecration with the holy oil given by an

angel to St. Rémy for the baptism of Clovis. Louis IX first organized the ritual of royal touching of *scrofulae*, often on such special occasions as the king's departure on crusade or major religious festivals, but also whenever people came in search of a cure. The royal ability to heal the scrofulous was used as propaganda by Philip IV (ruled 1285–1314) and his advisers as part of a collection of royal attributes that became useful weapons in Philip's struggles with the papacy (Bloch 1973, 63–64). Royal healing was later used by Philip's grandson Charles V (ruled 1364–1380) to restore the prestige of the monarchy after the disastrous fate of his father, John II, who had been captured by King Edward III of England in 1356 and died a prisoner in England.

From the 1490s onward, royal healing rites became better organized. Touchings were far less frequent, usually occurring only at coronations and on major religious festivals: Palm Sunday, Easter, Pentecost, Ascension Day, Corpus Christi, Christmas, Candlemas, and festivals of the Virgin Mary. Supplicants were first examined by the royal physician, who chose those allowed to pass before the king (either to avoid infection or to render the royal miracle more likely). The king always attended Mass and partook of the Eucharist before carrying out this duty and washed his hands afterwards in special basins of water (this water itself came to be regarded as having curative powers). While touching the swellings, the king repeated a formulaic prayer, "the king touches thee, and God heals thee." After the ceremony, alms were distributed to the supplicants, some of whom came from the Iberian peninsula, Italy, and the German states (the English preferred their own rulers). In 1515, Francis I of France exercised the royal healing power before the papal court in Bologna.

After 1559, royal healing became closely associated with national and religious identity. Elizabeth I of England was an excommunicate, and both French and English Catholics denied the efficacy of her touch. By this time, the French rite had also become associated with a local saint in the archdiocese of Reims, St. Marcoul, another reputed healer of *scrofulae*. Royal healing became closely associated with his relics, which were visited by the royal coronation procession from the late fifteenth century until 1654, when they were brought to Reims for the consecration of Louis XIV. This was repeated for Louis's successors. Both branches of miraculous healing, along with the efforts of local healers licensed by the monks of Corbeny, appear to have coexisted happily in France (Bloch 1973, 151–176; Poly 1990).

Henry IV, a former Calvinist who had converted in order to retain the French crown, needed to prove that God had accepted him as king, and royal healing formed an important part of his propaganda effort. The rite continued throughout Old Régime France, attracting large crowds of sufferers despite the increasing

skepticism of intellectuals. The execution of Louis XVI in 1793 effectively extinguished royal healing in France. A tentative attempt to revive it for Charles X in 1825 failed to gain sufficient support to continue it.

ROYAL HEALING IN ENGLAND

The beginnings of royal healing in England, although later than in France, are equally mysterious and controversial. Claims for royal touching for *scrofulae*, or at least of leprous sores, have been made for Henry I (ruled 1100–1135), but the most plausible claim for establishing a royal healing rite came in the reign of Henry III (ruled 1216–1272) (Barlow 1980), who was not only an admirer of Louis IX of France but also a champion of a form of national identity centered on the ruler as representative of both people and nation. Henry III was extremely devout, an ordained deacon who sometimes assisted personally at the Mass, and was therefore extremely receptive to ideas of royal sacrality, including healing (Coote 2000, 65–69). For the reign of his son, Edward I (ruled 1272–1307), and his two successors, records exist for royal touching and for the alms given to supplicants on these occasions (Bloch 1973, 56–57; Barlow 1980, 24–25; Coote 2000, 83–119). The sufferers passed twice before the king, who touched their swellings on the first occasion and on the second signed them with the cross. After this, each received alms, which were later replaced by a gold coin (an "angel," so-called from the image of St. Michael on one face) that the monarch held in his hand as he made the sign of the cross. "Angels" became healing talismans in their own right; the supplicants wore them, often permanently, on ribbons around their neck. The belief grew that if the coin were removed, the disease might return. The association of royal healing with "cramp" rings (see below) probably accounts for the ease with which these coins developed their talismanic quality. Nothing comparable happened in France.

Edward III (ruled 1327–1377) may have touched the sick on both sides of the Channel. The claim of English kings to be the rightful rulers of France, asserted officially in 1340, would have rendered this a test of allegiance. Obviously, Edward III employed every propaganda weapon at his disposal to support his claim, although his claim to healing power served to reinforce the primacy of the healing abilities of rightful kings of France. The English denied only that Philip VI of Valois (ruled 1328–1350) was the rightful holder of this title. Royal healing powers were also used as propaganda in fifteenth-century England during the period of instability and political unrest (known as the Wars of the Roses) that characterized the reigns of Henry VI (ruled 1422–1461) and Edward IV (ruled 1461–1483). Sir John Fortescue, Henry VI's Lord Chief Justice, denied that Edward IV, who had usurped the throne in

1461, could exercise the royal power of healing the scrofulous, even after Edward had been crowned and consecrated with the holy oil of St. Thomas (Bloch 1973, 65; Coote 2000, 195–234). Unlike the French, English monarchs never willingly shared the healing of *scrofulae* with local saints, particularly after the Reformation took hold in Tudor England.

As a new dynasty facing a continuing threat of civil war, the Tudors needed to use the full range of royal propaganda. Henry VIII (ruled 1509–1547) touched sufferers from *scrofulae* even after his break with Rome in 1532. Subsequently, English rulers allied royal healing ever more closely to a national identity increasingly divorced from the international Church. Under Elizabeth I, every mention of the Virgin Mary was expunged from the healing liturgy. In 1600, Sir Robert Cotton explained the royal healing capabilities as a function of the queen's anointing, but this was no longer performed with the holy oil given to St. Thomas by the Blessed Virgin; the nature of the oil no longer mattered (Linehan 1997, 189–196). James I (ruled 1603–1625), brought up as a Calvinist in Scotland, would not perform a rite that he regarded as superstitious without first explaining that it was simply intercessory. He refused to make the sign of the cross. His son Charles I (ruled 1625–1649) made more use of the royal healing power, particularly after the outbreak of the English Civil Wars in 1638, both because of his belief in the sacredness of royalty and because it provided valuable propaganda at a time when loyalty to himself was challenged.

Charles's execution in 1649 did not end royal healing; his son Charles II continued to touch the scrofulous while in exile in France until his restoration in 1660. Afterward, the exercise of royal healing became a means to reestablish not simply the Stuart dynasty but the monarchy itself. James II (ruled 1683–1688) was openly Catholic and had no problem in exercising his healing power, but his successor William III, a Dutch Calvinist, refused to administer the royal touch because it was a Catholic superstition (although we have no evidence that William's devoutly Anglican wife, Mary II, daughter of James II, shared his scruples; she might have administered the rite as her husband allowed). Mary's sister Queen Anne (ruled 1702–1714) was the last English monarch known to have touched the scrofulous, although "James III" (the Old Pretender) and his son Charles James (the Young Pretender) continued to perform royal healing in France. This link to the Catholic Stuarts, together with growing intellectual disdain for beliefs that the Protestant English associated with Catholicism, made royal healing officially unacceptable to eighteenth-century English governments.

"CRAMP" RINGS

In England, a custom also arose whereby the monarch would offer gold and silver coins on the altar on Good

Friday; the coins would then be redeemed and made into rings to be distributed by the ruler when necessary or desired. These rings were believed to cure epilepsy and similar diseases involving muscle spasms, "seizures," or fits. Because of their efficacy in dealing with this type of symptom, they became known popularly as "cramp rings." They first appear in the records in 1323 at York, where Edward II was staying. All English monarchs through Mary I (ruled 1553–1558) distributed such rings, which were eagerly sought by sufferers at all social levels. By the end of the fifteenth century, the rings were offered on the altar as ready-made, and the metal now gained its efficacy not through the Church's sanctification but from power transferred by the royal touch (Bloch 1973, 103–105). The practice was ended by Elizabeth I, who never performed it, perceiving it as "Catholic superstition."

LESLEY A. COOTE

See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; CUNNING FOLK; DISEASE; DIVINATION; HERBAL MEDICINE; MAGIC, POPULAR; MARY, THE VIRGIN; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; RINGS, MAGICAL; SUPERSTITION; WATER, HOLY.

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RUDOLF II, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR (1552–1612)

Rudolf II was famous for his intense interest in various aspects of the occult, for his tolerant and diverse court in Prague, and for his humanistic patronage of intellectuals.

The son of Emperor Maximilian II, Rudolf II inherited only the eastern hereditary lands of the Austrian patrimony (archduke of Upper and Lower Austria, king of Bohemia and Hungary), while the west and south remained in the hands of his uncles.

Crowned Hungarian king in 1572 and Bohemian king in 1575, he became Holy Roman Emperor of Germany upon his father's death late in 1576. He made the Bohemian capital of Prague his chief residence after the mid-1580s. One of the Habsburg monarchy's more controversial rulers, Rudolf II has been depicted in a number of ways: as a largely unsuccessful and mentally unstable ruler, distrusted by his nobility, and plagued by the intrigues of his brother Matthias, ultimately becoming a prisoner in his own castle; as a grand protector of the arts and sciences, presiding over the last great humanist capital of Europe; or as a notorious dabbler in several branches of occult philosophy: alchemy, astrology, astral magic, Kabbalah, and Hermeticism.

Mixed views of Rudolf existed during his lifetime. By the last decade of his reign, his brothers viewed him with suspicion, recording their thoughts in a family *Proposition* from 1606:

His Majesty is interested only in wizards, alchemists, kabbalists and the like, sparing no expense to find all kinds of treasures, learn secrets and use scandalous ways of harming his enemies. . . . He also has a whole library of magic books. He strives all the time to eliminate God completely so that he may in future serve a different master. (Evans 1973, 196)

They also questioned his political acumen, for in subsequent years, political confrontation with Matthias would lead Rudolf to relinquish his claims to the Austrian, Hungarian, and Bohemian crowns, and in his last years he descended into depression and seclusion (some called it madness). Within a decade of his death, Habsburg lands rose in revolt and Germany entered the Thirty Years' War. Although Rudolf II's political accomplishments were indeed limited, not all contemporary views of the emperor were negative. Visiting Prague shortly after his death, the imperial jurist Melchior Goldast wrote:

The Emperor Rudolf was, they say, a most intelligent and sagacious Prince who long maintained a wise peace in the Empire; he was cast in the heroic mould and contemned all vulgar things, loving only the rare and the miraculous. His rule was happy, peaceful and secure until the four years before his death. (Evans 1973, 5)

For close to two decades beginning in the 1580s, Rudolf resided in Prague and patronized an international assortment of renowned scholars, artists, architects, alchemists, and astrologers, including such artists as Bartholomaeus Spranger and Giuseppe Arcimboldo, the scientist and playwright Giambattista della Porta,

occult philosophers John Dee and Edward Kelley, and two notable court astrologers, Tycho Brahe and Johannes Kepler (both Protestants), whose astronomical data would be published in honor of their patron as *The Rudolphine Tables*. He was also a great collector of works of art, scientific instruments, and natural objects and oddities; his *Kunstammer* (chamber for art) became one of the most important collections in European history. Though it was kept private and used by the emperor for his own contemplative purposes, contemporaries hailed it as a miraculous wonder. Rudolf continuously displayed a keen personal interest in both his collections and the works his patronage helped sustain, but they served larger dynastic and imperial purposes as well, reflecting Habsburg political tendencies toward symbolizing inherent unity through harmonious diversity. Rudolf thus turned his own passions—artistic, astrological, or alchemical—into political statements.

Recent scholarship has suggested an even deeper unity among Rudolf's thoughts and actions, not least through his universalist striving: his overt, if also magical, interest in harmonizing religious and political factions, in artistic expression and scientific discoveries, and in the deepest mysteries of occult investigations and creations. Thus, Emperor Rudolf's court at Prague was particularly characteristic of a late-sixteenth-century intellectual atmosphere that was an outgrowth of Renaissance humanist thought and, indeed, its last great flowering—albeit in an extreme Hermetic form. Viewed in hindsight, his reign may surely be judged a failure in political terms and as problematic in terms of later developments in the natural sciences or Enlightenment philosophy. But judged by twenty-first-century standards, his reign was tolerant, moderate, cosmopolitan, and extraordinarily vibrant. Nonetheless, the ethos of its court culture (and of the emperor himself) depended upon an essentially magical cosmology: The world contained hidden sources of knowledge, whose revelation would explain the invisible forces and universal harmonies binding humanity and nature together.

EDMUND M. KERN

See also: ALCHEMY; ASTROLOGY; DEE, JOHN; DELLA PORTA, GIAMBATTISTA; GOLDAST, MELCHIOR; HERMETICISM; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; KABBALAH; KEPLER, JOHANNES; OCCULT.

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RURAL WITCHCRAFT

Witchcraft belief was essentially grounded in the countryside. Therefore it seems necessary to make a few preliminary observations about agrarian realities on the Continent and in the British Isles. An insightful approach to early modern rural Europe comes from observing a masterpiece of seventeenth-century painting, Peter Paul Rubens's *Autumn Landscape with a View of Heet von Steen in the Early Morning* (1636?). Three-fourths of this wide "oil on oak" shows a motionless world apart: the countryside and the work in the fields. But the countryside is never apart, and peasants are by definition never left to themselves. Thus, on the left of the painting is an overwhelming castle, and Antwerp looms in the middle distance. The proportion of the items in the painting well represents the social and economic reality of Europe. When Rubens painted *Heet von Steen*, some 80 percent of Europe's people still lived in the countryside, and their toil on the land had to feed some 70 million inhabitants. A century later, a demographic and economic spurt in the mid-1700s began a period of sustained growth that almost doubled Europe's population by 1850. Agriculture in the late Renaissance could never have fed some 150 million people, but three centuries later it could.

A topic like rural witchcraft must be understood within the context of related events that turned the agrarian history of Europe upside down. In order to activate the spiral of economic growth, a self-sufficient peasantry had to be transformed into a world of potential consumers attracted by material comfort, status, and urban influences. The age of witchcraft persecutions took place in this historical context in which the tapping of agricultural resources was crucial. Under different patterns of landownership, the interplay of political and economic factors ended up with diverging, and even contrasting, European agrarian economies. Yet on the whole, we can distinguish a fairly common evolution: a growing differentiation within the rural population, eventually causing the crumbling of the peasant community. Historical research has not yet made clear how, or if, the separated patterns of Europe's peasantry were related to a witchcraft belief supposed to be substantially homogeneous. In the end, some questions remain unanswered. Did the endurance of certain forms of magical belief depend on the permanence of the basic characteristics of village communities? And to what degree did slowly improving agricultural productivity eventually engender changes or possible decline in witchcraft beliefs?

STATIC APPROACH

DEFINITION

Is there a Europe-wide common definition for rural witchcraft? Historians tend to use explanations involv-

ing a distinction between witchcraft and sorcery and to point to harmful antisocial actions. In recent decades, research has shown that the underlying theme standardizing witchcraft from the Urals to Salem is *maleficium*, that is, the physical damage done to a person's family or his goods by someone of either sex, but usually a woman. Notwithstanding this focus on the evil side, it is worth emphasizing how often Europe's rural magicians, as in early modern Scandinavia, "dealt with [an] ability to have an influence on fellow humans and on nature—for better or for worse" (Raudvere 2002, 87). In sixteenth-century England, this capability to perform both evil and good is reflected in the lack of any special word to indicate an exclusively maleficent magician: "At this day' wrote Reginald Scot in 1584, 'it is indifferent to say in the English tongue, she is a witch or she is a wise woman'" (Thomas 1971, 518). And in the Sienese countryside in 1588, a villager under interrogation told the inquisitor about Lisa, a renowned healer: "I met her when I was a little girl; she used to come to our village. I did not know her as a [malefic] witch, but I have heard that she is a witch and heals spells. . . . She throws witches off" (Di Simplicio 2000, 134). These people's lexical ambiguity can be viewed as an epiphenomenon of a mental universe where any kind of magical activity was folded into the umbrella term "witchcraft." Overly strict distinctions between negative and positive magic prevent us from comprehending what was occurring in a specific social context, where black and white witchcraft were intimately inter-related.

Looking for definitions, historians also emphasize the notion of power. A common element in all witch belief is that witchcraft is a generally evil power. Individual witches are wicked persons who perform specific evil acts through often-inherited supernatural powers. "The beliefs which relate to magic, religion, and witchcraft are beliefs about power. The sources of power and the extent to which the individual is prey to them or can manipulate them are the form of any belief system" (Larner 2000, 138). In 1621, Edward Fairfax, a Yorkshire gentleman scared by the power of a witch afflicting his daughter, at first resorted to the supposedly stronger power of some counter-magic such as "charms, tongs and scratches" before relying "on the goodness of God, and invoked his help" (Sharpe 1996, 157).

CAUSATION

Villagers who considered witchcraft real cannot be dismissed as simply ignorant. They inhabited a mental world where religious rituals coexisted with other such important areas of beliefs as the presence of witches, ghosts, and fairies. In a world without effective techniques to deal with everyday crises, belief in witchcraft offered eminently reasonable explanations to people

confronted by specific problems: Witchcraft must be viewed as closely related to a specific notion of causation. In the early-seventeenth-century Basque region, as elsewhere in Europe, "it was not a meaningless coincidence when a small child who had previously been healthy fell ill and died, nor an inexplicable misfortune when a pig began to sicken. All this was thought to be the work of 'evil folk'" (Henningsen 1980). Witchcraft served as an explanatory model for specific misfortunes. When peasants considered the possible origins of misfortune, it was more consoling to attribute it to the agency of an evil person than to an angry God. It is hardly surprising that villagers willing to explain something inexplicable did not often ask: "How did that happen?" Rather, they asked "Who did it?"

THE SYSTEM

The world of witchcraft cannot be written off as something irrational. Villagers' behavior shows that experience, reason, and critical analysis played an essential part in witchcraft beliefs. The assumption that a neighbor's ill will could do some physical harm was founded on experience in a subsistence-level village, where people are closely connected in everyday life and cooperation is necessary. Witchcraft trials allow us to integrate these facts into their social setting and reveal the general meaning of witchcraft as a system in all its contrasting nature. Formal accusations and trials represented only the terminal, traumatic step for controlling wicked neighbors. Centuries-old "natural" or informal devices for controlling witchcraft predated the heyday of European witchcraft persecution and survived afterwards. "The popular understanding was that the disease was the result of a broken relationship with the witch and that the removal of a disease could only be effected in the context of at least some formal acknowledgment of a restored relationship" (Larner 2000, 141). The usual control mechanism, after the identification of the witch, involved either reconciliation, physical intimidation (in extreme cases, lynching), or the undoing of her or his power through stronger countermagic.

All these checks and balances implied the presence in the village of a variety of magical practitioners (cunning folk, soothsayers, witch finders) whose divinatory and curative powers must be considered a logical corollary of "witchcraft as an ideology that explains misfortunes, and an institution that regulates communal conflicts" (Pócs 1999, 9). Were magical healers and maleficent witches believed to be separate groups, or did they sometimes overlap? This thorny problem is made more difficult for historians by the ambiguity of sources and by the very fact that the witch was held to be the repository of a dual function: both malefactor and healer ("*qui scit destruere scit sanare*"). In Lorraine, the demonologist Nicolas Rémy described this basic European dynamic: "The people of our country, especially the

peasants, have an old pernicious custom. When one of them falls ill of some strange and unknown sickness, he at once sets about getting something to eat or drink from the house of the witch whom he suspects to have caused the sickness; and this he eats or drinks in the greatest confidence that it will restore him to perfect health" (quoted in Monter 1976, 179). Basically, separating black from white witchcraft was alien to villagers. Healing was intrinsically a dubious activity, and sometimes only the moral profile of the practitioner could qualify the intention of a performance. Did this system function strongly and deeply within the web that connected malefactors, victims, witch finders, and healers?

Historical research has shown that entire European regions furnish no evidence of a generalized social concern with combating witchcraft. A real problem in comprehending this system is explaining why so few accusations ever reached the judges. Usually, a witch was only brought to court after having been suspected for many years. Both facts suggest that the usual methods for controlling village witchcraft worked successfully, preventing the traumatic and costly outcome of a formal accusation and trial.

PERFORMING WITCHCRAFT

How was an evil act performed? Is there a recognizable pattern in the attitude to *maleficium*? The mobilization of ill will could be activated by cursing, touching, even staring at a person. In the decades since 1970, witchcraft research has reached some consensus about the way evil magical acts were performed. Seldom was a person hurt, wrote Thomas Ady, without crying that he is bewitched, "for, saith he, such an old man or woman came lately to my door, and desired some relief, and I denied it, and God forgive me, my heart did rise against her at that time, my mind gave me she looked like a Witch, and presently my Child, my Wife, my Self, my Horse . . . or somewhat was thus and thus handled" (quoted in Macfarlane 1999, 111). And "the overwhelming majority of fully documented witch cases fall into this simple pattern. The witch is sent away empty-handed, perhaps mumbling a malediction; and in due course something goes wrong with the household for which she is immediately held responsible" (Thomas 1971, 661). Macfarlane placed this charity-refused paradigm within a framework of social and economic change that in prosperous Essex brought about the end of an ordered society, in which no richer man was supposed to take advantage of his neighbors or ignore the needs of a poor neighbor knocking at his door.

More recent works suggests that this paradigm is not universally applicable even in England, where counties no less dynamic than Essex (Kent, Hertfordshire, Middlesex, Surrey) witnessed only minor levels of witchcraft persecution. On the Continent, the validity of this model, tested in local and regional studies, has

been downgraded. According to William Monter, the social dynamics of Jura witchcraft looks significantly different from the charity-refused model. Though there are some cases where that model was precisely repeated, there were a few other instances, especially in Fribourg, where it was precisely reversed, with the spurned beggar later accusing his uncharitable neighbor of witchcraft. In fact, the economic success of some individuals might have been resented by less lucky covillagers. In the German county of Lippe, widespread village economic rivalries, gossip, and tough private conflicts gave rise to witchcraft accusations. At the center of these village dramas stood the role of defamation and revenge in order to settle enmities (Walz 1993). Behind the accusation of infanticide in the seventeenth-century Sienese state, a retaliation-oriented culture for resolving old semifactional grudges is occasionally clearly recognizable. The close-knit village life of “the world we have lost” (as the English historian Peter Laslett termed it) never lacked opportunities to whip up envy and hatred because of a dispute over limited local economic resources or because of more personal disputes over such matters as love affairs.

REGIONAL VARIATIONS

In 1972, Erik Midelfort warned that witchcraft was not a rigid monolith but was flexible and varied. If asked how the divergent developments of European peasantry conditioned such homogeneous witchcraft beliefs, historians could not go much beyond mapping their findings and distinguishing between beliefs that were fundamental, those that were extremely common, and occasionally, those that were peculiar to one society. For instance, nautical *maleficia* appear to be a Norwegian and to a lesser extent a Danish or English specialty, but, surprisingly enough, there is no evidence of shipwreck *maleficia* in the early modern Portuguese witchcraft trials, and there are extremely few recorded cases in Holland. In central Europe, during major persecutions, collective misfortune such as crop failures or livestock and human epidemics were attributed to witches, and storm raising played at least a catalytic role in triggering accusations (Behringer 1999), but in Scotland, witchcraft was “rarely held to be responsible for large-scale disasters in which the suffering might be random” (Larner 2000, 82). In England as well as in the Sienese state, witch belief explained misfortune only in particular; the evil done by witches was interpreted in interpersonal terms. But whereas in central Italy, witches were held to interfere with sex by causing impotence in men, in England no sorceresses made secret ligatures with string to steal virility.

As far as love magic is concerned, a global pattern seems to be distinguishable. The hypothesis that it was more widespread in the Mediterranean region than in northern areas suggests an explanation should be

sought in the relative social position of women. It has been ventured that the more independent-minded English or Dutch women “had less reason to practice love magic than women from the Mediterranean areas, who had much more difficulty in keeping their heads above water without a man, and who were in greater risk of social marginalization” (Gijswijt-Hofstra 1991, 134). For whatever reasons, France must certainly be included among the countries where accusations regarding impotence were rife. A similar contraposition might regard the killing of children, which seems to have been much less widespread in northern countries than in Spain or Tuscany. In the Jutland trials (1609–1687), “271 testimonies relating to death can be enumerated . . . , but only 6 percent applied to children” (Johansen 1990, 356). In England, a slaughter of children took place only during the Matthew Hopkins craze of 1645–1647. In the end, geographic divergence in matters concerning the charges of witchcraft seems to be problematic. Apart from some obvious correlations between the type of indictments leveled and the main occupational structures of an area, many more local studies are necessary if we are to go beyond a mere charting of witchcraft beliefs in terms of the nature of the *maleficium* performed. The causes of the sometimes-erratic geographic distribution of differences have yet to be found. It is evident that witchcraft beliefs resembled local dialects: Each region had its own. It has been suggested that from further research a “system of differences” could emerge (Burke 1990, 439).

DYNAMIC APPROACH

During the “iron century” (ca. 1560–1660, a period of warfare, economic hardship, and social instability), rural witchcraft could not remain unchanged. In 1588 a young Sienese nobleman, Aspremio Borghesi, had a nightmare in his country house. His brother, awakened by loud noises, rushed into the bedroom and saw him standing on the bed waving an unsheathed sword. Aspremio reported the episode to the inquisitor:

We were eleven or twelve people and were having a vigil. We were talking about this Lisa. . . . I said, how do you know she is a witch? I was answered . . . “Can’t you see all her bewitchments? she keeps healing with prayers all day long.” . . . And this reasoning happened because an Edict had come, forbidding healing through the use of prayers. . . . That very night I went to bed with this fantasy and Lisa appeared to me. (Di Simplicio 2000, 132)

As the sixteenth century ended, a wave of religious intolerance spilled over peasant villages to discipline the morals of country folk. Lisa’s case exemplified the increasing religious zeal engendered by Reformation

and Counter-Reformation Europe. From Scottish villages to Mediterranean ones, the sermons of divines condemned any person associated with “witchcraft,” regardless of whether their secret personal power was used for good or ill: Demonologists and canon law decreed that all supernatural powers not emanating from the Church were demonic. To be sure, an association between maleficent magic and the Devil, witnessed physically by the notion that the witch bore on her body the mark of her profession or, in England, the belief that witches might possess a familiar imp, had never disappeared from the villagers’ minds.

But in the course of time, witchcraft became less a mirror of popular belief and more a reflection of demonology. In French and Italian rural areas, there is plenty of evidence that through parish priests and exorcists, the Roman Catholic faith contributed to reinforcing the new brand of witchcraft beliefs. Nevertheless, on the whole, on the Continent as well as in the British Isles, the very idea of a deliberate pact with the Devil and of witchcraft as devil worship was slow to develop among peasants. A reference taken from the heart of the European craze might be considered illuminating: During the witch hunts in the Saar region (1580–1635), the demonological notion of witchcraft remained marginal among the village community (Labouvie 1991).

Can historians relate social and economic changes in rural Europe to a transformation in witchcraft belief? In seventeenth-century Holland, for instance, there were only occasional cases of bewitched goods. The means of livelihood were no longer threatened by witchcraft, a change that has been partly ascribed to the favorable economic developments in these provinces (Waardt 1991). Such a line of research points to the question of whether a “loss of function” might have affected the endurance of rural belief. Labouvie maintained that starting with the mid-seventeenth century, as soon as poor relief took root in the Lutheran, Calvinist, and Catholic areas, accusations of witchcraft against the typical suspects—older women dependent on the personal support of their fellow villagers—receded. More generally, could the combination of a less collective religion, a more market-oriented economy, greater social mobility, and a growing separation of people through the formation of institutional rather than personal ties have undermined witchcraft belief in the “translated Christianity” of the post-Reformation and Counter-Reformation? Because of these changes, did villagers interpret illness, death, and other misfortunes in new ways?

A decisive step toward a new way of thinking and acting was made when ideas of causation—based on the question “How do things happen?”—replaced the old personalistic causality. With reference to the field of health, it has been argued most recently that “the increase in medical knowledge and capabilities gave rise

to a professionalism within recognized medical science, widening the gap between recognized and unofficial medicine, both in terms of content and organization. . . . The more that advanced medical knowledge and healing techniques came to be accepted in local communities, the more the latitude and rationale for thinking and acting in terms of witchcraft decreased” (Gijswijt-Hofstra 1991, 110).

OSCAR DI SIMPLICIO

See also: ACCUSATIONS; CHILDREN; COUNTERMAGIC; CUNNING FOLK; IMPOTENCE, SEXUAL; LOVE MAGIC; *MALEFICIUM*; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; MOUNTAINS AND THE ORIGINS OF WITCHCRAFT; POPULAR BELIEFS IN WITCHES; SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF WITCHES; SORCERY; URBAN WITCHCRAFT; WITCH AND WITCHCRAFT, DEFINITIONS OF; WITCH FINDERS.

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RUSSIA

Witches were prosecuted in Russian courts in the early modern era, following a timeline somewhat later than for western European witchcraft trials. From the late sixteenth through the end of the eighteenth centuries, Muscovite and Imperial Russian courts tried more than 500 cases. Witchcraft beliefs were prevalent throughout this period among elites and common people alike. The kinds of witchcraft described in accusations and court testimony reflected largely unadorned folk practices. Testimony suggests that a simple, kitchen or garden-variety magic, involving spells uttered over such ordinary ingredients as salt or roots, was widely practiced throughout society. Unlike Latin Christianity, Russian Orthodoxy rarely labeled magic satanic and developed no elaborate demonological theory. Instead, churchmen tended to condemn magic as "pagan" or "devilish." The actual content of folk practice relied on natural, "sympathetic magic," poetic incantation, and occasional invocations of biblical figures or saints to gain results. Aside from the limited role of demonology, one of the most notable features of the Russian case was that, as in some of the Baltic areas, the overwhelming majority of those accused of witchcraft were male.

CHRONOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT

As in the West, scattered evidence of witch belief and fear surfaced early. Medieval chronicles occasionally recorded a killing of a witch or group of witches, but it was not until the late fifteenth century that witches became a more serious concern of the Muscovite grand princes. Prominent figures came under suspicion of witchcraft sporadically from the late fifteenth to the late sixteenth centuries. In 1467, Grand Prince Ivan III of Moscow lost his first wife, Maria of Tver, to what

was assumed to be witchcraft. No more fortunate the second time, Ivan suspected his fractious second wife, Sofia Paleologue, of engaging witches to bring about his death. Witchcraft accusations continued to haunt the world of the powerful and highly placed: Grand Prince Vasiliï III, son of Ivan III and Sofia, raised witchcraft charges when he divorced his childless wife, Solomonïa Saburova, in 1525 and dispatched her to a convent. Ivan IV, the Terrible, reputedly suspected witchcraft in the death of his first wife, and the Romanov tsars of the seventeenth century attributed the deaths of several brides and potential brides to magical causes. During the Time of Troubles, a period of chaos at the start of the seventeenth century, a pretender to the throne, known to history as the First False Dmitriï, allegedly employed magic to delude his followers. In the late seventeenth century, several important men at court suffered popular and official wrath when they were suspected of dealing in magic, and angry mobs tore apart a few of these suspects during the many uprisings of this tumultuous century. Political sorcery remained a punishable crime in Russia into the nineteenth century.

In the seventeenth century, Russian prosecution of witches expanded beyond court circles, increasing in frequency and scale. Although not all of the sources have yet been identified, the hundreds of surviving trial records demonstrate that witchcraft was feared and prosecuted throughout the vast Russian lands. Nearly 300 court cases have been identified for the seventeenth century, and Russian historian E. B. Smilianskaia has discovered 240 cases from the eighteenth century (Smilianskaia 2003, 188). We cannot yet assess how frequent trials for witchcraft were, but it seems safe to say that the numbers of such trials were significant, although never indicative of any full-blown campaign against witches or widespread panic.

The Orthodox Church tried for centuries to involve secular authorities in a campaign against witchcraft, but until the beginning of the seventeenth century, Russian grand princes and tsars usually contented themselves with simply stating their disapproval of witchcraft. In the early seventeenth century, the tsar's courts began to hear occasional witchcraft cases. In mid-century, Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich took more forceful steps, declaring that practicing witches should be beaten and exiled and that the tools of their trade should be burned. His government also sent forth town criers to announce a strong prohibition of witchcraft (and other vices, such as singing on Sundays, drinking in church, or swinging on swings). The town criers invited the public to submit denunciations. In response, flurries of accusations poured in to local authorities throughout the realm. Trials peaked in the mid-seventeenth century and again in the 1670s, but prosecution continued at low levels for the remainder of the century.

The legal situation changed in the early eighteenth century, when Peter the Great, in his 1721 Spiritual Regulation, declared witchcraft in some contexts to be a crime of fraud against credulous clients. However, other legislation continued to enforce the older witchcraft statutes, and even to strengthen them. Peter's 1715 Military Articles for the first time articulated an association between witchcraft and dealings with the Devil and stipulated harsh punishment and execution by fire for diabolical magic. Imperial Russian courts continued to prosecute witchcraft cases until the end of the eighteenth century. In fact, despite its reputation as an era of secularization, reform, and enlightenment, the eighteenth century witnessed renewed intensity in prosecution. The years 1700 to 1706 were years of relatively active prosecution, and then, after a brief lull, a prolonged wave of trials stretched from 1721 to 1760, gaining steam as the century moved along. The reign of the purportedly enlightened Catherine the Great, while showing a less active record, nonetheless continued the prosecution of witches until the end of the century.

These numbers and patterns suggest that Russia never experienced the kind of devastating panics that took so many lives in western Europe; however, the numbers of trials are large enough to imply that witchcraft remained a serious concern for early modern Russian rulers and their subjects. There was no Russian Salem, just as there was no Russian witch-hunting zealot (like Matthew Hopkins in England, for example) to foment such a panic. The absence of beliefs in night flying, shape shifting, and Satanism may also have limited the scale of accusations. The largest Russian trials involved seven or eight accused witches, as in a particularly dramatic case in the provincial town of Lukh in the late 1650s, but such instances were rare. Denunciations tended to finger lone figures, or sometimes pairs.

THE NATURE OF RUSSIAN WITCHCRAFT AND MAGICAL PRACTICE

Until the late eighteenth century, Russian magic remained largely uncontaminated by the kind of Satanism or demonology that colored early modern western witchcraft belief. Although Russian Orthodoxy drew on the same body of early Christian writings as the Western church, and although precedents were available in saints' lives and apocryphal tales, there is no evidence of an actual case involving accusations of pacts with the Devil until the first decades of the eighteenth century during the "westernizing" age of Peter the Great. Some clerical statements and occasional elements of inverted Christian symbolism suggest that Russian practitioners recognized the power of religious magic. For instance, a few suspects reportedly wore crosses in the heels of their shoes, and others were said to have stolen Hosts for magical use.

Nonetheless, there was no sustained discussion of the role of the Devil in inspiring, empowering, or corrupting the practitioners.

Heresy remained marginal to Russian definitions of witchcraft. Sometimes the term *heresy* was conflated with witchcraft charges, but this accusation rarely had identifiable religious or doctrinal content. Few accused witches appear to have raised suspicion because of heterodox inclinations. Few if any accused witches had ties to the schismatic Old Belief, which broke from mainstream Orthodoxy in the late seventeenth century. Nor did many accused witches have suspicious ties across confessional boundaries.

Because spokesmen for the Church described magical practices as pagan more often than as satanic or heretical, historians have often described Russian religious culture as a dual-belief system, that is, a mixture of paganism and Christianity. Although sorcerers identified in early medieval chronicles were still practicing pagans and although a variety of paganisms intersected with Russian magical practice throughout the early modern era as Muscovy expanded and incorporated non-Christian peoples of Siberia and the north, most Russians appear to have become professing Orthodox Christians by the sixteenth century. Because of the variety of cultural and religious traditions in this vast empire, which by the seventeenth century already spread from Ukraine to the Pacific Ocean, magical practices differed greatly in different regions, but the Russian population appears to have shared a homogeneous belief system regardless of region. Early modern Russians apparently preferred spells that relied on the magical resonance of natural forces, not on pagan deities. For example, a colorful spell for curing alcoholism recommends invoking the same indifference to alcohol as that displayed by a disinterred corpse.

The problem of translation complicates any examination of magical practices in Russia. Are *witch* and *witchcraft* really the appropriate terms to use? Doubt may arise because of the anomalous male majorities among those accused in Russian courts, the limited role of the pact with the Devil, the general absence of "antibehaviors," or inversions of accepted behaviors, and the ambiguous evidence about the acquired rather than inborn nature of malevolent magic. The most common terms found in court records are *porcha*, literally "spoiling," but more appropriately translated as *maleficium* or hexing, and *vedovstvo*, the modern word for witchcraft, derived from a root meaning "knowledge." Other, less common terms include *charouanie*, *chamdeianie* (enchantment), *vorozhenie*, *gadanie* (fortunetelling), and *sheptanie* (muttering, saying spells). *Volkhovanie*, "sorcery," is a distinct term reserved for shamans and pagan priests. Because Russian magicians were thought to have practiced healing and

bewitching using spells and potions and because their own vocabulary uses the term, *witchcraft* does indeed seem the most appropriate translation.

Russian witches dealt with a limited array of issues. They could heal or curse, bewitch, and ruin. They could cast love spells for women, and they could guarantee sexual success or failure for men. Witches played important roles at weddings, where they might “bind” the new husband to prevent sexual union, or, if properly paid, they might protect the newlyweds from the malevolence of uninvited witches. Witchcraft might have been suspected in cases of business competition, for instance, if one tavern keeper seemed to attract all the business or another suddenly found his beer spoiled. Servants or slaves confessed to consulting witches to ensure that their masters and mistresses would be “kind” to them, stop beating them, or let them marry. Others confessed to plotting to kill their masters through magical means. Some witches could locate missing people and lost treasures. Just like western Europeans, Muscovites might have seen *powha*, *maleficium*, at work in any of a number of medical conditions, most commonly swelling or wasting diseases, hernias and ulcers (particularly in children), infertility, impotence, and infant death. The same individuals who served as local healers might find themselves facing witchcraft charges if their cures went awry. Russians did not look to witchcraft to explain natural catastrophes, such as hailstorms or droughts, nor did they accuse witches of drying up their cows or otherwise afflicting their livestock.

Occasional cases involved outbreaks of *klikushestvo* “shrieking,” a form of bewitchment or spirit possession in which the possessed, usually women, lost consciousness, trembled, shrieked, “hiccupped in animal voices,” and “said things not pleasing to God or man” (Kivelson 1991, 76). Sufferers explained that with the onset of this affliction, everything would go dark, the world about them would begin to spin, and they would later remember nothing of what they had said or done. Common belief assumed that witches provoked this affliction, and sometimes in their fits, the possessed would name names. Possession figured only rarely in trials from the Muscovite period, but in the eighteenth century, cases cropped up more frequently. Peter the Great and his eighteenth century successors viewed shriekers with suspicion, charging them with fraud and punishing their excesses harshly. This behavior persisted, nonetheless, throughout the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century, when possessed peasant women took on new emblematic force as a symbol and characteristic feature of Russia tradition. In the nineteenth century, possession assumed a positive association among the Russian intelligentsia, who

interpreted shrieking sympathetically as a sign of the simple faith of the Russian folk and as an indication of the hard lot of peasant women.

TRIALS OF WITCHES AND THE PROFILE OF THE ACCUSED

Although the Orthodox Church consistently condemned witchcraft, secular courts tried accused witches. Denunciations originated among those who perceived themselves to be victims of witchcraft, or sometimes from the entire community that felt afflicted by magic. Once a denunciation reached the tsar’s officials, the regional governor or a special investigator from Moscow would undertake a general investigation, questioning members of the community about the particulars of the case and about the characters of the people involved. Both accusers and accused would be questioned “firmly,” first individually and then in direct confrontation. The courts were authorized to use torture extensively and repeatedly. Court transcripts reported testimony taken from the accused without torture and then in the torture chamber before, during, and after torture. The transcripts make painful reading. Accused witches were forced to provide answers to a set list of questions: whom they had bewitched, for what reasons and by what means; from whom they had learned magic and to whom they had taught it. If convicted, male witches could be executed—usually by beheading, rarely by fire—and female witches could be burned or buried alive, the standard Muscovite punishment for female felons. Most commonly, however, convicted male witches were exiled to the military frontiers, where they were registered in military units, issued weapons and plots of land, and set to work to defend Russia’s borders. The sources cannot support any firm numbers, but only a few dozen people appear to have been executed for witchcraft, although hundreds were tried and many of them exiled. The date of the last execution for witchcraft remains difficult to establish because of scattered and incomplete sources, but changes in the justice system would point to the second half of the eighteenth century.

As the charges leveled against witches tended to be more prosaic than the charges of night flying, shape shifting, or orgiastic cannibalism encountered in western European sources, it is easier to envision the reality behind Russian accusations. Many accused witches appear to have worked as healers, using a hodgepodge of spells, potions, roots, and ointments with variable success. Some of the accused confessed to learning their craft from a master or healer; others accumulated a stock of remedies by trial and error. Healers as a group were particularly at risk, as were vagrants and wanderers, who often earned the odd kopek here and there by

purveying charms and medicaments. Non-Russians such as Tatars or Chuvash people who wandered into Russian villages could be vulnerable to witchcraft charges as well.

Among the accused Russians who were not healers, two sets of characteristics appear frequently. First, a number of the accused were seen as criminals and ruffians of a more general type, with witchcraft thrown in as an additional charge along with brigandage, theft, or assault; indeed, Muscovite legislation often categorized witchcraft as just another form of criminal behavior, and the term *vedovskoe vo roustvo* (magical criminality) appeared frequently in court records. Second, many of the accused acted in ways considered disrespectful, disobedient, or defiant of established hierarchies. Hence, serfs or slaves who disobeyed their masters or mistresses, wives who challenged their husbands or their in-laws, nephews who defied their uncles, all might find themselves in court facing witchcraft charges.

The overwhelming preponderance of the accused were male, and almost all were of rather low or middling rank. Although the court and ecclesiastical elite clearly believed in and relied on witchcraft to sort out some of their problems, high-ranking people, as in Louis XIV's Paris, were far more commonly charged with consulting witches than with practicing magic themselves. That most of the accused were male is puzzling, but the numbers are clear. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, approximately 80 percent of the accused were men (Kivelson 1991, 75; Lavrov 2000, 116; Smilianskaia 2003). Men may have been more at risk to accusations because they fit better into Russia's suspicious categories: More men than women appear to have wandered around the countryside; more men were involved in common violence and criminality; men generally had more opportunities to rub shoulders with unfamiliar people and to provoke suspicion or anger. Military service may have added to the risk for men. Numerous cases arose in the barracks, where women would not have been present. The same patterns continued in the eighteenth century, when the preponderance of men may have been reinforced by a quirk in the law: The military law codes of Peter the Great perpetuated and even intensified the penalties for witchcraft, while at the same time his church codes took a more typical Enlightenment line and demoted most magic practiced by women from felony to fraud.

WITCHCRAFT IN MODERN RUSSIA

After the end of formal prosecution, in Russia as in western Europe, witch belief continued to exercise a strong hold on the popular imagination. Russian peasants commonly consulted witches and magical healers

into the early twentieth century. Elements of western European folklore gradually crept into Russian belief, probably mainly through Catholic-influenced Ukraine and through the Baltic and Scandinavian countries. By the nineteenth century, when Russian intellectuals described with horror episodes of peasant lynchings of witches, the victims were uniformly female, and peasants attributed to them some characteristic features from western demonological lore: tails, Devil's marks, teats, and so on. Although educated Russians generally lost their belief in magic in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a revival of mysticism in the early nineteenth century returned some intellectual and cultural cachet to the world of witches, which retained its appeal in Russian arts and letters until the Revolution. Condemned as primitive superstition by the Soviets, witchcraft disappeared both as documented practice and as a topic for scholarly research for almost seventy years. The fall of the Soviet Union has witnessed a remarkable upsurge of mysticism, and witches have again gained a certain degree of popularity as a source of alternative wisdom and healing.

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See also: CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST-1800); DEMONOLOGY; ENLIGHTENMENT; GENDER; HERBAL MEDICINE; HERESY; IMPOTENCE, SEXUAL; MALE WITCHES; *MALEFICIIUM*; ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; SPELLS; TRIALS; UKRAINE, WITCHCRAFT; UKRAINE, WITCHCRAFT TRIALS; WITCH AND WITCHCRAFT, DEFINITIONS OF.

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SAAR REGION

Between 1500 and 1700, there were at least 591 trials of alleged witches in Germany's Saar region (Labouvie 1991). In terms of the percentage of the population affected, the witchcraft trials in this region, which had around 100,000 inhabitants, can be categorized as severe, although far less so than in some nearby territories; in the imperial abbey of St. Maximin, for example, approximately a fifth of all inhabitants were executed for witchcraft between 1586 and 1641.

The Saar region was a patchwork of territories belonging to different territorial rulers. Two Catholic areas belonged to the electors of Trier and the dukes of Lorraine; other parts belonged to the Calvinist dukes of Pfalz-Zweibrücken and, in the heart of the region, to the Lutheran counts of Nassau-Saarbrücken, who (unlike the others) lived in the Saarland territories they ruled. Because much of the Saar region was distant from its overlords, local conditions were occasionally conducive to persecuting witches. Furthermore—and this was also the case in the Rhine-Meuse (Rhein-Maas) region—the Saar region was characterized by an extreme fragmentation of lordship rights over land, people, and property. Different territorial lords ruled many areas jointly, and minor lords and even rural communities were often beyond the control of the territorial rulers concerning the exercise of criminal law. Witchcraft trials were particularly common in these areas and must thus be set in the political context of attempts by rival or minor lords to assert their rights of lordship (Vollmer 2002).

PHASES OF PERSECUTION, AREAS MOST AFFECTED BY WITCH HUNTS, AND TRIAL PROCEDURES

Witch hunts in the Saar region occurred in six phases: from 1500 to 1569, 1569 to 1586, 1587 to 1605, 1609 to 1623, 1626 to 1634, and 1646 to 1700 (Labouvie 1991, 69). Some relatively early trials of the 1520s and 1530s were triggered by trials in neighboring Lorraine, Luxembourg, and electoral Trier. In the early stages of persecution, one can discern a gradual spread of trials from west and north to east and south in the Saar region, whereas during the main phase of persecution between 1587 and 1634, trials occurred

simultaneously throughout the region. The zeal for persecution seems to have been stronger in Catholic parts of the Saar region: Some 222 trials were held in six district courts (Siersberg, Schaumburg, Wallerfangen, Griechingen-Püttlingen, Griechingen-Saarwellingen, and Beckingen) subject to the dukes of Lorraine, and 165 trials were held in eight district courts (St. Wendel, Blieskastel, Dagstuhl/Wadern, Schwarzenburg, Perl, Mandern, Liebenburg, and Thalfang) under the authority of electoral Trier; by contrast, only 54 trials occurred in the Saar territories belonging to Pfalz-Zweibrücken and 52 in those of the counts of Nassau-Saarbrücken (Labouvie 1991).

The gender balance among the accused witches in the different territories is also noteworthy. In Protestant territories, almost exclusively women were slandered, accused, and executed as witches, while in Catholic areas, up to one-third of all accused witches were men. This difference was apparently connected with different translations of Exod. 22:18 (22:17): "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." The Catholic Vulgate Bible used the male form of the word *witch*, but Martin Luther used the grammatically correct female form of the original Hebrew text, thus giving Protestants reason to perceive witchcraft as essentially female (Schulte 2001).

Most witchcraft trials in the Saar region, as in the Rhineland, originated with initiatives taken by the lower orders. This desire to hunt witches "from below" could take the form of petitions to local criminal courts for pursuing action against witches. Witch-hunting committees (*Hexenausschüsse*) were also often formed to bring suspected witches to court on behalf of the whole community. However, such committees were officially prohibited by the dukes of Lorraine and (as in the duchy of Luxembourg) had to operate secretly. In Merzig-Saargau, an area the dukes of Lorraine and the electors of Trier ruled jointly, there is clearer evidence of such witch-hunting initiatives. In Lorraine, trials usually began with accusations by private individuals (*Formalkläger*) or else ex officio by court officials.

In three Saar territories (Trier, Pfalz-Zweibrücken, and Nassau-Saarbrücken), witchcraft trial procedures were based on both local customary law and on the Carolina Code (the code of criminal procedure for the Holy Roman Empire), while territories belonging to

Lorraine followed the duchy's relevant criminal ordinances. These legal differences created different methods for settling the costs of witchcraft trials. According to the Carolina Code, the heirs of an executed witch paid the trial costs, whereas in Lorraine, the property of a convicted witch (dozens fled and were "banished" in absentia) was confiscated to meet the costs. Every territory followed set procedures for making appeals, for sending trial records to higher courts for approval, and for seeking legal advice from external experts. For advice in such matters, Lorraine used its central legal tribunal, the *Change de Nancy*; the electors of Trier used their main court, the *Oberhof*, in Trier; Pfalz-Zweibrücken used its ducal chancellery; and Nassau-Saarbrücken used its *Oberhof* in Saarbrücken or sought advice from the nearest Protestant university at Strasbourg.

MERZIG-SAARGAU

A *condominium*, or territory ruled jointly by two sovereigns (in this case, the elector of Trier and the duke of Lorraine), Merzig-Saargau had 1,200 inhabitants scattered over twenty villages. The elector of Trier shared rights of criminal jurisdiction over those parts of Merzig-Saargau situated on the left-hand side of the Saar River with the duke of Lorraine and those on the right side of the river with the lords of Montclair. The first recorded witchcraft trial in the entire Saar region occurred at Merzig-Saargau in 1500; a total of forty-four were held there during the early modern period. Local witch-hunting committees were active in bringing suspected witches before the local courts by 1588.

Accused witches from villages on the left-hand side of the River Saar were first kept in custody at Siersburg (belonging to Lorraine) and then in Saarburg (belonging to Trier). Suspects from the right-hand side of the river were held first in the castle of the Montclairs, then in Saarburg. However, the main trial always took place in Merzig in the presence of the magistrates representing the territorial rulers of Lorraine and Trier, as well as the criminal court's bailiff and lay assessors. Executions took place near Merzig in the presence of all thirty-five lay assessors. The goods of those executed for witchcraft were confiscated and auctioned off, with the proceeds divided between the Lorraine and Trier magistrates. This practice provoked disputes between the magistrates, as happened in 1588 when a Lorraine magistrate had the goods of an executed woman assessed without the Trier magistrate's knowledge and to his detriment. Occasional attempts were made to moderate the costs of witchcraft trials but never as part of a deliberate policy.

NALBACHER TAL

Nalbacher Tal was a *Gemeinherrschaft*, or a territory over which different rulers held various rights. In this valley, the ecclesiastical foundation (*Stift*) of St. Simeon in Trier was the *Grundherr*, or manorial lord. The duke

of Lorraine was the *Schirmherr*, the lord responsible for protecting it against external attack. And the electors of Trier and the Palatinate shared the *Vogtei* (administrative authority) and *Landesherrschaft* (ultimate territorial authority). Consequently, each lord possessed certain legal rights: St. Simeon controlled the manorial courts, high criminal justice was shared between the electors of Trier and the Palatinate, and the duke of Lorraine was responsible for repressing crimes threatening the security of the Nalbacher Tal. To complicate matters further, the electors of the Palatinate had given their share of the administrative authority (*Vogteirechte*) and thus part of the right to exercise high criminal jurisdiction to the lords of Braubach as a fief. As a result, criminal trials (including witchcraft trials) were held in Dillingen under the alternating chairmanship of bailiffs representing electoral Trier and the lords of Braubach. Understandably, the complexity of legal rights in the Nalbacher Tal led to frequent disputes between Trier and Braubach. The dukes of Lorraine also sought to extend their power by imposing taxes on Nalbach's inhabitants.

A total of twenty-nine witchcraft trials took place in the Nalbacher Tal, which contained only 110 households; in other words, someone from one in every four of its households (26 percent) was executed for witchcraft. Nalbach's inhabitants submitted a petition to the lords of the criminal courts in 1591 requesting action against witches and specifying suspects to be arrested. We have evidence of witch-hunting committees acting there to stimulate witchcraft trials by 1602. As elsewhere, disputes and complaints arose in the Nalbacher Tal over the high costs of the trials, because the goods of executed witches were often insufficient to meet the costs. Local customary law decreed that such shortfalls should be covered by the ecclesiastical foundation of St. Simeon (for the costs of imprisonment) and by the electors of Trier and the lords of Braubach (for the costs of executions). Lengthy witchcraft trials could thus result in significant expenses for the relevant lords. As a consequence, in 1602, the electors of Trier instructed their bailiff to avoid incurring excessive costs in witchcraft trials. The St. Simeon *Stift* was particularly critical of this bailiff's behavior, accusing him of various improper practices in the accounting of trial costs (for example, embezzlement, waste, and illegal seizure of goods). Demands for lowering trial costs and for the bailiff's dismissal were linked to an announcement that the inhabitants of the Nalbacher Tal were too oppressed by the costs of witchcraft trials to pay their rents. Disputes over trial costs contributed to ending witchcraft trials in the Nalbacher Tal after 1612.

WITCHCRAFT BELIEF AND WITCH SUSPECTS

Witchcraft beliefs in the Saar region were predominantly shaped by the fears and concerns of everyday

rural life (Labouvie 1991, 1992). “Mature” witchcraft theory (involving, for instance, sexual intercourse with the Devil or a large-scale sect meeting at a witches’ Sabbat) played a minor role in confessions by alleged witches at the early Saar trials, while harmful magic was at the center of witchcraft allegations. Witches’ Sabbats resembled village festivals, although with negative aspects. However, the rural image of the witch became increasingly demonized through continuing trials and the indoctrination of the lower orders by clerics and judges. After 1611, sex with the Devil and orgiastic witches’ Sabbats became more marked in confessions.

The victims of Saar region witchcraft trials did not belong to any particular social or occupational group. People most likely to fall under suspicion as witches were those who had disturbed their community’s peace (by being particularly quarrelsome, for example), who had connections with another suspected witch, or who had long been reputed as being witches within their community: It was believed that the power to work witchcraft could be inherited or passed on between acquaintances. Anyone who failed to take legal action after being publicly slandered as a witch also fell under suspicion of witchcraft.

The Thirty Years’ War devastated the Saar region, causing population losses of up to 90 percent in some parts, and it temporarily halted witchcraft trials; however, the last such trials took place only in 1679 (with an unknown result) and 1700 (the accused woman was merely excommunicated). We have no clear, single explanation for the end of the Saarland trials, although the unofficial prohibition of witchcraft trials in 1652 by the archbishop-elect of Trier, Carl Kaspar von der Leyen, may have affected his portion of the region. As indicated, endless disputes among witch-hunting committees, lords of criminal courts, and their officials over the high costs of witchcraft trials plagued the Saar region, and the compulsory moderation of costs by some territorial lords slowed the persecution of witches. After 1650, a more cautious treatment of witchcraft allegations was apparent in Saar region’s courts: They were now much more likely to be treated as slanders and become civil rather than criminal cases. Improved poor relief and medical care may have also helped lessen social tensions and thus the likelihood of one neighbor accusing another of witchcraft.

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TRANSLATED BY ALISON ROWLANDS

See also: COMMUNAL PERSECUTION; EXODUS 22:18 (22:17); FEMALE WITCHES; GERMANY, WEST AND NORTHWEST; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; LORRAINE; LUXEMBOURG; NASSAU-SAARBRÜCKEN, COUNTY OF; PFALZ-ZWEIBRÜCKEN, DUCHY OF; POPULAR BELIEFS IN WITCHES; POPULAR PERSECUTION; ST. MAXIMIN, PRINCE-ABBAY OF; TRIALS; TRIER, ELECTORATE OF; WITCH HUNTS.

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SABBAT

The Sabbat (witches’ Sabbat) was a central component of the elaborate scenario developed in the late Middle Ages to describe the workings of the Devil in the world and the role of humans in that work. A great many texts described the Sabbat as a gathering of witches led by the Devil. Those who attended were transported to a meeting place, sometimes far from their homes. The meetings were almost always at night, and the Sabbat-goers usually appeared to be asleep. They traveled to the meeting either by flying or by walking, though flight seemed to be the preferred option. Often, the witches rode on an object such as a stick or a broom or on an animal, often a goat.

The Sabbat was depicted as a parody of correct religious observance. It could be a fairly small affair of a few dozen or a huge gathering of thousands. It was generally presided over by a devil, often in the form of a

giant male goat with large horns. There was usually a banquet, featuring food that looked appetizing but was described as tasteless or unpleasant. Almost always, it was stated that there was no salt and often no bread.

At the Sabbat, the revelers would dance, usually back to back or in circles with their backs to the center. There would be a sexual orgy, with the Devil, his demons, and the attendees indiscriminately coupling with each other. The orgy was often described as including incestuous sex.

The attendees had to report the evil things they had done since the last meeting, and demons would mete out punishments if the evil deeds were not sufficient. All had to pay homage to the Devil, usually by kissing his anus (the Kiss of Shame). The witches would often be given powders or ointments to assist them in poisoning other people, animals, or crops. These substances were supposedly manufactured from the corpses of infants who were killed for the purpose. At the end of the gathering, everyone would return home in the same way they had come. Their absence would not have been noticed, and they would go about their business as usual.

In many confessions, the Sabbat was described as being like a perverted village fair. Some even testified that the social hierarchy of the real world was maintained in the Sabbat, with wealthier people arriving in carriages, sitting in front, eating elegant delicacies, and being served by their social inferiors. What was known about the Sabbat came entirely from testimony given to legal and religious officials, overwhelmingly through confessions that were usually made under torture. There is no corroborative evidence that witches' Sabbats ever actually took place, but the belief that they did seems to have been very widespread in all levels of society.

ORIGINS

The sources for the notion of the Sabbat are obscure and quite complex. There is, furthermore, a degree of scholarly controversy over these issues. Nevertheless, it seems clear that the concept of the Sabbat was based, at least in part, on some very ancient popular beliefs that had been widely diffused across Europe at the time of Celtic migrations, if not earlier. In many parts of Europe, people told of flying through the night skies, often in the company of female goddesses. The night flights often took place while these people were unconscious, in dreamlike or trancelike states. Often, the night flyers would travel to or be visited by the souls of the departed or by fairy people, who would play music, dance, and feast. In these early accounts, which were frequently very detailed and were not always obtained under torture, the point of the voyage was considered beneficial. The ecstatic travelers described themselves as fighters against evil and defenders of fertility. Often, the accounts included battles against devils or evildoers and humans assuming animal shapes.

The presence of these ancient folkloric beliefs came to the attention of religious officials in the Early Middle Ages, when the Church was working to guarantee its monopoly on access to the supernatural. At the beginning of the tenth century C.E., Regino of Prüm included the following warning to bishops in his collection of canons:

Some wicked women, who have given themselves back to Satan and been seduced by the illusions and phantasms of demons, believe and profess that, in the hours of the night, they ride upon certain beasts with Diana, the goddess of Pagans, and an innumerable multitude of women, and in the silence of the night traverse great spaces of earth, and obey her commands. . . . An innumerable multitude, deceived by this false opinion, believe this to be true, and so believing, wander from the right faith and return to the error of the pagans when they think that there is anything of divinity or power except the one God. (quoted in Kors and Peters 2001, 62)

This document, known as the *Canon Episcopi*, argued that these beliefs were fantasies or dreams, inspired by Satan. It was the belief that these dreams were real that the *Canon* condemned.

In succeeding centuries, Church writers and officials placed increased emphasis on evil and the role of the Devil as an enemy of god and of humankind. Numerous popular heresies were described as inspired by the Devil in his efforts to undermine God's work. This perception became sharper in the fourteenth century, as economic crisis, warfare, and the demographic disaster of the Black Death buffeted Europe. In this atmosphere of fear, lepers, Jews, heretics, and witches were targeted as the Devil's agents and were threatened to be eradicated. Notions of a secret Jewish conspiracy probably fed ideas of the Sabbat: The use of the term *synagogue*, often employed to describe the witches' gatherings, derives from this connection.

In the early fifteenth century, several documents that were written at approximately the same time illustrated the ways in which varied beliefs had merged to form the picture of the Sabbat. Originating mainly from the western Alps between 1435 and 1440, they treat the Sabbat as a reality, no longer as a fantasy of misled women. Johannes Nider, in the *Formicarius* (The Anthill), related stories of devil-worshipping groups who murdered infants and made ointments from their bodies to be used in witchcraft. The unknown author of the *Errores Gazariorum* (Errors of the Gazars or Gazarii [Cathars—a common term for heretics and later witches]) told of gatherings, presided over by the Devil in the shape of a black cat, at which the witches had to pay homage to their master by kissing his

backside. They participated in a banquet and obscene, perverted sexual activities and then were given ointments and powders made from dead children to be used in killing people and destroying crops. An account by a lay judge, Claude Tholosan, included similar stories, learned through testimony he heard in over 100 trials. Tholosan wrote of a sect of witches who, through ceremonies that inverted Christian observance, renounced God, adored the Devil, and sacrificed their children. He also stated, "They imagine in dreams that they travel bodily at night . . . in the company of the Devil." A French poem from the court of Burgundy, written around 1440, gave a full picture of the Sabbat. It told of gatherings of thousands of witches at the "awful synagogue" of the Devil. There, the witches worshiped a devil in animal form, kissing his backside and then drinking, banqueting, and dancing. After group sex, the witches returned to their homes, flying upon broomsticks, to do their evil deeds (quoted in Kors and Peters 2001, 165, 169).

DEMONOLOGISTS DIFFUSE THE SABBAT

By the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the Sabbat became a central part of demonologists' accounts of the crime of witchcraft. Testimony by thousands of people, in all corners of Europe, seemed to confirm the reality of secret nocturnal gatherings. Jean Bodin, author of the *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (On the Demon-Mania of Witches, 1580), described the Sabbat in detail as an aspect of witches' crimes. He based his discussion of this theme largely on accounts of recent trials, whose essential similarities he emphasized. He told several stories of the transportation of witches to their assemblies, with or without the use of ointments, and the flight on brooms or chimney mops. At the Sabbats, the witches danced in a frenzied way, adored the Devil, and had to report their evil deeds or be punished. Bodin held that the transportation to the Sabbat was real, not just an illusion or ecstasy. He insisted that the agreement of so many accounts constituted solid proof of the reality of this phenomenon.

Nicolas Rémy read hundreds of witchcraft trials as a judge and public prosecutor in Lorraine. He devoted a section of his *Dæmonolatria* (Demonolatriy, 1595) to the Sabbat, which he examined in great detail. It is clear that most, if not all, of the evidence he used from these cases had been obtained under torture. His sources were an interesting blend of classical and contemporary accounts. In a single section, he might name ancient authorities such as Pythagorus, Cicero, or Plato and then cite the testimony of local peasants who had been sent to the stake. Rémy emphasized that travel to the Sabbat had to be a fact, not a dream. To any suggestion that witches would go to a Sabbat in spirit only or in ecstasies, he argued that the soul and body were inseparable until death. The accounts of the Sabbat he related

were basically identical to most others, though with many minor variations. For example, he reported that in traveling to the Sabbat, people used a variety of means, such as broomsticks, forked sticks, or even just ordinary sticks. Some rode on animals, including bulls or pigs. He insisted, based on the testimony he had heard, that every aspect of the Sabbat—the food, the dancing, and the drink—was disgusting, tiring, and very painful for the participants. This assessment contrasts with that of Pierre de Lancre, who insisted that he was told how much the attendees enjoyed themselves. Rémy was not writing a legal manual for handling witchcraft trials, and he did not explicitly examine the issue of whether attendance at a Sabbat was sufficient by itself to convict a suspect. He did, however, imply that that was the case, pointing out that in regard to serious crimes, *intent* to commit a crime was tantamount to actually committing it: If someone, through attending a Sabbat, indicated an intent to do evil deeds, that should suffice for a death penalty decision.

This and other legal issues were examined in detail by someone who had never judged a case himself—the Jesuit scholar Martín Del Rio, the most respected Catholic demonologist of the early seventeenth century. Del Rio stated that for those who attended a Sabbat, even if they had committed no evil deeds, "the very fact that they allied themselves with an evil spirit by means of a pact, that they were accustomed to take part in a sabbat, and are responsible for what they do there, is sufficient reason" to impose the death penalty (Del Rio 1611, 833). Like many previous Catholic clerics in Italy, he also argued that the *Canon Episcopi* did not apply to "modern" witches, who were not innocent women but rather apostates, heretics, idolaters, blasphemers, and sodomites.

Pierre de Lancre was an appellate judge from Bordeaux who had investigated a widespread witchcraft panic in 1609 and wrote an extensive study based on this episode. Through hearing testimony from hundreds of witnesses, Lancre was convinced that the central problem he confronted in the Basque Pays de Labourd was the existence of a diabolical sect that assembled at countless Sabbats. He stated that, of 30,000 inhabitants of the region, at least 3,000 were witches who had been marked by Satan. Further, Sabbats took place almost every night, and four times a year, there were huge Sabbats, attended by up to 12,000 witches. Much of Lancre's testimony came from young women (below the age at which they could be prosecuted), who testified in great detail, without torture, about what happened at Sabbats. As with Bodin, the general agreement of these accounts was deemed a crucial proof of their reality. The Labourd Sabbats contained all the elements that were by then well known. Lancre was a skillful writer who used emotive and colorful prose to paint pictures of these horrifying events.



*The most famous illustration of the Sabbat, by Polish engraver and painter Jan Ziarnko for Pierre de Lancre's *Tableau de l'inconstance des Mauvais Anges et Demons* (Description of the Inconstancy of the Evil Angels and Demons), 1612. Note the Devil seated on his throne flanked by his favorite witches, the child presented to him as a sacrifice, witches and devils dancing and feasting on the right, witches brewing a storm, witches and demons flying, and other noxious activities that constituted a reversal of Christian society and religion. (TopFoto.co.uk)*

What particularly shocked Lancre was the witnesses' attitude to the Sabbats. Although most writers insisted on the unpleasantness and pain of the Sabbats, Lancre's juvenile witches testified about how much they enjoyed the meetings (something similar happened later with Swedish children at Blåkulla). He stated, "Instead of being quiet about this damnable coupling (with demons), or of blushing or crying about it, they tell the dirtiest and most immodest circumstances with such freedom and gaiety that they glory in it and take great pleasure in telling about it." He reported that one witness said, "The Sabbat was the real Paradise where there was more pleasure that could be expressed" (Lancre 1612, 142, 344).

THE SABBAT IN WITCHCRAFT TRIALS

The Sabbat figured in trials for witchcraft all across continental Europe. Because solid evidence for crimes

carried out with diabolical spells or poisons was very difficult to obtain, accusations of participation in Sabbats offered an alternative way for a judge to prosecute witches.

The attitude of a court to this kind of testimony was crucial in determining how many witches would be accused at any time. If court officials took this testimony seriously and used torture to obtain confessions and fresh accusations, the net could be cast very widely, as happened in many places, mainly in Germany. Rémy's Lorraine preserved hundreds of confessions by witches who had attended Sabbats. In their questioning, often accompanied by torture, the Lorraine judges were more interested in learning names of "accomplices" than in details of what happened at the Sabbats.

The Basque region, which lies across the border between France and Spain, produced voluminous quantities of information about Sabbats. On the French

side, Lancre and his senior colleague Jean d'Espaignet heard hundreds of young witches describe them; they concentrated on arresting several dozen suspects, including a number of priests, who seemed to be the head witches. The French judges tried these suspects on the spot, and the Spaniards reported that they executed as many as eighty of them. The remainder were dispatched to Bordeaux for judgment by the whole *parlement* (sovereign judicial court). The court eventually released most of them because of insufficient evidence, provoking an enraged Lancre to write his treatise in hopes of overcoming the skepticism of his colleagues about the value of Sabbats as evidence.

Across the frontier, witchcraft fell under the purview of the Spanish Inquisition. Refugees from Lancre's reign of terror spilled into Spain, where the Holy Office soon arrested several of them. Though these systems were very different, the handling of this complex case of the Basque witches was similar. The Spanish Inquisition also separated out two dozen or so ringleaders, sending them to Logroño to be examined by the Inquisition tribunal there. At first, these inquisitors took witchcraft seriously, including the Sabbat. They sentenced eleven witches to death at a famous *auto de fe* (act of faith) in 1610. As in France, garrulous, underaged witnesses had deluged them with voluntary confessions about what went on at Sabbats. However, a degree of skepticism emerged shortly after these proceedings. The Spanish Inquisition had not executed anyone for witchcraft for more than sixty years, and the local bishop had never been convinced of anyone's guilt. One inquisitor, Alonso de Salazar Frías, became an open critic of the role of the Sabbat, the original confessions, and the entire proceedings. A year after the *auto de fe*, he traveled through the region, persuading hundreds to retract their confessions. He sent confessed witches to the locations of their Sabbats in order to show how inconsistent their testimonies were. He even conducted experiments with witches' ointments and powders, which showed them to be harmless. No more witches were ever executed by the Spanish Inquisition.

In France, Europe's most prestigious court, the *Parlement* of Paris, tried around 1,250 people for witchcraft in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and executed just over 100 of them. While three-quarters of them were charged with attending Sabbats, they were also found guilty of other crimes of witchcraft. Only 7 were convicted and executed solely for attendance at Sabbats.

Many large-scale trials took place in Germany, based on denunciations of so-called accomplices seen at Sabbats. Lists of such accomplices have been preserved from several major German witch hunts, dating back to Trier in the 1580s. In Bamberg and Würzburg, both prince-bishoprics, intense witchcraft persecutions took place in several episodes between 1590 and 1630 in

which the Sabbat operated as the crucial multiplier. Each of these small cities witnessed hundreds of executions of witches, all generated through torture to obtain more names. In such massive trials, even wealthy and influential citizens were accused and tried. These people tended to have a more sophisticated understanding of theological issues, so their confessions were much more detailed than those of the ordinary folk. In 1628, two people accused Burgomaster (Mayor) Johannes Junius of Bamberg of attending Sabbats. After denying all charges, he was tortured; he eventually provided a full and colorful account of his participation in Sabbats. He also named several other prominent citizens as having been there as well. In Würzburg, at the same time, forty-three priests and monks were executed. Their confessions were the most elaborate in all of Germany, full of references to fairy food and parodies of the Mass.

In one very late trial at Bamberg, a witch denounced at least 126 accomplices—who were not arrested. By that time, trials for witchcraft were becoming rare in most of Europe. Attacks on abuses of the judicial system and on the use of cruel torture to extract confessions seemed to have had an effect on theologians and judges. Though stories of fairies and the souls of the dead flying through the night continued to be told, the authorities stopped regarding them as evidence of a demonic sect.

The Sabbat offers an instructive example of the complex relationship between popular and elite culture in early modern Europe. Ideas that emerged from widely diffused ancient folkloric roots had been at least partially integrated into elite culture by the 1430s. During the Reformation, these views were seen as proof for the existence of a diabolical, heretical sect of witches by all confessions. Through publication, preaching, and trials, such concepts permeated the consciousness of people at all levels of society in different ways. When adolescents and even children confessed to attending Sabbats and gave full accounts of their experiences, such views were confirmed, and the efforts to exterminate witches were justified.

JONATHAN L. PEARL

See also: BAMBERG; BASQUE COUNTRY; BENEVENTO, WALNUT TREE OF; BLÅKULLA; BODIN, JEAN; *CANON EPISCOPI*; CONFESSIONS; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DEMONOLOGY; DEVIL; *ERRORES GAZARIORUM*; FERTILITY CULTS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; FOLKLORE; GERMANY; GOAT; INQUISITION, SPANISH; JUNIUS, JOHANNES; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; NIDER, JOHANNES; OINTMENTS; POPULAR BELIEFS IN WITCHES; RÉMY, NICOLAS; SALAZAR FRÍAS, ALONZO DE; STICKS; THOLOSAN, CLAUDE; TRIALS; WÜRZBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF

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SACRAMENTS AND SACRAMENTALS

Writers on witchcraft inherited long-standing debates over the nature and efficacy of Catholic sacraments and sacramentals. Medieval Catholic theology defined sacraments as signs that perform the same acts of divine grace they signify. There are seven sacraments: baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, penance (sacramental confession), extreme unction, orders (ordination), and matrimony. Baptism, confirmation, and orders stamp the soul with a “character,” an indelible *signum spirituale* (spiritual sign), and therefore must be received only one time. Sacramentals are less momentous rituals that have an aura of the sacred: such as the sign of the cross; use of holy water; and various blessed objects such as salt, palm leaves, wax, and bread. Sacramentals and emergency baptisms can be performed by any layperson; the remaining sacraments are to be performed only by priests.

The Council of Florence declared polemically (in 1439) that sacraments “cause grace”; they “contain” it and “confer” it on those who receive them “worthily.” The Council of Trent (1547) reiterated these doctrines, anathematizing definitions of sacraments as metaphors or mere ceremonies (Denzinger 1976, 333, 382). Conciliar decrees reflected centuries-long clashes over sacramental reality between Church authorities and heretical movements. The debates were particularly fierce in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, from the Hussite movements in Bohemia to the Reformation and Counter-Reformation.

WITCHCRAFT, SACRAMENTS, AND HERESY

The earliest witchcraft texts reflected anxiety over challenges to sacramental efficacy in several ways. Witchcraft was defined as heresy; the behavior of fifteenth-century witches, more often imagined rather than real, reflected accusations against earlier heretics. Initiation into witchcraft was imagined according to heresiological stereotypes, some predating the twelfth century: One joined a “sect,” renounced Christianity,

met the Devil in person, bound oneself body and soul to him, and demonstrated contempt for Christianity by desecrating crucifixes and other sacramental objects. Like earlier heretics (and like Jews), desecrating witches unleashed normally imperceptible sacramental effects, thus unwittingly demonstrating sacramental reality. Most significantly, witches were forced to confess torturing the Eucharist until it bled or otherwise confirmed transubstantiation, the sacramental doctrine whose lack of universal acceptance caused some of the most persistent controversies and around which the largest cluster of superstitions developed.

The detrimental effects of *maleficium* (harmful magic) were retheorized as equal and opposite to the beneficial effect—literally, *beneficium*—of sacraments and sacramentals. Indeed, *maleficium* depended on the inversion and perversion of literal sacramental energies. Witches were forced to confess that, by desecrating a holy object (a cross, a consecrated Host, and so forth), they regularly caused a devil to appear corporeally. Confessions also confirmed that witches desecrated sacramental materials, especially the Eucharist and chrism oil, in order to prepare charms and other malefic paraphernalia. Conversely, making the sign of the cross, intentionally or not, made devils vanish; demons transporting witches through the air instantly dropped and injured anyone who inadvertently crossed themselves. Pronouncing the name of God, Christ, or Mary had the same effect. Thus, to demonstrate the reality of witchcraft was to defend sacramental efficacy and reality.

In the *Formicarius* (The Anthill, 1437–1438), Johannes Nider reshaped vivid stories reputedly told by a secular judge, Peter of Bern, and others about the opposition between witchcraft and sacraments. Nider was particularly concerned to demonstrate the reality of transubstantiation, baptism, and making the sign of the cross. He generalized from these anecdotes, declaring that witches confessed being unable to overcome properly observed sacramental protections. He presented *Formicarius* as a demonstration that, contrary to appearances, God had not ceased to look after modern Christians. Nider's opposition of *maleficium* to sacred rituals inspired further refinements: *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) claimed that devils always required witches to make their witchcraft materials from profaned sacraments and explicitly proposed sacraments as “remedies” for witchcraft. Later Catholic writers, for example, Bartolomeo della Spina or Francesco Maria Guazzo, perpetuated the opposition.

Before and after the Reformation, Catholic documents showed witches inadvertently demonstrating sacramental efficacy. Ironically, Protestant writers, who opposed various Catholic sacraments, helped perpetuate the connection between witchcraft and sacraments. Martin Luther and his followers reduced the seven sacraments to only two, both based on clear New

Testament texts; the two they kept, baptism and the Eucharist, were precisely those that witches most commonly defiled. This change redefined Protestants' belief in the overall sacramental system but did nothing to reduce their horror of witches, who desecrated both of the "real" sacraments. Meanwhile, Protestant polemics argued that the other "papist" sacraments, lacking foundations in Scripture, were themselves heinous forms of witchcraft, "excrements" overseen by Satan rather than God. The efficacy of most Catholic sacraments could thus be dismissed as either illusory or demonic.

WALTER STEPHENS

See also: HERESY; LUTHER, MARTIN; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; NIDER, JOHANNES; PETER OF BERN; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH; SUPERSTITION; WATER, HOLY.

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SAFTLEVEN, CORNELIS (1607–1681)

This Dutch painter was one of the few seventeenth-century artists to depict occult themes. Saftleven was born in Gorinchem (Gorinchem) into a family of artists; in fact, his brother Herman, a well-known landscapist, is better remembered today than Cornelis. Cornelis Saftleven is generally considered a painter of peasant genres in the tradition of such artists as Pieter Brueghel the Elder and two of his contemporaries, David Ryckaert III and David Teniers the Younger. Saftleven's work was closely tied to that of Teniers, although he may also have collaborated with Peter Paul Rubens.

Approximately seventy of Saftleven's paintings and drawings contained subjects such as scenes of hell and devils, the temptations of St. Anthony, enchanted animals, and witches. These themes also reflected the influences of the Brueghel family and Teniers. Many of Cornelis Saftleven's occult works depicted animals dressed in clothing and engaged in human activities. Some of these paintings and drawings may be interpreted as showing witchcraft. His concerts of cats and birds were quite similar to works by Teniers and his artistic entourage. In most cases, they were probably *singeries*, allegories in which animals mimic or make fun of humanity. But such motifs may also show transmuted witches, devils disguised as animals, or even enchanted domestic animals. Examples of such works by Saftleven included two drawings from the Rijksprentenkabinet in Amsterdam, entitled *Bird's Concert* and *Cat's Concert*, and a beautiful chalk, wash, and watercolor drawing, entitled *An Enchanted Cellar with Animals*, now in the

Getty Museum in Los Angeles, California. The last showed birds singing under the direction of an ape and a group of rats warming their forepaws in front of a hearth. That vignette of enchanted animals (or perhaps devils in disguise) warming their paws was lifted directly by Saftleven from a print by Brueghel, *St. James and the Magician Hermogenes*. Another concert of hellish cats is included in a painting, the *Temptations of St. Anthony* by Saftleven (its present whereabouts are unknown).

In some of Saftleven's works, the theme was unambiguously witchcraft. These works closely imitated paintings by Teniers and his follower David Ryckaert III. For example, a Saftleven painting entitled *Witches Sabbat*, or, alternatively, *A Witch Entering Hell* (owned by the Chicago Art Institute), showed a witch riding into the mouth of hell on the back of a demon-goat. She was certainly a witch because she carried that most obvious item of witchcraft iconography, her broom. As she rode into hell, the witch caused a large number of anthropomorphic and zoomorphic devils to flee before her. These devils were clearly derived from similar devils by Teniers; in fact, the scene is almost identical to a Teniers drawing entitled *Witch Entering Hell*. Another Saftleven witchcraft painting, *Binding the Devil to a Cushion* (present whereabouts unknown), showed witches tying down a zoomorphic devil. This painting was probably based on *The Witch*, a work by Teniers that is in the Munich Alte Pinakothek, and without question, it was ultimately derived from the scene of witches tying down devils in Brueghel's *Dulle Griet* or from a vignette in his famous painting *Flemish Proverbs*. Not coincidentally, Teniers also painted a work with the same title.

Comparing Cornelis Saftleven's paintings and drawings of witchcraft and other occult scenes with those of other seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish artists, we find that Saftleven's treatment of witchcraft was quite typical, with no distinctive iconography or unusual specific themes. Witches and devils went about their activities in a generally matter-of-fact manner. Apart from utilizing the folkloric saying of a woman so mean that "she could tie a devil to a pillow," Saftleven adhered to the standard artistic practice of his day and showed his witches and devils as the demonologists said they existed and behaved. What made Saftleven unusual was the large number of themes of the demonic and of witchcraft that appeared in his output. His animal allegory paintings were doubtless taken as humor during the seventeenth century, but they may also be interpreted as far more sinister views of witches transmuted or animals enchanted. Such double meanings were certainly understood by Saftleven's audience, and again, Brueghel, Teniers, and others also made use of the double meaning of animal allegory that did, at times, represent witches and devils.

JANE P. DAVIDSON

See also: ANIMALS; ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BRUEGHEL, PIETER THE ELDER; CATS; METAMORPHOSIS; TENIERS, DAVID THE YOUNGER.

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SALAZAR FRÍAS, ALONSO DE (1564–1636)

Salazar was a Spanish inquisitor who averted a mass killing of Basque witches and who was also directly responsible for the new instructions of August 29, 1614, that led to the definitive cessation of witch burnings under the Spanish Inquisition. He was born at Burgos, where his father was a lawyer, and belonged to an influential family of civil servants and prosperous merchants. At age fifteen, Salazar matriculated at the University of Salamanca, where he obtained his bachelor's degree in canon law after five years. In 1588, he took holy orders, becoming a stipendiary (*racionero*) at the cathedral of Jaén in Andalusia. Its bishop, Francisco Sarmiento de Mendoza, had been a professor of canon law at the University of Salamanca and a judge of the High Court of Valladolid; for Salazar, he was an excellent mentor. By late summer of 1588, Salazar took his licentiate degree in canon law at the University of Sigüenza.

A meteoric career began for the twenty-four-year-old licentiate. The bishop made him his representative on visitations; in that capacity, Salazar traveled throughout the diocese of Jaén, so that, as his autobiography says, there was no "church or font" he had not visited. At the age of twenty-six, he obtained a position as canon with a lifelong benefice of 1,500 *ducados* a year, a high income considering that an inquisitor earned barely half as much. Apparently, Salazar also served as a judge (*provisor*) at the bishop's court. When Bishop Sarmiento died in 1594, it emerged that he had also made the young canon his executor. In the same year, the cathedral chapter sent Salazar to defend the interests of the diocese in a lawsuit with the archbishop of Granada involving tithes. Salazar won the case in two and a half years, during which time he also represented Jaén at a synod in Madrid. After 1597, he spent most of his time in Madrid, representing the new bishop of Jaén, Bernardo de Sandoval y Rojas, in a succession of suits concerning the revenues of the diocese, all of which he won. In 1599, when Don Bernardo was promoted to archbishop of Toledo, one of the most powerful offices in the country, he made Salazar his private lawyer, and by 1600, he had him elected attorney general for the Castilian church. In this new post, Salazar met Crown ministers and the papal nuncio.

A Spanish historian characterized Salazar as a good negotiator with the tact and flexibility to get matters on the proper course; a man with great diplomatic talents; and an experienced lawyer who never gave up, even if he encountered opposition from the highest authorities, but who also only undertook causes he considered just. He attached great importance to written evidence, which sometimes prompted him to hunt through the archives; his love of these sources often resulted in a superabundance of documentation where less would have sufficed. In addition, he had perspicuity, concentration, and a formidable capacity for work: "When Alonso de Salazar took on a case . . . he spared no effort and left no loose ends. From that moment on he lived in a state of permanent preparedness to obtain the best possible result" (Coronas 1981, 19).

Several times, the Holy See, under both Pope Clement II and Pope Paul V, recommended him for a post as inquisitor. But he did not assume that position until his patron, Sandoval y Rojas, became Inquisitor General in 1608. Salazar was the first inquisitor he appointed, being assigned to the vacant post at Logroño on March 23, 1609. When Salazar took up his position three months later, the trial of the witches of Zugarramurdi was in full swing, and as the junior inquisitor, he at first relied completely on his two older colleagues. He spoke up only in June 1610, when they were voting on the cases of two clerical "witches" and six other *negativos*, or "deniers" (those who pleaded not guilty). His colleagues and their assessors agreed to sentence them all to the stake because of the overwhelming evidence against them. But after criticizing the evidence, Salazar alone voted that they should all be interrogated under torture, which was their only chance of survival. Already on this occasion, Salazar came up with the important observation that all of the confessing witches had been unable to tell whether they had gone to the Sabbath in dreams or in reality (*coposamente*). If they could be mistaken on such a material point, Salazar continued, they could also be in error regarding those they named as their accomplices (Henningsen 1980, 178–180).

The next year, on an eight-month journey through the Basque Country with the Edict of Grace for the witches' sect, Salazar fully confirmed his misgivings: "I have not found a single proof, not even the slightest indication, from which to infer that an act of witchcraft has actually taken place" (quoted in Henningsen 2004, 340), he wrote afterward in his report to the Inquisitor General. In his explanation of the genesis of the witch panic, Salazar can almost be said to have anticipated modern communication theory: "The only basis for this rumor-mongering appears to be the punishment of witches at the *auto de fe* celebrated in Logroño, the Edict of Grace and the fact that an Inquisitor has set out to visit so many places. All of which apparently

provides a reason for everything to be immediately thought of as witchcraft. This grows at every telling and today in fact there is no fainting-fit, illness, death or accident that is not attributed to witches” (quoted in Henningsen 2004, 336).

Alongside the almost 2,000 cases he dealt with in connection with the witch amnesty, Salazar also found time for some empirical investigations enjoined on him by the *Suprema* (the supreme council of the Inquisition). Everywhere he went, he tried to check the witches’ confessions against statements from people who were not themselves witches. In Fuenterrabía, for example, he questioned the family of Catalina de Echeverría, an elderly woman who had said, during her confession at Logroño, that when she became a witch, the Devil removed three toes from her left foot. Yet people from her house declared that she had lacked those toes since infancy (Henningsen 2004, 300). In the process, Salazar also carried out two series of scientific experiments. The first series concerned the witches’ meeting places and was conducted in nine different villages; in each, four subjects were selected from those who had made confessions of witchcraft in connection with the witch amnesty. These individuals were secretly taken out to the place where they said the witch meetings had been held. There, they were asked to point out the place more specifically and to show where the Devil’s throne had stood; where the witches’ cauldron had been placed; and where they had eaten, danced, and done other activities. Afterward, the reports with the replies were compared. The information matched in two of the nine experiments, but Salazar claimed that in both cases, information had leaked, so the subjects could have agreed in advance what to say. In the rest of the experiments, the subjects contradicted one another. A second series of experiments concerned the witch powders and flying ointments that had been revealed. The contents of twenty-two jars of these substances were examined by physicians and apothecaries, tested on animals, and, indeed, ingested by an elderly woman. The contents turned out to be quite harmless, and when Salazar pressed the owners of the substances, the witch ointments proved in every case to be something that the supposed witch had concocted to satisfy the persecutors (Henningsen 1980, 295–298).

However, most of the witches’ activities were said to have taken place in a dream world to which only the witches themselves had access and about which one could only get information through them. To solve this problem, Salazar concentrated on the witch stories that had a double aspect, referring to things in both this and the other world. For example, a seventy-year-old man confessed that *outside* the Sabbat world, he lived “in sin” with a woman who was also a witch and that they both went to the same Sabbat. After listening to him, Salazar asked whether they also met and spoke together

inside the Sabbat. But the man told him that “although both partners saw each other in the crowd, they never spoke to one another, nor exchanged a single word about their illicit relationship” (quoted in Henningsen 2004, 282). During the questioning, Salazar operated with four pairs of oppositions, each including an empirically verifiable element:

Inside (<i>allá dentro</i>)	Outside (<i>acá fuera</i>)
Invisible (<i>invisible</i>)	Visible (<i>visible</i>)
Fictive (<i>fingido</i>)	Real (<i>real</i>)
Sleeping (<i>durmiendo</i>)	Awake (<i>despierto</i>)

Using his almost wholly modern anthropological method, Salazar could deal with the confessions of the witches in purely phenomenological terms, unaffected by preconceived opinions about what the Devil and the witches were capable or incapable of. During his subsequent debate with his colleagues, Salazar formulated a number of basic rules for evaluating testimony in witchcraft and criminal cases as a whole: “It is not very helpful to keep asserting that the Devil is capable of doing this or that. . . . The real question is: are we to believe that witchcraft occurred in a given situation simply because of what the witches claim? It is clear that the witches are not to be believed and that judges should not pass sentence on anyone, unless the case can be proven by external and objective evidence sufficient to convince everyone who hears it” (quoted in Henningsen 1980, 350).

That Salazar sometimes offered reflections on the Devil’s capabilities does not necessarily mean that he believed in demonology. His demonological arguments must be viewed as superfluous rhetoric, for they can very easily be removed from the account without the arguments falling apart. This factor is exactly what distinguished Salazar from Johann Weyer, Friedrich Spee, and other famous “witches’ advocates,” in whose discourse demonology is integrated in a quite different way. On the whole, demonology seems to have interested Salazar very little. He did not quote a single authority, and in the catalog of his library of over 800 titles, the genre is represented by only 10 works.

Salazar proposed one of his most original ideas in the discussion of the judges’ evaluation of the evidence, where he argued for a kind of value-nihilism. He claimed that we have no objective method of assessing the credibility of people who confess (*confitentes*, as the Inquisition called them): “In order to resolve the contradictions which emerge from the confessions, my colleagues divide the defendants into three categories: good, bad, and indifferent *confitentes*. However, we have no method or rule which allows us to evaluate each confession other than the arbitrary one that they have used and refer to in their paper. Thus the name of bad *confitente* is given to someone whom another [judge] might call good, and vice versa” (quoted in Henningsen 1980, 436).

In 1618, Salazar was transferred to the Inquisition of Murcia and the next year to the Valencia tribunal, but in 1622, he was back as senior inquisitor in Logroño. His service as a “troubleshooter” at various tribunals ended in 1628, when he became *fiscal* (prosecutor) in the Inquisition’s supreme council, of which he became a full member in 1631. His reports, with their philosophically interesting analysis of the whole foundation of the belief in witchcraft, were buried in the archives of the Holy Office until they were retrieved by the American historian Henry Charles Lea (4: 225–237).

GUSTAV HENNINGSEN;

TRANSLATED BY JAMES MANLEY

See also: BASQUE COUNTRY; DEMONOLOGY; INQUISITION, SPANISH; LEE, HENRY CHARLES; OINTMENTS; SABBAT; SPAIN; WEYER, JOHANN; ZUGARRAMURDI, WITCHES OF.

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SALEM

In 1692, a witch panic, the largest and by far the most famous in U.S. history, gripped Essex County, Massachusetts. It began in Salem Village, a farming community of just over 200 adults, but then spread rapidly throughout the region. During that year, formal charges of witchcraft were brought against more than 150 people, while many others were named informally. Over half of those indicted lived in Salem village or in nearby Andover, but overall, there were women and men from twenty-four towns and villages. By early October 1692, when court proceedings were halted amid acrimonious controversy, 19 people had been hanged and one man had been killed for refusing to

plead; over 100 people were awaiting trial in prison. (For a list of those formally accused, where they lived, and the court’s verdicts, see Godbeer 1992, 238–242.)

The core group of accusers consisted of girls and young women from godly households in Salem village who had begun to suffer strange fits in the opening weeks of that year. Several of the girls had apparently been experimenting in secret with divination. One of them, for instance, suspended the white of an egg in a glass of water “to find her future husband’s calling” (Godbeer 1992, 34); when she looked into the glass, she saw the image of a coffin. We will never know exactly what prompted the girls’ subsequent fits, but it is likely that fear and guilt relating to their illicit experiments were contributing factors. One of them was the daughter of the minister Samuel Parris; another was his niece. When Parris called in a local physician to examine them, the doctor concluded that they were bewitched. At first, Parris responded by imposing a regimen of prayer and fasting. But in late February, he changed his strategy and pressured the two girls to name their tormentors, encouraging the parents of other afflicted children to do likewise. They named three women, including the pastor’s Indian slave Tituba.

Tituba has figured prominently in the evolving mythology that surrounds the Salem witch hunt, though reliable information about her is sparse. Parris had purchased Tituba in the West Indies and taken her with him to Massachusetts. The minister’s slave had a reputation for occult skill and was commissioned by the aunt of one of the afflicted girls to identify the witch responsible for causing the affliction through the use of countermagic. Tituba baked a cake that contained the girl’s urine and then fed it to a dog. Parris was furious when he found out about the episode, and it is hardly surprising that Tituba figured among the first three witches named by his daughter and niece. Some accounts hold Tituba responsible for teaching divination techniques to the girls, though no shred of evidence supports that contention. She and her husband, John, were described by contemporaries as Indian, yet later accounts made Tituba into an African woman and a convenient scapegoat for the ensuing disasters.

Once local magistrates issued arrest warrants for the three named women, other villagers began to come forward with additional accusations, and before long, allegations spread to nearby communities. By the time the new governor of Massachusetts, William Phips, appointed a special court to deal with the crisis in mid-May, almost fifty people had been charged. Most previous witchcraft trials in New England had targeted one or, at most, a few individuals, so the scale of the 1692 witch hunt was utterly anomalous. Many historians have pondered and recounted the events of that year, offering explanations that range from cynical

manipulation and conspiracy to collective food poisoning. The colony's unusual political situation in early 1692 doubtless abetted the spread of the panic. Massachusetts had lacked a legally established government since the fall of the authoritarian regime headed by Edmund Andros in 1689; until Phips arrived in May 1692, the authorities could only imprison suspects without trial, so allegations proliferated without any possibility of swift resolution. But recent scholarship has suggested that the origins of the witch hunt lay embedded in the preceding decades. Salem Village itself and the region as a whole had been afflicted by a series of crises that fostered witch hysteria. From a modern perspective, these events seem unconnected to witchcraft, but that was not so in the minds of seventeenth-century New Englanders.

Recent threats to the New England colonies had created an intense sense of danger among settlers in the region. Colonists felt imperiled by Native American attacks between 1675 and 1676 and from 1689 to 1691; by political reforms, imposed during the 1680s by the government in London, that threatened to undermine the colonists' independence; by the increasing visibility of religious dissenters; by recent Quaker evangelism; and finally, by news of the imposition of a new charter in 1691 giving freedom of worship and the vote to previously disfranchised groups such as Quakers and Anglicans. New Englanders described these threats in much the same language used to characterize witchcraft: as alien, invasive, and malevolent forces. Hostile residents characterized British imperial officials as "tools of the Adversary," and one of them was even denounced as a "Devil" (Godbeer 1992, 187). Many colonists believed, furthermore, that Indians were devil worshippers and that Quakers who claimed to access divine truth through inner revelation were actually possessed by Satan. To be attacked by Indians or evangelized by Quakers was thus practically equivalent to being assaulted by Satan.

The afflictions in Salem Village unleashed the fears of alien, invasive, and diabolical forces that had accumulated during the preceding years. The crisis of 1692 struck some contemporaries as the climax of a devilish assault upon the region. Those who could be linked in some way to these recent experiences of invasion proved vulnerable to allegations of witchcraft. A significant number of the accused had close Quaker associations; Samuel Wardwell, for example, had Quaker relatives. Several suspects were linked to Indians: One of John Alden's accusers claimed that he had sold gunpowder to Native Americans and had been sexually involved with Indian women. Tituba was marked by her race as well as her reputation for occult skill. Many of the accused were clearly perceived as outsiders, either literally or figuratively. Eight of the Andover suspects were marginalized by ethnic affiliation: Martha Carrier, for instance,

was Scottish and had married a Welshman, and Martha Corey had an illegitimate son of mixed race.

During the decades prior to the witch hunt, the village of Salem had become bitterly divided around a series of issues that paralleled crises in the region at large. The rural settlement that became known as Salem Village had no civil government of its own; it was legally joined with and subordinate to Salem Town. Salem Town needed the food that Salem villagers produced, and it benefited from the taxes that they paid. But some villagers wanted independence from the town, in part because the latter had proven remarkably insensitive to their concerns. The town government was slow to relieve villagers from having to provide men for the Salem Town night watch, even though some of the villagers lived up to 10 miles away from the town center; it was also reluctant to let the villagers form a church congregation of their own, despite the inconvenience of having to travel so far to the town meeting-house. Those who lived closest to the town tended to feel less aggrieved by these issues and became increasingly alienated from villagers further west, who in turn resented their lack of support.

Some villagers also wanted to separate themselves from the commercial spirit that increasingly characterized the town, which was a flourishing seaport. Villagers who saw that way of life as spiritually suspect tended to distrust neighbors who lived nearer to or associated with the town's interests. Factional division was shaped by disparate economic opportunity as well as by cultural values. Those farmers who lived closest to the town had land of a higher quality, enjoyed easier access to its markets, and tended to see the town's development as an opportunity; those living farther west had poorer land, were less able to take advantage of the town's growth, and tended to resent those who could do so.

Salem Village had become increasingly divided, as those who associated with the town aligned against those who were eager to separate and form an autonomous community. Because the village had no formal institutions of its own, it proved extremely difficult to resolve the disputes that arose between these two groups, so animosities and mutual suspicions deepened with each passing year. Proponents of separation from the town eventually secured the establishment of an independent church in 1689 and the ordination of Samuel Parris as their pastor. He was, however, an unfortunate choice: A failed and bitter merchant who resented those who succeeded in the world of commerce, he fueled local hostilities. Parris gave a series of inflammatory sermons that translated factional division into a cosmic struggle between the forces of good and evil. In the minds of his supporters, Salem Town became the symbol of an alien, corrupt, and even diabolical world that threatened the welfare of Salem Village.



The Trial of George Jacobs, August 5, 1692, by T. H. Matteson, 1855. (Bettmann/Corbis)

Divisions within the village were reproduced in the pattern of accusations in 1692: Most accused witches and their defenders lived on the side of the village nearest to Salem Town, whereas most of the accusers lived on the western side. Many of the accused had personal histories or interests that either associated them with Salem Town or otherwise marked them as threatening outsiders. Supporters of Samuel Parris perceived their enemies as evil, so it was but a short step for them to become convinced that those aligned with the town and its interests were servants of Satan. Though the afflicted girls were more than likely influenced by adults to name particular individuals, this was not a cynical attempt to dispose of enemies by labeling them as witches: Villagers pointed the finger of accusation at particular individuals because they truly believed them to be morally deficient and thus likely members of a diabolical conspiracy. In Salem Village and in the county as a whole, those people who had become identified with forces that seemed disorderly and immoral fell victim to accusations of witchcraft as the initial afflictions in the village ignited a witch panic.

To deal with the emergency, the newly arrived governor, Sir William Phips, formed the Court of Oyer and Terminer (to hear and determine). The court proceeded immediately with its work, holding its first session in Salem Town on June 2. Its chief justice was the lieutenant governor, William Stoughton, who soon showed himself to be a fanatical witch hunter; on the first occasion that a Salem jury proposed to acquit an accused witch, Stoughton sent the jurors back for further deliberation. Meanwhile, the most scrupulous member of the special court, Nathaniel Saltonstall, resigned after its first death sentence was carried out on June 10.

Magistrates presiding over previous witchcraft trials had been faced with testimony against defendants that was often impressive in quantity and yet legally problematic. New England's witchcraft laws demanded proof of the Devil's involvement. Because most depositions focused on *maleficia*, the practical harm allegedly inflicted by witches, but rarely mentioned the Devil, an overwhelming majority of accused witches were acquitted, much to the dismay of those who had given incriminating evidence. At first, it seemed that

such problems would not thwart the proceedings at Salem. Over fifty of the accused in 1692 confessed, describing in graphic detail their initiation into the Devil's service and often naming other individuals who had allegedly joined the satanic confederacy. These confessions lent a horrifying credence to the accusations that were pouring in from communities throughout the county. The evidence given by witnesses against the accused contained, moreover, countless references to the Devil and his involvement with the alleged witches; these also facilitated conviction. The first condemned witch, Bridget Bishop (whose basement contained "poppets," or Voodoo dolls), was executed on June 10. Five more followed in July (Sarah Good, Elizabeth How, Susannah Martin, Rebecca Nurse, and Sarah Wilds); another five were sent to the hanging tree in August (George Burroughs, Martha Carrier, George Jacobs, John Proctor, and John Willard); and eight were executed that September (Martha Corey, Mary Easty, Alice Parker, Mary Parker, Ann Pudeator, Wilmot Reed, Margaret Scott, and Samuel Wardwell).

By the end of summer, however, a growing number of critics were casting doubt upon the court's proceedings. Many of the confessing witches had recanted, claiming that their confessions had been forced from them by overly zealous officials through the use of physical torture and psychological pressure. Some of those recanting revealed they had confessed because they had been promised that those who admitted their guilt, renounced their allegiance to Satan, and then cooperated with the authorities would be spared from execution. In a ghastly irony (which exactly parallels the judgments in 1610 at the most infamous witchcraft panic ever investigated by the Spanish Inquisition), only those who refused to perjure themselves by confessing to crimes that they had not committed went to their deaths.

Other than confessions, almost all of the testimony that described the Devil's involvement in the alleged witch conspiracy came from the afflicted girls whose torments had sparked the witch hunt. Most of the information they provided in their numerous depositions supposedly came from the specters of witches that had appeared to them. Puritan theologians taught that human beings could not themselves turn into or produce specters; instead, devils assumed their form and acted on their behalf. Stoughton's court assumed that devils could appear in the image of a particular individual only with that person's permission, so the appearance of a specter could be treated as proof that the individual represented was, in fact, a witch.

Yet a growing chorus of ministers and magistrates, headed by Increase Mather, warned that Satan might represent innocent persons in spectral form so as to incriminate them. That the girls suffered terrible agonies in the courtroom whenever accused witches moved

or looked at them might also be a trick brought about by the Devil rather than a genuine sign of guilt. Because the Devil was a liar, critics warned, evidence that originated with him could not be trusted. These critics cast doubt upon the spectral testimony presented to the court, not because they questioned the existence of witchcraft but because they held that the Devil was sufficiently malignant to use the court in order to attack innocent parties. In other words, their very belief in the Devil's hatred of New Englanders made them doubt such evidence.

Once spectral testimony and the confessions came under attack, the court found itself in an extremely difficult position. There were many depositions against the accused from witnesses other than the afflicted girls, but hardly any of that testimony included references to diabolical involvement such as the law demanded. In early October, Governor Phips halted the trials. That accusers were now naming individuals from prominent families, including the governor's own wife, doubtless figured in his decision. But the collapse of the trials was due primarily to controversy over the evidence being used to justify conviction. The struggle to clear the names of those already convicted would last many years.

By no means did all residents of Essex County support the governor's decision to halt the trials, and his lieutenant governor, Stoughton, was furious. His allies, like those infuriated by the acquittal of witches in earlier years, did not agree that the evidence presented in the special court was inadequate. Even those opposed to the court's proceedings were motivated not by skepticism about the existence of witchcraft but by their commitment to legal rigor. Critics of the court came close to questioning whether an invisible crime was amenable to legal prosecution. But they carefully avoided engaging directly with that issue, which was, after all, deeply disturbing to people convinced of the threats posed by witchcraft.

RICHARD GODBEER

See also: CONFESSIONS; DEVIL; DIVINATION; EVIDENCE; MATHER, INCREASE; MILLER, ARTHUR; NEW ENGLAND; PANICS; QUAKERS; SPECTRAL EVIDENCE.

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SALZBURG, PRINCE-ARCHBISHOPRIC OF

After 1675, Salzburg, which was an ecclesiastical state governed by a prince-archbishop until 1803, experienced one of the largest and strangest of Europe's relatively late witch hunts. Limited and incomplete sources suggest that, until the last quarter of the seventeenth century, death sentences for magic or witchcraft apparently remained an isolated phenomenon in Salzburg.

Only eleven executions are known for Salzburg between 1565 (the date of the first witchcraft trial) and 1588. After 1575, there were several trials in Pinzgau, in the southwest, starting when a highly gifted minister and his female cook were accused of weather-making magic. The local authorities carried out witchcraft trials, all dealing with typical *maleficium* (harmful magic), because of massive popular pressure. Doctrines of witchcraft were occasionally mentioned after legally trained experts had intervened. Devil worship and participation in the witches' dance played important roles in trials conducted at Pinzgau in 1585 against a widow and others she accused. Thereafter, only one execution is known in the first half of the seventeenth century (in 1646).

However, the successful 1675 prosecution of a vagrant knacker named Barbara Koller caused a commotion. Two years later, her son Jakob (or Jack) Koller became the center of a massive hunt led by Salzburg's central authorities. Named for the hunt's presumed leader, *Zauberer Jackl* (Jack the Sorcerer), the *Zauberer-Jackl-Prozesse* (Sorcerer-Jack-Trials) grew into one of the last major witch hunts in the Holy Roman Empire. Among other things, Jakob Koller collected a group of young male beggars around himself and reputedly apprenticed them to the Devil. Consequently, those persecuted at Salzburg were over two-thirds male and mostly between the ages of ten and twenty. The women who were executed were usually older. In many cases, the victims had become beggars after their families disintegrated or else were directly recruited from this underclass.

The *Zauberer-Jackl-Prozesse* affected court districts of the archbishopric with different intensities and dynamics. Over half of the arrests occurred in the capital city of Salzburg and its vicinity, whereas they occurred later or not at all in some local courts. By fall of 1678, young male beggars came under such general suspicion that, in certain districts, zealous officers captured all the young male beggars and searched them for scars made by Jack the Sorcerer as a sign of demonic pacts. Despite a large bounty on his head, Jakob Koller was never arrested, but during the ensuing witch hunt, 124 of his alleged followers were executed or died in jail.

Because Salzburg's aulic court was the archbishopric's sole criminal court, local district courts could only make arrests and conduct first interrogations before transferring prisoners to the capital city for trial, sometimes after months in prison. The circumstances surrounding the massive witch hunt led to standardization of interrogations and interrogatory procedures. In particular, references to attending Sabbats, participating in demonic cults, and defaming the Host—crimes elaborately recorded in aulic court interrogation records with rather stereotypical wording—are almost always absent in records from local courts. When the witch hunts began affecting more-settled parts of the populace in the last six months of 1678, the archbishop told the courts to arrest people only if there was well-founded suspicion. The *Zauberer-Jackl-Prozesse* were not completely different from other, unrelated witchcraft trials conducted at the same time or from later trials.

Once the mass witch hunts ended in 1679, Salzburg did not immediately abandon witchcraft persecution. In the 1680s, regular witchcraft trials were aimed at members of the lower classes, and at least thirty-five death sentences were carried out in 1682 and 1683. The center of these hunts (but by no means their only location) was mountainous Lungau, in the southeast, where almost no arrests occurred during the *Zauberer-Jackl-Prozesse* hunt. Salzburg's witch hunts

reached another high point at decade's end, with arrests in several local districts; in Lungau, the so-called Ramingsteiner trials took place. The nine victims were children of miners, who had taken to begging and doing odd jobs after mining declined. Trial judges reinterpreted a make-believe wedding staged by village children as a witches' Sabbat. The figure of *Zauberer-Jackl* played a very indirect role in these trials. Between 1717 and 1720, again in Lungau, three vagrant beggars were accused of transforming themselves into werewolves (lycanthropy) and attacking livestock. Damages from wolves and bears had indeed increased in recent years.

The final trial and execution for witchcraft in Salzburg took place in 1750, six years before Mozart was born: A trial in Mühldorf and Landshut (now part of Bavaria) that had lasted for years ended with a death sentence for a sixteen-year-old nanny.

GERALD MUELLEDER;

TRANSLATED BY JONATHAN STICKNEY

See also: AUSTRIA; CHILDREN; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; LYCANTHROPY; MALE WITCHES; WITCH HUNTS.

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SANCTA CLARA, ABRAHAM A (1644–1709)

An Augustinian prior and court preacher in Vienna under the Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I, Sancta Clara wrote three books in which he defended witch hunting in the Habsburg lands.

Born in a Swabian peasant family but educated at the Jesuit Latin school in Ingolstadt, Johann Ulrich Megerle entered the Benedictine order in Salzburg and joined the newly formed Discalced Augustinians several years later as Abraham a Sancta Clara. He served as both preacher and priest in southern Germany and Vienna before being appointed court preacher to Leopold I in 1677. He later served as the prior of the Augustinian house in Graz during the high point of

Styria's witchcraft trials before becoming head of his order's province in Germany and Bohemia. Serving both the Catholic Church and the Habsburg dynasty, Sancta Clara helped to shape *Pietas Austriaca* (Austrian piety), so central to the house's early modern ruling ideology based upon alliances among the Crown, the Church, and the estates. His pastoral theology emphasized the reconciliation of human potential in a fallen world with Christian ideals.

In a series of works from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries—*Judas das Ertz-schelm* (Judas the Arch-villain, 1686–1695), *Huy! und Pfu!* (Hooey and Phooey, 1707), and *Wohl-angefüllter Wein-Keller* (The Well-Socked Wine Cellar, 1710)—Sancta Clara helped provide the theological and moral justification for hunting witches. He focused his attacks on Austrian nonconformists and frequently singled out Styria's witches as particular dangers to late baroque society. He drew from his extensive travels in the duchy and exercised a considerable influence upon both Austria's elites and its common people, enjoying a considerable reputation as an eminent preacher and prose writer.

Sancta Clara abhorred what he saw as the superstitions of common people, yet he credulously accepted not only the reality of sorcery but also the reality of the witches' Sabbat. But another aspect of his works is important to an understanding of Austrian trials for witchcraft, especially in the duchy of Styria. Although he emphasized the diabolical nature of the offenses he described, as did most theoretical works on magic, he also highlighted the role of authorities in eliminating the dangers sorcery posed. Sancta Clara repeatedly invoked the importance of authorities in his affirmations of absolutist society, denounced witches and sorcerers as the tools of the Devil, and claimed that no one could live safely in their presence.

EDMUND M. KERN

See also: AUSTRIA; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE.

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SATANISM

A contemporary dictionary defines *Satanism* as "the worship of Satan or the powers of evil" or as "a travesty of Christian rites in which Satan is worshiped"

(*Random House Dictionary* 1987, 1704). Both definitions originated as slanders. Scholars distinguish between ideas *about* Satanism, spread by accusation, and ideas expressed by persons claiming allegiance to Satan (La Fontaine 1999, 87). Concepts of Satanism have varied little historically and have been defined mainly by Christian accusers, not by freely self-proclaimed Satanists. Scholarship has confirmed an enduring symbiosis between Satanism and Christianity: Where Christianity has been demographically absent or negligible, accusations and professions of Satanism are lacking.

HISTORY

Satanism has a far shorter history as creed than as slander. Currently, self-styled Satanist organizations are few and probably small in membership (perhaps in the hundreds or low thousands worldwide); membership criteria and numbers are impossible to know (La Fontaine 1999, 107–109; Medway 2001, 293–294). Aside from slanderous myth (discussed later), no organizations are recorded before the mid-twentieth century.

The promotion of evil, as fantasized by Christian opponents, is conspicuously missing from the credos of known Satanist organizations. Indeed, the founder of one of the two principal North American groups, the Church of Satan, formally advocated obedience to the law (La Fontaine 1999, 97).

Modern Satanist spokespersons do not describe their religion as worship of Satan, whom some Satanists apparently regard as merely symbolic, but as opposition to Christianity. Satanist objections to Christianity concern its denial of bodily pleasure, intellectual curiosity, and the ego in favor of asceticism, intellectual passivity, and self-abnegation. Satanist ideals typically exalt individualism, self-determination, and self-fulfillment, interpreting Satan as archetypal rebel against arbitrary authority and oppressive conformity (La Fontaine 1999, 86–106).

Percy Shelley's assessment of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* prefigured the Satanist critique: "Nothing can exceed the energy and magnificence of the character of Satan. Milton's Devil as a moral being is far superior to his God, as one who perseveres in some purpose which he has conceived to be excellent in spite of adversity and torture." Milton's God tormented Satan "with the alleged design of exasperating him to deserve new torments," not to make him repent (Shelley 1971, 508). Modern Satanist ideals are intellectually descended from Shelley and later nineteenth-century writers such as Charles Baudelaire.

Formal religious Satanism sometimes seems calculated to provoke shock, outrage, and panic among Christians. This observation is truer still of informal Satanism or pseudosatanism in popular commercial culture, particularly in certain "hard" rock music.

Highly publicized, sporadic vandalism with Satanist content typically expresses adolescent rebelliousness, not religious conviction or musical brainwashing. It is "more often than not merely posing, adopting an image" (La Fontaine 1999, 108).

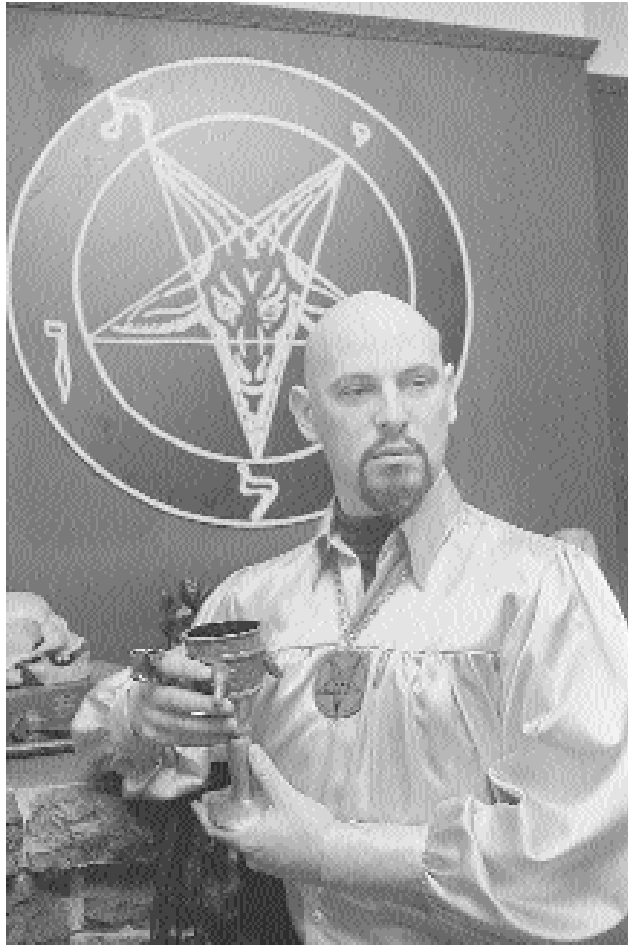
Satanism as slander assumes that Satanists are secret subversives, not exhibitionists, vandals, or sincere public advocates. It has a far longer history than genuine Satanism. The Bible (Ps. 95:5 and elsewhere) declared that pagan gods were only demons. The Hebrew *satanas* means "adversary," and Jesus saw Satan as his principal adversary (Matt. 13:37–39). Subsequent Christianity has contrasted real and imagined adversaries to itself. Christian mythology or folklore frequently has portrayed actual religious competitors—medieval heretics and early modern witches, as well as modern Satanists, pagans, and Wiccans—as Satanists.

Imaginary Satanists enact a kind of reverse Christianity. Their alleged behavior and ritual activities observe Christian categories but invert and pervert Christian ritual content (for example, adoring and praying to Satan or killing and eating infants as a parody of the Eucharist). Intentionally or not, Christian distortions of competing credos and activities as satanic parodies of Christianity domesticate religious otherness, absorbing it into familiar categories. Polar opposition reconfirms Christian ideas of humanity's relation to the supernatural and the divine.

Norman Cohn has traced Satanist stereotypes to pagan slanders about early Christians: political conspiracy; worship of outlandish or shameful gods; and rituals involving sexual promiscuity, cannibalism, and infanticide. The stereotype, whether by or about Christians, describes a secret society dedicated to overthrowing established society. The imaginary conspirators are inhuman or even bestial, deliberately breaking universal taboos. Despite their antisocial aims, the conspirators cooperate as a compact unit, an antisociety (Cohn 1975, 1–15). Given the stereotypical conspirators' inhumanity and antipathy to society, it is fitting that, in Christian versions of the myth, they be subservient to the archenemy of God and humanity.

Accusations of Satanism arose in the Greek Church during the eighth century, and they were documented in the Western Church by 1022. They have a longer subsequent history in the Western Church and inflected the development both of Satan as mythical figure and of stereotypes about his adepts. Satanist myths were disseminated about Cathar and Waldensian heretics, the Templars, and heterodox factions of the Franciscan order, before finally coalescing with other slanders around 1400, creating the specter of the witch.

With *maleficium* (harmful magic), Satan worship formed the core of witchcraft mythology. This combination is distinctive. In other cultural contexts, *maleficium* may involve secretly petitioning



Anton LaVey, founder of the Church of Satan in San Francisco in 1966. No satanic church existed in medieval or early modern Europe. (Bettmann/Corbis)

superhuman personages to harm enemies, but Satan supposedly required a formal contract before granting petitions, exacting the worshiper's body and soul in exchange for enabling the *maleficium*. This feature required Satan's apparition to worshipers in corporeal form, predisposing an extensive mythology of personal interaction: Satan held court, initiated adepts, hosted banquets and sexual orgies, assigned specific *maleficia* (evil acts, or evildoings) to devotees, and physically punished their disobedience or failure.

Accused witches' confessions of encountering the Devil in person, attending Sabbats, and so on were largely extracted through torture or psychological coercion. The concept of Satan as a supernatural person active in the world waned at the same rate as witch hunting and torture. After about 1700, Satan often seemed a metaphor for misfortune or the mysteries of human depravity. Modern societies describe Satanism as a possible motivation for infractions of secular law but not as a religious crime or a crime in itself.

However, Satanism is still prosecuted indirectly: In the 1980s and 1990s, sensational publicity surrounded

accusations that small children were harmed and even killed by "satanic ritual abuse." As in earlier times, epidemic accusations of Satanist crime were stimulated by anxiety over societal change. In North America, where the panic originated, prime stressors were the recent massive integration of women into the workforce and the resulting need to entrust small children to day-care centers. Anxious parents, therapists espousing a philosophy that victims cannot lie or confabulate, and fundamentalist Christians perennially alert to satanic conspiracies "discovered" that the apparently routine ailments and crises of small children were symptoms of physical and sexual abuse inflicted by evil caregivers during satanic rites. Abuse allegedly occurred under improbable circumstances—either during business hours, in public spaces, or, conversely, in inaccessible hideaways and even "spaceships."

A number of "satanic" defendants were convicted by testimony that would normally be inadmissible in criminal court. Accusations were compiled by prosecutors and social workers interviewing small children and by therapists employing controversial "recovered memory" techniques on adult sufferers of personality disorders. Leading questions, overt suggestion, a simplistic theory of repressed trauma, and a dogmatic insistence on "believing the victims" produced horrific accusations that were unproven, unverifiable, and objectively improbable or impossible. Some manifestly unjust convictions were nonetheless upheld (Medway 2001, 175–255).

Uncritical acceptance of satanic abuse testimony replicated the *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime) justification current during the witch hunt period: "Obvious" satanic adversaries were so devious and sophisticated that they could never be convicted without unconventional testimony.

One satanic rite rarely mentioned in "ritual abuse" mythology is the Black Mass, a modern development of the idea that the Sabbat parodied Catholic rituals. In a final ironic twist to the history of Satanism, this rite, originally invented as a slander, is now sometimes performed by self-identified Satanists (Medway 2001, 387–388).

WALTER STEPHENS

See also: BLACK MASS; CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST 1800); *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; DEVIL; HERESY; *MALEFICIUM*; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; TEMPLARS; *VAUDOIS* (WALDENSIANS).

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SATTLER, GOTTFRIED (CA. 1569–1613)

A Bavarian lawyer and assistant district judge who conducted an illegal witch hunt, Gottfried Sattler became famous when the Bavarian Privy Council decided to punish him for misuse and murder, thereby clearly destroying the comforting and widespread idea that God would not permit innocent people to be burned as witches. Sattler's decapitation in 1613 served notice that the innocent could easily become victims as soon as witchcraft trials transgressed the boundaries of the *processus ordinarius* (ordinary procedure). Adam Tanner and Friedrich Spee mentioned Sattler's execution, although without providing exact data. Until witchcraft trials were terminated altogether in the period of the Enlightenment, Sattler's trial remained a key event and an almost unparalleled debacle for the persecution party in Germany.

During an agrarian crisis between 1608 and 1609, Bavarian religious zealots tried to exploit a witch panic in the small Bavarian exclave of Wemding (near the imperial free city of Nördlingen), which was less tightly controlled from Munich. The regular district judge, nobleman Konrad II von Bemelburg, employed a former fellow student from Ingolstadt, Gottfried Sattler, to judge these cases. Sattler was in contact with members of Munich's zealot faction, most of whom had studied law with him at the University of Ingolstadt around 1590, when witch hunts had ravaged the small town and Jesuits such as Gregory of Valencia had justified draconian measures against these enemies of humanity. Presumably, Sattler expected a promotion after conducting his witch hunt.

However, the Wemding trials had far different results than Sattler had anticipated. After several exe-

cutions, the government became suspicious, intervened, and began investigating his conduct of these trials. The Privy Council commissioned Dr. Bernhard Barth, an educated lawyer from Munich who had clashed repeatedly over witchcraft trials with the court council zealots, principally Dr. Johann Sigismund Wagnereckh. Within days, Barth collected such damaging evidence that District Judge Bemelburg (then preoccupied with invading the imperial free city of Donauwörth and subsequently serving as Bavarian governor) was officially reprimanded by the duke for failing to supervise his official, while Sattler was imprisoned and put on trial. The court council chancellor, Wagnereckh, tried to sabotage all the legal steps against Sattler suggested by Barth, but every time, privy councillors such as Dr. Wilhelm Jocher and Count Hans von Rechberg overruled the chancellor's opinion.

Between July and December 1612, the court council discussed this case after every interrogation (ten times a month on average), and all sides apparently agreed that these debates were decisive. There were even public repercussions, as the Jesuit Jacob Gretser openly sided with the zealots, pointing to the witch hunts at Ellwangen. By September 1612, the Privy Council in Munich, then presided over by Dr. Joachim Donnersberger, decided to make an example of Sattler, ordering torture and contemplating punishing his misconduct with the death penalty. The Munich zealots, again led by Wagnereckh, fiercely opposed the sentence and tried to raise support from Duke Maximilian I's younger brother, Prince Albrecht, and from prominent Jesuits such as Gretser. Ingolstadt's law faculty, then dominated by Dr. Joachim Denich, twice confirmed the death sentence suggested by Munich's so-called politicians. When Duke Maximilian—who had himself been an Ingolstadt law student in 1589, along with Wagnereckh and Sattler—hesitated to confirm the death sentence, Wagnereckh persuaded the court council to decide for banishment.

However, the Privy Council considered the Sattler case a matter of principle. Supreme Chancellor Donnersberger ordered the court council to revise its decision within hours to comply with the opinions of both the legal faculty and the Privy Council. In May 1613, Duke Maximilian finally decided on Sattler's execution. Two other officials at Wemding were sentenced to perpetual exile from Bavaria. At the end of June or in early July, Sattler was beheaded at Schwaben (today's Markt Schwaben, east of Munich), presumably secretly, behind the walls of the district judge's castle. At that time, Schwaben's district judge was Johann Georg Herwarth von Hohenburg, chancellor of the Bavarian estates (*Landschaftskanzler*). Not coincidentally, Herwarth was also the leading moderate "politician" within Bavaria.

In 1590, the imperial city of Nuremberg (Nürnberg) had put to death a former executioner who had tried to incite a witch panic, but Sattler was the first witch-hunting judge in Germany to receive such a punishment. His death was an important symbolic victory for opponents of witch hunting. Tanner mentioned it alongside the 1618 death sentence against the Fulda witch judge Balthasar Nuss, another achievement of the Ingolstadt law professors (Tanner 1627, 3: col. 1005). Both death penalties proved extremely important, because they demonstrated that fatal mistakes could occur in witchcraft trials and that victims might turn out to be innocent. Like later opponents of witch hunting, Spee referred to these cases, borrowing evidence from Tanner: “Tanner relates that in earlier years in Germany two bloody judges who had to deal with cases of witchcraft were condemned to death by a judgement of the faculty of law at Ingolstadt and executed, because they had held trials contrary to law, in which innocent persons had been endangered. . . . Who will still doubt that many innocent people have been burnt by these judges?” (quoted in Behringer 1997, 295; cf. Spee 2003, 40).

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; EICHSTÄTT, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; FULDA, PRINCE-ABBAY OF; GREGORY OF VALENCIA; GRETSER, JACOB; INGOLSTADT, UNIVERSITY OF; MAXIMILIAN I, DUKE OF BAVARIA; NUREMBERG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY; NUSS, BALTHASAR; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; TANNER, ADAM; WESTERSTETTEN, JOHANN CHRISTOPH VON; WITCH-BISHOPS (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE).

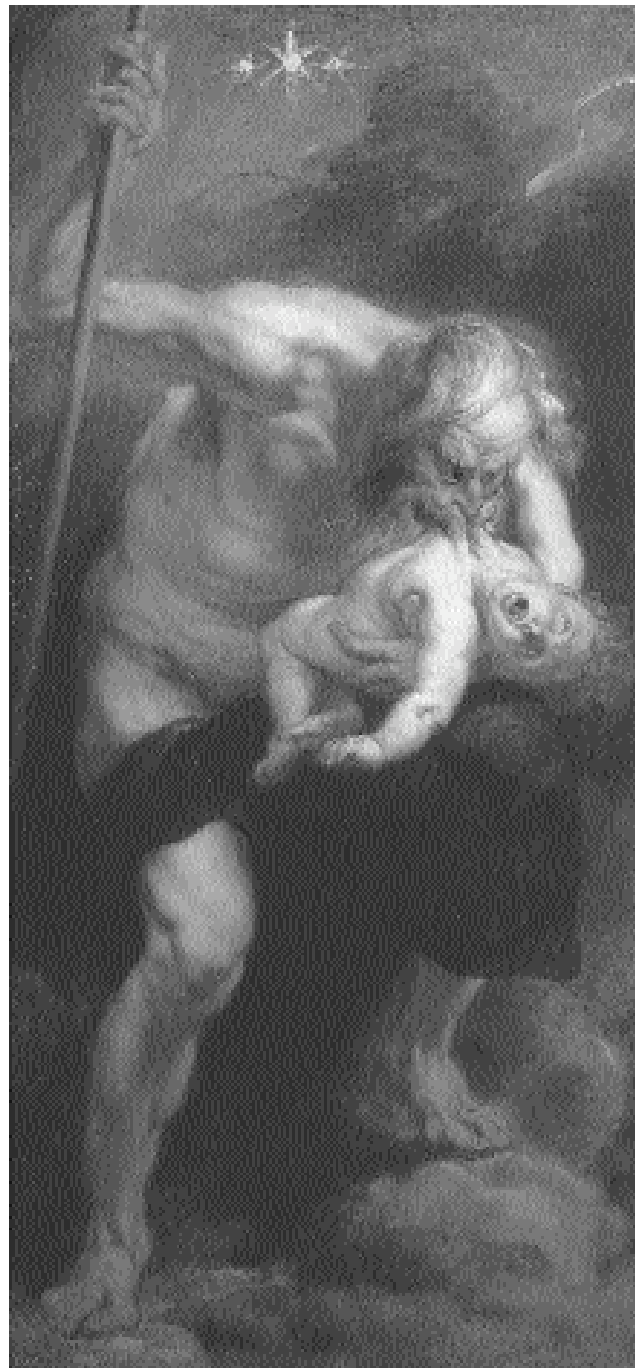
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SATURN

Saturn, god of agriculture and also of time, was linked to the planet Saturn and identified with the Greek god Kronos. Though his story was well known to Renaissance and early modern authors, it was visual artists who linked the physical and sexual violence at the heart of Saturn’s story with the nature and practices of witchcraft and included witches among those groups considered his “children.”

According to Hesiod, Kronos rose to power by castrating his father, Uranus, with a sickle. From Uranus’s genitals, which were thrown into the sea, Aphrodite, the goddess of love, was born. Late medieval authors



Saturn Devouring One of His Sons, by Peter Paul Rubens, 1636. God of agriculture, Saturn was associated with the planet and tied to violence and evil, as were his children, who included witches. To thwart a prophecy that his children would supplant him, Saturn ate them, thus reminding us of the cannibalism of witches. (Archivo Iconografico, S.A./Corbis)

such as Boccaccio told how Kronos/Saturn then suffered the same fate as his father. Because of a prophecy that claimed his son would overthrow him, Saturn decided to devour his children. One of them, Zeus, survived through a trick by Saturn’s consort Rhea. Zeus

later took power by castrating his father, reportedly with the same sickle Saturn had used on Uranus.

Arabic authors and late medieval European mythographers transmitted the classical story of Kronos/Saturn. Gradually, it also became linked to images of Saturn as the coldest, driest, and slowest of the planets, and to the so-called saturnine, or melancholic, temperament. The sinister characteristics of the mythical Saturn—his old age, malevolence, violence, and tyranny—were also attributed to “children” who lived under his planet: criminals, cripples, beggars, the elderly, the poor, and those involved in vulgar and dishonorable trades. As the inscription in a 1531 woodcut of Georg Pencz put it: “[I am] Saturn, old, cold and unclean; evil are my children.” By the fifteenth century, Saturn’s children increasingly included the dead, magicians, and witches; popular almanacs, calendars, and astrological handbooks disseminated information on such relationships in “Children of the Planets” series.

From the late fifteenth century, artists began to depict Saturn’s violence and sexual mutilation more frequently and more overtly. Often, Saturn was shown seated in a chariot pulled by two dragons, holding a scythe or sickle and devouring one of his children. His chariot was emblazoned with Capricorn and Aquarius, representing the portion of the zodiac over which he ruled. Sometimes, his scythe or sickle was strategically positioned over the penis of one of his children or hooked around the penile tails of his dragons. Alternatively, Saturn was depicted leaning on a crutch or with a peg leg, symbols of the power he both won and lost through sexual mutilation.

