

Magic and Magicians in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Time

Fundamentals of Medieval and Early Modern Culture



Edited by
Albrecht Classen and Marilyn Sandidge

Volume 20

Magic and Magicians in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Time



The Occult in Pre-Modern Sciences, Medicine,
Literature, Religion, and Astrology

Edited by
Albrecht Classen

DE GRUYTER

ISBN 978-3-11-055607-0
e-ISBN (PDF) 978-3-11-055772-5
e-ISBN (EPUB) 978-3-11-055652-0
ISSN 1864-3396

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A CIP catalog record for this book has been applied for at the Library of Congress.

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available on the Internet at <http://dnb.dnb.de>.

© 2017 Walter de Gruyter GmbH, Berlin/Boston
Printing and binding: CPI books GmbH, Leck
♻️ Printed on acid-free paper
Printed in Germany

www.degruyter.com

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Albrecht Classen

Magic in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age – Literature, Science, Religion, Philosophy, Music, and Art. An Introduction

Magic in German-Speaking Lands

In his elaborate ruminations on human nature and the role of folly, in his *Praise of Folly*, from 1509, first printed in 1511 and quickly copied, translated, imitated, and praised everywhere, the famous humanist Erasmus of Rotterdam also adds a curious list of national characteristics, referring to the French, the Italians, the Greeks, the Turks, the Jews, the Spaniards, and then to the Germans: “Spaniards yield to no one in military glory. The Germans pride themselves on their tallness and their knowledge of magic.”¹ Undoubtedly, he had the two famous German necromancers in mind, Johann Trithemius (1462–1516) and Henricus Cornelius Agrippa of Nettesheim (1486–1535), but perhaps also Johann Reuchlin (1455–1522) and others. They were, however, only avatars of a long tradition of similar occult scientists or practitioners, among whom we can count magicians, alchemists, sorcerers, druids, and, perhaps most significantly and most widely represented, astrologers, whether they practiced magic or not. Nevertheless, by the end of the fifteenth century, as a result of intensive debates among many Euro-

1 The English translation from 1876 is freely available online at <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/30201/30201-h/30201-h.htm> (last accessed on March 19, 2016); here I have drawn from Desiderius Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly*, trans. with an intro. and commentary by Clarence H. Miller (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1979), 70. For a little dated, but still solid introduction to Erasmus’s work and life, see Preserved Smith, *Erasmus: A Study of His Life, Ideals, and Place in History* (1923; New York: Frederick Ungar, 1962); see also the contributions to *Erasmus of Rotterdam: The Man and the Scholar, Proceedings of the Symposium Held at the Erasmus University, Rotterdam, 9–11 November 1986*, ed. Jan Sperna Weiland (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 1988); Christine Christ-von Wedel, *Erasmus von Rotterdam: ein Porträt*. Schwabe Reflexe, 45 (Basel: Schwabe, 2016). For Pico especially, see now Giulio Busi and Raphael Ebgi, *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola: mito, magia, qabbalah*. I millenni (Turin: Einaudi, 2014).

pean intellectuals, including Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494) and Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499), natural or white magic had become a topic of great relevance and was highly regarded as a most serious research approach, irrespective of what the Church might have thought about it. They could defend it well even against sharp critics such as the Benedictine Abbot Johannes Trithemius (1462–1516) because they refused to associate this white magic with demons, or the devil.²

To gain a taste of what this Introduction will explore and what this book is all about, we ought to consider at first how hard the Christian Church battled throughout the entire Middle Ages against all the various pagan cultures, and so was constantly confronted by the cult of magical practices as its self-chosen enemy.³ I would dare say that this struggle has not been decided even now in complete favor of the principle of monotheistic religion, the sciences, or rationality, considering the huge, perhaps even growing interest in magic and count-

2 Paola Zambelli, *White Magic, Black Magic in the European Renaissance*. Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions, CXXV (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), 1–10, et passim. See also the contributions to *Hermeticism and the Renaissance: Intellectual History and the Occult in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Ingrid Merkel and Allen G. Debus. Folger Institute Symposia (Washington, DC: The Folger Shakespeare Library; London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1988); John S. Mebane, *Renaissance Magic and the Return of the Golden Age: The Occult Tradition and Marlowe, Jonson, and Shakespeare* (Lincoln, NE, and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1989); Bernd-Christian Otto, *Magie: rezeptions- und diskursgeschichtliche Analysen von der Antike bis zur Neuzeit*. Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten, 57 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2011). For a useful text anthology, see *Les savoirs magiques et leur transmission de l'Antiquité à la Renaissance*. Textes réunis et éd. par Véronique Dasen et Jean-Michel Spieser. Micrologus' Library, 60 (Florence: Sismel. Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2014). See also M. E. van Matuschka, "Magie," *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, vol. VI: *Lukasbilder bis Plantagenêt* (Munich and Zurich: Artemis & Winkler, 1993), 82–88.

3 *Astrologers and Their Clients in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Wiebke Deimann and David Juste. Beihefte zum Archiv für Kulturgeschichte, 73 (Cologne, Weimar, and Vienna: Böhlau, 2015). For early medieval Irish druids, see, although written more for the general reader, Lewis Spence, *The Magic Arts in Celtic Britain* (London: Rider and Co., 1945); Paul R. Lonigan, *The Druids: Priests of the Ancient Celts*. Contributions to the Study of Religion, 45 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996); John Matthews, *The Druid Source Book* (London: Blandford Press, 1996); Miranda Aldhouse-Green, *Caesar's Druids: Story of an Ancient Priesthood* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010); see also the very old, yet still valuable monograph by Godfrey Higgins, *The Celtic Druids* (1829; New York: Cosimo, 2007); see also the contribution to the present volume by Aídeen M. O'Leary. For magic and superstition in Renaissance Spain, see Pedro Ciruelo, *Reprovação de las supersticiones y hechizerías (1538)*, ed., intro., and notes by José Luis Herrero Ingelmo. Serie humanidades, 22 (Salamanca: Diputación Provincial de Salamanca, 2003). For the efforts by the early medieval Christian Church on the European continent, see the contributions by Chiara Benati and Christoph Galle.

less ‘pagan’ practices and rituals, methods and concepts today.⁴ In essence, as we could confirm in light of a rich body of scholarship, the practice of magic in all of its manifestations has always been a significant factor in all cultures, whether legitimately or not, and this throughout history, irrespective of any kind of criticism or warning raised by a dominant church, worldly authority, or powerful individuals. World literature is filled with references to magicians, and also to the magician’s apprentice, to failed magic, and to astounding examples of magic. In other words, magic constitutes one of the central concerns of human imagination, but it was also a matter of very serious scientific investigations.⁵

What we cannot determine so easily is the true extent to which magic and all of its alternative manifestations were present or were operated by the secret or even publicly acknowledged practitioners. Moreover, what is the real difference between magic/superstition and religion?⁶ Here we could enter a long debate

4 Older research on this topic continues to exert considerable influence on modern culture; see, for instance, Siegmund von Schultze-Galléra, *Volkserotik und Pflanzenwelt: eine Darstellung alter wie moderner erotischer und sexueller Gebräuche, Vergleiche, Benennungen, Sprichwörter, Redewendungen, Rätsel, Volkslieder, erotischen Zaubers und Aberglaubens, sexueller Heilkunde, die sich auf Pflanzen beziehen* (1910; Darmstadt: Bläschke, 1979); Frater Widar, *Magie und Praxis des Hexentums: moderner Schamanismus in der westlichen Welt* (Benediktbeuern: Huter, 1992); Christopher Dell, *The Occult, Witchcraft & Magic: An Illustrated History* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2016). See also the contributions to *Sabbat und Sabbatobservanz in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Anselm Schubert. Schriften des Vereins für Reformationgeschichte, 217 (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2016). As to the notion of disenchantment and then also the re-enchantment since the seventeenth century, see the contribution to this volume by Allison P. Coudert.

