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Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft

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ἵνα φιλοσοφία μὲν καὶ μαγεία ψυχὴν τρέφῃ[1]

From the Editors

The word "magic" covers a great deal of ground, encompassing or closely connecting with a number of theories, beliefs, practices, and technologies that include witchcraft, astrology, divination, demonology, alchemy, ritual, theurgy, Cabala, theosophy, spiritualism, numerology, and other related topics. For more than two millennia, many of these have also been objects of study for scholars working in the Western academic tradition. Pliny the Elder (23–79 CE) opened the thirtieth book of his massive encyclopedia with a history of magic. Proclus (410–85), the last of the great Neoplatonists, joined his predecessors in seeking philosophical foundations for magic, astrology, and theurgy. Isidore of Seville (600–36), Pliny's Christian successor, included a section "On Magicians" in his encyclopedia, which was constantly imitated in the later medieval centuries. In our own day, Lynn Thorndike described this early material in a Columbia dissertation that paved the way for his monumental *History of Magic and Experimental Science* (1923–58), which recapitulates the first thirteen centuries of a story that ends in the seventeenth century. The sheer density of information in Thorndike's later volumes reflects profuse publication on his subject once printing was invented in the fifteenth century, and the flood has never slowed.

Meanwhile, Henry Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim had produced his *Occult Philosophy* (1533), the first summary of the subject after two books, both printed in the late 1480s, had transformed it. We know little about Heinrich Kramer and Jakob Sprenger, the authors of the *Hammer of Witches*, but their book became notorious. Written in Latin for priests and lawyers, it is a technical manual for interrogating witches and putting them on trial. The *Hammer* was reproduced in thirty editions, propagating the very thing that it was meant to stop. Partly because of this book, European witchcraft persecutions peaked not in the Middle Ages but in the early moments of the Scientific Revolution: Matthew Hopkins published his *Discovery of Witches* ten years after René Descartes had proposed a new way to do science in his *Discourse* of 1637.

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1. Stobaeus, Fragment 23.68, in A.D. Nock and A.J. Festugière, *Corpus Hermeticum* (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1972), IV, 22.

How were these horrors sustained? In part by social, economic, and institutional forces reflected in trial records and the witchcraft literature, and in part by a theoretical consensus among educated people: that belief in magic and related notions was intellectually justified. This consensus, which was certainly not unanimous, lies behind the enormous success of Marsilio Ficino's *Three Books on Life*. Just after the *Hammer of Witches*, Ficino's book was first printed in 1489 and went through thirty early modern editions, the last of them in the year of Hopkins's *Discovery*. Ficino's aims were benign, however. To heal the sick, he used magic and astrology in his medical practice, a controversial choice that he justified by proposing a philosophical theory for the beliefs that motivated his risky therapies. Agrippa's *Occult Philosophy* opens with a summary of Ficino's elegant theorizing, but then it becomes a more accessible and a more comprehensive work. Agrippa was more interested than Ficino in popular practices, more alert to witchcraft persecutions and, above all, more ambitious—prepared to cover his conception of the entire field that nineteenth-century thinkers would eventually call "occultism."

As an adjective describing everything that this journal hopes to study—and more—the earlier word "occult" entered the English language almost four centuries ago, quickly assisted by its advertisement in the first English translation of Agrippa's compendium in 1651. For hundreds of years, then, the Anglophone world has had a rubric for what this journal aims to study, a term that the editors might have used for the journal's title. But to have done so, in our view, would only aggravate the pejorative character of the term "occult" by making it more prominent. Better, we believe, for the phrase *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft* to signify the whole content of this journal's intentions, as informed by this editorial statement.

As an object of academic inquiry, in any case, our subject is a very old one, long studied by authorities in the arts and sciences and also in law, medicine, and theology—all the traditional faculties of the Western university. Now, in the contemporary world of learning, this venerable topic attracts the attention of experts from almost all the humanities and social sciences and from other disciplines as well, scholars working across the whole spectrum of world chronology and cultures. Thinking just of the *historical* study of the *Western* domain of our subject, one finds some topics especially well served. The literature on early modern European witchcraft and witch hunts is extensive, for example, and the study of magical theory in the Renaissance has thrived since the middle of the last century. But other areas of great interest are not so well developed. Given the long history of the subject, occasions for interdisciplinary study are abundant, but scholars looking to reach beyond their current expertise or disciplinary identities will not find enough oppor-

tunities of the kind provided by permanently established conferences, dedicated organizational structures, and well-defined programs of publication covering the whole field and distinctly identified with it. Most important for our purposes, and in the context described above, the editors know of no journal in the Anglophone world that has aims of this kind.

Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft hopes to serve scholars working on magic, witchcraft, and related subjects from Greco-Roman and biblical antiquity through the eighteenth century—but not exclusively so. Students of antiquity are now exploring magical rites and beliefs from the earliest days of attested human experience. Experts on modern Europe and North America, wondering whether Max Weber's "disenchantment of the world" ever happened, are finding more than just traces of magic in contemporary Western culture. Research on decidedly modern or even postmodern movements, such as contemporary witchcraft or Wicca, is coming into its own. In Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, South Asia, and elsewhere, historians are working with anthropologists to investigate the effects of European colonization on indigenous magical beliefs and practices, including the persecution—even the legal prosecution—of people thought to be witches. The time is right for a journal to bring this exciting work together, drawing on many disciplinary approaches without strict limits on geographical scope or chronological range.

In the framework described above, *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft* will publish articles on any topic that illuminates the study of magic, witchcraft, ritual, and related subjects. If the editors have an ax to grind, it is this: we hope to challenge the prevailing assumption that the terms "magic," "religion," and "science" represent readily distinguishable historical or cultural phenomena. We believe that an effective means to this end is to invite broad, comparative, interdisciplinary studies, including projects covering long periods of time and crossing cultural boundaries, on topics of substance or of theory, which might be less appropriate for publications serving a particular discipline or dedicated to a particular period or place. On the other hand, submissions tightly focused on specific issues at particular times and pursuing them in detail will be equally welcome. We assume that good research on any part of our very large subject will attract attention from scholars in other areas—provided, of course, that submissions keep our broader audience in mind and address themselves to it. We will also publish reviews, both short and long.

This first issue of *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft* is a beginning and a culmination. Our new journal is the product of long preparatory effort, during which we have been greatly encouraged by the enthusiastic interest shown by almost everyone who was asked about the project. Our editorial board—an

outstanding mix of senior and younger scholars—came together quickly, united by their common wish to make an important subject better known to the republic of letters. Excellent submissions arrived almost immediately after our initial announcement. Books for review piled up, and reviews were sent to the editors. In the beginning, however, the "onlie begetter" of this journal was Penn Press, whose staff have been exceptionally helpful and supportive through all the work needed to bring this first issue to birth. Our deepest and warmest thanks go to them, to our colleagues on the editorial board, and to our contributors and readers. In the ancient words that stand at the head of this inaugural announcement and statement of purpose, our wish for them is "that philosophy and magic too might feed the soul."

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The Meanings of Magic

MICHAEL D. BAILEY
Iowa State University

The establishment of a new journal titled *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft* begs the question: what do these words mean? In what sense do they comprise a useful academic category or field of inquiry? The history of magic and the cultural functions it has played and continues to play in many societies have been a focus of scholarship for well over one hundred years. Grand anthropological and sociological theories developed mostly in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries offer clear structures, and the classic definitions of Edward Burnett Taylor, James Frazer, Emile Durkheim, and others still reverberate through much scholarly work on this topic. While aspects of these theories remain useful, more recent studies have tended to take a much narrower approach, examining the specific forms that magic, magical rites, or witchcraft assume and the issues they create in particular periods and within particular societies. This has led to laudable focus and precision, yet it has also stifled communication between scholars working in different periods, regions, or disciplines. This journal is intended to promote such communication, and to provide a forum in which issues common to the study of magic in all contexts can be raised. Therefore, it will prove useful at the outset to present some thoughts about the significance of magic as a category, about the meanings it has carried and the approaches it has evoked, about some of the ways in which the study of magic might be advanced, and about some of the areas to which such further study might contribute.

Scholars in many fields recognize magic as an important topic. In its rites, rituals, taboos, and attendant beliefs, magic might be said to comprise, or at least describe, a system for comprehending the entire world. It provides a means for navigating among the varied forces that comprise and shape material creation, and promises its practitioners methods of controlling or at least

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My thanks to Sara Gregg, William Monter, Edward Peters, Janelle Stanley, and Matthew Stanley, each of whom agreed to act as a reader for this article, and who greatly improved both its content and style.

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affecting those forces. In certain circumstances, magicians claim that their rites can elevate them to a higher state of consciousness, allowing them to perceive occult aspects of nature or enter into communion with preternatural or supernatural entities. Not surprisingly, magic has often been linked to other expansive systems for understanding, interacting with, and influencing the whole of creation, namely, religion and science.[1] As part of such a powerful triad, magic appears central to human culture, and the study of the forms of magic that are accepted, practiced, or condemned in any society is necessary for a full understanding of that society.

Yet magic is a profoundly unstable category. In most circumstances it has typically been defined by authorities of various sorts (religious, legal, intellectual) who are either opposed to or at least condescending toward the practices and beliefs they see it entailing. These authoritative definitions have varied dramatically across time and between cultures. Yet the instability runs deeper, for even within a given society not all people who engage in magic will necessarily see their actions as part of a single coherent system, or accept all (or indeed any) other elements of that system. A remarkable aspect of magic is the degree to which many people in various social and historical contexts have engaged in acts that their culture as a whole, or at least certain cultural authorities, would categorize as magical without considering themselves to be performing magic. This seems especially true of simple spells or other common rites or superstitions that people may hold or practice without any systematic coherence.[2] This very instability, however, evident in so many contexts, makes magic a rich field of study and can even become a kind of unifying focus.

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1. Famously in classic works of anthropology and sociology by Edward Burnett Tylor, James Frazer, Emile Durkheim, and Bronislaw Malinowski (on each of whom more below); more recently, for example, in Jacob Neusner, Ernest S. Frerichs, and Paul Virgil McCracken Flesher, eds., *Religion, Science, and Magic: In Concert and in Conflict* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Stanley Jeyaraja Tambiah, *Magic, Science, Religion, and the Scope of Rationality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Randall Styers, *Making Magic: Religion, Magic, and Science in the Modern World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

2. Regarding medieval Europe, for example, Richard Kieckhefer's discussion of the broad "common tradition of medieval magic" (Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989], 56–94) is framed by questions of whether contemporary practitioners regarded their actions as magical. Of course, in the absence of strict authoritative enforcement, people may also become quite idiosyncratic in the religious rites they observe or beliefs they express. Similarly, many people accept or dismiss various aspects of science without great concern for how their choices may or may not relate to some overall system of scientific thought.

Recognizing the value of present methodologies that stress specificity and contingency, scholars should use their mutual interest in those contingencies to direct their conversations toward one another, to identify and compare various meanings of magic across human history and cultures. Beyond such basic comparativism, there are other areas in which the category of magic, broadly conceived but always with an understanding of its inherent constructedness, can provide a useful scholarly focus. Conceptualizations of modernity can be approached through the study of magic, for example, and magical rituals can offer insight into specific ways in which objects and human bodies become inscribed with meaning and power. Whatever approach is taken, the goal should not be to resolve the complexity of magic, but to draw out of that complexity new avenues of exploration and discussion, and to enliven time-honored approaches to this subject with new energy and new horizons of inquiry.

❧

Modern scholarship on magic has produced a number of overarching theories and definitions, and these have typically framed magic in relation to, or more frequently in distinction from, religion and science. The tendency toward sweeping theoretical definitions was most pronounced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when European and American social scientists bestrode the world like so many Aristotles, confidently categorizing all they beheld. Sociologists and anthropologists in particular advanced a number of general categorizations that could serve to distinguish magic from religion or science—but mainly from religion, as the distinction between magic and science appeared somewhat more self-evident in that period. One basic distinction, most commonly associated with James Frazier, held that magic typically sought to coerce or command spiritual forces while religion aimed to supplicate their aid. As Frazer wrote, the magician (like the scientist) assumed that certain actions properly performed would always produce identical results. Religion, on the other hand, emphasized the "propitiation and conciliation" of higher powers. Priests might hope for certain results, and beseech the gods for them, but they could not expect their prayers always to be answered.[3] Another essential distinction, associated with Emile Durkheim, posited that magic consisted primarily of private acts carried out for individual gain, while religion was essentially communal. Related to this was the definition ad-

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3. Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, 3rd ed., 12 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1913–20), 1:220–22; or see the abridged version of *The Golden Bough* (New York: Macmillan, 1927), 48–51.

vanced by Bronislaw Malinowski that magical practices always aimed to achieve specific and immediately tangible effects, while religious rites were ends in themselves, their main purpose being the devotion and grace they fostered in their faithful practitioners and the broad understanding of the universe they promoted.[4] Marcel Mauss, Durkheim's nephew and pupil, argued that scholars should ignore the purported purpose of rites and focus instead on the social context of their performance. Magic, for him, was private, secret, mysterious, and above all prohibited, while religion consisted of rites publicly acknowledged and approved.[5]

None of these definitions, or others like them, have proven entirely sufficient for all circumstances and contexts. Many religions assert that certain of their rites may produce definite ends seemingly automatically, such as the *ex opere operato* (by virtue of the operation itself) functioning of Catholic sacraments. Such rites can appear to coerce or compel divine power to some specific action in "magical" ways. Religious rites may also have very specific ends as their goal, while the purposes of some magical operations (that is, operations deemed magical rather than religious) can be quite expansive, intended to promote an elevated state of mind or enhanced level of understanding or perception in those who perform them. Durkheim himself admitted that many religious devotions could be entirely private, although he considered these only a limited aspect of some religions, and not a defining feature of "religion" as a category.[6] Similarly throughout history, many rites considered by outside observers or even by their participants to be magical have been and continue to be communal in nature. The most obvious current example would be the communal rites of Wiccans.[7] Mauss, by focusing on social context and communal approval or approbation of various rituals, offers useful tools. Ultimately, however, he maintains an essentially Durkheimian view that magic is private while religion is public and communal, and he also advances the notion that magic seeks immediate and practical results, while religion is more abstract in its general moral goals.[8]

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4. Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, trans. Karen E. Fields (New York: Free Press, 1995), 39–44. Malinowski, *Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1948), 67–69.

5. Mauss, *A General Theory of Magic*, trans. Robert Brain (1972; reprint London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 22–30.

6. Durkheim, *Elementary Forms*, 41.

7. For a personal yet scholarly introduction to such a rite, see Nikki Bado-Fralick, *Coming to the Edge of the Circle: A Wiccan Initiation Ritual* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

8. In this he links magic to science and technology, rather than to religion, in ways not entirely dissimilar to Frazer: Mauss, *General Theory*, 174–78.

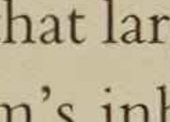
While certain scholars continue to engage with general theoretical definitions of magic, and some perhaps even still seek to produce them, for the most part attempts at overarching systematization have given way to careful attention to particular contexts. Such movement has been evident across the humanities and social sciences, and this broad trend has shaped the study of magic as well. Academics in many disciplines now focus on historically and culturally specific understandings of magic, seeking to clarify not how we might distinguish between magic and religion, or between magic and science, but rather how a given society drew these or other distinctions at some particular moment.[9] A key aspect of such scholarship usually involves a careful examination of the words and concepts used to designate various magical actions, both by contemporaries and by modern scholars.[10] This specificity, both laudable and necessary, has contributed to the dwindling of much theoretical or comparative work on topics captured under the broad rubric of magic (one particular avenue for theorizing about magical beliefs and practices—a mode of theorization grounded in historical specificity—has remained open, and will be discussed later in this essay). Moreover, this more focused, case-specific approach can be seen to call into question the legitimacy of magic as a universal category. Yet even in this scholarly climate,

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9. The assertion that the most useful definition of magic is the one held by the people, society, or culture under investigation is a central argument of Kieckehfer, *Magic in the Middle Ages*, for example, and is a running theme throughout Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark, eds., *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe*, 6 vols. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999–2002). See also the addendum volume, Helen Berger, ed., *Witchcraft and Magic in Contemporary North America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005).

10. E.g. David Frankfurter, "Dynamics of Ritual Expertise in Antiquity and Beyond: Towards a New Taxonomy of 'Magicians,'" in *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*, ed. Paul Mirecki and Marvin Meyer, Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 141 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 159–78; Jan N. Bremmer, "The Birth of the Term 'Magic,'" in *The Metamorphosis of Magic from Late Antiquity to the Early Modern Period*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and Jan R. Veenstra, Groningen Studies in Cultural Change 1 (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 1–11. Related studies of religion include Peter Biller, "Words and the Medieval Notion of 'Religion,'" *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 36 (1985): 351–69; John Van Engen, "Faith as a Concept of Order in Medieval Christendom," in *Belief in History: Innovative Approaches to European and American Religion*, ed. Thomas Kselman (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991), 19–67. See also Mark C. Taylor, ed., *Critical Terms for Religious Studies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), especially Donald S. Lopez Jr. on "Belief" (pp. 21–35) and Jonathan Z. Smith on "Religion, Religions, Religious" (pp. 269–84); this latter now reprinted in Jonathan Z. Smith, *Relating Religion: Essays in the Study of Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 179–96.

aspects of older grand theories still attract attention and help to give some shape to the subject of magic, and there have emerged from newer approaches definite impulses for the study of magic as a coherent field.[11]



The complexities revealed by careful study of specific magical rites and systems pose problems, but also open up many areas of potential scholarly exploration, so long as that exploration intends to more fully understand those complexities rather than simply to overcome them. One such area involves the revival of nuanced comparativism, aiming to extract both useful similarities and important differences from various highly focused studies.[12] As scholars have increasingly turned to the careful examination of specific magical beliefs and systems of practice, they have amply demonstrated how such social and cultural constructions depend on and must be understood within particular contexts. Their work, however, has also built up substantial support for the basic proposition that, despite important variances, many cultures have had or have general concepts that largely equate to the Western category of magic, considering also that term's inherent lack of precision. Of course, such apparent similarities arise in part from modern scholars' inability to fully escape the shackles of modern and almost inevitably Western concepts and terminology. This is precisely the dilemma that highly focused and carefully contextualized studies are intended to mitigate, and any attempt to draw general or comparative points from such studies must pay careful attention to how well they achieve this goal.

Despite issues of terminology and conceptualization, there is abundant evidence that most cultures have drawn and continue to draw certain basic distinctions separating manipulations of spiritual or occult natural powers that are deemed appropriate and approved from those considered sinister and illicit. Moreover, these differentiations typically involve far more than simply distinguishing between good and bad forms of what are otherwise recognized to be essentially similar practices. Instead, illicit forms are often deemed to

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11. The six volumes of Ankarloo and Clark, eds., *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe*, seek to frame the field for that area of the world. Richard M. Golden, ed., *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition*, 4 vols. (Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-Clio, 2006), is intended as a comprehensive reference work for the field of European witchcraft studies.

12. The need for comparative scholarship to focus on differences as well as similarities in its elucidation of patterns has been stressed by William Paden, "Elements of a New Comparativism," *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 8 (1996): 5–14.

belong to an entirely different category of action. In medieval Christian Europe, for example, authorities regularly defined magic as drawing on demonic power, while religious rites, however similar in form or intended outcome, comprised a wholly separate sphere of action because they were believed to draw on divine force.[13] Thus tied to Christian demonology, medieval European conceptions of magic became inextricably linked to Christian concepts of heresy, blasphemy, and idolatry, profoundly affecting the ways in which medieval authorities responded to supposed magical practices.[14]

In classical Greece, on the other hand, what modern scholars might label as either "religious" or "magical" rituals were often conceived as evoking the same sources of power (frequently spiritual entities called *daimones*). Within this range of powerful and effective practices, *mageia* referred quite precisely to foreign cultic rites, specifically those of Persian priests or *magoi*. In its etymological origins, the Western term "magic" was defined first by simple geography. Because the foreignness of *mageia* carried dark and sinister connotations, the term gradually became extended to include many illicit, covert, or private rites performed by Greeks themselves, but opposed to the publicly approved civic cults of the Greek *poleis*. Yet *mageia* in this sense was not simply "religious" ritual transported out of the confines of public cults, for the ancient world knew private cults, particularly familial ones, as well as prophets and priests who operated outside of clear cultic sites. Such people might arouse more suspicion than temple priests, but they were not automatically *magoi*.[15]

There is no doubt that the ancient pagan and medieval Christian worlds defined magic quite differently. As Christianity rose to dominance in the world of late antiquity, conceptions of magic underwent a profound shift

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13. Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages*; also Richard Kieckhefer, "The Specific Rationality of Medieval Magic," *American Historical Review* 99 (1994): 813–36.

14. Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Witchcraft in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1971); Norman Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons: An Enquiry Inspired by the Great Witch Hunt* (New York: Basic Books, 1975), slightly revised and reprinted as *Europe's Inner Demons: The Demonization of Christians in Medieval Christendom* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Edward Peters, *The Magician, the Witch, and the Law* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978).

15. Fritz Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World*, trans. Franklin Philip (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997). See also Georg Luck, "Witches and Sorcerers in Classical Literature," in *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: Ancient Greece and Rome*, ed. Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 91–158, and Richard Gordon, "Imagining Greek and Roman Magic," in ibid., 159–275.

that Valerie Flint has characterized as a "demonization." Christian thinkers transformed classical *daimones*, creatures of often ambivalent morality, into demons, fallen angels, and servants of the devil who were inherently evil and inimical to humanity.[16] Yet although classical and Christian culture had very different ways of separating magical operations from proper religion and cultic practices, they each posited such a division, and even described it in some of the same ways. In both pagan antiquity and medieval Christian Europe, the term "superstition" meant excessive or improper devotion or ritual practices. In fact, early Christian authors took the word *superstitio* directly from late-Roman usage. While to the Romans, Christianity was superstitious, in the Christian context a major element of superstition was the improper performance of rituals in honor of demons. This definition encompassed magic, but also the rites of all pagan cults. While this radical redirecting of superstition highlights the opposition between Christian and pagan culture, it also demonstrates that both pagan and Christian society, despite their very different understandings of magic, were similar in their identification of sharply differentiated spheres of ritual action.[17]

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Conceptions of magic, however designated, function broadly in many cultures to differentiate certain actions sharply from otherwise potentially quite

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16. Valerie Flint, "The Demonisation of Magic and Sorcery in Late Antiquity: Christian Redefinitions of Pagan Religions," in Ankarloo and Clark, *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: Ancient Greece and Rome*, 277–348. The figure of the devil, present in early Judaism, became far more clearly articulated as the great oppositional force to God and enemy of humankind in later apocalyptic Judaism, and especially in early Christianity through the writings of the church fathers. See Jeffrey Burton Russell, *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977), and Russell, *Satan: The Early Christian Tradition* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1981). A more focused study is Elaine Pagels, *The Origin of Satan* (New York: Vintage, 1995).

17. Still the best overview of medieval concepts of superstition is Dieter Harmening, *Superstitio: Überlieferungs- und theoriegeschichtliche Untersuchungen zur kirchlich-theologischen Aberglaubensliteratur des Mittelalters* (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 1979). On antiquity, see Dale B. Martin, *Inventing Superstition: From the Hippocratics to the Christians* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004). Specifically on ways the word "superstitio" could be used by either Roman or Christian authorities in the late-imperial period, see L. F. Janssen, "'Superstitio' and the Persecution of Christians," *Vigiliae Christianae* 33 (1979): 131–59; Michele R. Salzman, "'Superstitio' in the Codex Theodosianus and the Persecution of the Pagans," *Vigiliae Christianae* 41 (1987): 172–88.

similar rites, rituals, or practices. Drawing these distinctions is an exercise in power, and a major area of comparative focus must be to explore what roles such differentiation plays in various societies, who controls this differentiation, and to what ends that created difference is employed. In many cultures and across various historical periods, categories of magic often define and maintain the limits of socially and culturally acceptable actions in respect to numinous or occult entities or forces. Even more basically they serve to delineate arenas of appropriate belief. Whether defined as foreign rites, domestic but clandestine ones, or private rituals as opposed to public and communal ceremonies, magical practices and beliefs comprise a shadowy and tenuous, but still often carefully constructed, realm that helps shape a society's basic conceptions about both spiritual and natural forces that imbue the world with meaning. In many cultures individuals do not typically designate themselves as magicians or practitioners of magic. Those are labels ascribed to them by society, or by specific authoritative elites within a society. Such people may not deny the actions they perform, but they reject the sinister connotations (the means of differentiation) that the various terms that can be understood as designating "magic" frequently carry. Thus, to be labeled a magician is generally an accusation rather than a self-appellation. In fact, systems of magic tend to be defined by those who claim not to practice or, especially in the modern world, even to believe in them. While some medieval clerics did engage in ritual magic, for example, most of the theologians who described and dissected horrific demonic rites during the Middle Ages were never tempted to try a spell themselves. The anthropologists and sociologists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who developed the major theories of magic discussed at the beginning this article never believed in magic as its practitioners did, and scholars of contemporary magic continue to face that issue today.[18]

Of course, in many contexts people have self-designated as magicians, and continue to do so (again, regardless of the actual terminology). Some readily confess to magical crimes when questioned by authorities. Others promote their image as a practitioner of powerful rites or a possessor of occult knowl-

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18. In one of the earliest academic studies of contemporary magic, the anthropologist Tanya Luhrmann was careful to note that although she engaged in magical practices as part of her fieldwork, she did not consider herself a magician or a witch. See T. M. Luhrmann, *Persuasions of the Witch's Craft: Ritual Magic in Contemporary England* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), 16–18. Nikki Bado-Fralick, both a scholar and a practitioner, writes at length about the perceived dilemmas of this status. See Bado-Fralick, *Coming to the Edge of the Circle*, 4–21.

edge as a social identity. In Europe during the Middle Ages, educated but often lowly placed members of the clerical elite deliberately engaged in necromancy and other forms of ritual magic, frequently as an avenue to power in political courts.[19] Clerical necromancy continued to be a problem for religious authorities into the period of the Reformation, and of course the Renaissance was famous for its learned *magi* who grounded their magical systems in esoteric Hermeticism or aspects of Neoplatonic thought.[20] Whatever their particular situation, such people frequently acted to critique or challenge certain systems, structures, or norms within their society. This criticism could be tacit; no medieval necromancer ever seems to have openly questioned the authority of the church to pronounce on the legitimacy of various rites and rituals. Some Renaissance *magi*, by contrast, directly challenged the church and asserted the validity of their rites over official religion.

At quite another level from well-educated (and male) necromancers and Renaissance mages, the poor old women suspected of being witches in early modern Europe may have embraced that label in order to obtain, at whatever risk, some level of respect and even dark prestige within a community in which otherwise they were relatively powerless. Even if a suspect only began to confess in the course of a trial or under torture, this need not have represented simple submission to authorities' accusations. Scholarship on the European witch trials has begun to demonstrate how confessions could articulate deep psychological anxieties and social tensions that otherwise might not be expressible in any form.[21] Shielded from legal prosecution, although still open

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19. On the medieval "clerical underworld" of necromancy, see Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages*, 151–75. On the nexus of magical and political power in a courtly "demimonde," see Peters, *The Magician, the Witch, and the Law*, 112–25. Richard Kieckhefer, *Forbidden Rites: A Necromancer's Manual of the Fifteenth Century* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), examines one late-medieval necromantic text in detail, and positions it in precisely such a courtly demimonde. See also Jan R. Veenstra, *Magic and Divination at the Courts of Burgundy and France: Text and Context of Laurens Pignon's "Contra les devineurs" (1411)* (Leiden: Brill, 1998).

20. William Monter, *Frontiers of Heresy: The Spanish Inquisition from the Basque Lands to Sicily* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 176–79, notes cases of clerical magic in counter-Reformation Sicily in the sixteenth century. The fundamental, although overstated, treatment of Renaissance Hermeticism is Frances A. Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964). Also essential on Renaissance *magi* is D. P. Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic from Ficino to Campanella* (1958; reprint University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000).

21. See several essays in Lyndal Roper, *Oepidus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality, and Religion in Early Modern Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994); Roper, *Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale

to some level of societal ridicule and even persecution, modern Wiccans quite consciously appropriate the term "witchcraft," seeking to destabilize its long-standing negative connotations and especially gendered stereotypes.[22] Ongoing debates and contestations over who controls the various appellations for "magicians" and what those appellations connote therefore offers another area of general concern shared by many scholars working in this field.

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All the related issues thus far discussed cluster around the central problem of how various cultures have understood and employed categories they, or we, call magic. Many insights have been and will continue to be gained by careful examination of the precise historicized and contextualized meanings of various terms and categories roughly translatable as magic. Equally careful comparisons between these categories, exploring how they function in different societies, will yield further insights in many areas of cultural and social studies. This approach can also become problematic, however, because indigenous cultural understandings of magic and deployment of terms for magic can in fact mislead "external" scholars in some important ways. For example, scholars studying magic and witchcraft in medieval and early modern Europe used to stress strong divisions between popular and elite notions of magic. To some extent this tendency replicated earlier anthropological distinctions equating magic with primitivism, as something more advanced societies, and more elite groups within societies, should have moved beyond.[23] Yet as

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University Press, 2004). On social systems that promoted accusations and confessions, see Robin Briggs, *Witches and Neighbors: The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft* (New York: Viking, 1996).

22. The neopagan author and journalist Margot Adler, for example, had to address the meaning of the term "witch" at the very outset of her account of modern witchcraft *Drawing Down the Moon: Witches, Druids, Goddess-Worshippers and Other Pagan Peoples in America Today*, rev. ed. (New York: Penguin/Arkana, 1986), 10–11. The important neopagan author Starhawk writes explicitly of "reclaiming" the term in her seminal book *The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess*, 20th anniversary ed. (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1999), 31–32. A responsible scholarly account of the origins and early development of modern witchcraft is Ronald Hutton, *The Triumph of the Moon: A History of Modern Pagan Witchcraft* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

23. To the work of Frazer and Durkheim mentioned already, add the foundational anthropological work by Edward Burnett Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, 2 vols. (1871; reprint New York: Harper, 1958), esp. 1:112–59 and to an extent 2:448–60 (on prayer); Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, *How Native's Think*, trans. Lilian A. Clare (1926; reprint New York: Washington Square Press, 1966), esp. 256–68; Lévy-Bruhl, *Primitive Men-*

Richard Kieckhefer demonstrated three decades ago, arguments for such distinctions also paid careful attention to how judges, accusers, and the accused presented sometimes quite different notions of magical practices, how such practices functioned, and what they entailed.[24] A strict dichotomy between elite and popular conceptions has proven inadequate, however, and has now largely been abandoned in favor of further careful study of how understandings of magic were distributed across society. Kieckhefer, for example, has modified some of his own earlier distinctions between popular and learned conceptions of magic by suggesting a broad "common tradition" of magic permeating all levels of medieval society, around which various more particular traditions clustered.[25]

Following Kieckhefer, other scholars have stressed an expansive spectrum of magical beliefs and practices running both horizontally and vertically across premodern European society. Yet some clear distinctions between elite and popular concerns evident in most witch trials remains. So too does Carlo Ginzburg's remarkable discovery of the extraordinary system of beliefs surrounding individuals known as *benandanti* (literally, well-farers) in the remote northern Italian region of Friuli, which proved as surprising to modern scholars and it did to early modern Roman inquisitors. Ginzburg ultimately expanded his initial study to argue for a deeply rooted and fully popular, indeed folkloric, stratum of essentially shamanistic practices informing popular European images of witchcraft, but utterly closed to authoritative elites.[26] As other scholars have uncovered and explored additional examples of such beliefs, shamanism and remnants of shamanistic beliefs and practices has become an-

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tality, trans. Lilian A. Clare (New York: Macmillan, 1923), esp. 35–51, 59–67, 89–96; Lévy-Bruhl, *Primitives and the Supernatural*, trans. Lilian A. Clare (1935; reprint New York: Haskell, 1973), esp. 153–96.

24. Richard Kieckhefer, *European Witch Trials: Their Foundations in Popular and Learned Culture, 1300–1500* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976), drew perceptive distinctions based on careful readings of trial records that remain accepted to this day.

25. Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages*; also Karen Louise Jolly, "Medieval Magic: Definitions, Beliefs, Practices," in *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Middle Ages*, ed. Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 1–71, esp. 27–58; for a rich study of the complexity of cultural interactions in the field of magic, see Jolly, *Popular Religion in Late Saxon England: Elf Charms in Context* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

26. Ginzburg, *The Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, trans. John and Anne Tedeschi (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983); Ginzburg, *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath*, trans. Raymond Rosenthal (New York: Penguin, 1992).

other facet of the broad "common magical tradition." In particular, through a case study in every way as remarkable as Ginzburg's own find in Friuli, Wolfgang Behringer has repositioned the shamanism paradigm in relation to beliefs about the afterlife and the complex restructuring of folk-culture during the Reformation. As his and other work suggests, some aspects of the old poplar/elite distinction remain both viable and useful.[27]

While a focus on specific and at first glance possibly peculiar subtraditions of belief can therefore open larger vistas, working at the other end of Italy from the region of Ginzburg's *benandanti*, and following a very different methodology, David Gentilcore has sought to explore how people at all levels of early modern European society were, in practice, little confined by any set notions of magic or religion. Concerned less with methods than with the particular results they sought to achieve, they moved easily from "magical" rites to "religious" ones and back again. Finding even an extended common magical tradition too limiting to describe such behavior, Gentilcore argued instead for a very inclusive "system of the sacred" extending from simple witches to priests and bishops.[28] Evocative and useful as his term is, however, it risks losing the critical distinction that contemporaries at both elite and popular levels of society commonly understood to lie between magical and religious power in premodern, Christian Europe.[29]

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Perhaps the most important area in which broadly theoretical and often comparative work dealing with magic remains a vital element of scholarship, in addition to focused studies, involves the complex interaction of magic with modernity. As scholars in many disciplines turn more attention to non-

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27. E.g. Gábor Klaniczay, "Shamanistic Elements of Central European Witchcraft," in his *The Uses of Supernatural Power: The Transformation of Popular Religion in Medieval and Early-Modern Europe*, trans. Susan Singerman, ed. Karen Margolis (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990), 129–50; Wolfgang Behringer, *Shaman of Oberstdorf: Chonrad Stoeckhlin and the Phantoms of the Night*, trans. H. C. Erik Midelfort (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1998); Éva Pócs, *Between the Living and the Dead: A Perspective on Witches and Seers in the Early Modern Age*, trans. Szilvia Rédey and Michael Webb (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1999).

28. Gentilcore, *From Bishop to Witch: The System of the Sacred in Early Modern Terra d'Otranto* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992).

29. As stressed in Kieckhefer, "Specific Rationality." He was responding here not to Gentilcore but to Valerie I. J. Flint, *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991).

Western cultures, particularly in such fields as colonial, postcolonial, and subaltern studies, magic has become an important category to understand and evaluate Western culture's interaction with and impact on the rest of the world. Historians and anthropologists have begun to untangle the ways in which Europe exported its particular conceptions of magic and witchcraft, as well as the effects this exportation has had. Colonial authorities used these conceptions to categorize and control native peoples, yet such concepts have remained dynamic or even taken on new dynamism in the postcolonial period as native populations now seek to reassert traditional beliefs and practices, yet also necessarily strive to integrate these traditions with systems of Western modernity.[30] Such efforts have reflected back on Europe itself, and scholars are beginning to reconsider more seriously how basic elements of modern European thought and belief have been historically and culturally constructed, and to what effect on Europe and the rest of the world.

Major efforts have been made to trace the evolution of the modern category "magic," particularly since the period of the Protestant Reformation, and to uncover how, in Europe as well as in non-Western colonies, authorities have employed that category to distinguish the modern from the primitive or archaic.[31] A defining feature of Western culture at least since the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century and to some degree since the Reformation of the sixteenth has been "disenchantment"—the rejection, at least by authoritative elites, of many forms of magic, occult properties, or spiritual activity, or anything (including even elements of official religion) that might be dismissed as superstition. Despite the severity of the modern Western dismissal of supernatural powers operating in the world, however, many scholars

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30. A good introduction would be Birgit Meyer and Peter Pels, eds., *Magic and Modernity: Interfaces of Revelation and Concealment* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2003). Other examples include Peter Geschiere, *The Modernity of Witchcraft: Politics and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa*, trans. Peter Geschiere and Janet Roitman (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1997); Henrietta L. Moore and Todd Sanders, eds., *Magical Interpretations, Material Realities: Modernity, Witchcraft, and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001); Raquel Romberg, *Witchcraft and Welfare: Spiritual Capital and the Business of Magic in Modern Puerto Rico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003). On deployment of ideas of magic and witchcraft during colonial regimes, see (again examples only) Irene Silverblatt, *Moon, Sun, and Witches: Gender Ideologies and Class in Inca and Colonial Peru* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987); Margaret J. Wiener, *Visible and Invisible Realism: Power, Magic, and Colonial Conquest in Bali* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Laura A. Lewis, *Hall of Mirrors: Power, Witchcraft and Caste in Colonial Mexico* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2003).

31. Most recently and profoundly Styers, *Making Magic.*

of modern Europe are now coming to argue that even in the West, magic has never disappeared as a serious and important cultural category, and that magical beliefs and practices remain integral to at least certain aspects of Western modernity.[32]

That European society moved along a historical trajectory toward official rejection of many magical practices and that disenchantment characterizes many aspects of the modern West are venerable suggestions, deriving from the early-twentieth-century work of Max Weber, who associated the "disenchantment of the [Western] world" (*Entzauberung der Welt*) primarily with the Protestant Reformation, and above all with the rise of ascetic Calvinism.[33] Weber's ideas have encountered a good deal of criticism and revision in the century since he first articulated them, and historians of European magic and witchcraft in particular have rejected his claim that any serious disenchantment marked the Reformation era, when Europe experienced its major witch hunts. Instead they have pushed the real diminution in magical beliefs and practices back to the eighteenth-century Enlightenment or to nineteenth- and even twentieth-century industrialization.[34] Nevertheless, few would

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32. Alex Owen, *The Place of Enchantment: British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Corinna Treitel, *A Science for the Soul: Occultism and the Genesis of the German Modern* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004); David Allen Harvey, *Beyond Enlightenment: Occultism and Politics in Modern France* (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2005). These all deal with specifically modern forms of magic and occultism; on the continuation of earlier traditions see Owen Davies, *Witchcraft, Magic, and Culture 1736–1951* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), and Willem de Blécourt and Owen Davies, eds., *Witchcraft Continued: Popular Magic in Modern Europe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004). On magical and occult practices during the Enlightenment itself, see Owen Davies and Willem de Blécourt, eds., *Beyond the Witch Trials: Witchcraft and Magic in Enlightenment Europe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), and H. C. Erik Midelfort, *Exorcism and Enlightenment: Johann Joseph Gassner and the Demons of Eighteenth-Century Germany* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2005). For an important statement on the degree to which the Enlightenment actually opposed magical and spiritual systems, see Martin Pott, *Aufklärung und Aberglaube: Die deutsche Frühaufklärung im Spiegel ihrer Aberglaubenskritik* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1992).

33. Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (1930; reprint London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 56–80

34. For a general critique, see Owen Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 258; more specifically see R. W. Scribner, "The Reformation, Popular Magic, and the 'Disenchantment of the World,'" *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 23 (1993): 475–94, reprinted in Scribner, *Religion and Culture in Germany (1400–1800)*, ed. Lyndal Roper (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 346–65.

deny that since the Enlightenment, modern Western societies have been significantly disenchanted, although endless debate persists about what exactly that term implies. While Western culture exports disenchantment as an essential feature of modernity, and other cultures both adapt to and contest this connection, the significance of this issue will only grow, making it another topic on which a broad conversation could profitably develop between students of magic working in widely disparate areas. Insofar as scholars identify disenchantment as a historical process yet have reached no final consensus about when it primarily occurred, room for debate exists among experts in almost any historical period.[35] Similarly, as disenchantment is a particularly European idea, framed within European categories of magic and religion (and to some extent science), which now shapes understandings of magical/religious systems around the globe, scholars working on almost any world culture might profitably join this discussion.