This focus on Saturn’s violence encouraged links with the cannibalism and castrating powers of witchcraft. It remains unclear whether the hindquarters of the goat in Albrecht Dürer’s engraving *Witch Riding Backwards on a Goat* (ca. 1500) represented the tail of a fish similar to the astrological Capricorn, an allusion emphasizing the witch’s power to emasculate. Similarly, a male figure with a crutch shown ministering over a witches’ night ride in a woodcut illustrating a sermon of Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg in *The Ants* seems a clear reference to Saturn. Was the anonymous artist using this visual allusion to underline the message of Geiler’s text, that night rides were little more than fantasy and illusion produced through melancholy? This link between melancholic fantasies and claims of witchcraft was developed by artists such as Lucas Cranach, as well as by such writers as Johann Weyer. In the last of his *Melancholia* paintings, Cranach placed a head uttering the word *Melancholia* upon the body/cloud within which the imaginative fantasies of the witches’ cavalcades took place: This was surely the head of Saturn, who ruled over the melancholic temperament.

The most graphic relationship between Saturn and witchcraft was expressed in an engraving from the

1580s or 1590s by Crispin de Passe after Martin de Vos, which inspired other artists in turn. It depicted Saturn in his chariot, pulled through the sky by two dragons. Below him were the different groups and activities under his sway: on the right, Amerindians mining gold and silver, paying homage to their Spanish rulers, and cooking human body parts on a grill; on the left, a magician performing necromancy before a cauldron and witches engaged in an orgiastic dance, with three of them flying up in the air through billowing smoke. The figure of Saturn links witches, necromancers, and Amerindian cannibals as children of the same father.

CHARLES ZIKA

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; ASTROLOGY; CANNIBALISM; CAULDRON; CRANACH, LUCAS; DÜRER, ALBRECHT; GEILER VON KAYSERSBERG, JOHANN; IMAGINATION; IMPOTENCE, SEXUAL; MELANCHOLY; WEYER, JOHANN.

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SAVOY, DUCHY OF

Like such other regions of the western Alps as Dauphiné, Valais, or Vaud, the duchy of Savoy is presently considered one of the principal regions where the new heresy of witches and other devil worshippers appeared around 1430 and where important witch hunts were conducted. The emergence of this phenomenon was due in large part to the Duke of Savoy, Amadeus VIII, whose law code of 1430, the *Statuta Sabaudie* (Statutes of Savoy), enacted legislation specifically against sorcerers and heretics and who helped sensitize the local clergy to these issues. Savoyard witchcraft trials continued until the eighteenth century.

Over the centuries, the princes of Savoy acquired sovereignty over a vast territory from the Mediterranean (Nice) to north of Lake Geneva. Their western boundaries bordered the duchy of Burgundy, Dauphiné, and the Kingdom of France; to the east were the Savoyard-ruled Val d’Aosta and Piedmont-bordered Milan. (Savoy presently covers two French departments; this entry also discusses some territories ruled by the dukes of Savoy, in particular the Val d’Aosta, but excludes

Piedmont, Geneva, and Vaud.) Witch hunts appeared in Savoy shortly after its ruler became a duke in 1416, in a period when Duke Amadeus VIII (who would later become Pope Felix V, elected by the Council of Basel in 1439) sought to develop the majesty (*majestas*) of the ducal house and affirm its sovereignty. According to Jacques Chiffolleau (1992, 42), “It is highly possible that the beginnings of the witch hunts in Savoy . . . reflected the need that every secular power felt at that time to pursue such occult and unspeakable crimes that seemed to wrong divine and human majesty.”

From 1415 to 1417, at the beginning of Amadeus VIII’s reign, the trials of a Jewish doctor, Michel de Dissipatis, and a rich bourgeois, Jean Lageret, both linked politically to the Savoyard court, mixed astrology, divination, and *lèse-majesté*, just as the new duke was trying to affirm his power. Accused of conspiracy and subjected to extraordinary proceedings, Lageret confessed to casting spells on the duke by using the faces engraved on coins. The duke’s preoccupation with demonic witchcraft was evident in his legislation; in the 1430 *Statuta Sabaudie*, he introduced the use of inquisitorial proceedings against sorcerers, enjoining his officials to assist the inquisitors.

In the duchy of Savoy, the inquisition of crimes against the faith was divided. The Dominicans supervised it in Savoyard lands within the dioceses of Geneva, Lausanne, and Sion, while the Franciscans controlled it in all other Savoyard possessions in the dioceses of Lyon, Belley, Grenoble, Maurienne, Tarentaise, Nice, and Aosta.

Documentary research on the fifteenth century remains scant, and no complete investigation of the period is currently available. However, several cases can be cited: At Chambéry, eight people, seven of them women, were accused of an undefined crime and died in a bonfire in 1418. The Sabbat was known by the 1440s, with four cases in which testimony mentioned the Sabbat recorded in 1446 on the borders of Lake Annecy, at Talloires. From 1459 to 1462, Chamonix experienced a witch hunt led by the Dominican Inquisition. Six executions took place in Cluses from 1470 to 1471 (Brocard-Plaut 1986, 144–146; Hansen 1901, 473–484). A Franciscan inquisitor, Bérard Trémey, oversaw numerous witchcraft trials in Savoyard lands under the jurisdiction of the Minorite friars between 1449 and 1477 (Uginet 1979). A doctor of theology, Trémey toured his jurisdiction from his base at Chambéry’s Franciscan convent, which seems to have acted as a conduit for diffusing scholarly doctrines about Sabbats and demonology. Throughout his career, Trémey benefited from the indispensable support of the dukes of Savoy, who made him their confessor and adviser.

Few persecutions are known from the early sixteenth century, when France occupied Savoy before the restoration of Duke Emmanuel-Philibert in 1559. In

his *Discours des sorciers* (Discourse on Witches), the demonologist Henri Boguet described Savoy as a land where demons possessed an infinite number of people. Godefroy de Bavois, president of the Senate (the Savoyard criminal court), who displayed a predilection for witchcraft cases, advocated the death penalty for magicians and sorcerers in his *Theorica criminalis* (A Theory of Criminal Justice, 1607). More than 2,000 cases of witchcraft were reportedly brought before the judges of Chambéry from 1560 to 1674, with 800 estimated death sentences pronounced. However, only 40 witchcraft cases have been preserved in Savoy from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, just 8 of which—scattered from 1636 to 1715—described Sabbats (Brocard-Plaut 1993).

The climate changed by the eighteenth century. The *Constitutions Royales* (1723) of Victor Amadeus VII no longer mentioned witchcraft, and cases became rarer (Brocard-Plaut 1986, 147–166). An extensive survey on the folklore of the French Alps observed a strong diffusion of the terms *synagogue* or *gogue* and *chète* or *secte* to designate the Sabbat in the entire Alpine arc and principally in Savoy and Val d’Aosta. Based largely on oral testimony, this survey fits perfectly with the documentary fragments of the witchcraft trials and normative texts.

The Val d’Aosta, Savoyard territory, located today in northwestern Italy, was an outpost of early witch hunts. One of the first texts describing in detail the new fantasy of the witches’ Sabbat, the brief anonymous treatise *Errores Gazariorum* (Errors of the Gazars or Gazarii [Cathars—a common term for heretics and later witches]), written around 1437, was created in the Val d’Aosta region. Its author, apparently an inquisitor, might have been the Franciscan Ponce Feugeyron. Inspired by recent persecutions in the region, notably that of Johanneta Cauda in Chambave in 1428, this text offered a meticulous description of the Sabbat and the various evils sorcerers committed with the help of demons. Witchcraft trials led by Franciscan inquisitors and legal representatives (*procurator fiscali*) of the bishop occurred in the Val d’Aosta region beginning at least in the 1420s. According to an extant important dossier of fifteenth-century proceedings, the accused, referred to as *sortilegus*, *sortiligiatrix*, or *charrerressa* (witch), were charged with belonging to a sect of modern heretics who gathered in synagogues (Sabbats) in order to commit harmful magic (*feyturis*). The documents reveal the use of magical formulas, of magical-religious prayers in the vernacular, and of spells to cure various sicknesses or to harm neighbors (Bertolin and Gerbore 2003). Bishop Georges de Saluces (1433–1440) played an important role in the beginning witch hunts in the diocese of Aosta, as he did subsequently in the diocese of Lausanne, where he was transferred in 1440 through the influence of the duke of Savoy.

Further south, in Savoyard Piedmont, inquisitorial proceedings began to mix accusations of heresy with charges of witchcraft in the 1420s. A man from Pinerolo was burned at the stake in 1427 for sorcery that “savored of heresy” (*per sortilegio sapiente heresim*). In 1429, in the valley of Suse, five people were burned for having solicited help from the Devil to kill men with their evil spells (Centini 1995, 35–37). Thus, throughout the territory of the duchy of Savoy, inquisitors, whether Franciscans, Dominican, or episcopal, had used the image of the Sabbat in trials since the 1420s. Such a united effort must be attributed to the figure of the duke of Savoy, Amadeus VIII, although we do not know precisely the extent to which this phenomenon resulted from his bidding.

MARTINE OSTORERO;

TRANSLATED BY KARNA HUGHES

See also: BOGUET, HENRI; DOMINICAN ORDER; *ERRORES*

GAZARIORUM; FEUGEYRON, PONCE; GENEVA; ITALY; LAUSANNE, DIOCESE OF; MILAN; MOUNTAINS AND THE ORIGINS OF WITCHCRAFT; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; PIEDMONT; SABBAT; SWITZERLAND; VALAIS; VAUD, PAYS DE.

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SAXONY, ELECTORATE OF

There were more than 900 accused witches, approximately one-third of whom were executed, in the electorate of Saxony, which lay in the eastern part of the old German Empire, bordering the Kingdom of Bohemia with Silesia, the electorate of Brandenburg-Prussia, the archbishopric of Magdeburg, the counties of Mansfeld and Schwarzburg (Hessen), and the Thuringian duchies. Strong relations with its neighbors affected jurisprudence through the exchange of knowledge between the legal faculties of its regional universities, Leipzig (founded 1409) and Wittenberg (founded 1502); both taught Roman and canon law. Foreign jurists often entered Saxon service, and Saxon jurists served in neighboring domains. The reception of Roman law coexisted with traditional common law; both affected legal praxis.

Although inquisitorial trials for heresy and sorcery appeared in the electorate of Saxony by the fifteenth century, traditional criminal laws and regional legal systems remained of central importance in the sixteenth century. In the mid-eastern German states, the *Sachsenspiegel* (Saxon mirror) already stipulated death at the stake for sorcery and heresy in its oldest known version, written around 1224 or 1227. Shortly after 1500, it was enlarged by a gloss making necromancy, fortunetelling, and magical healing into criminal offenses. The completely new criminal offense of witchcraft arose in the fifteenth century in connection with the punishment of heretical Waldensians in Saxony, particularly around Sangerhausen and Dresden, where secular courts repeatedly mingled charges of heresy with accusations of sorcery and ordered burnings. However, unlike in most of western Germany, where full-blown diabolical witchcraft developed long before 1500, belief in maleficent magic remained dominant in Saxony. Moreover, due to the legally independent position of the electorate of Saxony, Charles V’s 1532 criminal code, the Carolina Code, had no legal force there.

After the 1572 Saxon *Constitutionen* took effect, the differences between the imperial criminal code (*Halsgerichtsordnung*) and the Saxon systems of laws involved many questions of civil and criminal law as well as trial procedures. Redefining the crime of sorcery caused far-reaching differences in sentencing. Several jurists and specialists in criminal law found the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) of special importance in this respect. Punishing sexual intercourse with the Devil by death at the stake, even

when no damage from sorcery had resulted, was new. An accusation from a private party usually started the proceedings in witchcraft trials. However, individual cases could also be started by the Saxon chancellery or by the lord of a manor. Before the seventeenth century, these proceedings allowed no defense by defendants or their family members; formal defenses were verifiable only in exceptional cases.

The 1572 Saxon legal constitutions banned appeals to higher authorities in criminal proceedings. Local feudal courts were supervised by the learned jurists (*Schöffengericht*) who coordinated the process; the final verdict or judgment had to be approved by legal experts on the *Schöffengericht* or university law faculties approved by the electors. The Leipzig learned jurists made the majority of judgments for Saxony in criminal proceedings, whereas the importance of the law professors of Wittenberg declined. Among the over 900 individuals accused of witchcraft in Saxony, officials of the elector sentenced the largest portion. Town and manor courts saw fewer persons charged with the crime of the sorcery; nevertheless, they handled approximately a third of the more than 900 defendants in Saxony who were accused of sorcery (with the first execution in 1407). The number of criminal proceedings was approximately proportionate to the total population (about 700,000 in the electorate by 1600). No significant differences in witch hunting existed between the different courts, although in rural areas, the probability of being accused of sorcery was statistically about 10 percent higher than in towns. Special responsibility for the execution of criminal proceedings fell to rural officials for upholding law and order (*Schösser*) and to town judges. In some special cases, such as in the county of Henneberg, criminal trials fell under the common administration of different sovereigns.

Proceedings related to the criminal offenses of witchcraft and sorcery were also conducted against magicians and magical healers, fortunetellers, and those engaged in “superstitious” practices. For crimes of magic without harmful consequences, the guilty were usually exiled. Even a few persons sentenced to death were exiled; more often, however, the death penalty was “graced” by decapitation with the sword instead of burning at the stake. After 1661, a death sentence could also be commuted to forced labor for the prince (territorial lord). Minor forms of sorcery required milder punishments, for example, being put in the pillory, whipping, house arrest, or even—at the request of the convicted individual’s partner—the nullification of marriage. Some guilty people were banished, other defendants were fined, parish priests were removed from office, and some proceedings were dismissed.

In Saxony, most accusations of sorcery or witchcraft were socially instrumented. They were triggered by various factors, including hailstorms and their conse-

quences, accusations from sick people, and behavior in disputes with neighbors or within the family. Unsuccessful healing and other magical practices also provoked suspicion. Sorcery, heresy, and witchcraft trials continued for more than 350 years, starting in 1407. Two main periods of verifiable proceedings lasted from 1610 to 1630 and from 1655 to 1665, when the number of executions reached its peak. Women comprised 73 percent of those tried for witchcraft in Saxony, most of whom were still married but no longer of childbearing age. However, at least twenty-two children were also accused of sorcery; as a rule, they were beaten and then given into the care of clergymen for education. Social status clearly mattered in the electorate of Saxony. Married women of good social standing usually escaped punishment in witchcraft trials and could expect an acquittal or a suspended execution. Widows of low social status were more frequently affected by death sentences and in significantly higher numbers than could otherwise be expected, given the share of Saxony’s population without possessions. Nevertheless, persons accused of sorcery came from all layers of the population, from beggars to farmers, burghers, and even nobility, roughly in proportion to the statistical size of each group within the total population. Neither Saxony’s rulers nor their Lutheran Church ever mounted campaigns against sorcery and witchcraft after the Reformation, while enforcing the new confessional dogmas. No religious or ethnic minorities were accused of witchcraft: Saxony’s few Roman Catholics, its Slavonic Sorbian population, and its Jews remained undisturbed.

The new Saxon criminal regulations of 1661, substantially influenced by Benedict Carpzov, marked an important break, beginning a slow legal disintegration of the elements of the criminal offense of witchcraft. Saxony’s last known death sentence for sorcery was



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carried out in 1689, when the manor court of Ostrau (*Amt Delitzsch*) had Anna Maria Braune burned at the stake, following a judgment by learned jurists (*Schöffentuhl*) in Halle/Saale. Alongside Saxon jurists, physicians and theologians also supported the start of decriminalizing judgments for sorcery by the second half of the seventeenth century. The end of death sentences in Saxon witchcraft trials was also closely connected with the replacement of the Scholastic tradition by the teachings of natural law. Saxony's final criminal proceeding against the offense of sorcery dates from 1766.

MANFRED WILDE;

TRANSLATED BY LARS-UWE FREIBERG
AND JONATHAN STICKNEY

See also: CAROLINA CODE; CARPZOV, BENEDICT; EXECUTIONS; GERMANY, NORTHEASTERN; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF WITCHES; UNIVERSITIES.

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SCAPEGOATS

The large majority of persons accused of witchcraft were scapegoats, in the sense that they were falsely blamed for the misfortunes of others. These misfortunes often involved bodily injury, illness, or death, and in many cases, the victims were small children. The naming of a witch as the cause of an illness was especially common when the infirmity had no known natural causes. Even when a natural cause of an illness could be identified, however, witches were blamed for having inflicted the illness on one particular person rather than another. Human disappointments, such as a failure to win the affection of a desired sexual partner

or the loss of money in business, were also blamed on witches. Sometimes, witches were accused of having caused sexual impotence as a means of retaliating against men who had jilted them. The misfortunes attributed to witchcraft could be as minor as the loss of an object, such as a coin. In some cases, witches were blamed for killing livestock, making horses fall sick, or even preventing cows from giving milk. In all these instances, witchcraft served as an explanation for the illnesses and mishaps that occurred frequently in communities challenged by food shortages, poverty, disease, and high rates of mortality. They also occurred in small, close-knit communities where people knew each other and their grievances well and therefore felt that others had reason to harm them.

Witches occasionally served as scapegoats for communal misfortunes, as when famine struck a region or when hailstorms destroyed agricultural crops. In such cases, witches were accused of having called down the hail by casting spells. In similar fashion, fires that ravaged towns and villages during the early modern period were occasionally attributed to witchcraft, although arson was generally prosecuted. In maritime communities, storms at sea could likewise be blamed on witches, especially when there was a loss of life or treasure. A storm in the North Sea that threatened the ship carrying King James VI of Scotland and his bride, Princess Anne of Denmark, to Scotland in 1590 led to the apprehension of both Danish and Scottish witches for having caused the storm by witchcraft.

The naming of witches as scapegoats for personal or communal misfortunes fulfilled two psychological functions. On the one hand, it provided the victim of the misfortune with an explanation of events that did not involve punishment by God for one's sins. In that sense, it freed the individual from personal responsibility for the misfortune that had occurred. On the other hand, it allowed the victim to obtain satisfaction and revenge by identifying and prosecuting another person for the developments that had transpired.

Not all alleged witches were innocent scapegoats. A small minority of the people accused of this crime had actually attempted to harm their neighbors by magical means. Even if they were not in fact responsible for the misfortunes that occurred, their intention to cause harm made them at least partially culpable for their crime. In the same category were those persons who, when suspected of witchcraft, assumed the role of witches in order to frighten or protect themselves from hostile neighbors. The witches who confessed freely to the crime, including those who were senile or mentally unstable, also cannot be included in the category of scapegoats. The same is true for the witches who thought of themselves as rebels challenging the political or social order.

BRIAN P. LEVACK

See also: ACCUSATIONS; IMPOTENCE, SEXUAL; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; *MALEFICIUM*; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; REBELS; SPELLS; WEATHER MAGIC.

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SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN, DUCHIES OF

Although Lutheran north-central Europe has not been considered a major witch-hunting region, Schleswig-Holstein can no longer be viewed as an area with few witchcraft trials. With over 600 witchcraft executions in a population of 495,000, Schleswig-Holstein ranks near the middle, not the bottom, of German regions in this respect.

At the time of witch hunts, the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein (politically bound together by treaties), the duchy of Saxony-Lauenburg, and the independent city of Lübeck and other smaller political entities fell within the current boundaries of the German *Land* (state) of Schleswig-Holstein. Beginning in 1581, most of this region was governed either by the king of Denmark or by the duke of Gottorf, whose capital was the town of Schleswig. In Holstein and Lauenburg, both part of the Holy Roman Empire, the Carolina Code (1532) of Emperor Charles V governed legal procedure, together with older ordinances. The Code permitted official public prosecution of sorcery, unlike conditions in Schleswig where Danish law, the so-called *Jyske Lov* (Jutish Law), permitted only private lawsuits against alleged witches for many years to come. In 1576, the Danish king Frederick II ordered high courts to review all locally passed death sentences, further limiting the possibility of arbitrary witchcraft trials. Some provisions in the imperial territories of this region, however, surpassed the Carolina Code in rigor. Yet they did not match the deadly severity of ordinances from other Lutheran rulers, such as those in electoral Saxony or the duchy of Württemberg.

Throughout modern Schleswig and Holstein, 852 witchcraft trials have been verified for the period between 1530 and 1735, 90 percent of them against women. In total, 71 percent of all defendants were put to death. In “the land between the seas,” the pressure from the Europe-wide witch-hunting fever became evident by 1580; after that date, the number of witchcraft trials continually increased until reaching its peak between 1610 and 1635 (Schulte 2001, 67–70, 97–104). These trials started relatively early in Schleswig-Holstein, as in Denmark. They seem to have

revealed that Protestant authorities took the lead in allowing extensive sentences from the very beginning.

The geographic distribution of these persecutions shows there were significant regional differences. The most trial-intensive areas were the fertile and politically fragmented estates where the jurisdiction was in the hands of the nobility, as well as on the island of Fehmarn in the east. In the independent Hanseatic city of Lübeck, by contrast, almost three-quarters of the defendants were not convicted (Schulte 2001, 78) or the problems were solved by simply exiling the “witches.” Individual trials predominated in the duchies because the majority of the proceedings were taken against single persons and ended with a verdict against the defendant. Even so-called small panics were uncommon. The typical witchcraft trial was based on the assumption that *maleficium* (harmful magic) existed, which was primarily attributed to a pact with the Devil and sometimes even to sex with the Devil.

The Danish Lutheran theologian Nels Hemmingsen, as well as the pastor Samuel Meiger from Holstein, helped to shape a moderate theological assessment of witchcraft, which had a major influence on the regional practice of witch hunting. In their writings (in 1575 and 1587), both basically assumed that witchcraft was real and potent, but they maintained a skeptical attitude toward a so-called witches’ Sabbath. In their opinion, the powers of witches were horrible but—given the monotheist view of the world, in which only God reigned—limited. The image of the Sabbath was missing in many defendants’ confessions because most regional authorities regarded their participation in alleged gatherings of witches with skepticism.

The end of witch hunting in Schleswig-Holstein can be attributed to the intervention of the authorities. In the late seventeenth century, King Christian V of Denmark tried to control the jurisdiction of the nobility in connection with his centralization attempts. At the same time, he was successful in sentencing two landlords in Denmark and in Holstein for perversion of justice in major witchcraft trials. His decision apparently had a strong deterring impact, given that only a few death sentences were passed in the following years. Witch hunting subsided thereafter, even before the criticism in the course of the early German Enlightenment could have any effect. The last execution of a witch in Schleswig-Holstein occurred in 1724, and the last trial took place in 1735.

In spite of the absence of mass trials or organized witch committees in villages, Schleswig-Holstein’s many individual trials, which common people often requested and which were then carried out by the authorities, reveal the latent tensions among the region’s population, vented in witch hunting.

ROLF SCHULTE;

TRANSLATED BY JAN VAN DER CRABBen

See also: CAROLINA CODE; DENMARK; GERMANY; GERMANY, WEST AND NORTHWEST; HEMMINGSEN, NIELS; *MALEFICIJUM*; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; SABBAT; SAXONY, ELECTORATE OF; WÜRTTEMBERG, DUCHY OF.

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SCHULTHEISS, HEINRICH VON (CA. 1580–CA. 1646)

Along with Licentiate Kaspar Reinhard, Dr. Johann (Jan) Möden, and Dr. Franz Buirmann, Dr. Heinrich von Schultheiss ranks among the best-known witch commissioners (*Hexenkommissare*)—individuals who played a pivotal role in sentencing hundreds of people to death during the witchcraft trials in electoral Cologne, especially during the severe persecutions between 1626 and 1631 and from 1641 to 1644. A tract written by von Schultheiss as a means of vindicating his role in the persecutions, the *Aussführliche Instruction, wie in Inquisition Sachen des grewlichen Laster der Zauberey . . . ohn Gefahr der Unschuldigen zu procediren* (Detailed Instruction, on How to Proceed against the Dreadful Crime of Witchcraft . . . Without Any Danger to Those Innocent of the Crime, 1634), offers a window into the mentality of these witch commissioners and of the processes they used to try alleged witches. The tract can be juxtaposed to the works of two contemporary opponents of these witchcraft trials: Michael Stappert, whose *Brillen-Tractat* (literally, The “Spectacles” [Eyeglasses] Tract) was written after 1629, and Herman Löher, whose *Hochnötige Unterthanige Wehmütige Klage der frommen Unschuldigen* (Much Needed, Humble, and Woeful Complaint of the Pious Innocent) was published only in 1676.

Heinrich Schultheiss was born into a wealthy farming family in the village of Scharmede near Paderborn, where his father held the office of bailiff, representing the interests of the Paderborn cathedral chapter, which held manorial rights in this village. Heinrich attended the Jesuit-run cathedral school in Paderborn and then a Jesuit grammar school, probably in Cologne. At first, he followed a clerical career path, but he never became fully ordained. He then studied law, initially at the University of Cologne and then at the University of Würzburg, where he became a doctor of law in 1603. Subsequently leaving the priesthood, Schultheiss became a councillor to the archbishop of Mainz before becoming a commissioner at the high court (*Hofgericht*) of the elector of Cologne around 1610. About 1614, he moved to Arnsberg, the capital of the duchy of Westphalia (one of the territories belonging to electoral Cologne).

There, Schultheiss became a prominent member of the territorial administrative apparatus through his rank as councillor to the Cologne electors. Between

1632 and 1634, he was ennobled, a clear indication of his rapid social rise, and he first became active as a witch commissioner between 1616 and 1617 and again in 1621, supervising witchcraft trials in the towns of Hirschberg (where at least thirteen executions occurred) and Arnsberg. Around 1630, he participated in the major persecution of witches in the duchy of Westphalia, which claimed about 1,100 victims between 1562 and 1728 (Decker 1981–1982, 374). Schultheiss had to flee to Cologne in 1633 because of the effects of the Thirty Years’ War. There, he printed his *Instruction*, on which he had been working since 1631. After returning to Westphalia, he again conducted witchcraft trials in the town of Werl.

Witch commissioners such as Schultheiss were qualified in the law and active at the court of the archbishop-electoral of Cologne. They oversaw local criminal law courts in order to ensure that procedures followed the 1607 Witch-Trial Ordinance promulgated for the electorate. They were only supposed to advise local lay judges, but in practice, the witch commissioners took control of the trials and consequently often triggered horrific, excessive persecutions. The practice of sending these commissioners throughout electoral Cologne to supervise proceedings in witchcraft trials at local courts replaced the ordinary custom in other territories, whereby local courts sent trial documents to “expert” jurists at central courts or to law faculties of universities to obtain advice on such cases. However, the Cologne witch commissioners were not deliberately sent to local courts as part of some witch-eradication scheme pursued by the electors; rather they were sent in response to petitions demanding action against witches, delivered to the elector by subjects from various localities. Occasionally, the witch commissioners collaborated with local witch-hunting committees (*Hexenausschüsse*).

A significant loss of relevant trial records makes it impossible to ascertain with any accuracy the number of witchcraft trials in which Schultheiss was involved; only a few documentary fragments detailing his personal activity have survived. However, his persecuting zeal and fanaticism were well attested in contemporary criticisms of the persecutions in electoral Cologne. For example, in his *Brillen-Tractat*, which was probably not originally intended for publication, the priest Michael Stappert described more than twenty-one witchcraft trials where the witch commissioners, including Schultheiss, participated. Stappert had firsthand knowledge of these trials because he had been confessor to their victims. In simple and forceful prose, Stappert told how Schultheiss, through manipulative questioning and torture, had forced suspects to make false confessions of witchcraft and then accuse other people as their accomplices. Like many other clerics with comparable experiences, Stappert changed from a

supporter to a critic of witchcraft trials after realizing that the alleged witches were innocent people who ultimately did not dare retract their confessions for fear of suffering further torture. Herman Löher, a lay assessor from a court in Rheinbach in the Eifel region, condemned the witchcraft trials pursued by the witch commissioners in similar tones. Löher, who fled to Amsterdam after being suspected of witchcraft himself, incorporated Stappert's work into his own critique of the trials and cited Heinrich von Schultheiss (along with Buirmann, Möden, and others) as stereotypes of the merciless, deluded, and insidious witch hunter. Although Schultheiss, like all witch commissioners, received a fee for every witch he tried, neither Stappert nor Löher accused him explicitly of hunting witches in order to enrich himself, as they did with Buirmann. However, it is certain that the role Schultheiss attained as a witch commissioner was significant in ensuring his ennoblement: He made a social, if not a financial, profit from such activities.

THE INSTRUCTION

As the criticisms voiced by Stappert showed, the work of the witch commissioners did not meet with universal approval from contemporaries. It was probably for this reason that Schultheiss wrote his *Detailed Instruction*. In this tract, he justified his own role in the witchcraft trials, called for further persecution, and also offered a guide to how the guilt of alleged witches could best be proved in court. Written in German, his tract was aimed at noble lords who held rights to or participated in the exercise of criminal justice at the local level.

Schultheiss discussed at length the sorts of evidence that justified the pursuit of trials against suspected witches. He refused to accept the legal validity of the swimming test (water ordeal), calling it a superstitious practice. However, he placed great value on the so-called Devil's mark (*Hexenmal*) as a sign of a suspect's guilt. The fact that another suspect had already named a person as a witch during interrogation was, for Schultheiss, an extremely important piece of evidence. He claimed that just one such accusation sufficed to instigate legal proceedings against a suspect. Evidence given by children could also be used against suspected witches because, according to Schultheiss, children were often the victims of seduction by witches. He generally allowed the accused witch no opportunities to defend him- or herself, denying both the accused and their families any access to the trial records. Using examples from his own experience and displaying an ironic pride in his own "ingenious" methods of interrogation, Schultheiss recorded how he—with the help of the torturer—had forced even obdurate suspects to make confessions. In his last chapter, he was particularly concerned to refute the allegation that he and his colleagues had acted overzealously and thoughtlessly

when prosecuting witches. Defending his actions, Schultheiss referred briefly to the *Cautio Criminalis* (A Warning on Criminal Justice, 1631) by Friedrich Spee (an important critic of witchcraft trials) and discussed in depth the work of another important Jesuit witchcraft trial critic, Adam Tanner. In Schultheiss's opinion, Tanner was a patron of witches who fully deserved to be tried for witchcraft himself.

RITA VOLTMER;

TRANSLATED BY ALISON ROWLAND

See also: BUIRMANN, FRANZ; COLOGNE; EVIDENCE; GERMANY, WEST AND NORTHWEST; LÖHER, HERMAN; MÖDEN, JOHANN (JAN); PADERBORN, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; SWIMMING TEST; TANNER, ADAM.

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SCIENCE AND MAGIC

Magic and witchcraft have long been associated with the Middle Ages and the Renaissance and presented in opposition to modern "science." The very title of this encyclopedia entry, "Science and Magic," implicitly upholds the persistent idea that the two are distinct enterprises and require different practices. Yet science and magic were indistinguishable for much of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and a discussion of the so-called occult sciences (astrology, divination, geomancy, alchemy) is unhelpful and potentially misleading. Magic provided a source of experimental and empirical knowledge about the natural world in the medieval and early modern periods, and it was governed by a specific rationality and internal logic. Historians have shown that magic was not a marginal

set of practices or beliefs in medieval and Renaissance Europe and that interest in natural magic and Hermeticism in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries provided some of the conditions for the creation of the “new science” in the seventeenth century.

It is, however, important to draw a distinction between folk, or “popular,” magic, which has left extremely few records of its practices or beliefs, and the learned, theoretical approach to magic. Keeping in mind that many more people believed in or practiced magic than we shall ever know, we are required by the paucity of evidence to focus almost entirely on intellectual, learned magic, as theorized and practiced by a relatively small, elite group of people throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Furthermore, there is nothing inherently good or evil about magic. While distinctions between “white” and “black” magic have been long held and widely discussed for centuries, they become difficult to pin down at a practical level. Theoretically speaking, black magic used the powers of the Devil or his agents, whereas white magic harnessed the forces of the natural world and celestial bodies. As there was no practical way to assess whether the power behind a specific act was divine or diabolical, this distinction was a matter of theory and polemic. It is worth bearing in mind, however, that influential people in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance were heavily invested in the theoretical differences between demonic and divine causes of magic and that many careers were ruined and lives lost as a result.

The conventional modern distinction between magic and science, put forth in the 1920s by anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski, rests on the difference between hope and reason. Magic relies on the belief that hoping for a result will produce a result, while science uses reason and experience to produce valid knowledge. Yet reason and logic were very much a part of magic in premodern Europe, and desire was embedded in traditional Aristotelian natural philosophy. Concepts of “use” versus “understanding” offer a better way to distinguish between magic and science. Use relates to a technology, whereas understanding yields knowledge, or *scientia*, the Latin term for wisdom. At its most basic, then, magic is a technology designed to accomplish very real and desired results, rather than a greater understanding of the natural world as an end unto itself. Magic is a technology, usually employing occult or unknown forces of nature to achieve specific ends through a series of means, often including words, symbols, or specific objects invested with particular qualities. It is important to keep in mind, however, that many of the theologians, natural philosophers, and scientists who were interested in magic, such as St. Albertus Magnus, Roger Bacon, Giordano Bruno, and Giambattista della Porta, were searching for knowledge about and understanding of the natural world for its

own sake, as well as being interested in magic. In the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, acceptance and manipulation of occult properties was often part of a larger interest in the workings of the natural world.

MIRACLES, MARVELS, AND MAGIC

There is an important distinction to be made between natural and supernatural phenomena, together with their causes. Until the seventeenth century, “natural” was what occurred in nature *most of the time* and what could be observed by a nonspecialist. Natural law under the Aristotelian system was not fixed or rigid but instead was based on customary, everyday experience. By observing many particular instances and learning what usually happened in nature, one could begin to deduce broader rules and causes for such behaviors. Strange particular instances, such as conjoined twins, were regarded as “unnatural” because they were abnormal occurrences. In Aristotelian natural philosophy, the concepts of natural and normal were strongly correlated. Supernatural phenomena always resulted from divine causation. The parting of the Red Sea or the sun standing still would be examples of miracles, occurrences that run contrary to nature’s laws; God caused both. By the thirteenth century, monstrous births, freak meteorological events, and other abnormal phenomena were classified as *praeter naturalis*, or outside of nature.

Preternatural phenomena did not have supernatural causes, yet they were not natural, as they did not follow the customary laws of nature. Rather, their causes were celestial, demonic, or unknown. Marvels could be caused by the placement of the planets in the sky, as it was believed that planets and their locations affected natural objects and events in the sublunar realm by intensifying the qualities of physical objects. St. Thomas Aquinas explained that preternatural phenomena could also be caused by demonic intervention. The intellect of the magus has no power over physical objects; therefore, the frequent use of symbols, hieroglyphs, and words in the practice of magic was to communicate with disembodied intelligences. Aquinas posited that these intelligences had to be demons, which exerted influence over physical objects and could manipulate the forces of nature. Later philosophers debated this point and posited that such intelligences could be either benign or evil, although it was difficult to know the difference. However, after Aquinas, magic and its practice became increasingly linked with diabolical influences, especially in the eyes of the Church.

NATURAL PROPERTIES AND QUALITIES

The unknown causes of preternatural phenomena provoked much theorization, becoming responsible for what became known by the early fifteenth century as “natural magic.” According to Aristotelian natural philosophy, “qualities” were the cause of the attributes of

natural objects. Qualities included such things as color, size, shape, or density and were divided into two broad categories: manifest and occult. Manifest qualities were sensible; they could be directly perceived by the senses. Occult qualities were insensible; they were imperceptible to the senses and were not revealed by experimentation. Precisely because they were insensible, they were considered unintelligible or unknowable. For example, a bezoar (foreign matter, such as hair, in the stomach or intestines) was known to be an antidote for poison, yet there was no way of discovering or explaining *why* it was an effective antidote.

Occult means hidden from view, yet it also has the connotation of beyond the range of ordinary human understanding, as well as secret or known only to the initiated. The occult sciences are so called because they involve the knowledge or use of the mysterious, hidden properties of natural objects. In many cases, it was considered magic to use the generally unknown properties of an herb or mineral, even if its effects were, by our criteria, “natural” or explicable. Thus, much of the medieval and Renaissance understanding of magic depended on the Aristotelian distinction between manifest and occult qualities: Magic dealt more with occult qualities, while science, or natural philosophy, relied on manifest qualities. Magic was linked to the study and manipulation of occult qualities, which were inexplicable. Whether these occult qualities or forces were unknowable (unintelligible to the human mind) or unknown (not presently understood), the point was that the magus or alchemist or astrologer did not fully understand the processes being studied and manipulated because a person was unable to apprehend fully with the five senses the nature of the object being used.

EARLY MODERN NATURAL MAGIC AND THE MAGICAL WORLDVIEW

Natural magic involved harnessing occult natural forces, often in conjunction with the position and influence of astral bodies (while “sympathetic magic” referred to the position of the heavenly bodies on the sublunary realm). The magus either was acted upon or was an intermediary; in either case, the result of the practice of natural magic could be psychological or psychosomatic. There were four forces that one skilled in natural magic could manipulate. The first was the *vis imaginum* (the force of images), relying on figures, hieroglyphs, and talismans. The second was *vis verborum* (the force [or power] of words), based on a belief that words were the essences of things. This force worked through oaths, spells, and incantations. The *vis musices* (the force [or power] of music) dealt with proportion and number and encompassed celestial harmony, numerology, and sympathetic magic. Lastly, the *vis rerum* (the power of things) pertained to the innate forces of things, that is, occult versus elemental

qualities. These elements could be combined; for example, talismans or amulets could intensify or redirect the innate powers of celestial bodies and their influences on the sublunary realm.

Giambattista della Porta is one of the best-known natural philosophers of the Renaissance. He founded the Academia dei Segreti (the Academy of Secrets), dedicated to studying and publishing the secrets of nature. His first published work was the *Magiae naturalis* (On Natural Magic, 1558), a collection of marvels and secrets of nature, as well as an attempt to apply experimental techniques to such marvels and secrets. The central belief underlying this work was that nature was orderly and rational. A natural magician could, if well intentioned, virtuous, and moral, understand this natural order after long study. *Natural Magic* also posited that experimentation could lead the magus to understanding the natural world and from understanding proceed to manipulation.

This spiritual and moral purity of the magus lends an emotional and personal quality to natural magic. A scientist can engage in questionable or illegitimate moral or spiritual practices; so long as these practices do not infringe on the sphere of scientific inquiry, this makes no difference to the final result. The magician, however, is intimately bound up in the quality and results of his or her knowledge and experimentation, as they hinge directly on the magician’s virtues, morals, and intentions. The principles of natural magic as a whole are also intimately related to human spirituality and intellect. The magical worldview is animistic, meaning that mind and matter are linked and can affect one another. The philosopher-magus can bring about changes in the material world through a sympathetic understanding of the network of occult and spiritual forces that animate the universe, just as the workings of nature and the movement of celestial bodies can affect the magician’s physical, emotional, or psychological state.

NATURAL MAGIC, HERMETICISM, AND SCIENCE

Much of what is called natural magic is linked with the Hermetic tradition. Part of the Neoplatonic revival in the mid-fifteenth century, it was based on a corpus of writings attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, or “Thrice-Great Hermes,” who was believed to be an incarnation of the Egyptian god Thoth. The Hermetic corpus is a considerable body of religious, philosophical, and scientific literature, believed to have been written around 2000 B.C.E. but actually composed by a group of Greek-speaking Egyptians in Alexandria in the second and third centuries C.E. While there was no direct link between the Hermetic writings and Christianity (especially early Christian mysticism), there were many similarities, due to the fact that writers of both groups

of texts were drawing on the same sources. Very little of the Hermetic writings was devoted to magic; what little was mentioned dealt with astrology, alchemy, and animated, or living, statues. However, the writings expressed the idea of the animistic, sympathetic universe, which became so central to the philosophy of natural magic.

The *Corpus Hermeticum* (the body of writings of the Hermetic tradition) was discovered in Constantinople (Istanbul) in 1460 by agents of Cosimo I Medici. Marsilio Ficino, the leading Platonist scholar and philosopher of his time, published a translation and commentary in 1464, claiming that Hermes Trismegistus was one of Plato's major influences, and he gave a Christian gloss to the writings by positing that Hermes Trismegistus and Moses had been contemporaries. After Ficino's translation and commentary, the Hermetic writings became one of the most important intellectual traditions of the Renaissance.

Giordano Bruno (1548–1600), a Dominican friar, was a strong adherent to Hermetic philosophy, and he managed to link Hermeticism, Copernican astronomy, and animism. Condemned as a heretic by the Inquisition and burned at the stake in 1600, he represented the last flowering of Hermetic philosophy. In the wake of Bruno's execution, the Catholic Church condemned certain forms of magic, and partly because of Bruno's zeal, Hermeticism and heresy became closely linked. In addition, the revival of many different strains of philosophy from antiquity diminished the novelty and originality of Hermeticism. However, Hermeticism exercised an influence on succeeding intellectual traditions, even after it had been discredited. Dame Frances Yates, in *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (1964), argued that the Renaissance magician was the immediate ancestor of the seventeenth-century scientist. Both Bruno and Copernicus espoused heliocentrism and Hermeticism, but in the next century, René Descartes and Pierre Gassendi advocated the mechanistic philosophy as a reaction against Hermeticism, contending that influence was not the same as organic descent. Yet Dame Yates demonstrated the importance of late Renaissance magic, and she explored its relationship to science.

E. R. TRUITT

See also: ALCHEMY; AMULET AND TALISMAN; AQUINAS, THOMAS; ASTROLOGY; BARANOWSKI, BOGDAN; DELLA PORTA, GIAMBATTISTA; HERMETICISM; MAGIC, LEARNED; MAGIC, NATURAL; MAGIC, POPULAR; MECHANICAL PHILOSOPHY; MIRACLES; MONSTERS; OCCULT; SIGHT, POWERS OF [SECOND SIGHT]; SYMPATHY; THOTH; YATES, FRANCES AMELIA.

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SCOT, REGINALD (1538?–1599)

It is one of the peculiarities of English witchcraft history that the first major work written on witchcraft by an English author, Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* of 1584, was unrelentingly skeptical. Scot was a relatively obscure Kentish gentleman, who, like most of his class, was involved in local administration (he may have been a justice of the peace) and whose only other known publication was a 1574 tract on hop cultivation, *A Perfite Platforme of a Hoppe Garden*. He was apparently moved to write his *Discoverie of Witchcraft* after witnessing and being horrified by trials in his native Kent. The work demonstrated a deep level of scholarship, citing over 200 foreign and 38 English works. For example, Scot was among the few English witchcraft writers to have said much about the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), a work that he continually held up to ridicule. Jean Bodin's 1580 demonological treatise received much the same treatment. Scot was equally dismissive of such English accounts of witchcraft as the tract describing the 1582 Essex trials or Richard Galis of Windsor's autobiographical account of his own bewitchment.

Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* remained out of print until it was republished in 1651, presumably in response to the renewed interest in witchcraft during the Civil War and its aftermath; another reprinting followed in 1654. A new edition in 1665 had a rewritten title page, reflecting the growing skepticism of the post-Restoration period: It was probably this edition that Samuel Pepys recorded purchasing on August 12, 1667.

Scot's work also appeared twice in Dutch, at Leiden in 1609 and again in 1637.

The work ranged widely, dealing with many topics debated by contemporary demonologists. Although some writers claimed that Scot was a harbinger of modernity and rationality, his thinking was very firmly located in the English Renaissance. There was, of course, a rough common sense in his thinking: Most of what witches were alleged to do was clearly absurd and impossible, he suggested, and it should therefore have been dismissed. Very near the beginning of his book, Scot provided a clear description of that connection between witchcraft accusations and the denial of neighborly charity that Alan Macfarlane would rediscover four centuries later.

Scot maintained two of the basic positions open to skeptics of his period. First, he argued that most witchcraft accusations rested on an unsound theological basis. Most misfortunes that their supposed victims ascribed to witches were, in fact, attributable to divine Providence; popular belief in witchcraft discredited God's power. Second, Scot argued that those who resorted to Scripture to defend witch hunting employed passages that were either mistranslated or described magical practitioners quite unlike the witches of Elizabethan England. Further proof that he was a man of his time was provided by the way in which, like most English writers of the period, Scot was anxious to emphasize the absurdity of Roman Catholic thinking and practices, an attitude that made his attack on the *Malleus Maleficarum* all the easier.

Thus, Scot was able to make mincemeat of most of the basic demonological tenets of the period. The demonic pact not only lacked a scriptural basis (a point that troubled many demonological writers) but was, moreover, patently absurd: There could be no possible bargain between a carnal and a spiritual body. Much the same argument extended to sexual dealings, allowing Scot to reject completely the notion of sexual intercourse between human beings and incubi or succubi (another problem troubling many demonological writers). Scot clearly enjoyed demolishing Scholastic arguments explaining how human semen, essential to produce offspring from intercourse between human beings and demons, could remain hot while stored in an incorporeal body. Bodin's discussion of shape changing, another concept that Scot rejected, provoked a searing demonstration of Bodin's dependence on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; Bodin's account of the Sabbat came in for a similarly brisk rejection. Scot described witchcraft at various points as a "cousening art," fit to be believed only by children, fools, melancholics, or Roman Catholics. Similarly cavalier dismissals were extended to prophesying, astrology, oracles, divination, and alchemy.

Scot's indictment of magical and related beliefs was, therefore, almost total. But a question remains: Did

Scot reject all spiritual interventions, either good or evil, in human affairs? If this had been the case, his work would indeed have been radical, for well into the eighteenth century, most writers who were opposed to witch hunting and who took a very restricted view of witchcraft were at pains to stress that they did not deny the existence of spirits and that to do so was an important step toward denying Christianity.

Recent scholarship confronting this issue has tended to concentrate on the final section of the *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, the seventy-two-page "Discourse upon Devils and Spirits"—a section unfortunately omitted from what is probably the most widely read edition of Scot's work, that prepared by Montague Summers. In this section, Scot restated his rejection of dealings with the Devil, of demonic magic, and of those notions of witchcraft that hinted at the miraculous. But in this, it has been argued (Anglo 1977), Scot demonstrated the limits to his denial of the supernatural, showing that he was aware of how radical his views seemed and was anxious to deny their ultimate implications. In effect, Scot seemed to have rejected not only the reality of witches but also the reality of spirits, which he saw as entities with no physical being and which could not intervene in the affairs of—and much less harm—human beings. This aspect makes defining Scot's own religious position difficult, and it is perhaps no surprise that a recent analysis of this final section of his great work attempts to connect Scot with the Family of Love (Wootton 2001).

As might be imagined, Scot's work received very hostile treatment from later demonologists. He was aware that he was writing against the grain of contemporary received wisdom, both learned and unlearned, Catholic and Protestant, and subsequent writers demonstrated this point vividly. James VI of Scotland wrote his *Daemonologie* at least partly to refute Scot's views. Scot was also targeted as a pernicious skeptic in such key English works of demonology as those by Henry Holland in 1590, William Perkins in 1608, and Richard Bernard in 1627, while the Puritan witch finder John Darrell also singled him out for criticism in a tract of 1602, declaring that his opinions about hop cultivation were superior to his views on witchcraft. The assertion that James VI, on his accession to the English throne in 1603, ordered the *Discoverie* to be burned by the public hangman lacks any support from contemporary evidence, but it certainly captured the attitude of most learned writers to this book. More equivocally, Scot seems to have been used by some Jacobean dramatists who made witchcraft a theme in their plays, notably by Thomas Middleton in *The Witch* (ca. 1613–1616).

One is left wondering how many of Scot's contemporaries shared his views. Current rethinking about early modern witchcraft rejects the view that there was a

monolithic attitude to witchcraft and stresses that there were a number of intellectually viable positions on the subject, varying from outright credulity to the type of theologically informed skepticism that lay at the core of Scot's thinking. The low intensity of witch hunting in England might reflect the fact that many other gentry with formal or informal local power shared something of Scot's skepticism, even if they were neither willing nor able to write such scholarly tracts on the subject. It seems unlikely that Scot was totally alone in his views—we know that the views of Michel de Montaigne, the most radical French skeptic of Scot's generation, were shared by most of his colleagues on the *Parlement* (sovereign judicial court) of Bordeaux—and the comparatively low levels of witch hunting in Elizabethan and early Stuart Kent might be a sign that they were widely shared by his county's elite.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: BODIN, JEAN; CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DEMONOLOGY; ENGLAND; ESSEX; FAMILY OF LOVE; INCUBUS AND SUCCUBUS; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; MACFARLANE, ALAN; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; METAMORPHOSIS; MONTAIGNE, MICHEL DE; PERKINS, WILLIAM; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DEMONIC; SKEPTICISM; SUMMERS, MONTAGUE.

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SCOTLAND

In Scotland, the belief in and practice of various forms of magic, including witchcraft, were widespread and more or less constant until the twentieth century. Scotland contains areas of widely differing cultures and societies—the Highlands, the Lowlands, the Islands, the Borders—and its history of witchcraft needs to be differentiated according to the linguistic, cultural, religious, and political circumstances of each region. Because Scotland is neither monocultural nor monolingual, the magical practitioners of its past were not identical everywhere. Moreover, we know little about witchcraft in Scotland before the Protestant Reformation. The relevant records are sparse; in the Gaelic-speaking Highlands and Islands where culture was largely oral and where no judicial records have survived, there is no indication of how witches were treated. Before the eighteenth century, "Scottish" witchcraft

therefore tended largely to refer to witchcraft in the Lowlands and the Borders and to the post-Reformation period. The first recorded execution of a witch took place in October 1542 at St. Andrews, and the last occurred in June 1727 at Dornoch.

SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Many expected features of witchcraft were missing from sixteenth-century Scotland. Its few Sabbats were distinguished by dancing, not by feasting or indiscriminate sexual activity: No one got there by flying, and no evil spirits were present. Satan rarely appeared to his witches, and when he did, it was only as a man. There was little overt indication of a pact; few witches were tested for the Devil's mark, and those who were found to have the mark did not carry it in their private parts. There is no firm evidence that James VI introduced any so-called continental theories of witchcraft to Scotland after his visit to Norway and Denmark between 1589 and 1590.

At that point, Scottish witchcraft consisted largely of traditional popular magical practices: curing or inflicting illness, providing or administering love charms or protective amulets, divination, and acts of maleficence. Quite often, magical practitioners were assisted by what appear to be spirit guides or by fairies (Gaelic, *sithean*). Thus, to be able to work her cures or find stolen goods in 1576, Elizabeth Dunlop relied on the advice of the ghost of Thomas Reid, who had died twenty-nine years before she first met him. In 1588, Alison Pearson was hired by the archbishop of St. Andrews to cure him of illness, and used a spirit guide called William Simpson. Two years later, Isobel Watson gave her own child to a *sithean* and served their king and queen; in 1598, Andrew Man called himself a child of the *sithean* queen who had inherited her fairy gifts of foreknowledge and curing. A spirit he called Christsonday, who looked like a white-clad angel, also attended Man.

But anyone who practiced any occult science or consulted such a practitioner was liable to receive the death penalty under the terms of Scotland's Witchcraft Act of 1563. Witchcraft thus became an offense tried by the state rather than by the Kirk (the National [Presbyterian] Church of Scotland). If the Kirk subsequently uncovered suspect witches, it either dealt with them through its own procedures, if it felt their alleged offenses had little or no substance, or passed them to the civil magistrate, if the Kirk found the case sufficiently serious.

Once in secular hands, suspects were subject to interrogation. Witchcraft was a difficult offense to prove, and the authorities were interested in obtaining either a confession or a set of witness accounts that would amount to serious circumstantial evidence (*indicia gravissima*) against the accused. It is difficult to know how much torture, if any, was applied in these cases;

sweeping generalizations have been based on very shaky foundations. To make torture legal, warrants had to be issued by the Privy Council—and we know of only two certain instances when this happened between 1590 and 1689. Other instances are therefore likely to have been illegal.

Once brought to court, the “panel” (accused) was tried by an assize, or jury. Defendants had the right to legal representation, and the evidence indicates that the advocates did their best to gain acquittals or to have charges ruled inadmissible. About half the panels appearing before the High Court of Justiciary in Edinburgh during the seventeenth century whose verdicts are known were acquitted. A panel could object to witnesses. Witness statements were heard by the assize, and witnesses who contradicted each other could be confronted in open court. After hearing all the evidence, the assize retired and elected its chancellor, or spokesman. Each charge against the accused was considered and voted upon separately: A majority of votes decided “innocent” or “guilty” on each count. Then the total number of guilty or innocent votes was counted, and this formed the final verdict. A death sentence often involved returning the panel to her or his hometown. Executions took place in the afternoon and consisted of garroting followed by burning of the corpse. The panel’s movable property was confiscated to help defray the costs of imprisonment and execution. As these costs were always high, however, confiscation (there as elsewhere) was not profitable.

Clichés about witches being poor, elderly, marginalized women do not apply to the situation in Scotland. The total number of executions, overestimated in the past, stands at about 1,000 according to current studies (approximately two-thirds of whom were women), although continuing research will obviously modify this figure. On a per capita basis, however, Scotland, with a population of approximately 400,000, had the highest ratio of witchcraft executions anywhere in northern Europe. Prosecutions of witches in Scotland were not uniform either chronologically or geographically. There were peaks of severity between 1590 and 1591, from 1597 to 1598, between 1629 and 1630, in 1649, and from 1659 to 1662. The first, often called the North Berwick incident because of a huge convention of witches allegedly held there, was basically a treason episode in which the preferred methods of assassination happened to be magical.

King James VI spent the 1589–1590 winter in Scandinavia with his new wife, Anne of Denmark. During his absence, male and female witches in East Lothian conspired on different occasions to murder the king by four different methods: raising a storm to wreck his homeward-bound ship; manufacturing a magical poison to be smeared on a lintel or threshold in the royal palace, where it could touch and infect the

king; enchanting a waxen image of the king; and finally, enchanting a picture of the king wrapped in a white cloth. Discovered by chance, the plot had many ramifications. The king’s cousin, the Earl of Bothwell, was named as a principal plotter. Some of the accused were probably named as conspirators for personal or family reasons having nothing to do with treasonous conspiracy. A magician with friends in very high places, Richard Graham, may have been suborned to incriminate Bothwell for political reasons; however, Bothwell was unstable enough to have been a genuine conspirator. James examined Agnes Sampson, a witch from Haddington, and John Fian, a schoolmaster from Prestonpans. Both allegedly suffered torture. Like Richard Graham, Sampson seems to have had access to some highly placed people near the king. Many people were arrested; relatively few, it seems, were executed. James had not been particularly interested in witches before. Now, however, properly frightened, he produced a book on the subject, *Daemonologie* (1597), based partly on his recent experiences and partly on the standard theories found in any scholarly witchcraft treatise. There was a further, unrelated outbreak of prosecutions in Aberdeenshire between 1597 and 1598 in which James took some interest, but after he became the king of England in 1603, he soon reverted to his former general indifference to the subject.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

After King James had gone, Scottish witchcraft saw one or two changes. In 1607, for example, Isobel Grierson was tried on charges of attacking Adam Clark and his wife in the form of her own cat, assisted by the Devil in the form of a “black man.” The previous year, the Devil had also helped her to harass William Burnet, that time in the shape both of an infant and of Isobel herself. Such shape changing was unusual in Scottish witchcraft cases (Tibbie Smart had changed herself into a badger in a rare instance from 1586), and the Devil still played little, if any, part in the majority of occult operations. More typical were the activities of Isobel Haldane in 1623, curing patients by washing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (a magical formula frequently charged against Scottish witches); she had visited a *sithean*, after which a spirit guide helped her to foretell the future.

After February 1638, when a religious manifesto called the “National Covenant” was signed by a number of people opposed to the English king Charles I’s innovations in worship, the notion of a covenant or pact seems to have imprinted itself on Scotland’s public consciousness, for the wording of witchcraft *dittays* (indictments) thereafter stressed the overt making of a pact between Satan and the individual witch. Indeed, the wording became formulaic, as in the following

example, which is repeated many times in the manuscript records of the trials:

You, having shaken off all fear of God and regard for the laws, have betaken yourself to the service of Satan, the enemy of your salvation, entered in covenant and paction with him, promised to be his servant and, taking a new name from him, renounced your baptism and suffered your body, which ought to have been a temple to the Holy Ghost, to be polluted and defiled by his having carnal copulation with you: and taken his marks upon you: and also has kept several trysts and meetings with the Devil and others.

The method of the witch's submission to Satan was also formulaic. She would put one hand to the crown of her head and the other to the sole of her foot, saying that all between was his. With these new formulas, of course, the Devil began to make regular appearances in witchcraft accusations. In virtually every case, he took the form of a respectable gentleman clad in black, blue, green, or gray. Satan would offer to help the potential witch, who was usually in a melancholy state or suffering pecuniary hardship, in return for her service and would then have sexual intercourse with her. His wearing green may be significant, for green was a fairy color; here, we may be seeing an example of a fairy encounter reinterpreted by the legal system as a diabolic meeting. Attendance at Sabbats also became a more common feature of accusations, although the Scottish Sabbat seems more an uproarious party than the sinister manifestation of Satan replete with performing evil, unpalatable food, and sexual orgies that learned commentators presented. Indeed, once one reads beyond the new formula of Devil-pact-sex, Scottish accusations differed little, if at all, from the kind of charges laid against their earlier counterparts. One exception, however, involved Isobel Gowdie from Auldearn, who, in 1662, described flying to her Sabbat on a straw (other witches were picked up by a magical wind and whirled to the Sabbat).

The number of accusations increased noticeably in 1649 when the Privy Council and Parliament freely issued commissions of investigation, with the Committee of Estates alone issuing over 350 during the 1649 summer recess. The motive was likely political: The state could assert control over the kirk by making witchcraft a crime rather than a sin and therefore a secular rather than an ecclesiastical concern. Thereafter, the number of cases diminished under Oliver Cromwell's rule over Scotland. But in 1657, accusations began to multiply once more, and although there was a brief interim after the end of the Protectorate in May 1659, the upward momentum resumed once the Restoration had settled in, reaching a climax in 1661 and 1662 when over 600 cases and perhaps 300

executions took place. This severe episode was undoubtedly exacerbated by the activities of several witch prickers, men who offered to test suspects by thrusting long pins into their flesh in search of the insensible spots labeled "Devil's marks." John Kincaid, the most notorious pricker, had also been active in 1649. Ten prickers were finally arrested and prosecuted for fraud.

A legal figure prominent in the second half of the seventeenth century was Scotland's Lord Advocate, Sir George Mackenzie. He published *Pleadings in Some Remarkable Cases* in 1673 and followed this in 1678 with *The Laws and Customs of Scotland in Matters Criminal*, both of which contained observations upon the trials of witches, based partly on his personal experience. Mackenzie was no skeptic, but he did maintain that nature has its secrets and that many extraordinary happenings may have natural rather than preternatural explanations. He was also aware that some confessions were based on fantasy, not fact; further, he stood by the legal position that a witch's threat to work malefice should not be sufficient to condemn her. For that, a confession or the evidence of at least two reputable witnesses was required.

Cases of demonic possession were both rare and late among Scottish witches. The most famous involved "the Bargarran imposter," Christian Shaw, the eleven-year-old daughter of the Laird of Bargarran. In 1696, she accused a number of local adults of bewitching her into fits and making her vomit material objects such as feathers, pins, and balls of hair. Doctors examined her. In 1697, the Privy Council issued a commission of investigation; by the time it was complete, Christian had accused twenty-one adults, and three other children had contributed their fantasies of being transported to a Sabbat and taking part in acts of magical murder. As a consequence, three men and four women were executed.

EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES
Scottish belief in and practice of witchcraft continued long after the Bargarran case. In 1704, for example, the Fife fishing village of Pittenweem saw a sixteen-year-old boy attempt to imitate Christian Shaw's possession, an episode that ended with the murder of one of those he accused; the Dumfries circuit court heard cases of witchcraft in 1709; in 1750, the presbytery of Tain heard more than one case of a woman being violently attacked because she was thought to be a witch; and on the island of Islay in 1772, if women suspected their cattle were bewitched, they employed magical remedies. Curiously, the repeal of the Witchcraft Act in 1736 provoked vocal objections from a faction within the Presbyterian kirk that felt an attack upon diabolical witchcraft represented the thin wedge of an attack upon the Christian religion itself.

Thereafter, we find that visitors to Scotland and Scottish clergymen recorded their impressions of magic among the Highlanders and Islanders in particular, documenting many instances of divination, attempted cure of diseases, fear of the evil eye, and second sight. In 1737, the minister of Speymouth rebuked one of his parishioners for consulting a man who claimed to find stolen goods with the help of a spirit guide; in 1734, Duncan Gregor was referred to the kirk session of Elgin for curing fevers; and James Boswell and Samuel Johnson noted instances of second sight when they visited the Western Isles in 1773. Belief in *sithean* remained strong. As late as 1770, dairymaids on Skye offered them milk, and a man from the island was still praying for protection against them in the nineteenth century.

Both Lowland Scots and English visitors regarded Highlanders and Islanders as “ignorant,” “superstitious,” and “savage.” Their evidence, while interesting and useful, must be treated with caution because it skews our information away from the Lowlands and Borders, where most Scots lived, and suggests that magic was to be found only among “backward” peasantry. Interestingly enough, kirk and presbytery records notably failed to record much practice of witchcraft or any other occult operations in this period, despite visitors’ evidence that these things were still common. This reticence may have been connected with ministers’ embarrassment that, after more than two centuries of conscientious endeavors, the Kirk had signally failed to eradicate its adherents’ willingness to believe in and use preternatural remedies for their everyday problems.

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART

See also: ABERDEEN WITCHES; CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST 1800); DEVIL’S MARK; FAIRIES; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; MACKENZIE, SIR GEORGE; NORTH BERWICK WITCHES; NUMBER OF WITCHES; PITTENWEEM WITCHES; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; PRICKING OF SUSPECTED WITCHES; SABBAT; SCOTT, SIR WALTER; TRIALS.

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**SCOTT, SIR WALTER
(1771–1832)**

During his lifetime, Sir Walter Scott was Scotland’s most influential and popular author, with a Europe-wide reputation. He wrote novels, collected and edited popular verse, and produced essays and reviews on a variety of topics. His interest in many aspects of the occult can be gauged not only from his own writings but also from the works of others dedicated to him, such as the *Letters of Natural Magic Addressed to Sir Walter Scott* by Sir David Brewster (1832). Scott was well informed about the occult in general and witchcraft in particular. His mother used to lend a toadstone amulet to mothers of newly born children, and throughout his life, he collected a sizable number of books relating to magic and other occult subjects. The witches in his novels may have been portraits tailored to the needs of the tale, but the magic they did was consistent with what we know of real witches through trial records and other factual sources.

Ghosts, fairies, astrology, various forms of magic, dreams, and second sight all appeared frequently in his work; witchcraft in particular played a role of greater or lesser prominence in such novels as *Guy Mannering*, subtitled *The Astrologer* (1815), which had the Gypsy witch Meg Merrilees as a diviner and spell maker. *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818) featured Ailie MacClure, whose status was disputed among three of the novel’s characters: One complained that she “practises her abominations, spaeing [telling] folks’ fortunes wi’ egg-shells, and mutton-banes, and dreams and divinations, whilk [which] is a scandal to ony Christian land to suffer sic [such] a wretch to live”; a second observed that she “only spaes fortunes, and does not lame, or plind [blind], or predevil any persons, or coup [overturn] cadgers’ carts, or ony sort of mischief”; and a third dismissed her as “no witch, but a cheat . . . practising her impostures upon ignorant persons” (Edinburgh University Press 2004, 415, 421). *The Bride of Lammermoor* (1819) was based on a real seventeenth-century incident when a bride died suddenly after her wedding day. Scott introduced a bevy of witches into the story, the principal of whom was Ailsie Gourlay, who distributed herbal cures concocted with the help of astrology, told fortunes, interpreted dreams, and worked love magic, much along the lines of Ailie MacClure.

In 1814, Scott visited the Shetland Isles and Orkney and there bought a favorable wind from a local witch in Stromness before continuing his journey. During the

course of the trip, he picked up a vast amount of information about contemporary magical practices and beliefs; he later worked many of them into his novel *The Pirate* (1822). These novels were set in the eighteenth century. In his two medieval novels, *Ivanhoe* (1820) and *The Talisman* (1825), the magic differed little, if at all, from that in his other stories. However, in *Ivanhoe*, his witches were not Scottish but Saxon and Jewish. The Saxon witch, Ulrica, was depicted as some kind of fiend, while the Jewish witch, Rebecca, was young and beautiful, accused of working cures with the help of the Kabbalah and of making a man fall in love with her through her use of magic. Tried as a witch and sentenced to death, she was found to be wearing protective amulets in her clothing. Records from seventeenth-century witchcraft trials confirm that this detail is accurate.

In 1830, Scott published *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, a compilation of written and oral history, folklore, and speculation about ghosts and fairies as well as witches. For this work, he had done a fair amount of research, extending from the study of well-known treatises such as Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* to still-unpublished transcripts of Scottish witchcraft trials. Some of his information came from his own experience. In one letter, for example, he told about the discovery of an animal's heart beneath the threshold of a house in Dalkeith, an object that he was later given (in January 1827). The *Letters* thus constituted a classical demonology, unusual only in being composed so late and in being cast in the form of letters. Altogether, then, Scott's antiquarian research and his personal experiences allowed him to preserve interesting and useful information about the continuing prevalence of magical beliefs and practices in his own day.

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART

See also: LITERATURE; SCOTLAND.

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SCRIBONIUS, WILHELM ADOLF (CA. 1550–1600)

Scribonius was a sixteenth-century German witchcraft theorist, philosopher, and physician from Marburg, who taught logic and natural philosophy at Corbach. A proponent of the logic of Peter Ramus, he published several works in various fields, including, in 1583, *De examine et purgatione sagarum per aquam frigidam* (On the Trial and Elimination of Witches by Cold Water), which upheld the validity of the "swimming test," or cold-water ordeal, whereby suspects were bound hand to foot and thrown into bodies of water. According to Scribonius, the idea that guilty suspects would float

while the innocent would sink was valid for entirely natural reasons: Through their pact with the Devil, witches acquired some of the insubstantiality of spirits, thus causing a tendency to float. (Scribonius opposed traditional religious explanations that flotation occurred because of the criminal's loss of spiritual purity, water being the medium of baptism.)

Between 1584 and 1597, Scribonius's theory regarding the swimming test was opposed by physicians (Johannes Ewich, Hermann Neuwaldt), by Catholic theologians (Peter Binsfeld, Martín Del Rio), and by the Protestant jurist Johann Georg Goedelmann, while another jurist (Jacob Rick) took up Scribonius's defense. Meanwhile, in 1588, Scribonius defended his ideas in *De sagarum natura et potestate, deque his recte cognoscendis et puniendis physiologia . . .* (On the Nature and Power of Witches, and on the Physiology of Rightly Recognizing and Punishing Them), adding no fresh arguments but relying mainly on sarcasm and rhetorical questions to discredit the objections of his critics.

Like Jean Bodin and other late-sixteenth-century demonologists, Scribonius saw demons as a fundamental and pivotal element in the total ecology of life and nature. Without angels and demons, the border between humanity and divinity seemed abrupt and the "great chain of being" incomplete. The doctrine of the Incarnation, asserting that Jesus mediated humanity and divinity by embodying both, apparently offered insufficient comfort to intellectuals seeking scientific or at least logical arguments for the reality and accessibility of suprahuman beings. Scribonius explained his ontological and cosmological views in *Rerum naturalium doctrina methodica* (1577; enlarged editions in 1583 and 1585), which was translated and abridged in English in 1631 as *Natural Philosophy: or A Description of the World . . .*

WALTER STEPHENS

See also: ANGELS; BINFELD, PETER; BODIN, JEAN; CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DEMONOLOGY; DEMONS; GOEDELMMANN, JOHANN GEORG; SWIMMING TEST; TASSO, TORQUATO; WATER, HOLY.

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SCRYING

Scrying, also known as crystal gazing or crystallo-mancy, is a form of divination in which the practice of prolonged staring at a translucent or shining object enables the practitioner to see moving pictures within the object. It is one of the simplest and most widely used techniques to induce a mental state receptive to supernatural phenomena.

METHODS

Scrying employs several different methods, including catoptromancy, in which the speculum is a mirror. This method was known in the fifth century C.E. Later references to catoptromancy are sparse, for other methods of scrying came into fashion. But Iamblichos knew it as an alternative to hydromancy (divination by seeing what certain things do in water), and it was allegedly used in 193 C.E. by Emperor Didius Julianus to ascertain his future. The alternative and in later times more frequently mentioned method, which ancient authors indifferently called lecanomancy (dropping precious stones into water and listening for acoustic manifestations such as whistles) or hydromancy, used a simple vessel of water with or without the addition of a film of oil as the speculum. This technique was borrowed allegedly from Persia, according to ancient Middle Eastern writers. Isidore of Seville described an instance of a holy woman he knew who would pour clean water into a glass goblet and see phantasms of coming events in the water. According to Isidore, the predictions she made from her visions regularly came to pass.

Where scrying was done by proxy both in antiquity and in the Middle Ages, a boy or a team of boys below the age of puberty almost invariably served as the intermediary. The primary reason for this choice was the requirement of sexual purity in many magical operations. Courtesans in Renaissance Venice used little girls for scrying, for identical reasons. John of Salisbury related the famous memories of his boyhood in his *Policraticus* (The Statesman, 1159), in which he mentioned that a priest tried to “teach” him the art of scrying. Fortunately for him, he did not show any affinity for clairvoyance.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the rite was most often precognition, either by direct vision, as in the case of the holy woman, or by inducing a god or daemon (a being intermediate between the gods and humans) to appear in the speculum and answer questions. For this reason, scrying has

been practiced under the aegis of religion. Although the revelation of the future has been the purpose most often given for scrying, the activity has also been used to find lost objects or missing persons and to track down criminals.

FAMOUS SCRYERS

The medieval anthologist of magic Johann Hartlieb described the various techniques in his *Puoch aller verpotten kunst* (Book of All Forbidden Arts, written between 1456 and 1464). Roger Bacon (1214–1294), known throughout his life for his magical practices, was vilified as a scryer and magician even after his death. The Renaissance magician Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim also used magical mirrors in his occult practices. Michel de Nostredame (1503–1556), generally known as Nostradamus, used scrying to reveal the future of the French kings to Catherine de Medici of France.

John Dee was one of the most peculiar figures in the history of magic and experimental science. After his genuinely scientific years, he tuned to the occult and was especially interested in the art of scrying. He subsequently employed scryers, including the famous Edward Kelly. Dee was reported to possess many crystal globes, one of which is on exhibit in the British Museum. Various legends have arisen surrounding Dee’s “shew stones,” as he called them.

There were good reasons why an early modern merchant such as the famous Anton Fugger found crystal-ball gazing attractive. By viewing this ball, he supposedly could behold his subordinates and purportedly see what they wore and where they lived. With this marvelous piece of early modern spy equipment, Fugger could see without being seen. Fugger’s gazer explained that her crystals contained two banned spirits who carried out the tasks she commanded. A powerful sorceress had transformed the spirits into the crystal Fugger had supplied to her.

All those accused of crystal-ball gazing protested that they had not prepared the balls they had used. They presented themselves as mere technicians. The belief that evil spirits inhabited the balls and were responsible for bringing about the magical powers of vision in them flourished in the Middle Ages. In early modern Europe, the element of the altered state of consciousness, the trance, was obviously looked upon as the effect of diabolical powers. That distinction clearly demonstrates the shift in the operators of supernatural powers: Well-educated, learned magicians who used the crystal in their individual forms of ritual magic, such as the famous John Dee and his successors, escaped prosecution, whereas the poor women who used but did not study the art were vulnerable to witchcraft accusations, as happened to the numerous hydromancers who were prosecuted by the Venetian Inquisition.

CHRISTA TUCZAY

See also: AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM, HEINRICH CORNELIUS; DEE, JOHN; DIVINATION; HARTLIEB, JOHANN; ISIDORE OF SEVILLE; JOHN OF SALISBURY; MAGIC, LEARNED; RITUAL MAGIC; SIGHT, POWERS OF (SECOND SIGHT).

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SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC

The witchcraft stereotype of fifteenth-, sixteenth-, and seventeenth-century Western Christianity assumed that demons had frequent face-to-face encounters with witches, often involving sexual intercourse.

Such encounters required that demons, despite being generally defined as immaterial spirits, have a bodily presence. Thomas Aquinas theorized that demons could create virtual bodies from compressed air and vapors. Demonic bodies were airy statues, “animated” by an extraneous agent, somewhat like a modern ventriloquist’s dummy. The imposture was extremely convincing, however: Demonic bodies could perform any human activity, including sexual intercourse. Being artificial, demonic bodies had no reproductive capability, or “seed,” but according to Aquinas, a demon could probably perform artificial insemination. First, the demon would form a lifelike female body, or succubus, and copulate with a man, stealing his semen. Then, the demon would transgender the virtual body into a male incubus. Carefully maintaining the viability of the stolen semen by keeping it warm, the demon would copulate with a woman and impregnate her by releasing the stolen semen. This, said Aquinas, would plausibly explain how children commonly known as offspring of the Devil could be begotten on women, although he stipulated that such children were *actually* sired by the men whose semen was stolen. Fifteenth-century demonologists accepted Aquinas’s theory, often citing Merlin as a “historical” example, using Geoffrey of Monmouth’s story that Merlin was sired on a nun by an incubus.

CARNAL KNOWLEDGE

Though it now looks bizarre and irrational, Aquinas’s theory was highly logical in terms of thirteenth-century categories. Since the twelfth century, Aristotelian philosophy had attracted the curiosity and admiration of Western Christian intellectuals. Aristotle had empha-

sized the importance of sensory information for the accumulation of knowledge. His theory of demonic copulation resulted from applying Aristotle’s empirical outlook to biblical and patristic representations of demons. The theory nourished the clerical fascination with demonic corporeality, which had been increasing since the twelfth century. Aquinas only tried to explain the existence of “children of the devil,” but by describing the mechanism so precisely, he opened the possibility that demons might be observed contriving bodies and interacting physically with humans. This hope inspired fifteenth-century clerics and magistrates to intensify their search for demons’ human accomplices.

Many Christian intellectuals were curious to know more about demons; some even desired verification that demons existed. Because sexual intercourse was clearly the most intense and complete form of human sensory experience, copulation achieved privileged status among seekers of demons: Sexual contact with demons provided credible proof of their reality. What was needed was irrefutable proof of the sexual contact. This empirical, protoscientific motivation was rarely acknowledged, but theorists of heresy occasionally enunciated it explicitly while censoriously describing the copulation of heretics with demons. Nicolas Jacquier (ca. 1458) declared that sexual intercourse could occur only when persons were awake and aware of their surroundings; thus, confessions to demonic copulation could not be dismissed as dreams. Girolamo Visconti (ca. 1460) shared this opinion and wished to eliminate the possibility that copulation with demons was a delusion or hallucination caused by disease. About 1460, an anonymous writer claimed that heretics could infallibly distinguish embodied demons from humans because during copulation, all their five senses were optimally engaged, leaving no chance that heretics were mistaking humans for demons (Stephens 2002, 20–21).

A Swiss case from 1465 gives firsthand evidence that, like the writers of theoretical treatises, inquisitors could also envision heresy or witchcraft trials as an occasion for research into the qualities and verifiability of demons. An elderly accused witch, Perrissona Cappit, was forced to testify that, whereas a man’s semen was warm and pleasant, semen received from a devil was cold and “abominable.” Her trial record states explicitly that she was interrogated for the purpose of discovering differences between copulating men and copulating devils. Transcription of her interrogation ended as soon as she provided this information. Although she was executed, she was never forced to confess any *maleficia* (evil acts), only demonic copulation and some other physical interactions with devils (Modestin 1999, 308–309).

Thus, although the new kind of heretics known as witches were apostates, cannibals, and murderers, they were also hunted down for their presumed firsthand



The Devil (indicated by his clawed feet, tail, and face) seducing a witch. From Ulrich Molitor, De Laniis et Phitonicis Mulieribus (Concerning Witches and Fortunetellers), 1489. (TopFoto.co.uk)

corporeal (sexual) experience of demonic reality. In the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), Heinrich Kramer defined female witches jurisprudentially as defendants but philosophically as “expert witnesses” to the reality of human–demon interaction, especially through interspecies copulation; witches’ confessions provided *experta testimonia* (expert testimony), he said, making such intercourse “credible” (Stephens 2002, 35).

Later writers imagined increasingly sadistic and pornographic encounters between women and demons, although they described sex between succubi and men, including clerics, less frequently. Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola (1523) gave egregious examples of both (Stephens 2002, 94–99). The idea that such real and unmistakable contact was possible between humans and demons fascinated even writers not otherwise attracted by witchcraft mythology or pornographic fantasy.

SEX AND THE NEW HERESY OF WITCHCRAFT

Before 1400, certain Christian theologians had claimed that heretics met the Devil embodied as a man or animal and interacted corporeally with him, often kissing his anus and performing other acts of self-abasement to signify their renunciation of Christianity. Explicit sexual transgression was also part of the pre-1400 stereotype, but heretics had illicit sexual relations with one another (particularly incest and sodomy), rather than with the Devil or demons (Wakefield and Evans 1969; Cohn 1975, 1–59). Once demonologists, trial judges, and other literate Christians had assimilated Aquinas’s theories of demonic corporeality and copulation, their speculations fed their paranoid fantasies of heretical behavior. This process of confabulation created a new sexual abomination for heretics. By significantly changing ideas about the sexuality of heretics, Aquinas’s theory of demonic copulation thus had a vast social impact. It demonstrably predetermined many confessions extorted from persons accused of heresy, as the prior examples show and as many later trials and treatises confirm.

Literate confabulation produced a further innovation. Before 1400, stories about human–demon copulation concerned either the siring of antediluvian giants by “sons of God” mentioned in Genesis 6:4 or incubi and succubi, demonic sexual predators who molested unwilling humans. St. Augustine firmly refuted the notion that fallen angels sired giants, but his discussion of incubi and succubi ensured their place in learned Christian demonology throughout the Middle Ages (Stephens 1989, 75–92). Virtuous women were thought particularly susceptible to demonic sexual harassment: St. Bernard (d. 1153), among others, supposedly liberated a woman from an incubus. Beginning around 1400, theologians, inquisitors, and secular judges redefined incubi, identifying them with Aquinas’s artificially embodied demons and imagining that female heretics voluntarily copulated with incubi.

These developments transformed the mythology of subversive demon-worshipping secret societies; heretical stereotypes with some basis in historical fact evolved into the purely mythical figure of the witch. Voluntary copulation with demons joined other transgressions long attributed to heretics, Jews, and various presumed enemies of Christian orthodoxy, notably infanticide, cannibalism, and the desecration of sacramental objects such as crucifixes and Eucharistic hosts. As the keepers of orthodoxy searched for the Devil’s accomplices, they sought clues among their illiterate informants’ folkloric ideas about magical destruction of crops and livestock, the willful infliction of suffering and death by occult means, and magical transformations of people into animals. The new stereotypical heretics that emerged from the process were defined as consummate enemies of both God and humanity. They were so demonically evil

that in Latin discourse, the generic term for “evildoer” (*maleficus/malefica*) became the preferred term for witches of either sex. The crime of witchcraft was simply *maleficium* (evildoing); like *maleficus/malefica*, it carried primarily demonic implications of and hatred of anything good. Meanwhile, courts employing vernacular languages rather than Latin long avoided these demonic implications (Kieckhefer 1976). To them, terms translatable as “magician” seemed more logical, and they mostly retained such connotations: for example, the French *genoeche* or *sovière*; the German *towersche*, *zauberin*, or *hexe*; the Spanish *xorquina*, *hechicera*, or *bruja*; the Italian *strega*; and, of course, the English *witch*.

GENDER

Before 1400, clerics’ sexual curiosity was concentrated on incubi and virtuous women, as the *Malleus Maleficarum* itself admitted (Stephens 2002, 44–46). Afterward, the stereotype of the heretic as witch included both men’s and women’s fornication with demons. However, women and incubi understandably outnumbered men and succubi in witchcraft literature. First, statistically, about 80 percent of witchcraft defendants were women. Witchcraft accusations typically concerned women’s sphere of domestic and social influence (childbirth and rearing, care of the sick, food preparation, some forms of animal care and agriculture). Such “women’s work” attracted and provoked traditional misogyny and social prejudice, particularly when unexpected misfortunes occurred and scapegoats were needed.

Second, the educated men who wrote about witchcraft and human–demon copulation had philosophical (although reprehensible) reasons for concentrating on women and incubi. SilvestroPrierias considered demonic copulation inseparable from witchcraft, claiming that demonic copulation was “so real” (*adeo realiter*) as to produce actual children (Stephens 2002, 73). Without real women, however, the birth of children from demonic copulation was impossible. This fact was so obvious that no writer apparently belabored it before 1650, when the meticulous Giovanni Tommaso Gastaldo (1650–1652, 1: 372; 2: 113) declared that succubi, lacking real bodies, were incapable of gestation.

Moreover, men presumed that women’s sexuality was both insatiable and passive, with females eagerly receiving or undergoing sexual actions performed by men. Thus, the more “virile,” lusty, or even violent or abusive a demon was when copulating with a woman, the stronger was the proof of his reality. The violent beatings that demons supposedly administered to both men and women indicated their reality; violent sex with a “passive” partner proved the same point more emphatically, particularly if a birth resulted. Sometimes, demonic virility was demonstrated by simultaneously penetrating multiple orifices with a pronged penis.

Of course, the weak point in this whole project was its claim to be empirical. Inquisitorial researchers (*inquisitio* means “investigation”) had to rely on confessions gathered from accused criminals through suggestion or, more often, torture. Thus, the desire to experience demonic reality firsthand, especially through sexual contact, could never be satisfied. There was no alternative to repeating the same scripted interviews endlessly. To be convincing, the confessions had to seem sincere; this made extracting them an even longer and crueler process, without ever bringing an interrogator closer to an actual experience. Because women were defined as more corporeal than men and as inherently sexually excessive, they were ideally suited as subjects for investigations of human sexual contact with demons (Stephens 2002, 102–105).

PROTESTANT VARIANTS

Most Protestant theologians readily accepted demonic corporeality but avoided detailed discussions about demonic copulation through incubi or succubi. The fact that Protestant clergymen were almost invariably married to real women probably contributed to their reluctance to expound on such prurient fantasies. Moreover, many Protestant countries used legal systems that minimized or avoided torture. For such reasons, discourse on demonic copulation with witches was largely confined to Catholics, whose clergy were forbidden to marry. In Lutheran Denmark, for example, the most detailed description of a witches’ Sabbath (held in a church) seems almost chaste: The Devil had intercourse with one of the women in the church a few times—but always with the same woman. In today’s Swiss canton of Vaud, where almost 2,000 witchcraft trials were held and where torture was used relentlessly, the “sober and almost sanitized” descriptions of post-Reformation Sabbaths contrast strikingly with lurid accounts from pre-Reformation trials in the same region (this was Perrissona Gappit’s home).

In England, treatises on witchcraft often discussed demonic copulation, attendance at the Sabbath, and other corporeal interactions attributed to witches, but English witchcraft trials ignored such activities. Instead, English witches (almost always women) normally confessed to having “familiar,” demons embodied as cats, dogs, and other small animals that they cared for and fed, sometimes allowing them to suckle blood from the witch’s mark (“witch’s teat”)—an anomalous excrescence somewhere on the witch’s body. That such “maternal,” caregiving physical contact could serve the same criminalizing ends as frenetic sexual transgression provides a peculiarly British variant to the misogyny that characterized educated men’s shaping of witchcraft stereotypes.

WALTER STEPHENS

See also: ANGELS; AQUINAS, THOMAS; AUGUSTINE, ST.; CONFESSIONS; CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DEMONS; DENMARK; ENGLAND; FAMILIARS; GAPPIT, PERRISSONA; GASTALDO, GIOVANNI TOMMASO; GENDER; HERESY; INCUBUS AND SUCCUBUS; JACQUIER, NICOLAS; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MERLIN; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA, GIANFRANCESCO; PRIERIAS, SILVESTRO; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; SINISTRARI, LUDOVICO MARIA; TASSO, TORQUATO; VAUD, PAYS DE; VISCONTI, GIROLAMO.

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**SHAKESPEARE, WILLIAM
(1564–1616)**

England's most famous playwright, actor, and theater professional, William Shakespeare wrote or collaborated on at least thirty-eight plays; he also wrote sonnets and narrative poems. Shakespeare's witches remain the best known of the many who appeared on the stage in Renaissance England or, indeed, who were actually prosecuted in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The chant of the "weird sisters" in *Macbeth* (1606) as they stirred their brew, "Double, double, toil and trouble, / Fire burn, and cauldron bubble" (4.1.10–11), has become the standard refrain for witches in Anglo-American



Macbeth and the Three Witches. While witches appeared in several of William Shakespeare's plays, the "weird sisters" in *Macbeth* are the most famous. (Stapleton Collection/Corbis)

popular culture. Yet there are some textual questions about the witches in *Macbeth*. Furthermore, they are not Shakespeare's only witches; others appeared or were mentioned in many of his plays. They were usually women who inverted gender and class hierarchies and embodied disorder in either festive or threatening ways.

The witches in *Macbeth* were called "weird sisters" in the play; they were only once called witches, although speech prefixes and stage directions in modern editions consistently refer to them that way. They were also called "instruments of darkness" (1.3.123), "night's black agents" (3.2.54), and "secret, black, and midnight hags" (4.1.63). As with other female roles on the Renaissance stage, men played these parts until the eighteenth century. The text referred to the ambiguity of these figures' gender: "You should be women, / And yet your beards forbid me to interpret that you are so" (1.3.43–45). The weird sisters established the atmosphere of the play and set the plot in motion by prophesying what would happen to Macbeth; he then committed murder to make their prophecies come true. A central question in interpreting the play is whether their predictions determined or simply foresaw what happened. Would Macbeth have become a murderer if he had never encountered them? Even in their relation to other characters, the weird sisters were curiously detached from the play's language, structure, and settings. While they addressed Macbeth and Banquo, they refused to respond to questions; their speech was oracular rather than interactive. Unlike anyone else in the play, they spoke in rhyming couplets. They appeared in a vaguely evoked space outside and apart from the play's castles and other than its battlefields. They disappeared entirely from the play's last movement and were never held accountable for their role in the tragedy. When, in the play's last lines, Malcolm summarized what had happened, he revealed that he never knew the role the weird sisters played.

The sisters bore some resemblance to the witches described in English demonology and accounts of prosecutions. They had familiars, or animal companions through whom they worked, as was often claimed of English but not continental witches. By one account, their rage began with a "gift" of food sought from a sailor's wife, refused, and answered with a vengeful curse (1.3). Yet these witches had as much in common with stage traditions as they did with popular belief or local trials. Indeed, the stage was not clearly separable from the courtroom. For the witch to compel belief, she had to be a convincing literary type recognizable to neighbors, accusers, legal personnel, and theater audiences.

Shakespeare may have borrowed material about witches from other plays, such as songs that also appeared in Thomas Middleton's *The Witch* (ca. 1613), or others may have added this material during production or in preparation of the First Folio, a posthumous

edition of most of Shakespeare's plays, printed in 1623 by two actors from Shakespeare's company, John Heminges and Henry Condell. The Folio contained eighteen plays (including *Macbeth*) for which there were no earlier, single-play or quarto editions; thus, without the Folio, these plays would not have survived. Many editors have argued that *Macbeth* as it appeared in the First Folio had been revised for performance and may be based on a promptbook, or a script recording changes made for performance. There was particular interest in such scenes as Act 3, scene 5, when the witches met Hecate, or parts of Act 4, scene 1, which seem to have catered to audience interest in witches rather than advancing the plot. Such moments raise the question of whether the witches were integral to the plot or merely spectacles added for sensational effect. They may, of course, have been a bit of both. Typical of seventeenth-century representations of witches and witchcraft, all of the scenes in which the weird sisters appeared drew together elite and popular, London and village, theatrical and legal beliefs and practices. They straddled a thin line between belief and skepticism, fear and amusement.

In the play's performance history, the witches have been comic figures, then frightening ones, then representatives of inner states. Diane Purkiss (1996) argued that they were a comic spectacle from the start, A. R. Braunmuller that presenting the witches as comic diversions was an eighteenth- and nineteenth-century tradition. By 1794, John Philip Kemble introduced a chorus of at least fifty witches who sang, danced, and offered comic relief. As such accretions were removed, the sisters emerged as more menacing, supernatural, and powerful figures, closely associated with Lady Macbeth, who allied herself with them when she invoked spirits to "unsex" her that she might more effectively urge her husband to make their prophecies come true (1.5). If the witches never entered the play's living spaces, Lady Macbeth was at home, sleeping and eating with her husband, convincing him to commit murder, and conspiring to kill her houseguest. For many critics, this proximity and intimacy made her a particularly disturbing figure. It also suggests that, in English culture, witches' relationship to the body and to domestic life was central to the threat they posed. Some have called them "antimothers" because of their displaced, demonic enactments of nurture, suckling animal familiars at supernumerary teats and injuring rather than caring for infants.

In Shakespeare's plays, almost any woman can be called or become a witch. While James I and others argued that women were more vulnerable to the Devil's seductions because they were weaker than men, women were most often called witches in Shakespeare's plays when they usurped men's powers and privileges, when they fought and spoke out, had beards or wore armor, or

wielded power of any kind. The cross-dressed warrior Joan La Pucelle (Joan of Arc) in *Henry VI Part 1* (1591) was burned as a witch, her valor, prowess, and armor linked to witchcraft. In *Antony and Cleopatra* (1606–1607), Antony called Cleopatra a witch when he thought she had betrayed him (4.13); in *The Winter's Tale* (1609–1611), Leontes called Paulina a “mankind witch” (2.3.68) in a string of insults intended to depict her as troublesome and insubordinate. In *The Tempest* (1611), Caliban’s mother, Sycorax, a “foul” and “damned witch” (1.2.259, 265), was dead long before the play began, yet nonetheless haunted it as the predecessor and counter to Prospero and his “rough magic.” As this incomplete catalog suggests, women’s speech, self-assertion, and sexuality could all be associated with witchcraft; any woman who spoke out, disobeyed, or schemed could be called a witch. In the seventeenth century, *witch* was increasingly part of an arsenal of terms used to distinguish bad women from good and to depict the latter as quiet and submissive, while bad women were disorderly, lower status, racially and ethnically different—simultaneously threatening and laughable.

Witchcraft also provided a language for transformation, seduction, and desire in Shakespeare’s plays. In *The Comedy of Errors* (1592–1594), Antipholus of Syracuse described Ephesus as a world of “Dark-working sorcerers that change the mind / Soul-killing witches that deform the body” (1.2.99–100). Dromio of Syracuse described his surrender to the topsy-turvy possibilities of the place as “turning witch” (4.4.157). In *Othello* (1603–1604), Brabantio accused Othello of using witchcraft to seduce Desdemona, because he could not believe that she would have been attracted to a “moor”: “For nature so preposterously to err, / Being not deficient, blind, or lame of sense / Sans witchcraft could not” (1.3.62–64). Othello presented the story of his adventures as the “only . . . witchcraft I have used” (1.3.168). Yet his later description of the provenance of his handkerchief—woven by a Sybil from hallowed worms and dyed in the fluid drained from maidens’ hearts, which was given to his mother by an Egyptian “charmer” as a talisman that would bind her husband to her—reintroduced an association between himself and witchcraft (3.4.53–73). Thus, witchcraft reentered the play to heighten Othello’s exoticism—and the threat he offered.

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See also: ENGLAND; FAMILIARS; GENDER; HECATE; LITERATURE; MOTHERHOOD; REBELS; RENAISSANCE DRAMA, ENGLAND.

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SHAMANISM

Shamanism is a distinctive and vital religious phenomenon in the cultural history of many peoples throughout the world. Both scholars and practicing shamans consider it a spiritual world heritage that is shared by most religions. In very general terms, shamanism is a religious practice that attempts to mediate between a profane reality and a sacred spiritual world. The shaman’s contact with presumed guardian spirits has the purpose of alleviating a range of problems and crises in the real world. Healing, clairvoyance, and divination are central powers of a shaman. To bridge the gap between the two worlds, a shaman employs various rituals, symbols, and techniques. Drumming combined with cries, song, and dance is the usual method for inducing an altered state of consciousness. It is often claimed that the shamanic altered state of consciousness is achieved through ecstatic techniques. Mircea Eliade, who wrote the pioneering book on shamanism in 1951, saw trance as an important part of all varieties of this phenomenon and even identified shamanism with techniques of ecstasy. Subsequently, most scholars have considered the state of trance, in which the soul temporarily leaves the body, to be the single most important feature of a shaman.

ASPECTS OF RITUAL

The word *shaman*—*saman*—apparently originated with Tungus-speaking peoples of Siberia and denotes someone who is moved or excited. An English explorer, Richard Johnson, became the first European to describe a shamanistic ritual. On New Year’s Day of 1557, he was staying among the Nenets, an indigenous people in northwestern Russia. There, he observed a peculiar experience that he referred to as “devilish rites.” Johnson’s description contains most of the elements later scholars have attributed to shamanism understood as religious practice:

The Priest does begin to play upon a thing like to a Great Sieve, with a skin on the one end like a

drum. . . . Then he sings as we use here in England to hallow, whoop or shout at hounds, and the rest of the company answer him with this chorus, Igha, Igha, Igha, and then the Priest replies again with his voices. And they answer him with the selfsame words so many times, that in the end he becomes as it were mad, and falling down as he were dead. I asked them why he lay so, and they answered me. "Now does our God tell him what we shall do, and whither we shall go." And when he had lain still a little while they cried three times together, Oghas, Oghas, Oghas, and as they use these three calls, he rises with his head and lies down again, and then he rose up and sang with like voices as he did before. (Hutton 2001, 30)

During the following 200 years, missionaries, explorers, and traders encountered various peoples in Siberia and other circumpolar regions. Their accounts and ethnographic reports spurred considerable curiosity and discussion in Europe. Around the middle of the eighteenth century, the interest among intellectuals and artists and in various courts had reached such dimensions that "shamans became a key exhibit in the European inquest on the supernatural" (Potter 1999, 217).

A SHAMAN AT WORK

During an interrogation about sorcery in northern Norway in 1692, an old Sami shaman named Anders Poulsen described his calling and how he used his drum. The information he provided about his skills illustrates the principal functions of any shaman. As Poulsen testified:

1. He could, with the aid of his gods, remove a spell and reverse its power. If someone had cast a spell upon another, the shaman could send the spell back to whoever had first cast it. Further, by praying to his gods and playing on his drum, he could punish evil people by persuading his spirits to condemn the sinner to hell.
2. He could track down thieves and retrieve stolen property by consulting his drum.
3. He could protect his people's reindeer from being killed by wolves through the power of prayer and music.
4. He could play upon his drum to help relieve the pains of childbirth for women in labor.
5. He could discover how his family was doing at home while he was far away. He could also learn what was happening to other people, even those several thousand miles off, and especially gain knowledge about ship arrivals and the physical appearances of the ships' captains.
6. He could hear the voices of others when he lifted the drum above his head. Poulsen said it was as though two people were talking to each other.

7. He could predict the weather, and he could produce fair weather by playing on his shamanic drum. Pressured by the prosecuting counsel, he divulged how drum playing could also wreak havoc upon ships and seamen.
8. He could use his skills in healing and to give absolution for sins. (Hagen 2002, 338–339)

SHAMANS AND WITCHCRAFT TRIALS

Experts customarily distinguish two main types of shamanism. The first is the type that cultural anthropologists have observed in Siberia, for instance, where shamanism is played out as a process of public performance. The other is more focused on spirit flights experienced during sleep. This second type sometimes appeared in historical studies of court records from witchcraft trials.

In a famous book about the folkloric roots of the Sabbat, the Italian historian Carlo Ginzburg (1991) emphasized its shamanistic elements. He argued that witches' confessions provided insights into rites and myths connected with the ecstatic journey to the land of the dead. His earlier research in Inquisition records from northeastern Italy between 1575 and 1675 investigated the confessions of people calling themselves *benandanti* (do-gooders), who made spirit journeys at night in certain periods of the year and fought the forces of evil as spirits in order to secure good harvests. Ginzburg interpreted the *benandanti* and their spirit journeys as an archaic fertility cult with strong shamanistic features, which the inquisitors gradually simplified into "orthodox" diabolical witchcraft. Meanwhile, on the opposite side of the Alps, a villager named Chonrad Stoeckhlin told a south German court in the 1580s how he fell into a trance and met with an angel who carried him away to distant places, where he joined other people. The judges interpreted the angel as the Devil and Stoeckhlin's nocturnal travels as the flight to the witches' Sabbat, and they ordered him burned (Behringer 1998).

During the age of witchcraft trials, European shamans risked being taken to court for their religious practice. However, shamans were usually perceived as a secondary group in relation to witches. A good example is the Hungarian *táltosok*—shamanlike sorcerers who appeared in connection with witches in the eighteenth century. They were professional healers with special powers given by the deity, especially the abilities to see hidden treasure, find lost objects, heal, foretell the future, and discover the fate of people who were far away. The *táltosok* were involved in a few Hungarian witchcraft trials but constituted a clear minority.

Northern Norway experienced an intense and brutal witch hunt in the seventeenth century. Most of those burned were Norwegian women, and only one-fifth

belonged to the Sami indigenous group. However, men constituted a majority among Sami convicted of sorcery, which indicates that Sami shamanism was primarily a male activity. All over Europe, most shamans convicted of sorcery were men.

THE SOUL JOURNEY

In most witchcraft trials against people who could be labeled shamans, ecstasy and trancelike states were seldom featured prominently. According to Wolfgang Behringer (1998, 143), “The separation of the soul from its body and its trip to certain places is the constitutive element for any great shaman,” and most scholars of shamanism would agree. However, we must also ask if the conception of the shaman as a kind of link between two worlds is largely a fabrication of some eighteenth-century missionaries. Nearly all earlier reports of shamanism-related trances were written by foreign travelers, traders, or priests—observers who described this evil art with great pathos, providing numerous stories about evil drum beating at the foot of naked mountain cliffs and devils who penetrated the minds of shamans (*ecstasis diabolica*). All too often, modern historians have accepted such tales uncritically and incorporated them into their work. Scholars attempting to view this topic in a religious-historical light have generally followed in the footprints of missionaries who, with considerable bias, focused on the state of ecstasy as a fundamental characteristic of shamanism. Yet ecstasy was probably nothing more than the most eccentric part of a shaman’s repertoire.

The concepts of trance and ecstasy carry a long tradition of negative associations. Early modern European Christians used the concept of the trance to condemn shamanistic practice as heathen, devilish, and blasphemous. During the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, “ecstasy” was used to stigmatize shamans as primitive, uncivilized savages. During the colonial period, these concepts were used to brand shamanistic societies as underdeveloped and their religious practices as wholly irrational. By the late nineteenth century, theories referenced a kind of correspondence in temperament among many native peoples. Shamanism alternated hysterical fits (ecstasy) with periods of complete exhaustion (trance). For instance, indigenous peoples in Arctic areas were described as easily moved, nervous, and short-tempered—their temperament marking their religious conceptual worlds. Their form of shamanism was diagnosed as Arctic hysteria and winter depression.

There is certainly a need for a deconstruction of the category of shamanism. Based on his extensive studies in both Scandinavian and Mediterranean Europe, the Danish folklore researcher Gustav Henningsen (1991–1992, 302) claimed that in most parts of Europe, professional magicians did not travel into the spirit world. Calling for a redefinition of concepts and

terminology with reference to the study of shamanism, he argued that the trance theory should be abandoned. Having studied the use of the terms *trance* and *ecstasy* in her fieldwork in Siberia, the French anthropologist Roberte Hamayon (1993, 7) questioned whether these terms were useful in studying shamanism and concluded that “the shaman’s behavior, called ‘trance’ by observers, is qualified by shamanistic societies with reference not to a specific physical or psychic state, but to the shamans being in direct contact with the spirits.” The comparative debate among scholars on the exact nature of shamanism continues.

RUNE HAGEN;

TRANSLATED BY ANNIKEN TELNES IVERSEN

See also: ANIMISTIC AND MAGICAL THINKING; ANTHROPOLOGY; *BENANDANTI*; CUNNING FOLK; DIVINATION; FERTILITY CULTS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; GINZBURG, CARLO; HENNINGSEN, GUSTAV; HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, MAGIC; LAPLAND; NORWAY; PEOPLE OF THE NIGHT; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; STOECKHLIN, CHONRAD; *TÁLTOS*.

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SHERWOOD, GRACE (CA. 1651–1740)

The most notorious witch of the Chesapeake Bay area, Grace Sherwood faced a string of witchcraft accusations starting in 1697, culminating in a formal witchcraft

trial in 1706. Her experience vividly demonstrates the transfer of witchcraft beliefs from England to colonial Virginia. Sherwood lived in Princess Anne County, in an area that is now Virginia Beach; she was forty-six years old, a wife and mother of three, when the witchcraft accusations began to appear in the court record. Grace was described as a strikingly attractive, strong-willed, nonconformist woman who had a habit of wearing men's clothing. She was also knowledgeable about the use of herbs and was an experienced healer.

Accusations against Grace first surfaced in 1697, when she and her husband, James, sued Richard Capps for publicly accusing Grace of being a witch and of casting a spell that had caused the death of his bull. The case was dismissed, but it was only the beginning of Grace's legal battles to defend her name. In September 1698, James and Grace returned to court, suing neighboring John and Jane Gisbourne and Anthony and Elizabeth Barnes for slander. The Gisbournes had accused Grace of ruining their cotton crop and casting a spell on their hogs, and Elizabeth Barnes had accused Grace of "riding" her—a common charge against witches in America, England, and Scandinavia. Elizabeth claimed to have been forced out of bed by Grace and a devil-like figure. She said Grace rode her about the room until she collapsed from exhaustion, at which point Grace transformed herself into a cat and left through the keyhole in the door. In court, the Sherwoods failed to clear Grace's name; in both slander suits, the juries found in favor of the defendants. Thus, Grace, although not yet formally convicted of witchcraft by the courts, was unable to defend her reputation successfully against charges of being a witch.

James Sherwood died in 1701, leaving his widow to fight her legal battles alone. In December 1705, Grace was again in court, accusing Luke and Elizabeth Hill of assault and battery. Grace claimed Elizabeth had assaulted her, and she sued for damages of 50 pounds sterling. On that occasion, the jury awarded Grace 20 shillings. But less than a month later, in January 1706, the Hills filed formal accusations of witchcraft against Grace. Grace did not appear to answer these charges. As a result, the Hills were required to pay court costs, but the county court ordered that a jury of women should search Grace for the witch's mark and the Devil's mark. The jury, with Elizabeth Barnes as its forewoman, found several questionable marks. A second panel of women was called but refused to serve, causing the court to order that Grace be ducked in water to ascertain her guilt or innocence. Grace was accordingly thrown into Lynnhaven Bay with her hands and feet bound in the usual manner; she floated. Seared again at that point, it was confirmed that she had two black marks in her private parts, and her guilt was therefore confirmed.

The documents that would have recorded what happened next were burned, along with the Richmond

courthouse, during the Civil War. What is known, however, is that Grace was not executed as a witch, which is likely because she was never accused of harming or causing the death of another human being and because belief in malicious witchcraft was on the wane by the end of the seventeenth century. She may have been jailed, but if so, she was free by 1714, when she again appears in court records. She lived until 1740. Accusations against Grace abated, although legends surrounding her survive to this day. The spot where she was ducked is still known as Witch Duck Point, and local folklore hints that Grace conjured a storm that drenched those who witnessed her ordeal. Other tales tell of her leaving her jail cell and flying with the Devil and taking an overnight trip to England and back in an eggshell to procure some rosemary. Thus, in both fact and fiction, Grace Sherwood stands as the Chesapeake's most notable accused witch.

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See also: CHESAPEAKE; CUNNING FOLK; DEVIL'S MARK; SLANDER; SWIMMING TEST; WEATHER MAGIC; WITCH'S MARK.

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SICILY

In Sicily, both ecclesiastical and civil authorities conducted trials for witchcraft and superstition, but as the archives of most courts await closer investigation, the present survey is based exclusively on inquisitorial cases judged by the Spanish Inquisition. A Spanish possession from 1282 to 1713, the island had a tribunal of the Spanish Inquisition in Palermo from 1487. Even after Spain relinquished Sicily in 1713, the Inquisition continued to function with a Spanish staff; in 1782, under the government of Naples, it was abolished and its archives were burned. However, summaries of its cases have been preserved in the so-called *relaciones de causas* (reports of cases) sent to the *Suprema* (supreme council), whose archives remain today in Madrid's Archivo Histórico Nacional. Among 3,188 cases known from the *relaciones* (between 1547 and 1701), 456 were concerned with "superstition," involving sorcerers, diviners, astrologers, necromancers, and witches, none of whom were burned. These cases resemble those from other Mediterranean regions, with one exception: They featured Sicilian magicians whom the inquisitors misleadingly called witches (*bruja*s). To understand this problem, we must place Sicily within the Mediterranean geography of witchcraft.

Like the Iberian Peninsula, Italy can be divided into a northern region with both witchcraft and sorcery and a southern one with sorcery only. In southern Italy, “evil people” did not fly to nightly gatherings, turn themselves into animals, or visit the houses of their neighbors to suck their children’s blood. Witchcraft was totally absent, and misfortune was explained there in terms of sorcery. But unlike Spain, southern Italy and Sicily had special kinds of magical agents—“the women from outside” (*le donni di fuora*, translated by Spanish inquisitors as *donas de fuera*). These women had the power to transform themselves into animals, to fly, to heal, and to predict. However, they differed greatly from evil witches in other regions. They were, in fact, highly appreciated by the local population because they served as mediators between humans and fairies. Since Sicilian fairies were also called *donni di fuora*, the term actually signified both fairies and fairy doctors.

This Sicilian fairy belief was documented by the mid-fifteenth century in a vernacular manual for confessors, in which the priests were advised to ask their penitents “whether they believe in the women from outside [*donni di fori*] and that they walk by night [*e ki vayanu la nocti*]” (Bonomo 1959, 65). However, the Holy Office only became aware of the phenomenon a century later. In November 1587, the inquisitors of Palermo wrote to the council of the Spanish Inquisition, describing the confessions of an old woman, a poor fisherman’s wife in Palermo named Laurea de Pavia, who had been arrested because she boasted of having permission from the Holy Office to cure sick people. But this was not the reason why members of the tribunal wrote to their superiors in Madrid. The inquisitors, who included the famous Ludovico a Páramo, were perplexed by her confessions. “If what this woman says is true,” they wrote, “a new sect of witches [*brujas*] has come into being” (Henningesen 1997, 174).

Their conclusion is understandable from their summary of her confessions: She described a kind of witches’ Sabbat—but without devils or any of the usual nasty details; everything that Laurea de Pavia described was beautiful and delightful. She and her company, with their “ensign” at their head, rode on billy goats through the air, about half a meter above the ground, to

a place called Benevento that belongs to the Pope and lies in the kingdom of Naples. There was a great plain there on which stood a large platform with two chairs. On one of them sat a red young man and on the other a beautiful woman; they said she was the queen and the man was the king. The first time she went there . . . the ensign and the other women of her company said that she must kneel and worship this king and queen and do everything they told her, because they could help

her and give her wealth, beauty and young men to make love with. And they told her that she must not worship God or Our Lady. The ensign made her swear on a book with big letters that she would instead worship . . . the king as God and the queen as Our Lady, and promise them her body and soul. . . . After she had worshipped them like this, they set out tables, ate and drank and danced, and then the men lay with the women and with her and made love to them often in a short time. (quoted in Henningesen 1990, 196–197)

The fisherman’s wife told the inquisitors that all this seemed to her to be taking place in a dream, for when she awoke, she always found herself in bed. She went on to say that she did not know in the beginning that the activity was diabolical, until her confessor explained to her that it was the Devil’s work and forbade her to go. However, she continued doing so until her arrest. She added that she went out joyfully because it gave her carnal pleasure (*el gozo*) and because the king and queen gave her remedies to cure sick people so that she could earn a little money, for she had always been poor (Henningesen 1990, 196–197).

Because it was unusual for Sicilian fairy healers to attend the Sabbat at Benevento, the confessions suggested influence from inquisitorial questioning. In Sicily, a typical Sabbat was said to involve a company of fairies and human beings going around town at night and entering houses invisibly, “like a breath of air.” If there was a party, they would eat and drink without being seen. In houses of rich people, they would open chests and dress up in the clothes they found. If there were small children, they would take them from the cradle to play with them and put them back again with their blessing (unlike witches, fairies and their human associates were fond of children).

Sometimes, the company included a fairy doctor who took them to the house of a sick person, where a special table had been prepared with delicacies to induce the fairies to cure the patient by taking away the fairies’ curse. When they came into a house with their songs and music and fine clothes, their greeting would be “With God’s blessing, let the dance grow.” And when they left to go somewhere else, their departing remark was “Stop the dance and may prosperity grow.” Clients were advised in advance to make their houses tidy when the fairies were coming at night, for otherwise, they might not bestow their blessings on the households. When going to some other place or town, the fairies rode through the air on goats. Like witches, they had regular days for their nocturnal activities, but they usually went on a Tuesday, Thursday, or Saturday, avoiding Friday (the day the Lord died) and Sunday (God’s day). Instead of the Devil, they met a fairy, who was given different names in their narratives: Queen of the Fairies (*Reina de las Hadas*), La

Matrona, La Maestra, The Greek Lady (La Señora Griega), Señora Gracia, Doña Inguanta, Mandatta, Doña Zabella [Isabella], or The Wise Sybil (La Sabia Sibila). She was described as a beautiful woman dressed in black or white, but her supernatural origin was revealed by her feet, variously said to be cat's paws, horse's hooves, and so forth. Fairies and human beings were organized in companies with different names according to their districts, such as *Compañía de los Romanos, Compañía de la Matrona, Compañía de Palermo, and Compañía de Ragusa.* The archaic traits and the rich variation in the narratives indicate that a so-called white Sabbat must have existed in Sicilian popular imagination—a beautiful image that was soon distorted by demonologists into the horrible witches' Sabbat (Henningsen 1990, 208; 1991–1992).

Under inquisitorial interrogation, some of the accused were forced to admit that their fairy cult was really demonolatry, and a few of them were encouraged to produce “authentic” descriptions of black Sabbats. But whenever the Holy Office seized one of these alleged witches, the inquisitors had to begin all over again. Several of the accused individuals declared that they never knew there was anything wrong in their activities, until their confessors or the inquisitors explained this to them. Some of the accused even tried to exculpate their fairies from the serious accusations by pointing out that they were not, like demons, afraid of the cross or holy water. The position of these women as mediators with the fairies was deeply rooted in Sicilian tradition, and the inquisitors were outraged to see that the fame of the fairy doctors was so great that people continued to frequent the women after they had been condemned and were serving their sentences of imprisonment in the Grand Hospital of Palermo; even there, their clients looked them up and consulted them.

GUSTAV HENNINGSSEN;

TRANSLATED BY JAMES MANLEY

See also: BENEVENTO, WALNUT TREE OF; FAIRIES; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; INQUISITION, SPANISH; ITALY; PEOPLE OF THE NIGHT; SABBAT; SORcery; SPAIN.

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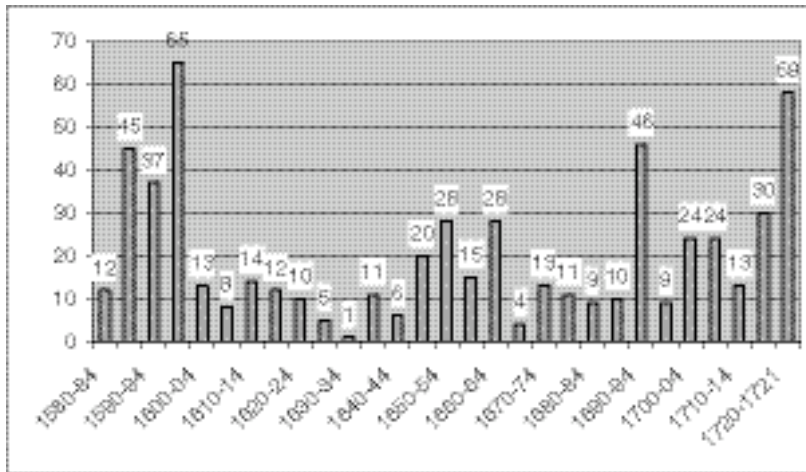
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SIENESE NEW STATE

The activity of the Sieneese tribunal of the Roman Inquisition, among the very few of this Inquisition's forty-five branches with virtually intact records between 1580 and 1721, is illustrated in Figures 1 and 2. Figure 1 charts the frequency of all cases involving any kind of magic except *maleficium* (harmful magic)—therapeutic magic, love magic, treasure hunting, divination, superstition, and necromancy. Figure 2 registers only *maleficium* cases. It seems evident from our sources that this period saw no decline in magic, although prosecutions for *maleficium* disappeared. The information in the first figure offers little that is new to historians, who are now fully aware of how vigorously magical practices persisted even well beyond the early eighteenth century. But the second figure, showing *maleficium* cases vanishing while magic continued to flourish, poses intriguing problems that still await explanation.

The Roman Inquisition tribunal in Siena had jurisdiction over the old Sieneese Republic, which was absorbed after 1559 into the Medicean regional state, the duchy (later, Grand Duchy) of Tuscany. The population of the so-called New State (*Stato Novo*) remained almost stationary between 1580 and 1720 at slightly over 100,000; the population of its capital, Siena, fluctuated between 15,000 and 17,000. Its inhabitants clustered in 132 nucleated villages divided in two contrasting zones: There were 46 in the Maremma—a marshy area, plagued by malaria, where mostly migrant laborers practiced pastoral farming and extensive cereal cultivation—and 86 outside it. However, witchcraft accusations show no clear division between the area's developed and underdeveloped zones. The religious organization of the New State included six small bishoprics governed by the archbishop of Siena.

A Franciscan inquisitor, a doctor of theology, carefully supervised inhabitants' consciences throughout the region. Defending Catholic orthodoxy through a *familia* (household or family) of forty-eight persons living in Siena and through a net of vicars, mostly parish priests, the father inquisitor wielded considerable power over the faithful through a web of co-opted confessors. The Holy Office attempted to use confessionals as bugging devices for detecting all local unorthodox beliefs; parish priests could not absolve parishioners from sins concerning “magic” until they had channeled such penitents to the Inquisition. As soon as a crime was confessed or reported, a preliminary inquiry was carried out locally, and the case was eventually sent to Siena, where the inquisitor there

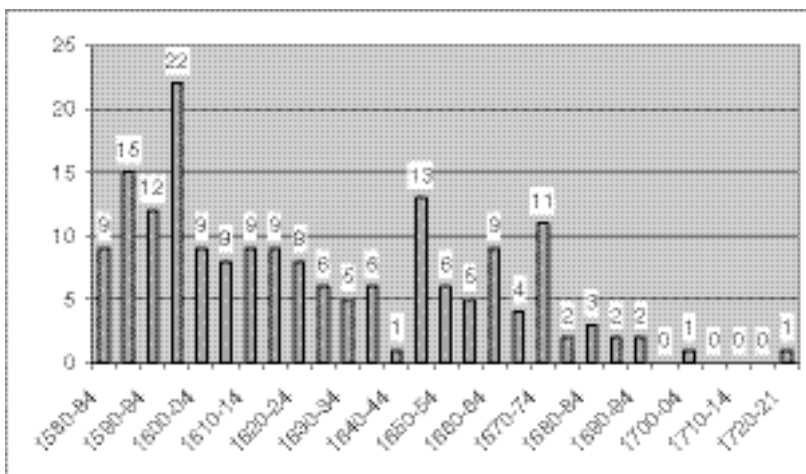


Magic cases (maleficium excluded).

began a fresh examination of witnesses and culprits. Sentences were decided at a congregation, with a representative of the archbishop and nine high-ranking ecclesiastics assisting the inquisitor. Though all forms of so-called magic fell within the competence of the Inquisition, secular justice also claimed theoretical jurisdiction over harmful sorcery. Two witchcraft trials begun in secular courts were in fact recovered by the inquisitors after some negotiations, and both defendants underwent fairer, new proceedings.

In the Sieneese countryside, trials of individual witches were endemic but rare between 1580 and 1660. As elsewhere in Catholic or Protestant Europe, “the popular fear of *maleficium* . . . provided the normal driving force behind witch prosecution” (Thomas 1971, 548). No particular set of internal or external factors triggered formal indictments. Although a parish priest reading an inquisitorial edict against magical healers and witches tried to persuade parishioners to denounce them, most trials for *maleficium* lacked this connection; other evidence shows that villagers ignored edicts and avoided making denunciations.

It must be underlined that demonic witchcraft is utterly marginal in this Sieneese evidence. Although 198 women were investigated for *maleficium* between 1588 and 1657 and 31 of them were tortured as suspected witches, only 6 women confessed to participating in a Sabbat—5 of them under harsh torture and the other spontaneously. One woman was probably burned in 1588. Sieneese sources confirm a widespread European feature: Witchcraft was a neighborhood crime, fostered by an atmosphere of malevolence and suspicion that was all too rife in early modern villages. Victims searched their memories to recall episodes that might have sparked off an evil eye, and they quickly discovered the culprit. However, it is difficult to ascertain why suspicions converged upon one particular person among several local candidates. In 1605, a woman complained that “fifteen or more people like me go a round here and there healing. But now whenever an infant dies, everybody says that they all have been wasted [*guasti*]. And they blame me as well as the others. I don’t know why they are hunting me [instead of] the others” (Di Simplicio 2005, 179).



Maleficium cases only

Two coincidental Sieneſe realities complicate our hiſtorical understanding. Firſt, by a proceſſ of lexical aſſimilation, the word *ſtrega* became a ſynonym for *healer* as well as for *harmful witch*. Second, in the Sieneſe ſtate, *all* 198 witches were women. This regional peculiarity is ſtill to be explained. The Sieneſe witches were not univerſally very old, unmarried, widowed, or poor—but all were women. Like their counterparts eſewhere in Europe, theſe *malefiche* (maleficent witches) ſuppoſedly had the power to heal people they had “waſted.” The topmoſt hierarchy of Sieneſe healers (male and female), in terms of personal power and knowledge, were men: the *ſtregone* (male witch) or *indovino* (ſoothſayer; cunning man). However, no maleficent action by a *ſtregone* was ever reported to the inquiſitors.

Sieneſe *maleficium* caſes concerned only humans, particularly infants; no weather-making witches were ever reported, and cattle bewitching ſeems to have been rare in this agrarian ſociety. “Binding” (ligature, tying a knot) to cauſe impotence was a common type of ſpell practiced eſpecially by urban prostitutes. Although infant mortality remained very high in this region, the nexus between infant deaths and charges of *maleficium*, ſo common among all ſocial claſſes, diſſolved there long before 1700.

Apparently, different ſocial relationships accelerated changes in ideas of cauſation in late-ſeventeenth-century villages, eventually leading to the diſappearance of infant *maleficium* caſes. Throughout Europe, the quality of interpersonal relations among villagers provided the crucial context behind witchcraft accuſations. Bewitched people ſought other ſolutions—ſome orthodox (exorcism), ſome illegal (*ſtreghe* and *ſtregoni*—female and male witches), or ſometimes even confronting the witch directly—before uſing a court to denounce their enemies. A cloſe examination of Sieneſe witness depositions confirms the now-venerable conclusion that blaming a witch ſimply reduced personal miſfortune to interpersonal terms. Unſurprisingly, the concept of the vendetta was deeply embedded in Sieneſe witchcraft trials, as proven by the eagerness of the parents of bewitched children to take revenge. Judges, witnesses, victims, and defendants continued to interpret the world according to the categories of friend and enemy.

Sieneſe trials for magic fall into two different phases. In the firſt (from 1580 to 1660), collective experience defined ſome diſeaſes as unnatural. This period was characterized by long trials, during which villagers’ opinions were marſhaled on each caſe. Elements eſtablishing *maleficium* were always reported with the expreſſion *tocco* (touched) or *maneggiato* (handled) by witches. A dark purple color on the victims’ bodies as well as tooth marks, finger marks, ſcratches, and bruises ſcattered all over the little corpeſes offered proof of a witch’s attack. Witnesses of all ſocial claſſes emphasized this obſeſſive

clinical picture of *putti guasti* (rotten children) through the language of *maleficium*. In the ſecond phase of the Siena trials, from the mid-ſeventeenth century onward, deſpite the virtual diſappearance of *maleficium* caſes, the ſources ſtill enable us to hear ordinary Sieneſe people diſcuſſing malevolent magic. But now, we find very ſhort trials, with examinations limited moſtly to the victim’s parents, and we note a change to an agnoſtic ſtance toward “unnatural” diſeaſes. On cloſer analysis, we diſcover that in theſe trials, identical clinical deſcriptions of ſick or dead children elicited a very different verbal diſcourſe—or even none at all. Although infant mortality remained extremely high, it ſeems that the nexus between infant deaths and charges of *maleficium*, previously common among all ſocial claſſes, faded away in the late 1600s. How ſhould we decode this new language of depositions? Was it a ſign of cultural change, a barometer that the explanation of miſfortune in personal terms had become unſatisfactory?

The early modern Sieneſe New State became a more complex ſociety as its local communities were integrated into two higher ſystems, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the poſt-Tridentine Church. This integration affected the quality of interpersonal relationships, diminished recourse to vendettas, and eventually helped to modify the idea of cauſation among uneducated people, thus reducing “the area where personalized explanations in terms of human will were thought” (Macfarlane 1999, 205).

OSCAR DI SIMPLICIO

See also: CHILDREN; CUNNING FOLK; DISEASE; EVIL EYE; EXORCISM; FEMALE WITCHES; IMPOTENCE, SEXUAL; INQUISITION, ROMAN; ITALY; MAGIC, POPULAR; *MALEFICIUM*; MILAN; MODENA; RURAL WITCHCRAFT; SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF WITCHES; SORCERY; TRIALS; URBAN WITCHCRAFT.

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SIGHT, POWERS OF (SECOND SIGHT)

Clairvoyance, generally termed *second sight*, is the psychic ability or power to see objects and visions or to gain information regardless of distance. The term often refers to prophetic visions and dreams, occasionally even of past events; it can occur in normal states of consciousness but also can be induced by drugs, fasting, illness, or scrying (crystal gazing). Telepathic descriptions are universal in written and oral lore. Tribal societies such as the Australian Aborigines accept clairvoyance as a human faculty, while more sophisticated societies consider second sight a special ability belonging to mystics, soothsayers, healers, and witches, nowadays known as mediums or psychics. In antiquity and medieval times, the term *intuitive divination* was preferred, and virgin boys or pregnant women were often used as mediums. While in a trance state, such people were thought to have the ability to see hidden things or discover thieves.

Christianity has always opposed such practices. In his treatise *De Divinatione Daemonum* (On the Divination of Demons, 406), St. Augustine explained that, while evil spirits lacked truly prophetic knowledge of the future, they could make conjectures that were informed by keen perception, the ability to move quickly, and a rich store of experience, and these conjectures were then communicated to human beings through divination. As early as the fifth century, synodal legislation repeatedly condemned *specularii* (scryers), who gazed into mirrors, bowls, polished fingernails, and so on, claiming that marvelous things were revealed to them, assimilating scryers to *phitones* (trance-diviners) who could see the future while possessed by a spirit. Later, in witchcraft trials, all forms of divination, including clairvoyance, were considered demonic.

ANTIQUITY

In antiquity, the belief that an alien voice spoke in the first person through the lips of the Delphic Oracle, the Pythia, was almost universal for more than a millennium. The onset of her trance was said to be induced by such ritual acts as sitting on the god's holy seat, touching his sacred laurel, and drinking from the holy spring. In her normal personality, the Pythia was a perfectly ordinary woman, but when she became possessed (*entheos*), she spoke in riddling symbols, which had to be interpreted by the priests—not unlike many modern trance mediums.

The Pythia was unique in her status but not unique in kind. The girl in the Acts of the Apostles who had a pythonic spirit made great profits for her masters. Apart from the official oracles in classical Greece, there is also evidence for persons who claimed to possess the gift of automatic speech. They were known as belly-talkers,

because they were believed to have a *daemon* (a being intermediate between the gods and humans and with a body made from a substance such as air) in their bellies that spoke through their lips and predicted the future. Apparently, like modern mediums, they spoke in a state of trance. In the Middle Ages, such individuals were more respectfully known as *pythones*. The possession state of both the Pythia and the pythons was, as far as we know, autosuggestively induced. But in the Egyptian papyri, we find spells by which a magician could induce it; one gives an elaborate recipe for summoning a god to enter into a child or adult and speak through that person.

MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN CLAIRVOYANTS

Medieval theologians were especially fascinated by *pythonica divinatio* or *divinatio per pythones* (divination by means of a spirit); Berthold of Regensburg (d. 1272) condemned them as heretics. Three centuries later, they were considered impostors. In 1584, Reginald Scot studied the phenomenon in his *Discoverie of Witchcraft*; in chapter 16, he mentioned “pythonists,” describing them as clairvoyants able to prophesy by a familiar spirit. Apparently, he knew them from personal experience because he referred to a woman practicing ventriloquy who lived not too far from his own home.

Mother Shipton (1488–?) became one of the most famous seers of her time and was slandered as a witch for supposedly prophesying scientific inventions, wars, and so forth. Fabulous stories surround her life and that of her mother. Ursula Shipton was born near Knaresborough (Yorkshire), England, to a mother famous for her healing powers, second sight, storm raising, and bewitching. Shipton reputedly inherited her mother's powers, being involved in poltergeist phenomena at a tender age. The book of predictions ascribed to her is a later compilation. Elsewhere in England, John Dee obtained clairvoyance by the art of scrying, employing his polished “shewstones” (crystal balls).

Fortunetellers and healers (so-called rural cunning folk) survived until almost our own time, plying their trade through long-established methods. By the end of the nineteenth century, new trends in pseudoscience and supernatural belief developed and circulated in urban culture. Practitioners calling themselves phrenologists, mediums, or clairvoyants tried to modernize such ancient divinatory practices. One reason for adopting new practices and identities was to elude the laws against fortunetelling. A good symbol for the new development was the crystal ball, which recovered its popularity in the mid-nineteenth century and has remained the stereotypical tool of the fortuneteller until the present. Although scientifically unproven, telepathy continues to be studied in psychic research.

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See also: AUGUSTINE, ST.; CUNNING FOLK; DEE, JOHN; DIVINATION; ORACLES; SCOT, REGINALD; SCRYING; SHAMANISM.

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SILESIA

Silesian territories had a relatively high rate of witchcraft persecution. Part of the Kingdom of Bohemia, the region was divided into several small *Standesherrschaften* (lordships) under Habsburg sovereignty. As elsewhere in the Holy Roman Empire, Silesian territories were affected by the Little Ice Age; by population growth; and by famine, plague, and religious uncertainty during the Thirty Years' War. Most persecution here occurred between 1580 and 1680, peaking in the Neisse area around 1651 or 1652; it mainly affected German-speaking areas on the left shore of the Oder River, primarily the principalities of Neisse (Nysa), Glogau (Glogow), Jägerndorf (Polish Karniów, Czech Krnov), Troppau (Opava), and Oppeln-Ratibor (Opole Racibórz).

Silesia was divided into immediate and mediate principalities and lordships (those directly subject to the emperor versus those subject to some intermediate authority). Until 1621, the Margrave of Brandenburg-Ansbach had possessions in Jägerndorf, and the house of Württemberg had possessions in Oels after 1648. The Habsburg emperor was the territorial sovereign (*Landesherr*), in most areas, but Silesia's local lords retained the right of high justice and could therefore conduct witchcraft trials to prove their relative independence. The Habsburgs governed through bailiffs and county-captains (*Landeshauptleute*), who possessed considerable autonomy. The actions of *Landeshauptmann* (governor) Georg Maximilian von Hoditz in Neisse showed clearly that neither the Holy Roman Emperor nor the bishop of Breslau intervened significantly in these trials, let alone directed them. In fact, the bishop of Breslau tried to moderate Hoditz's activities.

Silesia's first sorcery trials took place in 1456 at Breslau, where executions were still carried out by drowning, not by burning. Eight of the ten known trials in fifteenth-century Silesia took place in Breslau. The situation was similar during the first half of the sixteenth century, with nine of thirteen known trials taking place in Silesia's largest city. Although Breslau

remained calm thereafter, two pursuits took place in 1535 and 1581 in the Protestant town of Jägerndorf, belonging to Brandenburg, with at least twelve people executed.