5 Lynn Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science during the First Thirteen Centuries of Our Era* (London: Macmillan, 1923). This seminal multi-volume study has been reprinted many times. Though written for a more general readership, Susan Greenwood’s and Raje Airey’s *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Witchcraft & Practical Magic* (2006; London: Lorenz Books, 2007) offers an impressively illustrated treatment of the wide-ranging kaleidoscope of aspects pertaining to all human efforts to reach out to other forces (the *numen*) and to utilize those for personal uses. One could criticize the authors for throwing everything together into one category, magic, even though they would represent many, vastly different strategies to achieve healing, to gain power, to fight against an enemy, or to divine the future. See now *The Sorcerer’s Apprentice: An Anthology of Magical Tales*, ed. Jack Zipes (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017). Zipes skips, however, the entire Middle Ages and the early modern age, leaping from Lucian of Samosata (ca. 170 C.E.) to François Pétis de la Croix (1707).

6 See the contribution to this volume by Albrecht Classen. As to the ongoing struggle between Christianity and paganism, see now Nancy Mandeville Caciola, *Afterlives: The Return of the Dead in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY, and London: Cornell University Press, 2016), 14–16. This issue, what came first, magic or religion, or whether both phenomena have always existed side by side, has been debated for a very long time by scholars of religion, anthropology, and ethnology. See,

about prehistoric and ‘primitive’ cultures and their religious or animistic beliefs, but this would go far beyond the scope of the present volume, though in essence the same questions as to the principles underlying magic and religion continued to be of relevance throughout the Middle Ages and until today.

In learned circles already long before the time of Humanism, there appear to have been many more practitioners of the magical, and prophesying art, as we can learn in the long diatribe by Death against the Plowman in Johannes von Tepl’s famous debate poem *The Plowman* (ca. 1401), written by a German poet living in Bohemia. While the Plowman had vehemently riled against Death for having taking his innocent and beloved wife, mother of their children, Death simply dismisses all those complaints and at the end, in chapter twenty-four, even ridicules human life and the human body as worth nothing at all, claiming absolute power over all existence. Death is rasping with satire, if not even sarcasm, being entirely assured of his supremacy.⁷

However, the Plowman, by that time having calmed down in his emotions and having sharpened his rhetorical skills, responds with a glorious defense of the human body, describing it as God’s greatest creation, which many scholars have identified as the first major stirring of the Renaissance in German literature.⁸ Yet, Death then turns the debate upside down; he who had before insisted on logic, rationality, and reason as the basic principles of their exchange, now sees himself in the defense and rejects it all, full of wrath about his opponent’s

for instance, Karl Beth, *Religion und Magie bei den Naturvölkern: Ein religionsgeschichtlicher Beitrag zur Frage nach den Anfängen der Religion* (Leipzig and Berlin: B. G. Teubner, 1914). He strongly argues in favor of distinguishing clearly between magic and religion: “In der Religion handelt es sich immer um Erhebung der Seele und zugleich um demütige Beugung unter den höheren Willen, in der Magie hingegen um Herabzerrung der Seele und zugleich um egoistische Arroganz” (64; In religion we observe the elevation of the soul and at the same time the humble submission under a higher will; in magic the soul is pulled own and there is an egoistical arrogance).

⁷ Ernst Schwarz, *Der Ackermann aus Böhmen des Johannes von Tepl und seine Zeit*. Wege der Forschung, 143 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1968); Gerhard Hahn, *Der Ackermann aus Böhmen des Johannes von Tepl*. Erträge der Forschung, 215 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1984); see now also Albrecht Dröse, *Die Poetik des Widerstreits: Konflikt und Transformation der Diskurse im ‘Ackermann’ des Johannes von Tepl*. Studien zur historischen Poetik, 10 (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2013).

⁸ See, for instance, Hildegunde Gehrke, *Die Begriffe “Mittelalter”, “Humanismus” und “Renaissance” in den Interpretationen des “Ackermann aus Böhmen”*. Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik, 708 (Göppingen: Kümmerle, 2004); and the contributions to *Die Bedeutung der Rezeptionsliteratur für Bildung und Kultur der Frühen Neuzeit (1400–1750): Beiträge zur ersten Arbeitstagung in Eisenstadt (März 2011)*, ed. Hans-Gert Roloff and Alfred Noe. Jahrbuch für Internationale Germanistik, 109 (Bern: Peter Lang, 2012).

apparent triumph in their argument and thus being afraid of losing his authority over human life:

Grammar, the foundation of all eloquent speech, will not help him with her precise and finely-turned locutions. Rhetoric, the blossoming ground of honeyed words, will not help him with her ornate and richly-coloured expressions. Logic, the insightful demarcator of truth and untruth will not help him with her sly concealment, with the crooked ways that mislead truth. Geometry, the ascertainer, assessor, and measurer of the Earth, will not help him with her unerring measurement, or with her accurate weighing. Arithmetic, skilled marshal of numbers, will not help him with counting and calculations, or with her dexterous digits. Astronomy, Master of the Heavenly Bodies, will not help him with her astral power, the influence of the planets. Music, the organising handmaid of song, will not help him with her sweet melodies, with her harmonious voices. Philosophy, field of wisdom, tilled and sown, and grown to perfection, in knowledge of Nature and God and in the production of ethical living; Physic, with her draughts that help many; Geomancy, skilful respondent to all kinds of questions posed on Earth; Hydromancy, unveiler of the future by dint of the workings of water; Astrology, interpreter of sublunar events through the course of the Heavens; Chiromancy, smart soothsayer from the hand and the lines of the palm; Necromancy, mighty compeller of spirits through the sacrifice of dead men's fingers and secret signs; the musical art, with her select prayers and her strong incantations; the augur, versed in the language of birds and so the true prophet of future events; the haruspex, indicating the future in the smoke of the altar-victim; Paedomancy, conjuror with children's intestines, and ornithomancy, with grouse's guts; the jurist, the Christian without conscience: will not help him by twisting right and wrong and passing crooked judgements. These arts, and all those related, avail nought: every man must be felled by Us, scoured in Our fulling-tub and cleaned in Our rolling-press. Take my word, you riotous ploughhand!⁹

9 Johannes de Tepla, *Epistola cum Libello ackermann und Das büchlein ackermann: nach der Freiburger Hs. 163 und nach der Stuttgarter Hs. HB X 23*, ed. and trans. by Karl Bertau (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1994). Here, however, quoted from the online English translation at <http://www.michaelhaldane.com/HusbandmanandDeath>; see also the older, yet still very useful edition Johannes von Tepl, *Der ackermann*, ed. Willy Krogmann. Deutsche Klassiker des Mittelalters. Neue Folge, 1 (Wiesbaden: F. A. Brockhaus, 1964); for an alternative English translation, see *Death and the Ploughman: A Confrontation Between Man and Death, Resolved by the Judgement of God*, trans. Rosalind Hibbins (Oxford: Lindsay Ross, 2000). Cf. Albrecht Classen, "Der Ackermann aus Böhmen – ein literarisches Zeugnis aus einer Schwellenzeit: Mittelalterliches Streitgespräch oder Dokument des neuzeitlichen Bewußtseins?," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 110.3 (1991): 348–73; for a comprehensive approach, see Christian Kiening, *Schwierige Modernität: Der 'Ackermann' des Johannes von Tepl und die Ambiguität historischen Wandels*. Münchener Texte und Untersuchungen zur deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters, 113 (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1998); Classen, "Death Rituals and Manhood in the Middle High German Poems *The Lament*, Johannes von Tepl's *The Plowman*, and Heinrich Wittenwiler's *Ring*," *Grief and Gender: 700–1700*. Ed. by Jennifer C. Vaught (New York: Palgrave, 2003), 33–47; id., "Irony in Medieval and Early Modern German Literature (Nibelungenlied, Mauritius von Craün, Johannes von Tepl's Ackermann): The Encounter of the Menschlich-Allzumenschlich in a Medieval Context," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 113.2 (2014): 184–205.