Linked to issues of disenchantment and the separation imposed by an increasingly disenchanted West between intangible belief and the manifest enactment of various rites, another quite specific yet important area emerges in which more generalized discussions of magic might prove useful. In European society, beginning already in the later Middle Ages and early modern period, Christianity largely separated "religious" elements of belief and contemplation from the physical performance of ritualized actions. While many rites were maintained, particularly by the Catholic Church, their centrality was downplayed, and many authorities, particularly Protestant ones, came to see elements of magic in many ritualized performances.[36] Similar dynamics may or may not be present in other cultures, but European and American academics long accepted the historically particular Western notions of magic and religion as normative, whether they studied the Western or non-Western world.[37] As with disenchantment, therefore, because these categories have

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35. I have recently made an effort to dislodge disenchantment in European history from an entirely post-Reformation context by suggesting that elements of disenchantment can be found in medieval, indeed in basic Christian, conceptions of magical operation: Bailey, "The Disenchantment of Magic: Spells, Charms, and Superstition in Early European Witchcraft Literature," *American Historical Review III* (2006):383–404.

36. The classic account of this process, focusing on Protestant England, remains Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (New York: Scribners, 1971).

37. Not focused on magic or religion, but addressing many complexities of the perceived normative status of Europe is Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000).

been exported beyond the West, here too a specific Western development has taken on wider importance, in both the degree to which it has pervaded the rest of the world and the degree to which it is resisted or contested in other world cultures.

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The separation of essential religious belief from physical enactment in ritual forms tends to occlude the importance of physical objects and above all the human body in rites and ceremonies. The category of magic has not suffered any such imposed separation between its supposed essence and its enactment, yet magic too is far more often studied in terms of how it is understood and reacted to, mostly through prohibitions, than in terms of how it is enacted. In other areas of scholarship within many disciplines, the body has come to be an important topic of analysis, as physical entity, as cultural construction, and as symbol laden with meaning. The body has been studied as a locus of gender and sexuality, either their expression or their repression.[38] The anthropologist Mary Douglas has discussed the body as a central social symbol; the medieval historian Caroline Walker Bynum has done much to reassert the central importance of the body in religion, identifying in its basic biological processes—either the consumption and production of food or even more essentially growth and decay—an important locus of human interaction with the divine and of individual salvation.[39] One might extend this insight to include the possibility of the body as locus of interaction with all variety of supernatural or spiritual forces, or natural but occult ones—in other words, the body as critical interface for "magic." Such an approach would focus attention on the role of the body in any number of ritual performances or acts, both those that might be labeled religious and those that might be labeled magical. It would, in fact, necessarily blur the traditional distinction between religion and magic, at least as constructed in the West since the

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38. Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988); Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990).

39. Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology* (1970; reprint London and New York: Routledge, 1996). Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987); Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 1992); and Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200–1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).

medieval period. How various cultures, societies, or groups perceive body functioning in and being affected by ritual could be an important way for scholars of magic to analyze their subjects.[40]

As with human bodies, little comparative work has been done on how physical objects function in magical rituals or otherwise-designated rites of power. Yet the association of amulets, talismans, wands, and other objects with the invocation, attraction, or repulsion of spiritual or occult natural forces is widespread, if not universal. How is it that various cultures identify or fashion such objects, linking them with preternatural power? And how are such items then employed in ritualized practices? Without retreating to a Frazerian category and describing all magical operations as being essentially sympathetic,[41] the basic notion that objects made to resemble certain people or things, or symbolically linked to them, might convey power to their possessor is evident in many widely separate contexts. Scholars of classical antiquity, for example, expressly write of "voodoo dolls" in ancient Greece, averring any direct comparison but still implicitly conflating such classical magic with practices common in the Caribbean two and a half millennia later.[42] Admittedly, comparisons pursued along these or similar lines could easily become simplistic or essentialist. Yet scholarship should not avoid areas of inquiry because of potential anachronisms.

Beyond an examination of the social and cultural roles specially designated objects of power might play, which would be the domain primarily of historians and anthropologists, greater attention to how social and cultural meaning and power were (sometimes literally) inscribed in objects would bring art historians more fully into scholarly dialogue about magic. Magical items and visual depictions of magical practices have too rarely been explored as artistic

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40. My initial thoughts on this subject derive from conversations with my colleague Nikki Bado-Fralick about the role of body and practice, as opposed to belief, in religion. See Bado-Fralick, *Coming to the Edge of the Circle*, 78–80, 102–4, 129–34. More generally on the significance of ritual as physically enacted performance Catherine Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1997), 74, where she notes: "Some theorists appeal to kinesthesia, the sensations experienced by the body in movement, while others appeal to synesthesia, the evocation of a total, unified, and overwhelming sensory experience" in their attempts to unravel "the distinctive physical reality of ritual so easily overlooked by more intellectual approaches." Body, however, is not a major element of Bell's treatment of ritual.

41. Frazer, *Golden Bough*, 1:52–54.

42. Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World*, 136–46. Graf is careful to criticize simple Frazerian notions of sympathetic magic (p. 145). See also Daniel Ogden, "Binding Spells: Curse Tablets and Voodoo Dolls in the Greek and Roman Worlds," in Ankarloo and Clark, *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: Ancient Greece and Rome*, 1–90, at 71–79.

creations. In a recent work on several centuries' worth of visual images of European witches, Linda Hults has argued convincingly that such depictions did not simply reproduce contemporary understandings of witchcraft as developed in legal or theological texts. Rather, artists crafted images of witches and their magical acts that satisfied various artistic dynamics operating in early modern European culture.[43] Both focused and broader cross-cultural studies of how the magical is depicted (and why it is depicted in certain ways) seem a scholarly desideratum.

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With witchcraft, as with magic and ritual generally, responsible scholarship must address the cultural specificity of the concept being employed, and the limits of that specificity.[44] Highly focused studies offer the advantage of being able to define carefully the ideas deployed. Witchcraft is generally taken to mean harmful magic performed by people of low social status. It is typically not a learned craft involving long study or highly developed ritual expertise. It often carries the implication of close alliance with or worship of evil supernatural entities. Its practitioners are more often women then men, although not necessarily so.[45] Understood in this way, witchcraft is a phenomenon or construction that has appeared in many cultures. In late-medieval and early modern Europe, however, authorities came to consider the practitioners of such magic to be members of large, organized, explicitly diabolical cults. Witches offered service and worship to the Christian devil, and often explicitly exchanged their souls for the ability to command demons and so perform magical acts. In this context, witchcraft represented the culmination of centu-

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43. Hults, *The Witch as Muse: Art, Gender, and Power in Early Modern Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005). In regard to my own area of chronological focus, I am reminded of the late art historian Michael Camille's complaint that art history was too often regarded as merely "supplementary" to medieval studies: Camille, "Art History in the Past and Future of Medieval Studies," in *The Past and Future of Medieval Studies*, ed. John Van Engen (Notre Dame: Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), 362–82. Numerous articles on witchcraft and art by Charles Zika are collected in Zika, *Exorcising our Demons: Magic, Witchcraft and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

44. That "ritual" too, at least in intellectual and academic usage, is a problematic construction of the post-Reformation West rooted, above all, in Reformation-era theology, see Philippe Buc, *The Dangers of Ritual: Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), 161–247.

45. Devotees of neopagan Wicca, who often identify their practices as witchcraft, would certainly object to all but (perhaps) the last of these definitions. Modern neopagan witches, however, employ the term in a historically nontraditional way.

ries of linkage drawn by Christian authorities between the performance of magic and demonic forces. Some scholars contend that this conception of harmful magic and society's response to it (i.e., witch trials and the major witch hunts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) were so deeply enmeshed with Western Christian theology and with Western European religiosity of this period that they comprise a unique historical phenomenon. By implication, few worthwhile comparisons can be drawn between European witchcraft and systems of harmful magic in other cultures.[46]

There are deep historiographical reasons for this tendency to regard European witchcraft as exceptional. The founding fathers of the modern historical study of the European witch hunts, men like Henry Charles Lea and Joseph Hansen in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, had inherited an essentially Enlightenment mentality that regarded the medieval church as a bastion of superstition and intolerance. They tended to emphasize the demonological elements of the witch-stereotype—worship of demons and the devil, membership in cults, and participation in horrific witches' sabbaths where, typically, witches renounced God, trampled on the cross, and desecrated the Eucharist. They attributed the impulse to construct witches in this way primarily to medieval clerical authorities, above all inquisitors who drew on only slightly less fanciful notions of medieval heretical cults and their supposed demonic gatherings.[47] In the later twentieth century, scholars began

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46. The standard English-language survey of early modern witchcraft, Brian P. Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd ed. (London: Longman, 1995), 4–9, distinguishes the elements of *maleficium* in the European conception of witchcraft from elements of diabolism. He states that "it was in the performance of *maleficia* that European witchcraft most closely resembled the practice of witchcraft in primitive and non-European societies today" (p. 4), while "it is the diabolical component of early modern European witchcraft that distinguishes it most clearly from the witchcraft of many primitive societies in the world today" (p. 9). Levack is of course correct that there were many unique elements in European witchcraft, just as there are in any specific system of beliefs. Moreover, he is certainly not averse to comparative scholarship. He has edited two multivolume collections of scholarly articles on witchcraft. In the first, he included a full volume of comparative anthropological studies (Brian P. Levack, ed., *Articles on Witchcraft, Magic, and Demonology*, 12 vols. [New York: Garland, 1992], vol. 1, *Anthropological Studies of Witchcraft, Magic, and Religion*). In the second, he included several articles on African witchcraft in the volume on modern witchcraft (Levack, ed., *New Perspectives on Witchcraft, Magic, and Demonology*, 6 vols. [New York: Routledge, 2001], vol. 6, *Witchcraft in the Modern World*, 342–448).

47. Joseph Hansen, *Zauberwahn, Inquisition und Hexenprozess im Mittelalter, und die Entstehung der grossen Hexenverfolgung* (1900; reprint Aalen: Scientia, 1964); Hansen, ed., *Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Hexenwahns und der Hexenverfolgung*

to approach the study of European witchcraft from the perspective of social history, seeking to understand witchcraft not as the imposed construct of maniacal religious elites but as a sensible and even useful social structure. In this effort, historians such as Alan Macfarlane and Keith Thomas, while focusing their own studies mainly or entirely on early modern England, were deeply influenced by earlier anthropological work done on African societies.[48] Yet this influence did not move European scholarship on witchcraft or witch-hunting in any strongly comparative direction. Rather, historians continued to emphasize the particularly Christian nature of witchcraft, and the particular Western European political, social, and intellectual structures and developments that promoted fear and prosecution of witches.[49]

Such studies are important and of course correct in their basic assumption that witchcraft needs to be situated in particular social and cultural milieus, and certainly the ways in which particular societies conceived and employed witchcraft as a category of magical action must be analyzed and understood. Yet scholars have now also begun to emphasize how much European witchcraft, even with all of its demonological elements appended by authorities, remained primarily about the performance of simple, harmful magic—*maleficium* in medieval and early modern legal parlance.[50] Combining aspects of this approach with evidence of significant revivals of legal prosecution for the supposed practice of malevolent magic mainly in regions of Africa, Wolfgang Behringer, a leading expert on early modern European witchcraft, has called for scholars to reconsider the basic ways they have defined witchcraft. He notes that fear of harmful magic has been prevalent in most historical cultures, and that it continues to exist in many cultures, including (albeit in significantly reduced form) Western European culture. While suspicions

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im Mittelalter (1901; reprint Hildesheim; Georg Olms, 1963); Henry Charles Lea, *A History of the Inquisition in the Middle Ages*, 3 vols. (New York: Harper, 1888), 3:492–549; Lea, *Materials Toward a History of Witchcraft*, ed. Arthur C. Howland, 3 vols. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1939).

48. Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England: A Regional and Comparative Study* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970); Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*. Both were influenced especially by E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1937).

49. For example, Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), demonstrates magisterially how deeply embedded the European witch-stereotype was in many areas of intellectual activity, by no means exclusively "religious" thought.

50. Briggs, *Witches and Neighbors*, aggressively asserts that simple acts of *maleficium*, not demonology or even the mechanics of major witch hunts, should be the basis for the historical study of European witchcraft.

concerning the sort of person who supposedly engages in harmful magic can be quite diverse, Behringer notes a widespread tendency to attribute at least certain types of harmful magic to people believed to be deeply involved with sinister spiritual forces. Such conceptions of evil magical practitioners seem to engender, or at least reveal, certain basic and similar fears in many societies. Social and legal response to such suspected magicians frequently takes the form of sporadic waves of serious repression and prosecution—in other words, hunts. Those suspected of these crimes are often conceived as operating in conspiratorial groups, and they are often considered more likely to be women than men. For all these reasons, Behringer suggests, it is appropriate for scholars to label them as witches and the actions they supposedly engage in as witchcraft.[51]

While recognizing the continued necessity of highly focused studies of witchcraft in particular social, cultural, and historical settings,[52] Behringer intends more than simply to suggest that responsible comparative studies may also be possible and profitable. He insists on the need for such studies and on the more expansive definition of witchcraft that they entail. So long as witchcraft remains linked to medieval and early modern Western Christian demonology, he contends, it will remain an essentially Eurocentric notion inapplicable to the present age when activities that Behringer persuasively labels as witch hunts are prevalent and actually increasing in many regions of Africa and other parts of the world. More generally, the underlying notion that witchcraft and witch-hunting represent a terrible but essentially completed chapter in human history—itself a Eurocentric concept derived from Enlightenment authorities' confidence in their ability to promote disenchantment—must be challenged not just in Africanist or Asianist scholarship, reassessed not merely by postcolonial studies or by subaltern studies, but rather must be a focus of genuinely ecumenical scholarship on this topic.[53]



So with witchcraft, as with magic as a whole, there is a need for discussion and debate about terms employed, limits imposed, and the basic possibilities of scholarly inquiry. There is and probably can be no simple methodological

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51. Behringer, *Witches and Witch-Hunts: A Global History* (Cambridge: Polity, 2004).

52. Behringer's own *Witchcraft Persecutions in Bavaria: Popular Magic, Religious Zealotry and Reason of State in Early Modern Europe*, trans. J. C. Grayson and David Lederer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), is an excellent regional study.

53. Behringer, *Witches and Witch-Hunts*, 1–10.

solution to the definition or study of magic. A clear understanding of the terminology employed to designate magical acts in any particular context is critical, but a strict adherence to that terminology or even the basic distinctions it draws upon will not be suitable to all scholarly purposes. Moreover, terminology for and concepts of magic are almost universally vague, mutable, and "occult" in the literal sense of hidden or obscured. This basic methodological problem, however, is itself an element that all scholars working in the many fields bearing on magic, magical rituals, and witchcraft have in common. Obvious benefits, if most likely never any definitive solutions, will accrue from broad discussion of these issues, as well as from close comparison of different studies focused on different cultures and historical eras that deal with them.

There are vital reasons for scholars engaged in focused studies to pay attention to each other's work, and there are calls to attempt comparative or theoretical work based on focused studies. Categories constructed in the West dominate and indeed still define the field, but scholars of Western culture continue to evaluate the historical development and contingency of those categories, and scholarship is becoming increasingly concerned with how those categories have been imposed, accepted, and negotiated elsewhere in the world. Those stories, too, have now become critical in understanding the development of this field. The goal should not be to revise and reassert grand theories and sweeping definitions of magic such as those that dominated late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century sociology and anthropology, and then to test the degree to which magic thus understood appears in any given society or culture. Rather the goal should be to understand more completely how human societies and cultures have conceived, constructed, and reacted to magic and other comparable categories, and to develop and debate vigorously the ways in which such comparisons may be possible and profitable. Multiple meanings attach to the categories of magic, rituals and rites of power, and witchcraft. Scholars need to be open and alert to them all.

Witches, Saints, and Heretics

Heinrich Kramer's Ties with Italian Women Mystics

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In the late Middle Ages, mystical sainthood was often defined as antithetical to diabolic witchcraft. Whereas the saintly female mystic was revered as an emblem of piety, her mirror-image, the witch, was believed to be the embodiment of evil, who deliberately inverted orthodox religion by engaging in diabolic rites. Historians exploring the relationship between the category of "saint" and that of "witch" have pointed to the very fine line that usually separated the two in the premodern era.[1] Several studies have also lately un-

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1. See esp. Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley, Calif., 1987), 22–23; Peter Dinzelbacher, *Heilige oder Hexen? Schicksale auffälliger Frauen in Mittelalter und Frühneuzeit* (Zurich, 1995); Richard Kieckhefer, "The Holy and the Unholy: Sainthood, Witchcraft, and Magic in Late Medieval Europe," in *Christendom and Its Discontents: Exclusion, Persecution and Rebellion, 1000–1500*, ed. Scott L. Waugh and Peter D. Diehl (Cambridge, 1995), 310–37; Gábor Klaniczay, "Miraculum and Maleficium: Reflections Concerning Late Medieval Female Sainthood," in *Problems in the Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Europe*, ed. Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia and Robert W. Scribner (Wiesbaden, 1997), 64–65; Anne Jacobson Schutte, "'Saints' and 'Witches' in Early Modern Italy: Stepsisters or Strangers?" in *Time, Space, and Women's Lives in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Anne Jacobson Schutte, Thomas Kuehn, and Silvana Seidel Menchi (Kirksville, Mo., 2001), 153–64; Bengt Ankarloo, "Postface: Saints and

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derscored the connection between the gradual decline in the position of charismatic holy women, who had flourished in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and the growing preoccupation with witchcraft in the following two centuries. As the recent publications of Nancy Caciola and Dyan Elliott illustrate, the claims of saintly women to spiritual authority aroused ambivalent reactions throughout the late Middle Ages. The confusion between the holy woman and the unholy one persisted, despite the systematic attempts to distinguish female saints from demonically possessed women by establishing firm criteria for discerning spirits, and by increasingly relying on inquisitional procedure. Indeed, those attempts ultimately led to the suppression of the positive value that had previously been ascribed to some forms of interiorized female spirituality, as well as to the formation of the witch stereotype, which paved the way for the witch persecutions of the early modern era. Thus, the pathologization of specifically female forms of medieval piety was closely linked to the impetus to constrain and persecute women during the European witch-hunts.[2]

As is well known, prominent fifteenth-century churchmen such as Jean Gerson (1363–1429) and Johannes Nider (1380–1438), whose writings disclose a profound concern over witches and witchcraft, were also generally suspicious of female spirituality.[3] Alarmed by the unusual number of highly visible and influential female saints in their time, these theologians feared that women's piety had gotten out of control. They therefore attempted to constrain some of the central features of late-medieval female sanctity: ecstatic raptures, stigmata, ascetic fasting, and eucharistic devotion.[4] Some of them also blamed charismatic holy women like Catherine of Siena (1347–80) and Brigit of Sweden (1303–73), who had exerted great influence during the

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Witches," in *Procès de canonisation au moyen âge*, ed. Gábor Klaniczay (Rome, 2004), 365–70.

2. Nancy Caciola, *Discerning Spirits: Divine and Demonic Possession in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, N.Y., and London, 2003); Dyan Elliott, *Proving Woman: Female Spirituality and Inquisitional Culture in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, N.J., 2004). See also Elspeth Whitney, "The Witch 'She'/ the Historian 'He': Gender and the Historiography of the European Witch-Hunts," *Journal of Women's History* 7, no. 3 (Fall 1995): 91–93; Grace M. Jantzen, *Power, Gender and Christian Mysticism* (Cambridge, 1997), 264–77.

3. Klaniczay, "The Process of Trance, Heavenly and Diabolic Apparitions in Johannes Nider's *Formicarius*," *Collegium Budapest Discussion Paper Series* 65 (June 2003): 77–81.

4. On these specifically female forms of medieval spirituality see Bynum's path-breaking study, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*.

troubled years of the Avignon papacy, for the Great Schism that followed the pope's return to Rome.[5]

Gábor Klaniczay and other historians have recently proposed that the anxiety about the remarkable ascendancy of late-medieval female mystics, which had already been expressed by the theologians of the early fifteenth century, reached its apex in Heinrich Kramer's condemnation of women's supernatural abilities in the *Malleus Maleficarum*.[6] Heinrich Kramer, also known as Institoris (the Latinized form of his German surname), completed his notorious witchcraft treatise in 1486.[7] Arguably, with the publication of this work in 1487, the "interim position," which had previously connected the two poles

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5. See esp. Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, 277–85; Elliott, *Proving Woman*, esp. 216–19, 262–69, 284. On the impact of the Great Schism on the growing distrust of female sanctity in early-fifteenth-century clerical milieus, see also John Coakley, "Gender and the Authority of Friars: The Significance of Holy Women for Thirteenth-Century Franciscans and Dominicans," *Church History* 60, no. 4 (1991): 460.

6. Klaniczay, "Miraculum and Maleficium," 64–65, and see also André Vauchez, "Between Virginity and Spiritual Espousals: Models of Feminine Sainthood in the Christian West in the Middle Ages," *The Medieval History Journal* 2, no. 2 (1999): 359; Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, 274–319.

7. Günter Jerouschek, "500 Years of the *Malleus Maleficarum*," in *Malleus Maleficarum 1487 von Heinrich Kramer (Institoris). Nachdruck des Erstdruckes von 1487 mit Bulle und Approbatio*, ed. Günter Jerouschek (Hildesheim, Zurich, and New York, 1992), xli–xliii. Although Kramer's contemporaries assumed that he had written the *Malleus* together with Jacob Sprenger, most modern scholars now ascribe the work to Kramer alone. Sprenger, a renowned Dominican theologian, may have allowed his zealous confrere to mention his name in the "Apologia auctoris in Malleus Maleficarum" in order to add prestige and authority to his antiwitchcraft treatise. However, when Kramer became suspect of fabricating one of the official letters of approval for the *Malleus*, the relationship between the two friars became rather strained. See ibid., xlii–xliii; Klaus-Bernward Springer, "Dominican Inquisition in the Archdiocese of Mainz (1348–1520)," in *Praedicatores, Inquisitores I: The Dominicans and the Medieval Inquisition, Acts of the 1st International Seminar on the Dominicans and the Inquisition, 23–25 February 2002* (Rome, 2004), 345–51. In any case, shortly after Sprenger's death in 1496, his confreres at the Dominican friary in Cologne attempted to dissociate the name of their deceased prior from Kramer's controversial antiwitchcraft treatise. See André Schnyder, *Malleus Maleficarum. Kommentar zur Wiedergabe des Erstdrucks von 1487* (Göppingen, 1993), 62. On the circumstances surrounding the composition and publication of the *Malleus*, see now also Günter Jerouschek and Wolfgang Behringer, "'Das unheilvollste Buch der Weltliteratur?' Zur Entstehungs- und Wirkungsgeschichte des *Malleus Maleficarum* und zu den Anfängen der Hexenverfolgung," in Heinrich Kramer (Institoris), *Der Hexenhammer: Malleus Maleficarum*, trans. Günter Jerouschek, Wolfgang Behringer, and Werner Tschacher (München, 2000), 9–98; Walter Senner, "How Henricus Institoris Became Inquisitor for Germany: The Origin of *Summis desiderantis affectibus*," in *Praedicatores, Inquisitores*, 395–406.

of female saintliness and witchcraft, was completely erased. Thus, it is now generally assumed that, while earlier writers on witchcraft acknowledged the possibility of divinely inspired female mysticism, Kramer's publication of the *Malleus Maleficarum* marked "the terminus of a previously auspicious and vindicatory current in the assessment of female spirituality."[8]

By early modern standards, Heinrich Kramer's *Malleus Maleficarum* (*The Hammer of [Female] Witches*) was undoubtedly a best seller. Before the end of the seventeenth century, more than thirty editions of Kramer's antiwitchcraft treatise were published, and about thirty thousand exemplars of the *Malleus* circulated throughout Europe.[9] The *Malleus* is probably still the best-known premodern treatise on witchcraft today.[10] It has often been regarded as embodying the perversity and cruelty that kindled the great witch hunts, and has even been defined as one of "the most vicious . . . and damaging book[s] in all of world literature."[11]

The *Malleus* owes much of its notoriety to its infamous diatribe on the female sex.[12] Kramer attempts to establish a direct connection between dia-

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8. Dyan Elliott, "The Physiology of Rapture and Female Spirituality," in *Medieval Theology and the Natural Body*, ed. P. Biller and A. J. Minnis (Rochester, 1997), 167–73, quote from 173. For a critical discussion of Elliott's arguments in this article, see E. Ann Matter, "Theories of the Passions and the Ecstasies of Late Medieval Religious Women," *Essays in Medieval Studies* 18 (2001): 1–16.

9. Cf. Schnyder, *Malleus Maleficarum. Kommentar*, 452–53; Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, *Christianity and Sexuality in the Early Modern World: Regulating Desire, Reforming Practices* (London and New York, 2000), 91; Elaine Camerlynck, "Féminité et sorcellerie chez les théoriciens de la démonologie à la fin du Moyen Age: Etude du *Malleus Maleficarum*," *Renaissance and Reformation* 19 (1983): 13–25; E. William Monter, *Witchcraft in France and Switzerland: The Borderlands During the Reformation* (Ithaca, N.Y., and London, 1976), 24–26; Gary K. Waite, *Heresy, Magic, and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Houndmills, 2003), 44.

10. Cf. Edward Peters, "The Medieval Church and State on Superstition, Magic and Witchcraft: From Augustine to the Sixteenth Century," in Karen Jolly, Catharina Raudvere, and Edward Peters, *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe, 3: The Middle Ages* (London, 2002), 239; Hans Peter Broedel, "To Preserve the Manly Form from so Vile a Crime: Ecclesiastical Anti-Sodomitic Rhetoric and the Gendering of Witchcraft in the *Malleus Maleficarum*," *Essays in Medieval Studies* 19 (2002): 136.

11. Jerouschek, "500 Years of the *Malleus Maleficarum*," xxxi.

12. Cf. Michael D. Bailey, "The Feminization of Magic and the Emerging Idea of the Female Witch in the Late Middle Ages," *Essays in Medieval Studies* 19 (2002): 120; Sydney Anglo, "Evident Authority and Authoritative Evidence: The *Malleus Maleficarum*," in *The Damned Art: Essays in the Literature of Witchcraft*, ed. Sydney Anglo (London, 1977), 16–17; Anne Llewellyn Barstow, *Witchcraze: A New History of the European Witch Hunts* (London, 1994), 62, 171–72. For a recent outline and

bolic witchcraft and women throughout his treatise, and dedicates an entire chapter (Liber 1, Quaestio 6) exclusively to explaining why women are more prone to become witches than are men. In this chapter, he contends that women's nature is weaker than men's not only physically, but also psychologically, intellectually, and morally. Kramer argues that women's lascivious nature and moral and intellectual inferiority are the reasons for their greater proclivity to witchcraft. He calls for the extermination of the sect of (female) witches, and claims that the devil takes advantage of women's insatiable lust and inherent propensity to receive the influence of a disembodied spirit in order to harm Christian society.[13]

Over the last thirty-five years, scholars have been debating the significance of Kramer's virulent tirade against the female sex, and its impact on the gender-related nature of the great European witch hunts. The view expressed by radical feminist historians, who characterized the *Malleus* as the work that "launched the witch persecutions as an attack on women" by the patriarchal establishment,[14] has been much criticized since the mid-1970s.[15] Notwith-

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analysis of the main arguments in the *Malleus* see Broedel, *The 'Malleus Maleficarum' and the Construction of Witchcraft: Theology and Popular Belief* (Manchester, 2003).

13. Heinrich Kramer (Institoris), *Malleus Maleficarum 1487 von Heinrich Kramer (Institoris)*, ed. Jerouschek, 1.6, esp. fols. 20^{v}–22^{v} and 23^{r}. See also ibid., 1.3, fols. 11^{r}–13^{v}.

14. Cf. Barstow, *Witchcraze*, 62, 113, 171–72.

15. See esp. Diane Purkiss, *The Witch in History: Early Modern and Twentieth-Century Representations* (London and New York, 1996), 8–11. For earlier studies that questioned the presumed influence of the *Malleus*—and of Kramer's misogynistic witch stereotype—on the realities of the trials in many European regions, see esp. H. C. Erik Midelfort, *Witchhunting in Southwestern Germany, 1562–1684: The Social and Intellectual Foundations* (Stanford, 1972), 5, 21; Susanna Burghartz, "The Equation of Women and Witches: A Case Study of Witchcraft Trials in Lucerne and Lausanne in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century," in *The German Underworld: Deviants and Outcasts in German History*, ed. Richard J. Evans (London, 1988), 59–60; David Harley, "Historians as Demonologists: The Myth of the Midwife-Witch," *Social History of Medicine* 3 (1990): 1–26; Robin Briggs, "Women as Victims? Witches, Judges and the Community," *French History* 5, no. 4 (1991): 439; Stuart Clark, "The 'Gendering' of Witchcraft in French Demonology: Misogyny or Polarity?," *French History* 5, no. 4 (1991): 426–37. See now also Katherine Park, "Medicine and Magic: The Healing Arts," in *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Judith C. Brown and Robert C. Davis (London and New York, 1998), 144–45; Lara Apps and Andrew Gow, *Male Witches in Early Modern Europe* (Manchester, 2003), esp. 3–4, 100–108. The *Malleus* has nonetheless continued to serve as the main point of reference in the writings of some feminist scholars well into the 1990s. See for example Barstow, *Witchcraze*; Dea Moscarda, "Donna-Strega. Misoginia della grande epoca inquisitoriale (dall'analisi del *Malleus Maleficarum* e dalla lettura di alcuni altri trattati di demonologia giuridica),"

standing the important studies of Stuart Clark and Walter Stephens, who question the originality and significance of the *Malleus*'s misogyny,[16] several scholars have recently reaffirmed the book's role in facilitating the concurrent diabolization and feminization of witchcraft in the late fifteenth century. As Gerhild Scholz Williams, Sigrid Brauner, Hans Peter Broedel, Michael Bailey and Günter Jerouschek have noted, the publication of the *Malleus* marked a significant turning point in the history of European witch persecution. Although earlier writers on witchcraft, such as Johannes Nider, assumed that witches were predominantly women, Kramer was clearly more insistent in claiming that diabolic witchcraft was found mainly among members of the female sex. Furthermore, his characterization of the diabolic female witch, which influenced the notions expressed in the writings of later demonologists and witch hunters, created a uniformity of discourse in the witchcraft debate of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[17]

Because of the presumed impact of Kramer's discussion of female witches in the *Malleus*, historians have also tried to explain the reasons for his elaboration of such a virulent attack on women. Several scholars proposed that the *Malleus* simply embodied a chaste friar's fear of female sexuality, but this explanation has now largely been dismissed.[18] As already noted, a more recent

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Ricerche di storia sociale e religiosa 40 (1991), esp. 68–69, 89; Jantzen, *Power, Gender and Christian Mysticism*, 264–77, and the discussion in Alison Rowlands, "Telling Witchcraft Stories: New Perspectives on Witchcraft and Witches in the Early Modern Period," *Gender and History* 10, no. 2 (August 1998): 296; Willem de Blécourt, "The Making of the Female Witch: Reflections on Witchcraft and Gender in the Early Modern Period," *Gender and History* 12, no. 2 (July 2000): 292.

16. Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford and New York, 1997), esp. 110–16; Walter Stephens, *Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief* (Chicago and London, 2002), 32–55.

17. See Jerouschek, "500 Years of the *Malleus Maleficarum*," xxxi–xxxii, xxxv, xlvi; Sigrid Brauner, *Fearless Wives and Frightened Shrews: The Construction of the Witch in Early Modern Germany*, ed. Robert H. Brown (Amherst, Mass., 1995), esp. 3, 13–23, 31–49; Gerhild Scholz Williams, *Defining Dominion: The Discourses of Magic and Witchcraft in Early Modern France and Germany* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1995), 1–12, 65–87, 135–36; Broedel, *The 'Malleus Maleficarum,'* esp. 7–8, 19–20, 158, 167–84; Bailey, "From Sorcery to Witchcraft: Clerical Conceptions of Magic in the Late Middle Ages," *Speculum* 76 (2001), esp. 986–87, and see also Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1993), 226; Broedel, "To Preserve the Manly Form from so Vile a Crime," 136–37.

18. For example Anglo, "Evident Authority," 16; Julio Caro Baroja, *The World of the Witches*, trans. O. N. V. Glendinning, 3rd English impression (Chicago, 1971), 95–97; Jean Delumeau, *La peur en occident XIVe–XVIIIe siècles: Une cité assiégée* (Paris,

explanation places Kramer's misogynistic configuration of witchcraft in the context of late-medieval clerical discontent with the supernatural abilities and social prestige of saintly female mystics. Hence, it is now assumed that Kramer's assault on the female sex in the *Malleus* reflected the escalating anxiety over the somatic spirituality and political influence of charismatic holy women such as Catherine of Siena, whom fifteenth-century theologians held responsible for the ensuing troubles of the Church.[19]

Interestingly, whereas the recent studies that analyze the attitude of earlier fifteenth-century authors toward women take into consideration the entire corpus of their writings, discussions of Kramer's view of the female sex still focus exclusively on the *Malleus*. Indeed, most of the works that deal with early modern demonology—and virtually *all* the studies published in the English language—disregard Kramer's whereabouts during the last eighteen years of his life, from the publication of the *Malleus* in 1487 until his death in 1505.[20] Thus, while we know all the details about Kramer's inquisitorial activity prior to the publication of the *Malleus*, most biographical surveys of his life simply end by noting: "[Kramer] retained his position as inquisitor for most of his long life, and he was still pursuing witches and heretics in Bohemia when he died, probably in 1505."[21]

In the first part of this essay, I analyze several hitherto-overlooked sources pertaining to the last decade of Kramer's life, which disclose his active

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1978), 308, 322–23; Camerlynck, "Féminité et sorcellerie," 22–23, and see the critique of this psycho-historical explanation in Midelfort, *Witchhunting in Southwestern Germany*, 5.

19. See esp. Klaniczay, "Miraculum and Maleficium," 64–65; Vauchez, "Between Virginity and Spiritual Espousals," 359; Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, 318–19; Elliott, "The Physiology of Rapture and Female Spirituality," 167–73.

20. Notable exceptions are the comprehensive biographical accounts in Schnyder, *Malleus Maleficarum. Kommentar*, esp. 33–73, and Peter Segl, "Heinrich Institoris: Persönlichkeit und literarisches werk," in *Der Hexenhammer: Entstehung und Umfeld des 'Malleus maleficarum' von 1487*, ed. Peter Segl (Cologne, 1988), 102–26. See also the discussion of the latter part of Kramer's inquisitorial career, in the context of the changing religious practices at the end of the fifteenth century, in Charles Zika, "Hosts, Processions and Pilgrimages: Controlling the Sacred in Fifteenth-Century Germany," *Past and Present* 118 (1988): 27–30.

21. Quoted from Broedel, *The 'Malleus Maleficarum,'* 14. Stuart Clark has recently emphasized the need to situate early modern witch-hunters' manuals within the broader context of their authors' entire life circumstances in his review of Michael D. Bailey's book *Battling Demons: Witchcraft, Heresy and Reform in the Late Middle Ages* (University Park, Pa., 2003), in the *American Historical Review* 108, no. 5 (December 2003): 1510.

involvement in promoting the cults of the four best-known Italian holy women of his time: Lucia Brocadelli, Colomba Guadagnoli, Stefana Quinzani, and Osanna Andreasi. These renowned Dominican tertiaries have received much scholarly attention since the publication of Gabriella Zarri's seminal study *Le sante vive: Profezie di corte e devozione femminile tra '400 e '500* in 1990.[22] However, Kramer's ties with them, and his important role in spreading their fame for sanctity throughout Europe, have not been noted before. In light of my new findings, I then challenge the accepted historiographical notion of Kramer's alleged fear of charismatic women. I propose that his admiration for contemporary female mystics actually went hand-in-hand with his preoccupation with diabolic witches. I also suggest that Kramer's attempts to mobilize the central features that had traditionally characterized medieval female sanctity in his campaign against heresy reflect the peculiar religious conditions on the eve of the Reformation. My alternative reading of Kramer's attitude toward women, witchcraft, and female sanctity calls for a reappraisal of the writings and career of the inquisitor, who is often portrayed as the greatest misogynist of the premodern era.

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The first evidence of Kramer's ties with Italian holy women is a notarial document (*Instrumentum publicum*) certifying one of the inquisitorial examinations of Lucia Brocadelli, also known as Lucia of Narni (1476–1544), the most famous Italian *santa viva* (living saint) of the early sixteenth century.[23] Two copies of this notarial document, now in the main Dominican archive (Archivio Generalizio dell'Ordine dei Predicatori) in Rome, which were signed by the Ferrarese notary Bartholomeo Silvestri, indicate that the exami-

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22. Gabriella Zarri, *Le sante vive: Profezie di corte e devozione femminile tra '400 e '500* (Turin, 1990). For Zarri's impact on the study of Brocadelli, Quinzani, Guadagnoli, and the other Italian "holy women" of the early sixteenth century, see the bibliographical survey in Tamar Herzig, "Holy Women, Male Promoters, and Savonarolan Piety in Northern Italy, c. 1498–1545" (Ph.D. diss., The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2005), 12–15.

23. On Brocadelli and her short-lived saintly career see Herzig, "The Rise and Fall of a Savonarolan Visionary: Lucia Brocadelli's Contribution to the Piagnone Movement," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 95 (2004): 34–60; Adriano Prosperi, "Brocadelli (Broccadelli), Lucia," *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* (Rome, 1960–), 14:381–83; E. Ann Matter, "Prophetic Patronage as Repression: Lucia Brocadelli da Narni and Ercole d'Este," in *Christendom and Its Discontents*, 168–76; Eadem, "Lucia Brocadelli: *Seven Revelations*," in *Dominican Penitent Women*, ed. Maiju Lehmijoki-Gardner (New York and Mahwah, N.J., 2005), 212–16.

nation of Brocadelli's stigmata wounds was conducted at Heinrich Kramer's request. Kramer himself witnessed the inquisitorial examination, which was held in Ferrara on March 2, 1500.[24]

According to the notarial document, several witnesses, including Brocadelli's most ardent patron, Ercole I d'Este, the duke of Ferrara; his court physician; and some of his family members, were present at the inquisitorial examination. The witnesses were

> [A]sked by the venerable Reverend and religious Father, the Doctor of Sacred Theology, Magister Brother Heinrich Institoris of the Order of Preachers and Inquisitor of heretical depravity of the province of *Germania superior* . . .[25] whether it [wa]s true that the Venerable Sister Lucia bore the stigmata on her members. . . . They all declared unanimously that they had seen Sister Lucia of Narni . . . having, and bearing the scars, or wounds, called stigmata, on both her hands and on her two feet.[26]

Unlike the other three inquisitorial processes that were held for the purpose of establishing the authenticity of Brocadelli's stigmatization, the examination of March 2, 1500, was not mentioned by her early modern hagiographers. Nor was the certificate of this examination printed in any of Brocadelli's modern biographies, or in studies that survey Kramer's inquisitorial career.[27] Nonetheless, quite a few sources indicate that Kramer, who had

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24. Most of Bartholomeo Silvestri's original registers from the years 1477–1528 are preserved at the Archivio di Stato di Ferrrara (*Ser. notai*, matricola 338: "Silvestri, Bartolomeo," pacchi 1–31), but those dating from 1498 until mid-June 1500 are no longer extant. Nonetheless, one contemporary copy of the notarial certificate of March 2, 1500 can be found in the *carte* numbered 332^{r}–332^{v}, and another in the *carte* numbered 333^{r}–335^{v}, in the Archivio Generalizio dell'Ordine dei Predicatori, Convento di Santa Sabina, Rome (hereafter AGOP), *Sez. XIV*, lib. GGG, Pt. I.

25. Kramer had been serving as inquisitor of *Germania superior* since 1479. See Springer, "Dominican Inquisition in the Archdiocese of Mainz," 346–47.