Silesian witchcraft trials show both similarities and differences when compared with those in other territories within the empire. As in many other territories in the Reich, accusations of harmful magic predominated. With the trials of 1639, heresy, blasphemy, copulation with the Devil, and participation in the witches' Sabbath became dominant. Some Silesian local authorities, primarily the *Landeshauptmann* of Neisse, were responsible for promoting these witchcraft trials. Because the majority of the judges had no juridical training, they sought legal advice from the university jurists (*Schöppenstuhle*) of Breslau (Wrocław) and Löwenberg (Lwówek Śląski). The latter were notorious for their hard attitude; sometimes, in order to get a recommendation for an execution, local judges consciously went first to Breslau and then to Löwenberg. Occasionally, they even sought advice outside Silesia, at the *Schöppenstuhl* of Frankfurt an der Oder, Leipzig, or Wittenberg. However, Bohemia's appellate court, the Chamber of Appeals in Prague (not created until the 1680s), was consulted only in a few cases. Appeals to the emperor came primarily from husbands of prisoners, not necessarily to obtain the release of their wives but rather to restore their family's honor and sometimes their goods.

In Silesia, 444 single trials for witchcraft, resulting in 593 executions, can be proved; only 111 defendants escaped this fate, often after heavy torture. The fate of another 246 who were arrested remains unknown; most may have been executed (Lambrecht 1995, 345–346). With 40,000 square kilometers, Silesia was about as large as the current *Land* (state) of Bavaria (38,000 square kilometers), where 671 trials with 717 executions took place (Behringer 1988, 40–41). Over 90 percent of the victims were female. The majority of the 317 victims were killed during six waves of 20 or more victims between 1606 and 1669. During the trials at Neisse in 1651, almost one-fourth of the people condemned whose ages are known were children under fifteen; two-thirds of these 21 were under six years of age, including newborns and toddlers (Lambrecht 1995, 169, 404).

Although many victims were elderly poor women, several also came from a group of rich clothing merchants. This mainly Protestant group, which kept important positions within local government, stubbornly opposed the Counter-Reformation their Habsburg rulers enforced. These victims were affected not only by the trials but also by the confiscations, despite the fact that they were forbidden in such cases by the Carolina Code.

In seventeenth-century Silesia, the shift of persecution waves from west to east is remarkable: The trials at

Freiwaldau, together with those at Neisse, in 1622 produced the first expanding chain of accusations (*Besagungen*). For these trials, the exact number of victims is unknown, and traditional charges of harmful magic remain in the foreground. During the second wave, between 1639 and 1641, which principally affected the city of Neisse (Silesia's second-largest city) and its area, this was no longer the case. Only twenty-seven executions can be proved, but the number of victims must have been substantially higher. Moreover, this wave created an almost unique phenomenon, known otherwise only in Franconia: use of the witch furnace. Despite initial resistance from craftsmen in Neisse, the bishop of Breslau, Balthasar Liesch of Hornau, desiring to lower costs and accelerate the executions, ordered the building of such a furnace. Its form probably corresponded to a baking oven made from clay bricks. The witches were placed into the furnace, bound to chairs, in order to be burned.

The Swedish occupation of Neisse in 1642, combined with the authorities' resolve, brought the witch hunt to an almost complete end; however, a new outbreak of witch hunting followed Sweden's withdrawal in 1651. During the largest Silesian witch hunt, lasting from February 1651 until March 1652, probably more than 250 persons were executed. This time, it was primarily the environs of Neisse that were affected, particularly Freiwaldau (Jeseník) and Zuckmantel (Zlaté Hory). The wave began with a confession by an eight-year-old boy. Spreading from the region around Neisse, relatives of the witches were arrested as far away as Poland, Prague, and other parts of Bohemia. Owing to further confessions, forced by torture, but above all to the unbroken will of *Landeshauptmann* von Hoditz, which the bishop of Breslau slowed but could never stop, these trials finally ended in March 1652 after having caused enormous damage. Not just the high number of victims but especially the burning of pregnant women as well as children under six years of age and even babies was a singularly ghastly procedure, as Hoditz himself noted. Afterward, only isolated executions marked the second half of the seventeenth century. Witch hunting ended at Neisse in 1715 when a woman suspect was sent to the lunatic asylum.

The other major witch hunt occurred in Lower Silesia's Grünberg and the surrounding villages in the principality of Glogau, reaching its high point between 1663 and 1665 with over seventy executions. In this area, unlike in Neisse where witchcraft trials were led primarily by the *Landeshauptmann*, the trials were promoted by local landlords with "blood jurisdiction" (High Jurisdiction, the right to administer justice over serious crimes) who could therefore conduct trials on their own; they sometimes consulted the jurists of Löwenberg, well known for their harsh attitudes.

Almost parallel with activities in Neisse, further witch hunts took place in Jägerndorf, now given to the Catholic house of Liechtenstein, in 1638, between 1653 and 1654, and in 1662; they claimed at least twenty-five lives. There, unlike in Neisse, the *Landeshauptmann* tried to stop the trials, particularly during the largest wave from 1653 to 1654, while the landlord, Karl Eusebius of Liechtenstein, was interested in the executions. He wanted to use witchcraft trials both to secure his rule over this formerly Protestant territory and to demonstrate his right of high jurisdiction against the *Landeshauptmann*.

Individual trials also occurred in other parts of Silesia, in German-speaking rather than Polish-speaking areas. Particularly in Oppeln-Ratibor, which was pawned from 1645 to 1666 to the Crown of Poland, a wave of trials began in 1663, increasing sharply after the Habsburgs returned and lasting until 1668. More than thirty-four victims came from Polish-speaking villages in the east of Oppeln; others came from Gleiwitz, where the official language was Czech. We should not forget that witchcraft trials in Poland could also lead to pursuits in Silesia, as can be proved for some places in Lower Silesia.

The last executions occurred at Oels (governed by a branch of the house of Württemberg) in 1701, at Schweidnitz in 1703, at Oppeln in 1725, and finally at Breslau in 1730, claiming eleven lives in all.

For most of Silesia, witchcraft was no longer a punishable crime after the Prussian occupation of 1742. In the remaining Habsburg areas of Silesia, the Theresiana finally replaced the Carolina Code. Witchcraft and superstition remained crimes, although after 1755 or 1756, physicians had to be consulted and torture was forbidden in connection with witchcraft. Until 1780, the government primarily attacked the still-widespread faith in *Wiedergänger* (revenants, dead people with material bodies who return to the world of the living); afterward, nothing connected with witchcraft was punishable in Austrian Silesia.

LUDOLF PELIZAEUS

See also: AUSTRIA; AUSTRIAN WESTERN TERRITORIES; BAMBERG; BAVARIA; BOHEMIA; CAROLINA CODE; CHILDREN; EXECUTIONS; FERDINAND III, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; LITTLE ICE AGE; MARIA THERESA, HOLY ROMAN EMPRESS; POLAND; REVENANTS; WITCH HUNTS.

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SIMON, JORDAN (1719–1776)

Simon was known for his attack on beliefs in witchcraft and for his involvement in the Bavarian War of the Witches. Although Jordan Simon was mentioned in most biographical dictionaries around 1800, his biography remains patchy. Born in Neustadt an der Saale, a subject of the prince-bishop of Würzburg, Albanus Simon (his birth name) joined the Augustinian Hermits, received his monastic name of Jordan, and was sent to their monastery at Mainz in 1737 to study philosophy and theology. In 1742, after being consecrated a priest, he became professor of philosophy at Constance. Dissatisfied with monastic life, he left his convent that very year, traveling through Italy, France, Spain, the Netherlands, and parts of Russia. According to later accounts, Simon was particularly impressed by the works of enlightened Italian theologians such as Ludovico Muratori or philosophers such as Scipione Maffei (Strüber 1930, 28–30). In 1745, Simon returned to Germany, where he was named parish priest at Erfurt after taking his doctoral degree in theology at the local university; he subsequently became professor of theology there. He moved to Würzburg after quarreling with the prince-archbishop of Mainz, but after that man's death, Simon returned to teach canon law in Erfurt, where he published mainly between 1755 and 1759.

Although supposedly forced to flee once more because of quarrels and an alleged fraud, Simon, according to printed sermons, preached again at Erfurt in 1763 and 1766. Between 1760 and 1771, when he lived in nearby Münnerstadt, most of his works were published at Augsburg or Würzburg, although others were still printed at Erfurt as well as Munich, Ingolstadt, Frankfurt, and Leipzig. From 1772, Simon served as professor at the University of Prague and as councillor to the king of Bohemia, the enlightened Emperor Joseph II.

Contemporary biographers listed more than fifty publications by Simon, including a textbook for learning Italian (Erfurt, 1755), numerous Latin dissertations, and several translations from French. *A Moral Philosophy*, taken from the enlightened Italian theologian Muratori (Würzburg, 1764), indicated that Simon had embarked on the difficult business of Catholic enlightenment. However, many other publications—such as booklets on the life of Augustine, his *Refutation of Materialism* (separate editions at Augsburg and Würzburg, 1761), an apology for the veneration of saints (Augsburg, 1768), and his defenses of

Catholicism against libertines including Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Voltaire, and their followers (Augsburg, 1772) and against Epicurean philosophy (Würzburg, 1772)—clearly demonstrated the limits of toleration on his part. Simon reportedly published on the 1749 Würzburg witchcraft trial (Strüber 1930, 144, 204), but no traces of this work have survived.

One reason for Simon's quarrels with the prince-archbishops of Mainz may have been his position on witchcraft. Under the pseudonym Ardoino Ubbidente dell' OSA (*Ardoino* was an anagram of Iordano [Jordan], *OSA* an abbreviation of *Ordo Sancti Augustini* [Order of St. Augustine]), he published his first full-fledged attack on witch beliefs at Würzburg in 1761: *Das grosse Welt-betrügende Nichts oder die heutige Hexerey- und Zauberkunst* (The Great World Deceiving Nothing, or Today's Art of Witchcraft and Sorcery). Five years later, he published an updated version at Frankfurt, entitled *Die Nichtigkeit der Hexerey und Zauberkunst* (The Inanity of Witchcraft and Sorcery), developing his ideas for almost 600 pages.

Coincidentally, the Bavarian War of the Witches, one of the major debates of Catholic enlightenment in Europe, began the same year. Pushed by her son Joseph II, Empress Maria Theresa published a decree on witchcraft in November 1766, designed to terminate the endless series of witchcraft trials in Hungary; Jordan Simon immediately published a commented version of this edict at Munich. Its first 128 pages assailed Angelus März (1727–1784), another Augustinian from Munich. In December 1766, März had attacked an enlightened Theatine, Ferdinand Sterzinger, who had tried to terminate any attempt at further witchcraft trials in October. The second part of Simon's version was a reprint of the 16-page Austrian decree. In a third part, Simon spent 154 pages refuting the arguments of those who defended belief in witchcraft, abundantly paraphrasing his previous publications as well as those of such Italian luminaries as Maffei or Muratori.

Contemporaries considered Simon a vital contributor to the Bavarian War of the Witches; at least, he was mentioned several times in the local newspaper (*Churbayrisches Intelligenzblatt*) in July and August 1767. In his refutation of Jordan, März rightly pointed out that the royal decree had not categorically denied the existence of witchcraft but merely tried to prevent further local trials. However, Simon (1767, 237–238) maintained his idea that the witches' confessions were exclusively a product of torture and of Inquisition trials. He thus touched the core issue of the Catholic Church's guilt. Simon said, more articulately than Sterzinger or Joseph II, that *all* convicted witches were innocent.

After Simon's contribution, Bavarian luminaries changed their strategy and began ridiculing their opponents. It is unclear whether Simon authored two further small publications that contained stories of

witchcraft. In one, a pair of trousers flapping in the wind scared local people. The mayor imprisoned the trousers, and some monks exorcised them, until a carpenter reached the town hall and demanded his trousers back.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AUGSBURG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY; BAVARIAN WAR OF THE WITCHES; ENLIGHTENMENT; JOSEPH II, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; MAFFEI, SCIPIONE; MARIA THERESA, HOLY ROMAN EMPRESS; MURATORI, LUDOVICO; STERZINGER, FERDINAND; WÜRZBURG.

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SIMON MAGUS

Simon Magus, also known as Simon the magician, possibly a Samaritan by nationality, makes his first appearance in Acts 8.9–24. There, we are told that he had acquired a great popular reputation as someone who either possessed divine power or could mediate with it. When Peter and John went to Samaria and began baptizing people, Simon took this to be a special technique for transmitting a power that could work miracles, and he offered to buy their secret from them (hence the later term *simony*, referring to the sale of or traffic in spiritual things). The Apostles sternly rejected his offer and urged him to pray for forgiveness.

Simon then disappeared from the canonical Bible, but in the apocryphal *Passion of the Apostles Peter and Paul*, he undertook a magical contest with St. Peter in the presence of the Emperor Nero. The emperor was impressed that Simon had been credited with resurrecting a man who had been beheaded, but on being challenged to read Peter's thoughts and secret conversation with Nero, Simon became angry and created the illusion of several big dogs that, on his instructions, bound forward with the intention of eating Peter. Peter, however, blessed them, and they disappeared. Then, Simon said he would fly up to heaven on a particular day. So Nero had a tall tower built, and Simon launched himself off the top and began to fly. But Peter saw that he is being borne up by demons and ordered them to let him fall. This they did, and Simon crashed to his death on the Sacred Way in the center of Rome.

Other accounts of Simon's magical abilities were given in the *Acts of Peter*, with further details, including his apparent creation of a human being by combining a body of air with the soul of a murdered boy, appearing in the *Clementine Recognitions* and *Homilies*, where we also hear about Simon's heretical teaching, which seemed heavily influenced by Gnostic theology. Not surprisingly, perhaps, a religious sect (the Simonians) based on his person and his doctrines was active for a while, because the *Acts of Peter* told us that on a certain occasion, Simon flew over one of the gates of Rome in a shining cloud and people worshipped him as God or Christ. According to the sixteenth-century skeptic Johann Weyer, in *De praestigiiis daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils, 1563, book 2, chap. 3), Simon was a seedbed of all kinds of heresies, a suggestion he probably picked up from the Church Father Irenaeus.

But usually, Simon has been depicted as a blasphemous rival to Jesus, working his wonders with satanic help, wonders that were, in fact, merely clever illusions. The details afforded by the apocryphal writings were further expanded during the Middle Ages. The fifth- to sixth-century *Acts of Saint Nero and Saint Achilleus*, the later *Golden Legend* of Jacobus da Voragine, and the thirteenth-century Dominican John of Mailly all elaborated on an incident (also illustrated in several pieces of medieval art) when Simon tied a huge mastiff to a gate with the intention that it would devour Peter, who released the dog without being harmed. The more spectacular business of Simon's magical flight was used by the fourteenth-century St. Vincent Ferrer to underline the difference between the genuine miracles worked by St. Peter and the illusory, demon-based magic of Simon, which led only to spiritual and physical destruction, as witnessed by his falling to his death.

Simon thus represents type of arrogant magician aspiring to be God but reliant upon demonic help to create extraordinary illusions in the eyes of the beholders. At a stroke, therefore, he could be and was used to

criticize and condemn both ritual magicians and, by implication, the workers of that simpler but malevolent magic known as witchcraft.

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART

See also: BIBLE; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; JESUS; MIRACLES; RITUAL MAGIC.

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ŠINDELÁŘ, BEDŘICH (1917–1996)

A Czech Marxist historian and witchcraft specialist, Šindelář wrote two monographs and several studies treating the persecution of witchcraft in both Habsburg central Europe (Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia) and France. Šindelář's research spread across four other fields as well: Czech labor movements from 1860 to 1930, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century emigration from Czech lands, the political history of early modern western Europe, and eighteenth-century Freemasonry.

Born in Bosnia, he attended the University of Brno before and after World War II, reading history and German and earning his PhD in 1946 with a thesis on the history of witchcraft trials in Czech lands. He taught at Brno from 1953 until his retirement in 1990, becoming professor of history (in 1963) and serving as dean of the philosophical faculty (from 1976 to 1980). From 1952 to 1986, he was editor in chief of the *Časopis Matice moravské* (*Journal of the Moravian Association*), the oldest and most important Moravian periodical. Throughout his time as a university teacher, Šindelář never broke off his political activities as a dogmatic Communist. He took an active part in the politically motivated purges after the Communist coup d'état in Czechoslovakia in February 1948, which resulted in the dismissal of many non-Communist teachers at the University of Brno and the expulsion of hundreds of students. He played the same role during the so-called normalization following the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

As a specialist in the history of witchcraft trials, he formulated an extremely problematic, ideologically manipulative, and anti-Western interpretation of the European

witch hunt (Šindelář 1980). He maintained that Orthodox eastern Europe (particularly Russia) was not at all less civilized and less humane than western Europe because Orthodox regions had much less witchcraft persecution and far fewer trials during the late medieval and early modern periods. According to his moralizing interpretation, the Orthodox east showed "greater moderation [in persecuting witches] than western Christianity, which allowed these trials to become a terrible mass hunt and a cruel horror, making an inextinguishable blemish on the face of western European culture and civilization. Nevertheless, certain of its defenders are prone to boast that Western culture and civilization were both in the past and present . . . more humane than the East" (Šindelář 1980, 87–88). He produced one of the last but simultaneously one of the most distinctive attempts by dogmatic Marxist historiography to use the phenomenon of European witchcraft trials as a tool of anti-Western and anticlerical propaganda.

This thesis subsequently influenced the conception of his large monograph about the history of the witch hunt, published in 95,000 copies (Šindelář 1986). Besides its numerous tendentious anti-Western and anti-Catholic passages, the work neglected the results of the western European and American renaissance of witchcraft studies since 1970 the work done particularly by H. C. Erik Midelfort, William Monter, and Gerhard Schormann, who brought the work of the SS (*Schutzstaffel* [protection force]) *H-Sonderkommando* (special unit H [*Hexen*—witches]) to light in 1980. Consequently, Šindelář's monograph remains a widely read but scientifically obsolete relic of the Warsaw Pact era.

PETR KREUZ;

TRANSLATED BY VLADIMIR CINKE

See also: HISTORIOGRAPHY; MIDELFORT, H. C. ERIK; MONTER, WILLIAM; NAZI INTEREST IN WITCH PERSECUTION; ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY; SLOVAKIA.

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SINISTRARI, LUDOVICO MARIA (1632–1701)

Sinistrari was an Italian Franciscan demonologist and jurist. Students of witchcraft know his *De delictis et poenis* (On Crimes and Punishments, 1700), wherein Sinistrari analyzed (4.13) the concept of *daemonialitas*, or copulation between humans and incubi. In 1876, a French bibliophile, Isidore Lisieux, published a Latin manuscript entitled *Demonialitas expensa, hoc est de carnalis commixtionis hominis cum daemone possibilitate, modo, ac varietate dissertatio* (Demoniality, that is a Dissertation on the Possibility, Means, and Variety of Human Sexual Contact with Demons), attributing it to Sinistrari; Lisieux subsequently printed French and English translations of the work. In 1927, the occultist Montague Summers reworked Lisieux’s English translation as part of his program to make the major texts of witchcraft available, intellectually respectable, and, if possible, credible to a modern mass audience. (Summers claimed that incubi and succubi were probably identical with fairies, leprechauns, kobolds, and other folkloric creatures, and he characteristically declared his unhesitating belief in their existence [Summers, in Sinistrari 1989, xxxix].) Comparing the Lisieux text with two Latin manuscripts in Italian libraries, a recent Italian translation (Carena 1986) was based on a manuscript in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana of Milan (*Daemonialitas Expensa, Hoc est de Carnalis Commixtionis Hominis cum Daemone Possibilitate, Modo, Ac Varietate Dissertatio* [Demoniality, That is a Dissertation on the Possibility, Means, and variety of Human Sexual Contact with Demons]). Sinistrari apparently intended all 121 sections of *De Daemonialitate* as an entry for *De delictis* before deciding to include only the final 6, leaving the remaining 115, which developed his historical and philosophical proofs, in manuscript form (Carena 1986, 16–17).

Sinistrari’s lengthy title reflected his main contention: Incubi and succubi existed and copulated in various ways with human beings. He posited that incubi and succubi differed fundamentally from the evil demons of Judeo-Christian tradition because they were not disembodied *daemones* but *animalia* (bodies intrinsically animated by souls), just like people; they had natural bodies of an airy substance that were born and died, not the artificial bodies that Aquinas theorized for angels and demons. Incubi and succubi could be saved or damned when they died, and Jesus atoned for their sins along with our own. Therefore, “demoniality” with an incubus or succubus differed ethically from copulation with an evil demon.

Whereas demons copulated with humans in order to procure our damnation, incubi and succubi simply enjoyed sex because of their genuine corporeality. They required no pact or *maleficium* (harmful magic): Thus, demoniality was no more serious than bestiality, which degraded human nature, whereas sex with incubi or succubi exalted human nature (humans and incubi or succubi had equal spiritual dignity, but the latter had nobler bodies).

As heir to centuries of speculation on human–demon copulation, Sinistrari quoted authors from Michael Psellos (d. 1078) through Francesco Maria Guazzo, along with numerous biblical, patristic, and scholastic texts, with particular interest in the incubi St. Augustine mentioned in his *City of God*. Sinistrari’s purpose was novel: Instead of merely invoking copulation as proof of suprahuman beings, he wanted to salvage a form of copulation with them that was, if not laudable, only venially sinful.

However, Sinistrari sabotaged his revisionist program by conceding that incubi and succubi were as difficult to discover as evil demons because their airy bodies were so subtle and because, like evil demons, they normally appeared only to their paramours. Thus, persons who copulated with incubi or succubi necessarily believed they were voluntarily sinning with evil demons. Because sin was defined by intention as well as act, demonialists had to be punished exactly as witches were. Witchcraft was deplorable but legally provable; demoniality was neither.

Sinistrari’s postmodern heirs are the self-styled victims of alien abduction and the therapists who encourage them. Like Sinistrari, alien abduction enthusiasts seek to confirm corporeal, especially sexual, encounters between human beings and higher, “more spiritual” beings, yet they oppose Christian criminalization of such behavior. Indeed, proponents of alien abduction now denounce or dismiss Christianity as an irrational oppressor, superseded by an allegedly more evolved outlook offering “scientific” proof that “we are not alone” (Mack 1994, 387–422; Stephens 2002, 367–369).

WALTER STEPHENS

See also: AQUINAS, THOMAS; AUGUSTINE, ST.; CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DEMONOLOGY; DEMONS; GUAZZO, FRANCESCO MARIA; IMAGINATION; INCUBUS AND SUCCUBUS; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC; SUMMERS, MONTAGUE; TASSO, TORQUATO.

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SKEPTICISM

Skepticism about witchcraft can be defined as attitudes doubting the reality of some or even all of the principal crimes attributed to witches: the pact with the Devil, participation in the Sabbat, and the ability to fly and to injure others magically. Skepticism varied from moderate (questioning the reality of some components of witchcraft or simply the ability of the judicial system to detect “true” witches) to radical (denying the truth of witches’ confessions or even any possible interaction between humans and demons, though rarely denying the existence of demons). Historically, a variety of different approaches—philosophical, theological, medical, or judicial—were incorporated, often in combination, in the skeptical opinions of leading critics of witchcraft.

Skeptical views on deeds attributed to witches were expressed throughout the entire period in Europe, starting with the early tenth-century (ca. 906) Carolingian law, the *Canon Episcopi*, and continuing through the age of the witch hunts. However, it was only under the influence of Renaissance humanism and its revival of classical skepticism that critics of witchcraft objected openly and articulately to the theories of demonologists; opinions questioning the very foundations of the witch hunts do not occupy center stage until the mid-seventeenth century. The excesses of the largest witch panics, combined with the rise of Cartesian rationalism, produced irreparable cracks in the walls of belief. Thereafter, believers in witchcraft found themselves on the defensive, as skeptics gradually but irresistibly demolished the entire edifice of witchcraft theory, asserting that the witch hunters’ claims were impossible physically, unsound both philosophically and theologically, and unprovable legally.

The *Canon Episcopi*, purportedly issued by the Council of Ancyra (314), was a crucial document in the history of both belief in and criticism of witchcraft. The *Canon* distinguished harmful magic and divination, concrete and very real threats that had to be eradicated, from the deluded visions of some “wicked women” who gave themselves over to the Devil and then, “seduced by the illusions and phantasms of the demons,” believed themselves to be part of the goddess Diana’s retinue and to ride at night “upon certain beasts” for long distances. The author of the *Canon* called the women’s claims a “false opinion” because the Devil could trick the imagination of such “miserable little women” (*mulierculae*), producing visions and making them believe that such actions took place truly and corporeally (Kors and Peters 2001, 61–63). By dismissing the whole matter as an illusion, blamed on Satan’s powers over the human

intellect and the low social status of the supposed witches, the *Canon* anticipated most of the objections that skeptics would subsequently raise against the affirmations of witch hunters.

The inclusion of the *Canon Episcopi* in Gratian’s collection of canon law, or *Decretum*, around 1140 gave it widespread authority (Kors and Peters 2001, 72–77). Simultaneously, possibly under the influence of the *Decretum*, John of Salisbury, an English philosopher and prominent churchman, expressed an analogous skeptical view in his *Policraticus* (The Statesman, 1159), stressing the illusions of the witches’ experiences, which only “poor old women and the simpleminded kinds of men” could mistake for reality (Kors and Peters 2001, 77–78).

Developments in philosophy between the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries, chiefly the rediscovery of Aristotle’s works and the rise of Scholasticism, brought a heightened interest in the natural world, including the need to redefine, through purely “physical” investigations, the essential characteristics and influence of demons. Thomas Aquinas proved that demons could interfere with natural phenomena and could also create a “virtual” body and have bodily contacts with humans. His conclusions had a decisive effect on theories of witchcraft. Such was the case with the Florentine Dominican theologian Jacopo Passavanti, whose popular handbook for confessors—*Specchio della vera penitenza* (Mirror of True Penitence, ca. 1354)—mentioned some women who believed they participated in the *tregenda*, a collective night ride under the guidance of Diana or Herodias, to a place where “dishonest things” were carried out (Kors and Peters 2001, 110–111). Although Passavanti stressed that most of these things were simply delusions caused by demons, he did not completely deny the reality of the *tregenda*, because he maintained (following mainstream Scholasticism) that the Devil had the power to carry people physically from one place to another. His opinion, which supported the *Canon Episcopi*’s view of the Sabbat as an illusion while leaving room for exceptions, marked an important transition toward a less skeptical stance.

During the fifteenth century, discussions about the reality of witchcraft entered a decisive phase. Belief in the diabolical sect of the witches as a new form of heresy found complete expression first, without altogether eliminating skepticism. In fact, even fully orthodox theologians and inquisitors seldom subscribed to the witchcraft paradigm without a prior examination of its foundations, and they often rejected some of them. For example, they almost universally dismissed the witches’ ability to transform themselves (and others) into animals as a sensory illusion provoked by the Devil, because only a divine miracle could truly change the nature of creatures. Despite a general

consensus about the diabolical origin of the witches' power to harm, several key authors—Johannes Nider, among others—admitted the possibility of *fascinatio*, that is, the “natural” malefic effect of a witch’s poisonous glance on impressionable people (Lea 1957, 1: 265–272). The most controversial topics remained the reality of the witches’ Sabbat and the possibility of physical contact between demons and humans. A kind of moderate skepticism on these issues could be found among several theologians (for example, Nider, Alphonso de Spina, Martin of Arles, and Giordano of Bergamo), who agreed that such experiences were largely delusions, diabolically induced visions. However, the tone of the discussion changed sensibly over the century: A growing number of influential authors, while conceding the theoretical possibility of illusions, stressed that Sabbats and related phenomena normally took place in reality and corporeally. After 1450, the boundaries between the two opposing factions in the debate became more sharply defined. Those on one side, mostly Dominican inquisitors, tried to neutralize the *Canon Episcopi*, either by stating that present-day witches constituted a new heretical group (Jean Vinet) distinct from “sect of Diana” or by explicitly undermining the *Canon*’s authoritative status (Nicolas Jacquier). The skeptics, more heterogeneous but frequently lay jurists, upheld the *Canon*, insisting on the ability of demons to deceive human senses.

Particularly significant for its viewpoint was a work from the 1460s by an Italian jurist, Ambrogio Vignati, entitled *Quaestio unica de lamiis seu strigibus* (Investigation on Witches, part of his *Tractatus de haeresi* [Treatise on Heresies]). The author argued that most feats confessed by witches were simply impossible because the Devil’s incorporeal nature prevented him from having physical contact with humans. Furthermore, Vignati reversed mainstream legal tradition by arguing that in capital cases such as heresy, standards of proof should be higher than for other crimes: Thus, testimonies from confessed witches could not provide sufficient ground for torturing people they accused because the whole matter was delusional and therefore impossible (Lea 1957, 1: 299–301). Even a prominent Italian monk, the Florentine Guglielmo Becchi, master general of the Augustinian order, affirmed in the 1460s that demons could delude the senses and the intellect but could not interact corporeally with humans (Thorndike 1934, 4: 298–299). In 1489, an Austrian jurist, Ulrich Molitor (von Müller), discredited the Sabbat and animal metamorphoses, which he considered both impossible and delusional; however, he believed that the witches’ harmful powers were certainly real and very great, and he demanded the death sentence for those delusional women who had abandoned God for the Devil (Lea 1957, 1: 348–353). The issue acquired an important new dimension with

the publication of Symphorien Champier’s *Dialogus in magicarum artium destructionem* (Dialogue in Destruction of Magic Arts, ca. 1500), in which this French humanist physician speculated that beliefs in the reality of diabolical gatherings and the wicked deeds committed there may have resulted from a disease of the imagination, requiring a medical treatment for alleged witches (although he conceded that demons might have been responsible for the disease) (Thorndike 1941, 5: 117–118).

This debate reached its peak in the early sixteenth century, when it became a major controversy to which authors on opposing sides devoted entire works. The polemical exchange between the Franciscan Samuel de Cassini and the Dominican Vincenzo Dodo in 1505 and 1506 revolved around the theological argument of divine justice; Cassini denied that God would allow the demonic transportation of witches—possible in principle—for such wicked purposes as injuring innocent creatures. In those years, skeptics continued to use both logic and law to weaken the arguments of believers. For example, Giovanni Francesco Ponzinibio, a lawyer from Piacenza (Lombardy), composed the *Tractatus subtilis, et elegans, de lamijs, et excellentia utriusque iuris* (Subtle and Elegant Treatise on Witches and the Excellence of Both Civil and Canon Law, 1519–1520), the most articulate and systematic criticism of the belief in witchcraft of the time. Ponzinibio advocated the superiority of canon and civil law over theology, even on matters pertaining to faith. Using the *Canon Episcopi*, he also ruled out any possibility of the Sabbat, questioning the trustworthiness of the witches’ confessions as well as the testimony of their accomplices—all uncouth and wicked people, easily falling prey to the Devil’s delusions. Ponzinibio provoked a massive response from believers in witchcraft. He was vociferously opposed by a Dominican inquisitor from Pisa, Bartolomeo della Spina, author of a *Quaestio de strigibus* (An Investigation of Witches, 1523) and a *Quadruplex apologia de lamiis contra Ponzinibium* (Fourfold Defense on Witches against Ponzinibio, 1525), both of which demolished the *Canon Episcopi* as much as they confuted Ponzinibio (Zambelli 1991; Stephens 2002).

The growth of skepticism is further illustrated by Gianfrancesco Pico della Mrandola’s dialogue, *Strix* (The Witch, 1523), in which the influence of the witchcraft critics—represented by one participant, Apistius (“the Unbeliever”)—deserved an attack based on an impressive display of classical learning (Burke 1977). A significant passage from the famous Italian jurist Andrea Alciati about the reality of the Sabbat explicitly rejected the opinion of theologians, employing a wealth of classical authors as well as legal sources. Alciati questioned why one would believe that supposed witches had attended a demonic gathering if their husbands swore that they were in bed with them;

it made more sense to regard the Sabbat as wholly delusional, a vision induced by the Devil, and to consider that women who believed in it needed to be cured, not punished (*Parergon iuris* [On the Accessory of Jurisprudence], 1544, but the passage discussed dates to the early 1520s; see Lea 1957, 1: 374–376). Alciati's immense prestige added weight to his opinions, which, for the first time, combined legal considerations with medical explanations to question the theories of the witch hunters.

Interestingly enough, in these years, very few influential Neoplatonic philosophers, who advocated a learned, licit version of “natural magic,” publicly defended the so-called witches, both because they believed in the reality of demons and demonic magic and because they were trying hard to avoid accusations of dealing with the diabolical side of the supernatural world. One remarkable exception was the famous philosopher-magus and physician Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim, from Cologne, who, in the draft of his *De occulta philosophia* (On Occult Philosophy, written 1509, published in 1531 and 1533), blamed the beliefs of the “witches” on senility and, in a now-lost manuscript *Adversus lamiarum inquisitores* (Against the Inquisitors of Witches) accused the Inquisition of being moved by cruelty and greed in handling witchcraft cases (Nauert 1965). It was, however, an Aristotelian philosopher, Pietro Pomponazzi, author of *De naturalium effectuum causis sive de incantationibus* (Of the Causes of Natural Effects, or of Incantations, written 1520, but not published until 1556), who first radically denied the existence of disembodied spirits (both angels and demons) and attributed even the most extraordinary phenomena to the hidden powers of nature, ruling out the possibility of magic (Zambelli 1991).

While positions as extreme as Pomponazzi's remained isolated, a more selective type of skepticism emerged during the second half of the sixteenth century among several humanist physicians, who continued to express belief in the existence of demons while dismissing most of the witches' supposed crimes as the result of a disease of the imagination. In 1557, Girolamo Cardano, a famous astrologer and mathematician with a medical degree from the University of Padua, published *De rerum varietate* (On the Variety of Things), a work that included an attempt to analyze witchcraft beliefs from a medical viewpoint. Cardano blamed the fantastic confessions of night rides and diabolical orgies on the melancholic nature of poor mountain women, who suffered from a meager diet responsible for an excess of black bile and therefore experienced hallucinations. But it was another physician, Johann Weyer, working in Cleves, who first systematically attacked the witchcraft paradigm with his massive treatise *De praestigiis daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils,

1563), employing a variety of conceptual tools. Weyer admitted that devils may intervene physically in the world and commit horrible crimes, but he argued that they needed no human accomplices. While it was true that demonic male magicians existed and were to be punished harshly, he said, it was ridiculous to suppose that poor, old, simple women could perform supernatural operations. Their belief in such things could only be explained in medical terms as a disorder of the humors in their bodies, just as natural diseases accounted for most illnesses blamed on harmful magic. Besides using his medical competence, Weyer was also the first skeptic to draw on philological arguments to deny the scriptural foundation of witch hunting by showing that the supposedly relevant passages in the Bible did not refer to the witchcraft of his days. Finally, he used legal discourse to undermine the essence of the witches' crime—their pact with the Devil, which he showed to be juridically not binding on humans who entered it (Valente 2003).

Weyer's work enjoyed considerable editorial success, although it was attacked by a Swiss professor of medicine at Heidelberg, Thomas Erastus, with his *Repetitio disputationis de lamiis seu strigibus* (Repetition of the Disputation on Witches, 1578), and by the famous French jurist Jean Bodin, who devoted a good portion of his *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (On the Demon-Mania of Witches, 1580) to its confutation. It is noteworthy, however, that certain arguments raised by Weyer—for example, the possibility that melancholy caused witches to confess imaginary crimes—were accepted even by such influential supporters of witch hunts as Peter Binsfeld, suffragan bishop of Trier and author of the *Tractatus de confessionibus maleficorum et sagarum* (Treatise on Confessions of Sorcerers and Witches, 1589) (Valente 2003).

Perhaps the most coherent and implacable sixteenth-century assault on the witch hunters' theories came from an outsider, both geographically and professionally: the English country gentleman Reginald Scot, whose *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) called into question the very foundations of the belief. Scot drew upon Weyer's work in arguing for the mental illness of the self-confessed witches but surpassed him by denying the Devil any physical power. He therefore concluded that, since no human being could really inflict harm save through natural means (in which case, the crime became poisoning), witchcraft was an impossibility (Thomas 1971, 572–573). Although he had some influence on later English skeptics, Scot's position remained marginal, especially since it was based on a heterodox theology that largely reduced Satan to a metaphor for human imperfection and sinfulness (Wootton 2001).

Meanwhile, additional ammunition for those doubting the reality of witchcraft came from a new

philosophical trend of systematic skepticism, based on the recovery of the works of the ancient Greek skeptics, best expressed in the celebrated French philosopher Michel de Montaigne's *Essais* (Essays, 1580). Without addressing the issue of witchcraft in great detail, he emphasized the limited and imperfect nature of human knowledge, stressing that in matters as obscure and controversial as witchcraft, one should proceed with care and moderation, explaining the witches' actions in human rather than supernatural terms, and refrain from inflicting severe punishments. Montaigne prepared the French philosophical movement of *libertins érudits*, the intellectual avant-garde of the early seventeenth century. The movement's most relevant expression for the issue of skepticism was Gabriel Naudé's *Apologie pour les grands hommes soupçonnés de magie* (A Defense of the Great Men Suspected of Magic, 1625). Naudé did not attack the foundations of belief in witchcraft and other supernatural phenomena directly but rather insinuated his disbelief through the use of irony and mockery, and he suggested that the educated few had to take a critical stance toward "superstitions" blindly accepted by fanatics and the ignorant populace. Although confined to a very limited group of thinkers because of its atheistic implications, this attitude had a significant underground influence and resurfaced at the beginning of the Enlightenment (Popkin 1979).

By the late sixteenth century, an attitude of caution and doubt became the standard approach of the most important courts devoted to the repression of heresy in the Mediterranean: the Spanish and the Roman Inquisitions. While this attitude was already apparent in Italian witchcraft prosecutions in the late sixteenth century, the most important Spanish documents detailing this intellectual change came early in the following century. A Spanish inquisitor, Alonso de Salazar Frías, wrote sharply critical reports about a large-scale witch hunt in the Basque Country (1611–1614), blaming the authorities' imprudent support of popular credulity and condemning the procedures followed by local inquisitors; afterward, the Inquisition practically stopped prosecuting witches in Spain (Henningsson 1980). The Roman Inquisition adopted analogous guidelines, the *Instructio pro formandis processibus in causis strigum, sortilegiorum et maleficiorum* (Instruction for Conducting Trial Procedures Against Witches, Sorcerers, and Evildoers, 1620s), asserting that witchcraft was difficult to verify, both because of the inconstant nature of the offenders—women—and the role played by the Devil, the master of illusions. Local inquisitors were therefore urged to proceed with extreme care in order not to exceed the limits of legal propriety (Tedeschi 1991).

This type of skepticism, aimed mostly at making judicial procedures for prosecuting witchcraft more accurate and fair, produced a sizable cluster of works

between the end of the sixteenth century and the early seventeenth century. Several came from men who had witnessed the horrors perpetrated by witch hunters in the territories of the Holy Roman Empire, including law professors (Johann Georg Goedelmann and Ernst Cothmann), Protestant ministers (Johann Matthäus Meyfart [Meyfahrt] and Johann Greve), and Jesuits (Adam Tanner, Paul Laymann, Friedrich Spee). These critics denounced the general lack of solid proof to convict or even to arrest or torture people accused of witchcraft, arguing that the nature of the crime—always difficult to ascertain because it was linked to the diabolical power to delude—required judges to weigh evidence more carefully than in other types of cases. These authors accused the courts of bad faith, inhumanity, and abuses in torturing suspected witches; such excesses, by eliciting forced confessions, falsified the criminal procedure entirely and inevitably led to condemnations of innocent people. This body of critical legal literature grew during the century, reaching its fullest maturity in the books of Christian Thomasius, professor of law at the University of Halle: *De crimine magiae* (On the Crime of Magic, 1701) and *De origine ac progressu processus inquisitorii contra sagas* (On the Origin and Continuation of the Inquisitorial Trial against Witches, 1712). Expanding on Spee's *Cautio Griminalis seu de processibus contra sagas liber* (A Warning on Criminal Justice, or A Book on Witch Trials, 1631), Thomasius expressed his firm conviction that the witches' deeds, above all participation in the Sabbat, were impossible to prove legally and thus should no longer be prosecuted (Lea 1957, vol. 2; Levack 1999).

Although limited in scope, judicial skepticism proved extremely effective in reducing—and often stopping altogether—witch persecutions in most of western Europe by the end of the seventeenth century. But changes in attitude among a large portion of European jurists and judges cannot be explained solely in terms of a shift in the prevailing legal paradigm; it clearly mirrored a more general transformation of the dominant mental outlook among educated Europeans. The root of this shift lay in their acceptance of a secularized, mechanical philosophy, which, by stressing the separation of the realms of spirit and matter, made the existence of such incorporeal "substances" as angels and demons highly problematic, thus undermining the cornerstone of Scholastic theories on witchcraft. Individual positions among the followers of the "new philosophy" were, however, varied. René Descartes never explicitly denied the existence of demons, but in his *Leviathan* (1651), the materialist Thomas Hobbes reduced supernatural phenomena to products of past ignorance and superstition; his radical interpretation of Scripture made demons into metaphors for humans' evil thoughts and intentions (Porter 1999). Similar

ideas were intrinsic to the rationalistic pantheism of Benedict (Baruch) Spinoza, a Dutch Jew banned from his Amsterdam community whose philosophy assumed the existence of only one substance of divine origin in the universe and who simply ruled out the existence of evil and therefore any possibility for supernatural events such as witchcraft (Israel 2001).

Because the rejection of the diabolical paradigm by both Hobbes and Spinoza was the consequence of a radical philosophical outlook that implicitly denied traditional conceptions of a personal deity, their ideas were generally condemned as atheistic. They nevertheless exerted a powerful influence on less extreme witchcraft critics, such as the Dutch Calvinist pastor Balthasar Bekker. In his four-volume *De Betoverde Weereld* (The World Bewitched, 1691–1693, which was soon translated into French, German, and English), Bekker launched what became, in many respects, the final onslaught on the entire belief complex related to harmful magic and satanic power. From a theological point of view, Bekker argued that witch hunters had impiously underestimated God's sense of justice and love for humankind in supposing that he allowed the Devil unlimited freedom to torment his creatures. Influenced by Descartes, Bekker believed that nature worked with uniform regularity, with which a purely spiritual devil could not interfere. Using Spinoza's devastating principles of biblical exegesis, Bekker then turned to Scripture, interpreting its passages about magic or dealings with demons as referring either to natural phenomena or to deceit and accusing believers in witchcraft of having senselessly exceeded both reason and Revelation. Bekker exemplified the new confidence of skeptics in that age, who combined the critical usage of human intellectual faculties with a new, optimistic theology to overturn centuries of demonology (Israel 2001). Pierre Bayle, the controversial French Calvinist intellectual heir to the *libertins érudits*, also helped spread a new critical approach to the issue of magic and witchcraft. His *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (Historical and Critical Dictionary, 1697) and *Réponse aux questions d'un provincial* (Answer to the Questions of a Provincial, 1703), although characteristically oblique and never openly denying the existence of witches, stressed how frequently witchcraft (and such allied beliefs as demonic possession) simply resulted from false accusations, excessive imagination, deceit, or fraud. Such ideas both reinforced and mirrored the spread of an attitude of mocking disbelief among French elites, which had already incited King Louis XIV to issue an edict in 1682 that decriminalized witchcraft de facto, reclassifying it as "pretended magic" along with sorcery and other such "superstitions" (Porter 1999; Levack 1999).

The impact of these intellectual changes on the witchcraft debate is best gauged in Great Britain, where

the principles of the "new philosophy" were widely disseminated among educated men, the "new science" made its most spectacular advances, and discussions about supernatural phenomena ranged most widely in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. In the English debate, many skeptics tended to uphold a belief in spirits, while believers used some new scientific principles to prove that the Devil could operate in the physical world. Most critics (for example, Robert Filmer, John Wagstaffe, John Webster, and Francis Hutchinson) attacked the foundations of demonology through following the traditional Protestant rejection of "popish superstitions," arguing that Catholic witchcraft theories had no basis in the Bible. While usually maintaining the possibility of supernatural events (in order to preserve Jesus's miracles from doubt), they stressed that most such occurrences were best explained in purely natural terms. They did not rule out the existence of the Devil but limited his sphere of action to the spiritual realm. Their less and less influential opponents tried to show that disbelief in witches entailed doubting everything supernatural, including the principles of Christianity, and would necessarily lead to atheism. Joseph Glanvill, a Fellow of the Royal Society who tried to prove the existence of witches on a scientific basis that would withstand the test of skepticism (*Sadducismus Triumphatus* [Sadducism Conquered], 1681), showed that adopting the new mental outlook did not automatically mean rejecting traditional theories. In fact, increasingly latitudinarian religious attitudes and rejection of fanaticism among elite Englishmen, combined with the rise of the new science, best account for the dismissal of traditional ideas about witchcraft in the space of two generations; they were replaced by the vision of a benevolent and omnipotent deity ruling a well-ordered universe in which there was no room for such absurdities. This outlook, expressed by John Locke in *The Reasonableness of Christianity* (1695), became the establishment view (Thomas 1971; Porter 1999; Clark 1997).

These changes in the mentality of educated people both in England and on the Continent opened the way for the final, radically skeptical opinions of the Enlightenment *philosophes*. In the eighteenth century, however, the atmosphere was very different: The great majority of thinkers simply excluded witches and their deeds from serious philosophical research. By 1750, skepticism with respect to supposed supernatural events reached new levels of daring with David Hume's essay "On Miracles" in his *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1748), in which he argued that all miracles, including those of Jesus, could never be demonstrated satisfactorily (Gay 1966). Hume's analysis of the psychological mechanism through which humans bring themselves to believe in clearly impossible phenomena shed a powerfully critical light on belief

in magic and witchcraft, although this last issue had already become peripheral among most advanced discussions. The Enlightenment's renewed approach to the knowledge of nature entailed the rejection of the entire occultist tradition (that is, natural magic, astrology, alchemy, and so forth) and reduced witchcraft to an antiquated belief typical of bygone ages of darkness, prejudice, and fanaticism. Voltaire tirelessly accused Christianity of fostering superstition, including its doctrines about the Devil and his human accomplices. With matchless irony, he ridiculed popular credulity, stressing that witchcraft should be beneath contempt for the state or educated people.

Witchcraft had not yet become the laughingstock of all educated elites, however; as late as 1749, a moderate Italian Enlightenment intellectual, Girolamo Tartarotti, devoted a meticulous work, *Del congresso notturno delle lammie* (On Nocturnal Gathering of Witches), to the now-outdated issue of the reality of the crime (Parinetto 1974). Tartarotti's selective skepticism, which denied witchcraft but conceded the efficacy of magic, was opposed by the most reactionary tendencies within Roman Catholicism. His book did not arouse the last significant controversy of the century, though: Around the same time, several death sentences for witchcraft were carried out in Bavaria, sparking what became known as the Bavarian War of the Witches (Behringer 1997). In this heated debate, which reached its climax between 1766 and 1767, Catholic clergy were on both sides, as enlightened authors and as traditionalists. The victory of the former, due to the climate of modernization that the reform-minded Empress Maria Theresa and her son Joseph II had created, heralded the end of witchcraft trials in the Holy Roman Empire. It also signaled the transformation of witchcraft from a source of universal concern and a hotly debated topic among leading thinkers into an object of scholarly historical analysis, disappearing from the mental horizons of both intellectual elites and political establishments.

MATTEO DUNI

See also: ACQUITTALS; AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM, HEINRICH CORNELIUS; ALCIATI, ANDREA; AQUINAS, THOMAS; BAVARIAN WAR OF THE WITCHES; BEKKER, BALTHASAR; BINSFELD, PETER; BODIN, JEAN; *CANON EPISCOPI*; CARDANO, GIROLAMO; CASSINI, SAMUEL DE; CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DECEPTION AND MAGIC; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; DEMONOLOGY; DESCARTES, RENÉ; DIANA (ARTEMIS); DISEASE; DODO, VINCENZO; ENLIGHTENMENT; ERASTUS, THOMAS; EVIDENCE; FAMILY OF LOVE; FILMER, SIR ROBERT; GLANVILL, JOSEPH; GOEDELTMANN, JOHANN GEORG; GRATIAN; GREVE, JOHANN; HOBBS, THOMAS; HUTCHINSON, FRANCIS; IMAGINATION; INQUISITION, ROMAN; INQUISITION, SPANISH; JACQUIER, NICOLAS; JOHN OF SALISBURY; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (MIEVIAL); LAYMANN, PAUL; MECHANICAL PHILOSOPHY; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; MELANCHOLY; MENTAL ILLNESS;

METAMORPHOSIS; MEYFART (MEYFAHRT), JOHANN MATTHÄUS; MIRACLES; MOLITOR, ULRICH; MONTAIGNE, MICHEL DE; NIDER, JOHANNES; PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA, GIANFRANCESCO; POMPONAZZI, PIETRO; PONZINIBIO, GIOVANNI FRANCESCO; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; PROOF, PROBLEM OF; SABBAT; SALAZAR FRÍAS, ALONSO DE; SCOT, REGINALD; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; SPINA, ALPHONSO DE; SPINA, BARTOLOMEO DELLA; SUPERSTITION; TANNER, ADAM; TARTAROTTI, GIROLAMO; THOMASIIUS, CHRISTIAN; VINET, JEAN; VOLTAIRE; WAGSTAFFE, JOHN; WEBSTER, JOHN; WEYER, JOHANN; WITNESSES.

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SLANDER

Throughout much of Europe—particularly in regions where accusatory procedure endured, as in Scandinavia or the British Isles—witchcraft slander often led to witchcraft trials. Research has therefore been interested in the motives for slandering someone as a witch and also, with regard to the libeled persons suing for damages, in the chances of avoiding a witchcraft trial by filing a defamation suit.

Even though further research is necessary, especially in European regions using accusatory procedure, we can outline some conditions as well as some patterns of behavior in this regard. Robin Briggs (2002) examined the reactions of people defamed as witches in late-sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-century Lorraine. Rainer Walz (1993) undertook case studies of witchcraft persecutions in the German county of Lippe and also compared several behavior patterns. Both showed how witchcraft slanders were often used to manage conflicts in everyday life in early modern villages and towns.

TYPES OF WITCHCRAFT SLANDER

Many day-to-day conflicts provided occasions for witchcraft slander. Walz considered those practices as basic elements of behavior in economically stagnant societies with limited goods. An analysis of German witchcraft slander cases shows that enraged people often cried out words such as *zaubersche* (witch), *hure* (whore), or *dieb* (thief) one right after another. It seems such words were sometimes spoken without any intention of expressing a concrete suspicion. The defamers tried to hurt their enemies with words and to state publicly that they were evil people. In several territories of the Holy Roman Empire, struggles of honor through mutual slander can also be observed as conditional insults (Tschalkner 1997). The enemies challenged each other to continue the defamation until one of them revoked his or her offending words.

In other cases, a witchcraft slander was expressed verbally only after an evil reputation had long existed. Sometimes, several years of suspicion preceded concrete accusations of *maleficium* (harmful magic), articulated in face-to-face-situations.

Many times, witchcraft slander was reciprocally exchanged between two persons, and people often

believed that upbraiding the offender was a legitimate form of resistance. Even contemporary jurists discussed whether retorts (*retorsiones*) should be exempt from punishment. But sometimes, duels involving mutual exchanges of witchcraft slanders resulted in witchcraft trials against both parties, thus emphasizing the dangers of slander even for persons who had originally made the allegations. Knowledge of possible negative consequences led many people to control their own impulses or to prevent others from making public accusations. Of course, another reason that led people to be careful was fear of magical revenge if their enemy truly was a witch.

In conclusion, people handled witchcraft suspicions in very different ways. There were forms of spontaneous and more aggressive behavior and forms of restraining behavior. It is beyond doubt that people usually learned to be cautious, realizing that witchcraft slander could escalate out of control.

BEHAVIOR AFTER WITCHCRAFT SLANDER

For a person who had been insulted and called a witch in public, there was no foolproof way of averting a witchcraft trial. We can trace a wide range of behavior patterns in responses made to slanderous accusations. Passive toleration of witchcraft slander constituted an attempt to downplay it. Aggressive forms of behavior included threats, verbal retorts, or even physical violence. Paradoxically, either manner of response could be interpreted as affirming the original accusation: A lack of resoluteness to defend oneself implied guilt and a fear of investigation, whereas aggressive behavior gave proof of an evil character. Even opening a legal complaint of defamation was dangerous because it spread one's bad fame and provoked one's enemies to prove their allegations.

However, this does not mean that witchcraft trials were inevitable consequences of witchcraft slander. Neighbors of the warring parties assessed conflicts and the characters of the protagonists based on the rank and honor they had within their village or town. Law courts considered aspects of honor in defamation suits by obliging neighbors to testify as witnesses (Fuchs 1999). Judicial fights against witchcraft slander were undertaken in many German territories and towns and in other regions as well; for example, cases before the Church courts in England can be found as early as 1435 and as late as 1675 (Sharpe 1980, 12–14; Rushton 1982). In the Holy Roman Empire, legal acts against witchcraft slander were brought before several judicial authorities. Witchcraft slander was often handled within summary proceedings and punished with fines. More severe forms of witchcraft allegations could be brought before higher courts, including the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court), as defamation suits (*actio iniuriarum*). Most legal proceedings of this type

involved lawyers. The records of these lawsuits show that there was a chance for the plaintiffs to prove they were innocent. But further studies will have to show which legal and social requirements were necessary for filing a defamation suit and, ultimately, for succeeding in witchcraft cases. It seems significant that most defamation suits in the Saarland occurred outside—and often shortly after—periods of extensive witchcraft persecutions (Labouvie 1991, 74–78).

In the American colony of Virginia, a widow, Grace Sherwood, who had lost two defamation suits was formally tried for witchcraft in 1706. We know that she lived until 1740. Many of her predecessors were less fortunate.

RALF-PETER FUCHS

See also: ACCUSATIONS; COUNTERMAGIC; COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; COURTS, SECULAR; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; HONOR; LAWYERS; MALEFICIUM; REICHSKAMMERGERICHT; RURAL WITCHCRAFT; SAAR REGION; SHERWOOD, GRACE; WORDS, POWER OF.

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SLOVAKIA

For nine centuries (from 1018 to 1918), what is today's Slovak Republic formed part of the Kingdom of Hungary. Most sorcery cases were heard in Slovakia by town courts between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries; other cases can be found in the records of ecclesiastical courts and district courts (*župní soud*).

The first reliably proven case of burning a witch on the territory of modern Slovakia occurred in 1506 at the small town of Štítňik (Hung. *Csetnek*) in south-central Slovakia. The first witchcraft trials known directly from sources, in which no death sentences were passed, took place in 1517 in the royal town of Košice (Germ. *Kaschau*, Hung. *Kassa*) in southeastern

Slovakia. Until the mid-seventeenth century, only individual witchcraft trials can be found in Slovakian territory, among which only a handful ended with the execution of the accused: at Banská Štiavnica (Germ. *Schemnitz*, Hung. *Selmecbánya*) in 1581, at Komárno (Germ. *Kommorn*, Hung. *Komárom*) in 1589, at Bratislava (Germ. *Pressburg*, Hung. *Pozsony*) in 1602, and at Bardejov (Hung. *Bártfa*) in 1629.

The greatest number of witchcraft trials in Slovakia took place in the town of Krupina (Germ. *Karpfen*, Hung. *Korpona*) in central Slovakia, between 1662 and 1744. At least 49 people were judged for witchcraft (maleficent sorcery), and at least 42 of them (almost all women) were executed, sometimes in large clusters: specifically, 6 persons in 1662 and 14 more in 1675. Another mass witch process was held in 1691 in the royal town of Šamorín (Germ. *Sommerein*, Hung. *Somorja*) in southern Slovakia. According to the record, 21 women were judged for sorcery; most of the sentences passed are no longer extant, but the majority of these women probably were not sentenced to death.

Slovakia's last witchcraft executions took place in the 1740s—involving 3 women at Krupina in 1741 and individual women at Trenčín (Hung. *Trenčsén*) in 1742 and 1745. The last known witchcraft trial in Slovakia was held in 1747 against Countess Susanna Esterházy, who was finally freed by the district court.

With the exception of the witch hunt at Krupina (Matjánová and Majtán 1970), the history of witchcraft persecution in Slovakia has not been systematically researched. One cause, among others, is that the sources describing witchcraft trials were written, depending on the place and time, in four languages (Latin, German, Hungarian, and the local Slavonic dialect overlaid by Czech). The number of victims currently known from sources in the territory of present-day Slovakia is approximately 150–250, most of whom were executed. Given the substantial losses of source material (particularly from the sixteenth century), the actual number of victims of the witch hunt in Slovakia between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries could have been twice as high.

PETR KREUZ

See also: FEMALE WITCHES; HUNGARY; ŠINDELÁŘ, BEDŘICH; SOURCES FOR WITCHCRAFT TRIALS; URBAN WITCHCRAFT.

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SLOVENIA

Like its Habsburg-ruled neighbors in modern Austria or Croatia, present-day Slovenia first experienced witchcraft trials in the mid-sixteenth century. The trials reached their peak between 1660 and 1700 and lasted deep into the eighteenth century. According to the documentary evidence, a total of 495 people were tried for witchcraft in Slovenia. The records show that 265 of them were beheaded and burned for witchcraft (a few were burned alive), while only 54 received milder penalties; 41 others died in prison, and 6 succeeded in breaking out of jail. For over a fourth of these cases (131 people), the outcome of the trials remains unknown (Košir 2001, 165). Slovenian witches were overwhelmingly female. Omitting 94 cases in which a prisoner's gender is unknown, women accounted for 341 defendants, or 85 percent (Tratnik and Košir 1995, 188).

The Slovene language has two different concepts for witchcraft/witch. The first encompasses *coprnica* (sorcerer) and *coprništvo* (sorcery), more general terms indicating magic and harmful witchcraft. The second concept for witch and witchcraft includes *veščica* and *veščarija*, terms that are connected to diabolical witchcraft and can be found in the trial records. The word *veščica* (pyramid moth) conjures the images of night flights and covens. Its semantic nuances are interesting, as the word also is used for the night butterfly.

CHRONOLOGY OF SLOVENIAN TRIALS

Diabolism did not appear in Slovenia's earliest sorcery trials—in 1427 at Celje against Veronika of Desence and in 1513 at Ljubljana, in which a middle-class woman accused of sorcery with a wax doll was executed. But once the region's lay judges (*Bannrichter*) began applying the Carolina Code, the imperial criminal code of 1532 (its procedures having been adapted for Carniolan courts by a decree of Archduke Ferdinand I in 1535), witchcraft trials involving diabolism reached Slovenia at Maribor in 1546, where several people, perhaps ten, were burned for witchcraft. They were accused of raising storms and committing other evil deeds, flying in the air, and consorting with the Devil. Shortly afterward, the first Slovene printed book, a

1550 Lutheran catechism, also described Catholic rituals as witchcraft.

After four women were tried at Celje in 1579, a major witch hunt broke out at Maribor (Hrastovec and Vurberg courts), with at least twenty trials from 1580 until 1586. But from then until the mid-seventeenth century, as witchcraft trials peaked in western Europe, Slovenia had none. They revived between 1648 and 1650, when several people were tried at Gornja Radgona for practicing sorcery; soon afterward, in 1651 and 1652, a series of trials were held in the area between the Mura and Drava Rivers, beginning at the Vurberg domain but also conducted at the court in Ptuj. Witchcraft trials became even more frequent: In 1652, two women were burned at the stake for witchcraft in Škofja Loka and two others in Ribnica; stakes were also lit at three places (Ljutomer, Ormož, and Ptuj) in 1660. A year later, one judge (Lovrenc Lampertič) ordered more than twenty witches burned, over half of them at Hrastovec, six more at Gornja Radgona, and three (a mother and her two daughters) at Maribor; many others suspected of sorcery were also imprisoned. Other courts also burned women for witchcraft at Ljubljana (in 1662), Zavrč (in 1665), and Kranj (in 1669). In the 1670s, Ljutomer came first in the number of trials. In 1671, more than forty people were imprisoned on the suspicion of sorcery. In 1675 alone, the court judge Janez Wendtseisen sentenced sixteen people to death for witchcraft in Ljutomer. In 1676, a witch was again brought to trial in Škofja Loka.

In the 1670s, witchcraft trials were held before local courts Ormož, Hrastovec, Gornja Radgona, Maribor, Celje, Šoštanj, Podgrad (Šentjur pri Celju), and Poljane (Predgrad pri Kolpi). In the 1680s, further trials took place in Celje, Laško, Ljutomer, Hrastovec, Gornja Radgona, Hložce, Maribor, Borl, Slovenska Bistrica, Bizeljsko, Lož, and Snežnik. In the 1690s, trials occurred in Laško, Ljutomer, Celje, Ptuj, Ljubljana, Pobrežje ob Kolpi, Poljane (Predgrad ob Kolpi), Rupečvrh—Mehovo, and Krško; several of these places had previously been unaffected by witchcraft trials. The first major witchcraft trial in Carniola's capital, Ljubljana, started in 1691 and lasted through 1692, then resumed in 1694; overall, some thirty people were executed. Murderous hunts also began in 1691 at Poljane pri Kolpi, lasting until 1699 and producing dozens of victims.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, a major trial was held in Krško. Stakes were still burning there in 1714 or even longer. According to some estimates, as many as forty people were burned on that occasion. This, however, was Slovenia's last major witch hunt; the Inner Austrian government became increasingly skeptical toward witch hunting after 1700. But in 1700, courts in four places (Borl, Hrastovec, Ormož, and Ribnica) sentenced people for practicing witchcraft;

Ribinca's last witch was allegedly burned at the stake in 1701, accompanied by five at Borl and one at Haloze. As late as 1711, at Kostanjevica, two women and a man were burned for witchcraft, another woman was imprisoned, and a man succeeded in fleeing.

The hunts died down slowly in the eighteenth century. After 1711, the outcomes of the trials were increasingly milder, and the penalties were usually pecuniary, for example, at Slovenske Konjice (in 1728), at Legen pri Slovenj Gradcu (in 1731), at Ortnek (in 1733), and at Ptuj (in 1740). In 1744, three people were jailed on the charges of witchcraft in Gornja Radgona. The court released them in September 1744, but the local authorities in Veržej jailed them again and, with the help of the judge in Celje, reopened the procedure against them. One person died in jail, and two were freed. The last witchcraft trial in Slovenia occurred one year later when the witch Margareta Kukerca was arrested at Metlika. When the peasants held her responsible for a hailstorm and demanded that the court burn her immediately, Habsburg authorities sent troops to Metlika to suppress the peasant revolt and end the trial.

SLOVENIAN MAGIC AND WITCHCRAFT

Judges accused the witches primarily of consorting with the Devil, while the majority of the peasants believed that they raised hailstorms. In their decisions, the judges relied on the 1532 imperial criminal code and the 1535 provincial laws for Carniola, both of which listed witchcraft among capital crimes. The municipal statutes of the coastal towns associated witchcraft with poisoning (as, for example, in the Statute of Piran of 1307 and 1384).

For their part, the peasants believed that witches were mostly women who cast evil spells to cause bad weather. Already in 1515, at a mass meeting near Konjice, rebellious peasants drafted a complaint addressed to the emperor; its fourth point accused the authorities of freeing witches and thieves for money. Subsequently, a number of seventeenth-century records narrated the reactions of angry peasants who, after hail had destroyed their harvest, lynched or burned people with reputations for practicing witchcraft, holding them responsible for the hail.

Printed in 1689, Valkard Valvasor's *Ehre des Hertzogthums Crain* (Glory of the Duchy of Carniola) offers an important source for Slovenian witchcraft trials. This work probably played a role in shaping the images of witchcraft in Carniola. Under the circumstances, Valvasor was courageously skeptical about several points that were crucial for the conduct of mass witchcraft trials. Besides providing the usual witchcraft imagery, Valvasor also described related visions, for example, the struggles of phantoms between the so-called *vedomci* and *šentjanževci*; the former sucked the blood of children, while the latter protected them.

These apparitions are similar to those known as *kresni-ki*. Chiming of the church bells was believed to ward away storms, and if the parish priest or the parish clerk failed to do this, he was exposed to the wrath of the peasants. Valvasor narrated the case of a parish priest who had to leave his parish in order to escape from the angry peasants. He also reported that the entire Inner Carniolan village of Bočkovo had been burned in the 1670s because of witchcraft.

Accusations of witchcraft were frequent in rural areas, but they did not always end with a trial. Secular courts that were also competent for other criminal offenses conducted witchcraft trials. Most witches were not convicted individually. If and when a witchcraft trial began, the judge, on the basis of forced confessions, might expand the indictment to include numerous other people, especially if he believed in a witch conspiracy. Such a trial could result in dozens of victims. The single trials were frequently instigated by the peasants' accusations, while the major trials were invariably driven by the judges' zeal. Such zealous witch hunters included Volk Lovrenc Lampertič and Jan ez Wendtseisen, particularly prominent in Styria, and Dr. Jan ez Jurij Hočev ar, who marked a decade of trials (from 1695 to 1705) with his cruel judgments in Carniola. Hočev ar was a talented jurist and a knowledgeable man, a composer, an astronomer, and a member of both Ljubljana academies.

Slovenian witchcraft trials included many typical features, including torture. Usually, they also looked for the Devil's mark on the bodies of the accused, although there is no evidence that the swimming test (the cold water ordeal) was used in Slovenia. The questions that the accused had to answer under torture were formulated in such a way that the expected answers were clearly suggested. The confessions thus extracted were so uniform that the trials conducted by the same judges were often almost identical. The prime accusation was always the same—consorting with the Devil at a secret gathering, which was allegedly held at a crossroads or at witch mountains (Slivnica, Klek, Donačka Gora, or Rogaška Gora, Grintavec).

Whenever the trials multiplied, their costs soared accordingly. For this reason, feudal lords were rarely enthusiastic about such trials. Catherine Elisabeth, Countess of Auersperg (Turjak) and the owner of the manor court of Krško, ran into serious financial trouble in the early eighteenth century because of the high number of witchcraft trials held before that court. The owners of the Ljutomer court encountered similar problems. In several trials during the eighteenth-century and occasionally even earlier, certain skeptical judges pronounced milder penalties and even acquittals, primarily in cases that concerned fortunetelling and minor sorcery rather than diabolical witchcraft.

MATEVŽ KOŠIR

See also: ACCUSATIONS; AUSTRIA; CAROLINA CODE; CONFESSIONS; COURTS, SECULAR; CROATIA; CROSSROADS; DEVIL'S MARK; EXECUTIONS; FEMALE WITCHES; LYNCHING; RURAL WITCHCRAFT; SABBAT; SWIMMING TEST; TORTURE; TRIALS; VERONIKA OF DESENICE; WEATHER MAGIC; WITCH AND WITCHCRAFT, DEFINITIONS OF

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SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF WITCHES

Were witches characterized by specific social and economic traits? Before sketching any sociological classification, it seems necessary to state that any such

attempt is hampered by three factors. First, sources on the matter are extremely vague. It is rare for the occupation of a defendant to be recorded. Second, in many countries, women amounted to some 80 or 90 percent of the accused people, and identifying their specific roles in past agrarian societies becomes anachronistic. And third, any typological reconstruction is doomed to collapse in regard to large witch panics, when hundreds of suspects became involved. When we look at the almost random pieces of information available on this issue, we are reminded of the dodge of early modern cartographers, who filled in the blank spaces on their maps with *hic sunt leones* (here there be lions). Our European map is indeed full of lions, and it is likely to remain so. Only a few very tentative conclusions seem possible.

OLD AGE AND MARITAL STATUS

In many individual witchcraft trials that went on throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, accusations were first aimed at stereotypical "witches": old women, often isolated widows. All statistics about ages should be reconciled with the fact that people tried as witches had often been suspected for many years, even decades, and advanced age certainly helps account for the overrepresentation of widows among accused witches. Large samples from western Europe show almost one-third of suspected witches were widows: some 37 percent of 582 cases from Switzerland, France, and Essex (Monter 1976); 30 percent from a larger sample of 1,019 women from Basel, Geneva, Scotland, Salem, and Sweden (Levack 1995), versus 56.8 percent married and 13 percent single. H. C. Erik Midelfort (1972) suggested that the very factor explaining the vulnerability of widows to accusations was probably the fact that they had lost the protection of their husbands. But most women accused as witches were married, and the role of their husbands in the trials was ambiguous. Robin Briggs (2002) pointed out that when men actively defended their wives, it reduced the chance that their cases would go to court. In Tuscany, as well as Lorraine, some husbands obviously tried to obstruct the trials—but a few apparently encouraged their prosecution.

OLD WOMEN, MATERNAL CARE, AND HEALERS

Were these postmenopausal women a risky category? A few late-seventeenth-century Augsburg witchcraft trials resulted from accusations made by newly delivered mothers against older, poorer, often widowed postmenopausal women who had helped them as lying-in maids, charging them with harming the mothers, their babies, or both. In such cases, envy explains the *maleficium* (harmful magic): Relying on Melanie Klein's psychoanalytic assumptions, Lyndal Roper (1994, 214) maintained that "circumstances conspired to make the lying-in maid appear a likely sufferer from envy and

Ein weib in heyligem geist / Glaubte man mit dem Conuice fruyt
 Das buche mit herfürnem / pflanzet. So hülff die buche heylig zu sein.



Über zweifelhafte dinget gloubt /
 Dinst Gott genad mit pberaubt.
 Nur tröfft doch ob die wozt sein güt;
 Ein man wechschlich panderer thut.
 Mit irren demt die er will /
 Im hülff der Töfel buch sein sol.
 So the in dem Conuice oft wegent;
 Desnach volat die wozt sein frucht
 Die alre edelste pflanz /
 Des pflanzens der Töfel sein.

A female witch tempts two noblemen, as the sword and caparisoned horse indicate. While most accused witches were poor, but not the worst off, some were from upper social groups, especially in Germany. (Anonymous, Eine Zauberein versucht zwei Männer, 1531. From Hexen: Analysen, Quellen, Dokumente. Directmedia Publishing GmbH: Berlin, 2003)

hatred.” Should the role of these helping women and, to a greater extent, the position of midwives be considered closely associated with the crime of witchcraft because of the social organization of birthing practices? Contemporary demonologists, beginning with Heinrich Kramer (*Malleus Maleficarum* [The Hammer of Witches], 1486), created the myth of the midwife-witch. Premature claims that a majority of women accused of witchcraft were “lay healers serving the peasant populations and their repression marks one of the opening struggles in the suppression of women as healer” (Ehrenreich and English 1974, 4) have been demolished by more careful research showing that no statistical evidence supports them (Harley 1990).

But there were some geographic variations. In England, only 1 percent of people accused of witchcraft were midwives; however, in late-sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-century Aragon, an amazing 23

percent of women tried for witchcraft in episcopal courts appear to have been midwives (Tausiet 1996, 259). But in another Mediterranean region, the Sienese state, just 4 of the 229 women accused of infanticide in the same period were midwives of well-established local reputation.

Throughout Europe, healers and cunning folk featured generally among the most persecuted people, but their numbers are difficult to determine, and their gender distribution would probably show considerable regional variations. Being a cunning man or woman was never a full-time profession, and our available information is too uneven to detect many meaningful patterns for this widely practiced second occupation—with the possible exception of Catholic clerics, who seem very well represented until the mid-seventeenth century, at least in France, Spain, and Italy.

MATERIAL CONDITIONS AND PROFESSIONS

Contemporary observers often touched directly on the theme of the economic conditions of accused people. In Massachusetts, Rev. Josiah Cotton summarized a century-old common wisdom by observing that witchcraft charges seemed to fall disproportionately “on the poor.” As a matter of statistical probability, members of the underclass (persons at the bottom of the social scale) were many times more likely to be accused and persecuted than their counterparts at the top (Demos 1982, 285–292). It is tempting to generalize these New England findings and to project them back to Europe.

However, the bulk of available evidence suggests that witches were not usually the “poorest of the poor”—destitute, marginal members of their local village communities; most of them resembled their neighbors and were generally well integrated into communal life. In Scotland, where over 1,000 witches were executed from 1560 to 1700, we know that only 3 witches in 20 were male. Many of the Scottish male witches had close links (usually by marriage) to recognized female witches; others were folk healers; still others were notorious criminals (Goodare 1998, 290). This was a peasant society; few Scots lived in towns. Here, the average witch was overwhelmingly a middle-aged or elderly woman, the wife or widow of a tenant farmer, toward the bottom of the social and economic ladder but nevertheless from the settled rather than the vagabond or outcast poor.

ENGLAND

The impression given by Scotland differs slightly from the English scene, where it is clear that witches were even more exclusively women (93 percent versus 85 percent in Scotland) and even further down the social ladder, being wives or widows of wage laborers, or on the poor law, or beggars. But not all of the 102 women executed for witchcraft at the Home Circuit assizes between 1563 and 1682 were older or poorer than those who accused them. There were some marked

regional variations. In the southeastern county of Kent, the social background to witchcraft accusations frequently differed from that of Alan Macfarlane's county of Essex. In Kent, many accused women were well integrated in local society; denial of alms is entirely absent, and Macfarlane's paradigm (whereby charity denied a neighbor, followed by misfortune occurring in the household of the person who refused to offer charity, resulted in the neighbor being blamed for the misfortune and possibly accused formally of witchcraft) is even reversed in some disputes between neighbors (Gaskill 1996). In Sussex, accuser and accused were similar in terms of power: "The rare accusations of witchcraft seem to express ongoing competition rather than guilt or anger" (Herrup 1987, 33). The same dynamic of local, internecine competition emerged clearly in early seventeenth-century Rye, a small coastal town in economic decline and disrupted by internal factions. Cases from northern England suggest that witchcraft accusations could polarize communities along preexisting fault lines, as happened in Yorkshire (Sharpe 1997).

GERMANY

In Germany, where most witchcraft trials occurred, recent research largely confirmed Midelfort's findings: During major panics, the traditional stereotype of the old woman witch tended to dissolve, and people accused of witchcraft even tended to be somewhat wealthier than the average citizen. Bavaria in 1590 could serve as an early model (Behringer 1997). The social expansion of the persecution occurred in the third cycle of arrests, following two collective executions. As denunciations increased, the social standing of those arrested improved: Persecutions were no longer confined to outsiders and those near the bottom of the social scale but now affected the urban and rural middle class. Denunciations struck especially hard at those in trades and occupations that had some associations with magical practices (midwives, cowherds, apothecaries) or were in contact with foodstuffs (tavern keepers, butchers, bakers). As the persecution progressed, the witch hunters targeted their enemies among members of local elites, persons of wealth from patrician families. These social dynamics were repeated whenever persecutions were held, often up to the final batches of suspects in the 1630s.

In a general way, German statistics suggest that richer peasants provided a larger share of accused witches by the mid-seventeenth century. In the Saarland, accused female witches were predominantly poor: Some 43 percent of them owned no property or were beggars; the rest were evenly divided between villagers of very slender means and members of lower-middle-class households possessing modest incomes (Labouvie 1991). But not far away—and slightly later—almost 40

percent of accused witches (9 of 24) in the village of Winnigen between 1640 and 1660 came from the top social spectrum.

In Protestant northern Germany, a social analysis of the pattern of accusations made by village committees in the county of Lippe has demonstrated that most of the charges were against community members with relatively high local status, brought by members of middling status to resolve internal village conflicts (Walz 1993). As in parts of England, witchcraft accusations could arise between households of relatively equal social and economic status out of competition for resources and influence within their communities. Whenever local elites got deeply involved in witchcraft accusations, their actions seem motivated by vested interests. Therefore, they could be seen as witches endangering traditional communal norms.

Throughout the francophone Jura region, well-off people seem far less frequently represented among accused witches than were their peers in southwestern Germany or in Alsace. Even its most extensive panics did not resemble German panics: During Geneva's 1571–1572 plague-spreading and witchcraft panic, half of the hundred suspects were unskilled laborers or their wives, while the rest came from artisan families—but local elites were conspicuously absent (Monter 1976).

FRANCE

We know little about the social and economic status of female witches in France, partly because no large clusters of them have been uncovered in French archives. However, in northern France, men were unusually prominent in witchcraft trials (as in eastern peripheral areas such as Finland or Russia). According to William Monter (2002), two unusually prominent occupational groups emerge from the sources: clerics and shepherds. From Aix (in 1610) to Louviers (in 1647), a series of well-publicized scandals across France involving the demonic possessions of groups of nuns ended with trials and executions of priests. Louis Gaufridy and Urbain Grandier, the priestly magicians executed at Aix and Loudun, were only the best known among a good number of French priests condemned for witchcraft and black magic. At least fourteen French clerics were executed for sorcery before Grandier was burned; afterward, two more priests were executed for illicit magic in Brittany and another in Normandy in the 1640s.

Shepherds formed by far the largest group of France's male witches. They were accused of various acts of poisoning and sacrilege (many stole Hosts from churches to use in protecting their flocks). The largest cluster came from Normandy, a cheese-producing region: More than sixty shepherds were tried for witchcraft by the *Parlement* (sovereign judicial court) of Rouen between 1590 and 1635; over twenty of them and two of their wives were executed. Unlike the women

accused of witchcraft, shepherds were almost never charged with putting spells on people; instead, they were said to employ magical paraphernalia ranging from stolen Eucharists to toad venom in order to protect (or harm) livestock. This tradition had a long life: The *Parlement* of Normandy sentenced six more shepherds to death between 1684 and 1700, and the supposedly enlightened *Parlement* of Paris kept pace with five convictions between 1687 and 1691. As late as 1713, three shepherds were executed at Rouen for stealing Hosts, a practice that had begun in 1540 (Monter 2002, 40–43).

NETHERLANDS, NORTHERN

Before the early-seventeenth-century moderation in prosecuting witches, the Netherlands was affected by small hunts, and scattered sociological data suggest patterns similar to those in southeastern England. For instance, three villages in Peelland (northern Brabant) were hit by a series of witchcraft trials, where we have reliable sociological information about the twenty-three persons arrested (Caspers 1991). All were stable residents, belonging to all social classes; the fifteen women (all sentenced to death) included some well-off villagers. A feud that took place in the little rural community of Nijkerk in 1550 and involved people of substance showed accusations of witchcraft being manipulated to settle conflicts over property rights or social status (Wardt 1991).

SPAIN

A large occupational spectrum of an agrarian, semi-mountainous society emerges from the scarce sociological information related to the wild Basque craze in which some 2,000 witches were examined. From upper Aragon, some scattered but interesting data are available. Out of 140 people accused (83 males, 57 females), 59 men charged with sorcery had a second profession and 41 were unmarried (including 23 clerics) (Gari Lacruz 1991, 220–223). Interestingly, a disproportion has been noticed between the main occupational groups of the area (shepherds and peasants) and the fragmentation of the thirty-two occupations reported. In most of Spain, not social class but ethnicity and religion influenced the choice of suspected witches. Being a foreigner (especially a French Protestant) was an additional aggravating circumstance in Catalonia. Elsewhere in Spain, being a Morisco (before the 1609–1614 expulsion) or a Gypsy was a worsening factor. No sociological data exist for the dozens of women killed in Spain's worst witch hunt in Catalonia between 1618 and 1620. In the Canary Islands, male and female slaves comprised the most numerous category of people accused of sorcery, followed by artisans and sellers. Portugal seems to have been the country where the least is known about the occupations of cunning folk and healers.

ITALY

A cluster of trials carried out between 1611 and 1615 by an itinerant court in the sub-Alpine valley of Non involved 140 suspected witches (120 women and 20 men). Unfortunately, the socioeconomic evidence for drawing a profile of these witches is limited to 1 woman who was surely a healer and to 6 men who were soothsayers (*crivellatori*). In the Sienese state, few among the 229 Sienese malefic witches (all females) were very old, unmarried, widows, or beggars. Out of 36 cases with adequate information, spinning turns out—unsurprisingly—to have been the most common occupation (6 cases), apart from the prostitutes residing in Siena or larger villages (10 cases). In Malta, mainly male Muslim slaves residing in the harbor area practiced witchcraft.

PERIPHERIES

In Denmark, for lack of sources, the socioeconomic position of witches in rural areas is hard to evaluate. In the towns of Elsinore in Seeland and Ribe in southern Jutland in the first half of the seventeenth century, a clear pattern emerges: It was the moderately poor who accused the absolute poor. Some trials can be seen as an expression of a struggle to avert the slide from poverty into destitution. In Sweden, the status of witches between 1668 and 1676 shows that none lived on the margin or outside the community. Dalarna's witches stood squarely in the middle rank of parish taxpayers. In Finland, peasants and burghers were prominent in the available statistics. In Hungary in a polarized community, it was always the more prosperous witch that accused the weaker one. There is little available evidence about the socioeconomic status of witches in Poland.

RUSSIA

In seventeenth-century Moscow and a few provincial centers, there were some 100 cases concerning magic. According to W. F. Ryan (1998, 69), a “clear pattern of the status of the person accused cannot be discerned, apart from the fact that about half were peasants; of the non-peasant component there is a noticeable presence of persons connected with church or state, and a prominent number of foreigners.”

MOBILE GROUPS

Were witches socially oppressed rebels fighting against a feudal society? In a way, Jules Michelet's great historical imagination opened the way for future sociological interpretation, either because some connections might exist between peasant uprisings and witch hunts or because diabolic witch belief served as the mythical counterpart of popular revolts.

One of the recurrent themes of witchcraft persecutions was that these conflicts rarely opposed people at opposite extremes of the social spectrum. Social

mobility, more often than not, appeared as a threat to traditional values. Would not defining mobile people as witches be a way to defend society itself? In his reflections on New England witchcraft, the Reverend Cotton Mather blamed the refusal of men to accept their own social condition: "It is not irrational to ascribe the late stupendous growth of witches among us, partly to the bitter *discontents* which affliction and poverty has filled us with" (Mather, quoted in Demos 1982, 177); he also referred to social conflict and human envy in his *Memorable Providences Relating to Witchcraft and Possessions*: "when persons, through discontent at their *poverty* or at their *misery*, shall be always murmuring and repining at the providence of God, the Devils do then invited them to an agreement ... [and d]ownright *witchcraft* is the upshot of it" (Mather, quoted in Boyer and Nissenbaum 1974, 208).

Research based on social conflicts within Salem village has shown that families in decline resorted to witchcraft accusations: a class war caused by social and economic mobility. Can this interpretation be projected backward on the European stage? In fact, the hardening of the social and economic situation during the "iron century" has eventually led researchers to focus on mobile groups within villages. On close analysis, an interpretation of continental and British or Scandinavian witch hunts as expressions of social strains arising in peasant societies undergoing a crucial transformation from a self-sufficient peasantry to an agrarian and protocommmercial capitalism founders against insurmountable difficulties.

OSCAR DI SIMPLICIO

See also: ACCULTURATION THESIS; ACCUSATIONS; AGE OF ACCUSED WITCHES; AGRARIAN CRISES; CAPITALISM; CUNNING FOLK; ENGLAND; FEMALE WITCHES; FRANCE; GENDER; GERMANY; HISTORIOGRAPHY; ITALY; MACFARLANE, ALAN; MALE WITCHES; MATHER, COTTON; MICHELET, JULES; MIDWIVES; MOTHERHOOD; NETHERLANDS, NORTHERN; PERSONALITY OF WITCHES; REBELS; RURAL WITCHCRAFT; SALEM; SPAIN; URBAN WITCHCRAFT.

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SOCIAL CONTROL

In Old Régime Europe, religion and politics, state and church were structurally linked, thus affecting the entire social system and jointly forming the central axis of both state and society. In the foreword to the 1563 Heidelberg Catechism, Elector-Palatine Frederick III stated: "Due to Our natural duty and inclination, we have recognized and undertaken to fulfil Our divinely ordained office, vocation, and governance, not only to keep peace and order, but also to maintain a disciplined, upright, and virtuous life and behaviour among our subjects, furthermore, and especially, to instruct them and bring them step by step to the righteous knowledge and fear of the Almighty and His sanctifying Word as the only basis of all virtues and obedience" (Frederick, quoted in Hsia 1996, 367). This system, which historians now call "confessionalization," was pioneered in Germany (the epicenter of witch hunting) and reached its peak during the age of the great witch hunts. However, most historians are reluctant to view these methods of social control as sufficient or even necessary explanations for the rapid acceleration of witch prosecution in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

Both the Protestant and Catholic Reformations attempted to implement their respective programs to enforce doctrinal purity, moral control, and social discipline. Good subjects were godly Christians. Confessionalism proceeded unevenly throughout Europe and had strong regional variations, but everywhere, its campaigns for moral purity and for law and order ostracized deviants, including "masterless men," vagrants, rabble, and other marginal populations. Witches occasionally fell into such categories. In regard to the Catholic southern Netherlands, Robert Muchembled (1984) emphasized the social disciplinary effect of witchcraft trials as tools to acculturate a rural population. And in regard to Protestant Scotland, Christina Larner (2000) highlighted the witch as a threat to specific individuals, apart from the political implications of some famous cases.

Throughout Europe, from Calvinist Scotland or Lutheran Finland to the major Roman, Spanish, and Portuguese Inquisitions, confessional states provided institutional mechanisms for the widespread prosecution of unofficial (and thus forbidden) magic. A complex relationship among state, religion, gender, and magic emerged almost everywhere. In the Catholic duchy of Bavaria, a prominent feature of social legislation was a fear of propertyless people; between 1550 and 1599, Bavaria proclaimed no fewer than thirty-four decrees against beggars and rabble. A new and extremely pious

generation of Bavarian princes was looming, vividly exemplified by the "blood pact" made by Dukes Maximilian I (ruled 1597–1651) and Ferdinand Maria (ruled 1651–1679) with the Virgin of Altötting—a sort of antitype to the witches' pacts with the Devil. Such princes blamed their unworthy subjects for most kinds of misfortunes such as harvest failures and diseases, which were interpreted by contemporaries as God's punishments, and they bombarded them with laws and decrees on their morals (Behringer 1997, 107–108).

In the Sieneese New State, a 1575 apostolic visitation introduced the Medicean version of "Catholic confessionalization" (Di Simplicio 1997). Archbishops' vicars fought vigorously to domesticate their clergy and root out concubinage. A systematic policy of moral cleansing was enforced with the confinement of prostitutes to ghettos. The steady deepening of a parochial structure had a similar moral impact on villages. Systematic introduction of parish registers and the enforcement of Tridentine marriage procedures, with vigorous opposition to prenuptial copulations, clandestine marriages, and bigamy, affected the categories of thought of early modern villagers. Social disciplining of ecclesiastics was paralleled by the imposition of stricter norms to the laity. Parishioners listened as fears of witchcraft and sorcery were increasingly condemned from the pulpit. Here, the process of confessionalization implied strong support of Medicean rule, through an effective cooperation of local officials (captains of justice). The occasional cases of seventeenth-century witchcraft trials dealt with by secular officials eventually recovered by the Inquisition must be seen as signs that Sieneese agencies of social control were marching in the same direction, despite potential conflicts of jurisdiction.

OSCAR DI SIMPLICIO

See also: ACCULTURATION THESIS; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; GENDER; LARNER, CHRISTINA; MAXIMILIAN I, DUKE OF BAVARIA; MUCHEMBLE, ROBERT; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; REBELS.

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SOLDAN, WILHELM GOTTLIEB (1803–1869)

The son of a Lutheran pastor in Alsfeld (Hesse), Wilhelm Soldan was a well-educated historian and language scholar (having earned a PhD in 1831). A professor after 1853, he married the daughter of a capitalist in Darmstadt, who owned both a newspaper and a chocolate factory, and belonged to the liberal faction of the Parliament of Hesse-Darmstadt. In 1861, Soldan was elected to the Parliament as a member of the Progressive Party (*Fortschrittspartei*), serving for a time as president of the House of Commons. He remained a Hessian Member of Parliament (MP) until his death.

The publication of Soldan's *Geschichte der Hexenprozesse* (History of Witch Trials, Stuttgart, 1843) revolutionized witchcraft research. In striking contrast to contemporary scholars such as Etienne-Léon de Lamothe-Langon, Jules Michelet, Jacobus Scheltema, Sir Walter Scott, or Jacob Grimm, Soldan did not investigate (or invent) fantasies but confined his presentation to straightforward historical facts, firmly based upon written sources. Soldan's was the first serious scholarly publication on the history of European witchcraft, or "witch craze" (*Hexenwahn*), as he preferred to say. With its liberal bias and the related attitude blaming both church and state for the atrocities of the witchcraft trials, Soldan embodied the rationalist approach in witchcraft research. His interpretation, which basically combined the spirit of Enlightenment with Leopold von Ranke's historical method, dominated entries in international dictionaries up to World War I and was certainly more reliable than subsequent entries written for the *Encyclopedia Britannica* by Margaret Murray.

Soldan's *Geschichte der Hexenprozesse* provoked two influential updates. The first, written by his son-in-law Heinrich Hepe (1820–1879), a professor of Protestant theology at the University of Marburg, amplified the original book with more recent findings. This edition, known as *Soldan-Hepe* (Berlin, 1880), published posthumously by Soldan's daughter Henriette Hepe, injected a strong Protestant bias, implicitly siding with the Prussian party in the German *Kulturkampf* (culture war) and supporting Chancellor Otto von Bismarck in his struggle against the Catholics. The journalist Max Bauer provided a third enlarged edition at the beginning of the twentieth century. He tried to reduce Hepe's bias and included scores of new examples, as well as referred to contemporary persecutions in Mexico and Russia, and he added a good number of illustrations. This final edition, known as *Soldan-Hepe-Bauer* (Hanau, 1912), has been reprinted up to the present day, usually without editorial comment. Although still a valuable resource, it already had fallen short of contemporary research when it was first published, because Bauer did not manage to

incorporate the more sophisticated approaches of Joseph Hansen or Sigmund Riezler.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: GRIMM, JACOB; HANSEN, JOSEPH; HISTORIOGRAPHY;

LAMOTHE-LANGON, ETIENNE-LÉON DE; MICHELET, JULES; RIEZLER, SIGMUND; SCOTT, SIR WALTER.

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Edited by Sönke Lorenz and Jürgen Michael Schmidt.

Ostfildern. Jan Thorbecke.

SOMERSET WITCHES

The ample documentation for the study of witchcraft in the county of Somerset, England, for the period from 1500 to about 1900, has led it to be relatively well studied. However, most interest in the county's witches focuses on the cases investigated by Robert Hunt between 1657 and 1665. Republished in Joseph Ganvill's *Saducismus Triumphatus* (Sadducism Conquered, 1700), this material offered the most elaborate descriptions of English Sabbats and dealings with the Devil apart from those stemming from the Matthew Hopkins witch hunt in East Anglia (from 1645 to 1647).

Somerset witchcraft is documented in rich collections of both church and secular court records during the early modern period; local folklore and newspaper reports have also been studied for the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Davies 1999). The sources reveal a typical English mixture of supernatural damages to crops, animals, and people (especially children) done largely by women, together with several other supernatural offenses, including a substantial number of cunning men and women offering their services and some possession-type cases. As in other parts of southwestern England, the frequency of witchcraft trials increased after the Civil War; they continued into the early eighteenth century, although all known verdicts after 1664 were acquittals. None of Somerset's trials attracted pamphlet attention, but some chapbooks and ballads report cases of possession, attacks by the Devil, or apparitions. However, Somerset gained notoriety in the late-seventeenth-century debate on witchcraft through publications by three writers from the county: Joseph Glanvill, Richard Bovet, and John Beaumont. Beaumont was a natural and civil historian from the Mendips, and in his *Historical, Physiological and Theological Treatise of Spirits* (1705), he followed Glanvill's predominant interest in spirits and apparitions rather than witchcraft. However, his Platonism led him to question whether diabolical pacts provided a necessary explanation for preternatural phenomena.

Bovet, a radical Whig, published a series of cases, mostly from his neighborhood at Wellington, in *Pandaemonium* (1684), which was consciously modeled on Glanvill's example. But Bovet was interested primarily in the work of the Devil, which he linked to idolatry, attacking popery overtly and the restored monarchy covertly. Intellectually and socially, both Beaumont and Bovet were peripheral figures compared to Glanvill.

As rector of Frome Selwood from 1662 and of Bath's abbey church from 1666, Glanvill met Robert Hunt. Hunt's notes on witchcraft cases he had encountered as a justice of the peace (JP) in Somerset between 1657 and 1665 became critical evidence for Glanvill. He dedicated his first book on the subject to Hunt, and Glanvill cited Hunt's evidence at length in his revision of *Saducismus Triumphatus*, which was published posthumously in 1681. Both men died in 1680, but they apparently had lost contact after 1665. We know that Glanvill ignored a 1667 case of possession involving Hunt's own daughter, recorded in a letter of December 1667 to a relation named William Bull, according to which one Alice Knight was forced to visit and pray for the afflicted (Bristol University Library, Special Collections, Bull Papers, DM 155, no. 103). The fate of Hunt's book of examinations is unclear. Extracts were published in 1837 (*Gentleman's Magazine*, pp. 256–257), and two other versions survive: one, previously owned by the Dorset writer William Barnes, in a contemporary hand (sold by Sotheby in November 2003, catalog L03412, "Witchcraft and the Occult," lot 343), and the other in a transcript of October 1906 (Somerset Record Office, DD/DT 28). All three versions had close similarities to Glanvill's text, but minor variations and extra details in each suggest that none was his original source, which referred to a "fairly written" version of Hunt's book of examination of witches.

We do not know why Hunt's interrogations of Somerset witches produced such sensational confessions compared to most English cases: He never commented directly on demonology, though Glanvill described Hunt as thinking critically about the meaning of the events he witnessed. Born around 1608 and educated at Cambridge and the Middle Temple, Hunt was a substantial figure in Somerset. A member of the Long Parliament, he became a royalist and only returned to public life in 1654, serving two years as sheriff. Subsequently, he was an active JP from 1657 until his death, also representing Somerset in Parliament in 1659 and Ilchester thereafter. A moderate Protestant who was hostile to Quakers, Hunt protected royalists before 1660 and parliamentarians after the Restoration. In examining for witchcraft, he worked closely with his fellow JP John Cary of Castle Cary. Clearly, Glanvill regarded Hunt as the kind of unimpeachable and respectable witness whose evidence for the reality of demonic witchcraft would carry conviction

both locally and nationally. However, Hunt and Cary were obviously challenged by higher officials who blocked the major trial developing between 1664 and 1665, involving twenty-five witches named in two covens. In the end, only Elizabeth Styles, who had been acquitted in 1636 by the assizes and allowed to bring suit against her prosecutors, was tried and found guilty. She died in jail, probably the last Somerset resident to die as a convicted witch.

JONATHAN BARRY

See also: BOVET, RICHARD; CUNNING FOLK; ENGLAND; GLANVILL, JOSEPH; HOPKINS, MATTHEW.

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SORCERY

Sorcery and witchcraft must be conceived as distinct phenomena. While sorcery exists in every culture and at all times, the concept of European witchcraft was fully developed only in the fifteenth century, emerging from trials for both heresy and sorcery. Sorcery can be defined as an attempt to control nature to produce good or evil results. The Latin word for harmful sorcery, *maleficium*, originally meant an evil or harmful deed performed through magic. Practitioners of harmful sorcery have presented a problem socially and legally to all societies that believe in the real efficacy of magical acts. Throughout the Middle Ages, sorcery was generally regarded as suspicious and often criminal. The development of the "complete" or cumulative concept of witchcraft in the late Middle Ages incorporated sorcery, and aided by widespread anxieties, this enormously increased prosecutions and executions for frequently diabolized forms of *maleficium* throughout early modern Europe.

ANTIQUITY

In the ancient Mediterranean world, magic was considered a morally neutral act that a person could undertake toward either beneficial or harmful ends. The Greco-Roman world condemned only harmful sorcery as illegal. Literary and nonliterary sources cast some light on the figure of the classical sorcerer.

In both Greek and Latin, a wide array of terms were used to denote sorcerers. In Greek, they were called *epodoi* or *epaoidoi*, as well as *goetes*, *magoi*, and *pharmakis*; their craft was called *goeteia*, *mageia*, and *pharmakeia* (magical knowledge). Each term and craft had a distinct meaning. It has been argued that *goetes* were originally shamans, who, in an ecstatic state, conveyed the spirits of the dead on their perilous journey to the other world. Another meaning for *goeteia*, as used and understood in medieval and early modern times, was the summoning up of corpses, that is, necromancy. The term *magos*, a loan word from Persian, usually referred to a type of priest. In the ancient world, sorcerers were present in cities of any size, but they were not part of a community. They represented a type of person difficult to describe in ordinary terms because they were often traveling practitioners of magic, wandering from community to community.

The Hebrew Bible is replete with sacred magic. Legend has it that sorcery stopped with the birth of Jesus, but in the first few centuries after his death, an extensive literature developed about Simon Magus, a magician and contemporary rival to the Apostle Peter. As Rome became Christian, however, an important change took place. Classical daemons (*daimones*), supernatural spirits upon whom magicians often called to perform acts of sorcery, were gradually transformed into Christian demons. While daemons were ambivalent spirits, demons were considered evil, the legions of Satan battling against the Church and all Christian society. Thus, early Church Fathers, especially St. Augustine and, later on, Thomas Aquinas, condemned any magic that involved dealing with demons, regardless of its apparent effects. This new Christian conception of magic as operating often via demonic agency produced an interesting effect on official views of practitioners of magic after Rome became Christian. In the late antique world, the sorcerer involved in the performance of *maleficium* was no longer deemed important because Satan was the real author of the evil involved. This de-emphasis on the human agency in sorcery helps explain the Church's centuries-long hesitation, verging at times on outright disinterest, in persecuting practitioners of magic.

NORSE AND CELTIC SORCERY

Apart from occasional references to very early customs by such Roman historians as Tacitus and condemnations by early medieval monks, we have few written sources about Nordic or Germanic sorcery. Most important are the Norse runic inscriptions found throughout Scandinavia, Iceland, England, and even parts of Europe where Scandinavians and Anglo-Saxons traded. We have narrative sources from the postconversion period that still reflect the customs and mentality of the pre-Christian era, the thirteenth-century

Icelandic sagas being the most important Norse literary sources. It is not always possible to ascribe precise magical intent to runic inscriptions, but sometimes, the intent is indubitable. The sagas preserved many ancient beliefs and often referred to ancient magical practices. In both, the role of sorcery was evident.

The magicians of the sagas were almost always sinister characters who had learned their magic from teachers. There is no hint that magical rituals or practices formed part of pagan Norse religion, although Christian missionaries had battled against these as the Devil's work. While the sorcerers' magic sometimes made reference to the gods, it rarely involved appeals to them. Sorcery and heathen worship were conceived as essentially different things, although Christian writers conflated them. There is also evidence for non-Germanic beliefs, and some Lapp and Arctic influences can be traced. Icelandic magicians were depicted as trance diviners and trance mediums much like shamans.

Celtic literature from the twelfth and subsequent centuries, handed down to us in later medieval versions, also contained magical themes, and its pagan elements were remnants of an earlier culture. Fairies are prominent protagonists with magical abilities in the Irish tradition. Celtic literature was full of battles or duels between druids, looked upon as practitioners of demonic sorcery, and their Christian adversaries, often well-known saints.

SORCERY IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Throughout the Early Middle Ages, sorcerers were generally depicted not as powerful agents of evil but as unfortunate victims of the deceptions and temptation of the Devil. Therefore, the Church treated them with correction and penance, rather than calling for severe persecution. By the thirteenth century, however, clerical authorities began to take magic and its practitioners far more seriously. One main factor behind this shift was the rise of various types of learned magic, including astronomy, alchemy, and spiritual and demonic magic, among the educated elites of western Europe. Taken from Arab, Greek, and Jewish texts, learned magic aroused much interest among scholars and intellectuals. Especially in Spain—at Toledo, Salamanca, or Seville—there were rumors about universities teaching the magical arts.

The Church remained convinced that demonic power lay hidden behind even apparently innocuous magical practices. The darkest aspects of magic, involving explicit demonic invocations, were actually practiced by a "clerical underworld of necromancy" (Kieckhefer 1997). Medievalists have long noted how the rise of demonic sorcery contributed to the idea of witchcraft in the early fifteenth century (see, for example, Peters 1978). Although the concept of witchcraft was partly

rooted in learned sorcery, witches were not just sorcerers with a few diabolical features added. The nature of their power and their interaction with demonic forces were different.

Clerical minds conflated two quite different magical systems. By the end of the thirteenth century, clerical authorities were generally familiar with the essential system of learned magic. But there also existed in Western Christendom a widespread and diffuse system of common spells, charms, blessings, potion making, talismans, and amulets employed by many people at all levels of medieval society, including many clerics. Learned demonic sorcery was a highly structured variety of magic limited to a small clerical elite; necromancy operated though very complex and detailed invocation of demons, sometimes lasting for days and focusing on the right time, season, and requisites. These summoning formulas, often derived from Arabic or Hebrew magical concepts and usually grounded to some extent on Church rituals, were laid out and transmitted in books of spells written in Latin. Thus, only those with the prerequisite ritual training and Latin literacy could perform this magic. Though clerical authorities seemed to ignore that they were dealing with two different systems, a desire to fit common, everyday magical practices into the “diabolized” intellectual framework established by learned necromancy, laid the foundations for constructing the concept of witchcraft.

FROM SORCERY TO WITCHCRAFT

Although witchcraft and sorcery have similar characteristics, they are not identical. Sorcery involves the practice of magic through some sort of mechanical or manipulative process; it is a skill that one can acquire. It can be distinguished from witchcraft on two possible grounds. First, it can sometimes be considered beneficial; second, maleficent acts of witchcraft require no special techniques or tools. Maleficent acts can be committed through the innate powers of a witch, for example, by using the evil eye.

In the early years, while witchcraft theory was gradually being formulated, some inquisitors and judges were unsure of this distinction. By the mid-thirteenth century, papal inquisitors were already probing facets of sorcery and divination. The confusion between the two magical traditions became evident in the early fourteenth century, during the Avignon “Babylonian captivity” pontificate of John XXII. The reign of John XXII (1316–1334) was marked by deep and growing concern over sorcery at the uppermost ecclesiastical levels. Throughout this period, the papal court and the pope were obsessed by fears of demonic sorcery. The cardinal of Santa Sabina wrote to the inquisitors of southern France at Toulouse and Carcassonne, ordering them, in the name of the pope, to take action against

any sorcerers who engaged in demonic invocations or bound themselves to demons in order to perpetrate harmful sorcery.

Six years later, in 1326, Pope John XXII issued the bull *Super illius specula* (Upon His Watchtower), condemning all sorcerers who made a pact with devils; they were said to sacrifice to demons, adore them, summon them, and even enclose them in a ring, a mirror, or other object in order to bind them magically to answer their requests and help them achieve their desires. Anyone engaging in such activity would be excommunicated and punished appropriately. The type of sorcery to which these documents refer is clearly learned necromancy. This is most obvious in the bull, where the pope mentioned rings, mirrors, and phials made for magical purposes while ignoring the herbs, stones, and simple charms of illiterate sorcerers. By that time, major courts often had resident magicians, mainly astrologers, alchemists, and physicians who practiced ritual magic for the amusement, health, and political advantage of their employers.

The Dominican Bernard Gui (made famous in Umberto Eco’s novel, *The Name of the Rose*) was actually an inquisitor in Toulouse for almost twenty years before writing a handbook, the *Practica inquisitionis heretice pravitatis* (The Practice of the Inquisition of Heretical Depravity, ca. 1324), which was widely copied and influenced future inquisitorial practice. In Gui’s handbook, one can see the beginnings of the confusion on the part of Church authorities between elite necromancy and more common forms of sorcery that would later feed into the idea of witchcraft. His handbook did not deal with necromancy, but it did devote some space to popular forms of sorcery. Gui emphasized the inquisitor’s responsibility to ask sorcerers whether they cured diseases by conjurations or incantations, inquiring about using hair and nails, organic materials such as fruit and herbs, or girdles and similar objects; the rings and polished mirrors of ritual demonic magic were never mentioned (medical magic almost never figured in necromantic practice, while common sorcery was primarily concerned with healing or, conversely, inflicting disease). Gui did briefly mention baptized images of wax or lead and various other devices that were also tools of learned necromancers. Elsewhere in his *Practica*, he included several sections directed against clerical sorcerers and the charges that involved necromancy and diabolism. And elsewhere, Gui also advised inquisitors to ask sorcerers about women called “the good ones” who flew at night.

In 1376, the Dominican Nicolas Eymeric, formerly inquisitor of Aragon, completed his *Directorium inquisitorum* (Directory of Inquisitors), a vast manual that became even more influential than Gui’s. Among its many topics, it dealt with the question of whether sorcerers and diviners were heretics, and it subsequently

condemned all forms of demonic sorcery. Although still focusing on learned necromantic practice, its arguments formed an important foundation for later notions of witchcraft. Familiar with the learned black arts, Eymeric mentioned *grimoires* (magicians' books for invoking demons) such as the *Key of Solomon* and the *Sworn Book of Honorius* that he had obviously seized from magicians whom he had tried. He excluded certain forms of magical practice (for example, chiromancy and astrology) as not demonic and therefore not heretical. Sorcery that involved demonic invocation, however, was always heretical. Eymeric distinguished three levels of demonic sorcery: The first and most horrible involved summoning demons and showing them adoration; in the second method, the sorcerer showed demons certain signs of veneration that were due only to saints; and the third method involved tracing a circle in the earth and placing a boy in it, with the necromancer holding a book and reading it to invoke a demon.

But there were no further developments, either in theory or in courtroom confessions, until much later. If complex forms of ritual magic—necromancers performing complex rites and invocations designed to compel an essentially unwilling and dangerous demonic agent to come and serve them—concerned Pope John in 1326, over a century later Pope Eugenius IV feared uneducated men and women who could allegedly perform terrible demonic sorcery by a mere word, touch, or sign. The cumulative concept of witchcraft, involving, among other things, the complete absorption of commonplace sorcery and performance of *maleficium* as essential ingredients, emerged clearly in the 1430s in several treatises, connected in various ways with Alpine sorcery and heresy and filtered through clerical preconceptions. One of the most important of these witchcraft treatises was the section devoted to witches and their deceptions in the *Formicarius* (The Anthill), written around 1437/1438 by the Dominican theologian Johannes Nider. Employing the distinct notions of heretical witchcraft and the earlier conception of demonic sorcery, the *Formicarius* presented witches as members of an organized sect, performing the most evil kinds of magic, although the author did not believe in the corporeal flight of the witches. Well-educated minds (the first treatises on cumulative witchcraft were composed by both laymen and clerics) convinced themselves that certain simple people seemed to hold such complete and easy mastery over powerful demons, while even the Church's own exorcists engaged in complex rites that still often failed to command demons. The difference lay in the now-ancient notion of a pact between the sorcerer or witch and the demon, going back at least to Theophilus. But witches went far beyond offering demons limited acts of adoration: They apostatized, formally denying Christianity and surrendering themselves

body and soul to the Devil. They were able to perform malevolent sorcery with the aid of powerful demons with just a few words or gestures—but only because they had already become servants of Satan.

Three generations after the cumulative notion of witchcraft had been created, the influential jurist Paulo Grillando devoted many pages of his 1525 *Tractatus de haereticis et sortilegiis* (Treatise on Heretics and Sorcerers) to determining exactly when sorcery became heresy. God allowed the Devil certain powers, said Grillando, such as tempting people to sin, knowing the nature of things, predicting the future, and even curing diseases. Asking help of the Devil to do these permitted acts constituted sorcery. Asking the Devil to do other acts, which God reserved for Himself, constituted heresy. For example, asking the Devil to help in seducing a woman was not heretical because this ability came within the Devil's province. Yet the manner of asking was very important: If a person *ordered* the Devil to do the evil permitted by God, he was not a heretic, but if he *implored* the Devil with the same request, he became a heretic. If a person who had made a contract with the Devil asked in any way even for a permitted act, he or she became both a witch and a heretic.

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See also: AQUINAS, THOMAS; AUGUSTINE, ST.; BIBLE; CLERICAL MAGIC; DEMONS; EUGENIUS IV, POPE; EVIL EYE; EYMERIC, NICOLAS; GRILLANDO, PAULO; GRIMOIRES; GUI, BERNARD; IMAGE MAGIC; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; INVOCATIONS; JOHN XXII, POPE; MAGIC, LEARNED; MAGIC, POPULAR; MAGIC AND RELIGION; MAGIC CIRCLE; *MALEFICIUM*; NECROMANCY; NIDER, JOHANNES; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; RINGS, MAGICAL; RITUAL MAGIC; SHAMANISM; SIMON MAGUS; SPELLS; THEOPHILUS; WITCH AND WITCHCRAFT, DEFINITIONS OF.

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SOURCES FOR WITCHCRAFT TRIALS

Historians acquire information about witchcraft and witchcraft trials from a variety of published and unpublished sources, ranging from judicial records of the courts where witches were tried to scholarly accounts written by contemporaries and modern scholars.

PUBLISHED WORKS

1. The most accessible published works that provide information regarding witchcraft trials have been written since the eighteenth century, that is, during the era when witchcraft had been decriminalized in Europe and its former colonies. The works in this category comprised a large majority of the references used in this encyclopedia, including such subgenres as folklore collections. The absence of any direct need either to combat or to justify the persecution of witches gave them a degree of relative detachment, although depriving them of the sense of immediate relevance that informed most earlier publications. Obviously, their numbers have mushroomed since Rossell Hope Robbins painstakingly combed British and American libraries to amass the 1,140 printed works he used to compile his *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology* in 1959. Currently, the number of available works may well be ten times as large. The most helpful bibliographic guides can now be found online; probably the best starting point is the compilation begun by Jeffrey Merrick, continued since 1996 by Richard Golden, and maintained by Jonathan Durrant beginning in 2005, which concentrates on relatively recent items, predominantly in English (available at <http://www.witchcraftbib.co.uk>). To get an idea of how large modern witchcraft bibliographies can be, consider that merely for the Belgian province of Flanders (which has no separate entry in this *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition*), the Web site bibliography's list contains over 125 entries—none of them originally published in English.

Usually, the great advantage of modern publications is their relative accessibility, and they occasionally preserve valuable references to original documents that were completely destroyed during Europe's twentieth-century wars. For example, a nineteenth-century German monograph (Lilienthal 1861) about a small coastal city in what was then Prussia provided information about more than 120 witchcraft trials held there between 1534 and 1772; nearly half of those tried (fifty-eight people) were executed between 1605 and 1686.

2. The number of published works from the age of "cumulative" witchcraft (1420–1750), harder to find on electronic lists, can also be dauntingly large. For example, the unusually broad bibliography offered in a major synthesis on the intellectual history of witchcraft (Clark 1997) contained nearly a thousand pre-nineteenth-century titles, making it approximately

as large as the selection of more recent titles. More than 775 different authors wrote these pre-1800 works; about 7.5 percent of the works were anonymous or pseudonymous.

This category contains some interesting subgroups. For example, a few regions published pamphlets describing witchcraft trials. The earliest ones came from Germany, the home of both printing and witch hunting, starting with a sensational pamphlet describing the remarkable witch panic of 1562 that caused sixty-three deaths in the small territory of Wiesensteig. However, the richest and most reliable group of such pamphlets came from England. Beginning in 1566, England produced about twenty pamphlets describing individual English witchcraft trials before the Civil War erupted in 1640; only three of the authors are known. After the monarchy was restored in 1660, England held few witchcraft trials but instead produced multiple pamphlets about them; for instance, three different accounts appeared about a Bedfordshire case of 1682, and the last known British conviction of a witch spawned five printed pamphlets in 1712—all of them still anonymous.

A general rule for readers of such early pamphlets is that the greater the distance separating the printers from the events they described, the less reliable the printed evidence becomes; for example, the *News from Scotland*, printed at London in 1591, provided an inaccurate and misleading account. German pamphlets abound with such distant, excited, and generally exaggerated misinformation. In France, with most printing done at Paris or Lyons, one finds no such pamphlets until the seventeenth century; however, the trial of Urbain Grandier generated more than three dozen pamphlets between 1634 and 1636, dwarfing other individual European cases. Spain offers an interesting example: Before 1800, only one pamphlet described its witchcraft trials, but it helped fan the largest witch panic in Spanish history, and specific details from it have been traced in witchcraft confessions from Spanish America a decade after its appearance.

At the opposite end of the publications spectrum from pamphlets, Europe's first multivolume publication about witchcraft came from Eberhard David Hauber, who also published the first history of cartography (in 1724). An Enlightened Calvinist pastor in the north German county of Schaumburg-Lippe, where hundreds of witches had been burned only two generations earlier, Hauber edited the *Bibliotheca sive acta et scripta magica* (Library of Magical Stories and Writings) between 1738 and 1745; although published as a three-volume series, it began as a magazine with between four and six issues per year.

Apart from some works published by critics such as Hauber, mostly during the eighteenth century, the enormous majority of pre-1700 publications upheld

the reality of witchcraft and, by extension, the necessity to prosecute it. A reasonable estimate is that barely 10 percent of all published works that discussed witchcraft during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries could be classified as skeptical in their approach. But then, too, historians of science have pointed out that barely 10 percent of all astronomical publications published before 1650 supported Copernicus's theory. Legal codes mentioning witchcraft were seldom published, and statutory law was not an important guide to legal practice in most of Old Régime Europe. It seems symbolic that the most elaborate and fierce criminal code condemning witchcraft and magic, a Bavarian edict of 1611, had no visible effect on local legal practice.

ARCHIVAL SOURCES

Most witchcraft trials occurred in the German heartlands of the Holy Roman Empire, which was divided into literally hundreds of autonomous states. (Curiously, the most valuable general inventory of its archival sources, which eventually located nearly 30,000 individual witchcraft trials, was made under the Nazi regime, the only government of twentieth-century Europe to pose as an official champion of witches.) In order to get an idea of the problems faced by researchers wishing to acquire original archival information about witchcraft trials, consider the situation of four small territorial clusters (today in the German provinces of Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria) that formerly comprised Swabian Austria: the districts of Hohenberg, Nellenburg, the *Landvogtei* (provincial government) of Schwaben, and Burgau. Between 1493 and 1711, they experienced more than 520 witchcraft trials; about 90 percent of accused witches were women, and about three-fourths of those tried as witches were executed—reasonably typical of southwestern Germany. The first general investigation of the documentary sources for Swabian Austria (Dillinger 1999, 28–32) noted that serious lacunae had been mentioned as early as the mid-seventeenth century, with subsequent losses afterward through fire and theft. When Austria lost these territories during the Napoleonic era, in 1806, Habsburg officials at Innsbruck (the Tyrolean capital, from which the territories had been governed) sent the original documents from these exclaves to the new German authorities in Württemberg and Bavaria. Records for Nellenburg were soon transferred again, to Baden. Every transfer entailed further losses. By the late twentieth century, the remaining original trial records from Swabian Austria were thus located primarily in regional archives at Augsburg, Stuttgart, and Karlsruhe. However, the original administrative correspondence that had accompanied them remained with the archives of the Tyrolean government at Innsbruck, together with archives from hospitals that occasionally yielded useful

information. Similarly, the financial records from Swabian Austria remained in Tyrol, although scattered documentation about confiscations and trial costs was included with the original trial records. Apart from a few documents in the four district seats and one other town (Horb), local municipal archives had little to offer. A rhyming pamphlet, printed at Innsbruck in 1596 and preserved at Stuttgart, claimed to offer a *Wahrhaftig geschicht und eigentliche Beschreibung von den Hexen Weybern, so man zu Rottenburg am Neckar und in Westfahlen, Prissgre und anderstwo verbrand hat, dises 1596 Jar in Reimen weiss verfast* (Truthful . . . Description of the Women Burned as Witches at Rottenburg on the Neckar, Westphalia, Breisgau, and Elsewhere in This Year 1596, Put into Rhyme). Unexpectedly, the most valuable guide to the overall dimensions of witch hunting in Swabian Austria came from remarks scattered through a nine-volume manuscript chronicle kept between 1573 and 1604 by a Tübingen antiquarian, Martin Crusius, published in an abridged version between 1927 and 1961.

Of course, reconstructing the history of witchcraft trials within a particular region is generally less difficult than in Swabian Austria, but most of the problems encountered here apply to European witchcraft generally. The first documents historians usually look for are any available judicial sources of various kinds: German *Hexenakte* (witch trial document), French *Procès criminels* (criminal trials), and so on. They come from every level of court, beginning with seigneurial tribunals. For example, the richest family of sixteenth-century Germany, the Fuggers of Augsburg, acquired a block of estates stretching north as far as the Danube; around 1590, during the first wave of persecution in this region, witches from throughout their estates were burned at their two small capitals, but these persecutions have yet to be adequately explored. Many such seigneurial records have never been donated to public archives and remain in private hands.

Many trial records survive from municipal courts (and are often extremely well preserved), particularly from the imperial free cities of the Holy Roman Empire. Larger towns generally have better records. Self-governing towns such as Rottweil that ruled over several rural villages seem to have been especially prone to endemic witchcraft persecutions; there, as in the Republic of Geneva, most of the witches accused and executed came from rural districts. Outside Germany, other records slumber in a few municipal archives of eastern France (Toul, Besançon) or Swiss cantons. Even in England, some borough courts could impose death sentences for witchcraft; for example, at least seven women witches were sentenced to death in the small Essex town of Harwich between 1601 and 1619 (Macfarlane 1970, 75–76), while Newcastle executed fifteen witches in 1650 (Sharpe 1997, 218).

Trial records from higher-level courts are usually better preserved than those from lower courts; France, Europe's largest kingdom, is an extreme case because its local court records are nonexistent. Two major problems confront researchers. First, officials often preserved such documents randomly, primarily in order to establish precedents or prove their right to pronounce and execute capital punishments. Second, even when apparently preserved in relatively good order, the documents are difficult to use because they lack topical indexes; investigators have no alternative to exploring them serially in order to locate witchcraft trials among vast piles of other criminal cases. Official sentences from French appellate courts (which always specify the punishment but often do not specify the crime) can sometimes be supplemented by their *plumitifs*, shorthand records of prisoner interrogations. It required several years of research for an expatriate American to locate over a thousand witchcraft cases in the records of the *Parlement* of Paris (Soman 1992). Similar situations exist with national appellate courts in Scandinavia. The Holy Roman Empire, where most of Europe's witchcraft trials occurred, offers an unusual problem: The records of its principal appellate court, the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court), were split up after German unification and sent to three dozen different locations (a few of them outside present-day Germany), while those from the emperor's appellate court, the *Reichshofrat* (imperial aulic court), remain together at Vienna but have been little used.

Another little-used judicial source, the sale of pardons (a practice largely confined to French-speaking Europe), also offers occasional information about witchcraft. Witchcraft belonged to a small category of "unpardonable" heinous crimes; only one partial exception is known—a woman who had endured torture without confessing and whose banishment was revoked years later (Muchembled 1989, 378). The homicide of a suspected witch was a pardonable offense, and scattered examples (most of them apparently lynchings) can be found among the thousands of pardons preserved from the Kingdom of France, the Low Countries, or the duchy of Lorraine. In 1603, in the tiny southern enclave of Châtillon-sur-Saone in the duchy of Bar, subject to the appellate jurisdiction of the distant *Parlement* of Paris, local financial records suggest a reluctance to torture and convict arrested witches, and a ducal pardon suggests a readiness to lynch them instead. One general rule is that all such sources must be explored serially, concentrating on periods when witchcraft trials are known to have occurred.

Other administrative records discussing witchcraft trials are abundant. A great recent exploration of witch hunting (Behringer 1997) made excellent use of the rich series of deliberations by Bavaria's central government, sampling them during periods when other

sources suggested that witchcraft trials were occurring. In this *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition*, the entry on Bavaria concludes that "as far as serial analysis is concerned, . . . Historians possess an ocean of sources, which they have so far only explored in part," mentioning court council records since the early 1600s, trial records, official reports, special files for witchcraft trials, legal opinions, and official correspondence. Such official sources have proved particularly helpful when exploring the hotly debated topic of whether witchcraft trials originated primarily "from beneath," through popular pressure on local authorities, or "from above," by governments intent on punishing deviants.

Information about witchcraft trials lurks in some other administrative records rarely explored by historians. A thousand witchcraft trials from the present-day Swiss canton of Vaud between 1580 and 1620 have been located through the council minutes of the Republic of Bern, which governed Vaud until 1798 and had to approve all death sentences there. One local scholar carefully collected almost 1,700 references to witchcraft during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the provincial council minutes for the duchy of Luxemburg; most of them were petitions complaining of irregular procedures in witchcraft trials, thus offering an upside-down view of "sanitized" official versions. Another kind of administrative source, the abundant and well-preserved correspondence between the Spanish Inquisition's governing council, the *Suprema*, and its local tribunals, has proved especially useful for understanding the dynamics of the single most important episode in Spanish witchcraft, the 1609–1614 Basque panic.

The opinions about witchcraft cases issued by various German universities (whose archives are usually well preserved) constitute a different kind of specialized source. Through so-called document dispatching (*Aktenversendung*), courts sent the files of a pending procedure to a legal faculty to seek advice. Beginning in the sixteenth century, *Aktenversendung* applied to both civil and criminal trials in the Holy Roman Empire because local lay assessor courts usually needed the advice of professionally trained authorities. However, unlike the practice in French appellate courts, German law professors examined only the written trial records and had no opportunity to question defendants under oath afterward. In northern and northeastern Germany, their legal opinions sometimes provide our most important source of information about witchcraft trials: About a thousand of them survive from the duchy of Mecklenburg alone, while the situation is somewhat similar for electoral Saxony, where such legal consultations were required by central governments. Legal opinions have been studied from several of Germany's two dozen universities, with mixed results. Some law

professors clearly saw witchcraft as a *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime) and were extremely severe: At Rinteln, 347 decisions in witchcraft trials include only 19 judgments favoring the accused.

Financial records mentioning witchcraft trials are relatively abundant, since Old Régime governments generally took great care to preserve them. Bavaria, for example, has expense records from virtually every district court from the fifteenth century onward, as well as from some of its central prisons. However, they, too, are generally difficult to search because they contain no index of any kind—and they may even be preserved in a different country from the area being studied, as, for example, with both with Swabian Austria and the duchy of Luxembourg. Financial sources are frequently older than judicial records and seem to be especially helpful for identifying early witchcraft trials—especially those ending with executions, for central governments were less willing to pay costs of trials that did not result in convictions. For instance, in the Belgian province of Flanders, all but three of the three dozen cases known before 1560 are documented exclusively by financial records, while only three of the last fifty (all of them also found in judicial records) can be traced this way (Monballyu 2002, 302–313). Some countries—Norway is a good example—have relatively few surviving court records but preserve an almost complete series of their financial records for the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, providing a solid basis for estimating their witchcraft executions. Another very important example comes from the duchy of Lorraine, where virtually all records that mention its numerous witchcraft trials (more than 1,700 can be traced, over 300 of which include partial trial records) have been preserved among its unusually rich series of annual local financial reports. At the same time, financial records from the duchy of Bar, permanently united with Lorraine after 1506 but administered separately, are so incomplete as to be practically useless for this purpose.

A few general rules may be extracted from this rapid and obviously incomplete survey of archival and printed sources available for studying witchcraft in early modern Europe. Concerning published materials, there are a few major specialized library collections about witchcraft; the one at Cornell University, formed in the late nineteenth century, is probably the richest (available at <http://historical.library.cornell.edu/witchcraft/index.html>). However, just as no major specialized scholarly journal is devoted to this subject, no library holds anything like a complete series of works about witchcraft, although many libraries have the readily available primary source collection, “Witchcraft in Europe and America,” containing 1,196 items on 95 microfilm reels (available at <http://microformguides.gale.com/BrowseGuide.asp?colldocid=3058000&Item=&Page=1>).

This impression of incompleteness is reinforced and deepened when we consider archival sources. None of them from the early modern period is ever complete. Perhaps more important, none provides a direct record of the words of accused witches (the vast majority of whom were women with no knowledge of writing). The early-fifteenth-century trial records, even those from secular courts, were often kept in Latin; afterward (for instance, in the Spanish case between 1609 and 1614 or the Bernese in Vaud), the people who compiled the records could not even speak the same language as the accused witches. Moreover, with extremely few exceptions, preserved documents do not record the exact words of the witnesses who testified against the witches but instead provide a version rearranged by the recording scribe.

When it comes to discourse about witchcraft, post-modernism is actually very old. Ever since the sixteenth century, the sources of witchcraft have been deconstructed or “unpacked” by intellectuals who could “think outside the box.” Few areas of historical research demonstrate more convincingly that so-called authentic documents are not truthful documents: Like the historians who study them, witches cannot fly.

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: APPEALS; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; CONFISCATIONS OF WITCHES' PROPERTY; FUGGER FAMILY; HAUBER, EBERHARD DAVID; HISTORIOGRAPHY; IMPERIAL FREE CITIES; LORRAINE, DUCHY OF; LUXEMBOURG, DUCHY OF; NAZI INTEREST IN WITCH PERSECUTION; PAMPHLETS AND NEWSPAPERS; PARLEMENT OF PARIS; PRUSSIA; ROBINS, ROSSELL HOPE; UNIVERSITIES.

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SPAIN

Spain's experience of witchcraft was substantially different from that in many other areas of Europe. No real "witch crazes" happened there, although sporadic persecution of witches occurred throughout the peninsula. The total number of executions was comparatively small but larger than in other Mediterranean countries with effective Inquisitions, such as Portugal or Italy after 1542.

In the traditional legal systems of the Iberian Peninsula, where the dictates of Roman law had penetrated imperfectly, witchcraft was not formally considered an offense. At various times in the medieval period, people were tried and condemned for practicing *maleficia* (evil acts, harmful magic). When alien diabolical help was involved, the crime was also called sorcery (*sortilegium*). In 1370 and 1387, the laws of Castile declared that sorcery was a crime involving heresy, for which laypeople would be punished by the state and clergy by the Church. The medieval Inquisition, both in France and in the Crown of Aragon, left such questions largely in secular hands. Around 1500, when the Spanish Inquisition began investigating the heresy of witchcraft, repression of the offense was still normally in the hands of the state courts; a Castilian decree of 1500, for example, ordered an investigation into sorcery by the civil courts.

Church authorities in medieval Spain seldom took vigorous action against superstition. As elsewhere in Europe, Spanish popular culture, especially in rural areas, sought unorthodox cures for daily afflictions. Spanish villages had their wise men or women (*curanderos*) who offered medicinal ointments, found lost objects, healed wounded animals, or, like *La Celestina* (a procuress and enchantress, protagonist of a famous Spanish novel), helped lovers win the affections of the ones they loved. Cures might take the form of potions, charms, spells, or simply advice. This subculture coexisted with and did not try to subvert official Catholicism, though in certain "New Christian" areas (that is, areas with Christians of Jewish and Muslim origin), the Christian content of the spells was doubtful. In rural areas, the world of magic even entered the Church, with many clergy incorporating folk practices—rites, prayers, offerings, dances—into the normal liturgy.

The mountainous provinces of northern Spain, from Galicia on the Atlantic coast to Catalonia on the Mediterranean, were the regions most identified with a prevalence of superstition. All this was stamped on firmly in the sixteenth century by reforming bishops, post-Tridentine clergy, and the Inquisition. In the process of contrasting the dark world of primitive superstition with the illuminated world of the Gospel, preachers and learned men unduly simplified the forces at work and helped to create fears of "witchcraft."

Late medieval Spain produced several treatises about witches, mostly by theologians who helped give credence to the notions of a Sabbat and a compact with the Devil. A special meeting of the council of the Inquisition held in the city of Granada in 1526 ruled by a narrow majority that the notion of the witches' flight was impossible, claiming that "the majority of jurists in this realm agree that witches do not exist" (Kamen 1997, 271). The effective origin of prosecutions must be sought principally in social tensions and conflicts. In small communities across northern Spain, denunciations for witchcraft often arose simply from family and communal tensions. There were occasional state-sponsored witch hunts, particularly in Navarre, from a very severe one in 1525 until the 1580s. The most intensive outbreaks of persecution occurred in times of agrarian disaster, when local communities blamed the evil influences at work among them. When Spain's worst witch panic was affecting rural Catalonia in 1621, a bishop reported that "the barons and lords of the villages, on seeing the loss of crops and the clamoring of the people, have supplied a cure for the ills by punishing these women" (quoted in Kamen 2000, 68).

People accused of witchcraft were generally from the lower levels of rural society. Denunciations of witches, like denunciations for heresy, arose out of antipathies and grievances within the local community. Petty suspicions, jealousies, and gossip led to the victimization of individuals and eventually to their prosecution. In a changing society, the disappearance of traditional neighborly charity and mutual help might give rise to resentments. The fear of retaliation by witchcraft forced villagers to keep dispensing favors to those who were suspected of being witches or who, to exploit the situation, claimed to be witches. In times of crisis, such persons were persecuted and denounced to the courts. But documented cases range far beyond examples of "charity refused." Malice between neighbors was a universal phenomenon in witchcraft cases.

Medieval practice had been that witches should be burned, and the Spanish tribunals followed suit. The Spanish Inquisition, however, played no significant part in these prosecutions; it was guided by the policies laid out at the special meeting in 1526, when it decided to act with caution in cases concerning witchcraft. With few and brief exceptions, prosecution of the offense reverted to civil courts. At Barcelona in 1549, local justices and inquisitors collaborated in the punishment and execution of a handful of women accused of sorcery. The *Suprema* (the supreme council of the Inquisition) reaffirmed its attitude by punishing the inquisitor responsible; thereafter, the Inquisition in Catalonia punished few witches and burned none.