Death is right, of course, nothing and no one can go by him unscathed, but for his argument he would not need to dismiss all those arts in order to confirm his supreme position. Nevertheless, listing them all, combining the standard seven liberal arts with the wide range of necromantic arts, clearly indicates Death's desperate attempt at that moment to maintain the upper hand and not to lose the debate. He does not really mean to reject all sciences, since he has no reason to malign necromancy and related divinatory arts specifically, but he wants to control the exchange with the Plowman and is suddenly afraid that the latter might have a better argument than Death.

Intriguingly, here we face a perfect example clearly illustrating the widespread knowledge and understanding of all kinds of magical arts, and probably also their acceptance under certain circumstance, both black magic and natural, or white magic during the Middle Ages and far beyond, as the contributions to the present volume will confirm from many different perspectives. Johannes's *Plowman* debate poem is only a very late example of a long-term discourse on the meaning of magic since antiquity. So, let us take a look backwards and try to grasp the true dimension of magic as a learned art and instrument in the hands of both the educated and highly respected and more marginal figures of society.

The subsequent reflections do not pretend to chart completely new territory, as the rich body of relevant research literature demonstrates. Instead, the purpose is to outline the major threads throughout the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age demarcating the presence of, debate about, fear of, and interest in magic and the related occult arts as a basis for the individual contributions to this volume, where, as we hope, unique and innovative perspectives toward magic in the pre-modern world will come through. As we will recognize, the discourse on magic ranged far and wide from antiquity to the eighteenth century, if not until today, and can thus be identified as one of the fundamental aspects of medieval and early modern culture, even though, or perhaps just because the Catholic Church, later the Protestant Church battled so vehemently against magic wherever it raised its head.

After all, magic represents an alternative approach to scientific epistemology and claims a different perspective regarding the relationship between people and the world of spirits, non-material powers, and non-physical energy which the magical practitioner attempts to utilize in a productive or a deconstructive manner. Many times the difference between religion and magic seems to be only one in degree, since both the ultimate goal and the method to achieve it

often appear to be very parallel, if not competing with each other.¹⁰ But it seems to help, following Emile Durkheim, to identify a church with a close-knit community, whereas magic tends to be practiced and performed by an individual, even if s/he carries out the magical task for a community.¹¹ Finally, magic could be differentiated from ‘science’ in that it relies on ‘sympathetic relations’ versus a world view based on cause and effect (Lucien Lévy-Bruhl).¹² Wouter J. Hanegraaff now alerts us: “Although there is no such thing as a history of magic, then, it is possible to write a history of the discourse on magic. The only solid foundation for such a history is the detailed analysis of terms and concepts as used in their own context, and a precise investigation of their continuous transformations under the impact of changing historical circumstances.”¹³

Moreover, even though only an off-shoot, alchemy also has to be taken into consideration because the practitioner operated with the assumption that a charismatic, sympathetic relationship between the material and the spirit could trigger the desired transformation.¹⁴

The Phenomenology of Magic from Antiquity to the Early Modern Age

In essence, magic, as it was developed already in the earliest times and as it is still being practiced until today, is predicated on the notion of sympathetic relationships between macrocosm and microcosm, which derives its origin from

10 H. S. Versnel, “Some Reflections on the Relation Magic-Religion,” *Numen* 38.2 (1991): 177–97.

11 Emile Durkheim, *Les formes élémentaire de la vie religieuse: Le système totémique en Australie*. 3rd ed. (1912; Paris: Quadrige/Presses Universitaires de France, 1994), 61. See also the reflections on these issue by Allison P. Coudert in her contribution to this volume.

12 S. A. Mousalimas, “The Concept of Participatio in Levy Bruhl’s ‘Primitive Mentality’,” *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford* 21.1 (1990): 33–46; Wouter J. Hanegraaff, “How Magic Survived the Disenchantment of the World” *Religion* 33.4 (2003): 357–80; here 371–74; id., “Magic,” *The Occult World*, ed. Christopher Partridge. The Routledge Worlds (London and New York: Routledge, 2015), 393–404.

13 Hanegraaff, “How Magic Survived the Disenchantment of the World” (see note 12), 403.

14 Pearl Kibre, *Studies in Medieval Science: Alchemy, Astrology, Mathematics and Medicine*. History Series, 19 (London: Hambledon Press, 1984); *The Alchemy Reader: From Hermes Trismegistus to Isaac Newton*, ed. Stanton J. Linden (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Lawrence M. Principe, *The Secrets of Alchemy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013); Sébastien Moureau, *Le De anima alchimique du pseudo-Avicenne*. 2 vols. Micrologus’ Library, 76 (Florence: Sismel. Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2016).

Stoic philosophy.¹⁵ With the help of magic, charms, or prayers, for instance, the human being has always tried to reach out to divine or infernal powers in order to create miracles, or magic, here on earth.¹⁶ In antiquity magic was regarded with a relative neutrality, as long as it was not targeting opponents with evil intent, which was, of course, a deep source of irritation for Christians from early on. Nevertheless, in the world of the Christian Church, at least since the twelfth century, magic was consistently divided into *magia daemoniaca* (*magia illicita*) and *magia naturalis* (*magia licita*). The latter form of magic aims for an empowerment by means of drawing from natural forces and, in the widest context, can be identified as the foundation of sciences, even in modern terms.

Karl Beth succinctly defines magic as “die einfache und unverhüllte Objektivierung des Wunsches in der menschlichen Vorstellung, und der faktische Erfolg oder die reale Objektivierung ist nichts anderes als die zufällige Bestätigung jener idealen Objektivierung” (the simple and unveiled objectification of the wish in human imagination, and the factual success or the real objectification is nothing other but the random confirmation of that ideal objectification).¹⁷ This finds its realization until today in the rich tradition of fairy tales, where impossible things happen, where individuals can move into other times and spaces without any effort, and where irrational powers come to play, both beneficial and evil ones. Little wonder that the famous series of novels for young readers, *Harry Potter*, has achieved such a global acclaim because it is simply predicated on those fundamental dichotomic elements.¹⁸

It would hence be erroneous, as Nurit Golan now illuminates, to divorce the medieval Church entirely from magic, or related fields, since it was fully ac-

15 John B. Robinson, *Macrocosm and Microcosm: An Exploration of the Perceived Alchemical Environment*. Environmental Perception Research, Working Paper, 1 (Toronto: Institute for Environmental Studies, University of Toronto, 1978); Evelyn Edson and Emilie Savage-Smith, *Medieval Views of the Cosmos* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, 2004).

