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Chapter 9

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The figure of the witch first appeared in Europe toward the end of the Middle Ages. That is, while all the separate components of witchcraft—harmful sorcery or *maleficium*, diabolism, heretical cultic activity, and elements drawn from common folklore, such as ideas of nocturnal flight—were widely believed to exist throughout much of the medieval period, only in the fifteenth century did these components merge into the single concept of satanic witchcraft.¹ Also in the fifteenth century an aspect of witchcraft emerged that, to many modern minds at least, is perhaps the most striking and compelling element of the stereotype—the pronounced association of witchcraft with women rather than with men. This connection was developed most completely and ruthlessly in what is now by far the most famous late-medieval text dealing with witchcraft, the witch-hunting manual *Malleus maleficarum*, written by the Dominican inquisitor Heinrich Kramer in 1486.² In this profoundly misogynist work, Kramer linked witchcraft entirely to what he regarded as women’s spiritual weakness and their natural proclivity for evil. Above all, he linked witchcraft to supposedly uncontrolled female sexuality, famously concluding that “all witchcraft comes from carnal lust, which in women is insatiable.”³ Yet the idea of the female witch was not new to Kramer. Throughout the fifteenth century, the number of women tried for sorcery and witchcraft was significantly higher than the number of men,⁴ and the special association of witchcraft with women appeared in authoritative literature fully fifty years before the publication of the *Malleus*. In his *Formicarius*, written around 1437, the Dominican theologian and religious reformer Johannes Nider was the first clerical authority to argue that women were more prone to become witches than were men.⁵ In fact, his treatment of this issue was extremely influential on the later *Malleus*, and Kramer incorporated whole sections of Nider’s text virtually verbatim into his own more expansive analysis of female proclivity for evil.⁶
The strongly gendered nature of witchcraft accusations and convictions, clearly sex-related if not entirely sex-specific, has long been of interest to scholars. Most studies of European witchcraft address the issue to some extent, and many focus specifically on this point. Especially for the period of the great witch-hunts proper, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the economic, social, cultural, and even psychological factors that may have underlain and supported accusations against women have all been explored to varying degrees. Yet surprisingly, for all the recognition that the full stereotype of witchcraft represents a constructed concept rather than a practiced reality, interest in the early development of the actual idea of the female witch has remained slight. Often scholars of the early-modern witch-hunts explore the roots of this idea no further back than the *Malleus maleficarum*, and too readily accept the notion, so seemingly apparent in the *Malleus*, that longstanding Christian and especially clerical misogyny underlies and explains authorities’ ready acceptance of the association of witchcraft with women.

Here I want to explore the earliest appearance of a strong association between women and witchcraft in authoritative literature, namely in the writings of Johannes Nider. After outlining what he has to say on the subject of female witches, and how he explains the particular proclivity of women for this crime, I will contrast his writings with certain earlier clerical accounts of magic and sorcery. Ultimately, I will argue that, instead of undergirding the concept that women were particularly inclined toward witchcraft, for much of the Middle Ages clerical misogyny and typical notions of gender actually made difficult the belief that women might be the chief practitioners of powerful, threatening, and terribly effective demonic sorcery—that is, until the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, when performance of demonic sorcery itself became in a way feminized in the concept of witchcraft. Over two decades ago, Christina Larner warned that, when studying the gendered nature of witchcraft, scholars must recognize that witches were not persecuted because they were women; rather, certain women were persecuted because they were believed to be witches. This basic point has been reiterated more recently by Stuart Clark, who had noted that the question scholars so often ask needs to be reversed. Rather than looking for reasons that women were made into witches, we should explore why, in late-medieval and early-modern Europe, witchcraft was perceived to be a crime particularly associated with, and particularly appropriate for, women. The writings of Johannes Nider, the first authority to link witchcraft more profoundly to women than to men, shed much light on the initial emergence of this enduring connection.