A similar case happened in the Pyrenees in 1610. Basque refugees from a frenzied witch hunt conducted just across the French border entered Spanish Navarre,

soon leading to a number of witches being executed at an *auto de fe*. The inquisitor Alonso de Salazar Frías was sent to inquire into the circumstances and came to the conclusion that “there were neither witches nor bewitched until they were talked and written about” (Henningsen 1980, ix). Another result of the 1610 episode was that the Inquisitor General commissioned a report (in 1611) from the scholar Pedro de Valencia, who suggested that there was a strong element of mental sickness in the Navarre events and that exceptional care had to be taken to prove offenses. “The accused must be examined first to see if they are in their right mind or possessed or melancholic,” he stated, finally advising that “one must look for evidence, according to law, of an offence having been committed” (quoted in Kamen 1997, 275). A curious feature of this episode was the role of children. When inquisitor Salazar Frías visited Navarre in 1611, 1,802 people came forward as self-confessed witches; 1,384 of them were children under fourteen. In 1614, the council issued instructions reaffirming the policy of 1526. They remained the principal guide to the future policy of the Inquisition, advising caution and leniency in all investigations. As a result, the Inquisition never again executed witches.

Had all Spanish tribunals behaved in this way, the prosecution of superstition in Spain would have become what the Inquisition intended it to be: a means of disciplining people into orthodox Christianity. However, the control of much jurisdiction over witchcraft by secular authorities meant that witches continued to be executed in many parts of Spain. In the Kingdom of Aragon, for example, the civil authorities continued in full possession of their jurisdiction over witchcraft, and the Inquisition seems to have made only sporadic efforts to assert jurisdiction. Many witches were tried before local courts in upper Aragon in the early and mid-seventeenth century. Witches in Aragon were hanged and burned; the total number of those executed is not known.

In Catalonia, likewise, executions continued. In the jurisdiction of Vic alone, the civil authorities sentenced forty-five witches to death between 1618 and 1622. Dozens of witches were hanged in other towns throughout Catalonia, including some in the Pyrenees. The rector of the Jesuits in Barcelona, Pere Gil, begged the viceroy to intervene but with little result. Royal courts could not control the local and baronial jurisdictions in which the executions took place.

Such incidents, provoked in some measure by bad harvest conditions, declined in number after 1627. Further research may reveal many cases of persecution of witches throughout Spain, for popular superstitions on the matter remained deeply ingrained for centuries, and local authorities were usually responsive to complaints. There is no way to know how many witches were executed in Spain because we do not have

adequate information on this, but 300 is a reasonable guess. We also cannot be sure of the dates of the last execution for witchcraft and the last witchcraft trial, because various jurisdictions continued informal executions and trials well into the seventeenth century. Consciousness of witchcraft as a historical phenomenon remained in folk memory for generations after active persecution had ceased. In the early nineteenth century, the great Aragonese painter Francisco de Goya produced the best-known artistic representations of witches in the Spanish countryside.

As in nearly all of Europe, the overwhelming majority of those accused in Spain were female. Most cases were tried before the secular courts as a consequence of popular pressure, and even the interventions of the Inquisition in Barcelona in 1549 and Navarre in 1610 were a consequence of secular prosecutions. Spanish authorities, while tolerant of so-called diabolic witchcraft, initiated a firm campaign against popular superstitions in the later sixteenth century, but that campaign faded away a generation later. One must also bear in mind that if Spaniards needed scapegoats in times of crisis, they did not have to pick witches but could frequently find them in their resident cultural minorities, the New Christians of Jewish origin (*conversos*) or Muslim origin (*Moriscos*); this alternative was not available in other European countries.

HENRY KAMEN

See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; BASQUE COUNTRY; CARO BAROJA, JULIO; CELESTINA, LA; CHILDREN; COURTS, INQUISITORIAL; COURTS, SECULAR; FEMALE WITCHES; GOYA Y LUCIENTES, FRANCISCO JOSÉ DE; INQUISITION, SPANISH; MAGIC, POPULAR; SALAZAR FRÍAS, ALONSO DE; SCAPEGOATS; SUPERSTITION; VALENCIA, PEDRO DE.

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SPANISH AMERICA

Witchcraft and sorcery developed special characteristics in colonial Spanish America, merging European and

indigenous American concepts into new, hybrid notions. In addition, Spanish notions underwent cultural changes in the New World. Jurisdiction over witchcraft cases in Spanish America was supervised by the *Suprema* (the supreme council of the Inquisition) in Spain, which generally took a cautious position on witchcraft, urging its American inquisitors to punish witches and sorcerers less severely than heretics. Consequently, the *Suprema* never allowed death penalties for cases of witchcraft or sorcery to be executed in Spanish America.

While most Spanish American trials dealt with sorcery, witch hunts seldom occurred during the more than three centuries of colonial domination; they were confined to short periods of time and to small geographic regions in the viceroyalties of New Spain (Mexico) and New Granada. The majority of those prosecuted were women, overwhelmingly in sorcery trials involving magical healing, divination, or love magic. Sorcery techniques came primarily from Spanish models, with small variations in witchcraft and sorcery occurring principally through the use of native American plants and materials or occasionally through adopting indigenous practices. In Spanish America, witchcraft remained an individual phenomenon, with one person harming another; evidence of collective assemblies of witches is extremely rare and unreliable, with the exception of the Cartagena tribunal, where some cases were reported.

DISTRIBUTION OF WITCHCRAFT MODELS IN SPANISH AMERICA

Three different notions of witchcraft converged in Spanish America, incorporating Spanish, Amerindian, and African concepts of witches and sorcerers. The conquistadores carried contemporary Spanish ideas on witchcraft and sorcery to the New World. Missionaries and educated men were familiar with the demonological witch concept, while most colonists understood popular traditions about sorcery (*hechicería*) and harmful magic. Because frequent communication of Spaniards with Native Americans and Africans usually occurred among lower social strata, mostly concepts from popular Iberian tradition were transmitted. In the African population, several concepts of witchcraft were present. The Africans serving Spanish colonists were Christianized and generally familiar with Spanish ideas; African witch concepts seldom surfaced among them. However, slaves who came from Africa preserved their native concepts on witchcraft in America. Finally, Native American societies had their own specific notions of witches, different from those of Europeans and Africans but with some similarities to the European model.

The European concept of witches and sorcerers was generally confined to urban spaces. Spanish colonial

policy usually excluded Europeans from Amerindian settlements. Therefore, the vast majority of Spaniards and Creoles lived in colonial towns, explaining the strong concentration of European witchcraft/sorcery notions in urban centers. Trial records reflect an image of witches that was almost identical with contemporary Spanish notions. At the same time, regions with a high-density Amerindian population reveal a strong influence of Native American ideas and practices. Generally, the Iberian model of witchcraft and sorcery dominated urban colonial centers, while Amerindian concepts prevailed in rural areas.

In some regions, the Amerindian population declined dramatically during the sixteenth century after the Spanish Conquest. As Native American ideas on witchcraft faded, the popular European model of the witch became dominant. African influence was strongest in regions with economies based on slave labor, for example, in the mining centers of New Granada or the *haciendas* (estates) of the Peruvian coast. On the whole, the concept of the witch recorded in historical sources, even in regions with a strong African presence, was basically a hybrid European model with some African influence.

If we could draw a map of indigenous witchcraft beliefs in Spanish America, at least two different regional models would emerge: one centered in Mexico, in the core of the former Aztec state, another centered in highland Peru, the core of the pre-Conquest Inca Empire. In both regions, where the great majority of the population was Amerindian, indigenous elements penetrated the witchcraft and sorcery beliefs of the colonial population.

SPANISH AND CREOLE CONCEPTS OF WITCHCRAFT

Early modern Spanish distinctions between witchcraft (*brujería*) and sorcery (*hechicería*) were maintained in Spain's colonial possessions. In the learned tradition, witchcraft required an explicit pact with the Devil, but sorcery usually involved only an implicit pact. A further distinction involved the faculties attributed to witches and sorcerers. Adherents of both the learned and the popular traditions believed that witches could fly through the air, transform themselves into animals, and command the weather. Sorcerers, by contrast, were thought usually to lack such supernatural capacities but use spells, magic potions, and certain stones, plants, or other elements in their magical procedures. A third distinctive feature involved *maleficium* (harmful magic). Inquisitorial trials typically related it to witchcraft. Although sorcery occasionally inflicted harm on a victim, it was rarely associated with *maleficium*. Thus, the Inquisition characterized a magician as a sorcerer, if he or she had not employed *maleficium*, even though accused of metamorphosis, magical flight, and similar

deeds typical of witches. Some minor variations in these two categories can be observed in the historical material from the colonial era, principally due to changes over time or to the idiosyncratic views of some inquisitors about witchcraft and sorcery.

In urban centers where Spanish-Creole inhabitants were dominant, witchcraft and sorcery beliefs showed great similarity to the Iberian model characterized by a famous literary figure, *La Celestina* (a procuress or enchantress). Sorcery was practiced far more frequently than witchcraft. The predominant type of magician in colonial Spanish America was a sorceress engaged in love magic, divination, propitiatory rites, and magical healing. In general, *hechiceras* were women of low social status, unmarried or widowed, and without the protection and support of a husband or male relative. Consequently, they were poor and lived in difficult circumstances. Sorcery provided them with income and a means of gaining respect, at least locally. A few of these women were courtesans of somewhat higher social standing. Their clients came from different social strata.

Techniques employed in colonial sorcery corresponded closely to Iberian models, with some native American plants and materials added. Love magic included invocations, especially of St. Martha, who, as in Spain, was believed to be most helpful in love affairs. Conjuring demons, especially the "limping devil" (*diablo cojuelo*), tracing magical circles, and using special items such as earth from a graveyard or pieces from a rope used to hang someone completed the procedure. Colonial Spanish magicians also used indigenous materials, for example, feathers and skins of certain birds, plants, seeds, and (especially in the Andes) coca leaves; the Lima Inquisition accused several Spanish and Creole women of chewing coca and using it for divination.

Although the Spanish American sorceress more frequently acted as a magical healer and diviner, she could also inflict harm. Love magic could require *maleficium*, for instance, to remove a rival. Male Spanish and Creole sorcerers generally engaged in seeking treasure or conjuring luck when gambling by invoking the Devil or specialized demons and offering to make a pact in order to fulfill their desire. Throughout the colonial period, witches and sorcerers of the Spanish and Creole strata acted almost exclusively as individuals; extremely few assemblies of witches were reported in trials, and even these were probably invented by defendants hoping to inspire respect or else were misinterpretations of testimony by the judges.

AMERINDIAN CONCEPTS OF WITCHCRAFT

The Amerindian witch may be characterized as a person who inflicts harm magically on others. Indigenous witches were often thought to be capable of flying, with or without the help of a supernatural entity, and of transforming themselves into such animals as birds or

felines. It is difficult to describe pre-Columbian indigenous witch concepts, as we lack written sources for most of the American continent. Only in Mexico and parts of Central America are written texts available from the pre-Conquest period. Even there, European concepts were superimposed on indigenous beliefs and gradually obscured them. Besides, Europeans frequently misunderstood the religious concepts of the Amerindians. As a consequence, different cultural elements were jumbled together and only gradually formed a new belief system.

This transformation is evident in the Mexican *nabual*. In pre-Columbian times, *nabual* described persons, usually religious or political leaders, with special capacities to transform themselves into animals—jaguars, birds, and the like. Their capacity for shape shifting was considered evidence of their great inherent powers. When Spanish missionaries confronted the *nabual* belief, they identified the *nabual's* supernatural power with characteristics ascribed to witches. The European concept of the witch thus gradually obscured the original notion of the *nabual*, which never inflicted harm by magical means. Sixteenth-century historical sources show that the *nabual* probably also merged with other indigenous notions that were more like European witches. The resulting colonial Mexican witch could become an animal, fly through the air at night in this shape, and enter houses to harm their victims, often by sucking their blood. Injuries could be noticed on the body of a witch who was hurt while transformed into an animal; if the animal-witch was killed, the witch would die instantly. The evil, blood-sucking *nabual* was a colonial creation that eventually also became a synonym for *witch* among the indigenous population, at least in some areas of colonial Mexico.

Belief in individuals with supernatural capacities who used their magical power to inflict harm on other humans existed in pre-Columbian and colonial Peru as well. As in the Mexican case, the idea of the witch in ancient Peru was not linked to the moral category of evil used in early modern Europe. Nevertheless, witchcraft was much feared in the Inca Empire, and special care was taken to prevent witches from acquiring clothes, hair, fingernails, or personal belongings of the Inca ruler, lest these things be used for bewitching the Inca and eventually killing him. Witchcraft was severely punished in the Inca state by executing the witch and her entire family. Witches harmed other persons by inflicting illnesses that eventually killed their victims. Witchcraft was essentially performed by individuals; only one assembly of witches was reported, a case from the north coast of Peru in the early seventeenth century. Spanish ecclesiastical judges discovered what they considered a congregation of witches similar to their gatherings in the Spanish Basque Country. The Peruvian witches supposedly gathered at a special place

at night where they adored the Devil and held a banquet, consuming blood previously extracted from their victims. These witches not only flew to their gathering through the air but also used a powder that allowed them to enter the houses of their victims and make them fall asleep or else unable to move. Once the witches had sucked some blood from their victims, they went to their assembly and cooked the blood in enormous pots. Although Spanish accounts of the Peruvian witches' Sabbat clearly owe much to demonological perspectives and to reports on Basque witchcraft, we know from indigenous testimonies that the local population greatly feared these witches. Spanish colonial reports on Peruvian witchcraft distinguished its few adepts from the many sorcerers actively engaged in divination, propitiatory rites, and similar activities.

WITCHCRAFT AND MAGICAL HEALING

Amerindian notions of witchcraft as a principal reason for illness matched almost perfectly with Spanish colonial concepts of disease; both Spanish and Creole populations often attributed illness to witchcraft. Both believed that harm inflicted by magical means could only be removed by magical procedures. Therefore, throughout the colonial population (Spanish, Amerindian, and African), magical healing practices were considered necessary to counteract the effects of witchcraft. Especially at popular levels in colonial society, healers from different sectors of the population were consulted interchangeably: African healers would be consulted by indigenous or Creole patients and vice versa. This situation led to a fusion of their different notions of witchcraft as well. In consequence, we find a Spanish friar invoking an entity he thought was a Native American demon in order to conjure its help or an African dressed up with a Mexican feather costume performing an Amerindian shamanic ritual. Similar cultural exchanges can be noted in the incorporation of Christian prayers or paraphernalia (especially the crucifix) into African or Amerindian magical rites.

Amerindian magic, by contrast, introduced the use of hallucinogenic substances into magical healing. Sorcery trials against healers reveal the importance of hallucinogenic drugs in inducing ecstasy or becoming "possessed" in order to communicate with supernatural powers that would eventually cure their patients. Hallucinogenic drugs also conferred particular clairvoyance on healers to diagnose the cause of an illness.

In Spanish America, witchcraft could induce illness basically in two ways: by introducing an object (hair, a stone, and so on) into the victim's body or by abducting his or her soul (or part of it). In either case, the victim would slowly fade away unless the healer could discover the cause and either extract the pathogenic object or return the soul to the patient. Thus, in colonial Spanish America, magical healers—persecuted as sorcerers—

were adversaries of the witches, trying to unravel and counteract their spells. If the healer revealed the identity of the witch through divination and clairvoyance, countermagic was usually performed to kill the witch with his or her own weapons.

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See also: BASQUE COUNTRY; *CELESTINA, LA*; COUNTERMAGIC; DRUGS AND HALLUCINOGENS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; INQUISITION, SPANISH; LOVE MAGIC; *MALEFICIUM*; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; METAMORPHOSIS; NATIVE AMERICANS; NEW GRANADA; NEW SPAIN; PERU; SABBAT; SORCERY; SPAIN; URBAN WITCHCRAFT.

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SPECTRAL EVIDENCE

This hotly disputed type of evidence was used in a few seventeenth-century French witchcraft prosecutions but more often (and more successfully) in seventeenth-century England and New England. It derived from a belief that the witch, through a voluntary covenant, would permit the Devil to use his or her apparition, or "specter," to afflict others. Crucial to this form of evidence was the complementary belief that those who were afflicted in this manner had a special ability to see and identify the spectral representation of the person attacking them. In the best-known trials that made extensive use of spectral evidence—the Salem witchcraft prosecutions of 1692 and the trial at Bury St. Edmonds in England in 1662—victims came forward in court to identify as witches the people whose otherworldly likeness or specter was tormenting them.

What made spectral evidence so forceful as testimony against witches was the youth and perceived vulnerability of the afflicted victims, combined with the highly graphic manner in which they exhibited their suffering. The victims were overwhelmingly female but considerably younger and far more often unmarried than female accusers in other witchcraft trials. In New England, some victims of spectral assault were only 7 years old, with most aged between 13 and 20, compared to the other accusers who were clustered between the ages of 20 and 49. Typically, the initial signs of an "affliction" were manifested by what contemporaries called fits or convulsions, often consisting of screams and complaints of choking, burning, and pinching sensations. These cries in turn were often accompanied by vivid displays of pain and suffering, particularly unusual physical contortions in which heads were twisted at what appeared to be impossible angles or tongues were distended beyond what seemed physically tolerable. Before spectral evidence could be introduced in the courtroom during a trial for witchcraft, the victim's afflictions had to be attributed to supernatural causes and then to the malevolent action of a witch, rather than to the Devil acting alone. Once these hurdles were cleared (or overlooked), spectators witnessed live demonstrations of these horrifying effects of witchcraft as supposedly afflicted young women writhed in pain while crying out the names of the suspects whose specters were attacking them. Such evidence was vastly more dramatic than the more usual

narratives of ancient quarrels and disputes purportedly resulting in various *maleficia*, or acts of harmful witchcraft.

Translating fits and convulsions into lawful evidence was highly controversial; in France, such "demonic" testimony was attacked sharply by 1600, and after a few show trials, it had become completely discredited by 1650. England was not far behind. Such guides as John Cotta's *Tryall of Witchcraft* (1616) urged caution in the diagnosis of bewitchment after some recent scandals in which children who had acted as "demoniacs" had later confessed that their symptoms were counterfeit. Like most early French skeptics, with their famous diagnosis of "something to illness, much faked, and nothing diabolical," Cotta was a physician. For him, the proper evaluation of early signs of fits and fevers required the expert judgment of a skilled physician to separate what was caused by illness or other natural causes from what was caused by witchcraft. Likewise, Thomas Ady's later treatise, *A Candle in the Dark* (1656), expanded the list of natural causes that would have to be ruled out before arriving at a judgment of bewitchment. Whether or not such works were in part inspired by a need to assert medical over lay authority in such matters, they represented a growing skepticism about the validity of accounts of possession and bewitchment.

Paradoxically, the more serious challenge to the credibility of the afflicted came from within theology. Even if one accepted that their symptoms originated with the Devil or his representatives, there still remained the vexing question of whether the victim was truly gifted with the ability to see the specters that were hidden from the sight of ordinary people or merely an instrument of Satan's subtle and evil design. Were the afflicted somehow enabled to identify the malefic witches who tormented them? Or were their senses fooled by a devil who, with God's permission, could impersonate virtuous and innocent persons? Increasingly throughout the seventeenth century, Protestant theologians cast doubt on the availability of divine will to human understanding, thereby undermining the confidence that could be placed in the perception of those who claimed access to the invisible world. As applied to spectral evidence, the result of these misgivings was that it was impossible to be sure on theological grounds whether the accusations of the afflicted were true identifications of witches and witchcraft or a product of Satan's deceptions.

By the end of the seventeenth century in England and on the Continent, the combined effect of theological doubt and medical skepticism was apparent in the weight accorded spectral evidence by the more influential published legal guides that were intended to assist in the trial of witchcraft. Lawyers, of course, were more cautious than theologians and physicians. Continental jurists, trained in Roman law, ignored this problem of

spectral evidence. In England, Richard Bernard's *Guide to grand-jury men* (2nd edition, 1630), followed by later texts, regarded spectral evidence or "an apparition of the party suspected whom the afflicted in their fits seems to see" (p. 206) as presumptive rather than convictive, that is, it sufficed to bring an indictment for witchcraft but was not sufficient to convict.

SPECTRAL EVIDENCE IN THE SALEM WITCHCRAFT TRIALS

Among their other noteworthy features, the Salem witchcraft trials of 1692 represent a dramatic finale to use of spectral evidence. In less than a year after the initial proceedings, the special court that decided these cases altered its position from an almost-unqualified acceptance to an unqualified rejection of this evidence. It is hard to say which aspect is more remarkable: the lateness of the acceptance or the rapidity of its abandonment.

At the outset of the trials in February 1692, spectral evidence formed the basis for virtually all of the approximately 140 complaints that preceded the arrests of suspects on charges of witchcraft. The accusers consisted mostly of girls and young women between the ages of nine and twenty, who cried out against the suspects whose specters they claimed were attacking them. Everyone tried for witchcraft during the Salem trials was indicted on charges that mentioned spectral evidence alone: The standard form of an indictment specified the name of the afflicted person and charged the accused with practicing "witchcrafts and sorceries" on the victim, who was alleged to have been "tortured, afflicted, pined, consumed, wasted, and tormented" by these acts, although there is no standardized order in which the harms of affliction are listed in the indictments. Contemporary accounts and surviving records make it clear that live demonstrations of spectral evidence in the courtroom, testimony of witnesses confirming spectral assaults on the victims, and testimony of victims about torments at other times and other places formed the major part of the prosecution's evidence. It was primarily on this basis that the juries returned verdicts of guilty against twenty-six persons, of whom nineteen were executed by hanging.

To be sure, the Puritan ministers who were consulted for advice on the use of spectral evidence were unanimous in recommending that the court exercise extreme caution in interpreting this evidence and (like Bernard) insisted that no one should be convicted on the basis of such evidence alone. In fact, the special court endeavored to collect other evidence of witchcraft that might support the "spectral" accusations; with a few exceptions, it is equally apparent that only persons against whom there were other types of evidence, in addition to spectral evidence, were brought to trial.

Nevertheless, when a new court was convened in January 1693, with explicit directions to give less

weight to spectral evidence, juries did not even bring indictments against a majority of the accused; the vast majority of those who were indicted (eighteen out of twenty-one) were acquitted. Three were found guilty on the basis of their confessions, but even they were later released. The difference in outcomes between the court of 1692, which convicted virtually all persons who had been indicted, and the court of 1693, which acquitted or discharged virtually all persons who had been indicted, reflected the different weights attached to spectral evidence in each time period. Acceptance of the validity of spectral evidence was a necessary condition for conviction during the Salem trials.

What happened to change the opinion of the court and the political leadership between October 1692 and January 1693? For one thing, by autumn of 1692, the afflicted began to accuse persons of ever-greater prominence within Massachusetts Bay. When they cried out against one of the most respected ministers in the province, Samuel Willard, the magistrates rejected the accusation, and they did not issue warrants against others of similarly high repute who were accused. For the first time in the proceedings, the allegations of the afflicted were treated as fallible. Another important event was the publication of Increase Mather's *Cases of Conscience Concerning Evil Spirits* in 1693. The work of one of the most esteemed ministers in the province, endorsed and signed by fourteen other ministers, it forcefully discredited spectral evidence on theological grounds and demonstrated clear pastoral opposition to any continuation of the earlier policy. Finally, it is apparent that as arrests and accusations increased, public criticism escalated from dissatisfaction with individual cases to collective mobilization through petitions and resolutions questioning the entire proceedings. Whether prompted by one or more of these developments, the court that convened in 1693 reversed the policy of its predecessor of 1692.

For all its promise as a spectacular demonstration of the workings of the invisible world and for all the sympathy that might be won through the appearance of a struggle between a young innocent and the specter of a malefic witch, spectral evidence over the long run helped to undermine the credibility of witchcraft prosecutions wherever it was introduced, whether in Catholic France, Protestant England, or Puritan New England. After the Salem trials, there were no further legal executions for witchcraft in any of these places.

RICHARD WEISMAN

See also: ADY, THOMAS; BEWITCHMENT; CHILDREN; COTTA, JOHN; ENGLAND; EVIDENCE; FRANCE; MATHER, INCREASE; NEW ENGLAND; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; SALEM; SKEPTICISM; TRIALS.

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SPEE, FRIEDRICH (1591–1635)

Friedrich Spee von Langenfeld (usually, although not quite correctly, called Friedrich von Spee) was Germany's most important critic of witchcraft trials in the seventeenth century due to his treatise *Cautio Criminalis seu de processibus contra sagas liber* (A Warning on Criminal Justice, or A Book on Witch Trials, 1631). In fifty-two short chapters, Spee asked rhetorically why Germany was *tot sagarum mater* (the mother of so many witches) while more superstitious peoples such as Italians and Spaniards found and burned very few of them. He soon found his answer: excessive torture. His target was not the existence of witchcraft but excesses in legal procedure, especially the gruesome tortures that German judges employed to convict innocent people; as Spee remarked, "No German nobleman could bear to see his hunting dog mangled like this" (Spee 2003, 87). There is evidence that he did not believe in witchcraft but conceded its existence merely for tactical reasons.

Descended from an old noble family of the lower Rhineland, as of 1601 the young nobleman "Junker Friedrich" attended the famous Jesuit grammar school *tricornatum* (with three crowns) at Cologne, before going to Trier in 1608 to become a novice in the Jesuit establishment there. This decision was opposed by his parents and motivated by his desire to become a missionary in India. His superior turned down his application in this regard, telling him that Germany would be his India. Completing education in his order to become a professor of moral theology, Friedrich Spee was transferred frequently, often because of attacks of plague. Eugen Drewermann (1991) pointed out that Spee's incessant encounters with death during epidemics of plague became a basic experience marking his further life and work. He died of the plague at the early age of forty-four at Trier, having infected himself while caring for the souls of the dying.

Spee wrote much more than his powerful Latin polemic against torture, creating a new genre of literature (Battafarano 1995). He was a prolific lyricist, writing around a hundred hymns that appeared anonymously between 1621 and 1637 (the exact total remains unknown, but Spee probably has more hymns than any other author in modern Catholic hymnals). He also composed two other works in German, both published posthumously in 1649; a pioneering effort in another literary genre, his *Trutz-Nachtigall* (Defying the Nightingale) offered a collection of devotional poems that provide Christianized versions of classical pastoral poems, while his *Güldenenes Tugend-Buch* (Golden Book of Virtues) was a catechism for women written in dialogue form between confessor and penitent. At the very end of the *Cautio*, Spee lamented that he was too overwhelmed to translate his treatise into German, "which would not be without its uses" (Spee 2003, 221). However, others soon did so, in 1647 and 1649, with a Dutch translation following in 1657 and a French version in 1660 (no English translation appeared until 2003).

In contrast to previous opinions, we now may assume that the *Cautio Criminalis* must have been written during the author's sojourn at Paderborn between the end of 1629 and spring of 1631, after he had been seriously wounded by a murderous assault. At the time, Spee held a professorship of moral theology, but he was soon dismissed for his offensive remarks. He was certainly provocative; for example, he began with an ironic observation that "I wrote this book for the rulers of Germany, at least for those who will not read it, not those who actually will read it" (Spee 2003, 7). Several times, Friedrich Spee was fortunate to have backing, by turns, from the Jesuit order's general in Rome and from the provincial superior, so that his unorthodox opinions did not have disadvantageous consequences.

For Spee, the core of the witchcraft trial was torture. He once argued that if one invented any horrible crime whatsoever by which the people believed they were being harmed and then used the same techniques as were being used to convict suspects in witchcraft trials, the number of culprits who would be convicted of this imaginary crime would equal or exceed those being burned in the witchcraft trials of his day; he claimed he would throw himself into the fire if this should prove untrue. In other words, the legal process was unable to distinguish between guilty and innocent and was therefore senseless. He discredited the most common mode of diagnosing witchcraft by observing events before, during, and after some damage or magic ritual by objecting that *something* always had to happen before, during, and after a certain event. His principles of argumentation followed the Jesuit mainstream: *ratio recta* (right reason) and *ius naturae* (natural right), both in a sense prefiguring the Enlightenment's objections to torture.

In summarizing his treatise (Question 51), Spee blamed almost everyone in Germany for the scandals of the witchcraft trials. In at least two ways, he foreshadowed contemporary research into German witchcraft. First, Spee began by stressing the malice and superstition of ordinary people, Catholics in particular, who “shout with great passion that the authorities should investigate the witches, of which they themselves have created so many with their own tongues,” thereby pressuring their rulers into conducting trials (Spee 2003, 214). Second, he anticipated H. C. Erik Midelfort’s argument that once begun and employing the system of denunciations wrung out under torture, Germany’s major witch hunts would continue indefinitely until a belated “crisis of confidence” undermined the process followed in witchcraft trials. “No one of any sex, fortune, condition or rank whatsoever who has earned himself even one enemy or slanderer can be sufficiently safe in these times” (Spee 2003, 221).

Besides its elaborate and eloquent denunciations of the multiform abuses of torture, Spee’s *Cautio Criminalis* pours withering scorn upon the testimony used to arrest suspected witches, but we should note that a few horrors were largely unknown. For example, he hinted darkly that “judges have even been found who want to arrest and torture on the testimony of the possessed” (Spee 2003, 211). He ridiculed the “testimony of beggar boys . . . who, when they are asked about wonders, they narrate wonders” (Spee 2003, 212) and so uncannily presaged Germany’s *Zauber-Jäckel-Prozesse* (Sorcerer-Jack-Trials) in Salzburg two generations later.

It is remarkable that Spee insisted rhetorically on his personal experiences—for example, to have been father confessor to countless witches, although there is no evidence that he ever accompanied even a single witch to her place of execution (Jerouschek 1995). Here, as elsewhere, Spee made use of the pious lie (another Jesuit specialty) in order to save innocent people from death. From a Catholic point of view, his canonization by the Holy See is overdue.

GÜNTER JEROUSCHEK

See also: SALZBURG; SKEPTICISM; SOCIETY OF JESUS; TORTURE; TRIER, ELECTORATE OF.

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SPELLS

Both in common speech and in scientific literature, the word *spell* is used synonymously with *charm*, *incantation*, and *enchantment*. Etymologically, all these terms mean the powerful magic word, whether spoken or sung. Nonetheless, the words nearly always were accompanied by gestures and the manipulation of magical objects. We will keep to this definition and deal with spells as a type of oral and written tradition, though *spell* can also signify the action of casting a spell by other means (for example, invoking the *malocchio* [evil eye]) and the bewitching effect of such actions (as with the long-standing suspension of all movement in the fairy tale *Sleeping Beauty*).

Long ago, the tradition of these formulas was entirely oral, and thus, all spells must have existed in countless variations. We know only what has, by chance, been conserved by writing. Nonetheless, an inexhaustible richness of spells has already been transmitted in antique sources, both literary and in the form of practically used lead tablets, epigraphic inscriptions, papyri, and the like.

Many medieval Latin and vernacular manuscripts contained incantations, the literature of the Anglo-Saxons being especially rich. The most famous (because most studied) early examples are, however, the two *Merseburger Zaubersprüche* (Merseburg Charms) in the Old High German tongue. There are also many Scandinavian inscriptions in runic characters on wood, stone, and metal. From the late fifteenth century onward, many *grimoires*, small printed books of magic containing spells and the pertinent rites, have been preserved or at least recorded, culminating in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. Nobody will be surprised to learn that nowadays, rather simplistic spells may be obtained from mail-order bookshops (for instance, Lexa Roséan’s book, *Easy Enchantments*) and the Internet (“By the powers of earth, fire, and water, May love come to me. / By the powers of 1, 2, and 3, / Let no harm be. / So let it be!”). Obviously, some people still believe in their practical value, which could be real insofar as their recitation may have a positive autosuggestive effect.

Spells consist of a single word, a group of words, or formulas of several pages; they may be in prose or verse or a mixture of the two. Often, the narration of a situation or an action *in illo tempore* (at that time) is added, functioning as a pattern, the structure of which

should be repeated by virtue of the magic words. So, an Old English spell spoken to find lost cattle runs: “Bethlehem high the borough / in which Christ was begotten, it is far-famed throughout all the earth: So may this deed before men be known through the holy rood of Christ. Amen” (Cockayne 1865, 3: 60–61). Here, the “epic” element is a simile and offers an example for something widely known—as it should become known to the speaker also—in this instance, the place to find the animals. Many spells included allusions to what Jesus, Mary, or a saint did according to the Gospels or apocryphal sources. Consider, for example, this fourteenth-century German blessing to stop bleeding, which contained a reference both to a holy prophet and the founder of Christianity: “Saint Elias sat in the desert and the blood ran out of both his nostrils. Then he began to cry to god and said: ‘Lord god, now help me master this blood, as you have mastered the river Jordan before Saint John baptised you therewith.’ Say three *Pater Noster* and three *Ave Maria*” (Holzmann 2001, 206).

The simplest spell contained only a single word. When Gregory Florentius (538–594), who later became a saint and bishop of Tours, wanted to help his sick father, he put a sliver of wood with one word, the name *Joshua*, under his pillow, and his father recovered (so he told us in his *De gloria confessorum* [The Glory of the Confessors], chap. 39). Sometimes, a single word is repeated; it may be written as an “ephesian sequence,” that is, with the word losing one letter at each repetition, until only one letter is left, such as:

INA
NA
A

(Lecouteux 1996, 71). Incomprehensible words were sometimes inserted to enhance the spell’s mysterious fascination; this was also helpful in communicating spells under the seal of secrecy.

Spells could be used to help or protect the user. In fact, the majority of the material falls into this category (including love charms and spells against maladies, for stopping bleeding, against slow birth, to disable an enemy’s weapon, to keep away thieves, to free a prisoner, to secure a safe voyage, to drive away a dwarf, and to win a legal case). But spells were also applied to bring harm and injury (for instance, killing spells and spells causing impotence). One group of spells concerns not human beings but animals (spells to heal wounds and diseases, to keep away beasts or vermin, to bring back a lost swarm of bees, and to catch fish) or even inanimate objects (spells to stop fire, to prevent rain or hail, and to make good butter). There literally seems to have been a spell for everything.

Spells have been used by people of all social layers for a long time; the huge number of pagan Anglo-Saxon items transmitted in manuscripts with Christian contents demonstrates how interested in them even members of the clergy and especially monks must have been

in the Early Middle Ages. Christianization brought adaptations and substituted saints for the old gods but often did not change the basic structures. Indeed, there is no sharp distinction between a Christianized spell and a Christian blessing. It was probably only after the Reformation and Counter-Reformation and even more because of the Enlightenment that these forms of trying to solve everyday problems became part of what educated elites now call folklore superstitions.

Of course, there were specialists in that business, too. Medieval Spanish sources declared, as one would expect, that *los moros* (Muslims) had a habitual affinity for this form of magic; elsewhere, it was Gypsies, heretics, or witches and always the “simple country-folk.” There is, however, no reason to think that professional sorcerers usually sang their spells much differently from those used by other people, at least if they did not form part of a satanic circle. In the 1428 trial of Matteuccia di Francesco, the witch of Todi, we find a great many spells asking help from Jesus, the Virgin, and the saints, and also some diabolic spells sung to summon a “phantasm,” or Lucifer, the greater demon (Mammoli 1972, 32–33). But it seems there is no answer to the question of whether accused sorcerers used only the “everyday spells” everybody knew, applied demonic spells modified in the current Christianized formulas of folk medicine, or invented these demonic spells under torture. The case of Gostanza, the witch of San Miniato in 1594, suffices as a warning: Questioned without torture, she admitted many acts of healing through the invocation of God and the Virgin only; as soon as she was put on the rack, she confessed to doing everything with the Devil’s help; when again interrogated without torture, she said she had invented everything out of fear, basically by combining folk belief with ecclesiastical teaching. However, it seems extremely unlikely that the interrogators invented all the spells for making hail or killing a victim that were reported in trial records.

Such evil spells even found their way into the polite literature of Europe. Just as stirring as the all too famous song of the witches in Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* is a much less well-known example from an Old Nordic text of the thirteenth or fourteenth century, the end of the “prayer” of the sorceress Busla in the imaginative *Boses* saga: “He re will come seven churls, tell me their names! But first solve the riddle—if you cannot do that correctly, then the dogs shall gnaw at you in the underworld and your soul shall sink into that hellish home.” Then follows an unexplained magic formula, which has also been found on older runic stones: “*Ristil, aistil, pistil, kistil, mistil, vistil*” (Grambo 1984, 93–94).

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See also: CHARMS; FOLKLORE; GREEK MAGICAL PAPYRI; GRIMOIRES; SORCERY; SUPERSTITION; TODI, WITCH OF; WORDS, POWER OF.

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SPIDERS

For its venom as well as for its manner of hunting by laying traps, the spider has long been seen in Christian culture as an image or symbol of Satan. Both have the same nature; just as the spider awaits its victims poised in the middle of its web or in a dark corner, so the Devil spreads all of the nets and snares he can to capture the souls of humans and seek their perdition. Within Christianity, the spider's web represents not only the ingenious ruses that the Devil uses to ensnare sinners but also "vain works," which have no worth before God. Its extreme fragility also represents the scant security of impious and even heterodox doctrines in which some souls become entangled, dangerous doctrines from which it can be very difficult to extricate oneself. Such symbolism was spread in the Catholic world principally during the period of the Protestant Reformation, although it would remain for centuries—for example, in Georgette de Montenay's book of religious emblems, where the spider's demonic associations appear condensed in four illustrative verses: "The spider, an odious insect / surprises flies with its fragile web / thus every doctrine that is frivolous and gauzy / spreads deceitful webs for weak spirits" (Montenay 1571, 32).

From ancient times, the Christian imaginary tended to exaggerate the gravity of the spider's venom. The most notable case is that of the tarantula spider, associated with the southern Italian locality of Taranto, whence its name derives. It was supposed that anyone stung by a tarantula would experience acute sufferings, which could only be relieved through dance and music, particularly by playing musical pieces called "tarantellas." The phenomenon known in Apulia, Italy, as

tarantism goes back to the ancient Middle East; with intense popular participation and under various mythical ritual guises, it lasted until the end of the eighteenth century, gradually declining thereafter until the beginning of the twentieth century. This complex ritual—although associated principally with Apulia, where its symbolic range underwent its fullest development—could also be found in other areas of the Mediterranean, from the rest of southern Italy to Sicily, Sardinia, southern France, Spain, Albania, and Greece.

After the earliest attempts at symbolic interpretation by Leonardo da Vinci and Giovanni Pontano, natural scientists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries tried to reduce tarantism to an illness, a poisoning caused by the sting of the tarantula of Apulia, as well as a form of melancholy. More recently, following Ernesto de Martino's excellent study of the anthropology and history of religion (1961), scientific interpretations of tarantism have been replaced by investigations emphasizing its eminently cultural character, as a manifestation of ancient conflicts between paganism and Christianity in southern Mediterranean societies.

De Martino understood the tarantula as a "mythical monster," an imaginary construct that incorporated not only one concrete species of corpulent and shaggy spider (which modern zoology designates as *Lycosa tarentula*) but also another species, one more terrifying and without doubt more harmful, the *Latrodectus tredecimguttatus* (the Mediterranean Black Widow spider). However, despite the greater frequency of these species in the symbolic elements of this myth, other venomous species such as scorpions and snakes and even harmless spiders have also been called tarantulas.

The spider's venom is less important than the symbolism of venom and its effects: the sting or bite of the spider as a representation of unresolved regrets, frustrations, and conflicts. Tarantism, a therapeutic rite capable of alleviating certain unutterable sufferings by means of a long rosary of ceremonial lamentations, is now considered a form of musical, choreographed exorcism, whose cultural rather than biological character seems confirmed by annual repetition and the predominance of women among its victims. For many women, enveloped in oppressive southern Mediterranean surroundings, the supposed sting of the spider presents a unique occasion for putting aside inhibitions and permitting liberties usually prohibited to them, as with those (primarily women) thought to be victims of demonic possession.

MARÍA TAUSIET;

TRANSLATED BY THOMAS SIZGORICH

See also: MONSTERS; POSSESSION, DEMONIC.

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SPINA, ALPHONSO
(ALPHONSUS, ALFONSO)
DE (D. CA. 1491)

A mid-fifteenth-century Spanish Franciscan, confessor to Juan II of Castile, and bishop of Orense, Alphonso de Spina spent a good part of his life preaching in the towns and villages of Castile. Hence, he had a personal and intimate understanding of popular beliefs and folklore.

In 1459, he produced a polemical work, *Fortalitiūm fidei contra fidei Christianae hostes* (The Fortress of Faith



Woodcut of Alphonso Spina persecuting Jews, blindfolded because they do not see the truth. On the right are demons, linked in the Christian mind to Jews. (Topham/The Image Works)

against the Enemies of the Christian Faith), which thereafter ran into several editions. It was divided into five books, the fifth of which dealt with the warfare between demons and human beings, the Church, and God. Strongly reminiscent of St. Augustine's *City of God*, the book envisaged human history as a state of open hostility between the world of God and the world of the Devil. There is a hierarchy of demons, said Spina, mirroring the hierarchy of heaven and of the Church, and each demon has been allotted a particular sin over which he exercises special charge. Moreover, every human being is attended by at least one evil spirit who is responsible for his or her spiritual downfall. Demons are thus, at base, a source of sin rather than simply of misfortune; they not only raise storms in the physical world, but far more seriously, they excite Jews and heretics to attack the Church and thereby bring Christian souls into grave danger. But why do demons exist at all? Because, said Spina, they act as dark contrasts to the goodness and beauty of creation and thereby throw these into greater relief, after the manner of antitheses in a beautiful poem.

When Spina discussed demons in detail, his knowledge of popular beliefs became apparent immediately. He wrote of incubi and succubi; of spirits who press upon folk while they are asleep and make them think they are being suffocated; of demons attendant upon witches as their familiars; and of *bruxae*, spirits who cause old women to imagine they can fly through the air as attendants upon Diana or Herodias. This latter notion, he said, is a delusion, and yet one should not dismiss as merely foolish or superstitious those women who claim such things. They may be deluded, but their delusions are criminal and therefore deserve punishment. Certain spirits are harmless. Spina told the story of how he and three companions were asleep in a room one stormy night. When the storm subsided, they heard noises from the other side of their locked door and then sensed a small spark of light beside them. One of Spina's companions, more experienced in these matters than the others, recognized the phenomenon. It was a demon, *Dueño de casa* (owner of a house), who played silly tricks but did no one any real mischief.

Spina thus illustrated very well a dichotomy in contemporary attitudes toward magic. As a cleric familiar with the *Canon Episcopi*, he dismissed the whole business as futile and censured anyone who used it. But as an individual in touch with popular beliefs, he seemed to accept that magic could actually work and that its practitioners therefore represented a real rather than a deluded threat to the safety of the Church and the whole body of orthodox Christians.

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART

See also: AUGUSTINE, ST.; *CANON EPISCOPI*; DEMONS; DIANA (ARTEMIS); INCUBUS AND SUCCUBUS.

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SPINA, BARTOLOMEO DELLA (1475/1479–1546)

Author of three short works on witchcraft, Bartolomeo della Spina was born in Pisa to the ancient and noble Spina family of Sarzano. He joined the Dominican order in 1493 at the local convent of St. Catherine and studied theology at the University of Bologna under Silvestro Prierias. From 1518 to 1520, Spina served as deputy to Inquisitor Antonio da Ferrara at Modena, where a witch, Chiara Signorini, was tried in 1519. Three years later, he wrote a treatise against witches.

At the University of Bologna, where Spina obtained his baccalaureate in 1525 and became a master in 1530, he taught in the College of Theology, serving three years as rector of the Dominican *Studium Generale* (house of studies). He also held numerous positions in his order: assistant to the general master, with the honorific title of "governor of the Holy Land," from 1530 to 1532; vicar-general of the order in 1531; and provincial and inspector of convents in Calabria for two years beginning in 1534. In 1536, Spina became a professor at the University of Padua, a position he kept until 1545. In 1542, Pope Paul III nominated him as papal theologian (*maestro del sacro palozzo*); he and other members of the theological commission contributed to opening the Council of Trent. He died in Rome.

Beyond serving his order, Spina also did considerable academic writing, including commentaries on Aristotle, a defense of the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas, and arguments against the nominalism of Duns Scotus, plus original theological works. Between 1519 and 1535, his writings were published at Venice in three volumes. Spina dedicated some polemical tracts to the problems of witchcraft and magic. He also published two short vernacular essays to guide the laity: *Regola del felice vivere de li christiani del stato secolare secondo diversi gradi di persone, e massime delli maritati* (Rules for Living a Happy and Christian Secular Life, Adapted to People of Different Conditions and Principally for Married People) and *Breve regola della vita spirituale delle persone religiose* (Concise Rules for the Spiritual Life of Nuns), both published in 1533.

Spina's three short works about witchcraft were almost always published together. The first rare editions, probably printed at Venice, comprised *De strigibus* (On Witches) or *Quaestio de strigibus* (An Investigation of Witches, 1523) and two tracts against the skeptical

jurists, Giovanni Francesco (Gianfrancesco) Ponzinibio: *Tractatus de praeminentia sacre Theologie super alias omnes scientias et precipue humanarum legum* (Treatise on the Supremacy of Sacred Theology over All Other Sciences) and *In Ponzinibium de Lamjis Apologiae* (Defense from Ponzinibio's On Witches), both with a first publication date of 1525. These three essays fill only thirty-nine pages: three unnumbered pages, then the *Quaestio* (1–18), *De praeminentia* (19–26), and *In Ponzinibium* (27–36). There were numerous reprints of these works, sometimes in Germany and France. The best-known edition is that of Spina's collected works, published in 1576 as *Quaestio de strigibus una cum tractatu de Praeminentia Sacrae Theologiae et quadruplici Apologia de Lamiis contra Ponzinibium* (An Investigation on Witches with a Treatise on the Supremacy of Sacred Theology and a Fourfold Defense from Ponzinibio's on Witches).

The importance of Spina's essays about witchcraft lies in his attempt to abolish the distinction between ancient and contemporary witchcraft and to deny the credibility of the *Canon Episcopi*. Spina observed that the *Canon's* origin is obscure: We do not know who convened the Council of Ancyra in 314 (almost certainly, it was heretics), nor do we know if it was a general or a provincial council. The insertion of the *Canon Episcopi* in the *Decretum Gratiani* (Gratian's Concord of Discordant Canons, known as the *Decretum*, 1130; revised in 1140) does not give it validity because the Church never officially approved Gratian's work. Spina's essay, written in the detailed Scholastic style of *Quaestio* and *Responio*, demonstrated that the flight of witches to the Sabbat was real and not fantasy or diabolical illusion. His most cited source is the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486, by another Dominican, Heinrich Kramer), supplemented by examples from Spina's personal experience as an inquisitor. The other two works are polemics, refuting principally Ponzinibio's recent *Tractatus de lamiis et excellentia utriusque iuris* (Treatise on Witches and on the Excellence of Civil and Canon Law) of 1520. Ponzinibio maintained that civil law overrides canon law even on theological questions and manifested skepticism about the reality of the flight of the witches. In *De Praeminentia*, Spina reasserted the traditional superiority of theology over other sciences and reduced law to an ancillary position; *In Ponzinibium* affirmed that it is presumptuous to refute a theological question, such as the flight of witches, with merely judicial arguments.

GABRIELLA ZARRI;

TRANSLATED BY JESSICA BOTHWELL

See also: *CANON EPISCOPI*; DEMONOLOGY; DOMINICAN ORDER; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; GRATIAN; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; PONZINIBIO, GIOVANNI FRANCESCO (GIANFRANCESCO); PRIERIAS, SILVESTRO.

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ST. MAXIMIN, PRINCE-ABBEY OF

From 1586 to 1596, in 1637, and in 1641 and 1642, approximately 500 alleged witches were executed in the territory of the imperial abbey of St. Maximin, situated just outside the city walls of Trier and containing about 2,200 persons according to a 1563 census. This extended outbreak of witchcraft persecution ranked among the very worst anywhere in the Holy Roman Empire.

Mentioned in a 1590 pamphlet, *Erueyterten Unholden Zeyttung* (Further News of Witches), these witchcraft trials were triggered by agrarian and economic crises and by the already ongoing witch hunts in the duchy of Luxembourg and electoral Trier, showing the St. Maximin authorities how to handle the problem. In the relatively small and compact territory of an imperial abbey, the organization of witchcraft persecution attained a deadly level of perfection. Severe persecution had begun in 1586, by which time *Hexenausschüsse* (local witch-hunting committees) were active. At least 400 people were executed for witchcraft between 1586 and 1596. The severe effects of the trials on the affected villages, combined with high trial costs, brought persecution to a standstill by 1596. Another sizable witch hunt, involving at least thirty-two trials, occurred between 1637 and 1642, until a partial occupation of St. Maximin's territory by French troops hindered persecution.

Around a third of all witches tried by St. Maximin authorities were men, often from the wealthier part of their respective villages. Inadequate evidence makes it harder to identify the social status of the executed women, although poor widows were in a minority: Many women came from households whose heads held such positions in village government as *Meier* (stewards), *Zender* (village officials), or *Schöffen* (court assessors).

Before the actual trials began, the identification of witches lay mainly in the hands of *Hexenausschüsse*, which were so highly organized and influential that they attained quasi-official status in St. Maximin territory. These village witch hunters worked very closely with St. Maximin's *Amtleuten* (local magistrates), *Schultheissen* (bailiffs), and *Schöffen* and thereby exercised a kind of tyranny over their own communities. In the name of the village officials and inhabitants, the *Hexenausschüsse* usually gave the relevant authorities a list of accusations made against suspected witches in their community, copies of damaging statements made against suspects in confessions of already executed witches, and a list of witnesses for each case. A local magistrate or court assessor of St. Maximin then questioned the witnesses in the presence of a clerk, who kept a record of the proceedings.

All preliminary paperwork was, in accordance with the Carolina Code, submitted to St. Maximin's *Oberhof* (central court), which drew up legal summaries of the arrest, interrogation, and torture of suspects. Decisions to investigate accusations of witchcraft ex officio and to arrest suspects were made by the abbey's officials investigating the case, as were subsequent decisions on trial procedure. Trials were very rapid; some required only one or two days from arrest to execution. No recorded evidence suggests that any suspected witch enjoyed the luxury of a defense lawyer. A few suspects submitted pleas for mercy to the abbot, but there is no evidence of appeals to the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court). Individuals tried as witches were almost always executed: Very few cases ended with the release of the suspect. Authorities recouped the trial costs from surviving relatives of those executed, rather than by confiscating their goods.

The mass burnings between 1586 and 1596 were encouraged by fear of the threat from a sect of witches whose persecution was perceived as immensely urgent. As the "Witch-Register of Claudius Musiel" shows, the denunciation of alleged accomplices by suspected witches acquired paramount importance in St. Maximin trials; from 1586 until 1594, this register collected over 6,300 denunciations against approximately 1,380 people from ninety-seven places. Like the *Hexenausschüsse*, St. Maximin authorities demonstrated great energy in promoting witchcraft trials. The abbot and his officials intended that these carefully documented and archived trial records would serve as proof of their independent exercise of criminal justice and territorial sovereignty, an issue of considerable importance because of St. Maximin's ongoing dispute with electoral Trier over its political and judicial autonomy. One can thus conclude that the St. Maximin authorities recorded their witchcraft trials carefully for essentially political purposes.

The cooperation between *Hexenausschüsse*, local officials, and the abbot of St. Maximin had a

devastating impact on his subjects between 1586 and 1596. After the death of *Amtmann* (chief magistrate) Claudius Musiel in 1609 and the removal of the witch-hunting abbot Reiner Biewer in 1613, accusatory zeal waned markedly. Subsequent abbots and officials continued to uphold the abbey's political and legal autonomy, but they no longer saw promoting witchcraft trials as the best method for defending it, especially as St. Maximin's financial problems and wartime circumstances rendered it virtually impossible to prosecute witches. Popular thirst for persecution appeared unquenched, however, and *Hexenausschüsse* continued to submit accusations against witches to the authorities. The new, cautious attitude of local officials meant that very few of these charges resulted in formal prosecution, a fact about which the *Hexenausschüsse* complained bitterly. Finally, it is noteworthy that St. Maximin's witch persecutions were carried out without any formal intervention by the electors of Trier.

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TRANSLATED BY ALISON ROWLANDS

See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; BINSFELD, PETER; CAROLINA CODE; COMMUNAL PERSECUTION; FLADE, DIETRICH; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; LOOS, CORNELIUS; LUXEMBOURG, DUCHY OF; POPULAR PERSECUTION; *REICHSKAMMERGERICHT*; SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF WITCHES; SOURCES FOR WITCHCRAFT TRIALS; TRIALS; TRIER, ELECTORATE OF; WITNESSES.

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ST. OSYTH WITCHES (1582)

An extraordinary outbreak of witchcraft prosecution in Elizabethan England was noteworthy for illustrating the development of theological ideas and legal methods.

Ursula Kemp was a midwife, nurse, and healer at the parish of St. Osyth in the county of Essex, but she did not have a good reputation among her neighbors. In 1582, she was refused work caring for the child of Grace Thurlow, a servant of a local magistrate, Brian Darcy. Soon afterward, the child fell from its cradle and broke its neck, and Ursula's witchcraft was suspected. Nonetheless, Ursula's help was accepted when Grace herself began to sicken, but a quarrel erupted when she refused to pay the healer. Her sickness returned, and Ursula was carried before the justices of the peace. Magistrate Darcy examined Ursula's eight-year-old son, who reported that his mother fed diabolical imps called "Tyffin," "Tittey," "Piggen," and "Jacket." Promised "favor" by Darcy, Ursula broke down and confessed that what her son had said was true and that she used these familiars to cause illness and even to kill. She took her examiners through her crimes step by step, and she named other witches who had committed similar crimes. At least ten women from St. Osyth and neighboring villages were apprehended and tried at Chelmsford in February 1582, although it seems from the trial records that only two were actually hanged.

At that time, Essex was undergoing rapid economic transformation, which inevitably created significant differentials of wealth within communities that increased competition, suspicion, and resentment. These conditions, together with a witchcraft statute and an endemic belief in the supernatural, comprised essential preconditions for accusations of witchcraft. Essex was the English witch-hunting county par excellence. Three years before the St. Osyth outbreak, there had been numerous executions at Chelmsford following confessions similar to those of Ursula Kemp. What the suspects at Chelmsford and St. Osyth had in common was poverty and poor local reputations. They lacked the moral and political authority with which to resist the accusations made against them, and beyond that, their accusers and examiners saw in their wretched condition a compelling motive to use diabolical means to improve their fortunes and undermine those of more privileged neighbors. Ursula Kemp was a "poore and needie woman"; her son was illegitimate; and she had little credit among her neighbors, being held in deep suspicion because of the methods she used to heal people—always a danger if relations between practitioner and healer happened to deteriorate.

Grace's employer, the magistrate Brian Darcy, had read continental authors on the subject of witchcraft, and he published a substantial account of the St. Osyth incident shortly after the executions in 1582. He may have had more than an academic interest as well: It was rumored that his father had died as a result of being bewitched, and he sought revenge when rumors of witchcraft started to circulate among his tenants. Not only did Darcy pick up ideas about

diabolic pacts from his books, he also apparently learned about subtle but persistent techniques of interrogation. Ursula Kemp was not alone in her confession. Elizabeth Bennett, a poor wool-spinner, initially denied all knowledge of witchcraft, just as Ursula had originally confessed only to cunning magic, but coaxed and cajoled by Darcy, she eventually began revealing all the terrible crimes she had committed using diabolical familiars.

Unlike Matthew Hopkins sixty years later, Darcy did not use torture to extract these confessions; rather, he offered a means of escape to women who feared for their lives—and with good cause. Margery Sammon did not persist with her denial of the charges after her sister took her to one side and whispered in her ear, probably to advise that confession was her only hope. Of course, confession was actually the most damning evidence, and Darcy's promises of favor were empty ones. Reginald Scot, the skeptical writer from neighboring Kent, took the St. Osyth trials as the main inspiration for his *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584), which contained some withering criticism of Darcy's peritrial methods. Hearsay, false charges, and the unreliable testimony of children and people of poor reputation were all amassed for the purposes of the prosecution, bearing out the belief, which held for at least a generation, that the Devil was cunning and that extraordinary types of proof should be admissible against witches as a consequence. A century after the St. Osyth trials, it was exactly this argument—the vagueness of evidence—that contributed more than anything else to the decline of witchcraft prosecutions in English courts.

MALCOLM J. GASKILL

See also: ACCUSATIONS; CONFESSIONS; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; CUNNING FOLK; ENGLAND; ESSEX; EVIDENCE; FAMILIARS; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; MACFARLANE, ALAN; SCOT, REGINALD; SKEPTICISM.

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STEARNE, JOHN (D. 1671)

Stearne is best known in witchcraft history as the associate of Matthew Hopkins during the mass witch hunts between 1645 and 1647 in eastern England. Like Hopkins, Stearne was an obscure figure, a member of the petty gentry living in Manningtree in northeastern Essex. Stearne was involved in this witch hunt from the

outset, giving evidence against the Manningtree witches before accompanying Hopkins on his witch-finding journeys through the eastern counties. Although overshadowed by Hopkins in older accounts, Stearne also had a considerable impact as a witch finder.

Whatever his input into the actual trials, Stearne contributed to our knowledge of them by publishing his *Confirmation and Discovery of Witchcraft* (London, 1648). The printer, William Wilson, also published John Davenport's account of the Huntingdon trials of 1646, as well as John Gaule's *Select Cases of Conscience Touching Witches and Witchcrafts*, also in 1646. Stearne's *Confirmation and Discovery*, the main text of which covered sixty-one pages, was among the rare books written by a self-confessed witch hunter. Much of its text was devoted to discussing some major themes of English demonology; in fact, these passages were heavily plagiarized from Richard Bernard's *Guide to Grand Jury Men*, first published in London in 1627. Stearne offered his reader a fairly standard list of biblical references to witchcraft and such standard justifications of witch hunting as the fact that the laws of all nations encouraged it, that there were so many reports of cases involving the trial of witches, and that both England and other nations had experienced the effects of witchcraft in the recent past (citing the case of the Warboys witches and other well-known English episodes). Witches, Stearne argued, addressing another theme common in demonological works of the period, still existed despite the spread of the Gospel because their works were linked to the Devil. Stearne also developed the theme, very common among English demonologists, that "good" witches, the cunning folk to whom the population at large so readily resorted, were as worthy of censure and extirpation as the malefic witches whom the populace feared. Stearne also discussed familiars and the witch's mark in what were, by then, very conventional terms.

Besides discussing such fairly familiar themes, Stearne's tract provides us with a substantial body of information about the mass trials in which he was so heavily involved. There were details of his and Matthew Hopkins's investigative techniques, names of a number of witches, and details about the accusations against them that cannot be found elsewhere or that complemented other sources. Intriguingly, Stearne also attempted to justify his actions, and at least some of his statements cannot simply be dismissed as special pleading. His answer to criticisms of the investigative techniques he and Hopkins used, notably "watching" (a process involving sleep deprivation), will not convince the modern reader, despite his interesting justification of the practice on the grounds that the investigators were waiting for the witch to be visited by her familiar. Stearne denied taking any bribe or gift in the course of his witch-hunting activities, except whatever was given

him openly in public; he also insisted that he and Hopkins were often responding to a demand for witch hunting within eastern England's townships, a useful correction to the traditional view that the witch hunts were simply stirred up by the two witch finders.

Stearne was living at Lawshall in Suffolk when he wrote *A Confirmation and Discovery*. Malcolm Gaskill (2005) has suggested that by the 1650s, Stearne was apparently experiencing financial problems, and at the time of his death, he was earning his living as a scribe or scrivener, suggesting a decline in fortune for one who had once described himself as a gentleman.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: BIBLE; DEMONOLOGY; ENGLAND; ESSEX; FAMILIARS; GAULE, JOHN; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; WARBOYS, WITCHES OF; WATCHING AND WALKING; WITCH FINDERS; WITCH'S MARK.

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STERZINGER, FERDINAND (1721–1786)

Sterzinger was a theatine monk who initiated the dissipation of witchcraft trials and superstition in Bavaria and promoted enlightenment in southeastern Germany. Born at Lichtenwörth in Tyrol, he took his vows at Munich in 1742. Beginning in 1747, he studied theology and canon law at Rome and Bologna. Between 1750 and 1759, he taught moral philosophy and Canon law at Prague and Munich. He remained in Munich for the rest of his life, holding several high offices as professor of theology, canon law, and Church history and head of his monastery (from 1762 to 1765). A member of the new Bavarian Academy of Sciences (founded in 1759), he headed its historical section from 1769 to 1779 and was entrusted with Bavarian censorship. He fought against superstition and the belief in witchcraft until his death. Sterzinger published several books and papers with the intention of disproving the existence of witchcraft. He was also a leading spokesman in the controversy surrounding the exorcist Johann Joseph Gassner. In four books (from 1774 to 1783), Sterzinger attacked Gassner, exorcism, and superstition in general very strongly. He unmasked Gassner's exorcism and wonder cures as frauds and transgressions against Catholic orthodoxy of the official *Rituale Romanum* (Roman Ritual, 1614). As a historian, he wrote about early Christianity and initiated a discussion on the origins of the early medieval *Lex Baiuvariorum* (Law of the Bavarians). In 1774, he published Johannes Trithemius's Renaissance treatise *Unterricht wie ein*

Priester wohlanständig leben solle (Lessons on the Appropriate Way of Life for Clerics).

With the publication of his *Akademische Rede von dem gemeinen Vorurtheile der wirkenden und tätigen Hexerei* (Academic Speech Against the Prejudice of Effective and Active Witchcraft) in 1766, Sterzinger opened a controversy about witch hunting known as the *Bayerische Hexenkrieg* (Bavarian War of the Witches), which lasted until 1770. In his *Academic Speech*, written under the influence of Jordan Simon (Ardoino Ubbidiente Dell'Osa, an Augustinian), Scipione Maffei, and Girolamo Tartarotti, Sterzinger defined witchcraft as a pact between man and the Devil. Using Simon's arguments and proofs of the destruction of the Devil's power by Jesus's self-sacrifice, Sterzinger pronounced an alliance between man and the Devil to be impossible (although he never denied the existence of the Devil). He pointed out that the belief in the witches' Sabbat contradicted canon law (as in the *Canon Episcopi*). He ridiculed witchcraft as an evident illusion, because there was no reference to sorcerers or witches in the Gospels or the prayers of the *Rituale Romanum*. Sterzinger claimed that "unprejudiced" investigations and examinations by physicians would soon end the belief in witches and demonic possessions.

Sterzinger's speech provoked harsh criticism from all strata of Bavarian society, led by two other monks, the Augustinian Agnellus Merz and the Benedictine Angelus März. In 1767, Sterzinger answered them in his *Betrügerische Zauberkunst und träumende Hexerei* (Deceitful Sorcery and Dreaming Witchcraft). Within four years, various authors published some forty pamphlets for and against Sterzinger.

To understand the Bavarian War of the Witches, we must consider its wider political background. In the 1760s, Bavaria experienced Enlightenment politics and social reforms. The *Hexenkrieg* was part and parcel of a controversial process, in which a new place for the Catholic Church in Bavarian society was defined. Polemics against witchcraft belief became a weapon in this battle against the Church in order to legitimize the secularization of Church property and the nationalization of education.

Sterzinger further elaborated his arguments in four more books. Under the name Francone dell'Amavero, he published *Katechismus von der Geisterlehre* (Catechism on the Doctrine of Spirits, Munich, 1775) and followed it with two other harsh attacks on the belief in demonic possession and witchery: the enlarged edition of *Geister- und Zauberkatechismus* (Catechism of Spirits and Magic, Munich, 1783) and *Don Ferdinand Sterzinger's Bemühung den Aberglauben zu stürzen* (Don Ferdinand Sterzinger's Effort to Defeat Superstition, Munich, 1785). In his final book, *Die Gespenstererscheinungen, eine Phantasie oder Betrug . . .* (Apparitions of Ghosts, an Imagination or Deception . . ., Munich, 1786), he

attempted to disprove the existence of apparitions of dead people.

Sterzinger's arguments were often self-contradictory. He tried to avoid open clashes with Catholic traditions and with secular law. He did not admit that the victims of witch hunts had been innocent; they had deserved death because of their blasphemy, devil worship, and infanticide.

NICOLE SCHILBERG

See also: BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; BAVARIAN WAR OF THE WITCHES; *CANON EPISCOPI*; ENLIGHTENMENT; EXORCISM; GASSNER, JOHANN JOSEPH; MAFFEI, SCIPIONE; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; SIMON, JORDAN; SKEPTICISM; SUPERSTITION; TARTAROTTI, GIROLAMO; TRITHEMIUS JOHANNES.

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STICKS

Various kinds of sticks, especially cooking sticks and broomsticks, played a prominent role in the practices of witchcraft. Witches frequently were said to travel through the sky on sticks, often smeared with an ointment made from the fat of cooked children. Sticks were also related to the wands magicians used in sorcery rituals to create storms, bring injury and death, or effect metamorphosis.

In their night rides and processions through the sky, witches allegedly rode a wide range of everyday implements, as well as goats and other animals. The implements included broomsticks, cooking sticks, distaffs, pitchforks, threshing flails, reeds, wicker nets, baskets, sieves, stools, and shovels. In early-fifteenth-century witchcraft treatises, witches were usually described as riding sticks to their assemblies (Sabbats or synagogues). In a witchcraft treatise of around 1436, the Dauphiné judge Claude Tholosan first described them riding on brooms; two years later, a trial confession from the same region first referred to an accused witch riding a stick to

the Sabbat. One protagonist in Martin le Franc's long allegorical poem, *Le Champion des Dames* (The Defender of Ladies, 1440–1442), attacked the deeds of shameless women called sorcerers who traveled through the air on sticks to their "synagogues." And in a 1451 manuscript copy of this work, an unknown illuminator created the first images of such riding women (if we exclude two wall frescos in the cathedral of Schleswig in northern Germany that were probably misdated): One rides a simple stick, another a broom.

For the next century and a half, pictures of witches riding broomsticks were largely limited to France and the Low Countries. Broomsticks appeared in a series of illuminations to a work by the Walloon theologian Johann Tinctor in the 1470s, in a number of female *Dances of Death* printed at Paris in the 1490s, in a 1526 painting of the witch of Endor by the Dutch artist Jacob Cornelisz van Oostanen, in Pieter Brueghel's drawings of the magician Hermogenes from 1565, and in an illustration to a 1579 Genevan edition of a dialogue on witchcraft by Thomas Erastus. The last two examples depicted witches riding brooms out through



Earliest illustration of witches flying on broomsticks, marginalia on a manuscript copy of Martin Le Franc's *Le Champion des Dames* (The Defender of Ladies), 1440–1442. (Snark!Art Resource)

domestic chimneys, a motif that subsequently became very common in the iconography of witchcraft. The motif also appeared in a 1593 engraving depicting the curious practices of witchcraft in the region of Trier, and it featured in many early-seventeenth-century images by Frans Francken the Younger and David Teniers the Younger.

In German-speaking Europe, however, the most commonly depicted instrument on which witches rode through the air was a cooking stick (or cooking fork). The first such cooking stick appeared in Ulrich Molitor's *De Laniis et Phitonicis Mulieribus* (Concerning Witches and Fortunetellers), originally published around 1489. Although Molitor's text only referred to witches riding on "sticks," illustrations featuring cooking sticks appeared in more than twenty editions of the work during the next two decades, establishing the cooking stick as the ordinary instrument for witches to ride. Hans Baldung [Grien]'s famous 1510 woodcut of a group of witches seated in a triangle of cooking forks consolidated the role of the cooking fork in witchcraft iconography throughout German-speaking Europe over the next two centuries. Apart from a broomstick and a cooking stick appearing together in Jacob Cornelisz's 1526 painting, German artists would not accept the broomstick of French and Flemish tradition until the 1590s, while French or Flemish artists ignored German-style cooking sticks.

Cooking sticks were commonly depicted in contemporary iconography as instruments used near a fire to hang food or vessels from, turn food, transport pots, or simply stoke the fire. In this way, cooking sticks helped identify witchcraft as a female activity, linking it to a woman's task of food preparation around a cauldron. The use of the besom, or broom, by contrast, seems less clear. Though commonly linked to female domesticity and house cleaning, the besom seldom appeared in representations of domestic scenes before the seventeenth century. But given the association of besoms with domestic interiors and the gradual sixteenth-century identification of interiors as female space, riding a broom could have signified escaping from the domestic sphere with its attendant social and moral roles. However, riding brooms might be linked to ancient agricultural fertility rites, as in Jean Bodin's claim (1995, 120) that witches danced with brooms in their hands at the Sabbat, raising them to worship the Devil in imitation of the worship of God.

In witchcraft accounts, sticks also took on functions similar to those of the wands of ritual magicians, especially in various images of the classical witch Circe, who used a wand to transform humans into animals and maintain control over them. Sticks were often given to witches by the Devil at Sabbats. In Pierre de Lancre's *Tableau de l'inconstance des mauvais anges et demons* (Description of the Inconstancy of the Evil

Angels and Demons, 1612), rods and switches were given to child-witches to look after toads, a detail clearly depicted in Jan Ziarnko's accompanying etching. But as described by Henri Boguet in his *Discours des sorciers* (Discourse on Witches, chap. 29), a wand could also become an extension of the hand with which witches touched their victims to cause injury or death.

Another frequently described form of maleficence that included a wand or rod in its ritual was a type of weather sorcery. As outlined by Boguet or Bodin and described at greater length by Nicolas Rémy (1974, 514), witches would beat water with black wands provided by a demon while chanting spells in order to make heavy rain or hail. Witches could also use the same ritual to fly through the air, soon making it thick enough with dense vapor and smoke to carry them up. However, Martín Del Río, in his *Disquisitiones Magicae libri sex* (Six Books on Investigations into Magic, 1599–1600), referred to creating hailstorms by striking a stone with a stick.

CHARLES ZIKA

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BALDUNG [GRIEN], HANS; BODIN, JEAN; BOGUET, HENRI; BRUEGHEL, PIETER THE ELDER; CANNIBALISM; CAULDRON; CIRCE; CRANACH, LUCAS; DEVIL; ENDOR, WITCH OF; ERASTUS, THOMAS; FERTILITY CULTS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; GENDER; HERMOGENES; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; LE FRANC, MARTIN; *MALEFICIJUM*; MOLITOR, ULRICH; PEOPLE OF THE NIGHT; RÉMY, NICOLAS; RITUAL MAGIC; SABBAT; SORCERY; TENIERS, DAVID THE YOUNGER; THOLOSAN, CLAUDE; TINCTOR, JOHANN; TOADS; *VAUDOIS* (WALDENSIANS); WEATHER MAGIC; ZIARNKO, JAN.

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STOECKHLIN, CHONRAD (1549–1587)

In 1578, Chonrad Stoeckhlin, a horse wrangler in a mountain village of the Allgäu Alps, made a revenant

contract with another herdsman: Whoever died first was to return from the otherworld in order to answer questions. The other man died soon after but indeed returned from the otherworld, foretelling the advent of an angel. Around the Ember Days (four groups of three days of abstinence and fasting in the Western Church), the angel appeared and initiated Stoeckhlin to the “phantoms of the night” (*Nachtschar*), who had to leave their bodies on certain nights and fly to certain places. Stoeckhlin’s stories open a window to some fantasy worlds of popular beliefs in the central Alps. By joining the phantoms of the night, Stoeckhlin participated in supernatural abilities such as healing and divination. Furthermore, he served as a witch doctor. In this capacity, he involuntarily triggered a major witch hunt in the southernmost parts of the prince-bishopric of Augsburg in 1586 because the authorities were fascinated by his stories and exploited them for their own purposes. During the course of the witch hunt, he was the only man burned at the stake.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AUGSBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; PEOPLE OF THE NIGHT; POPULAR BELIEFS IN WITCHES; REVENANTS.

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STRASBOURG, DIOCESE OF

Alsace was divided into three dioceses at the time of witch hunting: Speyer, Basel, and Strasbourg. The diocese of Strasbourg included two parts, mostly located in present-day France (Alsace), with a smaller part located east of the Rhine in present-day Germany (Lahr, Offenburg, and Ottersweier). The diocese of Strasbourg covered a large part of modern Alsace, where about a thousand witches were executed between 1570 and 1650. Several of them died in places where the bishop of Strasbourg was also the territorial prince; expelled from Strasbourg after the Protestant Reformation, he established his capital at Saverne, dividing his political possessions into eight *bailliages* (bailiwicks), all but one of them west of the Rhine. However, most Alsatian witches died in places outside the bishop’s political control. From an ecclesiastical standpoint, this bishopric included many lands under controlled by various landholders, making its borders somewhat difficult to establish. For instance, the valley of Lièpvre on the eastern side of the Vosges, located in the center of Alsace near Sélestat, belonged partly to the dukes of Lorraine, but for religious purposes, it belonged to the diocese of Strasbourg rather than the diocese of Toul, which included most of Lorraine.

Historians have raised the question about geographic and political divisions in this diocese for a long time.

Around 1830, J. Theiler wrote a short notice about witchcraft in the bishopric of Strasbourg, in which he affirmed that different sixteenth-century demonologists believed that the diabolical sect observed strictly delimited and distinct boundaries. In Theiler’s opinion, the archives proved that there were exactly four specific places where Sabbats took place in the bishopric of Strasbourg: The witches from the *bailliages* east of the Rhine went to Knibis hill; those from the *bailliages* of Obermundat gathered at the Schauenberg; those from the *bailliages* of Benfeld, Marckolsheim, Wantzenau, Dachstein, and Schirmeck met at a hill near Bischoffsheim, called the Bischenberg; and those from the *bailliages* of Kochersberg and Saverne held their meetings on the Büchelberg. But many other places in addition to these four were mentioned in trial records, and such precise geographic and political distinctions seem pointless.

There was no uniformity in the witchcraft cases in the diocese of Strasbourg. All spatial divisions appear to be artificial when witchcraft is concerned, and precise limits become important only when we consider questions of legal jurisdiction. Alsatian witches were frequently in contact with other witches who lived under different jurisdictions, which was no obstacle to their coming together. For instance, witches from the valley of Lièpvre claimed to attend Sabbats in the Alsatian plain, well outside the area of jurisdiction in which they lived. Only the real-life experience of each witch determined her living area and sphere of influence. The population of the diocese at that time was quite mobile, and contacts between different communities were numerous. It was not rare that a witch claimed to have witnessed a Sabbat as a young girl in one region before she subsequently moved to another.

MARYSE SIMON

See also: ALSACE; AUSTRIAN WESTERN TERRITORIES; BALDUNG [GRIEN], HANS; FRANCHE-COMTÉ; GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; LORRAINE, DUCHY OF; SABBAT.

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STRIX, STRIGA, STRIA

Strix (of which *striga* and *stria* are variants) is the Latin word meaning “screech-owl,” but it quickly developed a number of associations linking it to malevolent women who practiced magic—hence its use in

medieval and early modern demonologies as one synonym for *witch*.

In Classical Latin usage, *striges* were birds of ill omen that ate people's entrails and drank their blood. Several authors, including Silius Italicus, Plautus, and Propertius, mentioned them. They were associated with practitioners of maleficent magic by Horace (*Epodes* 5.20) and Albius Tibullus (*Corpus Tibulliquum* 1.5.52). In a lengthy passage of Ovid's *Fasti* (6.131–168), they were described as birds of prey that flew during the night, attacked children in the cradle, ripped open their flesh, and drank their blood. Petronius used a derivative of this word, *striga*, in his *Satyricon* (63.4–8). There, he told us that while certain people were sounding the death lament for a young boy, *strigae* began to shriek; not long afterward, the mourners discovered that the *strigae* had managed to carry off the child's dead body, leaving a bundle of straw in its place. The second-century C.E. grammarian Festus defined *strigae* as evil-doing women (*maleficae mulieres*) who were able to fly (*volaticae*). Thus, many elements of the later image of the witch were already in place in classical literature: night flying, shape changing (metamorphosis), child murdering, child substitution, and sinister magic.

The Middle Ages betrayed a certain unease about Christians' continuing belief or trust in people who still claimed to work pagan magic and foretell the future. In *A Letter to Charlemagne*, Cathalpus listed various kinds of magical operators—those who used poisons, those who raised storms, those who used incantations, and so on—including *strigae*, adding that all such evil works came from the Devil. The *Synodus Patricii et Auxentii* (Synod of Patrick and Auxentius) declared that any Christian who believed in the type of divinatory witch known as a *striga* should be excommunicated. The association of *strigae* with anthropophagy was unnervingly brought out in chapter 5 of Charlemagne's capitulary for the conquered Saxons, which announced that anyone who had been deceived by the Devil into believing that a man or a woman was a *strix* and ate people and had therefore been led into cannibalism should be put to death. The *Pactus Legis Salicae* (Pact for the Salic Laws), however, was milder and merely said that if a *stria* had eaten someone and the fact had been proved against her, she was simply to be fined. The *Lex Salica* (Salic Law) hinted at a belief in witches' Sabbats, since it declared that anyone who called someone else a "carrier of poisons," that is, a transporter of witches (*strio-porcium*), and either could not or did not wish to prove it had to pay a fine; meanwhile, the Lombard Laws also provided protection against slander by saying that a free, married woman who had been unjustly accused of being a witch (*striga*) could either return to her relatives or seek refuge with the king.

Early modern demonologists, by contrast, well read in the classics, tended to exhibit their familiarity with

that tradition in particular. Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola, for example, began his dialogue *Strix* (1523) with an exchange between two interlocutors, which played upon the two meanings of the word—screech-owl and witch—and drew attention to the tradition that *striges* were women transformed into owls by evil spirits. The Jesuit Martín Del Rio claimed that *striges* derived their name "from an accursed night-bird which is believed to bring death to infants" (*Disquisitiones Magicae libri sex* [Six Books on Investigations into Magic], book 1, chap. 2). In 1553, Pedro de Cieza carried the European concept to the New World when he observed that Peru used to contain many *striges* who sucked out blood from small children (*La crónica de Perú* [The Chronicle of Peru], part 2, chap. 196). Through the use of Latin by scholars, therefore, ancient ideas continued to imprint themselves on later concepts of the witch. And, of course, the modern Italian term for witch, *strega*, derives from *striga*.

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART

See also: CANNIBALISM; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DEMONOLOGY; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; INFANTICIDE; LAMIA; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (MIEVEAL); LILITH; METAMORPHOSIS; NIGHT WITCH, OR NIGHT HAG; PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA, GIANFRANCESCO; WITCH AND WITCHCRAFT, DEFINITIONS OF

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SUICIDE

Suicide has a twofold relationship with witchcraft in early modern Europe, both through the deed itself, often committed by suspected witches to escape the cruelties of inquisitorial procedure, and more fundamentally through the association of self-murder with temptations of the Devil. Throughout Europe, accused witches killed themselves in jail during their trials, usually by hanging. Presumably, their actions were motivated by a genuine fear of the extremes of judicial torture applied in cases of witchcraft as a *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime; a crime so serious and frequently hard to prove that it was excepted from the usual legal procedures). However, contemporaries (for example, Heinrich Kramer and Nicolas Rémy) ordinarily assumed that self-murder in prison while on trial for witchcraft was tantamount to a confession of guilt and reinforced suspicions that the accused had been in league with the Devil. Ecclesiastical prohibitions against suicide had been in place since the Middle Ages, and it was commonly presumed that, like Judas, desperate suicides acted at the prompting of the Devil. Having died in a state of apostasy, they were regularly forbidden an honorable burial in hallowed ground throughout Europe until the end of the eighteenth century.

Legally, committing suicide, like practicing witchcraft, was a heinous crime. The leniency of the 1532 Carolina Code (article 135), which permitted the punishment of suicides only in cases where they had killed themselves in order to escape prosecution (as in the case of accused witches), was never uniformly applied. However, it does seem that prosecution in France and especially in Flanders was harsher than in the Holy Roman Empire. The physical dishonor associated with the crime meant that only the executioner could handle a suicide's corpse. The body was removed by digging a hole under the threshold to drag it from a house, thereby protecting the portal from reentry by the ghost of the self-killer, which was popularly feared to haunt the place of death as a revenant spirit. The body might then be publicly dragged to the place of execution, hung from the gallows or upside-down from a fork (*furca*), and either left to rot as carrion or disposed of in a cesspit or other disgraceful grave in a so-called ass-burial. In some parts of Europe, a suicide's home was then ritually pillaged ("ravaged"), and the estate might be officially liable to confiscation.

Most interesting for historians of witchcraft were the similarities between popular beliefs concerning witches and suicides. Because suicide was ostensibly committed at the behest of the Devil, there were presumptions of some tacit understanding or even a pact with the Devil. Furthermore, given the demonic nature of the deed, a number of popular beliefs arose regarding the corpse of a suicide, beliefs that were closely related to problems of agricultural fertility. It was known that witches commonly practiced weather magic to destroy crops, and witch persecutions often coincided with natural catastrophes that had caused crop failures. Similarly, the populace generally assumed that burying a suicide in hallowed ground profaned the communal cemetery and would result in inclement weather, especially hailstorms, that damaged crops and killed livestock. This belief was so deeply embedded in the early modern consciousness that communities sometimes rose up in armed revolt against attempts by authorities to exercise leniency in their decisions about such burials.

However, this belief was no mere superstition. Evidence shows that the rates of suicide tended to increase during times of crises, as desperate persons faced with starvation, plague, or terminal illness took their lives to escape their suffering. The popular perception was therefore not altogether mistaken, although it inverted cause and effect: Crop failures and famine increased the incidence of suicide, not vice versa. Apparently, oral village culture lost sight of this nuance over many generations, leading communities to fight against honorable burials right up to the end of the Old Régime, when suicide was finally decriminalized and secularized during the judicial reforms of Emperor Joseph II of Austria and later in the French Revolution.

The last region of Europe to decriminalize suicide fully was Britain, where attempted suicide was punishable until the passage of the Suicide Act in 1961.

DAVID LEDERER

See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; CAROLINA CODE; EXECUTIONERS; GHOSTS; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; JOSEPH II, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; KRAMER, HEINRICH (INSTITORIS); PACT WITH THE DEVIL; RÉMY, NICOLAS; REVENANTS; TORTURE; WEATHER MAGIC.

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SUMMERS, MONTAGUE (1880–1948)

An eccentric Catholic man of letters with a keen, not to say obsessive, interest in the occult, Montague Summers made two distinctive contributions to the history of witchcraft. He translated key Latin texts, most famously the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), into English. He also wrote extensively on the subject, developing his own version of the idea that a heretical sect of witches had really existed.

In his youth, Summers embraced the decadence of the 1890s, with Oscar Wilde and Algernon Swinburne as early heroes. He made a hesitant start as an Anglican curate in his native Bristol, but in 1908, he was charged with pederasty; although he was acquitted, his church career was finished. The following year, he converted to Catholicism—a religion in which he felt fully at home, having a deep love of ritual and tradition and a commitment to the power of the sacraments. He attended a Catholic seminary and sought the priesthood but was barred because of his homosexuality. However, he claimed to have obtained irregular ordination (one of the numerous aspects of his life on which he was evasive) and acted as a priest after 1913, though he never obtained a benefice. From 1911 to 1926, he was a schoolmaster; later, his literary earnings supplemented his private income from his wealthy banking family.

Between 1919 and 1925, he promoted the revival of early English drama, producing some genuinely scholarly editions of Restoration comedies. Later, he wrote on the Gothic novel, on vampires, and on werewolves.

His publications on witchcraft began in 1926 and 1927 with *The History of Witchcraft and Demonology* and *The Geography of Witchcraft*. The latter was a compilation of witchcraft cases from printed sources, including extensive quotations. The former expounded Summers's view of witchcraft as a genuine movement of devil worshippers. He traced its origin to the Gnostics, early Christian heretics who he claimed were influenced by pagans. He also made energetic criticisms of Margaret Murray's recent "anthropological" theory that the witches had practiced a benign pagan fertility cult. "Anthropology alone offers no explanation of Witchcraft," he announced: "Only the trained theologian can adequately treat the subject" (Summers 1926, 45). Yet he accepted aspects of Murray's theory, such as the coven of thirteen—which, he shrewdly pointed out, had to be a borrowing from Christianity rather than a survival from paganism.

Like Murray, Summers believed in a real witch cult. He too endeavored to interpret witches' activities in naturalistic terms and to explain away reports of flight and animal metamorphosis (but he ultimately accepted their possibility). Both the Devil and the pact had certainly existed and indeed continued to exist: "Commerce between human beings and evil spirits . . . is the very core and kernel of Witchcraft" (Summers 1926, 51), he said, arguing that the contemporary spiritualist movement proved the possibility of such commerce. Summers cited demonological writers of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries as authoritative.

However, he made his most enduring contribution to witchcraft scholarship with his translations of demonologies. He translated two himself—Ludovico Maria Sinistrari's *De Daemonialitate* (Demoniality) and the *Malleus Maleficarum*—and edited several other translations. He felt that if such texts were made accessible, their self-evident truth would be perceived. As a translator, his florid literary style was unsuited to the language of Latin Scholasticism, and some of his renderings have been questioned, including his much-quoted "All witchcraft comes from carnal lust, which is in women insatiable" (Kramer 1928, book 1, vi). Nevertheless, Summers's labors have proved vastly beneficial to scholars who have ignored his interpretations.

Although Summers perpetrated romantic and untrue stories about his personal life, his weakness as a scholar was not the systematic distortion practiced by Murray; rather, it was an excessive reverence for ancient authority. He proclaimed the *Malleus* one of the great books of Western civilization. Summers repeatedly asserted that his sources, especially Catholic sources, were wholly

trustworthy. As a result, he swallowed even the most bizarre legends, some from chroniclers writing over a thousand years after the events they described. He condemned some of the excesses of witch hunting—the Protestant Matthew Hopkins, for instance, was depicted as an impudent charlatan. But the witch hunt as such he wholly and explicitly approved. He also gave the persecutions a contemporary spin, attacking Bolshevism as a modern equivalent of witchcraft.

In later life, he lived in Oxford, where the students reported that one might see Summers with his dog, Summers with his secretary, or the secretary with the dog—but never all three together. It was an appropriate story for someone who had written on shape shifting, but it reminds us that folktales are not always taken literally or even seriously, even by the tellers.

What was Summers's motivation for writing on witchcraft? His fascination with the occult was mixed with horror. In his early years, he had sometimes participated in diabolic rituals, notably a Black Mass in 1913; he knew their powerful attraction from personal experience. In studying witchcraft, Summers may have been staring into the dark side of his own nature.

JULIAN GOODARE

See also: FERTILITY CULTS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; HISTORIOGRAPHY; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; METAMORPHOSIS; MURRAY, MARGARET ALICE; PACT WITH THE DEVIL.

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SUPERSTITION

The Latin term *superstitio*, whose exact translation is disputed, was adopted by the Romance languages and English; in German, it became *Aferglaube* (backward or obsolete faith) or *Aberglaube* (contrary of the right faith); in Dutch, it became *bijgeloof* (beneath the right faith); and in the Scandinavian languages, it became *overtro* (overly strong belief). All these terms refer to religious beliefs, and all share negative connotations.

From antiquity to the present, various beliefs and behavior patterns have been characterized as superstitious. The specific content of this invariably pejorative term depends on the religion of the definers, their social standing and education, and their own cultural practices. So the ancient Greek *desidaimonia* and the

Latin *superstitio* both implied an excessive fear of numinous powers or the mentality of an alien religion: Thus, right-thinking Romans qualified Christianity as superstitious (Tacitus, *Annals* 15.44), while the Christians expressed the same opinion about Judaism (Acts 25.19). Early modern Reformed theologians denounced many elements of Catholic faith and piety as superstitious; a French Catholic priest, J.-B. Thiers, compiled four volumes of superstitions in 1679, grouped according to sacraments.

From the time of the Church Fathers onward, types of Christian religious belief and ritual not approved by the official theological hierarchy were condemned as superstitions. Superstition was irrational and untrue. Often—but not always—we find among the “standard” objects and practices of superstition such things as reliance on amulets, dreams and visions, charms, fortunetelling, magic, necromancy, prodigies, portents, soothsaying, and spells. Many of these were survivals of pagan beliefs and rites, and the clergy condemned them as such. Superstition, therefore, is that set of beliefs and practices that functionaries of the official or established religion (*religio*) single out as unacceptable within the entire cosmos of factually practiced religion. A superstitious mind was generally ascribed to uneducated laypeople, especially the country folk or “rustics,” but often, these same so-called superstitions existed among the literate upper classes as well. Until the second half of the twentieth century, folklorists and historians unhesitatingly used this term to designate the same canon of popular imaginations and customs that theologians had dubbed superstitious for centuries. Currently, however, a growing sensitivity to the clearly negative connotations and implicit cultural arrogance connected with the term prevents many scholars from discussing superstition. Given also that cognate terms such as *popular religion* or *popular Christianity* are not without problems, perhaps the best alternative is *parallel religion* (a set of beliefs and rites coexisting with but disapproved of by the official religion).

Over the course of two millennia of Christian dogmatics, many teachings of an earlier age have become obsolete and are thus considered superstitions. For example, in the Early Middle Ages, several Church councils endorsed the practice of ordeals, but after their abolition by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, major theologians such as St. Thomas Aquinas classified ordeals as superstitions.

Carolingian theologians including Archbishop Agobard of Lyons regarded several aspects of witchcraft as superstitious. Agobard condemned the belief that certain people, in collaboration with cloud-riders, were guilty of making hail and thunder. The better-known *Canon Episcopi* severely criticized beliefs about the nightly ride of women to a certain kind of Sabbath. About 1100, King Coloman of Hungary decreed that

witches did not exist and that, therefore, nobody should prosecute them. However, such imaginings of witchcraft practices formed part of the standard accusations against sorceresses during the late Middle Ages and the early modern epoch. Theologians now affirmed that denying their reality could lead to an accusation of heresy; in 1453, Prior William Adeline (Edeline) of Saint-Germain-en-Laye was tortured because he denied that witches could ride. Heinrich Kramer, the author of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), also interpreted such skepticism as a sign of heresy. After the Enlightenment, the situation again returned to the position of a thousand years before: The superstitious person was one who believed in the existence of witches. This notion remains the prevalent opinion in the Western world today, although a small minority are still convinced that witches exist. There is also the semierne effort of some radical feminist groups to reinstall this belief by declaring that hexing is not a superstition but rather an ancient and effective knowledge. These modern-day Western witches have not been prosecuted; in parts of postcolonial Africa, however, some of their counterparts have been.

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See also: AGOBARD OF LYONS; AQUINAS, THOMAS; *CANON EPISCOPI*; ENLIGHTENMENT; MAGIC AND RELIGION; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; ORDEAL; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; SKEPTICISM.

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SWEDEN

Sweden experienced a wave of large-scale witchcraft trials between 1668 and 1676 that resulted in approxi-

mately 300 people being executed. Two major sets of trials ran simultaneously. In the Blåkulla trials in northern Sweden (from 1668 to 1676), the main charge brought against the defendants was the supernatural abduction of children to the witches' Sabbat. Meanwhile, a series of witchcraft trials were also held in the county of Bohuslän between 1669 and 1672. Though these events are deservedly famous, the usual prosecution of forms of witchcraft in early modern Sweden was very different. Most cases were concerned with minor offenses involving nonharmful magic. The prosecution of witches was characterized by leniency, rarely resulting in death sentences. Apart from the major witchcraft trials in Bohuslän and the Blåkulla trials, no more than 100 people were executed for witchcraft in Sweden from 1550 to 1750. Moreover, a great number of these trials, perhaps a majority, took place during the eighteenth century.

MEDIEVAL PROLOGUE

In medieval Sweden, the provincial law statutes concerned with harmful witchcraft were occasionally supplemented by rulings regarding nonharmful magic. The national law codes from the fourteenth century (*Magnus Erikssons Landslag* [the National Law of Magnus Eriksson]) and the fifteenth century (*Kristoffers Landslag* [the National Law of Kristoffer]—a slightly modified version) provided no clear guidelines for dealing with nonharmful magic. Few medieval sources preserve the activities of Swedish courts. The oldest recorded witchcraft trial occurred in the town of Arboga in 1471.

In the sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth century, a broader legal definition of witchcraft caused the more lenient punishments for maleficent witchcraft to be applied in cases of nonharmful magic. In addition, biblical law was consulted when passing sentences for serious cases of witchcraft. Various forms of consorting with the Devil were gradually placed on par with maleficent sorcery. As late as the eighteenth century, punishments following biblical law were still meted out in Swedish law courts.

OLD AND NEW WITCHCRAFT

Not until the sixteenth century did Swedish court records become sufficiently extensive to allow for realistic assessments of the extent of witchcraft cases. The number of trials increased markedly at the end of the sixteenth century, and interrogation techniques foreign to Swedish legal traditions, such as torture and ordeal by water (the swimming test), began to be employed. At the same time, a more elaborate conception of witchcraft appeared, with witches making pacts with the Devil and participating in Sabbats. Acts of nonharmful magic were also prosecuted, although more traditional forms of witchcraft, that is, *maleficium*

(harmful magic), still dominated the legal agenda. Generally, however, the courts tended to be lenient, condemning to death only one in ten of the defendants on average, while acquitting over 60 percent (Ankarloo 1984, 340–342). A particular form of oath taking known as *värjemålsed* formed an important part of Swedish litigation; it was used in court to repudiate accusations, often when people wished to defend themselves against gossip and slander.

During the first half of the seventeenth century, High Courts were established in various parts of the Swedish kingdom. In principle, they had to approve all death sentences, including those for witchcraft. Gradually, an extensive praxis of submitting all types of cases of witchcraft to the High Court emerged. Sweden's judicial system was based, at least formally, on accusatorial procedure; it required a plaintiff for each case. After 1600, royal officials increasingly assumed the role of public prosecutor in local courts in order to prosecute crimes that lacked a plaintiff. At the same time, the secular courts gradually acquired the sole right to punish witchcraft of all sorts. The Church had, by then, gained support for its far-reaching demands that measures be taken against relatively innocuous forms of magic. Sweden's medieval laws, now obviously outdated, attracted the attention of reformers. In 1665, a royal statute was published (renewed in 1687) dealing explicitly with nonharmful magic. The statute signaled a concern by the authorities with witchcraft and magic, just a few years before the outbreak of the great witch hunt. Other disciplinary regulations applicable to unacceptable religious practices were also introduced.

The reformed legal system of the seventeenth century had both constraining and stimulating effects on witchcraft trials. The use of torture exemplifies this fact. After the High Courts were established, only they could grant permission for a lower court to use forcible methods. But in exercising this power, the High Courts appear to have been passive. On the one hand, they were prepared to reject applications for the use of torture, which no doubt constrained some local officials. On the other hand, they accepted the method when confronted with its use. The explosive situation that resulted in the large-scale witchcraft trials of the 1660s and 1670s can partially be attributed to the High Courts' behavior. These courts did not sanction the coercive measures applied in the initial stages of these proceedings, but neither did they disallow them.

THE WITCH HUNTS

Although trials mentioning the witches' Sabbat first appeared in Sweden toward the end of the sixteenth century, no major outbreaks of witch hunting occurred until the second half of the seventeenth century. The Blåkulla proceedings and the Bohuslän trials displayed significant differences, the latter being relatively

straightforward. The province of Bohuslän had been transferred from Danish to Swedish rule ten years earlier, but trials were still supposed to follow Danish law. Accusations of traditional, that is, maleficent, witchcraft appeared alongside charges of consorting with the Devil and participating in the witches' Sabbat, with little or no mention of the abduction of children.

The northern Blåkulla trials departed from established practice on a number of points. Courts treated rather skeptically the stories of Blåkulla journeys that first appeared around 1600. This attitude changed drastically when children began to accuse alleged witches of abduction. Concern for the welfare of these children was felt to justify departures from the normal legal procedures and rules regarding evidence, creating a potentially volatile situation. Frightened adults encouraged their children to tell the authorities how they had been spirited away to Blåkulla, thereby providing the courts with the names of numerous suspects. The children could make these accusations without fear of self-incrimination, as they were perceived largely as victims.

In Sweden, children's testimonies were formally inadmissible. Nevertheless, they were used and given credibility. Further, quantity outweighed any qualitative shortcomings. The accumulated mass of children's evidence was judged sufficient grounds for conviction. Statements from convicted witches were also accepted as evidence in court. Torture was occasionally employed, although confessions could be elicited without it. All means of persuasion were permitted. A significant factor favoring confessions was that a refusal to admit guilt could lead to the death sentence, while a contrite confession might well result in a pardon. Those who refused to admit their guilt were clearly under Satan's power, while penitent women demonstrated that they had the courage to reject evil. Several hundred adults were accused of witchcraft, and several thousand children were involved.

The great witch hunt that started in Dalarna in 1668 was possibly preceded by a popular religious revival. The stories told about the witches' Sabbat were clearly interwoven with religious visionary tales of heaven and hell. A number of local circumstances in the diocese of Västerås, to which the province of Dalarna belonged, appear to have forced the clergy there to take an active role in curbing activities considered indicative of an undisciplined lifestyle, particularly among children and adolescents (Lagerlöf-Génétay 1990). Starting in Dalarna in 1668, the witchcraft trials then spread to most of the northern provinces, and by 1675, they had even reached central Sweden, including Stockholm. In addition to the regular courts, special witchcraft commissions were appointed to lead the hearings. The state regularly appointed commissioners to investigate unsatisfactory conditions and discontent in the provinces, not just in connection with cases of witch-

craft, thereby enabling the authorities to legitimize their actions in the eyes of the populace. Thus, as the Blåkulla trials began to increase in number and cause concern, the authorities made use of well-tried methods. However, temporarily delegating power in connection with the witchcraft commissions turned out to be a serious mistake. Members of lower courts with no juridical training were sometimes given decisive roles in the administration of justice. A structure strongly centralized in theory came temporarily under local influences. Year after year, the appointed commissioners failed to control the rising hysteria of witchcraft. In fact, the attention the commissions drew to the situation increased rather than allayed the general sense of unrest.

The witchcraft trials finally came to an end in Stockholm in 1676. The influential role in putting a stop to the trials that has been attributed to Urban Hjärne, a doctor, has been overestimated (for example, see Robbins 1959, 350). Moreover, Hjärne professed belief in the existence of trolls.

FROM WITCHCRAFT TO SUPERSTITION

While the large-scale hearings undoubtedly represent the culmination of Swedish witchcraft, they can also be seen as the start of a process that dominated the succeeding period. The relation between the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries is of great interest in the history of Swedish witchcraft. Of the more than 500 known witchcraft trials heard in the Göta High Court in southern Sweden from 1635 to 1779, around three-quarters took place in the eighteenth century (Sörlin 1999, 20). Gaps in the records of the Svea High Court, covering central and northern Sweden, and the unique features of the Blåkulla trials complicate comparisons with the Göta High Court. We do not know how often cases of witchcraft and magic failed to reach the higher courts or how legal customs varied geographically or chronologically. There is no doubt, however, that witchcraft trials were numerous throughout Sweden during the eighteenth century.

Most of these eighteenth-century cases involved nonharmful magic, while the importance of other cases steadily diminished. Few accusations now concerned *maleficium*, or maleficent witchcraft, in contrast to the situation in the sixteenth-century trials. However, from the end of the seventeenth century onward, Blåkulla cases recurred at regular intervals. Several rather extensive witchcraft trials were held until quite late in the eighteenth century. Nonharmful witchcraft was probably still brought before the Swedish courts in the nineteenth century, while Blåkulla stories continued to appear well after 1850. In 1858, children in Gagnef in Dalarna once more began to tell tales of journeys to Blåkulla (Tegler Jerselius 2003). This time, however, ecclesiastical and medical officers, not the law courts, conducted the inquiries.

The reform of the judicial system with the establishment of the High Courts clearly defined levels of instance. The influence of the High Courts is apparent in cases in which the legal situation was very unclear, which applied in particular to crimes of witchcraft. The records of the Göta High Court show considerable discrepancies between the sentences passed by courts of first instance and subsequent High Court decisions. The Göta High Court overruled a large number of the decisions by lower courts, usually reducing or amending their sentences (Sörlin 1999, 68). Though the lower courts proclaimed the death penalty almost as frequently in the eighteenth century as in the seventeenth century, the High Court stopped upholding this penalty almost entirely after the turn of the eighteenth century. With the exception of the major witchcraft trials in Bohuslän and the Blåkulla trials, no more than 100 individuals were executed for the crime of witchcraft from 1550 to 1750.

The growing importance of court cases involving nonharmful witchcraft reflected changes in legislation. Prior to 1734, more innocuous forms of witchcraft were not explicitly forbidden in Swedish law. However, the National Code of that year dealt comprehensively with acts of nonharmful witchcraft for the first time. Though changes in legislation in the latter half of the seventeenth century had prompted the desired effect, the code of 1734 eliminated any remaining doubts about whether non-harmful witchcraft should be punished. In other respects, this code was quite conservative, as it retained the death penalty for witchcraft. The difficulties of proving such a crime, however, meant that the courts did not enforce the strict letter of the law. The paragraph on witchcraft was mainly applied in certain cases of demonic pacts in lower courts. Gustav III abolished the death penalty for witchcraft in 1779, and in the same year, pacts with the Devil were placed on par with ordinary nonharmful witchcraft. However, witchcraft did not completely disappear from Swedish records. Although the concept of witchcraft was in a process of dissolution, individual elements of a criminal nature continued to be prosecuted under other suitable legislation. One such example was blasphemy; poisoning might also be included here. Nonharmful witchcraft followed the same process of dissolution when Sweden's Penal Code of 1864 allowed such crimes to be prosecuted as fraud, even though the legislation about acts of superstition had been repealed.

HOW CASES REACHED COURT

Cases involving witchcraft became increasingly common in Sweden at a time when secular and ecclesiastical authorities were strengthening their hold over both the judicial system and village life: Historians often consider Sweden to be the most thoroughly "confessionalized" Protestant state in Europe. Although relatively few trials took place on the direct instigation

of secular authorities, many cases of witchcraft came to light in connection with other criminal acts. Most of the accusations and denunciations of maleficent witchcraft originated among the populace. The time, place, and character of the witchcraft were often determining factors in its discovery; in many cases, magic had been performed in public, thus enabling its disclosure. Clergymen played a key role in the events preceding the trials, often as informers, and they were far more active concerning nonharmful magic than maleficent witchcraft. If individual acts, such as informing on people or making denunciations and accusations, are taken into account, the level of private initiative remained approximately constant despite the growing influence of the state.

THE ACCUSED

In Sweden, while both men and women were accused of the different types of witchcraft, there were distinct sex-linked differences among these crimes. Accusations of diabolism, generally in the form of alleged journeys to Blåkulla, were almost exclusively restricted to women, whereas men dominated in cases of written demonic pacts. Perpetrators of nonharmful witchcraft exhibited the greatest degree of sexual parity. Over the years, the sex ratios shifted considerably, with the proportion of men accused rising constantly. During the eighteenth century in the Göta High Court, equal numbers of men and women were charged, a consequence of the broadened definition of witchcraft (Sörlin 1999, 120). The increase in the number of trials was mainly accounted for by trials pertaining to nonharmful witchcraft, the category with the highest degree of symmetry between the sexes. Records from the Svea High Court show that, in fact, more men than women were accused of offering magical expertise (Oja 1999, 139).

During the great witch hunt, middle-aged or somewhat older farmers' wives or widows tended to be the most represented among the accused (Ankarloo 1990, 310–312). Among the innumerable minor cases, the most marginalized group of the accused were "wise" men and women (cunning folk). More surprisingly, in the cases of denunciations and accusations submitted by private individuals, the defendants often seemed to lack negative attributes; many did not seem to be at all "witchlike" (Sörlin 1999, 121–126).

NONCONFLICT WITCHCRAFT

Trials initiated by private individuals concerning nonharmful witchcraft did not constitute an appropriation of the negative view of such activities propagated by officials. On the contrary, what occurred was not a passive acceptance of new values but rather a selective use of new opportunities provided by the official assault on magic of all sorts. In this way, the non-

harmful magic used by others could be exploited as a weapon in local conflicts. However, in the case of maleficent witchcraft, people often made accusations based solely on the fact that the defendant had performed actions that could be interpreted as acts of harmful magic. The suspicion of being afflicted by witchcraft was, therefore, to some extent divorced from a social context; it did not need to be directly connected to any concrete conflict between the parties. This fact explains why the accused had so few negative social attributes: They were not taken to court because of negative behavior, such as making threats, but because they had practiced acts of magic that were often wrongly assumed to be of evil intent.

PER SÖRLIN

See also: ACCUSATORIAL PROCEDURE; AGE OF ACCUSED WITCHES; ANGELS; BLÅKULLA; BOHUSLÄN; CHILDREN; CONFESSIONS; CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST 1800); COURTS, SECULAR; CUNNING FOLK; GENDER; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); MORA WITCHES; SLANDER; SWIMMING TEST; WITCH FINDERS.

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SWIETEN, GERARD VAN (1700–1772)

The Dutch-born dean of the Faculty of Medicine in Vienna and personal physician to Maria Theresa since 1745, Gerard van Swieten made a study of so-called posthumous magic on behalf of the empress in 1755. Her hereditary lands of Moravia, Bohemia, and Hungary were experiencing several prosecutions during the 1750s in which corpses of presumed vampires were exhumed, after which their hearts were pierced, their heads shattered, their bodies burned, and their ashes dispersed to prevent their eventual return. Moreover, Hungary was experiencing heavy witch hunts at the same time.

Van Swieten recoiled at the Gothic belief in vampirism. His memorandum, written in French and entitled "Remarques sur les vampyrismes de Silesie de l'an 1755" (Remarks on the Vampirisms of Silesia) was never published in the original French version but appeared in German and Italian translations in 1756. He outlined beliefs about vampires that affected a large part of Moravia at the time, proving they had no scientific foundation. Innocent people, victims of ignorance and superstition, were being terrorized by impostors. He thought that such ideas might have been imported from the East by "Greek schismatics," quoting an extract from the *Relation d'un Voyage du Levant* (An Account of a Journey in the Levant, 1717) written by the French botanist Joseph Pitton de Tournefort (1656–1708), who had observed vampirism in Hungary earlier in the century. In any case, van Swieten denounced forcefully the episcopal authorities in Olmütz for encouraging such nonsense: Superstition was the enemy not only of the *philosophes* but of all intelligent men! (Brechtka 1970, 131–132). According to van Swieten, customary laws were also sources of unnecessary distress; a general reform of criminal justice was needed.

To sum up, van Swieten took three positions regarding witchcraft. First, he stated that many accusations of witchcraft were products of fantasy, imagination, or some form of mental illness. Second, he asserted that the pact with the Devil had no basis in reality. And third, he argued that many phenomena attributed to

socery had natural causes. He did not say that all aspects of witchcraft, especially maleficent magic, were impossible. A devout Catholic like the empress, van Swieten believed in the existence of the Devil and stated that the Protestants were correct when they did not deny that heathen people could be possessed by demons from which they could be delivered only by baptism. Nevertheless, van Swieten was much more skeptical toward witchcraft than his fellow countryman and successor as a personal physician to Maria Theresa, Anton de Haen (1704–1776). In 1744, the latter had stated in his tract *De Magia* (On Magic), published in Lutheran Leipzig, that witchcraft and diabolical magic really existed and that witches were able to fly

The impact that van Swieten's memorandum had on Maria Theresa was immediate. When she heard that a Bohemian peasant had been sentenced to death for socery, she pardoned him, saying: "It is certain that witches can only be found where there is ignorance. This man is no more capable of witchcraft than I!" (quoted in Venturi 1969, 380). Already in 1753, she had issued a decree on socery, followed in March 1755 by a decree about so-called posthumous magic. Finally, on August 6, 1756, the empress promulgated a general edict on witchcraft, superstition, and magic that marked a decisive moment in the decline of witch hunting throughout the entire Habsburg Empire. After 1756, all such cases were required to be submitted to her conciliar appellate court for confirmation before sentences could be carried out. This edict greatly reduced the possibility of prosecutions, and it virtually ended all executions: It forbade the use of torture, warned against searching for the Devil's mark, and forbade the use of the water ordeal (swimming test). The number of witchcraft prosecutions and executions immediately sank to minimal levels and definitely stopped in 1777, the year after torture was abolished. A decade earlier, in 1768, the empress had issued the official prohibition of witch hunting in Austria-Hungary (Ankarloo and Clark 1999, 68–70).

DRIES VANYSACKER

See also: AUSTRIA; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; DEVIL'S MARK; ENLIGHTENMENT; HUNGARY; MARIA THERESA, HOLY ROMAN EMPRESS; MORAVIA; REVENANTS; SILESIA; SKEPTICISM; SUPERSTITION; TRANSYLVANIA; VAMPIRE.

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SWIMMING TEST

One of the most frequently used ordeals of the Early and central Middle Ages was the cold-water ordeal. This legal test consisted of putting the accused in fetters and throwing him or her into a pool or very large container filled with cold water. If guilty, it was believed the pure element would not accept the witch but would keep the individual floating at the surface; if innocent, he or she would be able to stay submerged for some time without drowning. Many churches in medieval Europe possessed such pools and had an episcopal privilege to use the technique; the priest had to be present in order to fulfill the religious ceremonies (blessing the water, singing the paraliturgical formulas), for which he received a fee.

Swimming of witches was attested from the late eleventh century onward, but the practice remained uncommon before the sixteenth century. When the Fourth Lateran Council forbade all ecclesiastics to participate further in ordeals in 1215, this method of finding the truth came into disuse and was replaced by torture. Nevertheless, the water ordeal either survived better than other forms or was revived in the second half of the sixteenth century, when it became quite common in many parts of early modern Europe (especially western and northern Germany, France, England, the Netherlands, and Hungary) and was extended to the New World (Virginia, Connecticut) and even some Asian colonies (East India); because the crime of witchcraft was regarded as extraordinary, it required extraordinary means of detection. In English, the practice was called ducking or fleeting; in German, *Hexenbad*, *Hexenschwemmen*, or *Wasserprobe*. Not infrequently, as, for example, in the 1595–1596 Geldern witchcraft trials, the test in question was followed by torture if the accused failed to sink. It seems to have been customary to strip the suspect naked and bind each thumb to the opposite-side toe and vice versa.

Despite being widely practiced, this ordeal was usually illegal. According to mainstream learned discussions of that period, especially by almost anyone trained in Roman or canon law, the swimming test was to be prohibited as fallacious evidence—although one celebrated authority, King James VI of Scotland, recommended it in his *Daemonologie* (Demonology, 1597, Book 3, chap. 6). An overwhelming consensus among jurists and theologians of all major confessions



The swimming test (cold-water ordeal), called "ducking" in England, involved placing an accused witch, tied and bound, in water. If the water rejected the accused, the witch was guilty; if the person could remain submerged for a while, the accused was deemed innocent. (Fortean Picture Library)

led to a series of official condemnations of this proof: For the Spanish Netherlands, King Philip II declared this test illegal in 1595; in France, the *Parlement* of Paris (sovereign judicial court, with jurisdiction over approximately one-half of France) forbade it in 1601; and in 1603, the bishop of Bremen abolished it for his dioceses. Nonetheless, it was reported to have been practiced locally into the eighteenth and even the nineteenth centuries; as late as 1636, the magistrates of Osnabrück declared it to be a valid juridical custom and as helpful a device for unmasking witches as torture, and their English counterparts at Faversham officially sanctioned it a few years later. In 1644, the Bavarian commander in chief, Hans von Sporck, had many of the women accompanying his troops thrown into the Kocher River at Schwäbisch-Hall in order to discover the witches among them.

Much later, the Holy Roman Empress Maria Theresa had to forbid the continuation of this ordeal twice, in 1740 and in 1766. In 1751, it was still used in England (which had abolished the crime of witchcraft in 1736) before lynching a witch. Two very late instances of its extralegal use by European lynch mobs, suspecting a man to be a sorcerer or a woman to be a witch, are recorded at Deldenerbruck in Holland (in 1823) and Hela near Danzig (in 1836). A reminiscence of this practice is the name Witch Pool, given to a portion of the Bay of St. Andrews in Scotland.

Some extra-European peoples employed identical methods to discover sorcerers: The famous Babylonian Code of Hammurabi (ca. 1700 B.C.E.) describes the ordeal of plunging the suspected person into a river. For ancient Greece, there are some vague references to magicians who floated when thrown into water, but it is

not clear whether an ordeal or a punishment was implied.

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See also: EVIDENCE; FAVERSHAM WITCHES; LYNCHING; ORDEAL; OSBORNE, JOHN AND RUTH; SHERWOOD, GRACE.

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SWITZERLAND

In the territory of present-day Germany, more witches were executed than in the rest of Europe combined, yet the history of Europe's witchcraft trials both began and ended in the region we now know as Switzerland. The Swiss Confederation, which was already independent of the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation long before these trials started, has the unenviable record of executing many more witches per thousand population than any other contemporary European nation. Of course, exact figures will never be known, but we can be reasonably certain that at least 5,000 witches were put on trial between 1420 and 1800 in what is now Switzerland (a region that probably contained under 1 million people around 1600), and that over 3,500 of them were convicted and executed. For a land that presents itself as a peaceful working democracy in the heart of Europe, filled with cheese, chocolate, ski resorts, and private banks, this is indeed a dubious distinction.

In absolute numbers, of course, the area that is currently Germany burned far more witches, perhaps seven times as many as Switzerland. But Germany's population today is almost fourteen times greater than Switzerland's, and this disparity was equally great or even greater four centuries ago. Authorities in this venerable, multilingual democracy (70 percent German-speaking, 20 percent French-speaking, 10 percent Italian-speaking) probably burned witches twice as often, on a per capita basis, as their modern German neighbors to the north, ten times as often as their present-day French neighbors to the west, and almost a hundred times as often as the Italians to the south.

Switzerland also has other unenviable distinctions in this respect. It executed witches over a longer period (from 1427 to 1782) than any other European country. In addition, relative to its size, the present-day Swiss Canton of Vaud was the worst witch-hunting region anywhere in Protestant Europe (Scotland was probably its closest rival) and in French-speaking Europe (where Catholic Lorraine was likely its closest rival). For that matter, the modern Swiss Canton of Ticino may well have been the worst witch-hunting region of Italian-speaking Europe. There are few aspects of European cultural history in which this small yet multicultural country seems so important as in the history of witchcraft.

Most of the places where the early forms of the witches' Sabbath were brought together and the first witch hunts were held soon after 1425 can be found in present-day Switzerland—and the others usually lie in the neighboring French Alps (Savoy and Dauphiné) or Italian Alps (the Val d'Aosta). The single most important event for diffusing the new blend of sorcery and heresy symbolized by the diabolical witches' Sabbath occurred in 1439, when the schismatic Council of Basel elected the former Duke Amadeus VIII of Savoy to become pope under the name of Felix V. Geographically, this event connected the southwestern corner of Switzerland around Lake Geneva with its northwestern border at Basel. It is deservedly unimportant in the history of the Roman Church, since Felix V quickly joined the ranks of antipopes from the Great Schism that began in 1378 and the ensuing conciliar age; the Council of Basel finally disbanded a decade later, in 1449.

But what made this forgotten footnote of ecclesiastical history so central to the history of European witchcraft was that many events and writings related to the creation of the Sabbath occurred in Amadeus VIII's large Alpine duchy or right along its borders—including its borders with the Swiss Confederation—and the new doctrines of the Sabbath received considerable attention across large parts of Christendom because the former Savoyard duke had been elected pope. Various Swiss towns played important roles in shaping and spreading the new doctrine: Lausanne (where the duke-pope's personal secretary settled in a rich benefice and composed a long epic poem containing a vivid description of witches); Sion (an Alpine prince-bishopric that apparently lay at the center of Europe's first major witch hunt around 1428); Fribourg (where the Dominican inquisitor Ulric de Torrenté investigated heretics in the 1420s and witches a decade later); and, of course, Basel (where a prominent Dominican reformer composed a popular treatise containing an extensive and detailed account of witches' activities during the council). Many of these places lie in French Switzerland, and recent scholarship clarifying this topic has come primarily

from Lausanne, including a useful critical edition of the major early texts on Sabbats (Ostoreo, Bagliani, and Utz Tremp 1999). However, the important Swiss landmarks in developing a full-blown doctrine of witchcraft were not confined to French-speaking regions. For example, the French word for “witch,” *sorcière*, cannot be traced to fifteenth-century Switzerland, but the modern German noun for “witch,” *Hexe*, was first recorded at Lucerne in German Switzerland in 1419.

Switzerland continued to be disproportionately important in the history of European witchcraft after the mid-fifteenth century, as the Sabbat and related concepts spread across much of western Europe. Its rhythms of persecution were obviously quite irregular, though the difficulties we face in documenting this are compounded by the erratic conservation of fifteenth- and early-sixteenth-century records. Nevertheless, we know that no fewer than thirty-seven people were tried for witchcraft by secular officials in Switzerland’s northernmost Italo-phonetic Alpine valley, Val Leventina, from 1457 to 1459, and twenty of them, including five men, were burned (Schatzmann 2002, 139–142). A German-Swiss woman tried for witchcraft in 1459 at Andermatt, deep in the Alps, reportedly not only could transform herself into a wolf but also had the ability to provoke avalanches. More important, we know that a cycle of witchcraft persecutions affected the Swiss Confederation during the decade between 1477 and 1486, with twenty witchcraft trials by secular authorities recorded at Bern, Fribourg, and Lucerne and another dozen by inquisitors in the diocese of Lausanne. This cluster, which exactly coincided with the trials in Austria and south Germany that produced the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), also saw intensified “feminization” of witchcraft in French Switzerland, where, in 1481, a male witch who had named only men as “accomplices” was asked specifically if he had seen any women at the Sabbat.

In Switzerland, it took almost a century for the number of witchcraft trials to surpass the totals recorded between 1477 and 1486, the decade following the Confederation’s defeat of the Burgundians. During the ensuing age of Swiss military prominence, when the Confederation expanded its borders to the modern limits in the west and south, witchcraft trials continued to be held in various parts of modern Switzerland, especially in places such as Lausanne or Lucerne, which had prosecuted witches since the mid-fifteenth century. For example, we know that sixty witches, almost all of them women, were tried at Lucerne in thirty different years between 1490 and 1550; twenty-six of them were burned (Jäggi 2002, 145–146). There is evidence that no fewer than thirty-six female and eighteen male “heretics,” most if not all of whom were witches, were taken to Geneva and burned there between 1463 and 1500 (Binz 1997, 577–578). Between 1500 and 1550, the city-state of Basel tried eight witches and

executed six of them; Bern compiled a comparable record. This process seems to have been unaffected by the outbreak of the Protestant Reformation, which deeply divided the Confederation after the 1520s; at most, it meant the end of witchcraft trials by inquisitors in some parts of modern French Switzerland, where they were immediately replaced by secular officials, often Protestants. Ulrich Zwingli’s Zurich had tried witches for generations and resumed executing them after his death in 1531. At the other end of Switzerland, Geneva executed witches both before and after the Reformation; John Calvin encouraged Geneva’s magistrates to “extirpate the race [of witches]” from a rural parish in 1545. Some of Switzerland’s Catholic regions also continued to prosecute witches during this period.

Starting in the final third of the sixteenth century, recorded witchcraft trials multiplied dramatically in most parts of Switzerland. Although the necessary local studies do not exist for a few of Switzerland’s two dozen cantons, enough is known to provide a reasonably clear overall picture of witchcraft trials in the old Confederation during their peak phase, which lasted for approximately a century after 1570. After a long hiatus, witchcraft trials began to be recorded in such central Swiss cantons as Obwalden or Schwyz in 1571. In that same year in the west, they also began in what is now the recently created canton of Jura; immediately to the south, in the canton of Neuchâtel, recorded witchcraft trials resumed in 1568 after an interval of almost eighty years. In eastern Switzerland, trials apparently began slightly later: For example, Appenzell executed very few witches until the 1580s, while St. Gallen’s recorded witchcraft trials began only after 1600. The large separate confederation that occupied Switzerland’s southeastern corner, the Grisons, similarly began its recorded witch hunts in the seventeenth century. However, the Grisons—a region of mixed Protestant and Catholic, German-speaking and Italian-speaking populations—compensated for the late start with considerable activity, recording over 500 witchcraft trials and over 250 executions for witchcraft in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

When one divides Switzerland into Protestant, Catholic, and mixed-religion cantons, no clear patterns of witch hunting emerge (see Table S-1).

The numbers in this table (taken mainly from Bader 1945) suggest that throughout most of the Swiss Confederation, anywhere from half to two-thirds of the people tried as witches were executed, although they were seldom executed in large groups. Cantons without an urban capital, such as Schwyz or Appenzell, seem to have been relatively severe, but recorded trials were not especially numerous in such places. By contrast, Switzerland’s few urban cantons apparently were relatively skeptical in this respect: At Geneva, witchcraft executions ended comparatively early (with only one death after 1626), while Basel abolished torture in witchcraft trials in 1643.

TABLE S-1

<i>Catholic cantons</i>	<i>Trials</i>	<i>Executions (%)</i>
Lucerne (1550–1675)	505	254 (51%)
Solothurn (1550–1660)	122	55 (45%)
Schwyz (1571–1682)	50	35 (70%)
Jura (1571–1670)	191	100 (52%)
St. Gallen (1600–1723)	38	24 (63%)
<i>Protestant cantons</i>	<i>Trials</i>	<i>Executions (%)</i>
Zurich (1533–1714)	220	74 (33%)
Bern (undated)	124	40 (32%)
Geneva (1527–1681)	337	68 (21%)
Neuchâtel (1568–1677)	360	243 (68%)
<i>Mixed cantons</i>	<i>Trials</i>	<i>Executions (%)</i>
Appenzell (1579–1691)	91	62 (69%)
Grisons (1600–1750)	545	246 (43%)

These samples, drawn from most of the best-documented cantonal examples, offer few clues about why Switzerland was Europe's most intensive witch-hunting region. Explanations should be sought less within Switzerland's thirteen original self-governing cantons (seven of them included in these samples) and more within their "colonial" possessions, the mostly French- or Italian-speaking territories the Swiss had conquered during their period of expansion after 1475. Certain situations that maximized local autonomy seemed to have provoked intensive but extremely local witch hunts in a few corners of present-day Switzerland. One was de facto independence from a remote overlord outside the Swiss Confederation. For example, the micro region inhabited by fewer than 2,000 French-speaking Protestant subjects of the former prince-bishop of Basel (who still refused to join Switzerland's new French Catholic canton) lived under Bernese protection in two fully autonomous legal districts, which together recorded about 120 executions for witchcraft between 1607 and 1667 (Monter 1976, 107). At the opposite, eastern end of Switzerland, the German-speaking Catholic peasants of the Prättigau Valley liberated themselves from Austrian authority in 1648 and joined the Grisons; becoming fully autonomous, they immediately began a witch hunt, the *groos Häxatöödi* (great witch killing), that claimed over 100 victims by 1660.

Even worse was a Swiss "colonial" possession with lax supervision from its cantonal overlords. The Italoophone Val Leventina (Ticino), a high Alpine valley governed by canton Uri and the scene of serious witch hunting in the mid-fifteenth century, held over 250 witchcraft trials between 1610 and 1687 (Scanni 1997). The present-day French-speaking canton of Vaud, governed since 1536 by the Protestant Germanophone canton of Bern, provides a much larger and even more gruesome illustration of this situation. Although the exact number of witchcraft

executions in Vaud remains unknown, a remarkable survey (Kamber 1982) counted 970 of them during the forty years after 1580. Extrapolating from this base, we must also recall that witchcraft executions had persisted in this region from the period before the Bernese conquest until 1580; we know that over 100 witches were burned in Vaud during the 1629–1630 plague and famine and that significant numbers of witches were being burned in this canton, as in neighboring Neuchâtel or Fribourg, until at least the 1670s (for example, there were forty witchcraft trials dated between 1647 and 1671 in one *bailliage* [bailiwick], Moudun). The likeliest total of witches for the canton of Vaud would therefore approach 1,700, the majority of them being burned under Bernese rule. Many more witches died there than in the eleven cantons tabulated earlier combined; Vaud probably accounted for over 40 percent, perhaps almost half, of the entire Swiss total. An unusually high number of Vaud's witches were male: Men, who had outnumbered women among fifteenth-century witches in this region, still accounted for over one-third of Kamber's sample.

How did Vaud compile such an unenviable record? We know that two factors usually reduced witch hunting by the seventeenth century: careful religious indoctrination at the local level and scrupulous supervision of local judges by an appellate court. In Vaud, the Bernese failed miserably on both counts. As early as 1543, its German rulers expressed official worries about the extent of witchcraft in their recently conquered, French-speaking *welschland*, but they produced no effective educational remedy until they issued a special catechism against witchcraft in 1665; furthermore, they never established an appellate court for criminal cases. Kamber's survey showed that Bern routinely approved all but a tiny handful of death sentences handed down for witchcraft, regardless of who pronounced them. About half of the 1,000 executions surveyed occurred in the ten *bailliages* governed directly by Bern, while the other half were scattered across 91 of the region's 142 autonomous seigneurial jurisdictions.

All Vaud's witches were Protestants, and they provided a total at least equal to that of the entire Kingdom of Scotland, a proverbially witch-ridden but vastly larger and more populous place. By itself, Vaud guaranteed that Switzerland's Protestants executed more witches than its Catholics did. However, certain other aspects of witch hunting in Switzerland suggest that some "superstitious" behaviors lasted longer in Catholic regions. An examination of two particular problems associated with witchcraft and witchcraft trials in Switzerland—hailstorms and the Devil's mark—will help illuminate these contrasts.

In this Alpine region, grain and wine harvests were extremely vulnerable to sudden and severe hailstorms during the growing season. Consequently, fifteenth-century Swiss witches were almost invariably accused of causing them. This belief seems to have been intact when witchcraft trials resumed on a greater scale in several

parts of Switzerland after 1560. One finds accusations of making hail at Geneva in 1567 and occasionally at Zurich even after 1600 (7 instances in 86 preserved witchcraft trials), but such charges had almost disappeared from witchcraft trials in Protestant Switzerland by the seventeenth century. Meanwhile, this dangerous form of *maleficium* (harmful magic) endured throughout Catholic Switzerland's witchcraft trials until the end of the seventeenth century. Switzerland appears to confirm the schema for southwestern Germany (Midelfort 1972, 36–56), wherein Protestant theologians promoted a “providentialist” interpretation of hailstorms that reduced the role of demons—and thus of witches—in provoking them.

Searching a suspected witch for the Devil's mark, however, soon became a local Protestant specialty. This practice was unknown in fifteenth-century Switzerland, but it had become standard practice by the mid-sixteenth century at both Geneva and Vaud, where Protestants placed greater emphasis on the witch's pact with the Devil. Searching for the mark spread to other parts of Protestant Switzerland only around 1600 but took far longer to be adopted and taken seriously in Catholic Switzerland. For example, Devil's marks were described in all thirty witchcraft confessions in Protestant Moudun (Vaud) from 1647 to 1670, but they were found on only about half of a comparable sample of accused witches examined in neighboring Catholic Fribourg from 1644 to 1683.

In the area of present-day Switzerland, witchcraft trials began extremely early and ended comparatively late. Although witches were rarely hunted in most other parts of western Europe (England, France, Spain, Italy) after about 1670, some regions of the Swiss Confederation were still holding numerous witchcraft trials, and a few continued to do so far into the “enlightened” eighteenth century. Most parts of western and northern Switzerland, like Louis XIV's France, had abandoned witch hunting well before 1700. Yet one finds a witchcraft trial in a mountainous Protestant corner of the Jura in 1706, while the patriciate of Catholic Fribourg used witchcraft as a legal convenience to execute a female troublemaker as late as 1731. In the present-day canton of Valais, the scene of Europe's first large-scale witch hunt in 1428, two witches were burned more than three centuries later, in 1730, and still others were put on trial even afterward.

Witchcraft trials lasted even longer in the central and eastern Alps, particularly in Switzerland's original “forest cantons.” In Zug, spontaneous denunciations by a teenage girl who claimed to transform herself into an animal, make hail, and fly to the Sabbath triggered a small panic in 1737 that ended with five burnings; a sixth prisoner survived after being tortured twelve times. In 1753, witchcraft trials occurred in both the Italophone Grisons at Poschiavo and in the canton of Schwyz, where two suspects died under interrogation

and were buried in unconsecrated ground. The final legal execution of a witch anywhere in Europe occurred in the Protestant part of the canton of Glaris, after a maidservant named Anna Göldi was arrested for causing her employer's daughter to become demonically possessed. Because her accuser was a doctor, the indictment avoided terms such as *witchcraft* or *magic* in favor of a new crime called *Kunstkraft* (artificial power). But Anna Göldi was nonetheless beheaded for this offense in June 1782, and her fiancé, who was arrested with her, hanged himself in prison. Interrupting the age of Mozart and Goethe, the Glaris affair—replete with the futile gesture of a cantonal executioner burning some pamphlets ridiculing the local authorities—scandalized enlightened opinion in central Europe.