26. AGOP, *Sez. XIV*, lib. GGG, Pt. I, cc. 333^{v}–334^{v}: "Hi omnes supranominati, Requisiti à Venerabili et Reverendo ac Religioso patre, Sacre Theologie Doctore, Magistro fratre Henrico ordinis predicatorum Institore ac Inquisitore heretice pravitatis per Superiorem Germaniam . . . declararı, et exprimi . . . an veritas sit eadem Venerabilem Sororem Luciam Stigmata habere in memberis eius . . . unanimiter Verbo veritatis affirmarunt . . . vidisse . . . Reverendam Sororem Luciam Narnensem, habere, et deferre Cicatrices, seu vulnera, que stigmata nuncupantur, in ambabus manibus, et in ambobus pedibus eius."

27. The only scholar that I know of who has noted the manuscript copies of the notarial certificate (without pointing to the significance of Kramer's involvement in examining Brocadelli's stigmata) is Michael Tavuzzi, who mentions them in passing in his article "Giovanni Rafanelli da Ferrara OP (+1515), Inquisitor of Ferrara and Master of the Sacred Palace," *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 67 (1997): 140–41.

already visited Rome and northern Italy on several occasions during the 1480s and 1490s, made another trip to the Italian peninsula at the beginning of 1500. In January 1500, the Alsatian friar spent some time at the papal court in Rome. It is more than plausible that he first heard about the miraculous gifts of Lucia Brocadelli from her paternal uncle Domenico, who was attached to the papal curia, and served as *Vicario* to Pope Alexander VI at that time.[28]

While Kramer was in Rome, Alexander VI appointed him papal nuncio and inquisitor of Bohemia and Moravia. A papal bull of February 4, 1500, specifically charged him with the task of prosecuting and converting the members of the heretical sects that flourished in the Kingdom of Bohemia in those years. Having probably visited Ferrara on his way north from Rome, he arrived in Olmütz (Olomouc), the episcopal see and administrative center of Moravia, later in 1500.[29]

In Olmütz, Kramer aimed his inquisitorial zeal mainly at the *Unitas fratrum*, also known as the Bohemian Brethren. The Brethren, whose members had broken off from the Utraquist Hussites in the mid-fifteenth century, shared many doctrinal tenets with the Waldensians. They were apparently influenced by Waldensian doctrine, had ties with northern Italian and French Waldensians, and even suffered temporary exile after giving refuge to Waldensians who had fled persecution in Brandenburg. Although the *Unitas fratrum* and the Waldensians remained separate groups, many of the Catholic opponents of the Bohemian Brethren—including Kramer—regarded them as a Waldensian subsect.[30]

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28. Giacomo Marcianese, *Narratione della nascità, vita e morte della B. Lucia da Narni dell'ordine di San Domenico, fondatrice del monastero di Santa Caterina da Siena di Ferrara* (Ferrara, 1640), 11; cf. Edmund G. Gardner, *Dukes and Poets in Ferrara: A Study in the Poetry, Religion and Politics of the Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries* (1904; reprint New York, 1968), 366.

29. I use the term "Kingdom of Bohemia" to denote the entire Bohemian realm which, at that time, included Moravia and Silesia. The papal bull, and other documents pertaining to Kramer's assignment to Olmütz, are printed in Schnyder, *Malleus Maleficarum. Kommentar*, 67–68.

30. On the evolution of the *Unitas fratrum*, and on their ties with the Waldensians, see Malcolm Lambert, *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation*, 2nd ed. (Oxford and Cambridge, Mass., 1992), 352–60; Edmund De Schweinitz, *The History of the Church Known as the Unitas Fratrum or the Unity of the Brethren, Founded by the Followers of John Huss, the Bohemian Reformer and Martyr* (Bethlehem, Pa., 1901), 140, 180–81; Gabriel Audisio, *The Waldensian Dissent: Persecution and Survival, c. 1170–1570* (Cambridge, 1999), 84–85. On the use of the term "Waldensians" by Catholic authorities referring to the Bohemian Brethren see Josef Müller, "Bohemian Brethren," in *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious*

Kramer first attempted to convert the Bohemian Brethren by means of persuasion. He therefore invited two of their leaders, Thomas of Prelouc and Lawrence Krasonicky, to a public disputation in the Dominican church of S. Michael in Olmütz. In this public disputation, which was held in the beginning of 1501, Kramer strove to confute the Brethren's main heretical tenets, and especially their negation of the doctrine of transubstantiation, which he found particularly disturbing.[31] The Dominican inquisitor also strove to demonstrate that Roman Catholicism was indeed the true faith. For this purpose, he portrayed the Church of Rome as the only divinely elected church, arguing that God manifested his powers by the "miraculous deeds" of several contemporary Catholic women who were reputed for sanctity.[32] Not incidentally, the saintly women whom he praised in the disputation were all tertiaries affiliated with his own order. By lauding their divine gifts, Kramer clearly also hoped to enhance the Dominicans' prestige at a time marked by an intense rivalry for saints among the mendicant orders.[33] In addition to describing the miraculous stigmata of Lucia Brocadelli, he mentioned the

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Knowledge (1908–12; reprint Grand Rapids, Mich., 1963–66), 2:214. Kramer had been involved in the persecution of Waldensians long before he started aiming his inquisitorial zeal against the Bohemian Brethren; as early as 1458, he participated in the inquisitorial trial against the Waldensian bishop Friedrich Reiser (1401–58) in Strasburg. See Segl, "Heinrich Institoris," 116; Jerouschek and Behringer, "'Das unheilvollste Buch der Weltliteratur?'," 41; Wolfgang Behringer, "How Waldensians Became Witches: Heretics and Their Journey to the Other World," in *Communicating with the Spirits*, ed. Gábor Klaniczay and Éva Pócs in collaboration with Eszter Csonka-Takács (Budapest and New York, 2005), 183.

31. Kramer expressed an abiding concern for the host and invested considerable efforts in the defense of eucharistic reality throughout his inquisitorial career. See Zika, "Hosts, Processions and Pilgrimages," 27–28, and Stephens, *Demon Lovers*, 223–32.

32. On Kramer's public disputation with Thomas of Prelouc and Lawrence Krasonicky, see Joseph Müller, *Geschichte der Böhmischen Brüder* (Herrnhut, 1922), 311–12; E. Charvériat, *Les affaires religieuses en Bohême au seizième siècle: Depuis l'origine des Frères Bohèmes jusques et y compris la lettre de majesté de 1609* (Paris, 1886), 30–31; De Schweinitz, *The History of the Church Known as the Unitas Fratrum*, 183; Rudolf Říčan, *The History of the Unity of the Brethren: A Protestant Hussite Church in Bohemia and Moravia*, trans. C. Daniel Crews (Bethlehem, Pa., 1992), 91–92.

33. The Dominicans' attempts to promote these three Italian tertiaries were particularly related to their rivalry with the Franciscans, who denied the possibility of female stigmatization (see below). On the importance that religious persons ascribed to the number of saintly individuals associated with their order see Jodi Bilinkoff, *Related Lives: Confessors and Their Female Penitents, 1450–1750* (Ithaca and New York, 2005), 38–39.

astonishing ecstasies of Brocadelli's admirer, Stefana Quinzani (1457–1530), in which she periodically relived Christ's Passion.[34] Finally, Kramer praised Brocadelli's friend Colomba Guadagnoli (1467–1501), who was said to have subsisted on the Eucharist alone without receiving any earthly nourishment for more than six years, thus attesting to the real presence of Christ in the Host.[35]

Kramer's lengthy discussion of the paramystical experiences of the Italian holy women evidently aroused the curiosity of the leaders of the *Unitas fratrum*. Thus, in a letter that Thomas of Prelouc sent Albrecht of Sternberg on April 10, 1501, he sneered at Kramer's attempts to convert the Brethren with his stories about the miraculous gifts of the Italian mystics. Brother Thomas suggested that the holy women prove that they indeed have miraculous powers by going on a crusade against the Turks.[36] Accounts of the "fables and nonsense stories" ("*fabulae atque nugae*") that Kramer told the Bohemian Brethren about the miraculous stigmatization and abstinence from food of the Dominican tertiaries—with a specific mention of "Sister Lucia," "Sister Stefana," and "Sister Colomba"—also appear in later apologetic writings of the Brethren.[37]

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34. On Stefana Quinzani see Niccolò del Re, "Quinzani, Stefana," in *Bibliotheca Sanctorum* (Rome, 1961–69), 10: cols. 1318–1321; Lehmijoki-Gardner, *Dominican Penitent Women*, 192–97. On Quinzani's admiration for Brocadelli, and on her ties with Brocadelli's supporters, see Herzig, "Holy Women, Male Promoters," 173–79, 360–80, 405–13.

35. For recent surveys of Guadagnoli's life see the essays in *Una santa, una città: Atti del Convegno storico nel V centenario della venuta a Perugia di Colomba da Rieti*, ed. Giovanna Casagrande and Enrico Menestò (Spoleto, 1991); Enrico Menestò and Roberto Rusconi, *Umbria sacra e civile* (Turin, 1989), 211–26, 261–62; Maiju Lehmijoki-Gardner, *Worldly Saints: The Social Interaction of Dominican Penitent Women in Italy, 1200–1500* (Helsinki, 1998), 49–50; Gabriella Zarri, "Colomba da Rieti," in *Il grande libro dei santi: Dizionario enciclopedico*, ed. C. Leonardi, A. Riccardi, and G. Zarri (Turin, 1998), 1:467–70; Maria Luisa Cianini Pierotti, *Colomba da Rieti a Perugia: "Ecco la Santa. Ecco la Santa che viene"* (Bologna, 2001). On Guadagnoli's abstinence from food and eucharistic devotion see the discussion in Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*, esp. 86–87, 142–49; cf. Rudolph M. Bell, *Holy Anorexia* (Chicago, 1985), 156–58. On Guadagnoli's friendship with Brocadelli and her supporters see Herzig, "Holy Women, Male Promoters," 66–114.

36. Thomas's letter to Albrecht of Sternberg is cited in Schnyder, *Malleus Maleficarum. Kommentar*, 72–73, and see also Říčan, *History of the Unity of the Brethren*, 92.

37. See for example Joachim Camerarius, "De Ecclesiis Fratrum in Bohemia et Moravia Narratio Historica," in his *Historica narratio de Fratrum orthodoxorum ecclesiis in Bohemia, Moravia et Polonia*, ed. Ludwig Camerarius, 2 vols. in 1 (Heidelberg, 1605), 96: "Atque concedunt cohorti Papali, in primis Monachicis conventibus, miraculorum mirabilium laudem, atque gloriam, et ridiculas atque futiles notas stigmatum

Once he realized that his disputation with Thomas of Prelouc and Lawrence Krasonicky had not convinced the Brethren to abandon their heretical views, Kramer began to preach particularly venomous sermons against the *Unitas fratrum*. Among other slanders, he described their lascivious nocturnal meetings—strikingly reminiscent of the witches' horrendous gatherings—and their rite of swallowing the devil in the shape of a fly in order to learn diabolic wisdom. His zealous preaching activity did not bring about the desired mass conversion of the *Unitas fratrum*,[38] and the heretics' obstinacy finally convinced Kramer of the need to publish a voluminous polemical tract against them. This tract, the *Sancte Romane ecclesie fidei defensionis clippeum adversus waldensium seu pikardorum heresim* (*A Shield to Defend the Holy Roman Church against the Heresy of the Pikarts or Waldensians*), was first published in Olmütz on April 20, 1501.[39]

The *Clippeum* was aimed at warding off the heretical tenets of the "Pikarts or Waldensians," as the Catholic adversaries of the Bohemian Brethren used to call them.[40] It was written as a manual for preachers active in regions infected by heresy, instructing them how to confute the heterodox beliefs of the *Unitas fratrum*. Because of the expressed aim of his book, Kramer did not merely provide his readers with theoretical theological arguments, but also discussed contemporary evidence, which was supposed to assist preachers in

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cruentorum, quocunque sane pacto, non solum in Franciscana sectâ viris, sed virginibus quoque impressas in familiâ Dominicana, et a cibo incredibilem abstinentiam aliorum, et similes fabulas atque nugas: quales recenset Henricus quispiam Institoris cognomine, in concionibus sane mirificis suis, nominans Luciam, Columbam, Stephanam, ut taceantur alliae fallaciae." Although Joachim Camerarius completed this work before his death in 1574, it was only published for the first time in 1605 by his grandson, Ludwig (De Schweinitz, *History of the Church Known as the Unitas Fratrum*, 412–13).

38. See the "Excusatio fratrum valdensium contra binas litteras doctoris Augustini datas ad regem," originally written in 1508 and printed in Jacob Ziegler, *In hoc volumine haec continentur: Duplex Co[n]fessio Valdensiu[m] ad Regem Ungarie missa. . . . Excusatio Valdensium contra binas litteras Doctoris Augustini. Iacobi Zigler ex Landau Bavarie Contra heresim Valdensium libri quinq[ue]* (Leipzig, 1512); Schnyder, *Malleus Maleficarum. Kommentar*, 71. On Kramer's slanderous sermons against the Brethren and their possible impact on the decreasing toleration of the *Unitas fratrum* in the Kingdom of Bohemia, see also De Schweinitz, *History of the Church Known as the Unitas Fratrum*, 183; Říčan, *History of the Unity of the Brethren*, 91; Müller, "Bohemian Brethren," 215.

39. On the *Clippeum* as an important source for Kramer's activities during the last years of his life see Segl, "Heinrich Institoris," 124–26.

40. Cf. Müller, "Bohemian Brethren," 214.

successfully confuting heretical claims. Understandably, Kramer did not mention his own earlier failure to accomplish this goal in his tract.

Throughout the *Clippeum*, Kramer alludes to the existence of "numerous" holy women, and praises especially those saintly virgins who were living in northern Italy at that time. As in the disputation in S. Michael, the Dominican inquisitor does not miss the opportunity to enhance the prestige of his own order by singling out the exceptional piety of several Dominican tertiaries.[41] He dedicates more than twelve pages to a lengthy and detailed discussion of the paramystical phenomena experienced by Brocadelli, Quinzani and Guadagnoli, noting the supernatural abilities of the Mantuan mystic Osanna Andreasi (1449–1505)—an admirer of Guadagnoli and Brocadelli and a close friend of Quinzani—in passing.[42]

Like Catherine of Siena, Brocadelli, Guadagnoli, Quinzani, and Andreasi were all renowned for their somatic experiences: ecstatic raptures, stigmatization, ascetic fasts, and eucharistic devotion. Moreover, the Dominican friars who backed these four mystics were concurrently involved in the attempts to prove the authenticity of Saint Catherine's invisible stigmata, which was seriously contested by Franciscan theologians intent on reserving this privilege solely for Saint Francis. In the first years of the sixteenth century, the paramystical experiences of the Italian tertiaries—and especially Brocadelli's bleeding stigmata—were pawns in the Dominicans' attempts to receive official approbation of Saint Catherine's stigmatization.[43]

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41. Kramer, *Sancte Romane eccl[es]ie fidei defensionis clippeum Adversus walde[n]sium seu Pickardorum heresim* (Olmütz, 1501), fol. 19^{v}: "Su[n]t nempe per Lombardias inter q[uam]plures virgines devotas christi in magna vite sanctimonia cognite. Et hoc dumtaxat in una religione que de penitencia sancti Dominici nu[n]cupa[n]tur demotis aliis religionibus in quib[us] plures clarent miraculis. Et inter illas habentur tres excellentissime sanctitatis."

42. Ibid., fols. 10^{r}; 18^{r}–22^{v}; 50^{r}; 79^{v}. On Andreasi see Zarri, "Pietà e profezia alle corti padane: Le pie consigliere dei principi," in *Il Rinascimento nelle corti padane: Società e cultura*, ed. Paolo Rossi (Bari, 1977), 201–37; Gherardo Cappelluti, "Andreasi, Osanna," in *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, 1: cols. 1171–74; Giuseppe Bagolini and Ludovico Ferretti, *La Beata Osanna Andreasi da Mantova terziaria domenicana (1449–1505)* (Florence, 1905); Lehmijoki-Gardner, *Dominican Penitent Women*, 201–11.

43. Gabriella Zarri, "Lucia da Narni e il movimento femminile savonaroliano," in *Girolamo Savonarola da Ferrara all'Europa*, ed. Gigliola Fragnito and Mario Miegge (Florence, 2001), 102–12. As is well known, Saint Catherine's devotees regarded her as a real stigmatic, even though no visible marks of the stigmata had ever appeared on her body. When they attempted to have the reality of her stigmata officially recognized in the second half of the fifteenth century, they met with the resolute opposition of Franciscan theologians. During the years 1472–78, the Franciscan pope Sixtus IV promulgated several bulls prohibiting the artistic representation of Catherine's stig-

The saintliness of Brocadelli, Guadagnoli, Quinzani, and Andreasi, then, was primarily manifested through their physical suffering; but the four women were also famous for their prophecies and visions. Regarded by many of their admiring contemporaries as the spiritual successors of Catherine of Siena, they exerted a significant influence on the social, religious and political life in their towns.[44] Hence, we can see that the women that Kramer lauded in his *Clippeum* embodied all the characteristis of late medieval female sanctity, which early-fifteenth-century theologians concerned with witchcraft and diabolic temptations had mistrusted. Although Kramer, too, was preoccupied with the diabolic sect of witches, he did not hesitate to praise the ecstatic, and physical, spirituality of the Dominican holy women. The ruthless witch-hunter expressed his profound admiration for the saintly Italian tertiaries, and even went so far as declaring that their miraculous experiences alone "suffice[d] as a proof for the truth of the faith of the Holy Roman Church."[45]

The importance that Kramer ascribed in his *Clippeum* to the "proofs for the truth of the faith" provided by the Dominican holy women probably reflected his understanding of some of the reasons for the remarkable growth of heretical groups in the late fifteenth century. As Kramer apparently knew, the charismatic and ascetic leaders of such groups in Bohemia and Moravia often enjoyed a popular reputation as holy men because of the great austerity and purity of their lives. Some of the Bohemian heretics engaged in prophetic activities, while others were popular healers, and their healing powers were regarded as an indication of their holiness. Although they opposed the veneration of saints, some of them were perceived as "living saints," and were even addressed as "*sancti viri*." Their saintly reputations doubtlessly contributed to

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matization, and forbidding Dominican preachers from mentioning it in their sermons. Innocent VIII confirmed this ban in 1490 and, although the Dominicans later persuaded Alexander VI to permit Catherine's depiction with signs of non-bloody stigmata wounds, the controversy was only resolved in their favor in 1630. See Barbara Pike Gordley, "A Dominican Saint for the Benedictines: Beccafumi's Stigmatization of St. Catherine," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 55, no. 3 (1992): 397–98; André Vauchez, *The Laity in the Middle Ages: Religious Beliefs and Devotional Practices*, ed. Daniel Bornstein, trans. Margery J. Schneider (Notre Dame and London, 1993), 249–50.

44. The public influence and visionary and prophetic activities of these four women are discussed in Herzig, "Holy Women, Male Promoters." See 68–73, 86–103 for Guadagnoli, 151–161, 194–224 for Brocadelli, 360–380, 405–413 for Quinzani, and 224–255 for Andreasi. See also Eadem, "The Rise and Fall," 34–59.

45. Kramer, *Sancte Romane eccl[es]ie fidei defensionis clippeum*, fol. 22^{v}: "Et hec sufficia[n]t in approbatio[n]em veritatis fidei s[an]cte Romane ecclesie."

the relative success of the heretical sects that flourished in the Kingdom of Bohemia—despite the heavy persecution that they suffered—during the years 1470–1500.[46]

Hoping to curtail the allurement of local heretical groups, Kramer attempted to show that the ultimate manifestations of divine powers could only be found among contemporary Catholics, notably those affiliated with his own religious order. While individual heretics may have enjoyed the reputation of *sancti viri*, none of them could boast of "miraculous gifts" comparable to those of the Italian *sante vive*—to Brocadelli's bleeding stigmata wounds, to Quinzani's ecstasy of the Passion, or to Guadagnoli's eucharistic *inedia*. Kramer's lengthy discussion of the supernatural phenomena experienced by these pious Dominican tertiaries was aimed not only at confirming the contested incarnational doctrines of Catholicism, but also at proving the divine election of the Roman Church.[47] Hence, Kramer cited from a letter written by Duke Ercole I d'Este in praise of the Italian holy women, assuring the readers of his *Clippeum* that the miraculous gifts that Brocadelli, Quinzani, Guadagnoli and Andreasi enjoyed

> [A]re shown by the Supreme Craftsman in the bodies of His servants to confirm and strengthen our faith, and to remove the incredulity of impious men and those hard of heart . . . [and they] bear witness to us that our Catholic faith is the true faith, and that the Holy Roman Church is the mother of the faith, and should be followed in all matters pertaining to salvation and good morals.[48]

In the beginning of his discussion of the Italian holy women, Kramer asserts that he saw the miraculous stigmata wounds of Lucia Brocadleli "with

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46. De Schweinitz, *History of the Church Known as the Unitas Fratrum*, 117–18, 134–35, 205; cf. Wolfgang Behringer, "Detecting the Ultimate Conspiracy, or How Waldensians Became Witches," in *Conspiracies and Conspiracy Theory in Early Modern Europe: From the Waldensians to the French Revolution*, ed. Barry Coward and Julian Swann (Aldershot, 2004), 20–21; idem, "How Waldensians Became Witches," 180–81.

47. Cf. Camerarius, "De Ecclesiis Fratrum in Bohemia et Moravia Narratio Historica," 95–96.

48. Kramer, *Sancte Romane eccl[es]ie fidei defensionis clippeum*, fols. 21ᵛ–22ᵛ: "ea que ab summo rerum opifice in servorum suorum corporib[us] oste[n]duntur, ad fidei nostrae confortat[io]nem et robur et impiorum et i[n]durati cordis virorum incredulitate[m] summove[n]da[m] . . . [et] nobis testimoniu[m] reddunt et fidem hanc nostra[m] catholicam vera[m] esse, et sancta[m] Romanam ecclesiam esse fidei matrem, et i[n] o[mn]ibus q[ui] ad salute[m] et bonos mores specta[n]t esse sequendam." On Ercole's letter of March 4, 1500, from which Kramer cited this passage, see below.

his own eyes" ("*oculis conspexi*"). Later in the *Clippeum*, he affirms that he not only saw Brocadelli's stigmata wounds, but also kissed them ("*stigmata vidi et osculatus sum*"), during his visit to Ferrara "in the holy year" of 1500.[49] This assertion corroborates the evidence in the notarial certificate of Brocadelli's examination on March 2, 1500, and attests to Kramer's admiring fascination with Brocadelli and her mystical gifts.

Throughout his discussion of Brocadelli's supernatural experiences, Kramer refers to her as a "most saintly virgin."[50] This is particularly intriguing since, at the turn of the sixteenth century, the issue of Brocadelli's virginity was actually seriously contested. Whereas Guadagnoli, Quinzani, and Andreasi never married, and were commonly believed to have preserved their virginity, Brocadelli (as her opponents often pointed out) had been married for three years before she became a Dominican tertiary in 1494. Ercole d'Este and Brocadelli's other supporters, who were aware of the importance of sexual purity as a prerequisite for approved female sanctity, nevertheless emphasized the virginal state of the Dominican stigmatic. Brocadelli herself wished to be addressed as a virgin, and argued that she had succeeded in keeping her relationship with her husband chaste, thanks to a crucifix that she had placed between the two of them in bed, and to her constant prayers.[51] Kramer, who

49. Ibid., fol. 10^{r}: "una Lucia nomine, ferrarie dege[n]s, Stigmata n[ost]ri salvatoris quinq[ue] in suo corpore visibiliter defert, que et oculis conspexi"; ibid., fol. 79^{v}: "Etiam si nullis aliis ab extra clarerent miraculis uti soror Lucia . . . iam autem Ferrarie degens, stigmatibus nostri saluatoris visibiliter insignita in manibus et pedibus et latere cum stillacione sanguinis singulis sextis feriis. . . . existit. Quam et ego inquisitor visitando in anno iubileo stigmata vidi et osculatus sum." The last passage has been noted in passing by Sigmund Riezler, *Geschichte der Hexenprozesse in Bayern. Im Lichte der allgemeinen Entwickelung dargestellt* (Stuttgart, 1896), 101, and by Segl, "Heinrich Institoris," 126, n. 103, and is quoted in Schnyder, *Malleus Maleficarum. Kommentar*, 64. Riezler, Segl, and Schnyder do not mention the notarial certificate that attests to Kramer's personal involvement in examining Brocadelli, or his role in publishing the pamphlet *Stigmifere virginis Lucie de Narnia aliarumque spiritualium personarum feminei sexus facta admiratione digna* (see below).

50. See for example: Kramer, *Sancte Romane eccl[es]ie fidei defensionis clippeum*, fol. 19^{v}: "De illa sanctissima virgine in viterbiensi civitate primo, n[u]nc autem ferrarie degens nomine Lucia"; "de hac ipsa Lucia virgine"; "Copia instrume[n]ti publici super stigmata venerabilis virginis Lucie."

51. E. Ann Matter, Armando Maggi, Maiju Lehmijoki-Gardner, and Gabriella Zarri, "Lucia Brocadelli da Narni—riscoperta di un manoscritto pavese," *Bolletino della società pavese di storia patria* (2000): 173–99, and see the discussion of Brocadelli's virginity within the broader context of chaste marriage in the Middle Ages in Dyan Elliott, *Spiritual Marriage: Sexual Abstinence in Medieval Wedlock* (Princeton, N.J., 1993), esp. 218–22, 275.

may have known about the doubts surrounding Brocadelli's virginity, assures his readers that, by the time he saw her in 1500, she had "lived as a virgin for twenty-seven years, wearing a hair shirt on her naked flesh, with an iron chain girded around her loins."[52] Brocadelli was actually only twenty-four years old in 1500, but inaccuracies of this kind were quite common in the *Clippeum*.[53]

Kramer remarks that, while visiting Ferrara in 1500, he also received a letter from Ercole d'Este, in which the duke affirmed the authenticity of Brocadelli's stigmatization and praised the mystical gifts of Guadagnoli, Quinzani, and Andreasi.[54] Duke Ercole, who wrote his lengthy letter on March 4, 1500—two days after Brocadelli's abovementioned examination—doubtlessly did so at Kramer's request. The assiduous inquisitor had Ercole's letter reproduced in the *Clippeum*, where it appears immediately following Kramer's own eulogy of the Italian mystics.[55] In addition to Ercole's letter, Kramer incorporated into the *Clippeum* copies of notarial documents certifying the examination of one of Quinzani's ecstasies of the Passion in February 1497, and the examination of Brocadelli's stigmata in April 1497.[56] He apparently got the copies of these two documents from one of the Italian supporters of the Dominican mystics when he visited Ferrara in March 1500.

It is instructive that Kramer did not perceive his praise of holy women in the *Clippeum* to be incompatible with his earlier assault on witches in the *Malleus*. In fact, the zealous inquisitor continued to be an ardent advocate of

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52. Kramer, *Sancte Romane eccl[es]ie fidei defensionis clippeum*, fol. 79ᵛ: "soror Lucia . . . cilicio induta, cincta cathena ferrea circa lumbos ad nudam carnem virgo viginti septem annorum existit. Quam et ego inquisitor visitando in anno iubileo stigmata vidi."

53. See n. 56 below.

54. Kramer, *Sancte Romane eccl[es]ie fidei defensionis clippeum*, fol. 79ᵛ: "visitando in anno iubileo . . . in testimonium veritatis litteram ducali sigillo munitam, ut alibi deducitur, accepi."

55. Ibid., fols. 21ᵛ–22ᵛ.

56. Ibid., fols. 19ᵛ–21ᵛ. Kramer asserts that the examination of Quinzani's ecstasy of the Passion was conducted in February 1496, but according to the hagiographic tradition of Quinzani's life, it was actually held in February 1497. The notarial certificate of this examination, which was probably published for the first time in the *Clippeum*, was later reproduced in Giuseppe Brunati, ed., *Vita o gesta di santi bresciani*, 2nd ed. (Brescia, 1854–56), 2:55–62. It was recently translated into English by Maiju Lehmijoki-Gardner (*Dominican Penitent Women*, 192–97). The examination of Brocadelli's stigmata in April 1497, which was conducted by the Dominican inquisitor Domenico of Gargnano, is also mentioned in Brocadelli's early modern hagiographies. See for example Marcianese, *Narratione,* 107–8.

a thorough extermination of the diabolic sect of female witches (*maleficae*) during his sojourn in Olmütz, and repeated his call for a harsh repression of witchcraft in the *Clippeum*.[57] The heretics that Kramer was persecuting in Moravia were pacifists who opposed any form of capital punishment, including the execution of convicted witches, thus acquiring the reputation of being the "protectors" of witches.[58] Kramer blamed them for criticizing contemporary witch hunts, and listed their skepticism concerning the reality of diabolic witchcraft among their gravest doctrinal errors. He compared the horrendous sins of the Bohemian "Waldensians" to those of female witches, and referred the readers of the *Clippeum* to his more detailed discussion of the witches' crimes in the *Malleus*.[59] Kramer's ongoing engagement in the persecution of witches clearly did not prevent him from concurrently hailing contemporary women mystics as living proofs for the divine election of the Catholic Church.

The writings of leading members of the *Unitas fratrum* attest to the wide circulation of the *Clippeum* in the years following its first publication.[60] A second edition of Kramer's polemical work was published on March 20, 1502, and select sections from the *Clippeum*—in which the "miraculous lives" of the Italian holy women were mentioned—were also published separately, and circulated in Bohemia and Moravia in the early sixteenth century.[61]

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57. Kramer's continuous support of a harsh persecution of witches until his death in 1505 has been noted by Müller, *Geschichte der Böhmischen Brüder*, 311 and n. 102; Schnyder, *Malleus Maleficarum. Kommentar*, 70–71; Waite, *Heresy, Magic, and Witchcraft*, 53.

58. Cf. Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 352–53; Behringer, "Detecting the Ultimate Conspiracy," 15.

59. See Kramer, *Sancte Romane ecclesie fidei defensionis clippeum*, fols. 88^{r}–89^{v}, and esp. Kramer's assertion on fol. 81^{r}: "prout alibi in sermonibus contra maleficas ad longum est a nobis discussum; et in tractatu mallei maleficarum conclusimus contra illos, qui maleficas esse negant." As already noted, Kramer accused both the Bohemian Brethren and the members of the witches' sect of participating in lascivious nocturnal gatherings.

60. See esp. the "Excusatio fratrum valdensium contra binas litteras doctoris Augustini datas ad regem"; Schnyder, *Malleus Maleficarum. Kommentar*, 71.

61. See for example the description of the *Apostolicae bullae super plenariam remissionem et cruciatae erectionem contra christianae fidei hostes declaratio per opusculum praedicabile* (which was printed in Olmütz by the publishing house of Konrad Baumgarten in 1501) in Jaroslav Vobr, *Catalogus librorum ab a. MDI ad a. MDXX typis impressorum, qui in Scientiarum bibliotheca publica Brunensi asservantur* (Brno, 1986), 2:248–49: "F. vii:

Kramer's praise of Italian holy women in the *Clippeum* evidently helped propagating their fame for sanctity among devout Catholics beyond the Alps. The German abbot Johannes Trithemius, who lauded Brocadelli's miraculous stigmatization in a book that he completed in 1503, clearly reiterated Kramer's description of her supernatural experiences in the *Clippeum*. He too emphasized Brocadelli's virginity.[62] Kramer's eulogy of Brocadelli's miraculous gifts in the *Clippeum*, and his personal involvement in confirming the authenticity of her stigmatization, were later also mentioned in Odorico Raynaldo's *Annales Ecclesiastici*.[63] More importantly, in the early eighteenth century, when Brocadelli's Italian devotees were trying to promote her canonization cause, they relied on Kramer's discussion of her miraculous gifts. Listing the Alsatian inquisitor among the "contemporary witnesses" who had examined Brocadelli's stigmata and attested to her virginal state, they cited the *Clippeum* to support their claims that she should be venerated as a virgin and a stigmatic.[64]

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cleme[n]tia in p[ar]tibus Lombardie p[er] miraculosam vitam quaru[n]dam sancta[ru]m virginum." For a list of extant copies of the 1501 and 1502 editions of the *Clippeum*, see ibid., 249–51. For the discussion of Brocadelli, Guadagnoli, Quinzani, Andreasi, and their miraculous gifts in the second Latin edition of the *Clippeum*, see Kramer, *Sancte Romane ecclesie fidei defensionis clippeum adversus waldensium seu pikardorum heresim* (Olmütz, 1502), fols. ix^{r}, xvi^{r}–xx^{v}.

62. Johannes Trithemius, *Annalium Hirsaugiensium, Opus nunquam hactenus editum, & ab Eruditis semper desideratum Complectens Historiam Franciae et Germaniae Gesta imperatorum, regum, principum, episcoporum, abbatum, et illustrium virorum* (S. Galius, 1690), vol. 2, p. 580. Trithemius was evidently familiar with some of Kramer's writings, and was profoundly influenced by the *Malleus*. See Henry Charles Lea, *Materials toward a History of Witchcraft*, ed. Arthur C. Howland with an introduction by George Lincoln Burr, 3 vols. (New York and London, 1957), 1:369–70; Wolfgang Behringer, *Witchcraft Persecutions in Bavaria: Popular Magic, Religious Zealotry and Reason of State in Early Modern Europe*, trans. J. C. Grayson and David Lederer (Cambridge, 1997), 74.

63. Odoricus Raynaldus, *Annales ecclesiastici. Ab anno MCXCVIII ubi car. Baronius desinit*, vol. 19 (Rome, 1663), under "1500": "Conspecta a se & palpata eadem stigmata, dum censoris fidei munere fungebatur, testatur Henricus Insistoris in libro, quo veritatem fidei catholicae coelestibus prodigiis hoc tempore confirmatam probat adversus hereticos."

64. AGOP, *Sez. X*, no. 1736, "Ferrarien. Concessionis Officii, & Missae in honorem Beatae Luciae de Narnia Ordinis Sancti Dominici. Responsio ad animadversiones Reverendissimi Promotoris Fidei," in *Sacra rituum congregatione Em.o, & Rm.o D. Cardinali Fini ferrarien. concessionis officii, & missae in honorem Beatae Luciae de Narnia ordinis Praedicatorum memoriale*, 3: "Virginisque titulo illam denominant . . . Enricus Institoris Inquisitor Dominicanus coaevus Beatae Luciae in tractatu adversus Pikardos, seu Waldenses"; Domenico Ponsi, *Vita della beata Lucia vergine di Narni* (Rome, 1711), 36: "Giovanni Tritemo, ed Enrico Institore, contemporanei di Lucia, nelle loro storie la chiamano vergine"; ibid., 103: "testimonianze de' Scrittori, quali parlano delle

In the first years of the sixteenth century, however, the Bohemian Brethren themselves apparently continued to take little heed of Kramer's praise of Lucia Brocadelli and the other Italian holy women. Some of them even publicly defamed Brocadelli as a fraud. When Kramer heard that "some men, because of their innate malice and perversity . . . preach in certain regions of Silesia and Moravia . . . [defaming] the most honest virgin [Lucia] as the lewdest little woman,"[65] he edited and published another polemical tract. This work, titled *Stigmifere virginis Lucie de Narnia aliarumque spiritualium personarum feminei sexus facta admiratione digna* (*On the Stigmata of the Virgin Lucia of Narni and of the Deeds of Other Spiritual Persons of the Female Sex that are Worthy of Admiration*), was published in Olmütz on September 16, 1501.[66] It was printed by the German Catholic publisher Konrad Baumgarten, who devoted much of his time to publishing antiheretical polemical works, including all the known editions of Kramer's *Clippeum*.[67] The woodcut on the *Stigmifere*'s

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Stigmate di questa nostra Beata, come di un prodigio approvato, ed indubitato, e specialmente di due contemporanei, cioè di Giovanni Tritemio, e del Padre Enrico Institore, quale essendo Inquisitore ne fece un rigoroso esame."

65. See the first page of the pamphlet *Stigmifere virginis Lucie de Narnia aliarumque spiritualium personarum feminei sexus facta admiratione digna* [ed. Heinrich Kramer] (Olmütz, 1501): "no[n]nulli homines ex in[n]ata eorum malicia atque p[er]versitate ore temerario i[n] quibusdam p[ar]tibus Slesie signa[n]terque per Moravia[m] virginem prefata[m] integerrimam uti muliercula[m] impudicissima[m] p[ro]fessionisque sue immemorem predicarent." An unmutilated exemplar of the *Stigmifere* can now be found at Warsaw University Library (shelfmark 28.6.5.17). In another extant copy of the pamphlet, now in the Rare Books Collection in the Research Library in Olmütz (shelfmark 48.884), both the title page and the colóphon are missing. My heartfelt thanks to Mr. Rostislav Krusinsky of the Research Library in Olmütz and to Ms. Marianna Czapnik of Warsaw University Library for sending me copies of these two exemplars.

66. Kramer's involvement in editing and publishing the *Stigmifere* has already been noted by the Czech scholar Jaroslav Vobr, in his study of Konrad Baumgarten's printing activity in Olmütz: "Příspěvek k činnosti Konráda Baumgartena v Olomouci 1501–1502," *Problematika historických a vzácných knižních fondů Čech, Moravy a Slezska* 5 (1996): 11. The emblem that Kramer adopted during his term of office as papal nuncio and inquisitor in Moravia appears in the colophon of the *Stigmifere*, alongside the coat of arms of Pope Alexander VI. Kramer's emblem, which also appears in the title page of the *Clippeum*, has been identified by Ivo Hlobil, "Nejstarší Olomoucké knižní dřevořezy: Knižní dřevořezy olomoucké diecéze mezi léty 1499–1505 a jejich protireformačni význam," *Umění* 24, no. 4 (1976): 329, 348 n. 34 (and see the reproduction of the emblem in ibid., 332). See also Aneta Hynková, "Pătisté výročî knihtisku Olomouci," *Problematika historických a vzácných knižních fondů Čech, Moravy a Slezska* 8 (1999): 129.

67. The date of publication is noted on the last page of the pamphlet (*Stigmifere virginis Lucie de Narnia* . . . , no foliation). Baumgarten had been invited to Olmütz

title page, which shows three religious women kneeling before a Crucifix, was produced in the workshop of Albrecht Dürer, whose godfather and early patron, the Nuremberg printer Anton Koberger, had published three editions of Kramer's earlier works during the 1490s.[68]

The *Stigmifere* opens with a preface that explains the need for publishing a pamphlet in praise of Brocadelli and the other Italian holy women, "for the glory of the greatest [and] best God and for the delight and the consolation of the faithful Christians, and especially in order to help the truth."[69] As noted in the preface, once Duke Ercole d'Este became aware of Brocadelli's wicked detractors in Moravia, he decided to send to Olmütz additional documents affirming the authenticity of her miraculous gifts. These documents were all printed in the *Stigmifere*.[70] The most important one was a letter that

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by the Canon Regular Augustinus Olomucensis Moravus (1467–1513), one of the most ardent clerical opponents of the *Unitas fratrum* in Moravia. In October 1500, Baumgarten pulished Moravus' polemical tract against the Bohemian Brethren, and much of his subsequent publishing activity in Olmütz was aimed at serving the Catholic Church's campaign against local heretical groups. See Hlobil, "Nejstarší Olomoucké knižní dřevořezy," 328–49; Hynková, "Pătisté výročí knihtisku Olomouci," 129–130; Vobr, "Příspěvek k činnosti Konráda Baumgartena v Olomouci 1501–1502," 10–16.

68. Koberger, owner of the largest printing house in Nuremberg, issued one of the first editions of the *Malleus* in 1494. In 1496, he published Kramer's polemical tract *Tractatus varii cum sermonibus contra quattuor errores novissime exortos adversus divinissimum eucharistie sacramentum* and another edition of the *Malleus*. On these editions, see Charles Zika, "Dürer's Witch, Riding Women and Moral Order," in *Dürer and His Culture*, ed. Dagmar Eichberger and Charles Zika (Cambridge and New York, 1998), 130–31; idem, "Hosts, Processions and Pilgrimages," 127–28; Schnyder, *Malleus Maleficarum. Kommentar*, 452. The title page of *Stigmifere virginis Lucie de Narnia . . .* is reproduced in Ivo Hlobil ("Nejstarší Olomoucké knižní dřevořezy," 331), who identifies the three religious women as the three Marys. A more elaborate version of this woodcut appears on the title page of the abridged version of the pamphlet, *Spiritualium personarum feminei sexus facta admiratione digna*, on which see below (on the *Spiritualium*'s title page see Zarri, "Lucia da Narni e il movimento femminile savonaroliano," 108).