16 This is now comprehensively discussed by Chiara Benati in her contribution to this volume. See also the study by Christoph Galle, approaching this issue from the history of the early medieval Church.

17 Karl Beth, *Religion und Magie bei den Naturvölkern* (see note 6), 121. This seminal study was reprinted only recently (Graz: Edition Geheimes Wissen, 2014). We have to take this perspective with a grain of salt, of course, since he still viewed magic through a ‘colonialist’ lens, giving rationality and also the Christian religion absolute primacy. See now the contribution to the present volume by Thomas Willard.

18 See, for instance, *Reading Harry Potter: Critical Essays*, ed. Giselle Liza Anatol (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003); Marion Rana, *Creating Magical Worlds: Otherness and Othering in Harry Potter* (Frankfurt a. M., Berlin, et al.: Peter Lang, 2009); Tison Pugh and Angela Jane Weisl, *Medievalisms: Making the Past in the Present* (London: Routledge, 2013).

knowledgeed that God had every power to create whatever He wanted, which powerfully explains the presence of such a magnitude of gargoyles, corbels, and sculptures reflecting all kinds of hybrid creatures.¹⁹ According to Christa Tuczay, we can define magic, as understood in antiquity and the early Middle Ages, “as a system working purposefully and automatically, operating via charms and conjurations and affecting application of sympathetic relations between the mundane and the celestial worlds: gods, demons, stars, animals, plants, stones, limbs, etc.”²⁰ While in antiquity magic was regarded as a perhaps uncanny, but certainly powerful instrument to appeal to higher powers,²¹ the Christians quickly build a strong wall against anything that smacked like satanic and infernal, since they could not control magic at all, or basically failed in substituting their prayers for the heathen charms, irrespective of the strong similarities in wording and ritual. Their great concern was very understandable because they tried to establish their own church and faith within a world deeply determined by older, so-called pagan – certainly an imperialist term – religions and cultures, as the vast number of charms, amulets, and talismans from the early and high Middle Ages confirms and as the whole spectrum of theological writings since late antiquity underscores.²²

19 See Nurit Golan’s contribution to the present volume.

20 Christa Agnes Tuczay, “Magic and Divination,” *Handbook of Medieval Culture: Fundamental Aspects and Conditions of the European Middle Ages*, ed. Albrecht Classen. Vol. 2 (Berlin and Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2015), 937–53; here 938.

21 See, for instance, Georg Luck, *Magie und andere Geheimlehren in der Antike: mit 112 neu übersetzten und einzeln kommentierten Quellentexten*. Kröners Taschenausgabe, 489 (Stuttgart: Kröner, 1990); Fritz Graf, *Gottesnähe und Schadenzauber: die Magie in der griechisch-römischen Antike*. C. H. Beck Kulturwissenschaft (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1996); Daniel Ogden, *Magic, Witchcraft, and Ghosts in the Greek and Roman Worlds: A Sourcebook* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Brian P. Copenhaver, *Magic in Western Culture: From Antiquity to the Enlightenment* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015) – which is a rather popular anthology and often more confusing than illuminating; Bernd-Christian Otto, *Magie: Rezeptions- und diskursgeschichtliche Analysen von der Antike bis zur Neuzeit* (Berlin and Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2016); Marco Frenschkowski, *Magie im antiken Christentum: eine Studie zur alten Kirche und ihrem Umfeld*. Standorte in Antike und Christentum, 7 (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 2016). See also the contributions to *Der antike Mensch im Spannungsfeld zwischen Ritual und Magie: 1. Grazer Symposium zur indogermanischen Altertumskunde Graz, 14.–15. November 2013*, ed. Christian Zinko and Michaela Zinko, together with Berenike Kainz. Grazer vergleichende Arbeiten, 28 (Graz: Leykam, 2015). For an excellent survey, see now Michael D. Bailey, *Magic and Superstition in Europe: A Concise History from Antiquity to the Present*. Critical Issues in History (Lanham, Boulder, et al.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 9–42.

22 Albrecht Classen, “Old High German Missionary Activities by Means of *Zaubersprüche*—Charms: Anthropological-Religious Universals in the Early Middle Ages,” *Kościół w dobie chrystianizacji (Churches in the Era of Christianization)*, ed. Marian Rębkowski. Wolińskie Spotkania

Following Marcel Mauss, we might identify magic as opposed to religion as a ritual and spiritual practice carried out in secret, in far-away places: “Isolation and secrecy are two almost perfect signs of the intimate character of a magical rite. They are always features of a person or persons working in a private capacity; both the act and the actor are shrouded in mystery.”²³ Magic is carried out by an individual, not by representatives of an organization. Mauss attributes specific professional groups with magical powers, or at least with the potential to acquire those, that is, medical doctors, barbers, blacksmiths, shepherds, actors, and grave diggers (29). Individuals enjoying particular charisma and/or authority tend to be magicians or are recognized as such. While physicians and scientists have to labor long and hard to achieve their goals, if they ever achieve them, magicians are said to command miraculous powers to produce quick and totally surprising results: “He has the gift of conjuring up more things than any ordinary mortals can dream of. His words, his gestures, his glances, even his thoughts are forces in themselves. His own person emanates influences before which nature and men, spirits and gods must give way” (33).

Traditionally, many scholars identified magic with ‘primitive’ cultures, ancient cultures, barbarian cultures, that is, in short, with non-Christian cultures within the medieval European paradigm, and also elsewhere on the globe. What magic really means in sociological, religious, or philosophical terms, has been discussed for decades by major scholars such as James George Frazer, Nathan Söderblom, Sigmund Mowinckel, and Adolf Ellegard Jensen.²⁴ Even though all of them explored the differences between religion and magic, or their similarities, none of their positions have met full agreements across the wider field of scholarship, involving anthropology, religion, sociology, science, and literary scholarship. Carl Heinz Ratschow even goes so far as to claim that magic has nothing to do with religion in the narrow sense of the word and in-

Mediewistyczne III (Szczecin/Stettin: Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology, Department of Archaeology, 2016), 77–88. See also the contribution by Chiara Benati to the present volume. For the history of paganism, see John Marenbom, *Pagans and Philosophers: The Problem of Paganism from Augustine to Leibniz* (Princeton, NJ, and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2015; paperback 2017).

23 Marcel Mauss, *A General Theory of Magic*, trans. from the French by Robert Brain (1950; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), 23. For an extensive discussion of Mauss, see Daniel Dubuisson, *Religion and Magic in Western Culture*. Supplements to Method & Theory in the Study of Religion, 6 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 6–13.

