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The Early Modern Magical Continuum:

Magic's Ties to Religion and Folklore in Europe, ca. 1400-1700

In the last thirty years, much research on early modern magic and daily life has been centered on witchcraft accusations and prosecutions. There are good reasons for that emphasis. Magic and witchcraft were intertwined in early modern Christian Europe, and the classification of practices and practitioners often depended on the eye of the beholder. Yet the dominance of witchcraft studies can distort our understanding of common magic, which should be appreciated as part of a continuum of beliefs of which witchcraft was only one aspect.

Many excellent studies of early modern witchcraft have appeared in the last thirty years.¹ Ranging from analyses of demonological treatises to socio-cultural surveys and microhistories of single accusations, they have provided diverse and compelling perspectives on events and ideas that frequently puzzle or appall modern audiences. Yet there is a subtext in many of these accounts that is too often lost in descriptions of calculating neighbors, frustrated judges, and pathological accusers and defendants.² Witchcraft existed, as a practice and belief, because what is now termed magic was assumed to imbue creation and be accessible to individuals with special characteristics, tools, training, or bloodlines—and often a combination of the three. This magic was not a slight of hand nor a conjuror's trick; it was part of the innate substance of nature. Scholars thus do the study of religion, magic, and traditional piety a disservice when they try to parse distinctions between the three, and other forms of access to atypical forces, too finely. Because these forces were omnipresent—an aspect of and complement to immanence—magic, conjuring, witchcraft, and a wide variety of beliefs and practices involving the preter- and supernatural need to be seen as part of

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a continuum. This article sketches aspects of this continuum, working from less contentious practices to witchcraft itself, as an initial stage in revising our current treatment of premodern understanding of and interactions with the natural, preternatural, and supernatural.³

To Distinguish Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion

Two of the greatest challenges facing modern scholars of religion, magic, and witchcraft are the variable definitions and emotional resonances of those terms over time and between cultures. Traditionally "religion" has been used to designate supplicatory rituals and beliefs directed to a supernatural entity or force, "magic" to designate specific ritual practices that direct occult forces to achieve the magician's or client's goal, and "witch" or "witchcraft" as corrupt subsets of "magician" or "magic," respectively.⁴ Yet such a distinction oversimplifies their complex relationship. Religion, magic, and witchcraft overlapped in the ways in which they were discussed, conceptualized, and practiced, but aspects of all three could exist without the other. Clergy and holy figures, magicians, and witches were believed to have distinct abilities to access natural forces, aspects of God's creation that were innately intelligible to humans. Yet, for magical practitioners especially, the extent to which they could access preternatural powers, or the occult more generally was believed to vary depending on an individual's social class, educational level, and religious confession, to name just a few of the variables. The distinctions between coercive magic and supplicant religion found in some influential twentieth-century historical and anthropological interpretations would have been inconceivable to people in medieval and early modern Christian Europe.⁵

Recognizing this problem, contemporary research argues that definitions and perceptions of piety, witchcraft, and magic were formed through an ongoing exchange between clergy, judicial officials, and a general population that itself experienced them in myriad ways.⁶ This consensus draws upon historical, anthropological, and philosophical analysis. It accepts that "magic", and especially "sorcery", carry in modern European languages a hint of the illegitimate or deceptive that did not necessarily exist in premodern usage, but it acknowledges that attitudes towards magic and its effectiveness could depend on circumstances. Eschewing statements about the truth or falsity of preter- and supernatural access and influence, it stresses that magic and magicians were accepted components of early modern ideas and societies.

It focuses on the circulation of information about magic, the qualities that were used to judge the truth of such information, and the unconscious processes and assumptions that led to the classification of actions and signs as anomalous and magical.⁷ It accepts that such categories are by definition blurred and often actions seen as magical, beneficial, and even pious by one individual might be interpreted as maleficent witchcraft by another under different conditions. In doing so, it acknowledges conceptually a magical continuum.