Taking its title from Proverbs 6.6, “Go to the ant, o lazy one, and consider its ways, and learn wisdom,” Nider’s major work dealing with witchcraft, his *Formicarius*, is actually a long moralizing treatise structured (rather loosely) around the various conditions and qualities of ants, and written in the form of a dialogue. The chief character is a Dominican theologian, referred to simply as *Theologus*.
although he is clearly meant to represent the author, Nider himself. His interlocutor, and the character to whom the command of the opening line is directed, is the proverbial “lazy one,” Piger—in this case a student of the Dominican order. Desiring to attain knowledge without effort, this student poses endless questions to the theologian touching on many areas of late-medieval religious belief and practice. In particular, he presses his master on the matter of witchcraft, only just beginning to emerge as a serious problem for clerical authorities to confront and consider at the time the Formicarius was written, and today it is for the treatment of this subject that the treatise, and Nider himself, are best known.\textsuperscript{12}

In the Formicarius, Nider described in detail most of those aspects of witchcraft that would in following centuries become standard elements of the witch-stereotype.\textsuperscript{13} Witches were regarded as powerful sorcerers who performed harmful maleficium against their neighbors—killing children, impeding fertility, withering crops, summoning lightning and hail, and spreading disease and pestilence. They were also servants of Satan, gathering at regular nocturnal assemblies known as sabbaths where they worshiped demons, renounced their belief in Christ and adherence to the true faith, and performed any number of vile and wanton acts.\textsuperscript{14} Witches were also, for Nider, predominantly women. He came to discuss the particular propensity of women for witchcraft in relation to the recent case of Joan of Arc, executed in 1431 (not, in fact, for witchcraft, although Nider clearly considered her to be a sorceress and companion to demons),\textsuperscript{15} about whom he learned while at the Council of Basel from Nicolas Amici, a theologian from Paris and a representative at the council. After a lengthy discussion of Joan and other similar cases of rebellious women supposedly guilty of witchcraft in the Formicarius, the character of the lazy student is made to exclaim: “I cannot wonder enough how the fragile sex should dare to rush into such presumptions.” To this, the theologian replied rather wryly, “among simple ones like yourself, these things are wonders, but in the eyes of prudent men, they are not rare.”\textsuperscript{16} He then launched into an explanation of female proclivity for witchcraft, ultimately based on longstanding Christian conceptions of the physical, mental, and spiritual weaknesses of women, and their greater susceptibility to the temptations of the devil. In this, he drew on very standard biblical, patristic, and scholastic sources, and his arguments were in turn influential on later literature dealing with witchcraft.

Women, for Nider, certainly had the potential for extreme good, even sanctity. When they did not reach this potential, however, he was convinced that they sank, almost automatically, into the worst of evils.\textsuperscript{17} As he wrote:

\begin{quote}
There are three things in nature that, if they exceed the limits of their conditions, either in diminution or in excess, attain either the pinnacle of good or of evil, namely the tongue, the cleric, and the woman. These, if they are ruled by a good spirit, are usually the best of all things, but if guided by an evil spirit they are usually the worst.\textsuperscript{18}
\end{quote}
He then went on to offer evidence of the depths to which women could fall, and he cited authoritative sources that would buttress his arguments about the extent of feminine evil. From the Bible, he noted, “there is no head above the head of a serpent, and there is no anger above the anger of a woman; it will be more pleasing to abide with a lion and a dragon than to dwell with a wicked woman.” Drawing on Saint John Chrysostom’s commentaries on the gospel of Matthew, he described women as being the “enemy of friendship, an inescapable punishment, a necessary evil, a natural temptation, a desirable calamity, a domestic danger, a delectable detriment, a nature of evil painted with fair color.” From Cicero, he quoted the adage on female carnality: “Individual desires impel men to each evil; a single desire leads women into all evils.” From what he terms the proverbs of Seneca, he derided female duplicity: “A woman either loves or hates, there is no third. The weeping of a woman is a lie. Two sorts of tears there are in the eyes of women—one is of true sadness, the other is of treachery. When a woman thinks alone, she thinks of evil things.”