24 Carl Heinz Ratschow, “Magie: Religionsgeschichtlich,” *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, ed. Gerhard Müller. Vol XXI (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1991), 686–91; here 687.

stead aims for a recreation of the individual with his/her own self within a holistic universe.²⁵

Magic creates a merging of self and world in a unique fashion, free from all rational operations, in the firm belief that there is another entity in this world: “... der Ritus gewährt Leben, indem er den Grund seiner Möglichkeiten im Fest – Opferfest oder Tanzfest – darstellt” (691; the rite grants life by way of representing its possibilities in the festival, either a sacrificial festival, or a dance festival). However, magic reaches out as much to other powers as do religious practices, and is as much determined by the firm conviction that the individual can, through proper rituals and use of charms, amulets, talismans, etc., achieve an effect by appealing to a *numen*, which amounts to a miracle. Practicing magic consists of the effort to transfer power (“Kraftübertragung”) in another dimension to this world and to make the impossible possible. In other words, we can claim that, anthropologically speaking, the differences between a magician and a saint are rather minor, even though the representatives of the Church would vehemently protest against such an assumption. The wealth of medieval relics indicates that even Christians embraced, in essence, a notion of magic since those lifeless, inanimate objects were supposed to connect the supplicant with the saint, who in turn was expected to intervene in human life according to the faithful’s wishes.²⁶

Magical figures or sculptures tend to share an intimate similarity with the *numen*, which makes the sympathetic relationship possible and thus can launch the magical process (imitative magic). The magician establishes an analogy between microcosm and macrocosm, as anthropologists have observed all over the world (shamans, healers, kahunas, etc.).²⁷ Little wonder that hence all establish-

²⁵ Ratschow, “Magie” (see note 24), 690.

²⁶ A. Bertholet and C.-M. Edsman, “Magie,” *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Handwörterbuch für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft*. 3rd, completely rev. ed. by Kurt Galling. Vol. 4 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1960), 595–601.

²⁷ For a very useful survey article especially for covering the history of research, see <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shamanism> (last accessed on Feb. 3, 2017). See also Rebecca L. Stein and Philip L. Stein, *The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft*. 3rd ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2011); *From Shaman to Scientist: Essays on Humanity’s Search for Spirits*, ed. James Houran (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2004). For a study of medieval Irish shamanism, see Alexandra Bergholm, “Academic and Neopagan Interpretations of Shamanism in *Buile Suibhne*: A Comparative Approach,” *Essays in Honour of Anders Ahlqvist. Studia Celtica Fennica* 2 (2005): 30–46; see also Feargal Ó Béarra, “*Buile Shuibhne*: vox insanitae from Medieval Ireland,” *Mental Health, Spirituality, and Religion in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age*, ed. Albrecht Classen. *Fundamentals of Medieval and Early Modern Culture*, 15 (Berlin and Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2014), 242–89.

ed and other religions have commonly adapted ancient cultural rituals, charms, and practices, resulting into a fascinating, today often (deliberately) ignored amalgamation process. After all, as A. Berthelet and C.-M. Edsman have observed already a long time ago,

Im Hintergrund aller M[agie] steht ein Irrationales, für das die Erklärung allein in menschlicher Erfahrung und in menschlichem Erlebnis zu suchen sein dürfte. Es ist das Erlebnis der geheimnisvollen Macht, das im Menschen, zunächst vielleicht mehr unbewußt als bewußt, entsprechende Reaktions- und Ausdrucksbewegungen auslöst, und je mehr Wille und Wunsch, mit der Zeit auch verständiges Überlegen, für diese Bewegungen richtungsgebend werden, desto mehr sieht man M[agie] wachsen und sich entwickeln.²⁸

[In the background of magic there is an irrational element, which can be explained only through human experience and what humans have witnessed. It is the realization of the mysterious power, which triggers, perhaps at first more unconsciously than consciously, corresponding reactions and expressions. The more there is a will and a desire, and in time also a rational reflection determining this process, the more one witnesses the growth and development of magic.]

We know of magic and magical practices already in ancient times, and then, of course, from throughout the Middle Ages and beyond. The magical tradition emerged in the Middle Ages at first in Spain, especially because there it was fostered and promoted by King Alfons of Castile when he commissioned the translation of the book *Picatrix* from Arabic to Latin (see also below) and thereby literally invited those scholars into his courtly world who were working in the field of necromancy.²⁹ Most magicians were employed to create divinations for their lords, who were apparently desperately concerned with the outcome of their lives and tried everything in their power to modify their destiny before their own death. Nevertheless, magic was also utilized in a wide range of other contexts and enjoyed high popularity both amongst the upper and the lower social classes, and this certainly already since the early Middle Ages and before that time, if we think, for instance, of Pliny's (23–79) *Natural History* (*Historia naturale*).

The negative opinion about magic, as formulated by St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo (354–430), deeply influenced the entire Middle Ages, especially because magic could be characterized as almost polytheistic, in contrast to the Christian

²⁸ A. Berthelet and C.-M. Edsman, "Magie" (see note 26), 599.

²⁹ Dieter Harmening, "Magie: Historisch," *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, ed. Gerhard Müller, vol. XXI (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1991), 695–701; Ana González Sánchez, *Alfonso X el mago*. Colección de estudios, 167 (Madrid: UAM Ed., 2015). See also the contribution to this volume by Veronica Menaldi.

concept of monotheism. But the debate about the true meaning of magic, about the difference between ‘white’ and ‘black’ magic, raged throughout the entire pre-modern world and continued also far into the Renaissance, if we think of such intellectuals as John of Salisbury, Nicole d’Oresme, Roger Bacon, Albertus Magnus, Johannes Trithemius, and Marsilio Ficino.³⁰ Dante Alighieri, for instance, located the famous scholar and magician Michael Scot or Scotus (1175–ca. 1232), who was closely associated with the court of Emperor Frederick II in Palermo, in the fourth bolgia in the Eighth Circle of Hell, or *Inferno*, casting him as a liar who knew “[t]he magic game and its false signs to limn” (Canto XX).³¹

Even though the early medieval Christian missionaries tried hard to eliminate those vestiges of the popular and oral cultures, condemning them regularly as magic and necromantic, the stupendous presence of charms in Old English, Old High German, in a variety of Scandinavian languages, but also in some Romance languages, recorded, surprisingly, in liturgical texts, theological works, but then also on a variety of other media (e.g., carvings), clearly demonstrate that there was not such an impenetrable wall between both worlds. People commonly sought out magicians or sorcerers/sorceresses for medical help, especially in desperate cases, and the Christian priests and missionaries could hardly afford to fight against them with their minimal means and particularly their own lack of medical knowledge.³²

30 Karen Louise Jolly, “Magic,” *Medieval Folklore: An Encyclopedia of Myths, Legends, Tales, Beliefs, and Customs*, ed. Carl Lindahl, John McNamara, and John Lindow (Santa Barbara, CA, Denver, CO, and Oxford: ABC-CLIO, 2000), vol. 2, 611–16.

31 *The Portable Dante*, ed. and with an intro. by Paolo Milano (1947; Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1985), 109; Canto XX, 117. The English trans. is by Laurence Binyon. Giuliano Bonfante, “Dante e la magia,” *Aevum: Rassegna di Scienze Storiche, Linguistiche, Filologiche (Aevum)* 65.2 (1991): 313. As to Scotus, see Lucy Pick, “Michael Scot in Toledo: Natura Naturans and the Hierarchy of Being,” *Traditio* 53 (1998): 93–116; Silke Ackermann, *Sternstunden am Kaiserhof: Michael Scotus und sein Buch von den Bildern und Zeichen des Himmels* (Frankfurt a. M., Berlin, et al.: Peter Lang, 2009). *Kulturtransfer und Hofgesellschaft im Mittelalter: Wissenskultur am sizilianischen und kastilischen Hof im 13. Jahrhundert*, ed. Johannes Fried and Gundula Grebner (Berlin and Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2008). Scotus was, however, mostly a translator, an astrologer, alchemist, and divinator, and yet he quickly gained the reputation of a magician and occultist, especially because he had worked in Toledo, Spain. There he translated the famous Arabic treatise on astronomy, *Kitab fi l-hai’a* by Alpetragius, later works by Aristotle, also from Arabic to Latin, and Avicenna’s commentary on Aristotle. Scotus thus gained a universal reputation, which associated him with the occult sciences. See, for a useful overview, <http://www-history.mcs.st-andrews.ac.uk/Biographies/Scot.html> (last accessed on April 4, 2017).