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: ANHORN, BARTHOLOMÄUS; BASEL, COUNCIL OF; CALVIN, JOHN; DEVIL'S MARK; FEUGEYRON, PONCE; GAPPIT, PERRISSONA; GENEVA; GÖLDI, ANNA; HERESY; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; LAUSANNE, DIOCESE OF; MALE WITCHES; MOUNTAINS AND THE ORIGINS OF WITCHCRAFT; NIDER, JOHANNES; NUMBER OF WITCHES; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; TORRENTÉ, ULRIC DE; VALAIS; VAUD, PAYS DE; WEATHER MAGIC.

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SYMPATHY

Poorly understood in its early modern context, this fundamental concept of natural philosophy originated in Greek cosmology and science, but it is usually presented as a superstitious form of sorcery, known today as sympathetic magic. Whichever definition one focuses on—the former deeply rooted in Aristotelian physics, the

latter in the Hermetic tradition of Renaissance Neoplatonism—sympathy was essential to early modern European cosmology, as it explained the functioning of the universe in terms of a dynamic relational force. Our modern psychological understanding of sympathy (connoting compassion and a motivation to philanthropy) emerged only gradually during the eighteenth century, in bourgeois sentimental literature, philanthropic philosophy, and even in the works of political economists.

THE DOCTRINE OF SYMPATHY

Etymologically, *sympathy* (συμ and πᾶδος) meant “to be affected together” in Greek and was first employed in a consistent manner by the ancient Stoics (Kranz and Probst 1998). According to the prevalent theory of the affects, it embraced the commonality of emotions among people but in a material and biological fashion that also encompassed physical attractions between planetary bodies and their influence on society, culture, political events, and individual health. By the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the doctrine was hegemonic, representing the generally accepted basis for a cosmological interconnectedness of all things physical and metaphysical (hylomorphism), thereby offering grounds for causation in an otherwise unchanging universe. However, as sympathy (juxtaposed to antipathy, its exactly opposite force) lacked any materially observable basis, its universal power was ascribed to occult forces, generally proved inductively on the basis of experience or simply through introspection. As an Aristotelian worldview became systematized during the Renaissance, the doctrine of sympathy achieved its greatest influence. With sympathy considered the occult force behind the Hermetic mechanics of the universe, the doctrine was easily adapted to clarify incongruities in an otherwise logically consistent system based on philosophy rather than empirical deduction. The doctrine of sympathy permeated nearly all fields of knowledge, including Neostoicist political theory (in which it was rendered in social terms of *concordia/discordia*, concord or sympathy and discord or antipathy); astrology/astronomy; alchemy/chemistry; and perhaps most of all medicine. There, it was employed within the framework of Galenic humoral pathology by Girolamo Fracastoro to explain infectious diseases. During the sixteenth-century renaissance of *De Anima* (On the Soul, Aristotle’s work that served as the basic Western psychology text well into the eighteenth century), the doctrine of sympathy was much discussed in relation to the mind–body problematic. Another important proponent of the doctrine of sympathy at that time was Rudolf Goclenius the Younger (who, incidentally, introduced the term *psychology* in the first published work on the subject).

The eighteenth-century German encyclopedist Johann Heinrich Zedler defined sympathy as “a teaching in natural philosophy of a hidden agreement

between two bodies and the tendency of the one toward the other, juxtaposed with antipathy.” Briefly, the doctrine of sympathy proposed the existence of unseen forces of attraction in the universe that affected relationships among planets, plants, animals, metals, stones, and so forth. In this sense, sympathy performed the same epistemological function as gravitation or René Descartes’ theory of vortices. In essence, sympathetic attraction can be simplified either in Aristotelian terms of microcosm and macrocosm or in atomist terms as the attraction of the four basic and universally present elements—earth, water, air, and fire. Because the human body was composed of all four, it was subject more than most to the exigencies of sympathy/antipathy. The endogenous balance of elements not only defined the individual temperament (melancholy, phlegmatic, sanguine, and choleric, respectively) but also left humans emotionally affected by exogenous factors, such as the position of the stars or certain types of magic. Based as they were on natural philosophy, these holistic perceptions were highly influential in contemporary understandings of disease and witchcraft, and they help explain the popularity of common forms of healing, for example, the astrological medicine practiced by Richard Napier in early-seventeenth-century England or the more famous theories of Robert Burton in his *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621).

SYMPATHETIC MAGIC

The high level of active interplay between learned opinions on the doctrine of sympathy and popular belief structures becomes apparent through an examination of sympathetic magic. One of the most comprehensive descriptions of this particular form of magic (as related to but distinct from other forms, such as apotropaic and somatic magic) derived from the first significant chapter of James Frazer’s *The Golden Bough* (1922). Frazer differentiated between two forms of sympathetic magic—homeopathic, or imitative, magic and contagious magic. The former (based upon the Law of Similarity) presumes that “like produces like, or that an effect resembles its cause”; the latter (based on the Law of Contact or Contagion) supposes that “things which have once been in contact with each other continue to act on each other at a distance after the physical contact has been severed” (Frazer 1993, 11). Zedler offered an exhaustive list of substances that exerted sympathetic attractions upon each other. Common examples of sympathetic magic include the use of a victim’s hair in image magic (for example, the voodoo doll), urine in love potions, dead-body parts obtained from the executioner, or magical diagnoses made through the examination of a victim’s clothing (see, for instance, Thomas 1971, 183–185). One of the most famous examples of a sympathetic cure was the so-called *Pulvis sympatheticus* (Powder of Sympathy), also known as the weapon

salve. In the early seventeenth century, numerous authors debated the substance's occult power to cure battle wounds even at great distances, an ability attributed to certain powders or ointments dipped on a sword. Although not properly regarded as "magic" by contemporaries, this cure nevertheless illustrates the close practical relationship between popular sympathetic magic and the learned doctrine of sympathy.

DECLINE, TRANSFORMATION, AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Although Kenelm Digby's 1630 treatise on the weapon salve went into twenty-nine editions and Zedler still felt obliged to enter it uncritically into his *Universal Encyclopedia* in 1744, the scientific doctrine of sympathy was long on the wane. Apart from a fierce polemic conducted between Goclenius and his opponents, the Flemish Jesuit Johannes Roberti and the Dutch Paracelsian, chemist, and physiologist Jan Baptist van Helmont, the doctrine was fundamentally undermined by the greatest empiricist of Digby's day, Francis Bacon. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Bacon condemned the doctrine as "idle and ignorant conceits," noting that "what are called occult and specific properties, or sympathies and antipathies, are in great part corruptions of philosophy" (quoted in Kranz and Probst 1998). The epistemological dilemma posed by the doctrine of sympathy in the Baconian age is compellingly explored in Umberto Eco's novel *The Island of the Day Before* (1994). By the eighteenth century, the debate over the doctrine of sympathy in the natural sciences had been largely supplanted by an analogous one over the properties of magnetism. A cornerstone of the wonder cures employed by Franz Anton Mesmer, the occult power of his fluid doctrine of magnetism was discredited in 1784 by a French commission composed of the chemist Antoine Lavoisier, Paris mayor Jean Bailly, Dr. Joseph Guillotin, and the American Benjamin Franklin (ironically, Lavoisier and Bailly were both later beheaded by the device named after Guillotin).

However, the doctrine of sympathy was transformed and survived, first in the English moral sense-philosophy of Anthony Ashley Cooper, the Earl of Shaftesbury, and subsequently in eighteenth-century sentimental lit-

erature and early writings on psychiatry, which was then beginning to assume its modern contours. Other survivals can still be found in medicine (especially the homeopathic variant) and psychology. Sympathy also formed a significant aspect of the philanthropic philosophy of David Hume and of theories of political economy propounded by Adam Smith and others (Van der Lühe 1998). Nevertheless, in historical terms, an understanding of the older, early modern usage of sympathy is crucial to any understanding of Enlightenment luminaries' contemporary epistemology. Indeed, sympathy can be viewed as a critical component for the explanation of universal interconnectedness and unity in the era prior to the emergence of what Michel Foucault called a new "order of things" in the discourse of human knowledge.

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See also: ASTROLOGY; HERMETICISM; IMAGE MAGIC; MAGIC, NATURAL; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; OCCULT; PARACELSUS, THEOPHRASTUS BOMBASTUS VON HOHENHEIM.

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T

TÁLTOS

The *táltos* was a shamanistic magician active in Hungarian village communities until the nineteenth century. Through his ability to attain a state of trance, a shaman enabled his soul to leave his body and thus fulfilled the role of mediating between this and the otherworld. Researchers (Diószegi 1958; Róheim 1961) considered the mythology and rituals of the *táltos* as legacies from a pre-Christian Hungarian shamanism and found his closest counterparts in the shamans of Altaic peoples, thus placing the *táltos* in the context of classic Eurasian shamanism, originally connected to a hunting culture. This eastern connection is substantiated by the Finno-Ugric and Turkic origin of the Hungarian word *táltos* as well as the verbs *révül* and *rejtezik*, both of which refer to a state of trance.

There is no medieval information about the *táltos*. Its mythology and rites can be reconstructed from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century witchcraft cases and from nineteenth- and twentieth-century folklore collections. Such data connect the *táltos* to other traditions and practices of so-called European shamanism related to agricultural fertility. The closest parallels to the *táltos* are the *benandanti* (dogooders) of Friuli (Ginzburg 1983) or the magicians still active in the Baltic in the early modern times and much later in the Balkans, who, at the start of the agricultural season, conducted soul fights on storm clouds against demons and dead people who would try to destroy the harvest with hailstorms. They existed alongside other, usually female, seers whose community functions included healing, questioning the dead, and locating treasure through various occult “seeing” techniques or divination procedures (chiefly mirror divination). These two types offered alternatives of the same system, a sort of “double shamanism” (Ginzburg 1991). The seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Hungarian *táltos* represent both types of double shamanism; the twenty-seven mentions contained in the documents of Hungarian witchcraft persecution between 1626 and 1750 refer on rare occasions to a *táltos* whose magic was aimed at the weather, but more frequently they refer to treasure-seeking *táltos*.

The various types of central European magicians can be distinguished through their unique guardian spirits,

their “soul animals” (dragon, eagle, snake, dog, horse, and so on), as well as through the otherworldly spheres they visited and their mythological enemies. Despite these differences, almost all types (including the *táltos* found in witchcraft trials) communicated with the dead, in their role as guarding spirits. The dragon and the dead relatives appeared among their guardian and calling spirits, and horses, bulls, and snakes appeared as helping or soul animals. In every case with detailed documentation, the *táltos* also claimed a Christian dimension: Their guardian and calling spirit was God, Jesus, or the Virgin Mary. “Heavenly” shamans also had some werewolf traits that appeared at birth (being born with a caul, with a wing or bristles, or with two lines of teeth), and their capacity for trance was closely connected with their werewolf nature. The underworld type displayed many characteristics of *mora* (a pressing night demon or someone with a capacity for communicating with the dead in trances).

The activities of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Hungarian *táltos*, like those of other central European shamanistic magicians, were closely intertwined with those of the village witch. Identifying the witch and remedying her damage ranked among the *táltos*’ most important communal functions. The clearest example of a double *táltos* in Hungarian witchcraft trials appeared in the 1728 case of Erzsébet Tóth, a woman from Jászberény, who displayed both “heavenly” and “underworld” traits. She was born with a double line of teeth characteristic of Balkan werewolf-magicians and was then initiated by Jesus, exchanging one of her teeth for the medicine she used for healing. In court, she claimed she was the “daughter of Christ,” who helped her during battles fought in storm clouds and who gave her the keys to heaven. She protected the crops from hail raised by spells of the evil ones (evil dead, witches) and also had a dragon as a helping spirit. Once she had even saved all of Hungary from an earthquake. Erzsébet Tóth was also a seer who knew “all in the world that is in the ground” and who identified thieves, predicted fire and death, and, helped by *mora* soul animals, communicated with an earthly otherworld. She cured spells and identified witches, but she could also lay spells herself.

Another detailed example comes from the 1741 trial of three *táltos* (Suska Kőmives, György Tapodi, and

Judit Szöcs) held at Miskolc (Borsod County, Hungary). It focused on various forms of fighting. During their “journeys” at Whitsun and St. John’s Day, these *táltos* went in groups structured by gender and age, to fight in a state of trance, taking the shape of a dove, fish, or fox.

The communal activity of the *táltos* had vanished by the twentieth century, but its memory haunts even today’s folklore. Stories still mention their birth traits (being born with teeth or occasionally with birds’ wings), their weather magic, and their battles in the shape of a bull or a horse to ensure good weather for their village. Occasionally, a *táltos* born with the traits of a snake, dragon, or eagle or using such helping spirits also appears in late modern legends, as does the notion of *táltos* fighting in groups. Such traits relate the *táltos* to south Slavic and Italian magicians, but being born with teeth (but not with a double line of teeth) remains a uniquely Hungarian characteristic.

ÉVA PÓCS;

TRANSLATED BY ORSOLYA FRANK

See also: ANIMALS; *BENANDANTI*; CAUL; HUNGARY; HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, MAGIC; LYCANTHROPY; NIGHTMARES; SHAMANISM; WEATHER MAGIC.

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TANNER, ADAM (1572–1632)

One of Germany’s most highly esteemed Catholic theologians, Tanner was also an important critic of

witch hunts. Born at Innsbruck (Tyrol), he became a Jesuit in 1590. After studying rhetoric and theology at Dillingen and Ingolstadt (Bavaria), Tanner became a professor of scholastic theology at Ingolstadt in 1603. Apart from short periods at the universities of Vienna and Prague and at the Jesuit convent of Hall in Tyrol, he taught at Ingolstadt for the rest of his life. When the Thirty Years’ War reached Bavaria in 1632, Tanner tried to flee to Tyrol but died en route.

Tanner published twenty books, most of them harsh attacks on Protestantism and on all adversaries of the Jesuit order. One of his major achievements was the reception of Spanish Molinist theology north of the Alps. In one of his two treatises on astronomy, Tanner applauded Galileo as a mathematician, even though he apparently rejected the idea of a heliocentric universe. A crater on the moon, Tannerus (latitude 56.4 south, longitude 22.0 east), was named in honor of the Ingolstadt professor.

Witchcraft played a minor role in Tanner’s writings. He often avoided the subject deliberately, never mentioning witches when discussing such things as false miracles, idolatry, or the magical power of church bells. However, Tanner broke this silence on several occasions. Even though he was a pupil of Gregory of Valencia and knew the Bavarian Jesuit Jacob Gretser, both outspoken advocates of witch hunts, he distanced himself from their ideas very early in his career. During a public disputation with Protestant theologians in 1601, Tanner attacked the Protestant Jakob Heilbronner, who had denounced the cabbalist Johann Pistorius (Niddanus) as a witch. In his *Astrologia sacra* (Sacred Astrology; Ingolstadt, 1615), he rejected astrology as blasphemous nonsense while defending Johannes Trithemius against allegations of magic. In doing so, he openly contradicted two other prominent Jesuit scholars, St. Robert Bellarmine and Martín Del Rio.

At the height of his career, Tanner included a critical discussion of witchcraft trials in his most important work, *Universa theologia scholastica, speculativa, practica* (Complete Scholastic Theology, Speculative and Practical; Ingolstadt, 1626/1627), a monumental commentary on Thomas Aquinas. This text was based on a now-lost consultation on witch hunts that he had written in 1602 for the Bavarian government. Tanner presumably returned to the topic because witch hunts of unprecedented vigor had started north of Bavaria in 1626. Friedrich Spee quoted Tanner’s text on witchcraft trials extensively. Whereas Spee’s brilliant polemics were bitter and full of personal sentiment, Tanner’s criticism was distanced and meticulously erudite. Both were skeptical about the discretionary powers of judges, and both rejected the idea that God would not allow innocents to be condemned as witches.

Tanner admitted that witches' Sabbats did happen, but he was skeptical about "spectral evidence" because demons could assume anyone's outer appearance (that is, he believed that judges could never be sure that a person allegedly seen at a witches' Sabbat had really been there). Nevertheless, Tanner basically accepted denunciations of accomplices by condemned witches as circumstantial evidence. However, suspects should be investigated only if three witches, who had been condemned and who honestly repented of their crimes, denounced the same person freely and independently and if there was corroborating evidence against that person. Denunciations against persons with a good reputation should be ignored. Tanner was extremely careful, but he did not arrive at Spee's total rejection of denunciations as evidence.

Tanner urged princes not to punish any witches who truly repented and revoked their pact with the Devil before criminal proceedings against them had started. His ideas about the repression of witchcraft obviously contradicted those of the demonologists and witch hunters. Tanner believed that spiritual means were much more effective than criminal procedures: prayers, processions, and the use of relics and blessed amulets were sufficient to ward off demons. The best way to extirpate witchcraft was to strengthen public order and morality. Tanner tried to respiritualize the crime of witchcraft: Witches should be won back to the Church, not killed. His fellow Jesuit Spee still paid lip service to demonology, but it is very likely that Spee no longer believed in witches. This is probably the reason why he ignored Tanner's "spiritualization" of witchcraft.

JOHANNES DILLINGER

See also: BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; GREGORY OF VALENCIA; GRETSER, JACOB; INGOLSTADT, UNIVERSITY OF; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); SKEPTICISM; SPECTRAL EVIDENCE; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; TRITHEMIUS, JOHANNES.

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TARTAROTTI, GIROLAMO (1706–1761)

After a long preparatory period of research and difficulties with censorship, the Italian historian and writer Girolamo Tartarotti published *Del congresso notturno delle lammie* (On Nocturnal Gatherings of Witches) in three volumes at Venice in 1749. As a supplement, he wrote two epistolary dissertations on the magical arts. Touched by a human piety for all the victims of the

prosecution, which was still continuing in several parts of Europe after several centuries, Tartarotti tried to prove that the superstitious belief in witchcraft was completely groundless. In his first volume of *Del congresso*, a long journey through the world of horror, he rewrote the history of witchcraft belief from its origin until his day, concluding by identifying modern witches with the adepts of Diana, whom the *Canon Episcopi* (ca. 906) had considered victims of diabolic illusions. Thus, Tartarotti was glad to confirm the opinion expressed by Ludovico Antonio Muratori in *Della forza della fantasia umana* (On the Strength of Human Phantasy, 1745) that witches had never existed. But, contrary to Muratori's optimism about the absence of any contemporary witch belief, Tartarotti provided evidence of ongoing beliefs and prosecutions in Germany.

In the second volume, Tartarotti included a definition of the social and psychological character of the witch, who was according to him a poor and undernourished person in an impoverished countryside, geographically isolated, and susceptible to fantasies and hallucinations due to her melancholia and hypochondria. In volume 3, he severely criticized the Jesuit demonologist Martín Del Rio, whose *Disquisitionum magicæ libri sex* (Six Books on Investigations into Magic), first published in 1599/1600, remained popular in Tartarotti's days, having been reprinted at Venice as recently as 1746. Besides Tartarotti's denial of the existence of witches and witchcraft, a second statement about the historical genuineness of magicians also made Tartarotti's *Del congresso notturno delle lammie* famous. According to Tartarotti, magicians had all belonged to the world of Renaissance humanism and were men who intended to violate God's law by using demonic powers. It started a discussion among the Italian intelligentsia about magic and witchcraft.

Among fourteen others, Gianrinaldo Carli (1720–1795) and Scipione Maffei reacted to Tartarotti's statements: Neither of them believed in the historical reality of magic. Carli saw no difference between magicians and witches: Both, in his view, were swindlers and had to be punished. In 1751, the Franciscan Benedetto Bonelli severely attacked Tartarotti: He saw both magic and witchcraft as diabolically inspired arts that really existed. In his response, *Apologia del congresso notturno delle lammie* (Apologia of the Nocturnal Gatherings of the Witches; Venice, 1751), Tartarotti admitted that his distinction between the genuineness of magic and witchcraft was strategic: He feared that denying both would compromise his fight to liberate the so-called witches, because prosecutions and executions still continued. Tartarotti really was concerned for the victims of witchcraft trials. In 1749, he had tried—in vain—to influence the judges who wanted to burn a sixteen-year-old girl at the stake in Salzburg.

One year before his death in 1755, Maffei wrote his final response to Tartarotti. In his *L'Arte magica annichilata* (The Magical Arts Annihilated; Verona, 1754), he was really annihilating Tartarotti's distinction between witchcraft and magic. Maffei claimed that on theological, philosophical, or even ethical grounds, Tartarotti's position was untenable: How could judges distinguish a poor witch from a diabolical magician? And how did Tartarotti know that the harm caused by a witch was less serious than the harm caused by magic? Tartarotti was impressed by Maffei. In his anonymous response to yet another attack by the tireless Bonelli in 1755, Tartarotti often based his answers on Maffei's statements. Contrary to fanatically blind polemicists like Bonelli, Tartarotti wrote, he and Maffei were enlightened Catholics who wanted their society to benefit from their erudition. Indeed, Maffei and Tartarotti each tried in his own way to liberate eighteenth-century people from superstitious belief in witches and magicians.

DRIES VANYSACKER

See also: DEL RIO, MARTÍN; ENLIGHTENMENT; MAFFEI, SCIPIONE; MELANCHOLY; MURATORI, LUDOVICO ANTONIO.

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TASSO, TORQUATO (1544–1595)

Italian poet and author of a dialogue on demonology. By 1575, Tasso had completed an epic on the First Crusade, in defense of Counter-Reformation sacraments and theology. A committee of literati and a theologian helped him revise the poem, but the struggle to satisfy his critics damaged his mental health, provoking violent and erratic behavior. The duke of Ferrara imprisoned Tasso for madness in 1577 and again from 1579 until 1586. While imprisoned, Tasso allowed his epic, already circulating in pirated printings, to be published as *Gerusalemme liberata* (Jerusalem Delivered) in 1581, and he composed philosophical and literary dialogues.

Tasso's epic contained scenes of witchcraft (especially cantos 13, 16, and 18); his prison dialogues demonstrated his familiarity with theories of Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola and Jean Bodin. In his dialogue *Il messaggiero* (The Messenger), begun in 1580, Tasso presented a conversation between himself and a supernatural being, apparently a Neoplatonic *daemon* (a being

intermediate between humans and the divine and with a body composed from a substance like air). This "messenger" provided theological, cosmological, ontological, and epistemological evidence that angels and *daemons* (including "demons") are not imaginary but real. The first argument is inductive: *Daemons* "save the appearances," or provide causal explanations of observed phenomena. If sorcerers, witches, and possessed persons exist, then *daemons* exist; because every age records examples of them, then *daemons* exist.

Tasso's second argument was deductive: Nature is by definition both complete and hierarchically graduated. Souls ascended stepwise from sponges and shellfish to man. However, Renaissance Neoplatonists (such as Marsilio Ficino and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola) erroneously called man the perfect microcosm, or knot of the universe. True, man's soul mediated between brute beasts' and angels' souls, but man's body was mortal and corruptible, like beasts' bodies. Angels, including Aristotle's "intelligences," were incorporeal, immortal, and exempt from suffering. If the universe were truly complete, there logically existed a daemonic body that was immortal but subject to suffering and passion, thus separating human from angelic being. Tasso opposed the demonological consensus by defining daemonic bodies as real rather than fictive.

Certain *daemons*, Tasso held, could copulate with women, impregnating them with semen stolen from men. (He seemed unaware that this idea implicitly contradicted his contention that *daemons* had real bodies.) Copulation was a third, empirical proof of suprahuman reality. *Daemons*' paramours were called witches (*streghe*) and gave birth to magi. Women with magical powers were *maghe*, but not necessarily *streghe* (Stephens 1994).

Tasso's idiosyncratic demonology reflected a severe crisis in his religious faith between 1575 and 1580. In 1577, he begged the Inquisition to examine him for heresy, then reacted angrily when he was absolved as suffering from melancholia. In 1579, a month after being incarcerated, Tasso confided to a friend his failure to believe in a personal God, divine providence, the Incarnation, hell, purgatory, papal authority, the sacraments, or the immortality of the human soul. In a letter to Scipione Gozaga on April 15, 1579, Tasso made a painfully unconvincing claim that he had overcome his doubts. Ironically, he had carefully organized *Gerusalemme liberata* as an implicit, polemical defense of exactly the doctrines he confessed himself unable to believe (Stephens 1991, 2000). His *Il messaggiero* thus appears to be Tasso's attempt to reconstruct Catholic belief through philosophical persuasion, just as *Gerusalemme liberata* employed poetic persuasion for the same end.

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See also: CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DEMONOLOGY; DEMONS; PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA, GIANFRANCESCO; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC.

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TEARS

Today we know that the shedding of tears can be blocked, especially under stressful physiological and psychological conditions. From the fifteenth century onward, however, most witch hunters were convinced that a woman who could not weep when interrogated and tortured was very probably a worshipper of the Devil, who was hindering this natural manifestation. The *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) explicitly instructed inquisitors to observe whether or not a suspected person would shed tears in this situation, because a witch would be unable to do so even if constrained and most heavily pressed. The judge, it noted, should earnestly entreat her by Jesus's tears of love and Mary's tears of fire and all the tears shed by the saints to cry if she was innocent. Whether or not she could do so under other circumstances was of no importance (*Malleus Maleficarum*, book 3, chap. 15, 11).

The influence of this manual and the fact that its teachings were incorporated into later tracts, such as that of Silvestro Prierias, guaranteed the widespread observation of tears or lack thereof during later witchcraft trials, though the Roman Inquisition never acknowledged tears as an indication. There were some variants of this belief: Jean Bodin, for example, wrote that only three tears may fall from a witch's right eye.

To understand this evaluation of a physiological process, one must remember that according to the Gospels, Jesus never laughed, but he did cry several times. The most important scriptural basis is Luke 6:21: "Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh." This was, of course, interpreted within an eschatological frame: Weeping in this world, the "vale of tears," would be rewarded in the otherworld. Therefore, the *Mssale Romanum* contained a formula for praying for tears, and all spiritual enthusiasts craved the "grace of tears" (*donum lacrimarum*). Indeed, this faculty is a commonplace in Catholic hagiography, dating back to the desert fathers. In the later Middle Ages, the gift of tears was recorded more often about women than about men, because for women tears were not only a form of imitation of Jesus but also an *Imitatio Mariae* and an *Imitatio Mariae Magdaleneae*, who both had wept under the Cross.

The person most famous for her tears was the English mystic Margery Kempe, whose fits, combined with her "well of treys," made her both famous and notorious in the early fifteenth century. Some considered her a living saint; others considered her a hypocrite or even worse. Her tearful devotion made her suspect of Lollardy, and more than once she was in danger of being burned. Elizabeth of Hungary is another example. Of course, men could also have the gift of tears. John of Bridlington (d. 1379), one of Kempe's confessors, was also well known for having this grace, which was particularly praised in his canonization process. But few men could match Ignatius Loyola. His fragmentary *Spiritual Diary* meticulously recorded approximately 2,000 fits of weeping over a span of thirteen months in 1544–1545, and his closest associates feared he would cry himself blind.

Thus, although the faculty of shedding tears was reckoned a sign of sanctity and was indispensable in penitence, it could be used negatively as a test to discover a witch.

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See also: BODIN, JEAN; LIVING SAINTS; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; PRIERIAS, SILVESTRO.

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TEMPLARS

A military-religious order established by Hugh of Payns in 1119 and dissolved two centuries later amid rumors



The burning of the Templars, from a late fourteenth-century manuscript. (Erich Lessing/Art Resource)

of sacrilegious and blasphemous orgies. The order's modern fame derives largely from mythologizing by eighteenth-century Freemasons. Its original purpose was the protection of pilgrims traveling in the Holy Land after the conquest of Jerusalem by the first crusaders in 1099. Members of the order took the monastic vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, but unlike monks or canons regular, they served a military purpose. The king of Jerusalem allotted them space in what was then thought to be the Temple of Solomon, whence the name of the order, the Knights of the Temple of Solomon, or Knights Templar. Under the guidance and personal patronage of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, who recognized that they formed "a new type of order in the holy places" and described them in his work *In Praise of the New Knighthood* in 1136, the order received papal recognition at the Council of Troyes in 1129, established a Rule for its members, and placed them under the master of the order. Pious gifts of land and incomes in both the Holy Land and western Europe provided the order's support, and it recruited members in both places.

Although the novel combination of monastic discipline and military activity generated considerable criticism in the twelfth century, the Templars soon became a prominent and often independent military force in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, receiving extensive papal privileges in three bulls issued between 1139 and 1145. The order also received the patronage of European nobles and rulers, established Templar communities in much of western Europe, and constructed a series of strong, virtually autonomous castles in the Holy Land. The order became so powerful that it could act independently of the monarchy of the Latin Kingdom. At its greatest extent in the thirteenth century, the vast Templar network of 870 castles and preceptories housed 7,000 members of the various grades of knights, sergeants, and chaplains, 2,500 of whom served in the east, with the remainder organized into territorial provinces in western Europe. In his romance *Parzival*, written early in the thirteenth century, the great German poet Wolfram von Eschenbach (d. 1225) idealized the Templars in his description of the order of custodians and protectors of the Holy Grail, the *Templeisen*.

In addition to their religious, military, and political prominence, the Templars also became a powerful financial institution, serving as bankers to both crusaders and pilgrims, who could deposit funds with Templar houses in France and elsewhere and withdraw them as they needed from Templar houses along the route to Jerusalem. Templar financial expertise also served the rulers of Europe, particularly the kings of France, whose treasury was located in the Paris Temple.

Because the order was so closely identified with the Latin Kingdom, the fall of Jerusalem to Saladin in 1187, the loss of Acre (the last Christian-held territory in the east) in 1291, and the relocation of the Templars' headquarters to Cyprus led to renewed heavy criticism of the Templars and to proposals for reform of the Templars and for their merger with other military-religious orders, notably that of the Knights of the Hospital of St. John, or Knights Hospitallers. Under Grand Master James of Molay (who was master from 1293 to 1314), the Templars resisted this and other reform proposals, insisting upon their distinctive responsibilities for the defense of the Holy Land and criticizing from long experience the tactical shortcomings of contemporary proposals for a new crusade.

Although the order had maintained good relations with King Philip IV of France (ruled 1285–1314), he turned against it in 1307; historians still debate his reasons. Several years of expensive warfare with England and in Flanders, the progressive debasement of the royal coinage, Philip's long and destructive struggle with Pope Boniface VIII (ruled 1294–1303), the strong influence of Philip's ministers, and the fear that the kingdom was polluted by the presence of Jews, heretics, and sorcerers all appear to have combined in Philip's determination to purify the kingdom, and, in Philip's mind, that purification came to include the destruction of the Templars.

On October 13, 1307, Philip arrested all of the order's members in France, around 2,000 men, confiscated their property, and urged the kings of England and Aragon and Pope Clement V (ruled 1305–1314) to do the same. His charges against the order included the practice of sacrilegious initiation rites for new members, the denial of Christ, apostasy, idolatry (the worship of an idol named "Baphomet" or "Mahomet"), simony, and sodomy. These charges were not only brought against individual members in trials that included the use of judicial torture but were also publicized widely throughout the kingdom and beyond by Philip's servants. The trials resulted in graphic and horrifying confessions, including that of Grand Master James of Molay (later retracted), whose details were also widely publicized. Outside of France and the territories it controlled, the Templars were usually found not guilty. But inside France and its territories, many Templars were convicted, and many who were deemed

impenitent or relapsed were executed. Those who had been reconciled to the Church or found not guilty were pensioned off or dispersed among other monastic congregations. The scandal led Clement V to dissolve the order in 1312. After retracting his confession, James of Molay was burned at the stake on March 8, 1314. Upon the papal dissolution of the order, its properties, wealth, and archives were turned over to the Knights Hospitallers after Philip's expenses for the trials had been deducted.

The details of the confessions and the papal dissolution of the order were received throughout Europe with both hostility and praise. Dante condemned Philip IV, Clement V, and Boniface VIII in the *Divine Comedy*. However, since the order had long held its chapter meetings in great secrecy, had devised some forms of secret internal communication, and had regarded itself as an elite organization within Christendom, subordinate only to the grand master and the pope, the charges made against its members seemed plausible to many, particularly to those who followed the publicists of Philip IV. The royalist account of the trials influenced the kingdom's quasi-official history, the *Grandes chroniques de France*, which further tainted the Templars with charges of treason, collaboration with the Muslims, and some elements of sorcery. Proroyalist writers in France continued to justify Philip IV's actions until the eighteenth century.

At the same time as the Templar trials, a number of cases of political sorcery also were tried in France, many involving figures around the royal court and stressing the vulnerability of kings, popes, and members of the royal family, especially to diabolical sorcery. Beginning in the early fifteenth century, new charges of political sorcery spread in England, France, and the Burgundian Low Countries, and the formal conceptualization of diabolical witchcraft between 1430 and 1450 in the region of the upper Rhine Valley led to a growing fear of both diabolical sorcerers and witches throughout much of Europe. The linking of the Templars with diabolical sorcery was begun by the chronicler Guillaume Paradin in the mid-sixteenth century, although outside France learned opinion was generally more favorable than hostile to the memory of the Templars.

During the eighteenth century, however, Freemasonry, a secret ethical society prominent initially in France and Scotland, developed for itself a fictitious history that pressed the Templars into historical service as antecedents to the modern movement, thereby coloring Freemasonry's imaginary and remote past with both nobility and a place in the long chain of imaginary Freemasons whose traditions the eighteenth-century Freemasons professed to continue. The growth of Freemasonry and the increasing prominence of the Templars in its fable coincided with a general revival of

sentimental interest in the Middle Ages. In the case of the Freemasons' adoption of the Templars, the movement included the idea that the order had left behind ancient secret wisdom, magical powers, and great hidden wealth. In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the vogue of secret societies like the Illuminati and the Rosicrucians and the concurrent fear of the political dangers they and others raised inspired several writers to compose extensive imaginary histories that attributed to the Templars all of the evils in the world.

The most notable of these was Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall's *The Mystery of Baphomet* of 1818. Both Templar sympathizers and Templar critics accepted the fabulous history, the former tilting it toward a favorable interpretation, the latter condemning it savagely, as did Walter Scott in *Ivanhoe* (1819). Through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Templar fantasies were worked over time and again, by novelists, esoteric groups, and individual writers of fantasies with or without an axe to grind, even linking the imaginary Templars to the Shroud of Turin. Umberto Eco's 1988 novel *Foucault's Pendulum* offers a witty and complex send-up of the Templar mythology that began with Freemasonry in the eighteenth century.

EDWARD PETERS

See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; BAPHOMET; ENLIGHTENMENT; GRIMOIRES; IDOLATRY; SCOTT, SIR WALTER; TORTURE.

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TENIERS, DAVID THE YOUNGER (1610–1690)

The Flemish artist David Teniers the Younger is best known for several thousand paintings of Flemish peasants, but he also depicted various demonological and occult themes in complete agreement with contemporary thinking about witchcraft in northern Europe. Among these themes were the practice of alchemy, the *Temptations of St. Anthony* (after 1640), and the activities of witches. Most of Teniers's approximately two dozen paintings of witchcraft show in a very straightforward manner what witches were believed to do. As such, his paintings tell us much about contemporary northern-European witch beliefs. Teniers's



Jacques Aliamet's reproduction of David Teniers's *Departure for the Sabbath*, depicting four witches, many demons, toads, and a goat. Sitting next to a demon bat at a table, an old witch concocts something while looking at a magic circle on the floor. (TopFoto.co.uk/Roger-Viollet)

paintings also depict the activities attributed to witches by contemporary demonologists such as Martín Del Rio and Francesco Maria Guazzo.

Teniers's witches are seen reading black books of spells, preparing ointments to enable them to fly, anointing themselves for flight, riding upon broomsticks, working with poisonous plants and paraphernalia such as the Hand of Glory (the hand of a corpse, supposedly with magical powers, especially that of making the possessor invisible), and consorting with devils and familiars. In most cases, his paintings showed female witches of varying ages. A painting entitled *The Evocation* (ca. 1635, owned by the Musée des Beaux-arts, Bordeaux) shows the rare exception of a male witch calling up demons.

Teniers was among only a small number of seventeenth-century artists who depicted the activities of witches. Although his witchcraft paintings make up only a small percentage of his massive output of about 3,500 works, he nonetheless produced a larger number of such works than did other seventeenth-century artists. Only one Dutch artist, Jacques de Gheyn II, rivaled Teniers in the number of depictions of witchcraft.

Teniers produced his witchcraft paintings throughout his long career. His works fall into a category of factual reportage and, with two exceptions, are neither humorous or satirical. His small panel *The Witch* (ca. 1640, in the Alte Pinakothek Schleissheim Gallery, Munich) is one of these exceptions. Herein a peasant witch is shown raising hell from the relative safety of a magic circle inscribed on her floor. But it is evident from her very frightened expression that she has raised more devils than she can handle.

Teniers's demons generally resemble those of Hieronymus Bosch and of Teniers's in-laws, the famous artistic family of Pieter Brueghel the Elder. In following Bosch and the Brueghels, Teniers used a number of zoomorphic (animal-shaped) and anthropomorphic (human-shaped) devils as well as witches. The images of the anthropomorphic devils are disturbingly quite human. For example, he frequently included depictions of his own wife, Anna Brueghel, the granddaughter of Pieter Brueghel the Elder, among his witches. In doing this, Teniers followed the contemporary belief that witches could be members of various social classes. Because he was the court painter to Archduke Leopold Wilhelm, ruler of the Spanish southern Netherlands, he and his family would have been considered almost as members of the nobility.

One of the most interesting of Teniers's paintings of witchcraft is his *Scene of Witchcraft* (ca. 1650, owned by the Staatliche Kunsthalle, Karlsruhe). In this painting, witches are seen at the foot of a gallows harvesting mandrake roots, which were believed to spring up in such places. Teniers's paintings show a wide range of knowledge about witchcraft lore and are quite interesting illustrations of contemporary thought. A number of artists working both during his own lifetime and in the eighteenth century imitated Teniers's occult paintings.

JANE P. DAVIDSON

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BRUEGHEL, PIETER THE ELDER; GHEYN II, JACQUES DE; HAND OF GLORY; MANDRAKE; POPULAR BELIEFS IN WITCHES.

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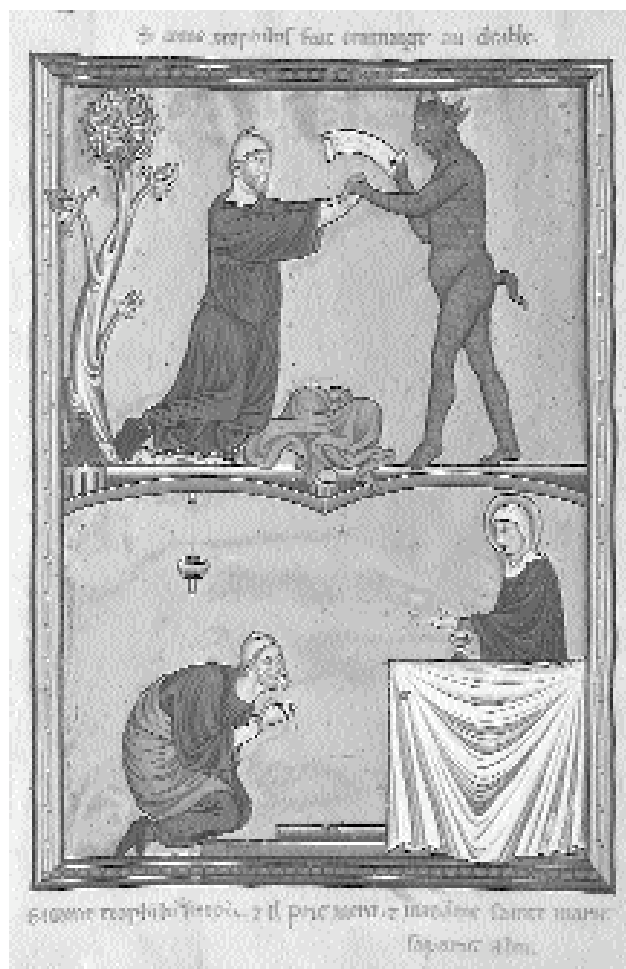
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THEOPHILUS

Theophilus is the most famous of all ancient forerunners of Faust. According to legend, Theophilus administered a bishop's diocese for him in Sicily early in the sixth century. When the bishop died, the people of

the region asked Theophilus to be the successor, but he, in his humility, refused because he did not feel qualified. He expected to continue as administrator, however. The new bishop, influenced by envious persons, discharged Theophilus as a counselor. Out of offended pride, Theophilus consulted a Jewish sorcerer and made a pact with the Devil in which, in writing, he renounced allegiance to Jesus and Christianity. Theophilus fulfilled the first part, but he never ceased to pray to the Virgin. After a short time, he was reinstated in the diocese. Driven by remorse, he begged the Virgin for help. After chastising him for his impiety, the Blessed Mother took pity on him, and eventually even Jesus forgave him. Mary retrieved Theophilus's pact from Satan and put the scroll on his chest as he slept. When he awoke, he loudly proclaimed his guilt and praised the Virgin for her loving assistance. Three days later, he died peacefully.

The central drama of the legend of Theophilus is the idea of a pact with the Devil, which derived from



Theophilus enters into a pact with the Devil and then repents before the Virgin Mary. From the Psalter of Queen Ingeborg, ca. 1210. (Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Art Resource)

Christian demonology. St. Augustine assumed that any kind of magic depended on a pact between a magician and a *daemon* (a being, aerial in body, intermediate between God and humans). Theophilus needed an intermediary—and a Jewish one at that. In almost every such case, the pact with the Devil was made not only or even primarily to gratify physical desires; instead, persons desired access to “secret” knowledge through the Devil or some other supernatural power. Subsequently, the diabolical pact reappeared as a key element in the witchcraft trials, which helped explain the Devil’s powers.

The Theophilus legend was important in another way: Its portrait of the Holy Mother as an adversary of the Devil and an even stronger force made this story a promotional pamphlet for medieval Marianism, thereby greatly aiding its popularity. The oldest extant Latin version of his story is a ninth-century translation, by Paul the Deacon, of an earlier Greek version. One of the most important early renderings is *Lapsus et conversio Theophili vicedomini* (The Fall and Conversion of Theophilus the Archdeacon) by the Alsatian nun Hrotswitha of Gandersheim (935–1000). Many similar accounts circulated subsequently, and the story became a favorite among preachers after Jacobus de Voragine (ca. 1230–1298) included it in his *Legenda aurea* (Golden Legend, ca. 1275). The French poet Rutebeuf (1255–1280) wrote the oldest miracle play version, *Le Miracle de Théophile* (The Miracle of Theophilus, 1264). In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the Jesuit poets Wolfgang Schoensleder’s and Matthäus Rader’s miracle plays on this theme were performed in Munich, Freiburg, Dillingen, Lucerne, and Graz. The drama even served as vehicle to make members of the nobility, always suspicious of sympathizing with heresy, rethink their positions.

After the thirteenth century, many German poets and playwrights adapted the story. The first Middle High German version was an “oration on faith” by the poet called Der Arme (“Poor”) Hartmann. A hundred years later, Brun von Schönebeck wrote *Wie Theophilus wart irlöst* (How Theophilus Was Saved, ca. 1250), a version that mentioned for the first time a blood compact with the Devil. By the fifteenth century, the legend had spread across Europe to France, Sweden, the Netherlands, Spain, and northern Germany. After the seventeenth century, the legend of Theophilus and his pact disappeared from central European literature, swallowed up by the Reformation and superseded by the more recent Faust legend. The legend remains alive in Greece, as modern Greek folktales prove; moreover, numerous transcriptions of its original Greek version are stored in the famous Greek monastery on top of Mount Athos.

CHRISTA TUCZAY

See also: FAUST, JOHANN GEORG; MARY, THE VIRGIN; PACT WITH THE DEVIL.

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THOLOSAN, CLAUDE (D.–CA. 1450)

Originally from Dauphiné in southeastern France, Claude Tholosan obtained his licentiate in civil law and served as chief prosecutor (*judex major*) of the Briançonnais from 1426 to 1449. After ten years of repressing witchcraft in remote valleys of the French Alps, he summed up his experience in a treatise known by its opening quotation from St. Augustine: *Ut magorum et maleficiorum errores* (So That the Errors of Magicians and Sorcerers . . . , 1436). It is one of the major texts in the early history of the witches’ Sabbat.

At Briançon, his function was to judge cases involving high justice and appeals from lower and seigneurial courts; as such, he was an agent of the penetration of royal power in Dauphiné (Paravy, in Tholosan 1999, 358). Tholosan first encountered witchcraft cases in the western Alps around 1420–1430. Although in the duchy of Savoy (Pays de Vaud, Val d’Aosta), Dominican or Franciscan inquisitors organized the repression of witches, in nearby places like French Dauphiné or Swiss Valais, this responsibility fell mainly on secular courts, occasionally in collaboration with local inquisitors. In Dauphiné, prosecutions for witchcraft came very early and on a large scale. From 1426 to 1436, Tholosan conducted more than a hundred witchcraft trials. Because he remained in charge until 1449, he probably sentenced many more people. Nearly all the proceedings have been lost. Yet the *Quintus liber factuweriorum* (Fifth Book of Sorcerers), a register of Dauphiné’s treasury (Chambre des Comptes), lists the possessions confiscated from the convicted sorcerers, as well as their names, the dates, and the reasons for their sentences. Married women or widows formed a large majority of culprits.

UT MAGORUM ET MALEFICIORUM ERRORES

Like the Savoyard inquisitor who wrote the *Errores Gazariorum* (Errors of the Gazars [Cathars—a common term for heretics and later for witches], ca. 1437) at the same period, Tholosan described a new heresy, that of the witches. In 1436, after a decade of prosecuting them, he wrote *Ut magorum et maleficiorum errores* (Paravy 1979; Paravy, in Tholosan 1999). Its purpose was to demonstrate the gravity of the new crimes of the witches and to affirm the competence of secular courts to pursue such heretics. The treatise was composed of four parts. The first described the doctrine and practices attributed to sorcerers and witches. Like the author of the *Errores Gazariorum*, Tholosan held that sorcerers belonged to a sect or synagogue gathered around the Devil and that they had renounced God and had given themselves body and soul to demons. Tholosan mentioned that the members of the sect thought they rode through the air on sticks and animals. Familiar with canon as well as civil law, Tholosan referred to the *Canon Episcopi* (ca. 906), that is, to the principle that night flight was an illusion. However, he described the ceremonies of the witches' Sabbat in detail, as if he believed in its reality. According to Tholosan, the sect came from Lombardy as healers and from Lyons, as ruffians. In the second part, he defined the competences of secular and ecclesiastical jurisdictions over this new crime of witchcraft. As members of a sect, witches were heretics; they were also apostates. Tholosan's third part inserted a consultation from French jurists of the House of Anjou and Provence, confirming his statements.

In his last part, Tholosan asserted the necessity of close collaboration between secular and ecclesiastical courts, but he underlined the importance of the secular judge. First, he held that the secular arm was essential in order to apply the death penalty. But he went further: According to Roman law and to the decretal *Vergentis in senio* issued by Pope Innocent III in 1199, the crime of the witches was a crime of *lèse-majesté*. In his concluding paragraphs, Tholosan affirmed the primacy of the prince (whom Tholosan represented) to have both the initiative and the profits of the proceedings against witches. Whereas Nicolas Eymeric, in his *Directorium inquisitionum* (Directory of Inquisitors, 1376), stressed the power of the inquisitors, Claude Tholosan underlined the importance of the secular judge. As a representative of the state and the ruler, the judge had a mission to destroy this *infernal palace* (Paravy 1993, 797–800; in Tholosan 1999, 428–431).

Tholosan's treatise remained practically unknown for over 500 years, but it was representative of a current of thought in the first half of the fifteenth century: the "new heresy" of the witches as a sect of night-flying,

cannibalistic devil-worshippers who desecrated Christian rites. Similar ideas were expressed at almost the same time by the anonymous *Errores Gazariorum*, by Martin Le Franc's *Le Champion des dames* (The Defender of Ladies, 1440–1442), and by the report of the Swiss chronicler Hans Fründ.

MARTINE OSTORERO

See also: CANON EPISCOPI; COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; COURTS, SECULAR; DAUPHINÉ; ERRORES GAZARIORUM; EYMERIC, NICOLAS; FRÜND, HANS; HERESY; LAUSANNE, DIOCESE OF; LE FRANC, MARTIN; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; SABBAT; SAVOY, DUCHY OF; VALAIS.

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THOMAS, KEITH (1933–)

Keith Thomas, with his *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (1971), brought the history of early modern witchcraft into the mainstream of British social history, demonstrating both the possibility and the value of the study of popular magical beliefs. Together with his doctoral student Alan Macfarlane, Thomas introduced to the study of English witchcraft the insights of British social anthropology on the functions and meaning of witchcraft in modern Africa. He used retrospective ethnography to place post-Reformation English witchcraft within the context of the Weberian debate on the "disenchantment of the world" and to reconstruct its meaning both for those accusing others of witchcraft and, to a lesser extent, for those accused. Through emphasizing the malefic focus of English accusations while denying both the reality of continental witch cults and the view that elites imposed witchcraft accusations, Thomas's work reinforced a sense of English exceptionalism; more recently it has been seen as applicable to much of those parts of Europe where large-scale witch hunting was absent.

Thomas is inextricably associated with the rise of social history in Britain, above all in his *Religion and the Decline of Magic* and *Man and the Natural World* (1983). His career has been a highly orthodox Oxford progress, culminating in the presidency of Corpus Christi College and of the British Academy, not to mention knighthood in 1988. Like that of his Balliol

tutor Christopher Hill, Thomas's work draws upon a prodigious mastery of the printed output of early modern England, supplemented in Thomas's case by an extensive grasp of the social sciences and humanities, reflecting his belief that history requires a constant dialogue with other disciplines committed to a holistic understanding of human society. Thomas's particular debt to the social anthropology of Edward E. Evans-Pritchard's work on witchcraft drew him into debates between functionalist and hermeneutic anthropologists, pioneering the shift of social history from economic or social-structural explanations toward cultural history (Geertz and Thomas 1975–1976). Considering himself a historical ethnographer, Thomas read available sources until he could locate people of all classes speaking on every aspect of thought and living; his studies pioneered recent social historical analysis by gender, age, and culture instead of class. Yet Thomas's primary historiographic debt is to R. H. Tawney, who sought to introduce English historiography to the analytic insights of both Marxist and Weberian social science. The title of Thomas's greatest work is surely a deliberate echo of Tawney's *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (1938); the core theme of both of Thomas's books is the Weberian "disenchantment of the world" in the post-Reformation centuries. Fundamentally, Thomas retained the Tawney–Hill view of the Protestant Reformation as implicitly revolutionary in its effects, although followed by a transitional century that sought to control such forces. This historical schema remains implicit in Thomas's work, which characteristically emphasizes the complexities and paradoxes of historical development by focusing on the anxieties and dilemmas of human behavior and choices.

Thomas's discussion of witchcraft in *Religion and the Decline of Magic* must be read in this wider context. Its key argument is often taken to be that the Reformation removed the protective magic of the Catholic Church, leaving anxious people to turn for protection against *maleficia* (harmful magic) both to countermagic and to the prosecution of witches, and that accusations of witchcraft often arose out of guilt for refusing charity to the dependent poor, who thus formed the major category of those accused in England. This model has been rightly questioned on many fronts, including its applicability to wider European witchcraft, its neglect of ideological and gender issues, and its tendency toward a form of functionalism. However, most of these criticisms are anticipated elsewhere in the book itself, and they ignore the historiographic setting of 1971, when it was the models of Margaret Murray and Hugh Trevor-Roper that dominated discussions of English witchcraft (Barry 1996).

JONATHAN BARRY

See also: ACCUSATIONS; ANTHROPOLOGY; ENGLAND; EVANS-PRITCHARD, EDWARD E.; HISTORIOGRAPHY; MACFARLANE, ALAN; MURRAY, MARGARET ALICE; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF WITCHES; TREVOR-ROPER, HUGH; WITCH HUNTS.

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THOMASIIUS, CHRISTIAN (1655–1728)

The most important German representative of the early Enlightenment, Christian Thomasius was also the first eighteenth-century critic of the witchcraft trials. Frederick II the Great of Prussia claimed that women could now grow old and die in peace because of him. Born at Leipzig, Thomasius was the first son of a professor of philosophy and rhetoric, Jacob Thomas, who Latinized his name to Thomasius. Enrolling at Leipzig University in 1669, Christian wavered between philosophy and law; finally, his study of Samuel Pufendorf tipped the scale toward law. As a student of the famous jurist Samuel Stryk at the University of Frankfurt am Oder, he modified his Protestant orthodoxy and sympathized with the new fashion of natural law. Because of his unorthodox opinions, Thomasius fell into official disgrace, left Leipzig, and moved to nearby Halle, where he became a pioneer of its newly founded Prussian university. The first dean (*Ordinarius*) of the law faculty was his former mentor Stryk, whom Thomasius succeeded after his death in 1710.

Thomasius soon turned his attention toward such controversial academic topics as torture, the law of evidence in inquisitorial trials, and the connection of both to cases of witchcraft and sorcery. He demonstrated that the origin of the *processus inquisitionis* (inquisitorial procedure) could be traced to the Roman Church's canon law, but he also realized that without the *processus inquisitionis*, state administration of justice would not work. The same ambivalent but realistic attitude recurred in his remarks about the law of torture; it was his pupil Martin Bernhardt who was the more critical of the law of torture.

Concerning legal procedures on witchcraft and sorcery, Thomasius at first followed the Saxon oracle, Benedict Carpzov, whose rules of procedure were set out in his *Practica nova imperialis saxonica verum criminaliam* (New Rules in Criminal Cases for Imperial Saxony) of 1635. Accordingly, as Thomasius wrote, he requested mild torture from the law faculty, when he had to propose a decision in a case of witchcraft presented by a lower court, and his faculty colleagues overruled him with Stryk in the chair. Only this “Damascus experience” and the reading of Friedrich Spee’s *Cautio criminalis* (A Warning on Criminal Justice, 1631) opened his eyes to the injustice of witchcraft trials and made him a sworn enemy of Carpzov.

Unlike Spee, whose approach was theoretical, Thomasius flatly denied the existence of witchcraft in his famous dissertation *De crimine magiae* (On the Crime of Magic) of 1701. He assumed that Spee did not believe in the existence of witchcraft either but had preferred to limit himself to criticizing procedural errors for strategic reasons. In practice, Thomasius seemed to judge witchcraft less consistently than in theory. Moreover, during his lifetime the great witch hunts had almost become extinct in the Holy Roman Empire, so his contribution to the abolishing of witchcraft trials should not be overestimated.

GÜNTER JEROUSCHEK

See also: CARPZOV, BENEDICT (II); ENLIGHTENMENT; PRUSSIA; SKEPTICISM; SPEE, FRIEDRICH.

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**THORNDIKE, LYNN
(1882–1965)**

Thorndike was an outstanding American historian of magic. The son of a Methodist minister, Thorndike was born in Lynn, Massachusetts, received his PhD from Columbia University in 1905, and held teaching posts at Northwestern University (1907–1909), Western Reserve University (1909–1924), and Columbia (1924–1950). Thorndike’s brothers were also academics; when Thorndike accepted a professorship at Columbia, he joined the educational psychologist Edward Lee

Thorndike and Ashley Thorndike, a professor of English literature, who were already members of faculty. With pertinacious attachment to the original manuscript and printed sources, Thorndike maintained a lifelong pursuit of the history of magic, from 1902–1903, when he began work on a dissertation considering the study of magic in medieval universities, until 1964, the year before his death, when he published his last monograph, a biography of the magician Michael Scot.

It has become fashionable to belittle Thorndike’s historical accomplishment, for his works were written before the impact of anthropological approaches to nonwestern magic in the 1970s and the postmodern sensitivity to texts and the politics of liminality in the 1980s. However, Thorndike understood his own strengths, and he demonstrated remarkable fortitude in ignoring his critics to pursue his own scholarly goals. He recognized early in his career that the disorder of European manuscript sources posed an impediment to more advanced scholarship, and he made a major contribution to clarifying this unwieldy body of writing for the benefit of an English-speaking audience unfamiliar with Thorndike’s predecessors such as August Bouché-Leclercq or Pierre Duhem.

In addition to the eight-volume *History of Magic and Experimental Science*, completed in 1958 and still in print, Thorndike prepared scholarly editions of medieval Latin scientific and magical works, wrote several well-regarded undergraduate textbooks, edited a still-useful collection of documents on the history of medieval universities, and produced in 1963, with Pearl Kibre, the *Catalogue of Incipits of Mediaeval Scientific Writings in Latin*, an often-updated guide to manuscript sources relating to medieval magic and science. It may prove his most lasting monument; Linda Voigts is currently preparing an electronic version as well as an updated and corrected edition with Peter Murray Jones.

Thorndike’s peers acknowledged his achievements only grudgingly. The publication of his first two volumes of *Magic and Experimental Science* provoked a long and withering review by George Sarton, who considered the whole project fundamentally misguided and dismissed it as an “elaborate parody of the history of medieval science” and a “depressing recital of unprogressive and hopeless activities” (Sarton 1924, 83, 88). Thorndike replied with an article on “The True Place of Astrology in the History of Science,” affirming the need to assess past societies and cultural practices on their own terms and not simply as precursors to contemporary science. Yet Thorndike did not provide a value-free account of the history of magic and its relation to science (Durand 1942). He delighted in undermining the reputation of some “great men of science,” insisting on the extent of their indebtedness to medieval sources and concepts. He was equally adept at locating lesser

lights from the medieval period whose contributions to knowledge had been neglected.

In 1955, Thorndike was honored by being elected president of the American Historical Association. His presidential address, "Whatever Was, Was Right," constituted a personal manifesto on the need for historians to consider the past on its own terms, particularly in evaluating the place of magic and other occult sciences in European history.

Within the generous span of Thorndike's scholarly interests, witchcraft held only a minor place. However, the number of references to witchcraft rose steadily throughout the volumes of the *History of Magic*, with chapters on illicit magic and the literature of witchcraft appearing in the final two volumes on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Like much of Thorndike's writing, these chapters provided summaries of his reading across the sources and archives that were as lightly burdened with references to the secondary literature as they were by speculation and synthesis. Yet his brief discussion of witchcraft affirmed his prescript that the advance of knowledge did not depend on proscribing inquiry in such fields as divination, astrology, or witchcraft, or, it might be added, the history of these disciplines. Instead, Thorndike considered that modern ways of thought emerged from the tradition of thoughtful investigation of contemporary problems in the course of which erroneous notions were discarded. A radical opponent of simpleminded and anachronistic theories of progress, Thorndike made a lasting contribution to the serious study of the past in all its complexity and difference.

HILARY M. CAREY

See also: HISTORIOGRAPHY; OCCULT; SCIENCE AND MAGIC.

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THOTH

In the Egyptian pantheon, Thoth was usually represented as a man with the head of an ibis, holding a pen

and a scribe's ink palette. These two instruments signified his roles as the inventor of writing, the secretary to the rest of the gods, the reckoner of time (since he was the god who fixed a life span not only for humans but also for the deities themselves), and the lord of wisdom, medicine, and magic. Sometimes he appeared as a baboon, an ibis, or the moon, sometimes in purely human form, and sometimes in a mixture of any of these elements. Thoth was always present when the heart of the newly dead was weighed in the balance against the feather of *Maat* (Truth), and he recorded the result. He also acted as a messenger for the gods. There does not seem to be any plausible etymology for his name.

Plato recorded a number of these traditional associations. In his dialogue *Philebus*, he said that "Theuth" was the first to notice that sound could be divided into categories, and so he invented letters as phonemes; and in the *Phaedrus*, he told us that this same Theuth also invented numbers (and therefore the disciplines of arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy) and the games of draughts and dice. Greeks visiting or settling in Egypt quickly identified Thoth with their own god Hermes, largely because in their tradition Hermes too was associated with the moon and the dead and brought messages from the gods. Because of this identification with Hermes, Thoth became known as "twice greatest." Then, in the second century B.C.E., Thoth–Hermes was further assimilated to Moses and so became "thrice greatest" (which translates into Greek as Hermes Trismegistus) because he combined the wisdom, ingenuity, and attributes of all three archetypal figures.

Thoth was believed to have written forty-two books that contained the wisdom of the world. In the Greek magical papyri, he was described as one who knew everything hidden beneath the vault of heaven and underneath the earth, so it is not surprising that his forty-two books included several tomes on magic, which was considered an occult (that is, "hidden") science. A corpus, called the *Hermetica* after Hermes Trismegistus, was known to Byzantine scholars and to a number of the Church Fathers. It consisted of eighteen books of theosophical philosophy that treated astrological and alchemical themes as well as religious ones, and it included a treatise known as the *Asclepius* and a number of fragmentary excerpts taken from a Byzantine scholar, Joannes Stobaios. Unfortunately, the *Asclepius* caught the unfavorable attention of St. Augustine, after which the Latin West seems to have lost interest, although Muslim scholars did much to preserve and extend the corpus. By the twelfth century, however, Hermes Trismegistus began to appear again in Western scholarly literature. Then, in 1471, Marsilio Ficino published his translation of several key Hermetic texts. To Ficino, Hermes Trismegistus was older than Moses and in consequence could be counted as "the first

author of theology,” foreseeing among other things the death of paganism and the rise and triumph of Christianity. A seventeenth-century German scholar even tried to claim him as the founder of Germany.

Pictures of Hermes Trismegistus tend to show him as an elderly bearded man dressed in what the Middle Ages or early modern period conceived as oriental costume. He appears thus in a famous inlaid floor panel of the pavement in the cathedral of Siena, and the accompanying inscription calls him “Hermes Trismegistus, the contemporary of Moses.” He is shown handing an open book to two men, and the image is accompanied by the words “Egyptians, receive the teachings and the laws.” A column painting in the Vatican Library, however, depicts him as a Greek Hermes and calls him “Mercurius Thoth who composed sacred letters [that is, hieroglyphs] for the Egyptians.”

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See also: GREEK MAGICAL PAPYRI; HERMETICISM; MOSES; OCCULT.

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THUMM, THEODOR (1586–1630)

One of the leading Lutheran theologians and polemicists of early-seventeenth-century Germany, Theodor Thumm was also an opponent of witch hunting and published a demonology at Tübingen in 1621, written from a skeptical perspective, entitled *Tractatus theologicus, de sagarum impietate, nocendi imbecillitate et poenae gravitate* (Theological Treatise, of the Godlessness of Witches, the Feebleness of Their Ability to Work Harm, and the Severity of Their Punishment). In this work, Thumm distinguished between three categories of witches: Those who suffered from melancholy and had been deceived by the Devil into imagining that they had done impossible things, such as metamorphosing into animals; those who had been duped into making a pact with the Devil against their will but had committed no harm; and those who had made a pact with the Devil and who had harmed people and livestock. Thumm argued that witches in the first two categories were victims of the Devil’s cunning and their

own lack of proper faith. They should be given better spiritual guidance; those who refused to renounce the Devil should be banished. Witches in the third category were to be executed because of the harm they had caused, but not because of their pact: Thumm was insistent that no one should be put to death for the spiritual crime of apostasy. Thumm’s tract was characterized generally by compassion for those individuals who fell into his first two categories, by his strong emphasis on human susceptibility to the Devil’s trickery, and by his assertion that territorial rulers should make the proper religious instruction of their subjects a higher priority than the persecution of witches.

The son of a pastor, Thumm was born in Hausen an der Zaber in the southwestern German duchy of Württemberg. He studied theology at the University of Tübingen from 1604 to 1608 and held various ecclesiastical posts at Stuttgart and Kirchheim unter Teck between 1608 and 1618, when he became a professor of theology at the University of Tübingen. After 1620 Thumm was also dean of the collegiate church and superintendent of Tübingen’s Lutheran seminary. His demonology continued the “spiritualizing” or “providential” view of witchcraft, whose theological home was the Lutheran University of Tübingen and whose most famous early proponent was the Württemberg reformer Johann Brenz (Midelfort 1972). In a sermon preached in 1539 after severe hailstorms had damaged crops in Württemberg, Brenz argued that God inflicted bad weather on his flock as a test of their faith or as a punishment for their sins. Brenz preached against the widespread popular idea that witches caused bad weather by magical means: They might be deluded by the Devil into believing that they could raise storms, Brenz said, but in reality they were powerless to interfere with God’s providential control of the world. The real crime of the witch was thus not the causing of *maleficium* (harmful magic) but the spiritual crime of consorting with the Devil.

Like Brenz, whom he cited in his *Tractatus*, Thumm denied that witches could cause bad weather. He also denied that they could have sex with the Devil, metamorphose into animals, enter locked houses through tiny holes, or cause harm at a distance from their victims by means of image magic—all activities beyond the capabilities of humans to perform. Witches could harm people and livestock, but only by mixing poisons into food, drink, or salves or by blowing it into the faces of their victims. For such crimes, they, like other poisoners, deserved the death penalty.

Thumm differed from Brenz in one crucial respect, however. Whereas Brenz and his successors at Tübingen had asserted that witches deserved death for renouncing God, even if they caused no physical harm, Thumm maintained that no one should be executed for apostasy alone. In adopting this line of argument, Thumm

acknowledged the influence of such earlier skeptics as Johann Weyer, Hermann Witekind, and Johann Georg Goedelmann. In fact, Thumm essentially copied from Goedelmann the threefold division of witches into those who made pacts and caused real harm, those who made pacts without causing harm, and those who confessed to impossibilities. Stuart Clark has argued that this way of distinguishing between different categories of witches became part of a general Lutheran orthodoxy on witchcraft during the seventeenth century. On the one hand, Clark suggested that the distinction was important because it “enabled pastors opposed to popular intolerance to break down the assumption that witches were always responsible for actual harm done” without abandoning entirely the notion that witches might be responsible for some instances of harm done to their neighbors. On the other hand, however, Clark suggested that this schema also illustrated the limits of the effectiveness of skeptical demonology in challenging the intellectual basis of witchcraft belief, because it still allowed for the possibility that humans could make pacts with the Devil (Clark 1997).

It is hard to assess the impact of Thumm’s work on his contemporaries. The spiritualizing Tübingen tradition of thinking about witchcraft, to which Thumm made a significant contribution, probably helped shape the relatively low level of witch persecution in the duchy of Württemberg, emphasizing as it did the powerlessness of witches and the idea that it was more important for good Lutherans to repent their own sins than to accuse their neighbors of witchcraft. Moreover, Tübingen University was the main center of theological ideas for southwestern and southeastern German Lutheranism. For example, the spiritualizing tradition influenced pastors in nearby Schwäbisch Hall and Hohenlohe, and it helped influence the very restrained pattern of witchcraft trials in the imperial free city of Rothenburg ob der Tauber (Midelfort 1972; Rowlands 2003). There is also evidence of the direct influence of Thumm’s work on a specific trial in Rothenburg: In 1627 Thumm’s *Tractatus* and his assertion that no one should be executed for a spiritual crime were cited explicitly at the trial of a self-confessed child-witch. This opinion, also citing such other Lutheran skeptics as Goedelmann, helped secure the acquittal of the imprisoned girl and also influenced the moderate way in which the Rothenburg city council handled other cases involving self-confessed child-witches. Finally, as the theological faculties of the universities of Tübingen and Wittenberg were important sources of the ideas on which Protestant demonology in other Lutheran parts of Germany and Scandinavia were based, Thumm may also have contributed in some small way to this wider discourse, which Clark has tentatively suggested may have had a moderating impact on the scale of the witch

persecutions in these areas (Clark 1990). A second edition of Thumm’s *Tractatus* was published in 1667.

ALISON ROWLANDS

See also: BRENZ, JOHANN; DEMONOLOGY; GOEDELMMANN, JOHANN GEORG; IMAGE MAGIC; IMPERIAL FREE CITIES; *MALEFICIUM*; MELANCHOLY; METAMORPHOSIS; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; POISON; SKEPTICISM; WEATHER MAGIC; WEYER, JOHANN; WITEKIND, HERMANN; WÜRTEMBERG, DUCHY OF.

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THURINGIA

Together with neighboring Franconia (Bamberg, Würzburg), southern Thuringia formed a principal zone of German witch persecutions. In early modern times, this area was larger than today’s federal state of Thuringia, extending further especially in the northeast and south (Sachsen-Coburg). In this enlarged area, more than 1,500 cases of witch persecution are known to have occurred from 1526 until 1731 (Füssel 2001, 89–94). Although many sources have been lost, the overall state of what we know about Thuringia seems quite good, because numerous cases can still be found in almost all state archives. Many cases have also been described in the older literature, both before and after 1900.

After a very slow beginning, with only scattered individual trials in the early decades, the records show a sharp increase in witch persecutions around 1590. Between 1598 and 1631, Thuringia experienced a large, though repeatedly broken, wave of persecution. Its peak came in 1629, shortly before the persecutions were suddenly stopped by the Thirty Years’ War, which affected Thuringia in 1631 with the battle at Breitenfeld, near Leipzig. After the war had cost Thuringia over half of its population, the hunt for witches remained in abeyance for some years. But in 1656, witchcraft trials resumed, and a second massive wave of persecution lasted until the end of the century. After 1700 only a few individual cases can be found in the records, and the accusations in those cases contain increasing elements of superstition.

Over 60 percent of all cases came from the areas of Henneberg (about 750 trials) and Coburg (about 230) in southern and southwestern Thuringia, bordering the prince-bishoprics of Bamberg and Würzburg, both areas of intensive witch persecutions. There were numerous cases also in two imperial free cities: Mühlhausen (66 trials between 1624 and 1731) and Nordhausen (30 trials between 1599 and 1644). Especially after 1656, numerous cases also occurred on the other side of the Thuringian forest, in the Georgenthal jurisdiction of Sachsen-Gotha. The center of persecution thus covered the hilly Thuringian forest and the Thuringian Rhön, whereas only a few witchcraft trials occurred in the flat Thuringian basin.

We have the decisions of 1,200 of the more than 1,500 known Thuringian witchcraft trials. Of these 1,200, about 75 percent, at least 900 persons died (800 in executions and 100 in prison). (In actuality, more than 900 persons died because the extant court records do not specify the outcomes of some of the trials.) Half of all prisoners executed were burned; another 11 percent were granted the “grace” of previous beheading. About 8 percent of all prisoners did not even live to see the end of their trial but died from the effects of torture or from miserable prison conditions. On the other hand, every fourth person tried for witchcraft got off with banishment or acquittal (Füssel 2001, 62–64).

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

Despite its multitude of autonomous governments, inquisitorial proceedings in witch cases throughout Thuringia were relatively uniform. Apart from the question of legal expenses (invariably paid by defendants, even if they were released) and some extraordinary sentences of banishment and *absolutia ab instantia* (acquittal with reservation)—that is, the proceedings could be recommenced—the *processus ordinarius* (ordinary procedure) of the Carolina Code was closely followed everywhere by local authorities, who duly consulted law faculties and princely *Schöppenstuhl* (benches of jurists). Procedural irregularities were censured and were mostly remedied; in Thuringia, the crime of witchcraft was not regarded as a *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime), that is, a crime so serious and frequently hard to prove that it was excepted from the usual legal procedures.

After 1572, the Carolina Code, the imperial law code, with its basic focus on *maleficium* (harmful magic), was supplemented in much of Thuringia by the new law code of electoral Saxony, which decreed the death penalty for diabolical pacts even without harmful *maleficia* (evil acts). Its regulations were gradually accepted by most Thuringian dominions, except the jurisdictions belonging to Nordhausen, Mainz (Erfurt and the Eichsfeld), or Hesse (Schmalkalden), or to the

Franconian judicial districts in southwestern Thuringia. In practice, this difference was minimal, because almost every Thuringian witchcraft trial investigated both harmful sorcery and the diabolical pact, and most defendants confessed to both (Füssel 2001, 27).

As recommended by article 219 of the Carolina Code, local courts throughout Thuringia did not decide cases without receiving opinions from law faculties, which their respective sovereigns required. These scholarly bodies thus became the decisive level of central decision making in witchcraft proceedings, unlike the situation in many other German territories, where local courts often made their own decisions. So far as we can trace, the *Schöppenstuhl* at Jena was consulted in approximately 57 percent of the Thuringian witchcraft cases, that of Coburg in about 20 percent, and another 15 percent consulted the electoral *Schöppenstuhl* at Leipzig. Occasionally, other bodies were consulted, mostly as additional authorities in questionable cases (Füssel 2001, 31–33).

WHO WERE THE WITCHES?

Although no profile of a “typical Thuringian witch” can be recognized (anyone could be tried), they were overwhelmingly female: About 87 percent of all prisoners were women, most of them married and between twenty and fifty years of age. Children and old people were rarely mentioned. Most prisoners came from rural villages, although their trials were often held in local or provincial seats of jurisdiction (Füssel 2001, 107–112). As elsewhere, most evidence against the accused concerned *maleficium*, harmful sorcery originating in rural or domestic conflicts. Most *maleficia* involved the illness or death of people or animals. In addition, people were often attacked by lice or suffered lameness in their arms or legs. When cows no longer gave enough milk, suspicion fell on “milk thieves,” especially in the early-sixteenth-century cases. Later, the term for a (usually female) “milk thief” was extended to witches in general.

Regional differences existed with respect to accusations of harmful sorcery. Sorcery with *Eben* (“bad things,” parasitic insects, reputedly begotten by the Devil and witches, that infiltrated the body of a human victim and harmed it from within) was limited to northern Thuringia, mainly to the hilly area of the Harz in Sachsen-Anhalt. Central and especially southern Thuringia was home to the dragon, sometimes called “fiery dragon,” that played a big part in popular belief of the region. One saw it normally at night, on the roof of a house or entering and leaving its chimney; it was said to bring its owners, the so-called dragon holders, a variety of benefits, above all in the form of food. On the other hand, accusations of misdeeds such as misusing the Host could be found all over Thuringia and were typical in other German regions as well.

When an investigation began with an accusation by another witch, the ensuing trial was focused first on participation at the witches' Sabbat, where the two witches must have seen each other dance. Questions about the other participants at the dance were standard at each hearing, and sooner or later all prisoners who confessed also named their supposed accomplices. When broken by torture, they also confessed the other relevant elements of the crime of witchcraft. But the fully developed idea of witchcraft cannot be found in Thuringian evidence before the end of the sixteenth century (Füssel 2001, 65–73).

RONALD FÜSSEL

See also: BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*); CARPZOV, BENEDICT; CONFESSIONS; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; EXECUTIONS; GERMANY, NORTHEASTERN; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); MEYFART (MEYFAHRT), JOHANN MATTHÄUS; MILK; POPULAR BELIEFS IN WITCHES; RURAL WITCHCRAFT; SAXONY, ELECTORATE OF; SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF WITCHES; TRIALS; UNIVERSITIES; WITCH HUNTS; WÜRZBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF.

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THYRAEUS (THRACE), PETRUS (1546–1601)

A Jesuit doctor of theology and for several years a professor at the University of Würzburg, Petrus Thyraeus published several books of theological controversy, but his principal interest lay in apparitions, ghosts, and invading demons who infested both places and people. From 1582 until his death, he produced several books on these topics, especially on demonic possession, most of which had more than one edition and most of which are in effect variants of a single treatise.

A translation of the full title of the best known of these, published in Cologne in 1598, gives a very good notion of the thrust of his work. It runs: *Infested Places: That is, a single volume dealing with places that are infested because of the spirits of demons or dead people causing distress and annoyance; wherein are discussed and explained the types of infesting spirits, their characters, their power, the distinctions between them, and the things they do that bring evil to the living; along with explanations whereby they may to some extent be recognized and to some extent outlawed; and finally, the methods whereby the places molested by them may be delivered from them, and information of a similar kind; to which is added a small volume on terrifying things that appear during the night and usually foretell the death of human beings.*

Thyraeus was interested in various aspects of this whole subject. He distinguished between evil spirits who simply infested places or who vexed the living and tried to do them harm, on the one hand, and the souls of those who were suffering the pangs of purgatory and returned to trouble the living or offer them a warning about their behavior, on the other. He discussed the motives of invasive demons, whether they appeared frequently or rarely, and whether they always appeared as they actually were. Were all places equally infested, or did some suffer more than others, and if so, why? Were all human beings equally subject to vexation by spirits, and if not, why did some suffer from them more than others? Precisely what kind of things did molesting spirits do? Could they inflict blows, death, or any other physical harm on human beings? And what kind of things should be attributed to angelic spirits, even though they may have seemed to arise from human agency?

Thyraeus went on to tell his readers how to distinguish between ghosts and evil spirits and to suggest that different places—sacred or profane, waste or cultivated, blighted by past death or crime or not so tainted, Catholic or heretical—were more or less likely to attract certain types of spirits. This was followed by much detail about the appearance and behavior of the various kinds of spirit, and finally, in the third part of the book, he gave advice about how to deal with the problem of spirit infestation, including admonitions about the wrong ways to go about exorcising spirits according to their different types and intentions, ending with a detailed discussion on “things that went bump in the night”—largely the actions of ghosts and inferior demons.

Thyraeus was pursuing themes that also interested such near contemporaries as Pierre le Loyer and Ludwig Lavater, both of whom published books on ghosts and spirits during the last years of the sixteenth century. One was the confessional point of purgatory: Did it exist or not, and if not, whence did certain kinds of ghost come? Indeed, without purgatory, could ghosts return at all? Another was the much-debated question of how best to deal with invasion from the spirit world and whether it was permissible to use countermagic to fight, say, magically induced possession. A third point, however, was less confessionally based and had troubled theologians for a very long time: Because spirits were by definition noncorporeal, how could they interact physically with human beings? It was a question that touched upon many aspects of witches' behavior—the possibility of their sexual intercourse with Satan and with incubi or succubi, for example—and the proposed answers were various and ingenious. Thyraeus's treatise was thus directly relevant to some of the foremost intellectual speculation of his period.

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See also: CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DEMONS; GHOSTS; INCUBUS AND SUCCUBUS; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC.

TINCTOR, JOHANN (CA. 1405/1410–1469)

The theologian Johann Tinctor (Johannes Tinctoris; Jean Taincture), who was born and died at Tournai in the southern Netherlands, ranks among the most important early contributors to the dissemination of major elements of the new, learned science of demonological witchcraft within the boundaries of present-day Belgium. He was a former professor, rector, and dean of the Faculty of Arts in Cologne from about 1440 to 1460 and a canon at the Cathedral of Notre Dame at Tournai after 1456. Sometime about 1460, he wrote a short tract entitled *Contra sectam Valdensium* (Against the Waldensian Sect), in the context of the famous trial of 1459 against the Waldensians in the city of Arras. Tinctor's book is also known by a variant title, *Speculatio in secta Valdensium* (Speculation on the Sect of the Waldensians).

In this treatise, Tinctor vehemently attacked the crime of demonic sorcery, which he characterized as being even worse than adherence to paganism, heresy, or Islam. He elaborated on the malevolent powers of the Devil and described the activities (including *maleficium*—harmful magic) done by the Waldensians in Satan's name. According to Tinctor, not only could the Devil work magic with snakes, rain, wind, and storms, but he could also open locks, lead humans into temptation, and so on. Tinctor's evidence for such crimes came from the trials in Arras, where fifteen people were burned at the stake as witches after having admitted taking part in obscene Sabbats and performing homage to a black goat.

Tinctor's tract became increasingly influential during the following decades. We know of five Latin manuscripts of the *Speculatio* and another four of a French translation. Both Duke Philip the Good of Burgundy (ruled 1419–1467) and the important humanistic patron of Bruges, Lodewijk van Gruuthuse (ca. 1422–1492), possessed illuminated copies of the French manuscript, entitled *Sermon contre Vaudois* (Sermon Against the Waldensians), in their rich libraries. Their manuscripts contained a miniature in which one can discern some demonological themes: a man in a kneeling position kisses the arse of a male goat, while in the background of the miniature there are flying men and women, seated on monstrous beasts. Some years later, about 1477, the famous printer of Bruges, Colard Mansion, printed Tinctor's tract. This printed representation of the Waldensians as an organized sect of demonological witches was soon followed by regular trials in the French-speaking parts of the southern Netherlands, where the labels *vauderie* (heresy

of Waldensians) and *sorcherie* (sorcery) were indistinguishable synonyms. Tinctor provided powerful assistance in disseminating the new "cumulative" witchcraft concept in his region.

DRIES VANYSACKER

See also: ARRAS; ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; GOAT; HERESY; NETHERLANDS, SOUTHERN; VAUDOIS (WALDENSAINS).

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TOADS

Initial evidence of the toad's central role in witchcraft comes from language. In German dialects, for example, *Hexe* signifies both "toad" and "witch," and in many Italian dialects, the toad is defined as *strega*, "witch," or *fata*, "fairy." The Spanish *bruja*, "witch," the old French *brusche*, and the Sardinian *bruscia* all derive from the Vulgar Latin *bruscus* (Plomteux 1965). This toad–witch connection points to the even closer relation between toad and woman that can be observed in the figures of the witch's body, although in Normandy, because of their venom, toads were connected to male witches. The relationships between the toad and female bodies are structured in various contexts of meaning that cut across fields of knowledge and practices of witchcraft, including the status of the witch's body and the animal components of the witch's "person," representations of female physicality in European Christian knowledge and practices, and the bodily figures and animal metaphors of ecstasy, possession, and dream.

Beyond the distinctions between "high" culture and "low" culture, the toad is one of the most frequent animal metamorphoses of the witch. Throughout Europe, a popular practice for discovering a witch in the guise of a toad was to brand the animal with a red-hot nail so that later a burn on a woman's body could be considered an identifying mark. Similarly, in inquisitorial trials for witchcraft, evidence of guilt was constituted by the privileged relationship that the defendant was believed to have with a batrachian, sometimes raised in the home as a "magic" spirit. Moreover, both in popular representations and in stereotypes of the witches' Sabbat created by the inquisitors, the identification of the witch came about through the discovery of an image of a small toad or toad's foot in the pupil of the left eye of the defendant:

The mark that the Devil painlessly impressed on the body of the witch (Henningsen 1980, 80; De Graaff 1991, 111–128; Charuty 1997, 82–94). These diabolical “marks” highlighted the animal components of the witch’s person, which were also evident in the ecstasy of the dream experience: In the phenomenology of witchcraft, the emergence of animals from the mouth or sex organ of sleeping women provided further proof that the woman was indeed a witch. Stories of this kind were widespread throughout Europe, and toads (along with spiders) figured prominently in them as animal components of the person that revealed her bewitched nature (Lixfeld 1972).

Toads appeared in many early modern witch narratives and in art, as in Jan Ziarnko’s famous depiction of the Sabbath and in the work of the elder Pieter Breughel, where they appear as familiars. In the Basque country, toads provided poison, flying ointment, and familiars. The Devil sometimes appeared in the form of a toad, and toad venom was a common ingredient in witches’ potions. People cooked toads (substituting for witches) as a form of countermagic.

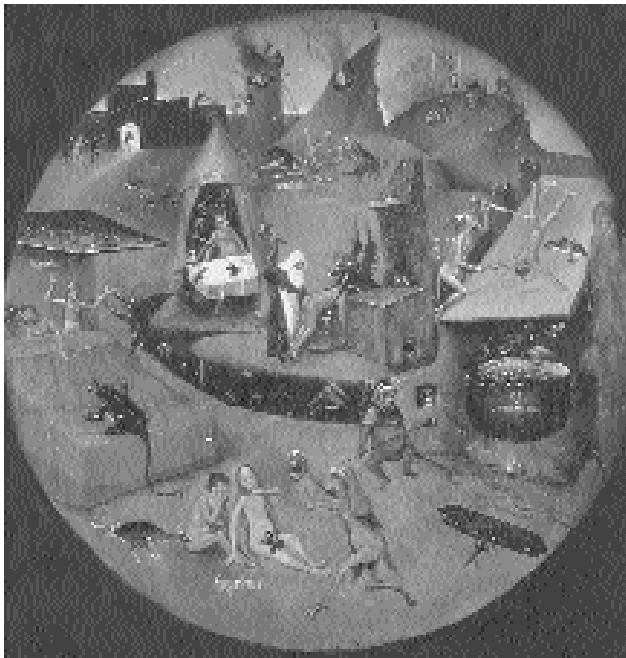
Carlo Ginzburg analyzed the toad’s presence in the context of witchcraft through ethno-pharmacological studies suggesting that the skin of this batrachian has psychotropic effects that explain its importance both in witches’ “recipes” and in the experience of ecstatic mediation. The pharmacological qualities of toad skin led Ginzburg to locate the genesis of the witches’ Sabbath in shamanic ecstasy (Ginzburg 1991, 306). But

when his analysis of the Sabbath addressed the question of dream representation, the toad took on a different symbolic meaning in relation to the physiology of the female body, the dual and plural character of the witch’s person, and figures of spirit possession.

A study of representations of the “alter ego” in animal form (or images of the “double” that in the dream experience emerged from the body in the form of an animal) indicated a thread of variants in which the alter ego was represented as a toad (or as a spider) that exited the body through the sex organ (Lixfeld 1972). The toad’s exit through the sex organ was described as an “extraordinary” but real event in the first book of the well-known treatise, published in 1599 and 1600, by the Spanish Jesuit, Martín Del Rio, *Disquisitionum magicae libri sex* (Six Books on Investigations into Magic), which recounted the apparition of a toad jumping out of the belly of a young woman in labor, who is thus finally able to give birth to her baby.

The symbolic relationship between the toad and the female body is also central to another series of practices and representations. In a vast area of western Europe from Alsace to the Tyrolean Alps, phenomena of spirit possession resulted from a toad’s bite or its penetration into the body of the possessed (Charuty 1997, 82–94). Such phenomena appear to have been the source of practices of intercession based on votive offerings in iron or wax representing the woman’s uterus in the form of a toad. In such cases, the toad was both the uterus and the instrument of possession, which, using an expression reported by ethnographers, “bit” the woman’s sex organ (Andree 1904). Museums in Alsace conserve numerous examples of these toad–uterus votive offerings. In the Middle Ages, wax or iron toad votive offerings were made in the cave of St. Vitus as a cure for St. Vitus’s dance (Andree 1904). The identification of the “bite” with the uterus was based on an age-old representation of the female sex organ, which, according to a tradition running through Greco-Roman, Renaissance, and baroque medicine, was endowed with a mobility that made it similar to an animal, and in this form it “possessed” the female body. In Christianity, this “hysterical” quality of the female body continued to be identified with the toad, whose “bite,” in medieval allegories, represented the sin of lust. In Christian iconography, the toad served the function of demonizing sexual desire (Pizza 2003).

The relationship between the toad and the female body suggests, therefore, a connection between the interpretations of stories recounting the entrance and exit of animals into and out of the body of a sleeping woman and symbolic physiologies of the female body. These elements appear to be integrated, for example, in Sicilian versions of the *matrazza*, the female malady that presented all the traits of possession and witchlike



Toad-demons, according to Hieronymus Bosch’s depiction of Hell. A panel of his painting, *The Seven Deadly Sins*. (Art Archive/Museo del Prado Madrid/Dagli Orti)

aggression, whose agents were the *donni di fuora* (women from outside), witch figures who, by transforming themselves into toads, invaded women's bodies (Henningesen 1990; Charuty 1997, 82–94; Pizza 1998, 69–74; Guggino 2004).

GIOVANNI PIZZA

See also: ANIMALS; ANIMALISTIC AND MAGICAL THINKING; ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BASQUE COUNTRY; BODY OF THE WITCH; BREUGHEL, PIETER THE ELDER; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DEMONS; DEVIL'S MARK; FAMILIARS; NORMANDY; POTIONS; SPIDERS; ZIARNKO, JAN; ZUGARRAMURDI, WITCHES OF.

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TODI, WITCH OF (1428)

The trial and confession of Matteuccia di Francesco, the witch of Todi, reveal far more clearly than other surviving documents of the early fifteenth century (when European witch hunting began) how "notions of diabolism were superimposed on earlier charges in the

course of judicial interrogation" (Kieckhefer 1976, 73).

Around 1430, when the doctrine of the witches' Sabbat was being developed through trials and treatises in the southwestern Alps in present-day France and Switzerland, that doctrine was also present in essentially similar form in early Renaissance Italy. Although we possess many fragments of trials from places like Dauphiné or Valais in these Alpine districts, our single richest record of an early witchcraft trial involving a Sabbat comes instead from Todi, a small town in central Italy. This record provides extremely suggestive information about the ways through which popular magical practices came to provide evidence of witchcraft. It offers tragic proof of the effects of revivalist sermons in spurring witchcraft prosecutions. But unlike the accused in Alpine cases from this period, the witch of Todi was never questioned about any "accomplices" seen at Sabbats: She died alone.

Todi, lying far north of Rome on the Tiber River, belonged to the Papal States, but the judge of the special court that tried Matteuccia di Francesco was a layman, not an inquisitor. The record of Matteuccia's trial is divided into two radically different parts. Almost three-fourths of it consists of a lengthy recital of her numerous illicit magical practices, related (as the trial record repeatedly insists) "not by malignant and suspicious people" but instead by "honest and truthful citizens." Most witnesses appear to have been former clients who had paid for her services. Most of Matteuccia's magical cures involved herbal healing; many were done in response to requests from abused wives. The final instance in this part came from a priest's concubine, for whom Matteuccia had provided a method to prevent pregnancy: burning the hoof of a she-mule, and drinking the ashes dissolved in wine.

Immediately after describing Matteuccia's contraceptive remedy, the trial record shifts abruptly and without warning. "Furthermore, not content with these things, adding evil to evil and aided by an infernal spirit, she attempted to ruin [*stregatum*] the health of children, at many times and in many places, by sucking their blood." The next sentence described how, "in the company of other witches, she often went to the walnut tree of Benevento and to other walnut trees, anointing herself with an oil made from the fat of vultures, the blood of bats, the blood of babies, and other ingredients" (Mammoli 1972, 36). We are even told, in the vernacular, the "prayer" she repeated on such occasions, and we soon learn the exact schedule of these 200-mile flights to Benevento. Five specific cases were documented (including relevant names, dates, and places), in which Matteuccia, disguised as a large fly, murdered babies by sucking their blood. The record states that she confessed, "saying that she has no defence" (Mammoli 1972, 38). An official notary verified that she was indeed burned for such crimes on March 20, 1428.

Matteuccia's trial record clearly demonstrates the importance of inflammatory antiwitchcraft sermons preached at Todi between January and March 1426 by the Franciscan friar and future saint, Bernardino of Siena, reinforced by his suggested reforms of Todi's penal code, which were adopted before he left. These new laws included provisions that anyone responsible for carrying out "spells or acts of witchcraft" should be burned, and they permitted the use of torture "according to the nature of the crime." Although the records of Matteuccia's trial emphasized that she confessed "spontaneously," there is good reason to suspect that she had in fact been tortured (Mormando 1999, 72–74).

Unfortunately, this was not the only witch burning connected with Bernardino's sermons. Two years earlier, in 1426, another instance had occurred while he was preaching in Rome (Mormando 1999, 54–66). Two details stand out: Unlike Matteuccia, the Roman witch was recorded in no fewer than six different sources, three Italian and three transalpine, but no trial summary exists. The sources agreed about her name, and they all suggested that she was a folk healer like Matteuccia. Interestingly, all three northern European sources (but no Roman source) insisted that this Roman witch turned herself into a cat when attacking babies, instead of a horsefly as Matteuccia did. None of the six sources mentioned anything like a Sabbat.

WILLIAM MONTER

See also: BENEVENTO, WALNUT TREE OF; BERNARDINO OF SIENA; CATS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; HERBAL MEDICINE; ITALY; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; SABBAT.

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**TORRENTÉ, ULRIC DE
(D. –1444/1445)**

Inquisitor for the western Swiss dioceses of Lausanne, Geneva, and Sitten around 1420–1440, Ulric de Torrenté belonged to the Dominican monastery of Lausanne, serving as its prior in 1419 and from 1439 to 1444. He began his career as an inquisitor by prosecuting a heterodox preacher, Nicolas Serrurier, an Augustine monk from the Low Countries, who had been condemned at the Council of Constance in 1418 before arriving in Lausanne in 1423. Pope Martin V (reigned 1417–1431) made Torrenté inquisitor for the dioceses of Besançon, Geneva, Lausanne, Sion, Toul, Metz, and Verdun, but without approval from either

the bishop of Lausanne or Duke Amadeus VIII of Savoy (the future Pope Felix V).

The Inquisition had existed on paper in these dioceses as early as 1269. The first recorded trials in the diocese of Lausanne took place against a Beguine house in 1375, followed by trials against approximately fifty Waldensians in 1399; both ended by releasing the defendants. Torrenté held his first witchcraft trials in 1428 and 1429 in Lower Valais and in Fribourg, although he was not admitted into episcopal Valais, where a large-scale witch hunt was then beginning (Andenmatten and Utz Tresp 1992, 71, 74–77, 78–82; Ostoro, Paravicini Bagliani, and Utz Tresp 1999, 63–98). In 1430 Torrenté also led a mixed tribunal carrying out Fribourg's great Waldensian trial, which contained some early traces of charges of witchcraft (Utz Tresp 2000, 106–119). His Dominican brothers in Geneva summoned him from Freiburg in the summer of 1430 to conduct a trial against another heterodox traveling preacher, the Italian Benedictine Baptista de Mantua, whose sermons had impressed Duke Amadeus VIII.

From 1432 to 1438, Torrenté may have studied at a university, but we do not know whether he studied at all and at which university. He did become a master of theology before being made professor in 1440. In 1438 and 1439 he conducted witchcraft trials at Dommartin (north of Lausanne) and Neuchâtel. The defendants were men, such as Pierre de la Prelaz, of Dommartin, and Jaquet dou Plain and Enchimandus le Masseler, of Neuchâtel; Masseler was characterized as "heretical." Within twenty years, Torrenté was thus able to make the inquisition in western Switzerland into a permanent and adaptable institution (Andenmatten and Utz Tresp 1992, 77–78, 93–102) that conducted some of the first witchcraft trials and lasted until the late fifteenth century (Paravicini et al. 1997, 247–258). However, Torrenté's activities were limited to the dioceses of Lausanne, Geneva, and Sion; apparently he never visited Besançon, Toul, Metz, or Verdun.

In May 1440 Torrenté finally received from Pope Felix V (the earlier Duke Amadeus VIII of Savoy) the succession to a benefice, which he never occupied. In 1442 Torrenté simultaneously held the titles of vicar-general to Pope Felix V, inquisitor, and prior of Lausanne's Dominican monastery. He died between December 1444 and November 1445 (Andenmatten and Utz Tresp 1992, 104–105; Zimmer 1999, 447–448). He probably did not compose the *Errores Gazariorum* (Errors of the Gazars or Gazarii [Cathars—a common term for heretics and later witches]), one of the earliest descriptions of the witches' sect, even though one of the two known manuscripts of the *Errores Gazariorum* (Basel University Library, A II 34, folios 319r/307r)–320v/308v) contains a text that bears a striking similarity to some proceedings against a

young man from Epesses (east of Lausanne), whom Torrenté reconciled to the faith in 1438. However, this treatise probably came from the Aosta valley and was most probably brought to Lausanne by Georges de Saluces, bishop of Aosta from 1433 to 1440 and of Lausanne from 1440 to 1461 (Ostorero, Paravicini Bagliani, and Utz Tremp 1999, 330–343).

KATHRIN UTZ TREMP;

TRANSLATED BY JONATHAN STICKNEY

See also: DOMINICAN ORDER; *ERRORS GAZARIORUM*; HERESY; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; LAUSANNE, DIOCESE OF; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; SWITZERLAND.

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TORTURE

In many European jurisdictions, judicial torture was used to extract confessions from accused witches. Torture was also used in many cases to obtain the names of witches' alleged accomplices. The administration of torture served the additional function of confirming the beliefs of judges and theologians regarding the alleged activities of witches.

Judicial torture, the infliction of pain in order to obtain evidence in the prosecution of crime, should be distinguished from penal or punitive torture, which is administered as punishment for crime after conviction. Judicial torture had been applied to slaves in ancient Greece and Rome, and during the Roman Empire even free men were tortured in the prosecution of treason and other heinous crimes. The practice, however, fell into general disuse during the Early Middle Ages. In the thirteenth century, after the adoption of inquisitorial procedure, torture was reintroduced into European courtrooms. It was first used in the secular courts of Italian city-states and the Holy Roman Empire in the late 1220s, and by 1252 it had come into use in the ecclesiastical courts, mainly in the trials of heretics.

The main purpose of judicial torture was to obtain the confessions of individuals suspected of concealed

crimes. When inquisitorial procedure was adopted, judges assumed responsibility for determining guilt on the basis of a rational evaluation of the evidence. In order to prevent the conviction of innocent people, the courts adopted a very demanding standard of proof: A person could not be convicted of a capital crime without the testimony of two eyewitnesses or a confession. In concealed crimes, such as conspiracy or murder, it was usually difficult to obtain evidence from eyewitnesses. The same was true for heresy and witchcraft. The virtual impossibility of obtaining testimony from eyewitnesses in those situations therefore placed a legal premium upon confessions, and when confessions were not forthcoming, torture was used to elicit them.

When torture was adopted, jurists recognized that the procedure might easily lead innocent persons to make false confessions in order to stop the pain. To prevent this from happening and to make the evidence obtained from confessions more reliable, jurists formulated a set of rules regarding the proper administration of torture. These rules required, first of all, that a certain amount of evidence of guilt be produced before torture could be administered. Either the testimony of one eyewitness or a specified amount of circumstantial evidence became the official prerequisites for torture to proceed. In order to prevent prosecution on trumped-up charges, there also had to be evidence, known as the *corpus delicti*, that a crime had actually been committed. Other rules governed the duration and intensity of torture, and another specified that all confessions obtained under torture had to be repeated outside the torture chamber. Yet other sets of rules were intended to restrict or deny the prosecution of a criminal's alleged accomplices on the basis of confessions obtained under torture.

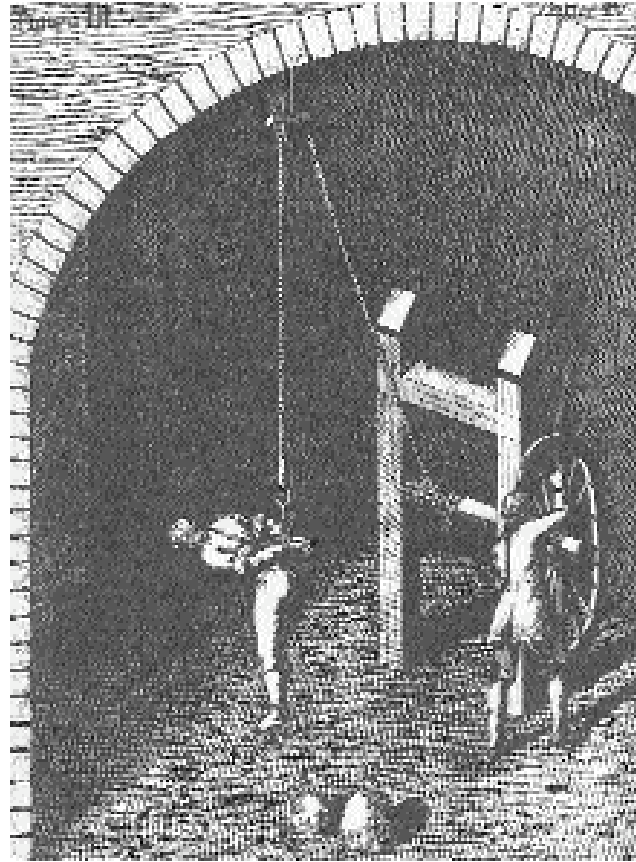
These rules did not serve as a rationale for the system of torture, but they did attempt to limit its arbitrary potential and made judges more confident that it would serve its intended purpose. The problem arose when those rules were either relaxed or completely ignored in the interests of obtaining convictions from persons who were assumed to be guilty but for whose guilt there was little tangible evidence. Relaxation of this sort was very frequent in trials for witchcraft, since witchcraft was widely regarded as a *crimen exceptum* an "excepted crime," in which the usual standards of proof did not apply. In these cases torture was often administered barbarously, and it could be repeated indefinitely until the accused confessed. While relaxation of the rules governing the use of torture became the norm in courts administered by trained judges, the complete ignorance or suspension of the rules occurred frequently in trials conducted by legally untrained laymen or clerics in small jurisdictions.

The instruments of torture were designed to extract information from prisoners without killing them. The

devices therefore compressed or extended the extremities; it was forbidden to apply torture directly to the torso. The thumbscrews, which were often the first devices used during an interrogation, were vises that squeezed and crushed the fingers. Wooden instruments known generally as the boots (the *brodequin* in France) used wedges to crush the legs against boards that encased them. A metal box fitted with a screw mechanism, known as the Spanish boot, served a similar purpose and could be heated to cause additional pain. The strappado, a pulley that raised prisoners to the ceiling by their arms while their wrists were tied behind their backs, served the opposite function of extending the arms. The cruelest use of the strappado took the form of squassation, in which the prisoner was dropped from the ceiling, only to be yanked up again just before hitting the ground. Weights as heavy as 660 pounds could be attached to the ankles of the prisoner in order to increase the pain. Yet another form of extension was the rack, which gradually stretched the arms and legs by means of ropes on ratchets. A less brutal but no less effective means of torture was that of forced sleeplessness, the *tormentum insomniae*.

All European countries allowed the use of torture under certain circumstances, but only in some jurisdictions, especially those that had adopted inquisitorial procedure, did it become an ordinary instrument of judicial interrogation. In Germany, France, Switzerland, the Dutch Republic, the Italian states, and the Spanish kingdoms, torture was accepted as a legitimate procedure. Even in these areas, however, it was administered in varying degrees. Within Germany, for example, the territories of Würzburg, Bamberg, and Eichstätt exhibited little moderation in using the procedure against witches, whereas towns like Rothenburg ob der Tauber exercised much greater restraint. Similar differences can be found in Switzerland. In the Pays de Vaud, where witch hunting was as intense as in any region of Europe, it was applied with great severity, but in neighboring Fribourg, local authorities used it in much greater moderation. Of 159 people imprisoned for witchcraft in Fribourg between 1607 and 1683, 75 survived the administration of torture without confessing, whereas only 49 confessed under its pressure and 35 were never tortured at all (Monter 1976, 106–107).

In many European countries, central judicial authorities took steps to regulate the use of torture, and in some cases, they were able to enforce their directives. In the Holy Roman Empire, the law code known as the *Carolina Code*, promulgated in 1532, set down strict rules for the administration of torture. In France the provincial *parlements* (sovereign judicial courts), especially the *Parlement* of Paris, took steps to gain a monopoly over the administration of torture and to



*The strappado, a torture instrument whereby a victim, wrists tied behind the back, was lifted by a pulley and then dropped without allowing the feet to reach the ground. Often iron weights were attached, thus increasing pain and dislocating joints. (John H. Langbein, *Torture and the Law of Proof: Europe and England in the Ancient Regime*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977, plate XLV)*

punish judges of the lower courts who tortured prisoners without permission. In Spain, Portugal, and Italy, the administration of torture was strictly regulated by the Inquisition, which in each country was a centrally controlled judicial institution.

In England, where the courts of common law were prohibited from employing torture, juries could convict on the basis of circumstantial evidence and therefore had no need of torture. The Privy Council, however, could issue special warrants authorizing the application of torture to identify persons who had threatened the state. These warrants were never issued in witchcraft cases. The only time torture was used in English witchcraft prosecutions was during the witch hunt directed by Matthew Hopkins and John Stearne in 1645–1647. Without effective central governmental control, Hopkins was able to subject suspected witches to the *tormentum insomniae*, keeping suspected witches awake on the grounds that their hungry imps or familiar demons would eventually appear in order to obtain nourishment.

In Scotland, the law of torture was similar to that which prevailed in England: Torture was not allowed unless it was authorized by a warrant from the Privy Council. Those warrants were issued more frequently than in England, but only in a few witchcraft cases. Large numbers of Scottish witches were, however, subjected to torture by local authorities, especially during the great witch hunt of 1661–1662. Torture in these instances often took the form of repeatedly piercing the skin while searching for the Devil's mark. The royal government made sustained efforts to control the application of torture by local authorities, but it did not succeed in this regard until the late seventeenth century.

In Sweden, torture was not allowed in ordinary criminal proceedings, but it was permitted in witchcraft cases, sometimes by royal decree, as occurred during the great witch hunt of 1668–1676. In Denmark and Norway, sixteenth-century legislation forbade the use of torture prior to the sentencing of criminals. This strict regulation of torture was generally observed, although in ten Norwegian trials witches were tortured before sentencing in order to obtain information regarding the worship of the Devil (Naess 1990, 375).

In Hungary, the use of torture in witchcraft cases did not become widespread until the late seventeenth century. The main foundation for its use, apart from some vague references to it in a statute book of 1517, was the *Practica nova imperialis Saxonica verum Criminaliam* (New Rules in Criminal Cases for Imperial Saxony) compiled by the Saxon jurist Benedict Carpzov in 1635. This guide, which has demonological as well as procedural significance, was adopted as the law code for Austria and Bohemia in 1656 and was subsequently incorporated into the Hungarian code of 1696. It is probably no coincidence that its adoption was followed by the intensification of witch hunting in Hungary. The procedures that Carpzov prescribed, however, especially those concerning torture, encountered opposition from jurists, especially Mátyás Bodó in his study of criminal jurisprudence published in 1751.

The use of torture in witchcraft cases served three main functions in the development of European witch hunting. First, it facilitated the fusion of different witch beliefs into a composite notion of witchcraft by forcing persons accused of magic to confess to worshipping the Devil. Torture enabled theologians and jurists to secure the confessions they needed to prove that those whom their neighbors had accused of *maleficium* (harmful magic) had made a pact with the Devil and worshiped him. Second, torture was more responsible than any one factor for high conviction and execution rates in witchcraft cases. Courts that did not regularly use torture, such as the English common law courts, or used it with moderation and caution, such as the tribunals of the Roman Inquisition, almost always had lower rates of conviction than those that applied torture with little

restraint. Torture was not necessary to convict witches, because a voluntary confession on the Continent or a guilty verdict by an English or Danish jury could send a witch to her death. The need to force a confession in most witchcraft cases, however, placed a premium upon torture and led to its widespread use. Third, torture was an essential tool in the conduct of large, chain-reaction witch hunts, in which convicted witches were forced to name their accomplices. Some large witch hunts grew as the result of other factors, such as the testimony of children who imagined they were being carried away to the Sabbat, as in the great Basque witch hunt of 1609–1614, but most large witch hunts, especially those in German and Swiss lands, developed mainly as the result of torture.

In the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the administration of torture in all criminal cases, and particularly in witchcraft cases, came under attack, resulting ultimately in the prohibition of torture in all European jurisdictions. The most famous of these attacks on the use of torture was written by Friedrich Spee of Langenfeld, a Jesuit professor of moral theology at the University of Paderborn. Spee's treatise *Cautio Criminalis seu de processibus contra sagas liber* (A Warning on Criminal Justice, or A Book on Witch Trials, 1631) condemned witchcraft trials for having brought about the death of thousands of innocent persons. Two other Jesuits, Adam Tanner and Paul Laymann, wrote large works on moral theology that included sections on the use of torture in witchcraft trials. From the Protestant side came works by Johann Matthäus Meyfart (Mayfahrt), a Lutheran professor from Erfurt whose work betrayed a heavy reliance on Spee, and Johann Greve, a Dutch Arminian theologian who condemned the use of torture by Christians for any purpose whatsoever.

This body of critical work on torture continued to grow in the late seventeenth century. In 1682 the Burgundian judge Augustin Nicolas wrote a closely reasoned assault on the practice. Christian Thomasius, a jurist from the University of Halle in Saxony who is known mainly for his earlier work, *De crimine magiae* (On the Crime of Magic, 1701), also published a devastating critique of torture in 1705. Thomasius drew heavily on the earlier works of Spee, Tanner, and Meyfart, but he also gave his treatise a distinctly Protestant flavor. A Pietist known for his anticlericalism, Thomasius argued in the manner of Greve that torture was an unchristian means of extorting the truth, that it was never mentioned in Scripture, and that the papacy had used it to strike down its enemies under the pretext of heresy and witchcraft.

The main criticism of torture in all these works was not so much that the procedure was inhumane but that the evidence obtained by means of its administration was unreliable, because innocent persons would make

false admissions in order to stop the pain. The criticism possessed more than mere academic significance. In jurisdictions where torture was routinely administered in witchcraft cases, these treatises contributed directly to a reduction in the number of convictions and executions and ultimately to a decline in the number of trials as well.

The critics of torture, writing in the context of witchcraft trials, made four specific points. The first was that torture should not be allowed on the basis of mere ill fame or insufficient circumstantial evidence. The rationale for torturing witches on the basis of such limited or unsubstantiated evidence was the claim that witchcraft was a *crimen exceptum*. Beginning in the 1620s, which was a particularly intense period of witch hunting in Germany, a number of jurists, most notably Ernst Cothmann, argued that witchcraft was not a *crimen exceptum*. If that were the case, trials for witchcraft would have to conform to the more exacting legal requirements spelled out in the Carolina Code. Soon after the appearance of Cothmann's decision, Paul Laymann argued that in cases of witchcraft and heresy, the circumstantial evidence upon which the decision to apply torture was based must be stronger than in other criminal cases. This meant that judges for all intents and purposes had to be persuaded of the guilt of the accused before resorting to torture and that the confession was needed simply to establish the technical requirements of full proof.

A second criticism, closely related to the first, was directed against the excessive use of torture, a practice that once again had been justified by the exceptional nature of the crime. Extreme cruelty was by far the most widespread abuse of the system, and the criticism of such excesses, on both moral and legal grounds, became the most powerful and enduring argument against the practice. Those who accepted the procedure under certain circumstances, such as the Spanish and Italian inquisitors who drafted instructions for its use in 1614 and 1623, respectively, often voiced the same criticism of torture. The Roman instructions prohibited the administration of torture by jerking the ropes in the administration of strappado, by attaching weights to the feet, and by applying it for longer than one hour. Repetition was to be forbidden except in the most serious cases, in which the court was required to consult with their superiors before proceeding.

The third criticism of torture, which may have done more to reduce the number of prosecutions than any other single factor, was directed at the practice of torturing those who were named by confessing witches as their accomplices. The use of torture in this way had become routine in areas where belief in collective devil worship was strong, and in some German bishoprics, such as Trier, Bamberg, and Würzburg, it had resulted in hundreds of executions. The practice raised two legal

questions. The first was whether witches whose torture had led to their conviction could be tortured a second time to extract the names of accomplices. The second was whether those persons whom the convicted witch named as accomplices could themselves be tortured without any other supporting evidence. On both legal questions, learned opinion was divided, although it is important to note that the most widely read demonologist of the seventeenth century, the Jesuit Martín Del Rio, had defended the practice in unequivocal terms, and had even claimed that the judge's suggestion of names during the administration of torture was legal. The torture of the persons named had been deemed necessary in order to confirm the testimony of the witches. The first scholar to engage Del Rio on this issue was his fellow Jesuit Adam Tanner, who objected that mere denunciation, even by more than one confessing witch, did not justify either torture or condemnation of those who had been of good reputation prior to their denunciation. The danger was that, under torture, innocent persons would confess to crimes they did not commit, the same danger that Spee identified in his *Cautio Criminalis*.

The final criticism of torture was a rebuttal of the claim that God would intervene in the process in order to protect the innocent. This same argument had served as a defense of the medieval ordeals before their abolition in 1215. Tanner, Greve, and even the French jurists who drafted the *Grande ordonnance criminelle* of 1670, which identified torture as an archaic practice similar to the old ordeals (but did not abolish it), had exposed the weakness of this defense. Tanner was particularly eloquent in destroying this argument, claiming that if God had permitted martyrdoms, wars, and massacres, there was no assurance that he would not permit the execution of innocent persons named as witches by allowing them to incriminate themselves under torture.

Although restrictions on the use of judicial torture helped reduce the intensity of witchcraft prosecutions, the abolition of torture in most European jurisdictions came only after the effective end of witchcraft prosecutions and sometimes even after formal decriminalization. Only in two countries, Scotland and Hungary, did abolition take place before the last witchcraft trial. Most prohibitions of torture should be seen as part of a broader reform of criminal procedure that many continental European states undertook in the last quarter of the eighteenth century and first quarter of the nineteenth century. The first country in continental Europe to abolish torture was Prussia in 1754, forty years after King Frederick William I had issued an edict against witch hunting. The last European territory to follow suit was the Swiss canton of Glarus, which took the step in 1851, long after the last legal execution for witchcraft in that territory (and in all of Europe) in 1782.

Moreover, the abolition of torture in Europe was in large part inspired by humanitarian concerns that had not been prominent in earlier critiques. The decline of witch prosecutions therefore had much more to do with the regulation and limitation of torture than with its formal elimination.

BRIAN P. LEVACK

See also: CAROLINA CODE; CONFESSIONS; COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; COURTS, SECULAR; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; EVIDENCE; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; LAYMANN, PAUL; MEYFART (MEYFAHRT), JOHANN MATTHÄUS; ORDEAL; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; TANNER, ADAM; THOMAS, CHRISTIAN; TRIALS; WITCH HUNTS.

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**TOSTADO, ALONSO
(D. –1455)**

Tostado was a Spanish theologian and Bible commentator, an early theorist of witches' "flying," or transvection. Author of a massive commentary on the Hebrew Bible and the Gospels that was reprinted several times in the sixteenth century, Tostado discussed several activities that became commonplaces of witchcraft mythology. He attended the Council of Basel (1431–1440) and could have exchanged information there with such contemporaries as Johannes Nider, Nicolas Jacquier, and Martin Le Franc about the exciting new alleged heresy that soon became known as witchcraft.

In his commentary on Genesis, Tostado discussed the witches' ointment and questions regarding incubi and succubi; while commenting on the Gospel of Matthew, he returned to both topics. Although at first reading, Tostado's two sets of opinions may appear inconsistent or contradictory, they are coherent and complementary. Throughout his commentary, Tostado's uppermost concern was not the social and moral dimensions of human behavior but, rather, the demonstration that human experience and the facts of nature were consonant with events mentioned in the Bible. Tostado was an important influence in the trend that began in the fourteenth century toward maintaining the literal truthfulness of the Bible (Allen 1963, 75–77).

While discussing the creation of Eve, Tostado wondered how God could have kept Adam from feeling pain from his amputated rib. He answered that God would have had no problem, because anesthesia was possible even by natural means. This was clear from the ointments used by certain women called *maleficae* (female witches). The ointments induced anesthesia, a profound stupor, and vivid illusions of flying. To illustrate this contention, Tostado recorded one of the earliest examples of experiments performed to ascertain whether women who used such ointments traveled "in the body" or merely underwent dreams or hallucinations. The anecdote Tostado cited as evidence appeared to portray witches' flying as an illusion, yet Tostado supported the reality of their flying when he discussed the Gospel story (Matt. 4:1–11) of Satan's carrying Jesus to the pinnacle of the temple and onto a high mountain. In both cases, Tostado invoked witches as evidence that phenomena mentioned in the Bible should be interpreted as literally true, rather than fabulous, fictional, or symbolic (Stephens 2002, 146–153).

Tostado was also reluctant to abandon the idea that the "sons of God" who sired the giants of Genesis (Gen. 6:4) were fallen angels, as a literal reading of the Vulgate Bible suggested, rather than mere men as St. Augustine claimed (Stephens 1989, 75–92). Using Aquinas's incubus theories, Tostado proposed that demons could have sired the giants artificially, using semen stolen from men. He returned to the topic in his commentary on the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5), propounding a bizarre theory that incubi and succubi could cause a man to commit adultery and sire bastards by proxy, by collecting semen ejected during masturbation. Thus masturbation was a sin against nature, because a man could sire children without intending to (Stephens 2002, 69–70).

WALTER STEPHENS

See also: ANGELS; AQUINAS, THOMAS; AUGUSTINE, ST.; BASEL, COUNCIL OF; BIBLE; CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DEMONS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; INCUBUS AND SUCCUBUS; JACQUIER, NICOLAS; LE FRANC, MARTIN; NIDER, JOHANNES; OINTMENTS; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC.

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**TREVOR-ROPER, HUGH
(LORD DACRE OF GLANTON,
1914–2003)**

A pioneer in bringing the study of European witchcraft persecution into the mainstream of historical interest, Hugh Trevor-Roper was Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford University (1957–1980), then Master of Peterhouse, Cambridge, until his retirement in 1987. His major contribution was a stimulating if relatively brief essay of around 100 pages, published first in his collection *Religion, the Reformation and Social Change* (1967), then as a separate book in 1969 under the title *The European Witch-Craze of the 16th and 17th Centuries*.

At this time, the documentary basis for such a study was distinctly limited; there were some collections of texts (such as those gathered by Wilhelm Gottlieb Soldan, Joseph Hansen, Henry Charles Lea, and C. L'Estrange Ewen), alongside the contemporary works of the demonologists and some relatively obscure local monographs. Trevor-Roper had the acuity to present the persecutions as an important aspect of European religious, intellectual, and cultural history, an aspect that needed to be related to more general trends in the early modern period. His own view was decidedly Whiggish, not just in refusing to concern himself with “elementary village credulities” (Trevor-Roper 1969, 9), but also in depicting the persecution as a prime example of misplaced clerical zeal fed by confessional strife. The essay remains a brilliant piece of writing, studded with intelligent and provocative remarks, raising a host of important issues. Many of its claims, however, now appear outdated or erroneous in the light of massive later research on the subject, which this striking early synthesis did much to encourage.

Although the author insisted that his own chief concern was with the ideas and motives of the persecutors, his study sketched the whole history of persecution between the fourteenth and the seventeenth centuries. Although he offered no overall figures for the number of trials, his wide range of examples created an impressive literary effect, a vision of much of Europe between 1560 and 1630 covered by pyres for burning witches. Although Trevor-Roper included numerous caveats, these were largely submerged beneath the sheer exuberance of his style as he built up a picture of the witch craze sweeping all before it, citing numerous terrible examples with obvious glee.

This picture of Europe and witchcraft persecution was a serious misapprehension with which more sober accounts of the persecution still struggle to compete: A story becomes much more exciting when told with verve and disregard for inconvenient facts. Trevor-Roper's presentation of zealous witch hunters such as Jean Bodin, Peter Binsfeld, or Henri Boguet as enjoying some kind of intellectual hegemony in their own times was significantly at variance with the messages found in their own writings and greatly underestimated the strength of their opponents. At a more general level, the whole explanatory mechanism proposed seems defective, because he showed the persecution as being essentially top-driven, the work of misguided clerics and judges terrorizing rural populations. He did not wholly ignore the sharp divisions within these groups, but he allowed such counterexamples far too little weight. Above all, he included only a few sketchy comments on the crucial interface between local societies and various official agencies.

The essay remains very interesting in historiographic terms, because it illustrates so well what an experienced and talented scholar could make of the subject in the 1960s, working from what by today's standards was an almost derisory bibliography. If one reads with care and tries to avoid being seduced by the rhetoric, one finds many impressive points, both in detailed comments and in the broad recognition that the intellectuals of the day were virtually compelled to confront the issues of diabolical power and witchcraft. Although his anticlerical tone grates at times, Trevor-Roper correctly identified the link between witchcraft and the religious concerns of the Reformation as a crucial area for study, alongside the question of how the decline in trials related to changes in worldview. It was unfortunate that Trevor-Roper wrote before Norman Cohn and Richard Kieckhefer detected the major forgeries involving early trials in Languedoc and northern Italy, because these discoveries demolished his claim that the inquisitors had simply moved on from the pursuit of heretics to that of witches. The idea that the mountain communities were inherently more superstitious than those of the plains now seems merely quaint. Despite its grave failings, Trevor-Roper's pioneering essay remains a landmark in the serious study of the subject and a lesson in how to communicate with a wide public.

ROBIN BRIGGS

See also: HANSEN, JOSEPH; HISTORIOGRAPHY; LAMOTHE-LANGON, ETIENNE LÉON DE; LEA, HENRY CHARLES; MOUNTAINS AND THE ORIGINS OF WITCHCRAFT; SOLDAN, WILHELM GOTTLIEB; WITCH HUNTS.

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TRIALS

Witches were tried in many different types of courts during the late medieval and early modern periods, and the procedures employed in their trials varied extensively from one jurisdiction to another.

It is a persistent misconception that ecclesiastical courts, especially the papal Inquisition, tried most witches. It is true that during the early years of witch hunting (from about 1425 to about 1550), inquisitors appointed by the papacy played a leading role in the prosecution of witches. Moreover, several authors of witchcraft treatises composed during those years, including the most famous one, the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) of Heinrich Kramer, were themselves papal inquisitors. Even during these early years, however, witches were sometimes tried by other ecclesiastical courts (those of bishops), and were very often tried by secular courts of princes or cities. After 1550, secular courts clearly dominated the prosecution of witches.

A bewildering variety of tribunals judged witches during the early modern period. They included village courts in France; courts in more than 400 German territories, including both local and appellate courts of various duchies and principalities; circuit courts such as the English assize courts, in which royally appointed judges tried witches in the localities; and ad hoc tribunals commissioned by central governments, such as Scotland's commissioners of justiciary, appointed by the Privy Council. In France, the sentences of lower courts could be reviewed by provincial *parlements* (sovereign judicial courts), and in Germany cases could be appealed to the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court). During the period from 1580 to 1630, which was the most intense period of witch hunting, ecclesiastical courts continued to claim jurisdiction over witchcraft, although they generally adjudicated only noncapital cases of magic and superstition. The great exception to this pattern of increased secular jurisdiction after 1550 occurred in the Iberian kingdoms and the Italian territories, where the Spanish Inquisition (established 1479), the Portuguese Inquisition (definitively established in 1536), and the Roman Inquisition (established in 1542) tried most though not all cases of witchcraft. Moreover, the regional tribunals of all three Inquisitions reported to a central authority. Even in Spain and Italy, secular courts executed more witches than did inquisitorial courts.

Each of the courts that claimed jurisdiction over witchcraft had its own procedures and traditions. Ecclesiastical courts had much greater uniformity than secular courts, although Protestant church courts usually followed somewhat different procedures from those of Catholic tribunals. The most salient procedural differences separated those courts that followed accusatorial procedure from those that adhered to inquisitorial procedure. According to accusatorial procedure, which was followed in England, the Scandinavian countries, and to a lesser extent in Scotland, parts of the German empire, and Hungary, prosecution was undertaken at least theoretically by accusers acting either in a private capacity or as representatives of the community. According to inquisitorial procedure, which became the norm in most continental European countries after 1500 and in all ecclesiastical courts, court officials controlled the entire prosecution, from initiation to sentencing. Even among those courts that followed either system of criminal procedure, there were significant variations in the methods used to begin prosecutions, the deposition of witnesses, the methods of interrogating the accused (the prerequisites for applying torture varied enormously within Germany's 400 courts), the determination of guilt, and the process of appealing verdicts or reviewing sentences. The claim that all witchcraft trials were identical has no foundation in reality.

INITIATION

The legal process began with the arrest and formal charging of the witch. The community's suspicion of a person for witchcraft could be made known to the court in a number of ways. In England and other countries that followed accusatorial procedure, it was necessary for someone to enter a formal complaint against a suspected witch. That charge was submitted to a grand jury of laymen, which would then draft an indictment of the accused. In countries following inquisitorial procedure, which included secular as well as ecclesiastical courts in most continental European countries, the process of initiation was more open-ended, since witches could be accused by their neighbors (including other witches), denounced by local officials or clergy, or arrested by the authority of the judge (*ex officio*) on the basis of ill fame or rumor.

In many jurisdictions, an official of the court, known variously as a fiscal, procurator, public prosecutor, or the attorney or advocate of the ruler, was entrusted specifically with the process of identifying and charging suspected criminals, including witches. In Scotland, which did not have a grand jury, the Lord Advocate could issue an indictment on the basis of accusations brought to his attention. Alternatively, local communities, after arresting a suspected witch and searching for the Devil's mark, could request a warrant from the

Privy Council to try the witch in their community. In many jurisdictions, a person could be arrested for witchcraft on the basis of claims by one or more confessing witches that the person was their accomplice. This identification of a witch's confederates was often demanded under torture. The practice of inducing witches to name accomplices, which could happen at any stage of the judicial process, was in large part responsible for the massive chain-reaction witch hunts that occurred during the period 1580–1630.

DEPOSITIONS OF WITNESSES

Almost all witchcraft trials involved the examination of witnesses and the recording of their testimony. These depositions were usually taken after the witch had been arrested and occasionally after she had been interrogated. They usually focused on the *maleficia* (harmful magic) that the accused witch had allegedly perpetrated. In courts that followed inquisitorial procedure, these depositions were taken by an official of the court and became part of the dossier upon which the trial (and any subsequent appeal) was based. In England, justices of the peace took such depositions after 1554, but the witnesses delivered their testimony orally in court, and therefore, written depositions did not usually become part of the official court record.

INTERROGATION OF THE ACCUSED

Central to all witchcraft trials was the interrogation of the accused, often under torture. The goal of all interrogation was to secure a confession, which was regarded as the “queen of proofs.” The desire for a confession was just as strong in England and Scotland, where a conviction could be obtained without a confession, as in countries that insisted upon either a confession or the testimony of two eyewitnesses (the Romano-canonical law of proof) for conviction. The interrogation of the accused might occur right after arrest, or it might be undertaken after the deposition of witnesses. In many cases, interrogations took place on a number of different occasions—first by the authorities who arrested the witch and later by officials of the court. In jurisdictions that allowed torture, courts were required first to provide sufficient evidence that the procedure was warranted. The traditional requirement was the testimony of one eyewitness or the accumulation of circumstantial evidence that, on the basis of contemporary jurisprudence, was considered the equivalent of one eyewitness. Great disparities prevailed among European jurisdictions regarding the frequency, duration, and intensity of torture. English and Scottish courts could administer torture only with the explicit approval of the Privy Council, although Scottish communities often tortured suspects shortly after arrest. Torture administered in this manner was illegal, and hence its application did

not become part of the judicial record. Technically, any confession made under torture was juridically invalid and had to be ratified afterward before it could constitute legal proof of guilt.

DETERMINATION OF GUILT AND SENTENCING

The core of any witchcraft prosecution—the trial in the technical sense of the word—was the determination of guilt. In the early and high Middle Ages, this process usually involved the submission of the accused to an ordeal or one of the “nonrational” proofs, such as trial by battle. After 1215, responsibility devolved on human beings to make such a determination of the basis of evidence. In countries following inquisitorial procedure, where recorded depositions became part of the trial's dossier, the weighing of this written evidence was undertaken either by a judge or a panel of judges. In these jurisdictions the accused was entitled to legal counsel, who was usually referred to as an advocate. In practice, however, most witches were too poor to afford such legal assistance, and lawyers were often reluctant to defend witches. In many German jurisdictions, local courts were required to seek legal advice regarding the handling of witchcraft cases from the law faculties of universities, which would issue nonbinding opinions regarding the case before its final determination. In England, a jury consisting of laymen determined the facts of the case on the basis of evidence presented orally in court. The accused was not entitled to legal counsel during the presentation of evidence, but the prisoner could obtain the assistance of lawyers on matters of law, such as the nature of the charges in the indictment. In Scotland, where criminal procedure included elements of both inquisitorial and accusatorial justice, witches were entitled to counsel, and much of the trial was taken up with the consideration of the relevance of the written evidence to the libel, which was the proposition stating the guilt of the accused. In all European courts, the trial ended with the sentencing of the accused, unless of course the accused had been acquitted or the trial had been suspended.

REVIEWS OF SENTENCES AND APPEALS

Sentences given in witchcraft trials were not always carried out immediately after conviction. A number of jurisdictions required that a death sentence in a witchcraft trial be submitted to a higher court for review. This obligatory reconsideration of witchcraft convictions was most common in seventeenth-century France, where death sentences for witchcraft were routinely referred to one of the nine provincial *parlements*. After 1614 the supreme council of the Spanish Inquisition also reviewed the sentences of lower tribunals and mitigated the severity of a number of

witchcraft sentences. Similar reviews of capital convictions for witchcraft were undertaken in the Scandinavian kingdoms in the seventeenth century and in eighteenth-century Hungary. Within the Holy Roman Empire there was no obligatory appeal of sentences, but cases could be appealed to the *Reichskammergericht*, which sat at Speyer. In cases that were reviewed by higher courts or heard on appeal, the appellate process became in effect a second trial rather than a continuation of the original proceeding. The legal dossier was sent to the higher court; advocates were often appointed to defend the accused, and witnesses could be examined again. There was no appellate process in England or Scotland, although English judges could grant pardons or reprieves to mitigate the severity of harsh jury sentences.

See also: ACCUSATIONS; ACCUSATORIAL PROCEDURE; ACQUITTALS; APPEALS; CONFESSIONS; COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; COURTS, INQUISITORIAL; COURTS, SECULAR; EVIDENCE; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (MEDIEVAL); LAWYERS; ORDEAL; *PARLEMENT OF PARIS*; PROOF, PROBLEM OF; TORTURE; UNIVERSITIES; WITNESSES.