While Nider was the first clerical authority to discuss female witches specifically in terms of their gender, his arguments regarding female corruptibility and propensity for evil may not, at first, appear very original or surprising. They are all drawn from standard sources and are largely what one might expect to hear from a medieval cleric on virtually any issue of perceived female wickedness. What is remarkable, however, is the fact that Nider himself strikes a note of surprise here, not in his own voice but through that of his lazy pupil. “I cannot wonder enough,” says Piger when he learns that women are so often involved in the terrible crimes of diabolic witchcraft. This small phrase is indicative of a device Nider employed frequently in the Formicarius. That is, he repeatedly put into his student’s mouth certain positions that were commonly held, even by educated people, but which he thought were incorrect, thereby affording himself the opportunity to correct these opinions through his own voice as the theologian. Here he replies that, while foolish and uneducated people might be amazed at the potential depths of women’s evil, “in the eyes of prudent men [such things] are not rare.” I think, however, that the level of astonishment indicated in the Formicarius over the notion of female witches was not limited to the unlearned. Rather it was probably also difficult for “prudent men” in Nider’s day, indeed perhaps especially for prudent men—trained theologians, to accept that a crime as horrific as witchcraft might really be the particular province of women. Here a brief discussion of earlier clerical attitudes toward magic, especially aspects of magic commonly associated with women, will prove helpful.

For many long centuries during the medieval period, a typical clerical position toward much common magic, including much of the harmful sorcery or maleficium that later characterized witchcraft, was that it was not real, being mere superstition or empty demonic illusion. I will discuss here only two early but important texts, and they will serve to stand in for many more. In the tenth cen-
tury, the famous canon *Episcopi* enjoined bishops to eradicate the “pernicious art of sortilegium and maleficium” from their diocese.21 The canon then went on to describe certain women who believed that they flew through the night with the goddess Diana. Yet this entire act was only a demonic deception.

Moreover, it must not be omitted that some wicked women, turned away after Satan and seduced by the illusions and phantasms of demons, believe and profess that, in the hours of the night, they ride upon certain beasts with Diana, the goddess of the pagans, and an innumerable multitude of women, and in the silence of the dead of night traverse great spaces of the earth, and that they obey her commands as of their mistress, and are summoned to her service on certain nights.22

The canon then goes on to ask: “Who would be so stupid and foolish to think that all these things that are done only in spirit occur in the body?” And it concludes: “Whoever therefore believes that anything can be made, or that any creature can be changed or transformed to better or worse, or be transformed into another species or likeness, except by the creator himself, who made all things and through whom all things were made, is beyond doubt an infidel.”23 The focus of the message is not on the power or threat of real sorcery or human sorcerers, but rather on the dangers of demonic deception.

One hundred years later, in the eleventh century, the legal scholar Burchard of Worms included material on sorcery in his important canon law collection, the *Decretum*. This source too indicates that the concern of clerical authorities often focused more on demonically inspired delusion and human susceptibility to false belief than on the real threat that magic might be believed to pose. “Have you ever believed or participated in this perfidy,” Burchard instructed authorities to inquire, “that enchanters and those who say that they can let loose tempests should be able through incantations of demons either to arouse tempests or to change the minds of men?” Immediately thereafter he asked: “Have you ever believed or participated in this infidelity, that there might be any woman who through certain sorcery and incantations can turn the minds of men, that is, either from hatred to love or from love to hatred, or by her bewitchments steal away men’s goods?”24 He then referred to the empty beliefs described in the canon *Episcopi*: “Have you ever believed that there might be any woman who can do this thing that some, deceived by the devil, affirm that they must do of necessity and by his command, that is, with a throng of demons transformed into the likeness of women ... they must ride on certain beasts on certain nights?”25 In a later section, he actually quoted from a section of the canon *Episcopi*, noting again that the women it described were merely victims of diabolical deception, and that they corrupted many others by their “false opinion.”26 Other passages in the *Decretum* refer exclusively to incorrect, superstitious, or “pagan” beliefs not directly related to the practice of sorcery. In all
cases, Burchard prescribed varying degrees of penance, but no harsher penalties, for these crimes and infractions.