32 The entire issue is well investigated by Valerie I. J. Flint, *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), especially, 68–84. See now also Al-

In the famous letter by Gregory the Great (540–604) to Abbott Mellitus, who was by then on his way to England, he urged him not to destroy the old shrines, but to remove the old idols. Even the sacrificial slaughter of animal was not to be banned; instead, “let them slaughter animals for their own food to the praise of God, and let them give thanks to the Giver of all things for His bountiful provision.”³³ Similarly, the old religions, decried as magic or necromancy, promised venues to higher powers, that is, forms of divination desired by many people. After all, just as today, people become often desperate in time of crises, such as illness, epidemics, war, famine, etc. As human creatures, we then try to find help wherever it might rest, which explains why the Christian Church could not gain the upper hand so easily and had to struggle for centuries to repress, or even to eliminate, the old popular cultures which were deeply determined by the presence of magicians, healers, necromancers, etc.³⁴

Yet, despite the clear direction in this struggle, Christian clerics had a hard time amidst the sea of pagan culture, especially if the local magicians seemed effective and hence superior to all efforts by the clergy. Many authors hence describe, for instance, how deceiving magicians were exposed by Christian clerics, although they had to struggle long and hard to detect the demons or devils supporting the opponents, as we often hear in the tales contained in Caesarius of Heisterbach’s *Dialogus miraculorum*.³⁵ Unintentionally, this promoted the presentation of magicians or their demons in medieval manuscripts, and their elaborate treatment in religious narratives.³⁶

brecht Classen, “Old High German Missionary Activities by Means of *Zaubersprüche*—Charms” (see note 22); cf. also the contribution to this volume by Chiara Benati.

33 Quoted from Flint, *The Rise of Magic* (see note 32), 77.

34 See the contribution to this volume by Christoph Galle. See also Flint, *The Rise of Magic* (see note 32), 88–92.

35 Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum/Dialog über die Wunder*, intro. by H. Schneider, trans. and commentary by N. Nösges and H. Schneider. 5 vols. *Fontes Christiani*, 86.1–5 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009). For an English trans., see *The Dialogue on miracles [by] Caesarius of Heisterbach (1220–1235)*, trans. H. von E. Scott and C. C. Swinton Bland, with an introduction by G. G. Coulton. 2 vols. *Broadway Medieval Library* (London: Routledge, 1929). See now Albrecht Classen, “Madness in the Middle Ages – an Epistemological Catalyst? Literary, Religious, and Theological Perspectives in Caesarius of Heisterbach’s *Dialogus Miraculorum*,” *Hermeneutics of Textual Madness: Re-Readings/Herméneutique de la folie textuelle: Re-lectures*, ed. M. J. Muratore. *Biblioteca della Ricerca*, 38 (Fasano, Italy: Schena Editore, 2016), vol. I, 339–68.

36 Sophie Page, *Magic in Medieval Manuscripts* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 8–9. She emphasizes how much the artists of manuscript illustrations and authors endeavored to present the dramatic development in the competition between a priest, for instance, and the magician/s and their supporters, the demons.

In many ways we might be able to call the countless efforts by the Church to combat magic and all forms of necromancy a targeted and multiple propaganda war by means of texts, images, and oral presentations in the form of sermons. Curiously and almost ironically, both the specific kinds of words and images often paralleled exactly the way how magicians operated on their own, drawing their power from verbal rituals and visual processes.³⁷ In this regard we might conclude that the discourse on magic reflected a universal debate about the authority to reach out to the *numinosum* (God, the saints, etc.) and to draw from their power for human beings in their misery and helplessness, which the exorcists and their many colleagues did mostly in a very similar fashion.

But insofar as spirits or angels cannot be verified, and insofar as the power addressed through prayer or a charm cannot be identified or characterized clearly, the entire conflict between the Church and the world of magic proved to be one concerning influence, and claim to truth, a highly contested field already then and certainly until today. This finds its vivid expression in a highly popular textual genre, the *Ars Notoria*, which originated in the twelfth century and survives in over fifty manuscripts. “The art consisted of a programme of prayers, inspection of ritual diagrams called *notae* and ascetic practices to be undertaken over several months, during which the practitioner would be miraculously endowed with faculties . . . and the scholastic arts.”³⁸ In other words, though certainly veiled, magic was also of great significance within the Church, as numerous monastic libraries demonstrate, especially in Canterbury, England.³⁹ At first sight, of course, the *Ars* served a religious, Christian purpose, but the parallels with magical practices are rather stunning.

³⁷ Page, *Magic in Medieval Manuscripts* (see note 36), 36.

³⁸ Page, *Magic in Medieval Manuscripts* (see note 36), 39. See also Michael Camille, “Visual Art in Two Manuscripts of the *Ars Notoria*,” *Conjuring Spirits: Texts and Traditions of Medieval Ritual Magic*, ed. Claire Fanger. Magic in History (Thrupp, Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 1998), 110–39.

³⁹ L’“*Ars Notoria*” au Moyen Âge: introduction et édition critique by Julien Véronèse. Micrologus’ Library, 21 (Florence: Sismel. Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2007); id., “Magic, Theurgy, and Spirituality in the Medieval Ritual of the *Ars Notoria*,” *Invoking Angels: Theurgic Ideas and Practices, Thirteenth to Sixteenth Centuries*, ed. Claire Fanger. The Magic in History Series (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012), 37–78; Sophie Page, *Magic in the Cloister: Pious Motives, Illicit Interests, and Occult Approaches to the Medieval Universe*. The Magic in History Series (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013); eadem, “Uplifting Souls: The *Liber de essentia spirituum* and the *Liber Razielis*,” *Invoking Angels*, 79–112; Claire Fanger, *Rewriting Magic: An Exegesis of the Visionary Autobiography of a Fourteenth-Century French Monk*. Magic in History Series (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015).

A scholar called Honorius of Thebes is said to have written another influential text, the *Liber iuratus* sometime in the early fourteenth century, more or less in direct response to the *Ars*, now defending magic and accusing the persecuting bishops and prelates of being inspired by demons and misunderstanding the entire field of magic arts. It was first mentioned in the 1347 trial record of Olivier Pépin from Mende, France, and Johannes Hartlieb (1456) (see below) cited it as one of his important sources. The *Liber* has been called a “Solomonic Grimoire” because of its heavy use of angelic powers and seals like those found in *The Key of Solomon*, referring to a host of ancient sages and necromancers who had charged the author to compile the collective wisdom about magic and to teach the new generation about its usefulness and authority.⁴⁰ It remains unclear how serious we have to take this work, since it represents a major collage of ritualistic prayers, magical texts, seals, invocations, etc., but it intriguingly reflects the powerful discourse on magic as it raged through the entire period and actually grew despite the best efforts by the Church, as numerous manuscripts from throughout Europe indicate, containing diagrams of magic circles and other magical images and objects, that is, richly illuminated and serving a representative purpose.⁴¹

The production of medieval manuscripts was an expensive operation, and it was regularly subject to critical examination by the superiors in monastic or lay scriptoria.⁴² It would have been virtually impossible for the scribes and artists to

⁴⁰ Joseph H. Peterson, *The Sworn Book of Honorius: Liber Iuratus Honorii* (Berwick: Nicolas-Hays, 2016).