69. *Stigmifere virginis Lucie de Narnia . . .* (no foliation): "ad laudem dei optimi maximi ac oblectacione co[n]solacioneq[ue] christi fidelibus et precipue p[er] adiumento v[eri]tatis."

70. Ibid. Ercole heard about Brocadelli's detractors from Kramer's confrere, Jacobus Johannes Streller (1463–1521), a Silesian friar who had studied theology in the Dominican *Studium generale* in Bologna (1496–99) and probably got to know Kramer during his sojourn in Rome in 1500. On Streller, see Gabriel M. Löhr, "Breslauer Dominikaner des 15. Jahrhunderts auf auswärtigen Hochschulen," *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 13 (1943): 174. Streller, who apparently met Ercole d'Este on his way back from Rome in the summer of 1501, was a *filius* of the Dominican friary of S. Adalbert in Breslau, whose members had collaborated with the bishops of Breslau in

Ercole himself wrote on January 23, 1501, in confirmation of his earlier letter (of March 4, 1500) in praise of Brocadelli, which had already been printed in Kramer's *Clippeum*. In the letter of January 23, 1501, Ercole expressed his wrath at those who had dared doubt the divine origin of Brocadelli's mystical powers. He assured the readers that he was convinced of the authenticity of Brocadelli's miraculous stigmata, because he himself often "saw and touched" her wounds, and so did "physicians and many other prudent men, not once but many times."[71] Finally, the duke asked the prospective readers of his letter to proceed vigorously against those who mendaciously slandered his saintly court prophetess.[72]

In corroboration of his own testimony concerning Brocadelli's miraculous gifts, the duke of Ferrara attached letters of patent signed by Niccolò Maria d'Este (Ercole's nephew and the bishop of Adria) and Pietro Tranensis, the bishop of Ferrara. These letters, along with his own letter of January 23, 1501, had already been sent to the city council of Nuremberg a few months earlier, presumably at Kramer's request.[73] Ercole now addressed the same

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the persecution of heretical groups ever since the emergence of the Hussite movement in the early fifteenth century (cf. Paweł Kras, "Dominican Inquisitors in Medieval Poland [14th–15th c.]," in *Praedicatores, Inquisitores,* esp. 264–67, 296–307).

71. *Stigmifere virginis Lucie de Narnia* . . . (no foliation): "videre voluim[us] et tangere adhibuimusque medicorum et alioru[m] pluriu[m] peritoru[m] et prude[n]tiu[m] virorum iudiciu[m] et nedu[m] semel, s[ed] pluries et pluries sicq[ue] p[er] veritate esse c[om]p[er]tu[m] e[st]." In this pamphlet, Ercole's letter is dated July 23, 1501, but the copy of the letter that had been sent to Olmütz (now in the Archivio di Stato di Modena, *Ser. Giurisdizione sovrana*, busta 430B ["Santi e beati"]) indicates that it was originally written on January 23, 1501.

72. See the discussion of Ercole's letter of January 23, 1501, based on the abridged version of the pamphlet, *Spiritualium personarum feminei sexus facta admiratione digna*, in Zarri, "Pietà e profezia alle corti padane," 217–18 and nn. 62–64.

73. See Kramer's preface to the *Stigmifere virginis Lucie de Narnia* . . . (no foliation): "Illustrissim[us] ac cristianissimus pri[n]ceps et dominus d[omi]n[u]s Hercules dux Ferrarie . . . cum fide dignas l[itte]ras spectabilibus Nurberge[n]sis co[n]sulibus pleris-q[ue] aliis me[n]sibus direxit." As is well known, Kramer had already sent the Nuremberg city council a manuscript with instructions for the prosecution of witches, in both Latin and German, in 1491 (Rudolf Endres, "Heinrich Institoris, sein *Hexenhammer* und der Nürnberger rat," in *Der Hexenhammer*, 195–216; Brauner, *Fearless Wives*, 32–33, 129, n. 7; the facsimile copy of this manuscript was published in 1992 by Günter Jerouschek as: *Nürnberger Hexenhammer 1491 von Heinrich Kramer [Institoris]: Faksimile der Handschrift von 1491 aus dem Staatsarchiv Nürnberg, Nr. D 251* [Hildesheim, Zurich and New York, 1992]). Kramer's ongoing ties with prominent citizens in Nuremberg are indicated by the publication of three editions of his works by Anton Koberger, the owner of the largest publishing house in this city, who may

letters, authenticated with his ducal seal, to Stanislav Thorzo, the bishop of Olmütz who supported Kramer's persecution of the Bohemian Brethren;[74] to the bishop of Breslau;[75] and to the secular rulers "and Christian people" in Silesia and Moravia. To the three letters that had already been sent to the Nuremberg city council was added another one, written by Ercole's son, Cardinal Ippolito I d'Este, archbishop of Milan, on July 24, 1501. Copies of all these letters were kept in the Este ducal archive, as well as in the convent that Ercole d'Este had founded for Lucia Brocadelli in Ferrara. In the early eighteenth century, Brocadelli's devotees consulted these copies and, during her canonization process, cited them as important testimonies for her saintliness.[76] Today, the copies of these letters can still be found in the Archivio Storico Diocesano in Ferrara and in the Archivio di Stato di Modena.[77]

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have been involved in commissioning the woodcut for the *Stigmifere*'s title page from Dürer's workshop (cf. n. 68 above).

74. On Thorzo (bishop of Olmütz during the years 1497–1540), his ties with Kramer, and his active involvement in the persecution of the *Unitas fratrum*, see Schnyder, *Malleus Maleficarum. Kommentar*, 64–67; Říčan, *History of the Unity of the Brethren*, 94; Vobr, "Příspěvek k činnosti Konráda Baumgartena v Olomouci 1501–1502," 12.

75. Jacobus Johannes Streller's involvement in obtaining these documents can probably explain why they were also addressed to the bishop of Breslau (see n. 70 above). The original documents were kept in S. Adalbert, where Streller served as subprior (since the fall of 1501), and later as prior (cf. Löhr, "Breslauer Dominikaner," 174). See the first page of the *Stigmifere virginis Lucie de Narnia* . . . (no foliation): "Transsumpta quedam ex parte virginis Stygmifere Sororis Lucie de Narnia tercii habitus Cherubici dominici patriarche Sacri predicator[um] ordinis quo[rum] origenalia [sic] habe[n]tur in conve[n]tu Wratislauien. sancti Adalberti vite regularis eiusdem ordini provincie polonie," and Hlobil, "Nejstarší Olomoucké knižní dřevořezy," 341.

76. See for example: AGOP, *Sez. X*, no. 1736, "Ferrarien. Concessionis Officii, & Missae in honorem Beatae Luciae de Narnia Ordinis Sancti Dominici. Summarium," in *Sacra rituum congregatione Em.o, & Rm.o D. Cardinali Fini ferrarien. concessionis officii, & missae in honorem Beatae Luciae de Narnia ordinis Praedicatorum memoriale*, 4–9.

77. Copies of the original letters that had been sent to the Nuremberg aldermen ("Spectabilibus et prestantissimis viris Amicis Carissimis Consulibus Civitatis Inclyte Nurimburgensis") in January 1501, and of Ippolito d'Este's letter of July 24, 1501, are kept in the Archivio Storico Diocesano (Curia Arcivescovile di Ferrara-Comacchio), *Fondo Santa Caterina da Siena*, busta 3/25 ("Processi della Beata Lucia da Narni"). The copies of the letters that were sent to Olmütz and Breslau later in 1501, with slips specifying that their addressees were the bishop of Olmütz, the bishop of Breslau, and the princes and Christian people of Silesia and Moravia, are now in the Archivio di Stato di Modena, *Ser. Giurisdizione sovrana*, busta 430B ("Santi e beati"), no. 32–36.

Following the four letters in confirmation of Brocadelli's miraculous gifts in the *Stigmifere* is a short eulogy of the supernatural phenomena experienced by Stefana Quinzani, Osanna Andreasi, and Colomba Guadagnoli. This eulogy is a repetition of Ercole's first letter of March 4, 1500, in praise of the four saintly tertiaries, although its source is not acknowledged in the pamphlet. Like the discussion of the four Dominican mystics in the *Clippeum*, this section of the *Stigmifere* ends with the assertion that the Italian women's miraculous experiences prove that "the Catholic faith is the true faith, and that the Holy Roman Church is the mother of the faith."[78] The *Stigmifere* ends with a four-page-long *carmen* in praise of Brocadelli (*Carmen theocasticon de Lucia Narnien[sis] tercii habitus Cherubici Dominici virgine stygmifera [sic]*), and with an epitaph in honor of Colomba Guadagnoli, who had passed away in Perugia just a few months earlier, on May 20, 1501.[79] Both the *Carmen theocasticon* and the epitaph were apparently written in the Italian peninsula, but their authors' names are not mentioned in the *Stigmifere*.

As early as September 20, 1501—merely four days after the publication of the Latin *Stigmifere*—Kramer had a German translation of the pamphlet published by Konrad Baumgarten.[80] The two editions published in Olmütz in September 1501 are the only full versions of the *Stigmifere* known to date, but a partial Spanish translation was published in Seville in 1502.[81] Another

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78. *Stigmifere virginis Lucie de Narnia* . . . (no foliation): "nobis testimoniu[m] reddu[n]t fide[m] catholica[m] nostra[m] vera[m] e[ss]e, et s[an]cta[m]que Romanam ecclesiam esse fidei matrem." Cf. Kramer, *Sancte Romane eccl[es]ie fidei defensionis clippeum* (1501 ed.), fol. 22ᵛ.

79. *Stigmifere virginis Lucie de Narnia* . . . (no foliation): "Ephitaphium ad Sepulcrum positum Sororis Coloumbe tertii habitus Cherubici Dominici." Several epipaphs in honor of Guadagnoli were written after her death, and some of them were attached to the hagiographic legend published by Leandro Alberti in 1521. See Zarri, *Le sante vive*, 131 n. 44; Cianini Pierotti, *Colomba da Rieti a Perugia*, 195–96.

80. This German pamphlet was titled *Wunderbarliche geschicht vonn geystlichenn weybes personenn* (cf. Vobr, "Příspěvek k činnosti Konráda Baumgartena," 13).

81. I consulted the microfilm reproduction of the Cambridge University Library copy of this edition—of which the title page is missing—at Princeton University Library (microfilm no. 05353): [*Stigmifere virginis Lucie de Narnia aliarumque spiritualium personarum feminei sexus facta admiratione digna*] (Seville, 1502). The documents in this pamphlet appear both in the Latin original and in a Spanish translation, and include Ippolito d'Este's letter of July 24, 1501. According to the preface, copies of the documents printed in this pamphlet were kept by the Vicar General of the Observant Dominican Congregation of Castile: "Transumptum litteraru[m] . . . de veritate sacroru[m] styg[ma]tum xpifere virginis sororis Lucie de Narnia . . . ex originali sigillato (quod apud se habet reverendus pater v. g. de observancia eiusdem ordinis provincie

Latin pamphlet, based solely on the letters that had been sent to Nuremberg in early 1501, was published anonymously, probably in Nuremberg,[82] with the abridged title *Spiritualium personarum feminei sexus facta admiratione digna*.[83] The woodcut that adorns the title page of this edition is an elaborate version of the one that appears on the title page of Kramer's Latin edition of the *Stigmifere*.[84] A German translation of the *Spiritualium* was published in 1502, probably in Strasburg, with a different woodcut on its title page.[85] Altogether, five printed versions of the *Stigmifere*, in three different languages, circulated in Europe in the first years of the sixteenth century. Their publication doubtlessly contributed to spreading across the continent the *fama sanctitatis* of four

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hispanie)." See also Vicente Beltrán de Heredia, *Historia de la reforma de la provincia de España 1450–1550* (Rome, 1939), 130.

82. The precise date of publication is unknown, although it was probably published before the German version of this pamphlet was issued in Strasburg in 1502. The documents themselves were kept in the Dominican friary in Nuremberg, as noted in the first page of the pamphlet: *Spiritualium personarum feminei sexus facta admiratio[n]e digna* (n. p., n.d. [Nuremberg, 1501?], no foliation): "Transumpta queda[m] ex parte Sororis Lucie quarunda[m]que aliarum Sororum nu[n]cupate de tercia Regula divi patris Dominici ordinis p[re]dicatorum primi fundatoris: quorum originalia cum quibusdam notabilibus testimoniis habentur in Conventu Nurmbergensi eiusdem ordinis." Dyan Elliott has recently argued that the quasi-inquisitorial documents printed in the *Spiritualium* attest to the "zeal for documentary evidence in support of the claims of a living saint," which reached its peak in the early sixteenth century (Elliott, *Proving Woman*, 191–92). I think that the personal involvement of an experienced, indefatigable inquisitor like Kramer in obtaining and publishing these documents can probably explain this impressive repertoire of official "proofs" for Brocadelli's holiness.

83. The extant copy of this pamphlet in the British Library (shelfmark 4825.C.30) is erroneously cataloged under the main entry of "Lucy [Broccoletta], Saint, of Narni" (see the British Library Integrated Catalogue website—http://catalogue.bl.uk). The *Spiritualium* was first mentioned in 1904 in Gardner, *Dukes and Poets in Ferrara*, 364–376, but see esp. Zarri, *Le sante vive*, 60–61. Kramer's emblem does not appear in British Library exemplar of the *Spiritualium*, and scholars of Italian religious history have hitherto not noted his involvement in the publication of the fuller (and presumably earlier) version of this pamphlet in Olmütz in September 1501.

84. The *Spiritualium*'s title page includes additional details, such as the instruments of the Passion and background flora, which must have been added to the less elaborate original version in the *Stigmifere*.

85. *Wunderbarlithe geschichte[n], die do geschehen synt von geystliche[n] wybs personen in disen Joren* (n.p. [Strasburg?], 1502). I consulted the microfiche reproduction of this edition of the pamphlet at Memorial Library, the University of Wisconsin-Madison (Microfiche 3482, no. 370). On the title page of this German edition, see below.



Figure 1. The woodcut on the title page of [Heinrich Kramer], *Wunderbarlithe geschichten, die do geschehen synt von geystlichen wybs personen in disen Joren* (Strasburg, 1502), which is attributed to Bartholomaüs Kistler.

female mystics, whose names were probably never heard beyond the confines of the Italian peninsula before 1501.

Kramer's role in editing and publishing the *Stigmifere* complimented his earlier efforts to turn Brocadelli, Guadagnoli, Quinzani, and Andreasi into internationally acclaimed holy women. Furthermore, although the eulogy of contemporary female mystics in the *Stigmifere* and the *Clippeum* and Kramer's earlier tirade against women in the *Malleus* may seem incompatible at first glance, I think that they can actually be explained as two sides of the same coin. As already mentioned, in his discussion of women's propensity to witchcraft, Kramer argues that women's minds are "naturally more impressionable" than the minds of men, and are therefore "more ready to receive the influence of a disembodied spirit." This contention is based on the assumption that, because of their moist and cool bodily humors, women receive impressions more easily, retain them better, and are less capable of critically evaluating them than are men.[86] In the *Malleus*, Kramer acknowl-

86. Cf. Ian Maclean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman: A Study in the Fortunes of Scholasticism and Medical Science in European Intellectual Life* (Cambridge, 1980), 42;

edges the fact that not all the impressions that women uncritically receive have a diabolical origin. In fact, he contends that "when they [women] use this quality [of their greater impressionability] well they are very good, but when they use it ill they are very evil."[87] Historians of witchcraft have so far underscored the first part of this contention, dismissing Kramer's assertion that when women "use this quality well they are very good" as a merely rhetorical affirmation.[88] However, Kramer's praise of women's supernatural experiences in his later works indicates that his acknowledgment, in the *Malleus*, of women's ability to become "very good" was anything but rhetorical. In fact, the assumption that women are more impressionable than men, and that this can make them "very good," underlies the eulogy of female spirituality both in the *Clippeum* and in the *Stigmifere*. According to Kramer, it is only because Guadagnoli, Quinzani, and Brocadelli are women who use their greater susceptibility "to receive the influence of a disembodied spirit" *well* that they can represent the divine. As the Dominican inquisitor notes in the *Clippeum*, thinking of Christ's Passion during prayer had such an impact on Brocadelli's mind that she received the signs of the stigmata on her own members. In a similar manner Quinzani, who every Friday used to contemplate a crucifix, entered a state of ecstasy, in which she physically relived Christ's Passion.[89] Kramer apparently assumes that only members of the female sex, deprived as they are of the capability to critically evaluate the images that influence their minds, can reach such a perfect degree of *Imitatio Christi*.

Taking into consideration not just the *Malleus*, but the entire corpus of Kramer's writings, we can see that for the Dominican inquisitor, the very qualities that render women more susceptible to the devil's machinations also turn them into the privileged conduits for divine revelations that confirm the tenets of Christianity. Kramer assumes that holy women can represent the divine, but that their ability to do so reflects their being essentially different from men, and especially their inherent psychological and intellectual depravity. This, of course, does not mean that he indiscriminately supported all

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Daniel Bornstein, "Spiritual Kinship and Domestic Devotions," in *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, 176.

87. Kramer, *Malleus Maleficarum 1487*, lib. 1, q. 6, fol. 21[r]: "quia natura p[ro]pter fluxibilitate[m] co[m]plexionis facilioris sunt imp[re]ssionis ad revelat[i]o[n]es capiendas p[er] impressione[m] sep[ar]ator[um] spirituum q[ua] co[m]plexione etia[m] cu[m] bene utunt[ur] multu[m] bone sunt, cu[m] male peiores sunt."

88. See for example Broedel, *The 'Malleus Maleficarum,'* 176.

89. Kramer, *Sancte Romane ecclesie fidei defensionis clippeum* (1501 ed.), fols. 10[r], 18[r]–22[v], 50[r], 79[v].

manifestations of female religious expression. In fact, we know that he was only willing to back saintly religious women who were subject to the appropriate spiritual direction of trustworthy Dominican friars.[90] Such an attitude toward female spirituality was, of course, hardly original. Indeed, Kramer's views concerning women, and especially female sanctity, seem to have been rather traditional. They were strikingly similar to the notions expressed by earlier Dominican and other clerical supporters of holy women in the late Middle Ages.[91]

The most notorious aspect of Kramer's discussion of diabolic witchcraft in the *Malleus*, namely his preoccupation with female sexuality, is also compatible with his insistence on the virginal state of the holy women that he praises in his later works. For the Dominican friar, the insatiable lust of diabolic witches was the mirror image of the impeccable chastity of saintly female mystics, and the resistance of sexual temptations was one of the central aspects of women's saintliness. In this respect, too, Kramer's dichotomous view of women was no more misogynistic than that of earlier Dominican theologians, who had typically emphasized female chastity as an important determinant of women's moral value.[92] Interestingly, whereas later Catholic witch-hunters exalted the Virgin Mary as a vision of female perfection to which earthly women could never approximate, Kramer still acknowledged the possibility of genuine female chastity.[93] It is certainly noteworthy that the female virgins that he lauded were not long-deceased canonized saints, but rather aspiring living saints whose holiness had still not been officially approved by the ecclesiastical establishment.

It is interesting in this context to examine the woodcut on the title page of the 1502 German translation of the *Spiritualium*, which is attributed to the

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90. In 1480, Kramer conducted a trial against a group of pious laywomen in Augsburg, and denounced their devotional practices, which he associated with the doctrinal errors of the Hussites (on this trial see Segl, "Heinrich Institoris," 109–113; Jerouschek and Behringer, "'Das unheilvollste Buch der Weltliteratur?'," 46–47).

91. Cf. Coakley, "Gender and the Authority of Friars," 445–60; idem, "Friars as Confidants of Holy Women in Medieval Dominican Hagiography," in *Images of Sainthood in Medieval Europe*, ed. Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Timea Szell (Ithaca, N.Y., and London, 1991), 222–46.

92. Cf. Bailey, *Battling Demons*, esp. 106–11.

93. Lyndal Roper recently noted the connection between witch-hunting and Marian devotion in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in *Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany* (New Haven, Conn., and London, 2004), 136–38. On the chastity of female saints as the counter-image of the witches' lust in early modern demonological writings see also Whitney, "The Witch 'She'/ the Historian 'He,'" 91–92; Brauner, *Fearless Wives*, 14.

artist Bartholomaüs Kistler. The woodcut depicts three religious women being harassed by four ferocious demons—or, plausibly, the same religious woman being molested by demons on three different occasions (see figure 1). One demon attempts to scourge a woman who, rapt in ecstasy, is reliving Christ's crucifixion. Another demon seems to be making a sexual assault on a half-naked woman, bringing his genitalia, which is in the shape of a beast's face, close to her breast. The attacked woman holds her hands in a praying gesture, attempting to drive her diabolic assailant away with her prayers. Two other demons are seen mocking a third female figure immersed in religious meditation, and are offering her a crown of thorns.[94] The unusual iconography of Kistler's woodcut has led art historian Cécile Dupeux to assert that it depicts "a scene of demonic possession of three religious women."[95] However, readers familiar with the contents of the pamphlet surely realized that the female figures portrayed in the title page were saintly mystics battling with their diabolic tempters. Combats with the devil were a common topos in the legends of the Italian *sante vive* of the early sixteenth century,[96] and Kramer even mentioned the diabolic temptations of Stefana Quinzani in the *Clippeum*.[97] Whether or not Kramer was the one who chose this peculiar image for the German pamphlet, Kistler's woodcut is certainly in line with his own view of holy women as the mirror image of diabolic witches; whereas the latter indulge in perpetual sexual acts with the devil, the former heroically resist sexual temptations and preserve their chastity.

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The sources analyzed in this article indicate that Kramer's insistence on women's greater proclivity to witchcraft actually went hand-in-hand with his admiration for the traditional features of medieval female sanctity. Clearly, his

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94. See the title page of this pamphlet, *Wunderbarlithe geschichte[n], die do geschehen synt von geystliche[n] wybs personen in disen Joren* (n.p. [Strasburg?], 1502).

95. Cécile Dupeux, ed., *La gravure d'illustration en Alsace au XVI siècle II: Georg Husner, Johann Prüss, Bartholomaüs Kistler, Wilhelm Schaffner, Mathias Hupfuff, Johann Schott, Johann Wähinger, Martin Flah, Johann Knobloch, 1501–1506* (Strasburg, 2000), 2:22 (my translation).

96. Cf. Zarri, *Le sante vive*, 117–19, 157, esp. n. 247.

97. Maiju Lehmijoki-Gardner has suggested that the woodcut may actually depict three scenes in the Passion ecstasy of Stefana Quinzani, as described in the notarial document of February 1497 (personal communication). In this document, which is printed in Kramer's *Clippeum* (see n. 56 above), Quinzani's demonic temptations are mentioned, although there are no explicit references to the devil's sexual assault on her.

attitude toward women and female spirituality can no longer be explained merely as the culmination of clerical anxieties about the "feminization of sanctity" in the late Middle Ages. Instead, it should be reconsidered in light of the peculiar religious conditions at the close of the fifteenth century, and especially in light of the growth of heretical sects which threatened the monopoly of the Catholic Church on the eve of the Reformation.

Kramer participated in the Church's attempts to crush heretical sects for over four decades, and his inquisitorial zeal far surpassed that of most of his fellow inquisitors.[98] The Alsatian friar was involved in persecutory activities directed against various individuals and groups that he defined as heretical, including not only the Bohemian Brethren, but also Conciliarists, Waldensians, and Taborites.[99] While he was evidently very much concerned with the new sect of (female) witches, he explicitly asserted in his *Clippeum* that the heretical groups that flourished in the Kingdom of Bohemia were just as abominable.[100] Strikingly, of the seven polemical tracts that the much-reviled misogynist published during his lifetime, only one was concerned with witches: all the others were aimed at refuting the doctrinal errors advocated by learned men, or held by male-led heretical groups.[101] In the long run, of

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98. Cf. Springer, "Dominican Inquisition in the Archdiocese of Mainz," 345–51, 364, 392.

99. In his review of Walter Stephens' *Demon Lovers* in the *American Historical Review* 108, no. 4 (October 2003): 1207, Wolfgang Behringer rightly called Kramer "a persecution specialist." On the Dominican inquisitor's lifelong persecutory career see also Jürgen Petersohn, "Konziliaristen und Hexen: Ein unbekannter Brief des Inquisitors Heinrich Institoris an Papst Sixtus IV. aus dem Jahre 1484," *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 44 (1988): 120–60; Richard Kieckhefer, "The Office of Inquisition and Medieval Heresy: The Transition from Personal to Institutional Jurisdiction," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 46, no. 7 (January 1995): 46; Segl, "Heinrich Institoris," 116; Behringer, "How Waldensians Became Witches," 183.

100. See especially Kramer's comparison of the sect of witches and the Bohemian "Waldensians" in his *Sancte Romane ecclesie fidei defensionis clippeum* (1501 ed.), fol. 89^{v} (and cited in Schnyder, *Malleus Maleficarum. Kommentar*, 70–71): "cur per has hereses duas iam novissimas sic atrociter diabolus ecclesiam infestat, patet responsio, quia enim cunctas alias hereses excedunt et in crudelitate quo ad maleficos hominibus, iumentis et terre frugibus supra modum nocentes, ut in opera sermonum contra heresim maleficarum deducitur; et heresies Waldensium excedit in pessimis demoniorum doctrinis, ut tactum est et successive in reprobacione eorum errorum deducetur. Ideo eciam, quia per amplius he hereses sibi deserviunt pre ceteris, eciam per eas ecclesiam persequitur [diabolus]."

101. Kramer's first work (*Epistola contra quendam conciliistam archiepiscopum videlicet Crainensem* . . . [Schlettstadt, 1482]) attacked Archbishop Andreas Zanometic for his alleged Conciliarist views. After the completion of the *Malleus* in 1486, and before the publication of the *Clippeum* and the *Stigmifere*, Kramer composed three additional

course, none of Kramer's other works proved to be nearly as influential as the *Malleus*. This book's impressive commercial success certainly attests to Europeans' growing preoccupation with witchcraft, especially in the century and a half after Kramer's death.[102] Nonetheless, the notorious inquisitor himself was evidently obsessed not just with the sect of witches, but also with other heretical groups, comprising of both women and—to an even larger extent—men.

Misogyny is socially constructed, and there is no denying that there was a misogynistic aspect to Kramer's writing about women; and yet, the witch-hunter's view of the female nature was clearly not as simplistic as it has often been portrayed in modern scholarship. Though he was seriously alarmed by what he characterized as a dangerous sect of female witches, Kramer acknowledged the possibility of genuine female sanctity, of women's authentic mystical experiences, and of true female chastity. Thus, in his attempts to combat the spread of heretical doctrines in Moravia, he did not hesitate to rely on the ecstatic experiences of chaste female mystics, and significantly enforced the *fama sanctitatis* of four Italian holy women.

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polemical works. The first two refuted various doctrinal errors concerning the sacrament of the eucharist (*Tractatus novus de miraculoso eucaristie sacramento* [Augsburg, 1493] and *Tractatus varii cum sermonibus contra quattuor errors . . .* [Nuremberg, 1495]), and the third condemned Antonio degli Rosselli's objections to papal primacy as heretical (*Opusculum in errores Monarchie* [Venice, 1499]). On these works see Zika, "Hosts, Processions and Pilgrimages," 27–28; Segl, "Heinrich Institoris," 121–26, Stephens, *Demon Lovers*, 223–27, and Senner, "How Henricus Institoris Became Inquisitor for Germany," 397.

102. Although Kramer's antiwitchcraft tract had already enjoyed a considerable editorial success during his lifetime, most of the known editions of the *Malleus* were published after his death in 1505 (cf. Schnyder, *Malleus Maleficarum. Kommentar*, 452–53).

State Decline and the Return of Occult Powers

The Case of Prophet Eddy in Nigeria

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Like some other African countries, Nigeria is a candidate for state collapse. At a recent conference sponsored by the National Intelligence Council of the United States, experts were already discussing strategies to deal with the possible eventuality of the country's collapse. In early 1999, when Nigeria returned to democracy, expectations were more optimistic. After fifteen years of military rule, Nigerians hoped that life would again become more secure.[1] But soon after the "democratic" elections, people witnessed an "explosion"[2] of violence. According to one report, "it is estimated that at least 50,000 people have been killed in various incidents of ethnic, religious and communal violence since the return to civilian rule."[3] The federal government proclaimed a ban on ethnic militias and sent military units into some of the worst

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1. The decline of state institutions had started before the generals assumed power in 1984. Under military as under "democratic" regimes, "political competition became a kind of warfare": Larry Diamond, "Nigeria: The Uncivic Society and the Descent into Praetorianism," in *Politics in Developing Countries: Comparing Experiences with Democracy*, 2nd ed., ed. Larry Diamond et al. (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1995), 416–91, here 465. When I worked at a Nigerian university from 1993 to 1996, the ruling elite no longer invested in state building. A senior lecturer earned the equivalent of $70 U.S. per month, a teacher got about $20, and a policeman less than $10. So the main concern of civil servants was to generate extra money, with the result that policeman were widely perceived as "daylight robbers."

2. Ukoha Ukiwo, "Politics, Ethno-Religious Conflicts and Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 41 (2003): 115–38, here 115; cf. Osita Agbu, *Ethnic Militias and the Threat to Democracy in Post-Transition Nigeria* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2004), 5, 13.

3. Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Profile 2005. Nigeria* (London: EIU, 2005), 13.

Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft (Summer 2006)
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crisis areas. In the former capital, Lagos, joint police and army patrols were given orders to shoot any member of the local OPC (O'odua People's Congress) militia who resisted arrest. But the security forces could not regain control over a city with ten million inhabitants.

Militias in Nigeria typically make use of magic or spiritual powers. The first part of this article will illustrate how armed gangs combine physical and occult violence, using as a case study the Bakassi Boys, who operated from 1998 until 2002 among the Igbo in the southeast of Nigeria. They had been formed by market traders as a private security organization, paid to fight armed bandits in Abia State. As they performed their job very efficiently, the governor gave them official recognition and started co-funding them. Soon after, the parliaments of two other Igbo states, Anambra and Imo, entrusted them with the task of "cleansing" the land of criminals.[4] Besides hunting down ordinary criminals they also fought sorcerers and witches. The governor of Anambra, Dr. Mbadinuju, who called himself the "commander-in-chief" of the local Bakassi units,[5] claimed that his boys were reviving an "age-long system of our people taking care of their defences."[6] The militia operated in a social and political environment in which traditional forms of policing were indeed better suited to maintaining order than bureaucratic institutions borrowed from the West. As we shall see, however, the Bakassi Boys adopted Igbo traditions in an arbitrary (or creative) way.[7]

Many militias or vigilante groups in Nigeria and beyond try to gain legitimacy by reviving precolonial traditions. In South Africa, members of the ANC (African National Congress) youth wing and other young rebels who fought Apartheid pretended to act as traditional custodians of their communities, and in this capacity they instigated witch hunts. "With the unbanning of political parties and release of Nelson Mandela from prison, many people experienced a sense of cultural freedom, including the punishment of witches in a typically African way. This was regarded as reaffirmation of African cul-

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4. When visiting Nigeria from January to April 2001 and from January to April 2002 I talked to Bakassi fighters in Anambra State and conducted interviews with businessmen and politicians who funded and patronized them. Cf. Bruce Baker, "When the Bakassi Boys Came: Eastern Nigeria Confronts Vigilantism," *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 20 (2002): 223–44.

5. *Tell* (Lagos), March 26, 2001, 43.

6. *Tell*, August 28, 2000, 28.

7. When referring to Igbo traditions, I will quote a number of ethnographic accounts. However, my analysis is also informed by personal observations in the mid-1990s. My research in Alor Uno, in northern Igboland, focused on witchcraft and Christian spirit possession.

ture after centuries of colonial and Western suppression."[8] The initiative to fight occult forces does not always come from the activists themselves. In a recent study on community policing in Port Elizabeth and Nkomazi (South Africa), Lars Buur and Steffen Jensen observed that vigilante leaders tried to avoid dealing with witchcraft accusations but were dragged into such cases under popular pressure: "To be responsive to the people in whose name they operate, members had to deal with witchcraft because there were no other structures, formal or informal, that would do so."[9] Secular institutions like the police or law courts, which lack the backing of spiritual powers, are ill-suited to deal with occult forms of evil. So the fear of uncontrolled invisible forces, which has been rising in many parts of Africa since the 1980s or 1990s, has contributed to the delegitimization of state institutions based on Western law. As scholars have noted, "among its other failings, liberal democracy could not formally encompass spiritual power."[10]

While it is obvious that the rising concern about occult forces has contributed to the decline of the state, it is not clear in what way state decline may have contributed to renewed concern or obsession with the occult. The second half of this article will examine some consequences of state disintegration that may help to explain the revival of witch scares. I will again refer to examples from Nigeria, and in particular from the Igbo region, but the four distinct trends I identify could also apply to other parts of Africa:

1. Since the state can no longer protect its citizens, they must turn to militia leaders and other local strongmen who monopolize the means of survival. Those seeking patronage cannot protest or rebel when they are treated in a humiliating manner. As their aggression cannot be expressed openly, it tends to turn into resentment, creating an atmosphere in which people suspect each other of using hidden means in order to act out their greed, envy, and hatred.
2. The armed gangs that are replacing the police cannot establish a monopoly on violence. In order to assert themselves against competing

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8. R. T. H. Dolamo, "The Escalation of Crime in the Northern Transvaal Province: A Challenge to the Church," *Ned. Geref. Teologiese Tydskrif* 37 (1996): 345–51, here 347. Cf. P. Delius, *A Lion amongst the Cattle: Reconstruction and Resistance in the Northern Transvaal* (Randburg: Ravan Press, 1996); Johannes Harnischfeger, "Witchcraft and the State in South Africa," *Anthropos* 95 (2000): 99–112.

9. Steffen Jensen and Lars Buur, "Everyday Policing and the Occult: Notions of Witchcraft, Crime and 'the People'," *African Studies* 63 (2004): 193–211, here 203.

10. Stephen Ellis and Gerrie Ter Haar, *Worlds of Power: Religious Thought and Political Practice in Africa* (London: Hurst, 2004), 107.

gangs, they have to intimidate their rivals by celebrating their strength and brutality. Using physical and occult violence thus becomes part of their public image.

3. Power that defies institutional regulations grows out of public control. It becomes unpredictable and appears to be linked to invisible forces that may be manipulated by secret techniques.
4. Decline, which affects all spheres of social life, is experienced as a collective trauma for which people have no explanation. By linking it to witchcraft, evil is personified, making it comprehensible and opening avenues to take countermeasures.

FIGHTING OCCULT CRIMES

On November 8, 2000, demonstrators stormed the governor's residence in Anambra State, Nigeria, took some of his colleagues hostage, and demanded the execution of a sorcerer called Edward Okeke. Prophet Eddy, also known as the "Jesus from Nawgu," owned a church in which miracle cures had been effected for many years. Whoever visited the prophet was greeted at the very entrance of the "healing center" by pious images in the form of an immense statue of Jesus surrounded by statues of Moses, the Prophet Elias, and finally Eddy himself, rising up over a fallen figure of the devil. As people came to learn, however, behind this façade of Christian piety, monstrous crimes were said to have taken place, including a series of ritual murders.[11] Some newspapers speculated that the man of God had killed ninety-three men in order to prepare especially effective charms from their body parts, while in the area of Onitsha, Eddy was suspected of having played a role in the theft of sixteen babies from a maternity ward. Because of the enormous power that people assumed he must have had in order to evade all attempts by state authorities to prosecute him, Edward Okeke was suspected of being no ordinary mortal, but a strange hybrid—half man, half spirit.[12] On posters that were for sale in all the large markets in Igboland, he was depicted with a double face, showing human features hiding an animal-like, demonic rascal. Eddy himself confirmed the suspicion that he was a spirit when he was interrogated by the Bakassi Boys, who had invaded the prophet's villa on November 4 and arrested him. What happened in the following days at their headquarters is recorded on an audio cassette that was on sale throughout Igboland, called *The Original True Confession of Prophet Eddy Nawgu*. This tape actually provides a sort of collage stringing together extracts from the

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11. *News Guide* (Lagos), vol. 1, no. 1, 2000, 5–6, 8; *Tell*, December 11, 2000, 42.
12. *News Guide*, vol., no. 1, 2000, 3.

interrogation, accompanied by a dramatic soundtrack consisting of police sirens and shots from a machine-gun. In addition, the alleged confessions do not come from Eddy's own mouth, but are read out by a different voice, as in a radio play. However, the staged character of the tape does not necessarily mean that it was simply fabricated. Original recordings obviously did exist, since, as the conflict over Eddy escalated, the Bakassi leaders sent a video cassette to the president in Ajuba, the capital, showing scenes from the interrogation.

While the prophet was interned in the Bakassi headquarters, the president's office demanded that he be handed over to the police. The governor of Anambra State, who was officially overseeing the activities of the militia, also tried to prevent the Bakassi fighters from executing the sorcerer.[13] Even Ibrahim Babangida, a former president and probably the richest and most powerful man in the country, is said to have exerted pressure behind the scenes to have the prophet released. In conversation with some market traders, whose stands were directly in front of the Bakassi headquarters, I was told that on those November days limousines from various states drove up bringing government officials to negotiate with the Bakassi leadership. I was assured that if ex-General Babangida wanted someone released, he could offer a sum of fifty million Naira without hesitating. But the Bakassi Boys were not to be bribed. On November 9, they led Edward Okeke out of his cell and brought him to a market place, where twenty thousand onlookers sang enthusiastic songs while the young men hacked the sorcerer to pieces with their machetes.[14]

At first sight, it might be assumed that the dispute over whether the prophet should be released or executed reflected a conflict between enlightened and traditional forms of thought. Yet this was not a confrontation between legal-minded state representatives and a murderous mob possessed by backward, anachronistic ideas. Everyone in Nigeria knew that the politicians who became mixed up in the case took occult powers as seriously as anyone else. For example, the governor of Anambra, a qualified jurist and former university lecturer, reported to the press that some of his supporters had once stormed a church in which his opponents were preparing magic substances: "The church was stormed and pieces of human flesh . . . were found being used for fetish concoction, all of them targeted at myself and some key politicians in Anambra State."[15] It is not unusual in Nigeria for government func-

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13. Ibid., 2, 7–8; *Tell*, December 11, 2000, 42.
14. *News Guide*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2000, 2–3.
15. *Vanguard* (Lagos), October 15, 2001, 3.

tionaries to be intensely concerned with occult threats. General Abacha, who ruled the country until 1998, kept sorcerers, fortune-tellers, and Islamic marabouts with him in his presidential bunker, while members of his government often had to wait days or weeks for an audience.[16] Against this background, it is hardly surprising that state representatives acted so decisively on behalf of the sorcerer from Nawgu. In the eyes of the people, the alleged ritual murderer was part of the political establishment—indeed he embodied the worst aspects of the Nigerian upper classes. The violent protests in the state capital, which were to lead to the sorcerer's lynching, therefore had aspects of political rebellion or class warfare, at least for Western observers.[17] There could be no doubt that Edward Okeke had close links with the top ranks of society; some of his most influential clients had had themselves photographed with him, photographs that Eddy had hung in his office to advertise his spiritual business. These photographs gave rise to the suspicion that the prophet must have possessed particularly exclusive charms in order to attract such prominent clients. Why else should his visitors have made him presents of luxury limousines?

To Westerners, the accusation that the church owner from Nawgu had enriched himself by means of human sacrifices sounds groundless. In Nigeria, on the other hand, the public is becoming uneasy because ritual murders are in fact taking place. According to official estimates, between 1992 and 1996 alone some six thousand individuals are supposed to have fallen victim to ritual murder.[18] In the popular imagination, such crimes are readily associated with the rich and powerful,[19] and indeed one is often told that they have only been able to acquire riches through occult means. The suspicion therefore rages that members of the upper classes, like

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16. *Tell*, March 25, 1996, 8 and June 22, 1998, 18.