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TRIER, ELECTORATE OF

Evidence survives for about 800 witchcraft trials in the electorate of Trier, mostly from the late sixteenth century. The total number of executions for witchcraft may have been more than 1,000, but this is highly speculative and reaches beyond available documentation. But even the known figure of 800 executions speaks to the intensity of witchcraft trials, because the population of the electorate prior to the Thirty Years' War might have been 75,000 (including 6,000 in the city of Trier and about 5,000 in Koblenz).

As one of the German prince-electors (*Kurfürsten*), the archbishop of Trier was the sovereign of a territorial

state, the electorate (*Kurfürstentum*) of Trier, ruling over territories scattered from the Saar River to the Westerwald Mountains. His jurisdiction was riddled with disputed borders, numerous enclaves, and condominiums. The persecutions began here in the 1480s, peaking around 1590 and again around 1630. One archbishop-elect, Johann VII von Schönenberg (ruled 1581–1599), had the dubious distinction of having the political responsibility for the first massive witch hunt in the Holy Roman Empire, one in which hundreds of witches were executed in the 1580s.

In Trier, mass persecutions that even disregarded rank began relatively early, and Trier Catholic territories moved to the forefront of witch hunting in Germany; these two facts turned Trier into an often-cited paradigm of witch persecution in the Holy Roman Empire. Accusations of witchcraft were leveled not only at criminals, foreigners, and vindictive persons who violated social norms but even at ruthless careerists and corrupt officials. Several members of Trier's upper class, including some priests, were executed as witches. The trial against Dietrich Flade, a magistrate and onetime vice-chancellor of the University of Trier, became a cause célèbre in demonology. And the demonological treatise published in 1589 by Trier's suffragan bishop Peter Binsfeld attracted further attention, although it had no direct influence on the witchcraft trials of the territory and was ignored by the elector's legislation.

After early indoctrination by Heinrich Kramer and local clerics, the popular witchcraft imagination conformed to the demonological stereotypes. A massive number of trial records have been lost, but according to the surviving sources, only 11 percent of the defendants were male; about 70 percent of the male and 87 percent of the female accused were executed (Dillinger 1999, 97–100).

The driving force behind the Trier persecutions included ordinary townsmen and villagers. In the electorate and its surrounding territories, town meetings traditionally elected committees charged with undertaking specific local tasks. In the form of communal witch-hunting committees, self-government turned into the motor of a persecution "from below." These committees usurped various state functions: They organized the investigations, collected evidence and denunciations, accused suspects collectively, and sometimes even employed their own lawyers. The courts and the elector's local officials cooperated with the committees in order to avoid difficulties with them. The committees financed themselves by confiscating a part of the defendants' possessions. Witch hunting provided committee members, their lawyers, and court personnel with significant additional income. These local networks of witch hunters defied every attempt of the badly organized electoral government to control them. The archbishop-electors Johann VII and Philipp Christoph promulgated

witchcraft acts in 1591 and 1630 designed to reinforce the regulations of the Carolina Code and to subject the committees to the control of the High Courts of Trier and Koblenz. However, neither of the witchcraft acts had any perceptible effect.

Trier's witch hunts were triggered by epidemics in connection with an agrarian crisis caused by poor wine harvests in the Moselle region. The persecution gained a momentum of its own. Communities learned about "successful" investigations and soon imitated the activities of other villages' committees. The committees and officials of the electorate exchanged information about suspects with their counterparts in neighboring states, especially the enclave belonging to the imperial monastery of St. Maximin, near Trier. Here, close cooperation between the abbot, his officials, and the village committees led to about 400 trials.

Not only did the Thirty Years' War end the persecutions of the early 1630s in the electorate, but it also destroyed the traditional structure of its rural communities. When Elector Karl Kaspar initiated a reform program in 1652, he successfully outlawed witchcraft trials, regarding them as a serious menace to public order.

JOHANNES DILLINGER

See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; BINSFELD, PETER; CAROLINA CODE; COMMUNAL PERSECUTION; FLADE, DIETRICH; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; KRAMER (INSTITORIS), HEINRICH; LOOS, CORNELIUS; POPULAR PERSECUTION; ST. MAXIMIN, PRINCE-ABBAY OF; WITCH HUNTS.

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TRITHEMIUS, JOHANNES (1463–1516)

Trithemius was one of the best-known magicians of Renaissance Germany. Born into a wine-growing family named Heidenberger from Tritenheim (whence his Latinized name), Trithemius studied at Trier and Heidelberg, became a Benedictine monk at Sponheim near Bad Kreuznach, and was elected abbot eighteen months later. Trithemius dedicated himself to reforming his monastery, whose library soon became a center of early German humanism and whose history he wrote. However, his frequent absences, together with

his passion for books, generous hospitality, and rumors of his occult inclinations, ultimately led Trithemius to exchange Sponheim for the rather unimportant monastery of St. Jacob.

His most inventive and influential studies, *Polygraphia* (Many Forms of Writing [Cryptography], 1518) and *Steganographia* (Secret Writing, written ca. 1499, published 1606), are encrypted treatises on ciphers. About 250 of his letters to many contemporary humanists are known, often through the publication of *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis* (About Clerical Writers) in 1494 and the *Catalogus illustrium virorum Germaniae* (Catalogue of Famous German Writers) in 1495. Besides having an excellent command of Latin, he learned Greek and Hebrew with the help of famous teachers, Conrad Celtis and Johann Reuchlin. A lifelong interest in history produced his *Chronicon Sponheimense* (Sponheim Chronicle, 1508). But Trithemius was clearly capable of falsification, proved by his invention of two chroniclers, Hunibald and Wastald, in a work for the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I.

Trithemius called himself a *philomagus*, a friend of magic. He identified magic with philosophy, with wisdom dealing with the divine, humanity, and nature. He considered legitimate natural magic to be utterly distinct from the superstitions of demonic sorcery and witchcraft. His autobiographical *Nepiachus* (1507) listed his teachers in the art of natural magic, including Albertus Magnus (Albert the Great) and Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola. Trithemius, however, also professed to have secret knowledge through revelation: While he was resting, an unknown visitor instructed him.

In 1502 Emperor Maximilian requested a list of Trithemius's magical skills from his close friend Conrad Celtis, a list that unfortunately has not survived. Three years later, Trithemius met Emperor Maximilian for the first time at the diet at Cologne. Afterwards, the abbot was allowed to call himself a chaplain of the imperial court. At their meeting, the emperor asked Trithemius eight questions, which he first answered orally and then in writing as *Liber octo quaestionum* (Book of Eight Questions, 1515); version appeared in 1515. One question asked why unholy people like witches could command demons, whereas good people could not. Another asked why miracles were possible outside the Church. In reply, Trithemius emphasized the powers of the Devil and demons who aided the magicians and the witches. Whereas magicians had informal but implicit pacts with the Devil, witches signed a formal pact and were consequently entirely subject to him.

In the second book of his *Antipalus maleficorum* (Testimony of Witches, 1508) Trithemius denounced witchcraft and surveyed the methods permitted by the Church to treat bewitchment, especially the healing

power of exorcism. In sixty-one pages, he described a procedure, lasting nine days, called the antiwitches bath. First, the bewitched person had to confess his or her sins and then attend a Mass of the Holy Trinity. The bath had to be in a secret place and the tub had to be filled with clear spring water, to which consecrated soil, ashes, salt, and nine different blessed herbs were added. A piece of dough, formed from consecrated salt and water, was wrapped in a cloth that covered the afflicted part of the person. While the bewitched was praying, the ritual of exorcism took place. The priest, while conjuring the demons, circled the tub twice, first with his back to the tub and then turned toward it. Using a freshly cut frond, the priest sprinkled the sick person with consecrated water and then blessed some wine, which the patient was to drink for nine days. A mixture of consecrated wax, thirty-eight powders, red coral, and holy water was shaped into a cross, put into a walnut shell, sealed, and sewn into a cloth that the patient was to wear around his neck. Additional crosses were formed and put on his doors, bed, and table. The patient was to attend Mass every day. Trithemius claimed to have applied this procedure successfully to several patients.

Trithemius intended to write a systematic treatise on demons, but the outline of *De demonibus* (On Demons), written between 1507 and 1514, only gave its table of contents.

CHRISTA TUCZAY

See also: DEMONOLOGY; FAUST, JOHANN GEORG; MAGIC, NATURAL; MAXIMILIAN I, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR.

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TYROL, COUNTY OF

Throughout the early modern period, trials for witchcraft remained relatively infrequent in the Alpine county of Tyrol, located west of most Austrian Habsburg hereditary lands. Their total number and intensity never came to rival those of neighboring lands in southwestern Germany. Trials for witchcraft throughout Tyrol appear to have reflected the ethnic, social, and political diversity of the county. Although a thorough, systematic analysis of the prosecutions is still lacking, available scholarship suggests that at least seventy-two trials, involving some 200 or more accused witches, took place; of those suspects whose gender is known,

approximately 72 percent were women. Executions remained relatively infrequent in many parts of the county, particularly to the west, where the earliest burnings took place only in 1623. In the Italian- and Ladin-speaking areas of the county around Brixen and Trent (today part of Italy), executions were more frequent (Byloff 1934; Dienst 1987a, 286–289; Tschalkner 1992, 231).

In the late Middle Ages, a total of four trials occurred at Enn (1296 and 1433), Brixen (1371), and Meran (1436–1437) (Dienst 1987a, 286–289). At Innsbruck, a noteworthy trial involving some fifty suspects was prosecuted in 1485 by Heinrich Kramer, the author of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486); but the bishop of Brixen and Archduke Sigismund arranged for the release of all seven imprisoned suspects and drove the Dominican inquisitor from their territory (Dienst 1987b). In comparison, the sixty-seven subsequent trials in the county remained limited in scope, but they occurred in increasing numbers during the sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth century, although they never generated a territory-wide witch hunt. Few trials occurred after 1650, the last being an isolated case in 1728. Therefore, witchcraft trials in Tyrol followed the typical chronological pattern of western European territories, with prosecutions peaking between 1580 and 1640, a pattern applicable as well to the contiguous Habsburg territory of Vorarlberg (today Austrian) and in Swabian Austria (Schwäbisch-Österreich, today part of Germany). In contrast, the dynasty's eastern lands experienced a different pattern of trials, with a high point between 1660 and 1690 (Dienst 1987a; Tschalkner 1992, 230–231).

Accusations stemming from fears of simple sorcery or *maleficia* (harmful magic) seem to have been central in most Tyrolean cases. Trial records reveal that the inhabitants of Tyrol feared debilitating illnesses for themselves or their animals, bad weather and crop failures, or other types of misfortune, just as did rural populations elsewhere in Europe. On occasion, such anxieties translated into suspicions of either neighbors or outsiders. Only sixteen of seventy-two trials included significant evidence of diabolical activity, though a few featured elaborate tales of the witches' Sabbat. Local magistrates exercising their own discretion, it seems, introduced such elements. Only in 1637 did the Innsbruck government introduce diabolical elements into its regulations for conducting witchcraft trials—but it did so in order to limit their influence upon court proceedings. Throughout the entire period of the witchcraft trials, the Tyrolean government sometimes acted to mitigate the effects of overzealous prosecution of accused witches, even if it did not eliminate the practice entirely.

EDMUND M. KERN

See also: AUSTRIA; AUSTRIAN WESTERN TERRITORIES; GOLSER, GEORG; INNSBRUCK; KRAMER (INSTITORIS), HEINRICH; RURAL WITCHCRAFT; SALZBURG, PRINCE-ARCHBISHOPRIC OF; VORARLBERG.

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UKRAINE, WITCHCRAFT

According to popular stories collected by Ukrainian ethnographers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Ukrainians did not explicitly differentiate between witchcraft and sorcery. The term most frequently used to describe all magic practices in both popular stories and trial records was *chary*. The difference between witchcraft practitioners was more essential. A sorceress, *charivnytsia*, was rarely mentioned in popular stories; their main character was a witch, *vid'ma*. Ukrainians, however, distinguished between two types of witches. The first was a "natural-born witch," *rodyma vid'ma*; the second was a "taught witch," *vchena vid'ma*. Both were female witches, but the origin of their power was different.

The natural-born witch, as her name suggests, was born as a witch. She could be recognized by physical characteristics: She was supposed to have a short tail and a strip of dark hair going down her back. Sometimes she might lack one breast. She was often described as an unfortunately fated being who did not want to do evil but who was unable to change her nature. Among her unavoidable responsibilities were teaching the learned witches magic and attending the witches' Sabbats. This latter activity was more abhorrent to her, because she could not refuse the duty. Yet it was the natural-born witch who helped people, practiced white witchcraft, and could undo the evil done by other witches.

The taught witch, on the other hand, who practiced low magic as opposed to high or learned magic, was the embodiment of evil because she had consciously decided to become a witch. Because any woman could become a taught witch, it was impossible to recognize her by natural means. However, such a woman had to perform an initiation ritual such as the act of sacrilege, usually late at night, on the border of a village, on the bank of the river. This ritual was free of the Devil's involvement. After she had performed such a ritual, a natural-born witch would teach her.

Another important character, *kyjiv's'ka vid'ma*, or "the witch of Kiev," was mentioned not only in Ukrainian but also in Russian, Belarusian, and Polish folklore. Witches from Kiev were thought to be the most powerful, dangerous, and knowledgeable of all witches in the region.

Male witches were rarely mentioned in popular stories. They were mentioned as either a "male witch," *vid'mak*, or a "vampire," *opyriaka*. A male witch wore his hair long in order to hide a small horn. He was mentioned as the head of the witches' gatherings, and he was able, as a natural-born witch, to undo the evil done by other witches.

The repertoire of Ukrainian witches was similar to that of witches in other parts of Europe. Their most popular activity was stealing milk from their neighbors' cows. Witches were especially attracted to milk and were able to extract it from such creatures as dogs, cats, rats, and frogs and even from some trees. Ukrainian witches could rule the elements of nature. They stole clouds from the sky and then turned them into frogs, which they hid in pots to cause a drought. They called locusts and sparrows to the fields to spoil the harvest or made special magic knots in grain crops for the same purpose. Sometimes a witch in popular stories was referred to as a "star-grasper," *zirokhvatka*, because she enjoyed stealing stars and the moon from the sky and hiding them in pots and wells in order to spoil important Christian holidays. They could steal babies from cradles at night or scare lonely passers-by, but rarely were they mentioned, at least in popular stories, as causing illness or death to people.

In order to move to the stage of crime at night unnoticed, the witch had to be able to shapeshift. The most common metamorphosis was into a dog or a cat. Sometimes such an animal was mentioned as having a female face. Other examples included a mouse, a frog, a horse, a fly, a haystack, a wheel, a needle, a wall, bread, and a sieve. There are many stories in which a man returning home late at night meets a suspicious animal or a moving object. He strikes it with a sharp knife or a saber, and next morning he discovers that a woman in a village (most often his close relative) has lost her hand, has fallen ill, or has been severely wounded, and so he discovers that she was a witch.

Resistance to witchcraft is an important part of many stories about witches. Because in many cases it was difficult to distinguish between a witch and nonwitch, it was first necessary to identify a witch. There were numerous methods. The swimming test (water ordeal) was used only in cases when a witch represented a

danger to the whole village community. When a witch was stealing milk from somebody's cow, that person had to take care of his or her own interests. All methods of recognizing a witch could be divided into two main groups: (1) Rituals that made an alleged witch come to the house of an offended person and propose to remedy the harm; and (2) rituals that allowed the recognition of a witch when she was among other women (most often she would appear with a milking bucket on her head).

Once a witch had been recognized, it was recommended that she be seized and punished (beating her up was the most widespread method of punishment). This was considered a dangerous enterprise, so those who could pay were advised to go to a healer, *znakhar*, for assistance. Anyone who had once succeeded in seizing a witch was considered a healer. However, those who could not afford to pay a healer had to face the witch in person. Because that was a dangerous procedure (performed at night and at the risk of being frozen until morning by the witch), one could not fight a witch with bare hands. The best weapon against a witch was a magic rope, *ochkur*. In addition, a certain type of dog was able to seize a witch. Such a dog was born only once in three generations and was called *iarbuk*, but the owner of this valuable dog had to take care when it was a puppy because local witches would try to steal and kill it. Some people, such as the seventh son of a seventh son, could also resist witchcraft. Such plants as poppies, hemp, and nettles were supposed to protect a house from witches.

Ukrainian witches regularly gathered for Sabbats. Prior to their journey, they had to come to the house of a local natural-born witch; there, they prepared for the journey. Popular stories mentioned about two methods of flying to the Sabbat. One was the traditional method of using a flying salve; the other involved somersaulting over a knife. The main gathering place for Ukrainian witches was in Kiev on the Bald Hill, *Lysa Hora* (scholars disagree about which of four alleged Bald Hills in Kiev was the authentic one). The Devil was not mentioned as being present at such gatherings; instead, a male witch sometimes headed them. According to the popular stories, during the Sabbats witches danced, played with dolls, and attacked each other with wooden swords.

Several stories described the horrible death of a witch. In order to reduce her suffering, she had to pass her knowledge on to someone. She could do this merely by touching someone or passing any object from hand to hand. Because of this belief, people were afraid to approach an alleged witch on her deathbed. Some stories claimed that relatives sometimes had to make a hole in a ceiling in order to make the witch's death less painful. Such a hole allowed the soul of the witch to leave her body easily.

KATERYNA DYSA

See also: ANIMALS; COUNTERMAGIC; DOGS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; FOLKLORE; IDENTIFICATION OF WITCHES; MALE WITCHES; METAMORPHOSIS; MILK; RUSSIA; SABBAT; SORCERY; SWIMMING TEST; UKRAINE, WITCHCRAFT TRIALS; WITCH AND WITCHCRAFT, DEFINITIONS OF.

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UKRAINE, WITCHCRAFT TRIALS

Ukraine has only recently come to be included among the countries traditionally perceived as part of the history of European witchcraft trials. Its witchcraft trials were mentioned never as a separate phenomenon but only in connection with Russian or Polish trials. In either case, Ukrainian trials were regarded as something foreign: To Polish witchcraft experts, Ukrainian trials were different because of the influence of the Orthodox tradition in its southeastern crown lands; from a Russian perspective, Ukrainian trials showed Polish characteristics and indirect German and thus Western legal and cultural traditions in these lands.

Such confusion was compounded by insufficient study of Ukrainian witchcraft trials. A Ukrainian historian of Polish origin, Vladimir Antonovich (1830–1908), produced the first detailed study of Ukrainian witchcraft trials in 1872. His study contained materials about Ukrainian witchcraft trials from 1700 to 1768 taken from the Kiev central archive; it was soon published as a separate book (Antonovich 1877). Although a pioneering researcher, Antonovich did little to analyze his information, apart from emphasizing the entire lack of torture and death sentences in Ukrainian trials and claiming that Ukrainians never connected witchcraft with the Devil and demons. Afterward, Ukrainian witchcraft was studied mainly by ethnographers, who produced much fruitful work (Kurotshekin 1991–1992). Historians recycled Antonovich's materials, comparing them favorably to western European trials (because Ukraine had relatively few witchcraft trials and executions), while adding ethnographic evidence. The only new angle to the problem was a short study of 1903 about the "drowning of witches," the swimming test or water ordeal (used in Zguta 1977a).

The information we possess remains limited to about ninety Ukrainian witchcraft trials, almost 70 percent of

which come from the palatinates of Podolia and Volhynia, with a few from the palatinates of Bratslav and Kiev and from a hetmanate (the domain of the hetman, the leader of the Ukrainian Cossacks of the Dnieper River region). Materials from the Ruthenian Palatinate, although well preserved, have not yet been researched. Magistrates' courts in Podolia treated witchcraft accusations more leniently than in Volhynia. Judicial torture was used rarely in Podolia but more often in Volhynia; all death sentences, except for one 1667 trial, also come from Volhynia. At least eleven people were executed during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The most notorious trial occurred at Hadiach in 1667, where six witches accused of an attempt on the lives of the local hetman and his wife were burned.

The first recorded Ukrainian accusation of witchcraft took place in 1578 in Volhynia against Princess Maria Kurbskaia. To date, only a handful of seventeenth-century cases have been studied; the vast majority (85 percent) come from the eighteenth century. The last known trial occurred in 1829 at the town of Lypovets', where Kateryna Martynivska, a lawyer's wife, was accused of bewitching a local priest.

Ukrainian witchcraft cases were almost entirely under secular jurisdiction; only in the late eighteenth century, when witchcraft was labeled a superstition, did the Spiritual Consistory of Kiev hear a few cases. Charges were usually brought to the magistrates' courts, but cases involving the *szlachta* (nobility) were taken to the *hrodskyj sud* (castle court). The diversity of legal codes used in Ukrainian lands created a certain flexibility in legal approaches to witchcraft. The two most frequently cited sources for dealing with witches—the Magdeburg law (introduced in Ukrainian cities at different times since the fourteenth century) and the 1588 statutes of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania—both prescribed execution by burning for convicted sorcerers. In practice, burning was often replaced with beheading, although the judges invariably stressed that the culprit should have been burned. They warned prisoners who received more lenient sentences for practicing witchcraft (defamation by whipping, "public torture," or banishment) that a second conviction would lead to their being burned alive. The most frequent punishments were merely fines and church penances, and many trials ended by acquitting the alleged witches and punishing their accusers for slander, imposing a fine and requiring a public apology.

An important feature of the Ukrainian judicial tradition affecting court attitudes toward alleged witches was that in the majority of cases, courts were not interested in the previous criminal history of the accused. Therefore the questions asked during such trials were strictly connected to the conflicts that had occurred at a certain time between the two parties

involved; witnesses who could testify about a defendant's past witchcraft were not usually summoned.

This lenient attitude has traditionally been attributed to the influence of the Orthodox Church, which allegedly failed to create a significant demonological tradition or to establish any connection between the Devil and witches. Such an explanation is unsatisfactory for two reasons. First, the treatises, pamphlets, and sermons of seventeenth-century Ukrainian Orthodox theologians, for example, Antonij Radyvilov's'kyj and Ioanikij Haliatov's'kyj, demonstrated that both devils and *chavwnitsy* (witches) were very popular subjects. *Bogi poganskia* (Pagan Gods), a demonological pamphlet by Haliatov's'kyj published in 1686, made a clear connection between the deeds of witches and sorcerers and the Devil's involvement. Second, the Ukrainian towns in which the majority of the known witchcraft trials originated were ethnically and religiously heterogeneous, melting pots of Orthodox, Uniates, Roman Catholics, Monophysites, and Jews, places where the influence of Catholicism was quite strong. However, it is true that the concept of a diabolical witch sect was absent from Ukrainian lands.

Death sentences persisted far into the eighteenth century, often in cases where there were accusations of witchcraft in conjunction with other crimes. In 1720, during some epidemics in the small town of Krasyliv, Proška, a peasant woman (reportedly 120 years old!), was accused by a soothsayer from a neighboring village of causing epidemics and was burned. Later, the victim's relatives, considering the decision unfair, appealed to higher authorities to punish the local court for sentencing an innocent woman to death. Ten years later, another peasant woman was accused of bewitching her master's family and was sentenced to beheading by the magistrates' court of Kremenets'. In 1748 the same court sentenced a servant to beheading for employing sorcery and fraud against his master; in 1753 and 1755 the court sentenced two women to death, primarily for infanticide but also for witchcraft.

Gender analysis of Ukrainian trials shows that almost equal numbers of men and women were accused of witchcraft. But a closer examination reveals that many men were accused on behalf of their wives and that most actual witchcraft practitioners were in fact female, although a substantial minority of male practitioners remains.

Ukrainian witchcraft trials were predominantly urban; only a handful of peasants participated. Most accusations occurred among craftsmen and town-dwellers of middling status. Another distinct professional category of participants included Orthodox priests and their wives. A third group consisted of soldiers; the remainder included various marginal groups, such as beggars, Jews, and other minorities, who received harsher treatment in court. For conviction for the same crime, craftsmen paid

finer and performed public penance whereas members of marginal groups were usually imprisoned, whipped, and exiled. In most cases that ended with a death penalty, the person convicted of witchcraft and executed was socially inferior to his or her accuser.

The urban character of the trials is also reflected in the nature of the accusations: no cases of stealing milk from cows, turning milk sour, or causing storms and droughts appear in court records. However, after 1700, courts investigated cases when local village authorities illegally organized water tests during droughts. Many accusations were based on actual magical practices. Craftsmen often accused each other of attempting to achieve business success by magical means. Although one finds numerous cases of love magic, accusations of maleficent magic predominated. Fears of bewitchment plus familiarity with magical practices explained the high percentage of preventive accusations, made before any actual harm had been done but after witnessing suspicious rituals or the cooking of strange concoctions.

Night flights and witches' Sabbats were mentioned in only one Ukrainian trial. Investigating a case of infanticide in the village of Shchurovichi in 1753, the magistrates of Kremenets arrested Orzyszka Liczmanicha, accusing her of witchcraft. Under torture she confessed that she belonged to a group of witches. She was the least experienced among them, so they had to teach her everything—how to fly, milk cows magically, spoil crops, and cook concoctions. During her first flight to a neighboring Ukrainian territory, she had an accident at the border and fell down, wounding her nose and knees. Because she never reached her destination, we still have no description of a Ukrainian Sabbat.

KATERYNA DYSA

See also: COURTS, SECULAR; EXECUTIONS; FEMALE WITCHES; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); LITHUANIA, GRAND DUCHY OF; ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY; POLAND; RUSSIA; SLANDER; SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF WITCHES; SWIMMING TEST; TRIALS; UKRAINE, WITCHCRAFT; URBAN WITCHCRAFT.

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UNIVERSITIES

Universities played a central role in the history of witch hunts. This applies both to the belief in witches and to witchcraft trials. Numerous proponents as well as opponents of witch hunts worked as professors in faculties of theology, law, and medicine. Academic theology made an important contribution to the fusion of the individual components of the cumulative concept of witchcraft in the early fifteenth century. Medieval scholastic theology busied itself with questions of satanic pacts, human sexual intercourse with the Devil, and the reality of nocturnal secret meetings of witches in remote places. Because of the universities' teaching activities and through the clergy's sermons, elements of the scholarly belief in witches also influenced the general public's concept of witches and witchcraft. In Estonia, which had perhaps 100 parishes, Tartu University, created in 1632, educated 242 clergymen between 1625 and 1720 and thus disseminated Swedish official ideas about witchcraft. The well-known seventeenth-century Swedish witch hunters Nils Psilander and Johan Gezelius had studied at Tartu University.

However, past assumptions that academic theology bore the main responsibility for witch hunts have proved untenable. Theological faculties did not directly influence witchcraft trials, particularly the large-scale witch hunts starting in the late sixteenth century. Previously, university statements had provided authority for witch hunters. In the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486), Heinrich Kramer (Institoris) cited the condemnation of ritual magic by the University of Paris theological faculty in 1398.

Discussion within theological faculties about the nature of witchcraft became livelier in the seventeenth century; an impressive example was the skeptical professor Adam Tanner of Ingolstadt. The second edition (1510) of Ulrich Tengler's *Layenspiegel* (A Mirror [of Law] for Laymen) clearly indicated the transmission of issues concerning witchcraft from the realm of theology to then-contemporary jurisprudence. The publisher of *Layenspiegel*, Ulrich's son Christoph

Tengler, wrote that although the Church did have a certain right to conduct witch hunts, it was not appropriate to burden the clergy with this responsibility because of the cruel punishments required by the crime of witchcraft. This was in keeping with the usual trial practice in early modern Europe. Therefore, in any discussion of the role of universities in witchcraft trials, the main focus falls upon faculties of law.

After a short overview of the establishment and spread of universities, this entry will discuss three further aspects: the integration of law faculties into the court system, the jurisdiction of universities in the matter of witchcraft, and scholarly literature written by university professors.

ESTABLISHMENT AND SPREAD OF UNIVERSITIES

The oldest European universities date from the High Middle Ages, centuries before witch hunts began. Those of Bologna and Paris were established before 1200, followed by Oxford, Cambridge, and Montpellier a short time later. Most early universities were in southern Europe; the first universities in central Europe (Prague, Vienna, Heidelberg) were established in the fourteenth century. Theology and jurisprudence, as well as medicine and philosophy, were the dominant fields at medieval universities. Important areas for the field of witchcraft research are the development of jurisprudence through the reception of Roman law and the development of the doctrine of witchcraft within theology. The work of Bologna's school of law was trailblazing, beginning with Irnerius, who revived Roman law, and Gratian, who first compiled canon law in his *Concordantia discordantium canonum* (Concord of Discordant Canons), known as the *Decretum*, around 1130 (revised 1140). Professors of civil law adapted common law (*ius commune*), while canonists concerned themselves with canon law (*ius canonicum*). Civil law concentrated mainly on interpretation of the Roman *Corpus juris civilis* (Body of Civil Law), the compilation issued in 530 by the Byzantine emperor Justinian. Criminal law did not develop until later and is often attributed to Albertus Gandinus's *Tractatus de maleficiis* (Treatise on Crimes) of 1298. Historically, researchers distinguish different epochs of scholarly jurisprudence. The glossators, whose specialty was describing and explaining Roman law texts, were active up until the time of Accursius (d. 1263). The commentators wrote long treatises on individual legal questions. In the Holy Roman Empire, in contrast to Italy and southern France, reception of Roman law did not develop fully until around 1500. At the time of the witch hunts, the *Usus modernus pandectarum* (The Modern Use of the Pandects—the *Digest*, one of the three parts of Justinian's code) prevailed, a mixture of standard Roman-Italian juristic traditions with traditional

Germanic law, for which David Mevius (1609–1660), Benedict Carpzov, and Samuel Stryk (1640–1710) are best known. In Switzerland, a main zone of witch hunting, universities played only a marginal role in the witch hunts. Only the law faculty at the University of Basel (founded in 1460) taught Roman law. The regional witch hunts in the Swiss cantons for the most part occurred without relation to scholarly discussions of witchcraft.

INTEGRATION INTO THE COURT SYSTEM

Faculties of law became involved in witchcraft trials particularly through so-called *Aktenversendung*—the practice of sending the files of a pending procedure to a legal faculty to seek advice. Beginning in the sixteenth century, *Aktenversendung* was a typical manifestation in the early modern court system and applied to both civil and criminal trials. In the Holy Roman Empire, where most witch hunts took place, *Aktenversendung* was based on two late medieval models: traditional trial procedure rooted in imperial and lay assessor courts, and Italian jurists with consultative responsibilities. Local fifteenth-century lay assessor courts usually turned for advice to another court, which was staffed by legally trained but nonacademic local dignitaries. This court then suggested a decision of the case in question, which the lower court normally accepted and pronounced as its own verdict. The scholarly-consultative activity, the second root of *Aktenversendung*, dates from fourteenth-century Italy. At the time, individuals as well as courts often consulted distinguished professors for legal advice, either generally or concerning an individual case. Unlike traditional courts, university jurists based their decisions on standard Roman law and contemporary scientific literature. Older literature falsely attributed a testimonial calling for burning witches to death to the famous fourteenth-century jurist Bartolo of Sassoferrato (d. 1337), a consultant who never actually encountered witchcraft trials.

In the Holy Roman Empire, the connection between the traditional courts and scholarly *consilia* (juridical advice) is clearly visible in Emperor Charles V's Carolina Code, the criminal-law ordinances of 1532. This code often referred explicitly to advice from legal scholars, including in article 109, sentence 2, concerning benign witchcraft. Article 219, the last clause in the Carolina Code, described whom a court should consult for advice and when. Here, imperial law differentiated between accusatory trials and inquisition trials. In accusatory trials, lower courts were either to consult higher imperial courts or to turn to their local government for legal advice. However, in inquisition trials, judges in doubt were advised to turn to a qualified faculty of law. In practice, the distinction between high courts, lay assessor courts, and law schools was minimal

by the mid-sixteenth century, as the first two were increasingly filled with university-trained legal scholars, some of whom also taught at universities. For example, Carpzov was simultaneously senior lay assessor of Leipzig, chairman of the law faculty of Leipzig's university, and a member of Leipzig's appellate court.

The integration of the universities into the court system was appropriate for several reasons. First, the empire possessed no supraregional supervisory bodies comparable to France's *Parlement* of Paris (sovereign judicial court, with jurisdiction over approximately one-half of France). Second, the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court) had been forbidden to hear appeals in criminal cases by a law of the Holy Roman Empire in 1530. The nullification of verdicts and individual trial procedures was thus only possible in special circumstances, so-called trivial cases and mandate trials. Third, urban and sovereign courts often remained staffed by untrained laymen well into the early modern period. *Aktenversendung* thus involved university-educated, professional judges with individual witchcraft trials. In such proceedings, advice was given purely on the basis of a written criminal trial (*quod non est in actis non est in mundo* [what is not kept in records does not exist—Roman law]). All nonjudicial trial procedures were documented in files, which the court formally locked (called *inrotulation*) and sent to a faculty of law. There were usually at least two *Aktenversendungen* in the course of a criminal trial. The first concerned the question of whether sufficient circumstantial evidence existed to justify the use of torture. At the trial's end, jurists had to reach a final verdict and determine whether there was enough evidence to justify a severe sentence.

Written trial records and the involvement of impartial, distinguished academic jurists led to a professionalization of criminal trial procedures. Because documentation was the responsibility of lower courts, a danger existed that the defendant's defensive possibilities could be deliberately impaired. If conviction depended on the contents of documents, overly zealous judges in witchcraft trials could distort those contents to achieve their goals. Sovereigns faced another problem with *Aktenversendungen*. If foreign lawyers decided local criminal trials, a judge's duties as head of his local court could be greatly impaired. There were two possible ways to escape this situation. Sovereigns either founded their own universities or created independent public authorities or ministries of justice, which took over the task of consultation from lower courts. Thus, in 1551, the duke of Württemberg ordered that all criminal courts, when in doubt, must seek advice from the college of law in Tübingen; *Aktenversendungen* to foreign universities was prohibited.

In Sweden, the law faculty at the University of Uppsala was likewise involved with witchcraft trials. In

1672 a member of the law faculty served on a commission to investigate legal procedures a local court employed in witchcraft trials in Hälsingland.

Outside the Holy Roman Empire, *Aktenversendung* to law faculties was common. The University of Basel in the mid-seventeenth century consulted for the French-speaking canton of Vaud and demanded compliance with the *processus ordinarius* (ordinary procedure). In 1718, during the Hungarian witch hunts, the city magistrates of Nagyszeben (Hermannstadt) requested opinions of the law faculties of the universities of Vienna and Leipzig regarding the credibility of confessions extracted under torture. The Hungarian University of Nagyszombat was noticeably influenced by the doctrines of Carpzov, professor of law at Leipzig.

The practice of *Aktenversendung* did not exist in England, where legal procedures were based on common law, even though the law faculties of Oxford and Cambridge taught only Roman law. The universities' teachings therefore had limited practical relevance for witchcraft trials, although some faculty, especially in Cambridge, authored demonological works.

JURISDICTION IN WITCHCRAFT TRIALS

How much influence universities had on witch hunts remains open to controversy. Some claim that universities perpetuated witchcraft trials into the second half of the seventeenth century (Schormann 1977), but large parts of the legal community are said to have constantly demanded adherence to the *processus ordinarius*. The following differentiation is probably correct: Judgments by faculties of law always took place in certain trial situations. In every case, legal scholars answered only those questions the lower courts asked. Their decisions were based primarily on weighing circumstantial evidence to permit torture and on evaluating evidence for punishment; statements about individual aspects of witchcraft rarely appear in their opinions. Concentration on procedural law as well as on criminal law led to a further decisive criterion: Whether an individual faculty of law favored or opposed persecution depended crucially on whether its professors considered the *processus ordinarius* the relevant principle for witchcraft trials. If, instead, they followed common legal principles from Roman law, the rules designed to protect defendants could be ignored in severe criminal offenses (*in delictis atrocissimis more propter criminis enormitatem iura transgredi licet* [in atrocious crimes or on account of the enormity of the crime, it is legal to transgress the law]). This latter viewpoint had serious consequences for evaluating circumstantial evidence, particularly for determining whether a prisoner could be tortured because of indicting testimony alone. The defense possibilities of suspects also depended on whether law colleges demanded *processus ordinarius* in

full or whether witch hunters had been granted broader powers.

Further differentiation is necessary because of the large number of individual sources of law. The common criminal law teachings prevailed at universities, but because of certain clauses it contained, the Carolina Code was often considered secondary to local penal codes. In such cases, the lower courts determined the relevant legal code to be applied by the universities in reaching their decision. Different evaluations of evidence by various scholars and schools usually reflected the varying individual standards of the court of inquiry. For instance, Professor Carpzov of Leipzig considered the satanic pact worthy of the death penalty, according to electoral Saxony's 1572 constitutions. What seems like an aggravation of common legal theory and deviation from article 109, sentence 2 of the Carolina Code only proves Carpzov's connection to locally valid Saxon law.

At the time of the witch hunts, central Europe contained twenty-three universities. The decisions of several law schools in witchcraft trials are well known and seem to indicate that rulings before 1570 equated witchcraft with the concept of *maleficium* (harmful magic), which appeared in article 109, sentence 1 of the Carolina Code. Toward the end of the sixteenth century, a more elaborate concept of witchcraft gained general acceptance within German universities, even among professors, such as Johann Georg Goedelmann of Rostock, who maintained that the guidelines of the *processus ordinarius* should be adhered to even in witchcraft trials. For a full century, every legal scholar fully followed the *communis opinio* (common opinion). Christian Thomasius was the first jurist to overcome the concept that witchcraft is real—and older colleagues such as Samuel Stryk outvoted him in his university's faculty. During the main phase of the witchcraft trials, university scholars fully shared the dominant concept of *crimen magiae* (crime of magic).

In procedural questions, numerous universities upheld strict standards. The law colleges in Lutheran Rostock and Greifswald spoke out as early as the turn of the seventeenth century for maintaining the *processus ordinarius* in witchcraft trials. Not only Goedelmann but also his colleague Ernst Cothmann (d. 1624) expressly rejected Jean Bodin's proposed easing of criminal trial procedures. Beginning in 1654, the faculty of law in Catholic Mainz upheld the *processus ordinarius* in witchcraft trials, explicitly disagreeing with the looser trial procedures of canon law in cases of heresy. By then, the high point of witchcraft trials had already passed. Previously, the Mainz faculty of law—like many others—had still permitted torture based on gossip, extralegal confessions, and allegations of having attended Sabbats with other witches.

The universities of Helmstedt and Rinteln seem to have largely preferred the theory of *crimen exceptum*

(the excepted crime). At Rinteln, 347 decisions in witchcraft trials include only 19 judgments in favor of the accused. The doubts expressed by Professor Hermann Goehausen in 1630 concerning the too-generous acceptance of denunciation as evidence were not widely shared by his colleagues. At Tübingen, however, *processus ordinarius* became the general guideline in witchcraft trials after the mid-seventeenth century. Erich Mauritius (d. 1691), a professor in Tübingen at the time, showed an attitude generally critical of persecution after becoming a professor at Kiel (1665) and then assessor at the *Reichskammergericht* in 1671. Many universities also gave advice about the details of torture, for which the Carolina Code only contained a recommendation (article 58). Following Italian jurists, many universities differentiated between the threat of torture and its actual execution, which they further divided into three degrees. The questions of whether a revoked confession permitted torture to be repeated or whether particular tortures could be repeated up to three times were sharply debated. The answers depended on whether a specific faculty of law followed the *processus ordinarius* or the *crimen exceptum* theory. We must not forget that large numbers of the accused were executed despite *Aktenversendung*, although this practice probably inhibited even larger-scale persecutions. For suspects, university involvement at least gave hope of an impartial judgment.

SCHOLARLY LITERATURE

Apart from their involvement in individual witchcraft trials, universities also produced some important scholarly literature about witches, both general academic treatises, and literature oriented toward practical decision making. Both kinds of works played a central role in contemporary debate. Most major demonologists were not university professors, but scholarly treatises and manuals on witchcraft came from both Protestant and Catholic theologians. They range from the Tübingen theologian Jakob Heerbrand (d. 1600), who used the Bible to deny substantial elements of scholarly witch theory, to Cologne professor Peter Ostermann, who wrote a commentary on the Devil's mark in 1629, and they culminated in the theses of Mauritius and Thomasius. The universities' published appraisals and decisions were, however, decidedly more important for the legal process. The medieval Italian counselors had already collected their legal opinions (*consilia*), which reached a larger audience with help from the printing press. Literature oriented toward practical decision making reached its apex in the early modern era. Many professors published their own collections of decisions or published verdict collections on behalf of their colleges. Depending upon the author's reputation, his viewpoint could have notable influence on witchcraft trials. The University of Mainz, for example, referred

during a witchcraft trial in 1654 to a 1597 decision by Rostock professor Ernst Cothmann. This was no isolated case, but followed the usual practice that lawyers and universities supported their *rationes decidendi* (reason for the decision) in significant decisions with examples from previous literature containing decisions. Individual jurists could attain almost canonical authority in this way. Used regularly by universities as well as appellate courts, academic jurisprudence thus influenced various levels of the legal system during witchcraft trials.

PETER OESTMANN;

TRANSLATED BY JONATHAN STICKNEY

See also: CAROLINA CODE; CARPZOV, BENEDICT (II); COURTS, SECULAR; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; GOEDELHANN, JOHANN GEORG; GRATIAN; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); LAWYERS; *LAYENSPIEGEL*; OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITIES; PARIS, UNIVERSITY OF; *REICHSKAMMERGERICHT* (IMPERIAL CHAMBER COURT); ROMAN LAW; TANNER, ADAM; THOMASIVS, CHRISTIAN; TORTURE; TRIALS.

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**URBAN VIII, POPE
(1568–1644)**

The pope best remembered for persecuting Galileo had few connections with witches but many intimate dealings with learned magicians and astrologers, principally the well-known Dominican utopian Tommaso Campanella.

Born Maffeo Barberini, the future pope belonged to one of Florence's most prominent and wealthy mercantile families. Educated by the Jesuits, he attended their Roman College and studied law at Pisa. Greatly influenced by humanist thought, he developed a keen interest in history, art, and classical antiquities. Throughout his pontificate, he continued his youthful practice of devoting an hour each day to composing his own brand of Baroque poetry, in Latin, Greek, and Italian. Moreover, he developed a very strong belief in the efficacy of astrology.

Barberini's legal acuity made him a rising star within the papal Curia after 1592, and an enormous legacy from an uncle in 1600 made him wealthy. Barberini took holy orders in 1604, swiftly becoming papal nuncio in Paris. He was made cardinal in 1606 with emphatic French support. Returning to Rome in 1614, he amassed an enormous personal library and built a palatial residence that remains a Roman landmark. After an extremely acrimonious enclave, Barberini emerged as the strongest candidate and was elected pope on August 6, 1623. Significantly, he chose to name himself after the great French pope Urban II (reigned 1088–1099), who unified all of western Christendom against the Turkish invaders of the Holy Land. The new Urban VIII clearly viewed himself as a modern crusader whose mission was to heal the breach caused by the Protestant Reformation and to convert all the peoples of the world to Roman Catholicism, uniting them within one all-embracing church. A Dominican monk and magician, Tommaso Campanella, who soon came to Urban's notice, encouraged this ambitious ideal.

Astrology preoccupied the pope. He had horoscopes cast for many cardinals resident in Rome and made a habit of openly predicting the dates and circumstances

of their deaths. But Urban's Spanish foes turned this technique back on him: From 1626 onward, rival astrologers were predicting the date of the pope's demise. Consequently, he turned increasingly to Campanella's expertise in order to prolong his life. Throughout 1628 there were frequent reports of Urban VIII and Campanella meeting together in order to practice magic and necromancy. In particular, the lunar eclipses predicted for January 1628 and December 1630 were thought to pose direct threats to the pope's health and well-being. At these critical junctures, the pope confined himself in a sealed room with Campanella; they attempted to restore harmony to the heavens through elaborate rituals, sprinkling the floor with herbs and re-creating the light of the seven planets (shut out by the eclipse) with the flames of candles and torches. The pair surrounded themselves with servants whose own horoscopes were not affected by the eclipse; music was played and spirits were drunk in an attempt to stimulate the properties of the good planets (Jupiter and Venus) and dispel the effects of such hazardous ones as Mars and Saturn. Campanella and the pope relied on Neoplatonic philosophy, not unbridled superstition (Walker 1958, 207).

A relieved Urban VIII emerged unscarred after each eclipse. He was quick to employ Campanella's talents again when the son of his nephew fell seriously ill. However, the pope's favor did not ultimately help the magus in fulfilling their dream of making the Roman Church universal, especially after Campanella drove Urban to a state of rage by publishing an account of his magical pursuits in *Astrologica* at Lyons in 1629. High (learned) magic may well have been a fitting and necessary private pursuit for them, but the pope felt it was not something to be openly propagated. Indeed, Urban VIII published his own bull (*Inscrutabilis*) against astrology in 1631. In it, he specifically forbade speculation about the deaths of popes and princes and the members of their families on pain of death, damnation, and the confiscation of property.

Reassured by Campanella's rites, Urban VIII lived until July 1644, criticized mainly for indulging the breathtaking graft of his nephews. His faithful magus received permission to found a new college in Rome, the Collegio Barberino, in order to train missionaries. Few of the earnest young men schooled there knew about the secret world of magical incantations that lay behind the college's creation.

JOHN CALLOW

See also: ASTROLOGY; CAMPANELLA, TOMMASO; MAGIC, LEARNED; NECROMANCY; PAPACY AND PAPAL BULLS.

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URBAN WITCHCRAFT

Although the vast majority of European witchcraft trials began in rural villages, a not insignificant share originated in cities; one even finds a few urban witch panics in places as widely separated as Arras in northern France (the mid-fifteenth-century *Vauderie*) and Salzburg (the late-seventeenth-century *Zauberer-Jackl-Prozesse* [Sorcerer-Jack-Trials]). However, trying to isolate any specifically urban dimensions within European witchcraft is an extremely difficult task.

The existence of "urban witchcraft" as a separate category cannot be assumed. But if we define witchcraft as a doctrine or system that requires both evil and benevolent witches, pivoting around the crime of *maleficium* (harmful magic), then urban and rural witchcraft might differ noticeably. When we compare rural with urban witchcraft, the scattered research about specific cities suggests the existence of a lame or abridged urban "system." In fact, we cannot tell to what extent any "natural control" (Larner 2000) of witchcraft operated within European cities.

How should we define a city? A most ancient symbol representing it was a cross within a circle. But walls alone are an insufficient criterion, even if the feeling of safety they provided distinguished town-dwellers from peasants in Old Régime Europe. For contemporaries, the possession of specific political and economic privileges was probably more important. However, for our purpose, simple demographic factors were probably the single most important separator affecting the practices of witchcraft, because the relative anonymity of larger agglomerates of people created circumstances quite different from those of small-scale villages with respect to a neighborhood crime like *maleficium*.

A summary of the demographic pattern of early modern cities is thus indispensable. The percentage of Europeans living in cities at the end of the seventeenth century (about 15 percent) was no higher than it had been a century earlier. At the end of the sixteenth-century demographic expansion, western and central Europe were dotted with some 200 cities of over 10,000 inhabitants, a number that remained substantially unchanged a century later. Europe was also swarming with towns of only 2,000 to 3,000 inhabitants. But a significant demographic change was occurring: Larger cities grew at the expense of smaller ones. In the seventeenth century, the number of

metropolitan centers of over 100,000 inhabitants increased from eight to thirteen. Because aggregates can be misleading, we must distinguish between Mediterranean areas, where both Spain and Italy experienced a marked urban decline, and some centers in northwestern Europe, which saw demographic explosions in Paris, London, and a cluster of cities in the province of Holland.

European towns required a steady influx of peasants immigrating from the countryside throughout the preindustrial period. The half-hidden agrarian roots of early modern urban centers weakened the impact of other demographic factors. Ties of kinship and godparentage, not to mention weekly markets, often linked villagers with towns. Such short-distance migrants generally maintained significant contacts with the moods and minds of people in their home villages. But at the same time, we must also ask to what extent the impact of a new urban way of life stimulated the process of “modernization,” overcoming the tyranny of traditional agrarian societies. Did a specific demographic threshold erase or erode some of the circumstances connected with a specifically neighborhood crime like *maleficium*? Were even “relatively small urban populations . . . just sufficiently mobile and anonymous to discourage the long build-up of hostility characteristic of witchcraft accusations in tight-knit rural societies” (Briggs 1996, 265)? This assertion badly needs further research, because contradictions abound.

On the one hand, there are plentiful examples in which an urban district might have created exactly the same malefic atmosphere of envy, backbiting, and calumny typical of small-scale village communities. On the other hand, why is there no trace of any large witch persecution in very large cities like Amsterdam, Hamburg, London, Vienna, Venice, Paris, or Madrid, sociological “monsters” where traditional ways of living and thinking were likely to be quickly altered and where practitioners of various types of magic proliferated? The crucial question seems to be this: At what point did early modern cities become centers of innovation and creativity, where their size and “culture” affected everyday life strongly enough to transform the attitudes of their inhabitants toward such basic issues as love, birth, and death? City-dwellers inhabited a milieu where the opportunities available for better worship, schooling, medical care, and policing made a difference. Historians have yet to ask how far such factors contributed to shaping an entirely different frame of mind, undermining a belief system that included spells and countermagic.

We take the example of Holland as a starting point. In Johann Weyer’s time, the Low Countries ranked among Europe’s most active witch-hunting zones. But after 1590, executions abruptly ended first in Holland, then in Utrecht, Groningen, and Gelderland (where the last

witch hunt occurred in 1603). “The Dutch *zonderweg* in witchcraft trials was celebrated early and often, centuries before such scholars as [Johan] Huizinga labelled it as one aspect of the triumph of a bourgeois spirit in the heavily-urbanized northern Netherlands” (Monter 2002, 35). Although Huizinga has followers, Marijke Gijswijt-Hofstra has questioned the idea of considering Holland’s high-seventeenth-century prosperity, and especially the predominance of towns over countryside and the victory of an urban culture, as the crucial factors in ending witchcraft trials. It is certainly an intricate task to verify how different social classes thought about witchcraft over time. But if the central focus of the historian “is on the evolving conception of witchcraft of various socio-cultural groups and their interactions” (Gijswijt-Hofstra 1991, 9), then the impact of a possible “modernizing” urban factor cannot be dismissed so easily. For instance, using sources from seven Dutch towns, Hans de Waardt has shown that the belief in witchcraft could still be found among broad strata of Dutch society, although certain categories of people had stopped participating in the discourse about witchcraft. For example, university-trained doctors and lawyers admitted that witchcraft was possible, but in the course of the seventeenth century, they became less inclined to recognize it as a cause of illnesses. It also seems that deficiencies in food production were no longer associated with *maleficium*, a change attributed to economic development. The Dutch area also seems to show a connection between a decline in witchcraft accusations and a rise in slander cases for being called a witch (Waardt 1991).

Unfortunately, no other European state enjoyed the stimulating Dutch coincidence of social, economic, and cultural primacy with an early dwindling away of witchcraft prosecution. Therefore, the workability of the impact of an urban factor should be approached randomly, guided by H. C. Erik Midelfort’s now-venerable methodological remark that witchcraft cannot be considered a monolith. William Monter’s equally venerable Genevan evidence serves the purpose. Demonstrating that villagers dwelling near Geneva accounted for about half of all witches tried in the city (a common feature: for example, a large number of Scottish cases said to come from Aberdeen, Dumfries, Stirling, or Edinburgh were merely tried there), he argued that “in Geneva, as in many other places, witchcraft was not static but dynamic. The typical form of this crime changed considerably between 1527 and 1652, [mostly] in the form of the witch’s *maleficia*” (Monter 1976, 56). The changes consisted mostly in simplifications that eliminated such details as orgies at Sabbats, while Geneva’s most common *maleficium* after 1605 became demonic possession, a phenomenon that occurred first in the city itself.

The phenomenon of demonic possession was not unique to Geneva. Though no general synthesis of

witchcraft in France has yet replaced Robert Mandrou's anticipatory *Magistrates et sorciers en France au XVIIe siècle* (1968), the phenomenon of urban possession that he emphasized remains a relevant French feature. Cases of collective possession took place mostly in nunneries and hospitals. Demoniacs, mostly women and children, blamed witches as the cause of their possession and attracted crowds of spectators. The cases of Loudun and Aix spread across the kingdom and became food for intellectual debate; however, in the capital at Paris, highly publicized exorcisms like that of Marthe Brossier in 1599 apparently failed to convince. Although the impact of such widely publicized urban exorcisms on the popular classes is difficult to assess, in the short run we should probably view them as a strong antidote to urban "modernization." The actual diffusion of French exorcisms is difficult to reconstruct because, unlike witchcraft trials, they rarely left written traces (Walker 1981). This remark applies equally to seventeenth-century Italy, where this phenomenon was certainly rife but where we presently have no way to assess its relative urban-versus-rural intensity beyond copying the assertion, referring mostly to sixteenth-century Germany, that "the Devil was equally active in towns and in the countryside" (Midelfort 1989, 120).

It has been maintained that "First or reasons which remain obscure, the urban milieu does not seem to have generated many witchcraft cases in most parts of Europe. The obvious exceptions are the pandemics which afflicted some German towns and the more routine persecutions found in parts of the southern Netherlands, the latter an exceptionally urbanized region suffering from severe economic dislocation" (Briggs 1996, 305). Witchcraft in early modern Germany, even more than elsewhere, was an unstable mixture of maleficent magic and devil worship. Because the roles played by these two components differed, extracting any particularly urban trends from studies that almost never addressed this problem is no easy task, both despite and because of the impressive proliferation in recent German witchcraft research. For example, if the cumulative demonological concept of witchcraft was certainly strongly contested in southwestern and Bavarian areas, as Midelfort and Wolfgang Behringer have demonstrated, was it, after all, "principally a construction which was (or could be) called upon during judicial interrogations, but which did not play a significant role in the context of daily life" (Gijswijt-Hofstra 1999, 164)? We know that many of Germany's numerous free cities (for example, Nördlingen, Rottweil) conducted relatively frequent witchcraft trials, and some of the largest and most important among them (for example, Augsburg, Strasbourg) continued to execute witches long after 1650. But we lack specific research about whether such modernizing factors as better schooling, worship,

medical care, or policing affected German urban milieus sooner and more strongly than rural zones.

For instance, granted that accusations of killing livestock or raising hailstorms through witchcraft were extremely rare in urban environments, it could be meaningful to compare data linking charges of witchcraft with infanticide in urban and rural settings. It has been shown recently that the judicial reclassification of charges against accused witches "involved the judicial abandonment of the general word for witchcraft (*hexerei, sorcellerie, brujeria, stregoneria, toverij, trolldom, hekseri, trolldom, noitus*) and its replacement with more specific terms" (Levack 1995, 81). A clear illustration of this "modernization" of witchcraft concerns infant mortality. Between 1550 and 1750, did a greater proportion of town-dwellers view the sudden and strange death of a baby as a less reasonable cause for charging a suspected person with *maleficium*? We note that "the central government of Württemberg in the eighteenth century dealt repeatedly with cases of simple poisoning. Similarly, infanticide came to be detached from its association with witchcraft" (Midelfort 1972, 83). But more information of this kind is needed in order to assess whether such "modernization" was more relevant in an urban milieu—where, admittedly, infant mortality was also higher. Similarly, in the late-seventeenth-century German cities, it became "increasingly common for persons to be found guilty of casting charms (*Segensprechen*), fortune telling (*Wahrsagen*), and magical treasure hunting (*Schatzgräberei*)" rather than being accused of devil worship (*ibid.*, 82). Because such magical activities are known to be equally widespread in villages, such a trend might appear to confirm the "simplification" theory already noted in Geneva. We know that in Augsburg, one of Germany's largest imperial free cities and a place where trials for witchcraft remained sporadic, a tycoon like Jacob Fugger dabbled in crystal-ball gazing, but we have no idea how widespread this recourse to supernatural economic information was among his fellow urban merchants.

In regards to Poland, further research may clarify whether any particular urban tonality lies hidden behind the statistic that 19 percent of the people accused of witchcraft lived in urban areas in a land where city-dwellers comprised only 5 percent of the population.

In Mediterranean cities, the activities of revealing the future, telling fortunes, finding lost objects, and attracting lovers were rife. Love magic was a typically urban phenomenon in Castile and southern Spain, as in larger Italian towns. Unfortunately, except for Venice, no thorough research on urban witchcraft has been done to date. To generalize from a single example is always a risky procedure, and in the case of Venice, these dangers multiply because the city was so gigantic (140,000 inhabitants), because it was so extraordinarily

cosmopolitan, and not least because its policy fostered a specific type of inquisition. Still, the wide range of the available information tempts one into venturing a few speculations. As the papal nuncio reported in 1580, these Venetian cases “did not arise from any inclination towards heresy; rather they were directed towards two ends, love and gain, which wield great power over empty-headed people” (Monter 2002, 47). Infant deaths and deliberately diabolical forms of witchcraft attracted scant attention here. Instead, Venetian witchcraft activity centered on money. Necromancy concentrated on treasure hunting; conjuration, divination, and many charms and incantations were employed for gambling (Martin 1989). About 70 percent of the persons accused of witchcraft were women, not infrequently courtesans, while among the men, some 40 percent of the accused belonged to the clergy. Charms and incantations for love magic were mostly practiced by women, either as a trade or by unmarried or immigrant women. Though the city must be seen as a sprawling collection of smaller communities likely to reproduce the neighborhood crimes of rural environments, the extent to which superstitious remedies were practiced was perhaps limited both by the concentration of opportunities for medical care in Venice and by agencies of control (the Inquisition, police); one provided alternatives for witchcraft, the other brakes upon it.

How far this possible Venetian evolutionary pattern could be extended to other Italian cities remains an open question; sheer lack of information makes it impossible to say anything about long-term changes. A similar profile of illicit magic probably proliferated between 1580 and 1660 in every major Italian city. We know that the number of trials conducted in Reggio Emilia for such illicit and diabolical magic in the decade 1595–1604 surpassed 200. How many of those accused lived in cities? Wherever witchcraft trial papers have survived and a concentration of urban opportunities such as those described above was present, it is worth trying comparisons. The interpretative speculation suggested for Venice seems to find some confirmation at Siena, where a long series of trials suggest that town-dwellers stopped accusing witches of causing strange illnesses or deaths of infants a half century sooner than did the *contado* (peasantry). Could these remarks be extended to all Mediterranean cities?

Most recently, this Venetian evidence has produced the hypothesis that the word “witch” was and is an interpretive category that may not be useful and could, in fact, obscure historical investigation and understanding. The noun *strega* is rarely used in the trials surveyed and never by the prosecutor or defendant: it designates a trade, like “baker” or “prostitute,” not an identity. It is vocational, occasional, and external, not an internal, dominant, and determining characteristic. The witch is an identity constructed, not even by contemporaries,

but by subsequent historians. A career option rather than a fate or destiny, witchcraft may be considered as having a place alongside labor and family studies, rather than being an exotic or aberrant growth of the social body (Scully 1995, 865, 857).

Such recent opinions evoke echoes of Jacob Burckhardt’s nineteenth-century suggestion that the Italian witch, like her famous fifteenth-century Spanish literary counterpart, La Celestina, practiced a real job and needed money and mostly self-awareness. Sometimes ancient insights still hold a measure of truth.

OSCAR DI SIMPLICIO

See also: AUGSBURG, IMPERIAL FREE CITY; CELESTINA, LA; COLOGNE; EXORCISM; GENEVA; GERMANY; LOVE MAGIC; MILAN; POLAND; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; RURAL WITCHCRAFT; SIENESE NEW STATE.

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V

VADUZ, COUNTY OF

In the early modern period, today's principality of Liechtenstein consisted of the county of Vaduz and the dominion of Schellenberg, both governed in personal union since 1507 first by the counts of Sulz and later by the counts of Hohenems. Vaduz and Schellenberg experienced intense witchcraft prosecutions; those of 1679 and 1680 rank among the most extensive witch hunts in German-speaking countries in the late seventeenth century.

As in many other nearby regions, numerous witchcraft trials occurred in both small territories (probably containing no more than 5,000 people together) from 1595 to 1600, again in the 1630s, from 1648 to 1651, in the mid-1660s, and from 1678 to 1680. The first episode claimed between ten and twenty victims; the second, in the 1630s, led to some arrests but no death sentences. The quantitative peak of witch prosecution in Vaduz and Schellenberg was reached from 1648 to 1651. Several series of trials, emphatically demanded by the territorial estates, claimed about 100 casualties. It seems that the prosecutions finally stopped when the accusations of witchcraft reached the upper strata of local society. Approximately fifteen years later, in the mid-1660s, further witchcraft trials took place, causing the execution of at least nine people.

These and the next prosecutions, at the beginning of 1678, are poorly documented. More exact source material exists for the last phase of witch hunting, in 1679 and 1680. In spring 1679, the *Landvogt* (governor), Dr. Romaricus Prügler, conducted witchcraft trials in Vaduz that resulted in the execution of twenty people. Although the court, in accordance with the law, had submitted its documents of inquisition to a lawyer, the trials soon encountered broad resistance. Because of his assumed abuse of authority, the *Landvogt* made a spectacular escape. The conflict between the representatives of the people and the count was then settled by an arrangement whereby the deeply indebted count left his income to the estates in return for the payment of interest on their debts and repayment of the credits they had taken for him. Henceforth, the representatives of the people would also receive the income from further witchcraft trials. Under these conditions, former critics of the trials became proponents of fresh prosecutions.

So in 1680, the estates made no protest against the trials under a new *Landvogt*, Joseph Andreas Walser, which claimed twenty-five victims altogether.

A first step to prevent further witchcraft trials was taken by Maria Eberlin of Planken after she escaped from the castle of Vaduz, where she had been imprisoned on the charge of assumed witchcraft, and found assistance from a notary in Feldkirch, in Habsburg Vorarlberg. Soon thereafter the parish priest of Triesen, Valentin von Kriss, also argued against witchcraft trials. However, his objections saved only one woman from burning, in December 1680; others were executed. Shortly afterward, the priest and five other people, who had fled from the county of Vaduz because of the witch prosecutions, contacted the Holy Roman Emperor in Vienna through the Habsburg government at Innsbruck. Their petitions incriminated the count, already in a precarious political situation. Soon he was forbidden to continue the inquisitions and trials. A commission appointed by the emperor sent the Vaduz documents to the law faculty of the University of Salzburg, which declared in its report that all cases from 1679 and 1680 were to be regarded as illegal and therefore invalid.

Nullification of the judgments and prohibition of further trials did little to resolve the conflict between supporters and opponents of witch persecutions at Vaduz. Although no new legal proceedings were begun against witches, suspicion and agitation persisted. Local conflicts continued generations-long enmities between the families of the victims and those of former prosecutors or informers, who were ostracized as *Tobelhocker* (people banished into a wild ravine) until the end of the twentieth century. Altogether, witch hunting in the regions that became Liechtenstein after 1719 claimed about 200 casualties.

MANFRED TSCHAIKNER

See also: APPEALS; CONFISCATIONS OF WITCHES' PROPERTY; HOHENEMS, FERDINAND KARL FRANZ VON; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; NUMBER OF WITCHES; UNIVERSITIES; VORARLBERG.

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VALAIS

Like other regions of the western Alps, such as the duchy of Savoy, the Dauphiné, and the diocese of Lausanne, Valais was one of the first regions where persecutions started as the “new” heresy of the witches took form around 1430. The present canton of Valais, located in the southwestern Swiss Alps, is bilingual (called Valais in French, Wallis in German). Beginning in the tenth century, it was a diocese led by the bishop of Sion, who was also the temporal lord (the count) of Haut-Valais (Upper Valais). He led an assembly, or diet, representing the nobility, the clergy, and the rural communities, or *Dizains*. In the west, Bas-Valais (Lower Valais) belonged to the territory of the duke of Savoy. In episcopal Valais, the repression of sorcerers or witches was mostly handled by secular courts controlled by the bishop, whereas in the Savoyard part, Dominican inquisitors judged heretics. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, the Valais was already well Christianized. Like the nearby Simmental valley, the Valais was highly developed economically, with some political tensions (Borst 1988, 267–270).

HANS FRÜND'S REPORT AND THE FIRST WITCH HUNTS

The first important testimony about witchcraft and diabolical sects in Valais comes from the chronicler Hans Fründ of Lucerne, who, around 1430, reported the first persecution of witches, which had taken place in Valais from 1428 to 1430. He gave a detailed account of how witches and sorcerers gathered around an evil spirit—one of the first descriptions of the witches' Sabbat. According to him, these *sortilegi* (sorcerers), both men and women, were discovered first in 1428 in the Val d'Anniviers and in the Val d'Hérens, two French-speaking valleys of Lower Valais, and then in the eastern, German-speaking regions of Upper Valais. Fründ claimed to have based his account on trial records.

Part of those proceedings and related evidence (local accounts, death sentences, and so on) have been found in the local archives by Chantal Ammann-Doubliez (Fründ 1999, 23–98). Her evidence confirms that this first witch persecution began in 1428 and lasted until 1436 throughout all of Valais, leading to the death of nearly 100 men and women. Fründ did not invent anything; for example, in 1428–1429, Agnès Lombarde and Pierre Chedal were accused, respectively, of being familiar with wolves and of riding on their backs, exactly as Fründ had said (ibid. 86–89).

During this persecution, local assemblies decreed rules for judicial procedure in cases of witchcraft, specifying the sharing of jurisdiction among various courts and authorities. In 1428 in Loèche (Leuk), the Patriots (that is, the diet) defined how to handle denunciations or specific accusations, how to open a case, when and how torture was to be used, how confiscated goods were to be shared, and so on. Communal statutes of Moerel in 1430 and of Rarogne in 1434 specified further rules of procedure. Witchcraft gradually came to be seen as a collective crime, perpetrated by a sect. Consequently, some adaptation of traditional legislation was necessary. However, during the witchcraft trials, frequent conflicts of jurisdiction occurred between the prince-bishop of Sion or his bailiff and the mayors or the local communities, each claiming competence over the proceedings and the right to confiscate the goods of the culprits. Witchcraft trials played a major role in the competition for both judicial and political power, above and beyond economic interests.

The novel phenomenon of the witch hunts in Valais progressively spread throughout Switzerland. Sometime between 1444 and 1450, Felix Hemmerlin (Malleolus), a canon from Zurich, wrote in his *Dialogus de nobilitate et rusticitate* (Dialogue Between a Noble and a Peasant) that the diocese of Sion was an accursed land, where a great many people, both men and women but mostly rural people, had been burned after publicly confessing their crimes (Hansen 1901, 111).

1450–1500: PROCEEDINGS AND CONFLICTS OF JURISDICTION

After the first Valais witch hunt of 1428–1436, persecutions continued in the second half of the fifteenth century; more than fifty cases are presently known. Among these is that of Françoise Bonvin, a rich widow who was accused of witchcraft in the spring of 1467. Her lawyer, Heyno Am Troyen, petitioned the prince-bishop of Valais, Walter Supersaxo (ruled 1457–1482). Using a list of fourteen questions, Troyen interrogated sixty-seven witnesses in order to establish the innocence and respectability of his client, who had been denounced by three “sorcerers” who had been burned a few months before. This petition offers a highly skeptical contemporary view of the witchcraft theory propagated by the local courts and authorities (Strobino 1996). In 1484, the next prince-bishop of Sion, Jost de Silenen (ruled 1482–1490), started proceedings against Peter Eschiller, who had fled Valais a few years before in order to escape arrest at a time when his predecessor, Supersaxo, was leading a witch hunt. When Eschiller returned home, he was incarcerated and questioned by the prince-bishop of Sion, acting simultaneously as inquisitor and overlord (with *merum et mixtum imperium*, “mere and mixed power”—the highest kind of jurisdiction and competence

in medieval Roman law). At the end of the inquisitorial procedure, after being forced to confess his participation in many diabolical “synagogues,” Eschiller was handed over to the secular arm and burned at the stake (Ammann and Chantal 1996).

In this period, the prince-bishops of Sion increasingly claimed jurisdiction over witchcraft trials, which had previously been handled by lay courts, leading to numerous conflicts. Around 1488, a general inquiry into the beneficiaries of the culprits’ goods during the fifteenth century showed some abuses in jurisdictional rights.

WITCH HUNT FROM THE SIXTEENTH TO THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES

Although at present the historical research remains very incomplete for this period, it appears that a reduction in the witch craze occurred in sixteenth-century Valais. Repression was no longer a collective phenomenon, and there were no further massive trials like those of the fifteenth century. In the seventeenth century, witchcraft trials resumed, perhaps because of the troubles caused by the Reformation, which tried to establish itself in Valais, and maybe sparked by serious outbreaks of the plague. Between 1590 and 1654, in Lower Valais, the lands governed by the abbey of St. Maurice held witchcraft trials with more than forty victims. The synodal constitutions of the diocese of Sion, promulgated in 1626 and published in 1635, explicitly forbade all forms of superstitions and magic and urged the priests to control the faith of their flock. The last sorcerers convicted in Valais were burned at Bagnes in 1730. Other proceedings were reopened afterward, but none ended with a death sentence. Nevertheless, in 1790 the penal code of Lower Valais still contained a chapter punishing magic spells and still followed the Carolina Code, the imperial criminal code of 1532 (Bertrand 1920–1921, 180–194).

MARTINE OSTORERO

See also: CAROLINA CODE; CONFISCATIONS OF WITCHES’ PROPERTY; COURTS, SECULAR; DAUPHINÉ; DOMINICAN ORDER; FRÜND, HANS; GEOGRAPHY OF THE WITCH HUNTS; HERESY; LAUSANNE, DIOCESE OF; MOUNTAINS AND THE ORIGINS OF WITCHCRAFT; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; RURAL WITCHCRAFT; SABBAT; SAVOY, DUCHY OF; WITCH HUNTS.

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VALENCIA, PEDRO DE (1555–1620)

Valencia was a Spanish humanist whose skeptical commentary on the confessions of witches at the *auto de fe* (act of faith) in Logroño in 1610, several of whom had been executed, helped reestablish the Spanish Inquisition’s almost century-old practice of not burning witches.

From a wealthy family in Zafra in southern Spain, Pedro de Valencia studied with the Jesuits at Cordoba, but when he matriculated in theology at the same university to become a priest, his parents sent him to Salamanca, where he studied classical languages and literature. He worked closely with the priest and philologist Benito Arias Montano, who taught him Hebrew and biblical exegesis. At the age of thirty-two, he was granted a papal dispensation to marry a cousin, and they had four children. In 1607 he was appointed royal historiographer (*cronista*) by Philip III, and he later became a censor at the Council of Castile. In this capacity, he asked the Spanish Inquisitor General in 1611 for permission to comment on a written account of the confessions of the witches at an *auto de fe* in the northern Spanish town of Logroño the previous year, where several of them had been burned. The account was published in 1611 by the Logroño printer Juan de Mongastón and described the rituals of the abominable witch sect down to the minutest detail. The Inquisitor General not only granted Valencia his permission but explicitly ordered him to offer his comments.

The learned humanist called his *Discurso acerca de los cuentos de las brujas* (Concerning the Tales of the Witches); he commented on the printed account and criticized the Inquisition for allowing this matter to become public knowledge. For, as he argued in the “First Discourse of Pedro de Valencia,”

although on the whole it must be assumed that the witches have confessed to the truth, some of the

things they have admitted are so improbable that many people will refuse to believe them and instead would consider the whole story to be something the witches have dreamed up. For such things have never been heard of before, except in poems and fairy tales [*libros fabulosos*] which are written to entertain and terrify children and simple folk. (Valencia 1997, 257)

In his analysis of the printed account, Valencia tried to view the witches' Sabbat in the context of the history of religion, pharmacology, and theology. He posited three hypotheses: (1) The witch meetings took place in reality, and the participants abandoned themselves to frivolous and depraved activities. The journey to the Sabbat was made on foot, and the Devil was only one of the participants disguised with horns and a gruesome mask. In this guise he had intercourse with the women, either in the normal fashion or with the use of an artificial phallus. (2) The meetings took place in dreams. The witches anointed themselves with a certain kind of ointment in order to fly to the Sabbat, but they did not really go anywhere. Instead they fell into a deep sleep during which the Devil made them experience the delights of the Sabbat in dreams. He saw to it that the individual dreams corresponded to one another, so that when the witches awoke they were convinced that what they had experienced had actually happened. It was even possible, added Valencia, that the dream experiences were caused entirely by the ointment, which affected everyone in the same way so that their dreams agreed and did not need to be coordinated by the Devil. (3) The Devil sometimes transported people to a Sabbat, so that they were present there in person, and at other times he deceived them and caused them to dream the whole experience.

Valencia discarded the first hypothesis because he considered it impossible to conceal an activity involving so many people. Nor could he accept the third hypothesis, which was generally accepted among theologians: that the Devil sometimes took people to the Sabbat body and soul, because the same theologians asserted that this happened extremely rarely, whereas the Sabbat journeys in this specific case had taken place several times a week. Valencia therefore ended up with a compromise between the second and third hypothesis: The Sabbat was an illusion produced either by the witch's ointment or by the Devil, but in either case it was a dream phenomenon. His long discourse to the Inquisitor General ended with the recommendation that in every concrete witch case, it was always necessary to search for a palpable corpus delicti in order to ensure that no person was sentenced for actions or injuries that had never been committed or that could be explained as natural occurrences or accidental misfortunes.

Valencia's prudent *discurso* remained unprinted until the twentieth century, but it circulated in manuscript within the closed circle of the Holy Office.

GUSTAV HENNINGSEN;

TRANSLATED BY JAMES MANLEY

See also: BASQUE COUNTRY; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; INQUISITION, SPANISH; OINTMENTS; SABBAT; SKEPTICISM; SPAIN; ZUGARRAMURDI, WITCHES OF.

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VALLÉES, MARIE DES (1590–1656)

The so-called saint of Coutances, Vallées was a charismatic Norman laywoman who experienced her lifelong possession by demons as a sign of divine favor.

Marie des Vallées was born into a peasant family in Saint-Sauveur-Lendelin, in the diocese of Coutances in western Normandy. As a teenager she experienced the symptoms of demonic possession, related to sexual attraction to a young man. Her state of possession lasted for over forty years, during which time she developed her own brand of holiness, which emphasized the virtue to be found in the pains of possession. She became known as a local visionary, miracle worker, and mystic. Vallées never aspired to a life in a religious order and spent most of her adult life as a housekeeper for two priests. She is widely cited as an influence on the reformer St. Jean Eudes.

Marie des Vallées's father died when she was twelve. As a teenager, Marie left her mother and violent stepfather to live as a domestic. She began to experience the symptoms of possession by demons in 1609, after a passing encounter with a young man on a religious holiday. She suffered violent physical contortions, wailing, and—a classic sign of possession—an inability to fulfill her devotional duties. In 1612, after three years during which Vallées said she did not sleep, relatives took her to the bishop of Coutances. But his exorcisms did not deliver her. In 1614 Vallées accused a nobleman (not the original suitor from 1609) of causing her continued afflictions by demons. He in turn reputedly had her arrested as a witch. She came to interpret the injustice of the accusation, and her pain when being tested for physical indices of witchcraft, as part of a martyrdom planned for her by devils.

Unlike such prominent demonically possessed *dévote* (devout, a Catholic known for great piety and

anti-Protestantism) noblewomen as Jeanne des Anges or Elisabeth de Ranfaing, Vallées never tried to distance herself from her initial state of possession. Instead, she absorbed her possessed state into a more or less routinized alternative form of devotional life. In particular, her suffering whenever demons kept her from confession and Communion became, paradoxically, the source of her greatest claim to sanctity. She did not take Communion or confess for over thirty years, remaining possessed from 1609 until 1655, one year before her death. Vallées's apparent decision to avoid the Church's traditional channels of grace smacked of spiritual arrogance, particularly given her peasant origins, and her distance from the sacraments and the ministrations of the Catholic clergy became a source of vulnerability. In 1651, she faced a tribunal of local clergy, who suspected that she had been deceived by the Devil; they ordered her to comply with the requirements of the Church. After her death in 1656, one of the same priests continued to attack her conduct, trying to prevent others from following her example and stifling a thaumaturgic cult that had developed around her. He also wondered whether her devil had ever left her, which implied that possession was a diminished rather than an elevated spiritual state.

Notwithstanding the hostility she sometimes faced, Vallées was consulted by members of Normandy's reforming religious elite: Her close friends included *dévo*t nobleman Baron Gaston de Renty and Jean de Bernières, and she is particularly remembered as the friend and inspiration of St. Jean Eudes, founder of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary (the Eudists). Her own spiritual influences included Angela of Foligno, Benet of Canfield, St. Teresa of Avila, and the Jesuit Pierre Coton, whose *Occupation Intérieure* (Inner Pursuit, 1608) influenced her controversial choice to "exchange her will" (as she described it) with that of God in order to avoid sin. Renty and Eudes each wrote biographies of her, based on their conversations with her.

Almost twenty years after her death, enemies of Eudes used his association with Vallées to undermine his credibility, implying she had been tainted with witchcraft. Eudes defended Vallées, replying that it was no crime for her to have been possessed. Investigations in 1869 preceding Eudes's canonization in 1925 considered his relations with Vallées and clearly found in their favor, placing Vallées among the significant woman mystics of her era.

SARAH FERBER

See also: BODY OF THE WITCH; COTON, PIERRE; EXORCISM; LOUDUN NUNS; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; RANFAING, ELISABETH DE.

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VAMPIRE

Belief in vampires blood-sucking demons, still survives in some areas and in some modern ritual practices, particularly in southeastern Europe. Words for "vampire" exist in Polish (*wampir*, *wapierz*, *upiór*), Czech (*upír*), Ukrainian (*opyriaka*), Bulgarian (*upír*), and Albanian (*dhampir*); words originally denoting werewolves in southern Slavic languages (*vukodlak*, *vrkolak*, *valkodlak*), Greek (*vrkolakas*), or Albanian (*vrvullak*) have come to signify primarily vampires in modern times. Among Slavic peoples, traces of the vampire concept have existed since the Middle Ages, and the concept probably spread to their neighbors. Following fourteenth-century Polish, Moravian, and Serbian vampire cases came vampire trials in Russia, various southern Slavic regions, Albania, Silesia, Germany, Armenia, and Greece.

The shared characteristic of all variants of vampires is their aggressive behavior, especially their practice of sucking blood, bringing sickness or death to the victim. The vampire usually attacks a local community (family, tribe, or village); its victim can be a single person, a whole family, sometimes even an entire village (in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, epidemics were often considered consequences of the action of vampires). Its two main subtypes are a living person (a vampire since birth through inheritance) and a corpse rising from its grave. Living vampires attack either personally or (in archaic variants) through a spiritual double separated from the body; as such, they can also take animal form.

Notions of corpses rising from their grave derive from the idea that the earth rejects certain dead bodies, which do not perish. These dead bodies, which retain their vital fluids and do not dry out, are revived (usually forty days after burial) either by the dead person's soul, which lingers among the community of the living, or by the Devil. Because this "dead vampire" appears in formal variants similar to living ones and their activities are identical, the two types seem interrelated. Both Slavic and Romanian people believe that a person who is a vampire when alive will remain a vampire after death.

Beliefs and rituals related to vampires seem quite homogenous throughout eastern and southeastern Europe wherever vampire belief has remained intense in modern times. Marginal people (the illegitimate, those conceived on feast days, people excluded by the community or excommunicated by the Church) become vampires, as do dead people without clear

status in the otherworld (those who died a violent death, who remained unburied, or who died unbaptized or excommunicated). If an animal walks across a corpse before burial, the dead person will also become a vampire.

Some antivampire rites try to prevent a person from becoming a vampire after death (this applies particularly to people suspected of being vampires while alive). The usual procedure is to guard the corpse until burial, placing sanctified objects in its body crevices (to prevent the Devil from inhabiting it). In many places, people customarily protectively “fence in” a dying person with lighted sacred candles or place an iron object on the body or in the coffin. Such practices as cutting the sinews or piercing the heart (or nailing the body to the ground by a wooden pole), as well as that of laying people face down in the coffin, occurred during the burial of people suspected of being vampires during their lifetime.

Another large group of antivampire rituals of the past tried to render dead vampires harmless. According to vampire trials that became widely known, suspicion of vampirism peaked after epidemics or other serial deaths. Antivampire rituals responded by exhuming the corpse of a suspected vampire, mutilating its body, piercing its heart, and finally burning the corpse and reburying it, thus completing the death of a body that had not “fully” died. According to early data, the Pravoslav church willingly cooperated in reburying such corpses as well as resanctifying both the graves and the graveyard, until nineteenth- and twentieth-century debates about handling cases of suspected vampirism ended with prohibitions. In the Balkans, the Serbs have preserved a number of church regulations for curbing antivampire rituals into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In cases of suspected vampirism, Bulgarian and Macedonian villages frequently used the services of vampire-seers, who could see and chase away vampires because they were born on a Saturday.

Beginning in early modern times, vampire belief expanded rapidly, particularly in southeastern Europe, transforming figures of popular beliefs not previously associated with vampirism. This expansion was related to the demonization of belief in ghosts, witches, and werewolves. The great affinity between these figures of popular belief and vampires had the effect of coloring belief systems, particularly in southeastern Europe. Death demons and “pressing” night-demons known as witches, werewolves, and the unbaptized demons of *mora* all assumed vampire traits; this is why words originally denoting werewolves in southern Slavic languages, Greek, or Albanian have come to signify primarily vampires in modern times. Similarly, modern Polish *strzyga* and Romanian *strigoi* mean both “vampire” and “witch”

(with werewolf characteristics). Throughout eastern Europe we find close connections between vampirism and witchcraft.

Vampire belief sometimes played a similar social role to that of witchcraft cases in attributing responsibility for unexplained misfortunes. By the late eighteenth century, Hungary and particularly Transylvania had become notorious throughout central Europe for their vampirism. Romantic novels, particularly Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, reinforced Transylvania's association with vampirism. The most notorious cases occurred not among Hungarians, but among the Serbian, Romanian, and Ruthenian population of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in connection with the great epidemics of the mid-eighteenth century. Holy Roman Empress Maria Theresa ordered investigations, while the press spread the fear of vampires to western Europe (Calmet 1751). After the persecution of witches had ended, “vampire-epidemics” burst out precisely in reaction to Enlightenment rationalism exemplified in medical and scientific literature (for example, by Maria Theresa's Dutch physician, Gerard van Swieten) and the consequent prohibitions of Habsburg rulers.

ÉVA PÓCS;

TRANSLATED BY ORSOLYA FRANK

See also: BLOOD; GHOSTS; HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, MAGIC; HUNGARY AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE, WITCHCRAFT; LYCANTHROPY; MARIA THERESA, HOLY ROMAN EMPRESS; METAMORPHOSIS; NIGHTMARES; REVENANTS; SWIETEN, GERARD VAN.

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VAUD, PAYS DE

The heartland of French-speaking Switzerland, the Pays de Vaud was not only the scene of some of Europe's earliest witchcraft trials, but also one of the regions where witch persecutions were most intense in early modern Europe. The best estimate is that at least 1,700 witches were executed here over the course of about 150 years, in a population estimated in a 1558–1559 census to have been between 70,000 and 80,000. On a per capita basis, nowhere else in Protestant Europe were anywhere near this many witches tried and executed. Until about 1680, when the trials stopped, there were continual small-scale panics, which resulted in up to seventy-four people being sentenced to death in 1599. There were several smaller peaks, with fifty or more witchcraft executions per year, between 1580 and 1665, for which data are available (Kamber 1998, 249).

A peculiarity of the witchcraft phenomenon in the Pays de Vaud was the high rate of men sentenced, amounting to one-third of all witchcraft cases. The most frequent explanation offered relates to the fact that in the Pays de Vaud, the persecution of witches started with the Dominican Inquisition well before 1450, a time when the witch stereotype was not yet clearly dissociated from the archetypical heretic, who was more often male than female.

A FRAGMENTED JUDICIAL FRAMEWORK

During the ancien régime, the Pays de Vaud consisted of the old Savoyard possessions north of Lake Geneva and the lands of the former prince-bishopric of Lausanne, both of which came under the rule of the city-state of Bern after a short military campaign in 1536. In the same year, Bern forcibly introduced the Reformation. Bernese rule also led to an administrative and judicial reorganization of the Pays de Vaud. The degree of interference in judicial matters, however, varied. Possessions that had been ruled directly by the duke of Savoy or the prince-bishop of Lausanne were administered by the Bernese *baillis* (bailiffs) and their local castellans; however, Savoyard vassals accepting Bernese overlordship retained their judicial prerogatives, including that of high justice.

The consequent atomization of high justice provides a key factor for understanding the remarkably high intensity of witch hunting in the Pays de Vaud: Between 1581 and 1620, there were no less than ninety-one different courts sentencing suspected witches to death (Kamber 1982, 22–23). As suggested for the village of Gollion during the 1620s (Taric Zumsteg 2000, 88–89), it can be assumed that witchcraft trials were instrumental in firmly demonstrating a seigneur's judicial rights when others contested them. Similar

coincidences between witch hunting and unsettled rights had preceded the Bernese conquest: In Dommartin in the 1520s, for instance, they were concomitant with the retreat of the Dominican Inquisition (Choffat 1989, 145–164).

In this context, one question requires further research: whether and to what extent witch hunting was also instrumentalized by both the local seigneurs and the Bernese authorities in the context of the centralization of jurisdictional matters. In fact, *Leurs Excellences de Berne* (the city fathers of Bern), already alarmed by the number of executions in their newly acquired possessions, published a mandate in 1543 forbidding any of their vassals to execute a person for witchcraft before the sentence had been ratified by the city council. Two years later, this measure was extended to all capital punishments in the Pays de Vaud (Von der Mühl 1960, 66). Accordingly, the Bernese council registered all death warrants for witchcraft in Bern's French-speaking territories. In spite of these steps, the rate of death penalties remained high, because Bern rarely overturned them. Peter Kamber counted about 1,700 death sentences between 1580 and 1655 (Kamber 1998, 249). He based his research on the short entries in the city of Bern's records, the *Ratsmanuale*, which are often our only available source, as transcripts of trials are comparatively rare.

Further attempts to reduce the ongoing witch persecutions were made in 1600, 1609, 1616, 1634, 1651–1652, and 1664. Without denying the existence of witchcraft, the authorities tried to check the proliferation of denunciations and to regulate the use of torture. Yet these measures had almost no noticeable effect.

THE CONJUNCTURE OF PERSECUTION

Before the persecution ended around 1680, the Pays de Vaud experienced endemic witch hunting with numerous peaks. If one were to graph the numbers of witchcraft trials, the high points would coincide with rising prices and plague years, when lingering social tensions culminated in specific accusations. The year the persecution reached its climax, 1599, when seventy-four people were burned as witches, was also a plague year in the Pays de Vaud. In 1629 and 1630, when forty and sixty-three putative witches were burnt, both plague and an economical crisis were raging at the same time (Kamber 1998, 248–252). By contrast, the repeated threat of war against the duke of Savoy and the ensuing mobilizations resulted each time in a decline in the number of trials (Kamber 1982, 27).

ALLEGED CRIMES

Unlike the medieval persecution in the diocese of Lausanne, early modern witch hunts in the Pays de Vaud have not yet received a thorough microanalysis,

except for a recent study about the village of Gollion (Taric Zumsteg 2000). That study showed that the stereotype of the witch, as it had been inherited from the fifteenth century, survived with minor changes into the first half of the seventeenth century. Manifestly new developments included the insistence on the Devil's mark, echoing Protestant preoccupation with the diabolical pact, and the sober, almost sanitized descriptions of the Sabbat, which contrast with the lurid accounts of earlier trials. In Gollion at least, the Sabbat was merely an occasion for nocturnal singing and dancing, a fact that should be seen in the context of the strenuous attempts by Reformed clergymen to ban such forms of popular entertainment. Throughout the entire period, we find great importance placed on evil spells against people or livestock and a particular terror of alleged spreaders of the plague (Taric Zumsteg 2000, 126–146).

GEORG MODESTIN

See also: DEVIL'S MARK; GENEVA; GEOGRAPHY OF THE WITCH HUNTS; HERESY; LAUSANNE, DIOCESE OF; MALE WITCHES; NUMBER OF WITCHES; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PLAGUE; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; SABBAT; SAVOY, DUCHY OF; SPELLS; SWITZERLAND; WARFARE; WITCH HUNTS.

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VAUDOIS (WALDENSIANS)

The question of how Waldensians became witches has long interested scholars. Although it has not played a prominent part in the historiography of Waldensianism, historians of witchcraft have shown a long-standing interest in the subject. The liberal historian Joseph Hansen, the leading scholar of the rationalist school (which held that witchcraft was a nonexistent crime) and head of Cologne's municipal archive, promoted the idea that rustic Waldensians were forced into witchcraft confessions by the intellectual and physical coercion of the Inquisition. Hansen became a precursor of the so-called labeling theory, because he believed that Waldensian heretics were simply labeled—by the populace as sodomites and by Catholic theologians as witches—without having themselves given their accusers any reason for doing so. Hansen's explanation is still widely accepted—with some modifications—by several recent publications (for example, Cohn 1975; Monter 1976; Blauert 1989).

This theory, however, remains unsatisfying because it cannot explain why Waldensians, who would have been burned anyway as heretics, should have also been labeled as sorcerers, and specifically as having been capable of flying through the air. An explanation for the equation of Waldensians and witches cannot be logically derived from the range of absurd interpretations characterizing the so-called romantic approach (which emphasizes the importance of women, seeing them as incarnations of popular culture or of popular resistance) in the historiography of witchcraft. Although Carlo Ginzburg (1991) opened new paths to "decipher" the witches' Sabbat with his emphasis on ecstatic experiences, he was unable to integrate Waldensians into his concept. As a prelude to the revival of popular myths, he reconstructed the scapegoating of lepers and Jews in fourteenth-century France to explain why Jewish terms like "synagogue" or "Sabbat" played such a prominent part in early witchcraft terminology.

Indeed, Ginzburg could point to a 1409 letter of Pope Alexander V that confirmed to the inquisitor Ponce Feugeyron: "We have recently and sadly heard that some Christians and perfidious Jews within the boundaries of your jurisdiction have founded new sects and perform rites that are repugnant to the Christian religion. They also often teach hidden doctrines, preaching and affirming them" (quoted in Kors and Peters 2001, 153). The Jews and Christians in this strange new sect, which operated in the Dauphiné and other parts of the French Alps and in southeastern France, used sorcery, divination, and devil worship (Hansen 1901, 16–17). The letter with its mandate was confirmed twice for the same inquisitor in the same region, in 1418 by Pope Martin V and again in 1434 by Pope Eugenius IV. Within five years, however, a decisive change in the perception of this enigmatic new

sect occurred. In 1437 Eugenius IV issued a general decree to all inquisitors about devil worshippers, who committed *maleficia* (harmful magic) through words, touches, or signs (Hansen 1901, 17–18). Three years later, the same pope issued a bull, *Ad perpetua rei memoriam* (For Eternal Remembrance of the Thing), against the former Duke Amadeus VIII of Savoy (ruled 1416–1451), who was elected by the Council of Basel as Felix V (ruled 1439–1449), and subsequently was known as an anti-pope or counter-pope to the legitimate pope. The bull connected the council's new pope with all the heretics in his former duchy, devil worshippers and sorcerers, “who are now commonly called *stregule* or *strigones* or *Waudenses*” (Hansen 1901, 18, 408–415). This finally became the name for the new sect: They were neither Christians nor Jews, but Waldensian witches.

The papal bull used this terminology for the first time in 1440, explicitly maintaining that it was the popular terminology of a specific region, namely the duchy of Savoy. This label was no mere invention but was based on something resembling subjective perception, as trial records demonstrate. It was precisely this region, including the Swiss dioceses of Geneva, Son, and Lausanne, where the term *Vauderie* (Waldensianism) was being used for witchcraft by the early fifteenth century and remained predominant throughout the sixteenth century. Monter recognized long ago that “the lands which used ‘heretic’ or ‘Waldensian’ as a synonym for witch after 1425 formed a contiguous geographical zone,” and he concluded that “these conciliarist and Savoyard dioceses were the geographical center of the first popular fusion of heresy and sorcery, which would later be cemented into accepted theory” (Monter 1976, 22–23).

If we turn away from official documents to examine demonological treatises, we find almost no connection between Waldensianism and witchcraft before 1435, although earlier inquisitors included chapters about sorcery in their handbooks; the *Practica inquisitionis heretice pravitatis* (The Practice of the Inquisition of Heretical Depravity; circa 1324) of Bernard Gui contained such a chapter. In a much larger chapter about Waldensian heresy, however, Gui never mentioned magical rituals or spiritual fantasies. Devil worship was an exception, for its practitioners adored the Devil in the form of a cat. This form of *latria* (the honor due to God) assumed enough importance to generate the term for heretics in several languages, for example, the German *Ketzer* (from *Katze*, “cat”) or the Italian *Gazzari* (from *gatto*, “cat”). However, although sorcery had potentially implied devil worship ever since the time of St. Augustine, the influential *Directorium inquisitorum* (Directory of Inquisitors) of 1376 by the Spanish Dominican inquisitor Nicolas Eymeric still lacked this detail.

As far as we know, not until the 1430s was worship of the Devil in the form of an animal transferred to the “new sect” of witches. The connection between Waldensianism and witchcraft in learned demonology began with the anonymous treatise *Errores Gazariorum* (Errors of the Gazars or Gazarii [the term *Gazarii* was a synonym for Cathars or Waldensians]). Presumably written by an inquisitor in the duchy of Savoy around 1435, it gave the first elaborate description of a witches’ Sabbat. In late-fourteenth-century Savoyard heresy trials at Pinerolo, a small town in the Piedmontese mountains, a Dominican inquisitor, Antonio di Settimo, forced a Waldensian named Antonio Galosna into confessions in which nocturnal gatherings, devil worship, and sorcery played an important role (Hansen 1901, 118–122). It has been suggested that George de Saluces, bishop of the Savoyard valley of Aosta in the Italian Alps from 1433 to 1440 and then bishop of Lausanne from 1440 to 1461, played an important role in importing the ideas of “synagogues” of the “Gazzarii” into parts of French-speaking Switzerland belonging to the duchy of Savoy. But even earlier Dominicans, such as Ulric de Torrenté, inquisitor for the diocese of Lausanne (circa 1420–1445), preferred to use the term *Vaudois* during his investigations, at least since the early 1430s. The soil for the fusion of witchcraft and Waldensianism may have been prepared by the Dominican preacher Vincent Ferrer (ca. 1350–1419), whose apocalyptic sermons between 1399 and 1409 had excited exactly the region where the fusion took place: Piedmont, Lombardy, Savoy, Dauphiné, and parts of Switzerland including Lausanne, Geneva, and Fribourg. As in later descriptions of Sabbats, devil worship and sexual orgies played a prominent role at early “synagogues.” This is not surprising, since Gui had already made these deviations necessary ingredients in charges against Waldensianism.

However, a new and decisive requirement in the linkage of heresy to devil worship and the Sabbat was the heretic’s ability to fly through the air. Martine Ostorero and colleagues connect this idea to a specific inquisitorial trial, mentioned only in the Basel manuscript of the *Errores Gazariorum*, conducted by Ulric de Torrenté at Vevey in 1438, whose records survive at Lausanne (Ostorero et al. 1999, 348–351). But it seems rather unlikely that the original fusion occurred in this trial; the idea of night-flying female *streghe* had certainly been a traditional ingredient of Alpine and other folklore. This can be demonstrated from early-fifteenth-century demonology. While the inquisitors in the diocese of Lausanne imagined witchcraft as the modernized version of Waldensianism (*modernorum hereticorum Waldensium*), other authors, such as Alonso Tostado, were already suggesting that the majority of the new sect were females, whom Tostado labeled with the popular Castilian term *bruxas* (Hansen 1901,

105–109). During the same years, the local Swiss term *Hexen* rose to prominence in German-speaking areas. Although this connection was not yet implied in contemporary papal bulls or in the earliest treatises about the new sect, its members tended to be portrayed as predominantly female. And the illustrator of one manuscript felt clearly attracted by this interpretation of Waldensianism. He sketched witches riding through the air on sticks and broomsticks. Although they could have been called *streghe*, the traditional term in Italy, *Hexen* in Switzerland, or *bruxas* in Spain, the scribe identified them as *Vaudoises* (Hansen 1901, 101).

Certainly, the use of the term *Vaudois* irritated and confused contemporaries: The chronicler Enguerrand de Mōnstrelet mentioned that he could not explain why these witches were now called *Vaudois*. Some conservative theologians deliberately chose not to equate witchcraft with Waldensianism: Nicolas Jacquier, who participated in the famous persecution of the *Vauderie* at Arras and was convinced that a new sect of witches existed, preferred to call them *haeretici fascinarii*, “bewitched heretics” (Hansen 1901, 124–130, 133–145). Nevertheless, between 1430 and 1460 a more general fusion of witchcraft and Waldensianism predominated in French-speaking Europe. Following the Savoyard paradigm, a whole series of trials against Waldensian witches took place in eastern Switzerland (Blauert 1989, 36–50) and France. Even a distinguished theologian, Dr. Guillaume Adeline, confessed under torture at Evreux (Normandy) in 1453 that he had flown on a broomstick to the “synagogue” of the “Waldensians,” where he had worshipped a he-goat (Cohn 1975, 230). At Arras in the duchy of Burgundy, the campaign against the *Vauderie* reached its climax between 1459 and 1461 (Singer 1975). Former participants at the Council of Basel tried to frame their experiences in terms of demonological theory. An anonymously written *Recollectio casus, status et conditionis Valdensium ydolatrarum* (Record of the Case, Status, and Outcome of the Waldensian Idolatries, 1460), a defense of the persecution from May 1460, simply equated witchcraft and Waldensianism without further explanation and blamed *Valdenses* for all the *maleficia* of the witches (Hansen 1901, 149–183).

Another participant at the Council of Basel, Johann Tinctor, canon at Tournai and later professor at the University of Cologne, summed up his perception of the new heresy in a sermon *Speculatio in secta Valdensium* (Speculation on the Sect of the Waldensians, ca. 1460). For him, the sect was more terrible than paganism, Islam, or simple heresy: It implied apostasy, the destruction of Christianity, and the end of the world. Several copies of his sermon survive in French, Belgian, and German libraries; there was even a contemporary translation into vernacular French, unusual for fifteenth-century demonological treatises, and his

Traité de Vauderie (Treatise on the Waldensians) was printed at Bruges as early as 1477 (Hansen 1901, 133–195). One of its manuscripts was illustrated with a famous early representation of the witches’ Sabbath, with men and women flying through the air, supported by devilish monsters.

Another echo of events at Arras was a manuscript entitled *La Vauderye de Lyonois en bref* (Waldensianism in Lyons, in Short), describing the *dyabolica synagoga* (diabolical synagogue [Sabbat]) of the witches. Ironically, it located the “synagogue” in the very region where the Waldensians, the “Poor of Lyons,” had originated centuries earlier (Hansen 1901, 191–195). This genre of demonological literature apparently ended with a similar treatise on night-flying “*Vaudois*,” *De haeresi Valdensium seu pauperum de Lugduno* (The Heresy of the Waldensians, or the Poor of Lyons), written by an anonymous Carthusian in 1485—just one year before the publication of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486). Heinrich Kramer ignored the association of Waldensianism with witchcraft, although (or because) he had been engaged in an inquisitorial trial against the Waldensian bishop Friedrich Reiser. Presumably overshadowed by Kramer’s *Malleus Maleficarum*, the confusing term *Vauderie* was no longer used in learned demonological discourse as a synonym for witchcraft. It persisted in some regions as a popular term, for example, in the southern Netherlands until the seventeenth century and in southwestern Switzerland until the present day.

Historians of Waldensianism simply deny any connections with witchcraft. With its biblicism, antipapalism, antifeudalism, and pacifism, Waldensian theology in no way resembled witchcraft. On the contrary, many examples showed the *pauperes Christi* (the poor of Christ) denying the wonders of the saints, the power of relics and of holy water and salt, or the efficacy of pilgrimages. In other words, they actively opposed superstition. As a persecuted minority trying to revive the apostolic spirit of the early Christians against the Roman Church, the Waldensians aroused the sympathy of many researchers as “enlightened” evangelical precursors of the Reformation. And this is why historians of Waldensianism have made few useful contributions to the debate. Waldensians were certainly not supporters of exotic folk beliefs, much less founders of ecstatic cults.

Nevertheless, it seems appropriate to ask what elements in Waldensianism could have stimulated or legitimized its identification with witchcraft. For instance, was it suspicions that this religious movement opposed any form of killing, even the execution of sorcerers? Waldensian masters came and left at night, as believers readily admitted (Kurze 1975, 97), because of the risk of suppression. Nocturnal gatherings with non-Roman rites were certainly one *tertium comparationis* (the third

[part] of the comparison, that which two things have in common) with witchcraft. Secrecy automatically aroused suspicion (it characterized rebellious peasants, secret lovers, and robber gangs), but it was obviously insufficient to provoke papal inquisitors to invent a new crime. On the other hand, popular magic in itself could never challenge the machinery of suppression. Its rites were well known, having been classified in penitentiaries. Even if its *maleficia* was approximated to devil worship, it remained separate from traditional heresies. A Celestine monk and inquisitor, Peter Zwicker, though pointing to the Waldensians' devil worship in his 1395 treatise *Cum dormirent homines* (While Humans Sleep), explicitly admitted that they were not "Luciferans," and he did not confuse Waldensianism with witchcraft (Biller 1989, 223–225).

Most Waldensians came from the lower orders, and their persecution resulted in the so-called marginalization of Waldensianism as it became increasingly strong among peasants and herdsmen in mountainous areas. It is thus unlikely that the average Waldensian was any less superstitious than his Catholic neighbor. If suspicions of sorcery played an important role in trials against Waldensians even in towns like Bern or Fribourg, what was to be said about the peasants in the high Alpine valleys of Piedmont, Dauphiné, Valais, or the Pays de Vaud? These are exactly the places where preachers in the high and late Middle Ages, sixteenth-century reformers, seventeenth- or eighteenth-century rationalists, and nineteenth- and twentieth-century folklorists would all expect to find the most exotic forms of folk beliefs. And there is certainly historical evidence to support this stereotypical assumption. From the Cathar village of Montailou in the Pyrenees, we learn about love magic, harmful magic, belief in spirits, and the charming tale of an ecstatic experience: a soul leaving the body in the form of a snake, walking over a silvery bridge, and visiting a castle in a mountain. Although historians of Waldensianism carefully try to keep witchcraft and Waldensianism separate by treating them in separate chapters to avoid any interrelations, numerous trials for magic and sorcery were held in the Waldensian valleys of Dauphiné. And magic and divination were practiced by Waldensians as well as by other mountain farmers and herdsmen.

Therefore, it seems worth reconsidering the role of Waldensian spiritual leaders: the *barbes* (brothers), who, like the Cathar *perfecti* (the perfect ones), managed to establish a peculiar spiritual elite outside the Latin Church. These brethren were trained by each other. Despite all attempts to reconstruct their training and the customs of their secret society, we know little about either. What we do know is that they had to be accepted voluntarily by their communities. This suggests charismatic abilities that could meet the specific spiritual demands of their followers. At least some of them

managed to demonstrate their spiritual superiority by establishing contacts with the "other world." Although evangelically trained Waldensian theologians, like many of their Catholic counterparts, rejected the idea of ecstasies, at least in some areas spiritual contacts with paradise, prophets, angels, or even God himself were thought to be peculiar to Waldensians.

Arnauld Gélis established contact with the deceased, with revenants, around 1312, and he could eventually see the dead not only in dreams but also while awake. His inquisitor Jacques Fournier (1285–1342), who became pope Benedict XII in 1334, reported that Gélis served as a courier for the deceased and received orders from the living before visiting the realm of the dead. This Waldensian worked as an intermediary between the living and the dead, and he was well known for his abilities in the region, serving clients who wanted to get into contact with the otherworld. His spiritual qualities far exceeded those of local Catholic priests and met the demands of the common people in a very singular manner. Maybe this was especially interesting for Waldensians who denied the existence of purgatory and could therefore do nothing to benefit their deceased relatives. On the other hand, the beings of the otherworld could help the living, and Gélis was commissioned to ask them about past and future events. Gélis was not the only Waldensian with these abilities, even within his own family. He was continuing the custom of his cousin, thus suggesting that this ability was hereditary within his lineage. As he explained during his trial in March 1320, his cousin had been able to "walk" (of course, this meant fly) with the dead, sometimes going with them for three or four days. Finally, Gélis acquired the same ability himself. After a while he began to "walk" with the "good women and the souls of the deceased" ("*bonis dominabus seu animabus defunctorum*"), who visited the cleanest houses, ate there, and drank good wine in the cellars, but without any loss (Utz Tremp 1994, 125–134).

Most historians of Waldensianism would claim that Gélis had no connection with it. But there is other evidence of his association with Waldensianism. During an inquisition in Austria between 1312 and 1315, the interrogatory protocol summarized some typical Waldensian errors: Two "brothers" had to go to paradise every year to receive the priestly power of binding and loosing (Matt. 18:18), which they could afterwards transmit to their followers (Maleczek 1986, 36). Many witnesses elsewhere in Europe claimed that their "masters" possessed this power (Merlo 1977, 43–44, 48–49). Further reports of otherworldly experiences by Waldensian brethren were also made three generations later, during Zwicker's extensive campaigns in Bohemia and Austria. In Zwicker's records from Brandenburg and Pomerania (today in Poland) between 1392 and 1394, where nearly half of the 450 original protocols

survived (Kurze 1975), one standard answer to questions about the teachings and religious practice of the Waldensian “masters” was that they went to paradise to receive their power from an angel. There were, however, differences about whether the brethren actually entered paradise or only stayed at the gates, and about what exactly happened there or what they could actually obtain from God. For instance, Claus Walther answered in February 1393 that the masters acquired their wisdom there. We can conclude from the bulk of evidence that whenever Waldensians touched upon the special relation between their masters and God, they meant far more than merely reading the Gospel. They hinted at ecstatic experiences, raptures, or spiritual journeys of the soul (if not a physical one of the body) through the air to the gates of paradise. In northern Germany, Richard Kieckhefer has correctly concluded, ecstatic experiences were commonly considered a Waldensian affair (Kieckhefer 1979, 63).

The Waldensian masters’ journeys to the otherworld are indisputable. There were, however, many variations in detail regarding the circumstances of the travels, their frequency, and their purpose. This probably suggests some debate among *credentes* (believers) about such things. Perhaps different masters told different stories about the supernatural origins of their spiritual power. Historians should be aware of the possibility that within the oral culture, these stories would have been much more elaborate than they were in inquisitors’ protocols. But even the protocols offer hints. One elaborate story was told by Aley Takken from Baumgarten in the Polish diocese of Poznan. In March 1394 she confessed

that she had heard from a certain woman, that two of their apostolic and heresiarch Brethren went to Hell, and heard the pitiable cries and saw the devils attacking the souls in Hell and saying, “that one was an adulterer, that one a usurer, that one a tavern-haunter,” and so on of all the other sorts of vice-laden souls; and afterwards they came to Paradise and heard the voice of the Lord God giving them wisdom and learning, with which they were to instruct the people committed to their care on earth. (Kurze 1975, 241)

Such stories sound familiar to historians of witchcraft. Some of the most aggressive witch hunts in European history were launched after confessions by witch doctors with otherworldly experiences. Around 1500, Hans Tscholi from Kriens (between Lucerne and Bern in Switzerland) had to “walk” (that is, fly) with the souls of the deceased. From their revelations he derived his authority as a witch doctor. Like Gélis, Tscholi was not the only member of his family with this kind of ecstatic experience. Another example is

Zuanne delle Piatte, a wandering witch doctor in the Italian Alps, well known in many villages of the Dolomites, who claimed to visit regularly the Venus Mountain (Venusberg; *mons veneris*), where the fairy queen lived; his confessions led to a witch hunt around Cavalese in the Val di Fiemme. Another example is Diell Breull (d. 1632), who visited Frau Holle (or Holda, leader of women who traveled at night, who lived on Venus Mountain; Frau Holle is the title of a fairytale by Jacob Grimm) in her mountain castle and was able to foresee the future. His tales caused a large witch hunt that claimed almost 200 victims in the small Calvinist county of Isenburg-Büdingen. Finally, Chonrad Stoeckhlin, a herdsman from Oberstdorf in the German Alps, provoked a similar persecution with his stories about the *Nachtschar* (phantoms of the night) with whom he traveled to paradise (Behringer 1998). All of them visited the “other world,” and their peculiar position as messengers between the living and the dead was an obvious precondition for their ability to heal and foretell the future.

Despite lacking medical training, the Waldensian brethren were expected to cure diseases. As reported in fifteenth-century Dauphiné, they provided clients with recipes and herbs, using prayers that might have been understood (or misunderstood) as magical spells (Biller 1982, 55–77). In healing their clients, the *barbes* probably thought they were fulfilling an evangelical mission (Matt. 10:8), but in the view of the common people, this ability aided the brethren’s reputation for holiness. One of their characteristics was an asceticism that contrasted sharply with the comportment of their Catholic counterparts. This stimulated some peculiar forms of veneration and unusual expectations: The *barbes* were reported to be *sancti viri* (holy men). The Passau Anonymous, writing around 1315, mentioned their “great appearance of holiness.” Bernard Gui noted the term “holy men,” a phrase confirmed by Waldensian believers in trial records from Pomerania, Bohemia, Austria, Alsace, Piedmont, and Dauphiné.

Of course, the phenomenon of “living saints” was well known in the Roman Church, where people like St. Francis advertised the power of Catholicism. On the other hand, the phenomenon is also well known to social anthropologists outside Christianity. They describe “religious specialists” who remind us of people like Arnaud Gélis, Hans Tscholi, Zuanne delle Piatte, or Chonrad Stoeckhlin, who served their communities as healers, diviners, and messengers to the otherworld. These kinds of superior spiritual qualities are characteristic features of shamanism. And although this might have been contrary to the intention of the Gospel, at least some Waldensian brothers were treated as, and seem to have worked as, shamans. Gabriel Audisio (1999) has pointed out that some narratives about the *barbes* have been amplified

with additional popular beliefs concerning the liminal experiences of fear, pain, or death, experiences that resemble typical initiation rites of shamans.

Waldensian brothers, as living saints, were called *boni homines* or *bons hommes* (good men) by their followers. This seemingly harmless term, mentioned approvingly by distinguished scholars of heresy, requires further interpretation. *Good men* or *good people* are exactly the same terms used for certain supernatural beings in contemporary folk belief: *good ladies*, *good men*, and *good people* were ambivalent terms, describing, for instance, fairy people or powerful benign spirits opposed to demonic beings. Such terms were also applied to the deceased, who according to popular belief visited the houses of people whom their neighbors then called “blessed.” Great ambivalence lurked behind terms like *good people* or *good men*; they could even be euphemisms, because any supernaturally powerful being could be dangerous, able to harm as well as heal. We can see this ambivalence as early as 1241, when a Waldensian believer admitted that Master Petrus de Vallibus, who also served as a healer, was “loved like an angel of God” (Biller 1982, 66).

In conclusion, the association of witchcraft and Waldensianism goes far beyond a mere labeling process. Beyond the “heresy-topos,” with Waldensians kissing devil-cats under their tails, the secrecy of their nocturnal gatherings suggested associations with negatively connotated animals like bats or toads and could be linked to evil behavior, sexual deviance, or evil itself. The importance of women in the Waldensian movement—some “sisters” acted as equivalents to the brothers, and women frequently substituted for *Magistri* (masters) during their absence—suggested associations with the importance of women in popular magic. Some believers, like Galosna in Pinerolo, even confessed that magic was taught at Waldensian “synagogues,” and that women exercised it. Finally, and most important: Not only for inquisitors but for the Waldensians’ neighbors and maybe even for themselves, the holiness of the masters and their supernatural abilities and shamanistic qualities, especially the brethren’s journeys to the otherworld, provided the missing link between Waldensians and witches.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: ANIMALS; ARRAS; ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BASEL,

COUNCIL OF; CATS; DAUPHINÉ; *ERRORES GAZARIORUM*; EUGENIUS IV; POPE; EYMERIC, NICOLAS; FEUGEYRON, PONCE; GINZBURG, CARLO; GUI, BERNARD; HANSEN, JOSEPH; HERESY; HISTORIOGRAPHY; HOLDA; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; LAUSANNE, DIOCESE OF; LIVING SAINTS; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MONTER, WILLIAM; MOUNTAINS AND THE ORIGINS OF WITCHCRAFT; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; PAPACY AND PAPAL BULLS; PEOPLE OF THE NIGHT (*NACHTVOLK*); REVENANTS; SAVOY, DUCHY OF; SHAMANISM; STOECKHLIN, CHONRAD; TINCTOR, JOHANN; TOADS; TORRENTÉ, ULRIC DE; TOSTADO, ALONSO.

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VERONIKA OF DESENICE (D. –1425/1428)

The second wife of Frederick II, Count of Celje, Veronika of Desenice was murdered on October 17, 1425 or 1428, after being accused by Frederick's father, Herman II, of attempting to kill him with poison and of bewitching his son into marriage.

Family interests had driven Frederick II (1365–1454) into an unsuccessful marriage with Elisabeth of Frankopan (Elizabeta Frankopanska), but the couple had allegedly lived separately since 1415. Frederick either killed Elisabeth or ordered her murdered in 1422. Three years later, in 1425, he secretly married Veronika of Desenice, whose origins were noble but significantly lower than those of his first wife. They settled in the castle of Friedrichstein, newly built by Frederick.

Frederick's father Herman was greatly displeased by the news of the wedding, which did not remain concealed for long. Frederick asked the Venetian Republic for sanctuary, but the Venetian Senate refused. Following an order by Emperor Sigismund of Luxembourg, Frederick was captured and brought back to Herman, who imprisoned him in the castle of Upper Celje (Zgornje Celje), destroyed his castle at Friedrichstein, and dispossessed him of all other castles and estates that Herman had previously given him. Veronika fled to Frederick IX of Ptuj, who hid her in Vurberk, but Herman soon discovered the fugitive and captured and imprisoned her.

Herman brought Veronika before his court, accusing her of witchcraft and attempted poisoning, but she was allegedly acquitted. Herman then locked her up in Ojstrica castle and later had her drowned. Because Emperor Sigismund was Herman's son-in-law and his most reliable protector, Herman did not fear reprisals for the act that he had committed. The emperor had previously pardoned Frederick after he had been accused of having murdered his first wife Elisabeth. The witchcraft trial was undoubtedly a result of Herman's anger with his son. Following the murder of his first wife, Frederick had married a lower-class noblewoman and thereby disgraced family honor. After Veronika's death, Frederick was released from jail. (He later had Veronika's corpse transferred to the Carthusian monastery at Jurklošter). The story of Veronika of Desenice remains one of the most popular historical motifs in Slovene literature.

MATEVŽ KOŠIR

See also: POISON; SLOVENIA.

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VERVAIN

Not all "magical" herbs associated with sorcery or witchcraft are poisonous or malignant. Such is the case with the herb *Verbena officinalis*, commonly known as vervain,

a perennial that produces lilac-colored flowers at the tops of long stalks. Other common names for vervain are herb of grace, *herbe sacrée*, and *herba veneris*. These names are suggestive of its long-standing traditional usage in magic and medicine. Other common names that reveal the plant's traditional uses include enchanter's plant, herb of enchantment, holy herb, and simpler's joy.

The word *vervain* is derived from a Celtic word, *ferfaen*, meaning to "drive away a stone." This name may be related to its traditional herbal-medicine use as a diuretic to treat calculus and other bladder afflictions. The word *verbena* derives from the Latin word for plants used on an altar. Christian herbal lore held that vervain grew on Mount Calvary and that it was used to staunch Jesus's wounds. Certain species of *Verbena* do have astringent properties. In more modern times, the herb was employed to treat neurological diseases, but this practice seems to have ended by the middle of the nineteenth century.

Like many medicinal and "magical" herbs, vervain lore is included in many old herbals. For example, it is included in the 1814 *Culpeper's Complete Herbal and English Physician Enlarged*. This famous book drew upon a number of much earlier works. Culpeper noted that vervain was an herb of Venus and that it was excellent for treating the womb. He further pointed out its traditional use for bladder disorders, such as calculus.

The Druids may have used vervain in magical and hallucinogenic concoctions. One reads this information rather commonly in modern books dealing with herbal lore, although the magical uses of the plant do not seem to be associated particularly with satanic witchcraft. But the supposed magical and hallucinogenic uses of vervain by the Greeks, Romans, and Druids have caused this plant to appear in the occult pharmacopoeia of modern times. Vervain is held to be a "compelling" plant by those who practice the religions of Santeria, Voodoo, and Wicca. Its alleged magical effects include bringing good fortune, health, money, good dreams, and even everlasting youth to its users. One may compound incenses, liquids, or contents of herbal pouches using vervain in order to help produce happiness, peace, and joy. A recipe for protective incense will suffice as an example: One compounds vervain, galagal, peppermint, rue, and cinnamon into a powder used according to the formulary to protect against hexes. Some modern Wiccans believe vervain capable of bringing visions of the future, enabling its user to foretell whether someone who is ill is going to die or recover and to assist in finding stolen property. It also may protect one's home from lightning and bad storms, and one may use it to invoke spirits. Such beliefs repeat the traditional ancient folk usages of vervain, such as those attributed to the Druids.

JANE P. DAVIDSON

See also: DRUGS AND HALLUCINOGENS; HERBAL MEDICINE.

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VICENTE, JOAN

Vicente was a cleric tried by the Inquisition in Saragossa (Zaragoza) in 1511 for heresy, witchcraft, and necromancy. Although settled in Saragossa as a beneficed priest of the church of San Pablo, Joan Vicente came from Perpignan (then part of Catalonia). Many men subsequently tried in Aragon for crimes related to witchcraft or necromancy were also immigrants, often from southern France and particularly from regions like Béarn or Gascony, ill-famed for their abundance of witches. The inquisitorial trial against Vicente provides very early and rich evidence of the effervescence in Spain of magical practices associated with invocations of demons that filled the pages of the *grimorios* (*grimoires*), or magic books, frequently found in the hands of clerics. Unlike feminine magic, whose practitioners, like the fictional Celestina (a procuress and enchantress), were mainly illiterate persons of humble social status from Mediterranean coastal zones, masculine magic in sixteenth-century Aragon was practiced principally by secular and regular clergy, like Vicente, accustomed to dealing with infernal spirits.

As opposed to the erotic character of the majority of feminine spells, whose final aim was to secure the love of or the seduction of a desired man, the principle objective of masculine necromancy was the acquisition of material wealth that would permit one to live well without effort. The most elaborate and thorough method for this magic was to perform certain ceremonies for invoking demons. These rituals required a number of ingredients, detailed in early manuals of magic. A good example of the complexity of these ceremonies is the conscientious preparation that the priest Vicente and his three accomplices (a weaver and a notary and his servant) carried out, beginning in 1509, with a view to tracing a great magic circle (*cercos generales*), where they intended to conjure various spirits "so that they would come and bring them money" (Tausiet 2000, 505).

Like their Italian or German counterparts, these Spanish necromancers used magic circles to perform the most sophisticated form of spirit invocation. The magic virtue of the circle acted as a bulwark to whoever was inside it, protecting them from every type of evil

attack. But meticulous preliminary preparations were required before such magic circles could be drawn. First, the participants (whose number could not exceed four) undertook purification rituals that included baths, fasting, and participation in confession and Holy Communion. Next, unless the building intended to house the circle was new, it had to be exorcised to eliminate any possible negative influences from its previous owners. Finally, certain objects and substances were necessary to complete the ceremony.

Following the *Clavicula Solomonis* (the Key of Solomon), a book of incantations for summoning demons, Vicente and his accomplices first procured a wardrobe (white clothes, underclothes, and shoes), which had to be new. The garments were marked with certain magical characters and figures, using a plume taken from the right side of a large goose, the plume sharpened with a knife with a black and white handle that had been previously tempered with the blood of the same goose. The ink used to mark their garments had to have been previously exorcised. All other essential objects had to be fabricated specially, sometimes from unborn animals or by the hands of a pure virgin. They included four knives (which would be used, after sharpening the plumes, to draw the circle and would then be thrust into it), four swords (which also had to be stuck into the circle), a magic ring made of silver (made an hour or two after noon, the period during which Mercury reigned), some rods and canes (to flay the skins that would be used as parchment), candles of holy wax, aromatic substances (incense, aloe), new coals, parchments on which to draw small circles made from the skin of aborted animals (pups, kids, and calves), and—last but not least—a holy water shaker, with which to shake holy water over all of the participants and each one of the objects present in the ceremony of invocation.

From testimony in Vicente's trial in 1511, we know that these objects were collected in the cleric's house; he told the judges he had previously hidden them in a cabinet in the church of San Pablo, where he kept his clerical garments. But the experiment of the circle, for which the four men had so carefully prepared, was never consummated. Two participants quarreled fiercely over economic issues and "because each one pretended to better understand this art of necromancy" (Tausiet 2000, 512). One of them finally informed the Aragonese Holy Office, which proceeded to arrest, try, and condemn all four would-be necromancers to death, "relaxing" them to the secular authorities.

Two prisoners (the priest and the notary) managed to escape from jail, so their executions could only be carried out in effigy at the 1511 *auto de fe* (act of faith) where the other two were burned. Vicente managed to lower himself from the window of the high tower of Saragossa's old Muslim palace of the Aljafería, which

served as the Inquisition's prison, leaving a note in his cell filled with threats against the inquisitors.

Vicente's revenge did not end with these threats. His path led him to Rome, where, after three years, he secured a papal pardon and retained his benefice. Not content with this, he returned to Aragon and sued the inquisitors of Saragossa (who had obtained permission from King Ferdinand to confiscate his property), winning a judgment (which they ignored) ordering them to pay him the sizable sum of 500 ducats as restitution.

MARÍA TAUSIET;

TRANSLATED BY THOMAS SIZGORICH

See also: ARAGON; CELESTINA, LA; CLERGY; COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; COURTS, INQUISITORIAL; DEVIL BOOKS; *GRIMOIRES*; INQUISITION, SPANISH; INVOCATIONS; LOVE MAGIC; MAGIC, LEARNED; MAGIC CIRCLE; NECROMANCY; RINGS, MAGICAL; RITUAL MAGIC; SPAIN; SPELLS; WATER, HOLY.

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VIENNA

Although few trials for witchcraft occurred in the capital of the Austrian Habsburgs, the city is best remembered for the so-called Plainacher trial of 1583, a notorious episode put to use in service of the Counter-Reformation.

Early in 1583, a sixteen-year-old girl named Anna Schlutterbauer was transferred to the city hospital in Vienna, where her condition soon drew the attention of the local bishop and even of the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II. Although exorcists had already sought to cure her fits (perhaps caused by epilepsy) at both the monastery of St. Pölten in Lower Austria and the pilgrimage site of Mariazell in Styria, it was not until her arrival in Vienna that the Jesuit Georg Scherer was able to drive 12,652 demons from her. He described the process in detail in a sermon published in 1584, *Christliche Erinnerung, bey der Historien von jüngst beschehener Erledigung einer Junckfrawen* (A Christian Recollection of the Tales of the Recently Completed Exorcism of a Young Woman). The story and its aftermath were widely reported throughout Catholic Europe, becoming a telling example of the power of the Church and a warning to Protestants drawn away from the "true" faith.

Although the girl emerged from the episode unharmed, her grandmother Elsa Plainacher was not so lucky. Although the seventy-year-old woman repeatedly denied her granddaughter's claims that she had surrendered Anna to the Devil some twelve years earlier, after the death of the girl's mother, she was unable to

withstand the judicial torture to which she was subjected. Elsa Plainacher ultimately confessed to making a pact with the Devil and to murdering her own husband and their long-deceased children. She was burned at the stake in September 1583, an event witnessed by large crowds.

Although the term *Plainacher* became a common insult among the Viennese in subsequent years, few other cases of witchcraft occurred in the Austrian city. Besides two late medieval episodes in 1425 and 1498, incomplete records reveal six more trials, in 1588, 1601–1603, 1643, 1695, 1706, and 1708. Overall, these early modern trials involved at least three women, three men, and two whose gender is unknown. At least one man was executed (in 1695), another suspect committed suicide (in 1601), and another died in prison (1603). In the early-eighteenth-century trials, one woman and one man were fined, publicly beaten, and exiled. Nine of the ten additional trials took place in nearby Wiener Neustadt in the sixteenth century, but Vienna never experienced a large-scale witch panic (Dienst 1987, 286–289). As the seat of the Habsburg government, Vienna was home to the eighteenth-century rulers and officials who brought witch hunting to an end throughout the Habsburg monarchy.

EDMUND M. KERN

See also: AUSTRIA; EXORCISM; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; RUDOLF II, HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR; URBAN WITCHCRAFT.

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**VINET, JEAN (VINETI, JOHANNES)
(D. CA. 1470)**

A Dominican inquisitor working in Carcassonne, Jean Vinet composed a *Tractatus contra demonum invocatores* (Treatise Against Demon Invokers) around 1450. His text was among the first to provide a theological and doctrinal approach to the possibility of the witches' Sabbat. Together with Nicolas Jacquier, Johann Tinctor, and Petrus Mamoris, Vinet represented the current of French thought that inserted the early doctrine of the Sabbat, formulated in Alpine regions, into the larger doctrinal framework of demonology.

Little is known of Vinet's life. In 1435, this French Dominican graduated from the faculty of theology at the University of Paris, where he taught between 1436 and 1438. Appointed inquisitor of heretical depravity for Paris in 1443, he subsequently carried out this function in Carcassonne from 1450 to around 1470. We cannot describe his specific activities as inquisitor of the faith. Three manuscripts of Vinet's *Tractatus contra demonum invocatores* have been preserved (in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, in the Bibliothèque Royale in Brussels, and in the Stadtbibliothek in Trier), as have five incunabula. Vinet composed one of the first treatises on demonology to integrate new reflections on sorcerers who consorted with or summoned demons, analyzing the new phantasm of the Sabbat from the perspective of Scholasticism and proposing an acceptable doctrinal framework for witchcraft trials. He was convinced of the reality of demons.

His treatise on demon conjurers contained four parts. Vinet first defined the nature of demons and their different names, relying principally on Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. Next, he described apparitions and the abilities of demons to intervene in the earthly world, discussing both contractual and carnal relationships between humans and demons. He devoted a long third section to the magic arts, their effectiveness, and demonic participation in such acts. Vinet ended by describing physical damage inflicted on men and animals by evil spirits, most notably demonic possession and its remedy, exorcism.

The Sabbat does not occupy a central place in his treatise, but it appeared several times during discussions of specific issues, notably in the second part. Here Vinet investigated the possibility of sexual relations between women and demons. He then examined the question of sorcerers' magical flights to demonic assemblies, or "synagogues of demons." Vinet was one of the first authors to distance himself explicitly from the authority of the *Canon Episcopi* (ca. 906). He clearly differentiated "women who aspire to ride in the night with Diana, goddess of the pagans" from these "new idolaters" (*moderni ydolatre* or *heretici*), whom the *Canon Episcopi* never mentioned. As Vinet described them, these "new idolaters" summoned demons, worshiped them by sacrificing newborn babies, rendered homage to them, and paid them tribute. He believed such heretics should be killed without mercy.

In the section devoted to the magic arts, Vinet carefully distinguished natural magic from devilish magic through lengthy discussions of the opinions of Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, and Albertus Magnus (Albert the Great). This section is notable for its range of topics, including necromancy, astrology, divination, enchantments, visions, and spells. Following Aquinas, Vinet condemned all arts practiced with the assistance of evil spirits or through pacts concluded with them.

Vinet submitted the Sabbath to the test of Thomism by searching principally in the works of the “Angelic Doctor” (that is, Thomas Aquinas) for answers to questions about the practices confessed by sorcerers during their trials. Vinet contributed to defining and qualifying the crimes committed by these devil-worshipping “new heretics.” Drawing on Scholastic demonology, Vinet redrew the boundaries between the possible and the impossible and between the acceptable and the unacceptable. Instead of depicting himself as an unrelenting defender of the struggle against these “modern heretics,” he adopted a critical position. Faithful to Scholastic training, his arguments aimed to discover the “truth” among different propositions.

Vinet stressed human free will, which rendered people responsible for their acts. He held people to be capable, through reason and will, of resisting demonic temptations, although the powers of the spirits were immense. For Vinet, any human being must ultimately be judged by his acts. Having demonstrated the possibility and existence of demonic assemblies, however, Vinet supplied some much-needed doctrinal and theological justification necessary for carrying out fifteenth-century witch hunts.

MARTINE OSTORERO;

TRANSLATED BY KARNA HUGHES

See also: AQUINAS, THOMAS; AUGUSTINE, ST.; *CANON EPISCOPI*; DEMONOLOGY; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; INQUISITION, MEDIEVAL; INVOCATIONS; JACQUIER, NICOLAS; MAGIC, NATURAL; RITUAL MAGIC; SABBAT; SEXUAL ACTIVITY, DIABOLIC; TINCTOR, JOHANN.

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VINTLER, HANS (D. –1419)

A member of a leading south Tyrolean noble family, Hans Vintler became a legal official in a territorial court and by 1416 was an official in the administration of Duke Friederich of Tyrol. He is best known as the author of a long didactic poem, *Buch der Tugend* (Book of

Virtue), a discussion of virtues and vices, which he completed in 1411. In the poem he described many popular magical practices, including conjuration, divination, love magic, and weather sorcery, and he also referred to a particular group of sorcerers called witches (*unholten*).