Many, indeed most, of the superstitious beliefs and supernatural actions mentioned in either the canon Episcopi or Burchard’s Decretum would be entirely typical of later witchcraft. That is, they revealed popular notions of nocturnal gatherings and flight at the behest of certain spiritual beings (inevitably regarded as demons by clerical authorities), and they reflected a variety of commonly employed spells and charms designed to control or influence the weather, to procure or protect wealth, or to arouse love or enmity between certain people. Yet here the reality and real effectiveness of these actions are patently denied, and in fact condemnation falls not so much on the acts themselves as on the belief in their efficacy. Clearly clerical authorities in the tenth and eleventh centuries had no difficulty associating such magical activity with women (although not exclusively so by any means), yet their attitude toward this activity was often largely dismissive, not deeply concerned. They frequently viewed the sort of common sorcery often employed by women in terms of superstitious belief and susceptibility to demonic deception, not yet as a serious crime in its own right.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, however, clerical authorities began to take magic and especially demonic maleficium, the practice of harmful sorcery that would form an important basis for the idea of witchcraft, much more seriously. As part and parcel of the “Renaissance of the Twelfth Century,” Western European intellectuals discovered or rediscovered a whole host of classical, Hebrew, and Arabic texts on occult arts. The systems of magic described in these sources were highly learned, undoubtedly authoritative, and in many cases explicitly demonic in nature. They gave rise to a resurgence among clerical authorities of respect for the real efficacy of magic and especially of demonic power in the world, and they generated a reasonably widespread and to many clerics profoundly disturbing interest in a particular kind of magic, namely necromancy. Technically referring only to divination performed by summoning the spirits of the dead, this term—necromantia or often the slightly corrupted nigromantia—meant in this period a specifically learned, indeed often specifically clerical form of demonic invocation for magical purposes.

I and others have argued elsewhere that elite understandings of necromantic sorcery and the concerns this sort of magic generated were essential to the later conception of diabolic witchcraft that actually appeared only in the early fifteenth century. Throughout the fourteenth century, clerical and theological concern over the basic nature of magic was growing. Arguments were made proving that most magic was necessarily demonic, that it entailed pacts made with demons, and that those pacts always involved the worship of demons. This sort of magic, as conceived by clerical authorities, was highly complex, ritualized, and formalistic. In 1326, Pope John XXII wrote of sorcerers who invoked demons with the aid of “images, a ring, mirror, phial, or some other thing” that they had specially made.
and consecrated for magical purposes. In the 1370s, the Dominican theologian and inquisitor Nicolau Eymeric wrote of famous necromantic texts, the *Key of Solomon* and the *Sworn Book of Honorious*, which he had seized from magicians whom he had tried. And in 1398, when the theological faculty of the University of Paris issued a declaration condemning sorcery, it described procedures and elaborate rituals that clearly pertained to learned, elite demonic invocation:

> Considering the feat or principal operation … the great circle conscribed with diverse unknown names and marked with various characters, a little wooden wheel raised on four wooden feet and a stake in the midst of the same great circle and a bottle placed on the said wheel, above which on a little paper scroll were written certain names … with the sign of the cross and certain characters interposed between the said names, and also thrones, earthen pots, a fire kindled, suffumigations, lights, swords, and many other characters and figures and diverse names and unknown words … not only those who use such figments and sorceries to find hidden treasure or learn and know things secret and occult, but also all professed Christians in possession of reason who voluntarily operate and employ such things in such manner are to be held superstitious in the Christian religion, are to be deemed idolaters, are to be deemed invokers of demons and strongly suspect in the faith.

Small wonder that the character of the lazy student in the *Formicarius* should have expressed surprise to hear that so many women were involved in performing sinister demonic sorcery. As an educated cleric, or at least as someone on his way to becoming an educated cleric, he would have been familiar with ceremonies such as these, and it is highly unlikely that he typically envisioned women performing them.