Functioning in an Enchanted World

Fundamental to accepting the ability of certain humans to interact with, supplicate, and even control occult forces, was the conviction that the world was enchanted, imbued with divine immanence.⁸ Actions and attitudes that modern Europeans might label magic or magical—and presume to be based on ignorance or deception—were, thus, for early modern Europeans extraordinary manifestations of ordinary divinity. For laity and clergy, peasants and university scholars, magic was both the existence of these forces and the ability to access them, and it was not necessarily confined to select individuals. While a small group of intellectuals placed the analysis and practice of this magic at the heart of their ontology, for most Europeans magic was an effective tool because they accepted that they lived in a world where entities and forces beyond the human played an active and interventionist role. In an enchanted world, magic was one coin in a common cultural currency. Premodern Europeans accepted magic and placed it alongside, but separate from, for example, witchcraft.⁹

Throughout early modern European society a vast number of rituals were performed to channel extraordinary forces for human benefit. Practices involving herbs, amulets, and charms were quite common and generally regarded as legitimate, at least when used to promote legal and orthodox activities. A typical example of the religious components of herbal medicine involved the steps for the harvesting and preparation of leaves used to treat fever: "Before using these leaves, one is supposed to write certain Latin words on them to involve the power of the Holy Trinity, and then one is to say the Lord's Prayer and other prayers over them.... repeating this procedure before sunrise on three consecutive mornings."¹⁰ The integration of prayers and natural objects, the assumption of Latin's innate power (even if the "Latin" was not always correct), and the link to a specific planetary time were widely

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assumed means to access or enhance occult power, whether as part of more official clerical practice or of common magic. Their employment in such diverse rituals and by individuals of such diverse backgrounds suggests that Europeans saw them as parts of a continuum of magical potential.¹¹

The use and assumptions underlying charms make the braiding of beliefs about the occult clearer and demonstrate how ideas that were legitimate in one context could easily become suspect or illegitimate. Charms were a common and orthodox magical object that could also become a tool of witchcraft. (Image 1) They often used magic words, relying on powerful phrases from Scriptures or combinations of words and letters that were believed to be particularly potent to obtain cures for illness or to protect buildings and other shelters. They would be written onto some object—parchment, wax, stones—and



Image 1. 17th-century amulet against disease. Germany. Credit: Wellcome Collection. CC BY

placed near the person or thing that needed protection.¹² For example, bottles or small containers containing prayers and magical objects were buried under thresholds or built into fireplaces as ways of protecting the vulnerable openings of homes. Certain texts had specialized functions; for example, the opening of St. John's Gospel was considered powerful protection against demons.¹³ Some churches produced objects that contained holy words for the benefit of their faithful, but a charm could be effective without any clerical benediction. Given the appropriate ingredients, skills, and reputation, cunning-folk produced charms that were seen as, and appear to have been, equally effective, as they drew on the same beliefs and cognitive-physiological and psychosocial interdependencies.¹⁴

A rare surviving example of a complete amulet comes from late seventeenth- or early eighteenth-century Bavaria. (Image 2) Described as an amulet against plague, it is a mixture of Latin texts, magical words, holy images, and blessed or magical objects wrapped tightly together. It would have been carried in a pouch or pocket on the person, preferably a pouch

that touched the skin. The bottom paper in which it is wrapped contains at least six and possibly nine small woodcuts of saints, all of whom had either lived at the time of the Catholic Reformation (St. Ignatius Loyola or St. Francis Solanus) or were particularly venerated then (St. Anthony of Padua). The second layer of paper contains an exorcism as well as a prayer for the wearer's preservation "against all diabolical arts." As in other such texts, the symbol for the cross is placed in the text to signal that readers should cross themselves, and orthodox objects of prayer and veneration (Jesus, Mary, the apostles Peter and Paul) are placed alongside words commonly used in magical invocations (Terragrammaton (sic), Sabaoth, and Homousion). In the middle of the second layer is a smaller



Image 2. Amulet and charm to protect against plague, Bavaria, German, 1690-1710. Credit: Science Museum, London. CC BY

third document shaped much more like a packet. In it are four silver charms, seeds, stones, and pieces of hair, grasses, and other objects with words of power across the four corners. On top of this packet was placed a portrait of the Virgin Mary and infant Jesus. Assembling this amulet was painstaking. Aside from the work gathering the objects in the pouch, all the texts were printed, so the preparer had to cut the individual magical words out of other documents and fix them into place. The cover image of the Virgin was also stitched into place, presumably so that the packet's components would not fall out. It was carefully crafted and likely quite precious. The mixture of image and exorcism, pious texts with fragments of seeds, bone, and hair—the obviously orthodox with objects often seen as superstitious—should make modern readers wonder about the categories into which we want to categorize such magical practices.