The *Buch der Tugend* was published at Augsburg by Johann Heidegger of Blaubeuren (commonly called Johann Blaubirer) in 1486; it also survives in six manuscripts written both before and after this date. Modeled on a widely disseminated Italian treatise of ca. 1300, the *Fiori di virtu* (Flowers of Virtue), Vintler’s work examined seventeen different virtues and their corresponding vices as part of his call for moral improvement. He devoted a substantial section to the vice of superstition (*unglauben*), drawing on a Latin confessional translated by Martin von Amberg in the late fourteenth century. Vintler complained about the widespread contemporary belief in magic and sorcery, more general beliefs about signs of misfortune, as well as a range of popular magical practices and maleficent sorcery. Healing and protective magic received particular attention, as did storms, invisibility, stealing milk, and impotence, nor did he overlook such forms of learned magic as divination and necromancy. All manner of plants, animals, and body parts were used in this magic, as well as verbal spells, blessings, ecclesiastical objects, and wax figures. Although Vintler generally called the effects of such magic “imagination” or “deception,” he occasionally presented the Devil and other figures drawn from folk literature as authors of or collaborators in such human delusions.

The considerable attention given to magic and sorcery in Vintler’s original text was further emphasized in the printed version of 1486, which included 236 woodcuts spread over its 214 pages, no fewer than fifty-two of them illustrating its relatively short section devoted to superstition (Schramm 1943, figs. 487–719). Most images are similar to the illuminations in a richly illustrated Gotha manuscript of circa 1500 that seems to have used the same now-lost model. The significance of this unusually large and varied visual compendium of contemporary magic clearly suggests that by the 1480s printers such as Blaubirer believed that images of popular sorcery, magic, and superstition would sell.

The Vintler woodcuts do not represent actual magical practices but instead offer us an educated author’s view of the world of popular magic. One key characteristic is the close relationship they posit between popular magic and the natural world. Animals feature frequently as portents of fortune and misfortune, instruments for fortunetelling, objects of special blessing, or symbols of village inequity and strife. The astrological powers of the heavens—sun, moon, and stars—also fill important roles, as do herbs, plants, earth, water, and fire.

A second significant characteristic of the woodcuts is the gendering of magical practices in a manner reflecting traditional divisions of labor. Women figure as both castrators and general healers, who dealt in body parts and protect domestic animals, whereas men charm weapons, search for treasure, and heal horses.

A third characteristic is the minimal references to diabolical association and influence, which appears unambiguously only in two woodcuts: one a scene of diabolical invocation, the other an act of sorcery identified as idolatry. The large compendium of magical acts contains only one reference to witches, female sorcerers who drink wine from other people's cellars—a reference to traditional stories about people of the night with their wild and destructive night rides and processions. It is puzzling that the accompanying illustration introduce a case of shapeshifting, possibly an indication of contemporary popular beliefs about *unhollen* in 1486. Although both text and images represent a world of magical forces and practices that are being condemned as vice, they largely ignore the widespread demonization of such practices that occurred around 1500.

CHARLES ZIKA

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; CHARMS; CUNNING FOLK; FOLKLORE; GENDER; IMAGINATION; IMPOTENCE, SEXUAL; MAGIC, POPULAR; NIGHT WITCH, OR NIGHT HAG; PEOPLE OF THE NIGHT; SORCERY; WEATHER MAGIC.

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VISCONTI, GIROLAMO
(HIERONYMUS VICECOMES)
(D. CA. 1478)

The Milanese scholar Girolamo Visconti participated in the debate about the existence of witchcraft practices with two brief treatises written around 1460, the *Lamiarum sive striarum opusculum* (A Brief Work on Lamia or Witches) and the *Opusculum de striis* (A Brief Work on Witches). An outside observer of the witchcraft trials that were increasingly numerous in

Lombardy during this period, he discussed the validity of the charges imputed to witches and demonstrated why they should be judged as heretics.

Descended from the noble Milanese family of the Visconti, he was ordained a friar while young and spent most of his life in the Dominican monastery of Sant' Eustorgio in Milan, where he taught logic after 1448. He served as provincial of Upper Lombardy from 1465 until his death around 1478. Aside from these works, he also wrote a *Compendium quaestionis de obligatione papali* (Summary of the Question of Papal Obligations) around 1470. Visconti's two brief treatises on witchcraft were published as a single volume at Milan in 1490. Three manuscripts of both treatises (in the Biblioteca Casanatensis in Rome, in the Biblioteca Universitaria in Pavia, and in the Cornell University Library in Ithaca, New York) have transmitted versions of these two texts on witchcraft that differed from the incunabulum of 1490.

Visconti dedicated his first treatise to Francesco Sforza, duke of Milan. It might have been written around 1460, a time when witchcraft trials were becoming more frequent in Lombardy. In the years from 1418 to 1422, nearly twenty trials for bestiality, sorcery, and witchcraft took place in his own monastery of Sant' Eustorgio. The imprecise procedural and legislative framework of that time allowed contradictory positions, sometimes favoring abuses or displaying great tolerance toward the accused. Having attended numerous trials, Visconti tried to provide a doctrinal structure for such proceedings. After presenting arguments for and against the existence of witchcraft, demonstrating the liveliness of the debate, he sought to synthesize such a priori irreconcilable elements as the *Canon Episcopi* (ca. 906) and the reality of nocturnal flight. Visconti certainly considered it possible that witches actually went to the "game" (that is, the Sabbat), because demons were capable of transporting them. On the other hand, if persons merely dreamed of attending a Sabbat, their bodies could not actually be found there, because they could not occupy two different places at the same time.

Like most Italian authors, Visconti distinguished vampire-witches (*striges*) from less dangerous kinds (*lamiae*), and he described the Sabbat as a "game" (*ludus*) where ghouls came to dance, drink, and eat and to find ways to harm their enemies by worshipping the "lady of the game" (*dominam ludi*). In his first treatise, he seemed to present the "lady" as retaining the beneficent character associated with the goddess Diana; the Sabbat still contained traces of some ancient beliefs in ghouls and Diana, which Visconti progressively helped transform.

In his briefer second treatise, the *Opusculum de striis*, his tone became more incisive and peremptory. Visconti primarily addressed the judges responsible for

determining if witches were heretics. This time, the “lady of the game” was clearly likened to Satan, the great protagonist of the ceremony. Christian demonology had transformed ancient beliefs. There was no doubt: Witches were manifestly heretical because they acted in reality, not dreams, and in full conscience. The “sect” of devil worshippers, to which they belonged, especially attracted women, but men, even noblemen, who had their own familiar demons, were also drawn to it. Several of their acts proved that this sect was heretical: Its adepts were apostates who had renounced their faith and baptism, who worshiped the Devil and offered him sacrifices. Consequently, they had to be punished.

While during the same period French authors such as Nicolas Jacquier or Jean Vinet tried to distinguish clearly between followers of Diana and the “new” heresy of devil worshippers, Girolamo Visconti, like such other Italian authors as Bernardino of Siena, John of Capistrano, or Jordan of Bergamo, transformed the old beliefs in *lamiae* and Diana by twisting them toward the witches’ Sabbat, thus reinterpreting ancient folkloric legacies in terms of Christian demonology.

MARTINE OSTORERO;

TRANSLATED BY KARNA HUGHES

See also: BERNARDINO OF SIENA; *CANON EPISCOPI*; DEMONOLOGY; DIANA (ARTEMIS); FLIGHT OF WITCHES; HERESY; JACQUIER, NICOLAS; LAMIA; MILAN; SABBAT; STRIX, STRIGA, STRIA; VAMPIRE; VINET, JEAN.

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VISIONS

A vision may be defined as an extranormal psychosomatic experience, the feeling of being transported bodily and spiritually into another space while the body actually lies in a catalepsy, trance, ecstasy, or deep sleep. As a

rule, these spaces are parts of the religious imaginary (heaven, hell, purgatory, or symbolic rooms). An apparition, on the contrary, is the sudden emergence of a person, animal, or something usually not found in the same space where the seer’s body is located. In this case, space does not change, but its content does (apparitions of Jesus, Mary, the Lamb, saints, and so on); the seer usually remains conscious and in control of his bodily functions. Today both phenomena would be called psychic hallucinations, illusions, or fantasies experienced during altered mental states.

Visions formed a typical part of the model of mystic sanctity, which predominated especially among spiritual women in late medieval and early modern Catholicism. Every famous saint of that epoch—Elizabeth of Hungary, Bridgit of Sweden, Catherine of Siena, and Teresa of Avila—experienced ecstatic revelations. Impostors like Sybilla of Marsal (thirteenth century) or Anna Laminit (fifteenth century) pretended to receive visions regularly, because otherwise they had no chance to be recognized as holy women. A vast corpus of religious writings, vision literature, developed from the Early Middle Ages onward, comprising both travels to the other world—like the famous *Visio Tnugdali* (The Vision of Tnugdalus [an Irish knight]; 1148/1149) or St. Francesca Romana’s ecstatic voyages through hell and purgatory—and mystical visions such as the revelations of Henry Suso or Julian of Norwich. As late as the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a rich corpus of mystical visions was produced by Emanuel Swedenborg, Anna Katharina Emmerick and others. The fine arts were often influenced by visionary texts upon which some iconographical innovations were based, namely, the scene of the Nativity following a revelation of St. Bridgit. The detailed hell paintings of Simon Marmion, Hieronymus Bosch, Pieter Brueghel the Elder, and others derived many elements from vision literature.

It seems indubitable that the witches’ records of encounters with the Devil and the ride to the Sabbat in reality were to some extent the consequences of visions, trances, and dreams. Heinrich Kramer, the author of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) and many other demonologists were convinced that the details of the Sabbat could be experienced *imaginaria visione* when sleeping on the left side (*Malleus Maleficarum* I, 17), though many authorities thought real flights with a witch’s broom possible. There was, however, a marked difference between the experiences of women saints and those of the witches: Whereas the former entered an appropriate psychic state through ascetic techniques such as self-flagellation, insomnia, fasting, and meditation, but never through the use of drugs, the latter reversed the preparatory procedure by swallowing hypnotic substances or anointing the body with hallucinogens.

For contemporaries, the same problem arose as with miracles: Who caused these visions a woman claimed to see? If the content of the vision was unmistakably diabolic, matters were clear. But how should they judge the numberless revelations where God or a saint appeared to command some act or give judgment on someone? The case of Joan of Arc, who was executed as a sorceress, is only the best known of many similar dilemmas. Her defenders held her apparitions of angels and saints to be authentic and her military mission to be the fulfillment of God's explicit order; her enemies denounced them as devilish fantasies, guided by merely political and personal interests. The complex theological literature on the discernment of spirits shows how difficult it was to find out whether God or his adversary produced such visions.

PETER DINZELBACHER

See also: BRUEGHEL, PIETER THE ELDER; DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS; DRUGS AND HALLUCINOGENS; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; JOAN OF ARC; KRAMER, HEINRICH; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MIRACLES.

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VOLTAIRE (1694–1778)

Though François-Marie Arouet, better known as Voltaire, was not the most vocal critic of witchcraft prosecutions in the eighteenth century, his fame as a *philosophe* (forward-looking thinker) made him a symbol of the Enlightenment's rejection of witch beliefs and condemnation of witchcraft trials.

During the seventeenth century, witchcraft prosecutions intensified in many European areas. But the most famous among the philosophers of that age, those now seen as the formulators of the new rationalism, such as René Descartes, Baruch Spinoza, and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, stood silent about this phenomenon, perhaps because they considered the belief in witchcraft too contemptible and misguided to warrant comment. The rejection of witch beliefs and the condemnation of the trials came mainly from theologians like Balthasar Bekker and jurists like Christian Thomasius.

After witch hunting had entered a period of decline in the eighteenth century, some Enlightenment thinkers,

such as Laurent Bordelon, Ludovico Muratori, and Girolamo Tartarotti, became openly critical of "superstitions" and witch beliefs. Others, like Francis Hutchinson, Scipione Maffei, Montesquieu, and—above all—Voltaire, not only dismissed witch beliefs but also condemned the prosecutions themselves.

In his *Dictionnaire philosophique* (Philosophical Dictionary, 1764), where 25 of the 600 articles concern magic, Voltaire ridiculed witchcraft as the fantasy of poor and ignorant women, deceived by some crooks and even more by their feeble minds. These women, according to Voltaire, thought they were able—after saying the magical word *abraxa* and putting horrid unguents all over their bodies—to fly to the Sabbat, where they met and worshiped the Devil in the shape of a goat. Voltaire also dismissed the books supposedly meant to help the magicians practice their rituals: the so-called *grimoires*, which Voltaire claimed were absolutely meaningless, full of indecipherable signs. The manuals written by inquisitors and witch hunters were just as silly as the *grimoires*. Voltaire chose Martín Del Río's *Disquisitiones magicae libri sex* (Six Books on Investigations into Magic, 1599/1600) as his main example of this genre, probably because Del Río was a Jesuit, and Jesuits had become a main target of Enlightenment thought.

Voltaire estimated that more than 100,000 witches had been condemned to death all over Europe (a figure currently accepted as a plausible number of trials, but not deaths). The only way to stop this carnage, he wrote, was for *philosophes* to teach judges that "they should not burn idiots at the stake." As for magicians, Voltaire wrote, "Nothing is more ridiculous than condemning a real magician to burn at the stake; because we should assume he would be able to extinguish the fire and twist judges' necks."

In his *Commentaire sur le livre des délits et des peines* (Commentary on the book concerning crimes and punishments, 1766 [Caesare Beccaria's *Dei delitti e delle pene*, 1764].), Voltaire discussed a trial that occurred in Geneva around 1652. A peasant woman named Michelle Chaudron was condemned to death for making a pact with the Devil, who had ordered her to bewitch two girls. Voltaire gave a short but moving description of how she was forced to confess under torture, but once again his explanation of the phenomenon went no further than the usual binary opposition between idiocy-ignorance on one hand (including both victims and persecutors) and philosophy-rationalism on the other.

MARINA MONTESANO

See also: BEKKER, BALTHASAR; BORDELON, LAURENT; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DESCARTES, RENÉ; DEVIL; ENLIGHTENMENT; *GRIMOIRES*; HUTCHINSON, FRANCIS; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); MAFFEI, SCIPIONE; MURATORI, LUDOVICO ANTONIO; SKEPTICISM; SUPERSTITION; TARTAROTTI, GIROLAMO; THOMASIU, CHRISTIAN.

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VORARLBERG

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, officials on behalf of the Habsburgs administered most parts of today's Austrian federal state of Vorarlberg. A few territories were self-governing members of the Holy Roman Empire, ruled by the counts of Ems and the abbots of Weingarten (Baden-Württemberg) and Einsiedeln (Switzerland). Neither clerical possession held any witchcraft trials. However, between 1528 and 1657 at least 170 people (approximately 80 percent of them women) were put on trial for witchcraft in the Austrian territories and in autonomous territories, and at least 130 (or over two-thirds) of them were sentenced to death.

The first victim of witch hunting who came from Vorarlberg was a shoemaker's wife in Bregenz; she died in a dungeon in Constance in 1493. Five years later another woman from Bregenz was imprisoned for a long time after having been identified as a sorceress by fellow citizens, who had practiced magic themselves in order to "discover" her. The first witchcraft trial in Vorarlberg took place at Bludenz in 1528; a woman from a nearby village was suspected of being a witch but was finally set free. There were a few more individual trials in the following decades, but these did not lead to executions. By the mid-sixteenth century, however, whole groups of witches were being prosecuted, first in the region of Bregenzerwald and then in other parts of the dominions of Feldkirch as well as Bregenz. The judicial prosecutions ended in spring 1551 when the Habsburg government at Innsbruck forbade the local

courts to torture prisoners on their own. It also demanded more comprehensive evidence before making further arrests and claimed the right to make all final decisions in witchcraft trials. This first series of trials may have led to thirty or more executions.

The next witchcraft trial took place at Bludenz in 1570; the victim was a woman from the valley of Montafon. Five years later, four women from Altenstadt were probably burned as witches, and three women were executed in Bludenz at that time after a professional witch expert from Urseren in Switzerland had convicted them on testimony obtained through harsh tortures. In 1585 a woman was burned in Dornbirn; in 1586 and 1588 trials involving four people from the valley of Klostersalpe ended with one execution at Bludenz.

After 1595, witch hunting in all counties of Vorarlberg reached a second peak, as in many other areas of central and western Europe. There were numerous connections with extreme agrarian crises. In 1597 and later, witch hunting in the dominion of Feldkirch led to a number of sharp conflicts between some local inhabitants and officials, especially at Dornbirn, where unofficial committees tried to circumvent the regular court and take control of both interrogations and torture procedures. There, the persecution of witches caused endless difficulties: When local authorities carried out the persecutions requested by large parts of the population, they violated legal instructions or financial restrictions of the Innsbruck government. If they refused persecutions because of legal orders from Innsbruck, they provoked bitter reactions from local people, sometimes even rebellions. On the one hand, this conflict saved the lives of many people; on the other, almost all executions were carried out after trials regarded as problematic by the Innsbruck government.

The largest witchcraft trial in southern Vorarlberg was conducted at Bludenz in June 1597: Five women lost their lives, and a man was burned some months later. In 1604 two more women were executed in Bludenz. The most extensive series of trials in the history of Vorarlberg took place at Bregenz in 1609: From April through July, sixteen people from the surrounding region were burned as witches or sorcerers. The trials obviously started with the capture of Melch Schnell, a healer from Ammenegg near Dornbirn. The government had already recommended his arrest in 1602 because of his activities. During the second largest series of witchcraft trials, ten more people were sentenced to death at Bregenz in 1615.

But the years following saw only individual trials. In Vorarlberg, four executions were recorded during the whole of the Thirty Years' War. A man from Hohenems was put on trial for magic at Bregenz in 1622—the only prosecution in Austrian Vorarlberg that can be regarded as social disciplining by the authorities (the magician

was the only person who was not a Habsburg subject, although he was not actually a foreigner). When the local population complained about evil sorcery, the authorities usually did nothing or reacted with moderation. But when crimes like abortion or the murder of a child were suspected, the authorities also took vigorous action regarding sorcery. Such circumstances led to the execution of a woman from Scheffau in 1626.

Unlike the dominion of Bregenz, where witchcraft trials continued after 1615, the south of today's federal state of Vorarlberg was apparently free of further trials after 1604. Nevertheless, women and men were still suspected of witchcraft and ostracized as witches or sorcerers there. In 1642, the supreme official of Bludenz was even forced by threats against his person to bring a woman from Bürserberg to trial, notwithstanding all legal regulations, after a possessed woman had called her a witch.

In the mid-seventeenth century, Vorarlberg experienced a third cycle of witch hunting. Executions now took place only in those territories where local authorities had considerable autonomy, particularly the city and dominion of Feldkirch, then governed by Karl Friedrich, Count of Hohenems. Under his rule, the last recorded death sentences in witchcraft trials in Austrian territories were pronounced in 1651 against eight women by the court of Rankweil-Sulz. In the same year, an old woman died during interrogations in Bregenz. There the last witchcraft trial conducted by an Austrian court ended with acquittals for all defendants in 1656–1657. In the following decade, however, the authorities faced further attempts to start prosecutions. These were still possible in the county of Hohenems, including Lustenau, where the first known judicial proceeding occurred in 1631. From 1649 to 1653, no fewer than twenty-three people stood trial for sorcery. Eighteen of them were put to death. In 1677 the last witchcraft trials on Vorarlberg soil took place in Hohenems and Lustenau, claiming four women's lives.

The last known sorcerer from Vorarlberg was in Schaan, a parish priest who came from the neighboring village of Frastanz. Arrested and investigated as a

sorcerer-priest for three years at Chur and Milan, he was finally found innocent and vindicated by papal authority. Nevertheless, his former parishioners did not tolerate his reinstatement.

One of the main reasons for the relatively early end of witch hunting in the Austrian dominions in Vorarlberg was the particular structure of administration that complicated and hindered the prosecutions. In Habsburg lands, the state did not inhibit trials, but its legal procedures were controlled more strictly. The last "successful" witchcraft trials, therefore, occurred in territories beyond the reach of the government in Innsbruck.

Numerous slander trials showed that many people felt threatened or damaged by witches, even long after the last witchcraft trials. In Vorarlberg, it also becomes apparent in the context of everyday conflict strategies that an accusation of women as witches represented the counterpart to accusing men of bestiality. Whereas men were regarded as having positive magical abilities like healing, women were overwhelmingly represented as practicing damaging magic. Such damages dominated the confessions in Vorarlberg. References to witchcraft as a satanic cult are rare and rudimentary. In some very early testimony, there appear connections to pagan beliefs concerning fertility cults or the journey into the world of the dead, similar to the beliefs of the *benandanti* (do-gooders) of northeastern Italy.

MANFRED TSCHAIKNER

See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; AUSTRIA; *BENANDANTI*; FEMALE WITCHES; HOHENEMS, FERDINAND KARL FRANZ VON; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; MALE WITCHES; SLANDER; TRIALS; VADUZ, COUNTY OF; WITCH HUNTS.

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W

WAGSTAFFE, JOHN (1633–1677)

Wagstaffe is author of *The Question of Witchcraft Debated* (1669, with a second expanded edition in 1671). We know little about Wagstaffe's life, except that he was educated at St. Paul's School and Oriel College, Oxford. Anthony à Wood claimed in his *Athenae Oxonienses* (An Exact History of All the Writers and Bishops who have had their Education in the University of Oxford from 1500 to 1690, 1691–1692) that Wagstaffe was a drunkard. In 1660, Wagstaffe wrote the antipapal *Historical Reflections on the Bishop of Rome*, and he also contributed a Greek poem to a volume, *Britannia Rediviva*, celebrating the restoration of Charles II.

In the *Question of Witchcraft Debated*, Wagstaffe nowhere acknowledged any previous attacks on belief in witchcraft (for example, those by Johann Weyer, Reginald Scot, or Thomas Ady), although we can assume he had read at least some of them. The only skeptical author he mentioned was Girolamo Cardano, whose skepticism was extremely cautious. Wagstaffe's good classical education had acquainted him with major works defending belief in witchcraft; in this regard, he mentioned Johannes Nider, Bartolomeo della Spina, Paulo Grillando, and Martín Del Rio. He had evidently read a contemporary defense of belief in witchcraft, Joseph Glanvill's *A Blow at Modern Sadducism* (1668), from which he took the story of the demon drummer of Tidworth. Among modern authors, Wagstaffe showed the most respect for the Venetian historian and propagandist Paolo Sarpi, on whose *History of the Inquisition* he drew freely, using the 1639 English translation.

Wagstaffe's private beliefs are hard to ascertain. He denied Glanvill's central claim that skepticism about witchcraft implied skepticism about the existence of spirits and even of God—although his attack on witchcraft might have been intended to encourage his readers to start down the slippery slope Glanvill identified. It has been argued that Wagstaffe was indebted to Thomas Hobbes, whose materialism certainly extended to skepticism about witches and spirits and was generally thought to imply atheism; Wagstaffe's arguments are certainly compatible with Hobbesism.

His core arguments were, first, that the Bible was mistranslated when taken to refer to witchcraft; second,

that belief in witches derived from pagan superstition; third, that Catholicism encouraged this belief in order to extend its power, while introducing new elements (the pact with the Devil, flight through the air, the Sabbat); and fourth, that belief in witchcraft was internally inconsistent because it presented witches as powerful, though they were penniless, and devils as omniscient, although God alone was omnipotent. Wagstaffe insisted that he believed in spirits (meanwhile noting that someone who did not believe in spirits would be foolish to deny their reality) and thus accepted the stories of poltergeists that Glanvill and others reported. But in the first edition of his major work, Wagstaffe claimed that belief in spirits who played “mad pranks” (1669, 60) and “malicious tricks” (63) and who were “frolick and gamesome in doing us mischief” (63) in no way implied belief in a demonic pact between witch and demon.

It is hard not to suppose that Wagstaffe expected his readers to adapt his arguments against witches into attacks on belief in spirits and on religion itself. He ridiculed the argument that one should believe in witches because “so many thousands of wise men in the world have believed,” for “the various religions that have been in the world, are more than enough to convince one, how absurd and ridiculous the wisest of men are in matters of opinion and belief” (67–68). And while ostensibly rejecting the view that religion was the result of irrational fear, he held that this was indeed the origin of belief in witchcraft and that this belief was fostered by “wise politicians” (70)—a line of argument he developed through a general survey of pagan religion, attacking Platonism in particular (though he acknowledged that Platonism was much admired by the first Christians). He concluded that attacking belief in witchcraft could help to save the lives of those tortured into false confessions and that “under this side Heaven, there is nothing so sacred as the life of man, for the preservation whereof, all policies or forms of government, all laws and magistrates, are most especially ordained” (80), an argument that seems straightforwardly Hobbesian.

Despite the denials and equivocations, it seems probable that Glanvill's insistence that denial of witchcraft led straight to atheism inspired Wagstaffe to write an

attack on belief in witchcraft that surreptitiously inculcated atheistical principles. It is surely no coincidence that the first edition was accompanied by a translation of a dialogue by Lucian of Samosata, widely understood to be opposed to all religious belief; in the second edition of his work, Wagstaffe acknowledged that “there are some who wonder that I would offer to annex unto my book, a Dialogue of Lucian, who as they say was a known atheist” (1671, 151). His response to the charge of atheism was that “the assertors of witchcraft do frequently object atheism unto those that deny it. But I am still of the opinion, that such a ridiculous slander is not worthy to be answered” (1671 preface, A3rv). How influential Wagstaffe’s views were is hard to assess. They were quickly attacked by R. T. in *The Opinion of Witchcraft Vindicated* (1670). Yet Wagstaffe’s work was translated into German in 1711, and his arguments reappeared in William Pittis’s *The Impossibility of Witchcraft* (1712).

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See also: BIBLE; CARDANO, GIROLAMO; ENGLAND; GLANVILL, JOSEPH; HOBBS, THOMAS; POLTERGEIST; SKEPTICISM; SUPERSTITION.

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WALPURGIS (WALPURIGS) NIGHT

In popular belief, Walpurgis is the night between April 30 and May 1 when all witches meet at the top of the Blocksberg (now called Brocken) in the Harz Mountain Range in central Germany.

The occasion is named for the Anglo-Saxon princess Walburga, who was the niece of St. Boniface and abbess of a nunnery at Heidenheim in Germany, where she died in 777. On May 1, 870, her corpse was transported to Eichstätt, and this date became her feast day. In most parts of Sweden, people used to light bonfires on Walpurgis Night (*Valborgmaessoavond*) to welcome spring. Traditionally, May 1 was the first day of the year when the cattle and the sheep were driven out of their stables to graze in the meadows and woods. Bonfires and noise would, it was believed, protect the livestock against wild animals or evil powers. It is quite possible that the custom of the *Freinacht* in southern Germany (when young people play tricks on everyone) is connected with this traditional moment of driving out the cattle.

Today, so-called modern witches try to relate Walpurgis Night to witchcraft through the Celtic feast of Beltane, a fertility celebration to welcome spring. They claim that Christian doctrine tried to extinguish the memory of this feast or at least reduce its popularity by encouraging the distribution of scary tales about witches coming together on this special night to dance and to worship the Devil. In fact, historical sources provide no evidence that any pagan spring festival survived beyond the Early Middle Ages. Records of witchcraft trials dating from the age of the great European witch persecution (that is, in Germany from the middle of the fifteenth to the middle of the seventeenth centuries) reveal that the investigators always inquired about the exact locations where the so-called devil’s dances (the term *witches’ Sabbat* occurred very rarely in the sources) took place. Yet even under the cruelest tortures, the suspects did not name Walpurgis Night as a special occasion for meeting the Devil.

Instead, they confessed that the Devil’s worshippers danced almost every week. They could meet on any day of the week, at any time of night or day, and in any place inside or outside the town or village. However, they clearly preferred Thursday to other days and darkness to daytime. Most of the places they chose for dancing were situated on the tops of hills or mountains or in clearings or meadows. Consequently, ordinary people imagined that witches met either on elevations or in spots that served as dancing places for local villagers. The confessions contained no hint of any specific witch festival on Walpurgis Night. In the context of witchcraft trials, even the Blocksberg (or Brocken) was seldom referred to as the site of witch meetings. The same is true for another mountain called Blocksberg in the Black Forest. Like its counterpart in the Harz Mountains, it was said to be a place where witches flew and gathered in order to celebrate. A witchcraft trial in Cologne in 1653 was the only case in the city when a beggar confessed that the Devil himself had taken her through the air to the Blocksberg.

The second half of the seventeenth century brought about a change in the scenario for witch dances—the “discovery” of Walpurgis Night. Hans Jacob Christovon Grimmelshausen did not connect the scenario of the witches’ Sabbat that he depicted in his novel, *Abentheuerlicher Smplicissimus* (The Adventures of a Simpleton, published in 1668), to any particular date or location. But Johannes Prätorius, in his book *Bockes-Berges Verrichtung* (The Blocksberg Performance, also published in 1668), was the first to determine that Walpurgis Night was the time and the Brocken was the place where all the witches gathered. Although Gottfried Vogt followed Prätorius’s example in his *De conventu sagarum ad sua sabbata* (On the

Gatherings of Witches at the Sabbat), published in Wittenberg in 1678, the notion of Walpurgis Night as a witch festival did not become part of general German lore until after 1800, when Goethe published his *Faust*, containing a highly influential “*Walpurgisnacht*” scene. Basing his witch-dancing fantasies on Prätorius, Goethe contributed a great deal to establishing Walpurgis Night as the exclusive time for witches to meet.

THOMAS P. BECKER

See also: FAUST, JOHANN; PRÄTORIUS, JOHANNES; SABBAT.

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WANN, PAULUS (CA. 1420–1489)

Wann was a noted preacher who opposed the early persecution of witches. Born in the Upper Palatinate, he studied theology at the University of Vienna after 1441, receiving his master’s degree in 1448 and starting to lecture. After Wann took his doctorate in 1460 at Vienna (then part of the large diocese of Passau), Bishop Ulrich III of Passau appointed him as his cathedral preacher and also made him a canon at the cathedral chapter of Passau in 1477. By then, manuscripts of Wann’s sermons were already widely spread among Bavarian and Austrian monasteries. Some of his sermons had been printed as early as 1460; several others were often published afterward. Acknowledged as a leading Church official during his lifetime, Wann is still remembered at Vienna for his foundation of a scholarship, the *Bursa Pauli*; Catholics know him for his defense of the Immaculate Conception, and historians of witchcraft know him for his early opposition to this new concept.

Wann had seemingly been invited by Bishop Georg Golser of Brixen to serve as an external witness in Golser’s attempt to terminate the inquisition conducted by Heinrich Kramer, author of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486). Wann was appointed a member of the tribunal that assembled at Innsbruck on October 29, 1485. After three days of intensive discussions with Kramer and the inquisitor’s assistants, the bishop’s vicar, Christian Turner, nullified the trials and ordered the liberation of all imprisoned women. Kramer suggested in the *Malleus* that these trials had been successfully completed and had the bishop’s support. That exactly the opposite was the case and

that Kramer’s persecution of witches was universally rejected in Tyrol becomes clear from a letter of October 21, 1485, from Paulus Wann to Konrad Airimshmalz (1425–1495), prior of the Benedictines at Tegernsee in Bavaria. Wann pointed out that the women were accused without reason and suggested that these inquisitions had severely damaged the pope’s reputation. A series of sermons, which Wann promised to design, would be necessary to restore confidence. Although we do not know whether these sermons were ever delivered, the experienced preacher’s announcement strongly suggests that preachers in Tyrol and Bavaria may have spread the ill fame of Inquisitor Kramer—and possibly of witch hunting in general—even before the Reformation.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AUSTRIA; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; GOLSER, GEORGE; KRAMER (INSTITORIS), HEINRICH; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MOLITOR, ULRICH; TYROL, COUNTY OF.

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WARBOYS, WITCHES OF (1593)

The affair of the witches of Warboys, resulting in the execution of three people in 1593, ranks among England’s most important witchcraft cases. In many respects, it set a pattern that would often recur in later witchcraft episodes, most famously at Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692.

The case centered on the sufferings of the children of Robert Throckmorton, a gentleman living in the parish of Warboys (Huntingdonshire). In November 1589, his daughter Jane, almost ten, developed strange symptoms, including violent sneezing, trances, and bodily contortions. Two doctors based in nearby Cambridge were consulted, and being unable to find natural causes for young Jane’s sickness, they suggested witchcraft as the cause: At an early stage in her sufferings, Jane had indeed called a village woman named Alice Samuel, a visitor to the Throckmorton household, a witch. Two other of Throckmorton’s daughters (he had seven children in all) fell ill and also accused Alice Samuel of bewitching them. A little later, yet two more daughters, the oldest being fifteen, developed the same symptoms, as would various household servants thereafter.

The girls’ sufferings lasted well over three years, attracting considerable local attention. A relative, Gilbert Pickering, supposedly the girls’ uncle, played a leading role in confirming that their sufferings were

attributable to witchcraft; it is probably no accident that he was member of a rising Northamptonshire Puritan gentry family. The parish rector, Dr. Francis Dorington, also became convinced of the reality of Alice Samuel's witchcraft. Members of the Cromwell family were lords of the manor of Warboys, and Lady Susan Cromwell was supposedly bewitched to death by Samuel after forcing a confrontation with the supposed witch. Alice Samuel was more or less kept prisoner in the Throckmorton residence and put under heavy psychological pressure until she was induced to confess to Robert Throckmorton. She subsequently retracted this confession but was tricked into repeating it before hidden witnesses. She, her daughter Agnes, and her husband John were eventually sentenced to death for witchcraft at the Huntingdon assizes in April 1593.

Research has demonstrated that Warboys, a small village of some seventy families, was essentially run by the more successful farming families and that the arrival of a gentry family such as the Throckmortons upset the parish's political balance. The Samuel family was well established in the area, and John Samuel, although a troublesome and possibly violent man, had served as a juror on the manorial court of Warboys. Perhaps the context of the case was provided by differing visions of how a village community should function, with the incoming, well-connected, and possibly Puritan gentleman opposing the more relaxed view of an established farming family.

The case was described in a fairly lengthy tract, probably coauthored by a number of people with firsthand experience of the events. It gave lengthy descriptions of the girls' sufferings, providing a model for similar later cases in which children and adolescents demonstrated alarming symptoms that allegedly resulted from witchcraft. Moreover, in the Warboys case, as in many later ones, the bewitched claimed to have been troubled by spirits sent into them by witches, thus allowing for a conflation of bewitchment with demonic possession. Interestingly, both William Somers, who was allegedly schooled in being possessed by John Darrell, and Anne Gunter, who was at the center of a witchcraft case between 1604 and 1606, had read the tract describing the Warboys case and modeled their simulated sufferings on those of the Throckmorton girls.

The Warboys affair did not end with the execution of the three supposed witches. It was commemorated by annual sermons, delivered into the nineteenth century, on the evils of witchcraft, preached at All Saints Church in Huntingdon every Lady Day (March 25) by a doctor of divinity from Queens College, Cambridge.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: BEWITCHMENT; ENGLAND; GUNTER, ANNE; PAMPHLETS AND NEWSPAPERS; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; PURITANISM; SALEM.

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WARFARE

Warfare and witch persecution were both defining features of the early modern period; thus, historians have examined the connection (if any) between them. To what extent and in what ways did warfare provide a context of "crisis" in which popular anxiety about witchcraft rose and the likelihood of witch hunts increased?

Warfare was commonplace in early modern Europe as the religious divisions produced by the Reformation added another cause for conflict to the traditional factors of dynastic rivalry and territorial disputes. In western Europe, the early sixteenth century was marked by the Habsburg–Valois wars in Italy; after the Reformation, religious conflict provoked the German Schmalkaldic Wars (from 1546 to 1547 and in 1552), the French Wars of Religion (between 1562 and 1598), and the Revolt of the Netherlands against Spain (from 1566/1567 to 1609). In the seventeenth century, civil war affected Spain (in 1640), France (from 1648 to 1653), and England, where civil war after 1642 culminated in the execution of Charles I in 1649. Germany became the theater of devastating European religious and political conflict in the Thirty Years' War. Religious conflict calmed down thereafter in western and central Europe, but warfare remained endemic in the early modern world, with Poland and New England suffering especially in the late seventeenth century. In fact, Europe was free from international wars for only a handful of years in the seventeenth century.

Witch hunts were, in fact, rare during periods of actual warfare, because people were too preoccupied with saving their own lives and livelihoods to worry about witches and also because war disrupted the community networks necessary for effective legal prosecution of witchcraft. Communities were more likely to prosecute witches in the aftermath of war, because the long-term psychological effects of the experience of war could increase the communal anxieties that were an essential, if intangible, factor in witch hunts. Probably for this reason, witchcraft trials intensified in parts of early modern France, Hungary, and Poland shortly after a war or internal uprising had ended (Levack 1995).

Threats of war also had a psychological impact on early modern communities that might stimulate witch hunts. The increased scale and frequency of troop movements (which not only represented the imminence of war but also spread disease and caused death)

likely contributed to the exceptionally severe episodes of witch persecution that devastated some Catholic ecclesiastical territories of southeastern Germany during the Thirty Years' War. In the prince-bishopric of Würzburg, for example, as many as 900 individuals were executed for witchcraft between 1625 and 1630. Here, however, the threat of war was the final straw for a population already adversely affected by plague epidemics and inflation since 1606 and by harvest failures during the 1620s; moreover, the people had already experienced one prewar episode of severe witch hunting in 1616 and 1617. Anxieties caused by the vicissitudes of the Thirty Years' War up to 1635 also contributed to some outbreaks of witchcraft trials in parts of western Germany, including the city of Cologne (Irsigler 1996).

Even if warfare increased popular anxieties about witches and the desire to make witchcraft accusations, the crucial factor dictating whether witch hunts would occur was the willingness of judicial elites to acquiesce to communal demands for trials. For instance, fears about witchcraft did intensify for some members of the lower orders of the German imperial free city of Rothenburg ob der Tauber and its rural hinterland in the aftermath of the Thirty Years' War. The conflict's devastating impact had made them more anxious about their ability to survive; it had also created a mentality of "every household for itself," weakening the bonds of good neighborliness that usually helped restrain witchcraft accusations. In addition, new ideas about witchcraft and magic had been spread in this region by the many troops who had marched through it or been quartered there. Because the Rothenburg city council maintained a legally restrained approach to witchcraft trials, however, popular anxiety never translated into large-scale witch panics. Nonetheless, we should be wary of overgeneralizing about the psychological impact of warfare: For some Rothenburg peasants, simply surviving the Thirty Years' War increased their piety and trust in God rather than their anxiety and fear of witches (Rowlands 2003).

Two (in)famous episodes of witch persecution for which a strong causal link to warfare has been suggested were the largest to occur in their respective countries: the 1645–1647 East Anglian witch hunts, instigated by England's self-styled "Witch-Finder General," Matthew Hopkins, and the Salem witchcraft crisis of 1692 in America, which saw 20 executions and over 150 accusations of witchcraft. The East Anglian witch hunts, vastly larger than anything else of the kind in English history, claimed at least 100 and possibly as many as 200 lives; the witch hunts occurred during the English Civil War and would no doubt not have escalated so far if they had not taken place at a time of such political, religious, and social upheaval. The distractions of war meant that the usually restraining influence of the assize court judges was absent in the crucial early months of the

trials: Many cases were left to local justices of the peace, who were unable or unwilling to resist popular pressure to act against witches. The activities of Hopkins and his partner, John Stearne, in fanning the flames of popular witch-hunting zeal would have been quashed much more rapidly by the central authorities in peacetime. The removal of press censorship also helped increase anxiety about the threat of witchcraft. In fact, many pamphlets on this and related themes were published as "witchcraft and ancillary popular beliefs now came to be recognised as a useful means of promoting political or religious issues" by the opposing sides (Valletta 2000, 217). The Civil War may also have caused a crisis of masculinity. Men whose fears of losing control over their own lives increased as a result of the threat of war or the experience of battle, it has been argued, used actual or fantasized acts of violence against witches as a way of reasserting normality and their masculine identities (Purkiss 1997). This thesis seems plausible to an extent, but it was surely the case that the terror of powerlessness that was so marked in wartime was far from gender specific.

Mary Beth Norton has maintained vigorously that the scale and intensity of the Salem crisis was due to the fact that Puritan New England experienced two devastating wars in the late seventeenth century—the First and Second Indian Wars (from 1675 to 1676 and from 1688 to 1699, respectively), during which previously prosperous settlements along the coast northeast of Massachusetts were ravaged by the Wabanakis, often acting in alliance with the French. These wars, Norton has asserted, had a psychological impact on various key groups involved in the Salem crisis. Some of the afflicted accusers were girls and young women who were refugees from the wars. Their stories of being attacked by witches' specters thus represented a way for them to articulate their own guilt at having survived the Wabanaki attacks that had killed their families. That their accusations against men such as the minister George Burroughs or the wealthy Jersey-born merchant Philip English were taken seriously can also be understood in the context of the wars: Burroughs generated suspicion that he was in league with the Devil and thus the Wabanakis, in part because he had an uncanny talent for surviving the latter's attacks unscathed, while suspicion that English may have been in league with the enemies of Puritan New England was raised because he was a native French speaker with many trading links to the French. New England's judicial and clerical elites were (at least initially) willing to lend full support to the witchcraft trials as a means of compensating for their failure in dealing effectively with the Wabanaki threat, and the idea that there was a large, organized group of witches in the process of attacking New Englanders in spectral form made sense to people who already felt themselves under siege at the hands of their visible

enemies (Norton 2002). Norton's work has been criticized for overemphasizing the Indian Wars as the only relevant explanatory context for the Salem witchcraft trials (Karlsen 2003). However, the work that Norton and others have done on the links between warfare and witch hunts in New England, England, and Germany demonstrates both how important it is to contextualize these episodes as carefully as possible and the extent to which psychological factors need to be integrated into explanations of specific witchcraft trials.

ALISON ROWLANDS

See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; ENGLAND; FEAR; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; IMPERIAL FREE CITIES; NEW ENGLAND; PANICS; POPULAR PERSECUTION; SALEM; SPECTRAL EVIDENCE; WARS OF RELIGION (FRANCE); WITCH PANICS; WÜRZBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF.

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WARS OF RELIGION (FRANCE)

In the second half of the sixteenth century, France, like most other western European countries, intensified the pursuit of witches. Between 1562 and 1596, France was torn by bitter and often brutal civil and religious wars between Catholics and Protestants (Calvinists, known as Huguenots). Religious allegiances merged with a struggle for power among the great nobles. Sectarian violence escalated into organized warfare early in 1562, and a pattern of open warfare followed by short-lived peace treaties persisted until early 1596. The monarchs generally tried to act as peacemakers, and French *parlements* (sovereign judicial courts) stopped trials for

heresy. But over time, royal administration broke down, plunging France into virtual anarchy.

Starting, like the religious wars themselves, in 1562, executions of witches began spreading across the kingdom. They escalated after 1580, especially in the appellate courts of northern France. Meanwhile, the first major French demonology, by Jean Bodin, appeared. Catholic propagandists argued, stridently and insistently, for an underlying connection between religious warfare and the simultaneous spread of diabolic witchcraft in France. While the military wars sputtered on and off, the propaganda war was ceaseless. Very early in the religious wars, Catholic polemicists adopted the view that the Protestant heresy was the work of the Devil. In turn, they argued, the heretics helped the Devil in his attempt to lead humankind to damnation. The religious turmoil and violence were seen as signs of the presence of Antichrist; the Apocalypse was near. These propagandists often conflated heresy and witchcraft in their sermons and tracts. The battle against witches and the battle against heretics became the same fight.

These themes first surfaced with the "Miracle of Laon" in 1566. Dramatic public exorcisms ended with the successful expulsion of the demons possessing Nicole Obry, and her demons revealed themselves to be leaders of the Protestant heretics. Reports of the incident depicting the successful exorcism as a great victory for Catholicism circulated throughout France. From that time on, Catholic demonology in France was directed against the existence of Protestantism as well as the eradication of witches.

Another significant development followed the Peace of St. Germain in 1570, which the Protestants seemed to win at the conference table despite losing every major battle. In this troubled atmosphere, the Jesuit Juan Maldonado, professor of theology at the University of Paris, gave a long and very popular series of lectures. Maldonado, who described himself as a soldier in the war against heresy, regarded witchcraft ideas as orthodox and also emphasized the close relationship between the Devil and the heretics. Among his auditors were several men who later became authorities in demonological matters, including Martín Del Rio, Pierre de Lancre, Louis Richeome, and Jean Boucher. Maldonado's lectures, which demonized the Protestants, might have contributed to the fury of the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres in 1572.

One of Maldonado's pupils, Jean Boucher, became a founding member and active participant in the Sixteen, the group of men who ran Paris from 1588 to 1594. During this time, priests preached violently against heretics and witches and threatened anyone who seemed to be insincere in their commitment to Catholicism. Throughout this period, the number of witchcraft cases appealed to the *Parlement* of Paris

stayed fairly level, at eight to ten per year. But during these years, the rates of death penalties the court meted out rose. Over the six or seven decades that the *parlement* applied the death penalty for witchcraft, fewer than one-tenth of the witchcraft cases that were heard ended in the application of capital punishment. During the years of the Catholic League, however, this rose to over one-quarter of the trial cases. This percentage of death penalties in witchcraft cases was still fairly low in a European context, but it represented a sharp increase in the court's usual approach to this crime. (Meanwhile, witchcraft cases actually dropped sharply in the *Parlement* of Rouen, also staffed by Catholic zealots, because few people obeyed the zealots.)

The last major incident pertaining to witchcraft—the demonic possession of Marthe Brossier in 1599—occurred shortly after the wars had finally ended. Catholic zealots hated the settlement imposed by King Henry IV. Brossier's exorcisms, performed in a very tense Paris during the quarrels over the Edict of Nantes (which had granted legal recognition to Calvinists in 1598), were a clear attempt to repeat the Miracle of Laon and to prevent a religious truce. The king, recognizing the danger, intervened. After a medical inquiry found Marthe to be a fraud, the exorcisms were suppressed, and she was sent home.

JONATHAN L. PEARL

See also: ANTICHRIST; APOCALYPSE; APPEALS; BODIN, JEAN; BROSSIER, MARTHE; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DEMONOLOGY; EXORCISM; FRANCE; HERESY; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; MALDONADO, JUAN; OBRY, NICOLE; PARLEMENT OF PARIS; POSSESSION, DEMONIC; WARFARE.

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WATCHING AND WALKING

Many suspected witches were forced to confess not by being physically tortured, but through types of brainwashing. Sleep deprivation was the most frequently used means to that end. In England, the self-styled witch finder Matthew Hopkins applied this mental pressure with considerable success in the 1640s. Through sleep deprivation, immersion in water, continuous questioning, and prolonged solitary confinement, a witch was, to quote Hopkins, "brought into a sad condition . . . and knowing the Devil's malice and subtle circumventions, is brought to remorse and sorrow for complying with Satan for so long, and disobeying God's sacred Commandments, doth then desire to unfold her mind with much bitterness" (quoted in

Macfarlane 1970, 20). The procedure was clearly aimed at exhausting the witch so that she or he was no longer able to deny the accusations.

"Watching and walking" was not the only psychological expedient to break a witch's will. Exorcism was used long before the Reformation to sever all connections between the suspect and her or his demonic accomplices, and it remained a standard procedure in many Catholic regions. Suspects were sprinkled with holy water (or even forced to drink it) or sacred objects were hung around their necks while priests read elaborate anathemas to expel their devils. The psychological effect of such actions in a culture intensely convinced of the effectiveness of sacred rituals can hardly be underestimated. This observation also applies to practices such as searching for the Devil's mark. Several demonologists claimed that the Devil clawed out God's mark placed on the foreheads of the faithful during confirmation. The Devil was then supposed to replace it with his own mark, which could be located anywhere on a witch's body. As a result, it was deemed necessary to shave suspects all over their bodies and then look for the Devil's mark; the suspects were often blindfolded, and they were searched by pricking conspicuous spots to see if they were numb. Such actions, certainly if applied in combination, caused the accused individuals to lose all sense of reality: The techniques broke their resistance and made them ready to confess.

Not every hangman or executioner was familiar with this technique, and as a consequence, it took this skill some time to spread. This process has been analyzed in detail for the northern Netherlands. In 1491, the magistrates of Zutphen, a town in the eastern province of Gelderland, asked their colleagues in Cologne for practical information. They had submitted three women to heavy torture and exorcism but to no avail. The outcome of this trial is unknown, but a few years later, the executioner of Zutphen had become an acknowledged expert in such matters and was hired by other courts farther west to extort confessions. In 1513, the authorities of the city of Nijmegen asked the hangman of Cleves to probe three women, and six years later, "master Symon" was again employed to that end by Nijmegen and also by the city of Utrecht. In 1528, the new technique was first applied in the coastal province of Holland by a Gelderland executioner. The town court of Amsterdam employed the secretary of Utrecht and a Franciscan friar named Geryt of Zutphen to help them force a witch to confess in 1541. A year later, the bailiff of the small town of Schoonhoven asked his colleague in Utrecht for similar advice, as did the city magistrates of Haarlem in 1549.

The Protestant Reformation did not immediately end exorcistic practices. In 1585 and 1586, two small towns in Holland, Schiedam and Goedereede, were advised by a Flemish lawyer named Frasinus Zoetius to

shave the suspects; exchange their clothes for vests sprinkled with holy water; and add blessed salt, wax from a blessed candle, and a fragment of a priest's stole to their food. Afterward, they were to be kept awake and then finally submitted to torture. Later, Protestant countries discarded exorcism, but Protestant ministers still exerted psychological pressure on incriminated parishioners. In northwestern Germany, for instance, Lutheran pastors pressured suspected witches to confess, and in Scotland, Calvinist ministers played a similar role.

HANS DE WAARDT

See also: BODY OF THE WITCH; CONFESSIONS; DEVIL'S MARK; EVIDENCE; EXECUTIONERS; EXORCISM; EXPERIMENTS AND TESTS; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; NETHERLANDS, NORTHERN; PRICKING; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; TORTURE; WATER, HOLY.

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WATER, HOLY

Standard monographs on witchcraft and demonology (see Thomas 1971, 25–77 and passim; Clark 1997) provide numerous examples and anecdotes about the use of holy water against witchcraft and other operations of demons.

A rich and systematic contemporary source is book 3, chapter 4 of Francesco Maria Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficarum* (A Summary of Witches, 1608; 2nd ed. 1626). Guazzo listed holy water as the ninth of twelve "divine and supernatural remedies" against witchcraft and praised its "wonderful efficacy." He distinguished between holy water intended for baptism and "lustral" holy water, which "is consecrated at Prime on every Sunday" and "is avowedly for repelling the attacks of the devil and for averting other dangers" (Guazzo 1988, 179). He gave a short history of its use, claiming that

since Christian antiquity, "those possessed by devils are delivered when sprinkled with it; and . . . this miracle is often renewed today among the Indians" (180). Like witches, Indians were often considered the intimates and confidants of demons; citing the sixteenth-century *Historia Mexicana* (Mexican History) of Francisco López de Gomara, Guazzo affirmed that "among the Indians there are three chief remedies against the illusions and apparitions of demons"—consecrated hosts, the sign of the cross, and holy water—and he added that "the cacodemons themselves have confessed as much to the Indians more than once" (202).

In a related chapter, Guazzo gave examples of baptism driving away demons that tormented Peruvian Indians, Japanese, and Jews, and he described a monstrous child born to the Armenian wife of a Tartar king. When baptized at his Christian mother's behest, "by a miracle, [the boy] at once became so exceedingly comely and beautiful that the King and many others were moved wholly to turn to God, and the Christian cause was very greatly advanced in the land" (182). In another story, a cautious demon warns a boy "to abstain from the use of Holy Water and from adoring the Consecrated Host (which he contemptuously called 'The Little Cake')" (185).

As with other sacraments and sacramentals, explanations were periodically required when holy water failed to produce the desired result automatically. Guazzo quoted from Peter the Venerable (d. 1156) to explain why holy water could not cure a monk tormented by a demon. As a punishment for mortal sin, Guazzo said, his torment could not be cured by holy water, a merely "external sacrament[al]," until the monk had performed an internal sacrament by confessing his sins, "and after he had confessed he at once ceased to be tormented" (186).

The basic idea behind the use of holy water as a demonifuge (a charm against evil spirits) is the opposition between afflictions as the works of the Devil and sacramentals as the works of God. Thus, other sacramentals—such as the sign of the cross, the *Agnus Dei* (a disk of blessed wax), blessed salt and palm leaves, and sacramental materials, particularly the consecrated eucharistic Host and chrism oil—are often described or proposed as demonifuges (Guazzo gave examples in book 3, chap. 4 of his *Compendium*). The *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) also recommended making accused witches drink holy water in order to break their demonically induced refusal to confess (Kramer 1971, 230). Reginald Scot, among other Protestants, mocked the entire complex of Catholic beliefs in *The Discoverie of Witches* (1584, book 12, chap. 10).

Water as a holy element was also important in the ordeal by cold water, also called "swimming the witch." It was assumed that a person bound hand and foot and

thrown into water would sink if innocent or float if guilty because water, as a pure element (which was sometimes blessed by an ecclesiastic for the express purpose of this test), would “accept” an innocent person (at the risk of drowning). Likely deriving from pre-Christian rituals and closely related to the symbolism of baptism, this ordeal was used on suspected heretics centuries before the invention of demonic witchcraft. Usually illegal, it continued to be employed here and there in Europe into the eighteenth century (led by the bishopric of Münster, which had more than 200 such ordeals from 1590 to 1650) as a test to determine the guilt or innocence of supposed witches. During the first half of the nineteenth century, use of this ordeal persisted in the Netherlands, Ukraine, and England.

WALTER STEPHENS

See also: CHARMS; CLERICAL MAGIC; EXPERIMENTS AND TESTS; GUAZZO, FRANCESCO-MARIA; *MALLEUS MALIFICARUM*; MIRACLES; MÜNSTER, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; SACRAMENTS AND SACRAMENTALS; SCOT, REGINALD; SCRIBONIUS, WILHELM ADOLPH; SWIMMING TEST.

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WEATHER MAGIC

Since ancient times, weather magic has been the most common form of both benevolent and harmful witchcraft in all societies. In preindustrial societies all over the world, weather and climate have been of vital importance for the growth of crops. It has always been vital for people to know what kind of weather they can expect, and throughout history, we find stories of diviners who could predict the weather. Besides their need to know something in advance about the weather, people have always sought to influence and control meteorological conditions. Indeed, trying to exercise magical

influence over the weather is as old as the tradition of weather prophecies.

Incantations and rites affecting the climate have usually been practiced with good intentions—in order to call forth favorable winds and good weather on land and sea. Folk culture commonly used protective weather rituals, that is, magical practices intended to prevent inclement or dangerous weather. Furthermore, the general population often believed that sudden changes in the weather and unseasonal weather conditions were caused by magic. It was this latter belief that found expression in the age of witchcraft trials. There is, in other words, a rich and varied folklore surrounding various ways of influencing the weather. Cultural traditions show that this phenomenon has had a long and significant effect on common opinion in European farming and fishing communities.

FOLK BELIEF AND LEARNED VIEWS OF WEATHER MAGIC

European elite culture long interpreted folk reliance on local weather magicians as primitive superstition. Medieval canons asserted that neither demons nor humans could control the weather. In the Middle Ages, canon law punished those who believed magicians could call forth or calm storms. And for a long time, the Christian Church condemned those who believed in the reality and efficacy of weather witches. Belief in



Witches place a cock and a snake in a brew in a cauldron to cause a hailstorm. From Ulrich Molitor, *De Laniis et phitoniciis mulieribus* (*Concerning Witches and Fortunetellers*), 1489. (Glasgow University Library, Department of Special Collections)

the efficacy of magic could itself be dangerous, as it was considered an affront to God. Learned clerics such as Bernardino of Siena found many folk beliefs they could ridicule, including the following: “To chase away a storm that might threaten your crops, you must bare your bottom to the approaching clouds. . . . There was a certain woman in Genoa who, seeing the bad weather coming and wanting to chase it away with a spell, raised up her skirts from behind and pointed her rear end toward the bad weather. Just at that moment lightning struck and killed her, because she had faith in such foolishness” (cited by Mormando 1999, 97).

But from time to time, learned treatises appeared that agreed with some popular beliefs. Adam of Bremen, an eleventh-century German bishop, claimed that wild, ravenous women lived in the Nordic mountains, in a land occupied only by females (*terra feminarum*). Beautiful women turned out to be monstrous witches, and the whole natural world appeared to be populated with demonic females possessing extraordinary abilities to control weather conditions. Menacing natives, who could call up evil weather, hid in the rocky cliffs and mountains. Without the slightest warning, these terrible gluttons could conjure forth horrendous storms. Nordic women’s magical conjuring was reputedly strong enough to control the forces of chaos; in other words, they could control or raise the sea at will. According to Adam of Bremen, even the most skillful sailors had few remedies for the northerners’ satanic tampering with nature. Nautical sorcery was a specialty of witches and sorcerers from the north.

After 1480, when the Church accepted the view that weather witches existed, accusations of weather magic ranked among the most important charges in European witchcraft trials. Heinrich Kramer, the author of the infamous *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches) of 1486, devoted an entire chapter to informing readers that, beyond doubt, witches could easily make hailstorms and cause thunder and lightning. Kramer had weather witches burned at the stake during his mission to Ravensburg in the mid-1480s. He related the story of a weather witch named Agnes (which reads like a popular tale spiced with a bit of priestly demonology) primarily to show that witches could not cause storms of their own accord. First, Agnes dug a little hole in the ground and poured water into it. Then, she stirred the water with her finger but in the name of the Devil and of all her other devils—at which point, the water disappeared and the Devil rose up into the air to produce the hailstorm (*Malleus Maleficarum*, part 2, Question 1, chap. 15; see also Broedel 2003, 64).

WEATHER WITCHES OR WEATHER DEMONS?

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, questions about what weather magic really was and what

witches and demons were capable of achieving with the weather became important topics of debate in intellectual circles. Belief in this kind of magic took various forms. The main dividing line was whether or not one believed that certain people could influence the weather for better or worse by performing a particular ritual. Within folk culture, there was a belief in a direct connection between the *tempestarii* (witches who raise storms) and weather conditions. The other tradition focused on a more indirect link: No human could influence the natural elements, but people could summon up demons that, in turn, could influence the course of nature. In other words, demonological teaching held that no direct link existed between witches and their rites and changes in meteorological conditions. Evil people could, however, influence the weather indirectly through a pact with Satan, who was often described as a prince of the air. Satan and his demons were “airy figures” and hence experts in manipulating the elements. Indeed, devils were the power of motion. Sorceresses could also make demons produce rain, storms, lightning, thunder, and hail and thus destroy crops or drown people at sea.

According to the learned view, all types of weather magic were ineffective by themselves. Their rituals could, however, be construed as signals to demons to take action. Thus, it was important in the trials to look for signs that could be interpreted as invocations of Satan and his demons. Witness testimony from ordinary people about suspicious threats, rituals, and behavior was taken seriously, but it was not interpreted as the direct connection the accuser tended to see between witches and their weather rituals and subsequent storms. The reason why only Satan, not human beings, could produce stormy weather was that the Devil could “bring hailstorms precisely because they have natural causes and because all natural phenomena are at his command. No accompanying ritual can physically affect this; it merely symbolizes the demonic entanglement of its performers” (Clark 1997, 196).

THE IMPORTANCE OF WEATHER MAGIC IN WITCHCRAFT TRIALS

The element of weather-related magic was quite substantial in witchcraft trials all over Europe. Accusations of magical manipulation of weather conditions were among the most important charges brought against suspected witches. Storms and bad weather at sea, cold summers, frosty nights in spring, floods, thunder and lightning, unusual quantities of snow, and extreme hailstorms that destroyed crops all provided important triggers for many important European witchcraft trials. Wolfgang Behringer (1995, 25) wrote of a “fundamental social-historical correlation” between accusations of witchcraft and dangerous weather caused by witches. Other scholars, too, have pointed to a general overlap

in the time periods of the witchcraft trials and segments of the Little Ice Age period.

Popular ideas about climatic conditions reflected social and living conditions in various parts of Europe. People living along the seaboard tended to focus on wind magic. In typical farming districts, the notion that magic could cause frost damage, lightning, and hailstorms that would damage grain crops and grapes was more widespread. Charges of causing intense hailstorms that ruined crops in early summer were prominent in many brutal witchcraft trials in Germany and other parts of central Europe. A common feature of these trials was that accusations were presented as coming from the entire local community. Witness testimony at such trials thus had a collective stamp and differed from the many cases of individual testimony directed against one particular individual. When weather magic affected the whole community, it was easy to express suspicions of a dangerous conspiracy. Weather magic therefore often appeared in conjunction with so-called chains of cases, in which accusations were made by a community and tended to be scapegoating reactions directed at a group of witches suspected of conspiracy. Weather making and storm raising were regarded as offenses against the whole community and were associated with the plotting of witches' covens.

In addition to cases from central Europe, we find weather magic in a wide range of trials from northern European coastal communities, including the east coast of Scotland, the Channel Islands, and the Nordic countries. Accusations of inclement weather from coastal communities and fishing villages had a slightly different character from those originating in the continental interior of Europe—focusing less on causing damage to agriculture and more on provoking stormy weather at sea, resulting in shipwrecks and death. But other accusations from fishing villages accused witches of destroying people's livelihood; for instance, witches were charged with causing storms that drove the fish away. Further south, a frequent accusation against witches in Catalonia was that flying women hurled hail and fog from the sky, destroying fruit crops, killing livestock, and damaging buildings. In 1621, a Catalan witch explained how she and some other witches went to a lagoon and threw some powder onto the water, after which clouds suddenly rose up and great pieces of hail fell to cause damage (Knutsen 2004, 94–95).

Raising enough wind to cause sailing ships to founder was a specialty of female Norwegian witches. Wind magic appeared frequently in the widespread sorcery trials in the far northern county of Finnmark; through diabolical conspiracies, sorcerers reportedly conjured storms that sank fishing boats and sailing ships. Synnøve, from the fishing community of Vadsø, was convicted of using evil weather magic and was burned at the stake in 1632. Along with other witches,

she had tied three knots in a piece of cloth, then untied them while spitting on them “in the name of the evil man.” Late one evening, the women threw the bundle into the sea, shouting the names of the men who had infuriated them. Several fishermen drowned in the storm that arose in the wake of the witches' curses.

The day before Christmas Eve in 1653, Marit Andersdatter pleaded guilty to charges of unleashing the autumn storm that had caused so much damage in Vardø, another fishing village in northeastern Norway. She admitted doing this in the company of other women. The witches had carried wind in a bag, which they then untied; according to court records, the storm was unleashed immediately. Marit confessed that they had sent a storm across the island in order to settle an old score with the district governor (Lilienskiold 1998, 163). Today, the inhabitants of Vardø still describe sudden changes in the weather by referring to winds being let out of a bag.

GOOD AND BAD WINDS FOR SAILING

One story, taken from a witchcraft trial on the Norwegian coast, shows some elements that are quite typical of such cases. In this story, we encounter a man known to be able to call up a good sailing wind for fishermen. The fishermen believed in his art and often approached him to get help in traveling quickly at sea. But one day, something went wrong. The wind maker lost control of his powers, a sign that external forces—that is, demonic powers—played an important role in the conspiracy.

On May 9, 1627, the local court was in session at Hasvåg, a little fishing village in Arctic Norway. The bailiff questioned a Sami shaman, Quiwe Baarsen, about what he had done when he had made sailing wind for Niels Jonsen two years earlier. Quiwe explained that Niels approached him eight days before All Saints Day, in 1625, and asked for a benevolent and favorable wind to get him to Hasvåg, saying that he would pay him well on his return. Quiwe agreed to this, took off his right shoe, and washed his bare foot in calm sea waters, saying, “Wind to land, wind to land!” Niels and his fishermen then got a good wind for sailing.

On the Saturday before All Saints Day, a woman called Trine went to Quiwe and asked him to make a sailing wind so that her husband, who had sailed with Niels Jonsen, might come home soon. She promised to give him a keg of beer if he would raise the wind. Again, Quiwe agreed, and this time, he took a piglet and threw it into the sea, invoking the winds with the words, “Wind to sea, wind to sea!” But the piglet squirmed too much in the sun, and the wind became too strong. Quiwe said to Trine: “God have mercy on them. I am afraid that they have left prematurely and that the wind will be too strong. If they sailed at the beginning of the storm, may God have mercy, or they will not return.”

Niels Jonsen and four other fishermen perished in that storm. The bailiff asked if Quiwe had raised the wind on other occasions. Quiwe replied: "Yes, I have often made wind for people. Four years ago I made wind for a ship from Nordlandene which was at Karcken, because the men on board requested that I make wind for them. So I washed my foot and stirred a gentle south wind."

In May 1627, Quiwe was burned at the stake for his weather magic. This case shows that it was the *abuse* of weather magic that caused him to be taken to court. When the sellers of wind magic ended their lives at the stake, it was usually because something had gone wrong with their magic.

A FAMOUS WITCH STORM

Wind magic of the kind just mentioned also played a major role in a trial concerning one of the most famous storms in the annals of European witchcraft trials. Scots presumed to be witches threw cats into the ocean in order to raise a storm against a sacred monarch, the Scottish Stuart King James VI. The 1589 wedding between the Danish and Scottish royal houses had to be moved because North Sea witches conspired against the Stuart monarchy. During later witchcraft trials in both Denmark and Scotland, it emerged that a coven of Scottish, Norwegian, and Danish witches had been trying to prevent the marriage of James VI to the Danish princess Anna by causing a huge storm in the North Sea. The extreme winds of this storm prevented Anna from crossing the sea, and the couple was forced to marry in Oslo in November 1589. The storm was considered a treasonable plot to sink the royal Danish fleet as it sailed from Copenhagen, bound for Edinburgh.

James VI reacted by proclaiming himself the mortal archenemy of Satan. In 1597, he wrote a book on demonology describing how to combat sorcery, based on his own painful experiences. Because of this book, King James became the foremost expert of the early modern era on the connection between sorcery and meteorology. He had much to say concerning the plague of northern witches. The Devil's worst havoc occurred in "such wild parts of the world, as Lapland and Finland," the monarch wrote with great pathos, mentioning also the horrible roar of the oceans, the demons of the air, and storm-making witches (James VI 2000, 414).

THE WOODCUTS

Such artists as Hans Baldung [Grien] and Albrecht Dürer are important in regard to the visual representation of weather magic. Their many woodcuts depicting weather witches of different kinds became stereotypical representations of witches during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Other variations on the same

theme include images of half-naked women standing outdoors around a cauldron, stirring up a terrible storm. In a famous 1555 woodcut by Olaus Magnus, we see a woman dumping the vile contents of her cauldron into the sea to raise harsh winds.

RUNE BLIX HAGEN;

TRANSLATED BY ANNIKEN TELNES IVERSEN

See also: ACCUSATIONS; ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; ASTROLOGY; BALDUNG [GRIEN], HANS; BAVARIA; BERNARDINO OF SIENA; CAULDRON; DEMONS; DIVINATION; DÜRER, ALBRECHT; FOLKLORE; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; KRAMER (INSTITORIS), HEINRICH; LITTLE ICE AGE; MAGIC, POPULAR; MAGNUS, OLAUS; *MALLEUS MALIFICARUM*; NECROMANCY; NORTH BERWICK WITCHES; POPULAR PERSECUTION; SORCERY; TRIALS; WIND KNOTS.

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WEBSTER, JOHN (1610–1682)

Webster, a former chaplain and surgeon to the Parliamentary armies during the civil war, published his *The Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft* in 1677. Back in 1654 he had attacked the universities and defended empirical science in his *Academarium Examen*. After the Restoration, he became a country physician in Lancashire. In 1671, he published *Metallographia: or, an History of Metals*. During the Civil War he had maintained that the Devil, hell, witchcraft, and the Antichrist were all essentially metaphors for evil within man—views echoing those of Reginald Scot in his *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584). In *The Displaying* he still wanted us to fear the devil within, but in other respects, his arguments were more orthodox than previously.

At the heart of *The Displaying* was the experience of the apostle Thomas, who was convinced that Jesus had risen from the dead only after placing his fingers in his wounds. Thomas's experience provided convincing proof of the Resurrection, because angels and devils could not fabricate a tangible reality; they could deceive sight, but not touch. It followed that *incubi* and *succubi*, familiars who sucked blood from witches, and similar tangible demonic presences must be entirely mythical. To believe in witchcraft as conventionally described was, Webster asserted, to doubt the unique importance of the Resurrection, when Jesus's tangible body gave incontestable proof that he was no mere spirit. Webster's argument did not require that spirits were incorporeal, merely that their bodies were ethereal, and this was his line of argument.

In order to dismiss the evidence advanced by demonologists, Webster developed a sophisticated view of testimony, dismissing the testimony of single witnesses or of many interested witnesses as unreliable. He was more cautious when considering the (supposedly disinterested) evidence produced by Joseph Glanvill to support the existence of spirits (well-attested poltergeists), and was prepared to accept further reliable evidence of the existence of "apparitions." Webster even accepted that certain spells or charms could be efficacious (perhaps because of the purely natural rhythmic impact of their sounds), and argued that the ethereal spirit of humans (composed of body, soul, and ethereal spirit) lingered long enough after death to cause such phenomena as corpses bleeding in the presence of their murderer. However, he disputed at length Johann Baptista van Helmont's view (a matter of lively debate ever since Johann Weyer in the late sixteenth century) that objects were often found within human beings that could only have been introduced by demonic means. Webster denied that there was any reliable evidence for witchcraft; he insisted that devils were of necessity limited to natural actions, and therefore that transmutation into cats, dogs, or other animals could safely be dismissed as impossible—familiars, almost ubiquitous

in English court cases—must always be fictitious. The true working of the Devil in the world (here Webster's argument rejoined his more radical position during the Civil War) was within our minds, tempting us to sin.

Webster's argument contained subtle equivocations. For example, he denied that he rejects the existence of witches, but he believed there were none, except those who pretended, or were deluded into believing, they had powers they did not have. He treated devils as corporeal, while insisting that their bodies had none of the qualities that ours had, because they could not deceive the sense of touch.

For modern commentators, Webster's book formed one side of a debate on witchcraft conducted among supporters of the Royal Society, the founding institution of modern experimental science. His book was published with the *imprimatur* of Jonas Moore, Vice-President of the Royal Society. The fact that eminent scientists like Robert Boyle defended belief in demons and spirits undermined traditional accounts of the supposedly antagonistic relationship between modern, scientific rationality and witchcraft belief. Webster's *Displaying* was partly a response to the theologian Meric Casaubon's *Of Credulity and Incredulity* (1668), but his target was also the clergyman and scientist (a member of the Royal Society) Joseph Glanvill, whose *Some Philosophical Considerations Touching Witches and Witchcraft* (1666) had become a best seller. The posthumous, revised and expanded version of Glanvill's *Saducismus Triumphatus* (1681), edited by Henry More, contained an extensive attack on Webster; Benjamin Camfield's *Theological Discourse of Angels* (1678) also contained an appendix attacking Webster. A German translation of *The Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft* appeared in 1719.

DAVID WOOTTON

See also: CASAUBON, MERIC; CORPOREALITY, ANGELIC AND DEMONIC; DEMONS; ENGLAND; FAMILIARS; GLANVILL, JOSEPH; INCUBUS AND SUCCUBUS; JESUS; METAMORPHOSIS; POLTERGEIST; SCIENCE AND MAGIC; SCOT, REGINALD; SKEPTICISM.

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WENHAM, JANE

Jane Wenham, from Walkern in Hertfordshire, enjoys the dubious distinction of being the last person known to have been convicted for witchcraft in England, at the Hertford assizes in 1712. She had a long-standing reputation for witchcraft, although her troubles really began when a local farmer, John Chapman, thought she had destroyed £200 worth of his cattle through witchcraft; he was also convinced that Wenham had bewitched one of his servants who refused to give her some straw she had asked for. Chapman waited for a suitable occasion to prosecute, but events moved forward when Anne Thorne, a maidservant of the vicar of Walkern, Godfrey Gardiner, began to show strange symptoms, which local opinion attributed to bewitchment.

Wenham was committed to prison, and on March 7, 1712, stood trial before Sir John Powell, a judge who was obviously unconvinced of the reality of witchcraft. Powell was clearly unimpressed when Thorne fell into fits in court, and he disparaged some of the materials produced in court as evidence of witchcraft. He also bullied prosecution witnesses. There is also a tradition that claims that at this trial, Powell, on being informed that Wenham was able to fly, cheerfully commented that there was no law against flying in England. Despite the judge's best efforts, Wenham was convicted, but Powell rapidly secured her a reprieve.

The Wenham case is interesting on several levels. First, it demonstrated how witchcraft was still a very live issue in the village life of the period. Wenham had a well-established reputation for witchcraft, and had been a focus of local fears for many years. These fears prompted various forms of countermagic. At one stage Chapman had burned a bundle of sticks thought to have magical properties, believing that this would force Wenham to reveal herself as a witch. Wenham was also brought before Anne Thorne to be scratched, in the expectation that drawing a witch's blood would bring relief to her victim. One of the pamphlets prompted by the case said that Wenham, hoping to clear her name, voluntarily offered to submit herself to being searched for the witch's mark, or to the swimming test (water ordeal), repeating the latter offer when she was brought before a Justice of the Peace. He refused, because the test was illegal and unjustified, but a clergyman who was present, a Mr Strutt, asked her to repeat the Lord's Prayer. She was able to do this until she came to the 'forgive us our trespasses' passage, a place where witches were generally thought to stumble. Belief in Wenham's status as a witch was not limited to what could be described as ignorant villagers. Anne Thorne's employer, the vicar Godfrey Gardiner, and two other clergymen who examined Wenham were convinced of her guilt, as were the justice involved in the case, Sir Henry Chauncy, and his son Arthur, who took the lead in employing several traditional "proofs" against

Wenham. The knowledge that such solid local authority figures thought Wenham to be a witch might have influenced the trial jury in deciding to convict.

More unusually, the case became enmeshed in contemporary elite politics. In 1712 the "rage of party" between Whig and Tory was in full swing. Among other issues, the two parties differed in their conceptions of the Christian commonwealth and, unexpectedly, a witchcraft case gained prominence as a political issue. The case prompted at least eight pamphlets (the one offering the most detail about Wenham's witchcraft and her trial is listed below) that split along party lines, with the Whigs taking a skeptical line and the Tories (notably the high church pamphleteer Francis Bragge) arguing for the reality of Wenham's witchcraft and of witchcraft more generally. It is no accident that Wenham finally died on the estate of a Whig magnate.

JAMES SHARPE

See also: COUNTERMAGIC; ENGLAND; EVIDENCE; LORD'S PRAYER; PAMPHLETS AND NEWSPAPERS; RURAL WITCHCRAFT; SWIMMING TEST; WITCH'S MARK.

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WESLEY, JOHN (1703–1791)

Usually regarded as the most influential believer in the reality of witchcraft in eighteenth-century England, John Wesley was the leading figure in the founding of the Methodist movement from the mid-1730s onward. His personal belief in witchcraft, apparitions, and spirits, reflected in the journals of his life that he published contemporaneously, would have influenced his many followers; so would the numerous accounts of such phenomena, past and present, published in the periodical he founded in 1778 (called the *Arminian Magazine*, later the *Methodist Magazine*) and in other Methodist publications. Wesley thus played a key role in maintaining traditional arguments for the reality of witchcraft and legitimating continued belief in it among his followers and other ordinary people. In practice, like many other eighteenth-century intellectuals, Wesley showed no interest in particular witchcraft cases; he judged the usefulness of the spirit world by evangelical standards and as part of his defense of scriptural religion against infidelity. Contemporary critics and subsequent historians have portrayed him as strengthening the credulity and enthusiasm of his followers,

with witchcraft providing a classic instance of his old-fashioned fundamentalism.

Wesley's belief in witches arose directly from his belief in the authority of the Scriptures, upholding earlier interpretations of Christian theologians and traditional views of Christian history as showing the existence and activity of the Devil, witches, and spirits. Wesley believed that deists and atheists satirized belief in witches and spirits as a means to undermine belief in the Bible, and he scorned Christians who accepted this contemporary fashion and compromised their beliefs. Thus, he found himself concurring closely with post-Restoration apologists for witchcraft and the spirit world.

Like these writers, however, Wesley also believed that he was defending an empirically open attitude to nature, as well as confirming religious truth, by providing well-attested cases of witchcraft and the spirit world and rejecting claims that such instances must necessarily be impostures because witchcraft was theoretically impossible. Wesley's favorite argument was that he had never personally seen a murder, any more than a case of witchcraft, although he believed the weight of evidence that murder occurred; it was skeptics, not believers, who dogmatically refused to accept facts. Whether any particular case was explicable by natural or supernatural causes was an empirical question for each person to decide, and Wesley could himself be neutral or equivocal, as when witchcraft was suspected at the Lamb Inn at Bristol in March 1762 (*Works* 21: 352). Judging from his journals, he never actively investigated or treated a case of witchcraft. There is no evidence that he ever sought to provoke fears of or action against witches, although his followers may have used his comments to justify their own fears.

Wesley was more directly connected with cases of convulsions during conversion experiences, which both preachers and laity sometimes interpreted as the struggles with and eventual expulsion of devils. He was clearly reluctant to reject this view but not particularly upset when such ecstatic phenomena became less common: Unlike other evangelicals, he always emphasized the subsequent piety and activity of his followers, not the drama of their conversion. Clergymen (both Anglican and dissenting) linked to Methodist circles were far readier to carry out exorcism with the biblical means of prayer and fasting than those who felt bound by the canons of 1604. Wesley's direct influence in this regard is not obvious. He was directly involved in reporting ghosts and spirits warning of deaths or other future events, for example, the experiences of Elizabeth Hobson recorded in his *Journal* in May 1768 (*Works* 22: 135–146). His family background included a ghost that haunted his father's rectory at Epworth when young John was away at Charterhouse School in 1716 and 1717. If Wesley was convinced of its reality and

satanic origins, this episode reflected his primary interest in the reality of a spirit world, rather than an interest in witches. Finally, Wesley shared with his followers a providentialist concern to document God's direct intervention in his daily affairs.

Wesley was not a propagandist for witchcraft beliefs but a religious leader who expressed (when many others remained silent) a widespread attitude among those who feared the effects of abandoning traditional authorities supporting such providentialist beliefs as witchcraft. Insofar as these attitudes coincided with popular beliefs and fears of the supernatural, they may have helped to spread the appeal of Methodism; in turn, Methodist preachings and writings sustained such attitudes in their followers. After Wesley's death, mainstream Methodism tended to emphasize the cautious aspects of its founder's attitude, leaving the appropriation of supernatural phenomena to primitive Methodism.

JONATHAN BARRY

See also: ENGLAND; ENLIGHTENMENT; EXORCISM; GHOSTS; SKEPTICISM.

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WESTERSTETTEN, JOHANN CHRISTOPH VON (1563–1637)

Known for his persistent witch hunting, Johann Westerstetten represents the fundamentalist type of Counter-Reformation German ecclesiastical prince. First, he initiated a long-running persecution in the territory of the prince-abbey (*Fürstpropstei*) of Ellwangen, which he ruled from 1603 to 1613, with no fewer than seventy-five days of execution (in which groups of four to twelve people were burned). Then, he added another sixty group burnings in the prince-bishopric of Eichstätt, which he ruled from 1613 to 1637. If Jonathan Durrant's revisionist figures (2002) are accurate and Westersetten's reign saw "only" 240 executions in Eichstätt, he would still be responsible for about 550 burnings, including the Ellwangen

persecutions. However, the surviving sources probably do not represent the entire persecution; the number of victims in Eichstätt could rise to 400 or more, and perhaps 700 were executed in both ecclesiastical principalities. Undeniably, Westerstetten ranks among the most bloodthirsty witch hunters in European history.

Born into the minor Franconian nobility, the son of Wolfgang Rudolf von Westerstetten and Ursula von Riedheim, Johann Christoph was dedicated to a clerical career early on, like other members of his family. Originally clients of the counts of Helfenstein, they had managed to rise in importance, taking their name from a small castle near Ulm. Johann Christoph's father served as an official and district judge at Wasseralfingen, one of seven districts of the Benedictine prince-abbey of Ellwangen. The son received an ambitious education, entering the University of Dillingen at age ten, before moving to Ingolstadt in 1581 and to Dole in Burgundy in 1584, without taking a formal degree. His ecclesiastical career began when he was appointed canon of the cathedral chapter of Ellwangen in 1575; subsequently, he was made canon of the cathedral chapter of Eichstätt in 1589 and of Augsburg in 1600. Residing first at Ellwangen, Westerstetten had moved to Eichstätt by 1589, where he served as a dean of the chapter from 1592 to 1602. By then, he had been elected coadjutor of the prince-abbot (*Fürstpropst*), Wolfgang von Hausen (who ruled from 1584 to 1603); he succeeded von Hausen in 1603. Ruling the small ecclesiastical territory until 1613, Westerstetten also became a councillor to the prince-bishop of Eichstätt, and in December 1612, the cathedral chapter elected him as prince-bishop Johann Christoph I of Eichstätt. After Pope Paul V confirmed the election in January, the prince-bishop of Augsburg, Heinrich V von Knöringen, consecrated Westerstetten bishop in March 1613.

In both Ellwangen and Eichstätt, Westerstetten began a determined policy of state building and confessionalization, utilizing the decrees of the Council of Trent to discipline the clergy as well as his lay subjects. More than an instrument, the Counter-Reformation became the motor of Westerstetten's political agenda: He was among the founders of the Catholic League of the Holy Roman Empire, and it was within his diocese that Prince Wolfgang Wilhelm von Pfalz-Neuburg, Count Gottfried Heinrich von Pappenheim, and the Upper Palatinate were converted to Catholicism.

Westerstetten's career was lit with witch burnings. At age ten, he witnessed the first serious trials within the prince-bishopric of Augsburg at Dillingen in 1575. In that same year, he also inherited his seat as a canon in Ellwangen from Johann Egolf von Knöringen, the late prince-bishop of Augsburg, whose death was reportedly caused by witchcraft; because this prebend provided Westerstetten's financial basis for studying, one could claim that witchcraft had launched his career. At

Dillingen, the young canon must have received instruction from the Jesuits dominating the theological faculty, Petrus Canisius and Gregory of Valencia, both ardent supporters of witch hunting. From then on, Westerstetten was a close ally of the Jesuits, whom he introduced in both Ellwangen and Eichstätt.

As a canon, Westerstetten experienced Ellwangen's first witchcraft trials in 1588 and the first serious witchcraft trials in the prince-bishopric of Eichstätt in 1590; because both cases are poorly documented, it is impossible to discover whether he was already actively involved. Clearly, witch hunting did not dominate the prince-abbot's agenda; it was simply part of a universal struggle against diabolical sins and heresies. In the eighth year of his rule at Ellwangen, a major scandal during Easter Mass triggered serious suspicions of witchcraft against an old woman, Barbara Ruefin (1541–1611), who had had a sinister reputation in her village of Rindelbach for many decades. Westerstetten promptly launched a massive witch hunt. He appointed an old friend, Carl Kibler, who had already gained a reputation for conducting witchcraft trials in Swabian Austria, as his court councillor and witch commissioner. Kibler was entitled to bypass the traditional judicial structures of the prince-abbey (which by 1802 counted roughly 20,000 inhabitants and possibly had that many before the Thirty Years' War). Westerstetten knew from his father how cumbersome these structures were.

Supported by Westerstetten, Kibler centralized the trials in the capital, hired foreign executioners for torturing from the prince-bishopric of Augsburg, and by May 1611 assembled a task force of lawyers in order to conduct the trials as effectively as possible. In practice, the trials were shortened by a massive use of torture. Barbara Ruefin was imprisoned on April 7 and executed on May 15; most later trials were shorter. Confessions became so standardized that the commissioner found it easier to replace the names of the suspects with numbers. Except for one man who managed to flee from prison, not a single suspect survived these Ellwangen trials. Some died in prison after massive torturing, and some committed suicide, but most of them lost their lives at the stake—as far as we know, an unprecedented conviction rate. Every fortnight after July 1611, a new group of convicted witches, usually more than 10, was ready for a collective burning. In the second half of 1611, about 126 persons were burned, as at least 143 were in 1612. By February 1613, when Westerstetten was elected prince-bishop of Eichstätt, a minimum of 280 people had been burned in thirty-six bonfires.

Westerstetten managed to find an appropriate successor at Ellwangen, and it seems likely that witch hunting was by then the main criterion. Johann Christoph I appointed Dr. Carl Kibler, chancellor of the prince-abbey and witch commissioner; conducting severe witch hunts was his main qualification. The new

abbot, Johann Christoph II von Freyberg und Eisenberg (who ruled from 1613 to 1620), was almost a clone of Westerstetten, appropriately calling himself Prince-Abbot Johann Christoph II, thus underlining the continuity of government. And there was indeed continuity: After a pause of five months, the new abbot resumed the burnings in the summer of 1613. He continued collective witch burnings, although with smaller groups put on the stakes. By 1618, at least 75 collective burnings can be proven in Ellwangen's sources.

When Westerstetten arrived in Eichstätt in 1613 to govern a territory of about 50,000 to 60,000 inhabitants, his reputation preceded him. The Jesuit Jacob Gretser had celebrated his successful Ellwangen burnings in 1612 in the dedication to his book *De festis Christianorum* (On Christian Festivals). As at Ellwangen, witch hunting was not the top priority on Westerstetten's agenda. Only in 1616 and after simultaneous demands from the population did witch hunts begin simultaneously in the Franconian prince-bishoprics of Bamberg, Würzburg, and Eichstätt, all clearly modeled on the Ellwangen example. This was particularly true in Eichstätt, where Westerstetten started a permanent witch hunt. Although the persecutions eventually stopped in Bamberg and Würzburg and even in Ellwangen in 1618, Westerstetten kept on burning witches until Swedish troops were about to invade his prince-bishopric during the Thirty Years' War.

By then, witch hunting had become a symbol or even a benchmark of Catholicity in Westerstetten's eyes, an opinion not shared within the Catholic League. Bavarian politicians saved Eichstätt's chancellor, Dr. Bartholomäus Richel, after his wife, Maria, had been accused and burned in 1621. Richel was soon promoted to vice-chancellor in the prince-electorate, and his insider knowledge certainly added to the hesitation about witch hunts in Bavaria. Bavarian Jesuits even dared to challenge the prince-bishop's conduct publicly, in Ingolstadt as well as in the Eichstätt Jesuit College. Kaspar Hell, SJ (1588–1634), in particular, preached so sharply from his pulpit in 1625 that the Jesuit general Claudius Aquaviva felt obliged to intervene and silence him. Although Hell courageously continued his campaign against the Eichstätt killings, he was never punished within his order but instead was appointed rector of the new Jesuit College in Amberg (Upper Palatinate). Possibly in reaction to Hell's attacks, the Bamberg suffragan Friedrich Förner dedicated his collection of sermons, *Panoplia Armaturae Dei* (The Splendid Armour of God, Ingolstadt, 1625), on witchcraft to Bishop Westerstetten.

As in Ellwangen, Westerstetten appointed witch commissioners in Eichstätt, and one of them, Dr. Wolfgang Kolb (commissioner from 1624 to 1628), boasted in 1629 of having examined 274 witches, all of whom were subsequently executed. Another Eichstätt

witch commissioner, Dr. Schwarzkonz, was transferred to the service of the prince-bishop of Bamberg for witch hunting in 1628. The Eichstätt persecution had first realized the somber dream of unconditional persecution, of persecution without regard for political, social, or humanitarian obstacles. Numerous new tortures were devised, and some victims denounced more than 200 accomplices. Because no taboo prevented the trials from reaching into the upper classes, one finds burgomasters, councillors, priests, and even the wife of the governing chancellor among those executed. However, there was still an uneven gender distribution, with the share of female victims close to 80 percent, as in Ellwangen. The last documented witch burning in Eichstätt took place on July 30, 1630, presumably because Westerstetten decided to flee shortly afterward, fearing an imminent Swedish invasion. In his final years, Westerstetten remained in the fortified Bavarian town of Ingolstadt, and he never again exercised power as he had before his flight; until his death, it seems that his prince-bishopric was actually ruled by administrators.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: AUGSBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; CANISIUS, PETER; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); EICHSTÄTT, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; ELLWANGEN, PRINCE-ABBEY OF; EXECUTIONS; FULDA, PRINCE-ABBEY OF; GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; GREGORY OF VALENCIA; GRETSER, JACOB; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; INGOLSTADT, UNIVERSITY OF; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); NUMBER OF WITCHES; TANNER, ADAM; TORTURE; TRIALS; WITCH HUNTS.

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WEYER, JOHANN (1515–1588)

In the second half of the sixteenth century, Johann Weyer, a physician to the duke of Cleves, became the first major advocate of Europe's witches—the first who opposed the witch hunt with a combination of philological, philosophical, scientific, and legal arguments and who dared to expose his ideas in print. Sigmund Freud saw Weyer as a forerunner of modern psychiatry, a physician affirming his right to cure his patients



Johann Weyer, physician, skeptic, opponent of witch hunting, and author of *De Praestigiis Daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils), 1563. (TopFoto.co.uk)

rather than burn them. This assessment was not greatly inaccurate: Weyer indeed wanted to end what he considered a bloodbath of innocent people.

Weyer was born in an area of mixed German and Dutch culture (his surname was variously spelled Weyer or Wier). His interest in demons began early, when he lived with his family, which, according to him, was protected by a *daemon* (a spiritual being intermediate between God and humans). Living in one of the most Erasmian corners of Europe, Johann was educated on the principles of *devotio moderna* (modern, or new, devotion); his younger brother Matthias became a Protestant mystic. At age fifteen, Johann became an apprentice of the great Renaissance magus and physician Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim. For three years, he studied with this famous (and, to him, beloved) teacher, who moved frequently because of his unconventional behavior and controversial publications. The most important thing Agrippa taught him was the model of an Erasmian man imbued with Renaissance ideals (Midelfort 1988, 238).

Like Agrippa, Weyer wanted to defend the innocence of witches on the basis of physical evidence, supplemented by scriptural exegesis. He differed from Agrippa

and from his contemporaries in his belief that demons can act in the physical world. After this training period, Weyer studied medicine at the University of Paris, arriving in 1533 and taking his degree in 1537. He was subsequently employed as a town physician, first at Ravenstein and then in Arnhem. In 1550, he was appointed personal physician by the tolerant (and later, mentally disturbed) Duke William V of Cleves, Jülich, and Berg, whose father had progressively reformed religion in his duchy under the influence of Erasmus. In these territories, some attempts were made to improve the laws on witchcraft, as Weyer emphasized.

A very important and still open question in Weyer's profile involves his religious creed and views: Scholars disagree on this point because of Weyer's contradictions. H. C. Erik Midelfort (1988, 238–239) saw him as an Erasmian Lutheran, although Weyer's last words in *De praestigiis daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils) seem an appeal to the Catholic Church, while in the German translation he praised the Lutheran Reformation. Hans de Waardt proposed the hypothesis of Weyer's adherence to the Family of Love, which could explain his refusal to take part in an increasingly confessionalized society (Valente 2003).

In 1563, Weyer published his most important work, *De praestigiis daemonum, ac incantationibus* (On the Tricks of Devils, Incantations, and Poisoners), choosing as his publisher Johann Oporinus, a well-known Basel printer as well as a former pupil of Paracelsus. Until 1583, there were six Latin editions of the work, with enlargements and other significant changes. In 1568, he added a sixth book. Meanwhile, there were three editions in French and two German translations. In 1577 came an abridged version, *De lamiis* (Concerning Witches), aiming at a larger readership.

Weyer actually assigned more power to the Devil than his adversaries ever had, as his title emphasized. The extent to which his work participated in traditional demonological discourse is clearly indicated by both his readers and his opponents. His style of argument was original, and as Gerhild Scholz Williams has underlined, his work formed a demonological trilogy with Jean Bodin's later *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (On the Demon-Mania of Witches, 1580) and Heinrich Kramer's earlier *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486). Like Bodin and Kramer, Weyer employed a large mass of widespread popular and cultural anecdotes to enrich his analysis, although he reversed the causal relationship between demonic activity and witches. He subverted Scholastic tradition by incorporating challenges to the authority of the *Malleus* into an often fundamentally traditional demonology (even borrowing the *Malleus's* explanations for gendering witchcraft). Weyer did not deny the Devil's powers, so adversaries such as Bodin found his arguments weak and tried to demolish his contentions. According to

Weyer, the world was a set of contingencies depending only on God's will in order to keep the Devil's power at a lower level: Everything depended on God's will, and devils acted without trespassing against divine providence. Witches were not responsible because they were weak, ignorant, ill, poor, and sometimes melancholic; the Devil had persuaded them they could do things that were impossible and against natural and divine law. Even if some witches were guilty, Weyer denied that they should be punished with death, because they were essentially victims. Magicians, by contrast, freely tried to subvert natural laws because they made a pact with demons.

Weyer led an assault on superstition and ignorance by maintaining that witches were not possessed by the Devil but instead suffered from mental illness and needed medical treatment. Because of such statements, Gregory Zilboorg long ago considered Weyer "the founder of medical psychiatry." However, this interpretation was excessive: Weyer merely tried to establish that madness and melancholy could explain some witches' confessions. He was undeniably the most thorough opponent of witch hunting in his century. Yet he believed deeply in demonic activities, which seems a contradictory feature. Weyer was neither temperamentally nor intellectually suited for denying the Devil's interference in the world, as Balthasar Bekker would do a century later, because Weyer continued to share the common worldview of his contemporaries.

Weyer's defense of the essential innocence of witches fit with his larger goal of refuting and rejecting any kind of magic as a product of superstition in order to establish a new kind of religion without credulous features. His progressive use of philology linked him to the best humanistic tradition. His defense was based on a new biblical hermeneutics: Against this, all his opponents struggled because Weyer asserted that God had ordered Christians to prosecute magicians but not witches. His works, quickly opposed by such adversaries as Bodin, King James VI of Scotland, and his fellow physician Thomas Erastus, aroused a storm of controversy, lasting until the second half of the nineteenth century. His opponents included the most forceful advocates of punishing diabolical witchcraft. Weyer became notorious as a *sagarum patronus* (defender of witches), as Dudith Sbardellati, an imperial ambassador in Poland, defined him.

Weyer was among the first to approach witchcraft with skepticism and originality. Andrea Alciati and Giovanni Francesco Ponzinibio had made previous attempts, but Weyer was radically different because of his originality; he was the first to marshal four different perspectives (philosophical, legal, natural-scientific, and theological) in support of his goal. His book laid a foundation for later skeptics such as Michel de Montaigne, who opposed executing alleged witches

because the evidence against them was never sufficient to justify their death; Weyer agreed with the idea that the only infallible tribunal was that of Jesus. He followed the Erasmian tradition, and in fact, Erasmus's role among the most important sources of *De praestigiis* was remarkable. Weyer borrowed a large section from one of Erasmus's own works, *Apologia adversus monachos* (Defense Against Monks, 1528), to assert that witches and heretics needed better religious instruction, not death sentences.

Throughout his life, Weyer practiced medicine, and in his own lifetime and during the century after his death, his medical works found appreciative readers (his *Medicarum observationum* [Medical Observations, 1567] was republished). His medical training provided him with cultural and scientific material pertaining specifically to witchcraft. In his treaty on anger, *De ira* (1577), he attempted to prove that Europe's contemporary political and religious troubles derived from anger, and he recommended Senecan stoicism. Erasmian themes also proved useful in Weyer's fight against Satan. It is well known that medicine faced dramatic challenges after the publication of Paracelsus's complete works (also by Weyer's publisher, Oporinus), although Weyer opposed Paracelsian medicine and defended Galen to the point of naming his son Galenus.

Weyer's mission was not successful in his lifetime. Toward the end of his long reign, Duke Wilhelm V of Cleves reinstated torture in witchcraft cases. Protesting against the Spanish invasion of the Netherlands, Weyer retired to his estates and died in Tecklemburg, although his son inherited his position. After his death, his complete works were published in Latin at Amsterdam in 1660, but otherwise, there were no reprintings before a French translation appeared at Paris in the late nineteenth century (in 1885), edited by a pupil of Jean Martin Charcot, D. Bourneville. Not too long afterward, Sigmund Freud ranked Weyer's *De praestigiis daemonum* of 1563 among the ten most important books he had read.

MICHAELA VALENTE

See also: AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM, HEINRICH CORNELIUS; ALCIATI, ANDREA; BEKKER, BALTHASAR; BODIN, JEAN; DEMONOLOGY; DEMONS; DEVIL; ERASMUS, DESIDERIUS; ERASTUS, THOMAS; FAMILY OF LOVE; FREUD, SIGMUND; JAMES VI AND I, KING OF SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MEDICINE AND MEDICAL THEORY; MELANCHOLY; MENTAL ILLNESS; MONTAIGNE, MICHEL DE; PARACELSUS, THEOPHRASTUS BOMBASTUS VON HOHENHEIM; PONZINIBIO, GIOVANNI FRANCESCO; SKEPTICISM; WILLIAM V, DUKE OF CLEVES.

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WIESENSTEIG

Wiesenstein, the major city of the small county of Helfenstein in southwestern Germany, was the site of the first known Reformation-era witch panic in the Holy Roman Empire, a hunt that consumed sixty-three victims between 1562 and 1563. Although the actual trial records are no longer extant, contemporary pamphlets and chronicles provide sufficient information for a general overview.

The Wiesenstein panic originated when religious conflict intersected communal agricultural disaster. Unlike their more powerful neighbor, Duke Ulrich of Württemberg (d. 1550), the Counts of Helfenstein, Sebastian (d. 1564) and Ulrich (d. 1570), had resisted reformation impulses until 1555, when they invited Lutheran ministers into the county. Their flirtation with the Reformation, however, was hampered by disputes between proto-Reformed (Calvinist) and orthodox Lutheran preachers and by considerable Catholic pressure. In 1567, Count Ulrich succumbed to his family's urging to return Helfenstein to Catholicism. Religious discord, combined with ongoing efforts to neutralize anticlerical sentiment, worries about large Anabaptist meetings, and an apparently sudden deterioration in the weather, sparked increased fears of demonic activity.

According to Dionysius Dreytwein (1498/1504–ca. 1585), a chronicler from Esslingen (Württemberg), weather in the region was indeed worsening in the 1550s and 1560s. In 1560, a horrible famine formed the backdrop to the trial and burning on July 13 of two witches who confessed to making diabolical pacts and performing much weather magic. In 1562, hailstorms ravaged the area, with a pre-Easter one inspiring the arrest of two accused witches in the county of Helfenstein, who had used magic to kill the younger woman's husband.

Then, in early July 1562, a large, nocturnal forest meeting of Anabaptists was discovered in a wooded ravine near Katzenbühl Castle outside Esslingen, leading to a series of investigations throughout July and August that required the assistance of neighboring authorities. Lutheran and Catholic preachers had long warned authorities of the demonic threat of even a small remnant of Anabaptists, and Count Ulrich frequently attended their interrogations. During this revived governmental anxiety about secret meetings of Anabaptists, a ruinous hailstorm destroyed the wine harvest across much of the region on August 3. This time, angry people pressured their authorities to arrest suspected witches and appease God's wrath. News of the nocturnal Anabaptist gatherings apparently blended with popular belief in weather magic, escalating into a hunt for a large, diabolical conspiracy. Only after the July 1562 arrests did Dreytwein begin recording stories of large groups of witches attending diabolical dances.

One of those convinced by such rhetoric was Count Ulrich, who at this moment was searching for confessional truth. He rejected the orthodox Lutheran position of Johann Brenz—which dominated Württemberg. Brenz opposed capital punishment for heretics and argued that even assisted by demons, witches could not alter the weather. Instead, Ulrich listened to the unconventional pastor of Esslingen, Thomas Naogeorgus (1508–1563), whose enthusiastic witch-hunting sermons had earned him a reprimand from Esslingen's magistrates. Ulrich immediately arrested a number of women in the region of Wiesenstein, whose initial protests of innocence were soon broken down in the torture chamber. When Duke Christoph of Württemberg asked his neighbor for further information, he was told the count had already executed six witches, some of whom had confessed to seeing Esslingen citizens at their Sabbath. The duke arrested three people but later released them.

Count Ulrich ultimately approved the execution of sixty-three accused witches who apparently confessed to murdering twenty-nine older adults and robbing a number of children of their "holy baptism," the latter being a crime strongly associated with Anabaptists. Enduring horrible imprisonment, interrogations, and torture, the accused conformed their confessions to the traditional stereotype of demonic witches: making pacts with the Devil, renouncing God and their baptism, taking demonic lovers, attending witches' Sabbats or dances, making horrible blasphemies against God, and, of course, performing *maleficia* (harmful magic) that included infanticide and weather magic.

The Wiesenstein mass trials raised expectations of demonic, conspiratorial witchcraft across the empire. In the wake of Wiesenstein's mass executions, witchcraft trials spread across the German southwest, affecting fifty separate locales in the 1570s, with larger clusters

replacing individual trials as the norm. Wessensteig experienced another panic in 1583 that saw twenty-five witches executed; fourteen more died around 1605 and five others in 1611.

GARY K. WAITE

See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; ANABAPTISTS; BRENZ, JOHANN;
GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; LITTLE ICE AGE;
POPULAR PERSECUTION; PROTESTANT REFORMATION;
WEATHER MAGIC; WÜRTTEMBERG, DUCHY OF.

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**WILHELM V “THE PIOUS,”
DUKE OF BAVARIA
(1548–1626, RULED 1579–1597)**

Wilhelm was a zealous witch hunter and Counter-Reformation absolutist duke. The son of Duke Albrecht V of Bavaria, who ruled from 1550 to 1579, and his wife, Anna of Austria, the daughter of the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand I, Wilhelm was educated within the confines of post-Tridentine Catholicism. In 1568, he married Renée of Lorraine (1544–1602), daughter of Duke Francis I of Lorraine and Christina of Denmark. The young couple held an illustrious court at the Bavarian castle at Landshut, but in 1575, the prince suffered from a severe disease, leading him to a conversion experience and a decision to alter his life fundamentally. Not long afterward, he succeeded his father, who had defeated the Bavarian Protestant Estates in the 1560s and who had begun a vigorous Counter-Reformation, thus moving Bavaria toward a relatively early confessional absolutism.

Wilhelm not only continued his father’s policy but also devoted his country’s fate even further to Catholicism by sacrificing all his revenues to an ambitious foreign policy. In 1583, he sent troops in order to depose the Cologne archbishop and Prince-Elector Gebhard Truchsess von Waldburg, who had converted to Protestantism, in order to prevent the Holy Roman Empire from becoming Protestant, for Cologne’s electoral vote would tip the next emperor’s election in favor of a Protestant candidate. After the Cologne War,

Wilhelm managed to install his younger brother, Ernst of Bavaria (1554–1612), who had previously become prince-bishop of Freising, Hildesheim, Liège, and Münster, as the new archbishop and prince-elect of Cologne. Together with several prince-bishoprics and prince-abbeys, Cologne was ruled by younger brothers of the Bavarian dukes (*Sekundogenitur*) from then until 1756, securing the Lower Rhine region for the Roman Catholic Church.

Religious considerations guided Wilhelm’s foreign and domestic policies. Killing heretics at home complemented the destruction of Protestant enemies by war *à* re. In the 1580s, several Anabaptists were burned or drowned because the main lines of Anabaptist migration to Moravia—from Swabia via the River Danube and from Tyrol via the River Inn—crossed Bavarian territory. Ingolstadt renewed its propaganda against Anabaptism, until an even more dangerous enemy was discovered: the witches. It may have been coincidence that the first recorded witch burning in the Bavarian capital of Munich occurred in 1578, the same year when the Marian Congregations were founded there. Infected by a wave of persecution farther west in the neighboring prince-bishopric of Augsburg, Bavaria’s western district courts experienced a rising number of witchcraft accusations in 1589. Duke Wilhelm and his zealous chancellor Ottheinrich von Schwarzenberg (1535–1590) consented to a massive witch hunt, conducted largely by district judges with little support from the Court Council, quite an extraordinary procedure by Bavarian legal customs. The importance Wilhelm gave to witch hunting can be guessed from the fact that he asked Gregory of Valencia to take his son and future successor Maximilian, then a sixteen-year-old student at Ingolstadt, to the torture chambers to instruct him about witch hunting.

Some resistance in his duchy seems to have led to Wilhelm’s April 2, 1590, decree on witchcraft, justifying the hunts while asking for an official opinion from his councillors. Four days later, they explained that the existing discourse on witchcraft, based largely on Johann Weyer and Johann Brenz, was irrelevant for Catholics, and they suggested on April 6, 1590, that a more general opinion should be commissioned from the University of Ingolstadt. The joint opinion of its theology and law faculties, issued three weeks later and stretching over fourteen pages, justified the recent Bavarian persecutions because an extraordinary crime required extraordinary measures. Its authors (including Gregory of Valencia) recommended the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486) and the recent demonology of Peter Binsfeld as guidelines for witch hunting. A few weeks later (between May and June 1590), the faculties’ recommendations were transformed into a general instruction to all judges detailing how to handle suspicions of witchcraft. In 1591, a Bavarian lawyer published a German

translation of Binsfeld's *Tractatus de confessionibus maleficorum et sagarum* (Treatise on Confessions of Sorcerers and Witches, 1589), which was reprinted the following year. However, some leading members of Bavaria's Privy Council, as well as representatives of Conventional to the Bavarian estates, remained dissatisfied with these persecutions and opposed the idea that religion took precedence over customary law. In the spring of 1590, Hans Georg Herwarth von Hohenburg (1553–1626), chancellor of the estates and a correspondent of Johannes Kepler (whose mother had been accused of witchcraft a few years earlier), replaced Schwarzenberg as lord chancellor; the skeptics gained the upper hand. This faction managed to interrupt the "exceptional" hunts and return to ordinary Bavarian legal procedures. Furthermore, they used the duke's weakness after his defeat to urge him into an early resignation.

Wilhelm V "the Pious" overstretched the patience of his subjects and his estates, as well as their financial capacities, by waging religious wars, thus bringing Bavaria close to bankruptcy. In 1594, he agreed to hand over political administration to his son Maximilian, then age twenty-one; three years later, Wilhelm resigned. For another thirty years, the former ruler lived a pious life in a new residence bordering the large complex of Munich's Jesuit College, which he had commissioned. Wilhelm continued to participate actively in such forms of Jesuit piety as Marian Congregations, Jesuit plays, and Corpus Christi processions, and he indulged himself in such extravagant religious rituals as washing the feet of twelve poor men on Good Friday and self-flagellation. But at least he was no longer dangerous to others. It is quite unlikely that any of his constant rituals of repentance included the hundreds of victims he had condemned to the stake as Anabaptists or suspected witches.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: ANABAPTISTS; AUGSBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; BINSFELD, PETER; BRENZ, JOHANN; COLOGNE; DENMARK; GREGORY OF VALENCIA; INGOLSTADT, UNIVERSITY OF; JESUITS (SOCIETY OF JESUS); KEPLER, JOHANNES; LORRAINE, DUCHY OF; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; MAXIMILIAN I, DUKE OF BAVARIA; WEYER, JOHANN; WITCH HUNTS.

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**WILLIAM V, DUKE OF CLEVES
(1539–1592)**

Ranking among the most prominent territorial princes in the Holy Roman Empire in the confessional era,

William V of Cleves did not persecute witches, in part because of his personal physician, Johann Weyer, the famous skeptic of witchcraft trials. William's extremely large territories extended from the Netherlands to the west German hill country, playing a key role in the power structures of the old Reich, a fact that determined the duke's unusual political and religious policies. Defeated by Emperor Charles V in 1543, William was compelled to restrict himself to territorial policy. Toward the end of his long rule, he suffered from mental debilitation, though (unlike his son and successor) he was never diagnosed as bewitched.

William V had the benefits of a humanistic education; his tutor, Konrad von Heresbach (d. 1576), admired both Erasmus of Rotterdam and Philip Melancthon, and William's Church policy was consequently moderate. The complicated dynastic situation in his territories permitted an expansion of Lutheranism and later of Calvinism, both of which the duke tolerated. In the confessional conflicts after 1555 between Lutheran territories and those loyal to Rome, his duchies remained unaligned. Until around 1567, he pursued a policy of denominational concession toward Protestantism. After the uprisings in the Netherlands, his policy became more repressive.

Against this background, one finds several humanist—and officially Protestant—scholars at his court in Düsseldorf, including the philologist Andreas Masius and the cosmographer Gerardus Mercator. The most famous of them was undoubtedly Weyer, who lived and worked in Düsseldorf from 1550 until his death in 1578 and wrote his famous work against the persecution of witches there. Because of these men, there was consistent opposition to witchcraft trials in the united duchies of Jülich, Cleves, and Berg. Apart from the electoral Palatinate, William V ruled the only large block of lands in the western parts of the empire where no witches were executed before 1600. Not until after the duke's death did sporadic witchcraft trials occur, in the early seventeenth century.

The example of Johann Weyer and William V reveals how strongly personal relations at court could influence a territorial ruler's record on witchcraft trials. However, Weyer's impact could not prevent the subsequent prosecution of witches in William V's various territories in later generations, although no major panics ever erupted there. Moreover, William's personally motivated tolerance certainly provided Weyer with the opportunity to fight the persecution of witches through his writings even beyond the boundaries of the sizable territory of Cleves.

JÖRG HAUSTEIN;

TRANSLATED BY HELEN SIEGBURG

See also: ERASMUS, DESIDERIUS; GERMANY, WEST AND NORTHWEST; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; SKEPTICISM; WEYER, JOHANN.

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WIND KNOTS

The magic of tying and untying knots is known throughout Europe, and it is not confined to particular regions or to weather magic. Three knots were known to have been tied during French wedding ceremonies to make the husbands impotent. By the mid-sixteenth century, symbolic fears of castration became so widespread that couples even got married secretly outside of their local church to avoid this affliction. Leading French intellectuals at the time, such as Jean Bodin, feared population decline as a consequence of this diabolical art.

Nonetheless, the magic of knots is best associated with wind force and fishing communities. Skills designed to raise destructive winds or sometimes to prevent them by knot magic have been known since ancient times. In European coastal areas, where sea transportation, fishing, and trade were important, witches could undo knots to raise storms, frighten off the fish, and sink fishing boats and larger trading ships. We know, for instance, of the story of Aeolus—the king of winds—who gave a bag filled with wind to Ulysses in Homer's *Odyssey*. The knot on the bag was to be opened when Ulysses needed fair sailing winds. Bodin told about a Sardinian captain who bought a rope with three wind knots. There were fifty vile ways of using them, he added. Wind knots were widespread in Iceland and other coastal parts of northern Europe. In his world chronicle, *Polychronicon*, a fourteenth-century English monk, Ranulph Higden, described a barren island west of Denmark, whose inhabitants sold wind in knotted ropes to sailors who arrived there. For centuries afterward, the northern peoples were renowned throughout Europe for their mastery of wind magic. Numerous reports circulated about foreign traders who had purchased wind from the natives.

Two authors, in particular, played a part in giving the Nordic peoples a reputation for sorcery related to wind magic: the Danish chronicler Saxo Grammaticus (ca. 1150–ca.1220) and the Swedish Olaus Magnus, an exiled Catholic bishop. Their accounts of the tenacious beliefs in sorcery among the Sami and Nordic peoples spread through Europe during the sixteenth century, simultaneously with the golden age of European demonology. Saxo told how some northern peoples, such as the Finns and the

Biarmians, controlled the elements of nature and used magic instead of weapons to defend themselves. Saxo wrote about weather magic as primarily a Nordic specialty. As examples of Nordic sorcery Olaus Magnus mentioned wind magic, spell casting, the ability to foresee the future, signing, and the brewing of witches' stews that reportedly brought good fortune. Both insisted that Nordic peoples could interpret and affect the weather. Olaus described how the inhabitants of the far north attached wind knots to straps and used their magical powers to protect themselves against harm. Olaus claimed that "the entire world is irresistibly fascinated by this devilish art. Sailors are forced to buy wind because of the wind conditions in the north, and for a little money they get three bewitched knots tied to a strap. Bad things happen to those who doubt the power of the knots, who are thus forced into seeking advice from sorcerers" (Magnus 1996, 173–174).

The Sami conjured weather and wind by hocus-pocus, wrote the Norwegian poet, vicar, and fire-and-brimstone preacher Petter Dass (1647–1707) in *The Trumpet of Nordland*. If a countervailing wind kept your ship from sailing, he wrote, you could find a Sami to buy a pliant wind through his secret knowledge. His wind magic would be fixed by three knots on a cloth. To untie one knot meant unleashing adequate wind for sailing, but when untying the second knot, "the sail must be pulled down to half mast." And if you untied the third knot, "then she goes too quickly—and with the pump you must bail" (Dass 1954, 72). The opening of a rag's third knot brought on a destructive storm to overwhelm those dealing with the agents of the Devil. Stories of knotted ropes and wind sorcery were retold again and again.

Ever since Olaus Magnus, there has been a close connection between wind knots, witchcraft, and the northern peoples. In a 1616 treatise on witchcraft, Alexander Roberts, the militant Protestant vicar of King's Lynn in Norfolk, described many of Olaus Magnus's stories about northern witches and their weather magic as "meere fictious, and altogether incredible" at first sight. However, he went on to say that these stories could be trusted because "by the experience of our owne Navigators, who trade in Finland, Danmarke, Lapland, Ward-house (Vardøhus), Norway, and other countries of that climate, and have obtained of the inhabitants thereof, a certaine winde for twenty dayes together, or the like fixed periode of the time, according to the distance of place and strings tied with three knots" (Roberts 1971, 20–21). Roberts added the well-known story of what would happen when the knots were untied, using it to convince his readers of the reality of witchcraft and to justify the execution of a local witch called Mary Smith who was hanged in January 1616.

RUNE HAGEN;

TRANSLATED BY MARK LEDINGHAM

See also: IMPOTENCE, SEXUAL; LAPLAND; MAGNUS, OLAUS; SORCERY; WEATHER MAGIC.

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WINTER, ANTON (D. 1633/1634)

An imperial lawyer, Anton Winter was commissioned by the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand III to curb the Bamberg witch hunt. Born in a Protestant territory of southwestern Germany, Winter received his doctoral degree from the University of Tübingen in 1605, where he later became a professor of law. In 1621, he was appointed councillor to the Lutheran duke of Saxe-Coburg, where he rose to become president of the high court. In 1627, Winter converted to Catholicism and was appointed councillor by the neighboring prince-bishop of Bamberg, who designated him vice-chancellor.

The opponents of witch hunting in Bamberg, particularly the chancellor, Dr. Georg Haan, expected Winter's support and were responsible for his appointment. However, the Bamberg witch hunts gained momentum and swallowed up a good number of the opponents of witch hunting, including even the chancellor and his family. When the Bamberg witch hunts began to attract the attention of a wider public, a formal hearing took place during a meeting of the imperial electors at Regensburg in August 1630. Winter—to the great dismay of his prince-bishop, the bishop's witch commissioners, and the hard-liners in the Bamberg government—testified against the illegal persecutions. In 1631, he was appointed imperial commissioner to end the Bamberg witchcraft trials and release the remaining detainees. Soon afterward, Swedish troops approached Bamberg. The prince-bishop fled to his estates in Carinthia, and the witch commissioners withdrew to the fortress of Forchheim. Winter now became de facto ruler of the prince-bishopric and advised unconditional

surrender. On February 1, King Gustav II Adolf of Sweden entered the capital. However, a month later, Catholic troops drove the Swedes out, and the returning witch commissioners accused Winter of treason. He was arrested and remained in prison until December 1632. While the commissioners continued to collect evidence against witches, Winter protested against their investigation. His name disappears without a trace in 1633, when a second Swedish invasion led to major changes in Bamberg's regular administration. We do not know whether he was formally indicted, or tried, or liberated by the Protestants. But if he was not executed in early 1633, Winter most likely died during the bubonic plague of 1634, when almost half of Bamberg's people perished, their bodies thrown into mass graves.

WOLFGANG BEHRINGER

See also: BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE).

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WITCH AND WITCHCRAFT, DEFINITIONS OF

According to E. E. Evans-Pritchard (1991, 234), "The notion of witchcraft is a function of misfortunes and of enmities." It assigns responsibility for misfortune to human agents perceived as enemies by the afflicted party. Witchcraft as a concept is universal or nearly so among human societies. As Evans-Pritchard and others have shown, the notion of witchcraft arises in settled societies in which people are compelled to live together under all circumstances, rather than opting to solve conflicts by moving away (Macfarlane 1970; Briggs 2002). Notions of what precisely witchcraft is and of what differentiates it from the related concepts of magic and sorcery vary considerably from society to society. Evans-Pritchard's study of the African Azande people indicated that they thought of witchcraft as an inherited tendency, which could even take the physical form of a substance discoverable by autopsy. One could be a witch and perform witchcraft consciously or—so those accused of witchcraft often argued—unconsciously and involuntarily. "A witch performs no rite, utters no spell, and possesses no medicines. An act of witchcraft is a psychic act" (Evans-Pritchard 1991, 1, quoted by Sharpe 1996, 13).

Sorcerers, by contrast, both among the Azande and in other contexts, employ rites, verbal formulas, and the

manipulation of symbols and substances in order to work magical effects. Necromancers use techniques resembling sorcery in order to consult demons or spirits of the dead. Sorcerers are generally thought to be maleficent, though agents whose actions resemble sorcery, often called “white” or good witches, have in many times and places been considered beneficent and been sought out as prophets and healers, rather than dreaded or avoided. Cunning folk (cunning men and cunning women) are thought to be able to remove witchcrafts, find lost articles, and perform certain acts of healing; they may be referred to as witches, as witch doctors, or, if male, as wizards (Thomas 1971, 177–252).

Most important, the semantic distinctions among sorcerers, necromancers, cunning folk, and witches (both beneficent and maleficent) are often blurred or obliterated in everyday usage and nonspecialist writings. Both in English and in other modern European languages, the term *witch* is often used indiscriminately for all these agents; conversely, one of the other terms may subsume the concept of the witch (for example, the French *sorcier* and *sorcière*). Another shift in semantic values has occurred since the 1970s, as groups of



In a dream, a woman conceptualizes standard elements in diabolical witchcraft: flight with a stick to the Sabbat (and hence apostasy) on a goat/devil, a cauldron, maleficium (weather magic), winged demons, death, invocation from inside a magic circle, and a serpent.
(Anonymous, *Die Hexenvorstellung als Traum*, 1716. From *Hexen: Analysen, Quellen, Dokumente*. Directmedia Publishing GmbH: Berlin, 2003)

religious and political dissidents, particularly in English-speaking countries, have reclaimed the witch as a positive figure to be imitated and reinterpreted in daily life; this “good witch” expresses a Neo-Pagan, non-monotheistic ideal of nature worship and “holistic spirituality.”

However, the definitions of witches and witchcraft that evolved in western Europe from the early 1400s until the end of organized prosecutions around 1700 have determined the shape of modern European and American ideas. Early modern witch mythology was not medieval but a product of the Renaissance and Enlightenment; it was not ignorant or plebeian but was produced by the educated elites. Witchcraft was a miscellany of slanders, stereotypes, and paranoid fantasies, mostly inherited from previous ages, but seasoned with contemporary anxieties. For centuries before 1400, the illiterate and semiliterate strata of society had attributed paranormal or supernatural powers to certain persons. During this period, both secular and ecclesiastical elites had denounced many of the witches’ supposed powers as superstitious, sinful, and contrary to reality. But rather suddenly, about 1400, the skeptical attitude toward witchcraft in literate culture was replaced by a new attitude of credulity.

Between 1430 and 1470, increasing numbers of literate European men, both clerical and secular, convinced themselves that such phenomena were actually possible. But the power to perform such wonders (*mirabilia*) could not be inherently human or natural, as common folk believed; rather, it must be demonic. Whereas illiterate culture had defined witchcraft as either good or evil, the new definition implied that it was always evil in origin, even when its effects seemed beneficent or neutral. Moreover, witches had to be the dupes or slaves of demons, not their masters, as the learned concept of necromancy presupposed. Witches’ power was a *praestigium*, or demonic illusion: Any actual wonders were performed by demons, and even illusory feats derived from demons’ manipulation of reality or human perception. Collectively, these phenomena were labeled by a variety of Latin words (*maleficium*, *veneficium*, *sortilegium*) and vernacular terms (*sorcellerie*, *Hexerei*, *brujería*, *stregoneria*, and so forth; often—as in French, German, or Spanish—with more than one term per vernacular) that English now translates as *witchcraft*. These labels had major shared aspects.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WITCH STEREOTYPE

APOSTASY Learned opponents of witchcraft imagined witches as renegade Christians. Throughout the early development of the learned myth, witchcraft was defined as a terrible new heresy, deriving not from a

person's ignorance or deception by others but from willful abandonment of orthodoxy. Thus, witches were condemned as apostates or defectors from the Church, who had formally transferred their allegiance from God, Jesus, the Virgin, and humanity to Satan, the archrival of God, and his demons, the archenemies of humanity. The common goal of witches and demons was to overthrow both Church and society.

MALEFICIUM Witches subverted society by inflicting mysterious harms or destruction on adults, children, livestock, and crops. Whereas folklore attributed mysterious power for both good and evil to witches or to their occult rites and words, intellectuals insisted that such great power, real or illusory, could only come from a supernatural—and thus demonic—source. In fact, witches' apparent power for good was presumptive proof of a demonically bestowed power to perform evil.

FEMININITY A large majority, roughly 80 percent, of persons tried for witchcraft were women, despite occasional majorities of male defendants. This imbalance partly reflected illiterate accusations of *maleficium*, whether spontaneous or solicited by literate judges and inquisitors. *Maleficium* largely affected "women's work," from childbirth and caregiving to food preparation, folk medicine, and many kinds of farm labor. Prejudice, literate and not, contributed: *Maleficium* was performed secretly and was, therefore, considered appropriate for persons lacking physical or economic power. Literate and illiterate stereotypes about women's secrecy, deviousness, and sexual insatiability were already codified in proverbs and literature, and they inflected all the characteristics attributed to witches.

PHYSICAL INTERACTION WITH SATAN AND DEMONS Apostasy implied that a witch did not operate in isolation but had necessarily defected to a rival organization structured like the Church. But unlike induction into the Church, initiation into apostasy happened through personal, even physical contact with the head of the organization: Satan appeared "in person" to wavering Christians to tempt them. Alternatively, he might order a veteran witch to tempt a prospective initiate (a particularly frequent feature during the fifteenth century). All formal initiations into the organization were personally conducted by Satan, not delegated to priests or other representatives. As confirmation, the Devil might demand body parts or other tokens from the initiate or bestow his own tokens or proprietary marks. In contexts where literacy was relatively common, the Devil supposedly required initiates to sign a formal written contract (or, alternatively, a collective "Book of Death"), often in blood, surrendering body and soul in exchange for initiation and the power to perform *maleficium*.

The Devil could take sexual possession of the initiate at initiation or other times. Copulation with Satan or demons was possible for both male and female witches, but women were imagined performing this activity more often than men.

ATTENDANCE AT MASS MEETINGS Initiating adepts into Satan's antisociety required collective gatherings. This stereotype derived from earlier commonplaces about heretics. Over time, the numbers of participants increased, reaching thousands during the sixteenth century. Religious vocabulary designating the imagined meetings expressed their anti-Christian nature: *Sect* frequently referred to the society of witches, but *synagogue* and *Sabbat* (sabbath)—terms implying an analogy with Jewish refusal to accept Christianity—prevailed for describing their meetings.

Aside from initiations, mass meetings provided privileged settings for other imagined witch activities. The most common are described in the following passages.

DESECRATION Sabbat mythology imagined witches as antithetical Christians, performing rituals that inverted Christian ritual interactions with the deity. Catholics imagined that crucifixes and Eucharistic Hosts were debased, not exalted—trampled, besmirched with excreta, or insulted verbally rather than elevated and adored. Beginning around 1590, desecration evolved into the myth of the Black Mass, a systematic inversion of the Roman Catholic Mass performed by or in honor of the Devil. Protestants, who rejected the sacraments that Catholics imagined being desecrated at the Sabbat, frequently denounced the Catholic sacraments as witchcraft, an imposture invented by Satan.

INFANTICIDE AND CANNIBALISM Folkloric mythology imagined witches causing the death of children. In most learned scenarios, dead witches disinterred children after burial and took their corpses to the Sabbat to be cooked and eaten. An analogy with the Eucharist was usually implied or explicit. Children could also be killed at the Sabbat as a sacrifice to Satan, implying a travesty of the Mass as Eucharistic sacrifice.

BANQUETING The Sabbat menu could feature dishes other than roasted or boiled children, reflecting the fantasies of malnourished accused witches, of their learned interrogators, or a combination of both. Defendants imagined everyday or festive cuisine; interrogators suggested disgusting or terrible dishes or that normal dishes lacked flavor: Salt was used to prepare holy water, and both substances supposedly repelled demons.

METAMORPHOSIS Folkloric witches (and occasionally their victims) could become wolves, cats, or other

animals. Learned witchcraft writers declared that only God could effect true metamorphosis; witches merely appeared to be transformed, thanks to a diabolical illusion. The illusion was, however, absolutely convincing to anyone besides authorities familiar with demons' deceptive power. Like ordinary people, witch-hunting advocates imagined that pseudometamorphosis allowed witches to disguise their supernatural *maleficia* (evil acts), particularly infanticide, as the natural destructiveness of animals. Ignorance of such demonic deceptions was invoked to refute opponents of witch hunting.

THE CAULDRON Witches were imagined cooking disgusting or horrifying ingredients: serpents, toads, boiled children, and sacramental materials. The cauldron was also essential for preparing the products discussed in the following sections:

THE INITIATES' POTION A kind of anti-Eucharist, this potion granted witchcraft knowledge and, in some versions, bound the initiate's soul, preventing reconversion to Christianity

OINTMENTS When smeared on witches' private parts or on brooms, pitchforks, and the like, greasy residue from the cauldron allegedly signaled demons to transport witches. Alternatively, it could be smeared on victims, summoning demons to attack them.

POWDERS Powders struck victims with illness or death. There were two varieties, one concocted by witches, the other by the Devil or other demons. Like the ointment, powder made by witches summoned demons to harm victims. Powder supplied by devils was apparently lethal in itself.

FLYING OR TRANSVECTION Centuries before witch stereotypes solidified, wise women and herbalists apparently used hallucinogenic ointments. Fifteenth-century clerics reinterpreted women's hallucinations of rapid travel as actual flight. Literate culture found flight ideologically useful: First, it argued for the reality of demonic power, because it could not have human or natural causes; second, it explained the elusiveness of the Sabbat and precluded skeptics' empirical investigation.

INFLUENTIAL DEFINITIONS OF THE WITCH

About 1350, the Dominican Jacopo Passavanti used the term *strega* in a vernacular sermon to designate women who claimed nocturnal rambles with the goddess Diana and other godlike females (Kors and Peters 2001, 111). *Strega* (from the Latin *strix*) became one of the standard terms for witches over the next century. Passavanti's term for nocturnal rambling was *tregenda*, which later designated the Sabbat in Italian. However, Passavanti implied that the *tregenda* might be an empty masquerade

put on by devils to deceive simple people, including the *streghe*.

In the fifteenth century, five treatises sketching elements of the witches' Sabbat, often composed by people who had attended the Council of Basel in the 1430s, appeared almost simultaneously, alongside well-documented trials in Dauphiné, the Valais, and the diocese of Lausanne. Such accusations of diabolic witchcraft may indirectly have reflected anxiety over actual religious dissent: The Hussite heresy presented a major challenge to Western orthodoxy in this period and was discussed worriedly by several early witchcraft authors, especially Johannes Nider. Some actual groups were persecuted under names linking them to major medieval heresies: for instance, *Vaudois* or *Valdenses* (Waldensians) or *Gazarii* (Cathars).

Simultaneously, in northern and central Italy, St. Bernardino of Siena popularized similar notions and claimed to have discovered two Roman women in 1424 who had killed numerous children, using an herbal ointment that made them seem to be cats. The women were burned (Kors and Peters 2001, 133–137).

Between 1437 and 1455, two clerics, Johannes Nider and Alonso Tostado, described the same night-rambling women as Passavanti, employing terms (the German *Unholda* and Latin *malefica*) later commonly used for witches. Both writers described the women's failed attempts to convince others that their traveling was real. However, each author claimed or implied elsewhere that magical night traveling was sometimes possible in reality.

Meanwhile, papal decrees in the first four decades of the 1400s mentioned new "sects" of Jews and demon-worshipping heretics who practiced *maleficium* and magic, desecrated sacraments, flew, and caused bad weather. By mid-century, treatises describing the new sect and its gatherings multiplied in Germany, Italy, the Low Countries, and Spain. Most shared a major strategy of separating modern witches from the dreaming women mentioned by the *Canon Episcopi* (Stephens 2002, 20–26, 134–137).