17. On this, cf. Daniel Jordan Smith's study of a similar event in Igboland, a revolt by the citizens of Owerri against a syndicate of ritual murderers: Smith, "Ritual Killing, '419,' and Fast Wealth: Inequality and the Popular Imagination in Southeastern Nigeria," *American Ethnologist* 28 (2001): 803–26, here 805.

18. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, November 2, 1996. Even though the scale may be accurate, this seems to be an arbitrary figure. More reliable figures come from South Africa, where a government commission was set up to examine the many cases of witch persecution and ritual murder: N. V. Ralushai et al., *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Witchcraft Violence and Ritual Murders in the Northern Province of the Republic of South Africa: Submitted to the MEC for Safety and Security, Northern Province* (1996) [unpublished]; Jeremy Evans, "Muti Murders: Ritual Responses to Stress," *Indicator South Africa* 8 (1991): 46–48, here 46.

19. Daniel Jordan Smith, "'The Arrow of God': Pentecostalism, Inequality, and the Supernatural in South-East Nigeria," *Africa* 71 (2001): 586–613, here 593.

witches, join together in secret societies. Whoever wants to become a member of their "millionaires' clubs" has to "sell" a close relative. The person to be sacrificed would then be gripped by a mysterious disease and slowly whither away because his tormentors would devour his soul or invisibly destroy his inner organs.

RIVAL FORMS OF JUSTICE

In my analysis, state authorities are hardly in a position to contain fear of occult powers. In a number of African countries, certainly, the state assumes an active role in combating witches and sorcerers. In Cameroon, for example, anthropologists have reconstructed a series of trials with the aid of court files, showing that judges did not hesitate to sentence the accused to long prison sentences, despite the lack of any concrete evidence. Convictions were often based on the statement of a single witch doctor, who established with the help of magical techniques that a defendant was guilty, while in a few cases the accused were persuaded to confess. A twenty-year-old student, for example, professed to have entered the house of a village teacher by means of witchcraft. Together with three other defendants, he operated on the victim, removed his heart, and then ate it. Since then, the teacher had been living without his heart. The three other accused disputed this story, but to no avail. The judge determined that the leader of the group, like his accomplices, was trying to "mislead the tribunal with his vain and ridiculous denials."[20] Therefore all the accused received prison sentences of up to five years, a judgment that was later confirmed by the appellate court in the provincial capital.

Here, judicial processes that appear to follow Western forms of legal procedure and judgment are revealed to be a farce, or rather a façade concealing all manner of local intrigues. When judges have to try offences that were committed secretly and invisibly, they hardly have a choice but to consult ritual experts who claim to be able to identify witches. In this way, traditional healers, diviners, and witch doctors acquire a crucial role in administering justice. As intermediaries between judges and the local population, they control access to the courts. Only plaintiffs who can gain the backing of an influential witchfinder will have a chance to succeed in bringing their charges of witchcraft. Such backing, however, is not free. Witch doctors sell their services to the highest bidder. It is therefore almost exclusively the local big

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20. Peter Geschiere, *The Modernity of Witchcraft: Politics and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 1997), 174.

men, that is, rich farmers, teachers, party functionaries, or businessmen, who make use of witchcraft trials to terrorize their opponents.[21]

Even in normal trials that have nothing to do with magic or witchcraft, the decisions of state courts have little legitimacy. The openness of the proceedings, together with complicated rules of procedure and for establishing evidence, should ensure that, as in European or North American courts, truth emerges. In Nigeria, however, as in other African states, court cases often drag on for years, only to result in apparently arbitrary decisions because decisive arrangements are actually made behind the scenes. Money is often involved, and when high sums are at stake judges do not hesitate to pronounce long prison sentences against defendants whom everyone knows to be innocent.[22] Since European-style court systems do not produce justice, it is not difficult to turn one's back on them. Militias like the Bakassi Boys avoided public trials; instead they used spiritual means of determining the truth, including the so-called "lab test." During interrogations, a special chain, or sometimes a tortoise, would be hung around the suspect's neck, making it impossible for him to lie.[23] The Bakassi fighters also possessed a sword that only drew blood when it came into contact with a murderer or a thief.[24] For Westerners it is frightening to imagine that decisions of life or death should depend on such methods. For many Igbo, however, it is reassuring to know that judgment is rendered by alien, invisible powers, not by one's fellow humans,[25] as human authority is scarcely to be trusted. Such practices have a long history. In the precolonial era it was usual for people to consult poison oracles or to turn to shrine priests and diviners in order to let religious or magical forces decide critical questions.

People have often resorted to the occult because they lacked effective mechanisms to resolve conflicts. Having no access to independent central powers meant that any groups that got involved in a conflict were also bur-

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21. Ibid. 114, 170, 172. Diane Ciekawy's case study from Kenya is similar: Ciekawy, "Witchcraft in Statecraft: Five Technologies of Power in Colonial and Postcolonial Kenya," *African Studies Review* 41 (1998): 119–41, here 125.

22. Civil Liberties Organisation, *Justice for Sale: A Report on the Administration of Justice in the Magistrates and Customary Courts of Southern Nigeria* (Surulere, Lagos: Civil Liberties Organisation, 1996).

23. *Tell*, December 18, 2000, 34.

24. *Newswatch* (Lagos), September 18, 2000, 16.

25. Cyril C. Okorocha, *The Meaning of Religious Conversion in Africa: The Case of the Igbo in Nigeria* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1987), 109–10.

dened with the task of resolving that conflict among themselves.[26] Under such circumstances, the determination to have an oracle decide matters may have been the best means of keeping or reconstituting the peace. Thus, thousands of people in search of justice once came from all over Igboland to the famous shrine of Arochukwu in order to have their disputes settled there. The priests who managed the cult would lead the accused into a closed-off area of the shrine, and when the stream that emerged from the sacred grove turned red, people knew that the god's decision had been rendered. The British authorities who destroyed the oracle in 1901 could only see it as a fraudulent undertaking. Colonial officers reported that the priests reddened the water of the stream with goat's blood because they were not executing those found guilty, but rather selling them into slavery.[27] Yet for the quarrelling parties who made their way to the Aro shrine as pilgrims, it was advantageous to ignore such possible manipulations and to surrender to the illusion that they were subjecting themselves to an impartial deity. The actual content of divine judgment was less important than the fact that unequivocal judgment had been made, ending the conflict before it could escalate into a chain of revenge killings.[28]

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26. Igor Kopytoff, "The Internal African Frontier: The Making of African Political Culture," in *The African Frontier: The Reproduction of Traditional African Societies*, ed. Igor Kopytoff (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987), 3–84, here 18; Robin Horton, "Stateless Societies in the History of West Africa," in *History of West Africa*, 2nd ed., ed. J. F. A. Ajayi and Michael Crowder (Burnt Mill, Harlow Essex: Longman, 1981), 1:72–113, here 85–86.

27. Chukwuma Azuonye, "The Heroic Age of the Ohafia Igbo: Its Evolution and Socio-Cultural Consequences," *Genève-Áfrique* 28 (1990): 7–35, here 16; Frank Hives, *Ju-Ju and Justice in Nigeria* (London: John Lane the Bodley Head Limited, 1933), 103ff.

28. René Girard, *Das Heilige und die Gewalt* (Zürich: Benziger, 1987), 28ff. Today people again submit their affairs to the judgment of the spirits, as there is no human authority they can trust. Igbo politicians have little reason to accept the verdicts of law courts or the decisions of party executives and parliamentary meetings. Before the present governor of Anambra State was given a chance to campaign for his office, he had to visit a shrine and swear to his godfather, a wealthy businessman and influential member of the ruling PDP (People's Democratic Party), that he would provide him with government contracts. This secret oath became known only when the police raided the shrine and detected sixty corpses in its vicinity. According to the priests, the dead bodies had been brought to the evil forest surrounding the shrine because the deity residing there had killed these unfortunate people. Whenever a vow sworn at the shrine was broken and the deity felt offended, it would take revenge, so that the guilty party, wherever he or she was, would die within a certain period of time. The corpses of the deceased were not allowed to be buried, but were displayed openly around the shrine as they testified to the deity's determination and strength.

In the case of the Bakassi Boys, too, belief in occult powers made it easier for people to accept the excessive force they used. According to the estimates of the Civil Liberties Organisation, in Anambra State alone the Bakassi Boys are supposed to have killed three thousand people within a period of eighteen months.[29] Despite such brutality, however, they enjoyed enormous popularity for a variety of reasons. A decisive factor was that they did not act as arbitrarily or corruptly as the police, who "routinely" torture suspected lawbreakers while simultaneously working together with criminal bands.[30] After the government gave the Bakassi Boys authority to pursue criminals, the rate of violent crimes fell dramatically, to such an extent that a commission of independent journalists determined that Anambra was the most secure state in Nigeria.[31] Naturally there were indications that the militia mistreated the innocent and intimidated political opposition on behalf of the governor. Nevertheless the population persevered in the belief that, thanks to its spiritual superiority, the most powerful and most dreaded militia in Igboland did not spill innocent blood. Competence in matters of the occult was regarded as an essential advantage for the Bakassi fighters, and when rival Bakassi factions emerged, it became a crucial criterion for determining the authenticity of the group. When the parliament of Imo State set up an autonomous Bakassi unit, for example, suspicion arose that it was not genuine, but an instrument of corrupt politicians. What puzzled people was the fact that the militiamen obviously did not know how to handle occult techniques. According to one report: "Whereas the original Bakassi Boys in Abia and the ones in Anambra use magical powers to fish out criminals, the ones in Imo relied on information supplied by members of the public to arrest their suspects. Soon, it became public knowledge that people were supplying Bakassi Boys with names of their enemies to settle personal scores. Imo indigenes concluded that Bakassi Boys without magical powers must be fake ones."[32]

Clients visiting the oracle would gain the impression that there was no counter-magic strong enough to save the guilty party and that nobody had a chance of manipulating the verdict, as one would do in a secular court when bribing the judge (*Newswatch*, August 23, 2004, 14–26, and October 11, 2004, 18–19).

29. *News Service* (Enugu), February 2002, 31–32.

30. Civil Liberties Organisation, *Above the Law: A Report on Torture and Extrajudicial Killings by the Police in Lagos State, Nigeria*. (Surulere, Lagos: Civil Liberties Organisation, 1994), 22; Human Rights Watch, *Political Shari'a?: Human Rights and Islamic Law in Northern Nigeria*, http://hrw.org/english/docs/2004/09/21/nigeri9364_txt.htm, May 18, 2005, 3, 6.

31. *Newswatch*, May 14, 2001, 42.

32. *Crystal* (Abuja), August 2001, 42–43.

The most convincing means the Bakassi group in Anambra had of demonstrating its superiority in the realm of the occult was to execute Edward Okeke. While the police could not harm the "false prophet" because he had bewitched them,[33] the Bakassi fighters were well equipped to do battle with him. Because the "great spiritualist" possessed the capacity to make himself invisible, however, even the Bakassi Boys required two attempts before they were said to have succeeded in capturing him at his villa. Further problems arose during the subsequent interrogation. It would hardly have been possible to force Eddy to confess to his crimes if the juju man who was aiding the Bakassi Boys in their search for the truth had not developed an unusual method. In order to break the prophet's magic, his long, bushy hair, which had helped give him a strange, wild appearance, was cut off.[34] The militia then celebrated the final triumph over their opponent with his public execution, when they played football with the prophet's head. Through this act of contempt, they were able to show that they did not even fear the ghost of the deceased.[35]

RESENTMENT AND FEAR OF WITCHES

Other examples could be adduced to demonstrate how the state is losing legitimacy in Nigeria because it cannot meet new occult challenges. More interesting, however, is the question of whether the decline of the state has itself contributed to people feeling increasingly threatened by occult powers. The essential problem is simply why fear of witches and sorcerers has revived since the end of the twentieth century. Anthropologists who studied witchcraft during the colonial period assumed that obsession with the occult would disappear through urbanization and the dissolution of traditional family groups,[36] given that witchcraft, at that time, was considered to be the dark

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33. *Guardian* (Lagos), January 14, 2001.

34. This scene is shown on one of the Bakassi posters that could be bought in the markets.

35. In Igboland, it was a widespread tradition to cut off the heads of slaughtered enemies, but the headhunters of the precolonial period dealt with their trophies quite differently. The skull of the murdered victim was treated with care, sometimes being colorfully decorated and kept in the ancestral shrine, while fighters who had been stained with blood went through elaborate rites of purification (N. Uka, "A Note on the 'Abam' Warriors of Igbo Land," *Ikenga* 1 [1972]: 76–82, here 80–81; Emefie Ikenga-Metuh, "Ritual Dirt and Purification Rites among the Igbo," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 15 [1985]: 3–24, here 16).

36. Max Marwick, "The Decline of Witch-Beliefs in Differentiated Societies," in *Witchcraft and Sorcery: Selected Readings*, ed. Max Marwick (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1975), 379–82, here 380.

side of kinship. Accusations usually circulated among members of the same family or village community, that is, between people who could not avoid one another because they were closely tied together in fixed living conditions. From foreigners, those who were not part of one's own moral universe, one expected not hidden forms of violence, but open aggression, which might manifest in theft, slave raids, or blood revenge.[37] Among kin or neighbors, on the other hand, hatred that threatened the whole group should not be expressed openly. To survive in a precarious world, the inhabitants of a compound or a small settlement were obliged to stand united against external enemies. Yet significant tensions and aversions arose precisely among those people who saw each other daily, indeed who were forced to live together without ever choosing such a relationship. People enter family groups by the chance of birth, and even women who married into families, and who usually came from outside villages, had often not sought their new home themselves. The mutual aggression that was bottled up in the narrow circle of daily contact often mutated into resentment that could not easily be dispelled, since the inhabitants of a farmstead could not simply turn their backs on one another and separate. Where else would they find protection if not within their own kinship group?

In a country in which a large portion of the population consisted of slaves, leaving one's home settlement and seeking one's luck among strangers was more than just risky. The fear of armed bands lying in wait outside the village was so great that women were often hesitant to collect water or firewood unless they went out in large groups or were accompanied by armed fighters.[38] Only with the public peace enforced by colonial authorities could peo-

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37. T. O. Beidelman, *Moral Imagination in Kaguru Modes of Thought* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 147; E. H. Winter, "The Enemy Within: Amba Witchcraft and Sociological Theory," in *Witchcraft and Sorcery in East Africa*, ed. John Middleton and E. H. Winter (London, Henley, and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), 277–99, here 294.

38. G. T. Basden, *Among the Ibos of Nigeria*, 2nd ed. (Lagos: University Publishing, 1982), 94. In the north of present-day Nigeria, where the Muslim preacher Usman dan Fodio proclaimed a holy war against nonbelievers in 1804, millions of people were enslaved during the jihad. When the British conquered this region, 25–50 percent of the population of the emirates were slaves (Paul E. Lovejoy, "Problems of Slave Control in the Sokoto Caliphate," in *Africans in Bondage: Studies in Slavery and the Slave Trade*, ed. Paul E. Lovejoy [Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986], 235–72, here 240). In Igboland, which never fell under Muslim rule, the proportion of slaves was apparently lower, though here, too, "the slave trade overshadowed every aspect of life." "One could not go to another town's sector of the market without being led by an armed elder. Any lapse in this protection might lead to a person's enslavement. . . . Movement during the slave trade period was limited to the survival

ple penetrate into remote areas and settle among strangers. Protected by the state, they could leave the shelter of their family group and determine for themselves where and with whom they would live. Given this increase in individual autonomy, the prediction that witch-beliefs would wither away seemed reasonable. As Max Marwick has noted, "in the towns, a preponderance of strangers not linked intimately or emotionally makes it possible for hostility and opposition to be expressed openly rather than supernaturally,"[39] and "beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery began to decline . . . when small-scale, intimate communities began to be displaced by large, impersonal, urban complexes."[40] My impression is that state-centred modernization indeed went hand in hand with a process of disenchantment. Yet in the last decades of the twentieth century, major achievements of modernization were lost. Life has become so insecure, even in rural areas, that people must submit to the patronage of more powerful groups or individuals. Without protection by local politicians or militias, by secret cults or religious communities, individuals would be largely without rights, since rights only exist if they can be defended by force.

In Igboland, as in other parts of Nigeria, no effective protection can be expected from the police and the judicial system. Quite the contrary, the agents of a disintegrating state have themselves grown out of control, to the extent that they often increase the pervading sense of insecurity: "People are permanently under siege and the fear of illegal detention."[41] In order to supplement their modest incomes, the police often arrest ordinary citizens under any pretext and incarcerate them in overflowing cells until their families come and purchase their freedom. Nor do such victims always succeed in escaping the clutches of the state's security forces. According to a government commission that visited the overfilled prisons, more than half the inmates had never been legally sentenced. Many prisoners had been in their cells for up to ten years without ever having seen a judge.[42] People cannot rebel openly against such arbitrary actions by state officials. Most have to endure this ha-

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of the fittest": Elizabeth Isichei, *A History of the Igbo People*, 2nd ed. (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1977), 48; Elizabeth Isichei, *Igbo Worlds: An Anthology of Oral Histories and Historical Descriptions* (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1977), 76–77.

39. Marwick, "Decline of Witch-Beliefs," 380.

40. M. G. Marwick, *Sorcery in its Social Setting: A Study of the Northern Rhodesian Cewa* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1965), 295.

41. *The News* (Lagos), August 10, 1998, 17.

42. *Guardian*, January 31, 1995, and February 12, 1996; *Tell*, January 5, 2004, 46, and October 11, 2004, 30–31; Human Rights Watch, *Political Shari'a?*, 6.

rassment with impotent rage and behave submissively in order not to provoke further violence.

What compels people to seek protection are not just the threats presented by state authorities, police, and other armed bands, but also the precarious economic situation. Seventy percent of Nigeria's population lives below the poverty line, without much prospect of finding a way out of their misery.[43] Hardly any work can be found in large cities, where many industries have collapsed. Yet few of the unemployed can go back to their home villages because they no longer have any land to cultivate. Scarcity of land is especially problematic for the Igbo, who since precolonial times have had to live "in some of the heaviest population concentrations in all Africa."[44] Today southeast Nigeria is hopelessly overpopulated, and the exhausted, eroded soil does not yield enough food for the local population. Rural areas have thus become net importers of food; their inhabitants can no longer ensure their own sustenance without the cash remittances sent to them by family members in Lagos, Hamburg, or New York.[45] For subsistence farmers, used to earning their living with a hoe and a piece of land, to see their means of survival slip out of their hands is a traumatic experience. In desperation, they cling to those family members who are a little better off than they are, and above all they take their concerns to the lobbies of the big men and patiently wait to be admitted. In the past, the local elites were eager to have such clients and readily exchanged their wealth for prestige. Today, as they are besieged by people seeking help, elites are more inclined to distance themselves from the mass of the poor.[46] In any case, they cannot fulfil the expectations of all those in need; instead they put off, stall, or simply eject tiresome petitioners. As a result, those they reject regard the lavish wealth of the upper

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43. Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Profile 2005: Nigeria*, 16.

44. Richard N. Henderson, *The King in Every Man: Evolutionary Trends in Onitsha Ibo Society and Culture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972), 23. "Igbo communities were almost constantly at war," and as an Igbo elder remembered, "wars were fought mostly over land issues": Isichei, *History of the Igbo People*, 78–79.

45. See the case study by Gilbert Malchau, *Einkommensstruktur kleinbäuerlicher Haushalte und gesamtwirtschaftlicher Strukturwandel in Südost-Nigeria: Untersuchungen im Rahmen eines erweiterten Tragfähigkeitsansatzes im dichtbesiedelten Hinterland von Uyo* (Hamburg: Institut für Afrika-Kunde, 1998), 110, 147–48.

46. Peter Lewis, "From Prebendalism to Predation: The Political Economy of Decline in Nigeria," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 36 (1996): 79–103; Elizabeth Isichei, *Voices of the Poor in Africa* (Rochester, N.Y.: University of Rochester Press, 2002), 248.

class with resentment and envy, and indeed suspect that the nouveau riche have acquired their privileges in an illegitimate and obscure manner. One Igbo newspaper, for example, claimed that most businessmen in Anambra State owed their success to the demonic arts of Edward Okeke.[47]

The violent protest against Eddy and his allies was one of the few occasions when popular anger against the arrogance of the ruling circles exploded. In more typical interactions, when people come to the villas of the rich asking for jobs, small favors, or help against an enemy, they are compelled to hide their bitterness. It would be fatal to rebel against those one needs. Impoverished Nigerians (who are, as a rule, neither exploited by modern factory work nor forced to pay traditional tribute) do not claim any collective rights, but instead demonstrate their servility as they request individual favors. Locked in competition with everyone else lacking means, they are desperate to find influential supporters who will incorporate them into a network of patronage and thus provide them with some security. For everyone knows that, if difficulties arise, the solidarity of the poor will help less than the generosity of the rich.

Since people cannot openly rebel, most of them have no alternative but to fantasize revenge in secret. With growing resentment, the fear of invisible forms of aggression also increases. As social anthropologists have observed with regard to premodern, small-scale societies: "people accuse one another of witchcraft when they are prohibited from expressing their aggression in other ways."[48] In order to defend themselves against attacks by their fellow citizens, impoverished farmers take what little money they have to so-called "native doctors" or "herbalists." Even Catholic priests stuff jujus behind their pictures of the Virgin in order to be equipped against any kind of trouble. The outraged citizens who became so indignant about Edward Okeke's magic skills thus knew what they were talking about. They were themselves deeply involved in occult practices so that their opponents would have reason to fear them. Accusations of pursuing witchcraft or black magic therefore fly in all directions. No one is free from suspicion, whether rich or poor.[49] Indeed, many people make no secret of the fact that they are equipped with

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47. *News Guide*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2000, 7.

48. Philip Mayer, *Witches: Inaugural Lecture Delivered at Rhodes University* (Grahamstown: Rhodes University, 1954), 13.

49. Misty L. Bastian, "'Bloodhounds Who Have no Friends': Witchcraft and Locality in the Nigerian Popular Press," in *Modernity and its Malcontents: Ritual and Power in Postcolonial Africa*, ed. Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1993), 129–66, here 142.

hidden weapons and occult powers. Those who can afford to consult the most expensive sorcerers let this be known so that potential opponents might be dissuaded from making any kind of spiritual or physical attacks against them.

THE OCCULT DIMENSION OF POWER

Such spiritual mobilization might in some ways reproduce social conditions that prevailed in precolonial times. Before Europeans introduced their model of a secular state, it was self-evident to the Igbo that every sort of power was linked with invisible forces. Every clan, family, or village community gathered around a shrine in order to derive strength from their ancestors or local deities. When competing groups were drawn into feuds, they needed to mobilize all possible resources, so they did not hesitate to call on very violent supernatural agents. Deities that had proven their strength by killing many people were regarded as valuable allies.[50] In Alor Uno, where I conducted field research, villagers possessed a particularly dastardly goddess who killed people for miles around. Thanks to the brutality of Adoro, who lived in the wild bush on the edge of town, the inhabitants felt protected everywhere they went. They could move about in astonishing safety, as far as the goddess's reputation reached, because the whole world feared to harm one of "Adoro's children."

Apart from seeking the protection of religious powers, the inhabitants of a village or town might also arm themselves with magic weapons, amulets, and other "war medicine." Such treasures, which they acquired at enormous cost, were not hidden away, but displayed openly to intimidate enemies.[51] Magical substances could, of course, also be used for personal ends, to provide fertility in the fields and to protect the harvest from theft, or in more sinister ways to harm one's neighbors. Because of this ambivalence, the profession of sorcerer, who provided jujus for all conceivable purposes, was always rather notorious. Witchcraft, however, was especially threatening. In contrast to the cultic magic of elders or the services of male sorcerers, this most secretive form of occult aggression was almost invariably considered illegitimate and harmful. Not coincidentally, it was mostly women who, while their bodies lay motionless in bed, would allegedly change into animals at night and enter the houses of their victims in order to consume them almost imperceptibly from the inside while they slept defenceless. Women had little opportunity

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50. Henderson, *King in Every Man*, 115–23.

51. Herbert Cole and Chike Aniakor, *Igbo Arts: Exhibition Catalogue* (Los Angeles: Museum of Cultural History, 1984), 133–34.

to manipulate religious or magical powers in publicly recognized ways. As outsiders coming from other clans and developing at best a broken form of loyalty to their new place of residence, they were excluded from ancestral cults and many other religious activities.[52] People therefore suspected that they acted out their envy and dissatisfaction by hidden means.

While in the past witchcraft accusations focused on marginal persons, today people in ruling circles are also implicated. All the stories that circulate about blood money, secret human sacrifices, and exclusive millionaire clubs attest to the perceived loss of legitimate authority among the upper classes. What provokes so much moral indignation, however, is not occult violence per se. Power, wealth, and the deployment of spiritual forces are regarded as entirely legitimate when they serve one's own group. While in the precolonial period people never thought of purchasing spiritual protection, the gods they venerated could still demand a high price: "Nri deity was one of the few in Igboland that abhorred human sacrifice."[53] Ritual killings to win favor from the gods were accepted for other purposes as well. In some purification ceremonies, a slave was tied to a rope and dragged through every nook and corner of a village in order to take up into his dying body all the pollution that the community had accumulated.[54] Slaves were often buried with their masters, and they also served the more profane purpose of title taking: "In the central districts of the Ibo country probably the most honorable title is that of Obu Madu, i.e. the one who has killed (his) man. . . . The victim was securely bound to a tree and a young lad, armed with a machete, hacked off the man's head . . . throughout the task he was urged on by the cheers of the assembled company."[55] Today, popular imagination is again preoccupied with

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52. "[W]omen are . . . prohibited from making juju": Basden, *Among the Ibos of Nigeria*, 235; and "[w]omen are generally excluded from inner parts of shrines": Francis A. Arinze, *Sacrifice in Ibo Religion* (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1970), 23. Among the Igbo, the exclusion of females was not as strict as among the Jukun and other Nigerian peoples. In a study of northern Igboland, Nwando Achebe describes how in the early twentieth century, a woman could become high priest of a deity: Achebe, *Farmers, Traders, Warriors and King: Female Power and Authority in Northern Igboland, 1900–1960* (Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 2005), 85–87.

53. Oliver A. Onwubiko, *Facing the Osu Issue in the African Synod (A Personal Response)*, 2nd ed. (Enugu: Snaap Press, 1993), 59; cf. Ogbu U. Kalu, *The Embattled Gods: Christianization of Igboland, 1841–1991* (Lagos and London: Minaj Publishers, 1996), 100.

54. Emefie Ikenga Metuh, *African Religions in Western Conceptual Schemes: The Problem of Interpretation (Studies in Igbo Religion)*, 2nd ed. (Jos, Nigeria: Imico Press, 1991), 97; Basden, *Among the Ibos of Nigeria*, 231–33.

55. Basden, *Among the Ibos of Nigeria*, 256.

acts of ritual murder allegedly committed by the rich and mighty, but attitudes have changed. When the mass of the population is becoming impoverished while the elite of politicians and businessmen openly display its wealth, the power of ruling elites becomes demonized.

If there is any sense of legitimate authority at all, it lies rather in the vengeful mission of groups such as the Bakassi Boys, who gave the impression that they did not pursue self-seeking ends but protected the whole land. They could not, however, expect to establish a monopoly of power as the colonial administration had done. The Bakassi Boys had to share their operational space with other violent actors, marauding soldiers and policemen, private security forces and street gangs, militias and ethnic "liberation movements." Since such groups were allied with rival politicians, clashes between them were unavoidable.[56] The competition between armed groups, which is slowly turning politicians into warlords, is altering the character of political rule. The sovereign power of the state, which used to control the use of force, did not have to fear rival powers in its territory, whereas the new armed gangs that are gradually replacing the crumbling state must constantly assert themselves against each other. Thus, they have to appear intimidating. For the Bakassi Boys, as for their rivals, it was important to show that they would not shrink from any bloody act. Like a cult of violence that feeds off human sacrifice, they used the punishment of lawbreakers to celebrate their overwhelming might through an endless series of executions.[57] The cold, ritualized cruelty with which they hacked their victims to pieces and burned them was intended to demonstrate that any attempt at opposing their ruthless power would be in vain.[58] To create an aura of invincibility, they surrounded

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56. William Reno, "The Changing Nature of Warfare and the Absence of State-Building in West Africa," in *Irregular Armed Forces and Their Role in Politics and State Formation*, ed. Diane E. Davis and Anthony W. Pereira (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003): 322–45, here 335–36, 340.

57. The cultic aspect was more pronounced in the ritual killings committed by politicians and militia groups in Liberia; see Stephen Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy: The Destruction of Liberia and the Religious Dimension of an African Civil War* (London: Hurst, 1999), 249–59.

58. Such dastardly acts were not alien to European states either, especially in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when the absolutist state was seeking to establish itself in opposition to other sources of power. The sovereign staged cruel executions in order to present his power with triumphant gestures: "La cérémonie du supplice fait éclater en plein jour le rapport de force qui donne son pouvoir à la loi." "[L]'exécution de la peine est faite pour donner non pas le spectacle de la mesure, mais celui du déséquilibre et de l'excès . . . Et cette supériorité, ce n'est pas simplement celle du droit, mais celle de la force physique du souverain s'abattant sur le corps de son adversaire . . . pour le montrer marqué, vaincu, brisé. . . . Le supplice ne

themselves with attributes of the occult, especially with jujus that they wore clearly visible on their upper arms, and sometimes also around their hips or ankles. It was through such mysterious means, coupled with their fearless and resolute appearance, that they acquired the reputation of being bulletproof, so that initially even the army and the police did not dare to attack them.

LACK OF PREDICTABILITY

The decline of the state might be contributing to the return of the occult in yet another way. Since power is hardly regulated institutionally anymore, it has become unpredictable and seems to be connected to hidden forces, and everyone in society has an interest in manipulating these forces. In all spheres of life, it now seems advisable to take occult influences into consideration. In the universities, for example, students seek the help of miracle doctors or (Christian) spirit mediums in order to pass their examinations. Government employees seeking promotion or businessmen looking for customers arm themselves with amulets against the evil magic of their opponents, and in politics, too, the rise and fall of powerful figures seems to depend on invisible forces. Despite the introduction of "democracy," the use of power has not become more transparent; rather, "power is located other than where the law proclaims it to be."[59] As in the period of military dictatorship, cliques of politicians, rich businessmen, and (pensioned-off) army officers arrange among themselves who will fill which positions—a game of intrigues and swiftly moving alliances. Whoever wins any power must defend it tirelessly since the possession of power is no longer guaranteed by institutions. As in other African countries, "the most amazing changes of fortune are possible," for example, "Laurent-Désiré Kabila, a small-time bandit chief and smuggler . . . dropped almost entirely from international view, before emerging from nowhere, as it were, to become president of Congo."[60] Power attaches itself to certain individuals and leaves them again, without any clear criteria that would make its use calculable. The assumption that power has an occult dimension is sometimes corroborated by politicians themselves, who feed the suspicion that they are in league with sinister forces. What brought them to the top was not only intrigues, cleverness, and criminal machinations (which they share with their rivals), but also more mysterious means.[61]

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rétablissait pas la justice: il réactivait le pouvoir": Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et Punir: Naissance de la Prison* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975), 61, 60.

59. Ellis and Ter Haar, *Worlds of Power*, 190.

60. Ibid., 45.

61. Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument* (Oxford: James Currey, 1999), 66ff.

A COLLECTIVE TRAUMA

The impression that the world is ruled by dark forces has been intensified by a kind of moral trauma. Social and political decline has placed Nigeria's inhabitants in a world in which the relationship between good and bad, guilt and atonement, has become unbalanced. As in other African countries, people "are increasingly concerned with the presence of evil."[62] The importance of such collective anxieties becomes apparent when compared with the situation in Europe in the fifteenth century. Here, as in other premodern civilizations, the peasant population had always been worried about witchcraft and malicious forms of magic. Yet they had learned to coexist with sorcerers and witches so that large-scale witch hunts were rare. On the eve of the great witch-craze, however, it seems that "European civilization was overwhelmed by collective fear."[63] Historians have pointed to the "threat posed by Islam, the increasing frequency of hunger crises, the return of the Black Death, and the split of the Roman Church." As Wolfgang Behringer has argued, no one can assess the extent to which these events affected peasants in the valleys of the western Alps where the first major witch hunts took place. Nevertheless, there were developments that had a direct impact on all communities involved in witch-hunting. Starting in the 1430s, waves of extreme climatic deterioration "left European society 'on the brink of apocalypse.'"[64] The disaster that the Little Ice Age brought had two main features—it affected all spheres of society, and it was incomprehensible.

For the vast majority of Igbo and other Nigerians, a surfeit of suffering has broken over their heads. As the means of survival grow scarce, they desperately fight their rivals, but in doing so they become all the more caught up in a web of aggression with no way out. For many, life is becoming a nightmare, and they find no means to arrest the downward spiral: "When you look at yourself as an African, it is easy to think that God has cursed you."[65] All attempts to emulate the development of Western societies by adopting their technical and administrative systems have led to a dead end, and the causes of this "catastrophic decline"[66] are obscure. Of course, everybody knows that politicians in Nigeria are corrupt, as are policemen, teachers, and

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62. Ellis and Ter Haar, *Worlds of Power*, 41.

63. Wolfgang Behringer, *Witches and Witch-hunts: A Global History* (Cambridge: Polity, 2004), 60.

64. Ibid., 60, 61.

65. Paul Gifford, quoting a preacher from Zambia: Gifford, *African Christianity: Its Public Role* (London: Hurst, 1998), 324.

66. Ibid., 348.

administrative staff. But why are state bureaucracies working in Europe and North America? Some former students and colleagues told me that Europeans, in their quest for hegemony, have relied on the superiority of their witches or sorcerers. How else did they manage to invent computers or send rockets to the moon? The secrets of their strength, so I was told, might also be due to the fact that they have found ways to handle occult forces in less destructive ways. Instead of directing magic and witchcraft against each other, as Africans are inclined to do, they may have turned these forces into a resource of common strength.

Commentators in the West have pointed to a sense of "moral panic" or "moral confusion" that has spread in large parts of Africa.[67] Many Nigerians would agree that they are witnessing a "moral collapse in the nation,"[68] but while Western experts propagate social technology and secular institutions as a way out of the crisis, Nigerians look instead for religious solutions. Before they can transform their social and political environment, they need to develop a sense of common direction. Without a consensus on what is good or evil, right or wrong, the mass of the population will not find the strength to check the excesses of the ruling elite and enforce political reforms. Yet in a deeply divided country like Nigeria, there is no consensus in sight. For Muslim reformers in northern Nigeria, Sharia is the only way to overcome "the collapse of moral values."[69] By turning to the immutable laws of God, they try to leave the African past behind. According to the new penal code that has been introduced in Zamfara and some other Sharia states, it is a criminal offence to worship gods other than Allah: "Whoever . . . takes part in the worship or invocation of any juju . . . shall be punished with death."[70] The term "juju," which normally refers to various forms of magic and traditional religion, is defined in the Sharia penal code in such a broad sense that it covers all sorts of African religious practices: "'Juju' includes the worship or

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67. Ellis and Ter Haar, *Worlds of Power*, 36; Heike Behrend, "Man ist was man isst," *Kursbuch* 143 (2001): 167–83, here 168.

68. Ogbu U. Kalu, "The Religious Dimension of the Legitimacy Crisis, 1993–1998," in *Nigeria in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Toyin Falola (Durham, N.C.: Carolina Academic Press, 2002): 667–85, here 674.

69. Abubakar D. Muhammad, *Muslim Responses to the Re-Implementation of Sharia in Northern Nigeria*, paper presented at the Conference on "The Sharia Debate and the Shaping of Muslim and Christian Identities in Northern Nigeria," held at the University of Bayreuth, July 11–12, 2003 [unpublished], 7.

70. Zamfara State of Nigeria, *Gazette. No. 1. 15th June, 2000. Vol. 3. Law No. 10. Shariah Penal Code Law* (Gusau, Zamfara State: Ministry of Justice, 2000), sec. 406.

invocation of any object or being other than Allah."[71] By classifying indigenous forms of religion as godless and wicked, Sharia law treats them like witchcraft, which also carries the death penalty.[72] Despite such official commitment to "de-Africanize"[73] the country, however, it is unlikely that Sharia states will start killing witches or "idolaters." So far, there have been only mild forms of prosecution. State authorities in Zamfara and Katsina tried to enforce a ban on music and dancing, both of which play a vital role in traditional forms of worship. For some time, such orthodox measures found popular support. Murray Last, an expert on northern Nigeria, wrote at the height of the Sharia campaign: "La culture domestique 'traditionelle' que j'ai connue il y a trente ans n'existe plus."[74] But the wave of religious enthusiasm ebbed when the faithful realized that Sharia did not improve their living conditions. As their collective endeavor to eliminate evil has failed, many have begun resorting again to common magic and spiritual means to ward off personal misfortune.

Christians in the south, among them many Igbo, tend to demonize "pagan" traditions as well. But unlike Muslims, they have no blueprint for a just and godly society. When Pentecostal pastors call for a "complete break with the past,"[75] they expect an inner transformation, a rebirth of the personality that has been steeped in sin: "[W]e are the problem ourselves. The problem . . . is ingrained in us, and to resolve it will require a complete crushing . . . of our personality."[76] At the core of the crisis seems to be pacts with "satanic" powers, which take possession of their adherents and drive them to pursue their individual interests recklessly. In order to free themselves from these destructive forces, Christians should acknowledge that their godless ways have led them astray. As one Christian minister noted, "If God does not punish Nigeria in future, then He (God) certainly owes the people of Sodom and Gomorrah an apology."[77] Yet the appeal to the personal morality of the individual has a limited effect, since it cannot change the system of patronage and personal dependence that breeds corruption.

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71. Ibid., sec. 405.

72. Ibid., sec. 406.

73. William F. S. Miles, "Shari'a as De-Africanization: Evidence from Hausaland," *Africa Today* 50 (2003): 51–75.

74. Murray Last, "La charia dans le Nord-Nigeria," *Politique Africaine*, 79 (2000): 141–52, here 148.

75. This expression is taken from Birgit Meyer, "'Make a Complete Break with the Past.' Memory and Post-Colonial Modernity in Ghanaian Pentecostalist Discourse," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 28 (1998): 329.

76. *Tempo* (Lagos), December 5, 1996.

77. Rev. (Dr.) James Ukaegbu, in *Champion* (Lagos), December 23, 1996.

As long as people are locked in a world of decline without any way out, their thoughts tend to revolve around possible conspiracies being set in motion by monstrous means.[78] Stories of ritual murders, satanic banknotes, and cannibalistic feasts open up a view into a chasm of malice, a world in which nothing can be relied on anymore since the last moral taboos have been broken. These gloomy stories are popular because they dramatize what everyone believes they have experienced when confronted with the unscrupulousness of their fellow humans. This may be a reason why such fantastic stories are accepted with so little skepticism. Listeners assure each other with a bitter realism that admits no illusions that there is nothing they would not believe their fellow humans capable of doing.

In Nigeria, as in other African countries, the decline of state structures is leading to a loss of trust. Contractual relations, sanctioned by law, are being replaced gradually by personal forms of dependence. And even personal loyalties are fragile. As they are largely determined by self-interest, they provide little security. It appears Europe underwent a similar process in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but it moved in the opposite direction. With the creation of the state, which removed people's fear of one another, the concern with hidden forms of aggression slowly subsided.

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78. This includes global conspiracies. Some Sharia states in northern Nigeria discontinued the polio vaccinations organized by UNICEF, claiming that the vaccine had been contaminated with AIDS. In the south, Christian pastors made it known that the Antichrist, the Great Beast of the Apocalypse, had been born in Europe. Under his leadership, the European Union was preparing for a global showdown by establishing a common parliament, a single currency, etc.: Simeon U. Ezekwe, *European Union Plans to Rule the World with Antichrist*, 2nd ed. (Jos, Nigeria: End-Time Missionary Bookshop, 1999), 20–21.