Although never explicitly described in terms of gender, the practice of necromancy as clerical authorities conceived it seems to have been a decidedly masculine act. It involved skill, training, preparation, and above all education. A necromancer, whatever else might be thought of him, had to be intelligent and have a certain force of will to work his magic. Witches, of course, be they male or female, were typically not highly trained or educated people, and the external mechanisms by which they worked their magic were far different from the complex rites of the necromancers. For example, Johannes Nider described how a witch might seem to cause rain merely by dipping a broom in some water. He went on, however, to note:

> The broom that the witch immerses in the water, so that it should rain, does not cause the rain, but a demon who sees this and who, if God permits, has power over all corporeal things, and
over the air, the winds, and the clouds, so that immediately he might manage such things and be able to cause them. Indeed, the witch gives a sign with the broom, but the demon acts, so that it rains through the action of the demon ...\textsuperscript{34}

The witch here, who happens to be female although by no means all the witches Nider described were, seems to enjoy a tremendous amount of power over the demon, and an incredibly easy sort of power. A necromancer might have to labor for hours or even days with a complex ritual to summon a demon, but a witch just needed to stir up some water with the end of her broom. Yet in the minds of clerical authorities the witch controlled and directed exactly the same sort of real and effective demonic power that the necromancer might command—indeed at one point in the \textit{Formicarius}, Nider explicitly equated \textit{maleficium} with \textit{necromantia}.\textsuperscript{35}

The solution to this apparent discrepancy in power and preparation lay in the very nature and essence of witchcraft as a system of magic, as compared to necromancy. Theologians typically conceived of necromancy as necessarily involving pacts with demons and worship exchanged for supernatural services. Although necromancers often presented themselves as the masters of demons, controlling these evil spirits through the power of their complex and often quasi-religious formulations and ceremonies, theologians and inquisitors understood necromancers as subjecting themselves to demons.\textsuperscript{36} Yet all the complex paraphernalia of necromancy remained, all the long ceremonies and intricate invocations, that could (potentially at least) obscure the issue. Witchcraft entailed a much more unambiguous and in many ways a much simpler concept of magical operation. The central aspect of witchcraft, from a theological point of view, was the complete and absolutely explicit submission of the witch to demons and ultimately to the devil. This was typically acted out in the supposed ceremonies of the witches’ sabbath. At these assemblies, filled with all the lurid horrors that centuries of accumulated clerical polemic against heretics and heretical cults could provide, witches came before the devil, surrendered themselves entirely to his service, and in exchange were given magical potions, powders, and the ability to command demons with only simple gestures or spells.\textsuperscript{37} This was a sort of magical operation more suited to the masses of Europe, enabling educated authorities to see demonic forces at work among large segments of the population, and providing a necessary basis for the widespread witch-hunts to come. It was also a sort of magical operation that was now once again apt for both women and men. Indeed, insofar as the performance of harmful sorcery by witches was seen to rest wholly on submission to evil rather than on training or preparation, and on susceptibility to temptation rather than on intellectual striving, the magical operations of witchcraft could be seen as being particularly suited to women. Thus in the movement of theological concern from necromancy to witchcraft in the early 1400s, certain underlying conceptions of magic became, in a way, feminized, and this
made easier the subsequent acceptance by authorities of the notion that witches might be predominantly women.