The Legitimate and Illegitimate Occult

Other forms of common magic reinforce the perception that the line between legitimate and illegitimate magic frequently fluctuated. What modern scholars might describe as sympathetic magic was at the heart of many medical practices. Certainly sympathies and antipathies between the heavens and earth were fundamental to premodern medicine, but some medical practitioners might integrate prayer and holy objects into sympathetic practice in ways that bordered on the profane.¹⁵ Other practices were always considered illicit, even if their goal was essentially harmless or even beneficial. For example, early modern Catholic clergy feared parishioners would take the Eucharist but not swallow it. As the actual body of Christ, the consecrated wafer contained divine power, which made it an especially effective magical object in the eyes of some Christians. Yet for other Christians, especially the clergy, such treatment was horrifying because it assumed that the godhead could become a mere human tool. Such practices were officially sacrilegious, whether the host was part of something beneficial, such as a healing tonic, or for something criminal, such as a poison.

The use of sacraments or even sacramentals for what the clergy believed to be nefarious purposes brought common magic into the realm of superstition, which carried with it significant spiritual and ecclesiastical consequences.¹⁶ For premodern European authorities superstition was not foolishness or ignorance; superstition was false belief. Someone who was superstitious could thus easily be damned. As the improper use of holy object or as incorrect belief, superstition could readily encompass many magical activities and transform them into something fundamentally dangerous and even heretical. For example, in 1566 Elizabeth Mortlock was publicly shamed for integrating Catholic prayers—the Paternoster, Ave Maria, and Creed—into her healing practices on behalf of those whom fairies injured. Yet her judges felt that her superstitions and application of magic were more than just ignorant retention of Catholic ritual in Protestant England. In an example of how fine the line could be between licit and illicit magical purposes and practices, she was also condemned as a witch and publicly shamed.¹⁷

The case of Elizabeth Mortlock highlights the durability of a common culture of medieval and early modern magic that skirted the line of orthodoxy, even when there were no confessional divisions. Such practices often gained their problematic status because of the preconditions necessary for them to function and the involvement of supernatural entities in their production or

implementation. Even relatively innocuous objects like charms could depend on secrecy, prayers, blessings, magical movements, and occult symbols to function—conditions seen as potentially subversive. That such objects did not depend on clerical participation or sophisticated doctrinal analysis for their fabrication and efficacy made them even more suspect. Even magic used to combat witches could be dangerous if it was in the wrong hands or came from the wrong source. Chonrad Stoeckhlin, a sixteenth-century Swiss herdsman, claimed to be able to identify witches because of powers he received from the "phantoms of the night."¹⁸ In other words, an illicit source gave him licit powers, although Chonrad himself saw nothing illicit about his involvement with the phantoms. Moreover, Chonrad's community accepted that herdsmen might have such experiences and powers. The authorities did not, and Chonrad was executed as a witch in 1587.

For Europe's secular and ecclesiastical authorities, distinguishing degrees of legitimacy in this enchanted world was essential, but it was often difficult and contentious because some clergy, lawyers, and medical doctors were active practitioners or consumers of magic; even magic's detractors shared common cultures in which magic was assumed. After all, many were raised by mothers and nursemaids who told stories about humans transforming to animals; they turned to herbs such as mandrake for cures, relying on the similarities between its form and that of a man to enhance its curative properties; and they repeated preachers' condemnations about the ability of Egyptian days or singing requiem masses to speed human deaths.¹⁹ In Western Europe since at least the time of the Roman Republic, magic had been under the purview of secular courts, making judging magic's existence and application a judicial and administrative responsibility. In other words, officials had likely read legal treatises about, heard lawsuits concerning, and testified before courts about magic. Some medieval and early modern princely courts, such as that of Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II (1552-1612), also housed sorcerers, who had wide responsibilities ranging from divination to pursuit of the Philosopher's Stone. Even those individuals whose primary activities took place outside the university or courts, such as preachers, showed and reinforced the power and influence of this enchanted worldview in their stories. They told when and where the dead spoke, why charms repelled illness, and how prayers led to the discovery of criminals. Magic was an orthodox and expected, if not common, part of everyday life; it could be dangerous, but it was not inherently corrupt.²⁰