Mythologies of Witchcraft in the Fifteenth Century

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The European witch trials that began in the fifteenth century have been explained in many ways, but always assuming that witchcraft was a unified concept. Work on the history of witchcraft has come to a point at which we both can and must rethink this and other basic assumptions about the rise of these trials. We must reconsider how far the concept of witchcraft was consolidated into a single imaginative construct during the fifteenth century, and how the mythology of witchcraft functioned in distinct places. Most basically, we must ask anew how useful standard models of historical explanation are for understanding the early witch trials.

At the turn of the twentieth century, Joseph Hansen traced the evolution of what he called the "collective concept" (*Kollektivbegriff*) of witchcraft, corresponding to what we would now call the imaginative world of the Sabbath.[1] All the components of this concept had their separate histories: the nocturnal assembly, flight through the air with demonic assistance, the pact with the devil, sexual intercourse with incubi and succubi, and bewitchments or *maleficia*. In Hansen's construction, which has never seemed controversial, it was in the fifteenth century that these notions fused into a cohesive notion of witchcraft, to which the Sabbath was of central importance. Whether agreeing or disagreeing with Hansen in other respects, historians have followed his lead in all this, accepting as a given that in the fifteenth century there was a more or less established conception of witchcraft. The single mythology of witchcraft is then explained by tracing its roots in medieval

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1. Joseph Hansen, *Zauberwahn, Inquisition und Hexenprozeß im Mittelalter, und die Entstehung der großen Hexenverfolgung* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1900; repr., Aalen: Scientia, 1964), 35.

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heresies, in the practices of ritual magic, in the tenacious peasant culture of Europe, or in the effort of Christians to shore up their own uncertain faith by grasping for evidence of the supernatural.[2] Historians of various persuasions agree on this point: whatever their sources, and however diverse they may be at first, the elements of witchcraft consolidated quickly into that cumulative construct, into a concept of "the Sabbath" that emerges relatively early in the fifteenth century through the aglutination of elements in a single mythology.

We now have fuller documentation at our disposal than even the great source-compiler Hansen could claim. We are therefore in a position to see that in the fifteenth century there was not a single mythology of witchcraft but multiple mythologies, and that in certain places these mythologies remained intact for several decades, preserving their independent contours with remarkable tenacity. We can now see, too, that when these mythologies did lose their stability, the circumstances leading to change require special attention. We can trace the patterns of both stability and modification with greater precision than Hansen could have hoped to attain. The point is not simply that mythologies of witchcraft are plural rather than singular, and that they come in regional varieties—although this much is true, important, and more obvious now than any of us once knew. The further argument I want to make is that mythologies of witchcraft *functioned* differently under different circumstances.

Two sources in particular compel us to revise our notions of how the witch trials began at the end of the Middle Ages. First, it would be difficult to imagine a source for the history of witchcraft more important than manuscript 29 in the Archives Cantonales Vaudoises at Lausanne. This manuscript gives us detailed information about the trials of twelve men and seven women from the southern edge of the Pays de Vaud, the region of Lausanne, along the north shore of Lake Geneva, all tried for witchcraft in the years 1438–98.[3]

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2. The positions of, respectively, Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Witchcraft in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1972); Norman Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons: An Enquiry Inspired by the Great Witch-Hunt* (London: Chatto, 1975; rev. ed., Pimlico, 1993); Carlo Ginzburg, *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath*, trans. Raymond Rosenthal (New York: Pantheon, 1991); and Walter Stephens, *Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

3. Because it deals with material beyond the chronological scope of this article, I am leaving out of consideration Pierre-Han Choffat, *La sorcellerie comme exutoire: tensions et conflits locaux, Dommartin 1524–28* (Lausanne: Cahiers Lausannois d'Histoire Médiévale, 1989).

This collection of legal records provides a wealth of information early in the history of the witch trials, from the very heartland of those trials. The accused are called heretics (*heretici*), but their transgressions are those of conspiratorial witches. The documentation for this series is full and candid enough that we can tell how the trials began, how they progressed, and how interrogation and torture molded the outcomes. The manuscript has been known to scholars since 1908–9, when Maxime Reymond published two articles based on it, and some of us have made use of it in later decades; but it was in only 1995–97 that a team of historians published editions, French translations, and extended commentary in four volumes.[4] The second source, less extensive than the first yet still vitally important, is a series of trial records in the Archivio di Stato di Perugia, most especially a set of four trials between 1455 and 1501, published in 1988 by Ugolino Nicolini.[5] The trials took place at the Umbrian town of Perugia. The accused here were almost all women, and they were called *streghe* or witches.

In each of these sources we can see a mythology of witchcraft that remains fundamentally stable over several decades. But it is a *different* mythology in each case: the witchcraft of the documents from Perugia bears almost no resemblance to that of the manuscript from Lausanne. In a conventional interpretation we might say that they describe different versions of witchcraft, with differing accounts of the Sabbath. But not all contemporary observers would have classed the *heretici* of Lausanne and the *streghe* of Perugia in the same category. I will want to examine the implications of these differences. I will then turn to other witch trials of the fifteenth century, in parts of France where the mythic vocabulary was less stable, and where the myths of witchcraft were largely borrowed from western Switzerland, from central Italy, or both. And I will argue that it makes a great deal of difference whether the mythology of witchcraft was indigenous to a region or imported into it.

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4. Martine Ostorero, *"Folâtrer avec les démons": Sabbat et chasse aux sorciers à Vevey (1448)* (Lausanne: Cahiers Lausannois d'Histoire Médiévale, 1995); Georg Modestin, *Le diable chez l'évêque: Chasse aux sorciers dans le diocèse de Lausanne (vers 1460)* (Lausanne: Cahiers Lausannois d'Histoire Médiévale, 1995); Eva Maier, *Trente ans avec le diable: Une nouvelle chasse aux sorciers sur la Riviera lémanique (1477–1484)* (Lausanne: Cahiers Lausannois d'Histoire Médiévale, 1996); and Laurence Pfister, *L'enfer sur terre: Sorcellerie à Dommartin (1498)* (Lausanne: Cahiers Lausannois d'Histoire Médiévale, 1997). For a concise overview see Martine Ostorero, "Les chasses aux sorcières dans le Pays de Vaud (1430–1530): bilan des recherches," *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Geschichte: Revue suisse d'histoire: Rivista storica svizzera* 52 (2002): 109–14.

5. Ugolino Nicolini, "La stregoneria a Perugia e in Umbria nel Medioevo: con i testi di sette processi a Perugia e uno a Bologna," *Bollettino della Deputazione di storia patria per l'Umbria* 84 [for 1987] (1988): 5–87.

FIRST REPRESENTATIVE CASE: JORDANA DE BAULMES

Few of the early trials for witchcraft are more poignant than that of Jordana de Baulmes, tried in 1477 in the castle of Ouchy, on the south side of Lausanne.[6] Neighbors of hers from the outskirts of Vevey first brought her before the papal and episcopal inquisitors. At the outset of the trial she was asked if she knew a man named Gérard Reymond. Yes, she replied; he was a fellow villager, who two years ago had approached her with the words, "Come on, you false woman, you heretic, you caused my animals to die, and now I have a cow that is sick, and I've given up on its life, but if it dies I will make you burn for it, because you are a heretic."[7]

Faced with such initial allegations against her, Jordana denied them, but she confessed to a deeply troubled conscience on other grounds.[8] Twenty years earlier she had quarreled with her husband and gone to help her parents with the vintage. They took her to the neighboring town of Fribourg, where she had a romantic adventure with a man who "loved her so much that she conceived a daughter by him." Her lover left her and refused all help; she gave birth secretly and left the infant daughter exposed at a fountain, where the child evidently survived long enough to be baptized but then died. Jordana had confessed this sin and received absolution from a Dominican friar. She added that when she was living at Gruyère she had a second illegitimate child by another father, who again refused his help, and this time she buried the infant without baptism behind some building. But a few days later she retracted the second story, saying she had in fact never lived in or near Gruyère; she told this fabrication thinking she might secure release from prison by giving the inquisitors a false confession. For years, however, she clearly had been haunted by the first experience. It would be too much to expect of the inquisitors the gentle wisdom of a sympathetic counselor, and in fact this was not their strength. Faced with a woman who freely admitted her crushing sense of guilt, they were indifferent. The memories she told were not the sort that interested them.

Eight days into the interrogation, Jordana's judges found a way to make progress in their proceedings.[9] Rather than asking her outright if she had been guilty of witchcraft, they asked what she could tell them about the deeds of heretics, and on that point she had much to relate: in their assemblies the heretics drink and eat, consuming the flesh of children; they lie together

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6. Maier, *Trente ans*, 333–61.
7. Maier, *Trente ans*, 334; see the similar incident reported on p. 348.
8. Maier, *Trente ans*, 338, 342–44.
9. Maier, *Trente ans*, 344.

in the manner of brute animals; they fly on brooms anointed with unguents. She had heard all this a good twenty years ago, from sources she could not remember. She did not know at what time the heretics assemble, because she had never heard that told. Did she know anything else? No, except that—and here she took a fateful step—just the previous night a great multitude of candles with blue light came before her in the prison where she was detained. But with this the book of her memory snapped shut: she knew nothing further. She was taken to the place of torture, where at the portal she suggested perhaps a devil was hidden somewhere on her person and was keeping her from confessing.[10] Suddenly she lost her power of speech, as if she were being strangled. Soon, however, the floodgates opened, and in further interrogation Jordana's story conformed to the judges' expectations. Her tale now began as it had before, but it veered off in a very different direction. She said she had quarreled with her husband and moved to Fribourg, where she had a baby girl by a lover who deserted her. Alone and depressed, she found herself approached one day by a man with the suspicious name Sathanas, dressed in black, like a great lord, who asked the cause of her sadness and said he would give her consolation if she agreed to do as he said. With this she made her entry into the witches' company. On more than one occasion she attended a nocturnal assembly, called here a "sect." In it she denied God, the Virgin, and baptism. She gave the devil an obscene kiss on his posterior. She and others at the assembly ate the flesh of children and had sex with each other "in the manner of brute animals." One of the locations for the assembly was a "mountain" above Blonay, to the north of Vevey.

Jordana was by anyone's standards an unreliable narrator of her own story, as the inquisitors clearly perceived. Having followed their script fully, she later retracted part of what she had confessed, but only part. She denied, in particular, an earlier confession about her role in a host desecration.[11] Evi-

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10. Maier, *Trente ans*, 346.

11. Maier, *Trente ans*, 350. For parallel cases see Joseph Hansen, ed., *Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Hexenwahns und der Hexenverfolgung im Mittelalter* (Bonn: Georgi, 190l; repr. Hildesheim: Olms, 1963), 467–99, 477–84, and 548–51; E. Hoffmann-Krayer, "Luzerner Akten zum Hexen- und Zauberwesen," *Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde* 3 (1899): 30–33; René Filhol, "Procès de sorcellerie à Bressuire (Août–Septembre 1475)," *Revue historique de droit française et étrange*, 4th ser., 42 (1964): 77–83; Abbé Garnodier, *Recherches archéologiques sur Saint-Romain-de-Lerp et ses environs* (new ed., Valence, 1860), 234–35 n. For the broader tradition, in which Jews are usually seen as the antagonists, see Peter Browe, "Die Hostienschädung der Juden im Mittelalter," *Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und für Kirchengeschichte* 34 (1926): 167–97; Charles Zika, "Hosts, Processions and Pilgrimages: Controlling the Sacred in Fifteenth-Century germany," *Past and Present* 118

dently the judges believed that a long period in prison might win her back to a more compliant mood, and when they resumed interrogation seven weeks later she confirmed that her previous confessions had been true, except for the matter of the consecrated host.[12] Through the convoluted record of her proceedings, we can see the intertwining of three imaginative realms: her own, in which the number of her lovers and illegitimate children was uncertain and unstable; that of her neighbors, in which she could be the occult cause for illness to livestock and perhaps other misfortune; and that of the inquisitors—confident, fully elaborated, and destined to prevail over the other two imaginative worlds, as well as any real world one might care to posit.

THE LAUSANNE MANUSCRIPT AND THE MYTHOLOGY OF WITCHCRAFT IN THE PAYS DE VAUD

The confession that Jordana eventually gave her judges was essentially that of virtually all the accused who occupy the folios of the Lausanne manuscript. One of the most important facts to emerge from these trials is the consistency of the confessions extracted from the accused. The manuscript provides a coherent body of cases; although the defendants were quite different in the backgrounds and in the circumstances leading to their accusation, they were made to conform over several decades to a script that was remarkably consistent from one case to another. The standard script for confession included thirteen elements, which can be clustered for convenience in three groups.

First, there were matters having to do chiefly with the relationship between the heretic and the devil: (1) the circumstances of the heretic's induction into allegiance with the devil, usually at a moment of despondency; (2) the appearance of the devil or demon to the heretic, in human or bestial form; (3) the homage paid by the heretic to the devil, which included the obscene kiss *sub cauda* and the giving of a bodily part and other offerings; (4) denial of God, the Virgin, the sacrament of baptism, and sometimes other holy persons and objects; (5) desecration of the sacred, often involving the trampling on a cross; and (6) payment to the heretics of a specified sum of money, which was generally not paid, or when paid turned out illusory. The most dramatic part of the narrative is often the opening. The script called for an account of the witch's fall into complicity with other heretics, and almost

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(February 1988): 25–64; and the "Croxton Play of the Sacrament," in *Non-Cycle Plays and Fragments*, ed. Norman Davis (London: Oxford University Press for the Early English Text Society, 1970), lxiii–lxv, 58–89.

12. Maier, *Trente ans*, 352.

always this testimony appears in the record. Induction typically presupposed inducement: people were led into the sect as a solution to some problem, sometimes a quarrel or some ongoing enmity. The most often cited temptation was the promise of wealth, whether or not this came as a solution to the pressure of poverty. The spirit typically appeared at first in human form, generally that of a man dressed in black, and then changed into the form of an animal, usually a black cat, to receive the heretic's obscene kiss beneath its tail.

Second, there were matters having to do with the heretic's participation in activities along with other heretics: (7) attendance at the assemblies, called either sects or synagogues (never Sabbaths); (8) transport to those assemblies, usually on an anointed stick, and usually instantaneous; (9) eating at the sects of the flesh of infants whom the heretics had previously killed and exhumed; (10) sex with other heretics; (11) illumination of the assemblies by a fire that emitted blue light and by candles. Attendance at the assemblies could be impressively large: at one there were a hundred twenty people, at another nearly three hundred men, women, and demons.

Third, the accused told of misdeeds carried out in the broader society at the command of demons: (12) violation of religious duties, and profanation of the Eucharist; and (13) *maleficia*, chiefly the killing of persons and animals by use of powders given by the demon. Apart from these thirteen points of confession (which are not explicitly broken down in this manner in the documents), the heretics were expected to give the names of as many accomplices as possible in all these deeds.

Only rarely is there deviation from or even significant addition to the established mythology. Late in the sequence of trials two of the witches were said—in the midst of more typical allegations—to have fallen from the clouds during storms. Precisely how their tumbles related to their other activities remains unclear. And the notion, which figured prominently in literature of the ninth century, seems to have resurfaced unaccountably in this much later setting, as if fallen from a Carolingian cloud that somehow strayed over late medieval skies. In any case, this was a slight addition to the received pattern, which otherwise persisted intact.[13]

The geographical setting for these trials calls for close attention. In a seminal article of 1967, H. R. Trevor-Roper suggested that witchcraft originated in mountainous regions.[14] Perhaps he was thinking of cases such as these from

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13. Pfister, *L'enfer sur terre*, 186, 188, 198. On the Carolingian precedent see Russell, *Witchcraft in the Middle Ages*, 82–83.

14. H. R. Trevor-Roper, *The European Witch-Craze of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries and Other Essays* (New York: Harper, 1969), 102.

western Switzerland. But in fact these took place on the urbanized north shore of the Lake of Geneva. Even the *mons de Blonay* at which some of the witches' assemblies took place is not a mountain but a hill on the outskirts of Vevey. Jordana de Baulmes is typical: she came from Corsier, not far outside the town of Vevey, in the elevated land within easy walking distance of urban life. Her parents were vineyard workers, probably small rural proprietors. Within Vevey she might have been recognized as the proximate outsider, the sort of villager often met in passing at a town market: a person markedly different in class and culture from the inquisitors and other churchmen of the town. Yet her initial troubles came not from them but from her neighbors in Corsier. If she had lived in a mountain valley, it might never have occurred to anyone to report her to the inquisitors, who rarely penetrated the mountainous hinterland. Jordana's misfortune was to come from a village close enough to the town that she was caught between two cultures, surrounded by neighbors who could easily walk downhill to Vevey and hear inquisitors preaching against witchcraft, or witness the public spectacle of women and men burned as witches. The record of the Lausanne manuscript must be read against this background.

It might seem that the mythic complex produced by this interrogation is unexceptional: that it is simply what witches anywhere were expected to confess. This is not in fact the case, but there is a handful of fifteenth-century trials outside the diocese of Lausanne that belong recognizably to the same family as these. In 1462 four women and four men were sentenced at Chamonix in Savoy, and the pattern of confessions followed that of Lausanne quite closely.[15] Again in 1477 a woman named Antonia was tried in Savoy, and again her confessions follow the general pattern of confessions in the diocese of Lausanne.[16] Even the sequence of interrogation leading up to the interlocutory sentence and torture was essentially the same as that used in the diocese of Lausanne. Clearly an interrogatory from Lausanne was being used in these trials. And it comes as no surprise that the inquisitors who presided at these proceedings were deputed by an inquisitor who worked in Lausanne. The connections are less obvious in the trial of Jehanneta Lasne by municipal authorities at Fribourg in 1493. Her trial record does not report on the interrogation leading up to her confession, but still her confession resembled closely that of the women and men tried by inquisitors in the

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15. Hansen, *Quellen*, 477–84.

16. Jh. M. Lavanchy, *Sabbats ou synagogues sur les bords du lac d'Annecy: procès inquisitorial à St. Jorioz en 1477*, 2nd ed. (Annecy: Abry, 1896); Hansen, *Quellen*, 467–99.

diocese of Lausanne, closely enough that we may assume the magistrates were following the model set by the inquisitors in the Pays de Vaud.[17]

SECOND REPRESENTATIVE CASE: FILIPPA DA CITTÀ DELLA PIEVE

In 1455 the secular authorities of Perugia tried and executed Filippa da Città della Pieve as, among other things, a *strega* who drank the blood of children.[18] Unlike many of the characters tried in and near Umbria for witchcraft, she is not spoken of as a professional healer, diviner, or specialist in other people's amorous requirements; she operated in her own interests, not those of clients. The record is explicit and minutely detailed about her magical practice. It tells of the love potion she concocted with semen, her own menstrual blood, and a powerful herb, which she harvested on a Thursday before sunrise while mouthing incantations. Using this and other magical procedures, she managed to compel at least four men to love her with unquenchable fury. Other ingredients, including hairs of a hanged man and body parts of a bat and a raven,[19] she placed in a pouch, which she buried near the house of a man with whom she had quarreled, causing him to die. These and other crimes are told in circumstantial detail, including names and dates as well as means. She had been practicing her crimes for the past twenty years, and she had gained a considerable reputation as a formidable enemy. Yet she acknowledged a prior if not better craftswoman named Clarutia Angeli, also of Città della Pieve, to whom she was a disciple.

It was a further category of offense, also learned from this Clarutia, that qualified Filippa as a *strega*. Being in league with the devil, the two women went about killing young children by sucking and draining their blood. One morning before dawn Filippa stripped herself naked, anointed herself with an unguent, and pronounced the conjuration, "O devil, I give myself to you in soul and in body; carry me where I tell you." Immediately both she and her teacher were swept away to a neighbor's house in transfigured form, presumably that of a small animal, and they sucked the blood of a child while his mother slept. The next day, the child died. After his burial, they exhumed the body; they used it and other children's corpses to make magical powders and unguents. Indeed, she killed more than a hundred infants, drinking their blood as they lay beside their mothers.

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17. Hansen, *Quellen*, 590–92.

18. Nicolini, "La stregoneria a Perugia," app. 1–5, pp. 52–58.

19. Conspicuously absent here is the hoopoe, on which see Richard Kieckhefer, *Forbidden Rites: A Necromancer's Manual of the Fifteenth Century*, Magic in History, 1 (Stroud: Sutton, 1997; University Park: Penn State University Press, 1998), 66 n25.

THE PERUGIA DOCUMENTS AND THE MYTHOLOGY OF WITCHCRAFT IN UMBRIA

Through much of central Italy, women such as Filippa were tried at least sporadically as *streghe*. The term has come to be a standard Italian word for "witch," but in this context it means something rather more specific. It is a term associated with a particular mythology, that of women who go out at night, enter people's homes, and kill infants. The term is a reference to the screech-owl (*strix*, *strigis* in Latin). This mythology had very little in common with that of the Pays de Vaud. The *streghe* were almost all female; even when one male *strega* was tried, it is clear that he was thought to be acting alongside women who acted the role more fully than he.[20] They operated independently or in pairs, rarely in larger groups. They flew, but not usually to assemblies. When they flew, they took the form of animals rather than flying on the backs of animals. They might be accused of invoking and collaborating with demons, but they did not do homage to the devil. They killed children, almost always by sucking their blood, but they did not eat the children's bodies.

The epicenter of these trials, the place where the notion seems most often to have surfaced in the course of prosecution, was Perugia, yet this concept of witchcraft was not specific to Perugia or even to central Italy. Bernardino of Siena knew the type and reported that he had encountered a *strega* of this sort in the 1420s at Rome.[21] In a trial at Todi in 1428, the phenomenon merged with the notion of a witches' assembly, although the mythology of that assembly was not fully developed, and it played here at most a marginal role.[22] The witch at Todi, Matteuccia di Francesco, was said to have carried out much of her activity in the region of Perugia, but others operated further afield. Maria "the healer" of Vicenza went forth as a *strega* and attacked (*streavit*) around three hundred children in various places in and around Brescia; half of these died, while the rest she then cured.[23] Alfonso de Spina assumed there were witches of this sort in fifteenth-century Spain, and we will see at

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20. Nicolini, "La stregoneria a Perugia," app. 1–8, pp. 66–73.

21. Franco Mormando, *The Preacher's Demons: Bernardino of Siena and the Social Underworld of Early Renaissance Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 52–108, esp. 54–72; Saint Bernardino of Siena, *Sermons*, ed. Nazareno Orlandi, trans. Helen Josephine Robins (Siena: Tipografia Sociale, 1920), 166–67.

22. Domenico Mammoli, *The Record of the Trial and Condemnation of a Witch, Matteuccia di Francesco, at Todi, 20 March 1428* (Rome, 1972).

23. Paolo Guerrini, ed., *Chronache bresciane inedite dei sec. XV–XIX* (Brescia, 1922), 1:183–85; Giuseppe Bonomo, *Caccia alle streghe: La credenza nelle streghe dal secolo XIII al XIX, con particolare riferimento all'Italia* (Palermo, 1959.)

least fragmentary evidence for the concept also in southern France, suggesting its distribution across the Mediterranean coast.[24] Ethnographic evidence shows much wider diffusion of the pattern; in the Tlaxcala region of Mexico between 1959 and 1966, Hugo Nutini collected evidence of roughly three hundred cases of blood-sucking witches (called *tlahuelpuchis*) who take on animal form, insinuate themselves into people's houses, and kill children, mostly infants.[25]

Returning to Perugia, once again in this town we find a coherent mythology to which the accused conformed over several decades. But when we compare it to the mythology from the Pays de Vaud, the most striking conclusion is how little the two mythic complexes resemble each other. What I have already suggested for the two case studies applies more broadly: these mythologies have almost nothing in common. Whereas the confessions from the Pays de Vaud focus primarily on the witches' assemblies, the *streghe* of central Itally operated independently or in pairs, rarely in larger groups. In the Pays de Vaud, the bewitchments perpetrated among neighbors tended to fall from view once attention focused on the mythology of the witches' sect; in central Italy, there is far more detail about the bewitchments, and the mythology itself centers far more squarely on the most important of these *maleficia*: the metamorphosis into the form of small animals, the entry into people's houses through small openings, and the attack on infant children, killed by sucking their blood. While the witches of the Pays de Vaud killed babies to eat their bodies in their communal assemblies, those of central Italy evidently killed because they themselves need to drink infant blood.

Whereas the Vaudois witches inverted ecclesiastical values, those of central Italy inverted the values of domestic life and particularly of motherhood. The witches in the Pays de Vaud were said to renounce all that was sacred, including their baptismal vows, they took the devil as their master rather than God, and they desecrated the eucharist. The mythology revolves centrally around this flaunting of the Church's values, the inversion of sacred order, clearly a matter of deep concern to the churchmen who tried these witches. In central Italy, the *streghe* entered into people's homes surreptitiously and attacked infants precisely where they should have been most secure, at their parents'

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24. Alphonsus de Spina, *Fortalitium fidei*, in Hansen, *Quellen*, 145–48.

25. Haracio Fabrega and Hugo Nutini, "Witchcraft-Explained: Childhood Tragedies in Tlaxcala, and Their Medical Sequelae," *Social Science & Medicine* 36 (1993): 793–805; Hugo G. Nutini and John M. Roberts, *Blood-Sucking Witchcraft: An Epistemological Study of Anthropomorphic Supernaturalism in Rural Tlaxcala* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1993).

side. The infants' mothers would have given them breast milk, recognized in medieval culture as a transformed and nourishing gift of the mothers' own blood, their own life force.[26] The *streghe*, inverting the order of nature, sucked this vital fluid from the infants' veins. The values they challenged were those basic to family life, and for the family men who tried them, this was a fundamentally serious threat. One might have expected the inquisitors at Vevey to be equally attentive to these concerns, but even when Jordana de Baulmes exposed herself to them as a quintessentially bad mother that was her script, her reality, not the inquisitors' mythology. The mythology of the Pays de Vaud centered on the mocking of social values, the beliefs and rituals that defined Christian society, by a sinister inversion of that society. The mythology of central Italy focused rather on the affront to private and domestic values by *streghe* who operated not as a society but alone or in pairs. And the differences remained over decades.

Filippa's is the earliest trial of a *strega* found in the Perugian archives, but another Perugian case ten years earlier, known from other sources, is in its own way revealing. A woman named Santuccia da Gualdo Tadino was burned for having killed fifty children and bewitched people by means of consecrated hosts given to her by a priest.[27] The case is mentioned in a contemporary chronicle. It is mentioned also in a sermon by the Franciscan friar Giacomo della Marca, who had been summoned to Perugia by the municipal authorities to lend his moral authority to the prosecution. He had not been the instigator of the trial, or the catalyst by which a figure of folklore became identified in real life, but his presence even as a latecomer makes the case an interesting study in the collaboration of power, principle, and popular pressure. His sermon is further interesting because of one context in which he mentions Santuccia. He is speaking about the association of humans and demons, and the effects of that association. If you doubt what he has to say, he urges looking into the face of a sorceress; you will see that it is diabolical, because the devil dwells in her at all times. This is half a century or so after Raymund of Capua told his readers how he had seen the face of Catherine of Siena suddenly transformed into the face of Christ, who was present in

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26. See Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987), 179; Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Harvard University Press, 1990), 104–6; and William F. MacLehose, "Nurturing Danger: High Medieval Medicine and the Problem(s) of the Child," in *Medieval Mothering*, ed. John Carmi Parsons and Bonnie Wheeler (New York: Garland, 1996), 11.

27. Nicolini, "La stregoneria a Perugia," app. 1–4, pp. 50–51.

her.[28] Like Catherine's face, Santuccia's becomes a gestalt image, and once one viewer shows a new way to see it, others will perceive it likewise, imagination bending easily to the force of suggestion.

COERCION AND COLLABORATION

Comparison between the witch trials of the Pays de Vaud and of central Italy demonstrates key distinctions not only in the mythologies that emerge from the records but also in the ways these mythologies functioned—and at this point we come to the heart of our analysis. The Vaudois trials manifested competition between the imaginative worlds of the accusers, the accused, and the (ultimately coercive) inquisitors, while the Umbrian cases showed a greater degree of consensus and collaboration because the script was familiar to all parties.

As we have already seen, the Vaudois trials were quite fully scripted. The script to which the confessions conformed was supple enough to accommodate some particularities: it allowed for the incidental variation needed to give it a semblance of plausibility. Thus, the name of the devil who approached the witch might be scriptural, folkloric, or simply invented: Satanas, Grabier, Rabiel, Robinet, and other names occur. The theriomorphic apparition too was subject to some variation: the spirit usually changed into the form of a black cat, in one case a horned gray cat, but at times some other horned beast, a calf, a wolf, a black dog, or a horse. Still, the script was fixed in its outlines and in many of its details. The scripted character of the records can be seen in small and apparently inconsequential details. With fair consistency throughout the series of trials was the report of fire and candles illuminating the assembly with strangely blue light. The judges showed some curiosity on this point; whether or not the color blue was intrinsically significant, the consistency of the report showed that these heretics were all members of the same sect and thus a unified conspiracy. In an era without artificial lighting, one can imagine that unnatural illumination would convey a powerful sense of the supernatural and in this case the demonic. Jordana de Baulmes said that when the fire was extinguished, it appeared as though there had never been a fire: further evidence that the illumination was unnatural and the fire illusory.[29]

Elsewhere Jordana gives particularly telling evidence of how the accused was made to conform to the script. Asked what form the devil took for the

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28. Raymond of Capua, *The Life of Catherine of Siena*, i.9.90, trans. Conleth Kearns (Wilmington, Dela.: Michael Glazier, 1980), 82.

29. Maier, *Trente ans*, 360.

obscene kiss, she said twice that he was a man dressed in black, the form in which he originally appeared to her. But she had departed from the script, which required the devil to receive the kiss in bestial form, and her judges did not allow the departure. Again a second time she gave the wrong response. It was only after several days that she finally gave the correct answer, that she had kissed the devil in the form of a cat.[30] How did she know that this was the right answer? Perhaps a jailer gave her the tip she needed. Or she may have remembered this detail at last from an inquisitor's sermon that she heard (or heard about) when some previous witch was condemned and burned.

The accused were expected to confess that they had been forced to renounce God and all that was sacred.[31] A formal denial of this sort is recorded in all the trials except one. In this matter the script was reasonably clear, but renunciation of the sacred was evidently more difficult for some of the accused to admit than adherence to the demonic, and so there was variation in what they were willing to confess even when they clearly knew what was expected of them. Jeannette Barattier said that at first she had denied God, the Virgin, the heavenly court, and baptism, taking a demon as her lord and master, but at another point she agreed to deny all except for the Virgin and baptism. Others were willing to deny God but not the Virgin: eloquent if perverse testimony to the hold of Marian piety in late medieval culture. And some said they had denied God with their mouths only, not with their hearts. Once again, the testimony clearly came in response to an unvarying interrogatory, and the range of variation allowed in the responses was not broad.[32]

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30. Maier, *Trente ans*, 348 (9/18), 352 (9/21), 360 (11/10).

31. Typically the denial was of God and the Virgin, sometimes also the Trinity, at times also baptism, and occasionally the saints (or the heavenly court). Presumably the implication is that introduction into the Christian faith is being foresworn, a renunciation if not an undoing of baptism, and this could be done either explicitly or by a denial of the Trinitarian formulas of baptism. This would explain why the Trinity had to be renounced even after God had been.

32. Ostorero, *"Folâtrer avec les démons"*, 202 (God, with mouth only, not heart), 204 (God, his face and the cross, the sacrament of the altar, the Trinity, and baptism), 204 (God, the Trinity, baptism, the face and cross of God, and the sacrament of the altar), 216 (God and the heavenly court, the Virgin Mary, and the sacraments), 266 (God and things pertaining to God); Modestin, *Le diable chez l'évêque*, 198 (God Almighty, the Virgin Mary, and the entire heavenly court), 204 (God almighty, the Virgin Mary, the entire heavenly court, and holy baptism), 218 (God and the Holy Trinity), 228 (God and the Holy Trinity), 302 (God and all that is of God, in word but not in heart), 312 (God almighty, the blessed Virgin Mary, and the entire heavenly court); Maier, *Trente ans*; 178 (God, the Virgin Mary, the entire Trinity, and baptism), 182 (God, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the entre Trinity, and baptism), 188 (God, the Virgin Mary, and the whole Trinity), 208 (God and the whole Trinity, the Virgin

The inquisitors induced the accused to follow the script through essentially three means. The most obvious means was torture, and the record is explicit about the use and the efficacy of torture. Jaquet de Panissère, tried in 1477, said he was willing to undergo torture but would confess nothing, and indeed when he was lifted up a bit from the ground on the instrument of torture he persisted at first in his denials, but soon he confessed.[33] Torture was sometimes applied to secure fuller confessions than the accused had already made. The mere threat of torture could sometimes secure a confession, even when torture was apparently not in fact used. At times the accused began by refusing to confess their crimes, then broke down, and said they had been unable to confess earlier because their demon masters had in one way or another prevented them.

Short of torture, there was a second way of inducing conformity to the script: carefully patterned interrogation, seen especially well in the trials of Catherine Quicquat, Jaquet de Panissère, and Pierre Menetrey.[34] The interrogation focused initially on circumstantial factors, clearly meant to catch the accused off guard. Were the prisoners aware why they had been arrested? Had they ever fallen under suspicion of witchcraft? Did they have enemies? Very little emphasis was placed on questions about actual guilt; the possibility was raised whenever possible indirectly. Rather than asking whether they had cursed anyone, the interrogators asked whether they had ever made threats that were followed by misfortune. Interrogation about what one knew about witches could be useful as a way of moving the trial forward. A defendant who admitted knowing the deeds of witches in some detail might be suspect of learning them at firsthand. This line of interrogation served

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Mary and the whole heavenly court, baptism, and all things divine), 230 (God, the Virgin Mary, the heavenly court, and baptism), 234–36 (God, the Blessed Virgin Mary, baptism, the saints [sanctos et sanctas Dei], and all things that are God's—she agreed to deny all except the Blessed Virgin Mary and baptism), 264 (God, the Virgin Mary, and the entire Trinity), 308 (God and baptism), 314 (God and baptism), 326 (God, the Virgin Mary, and baptism), 348 (God, the Virgin Mary, and baptism), 355 (God, with mouth but not heart), 361 (God); Pfister, *L'enfer sur terre*, 204 (God, the Virgin Mary, and the Holy Trinity), 218 (God, baptism, and the Virgin Mary), 220 (God the creator, baptism, and the Virgin Mary—but then God the creator of heaven and earth, and baptism, but not the Virgin Mary), 240 (God and the entire Trinity but not the Virgin Mary), 262 (God the creator but not the Virgin Mary). On the use of an interrogatory see Ostorero, "Les chasses aux sorcières," 112.

33. Maier, *Trente ans*, 298.

34. Ostorero, *"Folâtrer avec les démons"*, 236–57 (Catherine Quicquat); Maier, *Trente ans*, 287–331 (Jaquet de Panissère); and Pfister, *L'enfer sur terre*, 250–73 (Pierre Menetrey).

further as a sort of rehearsal for confession of guilt. A person who had articulated what the inquisitors wished to hear in the third person was better prepared to give the same information in the first person.

A third means of bringing confession into conformity with script was the pressure placed on the accused by others who had already confessed. Those who had confessed their own crimes were expected then to implicate others, and to confront those they had implicated face-to-face. Thus, two convicted witches testified against Marguerite Diserens, saying she was one of their company, having attended the assembly with them. When she denied it, they besought her to her face, for the love of God, to confess her guilt and receive the mercy of God and of the Church, as they had done. She persisted in her denial, but not for long. When she confessed, Marguerite was among those who accused Pierre Menetrey. When he denied his complicity, it was her turn to beg him to confess and to throw himself on the mercy of God and of the Church, as she and others had done. Although reported in formulaic language, these confrontations gave opportunities for reminding the accused about the sort of confession expected of them.[35]

All this apparatus of instruction and coercion, however, presupposes a dimension of these trials that is easy to overlook. One of the most important aspects of these trials in the Pays de Vaud is that the mythic complex reported in them was evidently not indigenous to the region. It was imported from elsewhere, and at least during the fifteenth century it was evidently not integrated into local culture. It came from written sources, composed in other regions around the 1430s. The earliest of these sources, the *Errores Gazariorum*, probably originated in the Aosta valley, perhaps taken from Aosta to Lausanne in 1440 by the newly elected bishop, George de Saluces (Saluzzo), as the latest editors have suggested, although its themes are not in all respects those of the Vaudois witches.[36] Related works were written soon afterward in the Dauphiné and in German-speaking Switzerland.[37] Some elements of

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35. Pfister, *L'enfer sur terre*, 240, 254.

36. Georg Modestin discussed the bishop's role in "Des Bischofs letzte Tage: Georg von Saluzzo und die Hexenverfolgung im Fürstbistum Lausanne (1458–1461)," at a conference on *Hexenverfolgung und Herrschaftspraxis* (Wittlich, 2001); see Ostorero, "Les chasses aux sorcières," 112. While the *Errores Gazariorum* surely was an important source for the trials in the Pays de Vaud, the proceedings of these trials do not share with the treatise a special and sustained interest in the devastation of the countryside.

37. For all these texts see now Martine Ostorero, Agostino Paravicini Bagliani, and Kathrin Utz Tremp, eds., in collaboration with Catherine Chène, *L'imaginaire du sabbat: Edition critique des textes les plus anciens (1430 c.–1440 c.)* (Lausanne: Cahiers Lausannois d'Histoire Médiévales, 1999); for the connection between the *Errores Ga-*

the mythology contained in these sources may perhaps have come from folkloric sources of those other regions. Be that as it may, this was a mythology that soon became closely identified with the Pays de Vaud, yet it was not native to the local folk culture of that region. What the Lausanne manuscript reveals is the careful cultivation of an invasive species. And because the mythology was not indigenous, it did not come with culturally sanctioned clues that could help identify the sort of person who might plausibly be identified as a witch. For precisely that reason, I propose, the subjects were widely diverse in their backgrounds. One remarkable feature of these trials is how little the accused resembled each other before their interrogation, and how much they did afterward. The imported mythic pattern, systematically imposed by a rigorous tribunal, could be imposed just as effectively on anyone. Given the absence of locally accepted marks of a plausible subject, almost anyone could become accused and convicted.

In precisely this respect, the trials in central Italy were fundamentally different from those of the Pays de Vaud: the mythology disclosed in and around Perugia was indigenous. The myth of the *strega* was deeply rooted in Italian folklore and well known to poets in antiquity.[38] Being integrated into the local culture, it came accompanied by expectations about the sort of person who might plausibly be a *strega*. Whereas the subjects in the Pays de Vaud were highly diverse, the accused in Perugia were far less so. They were women, regularly if perhaps not professionally engaged in mediation of supernatural powers. The mythology was itself different from that of the Pays de Vaud, but even more importantly it functioned differently, operating within a cultural complex rooted in the soil, a complex that told people not only what a *strega* did but what a *strega* looked like. She did not come from an agrarian hinterland; if she seemed strange, it was because within the urban culture of central Italy she was strange: she was meant to be so, and she might support herself or gain a kind of stature within her community by exploiting her image as the uncanny woman, perhaps the hag.

In the Pays de Vaud, incidents of bewitchment are generally given in the

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zoriorum and the trials in the Pays de Vaud, see especially Ostorero's comment on p. 334–37. For a useful comparison (clarified by an accompanying chart), see Michael Bailey, "The medieval concept of the witches' Sabbath," *Exemplaria* 8 (1996): 419–39.