None of which is to say that this crucial shift was due to a conscious effort on the part of theologians or other clerical authorities—that they, due to longstanding misogynistic traditions in the church and Western culture more generally, deliberately linked the operations of magic to female weakness and then set about prosecuting women for the resulting crime of witchcraft. If the few surviving records of trials for sorcery and witchcraft in the late Middle Ages can be believed, then the number of women being accused of performing harmful magic was on the rise already in the late fourteenth century, and by the early fifteenth century, women accounted for a clear majority of those tried for sorcery.³⁸ Again, I think the surprise expressed by Nider in his Formicarius was genuine. Clerical authorities familiar with the operations of necromantic magic probably were initially quite shocked at the idea of women performing what they were convinced had to be powerful and terribly effective demonic maleficium. Yet Nider was able to provide his fellow churchmen, as well as lay authorities who followed a similar rationale, with a perfectly coherent explanation, one derived from their own basic conceptions of how this apparently widespread form of demonic sorcery operated. Witchcraft was not an exclusively female crime, but it certainly represented a more feminized form of demonic magic than did elite, learned necromancy. At the very least, witchcraft could be seen as more suited to women than to men, because the power of witches rested on their submission to the devil and their susceptibility to his seductions. Authorities did not need to operate within a system of such extreme misogyny as that which permeated the Malleus maleficarum in order to accept the notion that in these areas, women were naturally weaker than men.

I do not want to claim that theologians and other clerical authorities were solely, indeed even primarily, responsible for the number of women who went to the stake during the years of the great witch-hunts. As study after study has shown, for every trial and for every victim, there was a complex series of factors—local patterns of animosity, economic dislocations and stresses, and broadly accepted cultural conceptions—that struck the sparks and fanned the flames. But in the end, scholars of witchcraft and witch-hunting in Europe must take seriously the fact that at some level witches, men or women, were persecuted because they were believed to be witches, and witchcraft, as it was conceived in European society from learned elites on down to the common culture, was in some ways a crime particularly appropriate for women. Had clerical authorities clung to either of their earlier conceptions of magic—that is, that the sort of common sorcery often (although by no means always) performed by women was merely empty superstition and demonic delusion, or that the real, powerful demonic magic performed by necromancers was in some way essentially unsuited for women—the witch-hunts would surely not have happened, at least not in anything like the form that they finally took.
Feminization of Magic

Notes


4. Whereas in the early fourteenth century, men had comprised over 70% of those accused in trials for sorcery or diabolism, by the first half of the fifteenth century, women comprised roughly 60-70% of those accused in witch trials. I derive my figures from the “Calendar of Witch Trials” in Richard Kieckhefer, *European Witch Trials: Their Foundations in Popular and Learned Culture, 1300-1500* (Berkeley, Calif., 1976), pp. 106-47.


Michael D. Bailey


11. On Nider and his Formicarius, see Werner Tschacher, Der Formicarius des Johannes Nider von 1437/38: Studien zu den Anfängen der europäischen Hexenverfolgungen im Spätmittelalter (Aachen, 2000); Michael D. Bailey, Battling Demons: Witchcraft, Heresy, and Reform in the Late Middle Ages (University Park, Pa., 2003), esp. pp. 91-117. Extensive analysis and a partial edition of the material pertaining to witchcraft in the Formicarius have been provided by Catherine Chène in 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.), Cahiers lausannois d’histoire médiévale 26 (Lausanne, 1999), pp. 103-265. Some of this material is also available in Joseph Hansen, ed., Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Hexenwahns und der Hexenverfolgung im Mittelalter (1901; reprint Hildesheim, 1963), pp. 88-99. In citations from the Formicarius below, I provide book and chapter numbers, as well as page numbers from L’imaginaire du sabbat for material edited there. Otherwise, I have relied on, and provide page numbers from, the Douai 1602 edition of the Formicarius, edited by G. Colvener. For a full discussion of manuscripts and early printings of the Formicarius, see Tschacher, Der Formicarius, pp. 83-125.


13. See Levack, Witch-Hunt, pp. 27-50, on typical elements of the witch-stereotype during the early-modern period.


17. This “dichotomous” treatment of women was typical of medieval clerical authorities, and had been evident in religious literature since at least the twelfth century. See Caroline Walker Bynum, “‘…And Woman his Humanity’: Female Imagery in the Religious Writing of the Later Middle Ages,” in *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York, 1991), pp. 151-79, esp. at p. 152 and p. 156. R. Howard Bloch, *Medieval Misogyny and the Invention of Western Romantic Love* (Chicago, 1991), pp. 65-91, examines the roots of this treatment of women in earlier religious literature.