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Natural Magic

The practices of and assumptions underlying natural and judicial magic illustrate the scope of Europe's magical continuum and the opportunity for diverse understandings of the "enchanted world" it provided. Natural magic involved accessing powers and influences in creation that were normally imperceptible or only weakly so to ordinary humans. Natural magicians could take their (presumably) extraordinary knowledge of natural objects' occult properties and predict future events and individual characteristics, as found in horoscopes and formal prognostications. In doing so, they could move into more unorthodox territory. For example, astral magic was part of both natural and judicial magic. Magic involving the stars was fundamental to many aspects of medieval and early modern life: herbs were picked during certain planetary conjunctions to enhance their effectiveness, medical procedures were timed to take advantage of astral influences, and astrological signs were presumed to affect the human personality. Yet the extent to which astral magic was legitimate was debatable. Some elites patronized astronomers for their predictive and protective skills; for example, Pope Urban VIII (1623-44) brought the Italian writer and scientist Tomasso Campanella to Rome in 1626 so that he could be the papal astrologer and magician protecting the pope from malign planetary and earthly influences, a job description that seemingly asked him to perform judicial magic.²¹ Yet if the same individuals who turned to fortune-tellers to learn about their future returned to those same magicians for aid in preventing that which had been foretold, such actions became attempts to control divine providence. Authors on opposite sides of the confessional spectrum condemned such practices; both Ignatius Loyola and Calvin found them an affront to God. Others would denounce them as witchcraft. Because of magic's fundamental integration into the fabric of Creation and the fluctuating continuum on which its legitimacy was assessed, debates about practices such as astral magic would be almost impossible to resolve.²²

Spirits, the Dead, and the Living

Equally durable, despite the difficulty of integrating them into Christian doctrine, were a series of entities—demons, ghosts, fairies, dwarves, and more generic "spirits"—that appeared throughout early modern European folklore. They were also believed to be innately magical, whether through

their greater knowledge of nature (demons), experience with realms beyond those of the living (ghosts), or the ability to move between aspects of creation (various spiritual beings).²³ The invocation of such spirits was a key aspect of elite ritual magic and was integrated into many more mundane magical activities. For example, in both villages and towns throughout Europe, people found specialized practitioners who provided love potions, told fortunes, and helped find lost objects.²⁴ Whether they were called cunning-folk, wise men/women, or scryers, to give just some English-language terms, their interactions with spiritual entities distinguished them from and empowered them beyond ordinary human beings. Sicily's *donas de fuera* (ladies from outside) were one such group. The *donas* spoke with fairies and availed themselves of fairy knowledge because they were believed to have "sweet blood" which naturally attracted these beings.²⁵ Common divination often had practical motivations. For example, spirits often guided early modern treasure hunters to hidden caches—or at least so the hunters argued. Some hunters even saw their actions as part of a spiritual economy; they claimed that, by allowing the deceased to reveal ill-gotten gains and put these gains to good use, they were actually performing a meritorious deed that would benefit the spirit's soul and theirs. Not surprisingly, authorities were unconvinced.²⁶

The connection treasure hunters made, or at least tried to, between good works benefitting souls and their own traipsing through fields and invoking spirits is a telling example of how early modern acceptance of an enchanted world led to the placement of many activities and beliefs on a magical continuum. Authorities might challenge the very premises of one placement while they themselves performed a similar blurring in other areas. One example of such a process is the distinction made between saints and ghosts. Both were dead people who returned to the living in some way, whether through visions or full sensory experiences. Both helped dependents, demanded recognition, and punished unbelievers. Both were central to the "community of the living and the dead" that has been widely accepted as fundamental to medieval Christianity and that lasted far past Europe's sixteenth-century Reformation.²⁷ Yet ghosts were not saints: they had not experienced the beatific vision (although they might) nor did they have the ability to channel divine grace or represent God's judgment. Such distinctions, though, could seem more of degree rather than kind, and it was not difficult to imagine a ghost as a failed or even potential saint.²⁸