⁴¹ For a most intriguing example from early modern Dutch art history, see the contribution to this volume by Martha Moffitt Peacock. See also Matilde Battistini, *Astrology, Magic, and Alchemy in Art*, trans. Rosanna M. Frongia Giammanco (2004; Los Angeles, CA: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2007); see also the contributions to *L'art de la Renaissance entre science et magie*, ed. Philippe Morel. Collection d'histoire de l'art de l'Académie de France à Rome, 5 (Paris: Somogy, Ed. d'Art, 2006). Cf. also Stephan Müller, “Magie und mise en page: Über die Schrift als Vollzugsform in mittelalterlichen Zauberpraktiken und die Deutung eines Nachtrags in der Heidelberger Handschrift des ‘König Rother’,” *Akten des X. Internationalen Germanistenkongresses Wien 2000: Zeitenwende – Die Germanistik auf dem Weg vom 20. ins 21. Jahrhundert*, ed. Peter Wiesinger. Jahrbuch für internationale Germanistik: Reihe A. Kongressberichte, 57 (Bern, Berlin, et. al.: Peter Lang, 2002), vol. 5, 333–34; Christa M. Haeseli, *Magische Performativität: Althochdeutsche Zaubersprüche in ihrem Überlieferungskontext*. Philologie der Kultur, 4 (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 2011).

⁴² Frank Fürbeth, “Texte der Magie – Magie der Texte: zum Lebensraum magischer Texte in mittelalterlichen Handschriften am Beispiel der Chiromantie,” *Text als Realie: internationaler Kongress, Krems an der Donau, 3. bis 6. Oktober 2000*, ed. Karl Brunner. Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Realienkunde des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit, 18 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2003), 97–13. More generally, see, for instance,

sneak magical images or designs into the manuscripts without some kind of approval by the authorities within the Church, later by university professors, private patrons of high standing, and other individuals with power and wealth. Even if some renegade monks, scribes, or clerics might have tried to make some money on the margin by copying magical texts or creating art work serving magical procedures, we are still faced with the paradoxical phenomenon of a Christian world where magic – both white and black, both officially accepted as scientific and radically rejected as the devil’s work – certainly surfaced and found its own place. All endeavors by the Church to excoriate and eliminate all form of magic, regarding it as evil necromancy, led to a number of book burnings, executions of perpetrators, often also burned at the stake, but the presence of magic could not be repressed entirely, if at all.⁴³ The phenomenon of magic in all of its manifestations (grimoires, rituals, charmes, etc.) at the end of the Middle Ages thus indicates quite shockingly the considerable crisis the Catholic Church was in, “une chrétienté en crise,” as Florence Chave-Mahir and Julien Véronèse now formulate.⁴⁴

As we have learned, in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, interest in magic and necromancy, in astrology and divination grew considerably again because, as Frank Klaassen has noted, “medieval ritual magic and Renaissance magic held similar assumptions, sought similar goals, and often employed nearly identical techniques. Moreover, in both cases, astrological image magic was understood as only one element in a much more expansive system.”⁴⁵ Major intellectuals such as Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499), Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494), and Henricus Cornelius Agrippa (1486–1535) drew extensively from medi-

the contributions to *Le livre au moyen âge*, ed. Jean Glenisson ([Paris:] Presses du CNRS/Brepols, 1988); Claudia Brinker-von der Heyde, *Die literarische Welt des Mittelalters* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007); *L’univers du livre médiéval: substance, lettre, signe*, ed. Karin Ueltschi. Colloques, congrès et conférences sur le Moyen Âge, 17 (Paris: Champion, 2014); *The Materiality of Magic*, ed. Dietrich Boschung and Jan N. Bremmer. Internationales Kolleg Morphomata, 20 (Paderborn: Fink, 2015).

⁴³ Page, *Magic in Medieval Manuscripts* (see note 36), 56–61. She refers, for instance, to the burning of the *Liber visionum*, a revision of the *Ars Notoria*, from ca. 1307 by the monk John of Morigny; Fanger, *Rewriting Magic* (see note 39). See also the contributions to this volume by Veronica Menaldi and Claire Fanger.

⁴⁴ Florence Chave-Mahir and Julien Véronèse, *Rituel d’exorcisme ou manuel de magie? Le manuscrit Clm 10085 de la Bayerische Staatsbibliothek de Munich (début du XVe siècle)*. Micrologus’ Library, 75 (Florence: Sismel. Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2015), 3.

⁴⁵ Frank Klaassen, *The Transformations of Magic: Illicit Learned Magic in the Later Middle Ages and Renaissance*. The Magic in History Series (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013), 215.

eval magical sources, as much as they might have tried to distance themselves from their predecessors and claim a new intellectual position. Especially Agrippa “gathered materials from the texts of medieval ritual magic He harvested a dizzying range of magical and divinatory practices, all of which he subsumed in a single ordered package” (216). Ficino identified love as a form of magic through which an individual tries to influence another person’s spirit, which would all depend on the star constellations. Nevertheless, the end of the Middle Ages witnessed a growing number of juridical trials and court proceedings against accused magicians and the subsequent burning of books, and of the alleged perpetrators, which was to become the antecedent of the imminent witch craze, resulting from a mass hysteria affecting all of Europe throughout the following centuries.⁴⁶

Famously, Richard Kieckhefer has called the presence of magic within the medieval Church the product of a “clerical underworld,” that is, a world where many different clerics, including monks, abbots, priests, bishops, were aware of or practiced magic themselves, whether with good or evil intentions:

What is most important for our purposes is that they all would have had at least a little learning, and for them this learning was a dangerous thing. Basic knowledge of the rites of exorcism, and perhaps an acquaintance with astrological images and other kinds of magic, might well lead them to experiment with conjuration. If they had access to the infamous books of necromancy, and if they were curious enough to try them out, that was all they needed for membership in this clerical underworld.⁴⁷

While a student of the Middle Ages at large might at first be overwhelmed by the presence of Christian texts, immediately identifying that world as entirely dominated by the Christian Church, a closer examination quickly leads to the realization of how many magical works actually existed, whether they focused on necromancy, basic magic (white or black), divination, prophecy, medical processes, or astrology. The hegemony of the Christian Church was clearly present, here disregarding the presence of the Jewish population dispersed all over Europe, and leaving aside various heretical groups, such as the Cathars, the Waldensians, and the Hussites, but it was based on a rather shaky foundation where numerous

⁴⁶ See the contribution to this volume by Thomas Willard, who provides an excellent historical overview of how magic developed from antiquity through the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. Consult also the useful study by Corinne Saunders, *Magic and the Supernatural in Medieval English Romance*. Studies in Medieval Romance (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2010), 71–77.