From the 1450s through the 1470s, treatises on witchcraft phenomena became increasingly Scholastic. Alonso de Espina (ca. 1459/1460) classified witchlike heretics along with Jews, Muslims, and devils as enemies attacking the "Fortress of [Christian] Faith." He specified that demon-worshipping women called *xurguinae* or *bruxae* were deluded about their supposed powers but were and should be prosecuted. Treatises of this period defended the reality of witchcraft, the Sabbat, and even demons themselves, by peremptorily refuting pagan and Jewish skepticism about the reality of spirits.

With the 1486 publication of *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches), witchcraft mythology attained systematic theoretical consolidation, despite

ignoring the witches' Sabbat. The *Malleus* argued formally for a predominance of women among witches, and it dated the origin of the "sect" to around 1400, when, it claimed, women began voluntarily fornicating with incubus demons for pleasure, rather than being molested by them; demonic copulation was considered widespread among witches (Stephens 2002, 32–55). The *Malleus* devoted two books to historical and theoretical treatment, and its entire third book focused on practical legal procedures for discovering, entrapping, prosecuting, and executing witches, all of which applied to secular as well as ecclesiastical justice.

Subsequent definitions of witchcraft evolved less rapidly in their broad outlines, yet witchcraft progressively separated itself from conventional forms of heresy. By the Reformation, witchcraft had become a practically self-standing phenomenon in the literate imagination, so socially dangerous as to subsume other varieties of religious deviance. A group of related northern Italian treatises from the early 1520s strikingly illustrates this consolidation. About 1521, Silvestro Prierias coined the neologism *strigimaga*, or "witch-sorceress," to argue that witchcraft was a new phenomenon, inadequately defined by the ancient terms *strix* and *magus/maga* (child-attacking vampire and magician). To define the *strigimaga*, Silvestro Mazzolini explored the origins and meanings of other terms, Latin and popular, pagan and Christian, ancient and modern. *Maga/magus* is a vernacular synonym of *malefical/maleficus*; *masca* is a vernacular synonym of *larva*, referring to the ease with which ghosts (and hence witches) evade detection, as if "masked." The Latin *lamia* and *strix/strigia* and Italian *stregal/strigal/stria* show that witches victimize children. The *strix* is a screech-owl, believed to suck sleeping infants' blood, the *lamia* a monstrous humanoid beast that devours its own children. All these terms refer metaphorically to witches' deeds (Stephens 2002, 279–280).

In his *Quaestio de strigibus* (An Investigation of Witches, 1523), Prierias's pupil Bartolomeo della Spina maintained that everything witches confessed was true and real, though not always in the way that witches and common people thought. Only inquisitors were qualified to decide in what manner witches' experiences were real; most happened "in the body," but some were demonic illusions. Yet all witchcraft phenomena were enabled and overseen by demons.

Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola, who had personal contacts with both Prierias and Spina, extended their conclusions in his *Strix* (The Witch, 1523). Witchcraft and particularly the Sabbat featured a mixture of ancient and modern perversions, attested by ancient Greco-Roman terms such as *strix* and *lamia* (Pico gave an even fuller catalog of such terms than Prierias); other abominations, involving heresy, were new (Elmer, Webb, and Wood 2000, 378–380).

Between Pico's *Strix* and Jean Bodin's *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (*On the Demon-Mania of Witches*, 1580), witchcraft was little discussed (mainly by critics such as Johann Weyer), and persecutions declined, while Western Christians coped with the overt doctrinal conflicts of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, with their related social upheavals (Peters 2001, 240–243).

The second wave of witchcraft treatises, beginning with Lambert Daneau and Bodin, was more systematic and often even more virulent and extreme in its assertions than writings of roughly between 1430 and 1530. For example, the *Malleus* named only four crimes that were characteristic of all witches (Kramer 1971, 20–21), whereas Bodin's work enumerated fifteen (Kors and Peters 2001, 291–294). Bodin did not imagine completely new crimes; rather, he exploited rhetorical effects, such as lengthy numbered lists. Bodin, a political theorist, strongly emphasized witchcraft as *lèse-majesté* against God, enumerating seven benefits obtained by punishing witches, especially "to appease the anger of God" and obtain his blessing on the state (Kors and Peters 2001, 291).

Martín Del Rio's *Disquisitiones Magicae libri sex* (Six Books on Investigations into Magic, 1599–1600) related witchcraft to the history of heresy from Hussitism to Calvinism, giving five reasons why "magic regularly accompan[ied] heresy" (Kors and Peters 2001, 332–334). Del Rio named eleven separate stages in the solemnization of the witches' pact with Satan at the Sabbat; these stages, like much else in Del Rio's treatise, were copied by Francesco Maria Guazzo in his *Compendium Maleficarum* (A Summary of Witches, 1608, 2nd ed., 1626) and synthesized with information from Nicolas Rémy's *Daemonolatriae* (Demonolatry, 1595) and other earlier works.

With Guazzo and Pierre de Lancre (*Tableau de l'inconstance des mauvaises anges et démons* [Description of the Inconstancy of Evil Angels and Demons], 1612), the stereotype of the witch reached encyclopedic proportions. Not coincidentally, editions of these two works contained the most complete pictorial illustrations of witches' activities, especially at the Sabbat, found anywhere in witchcraft treatises.

WALTER STEPHENS

See also: BASEL, COUNCIL OF; BERNARDINO OF SIENA; BLACK MASS; BODIN, JEAN; CANNIBALISM; *CANON EPISCOPI*; CATS; CAULDRON; CONTEMPORARY WITCHCRAFT (POST 1800); CUNNING FOLK; DANEAU, LAMBERT; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; DEMONS; DRUGS AND HALLUCINOGENS; EVANS-PRITCHARD, EDWARD; FLIGHT OF WITCHES; GENDER; GUAZZO, FRANCESCO MARIA; HERESY; HUSSITES; INFANTICIDE; LAMIA; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; MAGIC, LEARNED; MAGIC, NATURAL; MAGIC, POPULAR; *MALEFICIUM*; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; METAMORPHOSIS; NECROMANCY; NIDER, JOHANNES; OINTMENTS; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA, GIANFRANCESCO;

POISON; POTIONS; PRIERIAS, SILVESTRO; RÉMY, NICOLAS; SABBAT; SATANISM; SORCERY; SPINA, BARTOLOMEO DELLA; STRIX, STRIGA, STRIA; TOSTADO, ALONSO; VAUDOIS (WALDENSIANS).

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WITCH CRAZE

Until the mid-twentieth century, the term *witch craze* was a common descriptor for large witchcraft trials and was often applied to the European witch persecution in general. Subsequent scholarship has preferred to replace this value-laden term with the more neutral *witch hunt* or *witch panic*, defined as "any hunt resulting in 20 or more executions in one year" (Midelfort 1972, 9). However, in 1980, *witch craze* was redefined as an "explosive amplification of witchcraft caused by a temporary syncretism of the traditional witch beliefs of the common people with those of the more specialized or educated classes" (Henningsen 1980, 391), for instance, the demonological theory of European intellectuals or the elaborated witchcraft mythology of African witch doctors. The two phenomena may be distinguished by a series of opposed characteristics:

1. *Witch belief* is transmitted by long-term oral tradition in the local community, uninterrupted and continuous. *Witch craze*, by contrast, is a short-lived phenomenon and exists only momentarily as local rumors and propaganda.
2. Socially, *witch belief* has several functions within the local community. It is part of a cognitive system (for example, explaining individual misfortune) and of a moral system (most societies do not tolerate envy, and envious people are therefore thought to be witches). Moreover, belief in witchcraft may function as a safety valve for latent aggression that cannot be expressed otherwise because society forbids it. For instance, if your mother-in-law lives with you, you must endure her caprices, but if you can convince your family and your neighbors that

she is a witch, you can throw her out of your house. *Witch craze*, by contrast, is totally dysfunctional, both cognitively and morally, and any function as a safety valve takes such explosive forms that it tears local society into pieces.

3. *Witch belief* is characterized by an unsystematic mythology, while *witch craze* has an abundant and elaborated superstructure.
4. In *witch belief*, harm to individuals (*maleficium*) is necessary for initiating a trial, but in a *witch craze*, this aspect becomes insignificant; the primary thing is to identify someone as belonging to the witches' group because he or she, for instance, was seen at the Sabbath or was found to have a Devil's mark.
5. In *witch belief*, the compact with the Devil or other supernatural beings is unimportant or even totally missing. In a *witch craze*, it is overwhelmingly important, as the accusation is concentrated on this point.
6. In *witch belief*, the usual suspects are individuals who do not fit into the community: old people, widows, cripples, and beggars. In a *witch craze*, all sorts of people may be accused, including even children.
7. Finally, in *witch belief*, usually only one or two people in each village are accused. In a *witch craze*, up to half the population may be branded as witches.

In other words, the witch craze was not just a reinforced form of witch belief but rather a sort of mutation, whereby witchcraft was prosecuted as a heresy, instead of being treated as an ordinary crime along with theft and homicide. Most trials of the European witch persecution were *maleficium* cases and belonged to the category of witch belief. By contrast, the witch craze was a rather rare phenomenon. The largest outbreaks occurred in Sweden, Germany, and in the Alpine and Pyrenean regions. Postcolonial Africa has experienced occasional epidemics of witch craze in the shape of the so-called witch-finder movements.

While witch belief has disappeared from most Western societies, witch craze also tends to return there in new disguises. An example of this was the wave of trials for satanic child abuse that started in the last decades of the twentieth century with a sort of demonology developed by psychotherapists and social workers, with obscure techniques for identifying the child victims, and with the same flaws in judicial procedure as in the historical witchcraft trials.

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See also: AFRICA (SUB-SAHARAN); BASQUE COUNTRY; DEVIL'S MARK; PANICS; SATANISM; WITCH HUNTS.

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WITCH FINDERS

Witchcraft is normally understood as damage of a mysterious or supernatural nature caused by another person's ill will or evil intent. There is often a fundamental uncertainty about the real identity of a witch. Therefore, the belief in witchcraft includes ideas about how the identity of witches can be revealed. Individuals who fulfill this function of revealing the identity of witches are called witch finders. In the same way that witchcraft is, in itself, a multivariuous phenomenon, differing types of witch finders display no uniform characteristics. In the endemic form that witchcraft takes at the village level, the witch finders had their allotted place in the system, not just to expose witches but also to provide countermagic. Extreme forms of finding witches appeared in connection with extensive witch hunts, wherein witch finders temporarily played an important role in initiating and, in a spatial context, communicating witchcraft. The appearance of witch finders may help explain the disparate occurrence of the witchcraft trials in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

However, in a society where witchcraft has a prominent place as an explanatory system, it is not always necessary (in the case of minor damage, for example) to disclose the identity of the witch. Similarly, in some cases, the witch may be seen as an external enemy rather than an internal one, as is usually the case, and could therefore be banished by countermagic, thus dispensing with the need to disclose an identity. In some situations, the need to find the witch through a witch finder is considered unnecessary, for instance, when a conflict arises in which one of the parties is threatened and fears immediate reprisal. The occurrence of an accident in these circumstances means that a witch is undeniably exposed. The village witch, a classic figure who was already surrounded by rumors of witchcraft, had every reason to be wary of making threats or using a sharp tongue. Similarly, in the case of a person performing magic or sorcery—that is, ritualized, externally observed behavior—it might seem evident who was responsible for an accident, even if the person seen carrying out suspicious acts by the victim of the witchcraft was not expressly an enemy of the victim.

Somewhat ironically, one could say that when a traditional witch finder was employed, it was quite

likely that the witch would remain anonymous and not be exposed before he or she succumbed to the witch finder's countermagic. Naturally, the expert in magic could claim to know the name of the witch, but equally, it was better not to be too explicit regarding his or her identity, as this could lead to an outcry or major conflict between the parties involved and might even attract the attention of the clergy or the civil authorities. In the cases where individuals were identified, it was in the interest of the witch finder to ensure that the accused was at a safe distance and not in direct conflict with the victim.

The term *witch finder* does not always imply a human agent but can also be used to refer simply to a method. Methods such as beating *fuligo septica* (believed to be the vomit left by witch familiars after stealing milk from the cows on a farm) or burning straw as a way of forcing the witch to disclose him- or herself are well known in folklore. The use of oracles is slightly different in that it requires the names of the suspects to be presented to the oracle. It should be emphasized that certain witch finders could also operate unconsciously by putting themselves in a trance in order to be able to detect and expose witches. An institution could also act as a witch finder. The judicial system supplemented or even competed with the traditional witch finders. However, while the latter meted out symbolic punishment, the former executed those found guilty. Thus, the work of the witch finder was not exclusive to magical experts but could equally well be carried out by the victim of witchcraft, an impersonal technique, by an institution, or even by the witch himself or herself. Antiwitch movements studied in traditional communities have sometimes been shown to produce self-confessed "witches," but this is a secondary development in relation to the "normal" witch finder's initial measures in the process of inducing people to refrain from witchcraft. The use of violence to achieve these ends should not be overlooked, nor should the fact that blood has been shed in the grim persecution of witches in postcolonial contexts. In Europe in the early modern period, spontaneous confessions were unusual but hardly surprising in view of the punishment involved. In the major witch hunt at the beginning of the seventeenth century in northern Spain, however, spontaneous confessions were surprisingly common. This finding is probably related to the generous granting of pardons that characterized the Inquisition (Henningsen 1980).

Concurrent with the traditional witch finders, a more sensational and dangerous type of witch finder was sometimes seen in connection with major witch hunts. This figure was the witch finder proper. In contrast to most of the traditional witch finders, such individuals were not concerned with counteracting witches but only with exposing them. Similar witch finders and movements, known as antiwitch

movements or witch-cleansing movements, have existed in various communities with a belief in witchcraft, in widely differing eras and locations. These movements have the aim of freeing their communities from witchcraft once and for all. In this respect, they are not retrospective, as in the normal case of trying to discover who is responsible for having caused particular damage, but are, on the contrary, more concerned with the future. The witch finder here is not operating in the service of an individual but on behalf of the whole community, even though the dynamic role of the witch finder should not be underestimated. The recurrent nature of this type of movement suggests that it is not necessarily related to deep social upheavals, which might easily be assumed in the case of African communities in a colonial or postcolonial context or in relation to early modern Europe. The witch finders often show creativity in adapting new methods to fit traditional conceptions and attitudes. They are entrepreneurs who know how to satisfy demands and take advantage of the situation to gain prestige or financial rewards. This, in turn, makes witch finders dependent on a continuing witch hunt.

Witch finders existed all over Europe. The most famous of these was probably Matthew Hopkins, "Witch-Finder Generall," as he is titled on the frontispiece of his book *The Discovery of Witches* (1647). Hopkins was a relatively insignificant gentleman who lived in Manningtree in northeast Essex, England. In the 1644–1645 winter, he apparently became very concerned about the presence of witches in the neighborhood, and it seems likely that 19 witches were put to death in the summer of 1645 as a consequence of the trials resulting from his fantasies. The persecution of witches spread rapidly to neighboring counties. In total, some 250 suspected witches were brought before the authorities in the East Anglian trials between 1645 and 1647, the majority in the first intensive months of the witch hunt (Sharpe 1996, 237–238). Hopkins and his less well-known colleague John Stearne were active in Essex and in other counties. They traveled around looking for witches, were paid for their services, and took part in the trials. Methods such as pricking, searching for strange excrescences, swimming, and sleep deprivation were included in Hopkins's repertoire. Even though no one can deny the personal importance of Matthew Hopkins, research has often focused on the contemporary social climate that provided the necessary conditions for his success as a witch finder (Macfarlane 1991; Sharpe 1996).

There are also references to witch finders in France in connection with the outbreak of local witch hunts in the 1640s and 1670s. It is reported that higher authorities frowned upon their activities. In January 1644, in the vicinity of Toulouse, such a man, who was supposed to be skilled in the art of disclosing "the Devil's mark," was

summoned to Eauze. He had also previously been operating in Gascogne. It is worth noting that complaints about suspected witches had been made before the arrival of the witch finder. His investigations, for which he was well remunerated, showed that only two of ten elderly women lacked the numb spot that was the distinguishing mark of a witch. In the spring of 1671, a fourteen-year-old youth named Jean Parrabère, from Chalosse, was operating in the vicinity of Condom, disclosing witches by looking them “in the eye.” In Mezin, the youth’s activities resulted in almost 60 of the 200 people gathered there being identified as witches. Jean Parrabère claimed that he had been taught the art by his wet nurse, who had taken him with her to a witches’ Sabbath as a young child (Mandrou 1968, 373, 441).

Children made up a special category of witch finders that gradually increased in significance. As early as the first half of the sixteenth century, in fact, children were referred to as witch finders in Navarre in Spain. In 1527, two girls, aged eleven and nine, appeared before the councillors of Pamplona and made the following claim: “Sirs, the truth is that we are witches like many others, who do so much evil. And if you want to punish them we will point them out to you, for we have only to look at their left eyes to be able to recognise them, since we are of their kind. Anyone not of their kind could not do it” (quoted in Caro Baroja 1965, 145). In the persecution that allegedly followed, the girls’ services were called on to disclose many witches. This story is reported from an unreliable source, but it could possibly be based on a real witch hunt that took place in 1525 (Monter 1990, 262–263).

In Sweden during the infamous Blåkulla trials, from 1668 to 1676, children identified witches in various ways. The abduction of children meant that they could both identify the witch that had carried them off to the witches’ Sabbath and recognize others who had taken part. Other children were acting as witch finders, basing their judgments on the physical appearance or clothing of the women. Vanity and pride were abominations. In the small town of Söderhamn on the coast of northern Sweden, this was taken so seriously that the townswomen demonstrated their good intentions by ceremonially burning their hats on a fire (Wall 1989). Children with second sight were often involved at a later stage of the process than children who had been abducted, implying that the witch hunt actually preceded “witch finding,” which thereby acted as a confirmation of guilt.

Satisfying the need for methods of verifying witchcraft led to the use of these supposedly clairvoyant children. From a contemporary perspective, identifying witches in return for financial remuneration, which was the role of these children in the witchcraft investigations, appears cynical. That the clergy and parish administration sent elsewhere for clairvoyant children

who could expose witches was not due to a shortage of such children in their own parishes. Their value lay in their ability as outsiders to distinguish more easily good people from evil, thereby achieving an apparent objectivity. However, bribes and blackmail flourished in these circumstances, and the original aims were thwarted. Central civil authorities condemned these practices, and the local clergy was censured. The great confidence people placed in the evidence given by these children is demonstrated in a case from the province of Medelpad. When it was proved that one of the boys giving evidence had contradicted himself, instead of denouncing the use of these children as witnesses a replacement was sent for. To prove his innocence of any involvement in witchcraft, a man from the same province produced a certificate of denial signed by clairvoyant children from Ljusdal in the neighboring province of Hälsingland (Sörlin 1997).

PER SÖRLIN

See also: AFRICA (SUB-SAHARAN); BASQUE COUNTRY; CHILDREN; COUNTERMAGIC; DEVIL’S MARK; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; IDENTIFICATION OF WITCHES; LIPPE, COUNTY OF; MORA WITCHES; ORACLES; PRICKING OF SUSPECTED WITCHES; STEARNE, JOHN; SWEDEN; SWIMMING TEST; WITCH HUNTS.

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WITCH HUNTS

Witch hunts were an early modern phenomenon. Geographically, they occurred most often in some parts of the Holy Roman Empire that were extremely fragmented legally: Franconian ecclesiastical territories; the Saar and Mosel regions; the electorates of Trier and Cologne, including the duchy of Westphalia; the duchies of Luxembourg and Lorraine; the prince-bishopric of Münster; Schleswig-Holstein; and Mecklenburg. Elsewhere, they occurred on the peripheries of France (for example, Navarre and Languedoc), in the Swiss Confederation, the Spanish Netherlands, the Austrian Habsburg patrimonial lands, and western Poland. Witch hunting was generally less intense in both Mediterranean and northern Europe, with Catalonia from 1618 to 1620 as a notable exception in the former area and lowland Scotland, eastern England, in 1645, and northern Sweden from 1668 to 1674 as exceptions in the latter area. Even in areas affected by severe witch panics, trials occurred in unequal numbers everywhere. There was a great deal of regional variation in persecution; some areas experienced endemic, others epidemic, episodes of witch hunting. Witch hunts had many different causes: Current witchcraft scholarship acknowledges that no single factor explains all early modern witch hunts.

LEARNED WITCHCRAFT AND THE CHRONOLOGY OF PERSECUTION

Witch hunts were clearly not a medieval phenomenon, but ideas about witchcraft had roots in medieval belief systems. By 1400, it was generally accepted that individuals could work harm (but also effect cures) by means of magic. During the fifteenth century, a far more terrifying belief developed that a witch sect met secretly in order to plot harm to the rest of society. This new concept was an "invention" of the late medieval learned elites, created from several different sources, including confessions elicited by inquisitors from Cathar and Waldensian heretics, in which flight through the air, devil worship, and the sacrifice of children were already mentioned. Anti-Semitism also played a role, as the witches' gathering was called a "synagogue" (or Sabbath), where witches, like Jews, supposedly desecrated Christian rites and indulged in the ritual murder of infants. Human pacts with the Devil had been discussed since St. Augustine and renewed by

St. Thomas Aquinas. Ancient beliefs about the efficacy of magical and demonic powers, harmful magic, the evil eye, and the ability of certain people to change themselves into animals and to fly at night existed alongside these learned ideas.

These ideas converged in the 1430s. The Dominican Johannes Nider systematically summarized these ideas in his *Formicarius* (The Anthill), written in 1437 and 1438 after he attended the Council of Basel, the nexus from which the previously unknown crime of witchcraft spread to a sizable proportion of Europe's learned elite. The new medium of printing sped this process. Such demonological texts as the infamous *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches), first published in 1486 by Heinrich Kramer, found their way into Europe's universities, courtrooms, monastic libraries, and private households, wherever Latin was understood. Uneducated contemporaries learned about the new sect of witches through sermons.

The earliest recorded witch hunts—some with over a hundred executions—come primarily from lands near Lake Geneva around 1430: the duchy of Savoy, the Val d'Aosta, Dauphiné, and today's Swiss cantons of Valais and Vaud. Here, the belief in an alleged secret sect of witches and inquisitorial techniques (often applied by laymen) mutually reinforced one another to create chains of trials, in which confessions forced from suspects under torture confirmed the fantasies of court authorities. Moreover, confessions of weather magic and other harmful magic appeared to explain genuine crises (such as harvest failure or illness) afflicting contemporaries.

Witch hunts soon spread south into the Italian-speaking Alps and as far north as the Low Countries, as in the trials in Arras in 1459. They also moved northeast into German-speaking Switzerland, the regions bordering Lake Constance, and the upper Rhineland, where many people were executed for witchcraft before 1500. The activities of Inquisitor Kramer and the impact of his particularly misogynistic demonology, the *Malleus Maleficarum*, promoted clusters of trials in Alsace, the city of Metz, and the area between the Rhine and Mosel Rivers. Witch hunts petered out temporarily in west-central Europe after 1520 or 1530, probably because of the impact of the Protestant Reformation, but they resumed again after 1560, often in conjunction with severe agrarian crises. They continued (with significant regional variations) until the second half of the eighteenth century, with the worst witch hunts occurring between 1580 and 1650.

SECULAR AND ECCLESIASTICAL COURTS In the early phase of the witch hunts before 1500, secular courts rather than inquisitors were already taking the leading role in persecuting alleged witches. In countries where the prosecution of witches remained entirely or largely

in the hands of the Inquisition (Spain, Portugal, and Italy), witch hunts were largely prevented, and accusations of witchcraft made against an alleged “accomplice” by a confessing witch did not constitute valid evidence. Death sentences for witchcraft were very infrequent; in Portugal, the Inquisition ordered only perhaps ten such executions. Between 1610 and 1614, the Spanish inquisitor Alonso de Salazar Frías brought the witch hunts in Spanish Basque lands to an end, after secular judges had executed many French Basque witches. In areas influenced by the Roman Inquisition, witchcraft trials were also pursued with moderation. In Poland, witch hunting was relatively restrained, while the crime remained under ecclesiastical jurisdiction but gradually increased in the sixteenth century when secular courts, which allowed burning at the stake, took control of witchcraft persecution.

NUMBERS EXECUTED AND CENTERS OF PERSECUTION

The idea that 9 million people were executed during the early modern witch hunts has long since been refuted (Behringer 1998). Estimates now put the total number of executions in Europe between 30,000 and 60,000. The attempt to arrive at exact statistics for particular regions almost invariably fails because of the incomplete survival of sources. Moreover, in order to calculate the intensity of persecution in a particular area, one must compare the number of executions with the overall (adult) population. And when counting “victims” of the witch hunts, we must be careful to include not just those who were executed. Suspected witches who were released after refusing to confess were often physically and psychologically severely damaged by their ordeal and subsequently led a precarious existence on the margins of society. Some areas with low “execution rates” experienced many lynchings and unofficial executions of reputed witches or released witch suspects: Hundreds of people were murdered in this way in the French Ardennes in the seventeenth century. Our statistics on the total number of executions given previously must therefore be adjusted upward to include other kinds of victims of witch hunts.

Territories that we can categorize as centers of the most extreme witch hunts include all three of Germany’s Catholic archbishop-electoralates: Trier (with at least 1,000 trials), Mainz (with around 2,000 trials), and Cologne (with over 2,000 trials). The witch hunts in Franconia’s Catholic ecclesiastical territories were equally intense: Around 900 witches were executed in the prince-bishopric of Bamberg, while around 1,200 met this fate in the prince-bishopric of Würzburg. More than 4,000 trials occurred in Lutheran Mecklenburg. Overall, Germany probably saw nearly 25,000 executions for witchcraft. On its western edges, persecution of witches was very severe in the Catholic duchies of Lorraine and Luxembourg (both with

around 3,000 trials). But the Protestant Pays de Vaud, in French Switzerland, had perhaps the highest known per capita execution rate of any region, with over 50,000 people (at least 1,700 deaths, over 20 per thousand) during the early modern period.

Territories on the periphery of Europe experienced a more restrained pattern of witch hunting. There were around 2,000 executions for witchcraft in all of Scandinavia (half of them in Denmark), although the region was much less densely populated than west-central or southern Europe. There were not more than 500 executions—and perhaps even significantly fewer—in England; Scotland, by contrast, was less than one-fourth as populous but executed 1,000 witches. In France, the *parlements*, or sovereign judicial courts, provided a strongly centralized administrative structure that exercised control over local courts: Here, fewer than 500 people out of a population of 16 to 20 million royal subjects were legally executed as witches. Eastern Europe also experienced some witch hunts, though later than in the west. Poland’s witch hunts occurred mostly between the mid-seventeenth and mid-eighteenth centuries, but exact statistics are impossible, and no more than seven witches are ever known to have been executed in one place in one year.

THE ROLE OF RELIGION The religion of the authorities in any particular territory played only a subordinate role in determining the willingness to hunt witches. In Germany, Calvinist authorities in the Palatine electorate systematically quashed every attempt to instigate or pursue witch hunts (Schmidt 2000), while the rulers of such Lutheran imperial free cities as Nuremberg also demonstrated a marked reluctance to persecute witches. However, other German Protestant areas (such as Mecklenburg or Lemgo) experienced extremely severe episodes of witch hunting. Not the religion but the degree of political and judicial fragmentation of an area had the greatest influence in shaping the severity of witch persecution. Such small ecclesiastical territories as the imperial abbey of St. Maximin or the Mergentheim Chapter of the Teutonic Knights, with only a few thousand subjects, experienced truly devastating witch hunts. Similar developments affected some small secular lordships, especially where the right to exercise criminal jurisdiction was in dispute, particularly along some western edges of the German Empire such as Luxembourg or the Saarland—or in Silesia, near its eastern edge, after 1650. Larger, less fragmented territories, where local courts were answerable to central courts staffed by professional jurists, as in France or the duchy of Bavaria, usually avoided witch hunts.

THE GENDER AND SOCIAL STATUS OF ACCUSED WITCHES A large majority of those who fell victim to witch hunts were women, even if in a few regions, such

as Finland or Normandy in France, more men than women were executed. Kramer focused solely on women as susceptible to the temptations of the Devil in his misogynistic *Malleus Maleficarum*, and in many places, popular opinion supported him. Generally speaking, confessionalism affected witch hunting only marginally in comparison with juridico-political issues. In much of Protestant northern Europe (Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, England, and Scotland), women constituted 80 to 90 percent of those executed, a notably higher rate than in most parts of Catholic Germany (Schulte 2001). But in fervently Catholic Poland, 96 percent of all executed witches—the highest rate known in Europe—were women, while in Calvinist Vaud, almost 600 men—more than anywhere in Catholic Germany—were executed as witches; moreover, Iceland, where more than 90 percent of witches were men, was Lutheran.

The stereotype of the witch as a poor, old, widowed woman was emphasized in the writings of both Protestant and Catholic demonologists and by such opponents of witch hunting as Johann Weyer and Friedrich Spee. However, this stereotype consistently broke down, both in the earliest witch hunts and especially in the large-scale witch hunts of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Young, married women; children and teenagers; and men (including some holding political or religious office) became increasingly caught up in chain trials during major hunts. Midwives were not singled out for persecution as witches, even though this idea is still emphasized occasionally.

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE OUTBREAK OF WITCH HUNTS Despite the many reasons behind the witch hunts that struck different parts of Europe at different times, certain common factors increased the likelihood for multiplying witchcraft trials. Not all these factors needed to be present at the same time and with the same intensity in any particular region to trigger witch hunts.

THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE CUMULATIVE CONCEPT OF WITCHCRAFT Nearly all cultures believe in the efficacy of harmful magic and the existence of individuals who practice it: These beliefs constitute anthropological constants. But belief in blasphemous witches, who carry out evil deeds with the Devil's help, was specific to Latin Europe and the Americas. The five components of the so-called cumulative concept of witchcraft (the pact with the Devil, sex with the Devil, flight, attendance at Sabbats, and the performance of harmful magic) were not, however, accepted with equal enthusiasm and speed. Throughout northern Europe and Scandinavia, the cumulative concept of witchcraft was adopted very slowly and imperfectly; most witches were tried for the traditional crime of harmful magic,

and only far in the seventeenth century did attendance at Sabbats feature in charges leveled at suspected witches. Wherever belief in the Sabbat remained weak, mass persecution was almost impossible because there was no reason to force the names of supposed accomplices from alleged witches under interrogation.

THE CONTEXT OF CRISIS From 1400 to 1700, various radical changes and crises affected many different aspects of life. Climatic deterioration—which earned for the period the name Little Ice Age—caused long-term inflation in the prices of essential foodstuffs, and in many regions, intensive witch hunts coincided with periods of bad weather, harvest failure, and rapid inflation. This “crisis scenario,” emphasized by Wolfgang Behringer (1995), was often made worse by epidemics and warfare. In addition, the Reformation and Counter-Reformation caused acute uncertainty among early modern Europeans; religious change also encouraged territorial lords and churches to try to impose ever-stricter codes of discipline on their subjects. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century demonologists repeatedly evoked apocalyptic images of the imminent end of the world in a final battle between good and evil, with the Devil and the witches on the side of evil. Ordinary people shared this vision as well; as a result, as Behringer has argued, a general “darkening” of people's worldview occurred.

DISCOURSES AND DISSEMINATION OF DEMONOLOGICAL “IDEOLOGY” The general shortage of material resources, the struggle for survival, and religious uncertainty provided fruitful ground in which belief in and fear of the secret powers of a large-scale witches' sect could grow. However, no simple causal connection existed between crisis phenomena and witch hunts. Rather, crises helped create a climate of fear, envy, resentment, greed, and anxiety about daily survival, a context in which witchcraft trials were likely to occur. In order for the new beliefs about witchcraft to take root, channels of communication—the most important of which were sermons and printed literature—were necessary. In late sixteenth-century Trier, for example, popular pressure for witch hunts was repeatedly aroused through sermons preached by Jesuits.

Once a personal misfortune or devastating hailstorm (both of which could be blamed on witchcraft) had triggered the first witchcraft trials in a region, beliefs about witchcraft were disseminated and strengthened as the judges, commissioners, local committees, and witnesses involved in the trials traveled to various courts, spreading fears as they went. It often happened that witchcraft trials in one area stimulated a desire for witch persecution in a neighboring territory that had experienced no particular misfortunes or crises.

Density of population played an important role here: Beliefs about witches spread much more slowly throughout the thinly populated parts of northern Europe than they did in west-central Europe. For example, it was probably not until the 1640s that soldiers returning from the Thirty Years' War took beliefs about the witches' Sabbat and witches as devil worshippers back to Sweden with them. The large-scale Swedish witch persecution between 1668 and 1676 (which affected its very thinly populated northern provinces) in turn spread to Finland, where severe witchcraft trials affected the Swedish-speaking population. Finland, where the cumulative concept of witchcraft surfaced for the first time only in the 1660s, was the last Scandinavian land to be affected by witchcraft trials. The man largely responsible for disseminating it, the judge Nils Psilander, had come into contact with German-influenced ideas about the crime of witchcraft while studying at the new University of Turku.

As this example illustrates, the role of universities in influencing the dynamics of witch hunts should also not be underestimated. In these institutions, generations of jurists and lawyers who became judges and assessors in witchcraft trials or provided legal advice in witchcraft cases received their training. These witchcraft trial legal specialists could offer their services in several territories or regions, thereby playing a significant role in stimulating the beginning, escalation, or end of such trials.

PERSECUTION "FROM BENEATH" Witchcraft trials usually began after pressure was exerted by a populace suffering from one or more of the aforementioned crisis scenarios and influenced by antiwitch propaganda. Witch hunts were rarely initiated by authorities against the wishes and without the cooperation of their subjects, because witchcraft trials needed evidence from those supposedly affected by harmful magic, supported by testimony from witnesses about the allegedly bad reputation and suspicious behavior of the accused. This desire to hunt witches "from below" varied in intensity. In many western parts of the Holy Roman Empire and the duchy of Luxembourg, witch-hunting committees (*Hexenausschüsse*) were organized. These committees were groups of men appointed by the local community to gather evidence against suspected witches in order to bring formal charges against them. In other parts of Germany and the Spanish Netherlands, this type of popular initiative took the form of surprisingly unified demands for witchcraft trials from entire villages. No witch-hunting committees existed in most parts of Europe. Here, however, the lower orders could demand that the authorities take action against witches who had allegedly caused bad weather, disease, and harvest failure in forms ranging from peaceful petitions to almost open revolt. Before the desire to hunt witches from

below could translate into an episode of mass persecution, however, at least one other factor was necessary.

ELITE WILLINGNESS TO HUNT WITCHES AND THE USE OF TORTURE Witch hunts could occur only when the authorities were willing to make the full apparatus of the criminal law available for the pursuit of witchcraft trials. Territorial lords seeking greater centralization and unity by developing more efficient bureaucracies usually demonstrated little interest in hunting witches. The exceptionally severe witch hunts that took place in the ecclesiastical territories of the German region of Franconia in the early seventeenth century constitute rare examples of witch persecutions instigated, fostered, and condoned by the authorities. Where a territorial government consistently suppressed popular desires for witch hunts, for example, in the Palatine electorate, no witchcraft trials took place. By contrast, one finds enthusiastic promoters of witch hunts among minor secular and ecclesiastical lords holding rights to exercise criminal jurisdiction at local courts.

With few exceptions, the crime of witchcraft was tried before secular courts. However, northern Europe, including the British Isles, never adopted inquisitorial legal procedure—which was based on Roman law and which allowed the use of torture—in criminal cases. In these countries, chains of trials linked by denunciations of so-called accomplices extracted by torture were impossible, and true witch hunts were accordingly extremely rare.

As the example of common-law Europe shows, the use of torture played a decisive role in predicting whether witchcraft trials escalated into large-scale witch hunts. Criminal legal procedure based on Roman law accepted torture as a legitimate part of the process for obtaining a confession, which was necessary in order to convict the accused. The Carolina, the 1532 code of criminal-law procedure for the Holy Roman Empire, left decisions about the frequency and severity with which torture was to be applied to the discretion of the presiding judge. Almost every area that experienced massive witch persecution classified witchcraft as an "excepted crime" (*crimen exceptum*), whereby the restraints of normal legal procedure could be ignored, and proceeded to inflict tortures of the most horrifying and gruesome type on suspected witches.

WITCH HUNTERS Witchcraft trials required input from a large number of "specialists": jurists, judges, court scribes and notaries, beadles, and executioners. All large-scale European witch persecutions included, among these specialists, prominent men who sought to promote witchcraft trials and manipulate them for personal advantage. In this way, the witch hunts in Franche-Comté are linked to the judge and demonolo-

gist Henri Boguet, the French Basque witchcraft trials with Pierre de Lancre (also a judge and demonologist), and the endemic persecutions in the duchy of Lorraine with *procureur-général* (public prosecutor) Nicolas Rémy (and his son, who inherited his position). The witch hunts that began in the English region of East Anglia in 1645 were driven by the ambitious “Witch-Finder General” Matthew Hopkins (who died in 1647), while trials in Iceland after 1650 were directed by Sheriff *piorleifur Kortsson*.

The number of executions in the prince-bishopric of Bamberg would certainly have been lower without the fatal influence on proceedings of its suffragan bishop and demonologist Friedrich Förner; they abated after his death in 1630. Other men who exerted a fateful personal influence on large-scale German trial episodes were Witch Commissioner Berend Nobis in Schleswig in 1626, his colleague Heinrich von Schultheiss in electoral Cologne, “witches’ judge” Balthasar Nuss or Ross (hanged in 1618) in the prince-abbey of Fulda, and jurist Daniel Hauff in Esslingen. All these men claimed to be crusading against a sect of witches that deserved extermination, and they showed their victims no mercy. They were also driven by a desire for self-promotion and disseminated their witch-hunting experiences in published form, thereby retrospectively legitimating their actions. Rémy, for example, published his essay on the persecutions in the duchy of Lorraine, *Daemonolatriae* (Demonolatry), in 1595; Lancre published a demonological work, *Tableau de l'inconstance des mauvais anges et démons* (Description of the Inconstancy of Evil Angels and Demons) in 1612. In the 1620s, Förner published a collection of sermons against witchcraft, with one for every day of the year, while in 1634, von Schultheiss published a handbook on conducting witchcraft trials correctly. Other jurists, commissioners, and court personnel often obtained significant promotions through their involvement in witch hunts, which sometimes also brought financial advantages—although increasing social capital was at least as important to such men as making an economic profit.

THE PURSUIT OF WITCH HUNTS IN PRIVATE AND POLITICAL INTERESTS Fears of witchcraft occasionally led to genuinely panic-stricken persecutions of alleged witches in rural areas and sometimes also in small towns. Contemporaries were, however, aware that accusations of witchcraft were not always leveled at “real” witches but knew that innocent people could inadvertently find themselves dragged into witchcraft trials. Early modern people, deeply ensnared in contemporary witchcraft beliefs, also used witchcraft accusations and witchcraft trials in their own interests. Such “instrumentalization” of witchcraft accusations and trials can be seen at every level of the persecution

process and in every group who participated in it. Neighbors used suspicions and accusations of witchcraft to resolve social conflicts, while local court officials obtained social and financial advantages from witch hunting.

Minor lords with the right to exercise high criminal justice used witchcraft trials to exert and affirm this right, which helps explain why severe witchcraft trials usually occurred in small and middle-sized territories where a climate of persecution, hermetically sealed against external interference, could develop. Such minor but independent rulers clung ever more tenaciously to their “old” legal right to try serious crimes the more this right—and thereby their autonomy—was challenged by major territorial lords; as part of the early modern state-building process, they sought to wrest control of high criminal justice from local courts and centralize it in their own hands. Witchcraft trials acquired a significant political role against the background of such judicial conflicts: They were used and sometimes even deliberately staged by the lords involved in such conflicts. For example, the fifteenth-century Swiss witchcraft trials that occurred around Lucerne, Basel, and Fribourg, in the Val Leventina, and in the Pays de Vaud served political purposes, demonstrating claims to political authority. Around 1600, similar political motivations underlay many witchcraft trials in parts of Silesia, Mecklenburg, Schleswig-Holstein, and the prince-bishopric of Münster. In particular, the territory between the Meuse and Rhine Rivers was characterized by a patchwork of territorial rulers holding different political and legal rights, a situation that frequently produced witchcraft trials resulting from deliberate attempts by local lords to assert their power and authority (Voltmer 2002).

OPPOSITION TO AND END OF WITCH HUNTS

Early modern opinion about witchcraft trials was by no means unanimous. Some regions (for example, Ireland) experienced almost no witchcraft trials, while others experienced mass persecutions. Meanwhile, critical voices—from all major religions and from various social groups—were raised against belief in witchcraft and the persecution of witches throughout the entire witch-hunting period. Legal records from the highest courts of appeal show that the individual elements comprising the cumulative concept of witchcraft were rarely accepted without opposition. Moreover, as the example of Ireland shows, people who believed in witches did not necessarily become hard-line advocates of persecution. In the supplications and suits brought before various appellate courts, such as the *Grand Conseil* (Great Council) in Malines, the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court) and *Reichshofrat* (imperial aulic court) in the Holy Roman Empire, and the *parlements* in France, we find many

individuals who believed themselves innocent of the witchcraft accusations brought against them and who described in detail the cruel, often fanatical, and sometimes cynical behavior of witch hunters pursuing their private social, economic, and political interests. Familiarity with such legal records led some contemporaries to deny the belief in witches completely (although almost never saying so in public); others called for moderation in—or even stopping entirely—the persecution of witches, using arguments resembling the criticisms by such opponents of witchcraft trials as Johann Weyer, Reginald Scot, Cornelius Loos, and Friedrich Spee.

However, because of official censorship, advocates of witchcraft trials held a quasimonopoly on publications during the early modern period. Therefore, most surviving printed sources (pamphlets recording trials, demonological tracts, and sermons) reflected the conventional line favoring witch hunting, supported alike by official political power, by faceless public opinion, by those who supported witchcraft trials from self-interest, and by those too frightened to dare criticize witch hunting. The rare examples of people willing to risk making more or less open criticism of witch hunts are thus all the more valuable, showing that there were always alternatives to zealous persecution, that fear of witches was never present with the same degree of intensity throughout Europe, and that some contemporaries understood and loathed the terrible legal mechanisms fostering witch hunts.

Large-scale outbreaks of witch hunting always required several interrelated factors. Attempts to explain why witchcraft trials became fewer and fewer in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries and why they eventually ceased altogether are equally complex. Mass witch hunts not only confirmed the plausibility of belief in witchcraft; they also provoked the interest of critics who doubted their legality and suspected that innocent people were being unjustly executed as witches. Mass trials also produced all manner of scandals and illegal procedures, causing some people to rethink their support for witch hunting. Skeptical attitudes became more common in the wake of the Enlightenment and increasing religious tolerance. Even though witchcraft remained a crime in some countries into the nineteenth century, trials declined alongside the gradual abandonment of judicial torture, the increasing subordination of local courts to centralized systems of justice, and the implementation of territorial decrees prohibiting witchcraft trials. In electoral Trier, for example, witchcraft trials were unofficially prohibited in 1652; in France, Louis XIV abolished them officially in 1682; in the Habsburg lands, Maria Theresa effectively prohibited them after 1750.

However, although many critical voices were raised among Europe's learned and ruling elites, belief in

witchcraft remained very much alive among the lower orders, although there were some opponents of persecution even at this social level and despite the fact that courts no longer satisfied popular desire for trials. Witchcraft trials did, in fact, continue far into the eighteenth century; the last legal execution for witchcraft in Europe occurred in the Swiss canton of Glarus in 1782. In the long term, improving economic, political, and social conditions, together with better levels of education, medical provision, and state poor relief, contributed to the gradual cessation of witchcraft trials. The belief in the ability of certain individuals to work either harmful or helpful magic has nonetheless remained until today.

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See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; APOCALYPSE; CHRONOLOGY OF WITCHCRAFT TRIALS; COMMUNAL PERSECUTION; COURTS, ECCLESIASTICAL; COURTS, SECULAR; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; DECLINE OF THE WITCH HUNTS; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); FEAR; FEMALE WITCHES; GENDER; GEOGRAPHY OF THE WITCH HUNTS; GERMANY; LITTLE ICE AGE; LYNCHING; *MALLEUS MALEFICARUM*; NUMBER OF WITCHES; ORIGINS OF THE WITCH HUNTS; PANICS; POPULAR PERSECUTION; SKEPTICISM; SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF WITCHES; TORTURE; UNIVERSITIES; WITCH CRAZE.

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WITCH HUNTS, MODERN POLITICAL USAGE

One of the more visible legacies of the European witchcraft prosecutions that ended in the late seventeenth and mid-eighteenth centuries is the use of the term *witch hunt* as both symbol and metaphor for persecution and injustice. If the decline of witchcraft prosecutions after this period is often celebrated as a benchmark of social progress, the invoking of the witch hunt as a metaphor for comparing the past and the present challenges this claim. To refer to contemporary events as witch hunts is to imply that the same methods and controls once deployed against alleged witches have been and are still, in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, used against different targets with results that can be no less devastating, even if no one is hanged or burned. It also suggests that the modern secular state and its bureaucracies may be no less susceptible to eruptions of unjustified official violence against individuals and groups than were the societies that flourished before the rise of science and before the separation of church and state.

A survey of the *New York Times* and the *Times* of London between 1985 and 2002, using the search index *Lexis-Nexis*, testifies to the continuing vitality of the term *witch hunt* as a metaphor for contemporary social phenomena; more than 1,000 articles appeared during this period in each of these major newspapers in which the term was invoked to characterize selected current events. Moreover, a canvassing of world newspapers (relying on the same source) during the same period revealed a similar usage of the term in Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand, as well as in other countries throughout the world. There are, in addition, dozens of published books in English alone that use *witch hunt* when commenting on present events—further evidence of its widespread cultural significance.

The events to which the category is applied are as varied as the societies and the times in which they occur. False accusations of child abuse in England, the

prosecution of a British nanny in Massachusetts on charges of murdering an infant in her care, attempts to remove gay clergy from Australian pulpits, the court-martial of U.S. military officers engaging in extramarital relations, and proposed antiterrorism legislation in Australia—these are just a few of the recent events that journalists and other commentators have compared to witch hunts. Yet through this welter of phenomena, several common themes emerge. First and most transparently, invoking the category is almost invariably pejorative; to refer to an event as a witch hunt is, by definition, to invite moral condemnation by implying that it is unfair or malicious or both. Second, the actions described as witch hunts are almost always those of public officials acting under the authority of the state or some other powerful organization, often in the form of a prosecution but usually involving some form of aggressive interference in the lives of private citizens. Third, the targets of actions defined as witch hunts tend to be persons who are marginal or nonconforming, religiously or politically or behaviorally. Finally, the witch hunt is perceived as an intervention that is either grossly disproportional to the wrongdoings that preceded it or a complete miscarriage of justice that results in the punishment of the innocent. These features reveal both what witch hunts mean to contemporaries and what characteristics contemporaries have come to associate with witch hunts.

MODERN WITCH HUNTS?

For no events in recent history has the metaphor of the witch hunt been elaborated quite as vigorously as for the congressional hearings into the presence of Communists in the late 1940s and early 1950s in the United States and for prosecutions for ritual child abuse that occurred in the late 1980s through to the late 1990s, mostly in the United States but also in Canada and England. Not surprisingly, given their Anglo-American bias, the exemplar for this search for correspondence has been the Salem witchcraft prosecutions of 1692.

The parallels that have most impressed contemporaries are the power of the human imagination to give human form to its deepest fears and the capacity present even in modern states committed to the rule of law and to empirical science to create conspiracies of their own making. In particular, commentators have suggested broad similarities in the process by which suspicions were generated and then elaborated into full-fledged accusations that in turn generated more accusations and convictions. Just as the Salem trials were propelled by a form of evidence that placed defendants at an impossible disadvantage, so also were both the allegations that triggered the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) in the mid-twentieth-century United States and the allegations of ritual abuse some

forty years later, which could not be refuted no matter how improbable or unfounded. “Spectral evidence” in 1692 was based on the belief that victims of witchcraft had a special gift to see the specter or otherworldly likeness of the witch who was tormenting them. No matter how accused persons comported themselves and no matter how they behaved, the testimony of the victim proved their guilt in the eyes of the juries and magistrates who returned verdicts of guilty and imposed penalties of death according to the law. Only through confession and by implicating others could persons suspected of witchcraft delay or mitigate the punishment of death by hanging. Persons who criticized the proceedings were at risk of being accused. The result was a process in which the web of suspicion was rapidly and continuously amplified until its sudden cessation a year later.

The congressional investigations into “un-American” activities likewise loosened the criteria for active subversion of the U.S. government by placing under suspicion not only persons who had been members of the Communist Party at any time but also members of any organization perceived as sympathetic to the Communist Party; any authorship or participation in films that endorsed values that were perceived as compatible with those of the Communist Party; and anyone who associated with someone in the preceding categories. To come under suspicion was to risk severe repercussions, especially loss of employment and loss of reputation. To rehabilitate one’s reputation and to protect one’s livelihood, it was necessary to confess one’s misdeeds and to implicate others. Refusal to testify or refusal to give the names of one’s confederates was taken as equivalent to a statement of guilt. To criticize the proceedings was to risk being placed under investigation. Just as in the Salem trials, the search for Communist infiltrators into the core of American institutions generated more and more suspects until it too was dismantled.

The mass prosecutions that resulted in the conviction and subsequent acquittal or overturning on appeal of hundreds of persons charged with the ritual abuse of young children have also been viewed through the prism of the Salem trials, albeit from a different vantage point. Here, what has most struck contemporaries has been the validation of children’s testimony no matter how improbable and completely unsupported by physical evidence, while ignoring the unacknowledged responsibility of therapists, police, social workers, and others in actively shaping the children’s testimony. Through aggressive interrogation and fear of worse punishment, many false confessions were generated that in turn generated more accusations and convictions. Only after the mounting of costly appeals backed by experts who challenged the findings of the courts did appellate courts throw out most of the incriminating

evidence as lacking in credibility and as irrevocably tainted by the leading questions of adults in authority. Journalists and academics who have written about these trials have focused on what they identified as parallels between the use of evidence in these cases—child witnesses coached by adults with preconceived ideas—and the use of child witnesses to give spectral evidence during the Salem trials and its validation by magistrates, clergy, villagers, and others. Just as in the Salem trials, when official pressure was removed, confessors recanted their confessions.

That each of these official initiatives was able to generate evidence to confirm the worst fears of their respective communities can be taken as a further point of similarity. Through the testimony of confessors, members of the Massachusetts Bay colony learned of a conspiracy of witches consisting of otherwise respectable members of the church that sought to destroy Salem village and to replace it with a kingdom presided over by the Devil. The hearings into un-American activities produced revelations of a vast Communist conspiracy that had penetrated into the very core of U.S. military and political institutions. The mass prosecutions of the 1980s and 1990s resulted in confessions that spoke of secret associations of otherwise law-abiding adults who engaged in extreme acts of sexual violation of young children as part of a satanic or cultlike ritual.

For some commentators, the use of the witch hunt as a metaphor is misplaced and anachronistic. For others, it is a sobering reminder of the fragile boundaries separating the present from the barbarities of a past that was certainly not the “good old days.” But if, as Norman Cohn (1975, 225) has written, the witch hunt “illustrates vividly the power of the human imagination to build up a stereotype and its reluctance to question the stereotype once it is generally accepted,” then it is no wonder that it continues to be useful as a tool of analysis and as a reference point for contemporary phenomena.

RICHARD WEISMAN

See also: MILLER, ARTHUR; SALEM; SPECTRAL EVIDENCE; SATANISM; WITCH CRAZE; WITCH HUNTS.

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WITCH-BISHOPS (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE)

Although it is no longer possible to sustain the assertion that witchcraft persecutions were extremely severe everywhere in Catholic lands because several Catholic states—for example, Portugal, Spain, Venice, Naples, Austria, and Bavaria—executed relatively few witches, it remains true that witch hunts in some German prince-bishoprics were indeed horrifying. The bishops were responsible for these hunts as secular princes in their territories, but still, there seems to be a striking difference between the sheer numbers of people burned by bishops in contrast to those burned by most secular lords, whether Protestant or Catholic. This situation was partly due to the bishops’ personal qualities as rulers but also to their role as princes of ecclesiastical territories. Although it was usually relatively minor secular rulers who permitted witch hunts, it was the most prominent archbishops and bishops (except the greatest of all, the pope) who allowed or even supported witch hunting. Within the Holy Roman Empire, the core of witch-hunting Europe, these bishops were responsible for the most terrible witch hunts.

The highest-ranking princes of the Holy Roman Empire, its three ecclesiastical archbishop-electors, also ranked among its worst witch hunters. The archbishop of Mainz was by far the most powerful ecclesiastical prince north of the Alps: His archdiocese extended almost from Hamburg to Milan, comprising the dioceses of Hildesheim, Paderborn, Strasbourg, Worms, Augsburg, Eichstätt, Constance, and Chur. Moreover, this archbishop was of great political importance. He held the first vote among the seven electors; he crowned emperors and elected kings; and he served as imperial chancellor, the most prominent office in the empire, exercising influence over imperial officials in Prague or

Vienna. Furthermore, he ruled a territory of his own, the electorate of Mainz (*Kurfürstentum Mainz*, or *Kurmainz*), scattered geographically across the middle of the empire, with a large portion in the Rhineland, another portion stretching east of Frankfurt in upper Franconia, and a third patch in Thuringia around the town of Erfurt (where Martin Luther received his university education), as well as further tiny particles of land elsewhere. Altogether, his territory encompassed about 8,300 square kilometers, held nearly 400,000 people, and generated an annual income of 1 million gulden. The archbishops were elected by the cathedral chapter and usually came from the minor regional nobility. The witch craze in Mainz started during the short reign of Johann Adam von Bicken (1601–1604), a man of fragile health who saw about 650 burnings. Persecution slowed under his successor, Johann Schweikhard von Cronberg (ruled 1604 to 1626), a powerful imperial politician, but 361 people were nevertheless executed as witches. Witch hunting then accelerated rapidly under Archbishop Georg Friedrich von Greiffenklau (ruled 1626 to 1629), with 768 witches killed within just four years. Overall, about 1,800 people were legally killed as witches under the rule of these three prince-bishops (Pohl 1998).

Recent research enables us to provide a ranking of the major witch-hunting bishops, as presented in Table 1.

In many cases, bishops engaged in major episodes of witch hunting had similar personality traits. They belonged to the first generation of bishops educated in the spirit of the Counter-Reformation and thus possessed fanatical severity that could be turned inward or against others. Such a mental hardening resulted from a somber worldview, with occasional chiliastic expectations. Their perception of living in an exceptional historical situation encouraged exceptional solutions, some of them violent. One cultural historian (von Pölnitz 1934, 395) described the reforming bishop of Würzburg, Julius Echter von Mespelbrunn, a key figure of the German Counter-Reformation, in terms reminiscent of psychoanalysis: “[His] whole generation . . . was dominated by a spirit of extreme austerity, directed partly against religious enemies and partly against

TABLE 1 WITCH BISHOPS

<i>Victims</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Ruling bishop</i>	<i>Persecution dates</i>
2,000	Electoral Cologne	Ferdinand von Bayern	1624–1634
900	Bishopric Würzburg	Philipp Adolf von Ehrenberg	1626–1630
768	Electoral Mainz	Georg Friedrich von Greiffenklau	1626–1629
650	Electoral Mainz	Johann Adam von Bicken	1602–1604
600	Bishopric Bamberg	Johann Georg II Fuchs von Dornheim	1626–1630
550	Ellwangen/Eichstätt	Johann Christoph von Westerstetten	1611–1630
361	Electoral Mainz	Johann Schweikhard von Cronberg	1616–1618
350	Electoral Trier	Johann VII von Schönenberg	1581–1599
300	Bishopric Würzburg	Julius Echter von Mespelbrunn	1616–1618

opponents in their own camp, but foremost against their own ego, and everything that could be perceived as sinful within themselves.” In his famous *Cautio Griminalis* (A Warning on Criminal Justice, 1631), Friedrich Spee interpreted the witch hunts as “the disastrous consequence of Germany’s religious zeal.”

It fits neatly with this interpretation that the most terrible witch hunters of the Holy Roman Empire, at least of its German-speaking parts, were prince-bishops—*Hexenbischöfe*, or “witch-bishops,” according to a term first coined for Johann Georg II Fuchs von Dornheim (von Lamberg 1835, 17). Like his colleague in Würzburg, this witch-hunting bishop of Bamberg was a nephew of Julius Echter, who sponsored their education and prepared their careers. But witch hunting was more a matter of education than a family affair. Many of these zealots had been educated in the same institutions and by the same academic teachers at the Universities of Dillingen, Ingolstadt, Freiburg-im-Breisgau, or Dole (Franche-Comté). A study of witch-bishops (and their advisers, councillors, and confessors) as members of the same age group, molded by similar key experiences, moods, or mentalities (Mannheim 1928, 157–158), has not yet been attempted. Religious fundamentalism was buttressed by confessional strife, and it is no coincidence that Germany’s most terrible witch hunters all belonged to the Catholic League. Their inclination toward violent solutions led in the case of witchcraft trials to the theory of “extraordinary” trials (*processus extraordinarius*) for an “excepted” crime (*crimen exceptum*) and climaxed before the 1629 Edict of Restitution, the Catholic party’s attempt to regain all territories lost to Protestants since the Peace of Augsburg in 1555. However, this was not the official policy of the Catholic Church; Pope Urban VIII (ruled 1623 to 1644) looked with contempt upon Germany’s religious zealots (Bireley 1975, 226).

Nineteenth-century scholars were eager to attribute these persecutions to Counter-Reformation zeal and to Catholicism in general. Recent research has demonstrated that assigning responsibility is more complicated. Nevertheless, the attitude of the ruling princes played a decisive role, as the example of the prince-bishopric of Bamberg illustrates. Under Prince-Bishop Johann Philipp von Gebsattel (ruled 1599 to 1609), a pre-Tridentine bishop who indulged in the Renaissance joys of loving music and women (he had half a dozen children), there were few witchcraft trials and executions. After Gebsattel’s death, the Catholic League installed an ardent reform bishop, Johann Gottfried von Aschhausen (ruled 1610 to 1622), already bishop of Würzburg. His new suffragan bishop, Friedrich Förner (1568–1630), a theologian whose views resembled those of the demonologist Peter Binsfeld, began forming new alliances and immediately lashed out against witches. A witch hunt started in

1612 but stopped in 1618, when politicians utilized the outbreak of the Thirty Years’ War as an argument for reducing expenses. The hard-liners lost out until the election—organized by suffragan Förner—of Bishop Johann Georg II Fuchs von Dornheim (ruled 1622 to 1633), another candidate of the Catholic League. Chancellor Georg Haan remained in office while his enemies carefully prepared to take over. In 1625, Förner delivered a series of thirty-five sermons on magic and witchcraft, entitled *Panoplia armorum Dei* (The Splendid Armor of God, Ingolstadt, 1625), dedicated to the prince-bishop of Eichstätt, Johann Christoph von Westerstetten. The most prominent victim of Bamberg’s witch hunts, now guided by Förner, was Bamberg’s leading politician, its chancellor Dr. Haan, who had served the bishops of Bamberg and the Catholic League for many years; his entire family was burned.

Bamberg represented the “ideal type” of a massive witch hunt, although its victims were outnumbered by those in the electorate of Mainz (*Kurmainz*). Both were surpassed by the prince-bishopric of Würzburg, where about 900 people were burned at the stake during the same five years (1626 to 1631), including a number of noblemen and a good number of clergy (Schwillus 1992). This followed an earlier persecution around 1616 or 1618 in the same territory under the famous reforming bishop Julius Echter von Mespelbrunn (ruled 1573 to 1617), the German counterpart of St. Carlo Borromeo in Milan, when about 300 witches were burned during his long reign.

The burnings under Philipp Adolf von Ehrenberg (ruled 1623 to 1631) gained a proverbial reputation. When persecutions started in the electorate of Cologne (*Kurköln*), a town councillor about 500 kilometers further northwest predicted, “*Es wird Wirtzbürgisch werck werden*” (“It will work out like in Würzburg” [Behringer 2001, 265]), and his forecast was anything but exaggerated. In the duchy of Westphalia, subject to Ferdinand, elector-archbishop of Cologne (ruled 1612 to 1650), about 2,000 people were burned for witchcraft between 1626 and 1634. Ferdinand was responsible for the most terrible witch hunt in the German parts of the Holy Roman Empire. This was not due to any “centrally implemented program of eradication” or “War against Witches” (Schormann 1991, 169–171) prepared by earlier legislation against witchcraft in 1607, when Ferdinand served as coadjutor for his uncle Ernest of Bavaria, his predecessor as archbishop-elect of Cologne.

Describing the prince-elect as a predecessor of the Nazi “War against the Jews” (Davidowicz 1975) would explain these developments elegantly, and moreover, Ferdinand had been educated in Trier during the great witch hunt of the 1590s. However, evidence for such parallels is surprisingly weak. Ferdinand had already

been appointed coadjutor in Cologne in 1594, and during the first twenty years of his rule, no witchcraft persecutions occurred. Clearly, Ferdinand was more interested in religion than was his uncle Ernest of Bavaria, bishop of Freising, Hildesheim, Liège, and Münster, who had become archbishop of Cologne as the candidate of the Counter-Reformation party to replace his heretical predecessor after the Cologne War. Although one of the most powerful Catholic rulers in Europe, Ernest was interested primarily in the worldly pleasures of an aristocratic life: hunting, music, dancing, and feasting in the company of women. He had even terminated the witchcraft trials in his prince-abbey of Stavelot, but obviously, he did not prevent his zealous nephew and successor Ferdinand from starting such trials. Even after 1612, the new archbishop saw no reason for launching inquisitions in electoral Cologne or Westphalia, nor in any of his other sees—Hildesheim, Liège, Münster, or Paderborn.

Scrutinizing the protocols of the electoral court council in Bonn demonstrates that these persecutions had not started “from above,” as Gerhard Schormann (1991) claimed, and they were not at all centrally planned or implemented (Becker 1992). At the root of the problem lay the agrarian crisis of the mid-1620s, with devastating crop failures, unusual diseases, and an urgent demand “from below” putting pressure to punish witches on the noblemen in charge of the criminal courts. Moreover, the elector’s central government would have been incapable of launching a witch hunt because most of its criminal courts had been pawned to the nobility and because there was no obligatory system of reporting to the court council, unlike such contemporary secular territories as Württemberg, the Palatinate, or Bavaria, where court councils (*Hofrat*) tightly controlled district courts (*Landgerichte*). In most ecclesiastical territories, central authorities were only sporadically informed about cases, when the owners of their courts sought advice or when subjects tried to appeal to a higher court. Such patchy references enable us to reconstruct when and where these persecutions developed in the electorate of Cologne.

After the persecution had gained momentum, Archbishop-Elector Ferdinand tried to assert control over the movement. He appointed witch commissioners, possibly hoping to recover some of his pawned criminal courts. However, these appointed commissioners soon began implementing their own agendas, terrorizing entire regions in order to gain money and reputation, using their arbitrary power extensively and in anarchical fashion, much like the English “Witch-Finder General” Matthew Hopkins during the Civil War. The Thirty Years’ War had created a similarly anarchical environment in central Europe, loosening normal legal administrative practices. Due to the sheer size of the Cologne witch hunts but also because the

imperial free city of Cologne was a university town full of independent monasteries and printers, these persecutions spawned a number of publications both for and against witch hunting. Friedrich Spee published the famous *Cautio criminalis*, the most powerful attack on illegal procedures of the archbishop-electors’ government, anonymously in 1631. The author, then a member of the Jesuit College at Paderborn, had intimate knowledge of developments in Ferdinand’s electorate; although he formally disguised all names, contemporaries could easily decode his text to understand his allusions to particular actors and events.

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See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; BAVARIA, DUCHY OF; BINSFELD, PETER; COLOGNE; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); EICHSTÄTT, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; FERDINAND OF COLOGNE; GERMANY; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; MAINZ, ELECTORATE OF; POPULAR PERSECUTION; SPEE, FRIEDRICH; TRIER, ELECTORATE OF; WESTERSTETTEN, JOHANN CHRISTOPH VON; WITCH HUNTS; WÜRZBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF.

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WITCH'S MARK

The witch's mark, or English teat, was a protuberance or nipple on a witch's body that personal demons (known as imps or familiars) sucked for nourishment. According to British folklore, certain groups of people could command spirits, goblins, and minor demons, which they could induce to perform magical services for them. These creatures generally took the shape of animals (cats, dogs, toads, mice, butterflies, insects) and fed like vampires on their masters' blood, which they sucked from a bulge or a nipple that was sometimes located in proximity to the genitals. By the time of England's witchcraft trials, the signs left by these vampire-animals were associated with the continental Devil's mark, and the possession of a 'familiar' was consequently deemed a sign of a prior pact with the Devil. (This change is also evident in many English treatises of the period.) Devils could thus appear in the shape of animals and confirm the pact with the witch by sucking the witch's blood. In order to ascertain the presence of bulges on the bodies of the accused, the judges sometimes employed special juries of midwives and matrons, thereby enabling women to participate in witchcraft trials as legal experts parallel to male surgeons.

Accusations of possessing a familiar played an important role in England. Witches' marks were first mentioned in a trial in 1566, and the search for them was systematically encouraged by 1579. In 1604, a new law against witchcraft explicitly declared the guilt of those who were found to have fed animals with their own blood. Subsequently, witches' marks became a crucial proof in many witchcraft trials and played a central role in the great witch hunt led by Matthew Hopkins (from 1645 to 1647). Witches' marks were also considered pertinent in the witchcraft trials that took place in the American colonies; one encounters juries of women at the Salem panic of 1692. According to James Sharpe, the widespread belief in the existence of familiars and in witches' marks challenges the position of Keith Thomas, who assumed that in

England, accusations against witches were mostly based on general fears of evil spells and only in exceptional cases motivated by the idea of a pact with the Devil, which Thomas considered a "continental import" typical of the elites.

The witches' mark is often confused with the Devil's mark (common in Scotland and on the European Continent). The belief that the Devil imprinted a mark on his followers has an important foundation in the Apocalypse (Rev. 13:16): "And [the Antichrist] causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads." Tertullian and Irenaeus also spoke of diabolical marks. Hence, the idea that there ought to be a tangible mark that would allow human judges to recognize witches seemed, in the early modern period, to be confirmed by both Scripture and subsequent tradition. The biblically driven Protestant Reformation was conducive to searches for the Devil's mark.

The mark acted as a sinister counterpart to the rites of baptism, circumcision, or feudal homage; it was almost the reverse of saintly stigmata, a symbol of debasement and submission to the Devil. The search for the *punctum diabolicum* (the Devil's spot or mark) subjected the accused to an ordeal, which many accepted voluntarily in the hope of proving their innocence. In fact, it was believed that, when the Devil concluded a pact, he imprinted a mark of varying form and consistency (a mole, bulge, or mark), perhaps shaped like an astrological sign or the footprint of an animal, that could be recognized because it was insensitive and did not bleed (like a piece of dead flesh). Although many Catholic demonologists downplayed its importance by assuming that not all followers of Satan had such a mark, it often provided decisive evidence in witchcraft trials by 1600.

Surgeons participating in the search for these marks shaved the entire body of the accused in order to discover the insensitive spot. According to common belief, this spot was often hidden among the most intimate parts of the human body: breasts, anus, armpits, and genitals. The investigation therefore proceeded by probing moles, scars, and birthmarks, often with needles that were forced deeply into the body and caused terrible pain. The discovery of the marks did not provide sufficient proof for conviction; rather, it allowed the trial to proceed and torture to be administered. In many cases, judges and surgeons cheated and employed dubious stratagems, which were severely censured in 1631 by the German Jesuit Friedrich Spee, who also denounced their scandalous and shameless probing of the naked bodies of accused witches.

Witches' marks were never mentioned in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Hammer of Witches, 1486). The situation changed, however, during the latter half of the sixteenth century, and by the late

seventeenth century in a significant part of Europe and the New World, the *punctum diabolicum* was considered a decisive element in witchcraft trials. According to William Monter, this early belief in the Devil's mark was a consequence of the association between witchcraft and heresy, especially in Reformed regions of Switzerland, which pioneered the search for marks as a definite proof of a culprit's guilt. Yet some Lutheran theologians such as Johann Brenz ridiculed the belief in marks, and some Catholics were no less ardent than Protestants in the search for the Devil's signs. During a case of demoniac possession at Aix-en-Provence in 1611, the chief exorcist, Sebastien Michaëlis, demanded that tangible proofs of witchcraft be found on the body of the suspected priest; a physician, Jacques Fontaine, who took part in the trials and wrote a treatise on the subject, supported his position.

As the witch hunts peaked around 1630, Catholic experts were bitterly divided over the issue. In 1629, a German Catholic counselor of the archbishop of Mainz, Peter Ostermann, published an extensive commentary in favor of searching for diabolical stigmata. Johannes Jordanaeus immediately rejected this position in 1630, as did the Roman Paolo Zacchia, an eminent legally trained physician, who in 1635 referred to the Roman Holy Office's skepticism about the Devil's marks in order to support his position. Despite this overall tendency, an official of the Roman Inquisition, Cesare Carena, claimed during the same decade that the Devil's mark existed and constituted a proof. Jesuit theologians were also divided: While Spee denounced the searches in 1631, a French Jesuit, Théophile Regnault, published a favorable treatise in 1647, entitled *On Stygmatism*. Europe's most prestigious Catholic court systems, the great inquisitions and the major French *parlements* (sovereign judicial courts), never searched for it, although most Protestant court systems did. Probing for the Devil's mark became especially frequent in Scotland, Switzerland, and much of the Holy Roman Empire.

VINCENZO LAVENIA

See also: AIX-EN-PROVENCE NUNS; ANIMALS; BLOOD; BRENZ, JOHANN; DEVIL'S MARK; FAMILIARS; HOPKINS, MATTHEW; JORDANAUEUS, JOHANNES; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; PRICKING OF SUSPECTED WITCHES.

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WITEKIND, HERMANN
(1521/1522–1603)

This Reformed professor at the faculty of arts in Heidelberg can be counted among the most important opponents of the persecution of witchcraft in Germany, second to Johann Weyer, mostly because of his 1585 treatise *Christlich bedencken und erinnerung von Zauberey* (Christian Thoughts and Memories About Sorcery).

Born as Hermann Wilcken (Wilchen), he registered at the University of Frankfurt an der Oder in 1546 and in 1548 at Wittenberg, where he became a friend of Philip Melancthon. Later, Witekind was called to the Latin, or cathedral, school at Riga. In 1561, he joined the University of Rostock, but was soon called to the University of Heidelberg, where he taught (with a short intermission) from 1563 until his death.

Witekind's treatise against witchcraft persecution, published at Heidelberg under the pseudonym Augustin Lercheimer, was the first really successful attack on persecution ever conceived in the German language. A second, enlarged edition (Strasbourg, 1586) was followed by a third (Basel, 1593); the last edition, worked on by the author himself (Speyer, 1597), included major additions. It was reprinted in 1627 and probably in 1654 as well. His treatise was also included in the *Theatrum de veneficis* (Theater of Poisoners, 1586) and other collections.

Obviously, Witekind witnessed no witchcraft trials in the Palatinate, but news about persecutions in his native Westphalia motivated him to write his treatise. In addition, he wanted to refute Weyer's most prestigious opponent, Jean Bodin (who had been translated into German by Johannes Fischart). Deep compassion for the victims and strong resentment against their persecutors brought Witekind to demand an end to witch burnings. His arguments were based primarily on the New Testament, which for him was normative in all things. Although the traditional tone of the confessional age dominated, Witekind's arguments included empirical evidence from natural science, in a way that sometimes resembles the early Enlightenment. They also appealed to the common sense of his readers, asking them not to believe the nonsensical accusations against sorcerers.

Witekind's book was aimed mainly at rulers and lay judges, who had decisive influence on the trials. For this reason, he chose a style that was decidedly unscientific and picturesque and wrote in strong, blunt German. While the number of printings suggest that Witekind reached a larger audience, his language and style meant he was seldom cited in learned discourse. Nevertheless, for Johann Georg Goedelmann and Anton Prätorius, Witekind was of crucial importance.

Witekind was one of those skeptics who attacked the idea of the witch at its core by emphasizing God's omnipotence. He believed that everything in the world happens by divine providence alone. As God's law is the law of

nature, witchcraft accusations had to pass the tests of natural science. Harmful magic, the flight of witches, and the witches' Sabbat were therefore usually impossible. Even though Witekind occasionally got entangled in contradictions, he agreed with Weyer that what female witches experienced were only fantasies created by the Devil. However, for Witekind, the witches' apostasy from God and their pact with the Devil were real. But not even these major sins could be punished by humans; that was God's right alone. In a way that was radical for his time, Witekind rejected the persecution of heretics and attributed to every Christian the right to turn away from God. The Hebrew Bible's rules for punishment were set aside in favor of the New Testament, which explicitly prohibited the persecution of heretics. In an age of confessionalization and social discipline, Witekind evicted only those who would never repent. Even though, in his opinion, criminal justice had no place in treating the offense of witchcraft, he covered the topic in the light of current witchcraft trials. He wholeheartedly supported the *processus ordinarius* (ordinary procedure) and rejected the opinion that witchcraft constituted a *crimen exceptum* (excepted crime).

Witekind, who as a rule did not name other authors of his time, was obviously influenced by Johann Weyer and doubtless by the opposition to persecuting witchcraft in electoral Palatinate, whose position resembled that of Weyer. Obviously hoping to export this rather mild Palatine position to the rest of Germany, Witekind became its most important literary representative.

Although deeply rooted in tradition, Witekind's treatise remains original. This assessment holds true especially for his critical social approach, which was stronger than that of any of his predecessors. According to Witekind, witches were driven to the Devil's embrace not so much through their own faults as by social circumstances. Proceeding from the profile of the witch as a poor woman outside society, he mainly blamed social grievances and failures of the authorities for their situation. On the one hand, women lacked the spiritual armor to resist the Devil because the authorities and the Church continually failed in the religious education of a nearly heathen populace. On the other hand, however, the social circumstances of a materialistic, egotistical world—their economic misery and their social isolation—drove poor women to seek help from the Devil. Sometimes, even simple hunger made them lose control, leaving them in a state of unsound mind, ready to accept the Devil's pact. In this case, Christian charity was the cure. Although accepting the traditional idea of women's natural weakness for seduction, Witekind twisted this cliché into a different perspective.

JÜRGEN MICHAEL SCHMIDT

See also: BODIN, JEAN; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; GOEDELMAHN, JOHANN GEORG; PALATINATE, ELECTORATE OF; PRÄTORIUS, ANTON; SKEPTICISM; WEYER, JOHANN.

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WITNESSES

Witnesses, in the sense of character witnesses rather than eyewitnesses, generally played a vital role in formal legal proceedings against accused witches that was an extension of the informal role they had played in the formulation of suspicions that had led to the accusations. Most trials progressed according to more or less rigorous legal procedures, and the suspect's general reputation, together with evidence of past incidents suggesting witchcraft, were important in determining whether to proceed, particularly to torture. In a sense, witnesses framed the accusatory process: After an accusation was lodged, their role was to confirm it by establishing that the offense was part of a pattern of behavior. Trials therefore involved members of the suspect's community who testified about her or his general reputation or who knew of specific incidents related to the current charge. Reputation was, by definition, collective opinion, built up gradually from numerous incidents in the small communities where most accusers and suspects lived. Both the formal and informal roles of witnesses have long posed problems of interpretation for historians, the former because of the difficulty in determining the amount of embellishment and retroactive invention their stories contained and the latter because it is difficult to explain why one incident precipitated a formal accusation while earlier incidents had not.

THE PROBLEM OF WITNESSES IN THE LEGAL PROCESS

The use of character witnesses and evidence of past wrongdoing originated in ancient legal practice. They were important because many proceedings involved little hard evidence and came down to deciding which

of the several accounts to believe based on the credibility of the sources. This problem was particularly acute—and reliance on reputation and past history was particularly pronounced—in judging crimes that were surreptitious, such as infanticide and burglary. Witchcraft was doubly obscure, since both *maleficium* (harmful magic) and diabolism were necessarily occult offenses. In the case of *maleficium*, harmful rituals and malign thoughts were at least as likely to be concealed as manifested overtly, and the meaning or intent of overt acts was often unclear. In the case of the diabolical pact, physical evidence was almost never available, and eyewitness testimony, most frequently to participation in a witch dance, was generally tainted by coming from tortured suspects or from children. Trials therefore generally focused as much or more on the reputation of the suspect as on specific evidence about the incident(s) precipitating the investigation.

SUSPICIONS AND ACCUSATIONS Long before any arrest was made, witnesses generally played a vital role in solidifying suspicions into a formal accusation. A bad reputation was not absolutely necessary for having an accusation lodged, and suspects in mass panics were tortured and executed on the basis of coerced testimony alone. Yet in most instances, accusations, especially those likely to lead to convictions, represented the culmination of a series of incidents that created a reputation stretching back many years. Witnesses were, first, people who felt they had been victims of witchcraft, who knew people who had been, or who had observed something suspicious in the past.

These witnesses may not have stepped forward earlier for many reasons. One was the element of risk: If a prosecution failed, there could be legal or informal penalties for the person bringing the charges. In inquisitorial trials, widely used in Europe by the sixteenth century, the formal accuser was the state rather than an individual, so plaintiffs no longer risked an automatic penalty if their charge was not sustained, but there was still the legal risk of a countersuit. Perhaps worse, once the magistrates had gone, accuser and vindicated suspect would remain neighbors—but in a poisoned atmosphere of heightened tension.

The power of the accusation did not rest solely on the power of the accuser, however; it also depended on the nature of the allegation. Certain types of perceived harm both called for and had stronger potential than others to sustain prosecution. Accusations that precipitated trials were more likely to concern lethal illnesses or open attacks that injured people or valuable property, whereas less serious or less tangible suspicions generally remained dormant. A person had to be desperate, powerful, or confident to bring charges, otherwise, his or her story faded into the background of village suspicions. As such stories accumulated, though,

the probability that an accusation would be successful increased.

People who suspected that someone had manifested powers related to witchcraft had other reasons to hold back. Witchcraft was a capital crime, and a person had to be convinced that a suspect really deserved death to bring an accusation. If the spell was not life threatening, if the evidence was ambiguous, if the illness had gone away, or if there was reason to believe the suspect's actions were at least partially justified, a potential accuser might well be reluctant to bring charges. Furthermore, many small communities were hesitant to involve the state in local affairs.

INTEREST, MEMORY, AND VERACITY In addition, one must ask why so many witnesses *did* come forward once a witchcraft trial began and why they said what they said when they did. Two major differences separate these questions from those raised by the accusations that precipitated trials: Unlike the primary accusers, most witnesses had no immediate impetus to testify; moreover, their testimony usually included a temporal dimension, which raises issues about the nature and functioning of memory.

There are two possible reasons why witnesses would have come forward when a trial was under way. First, they might have seen the proceedings as an opportunity to strike at someone they wanted to get rid of for other reasons and then consciously fabricate their allegations. Second, they might have become convinced that they “remembered” an incident they had, for one reason or another, held back. There is no question that some witnesses, like some accusers, acted cynically, either for personal advantage or in order to rid their community of an unwanted member. In such cases, the issue of memory became irrelevant. But most witnesses, like most accusers, appear to have spoken sincerely. Why they came forward would in many cases have been related to why they held back: If their evidence had seemed too weak to initiate proceedings, the standard was lower for this sort of testimony; if they did not want to risk confrontation with the suspect, someone else had now taken the major risk; if they had been uncertain whether the person deserved to be punished, the fact of a trial put a new perspective on their experience or information.

Another reason why a witness might have come forward only when a trial had started was because until then, the person did not “remember” the incident about which he or she would testify. Discussion of the trial may have caused the witness to fabricate the memory without realizing it, pasting together some combination of stories she or he had heard with stock elements of local witch beliefs. Or the witness might have reshaped her or his memory of an actual event,

transforming it from an inconsequential encounter into a sinister incident. Clearly, this process operated to some extent in a considerable number of cases and to a considerable extent in some cases. Memory, like perception, is a slippery thing, and there is no doubt that people mold what they say to the expectations of their audience.

However, it would be a mistake to proceed, as some recent historians have, from this realization to the position that *all* testimony was shaped by this process; the evidence simply will not support that conclusion. First, the number of witnesses with old stories generally corresponded to the suspects' general reputation; it was very unusual for a person held in high regard by the community to have a whole slew of allegations made about the past, even though they had just been denounced for witchcraft. Second, independent witnesses corroborated some of the incidents recounted. Third, some incidents had left a public record, possibly even a previous trial. A witness's testimony was not simply memories constructed to fit one set of circumstances, nor was it simply the product of cynical calculation or a simple remembrance of reality. Instead, it was generally and in most particular cases a mixture of all three.

EDWARD BEVER

See also: ACCUSATIONS; EVIDENCE; IDENTIFICATION OF WITCHES; INQUISITORIAL PROCEDURE; *MALEFICIUM*; SLANDER; TRIALS.

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WORDS, POWER OF

The idea of the magical power of words—that they can provoke physical effects merely by being uttered or inscribed—is found in many cultures. It has often been attributed to a belief that language and reality are so closely related that words have a real bond with the things they signify, so that utterances may be used instrumentally to affect or exploit the power of those things; as the anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski once said: "To know the name of a thing is to get a hold on it" (cited by Clark 1997, 283). Before him, Sir James George Frazer (1978, 321), consistent with the cultural evolutionary theory of his time, assumed that "primitives" were "unable to discriminate clearly between words and things." Stanley J. Tambiah dismissed this assumption in 1968, arguing that, on the contrary, magical rituals demonstrate sophisticated uses of language and figures of speech. He contended that analogy and metonymy verbally transfer properties from a substitute or complement to another thing, and this transfer in thought and word may be given added realism by the simultaneous use of action or objects (Tambiah 1985, 32–37). Both metaphoric and metonymic transfer are expressed, respectively, in Frazer's categories of "homoeopathic magic" (manipulating similarities) and "contagious magic" (exploiting bonds of possession or contact) (1978, 14–63), but these rhetorical strategies are far more complex than a simple confusion of words and things.

RITUAL, RHETORIC, AND REALITY

Tambiah's reservations are relevant to the study of medieval and early modern European charms. Though we know little about folk practitioners' understandings of the relationship between ritual words and their effects, surviving texts show much sophistication in the use of rhetorical devices. Analogy was commonly employed. In reducing charms, the successive diminution of a phrase or word, such as *Abracadabra*, was analogous to the ritual's aim of reducing the patient's affliction (Storms 1948, 153). Verbal formulas often followed the pattern "just as α is, so let β be" (Roper 1997, 22). Matteuccia di Francesco, executed at Todi in 1428, combined such a formula with manipulation of a metaphoric object in a spell she recommended to a thwarted lover: To inflict impotence on his rival, he was to bend a lighted holy candle while saying, "As this candle bends in this heat, so let the bride and groom never come together in this love" (Mammoli 1972, 33).

Metonymy was also widely used. Garments were measured to diagnose patients' ailments, and enemies could be harmed through rough handling of items belonging to them, such as thatch from a witch's house (Thomas 1971, 184–185, 544). Patients might be progressively represented by a metonymic list of parts: Healing charms often commanded the affliction to

depart from each part of the body from head to toe (Storms 1948, 222). Whether such figurative utterances and gestures were understood as rhetorical devices establishing imaginary correspondences or as the exploitation of a real bond between things would vary from one person to another. As Stuart Clark suggested, the power of ritual words may have been construed differently by charmers and their patients, as also by priests and their congregations (Clark 1997, 283).

Modern fieldwork also cautions against assuming that performers of spells, charms, and prayers or even their clients attributed the efficacy of rituals solely to the words, despite the claims of medieval and early modern writers that people commonly did so (Clark 1997, 284). Though anthropologists have encountered informants who state that a ritual worked because the words were spoken, performance analysis usually reveals that other factors were also essential, especially the context; the simultaneous use of action, substances, or objects; the response of spirits or other entities; and the faith or will of participants or performers (Tambiah 1985, 18–21, 29–30). What performance details survive of medieval and early modern charms and spells indicate that settings, medicines, material objects, and actions accompanying verbal formulas were no less important than in modern rituals—for example, in Anglo-Saxon medical charms (Storms 1948) or the elaborate spells in a fifteenth-century necromancer's manual (Kieckhefer 1997). The difficulty of separating the communicative and instrumental uses of language in rituals has also been emphasized (Clark 1997, 282). The words may be addressed to the participants or even the performers themselves (Roper 1997, 24); many rituals employ intelligible, everyday language, and the effects may be subjective. They might also address gods, demons, or spirits, invoked to perform the effects. Foreign words and nonsense were commonplace in charms and spells, but even unintelligible utterances might still communicate, since demons could understand gibberish (Tambiah 1985, 21). Moreover, extraordinary language (poetic, archaic, and the like) and unusual modes of speech (such as whispering or chanting) are in themselves markers of the transition from everyday matters to another level of reality, and in rituals aimed at change, linguistic difference expresses that aim by analogy: Just as the words are altered, so let things be different.

According to the cultural theory of language prevalent since the eighteenth century, words are humanmade signs with conventional meanings; they have a purely abstract relationship to the things they signify, serving only to communicate our *ideas* of those things; they cannot provoke physical effects simply by being uttered (Clark 1997, 286–287). This separation between language and reality has a long history, from Plato and Aristotle to the empirical scientists of the

seventeenth century, including Francis Bacon, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Daniel Sennert, and many others (Vickers 1986). But before the eighteenth century, cultural accounts of language coexisted with another theory that words and other signs had a natural relationship to the things they denoted. Early modern occult philosophers considered that the essential nature of things was embodied in their names, which could be used to perform marvels, and they consistently blurred the distinction between figurative and literal uses of language, taking analogy for identity, a real connection between a figure and the thing referred to (Vickers 1986, 105–108, 122–130). This natural theory of language rested primarily on the concept of “Adamic,” the divinely inspired language of Adam, who named all the animals according to their nature and thus encapsulated their essence in words, God-given words that were inherently powerful and would work wonders—if they could be identified after Babel (Clark 1997, 285–286; Vickers 1986, 107–108).

SACRED WORDS

The widespread idea of the creative power of divine words is often allied to traditions that the language system was divinely instituted and transmitted to human beings to accomplish transitive effects (Tambiah 1985, 27–28). God's creative word, affirmed in the Hebrew Bible, was confirmed in the New Testament with Jesus as God's Word incarnate in the opening verses of St. John's Gospel: “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.” St. John's words were commonly inscribed on talismans worn against a variety of evils, including witchcraft (Jolly 2002, 49). Holy names, phrases from the Church's liturgy, and Christian prayers were employed in both verbal and written formulas for protection and healing, especially for invisible threats and afflictions attributable to demons or spirits (Jolly 2002, 35–56). An Anglo-Saxon charm against “Elf-Sickness” included the words “aius, aius, aius. Dominus deus Sabaoth. Amen. Alleluiah,” to be sung over the patient (Storms 1948, 222). Diseases, often personified as intrusive entities, were adjured and banished from the body in God's name, and healing charms often referred to biblical or apocryphal stories of Jesus or the saints performing analogous cures (Kieckhefer 1989, 71–75). Catholic objections to such uses of sacred words centered on the observances and ceremonies that usually accompanied them, such as a concern with the precise recitation of formulas or the shape of inscribed objects (Kieckhefer 1989, 70), which the Church regarded as superstitious. The words' virtue lay in their meaning, not in the actual letters. St. Thomas Aquinas accepted that passages of Scripture could be worn on talismans, so long as the words were not expected to work effects

by themselves (*Summa theologiae*, 2.2.96.4, cited by Thomas 1971, 30). Around 1600, the Jesuit Martín Del Rio (2000, 59) echoed this opinion: “Provided one places no reliance on the written words as such, . . . it is pious and holy to wear round one’s neck, out of simple reverence, the relics of saints, the wax images of the Agnus Dei, the Gospel of Saint John, [etc.]”

However, the late medieval Church unintentionally did much to foster such expectations through many of its rituals, especially its teaching that sacramental formulas worked automatically: By virtue of the priest’s ordination, the words of consecration *Hoc est corpus meum* (“This is my body”) transformed bread into the body of Jesus (Jolly 2002, 43; Walker 1958, 151). The Reformed churches later rejected this doctrine as no less superstitious than charms (Thomas 1971, 51–52).

INVERSION, STRANGE SIGNS, AND SIGNALS TO DEMONS

Inversion is common in magical formulas everywhere. Reversibility is the key feature of the ancient device SATOR AREPO TENET OPERA ROTAS, usually inscribed as a magic square, which had many different uses (Ryan 1999, 302–304). Standard prayers such as the Paternoster were also recited in reverse for malevolent purposes, while many curses were similar in form to charms and blessings but with inverse, harmful intent (Kieckhefer 1989, 19, 82). Curses often sought divine retribution for a wrong suffered; they were partially justified by the medieval Church’s practice of anathema, and a belief (considered blasphemous by many Protestants) long persisted that God heeded the curses of the poor and innocent (Thomas 1971, 502–512). Necromancers’ spells to conjure demons also borrowed heavily from Christian ritual and vocabulary, invoking divine protection and power while summoning dangerous spirits to perform tasks (Kieckhefer 1989, 167–168). Theologians condemned not only such explicit invocations but also, especially from the late thirteenth century onward, the use of verbal formulas containing unintelligible words or strange characters, for these could also, even unintentionally, send signals to demons.

According to Aquinas, words had no power to produce the effects of magic; they were only signs communicating thought: “As to the letters that form an inscription on an image, and other characters, nothing else can be said of them, but that they are signs: wherefore they are directed to an intelligence only” (*Summa contra gentiles* 3.2.106, in Kors and Peters 2001, 94–95). Such effects as unlocking locked doors or revealing hidden knowledge, which Aquinas believed were real and unnatural, could only be produced by an agent able to understand the signs. Magicians were unable to do these things; neither could the stars, nor the materials on which inscriptions were written.

Because the effects were often evil, they could not come from God or angels. Therefore, they must have been caused by demons in response to the signals. Magical words were thus evidence of a tacit pact with demons, the logically necessary intermediary between the real effects of magic and the powerless magician’s words.

RENAISSANCE MAGIC AND DEMONOLOGY

The Renaissance revival of ancient Hermeticism and Neoplatonism, which promoted the concept that signs and characters captured the essential nature of things and had transitive power, renewed intellectual support for a natural theory of language. These and the idea of Adamic prompted occult philosophers to seek God’s own, powerful words in Hebrew (Kieckhefer 1989, 148–149). Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494) sought them in the Kabbalah, a Jewish mystical tradition that held that God created the universe using the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet (Walker 1958, 68–69). The Florentine Platonist Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499) saw correspondences and sympathies everywhere. A cosmic spirit vivified the universe and connected the stars with the earth, the macrocosm with the harmoniously proportioned human microcosm who, like a string vibrating in sympathy, was affected by celestial influences. Appropriate songs could channel these influences toward the singer or hearer, bestowing the virtues of particular celestial bodies: Those affected by Jupiter, for example, became more jovial (Walker 1958, 12–16). Ficino claimed that his incantations worked through the imagination, making people receptive to natural astral emanations and provoking subjective effects but not directly affecting the body or things elsewhere. His critics, however, saw them as dangerous because demons might overhear them (Walker 1958, 44).

Early modern writers supporting the prosecution of magicians and witches generally agreed that words had no power except as signs; the effects were often real but caused by demons responding to witches’ signals, according to their pact (Clark 1997, 290). As Henri Boguet (1929, 79) wrote: “[Words] are no more than a symbol of the pact between the witch and Satan; for it is certain that words have no other purpose than to denote the thing for which they were ordained and to express the passions of the soul and the affections of the spirit.” Besides, if words had the power to harm, they would do so whenever anyone inadvertently uttered them.

MALEFICIUM AND LOSS OF THE POWER OF WORDS

Curses and threats were important in forming witches’ reputations, providing circumstantial indications of their guilt, while written spells and objects with strange inscriptions provided weighty material

evidence at law. Witches' intentions and desires, however, were more important than their words: Their gaze ("overlooking") or malevolent thoughts ("ill-wishing"), whether overtly expressed or not, provoked the same effects as curses and "forespeaking" (Thomas 1971, 187). Nor was it only harsh words that were harmful. On the contrary, praise could bewitch. Boguet (1929, 78–79), evidently puzzled, asked: "How are we to account for the fact that even when they praise you and compliment you, they injure you?" While there is no knowing how much sarcasm and irony was expressed by (or projected into) bewitching kind words, praise itself was dangerous unless delivered with a blessing because it expressed the speaker's envy or made something stand out, exposed to the envious yearnings of those who would "take" its productive potential, as the evil eye did.

Witches also took their victims' power of words. Loss of voice is a symptom of the nightmare (attributed to a witch riding on the sleeper's chest) and a common motif in witch narratives. In 1672 and 1673, the Northumbrian witch finder Anne Armstrong claimed that after the witches abducted her to their meeting and forced her to sing, she could not talk about her experience until her vocal power was restored on St. John the Evangelist's day by a piece of cheese, enabling her to name the witches (Oates 2003, 213–214). In a modern French region, the deadly silence of witchcraft resonates in belligerent verbal acts of witchcraft where "words wage war" (Favret-Saada 1980, 10). No one talked of witchcraft unless implicated in the conflict, and suspects could not talk about it at all. Bewitched people verbalized their misfortunes to an "unwitcher" who identified the witch, usually a neighbor presumed to have uttered spells learned from bad books or bewitching words during a crisis, in order to increase his or her power at the victim's expense. Unwitchers engaged in retaliatory magical combat to return the spell to the witch, while the bewitched were required to cease communication with the suspect; failing that, they must talk without saying anything and always have the last word. If witches strengthened their hold over their victims by controlling conversation, silence weakened it, allowing victims to regain some control while the unwitchers counterattacked the witches, depriving them in turn of the power of words.

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See also: AMULET AND TALISMAN; AQUINAS, THOMAS; BOGUET, HENRI; CHARMS; CURSES; DEL RIO, MARTÍN; EVIL EYE; FOLKLORE; HERMETICISM; INVOCATIONS; KABBALAH; NECROMANCY; NIGHTMARES; PACT WITH THE DEVIL; RITUAL MAGIC; SPELLS; SUPERSTITION; SYMPATHY; TODI, WITCH OF.

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WÜRTTEMBERG, DUCHY OF

Between 1497 and 1700, over 350 investigations and trials for witchcraft were conducted in the duchy of Württemberg. Over 600 people were investigated, charged, and imprisoned. At least 197 executions are known from trial records, so roughly one-third of those accused were sentenced to death. In comparison with other jurisdictions in southwest Germany (the present-day state [*Land*] of Baden-Württemberg), where over 3,200 people were put to death for witchcraft between 1561 and 1670, the duchy of Württemberg conducted

a relatively moderate witch persecution. Its record reflected, on the one hand, a smoothly functioning judicial apparatus, which kept firm control of witchcraft trials, and, on the other hand, the attitude of Württemberg's religious leaders, who opposed popular wishes for persecution through sermons and theological tracts.

Although the largest realm in territorially fragmented southwestern Germany, at around 9,500 square kilometers, the duchy of Württemberg ranked among the smaller middle-sized states in the Holy Roman Empire. The first Protestant territory in the region following the Reformation of 1534 under Duke Ulrich, it was forged by Duke Christoph (1550–1568) into a cohesive Lutheran confessional state. Around 1600, approximately 450,000 people lived in its fifty-eight administrative districts. Each district included a town that served as the district seat as well as a number of villages. The capital, Stuttgart, had around 9,000 inhabitants, while the university town of Tübingen had 4,000.

Most accused witches were women (85 percent); the men were often herders who practiced incantations and herbal remedies. The women accused of witchcraft were most commonly old and from the peasant underclass; they were poor, propertyless, and often widows deprived of familial support. "Honorable" and propertied women from the urban upper class were less frequently suspected of witchcraft and better able to exploit the judicial possibilities of defense and appeal to get through unharmed, to buy better accommodations in jail, or even to escape with the help of town officials. Eight of the women executed as witches were midwives (7 percent, an unusually high percentage). Children, who became increasingly involved in witchcraft trials in the second half of the seventeenth century, were never sentenced to death in Württemberg; their punishment combined a spanking with religious instruction by a minister or schoolmaster.

Württemberg's first recorded witch burning occurred in 1497, when "Fiends" (the usual term for witches in contemporary records) were burned to death in the town of Brackenheim. In 1505, after a woman was burned at the stake in Tübingen, the theologian Martin Plantsch preached a number of sermons opposing credulous and superstitious witch beliefs. A relatively mild phase ensued until 1560, during which thirty trials for magic and witchcraft ended with banishments or acquittals. In 1529, the widow of a Stuttgart citizen accused of witchcraft even lodged a complaint with the *Reichskammergericht* (imperial chamber court) against the prefect of Stuttgart for excessive torture.

After 1560, concern about witchcraft increased. In August 1562, a bad hailstorm, an early symptom of the Little Ice Age, devastated large areas of Württemberg, totally destroying the harvest in some districts and sparking a substantial wave of persecutions that swept

across the land and quickly spread to neighboring regions. In 1562 and 1563, eleven women accused of witchcraft were executed. In the neighboring Protestant county of Helfenstein, over sixty people were burned at the stake. In Stuttgart, the preachers Matthäus Alber and Wilhelm Bidembach spoke against the witch superstition and opposed the fury of people who had quickly identified the witches responsible for their misfortune and demanded their rigorous prosecution. Following the position of Württemberg's great reformer Johann Brenz (1499–1570), the preachers urged the judicial officials to be cautious and disregard popular clamor.

After 1590, a new wave of persecutions started, lasting until 1630 and reaching a peak in the period between 1626 and 1630. Despite the large volume of activity, though, single trials rather than mass panics predominated. A "witch newspaper" printed in Tübingen in 1616 reported that the regent of Württemberg insisted his officials follow legally correct procedures against witches. The most famous witchcraft trial in Württemberg took place in 1620 and 1621, when Katharina Kepler (1547–1622), mother of the imperial astronomer Johann Kepler (1571–1630), was accused as a witch and tortured but eventually acquitted.

After the Battle of Nördlingen in 1634, when the Thirty Years' War swept over the duchy and devastated it, almost no witchcraft trials took place. Witchcraft accusations revived in the 1650s. Now children were often involved, either accusing others or denouncing themselves. In the last great witchcraft trial, which occurred in Calw between 1683 and 1684 and resulted in two death sentences, over forty children were involved. However, this trial marked the beginning of the end. The ducal government sent a commission to stop the "lamentable witch business, which," it said, was rooted "mainly in fantastic illusions." Witch accusations continued until the end of the eighteenth century, but they only led to criminal prosecutions in exceptional circumstances and increasingly were handled as slander.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

The Carolina Code (*Constitutio criminalis Carolina*), issued in 1532 by Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, contained penalties for magic that included, in article 109, death by fire for harmful magic. In Württemberg, the wave of trials in 1562 gave the impetus for a legal definition of the crime in the Sixth Provincial Ordinance of 1567. Württemberg was the first territory that put a pact with the Devil on par with harmful magic as an essential feature of magic and, diverging from imperial law, made it punishable by death. The law remained on the books without modification throughout the seventeenth century.

In Württemberg, witchcraft was considered an offense against the state and, like every other criminal offense, was handled exclusively by secular courts. The prefect, the ducal representative in each district, led the investigation and brought charges before the district seat's municipal court in what amounted to an inquisitorial trial. The prosecution tried to determine the material facts and establish the objective truth. Because incontrovertible evidence could be found only in exceptional circumstances, the proceedings had to rely on circumstantial evidence, and torture was included as a means of determining guilt. In general, neither the prefect nor the judges of the municipal court, who came from the urban elite, had formal legal training. In order to compensate for their limited legal knowledge, prevent crass miscarriages of justice, and hold the courts to uniform procedures, prefects could not conduct criminal trials on their own authority but had to report to the ducal chancellery. Thus, the decision to start a witchcraft trial lay with the central administration, and the ducal High Council directed such criminal trials according to legally correct procedures. Municipal courts were often required to send trial documents to the jurists at the University of Tübingen for expert legal counsel. These consultations and the reports to the High Council put a heavy responsibility on the central administrators, who made the actual decisions in witchcraft trials. The High Council also had to approve a death sentence, which, following contemporary criminal law, meant burning alive. However, repentant witches were beheaded as an act of mercy, and their corpses were burned afterward. Confiscation of property from convicted offenders was not allowed in Württemberg, so direct financial interests of the prosecuting elite played no role in witchcraft trials.

Witchcraft accusations almost always originated from ordinary subjects, and *maleficium* (harmful magic) invariably stood at their center. Poisonings, diseases, and the death of people and animals were supposedly caused by harmful magic, often after a conflict between perpetrator and victim that the ducal government was expected to resolve through a witchcraft trial. In the majority of cases, charges were usually not brought on the basis of a confession by the accused but rather on the basis of circumstantial evidence: rumors, suspicions, and accusations. Legally defined (Carolina, art. 44) and reliable evidence was needed to justify an indictment, incarceration, or torture. Württemberg's High Council based a decision to begin a witchcraft trial on concrete and demonstrable injury, the *corpus delicti*, as well as the moral and religious reputation of the suspect, supplied by the local clergy. Testimony of witches who had confessed only to a pact and intercourse with the Devil did not suffice as grounds for bringing charges.

Torture could not be undertaken without the approval of the High Council. Torture was the decisive

instrument in witchcraft trials, for whether and how it was administered generally determined the outcome. Württemberg's law provided for torture by hoisting (strappado) for at most a quarter hour, but the honor of the executioner and of the court personnel generally induced them to compel the suspect to confess by any means at their disposal, often in violation of the law. The needle probe to determine imperviousness to pain played a limited role in Württemberg witchcraft trials; tests such as "swimming" were unknown. Confessions extracted by torture contained the usual, well-known components: harmful magic, pact and intercourse with the Devil, and magical flight to a witches' Sabbat.

Without questioning the basic belief in witchcraft, the clerical and secular elites in Württemberg conducted witchcraft trials on a thoroughly scrupulous basis. The fact that only 30 percent of them ended with executions is attributable to the moderating influence of the government. Württemberg suffered no "witch-hunts from above"; instead, the early modern territorial state, with the consolidation of its central administration, maintained a certain amount of legal order that prevented virulent witch persecutions.

ANITA RAITH;

TRANSLATED BY EDWARD BEVER

See also: BRENZ, JOHANN; CAROLINA CODE (*CONSTITIO CRIMINALIS CAROLINA*); COURTS, SECULAR; FEMALE WITCHES; GERMANY, SOUTHWESTERN; HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE; KEPLER, JOHANNES; LAWS ON WITCHCRAFT (EARLY MODERN); LITTLE ICE AGE; MIDWIVES; PLANTSCH, MARTIN; SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF WITCHES; SWIMMING TEST; TORTURE; UNIVERSITIES.

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WÜRZBURG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF

During the first thirty years of the seventeenth century, the Catholic prince-bishopric of Würzburg, along with four other Catholic ecclesiastical principalities situated in Franconia in southeastern Germany (the upper part of the prince-bishopric of Mainz, the prince-bishoprics of Bamberg and Eichstätt, and the prince-abbey of Fulda), experienced some of the most severe witch hunts ever seen in the early modern world. These Franconian persecutions “were among the worst excesses of European history,” fulfilling “the sombre dream of unconditional persecution, of persecution without regard for political, social or humanitarian obstacles, but only for the logic of the persecutions themselves” (Behringer 1997, 24, 228). In Würzburg, 300 people were executed as witches in 1616 and 1617 during the rule of Prince-Bishop Julius Echter von Mespelbrunn (1544–1617; episcopate 1573–1617); 900 executions occurred between 1625 and 1630 under Prince-Bishop Philipp Adolf von Ehrenberg (1583–1631; episcopate 1623–1631). Survival of trial records from Würzburg is incomplete, and research on the witch hunts there has been patchy: No book-length study of these hunts exists.

Little evidence of witchcraft trials in Würzburg prior to 1590 remains. Scattered trials, some of which ended in executions, occurred under Echter between 1590 and 1603. The rate of persecution accelerated markedly between 1616 and 1617, however. It is impossible to ascertain the exact numbers of those executed because many trial records are missing, but it is clear from contemporary comment that this witch-hunting episode was severe. On June 11, 1617, for example, Würzburg cloth shearer Jacob Röder recorded in his diary that, according to an announcement made on the bishop’s orders from the cathedral pulpit, 300 witches had been executed in the prince-bishopric over the past year. Trials continued under Echter’s successor, Johann Gottfried von Aschhausen (1575–1622; episcopate 1618–1622). Although there is no evidence on the number of people executed, it appears that the severity of the persecution declined. Under Aschhausen’s successor, Ehrenberg, trials began in 1625, gained momentum between 1626 and 1628, peaked in 1629, and stopped in 1630.

Some historians have regarded the total of 900 executions between 1625 and 1630, first publicized in a contemporary pamphlet, as an exaggeration. However, recent work based on witch-trial material gathered by the *H-Sonderkommando*, the special research team organized during the Nazi regime by Heinrich Himmler, suggests that this total is reasonably accurate (Behringer

1997). Regardless of age and status, no one was safe from the witch persecutions under Ehrenberg. Lists of victims of the first twenty-nine of the forty-two mass burnings that occurred in the city of Würzburg between 1627 and 1629 detailed a total of 160 individuals executed, including a mayor’s wife, the wife of the former chancellor, a councillor, three councillors’ wives, and seventeen children whose ages were specified as fifteen and under. Forty-three canons and vicars were also executed between 1627 and 1629. These persecutions were so savage that Germans coined a new term for excessive witch hunting: *würzburgisch Werk* (Würzburg work). A mandate issued by the *Reichskammergericht* (the imperial chamber court), prohibiting Ehrenberg from further witch hunting, probably stopped the trials in 1630 (Oestmann 1997). The mandate was likely triggered by a complaint brought before the *Reichskammergericht* by jurist Johann Friedrich Burckhardt, who had escaped from the city’s special “witch prison” after being imprisoned on witchcraft charges in 1628. Ehrenberg may also have deemed it politic to end the persecution after he and his chancellor had also been denounced as witches.

Echter, Ehrenberg, and their advisers doubtless believed in the reality of witches who made pacts with the Devil, committed acts of *maleficium* (harmful magic), and attended witches’ Sabbats: These beliefs had been Catholic dogma since 1590. They also treated witchcraft as a *crimen exceptum* (the excepted crime), a crime so heinous that normal safeguards on the use of torture could be ignored in its prosecution. Consequently, once witch hunts started, they were certain to escalate, as suspects were forced into confessing their “guilt” and denouncing others as Sabbat attendees. Moreover, the persecution process was accelerated (particularly under Ehrenberg) by the fact that all trial records were submitted to the episcopal chancellery for examination and advice.

Both Echter and Ehrenberg were also zealous reformers, a factor that contributed significantly to the enthusiasm with which they eradicated alleged witches. The son of a councillor of Mainz, Echter was born in Mespelbrunn Castle in the Spessart region in 1544; he studied law and theology at the Universities of Mainz, Louvain, Douai, Paris, Angers, Pavia, and Rome. After his election at Würzburg in 1573, he began a vigorous program of Counter-Reformation in 1585, organizing visitations throughout his diocese, forcing many Protestants to convert to Catholicism or leave, founding new parishes, and disciplining lax priests. He also increased his power at the expense of rival institutions by issuing mandates regulating the social, economic, and religious life of Würzburg; pursuing legal and administrative reforms; and reducing the influence of the Würzburg cathedral chapter. The witchcraft trials of 1616 and 1617—some of which

he oversaw personally—can thus be seen as a product of his Counter-Reformation zeal to eradicate heresy and ungodliness while increasing his own power. Echter also founded a hospital for the sick, aged, and orphaned in Würzburg in 1576 and a university in 1582, both named after him. Echter's charitable acts and his persecution of witches were all motivated by a desire to do what he believed improved his subjects' physical and spiritual well-being, even if this meant burning some of them at the stake for the good of their eternal souls.

Philipp Adolf von Ehrenberg was Echter von Mespelbrunn's nephew. Born into the family of the Imperial Knights of Ehrenberg near Heinsheim am Neckar in 1583, Ehrenberg may never have become bishop of Würzburg had his Protestant father, Hans Heinrich, not died in 1584. Hans Heinrich had wanted his son to be raised a Lutheran, but after his early death, his widow's brother, Julius Echter, took over his young nephew's guardianship and (Catholic) education. After studying theology at the Universities of Rome, Salamanca, Valladolid, and Paris, Ehrenberg was elected bishop of Würzburg in 1623. He continued his uncle's Counter-Reformation efforts, reforming a further 200 villages according to the principles of post-Tridentine Catholicism. In overseeing the persecution of so many witches in his prince-bishopric between 1625 and 1630, Ehrenberg doubtless acted on impulses similar to those of his uncle in 1616 and 1617: first and foremost godly zeal but also a desire to affirm his own power as territorial ruler.

It seems, however, that there was greater popular pressure on Ehrenberg to hunt witches than there had been on Echter. The prince-bishopric's inhabitants had suffered from periodic plague epidemics and creeping inflation between 1606 and 1617; these misfortunes almost certainly helped create a climate of anxiety conducive to the persecution of witches under Echter in 1616 and 1617. But conditions deteriorated markedly during Ehrenberg's episcopate. As a result of harvest failures, coinage devaluation, and increasing troop movements through the area, the years between 1624 and 1629 constituted a high point of dearth, inflation, and plague in Würzburg. In 1626, unseasonal frosts destroyed harvests and prompted popular demands for action against those believed responsible for the bad weather: witches. Two women suspected as witches were stoned—one to death—in rural Würzburg. In this context, Ehrenberg probably regarded witch persecution as a way of quelling potential popular unrest and of appeasing the wrath of God, who was visiting such Job-like disasters on his territory. In his confiscation mandate of 1627, Ehrenberg pointed out that God wanted to scorch Würzburg as he had Sodom and Gomorrah with sulfur, fire, war, hunger, and pestilence because of the number of witches it contained (Dürr 1931). Ehrenberg seems also to have been even more zealous

and intolerant than his uncle; one historian described him as “an energetic person, who could not be shaken in his intentions, who knew exactly what he wanted to do and who pursued all of his goals with immense doggedness” (Dürr 1931, 65). There may even have been a financial motive in Ehrenberg's sustained witch persecution. In 1627, he issued an ordinance allowing him to confiscate the property of executed witches, a measure that generated around 79,000 Gulden by 1629, helping to offset the great indebtedness into which his prince-bishopric had fallen since 1623.

Würzburg experienced no mass witch hunts after 1630. There were no witchcraft trials during the Swedish occupation of Würzburg (from 1631 to 1634) during the Thirty Years' War and only a few trials during the latter part of the episcopate of Ehrenberg's successor, Franz von Hatzfeldt (1596–1642; episcopate 1632–1642). Hatzfeldt's successor, the enlightened Johann Philipp von Schönborn (1605–1673; episcopate 1642–1673), refused to bow to popular pressure for further hunts. In 1669, he issued an ordinance for Würzburg and his other territories of Mainz and Worms that rendered further witch persecution almost impossible by threatening those who spread “superstitious” belief in witchcraft with punishment. Schönborn's moderation stemmed from the influence of Friedrich Spee, the Jesuit critic of excessive witch hunting, and from close contacts with Paris, where the *Parlement* of Paris (sovereign judicial court, with jurisdiction over approximately one-half of France) in 1624 implemented automatic appeal in all witchcraft cases and in effect ended death sentences for witchcraft.

A late burst of anxiety about witchcraft resulted in the execution for witchcraft of Maria Renata Singer, subprioress of the convent of Unterzell bei Würzburg, in 1749. This was the last execution for witchcraft in Franconia and one of the last in Germany.

ALISON ROWLANDS

See also: AGRARIAN CRISES; BAMBERG, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; *CRIMEN EXCEPTUM*; ECCLESIASTICAL TERRITORIES (HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE); EICHSTÄTT, PRINCE-BISHOPRIC OF; FULDA, PRINCE-ABBAY OF; GERMANY; GERMANY, SOUTHEASTERN; MAINZ, ELECTORATE OF; NAZI INTEREST IN WITCH PERSECUTION; NUMBER OF WITCHES; *PARLEMENT* OF PARIS; *REICHSKAMMERGERICHT* (IMPERIAL CHAMBER COURT); SPEE, FRIEDRICH; TORTURE; WEATHER MAGIC; WITCH HUNTS.

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Y

YATES, FRANCES AMELIA (1899–1981)

One of the greatest Renaissance scholars of her time, Frances Yates wrote numerous valuable studies on the history and culture of the Renaissance that shed light on many obscure aspects of the period, especially in the field of Hermeticism, magic, and other occult beliefs. Yates was certainly aware of witchcraft's negative associations with research interests. For example, her last work, *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age* (1979), employed the example of Jean Bodin's attack in his *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (On the Demon-Mania of Witches, 1580) on Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim and Johann Weyer for using Kabbalah in defense of witches to show how witch hunts could be useful in the destruction of one's cultural enemies.

Born in Southsea, England, Yates graduated from University College, London, in 1924. She continued her research privately while doing some teaching at the North London Collegiate School from 1926 to 1939. Her intellectual biography is best traced in her *Autobiographical Fragments*, in which she sought to examine herself and her research through intense and colorful self-scrutiny. Her academic isolation was always expressed with feelings of pride and sometimes regret.

Yates published her first book, *John Florio*, in 1934; like her subsequent works, it was widely reviewed. She received a prize from the British Academy and in 1941 joined the staff of the Warburg Institute. Although Warburg's method of reading images and symbols as historical events shaped her interdisciplinary approach to research, she preferred to be considered independent of any institutional tradition: Indeed, Sir Ernst Gombrich defined her attitude as lying outside the academic mill, although she was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1967 and awarded an Order of the British Empire in 1972. Association with the Warburg Institute encouraged her to go beyond conventional academic boundaries; as Sidney Anglo remarked, "No boundaries . . . were allowed to limit [her] research" (cited in Gombrich 1982, 26). The main outcome of this breakdown of traditional subject barriers was her decision to study Giordano Bruno, whose *Supper of the Ashes* she started to translate. This interest led to the

publication in 1964 of her single most famous book, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, subsequently translated into several languages.

Yates wrote another acknowledged classic, *The Art of Memory* (1966), in which she tackled an original subject. Together with *The Theatre of the World* (1969) and her book on Bruno, her trilogy on the Shakespearean world in Elizabethan England was complete. She tried to investigate how a new cultural tradition took root in England. Although her books were sometimes harshly criticized, the significance of her work was recognized by everyone in her field and gave rise to new areas of research. Yates also turned to the French Wars of Religion in order to underline the importance of ceremonial rites in such works as *The French Academies of the Sixteenth Century* (1947) and *The Valois Tapestries* (1959). In *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (1971), Yates explored the same theme, the adaptation of the Renaissance Hermetic heritage, this time amid the turmoil of central Europe during the Thirty Years' War. A collection of essays, *Astraea: The Imperial Theme of the Sixteenth Century* (1975), developed her iconographic approach to the idea of power and kingship. In her last work, *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age* (1979), she investigated what Eugenio Garin has called the "dark face" of Renaissance culture and combined two important themes of her works, which she herself outlined at its end: the story of the Hermetic and Kabbalistic movements and the iconographic approach.

Yates, along with Garin in Italy, ultimately managed to create a new field of specialization. Hermeticism and magic, finally freed from the rationalist paradigm, were considered important and noncontradictory features of Renaissance culture. The great enthusiasm for and fierce criticism of her books revealed her enormous impact on academic culture. Yates's interest in Renaissance magic was often misunderstood. Even though she declared that her work on Bruno did not deal with the history of science, some scholars reduced her claim to consider Renaissance magic as an early phase of science. An Italian scholar, Patrizia Delpiano (1993) has shed fresh light on Yates's cultural plan to detect some mysterious features of the Renaissance and reassessed how successful her attempt was. According to

Delpiano, Yates's adherence to the history of ideas appears in contrast with the historiographic revolution of the French *Annales* school; her works reflect the fall of illusions typical of her era and demonstrate that any historical reconstruction is relative, a personal result of reading R. G. Collingwood's idea of history.

MICHAELA VALENTE

See also: AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM, HEINRICH CORNELIUS; BODIN, JEAN; HERMETICISM; KABBALAH; MAGIC, LEARNED; OCCULT; SCIENCE AND MAGIC; WEYER, JOHANN.

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Z

ZIARNKO, JAN (CA. 1575–CA. 1628)

Jan Ziarnko (“Jean Le Grain” in French) was a Polish engraver and painter who spent most of his career in Paris; his importance for European witchcraft is a large etching of 1613 providing a very detailed visual account of the Sabbat. After completing his apprenticeship in Cracow, he spent a short time as a painter in his native Lwow, traveled to Italy, and reached France perhaps as early as 1601. All his surviving works are engravings, many reflecting his close association with the courts of Henry IV and Louis XIII.

Ziarnko created his etching to illustrate the description of the Sabbat by the French magistrate Pierre de Lancre in his *Tableau de l'inconstance des mauvais anges et demons* (Description of the Inconstancy of Evil Angels and Demons). Originally published in two Paris editions in 1612, the book was based on Lancre's four-month experience in 1609 with a royally appointed commission investigating the activities of witches in the Pays de Labourd, the Basque region of southwestern France, enriched by materials from witch hunts on the Spanish side of the border. One of Lancre's colleagues attended, in disguise, the famous 1610 *auto de fe* (act of faith) at Logroño (Henningsen 1980, 174–175). Ziarnko's etching, accompanied by a detailed key, appeared in a slightly revised 1613 edition by Nicolas Buon, at the head of book 2, chapter 4, which describes the Sabbat; it has been reproduced with an English translation of its key (Robbins 1959, 300–301).

At top right, Ziarnko's Devil sits on a golden throne in the form of a “stinking and bearded” goat with five horns, the central one a light from which all the black pitch candles and false fires of the Sabbat will be lit. On his right sits the crowned Queen of the Sabbat, his special consort, with the next in charge on his left, each holding a fistful of snakes. A young witch and devil kneel before them, presenting a child as part of their admission ceremony into this infernal society.

Lancre's text describes the scene as a counterliturgy, adding many features from Labourd's wild and raucous fairs, through which pass crowds of disorderly and disheveled people, plying their wares and depravities. At bottom right, a group of witches with their demon

paramours enjoy flesh from those who have been hanged, the hearts of unbaptized children, and the meat of unclean animals. Reinvigorated, the key claims, they continue their disgusting rites with lascivious dancing around a cursed tree. At middle left, another group of younger and naked women indulge in back-to-back dancing to the sounds of a musical consort, which de Lancre compares to the lewd and obscene movements of various current dances. Below them are members of the wealthy and powerful nobility who also participate, masked to ensure their anonymity.

Cutting through the whole scene is a vast swirl of smoke, in which can be seen witches on sticks, brooms, and dragons; bones and body parts; winged devils; and obscure shapes. A wild, disheveled, and naked witch rides a goat with two infants, while below her, a phantom passes through an imaginary fire. Smoke belches from a huge cauldron in which witches boil up their poisonous ointments and liquids; two of them prepare its main ingredients—snakes and skinned, decapitated toads—while a third fans a fire in which bones and a skull are visible. At bottom left is a scene peculiar to Basque witchcraft. A group of children use rods and switches to prevent toads escaping from a small stream. As alluded to by the toads that adorn the thrones of the Devil's two consorts, these animals played a key role in Basque witchcraft: They not only provided a critical ingredient for witches' poisons but also doubled as witches' familiars.

Ziarnko's iconography drew especially on Jacques de Gheyn the Younger and was later ridiculed in Jean Crépy's illustration to Laurent Bordelon's 1711 parody of witchcraft. The only other of Ziarnko's works with demonological themes were his engravings of St. James and Hermogenes.

CHARLES ZIKA

See also: ART AND VISUAL IMAGES; BASQUE COUNTRY; BORDELON, LAURENT; CANNIBALISM; CAULDRON; GHEYN II, JACQUES DE; GOAT; HERMOGENES; LANCRE, PIERRE DE; OINTMENTS; SABBAT; SALAZAR FRÍAS, ALONSO DE; TOADS.

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ZUGURRAMURDI, WITCHES OF

The trial of the witches of Zugarramurdi is, beyond all comparison, the most famous in Spanish history and was already a "media event" at the time. Its verdicts were pronounced at an *auto de fe* (act of faith) at Logroño on November 7–8, 1610, in the presence of 30,000 people from all over northern Spain. Soon afterwards, one could read about the sensational revelations in the Logroño printer Juan de Mongastón's pamphlet, which was translated into French and incorporated in Pierre de Lancre's *Tableau de l'inconstance des mauvais anges et démons* (Description of the Inconstancy of Evil Angels and Demons, 1612, chap. 5.3). Mongastón's account was later reprinted by Francisco de Goya's friend Leandro de Moratín (in 1811 and 1824). Not until the twentieth century did the whole truth about the trial come out.

Zugarramurdi and Urdax are two Basque villages on the northern side of the Pyrenees, close to the French border. In those days, Zugarramurdi was a daughter-parish of Urdax, and its church was served by a Premonstratensian monk from the convent at Urdax. The combined population of the two villages hardly exceeded 600. The abbot at Urdax had jurisdiction over the spiritual and secular affairs of both villages; the inhabitants of Zugarramurdi were peasants and shepherds, while those of Urdax were farm laborers working on the abbey's lands.

Twenty-six of the thirty-one witches on trial in 1610 (ten men and sixteen women, from twenty to eighty years of age) came from these two villages. Together, they must have comprised a substantial part of the adult population. At the *auto de fe*, they were presented as the inner circle of the witch group that the Inquisition had exposed in these remote mountain communities. An eighty-year-old shepherd's wife, Graciana de Barrenechea, was "Queen of the Sabbat"; the second most senior witch was an octogenarian

farmer's widow, Estevanía de Navarcorena; and the third-ranking witch was a fifty-two-year-old carpenter's wife, María Chipia de Barrenechea. She was also the aunt of the young María de Jureteguía, the inquisition's star witness, who during the trial incriminated both herself and her relatives. Graciana's "co-father-in-law" (*consuegro*), the shepherd Miguel de Goiburu, was "King of the Sabbat," and he and another old man also held the office of "the Devil's robe-bearer." Miguel's son, Juanes de Goiburu, who was married to one of Graciana's daughters, Estevanía, was "bass drummer at the Sabbat," while his cousin, Juanes de Sansín, who was a basket weaver and unmarried, was the "side drummer." As drummer, Miguel had to join the procession whenever his mother-in-law led his wife, Estevanía, to the Devil and be present with the band and play while the Devil enjoyed her. The inner circle also included two priests who assisted the Devil at the Black Mass. These men were a thirty-four-year-old curate in Fuenterrabía, Juan de la Borda, the son of a rich farmer in Zugarramurdi, and his slightly older cousin, Fray Pedro de Arburu, a monk in the Urdax monastery and the son of the monastery's hospital superintendent.

The description of the rituals of these witches surpassed most other Sabbat accounts in its inventiveness and wealth of detail. It is therefore surprising that ordinary people in Zugarramurdi did not appear to have heard of the witches' Sabbat before the panic broke out. There had been occasional instances of bewitchment, and it appears from their confessions that the accused were considered responsible for several deaths among infants, illnesses among adults, losses of cattle, and destruction of crops. However, there had been no open accusations; people preferred to keep their suspicions to themselves or blame their misfortunes on "the witches" generally. The result was an atmosphere rife with old and unresolved suspicions. To spark an explosion in such a community, it was only necessary for someone to succeed in convincing people that he or she had proof. This happened at Zugarramurdi.

At the beginning of December 1608, a young village girl returned after living for some years in Ciboure, a nearby coastal town on the French side of the border. María de Ximildegui, who was now twenty, told interesting things about her stay in France. For eighteen months, she had belonged to a witch group, but an experience during Lent in 1608 had reconverted her to Christianity. After a profound crisis and seven weeks of illness, she visited a learned priest in Hendaye, who heard her confession and gave her powerful remedies with which to resist the Devil until he could obtain permission from the bishop to absolve her. At the end of July, the priest finally gave her Communion. María (who in many respects resembles the so-called survivors in twentieth-century trials for satanic child abuse) was

able to talk not only about her own case but also about the new witch panic that had broken out in France and about vigils held in the church at Ciboure to prevent witches from taking children off to the Sabbat. However, the most interesting thing was that during her time as a witch, María had also attended a Sabbat at Zugarramurdi and accordingly knew who its witches were. When she proceeded to mention individuals by name, protests were soon heard. The first to speak out was the peasant Esteve de Navarcorena, who, along with his relatives, called her to account for her accusations against his wife, the twenty-two-year-old María de Jureteguía. The French girl replied that if she could speak to Esteve's wife, she would certainly get her to confess. When the two women confronted each other, a lengthy exchange took place. María de Ximildegui described everything she had seen at the Zugarramurdi Sabbat, while the other woman denied each accusation as soon as it was uttered and swore that they were all lies. But the French girl recounted the details so vividly that her listeners gradually felt convinced and began to put pressure on María de Jureteguía to confess. When the young wife realized she had no means of escape, she fainted; shortly afterward, when she had recovered, she confessed and admitted that everything the French girl had stated was true. She confessed to having been a witch since she was a child, and she named María Chipía de Barrenechea, her maternal aunt, as her instructor in the evil art. María de Jureteguía was now brought before the parish priest Fray Felipe de Zabaleta, where she repeated her confession. Fray Felipe urged her to make a public confession in the Zugarramurdi church and beg forgiveness from the congregation for all the damage she had caused. During the next few days, various other people denounced by the French girl followed María de Jureteguía's example and made public confessions.

Meanwhile, María began to feel that the witches were pursuing her. Shortly before Christmas, the Devil and his witches invaded her house and tried to abduct her, but they were prevented from doing so by the neighbors who were holding a vigil with her family. Day by day, the witch panic spread. Shortly before New Year's, a dozen people broke into the houses of those neighbors who were under suspicion in order to look for their "toads" (that is, their familiars). They went to Miguel de Goiburu, to Graciana de Barrenechea, and to Estevanía de Yriarte. The next day, Estevanía's husband, the shepherd Juanes de Goiburu, went to the priest at the monastery to complain about what had happened. Fray Felipe told him to fetch his wife. When he returned with her, the priest declared that she had already been exposed as a witch. When Estevanía denied the charge, Fray Felipe laid his stole and a certain relic on her head, exhorting her to tell the truth. Eventually, after being threatened by the priest and by

others present, Estevanía confessed and admitted that she was a witch.

Some other people under suspicion were dragged to the priest by force; when threatened with torture, they too confessed. By January 1609, a considerable number of people had made confessions in this way, and afterward publicly asked pardon in the church of Zugarramurdi. We do not know the names of everyone who proclaimed themselves witches and asked for pardon, but except for the two priests, all the persons mentioned here were definitely included. It is also clear that the accused came from particular intermarried "witch families." However, the dividing line between witches and nonwitches cut through marriage and sibling ties. It is understandable that the inhabitants of Zugarramurdi, faced with this fact, chose to reconcile with their witches. If the Inquisition had not been alerted, the story of the Zugarramurdi witches would have ended in this admirable manner.

But unfortunately, the Inquisition *was* informed. Ten of those who had made public confessions were the first to be arrested. Once the inquisitors had used a kind of brainwashing to pry confessions out of them, they identified sixteen more witches in Urdax and Zugarramurdi and had them arrested along with five from other towns in the border region. When the new prisoners were placed together with the old ones, the following episode occurred. One night, the warden kept watch secretly over two women in his prison, María de Jureteguía and her aunt, María Chipía Barrenechea. He heard María Chipía tell her niece that she could not confess to what the inquisitors were asking her in the audience chamber because, in fact, she was not a witch nor did she know that anyone else was; further, she said, everything they had confessed previously was untrue. Her niece replied that she would never be able to leave prison until she had made a confession even if false, and this was what she, María de Jureteguía, had already done (Henningsen 2004, doc. 14.15).

By the time the *auto de fe* was held, thirteen of the original thirty-one prisoners had died in prison of typhoid fever. Of the survivors, ten who had confessed were pardoned, including María de Jureteguía and her aunt, María Chipía. The rest were sentenced to the stake as *negativos*, or "stubborn deniers." Both clerical "witches" were, however, pardoned at the last moment, after they had been interrogated under torture without confessing. But six other *negativos*, including both of their mothers, were sent to the stake without this chance to clear themselves. Four years later, the supreme council of the Inquisition admitted that the trials had been a terrible mistake and exonerated the victims posthumously.

GUSTAV HENNINGSSEN;

TRANSLATED BY JAMES MANLEY

See also: ACCUSATIONS; BASQUE COUNTRY; BLACK MASS;
CONFESSIONS; FAMILIARS; FAMILY; INQUISITION, SPANISH;
PANICS; SABBAT; SALAZAR FRÍAS, ALONSE DE; SPAIN; TOADS;
VALENCIA, PEDRO DE.

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