Witchcraft on the Magical Continuum

Viewing premodern European ideas about religion and magic as part of a continuum encompassing both theology and folklore may also help to understand the escalation of witch trials and the development of panics in late medieval and early modern Europe—as products of a long redefinition of the relationship between magic, its practitioners, and the supernatural. As previously shown, magical practitioners were never morally neutral and, as helpful as they might be at times, were always seen as potentially dangerous to their community. Yet by the fifteenth century, the threat such individuals could pose seems more frequently to have outweighed the benefits they offered, and by the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, growing fears of demonic activity enhanced the danger. In linking many forms of magic to spirits and presuming that spirits were likely demonic, both clergy and laity increasingly saw occultism and magical practice as evil and, therefore, as witchcraft. In the process, approximately 100,000 people would be prosecuted as witches, and approximately half of those individuals were executed.

Although accusers stressed the evil a witch had done to them and their neighbors, often for years if not decades, and may even have noted that such activities were diabolical or involved some other entity, it was up to legal and clerical officials and authors to work out the full implications of the demonic influence on magic and to redefine the lines between legitimate occultism, superstition, and witchcraft. Such redefinition began in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. At that time when clerics began writing treatises advocating expanded jurisdiction in cases involving magic and situating magical activities in a broader epistemology and ontology.²⁹ The *Formicarius* (ca. 1435-38) of Johannes Nider and *Malleus Maleficarum* (ca. 1486-87) of Heinrich Institoris are the most famous. These works combined information from inquisitorial proceedings against heretics with scholastic speculation about the nature of evil and humanity's susceptibility to it. The result varied widely in tone but created witches who were more than dangerous magical practitioners: they were sly soldiers of Satan.

After a brief hiatus, the composition of such texts resumed in the middle of the sixteenth century, completing the theoretical diabolization of the figure of the witch and of secret magic. By integrating witches into a demonic conspiracy to overturn Creation, magic lost much of its moral neutrality, at least among those who could read such tomes. Some clergy, jurists, and scholars contributed further to the diffusion of such connections when

they composed demonologies in the vernacular. Even influential authors who opposed the witch trials, such as the English official and gentleman Reginald Scot and the Dutch physician and civil servant Johann Weyer,

disseminated ideas about witchcraft and illicit magic when they summarized their opponents' arguments. When stories from these texts became best-selling "marvelous" or "astonishing" tales, a broader audience could see how magic and witchcraft were linked and likely dangerous, if not damnable.³⁰ (Image 3)

Yet it was in the law courts that the theories about magic, witches, and devils confronted actual experience, and as one of the leading authorities on early modern witchcraft has noted, "different jurisdictions chose to emphasize one dimension of the witch's crime to the exclusion of the other, and the judicial record reflects those differences."³¹ As such, legal cases often provide one of the best ways for scholars

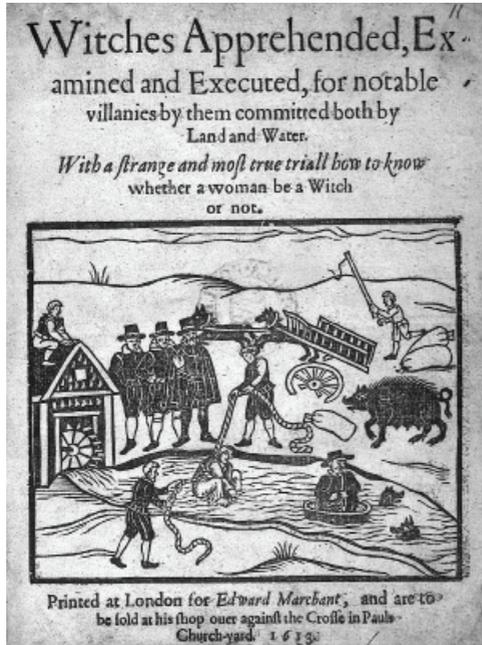


Image 3. Cover of *Witches Apprehended, Examined and Executed, for notable villanies by them committed both by Land and Water*. London, 1613. Credit: Wellcome Collection. CC BY

to see how assumptions about magic could be applied in unexpected and unorthodox ways. Some judges were convinced that all witches worked for the devil and, thus, their magic was diabolic, an affront to God; as such, it was the judges' duty to root out any and all suspected of being a witch. In the process objects that could be either magically neutral or have mild magical potential, such as feathers and needles, became tools of diabolic magic. Other judges were more circumspect, firmly believing in the demonic but much less convinced that what they were hearing and seeing was actual witchcraft and that devils were involved. Although in the sixteenth century many countries passed statutes banning the use of harmful magic, or reinforced existing

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statutes, in general it could be difficult to get a guilty verdict in a witchcraft trial, unless the region was experiencing a witch panic.³² By the second half of the seventeenth century revisions in legal procedures and standards of evidence made it even more difficult to prove that magic was used to cause a misfortune or that a witch had directed the magic. What made magic illicit, or at least suspect in the eyes of some secular and ecclesiastical authorities, was evolving and distancing itself from witchcraft.