38. See Ovid, *Fasti: Roman Holidays*, vi.101–68 (an entry for June 1), trans. Betty Rose Nagle (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 155–56; Paul Murgatroyd, *Mythological and Legendary Narrative in Ovid's* Fasti (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 4–6; and Samuel Grant Oliphant, "The Story of the Strix: Ancient," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 44 (1913): 133–49.

early stages of the trial: the initial stimulus to prosecution was typically someone's charge of love magic, bewitchment of cattle, or some other *maleficium*. Once the trial had begun, there was a clear break, and these accusations were quickly submerged in a flood of testimony about the mythic elements of the satanic assembly.[39] Bewitchment might figure in this mythology, in the sense that the devil was said to supply the means for afflicting society, but the language at this point is generic. There is relatively little talk about how the witch has afflicted such-and-such a person by particular means in a specific year. In the trials at Perugia, however, the documents are full of such information. There is no caesura separating talk about bewitchment from mythological discourse. The mythology of the *strega* and her activities is still usually couched in highly particular language, indistinguishable from that about love magic and bodily harm: Filippa da Città della Pieve sucked the blood of a neighbor's child in March of 1434, perpetrated love magic on a young man in May of 1440, and used sorcery to kill a man she had quarreled with in 1448. The mythology of the blood-sucking witch is as fully integrated into the particularities of daily life as the rest of the charges given in the condemnation. It arises, like the other charges, out of the locally established vocabulary of fear.

This is not to say that the secular judges of Perugia did not torture their subjects or apply other forms of judicial coercion; they may have done so, even if the records are not the sort that would give us that information. The notion of the *strega* was surely known to all, but torture may have been needed to induce self-identification as such a malefactor. Even if it was used, however, there are two crucial differences: first, the mythology is indigenous; second, it is clearly and directly linked with the bewitchment that aroused popular anxiety and brought the accused into the tribunal in the first place. Rather than revealing a competition of imaginative worlds, these trials disclosed fundamental agreement about the mythology in question.

EXCURSUS: A THIRD MYTHOLOGICAL PATTERN IN NORTHERN ITALY

The stable mythologies of the Pays de Vaud and of Umbria seem to have been without parallel in late medieval Europe, yet there is evidence of a third mythic paradigm, less fully disclosed and developed, that had some staying power. Trial records show a scattering of trials in northern Italy that seem to

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39. See Richard Kieckhefer, *European Witch Trials: Their Foundations in Popular and Learned Culture, 1300–1500* (London: Routledge, 1976), where I emphasize this disjunction between *maleficia* and the mythology of what I there call diabolism.

fit neither the Vaudois nor the Umbrian paradigm. Between 1384 and 1480 there were cases at Milan, Faido, Brixen, and Brescia, all in northern Italy and Italian Switzerland, but these trials were widely scattered and nowhere frequent.[40] One key element in this pattern is the notion of an assembly that is called a "play" (*ludus*), with a female presider, sometimes a figure named Oriente who gave instruction on healing and other matters, elsewhere a Lady Abunda.[41] The record may dutifully identify the presider as a devil in the form of a queen, but even then the theme of female leadership is discernible beneath the inquisitorial bias. A second leitmotif is an emphasis on bounty and beneficence: the devil brings a supply of bread and cheese, and the name Abunda also hints at this emphasis.

At times there may be hints of either the Vaudois or the Umbrian mythology in these trials: the assembly may involve eating human flesh, or the drinking of children's blood. Still, what we see here are surely elements of a third mythic complex, perhaps authentically folkloric, but overlaid with other notions in ways that make a coherent cultural setting impossible to recreate. I see this northern Italian mythic complex as related tenuously at best to the other two mythologies. Indirectly it may have been a source of folkloric material later taken over in much distorted form, but (pace Carlo Ginzburg, for whom these trials are paradigmatic) it is only incidentally connected with the mainstream of early witch trials.[42]

Niklaus Schatzmann has recently published a study of trials in the Leventina Valley in the canton of Ticino that shows in detail how this paradigm could become partially assimilated to others.[43] Faido, a town in this valley,

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40. Ettore Vergo, "Intorno a due inediti documenti di stregheria Milanese del secolo XIV," *Rendiconti del Reale Instituto Lombardo si Scienze e Lettere*, 2nd ser., 32 (1899): 166–68; "Le streghe nella Leventine nel secolo XV," *Bollettino Storico della Svizzera Italiana* 6 (1884): 144–45; *Nicolai Cusae Cardinalis Opera*, 2 (Paris, 1514), fol. clxxii^{r}; Carl Binz, "Zur Charakteristik des Cusanus," *Archiv für Kultur-Geschichte* 7 (1909): 145–53; Guerrini, *Chronache bresciane*, 185–86; and Pierangelo Frigerio and Carlo Allessandro Pisoni, "Un brogliaccio dell'Inquisizione milanese (1418–1422)," *Libri & Documenti: Rivista quadrimestrale (Archivio Storico Civico e Biblioteca Trivulziana)* 21, no. 3 (1995): 46–65.

41. For evidence of Lady Abunda in thirteenth-century French culture, see *Roman de la Rose*, lines 18411–98, ed. Daniel Poirion (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1974), 491–92; *Romance of the Rose*, trans. Charles Dahlberg (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971), 305–6.

42. Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*.

43. Niklaus Schatzmann, "Hexenprozesse in der Leventina und die Anfänge der Hexenverfolgung auf der Alpensüdseite (1431–1459)," *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Geschichte: Revue suisse d'histoire: Rivista storica svizzera* 52 (2002): 138–42; and *Verdor-*

had already been the site of relevant proceedings in 1432. Roughly a generation later, in 1457–59, thirty-seven individuals were tried in the valley for witchcraft, and twenty of them burned. While most of the accused were charged with blasting trees and harming humans and livestock, eleven of them in particular were accused of mythological witchcraft. They attended a "play" at which they met other witches, sometimes a hundred fifty or more, and they encountered the devil usually in bestial form. During the first month of the proceedings there were elements of the typical northern Italian pattern with its emphasis on bounty: those gathered at the *ludus* might feast on bread, meat, and cheese. But before long, certain of the accused said they could not share in the feasting; one of them explained that she was one of the lesser members of the assembly. As the series of trials continued, beneficence yielded to horror and the devil came to be a fire-spewing monster who reacted savagely if his followers did not bring him the offerings he wished. Those tried later in the series described anointing stools or other objects as media for flight to the assembly; one had been warned not to cross herself during flight. If in these respects the *ludus* became assimilated to the Vaudois paradigm, without ever becoming as detailed in the account of the assembly, one trial bears the clear mark of the central Italian mythology: it was a male witch who told how members of the company went out at night in the form of cats and stole infants from the cradle to kill them by sucking their blood.[44] Clearly the paradigms were not hermetically sealed off from each other, yet perhaps just as clearly they began as distinct paradigms and then in varying measure began to converge.

FUSION OF MYTHOLOGIES IN THE THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE

If the mythologies of witchcraft seen in the records from Lausanne and Perugia are fundamentally distinct, and remained so for generations, was it only modern historians who conflated them into a unitary mythology? No, because theologians and writers with some training in formal theology led the way in the fifteenth century. It was perhaps inevitable that they should do so: writing in Latin, but accounting for vernacular culture, they used Latin terms

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rende Bäume und Brote wie Kuhfladen: Hexenprozesse in der Leventina 1431–59 und die Anfänge der Hexenberfolgungen auf der Alpensüdseite (Zürich: Chronos, 2003).

44. Schatzmann, *Verdorrende Bäume*, 334–35, 377–80; 335, 380–82; 338, 387–91; 340, 391–95 (feasting on bread and meat and cheese); 341, 398–99 (among the lesser members); 344, 405–8 (savage reaction from devil); 344–45, 408–11 (savage reaction from devil, up to 150 and more at the assembly, stealing infants and sucking their blood); 346, 412–14 (devil demands gifts); 349–50, 421–24 (attendance of the *ludus* in the form of cats); 354–56, 435–40 (warning not to cross self); 359, 449–51.

as equivalents to various vernacular ones, and in the process they made the Italian *strega* and the Spanish *bruxa* become synonyms for *sorcière* and *hexe*.

In the third quarter of the fifteenth century, the Italian Dominicans Girolamo Visconti and Giordano da Bergamo both wrote about *streghe*.[45] They both claimed to be writing about beliefs held by common people (*vulgares communiter tenent*). But Visconti spoke of the *streghe* as attending a *ludus* or festival at which a *domina ludi* presided, and he spoke of obscene and disgraceful behavior at these assemblies, which suggests that he was conflating the *streghe* of central Italy both with the witches of northern Italy and with those of western Switzerland. And Giordano da Bergamo ascribed to the *streghe* behavior typical not for the central Italian but for the Vaudois paradigm, such as sexual intercourse with demons. The Spaniard Franciscan Alfonso de Spina began by describing witches in terms of the central Italian paradigm but then spoke of them as meeting at night by candle light and giving the obscene kiss to a wild boar. And he believed they abounded in the Dauphiné and Gascony, by which he seems to have meant Languedoc.

For theologians of this period, the question of overriding importance was whether the deeds of the witches were possible, and if so how. The typical answer was that the devil achieved the witches' effects, either by delusion of the senses or by the locomotion that spirits could exercise over matter. For the theologians, examples of such demonic power could be drawn from the widest variety of sources: from scripture, from classical literature, or from recent judicial testimony. They were hardly concerned to distinguish one body of folklore or mythology from another. In their effort to find as many examples as possible of how demons could delude people and manipulate physical bodies, these writers helped to obscure distinct cultures and reduce multiple phenomena to a single phenomenon.

It was in the demonological literature more than in the courts that the mythology of the Sabbath eventually became consolidated, to some extent in the fifteenth century, more fully in the sixteenth. The process was one of convergence, and this point calls for attention. To speak of the witches' assemblies in the Pays de Vaud, in northern and central Italy, and throughout France as different forms or versions of "the Sabbath" is to suggest that there was some common root from which these variants emerged. It may be more helpful to speak not of divergence but of convergence: not of variations on some basic type, enshrined perhaps in the *Errores Gazariorum*, but rather of

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45. Jordanes de Bergamo, *Quaestio de strigis*, in Hansen, *Quellen*, 195–200; Girolamo Visconti, *Lamiarum sive striarum opusculum*, in ibid., 200–207.

regional mythologies which over the course of the fifteenth and following centuries came (perhaps never fully) to be fused.

DIFFUSION OF THE VAUDOIS MODEL IN FRANCE

Even in the courts, however, there was at least sporadic diffusion of the Vaudois mythology of witchcraft, particularly in France, where some trials of the mid-fifteenth century gained a notoriety that spawned further literature on witchcraft, and thus further theological blurring of mythologies. The common French term for witchcraft from the mid-fifteenth century was *Vauderie*, and the witches were known as the *Vaudois*. These terms were linked with French variants on "Waldensianism" and "Waldensian"; Pope Eugenius IV appears to have made this connection already in 1440.[46] Yet the words would surely have resonance also because they conjured an association with the Pays de Vaud. The sources are typically silent about which connection they had in mind, but contemporary writers often cited western Switzerland and adjacent regions as breeding grounds for witchcraft, and association of the *Vaudois*-witches with the *Vaudois*-Swiss would have been a simple and understandable crossing of semantic wires.[47]

In any case, the mythic complex worked out and systematically imposed on the accused on the shores of the Lake of Geneva appeared in only partial and shifting forms when it spread westward. We have here detached fragments of an originally coherent model. This is true even for the nearby mountainous territories of the Dauphiné.[48] These fragments might become subject matter for new demonological literature that would impose a new kind of order on the fragments, as happened at Arras when nearly three dozen persons were tried for *Vauderie* in the years 1459–62.[49] But even in

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46. Hansen, *Quellen*, 18.

47. Ostorero et al., *L'imaginaire du sabbat*, 511–13.

48. Pierrette Paravy, *De la chrétienté romaine à la Réforme en Dauphiné: évêques, fidèles et déviants (vers 1340–vers 1530)* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1993), 849, "à l'exception de la vision de Marguerite Vincent-Roux, remarquable par le caractère complet et structuré qu'elle présente, les évocations du sabbat restent rapides, imprécise et floues." But even this account (given ibid., n. 62) is far less complete and nuanced than in the Lausanne manuscript. (The assembly is referred to in the Dauphiné as a *fach* or *synagogue*.) It is worth bearing in mind that Claude Tholosan, the judge in the Dauphiné who also wrote a treatise on witchcraft, believed that the assembly was illusory; see Ostorero et al., *L'imaginaire du sabbat*, 355–438.

49. Gordon A. Singer, "La Vauderie d'Arras, 1459–1491: An Episode of Witchcraft in Later Medieval France" (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, 1974); Franck Mercier, *La Vauderie d'Arras: Une chasse aux sorcières à l'Automne du Moyen Age* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2006); Giovanni Gonnet, "La 'Vauderie d'Arras'," *I valdesi e l'Europa: Collana della società di studi valdesi* (Torre Pelice, 1982),

this celebrated case there was little consistency about mythic matters: the records mention at one point dancing at the witches' assemblies, but the notion does not recur; two of the subjects were said to have killed children, but they were not said to have eaten the flesh; some of the accused, but not all, had made pacts with the devil; the obscene kiss appears in the well-known manuscript illuminations depicting the witches of Arras, but it figures less prominently in the trial records.[50]

Two other cases of *Vauderie* occurred not far from Paris in the years 1452–53. At Provens in western Champagne the *Vaudois* were said to attend an assembly called a *mescle*, but what they did there other than stripping naked is not clear. The members killed children and brought their bodies to the *mescle* to be roasted and eaten. Otherwise, links to the Pays de Vaud are few. At Evreux in eastern Normandy the accused, a Carmelite theologian named Guillaume Adeline, confessed to having attended "synagogues" of the *Vaudois* at which he kissed the hand and then the posterior of the presiding demon.[51] He had renounced belief in the Trinity, the Virgin, the cross, holy water, consecrated bread, and adoration of roadside crosses—an odd mixture, combining doctrinal repudiations with cultic renunciations. Mainly what Adeline did at the assemblies was to serve as the theologian in residence, preaching diabolical doctrines in lieu of those he had taught at Paris. His practice is called *Vauderie*, but it consists of little more than bits and pieces of the witchcraft evidenced in the Pays de Vaud.

Much the same could be said about the cases of Andrée Garaude at Bressuire in 1475 and Martiale Espaze at Boucoiran in 1491.[52] In both these trials,

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99–113; Franck Mercier, "L'enfer du décor ou la vauderie d'Arras (1459–1491): les enjeux politiques d'un proces d'inquisition à la fin du Moyen Âge," *Heresis: revue semestrielle d'histoire des dissedence médiévales* 40 (2004): 95–121; and Jan R. Veenstra, "Les fons d'aulcuns secrets de la théologie: Jean Tinctor's *Contre le Vauderie*: historical facts and literary reflections of the *Vauderie d'Arras*," in Nine Miedema and Rudolf Suntrup, eds., *Literatur—Geschichte—Literaturgeschichte: Beiträge zur mediävistischen Literaturwissenschaft* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2003), 429–53 (see pp. 445–46 for a discussion of the term *Vauderie*).

50. Thus, the account of the mythology in Mercier, *La Vauderie d'Arras*, 61–85, is drawn almost entirely from the theological writings rather than from the trial record.

51. Hansen, *Quellen*, 467–72; Martine Ostorero,"Du danger de prêcher que le sabbat est une illusion: autour du cas de Guillaume Adeline," in *Le diable en procès: Littérature démonologique et sorcellerie à la fin du Moyen Âge*, ed. Martine Ostorero and Etienne Anheim, Médiévales: langue, textes, histoire, 44 (Saint-Denis: Presses universitaires de Vincennes, 2003), 73–95.

52. Filhol, "Procès de sorcellerie à Bressuire," 77–83; Bligny-Bondurand, "Procédure contre une sorcière de Boucoiran (Gard), 1491," *Bulletin philologique et historique* (1907), 380–405.

the accused were marginalized women; Espaze had a history of sexual promiscuity. In both cases, the witches' assembly is called not a synagogue but a Sabbath. In neither is the mythology of the Pays de Vaud preserved intact. But in the trial of Martiale Espaze we encounter an extraordinary mixture of themes. She is inducted into the company of witches and pays homage to the devil in the form of a goat, giving him the obscene kiss on the posterior. The women at the Sabbath hold candles in their hands. She renounces God and the Virgin, and after tracing a cross on the ground she tramples and spits on it. She has extensive dealings with her demon, named Robin, more outside the context of the Sabbath than at it. But then, suddenly, toward the end of the interrogation, we find her behaving more like an Italian *strega* than like a Vaudois heretic. She goes out and kills infants, sometimes in the company of another woman. She presses upon and evidently strangles the children as they lie in their cradles. She does not suck their blood, but neither does she take the bodies to the Sabbath to be eaten. In this case, then, we have assorted fragments of both the first and the second of our mythic complexes.

The situation in France, then, is entirely different from what we have seen elsewhere. There is no coherent sequence of trials orchestrated by inquisitors over several decades, with confessions forced into the Procrustean bed of a fixed mythology. But neither is there a generally accepted indigenous mythology; rather, we find a mythic complex now twice transplanted. Given neither source of coherence, the result is inevitable: a highly fluid mythology, in which no two trials resemble each other very closely; sporadic rather than sustained prosecution, in which the victims may be disreputable women but may also be respected theologians, because the imported and fragmented mythology is accompanied by no criteria at all for its application.

Were it not for these trials in France, we might wish to rehabilitate some version of Hansen's *Kollektivbegriff*: we might wish to say that there was a single cohesive mythology of witchcraft, that found in the literature of the 1430s and in the trials of the Pays de Vaud, and that the cases from central Italy represent simply a secondary phenomenon, integrated only peripherally into this mythological complex. What the French trials suggest is that the Vaudois mythology lost much of its cohesion once it was transplanted, and no longer served so rigorously as a script to which confessions regularly conformed. Once it reached France, the mythology became distinct from both major alternatives and capable of meshing elements of both.

Was it the report of inquisitions in the Pays de Vaud that inspired these trials in France, or was it rather the literature of the 1430s and later witchcraft literature? The distinction may be unresolvable (because the fragmentary mythology in the trials does not allow close comparison with the fully developed

mythological sources), and it may be moot (because the same ideas could have come from either channel). But two points are worth emphasizing in this connection. First, as already proposed, the French term *Vauderie* suggests association with the Pays de Vaud, and this association is reinforced by contemporary evidence of a link between witchcraft and the western Alpine regions. Second, and more to the point, of all the writings penned in and around the 1430s, the one most closely associated with the trials in the Pays de Vaud was the *Errores Gazariorum*, which seems not to have had a widespread readership, survives in only two manuscript copies, and is unlikely to have been the direct source for French notions of mythological witchcraft. In all likelihood, the ideas contained in this treatise gained currency in France in large part indirectly, through their influence on prosecution in Francophone Switzerland.

In other parts of Europe there were only the faintest echoes of this mythology. From German-speaking lands we have the report of a chronicler, Matthias of Kemnat, about witches (*Unholden zauberin*) apprehended around 1475 in the Upper Palatinate, particularly at Heidelberg and Zent bei Tilsberg. They were said to ride at night on cats and brooms. Some of them confessed that they rode out on Ember Days to rouse storms. They made people lame, and they also could cure people.[53] A trial at Lucerne in the mid-fifteenth century likewise contains elements of the *Vaudois* paradigm.[54] But in most Germanic regions we find trials only for bewitchment, not for mythological witchcraft. The *Malleus maleficarum*, written in Latin for the use of German judges, focuses mainly on bewitchments (or *maleficia*), analyzes the collaboration between witches and demons required for their efficacy, and borrows from Romance-language areas the notion that sorcery itself is part of a conspiracy, but it does not develop the mythology of the Sabbath, and in general does not drink deeply from mythological springs.[55]

CONCLUDING METHODOLOGICAL POSTSCRIPT: EXPLAINING WHY AND EXPLAINING HOW

It follows from what I have been arguing that if we set out to explain why the witch trials of the fifteenth century began we are asking the wrong question. It is wrong, first of all, because it assumes precisely what this article has

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53. Hansen, *Quellen*, 235.

54. Hoffmann-Krayer, "Luzerner Akten zum Hexen- und Zauberwesen," 30–33.

55. The literature on this work is extensive; see especially Peter Segl, ed., *Der Hexenhammer: Entstehung und Umfeld des* Malleus maleficarum *von 1487* (Cologne and Vienna: Böhlau, 1988).

argued we cannot assume: that there was a single phenomenon for which we can give an accounting. Finding an explanation that will apply to the trials for mythological witchcraft in the Pays de Vaud, in Umbria, and in France is a pointless exercise. The trials in these regions were of very different sorts, and they came about in significantly different ways. These were phenomena that had some relationships, and in some people's minds did become conflated, but there is no reason to assume common grounds for prosecution.

Even if we limit ourselves to the trials in any one of these regions, however, it may not be helpful to ask *why* they occurred. We may be able to give a plausible account of why a particular theologian or other writer promoted belief in mythological witchcraft, as Michael Bailey has done for Johannes Nider,[56] but very few of the judges involved in witch-hunting left us written material, and we cannot assume their intent was always the same as Nider's. If we had a concentration of trials in a particular time and place, perhaps eight or ten in a single town over three years, we would certainly want to know what was happening in that town that led to such an outburst of prosecutorial zeal. But even in the Pays de Vaud, what we have is nineteen trials over sixty years, fewer on average than one every three years, with different inquisitors presiding and different local circumstances in the background. In 1448 there was a cluster of three trials, but very different in character; one of them, in particular, involved a man who presented himself voluntarily before the inquisitors. We can isolate certain factors that in a general way served as causes or at least necessary conditions for witch hunting: the development of inquisitorial procedure and the use of judicial torture, the articulation of theological arguments showing how demons could carry out the effects ascribed to witches, the emergence of learned (often university-trained) elites that took a serious interest in reform of religion and morals at the grassroots level, and the rise of complex societies in which divergent classes and cultures encountered each other, with the inevitable heightening of tension and misunderstanding. But there were places where all these conditions were met and still there was no particular surge of prosecution for sorcery, let along mythological witchcraft. We can say that certain specific notions must have been linked with particular experiences, as fear of the *streghe* was obviously inspired by the experience of sudden infant death, but should we assume there were no sudden infant deaths in Germany, England, or other places where they were not blamed on blood-sucking or otherwise mythical witches? However relevant all these factors no doubt are,

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56. Michael D. Bailey, *Battling Demons: Witchcraft, Heresy, and Reform in the Late Middle Ages* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2002).

they do not add up to a cogent explanation why witch-hunting begins at a particular place in a particular time. However much we know about necessary conditions, too much depends on local circumstances we do not know, or know insufficiently. And too much depends on the obvious but unpredictable factor of imitation: one peasant accused a neighbor of witchcraft because another had done so, or one judge listened sympathetically to such charges because another judge whom he respected had heeded them, even if the precise circumstances were quite different.

Thus, while in many other cases it may make perfect sense to explain why historical events and developments occur, the early witch trials (1) were too diverse in character and circumstance to reduce them to any overarching set of causes and (2) presuppose a range of rather obvious conditions that were individually necessary but jointly insufficient to serve as causal explanations. Yet none of this is counsel of despair, because even if we cannot expect to explain *why* the witch trials occurred, we still can and must explain *how* they took place. We can examine with increasing precision and sensitivity the various dynamisms that unfolded in the course of prosecution. And explaining *how* the trials occurred may in a sense bring us as close as we dare hope to come in explaining *why* they took place. If we can perceive more clearly how judicial coercion and judicial collaboration functioned, sometimes overwhelming and at other times cultivating the community's imagination, we are likely to be less surprised at the apparently trivial circumstances—the village quarrels, the zealotry of particular judges, the spontaneous consensus in identifying a particular woman as a *strega*—that serve as catalysts giving a network of conditions the potency of a cause. Explaining the rise of the witch trials is a classic example of a problem that calls for supple and nuanced explanatory models, and explaining *how* the trials came about is likely to carry us much further than perhaps inevitably flat-footed attempts to explain *why* they did so.

The further implication is that the witch trials cannot be conceived as simply and straightforwardly the product of demonological literature. Even if the *Errores Gazoriorum* did much to inform the interrogatory used in the Pays de Vaud, its availability cannot in any simple sense be said to have *caused* the trials there. Much light has been shed recently on the interests that led the demonologists to write their works.[57] The relationship between the literature and judicial practice was broadly reciprocal: if some texts inspired pros-

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57. See especially Michael D. Bailey, "From Sorcery to Witchcraft: Clerical Conceptions of Magic in the Late Middle Ages," *Speculum* 76 (2001): 960–90.

ecution, in other cases it was prosecution that provoked the writing of texts.[58] In any case, the witchcraft literature represents essentially another of the conditions that made witch-hunting possible but not inevitable, and why this literature affected judicial practice in some places while not in others cannot be accounted for by the literature itself. The main further difference that the literature makes is that it changes somewhat one's sense of whether witchcraft was in fact *a single and cohesive phenomenon* that might be explained. The trial records would suggest otherwise. The demonological literature might also be read as suggesting a multiplicity of views, but the writers of this literature far more than contemporary judges at least had a strong interest in *creating* the mythology of witchcraft as a widespread and uniform threat to Christendom.

In an article entitled "'Many reasons why': witchcraft and the problem of multiple explanation," Robin Briggs has argued against monocausal and otherwise simplistic explanations of the witch trials.[59] My argument here may seem similar to Briggs's, and it may thus be useful to highlight three crucial differences. First, I am making a claim not primarily about the reasons cited in explanation of witch-hunting but rather about the phenomena we are trying to explain. My argument is not that the witch trials had multiple causes. Rather, it is that witchcraft—and even *mythological* witchcraft—was a cluster of distinct phenomena that need not have been seen as related. Not only the *explanans* but the *explanandum* was multiple. Second, I am suggesting that the process of convergence—the emergence of a perception that disparate phenomena had something in common—is itself a development calling for historical explanation. It may seem that I am being a splitter rather than a lumper, but if so that is only because I see the process of lumping itself as something interesting and not to be taken for granted. Third, I am proposing that the convergence in question is a convergence in *perception*, and that perceptions call for a different type of explanation from events. It is usually more productive to examine the process by which a perception arises and takes hold ("explaining how") than to seek some elusive cause behind it ("explaining why").

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58. Perhaps most obviously the *Malleus maleficarum* (largely inspired by Heinrich Kramer's trials at Innsbruck and elsewhere) and the writings of Johannes Tinctoris (provoked by the case at Arras in 1459–60), on which see now Jean Tinctor, *Invectives contre la secte de vauderie*, ed. Émile van Balberghe and Frédéric Duval (Tournai: Archives du Chapitre Cathédral; Louvain-la-Neuve: Université Catholique de Louvain, 1999).

59. Robin Briggs, "'Many Reasons Why': Witchcraft and the Problem of Multiple Explanation," in *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*, Jonathan Barry, Marianne Hester, and Gareth Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 49–63.

Causal explanation may well be possible in the case of trials for *maleficia*, particularly when there is reason to suspect that the accused were in fact guilty, or when there is plausible political motive for the charges. Explaining the judicial concern with *mythological* witchcraft is a more complex and elusive challenge. Can we hope to explain why some healer-diviners (but not others who were equally deviant) were perceived as blood-sucking *streghe*? Or why certain village quarrels (but not countless others equally fierce) led to charges before inquisitors who had read the demonological literature? Or why some marginalized crones (but not others who likewise muttered curses and rejoiced at their neighbors' misfortune) evoked echoes of the Vaudois paradigm? We might just as well ask why some people see a gestalt image as a duck while others see it as a rabbit. There may be a reason, but the evidence required to find it is unlikely to be at hand. Can we, then, explain more generally why these mythologies gained whatever currency they held? No doubt we can offer conjectures, but much depended on the power of suggestion, on the persuasion of charismatic zealots (both international and local), and on the self-perpetuating power of imagined threats, a tissue of contingent and imponderable circumstances, operative in some regions but for no clear reason absent in others. What we can and must do, rather, is investigate the processes that fostered these perceptions, showing how Italian magistrates drew upon regional folklore in prosecution of *streghe*, how inquisitors in western Switzerland exploited the tools of inquisitorial prosecution, how French judges borrowed and adapted fragments of the Vaudois mythology, and how theologians in particular began to weave these and other strands into a more complex and comprehensive mythology of witchcraft. We are unlikely to arrive at a set of causes under which trials for mythological witchcraft could only be expected. But given that the trials did occur, we can show *how* they unfolded, and how differing setting and perceptions led to their unfolding quite differently from one region to another. It is fuller investigation of these processes that will lead to ever deeper understanding of the early witch trials.

Distinct mythologies of witchcraft in the fifteenth century

Vaudois paradigm	*Umbrian paradigm*
Key source: Archives Cantonales Vaudoises, Lausanne, MS 29: records of 19 trials, 1438–98, in and near Lausanne and Vevey	Key source: Archivio di Stato di Perugia: records of four particularly relevant trials, 1455–1501, in Perugia
The accused twelve men, seven women widely varying in character and situation	The accused mostly female typically marginalized
Relationship with devil circumstances of induction apparition and homage denial of God, Virgin, baptism desecration of the sacred payment to heretic	Relationship with devil invocation and collaboration (without homage)
Association with other witches at assemblies ("sects" or "synagogues") arrival and departure on stick eating flesh of infants sex with other heretics illumination with blue light	Association with other witches operation independently or in pairs, rarely in larger groups
Misdeeds committed within broader society violation of religious duties and profanation of eucharist bewitchments (*maleficia*), including the killing of children	Misdeeds committed within broader society metamorphosis, flight, entry into houses through small openings killing of children by sucking their blood, use of bodies for magic
Function of the mythological complex imported and imposed on populace uneven competition of accused, accuser, and judges operating within different imaginative worlds no established criteria for application subordination of *maleficia* to mythology	Function of the mythological complex indigenous and elicited from populace collaboration of accused, accuser, and judges operating within shared imaginative world established criteria for application integration of *maleficia* with mythology

Witchcraft and Magic in Europe—and Beyond

BENGT ANKARLOO AND STUART CLARK, EDS., *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe.* 6 vols. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press / London: Athlone, 1999–2002.

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There can be no doubt that historians needed a handbook of witchcraft and magic. It tells us a lot about the progress the historiography of magic and witchcraft has made in recent years that no older work can still be used as a handbook. Lynn Thorndike's monumental work is partly outdated and too limited in outlook.[1] If we look for a comprehensive account of magic, Keith Thomas's classic study still comes to mind. Thomas, however, concentrated almost exclusively on Britain, and as the book was first published more than thirty years ago, it has hardly anything to say about witch hunting that does not need revision.[2] Stephen Wilson's *Magical Universe* largely ignores the witch hunts, and the scrapbook fashion of his account seems old-fashioned and not suitable for the student audience.[3] Wolfgang Behringer does not want his short new account of witchcraft in premodern Europe and contemporary Africa and Asia to be a handbook.[4] Richard Golden's *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft* is certainly very helpful, but an encyclopedia cannot replace a handbook, or

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1. Lynn Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, 8 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1923–58).

2. Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century England*, 4th ed. (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1991).

3. Stephen Wilson, *The Magical Universe: Everyday Ritual and Magic in Pre-Modern Europe* (New York: Hambledon and London, 2001).

4. Wolfgang Behringer, *Witches and Witch-Hunts: A Global History* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004).

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vice versa.[5] Thus, historians of witchcraft simply need Ankarloo's and Clark's *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe*.

The series brings together eighteen articles by distinguished scholars in six volumes. Its concept entails a most daring approach to magic. This survey of magic in Europe starts outside of Europe in the Ancient Near East at the very beginning of what became the culture of the Christian West. Subsequent volumes describe ideas and practices about harmful magic chronologically. The last volume deals with the witch-beliefs of the twentieth century, the "new witches" and satanists. Many historians shiver at the thought of even suggesting a link between the victims of the early modern witch trials and the members of modern neopagan cults. To be sure, the founders of neopaganism based their teachings on serious misconceptions of the history of the witch hunts that could have been recognized as such even in their time. However, neopaganism has become one of the most significant expressions of the belief in witches in the twentieth century. Modern satanism is another very difficult issue. News about this adoption of demonology belongs largely to the dim-witted "infotainment" industries. Many academics seem to think that the less serious scholars say about it, the better. Should a history of magic provide information about the self-proclaimed satanists and the satanist scare in the media? Given the scope of the study, and the inclusion of Sumerian, Greek, and Roman magic, it is not only legitimate but conclusive and convincing to provide historical information on neopaganism and alleged modern demon worshippers, too. Both phenomena constitute probably the most visible expressions of magical thought in contemporary Europe and North America. Instead of ignoring them historians should accept them as legitimate objects of research and thus "secularize" them.

The very inclusive concept of magic in these volumes more than makes up for an obvious exclusion. The focus of the series is on the kind of magic that is usually labeled witchcraft—harmful magic done by humans. It goes almost without saying that this was a mere fraction—and arguably not even the most significant one—of magical culture. We do not hear that much about other forms of magic, about the myriads of spirits, the magical routines of everyday life, and the fringes of magic and science that were characteristic of premodern cultures. However, it would be foolish to denounce that restriction as a conceptual weakness of *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe*. On the contrary, without that limitation the whole project would have been in jeopardy. Even six well-researched volumes would not be enough for a handbook

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5. Richard Golden, ed., *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition*, 4 vols. (Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-Clio, 2006).

of all kinds of magic and magical beliefs in European history. The concept of the series is clear enough and flexible enough to make sense.

Each volume has a short introduction by the editors. With the regrettable exception of the all too sketchy and too generalizing introduction to the volume on *Biblical and Pagan Societies*, these texts provide good surveys and familiarize the reader with some of the main problems the articles of the respective volumes discuss.

The first volume of the series deals with magic in ancient pagan cultures and in Old Israel. Marie-Louise Thomsen discusses magic in ancient Mesopotamia. She integrates harmful magic in the wider context of religion and benign magic. Thomsen suggests that suspicions of witchcraft in Mesopotamia were directed against outsiders—hostile foreigners or the strangers within one's own family, such as women who lived in the families of their husbands. Frederick Cryer describes the magical beliefs in Syria-Palestine and in the Old Testament. He refutes the naive notion that Old Israel's strict monotheism knew of no magical elements other than those "imported" from neighboring pagans. According to Cryer, the monotheistic culture of the Old Testament was as familiar with magic as medieval Christian Europe.

Four authors discuss various aspects of magic in *Ancient Greece and Rome* in the second volume. Daniel Odgen presents and interprets archaeological finds—curse tablets and magical dolls (somewhat misleadingly labeled Voodoo dolls) as the material culture of magic. Georg Luck, the Nestor of the historiography of Greek and Roman magic, contributes an exhaustive study of magicians in classical literature. He sketches a very colorful and complex picture of literary witches and wizards, including purely invented characters as well as the literary reflections of historical persons. Some were godlike figures, others respected teachers and holy men, skillful poisoners, or even comical personages. Luck is not interested in the question whether his sources represent the reality of magic or simply their authors' imaginings of magic. Richard Gordon's thought-provoking essay deals with that question, if only to refute it. According to Gordon it is not satisfactory to look for magical practices as constituting the "reality" of magic, for it is characteristic of magic that it often exists more in the mind than in the world of facts and actions. Nevertheless, the concept of magic Gordon finds in a variety of sources, legal texts as well as purely fictional accounts, is predominately negative. The poets saw magic in the same terms as the respective legal authorities. Valerie Flint's article concludes the volume. She deals with the demonization of magic by the early Christian church. The church's response to magic was twofold. First, of course, it fought more explicit and dangerous forms of witchery. Second, the church tried to win over magicians. Their conversions

were all the more urgent as they harmed others and themselves by their contact with demons. In the context of the Jewish belief in demons Flint might have paid closer attention to the relationship between Satan and other demons, which was not as clear-cut as it might seem.[6]

Three authors contributed to the volume *The Middle Ages*. Karen Jolly gives a general overview. She points out three phases of change in the concept of magic: the period of Christianization, which Jolly considers as largely complete around 1100, the renaissance of the twelfth century, and the crisis of the late fourteenth century. Not surprisingly, Jolly describes Christianization as a process of marginalization and adoption of magic. The second paradigm shift was brought about by the rise of the towns, courtly culture, and the rediscovery of Aristotle in the high Middle Ages. New elites began to identify themselves with these new developments—burghers, courtiers, and scholastic theologians. Practitioners of magic became the significant "others" for them all. In the late fourteenth century, ideas about magic changed again, turning from a set of questionable practices to full-fledged witchcraft, practiced by a secret satanic organization. Jolly pays hardly any attention to the question why exactly this last paradigm shift occurred.[7] She goes on, instead, to describe common magical practices that seem to have been unaffected by the three paradigm shifts.

The other two articles in the volume on the Middle Ages elaborate thoroughly on a number of points Jolly raised. Using sagas and the mythology of the *Eddas* as sources Catharina Raudevere examines ideas about *trolldómr* in high medieval Scandinavia. Raudevere presents this magic as an integral part of rural life, a set of rituals rather than ideas or concepts, mostly used to fight off disease and starvation and to predict the future. The few source materials that give insight into the culture of the Anglo-Saxons and Continental Germanic tribes suggest that they shared this concept of magic. Raudevere ends her discussion of Norse magic with an outline of magic in law and trials against magicians. Persons found guilty of using harmful *trolldómr* were burned, drowned, or stoned to death. However, if it was obvious that the magician had acted on behalf of a person of higher standing, the practitioner of *trolldómr* was not even brought to court. His or her "principal" was accused instead. The purely instrumental character of magic in a society that had not yet fully accepted Christianity is obvious here. After providing the back-

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6. Cf. Meinhard Limbeck, "Satan und das Böse im Neuen Testament," in Herbert Haag, *Teufelsglaube*, 2nd ed. (Tübingen: Katzmann, 1974), 271–388, esp. 384–87.

7. Johannes Dillinger, "Terrorists and Witches: Popular Ideas of Evil in the Early Modern Period," *History of European Ideas* 30 (2004): 167–82.

ground of systems of magical beliefs in Greece and Rome in the pervious volume, it might have been very interesting for the series to look not only at *trolldómr* in medieval Scandinavian, but at popular concepts of magic in medieval Mediterranean countries too.

In the third article on the Middle Ages, Edward Peters discusses the attitude of church and state toward magic in Latin Europe. After looking again briefly at the church of antiquity, Peters deals with magic in Germanic and early canon law. The reformist clerics of the eighth and ninth centuries together with the Carolingians put strong emphasis on the struggle against magic and superstition. The Canon Episcopi was an integral part of that first wave of ecclesiastical and secular measures against magical beliefs and practices. The twelfth century brought new ideas about the powers of nature, and in connection with that a more sophisticated demonology. The experience of the mass persecution of heretics and the rise of inquisitions helped to set the stage for the first witch trials. After briefly reviewing the well-known trials against the Knights Templar and various courtiers, and probably too short a glance at condemnations of magic from Jean Gerson and the faculty of the Sorbonne, Peters alters the scene. In order to fully understand the rise of the witch hunts, he turns his attention to the western Alpine region of the early fifteenth century. Here, in one of most lively and "progressive" regions of Europe, the image of the witch emerged out of regional or even local contingencies. Peters points out the intermingling of trials and the emergence of new demonological literature. In light of the findings of the important research group working in Lausanne, Peters might have put a greater emphasis on the paradigmatic importance of the first trials themselves.[8] Broedel's recent study on the *Malleus maleficarum*—which Peters could not yet know—certainly points in that direction, too.[9]

Surprisingly, the volume on *The Period of the Witch Trials* is the second shortest of the series. As numerous good monographs on the persecutions in a variety of European regions and states have been published in recent years, William Monter and Bengt Ankarloo, two of the pioneers of witchcraft research, are in the position to present a new panorama of witch hunts that is much more complete, clearer, and more colourful than that sketched in the

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8. Martine Ostorero, Agostino Paravicini Bagliani, and Kathrin Utz Tremp, eds., *L'imaginaire du Sabbat: Edition Critique des Textes les Plus Anciens, 1430 c.–1440 c.* (Lausanne: Université de Lausanne, Section d'histoire, Faculté des lettres, 1999).

9. Hans Peter Broedel, *The Malleus Maleficarum and the Construction of Witchcraft: Theology and Popular Belief* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003).