unum, insidiarum aliud. Mulier cum sola cogitat, mala cogitat”: Formicarius 5.8 (Douai, p. 390). Compare to Malleus maleficarum 1.6, fol. 21r. Although the reference from Cicero is ascribed by Nider to the second book of the Rhetorics, this citation is actually found in Rhetorics 4.16 (Cicero, Opera rhetorica, ed. Wilhelm Friedrich, vol. 1 [Leipzig, 1890], p. 80). The quote from what Nider refers to as the “proverbs” of Seneca, and what is ascribed in the Malleus maleficarum to the Tragedies of Seneca, is actually from the Sententiae of Publilius Syrus, frequently ascribed to Seneca in the Middle Ages (Sententiae 6, 153, and 376 respectively, as given in J. Wright Duff and Arnold M. Duff, eds. and trans., Minor Latin Poets, Loeb Classical Library [Cambridge, Mass., 1935], pp. 14, 34, and 62).


22. “Illud etiam non omittendum, quod quaedam sceleratae mulieres retro post Satanam conversae daemonum illusionibus et phantasmatisbus seductae, credunt se et profitentur nocturnis horis cum Diana paganorum dea et innumera multitudine mulierum equitare super quasdam bestias, et multa terrarum spatio intempestae noctis silentio pertransire, eiusque iussionibus velut dominae obedere, et certis noctibus ad eius servitium evocari”: Hansen, Quellen, p. 38.

23. “Quis vero tam stultus et hebes sit, qui haec omnia, quae in solo spiritu fiunt, etiam in corpore accidere arbitretur?” and “Quisquis ergo aliquid credit posse fieri, aut aliquam creaturam in melius aut in deterius immutari aut transformari in aliam speciem vel similitudinem, nisi ab ipso creatore, qui omnia fecit et per quem omnia facta sunt, procul dubio infidelis est”: Hansen, Quellen, p. 39.
24. “Credidisti unquam vel particeps fuisti illius perfidia, ut incantatores et qui se dicunt tempestatum immissores esse, possent per incantationem daemonum aut tempestates commovere aut mentes hominum mutare?” and “Credidisti aut particeps fuisti illius incredulitatis, ut aliqua femina sit, quae per quaedam maleficia et incantationes mentes hominum permutare possit, id est aut de hodium in amorem aut de amore in hodium, aut bona hominum fascinationibus suis subripere possit?”: Hansen, Quellen, p. 41.

25. “Credidisti ut aliqua femina sit, quae hoc facere possit, quod quaedam, a diabolo deceptae, se affirmant necessario et ex praecepto facere debere, id est cum daemonum turba in similitudinem mulierum transformatam, quam vulgaris stultitia hic strigam holdam vocat, certis noctibus equitare debere super quasdam bestias …”: Hansen, Quellen, p. 40.

26. “Nam innumera multitudo hac falsa opinione decepta haec vera esse credit, et credendo a recta fide deviat et in errorem paganorum revolvitur”: Hansen, Quellen, p. 39.


30. See Bailey, “From Sorcery to Witchcraft,” and earlier literature cited there.

31. “… daemonibus namque immolant, hos adorant, fabricant ac fabricari procurant imagines, annulum vel speculum vel philiam vel rem quaecunque aliam magice ad daemones inibi allegandos ab his petunt …”: from John’s decree Super illius specula; Hansen, Quellen, p. 5.


33. The full articles of condemnation are translated in Lynn Thorndike, University Records and Life in the Middle Ages, Columbia Records of Civilization—Sources and Studies 38 (New York, 1944), pp. 261-66; reprinted in Alan Kors


36. On necromancers’ claims to control and master demons, see Cohn, *Europe’s Inner Demons* (as above, n. 1), pp. 107-8.

37. Every early description of the sabbath from the 1430s treats this notion of submission to Satan in exchange for diabolical instruction in sorcery. See Bailey, “Witches’ Sabbath” (as above, n. 14).

38. See n. 4 above.