As such cases emphasize, the distinction between legitimate magic and illegitimate witchcraft was often in the eye of the beholder, although few people in early modern Europe would challenge the statement that witches were corrupt. The same magical practice, such as the preparation of a love potion, could be seen as good or evil; for the person who obtained his desired love, the magical practitioner was skilled and moral, someone who fulfilled his side of a business arrangement. Even for the person who was coerced, some could argue that the magic made accepting love easy and happy, although, not surprisingly, such magic was more often seen as the corruption of free will. The personal aspect of the interrelationship between magic and witchcraft may even have been what allowed for the continuation of an estimated tens of thousands of magical practitioners at the same time that magic was being diabolized and witches subject to vicious prosecution. Magic gained its qualities, in part, through the reputation of its practitioner. If a practitioner was known as reliable and judicious, the magic was less likely to be seen as deceptive or dangerous. If cunning folk were honest, how could they or their works be in thrall to the Prince of Lies?

Magic in Creation

Given the vast historiography on the witch trials, it might seem odd to end this article with such a brief treatment of a topic that has added immeasurably to our understanding of early modern European gender relationships, community life, intellectual debates, and judicial processes, to name just a few areas. Yet pulling witchcraft back from its prominence in studies of "popular" culture and religion is precisely the point. Witchcraft, as well as a series of other beliefs and practices, needs to be seen as part of a magical continuum, and modern scholarship too often relies on a false binary of orthodox and unorthodox that even early modern European authorities had difficulty articulating, much less following. The relationship between premodern European religion, magic, and folklore reflected a holistic concept of nature

and humanity's place in it. Magic was not innately bad or good. It existed. It manifested throughout creation and in all kinds of human experience. As such, rather than parsing the magical and the natural, religion and folklore, scholars would do better analyzing how these were interwoven in medieval and early modern Europe and why tensions arose with this understanding of magic by the seventeenth century.

Notes

1. Among those that have most influenced this article are Jonathan Barry and Owen Davies, eds. *Palgrave Advances in Witchcraft Historiography* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Robin Briggs, *The Witches of Lorraine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Brian P. Levack, *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); H.C. Erik Midelfort, *Witchcraft, Madness, Society, and Religion in Early Modern Germany: A Ship of Fools* (London: Routledge, 2013); and Lyndal Roper, *The Witch in the Western Imagination* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012).
2. For excellent recent case studies of witch trials, see Thomas Robisheaux, *The Last Witch of Langenburg: Murder in a German Village* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2009); Ulinka Rublack, *The Astronomer and the Witch: Johannes Kepler's Fight for his Mother* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); and Kirsten Uszako, *Being Bewitched: A True Tale of Madness, Witchcraft, and Property Development Gone Wrong* (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2017).
3. While the natural realm encompassed all of God's creation, it was widely believed that some aspects of the natural were extraordinarily difficult, if not, impossible for most humans to fathom. These aspects belonged to the preternatural realm, which included knowledge that was normally beyond human understanding and capability; for example, angels and demons, not humans, functioned ordinarily in both the preternatural and natural realms. By definition, only God was supernatural, that is, above Creation/nature. Although such distinctions were unclear in or absent from many texts on magic, witchcraft, and the natural world, they occur in scholastic documents, demonologies, and studies of natural philosophy.
4. A detailed discussion of the vocabulary of magic and witchcraft in pre-modern Europe is in Owen Davies, *Popular Magic: Cunning-folk in English History* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2013), 1-13. For a summary of the detailed debates over the (false) magic-religion binary, see Brian P. Copenhaver, *Magic in Western Culture from Antiquity to the Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), chapter 1.
5. Richard Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University