"classical" collection of essays *Häxornas Europa.*[10] Monter provides a short survey of the witch hunts in Continental Europe. His focus on the Holy Roman Empire is well justified: large-scale witch hunts did indeed concentrate in several German principalities. Referring to parts of the extensive research on witch trials that has been done in German-speaking Europe during the last twenty years, Monter points out that severe witch hunts were limited to territories in which administration was badly organized and government control was loose. Within such deficient systems special administrations could rise that quickly accumulated power and worked without any effective outside control placed over them. Monter concentrates on these administrations. He underplays the role of the common people; in various territories peasants and townspeople organized witch hunts themselves with hardly any support from the state administration and sometimes even against the specific orders of the respective prince. Well-organized states with effective centralized control remained largely free of intensive witch hunts. This holds true not only for German principalities; France, with the Parlement de Paris as a powerful appellate court, also remained largely free of intensive witch hunts. Unfortunately, the article has little information on popular witch beliefs.

Bengt Ankarloo discusses the persecution of witches in the Netherlands, the Baltic, Scandinavia, and Britain. Here again, the importance of legal and administrative structures is obvious. England experienced its most severe witch hunt during the Civil War when in some regions the system of criminal justice broke down. In Scotland, the persecutions were conducted by special commissions that worked outside of the ordinary legal system. The well-known Swedish trials of the 1660s must be regarded as the work of royal commissions established to meet the demands of a nervous and potentially dangerous peasantry. In contrast to that, the Netherlands managed to subject criminal courts constantly to the close and systematic control of well-trained jurists. In the third essay in the volume, Stuart Clark describes magic as a part of early modern culture. He has a short but informative chapter on folk magic and popular concepts of witchcraft. Following the general outlines of his monograph on demons in early modern intellectual history, Clark provides clear and well-documented insight into the meaning of demonology and *magia naturalis* in scientific and political debates.[11]

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10. Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen, eds., *Häxornas Europa 1400–1700: Historiska och Antropologiska Studier—Early Modern European Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries* (Lund: Institutet för Rättshistorisk Forskning, 1987; Oxford: Clarendon, 1990).

11. Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

The volume on *The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* discusses the transformations of magic. In his cautiously argued article on the decline of the witch hunts, Brian Levack takes nothing for granted. He examines closely various factors that all contributed to the end of the persecutions. The first signs of tolerance and secularization might have helped to dampen the princes' zeal concerning witch hunts. The beginning of scepticism concerning the power of the devil in the visible world, and the significant economic and social improvements after the end of the "Little Ice Age" undoubtedly played their role in the cessation of the persecutions. Levack convincingly argues, however, that the growth and diversification of legal administrations was the decisive factor that put a stop to the witch hunts. This conclusion is entirely in keeping with the results of research Monter and Ankarloo summarized in their respective articles. Levack's argument implies that the end of the witch hunts was by no means the end of the belief in witches. Marijke Gijswijt-Hofstra amply demonstrates that the witches did not disappear from popular culture in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. No longer accepted in court, witchcraft lingered on in the private sphere. It was used to explain personal rather than collective misfortune. No folklorist will be surprised to learn that folk magic and countermagic against witches continued to flourish. The gender patterns of magic known from the early modern period also do not seem to have changed.

Roy Porter examines the active struggle of cultural elites against "superstition" during the Enlightenment. Of course, the victory of the Enlightenment was at best doubtful. Neither the aggressive campaigns of the adherents of Voltaire—Porter concentrates on the French context—nor the new interest in science, but rather the marginalization of rural culture and the rise of urban capitalism helped to weaken the traditional concepts and practices of magic. Thus, old European magic declined together with and as a part of preindustrial culture. New magic emerged; magical practices appeared in Bourgeois society that experimented with fashionable quackeries and witnessed the rise of spiritualism as a new combination of religion and science. Porter deals too briefly with the spiritualists. He has only half a page to spare for the Freemasons. Schindler's ground-breaking discussion of the magical elements of Freemasonry is not even listed in the bibliography.[12] "Count" Cagliostro, arguably the most prominent self-styled magician of the eighteenth century,

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12. Norbert Schindler, "Freimauerkultur im 18. Jahrhundert: Zur sozialen Funktion des Geheimnisses in der entstehenden bürgerlichen Gesellschaft," in *Klassen und Kultur: Sozialanthropologische Perspektiven in der Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. Robert M. Berdahl (Frankfurt: Syndikat, 1982), 205–62.

tice. In the introduction of the volume on the twentieth century, however, the reader is somewhat disappointed to see the apparent continuities in this period explained away as existing mostly in the eye of the beholder. Nevertheless, one might argue that some ideas about magic and some "tools" used by magicians are so basic and so close to the core of European culture that change was not necessary. Maybe it was not even feasible. Magical practices could hardly change anymore because everybody knew they were ancient.

Witchcraft and Magic in Europe is so monumental a work that it is largely immune to criticism. The series is a good summary of what we already know and a good starting point for further research. The student audience will welcome the informative surveys. The editors as well as all the authors have made a lasting contribution to the historiography of European magic.

Reviews

NIKKI BADO-FRALICK. *Coming to the Edge of the Circle: A Wiccan Initiation Ritual.* Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2005. Pp. x + 181.

This book begins by asking a simple question: is Arnold Van Gennep's tripartite template of initiation (separation, liminality, and reincorporation), which has been the basis of anthropologist and folklorists conceptualization of initiation for a hundred years, accurate or sufficient? In answering this question the author gives a lively and informative description of her own route to becoming a Witch, raises issues of insider and outsider studies of religions, and provides a sense of how Witches practice their religion. Bado-Fralick has studied folklore, performance studies, philosophy, ritual studies, and feminism, and to varying degrees brings all these to bear on her analysis of her own initiation as a Witch thirty years ago and her initiation of others in her role as a high priestess of a Wiccan coven, Merry Circle.

Bado-Fralick believes her own route to Witchcraft began in her childhood, in which her mother taught her the folkways of her native Serbia and her father alternative healing practices, and in her Serbian Orthodox church where she grew to love ritual and mystery, although not the gender divisions between exclusively male priests and practitioners. However, it is not until she enters college that she meets Sam, the man who will teach her about Witchcraft and initiate her into the religion, and Lauren, a fellow initiate with whom she subsequently forms Merry Circle Coven.

Through her discussion first of her own dedication ritual—the ritual that signifies an individual's desire to join a coven and begin the process of training to be Witch—her subsequent initiation, which typically takes place a year and a day after dedication but may be longer, to her becoming a high priestess who initiates others, she takes us on her personal journey while at the same time looking at the details of these rituals, their meaning to the individual, and their implication for understanding the larger question of the initiation process.

She argues that initiation into Witchcraft must be understood not as three distinct periods but as a process of learning. Using Wittgenstein's concept of language game she contends that becoming a Witch is a process of learning a new discourse, which involves both skill and practice, not just learning rules

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but learning how and when to use those rules. This learning for Witches is not just intellectual, but is embodied. She suggests that learning to drive a car is an apt analogy, as one first must learn the rules of the road, but learning them and how a car works does not make you a driver. Practicing over and over does, and with time one becomes a better driver. Learning to drive is not just an intellectual act but one that is learned in the body itself. One learns to "automatically" step on the brake when a child runs in front of the car. Driving, particularly for an experienced driver, becomes a matter of instinct as much as of thinking.

The combination of intellectual and somatic learning is particularly important for Bado-Fralick's discussion of Wiccan initiation rituals, as Wicca is an embodied spirituality. She does an excellent job of describing what it means to have an embodied spirituality—it means that the body itself must learn to act and respond. The body is not separate from the divine but is part of it, particularly within ritual as she notes this is not a natural state but an achieved one. For her the most central part of this is learning to control one's breathing. It is through what she terms "body-in-practice" that Witches existentially transform themselves both in ritual and out of it.

Relying on Kaulis she describes part of this transformation to becoming a Witch as a move from integrity to intimacy—that is, a change in the way of knowing and interacting in the sacred circle, magically and in life. Integrity is objective, public, and does not involve affective or somatic elements. Intimacy to the contrary is private and is based on affection and somatic knowledge. Scientific learning would be a good example of the former. The latter is exemplified by parents knowing that their child is unhappy without the child having the usual signs of distress—crying, frowning, complaining. Parents, more often mothers, sometimes state that they can feel in their bodies that something is not right with their child. They may be picking up subtle cues that the child is not quite his or her normal self. It is this sense of knowing and interacting that Bado-Fralick sees as an important element in a Witch's magical training. The body, she argues, must become intimately attuned in the circle to the gods and to one's fellow participants.

Bado-Fralick uses one initiation ritual in which she served as high priestess to discuss the role of the timing and place of the ritual in emphasizing the initiate's relationship with the Goddess and with viewing nature as a "person" and an important player in the ritual. By holding the ritual at the full or waxing moon the group is making the initiate aware of the importance in ritual of the Goddess in her three aspects of maid, mother, and crone. As far as possible the rituals in Merry Circle Coven were held outdoors, placing the initiate within nature. She or he is placed alone to meditate within nature, to

come to see nature as alive. This would have reinforced teaching that preceded the initiation, as there is nothing automatic or natural about being in nature and coming to view it as a person to be interacted with. Neither the initiate nor the coven meets nature in its natural state because as Bado-Fralick notes they first put on insect repellant, although this aspect of ritual preparation is not analyzed by her.

Bado-Fralick's discussion at the beginning of the book about the insider-outsider debate within scholarship on new religions covers the basic points. It at times seems defensive as she justifies herself as scholar-practitioner. This is unfortunate but possibly necessary for scholars who are practitioners of minority religions. It is common for practitioners of mainline religions to study their own religions without raising a question of the validity of their research. Witches and others of minority faiths are often not accorded the same good will. Bado-Fralick's very intimate insider's view of initiation could only be written by a Witch. One or two times Bado-Fralick does take a partisan position of issues within the Witchcraft community, such as her criticism of feminist Witchcraft, but this is rare.

Bado-Fralick, through her insider analysis of Wiccan initiation rituals, brings into question Van Gennep's template of the initiation process. She suggests not that he was completely wrong, but that the process of separation, liminality, and reincorporation is not something that occurs as three distinct stages that are consecutively completed. Rather the individual moves among these throughout the initiation process, returning again to separation, liminality, and ultimately reincorporation. As a first person account this is a very readable book and therefore would make an excellent addition to an undergraduate course in Pagan Studies, Sociology of Religion, Folklore, or Introduction to Anthropology. It will also make a contribution to the growing literature on Wicca.

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WOLFGANG BEHRINGER. *Witches and Witch-Hunts: A Global History.* Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004. Pp. xxi + 337.

When Alan Macfarlane and Keith Thomas reinvigorated the study of historical European and particularly English witchcraft in the early 1970s, they were heavily influenced by studies of witchcraft in Africa, particularly the work of E. E. Evans-Pritchard done decades earlier. While they did not pri-

marily write comparative histories (only the final section of Macfarlane's book is explicitly comparative), they drew on anthropological models to help them understand how belief in and fear of witches might have functioned in early modern English society. A door could have been flung open between the study of European and non-European systems of witchcraft. Instead, as histories of the European witch hunts proliferated in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, most scholars avoided broad, comparative arguments. Instead they stressed the particular nature of witchcraft in early modern Europe, with conceptions of "the witch" deeply rooted in Christian theology and demonology. Now Wolfgang Behringer, a major scholar of early modern witchcraft, wants to redress this tendency. His focus is witch-hunting—legal or quasi-legal actions taken against those supposed to have performed some type of maleficent magic against their neighbors. He begins not in Europe but in modern South Africa, where in 1990 a hunt claimed thirty victims. Throughout the 1990s, he notes, witch-hunting actually increased in South Africa and other parts of the African continent. He therefore contends that a purely Eurocentric, predominantly Christian conception of witchcraft is "no longer acceptable" (p. 3), nor is the comfortable notion that witch-hunting is an essentially "closed chapter in the history of mankind" (p. 8).

In his second chapter, "Belief in Witchcraft," Behringer articulates a reasonable definition for "witchcraft" that can be applied to any culture: "There are evil forces around, and they try to cause harm. Some people, who are essentially anti-social, either incorporate such forces involuntarily, or form alliances with these forces intentionally in order to inflict harm by mystical means. . . . They not only act as individuals, but rather, through their alignment to evil forces, they act in groups, being part of a conspiracy" (pp. 12–13). He also notes that many cultures tend to associate such activity more with women than with men. Even in Western Europe, such notions have not disappeared, as 10 to 15 percent of Europeans, when polled, assert a belief in some form of witchcraft, although they may no longer associate witchcraft with Christian demonology and the devil.

In his next three chapters, which form the bulk of the book (about 150 out of 248 pages of text), Behringer narrows his focus to the history of Europe. "The Persecution of Witches" (Chap. 3) surveys legal responses to supposed witchcraft from Roman times through the Middle Ages. "The European Age of Witch-Hunting" (Chap. 4) surveys the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when witch trials were at their height across much of Europe. "Outlawing Witchcraft Persecution in Europe" (Chap. 5) covers the skepticism that was always present, at least about certain aspects of witchcraft and legal means used against suspected witches, throughout the period

of the major witch hunts, and discusses how such skepticism finally resulted in the end of most legal prosecutions in the eighteenth century. Behringer is a leading expert in this field and delivers valuable information and insight on almost every page. While keeping his survey broad, he does not avoid making important specific points, especially in terms of the geographical spread of the major hunts and the potential numbers of their victims. One of his main points is to stress how limited, both geographically and chronologically, were the relatively few truly massive witch hunts of this period. We should not, therefore, regard spectacular trials claiming hundreds or even thousands of victims (as sometimes occurred in this period, mainly in German lands) as the norm. Such great hunts were actually quite rare, but "witch-hunting" in terms of smaller-scale prosecutions was pervasive in Europe and clearly also exists in other parts of the world.

Chapter 6, "Witch-Hunting in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," largely returns to Africa, focusing on how European skepticism was exported through colonization, how it interacted jarringly with local systems of magical beliefs, and how in the postcolonial era a reinvigoration of traditional beliefs has led to some demands for a restoration of legalized witch-hunting. The chapter also touches briefly on Asia and the Americas, as well as the persistence of some forms of witch-hunting in modern Europe. The final chapter, "Old and 'New Witches,'" deals with the emergence of Wiccan and other neo-pagan movements in contemporary Europe and North America, and their connections, real and supposed, to historical witchcraft. Behringer has no patience with the claims of some neo-pagans to be the direct descendents of historical witches, whom they believe practiced an ancient pagan religion. He notes that aside from neo-pagans themselves, the modern group most favorable to the argument that historical witchcraft was actually a popular form of pagan religiosity that resisted Judeo-Christian hegemony over Europe was the Nazi Party.

This is an important book, in that it calls for a broader, more comparative understanding of what witchcraft can be and what forms witch hunts can assume in various cultures. Yet the largest part of the book still focuses on the rise and fall of witch-hunting as it is traditionally understood in premodern Europe. This is unsurprising given that this is the area of Behringer's main expertise; his survey here is valuable on many points, and informs his attempt to set witchcraft in a more global perspective in important ways. Yet that global perspective can appear to be simply a substantial addendum to what remains an essentially European story. This is not helped by the fact that when Behringer goes beyond Europe, it is almost always to Africa (not surprising since, Europe aside, Africa has been the focus of the largest body of

witchcraft scholarship). Thus, this book is really a useful survey of historical European witchcraft and witch-hunting, with an extension of that history into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, along with a comparison to colonial and postcolonial Africa. That, in itself, is no small accomplishment. Nor is Behringer's point about the need to think about and study witchcraft in far broader terms than has typically been the case any less valuable because he has not presented us with a study as broad as could possibly be imagined or hoped for. What remains to be seen is whether Behringer's call will serve to open doors to comparative scholarship and interpretation that have largely remained shut for the past forty years.

MICHAEL D. BAILEY
Iowa State University

HANS PETER BROEDEL. *The Malleus Maleficarum and the Construction of Witchcraft: Theology and Popular Belief.* Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2003. Pp. 209.

There is perhaps no historical text more associated in the popular imagination with the horrors of the European witch hunts than the infamous *Malleus maleficarum*, commonly ascribed to the Dominicans Heinrich Kramer (Institoris) and Jacob Sprenger (in fact much evidence points to Kramer as the sole author). Proclaimed to be *the* great witch-hunting manual of the late-medieval and early-modern period, the *Malleus* has been held by some as a definitive statement of authoritative conceptions of witchcraft. In fact, scholars of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries have long recognized that the *Malleus* was in many respects an idiosyncratic work, that its influence was far from pervasive, and that its authority was far from absolute. A major goal of Hans Peter Broedel's study is to modify what may indeed now be an overly developed tendency to argue against the importance of the *Malleus* and its centrality in the construction of witchcraft. He does not return to any simplistic notion of completely pervasive influence, nor does he claim the *Malleus* is representative of the all currents of European thought on witchcraft. Rather, by exploring the work's uniqueness, he seeks to uncover what made it for several centuries such a compelling statement of the idea of witchcraft.

Few works as well known as the *Malleus* have been the subject of as little focused study. Although the work is mentioned in virtually every account of European witchcraft, this is the first scholarly book in English, and one of

only a few in any language, devoted entirely to the treatise. Those expecting a straightforward overview of all aspects of the *Malleus*' composition, context, circulation, and impact will be disappointed, however. Broedel has a specific and quite focused argument, indicated in his subtitle. His main analytical point is that the *Malleus*, more than any other contemporary treatise on witchcraft, effectively fused theological concerns about demonic magic with popular conceptions of harmful magic (*maleficium*) widely held in European society. If anything, according to Broedel, the *Malleus* leaned toward the side of popular conceptions at the expense of theological ones. This is what made the work such an enduring success. Scholars broadly recognize that the particular image of diabolical witchcraft that formed in Europe in the fifteenth century was the result of a fusion of common conceptions of *maleficium* and more elite, learned concerns about diabolism entailed in such magic. The *Malleus*, according to Broedel, represents one of the most effective integrations of those two aspects of the construction of witchcraft.

Broedel begins with the authorship of the treatise. Both Kramer and Sprenger were Dominicans (although he recognizes the arguments for Kramer's sole authorship, Broedel continually refers to both men throughout). As such, they were members of a religious order dedicated to preaching and pastoral care of souls. Also in their roles as inquisitors, Dominicans were necessarily exposed to popular beliefs. Throughout his book, Broedel argues repeatedly that because of these essentially Dominican tendencies of its author(s), the *Malleus* became a far more practical work rather than a purely theoretical one. In its accounts, authorities could see notions of harmful magic similar to what they would encounter in the testimonies of ordinary laypeople brought before them for questioning. Thus, the *Malleus* proved more useful than other more purely abstract accounts of witchcraft.

One vexing problem for authorities bent on prosecuting witches was the degree to which theological insistence on the demonic nature of *maleficium* could actually reduce human culpability. If demons both tempted humans to will evil upon their neighbors and then carried out evil actions on their behalf, the culpability of human spell-casters could appear quite small. Many medieval authorities debated this point. The *Malleus* very clearly laid blame on the human actor. Broedel argues this was because it more fully accepted popular conceptions of witchcraft than did other works. While common people were not ignorant of the church's teachings that *maleficium* operated via demonic power, they were naturally less concerned with abstract demonology and more inclined to locate the source of evil directly in some human being. By accepting this approach, the *Malleus* made prosecution of witches

less problematic for the authorities who relied on its guidance, and so again proved a highly useful tool.

Broedel pursues similar arguments through other points, concluding with the *Malleus*' famous concentration on the gender of witches and the essentially gendered nature of witchcraft. The *Malleus* provides philosophical, physiological, and theological reasons for the particular proclivity of women for witchcraft, namely their inferior mental and spiritual capacities and their greater susceptibility to demonic temptation. Yet Broedel locates the root of its attitude toward women primarily in its greater acceptance of popular notions that women were more inclined to witchcraft than were men. More theoretical demonologies often ignored the issue of witches' gender. In accusations brought by common people in courts, however, the accused were usually female.

It would be churlish to fault Broedel for pursing a particular line of analysis and writing a focused study. Yet the absence of any more general or technical analysis of the *Malleus*, while not undermining his arguments, leaves them open to question. For example, on the particularly "Dominican" character of the *Malleus*, there is no doubt that Dominicans were, through both preaching and inquisition, very much exposed to popular beliefs. But they were also engaged in shaping those beliefs, not just passively observing them. Moreover, other authorities, both clerics and lay judges, would have had similar exposure to popular beliefs, and several also authored witchcraft treatises. Broedel does compare the *Malleus* to other treatises at many points, but to my mind what is called for to buttress his central arguments is a thorough and systematic comparison of the *Malleus* to one or more other treatises of differing authorship.

As already noted, Broedel does not advance a simplistic notion of the influence or authority of the *Malleus*. His lines of analysis do keep circling back, however, to the conclusion that the work's particular fusion of theological and popular concerns made it uniquely useful to subsequent authorities. Yet how widely used was the *Malleus*? We know how often it was reprinted, but how often did it stand open on prosecutors' desks? This is an enormously vexing question, and perhaps an impossible one to answer, but any study whose central argument rests on an assumption of the *Malleus*' broad and enduring utility must try. Broedel also regards the *Malleus* as more unique than I do. I agree with him that the work is terribly idiosyncratic, but so were most witchcraft treatises. They all to some degree incorporated specific local conceptions as well as general theoretical ones. On any number of particular points I grew uncomfortable with Broedel's tendency to categorize

the *Malleus* as uniquely unique, its depictions of witchcraft seemingly set against some sort of otherwise universally accepted standard.

This is not to say that I find Broedel's analysis to be wrong. I agree with many of his points. Yet even where I agree, I would like to see more extensive and systematic comparisons of the *Malleus*' approach to that of other treatises. Thus, while this is the first scholarly book in English devoted to the *Malleus*, I hope it will not be the last. In making the *Malleus* the focus of sustained attention, Broedel has begun to address a serious gap in the study of European witchcraft. More work remains to be done.

MICHAEL D. BAILEY
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P. G. MAXWELL-STUART. *Witch Hunters: Professional Prickers, Unwitchers & Witch Finders of the Renaissance*. Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus, 2003. Pp. 157.

The problem with witchcraft in early modern Europe was that although almost everyone agreed it was real, there was much uncertainty and disagreement about its definition and demonstration. It was especially unclear how to prove individual guilt, and most convictions relied on the persuasiveness of witness testimony derived from circumstantial evidence and the sheer strength of conviction. Thus, most legal tribunals, eager to pass judgment with a clear conscience, valued the expert opinion of theorists and investigators.

This is the starting point for P. G. Maxwell-Stuart's compendium of case studies, six in all, which explores the problem of identifying witches. The book really needs a more substantial introduction; it only has a flimsy preface. Students and general readers (at whom this book must in part be aimed) would have benefited from a guided tour of contemporary debates and difficulties, likewise a potted history of the witch trials to hold the more persistent myths at bay. Witchcraft was an unstable concept, and its fragile reality at law depended on the strength of ties between the conceptual and the empirical. When it actually came to burning people, even a robust consensus could disintegrate.

The intellectual foundations of witchcraft combined reason based on ancient wisdom with contemporary experience. In one of the most influential treatises of its time, *Investigations into Magic*, Jesuit polymath Martín Del Rio shaped a mass of ideas and accounts into a comprehensive reference work for theologians, jurists, and physicians, published in three volumes between 1599 and 1600. Del Rio was a sponge for stories about the occult and not afraid of fieldwork either; sometimes curiosity drew him dangerously close to com-

plicity. No tale was too tall for him: a clairvoyant boy in Madrid, a shape-shifting barmaid, a Westphalian werewolf who made a demonic pact, a monk who confessed to enjoying an orgy with Beelzebub.

A scholar of extraordinary erudition like Del Rio was able to believe such things, Maxwell-Stuart argues, because, like all the characters in this book, he was "a man of his own times, not ours, and so responded to what he saw and read . . . in much the same way as any of his contemporaries in the complex and frightening world of post-Reformation Europe" (p. 12). War, rebellion, schism, famine, and plague stood alongside the flowering of the arts and natural philosophy, the expansion of commerce, and the voyages of discovery. With the apocalyptic end of mankind in sight, it seemed certain that witches and heretics were rushing to infect Christian society. It was the duty of men like Del Rio to fight back using the word of God, the force of rhetoric, and the criminal law.

However repugnant witchfinders seem today, their campaigns were usually sincere, "an attempt to occupy high moral ground in the face of a tidal wave of Satanically inspired evil which was threatening to overwhelm and destroy humanity" (p. 13). We glimpse a mentality where it was folly not to take witch-tales seriously, in contrast to our own, where in the absence of evidence, the opposite inference might be drawn. But even with these relativist standards in place, the French magistrate Pierre de Lancre seems extraordinarily credulous and ruthless. Much of what we know about him originates in his own account of investigating an outbreak of witchcraft accusations in the Pays de Labourd in 1609. His advice was more pungent than that offered by Del Rio: if the substance of confessions matches the other supporting evidence offered by witnesses then judges could rest easy after condemning the accused—and condemned these witches must be.

De Lancre shows how the methods of the Renaissance witchfinder can be seen as scientific rather than superstitious: he entered the Pays de Labourd like an intrepid ethnographer recording a newly discovered land. He found a population of seafaring families and demons, the latter refugees from the religious cleansing of missionaries in the New World and Far East. Beliefs and suspicions were recorded in lurid detail: witches' sabbats, aerial flight, grave-robbing, vampirism, and so on. Faced with these nightmarish facts, de Lancre insisted, it would be perverse to cling to skepticism. His discoveries indicated not just the contagious depravity of individuals, but an anti-Christian conspiracy on a grand scale, which in the short-term, might spread from this remote region to all France. Confessions of attendance at sabbats where the devil was exalted and the Mass mocked—mainly from girls and young women—left de Lancre in no doubt.

Chapters 3 (on medicine) and 4 (on possession) concern the physical proof of a spiritual crime. Battista Codronchi, an Italian physician, stressed the mutual agency of body and soul, and drew parallels between witchcraft and the alleviation of sin by priestly confession. Codronchi was especially interested in forensic medicine, but drew no sharp distinction between religion and science: doctors should observe Christian principles. He described the common belief that toxic substances in the bodies of menstruating and menopausal women might leave the eye as maleficent energy against an enemy—often a helpless child, the perfect image of innocence and regeneration. Magic and medicine were intertwined, just as illness could be traced to divine or demonic origins. Maxwell-Stuart explains the difference between possession and obsession, and separates the different moral responsibility each implied. His case study here comes from early eighteenth-century Scotland, and suggests that contemporaries were fascinated with demoniacs. Although easily faked, possession was considered a potential source of "knowledge and experience not only other than human but greater too" (p. 97). One detects a modern scientific impulse in this interest, not just medieval mumbo jumbo.

The final chapters examine individuals claiming to be able to identify witches by a glance or by pricking their bodies to find the devil's mark. The most notorious practitioner of the latter method was a Scot named John Kincaid, working in the mid-seventeenth century. His activities were brought to an end in 1662 when, as many witchfinders discovered, the authorities would no longer tolerate such disorderly conduct. Campaigns against witches, initiated and energized by professional witchfinders (of whom the most famous was the Englishman Matthew Hopkins), tended to be localized, intense, and short-lived, and demonstrated how charismatic leadership from an individual professing special insight could have devastating results. The ordeal by water, another means by which the intangible could be made manifest for all to see, was also a way of "publicly demonstrating to one's friends and neighbors a fellowship in right thinking and right behavior" (p. 122). The truth was always just out of sight, but vitally important, so that any means to a clearer view was appealing.

Like the introduction, the conclusion to this fascinating if somewhat randomly organized book is disappointingly short. This is a shame, as there is no shortage of fruitful insights and implications to draw out. Toward the end, Maxwell-Stuart makes an important point about the dangers of seeing early modern people through modern eyes. Belief in witchcraft was endemic, and this made it a reality for witchfinders and suspects alike. He deftly puts down "the facile rush to suggest that one side oppressed the other" (p. 123), and reminds us that practitioners of magic were, by contemporary standards,

guilty. And unless we take those standards seriously, historical understanding of the history of witchcraft will remain elusive.

MALCOLM GASKILL
Churchill College, Cambridge

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART. *Wizards: A History.* Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus Publishing, 2004. Pp. 222.

Recently, in a brief review for another journal of another work by the same author, with the same publisher and year of publication as this book, I called it "a brief and eclectic survey of a vast subject" where "pell-mell, one finds brief descriptions [of disparate material]," and further complained that its bibliography "avoids mentioning many modern classics on the subject." This tiger has obviously not changed his stripes, and has here produced yet another farrago with similar shortcomings.

The book provides a prime example of UK insularity by devoting its longest profiles to John Dee (pp. 90–100) and Aleister Crowley (181–92) and giving more space to an obscure late sixteenth-century *magus* from Aberdeen (138–41) than to Doctor Faustus (79–81); even its fictional protagonists tend to be British males, from Merlin to Gandolf or Harry Potter. If its longest section treats Renaissance magicians, one searches in vain for any trace of their greatest scourges, Johan Weyer or even Reginald Scot—perhaps the most prominent British absentee.

Like most male experts on this subject from the UK, Maxwell-Stuart seems ill at ease with the (elsewhere) much-discussed issue of shamanism. When he cannot completely avoid the term in connection with particular hypotheses (e.g., on p. 48), he skips past it in a phrase; another time (p. 138), he devotes two sentences to the protagonist of Wolfgang Behringer's *Shaman of Oberstdorf* without introducing shamanism. Similarly, Maxwell-Stuart (like some other male UK experts) shows little awareness of gender issues. For example, while emphasizing more than once (esp. p. 70) the quasi-sacerdotal clothes of his protagonists, he never connects this feature to the almost-complete invisibility of women from his collection of ancient and modern wizards until the twentieth century (pp. 195–99); and if Harry Potter gets four mentions in three different chapters, we are never told that his creator is female.

Maxwell-Stuart has obviously read widely about this subject, and he has produced worthwhile scholarship, including a useful abridged translation of Delrio's *Disquisitions on Magic*, and a study of Scottish witch trials, *Satan's*

Conspiracy, grounded in archival research. However, he also seems committed to churning out brief synthetic works like the one under review here at a breathless pace, at least one per year. The product may be based on broad learning, but is inevitably patchy. For example, in this volume the author is aware of multiple manuscript variants of the popular medieval manual entitled *Clavicula Salomonis* (see p. 71), but avoids any detailed discussion of this problem. His footnotes are scanty and sometimes vague; his bibliography displays a perverse refusal to mention some generally acknowledged classics appropriate for his particular chapters (e.g., he omits Fritz Graf on ancient magic, Richard Kieckhefer on medieval magic, D. P. Walker on spiritual and demonic magic during the Renaissance, and even overlooks the most recent academic treatment of the Order of the Golden Dawn, Alex Owen's *The Place of Enchantment: British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern*).

In the crucial aspect of weighing the veracity of preserved evidence, Maxwell-Stuart often pays insufficient attention to the complicated contexts from which accounts of magic might arise as he hurries on in his account. For example, his detailed portrait of a Roman Empire wizard, taken from the famous satirist Lucian (pp. 41–43), describes how the "master" ended his well-paid lessons by speaking too rapidly to be understood and then spitting three times into the neophyte's face, Nevertheless, Maxwell-Stuart concludes that Lucian's tale "does not appear to be exaggerated for comic or sarcastic effect." This confuses Dr. Pangloss with Immanuel Kant.

WILLIAM MONTER
Northwestern University (Emeritus)

RANDALL STYERS. *Making Magic: Religion, Magic, and Science in the Modern World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. Pp. vi + 290.

The title of this book is somewhat misleading, as it does not deal directly with practitioners of magic, however defined, but rather explores the variety of ways in which the category of "magic" has been constructed as an Other by Western philosophers, natural and social scientists, and theologians in the modern era, and has been used in multiple settings and contexts as the foil for various definitions of modernity. In this regard, Styers offers an ambitious and fascinating survey of European intellectual history, in which the vantage point of magic allows him to explore and shed new light on a wide range of familiar issues. In particular, Styers explores the role of magic in the thought of such

guilty. And unless we take these combined research, historical and
of the history of witchcraft will remain elusive.

WILLIAM DE BLÉCOURT
Churchill College, Cambridge

R. G. MAXWELL-STUART. Witches of Henry Street, Gloucestershire. Tempus Publishing, 2004. Pp. 222.

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Maxwell-Stuart has obviously read widely about the subject, and has produced worthwhile scholarship, including a useful abridged translation of Pedro's Declaración, in Alger, and a study of Scottish witch trials. So

major figures of the high modern era as E. B. Tylor, James Frazer, Marcel Mauss, Emile Durkheim, Bronislaw Malinowski, and Sigmund Freud.

In the first chapter, Styers examines the emergence of the category of magic in Western thought from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment. While he briefly notes the significance of Neoplatonist ritual magic to Renaissance high culture, most of the chapter focuses on the emergence of skepticism, beginning with criticisms of the witch trials of the early modern era and continuing on through the Reformation and its aftermath, and on the introduction of a mechanistic cosmos in the Scientific Revolution. The impact of these developments, Styers argues, is to construct a normative rationalist worldview, in which the boundaries between science, religion, and magic are drawn sharply for the first time. This period witnesses the "disenchantment of the world," as Max Weber famously described it, as once widespread beliefs in supernatural forces and divine (or demonic) intervention in the natural world are cast out of the intellectual mainstream and confined to the conceptual ghetto of "magic."

While the first chapter covers several centuries of European intellectual history, most of the remainder of the book focuses more specifically on Western social science in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the location shifts from Europe itself to the colonized world. The second chapter studies anthropological approaches to the history of religion, in which, in keeping with the evolutionary paradigm of much of modern thought, the "primitive" societies of Africa and Oceania were taken as analogues of European prehistory, offering insights into the remote origins of civilization. Indigenous religious beliefs and practices were labeled as "magical"; that is, not corresponding to the somewhat rarified, abstract notions of "religion" held by the modern West (and which Styers identifies as culturally specific to Protestant Northern Europe). In fact, Styers makes the interesting observation that traditional Protestant diatribes against "magical" or "superstitious" aspects of Catholic rites were easily transferred to apply to the "fetishism" of tribal societies. The third chapter considers the relationship between magic and science, and notes the historical difficulties in drawing a clear line between the two. The final chapter, on "magic and desire," explores psychological theories of magic from Freud to the present, and offers some interesting thoughts on the relationship of magic and (often "deviant") sexuality.

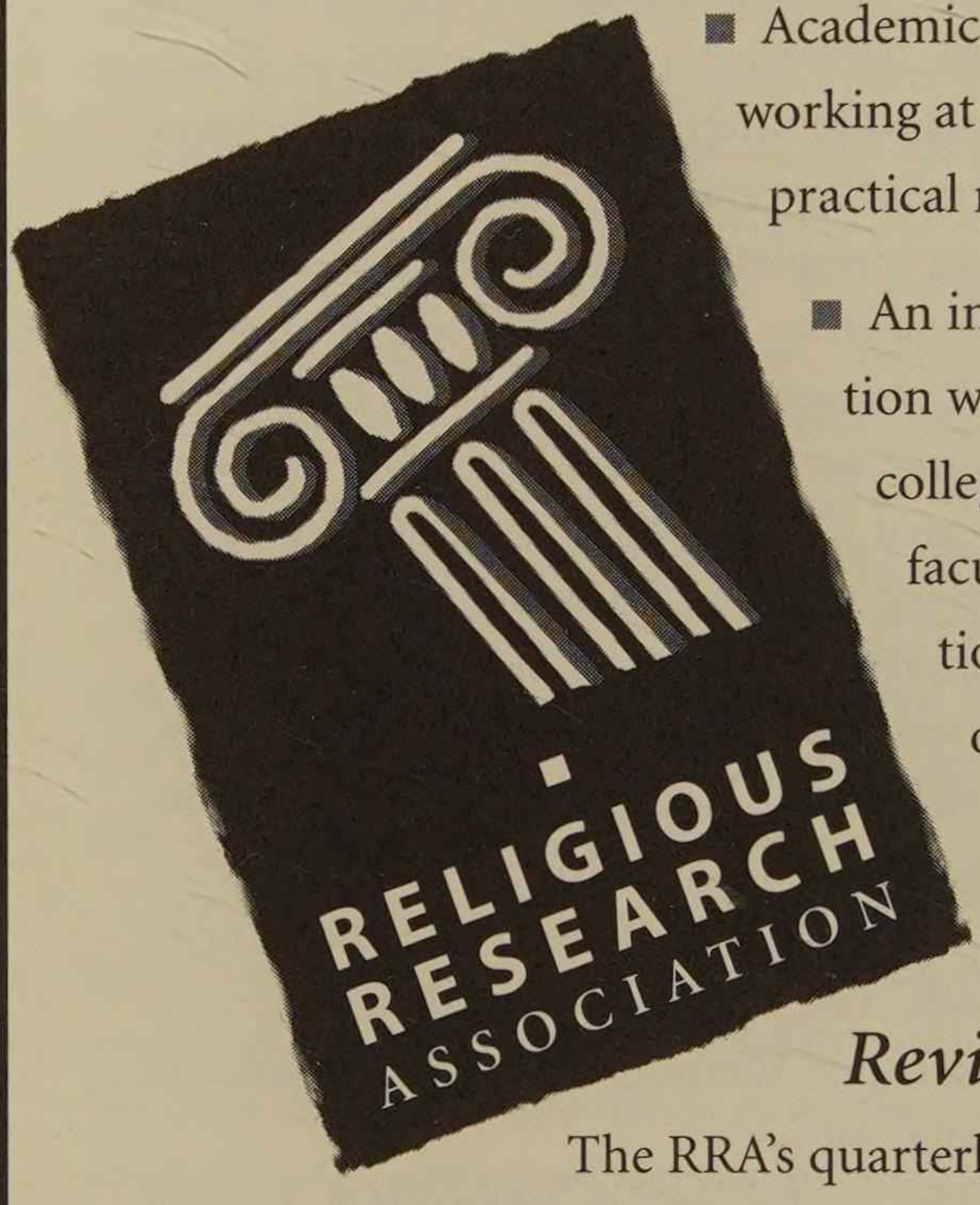
A number of recurrent themes run throughout the chapters of the book. One of the most central of these is the relation of magic to modernity. Is magic an evolutionary stage, typical of "primitive" societies, from which modern religion and science later emerged, or, on the contrary, is magic the eternal enemy of modern rationality, fundamentally different in kind from

religion and science properly defined? Styers insightfully analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of both of these positions, noting that "evolutionary" thinkers, such as Tylor, were deeply troubled by the (to them) inexplicable survival and reemergence of magical modes of thinking in the modern world, while scholars who stressed the difference of magic, such as Mauss and Durkheim, drew arbitrary and ultimately untenable boundaries between magic and religion. Styers notes that religion cannot be fully divested of its "magical" elements without becoming completely internalized and largely irrelevant to daily life, and that the boundaries between science and magic, particularly in the early modern period, are notoriously porous, as the careers of figures such as Isaac Newton demonstrate. A second recurring theme is the association of magic with the colonial Other. Magic in this sense serves as a marker of the inferiority of colonized peoples, ignorant of modern science and (Christian) religion and beholden to shamans and witch doctors, who therefore should be conquered and assimilated for their own benefit. Even within western nation-states themselves, magic is associated with "backward" groups such as the peasantry, who are also in need of being civilized (there are echoes here of the "internal colonialism" thesis of Eugen Weber's classic *Peasants into Frenchmen*). The concept of "magic" thereby becomes a necessary weapon in the arsenal of Western bourgeois civilization as it seeks to remake the world in its own image.

There is, in this reviewer's opinion, a bit of an unresolved tension throughout the book between "magic" as an intellectual construct, created by Western thinkers as a foil to modernity, and "magic" as a set or sets of beliefs and practices actually held by people both within and outside the boundaries of European society. Styers offers a fascinating case study of shamanism and sexual deviance among Siberian Chuckchi tribesmen, but this is one of the few instances in which he examines a particular instance of magic in any detail. Given the extreme heterogeneity of magical beliefs and practices in the contemporary world, this omission is perhaps unfortunate, as the reader may reasonably conclude that "magic" throughout the world is more similar than it in fact is. Nevertheless, it would be unfair to fault Styers for not writing a different book than the one he has produced. This is a remarkably insightful and important study, which fundamentally challenges many of our received notions about the boundaries between magic, religion, and science. It deserves a wide audience, and should be of interest to intellectual historians beyond the growing, but still narrow, community of scholars who specialize in "magic" or "occult" topics.

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