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- Press, 1989), 14-16. Also see Malcolm Gaskill, "The Pursuit of Reality: Recent Research into the History of Witchcraft," *The Historical Journal* 51, no. 4 (2008): 1069-88.
6. David J. Collins, "Introduction" and Michael D. Bailey, "Diabolic Magic," in *The Cambridge History of Magic and Witchcraft in the West: From Antiquity to the Present*, edited by David J. Collins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 1-14 and 361-92.
 7. Ronald Hutton, "Anthropological and Historical Approaches to Witchcraft: Potential for a New Collaboration," *The Historical Journal* 47, no. 2 (2004), 428; Davies, *Popular Magic*, 110.
 8. Sigmund Mowinckel, *Religion und Kultus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1953) who coined the term "magical worldview"; Robin Briggs has carried this concept further for medieval and early modern Christian Europe and labeled it "superenchanted": see "Dangerous Spirits: Shapeshifting, Apparitions, and Fantasy in Lorraine Witchcraft Trials," in *Witches, Werewolves, and Wandering Spirits: Traditional Belief and Folklore in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Kathryn A. Edwards (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2002), 1-24. Although scholars debate the modernist implications in the terms "enchanted" and "disenchanted," much current research emphasizes this binary: see Euan Cameron, *Enchanted Europe: Superstition, Reason, and Religion in Europe, 1250-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) and Alexandra Walsham, "The Reformation and 'The Disenchantment of the World Reassessed,'" *The Historical Journal* 51 (2008): 497-528.
 9. For the integration of magic into various aspects of early modern European society: Edward Bever, *The Realities of Witchcraft and Popular Magic in Early Modern Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Kathryn A. Edwards, *Everyday Magic in Early Modern Europe* (Basingstoke: Ashgate, 2015); Catherine Rider, "Common Magic," in *The Cambridge History of Magic and Witchcraft*, 303-31; Stephen Wilson, *The Magical Universe: Everyday Ritual and Magic in Pre-Modern Europe* (London: Hambledon, 2000); and many books in the exemplary series "Palgrave Historical Studies in Witchcraft and Magic," edited by Jonathan Barry, Willem de Blécourt, and Owen Davies.
 10. Kieckhefer, *Magic*, 3. For information regarding medicine and its relationship to witchcraft, see Peter Elmer, "Medicine and Witchcraft," in *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft*, 561-74.
 11. For examples of such practices, see Davies, *Popular Magic*; Johannes Dillinger, *Magical Treasure Hunting in Europe and North America: A History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Lizanne Henderson, *Witchcraft and Folk Belief in the Age of Enlightenment* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 92-125; Timothy Walker, *Doctors, Folk Medicine, and the Inquisition: The Repression of Magical Healing in Portugal during the Enlightenment* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 211-92.
 12. Such practices were widespread throughout Europe and the Americas well into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: Davies, *Popular Magic*, 67-73; Jonathan Roper, *Charms and Charming in Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).
 13. Within Europe's small Muslim community, textual magic and charms were used in similar ways as in Europe's Christian territories—passages from the Qur'an were

placed in amulets as protection—and some evidence exists that, in the Iberian peninsula, Christians would see these Arabic charms as being especially effective and use them well after the association with Islam had faded: Kieckhefer, *Magic*, chapter 6; Liana Saif, *The Arabic Influences on Early Modern Occult Philosophy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 95-143 (on Ficino and Pico della Mirandola). Gunnar W. Knutsen emphasizes that practitioners of such magic could assume that their actions were orthodox: *Servants of Satan and Masters of Demons: The Spanish Inquisition's Trials for Superstition, Valencia and Barcelona, 1478-1700* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2009), 172-73.

14. Edward Bever has provided the most convincing integration of modern cognitive science into his analysis of early modern witchcraft, and I am greatly indebted to his work for my thoughts about a cognitive continuum integrated religion, magic, and folklore. For a full-length treatment, see his *The Realities of Witchcraft*; his main ideas are well summarized in Bever, "Popular Witch Beliefs and Magical Practices," in *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft*, 50-68.
15. For a detailed and insightful discussion of the relationship between early modern medicine and witchcraft trials, see Jonathan Seitz, *Witchcraft and Inquisition Inquisition in Early Modern Venice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 149-85.
16. For the debate over superstition in late medieval Europe, see Michael D. Bailey, *Fearful Spirits, Reasoned Follies: The Boundaries of Superstition in Late Medieval Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013); Michael D. Bailey, "The Disenchantment of Magic: Spells, Charms, and Superstition in Early European Witchcraft Literature," *American Historical Review* 111, no. 2 (2006): 383-404; Helen Parish and William Naphy, eds., *Religion and Superstition in Reformation Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), introduction. See the list of thirty "superstitions" from the *Indiculus superstitionum et paganiarum* (A Short List of Superstitions and Pagan Practices) of ca. 700 in Yitzhak Hen, "The Early Medieval West," in *The Cambridge History of Magic and Witchcraft*, 183-84.
17. Malcolm Gaskill, *Witchcraft: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 28-29.
18. Wolfgang Behringer, *Shaman of Oberstdorf: Chonrad Stoeckhlin and the Phantoms of the Night*, trans. H.C. Erik Midelfort (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998). Also see Carlo 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).
19. Jacobus, *Omne bonum*, British Library, MS Royal 6.E.VI, fols. 396v-397v; cf. MS Harley 275, fols. 149r-153r, as cited in Kieckhefer, *Magic*, 181.
20. See Paola Zambelli, *White Magic, Black Magic in the European Renaissance* (Boston: Brill, 2007).
21. Daniel P. Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic: From Ficino to Campanella* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 205-212.
22. Copenhaver, *Magic in Western Culture, part IV*; Collins, "Learned Magic," in *The Cambridge History of Magic and Witchcraft*, chapter 11.

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23. Michael Ostling, ed., *Fairies, Demons, and Nature Spirits: "Small Gods" at the Margins of Christendom* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); Emma Wilby, *Cunning Folk and Familiar Spirits: Shamanistic Visionary Experiences in Early Modern British Witchcraft and Magic* (Eastbourne: Sussex Academic Press, 2005), 46-58.
24. Davies, *Popular Magic*, provides a detailed discussion of English cunning-folk; Dillinger, *Magical Treasure Hunting*, does so for Germany.
25. The Inquisition mistrusted their claim to benevolence, and it tried a series of cases involving the donas in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: see Gustav Henningsen, "'The Ladies from Outside': An Archaic Pattern of the Witches' Sabbath," *Early Modern European Witchcraft: Centers and Peripheries*, edited by Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 191-215; and Henderson, *Witchcraft and Folk Belief*, 108, 122, see pages 284-85 for similar fairy magic in Scotland.
26. Dillinger, *Magical Treasure Hunting*, chapters 3 and 4.
27. The best recent treatment is Robert Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things? Saints and Worshippers from the Martyrs to the Reformation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015) although he does little with the Reformation; for a brief response regarding Reformation sanctity, see Euan Cameron, "Saints, Martyrs, and the Reformation: Reflections on Robert Bartlett's Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things?" *Church History* 85, no. 4 (December 2016): 803-9.
28. This argument is developed more fully in my "Distinguishing between Saints and Spirits. Or how to tell the difference between the Virgin Mary and Mary the Ghost," in *Cultural Transfer and Ritual in Reformation Europe: Essays in Honor of Susan C. Karant-Nunn*, edited by Victoria Christman and Marjorie Elizabeth Plummer (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming).
29. Scholars debate why the late fourteenth and fifteenth century saw the increased diabolization of magic and its relationship to common magical culture. Influential work in this area includes that by Bailey, *Fearful Spirits*; Cameron, *Enchanted Europe*; Martine Osterero, Agostino Paravinici Bagliani, and Kathrin Utz Tremp, eds., *L'imaginaire du sabbat: Edition critique des textes les plus anciens (c. 1430-1440)* (Lausanne: University of Lausanne Press, 1999); Laura Stokes, *The Demons of Urban Reform: Early European Witch Trials and Criminal Justice, 1430-1530* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); and Kathrin Utz Tremp, *Von der Häresie zur Hexerei: "Wirkliche" und imaginäre Sekten im Spätmittelalter* (Hannover: Hahnische Buchhandlung, 2008).
30. Gaskill, *Witchcraft*, 76.
31. Levack, *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft*, 4.
32. Gaskill, "Witchcraft and Evidence," 40.