⁴⁷ Richard Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages*. Cambridge Medieval Textbooks (1989; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 155.

alternative voices, learning, skills, belief systems, and intellectual power rested, which we now simply place under the umbrella term ‘magic.’⁴⁸

Magic in Theological and Historical Terms

From early on, both in Europe and in other continents, magic was a form of ritualistic performance, by means of words (charms) or objects (amulets, talisman), which highlights the very close relationship between magic and religion. This still holds true until today, since all prayers of all religions rely on words and rituals, reaching out to a higher being and requesting help in human affairs since medical sciences, feats of engineering, or mathematical calculations do not achieve the desired end.⁴⁹ However, the Romans already specified illicit forms of magic predicated on a contract with demons, which was severely condemned and forbidden (*crimen magiae*). The Church Father St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo (354–430) intensively engaged with the phenomenon of magic throughout his life and struggled hard to find a solid position to distance himself and good Christians from the danger of this uncanny force, such as in his *De diversis quaestionibus LXXXIII* (ca. 396), in his *De doctrina Christiana* (late 390s), in his *De divinatione daemonum* (between 406 and 411), and, most comprehensively, in his *De civitate dei* (between 413 and 426). He vehemently rejected all beliefs in the effectiveness of demons, describing all forms of magic as superstition, and he insisted that only Christian rites and rituals were valid. The famous Spanish encyclopedist Isidore of Seville (560–636) outlined specifically how to recognize

48 Charles Burnett, *Magic and Divination in the Middle Ages: Texts and Techniques in the Islamic and Christian Worlds*. Collected Studies Series (Aldershot, Hampshire, and Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1996); Helmut Birkhan, *Magie im Mittelalter* (Munich: Beck, 2010); Patrick Hersperger, *Kirche, Magie und “Aberglaube”: Superstitio in der Kanonistik des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts*. Forschungen zur kirchlichen Rechtsgeschichte und zum Kirchenrecht, 31 (Cologne, Weimar, and Vienna: Böhlau, 2010). See now the contributions to *Magia daemoniaca, magia naturalis, zauber: Schreibweisen von Magie und Alchemie in Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, ed. Peter-André Alt, Jutta Eming, Tilo Renz, and Volkhard Wels. Episteme in Bewegung, 2 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2015); cf. also my review in *Mediaevistik* 29 (2016): 351–53.

49 Monika Schulz, *Beschwörungen im Mittelalter: Einführung und Überblick*. Beiträge zur älteren Literaturgeschichte (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2003); *Heilkunde im Mittelalter*, ed. Ortrun Riha. *Das Mittelalter* 10. 1 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2005); Denis Bruna, *Enseignes de plomb et autres menues choses du Moyen Âge* (Paris: Éd. du Léopard d’Or, 2006); Simone Miche, *Die Magischen Gemmen: Zu Bildern und Zauberformeln auf geschnittenen Steinen der Antike und Neuzeit*. Akademie Mittelalter, 6 (Munich: Oldenbourg Akademieverlag, 2010); Wolfgang Ernst, *Beschwörung und Segen: Angewandte Psychotherapie im Mittelalter* (Cologne, Weimar, and Vienna: Böhlau, 2011); Corinne Saunders, *Magic and the Supernatural* (see note 46), 87–99.

and determine nefarious forms of magic, which also implied the presence of good and evil magic. At the same time, the influence of Neoplatonism and Gnosticism was considerable with respect to the development of magic that found much scientific support and many types of practical applications throughout the Middle Ages and beyond.⁵⁰

The large movement of the Cathars (twelfth and thirteenth centuries) and similar groups was closely associated with this form of magic, by which the individual allegedly tried to reach out to divine forces and powers – certainly a rhetorical claim by the members of the Catholic Church trying to malign these so-called heretics,⁵¹ which finds its parallel a few hundreds of years later in the witch craze.⁵² What people cannot or do not want to understand they stereotype as evil, devil worship, or magic, relying on an age-old strategy of casting a Manichean world-view. However, such opinion fused already then many different components, leveled all differences, and lumped together, as modern readers tend to do, vastly contrasting aspects into one category for the sake of simplification. If we comb through various theological treatises from the late antiquity and the early Middle Ages, we easily come across a wide range of opinions about magic, witchcraft, astrology, necromancy, and related arts, reflecting a considerable degree of uncertainty and worry about one's own religious position. Was God the only creator, or were there also other powers beside Him?

The theological discussion about the human free will (St. Augustine, 354–430), however, opened the floodgates for theoretical concepts about demons that influenced people and made them believe that they could use magic for their personal use and material enrichment, for instance. As Christa Tuczay informs us, “[a]fter Augustine’s fundamental exegesis, Christian authorities generally agreed that no magical performance occurred by magicians’ own skills, but rather with the aid of demons and their illusory arts. Augustine’s contrasting of demonic and angelic powers was consequently followed by the contrasting of magic and miracle.”⁵³ Both Albertus Magnus (ca. 1200–1280) and Bonaventure (1221–1274) embraced this concept and developed their own theories regarding magic as an evil form of epistemology. Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) went so far as to place the vice of superstition above the sin of tempting God. However,

50 Michael Bailey, *Magic and Superstition* (see note 21), 53–59.

51 Peter Clarke and Tony Claydon, *God’s Bounty? The Churches and the Natural World*. Studies in Church History, 46 (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Ecclesiastical History Society; Rochester, NY: Boydell & Brewer, 2010).

52 See the contribution to this volume by Amiri Ayanna.

53 Tuczay, “Magic and Divination” (see note 20), 941.

he granted astrology its own legitimacy, which had huge consequences for late medieval sciences based on the observation of the star constellations.⁵⁴

One can certainly debate whether magic falls under the category of astrology, but the differences would not be very large since both practitioners were trying to solve the riddles of this world through esoteric ‘sciences’ predicated on profound knowledge, though we tend to disagree strongly with the definition of ‘knowledge’ as it was used then. Magic and modern sciences differ in the way in which understanding and insights are established, insofar as the former relies on spiritual forces, whereas the latter are predicated on the principles of experimentation, verification, and falsification. Nevertheless, the dichotomy between science and magic has never been as much apart as the representatives of the former have claimed, especially because the goals of both have been fairly similar, and at times even identical. As Jens Braarvig has noted, “Magic then, and I would like to include myth, are rhetorical and polemical concepts in common and even scientific language. . . . Like myth, however, magic has in periods also had very positive connotations.”⁵⁵

Astrology was always treated with great respect, despite its intimate connection with magic, because it pursued sympathetic influences from the stars on people’s individual lives. Both philosophers and scientists in antiquity and throughout the Middle Ages, and then even far beyond embraced astrology as a crucial instrument for divination and hence also for medical purposes, especially when thirteenth-century scholars began to rediscover the teachings of Ptolemy through new translations from the Arabic into Latin, and so also the famous texts by Aristotle.⁵⁶

Similarly, the difference between magic and religion could easily be regarded, with many good reasons, as rather minimal and even arbitrary, especially if we consider Christianity also as an institution bent on gaining hegemony over other religions in political and economic terms. Finally, again in Braarvig’s

54 M. E. von Matuschka, “Magie” (see note 2), 82–88. There is, of course, much research on this global topic; and it would be hard to identify any medieval and early modern philosopher or theologian who would not have embarked on some form of critical exchange regarding the meaning of magic or necromancy. See now the contribution to this volume by Thomas Willard.

55 Jens Braarvig, “Magic: Reconsidering the Grand Dichotomy,” *The World of Ancient Magic: Papers from the First International Samson Eitrem Seminar at the Norwegian Institute at Athens*, 4–8 May 1997, ed. David R. Jordan, Hugo Montgomery, and Einar Thomassen. Papers from the Norwegian Institute at Athens, 4 (Bergen: The Norwegian Institute at Athens, 1999), 21–54; here 28.

56 Bernhard Dietrich Haage, “Artes magicae: Die magischen und mantischen Künste,” id. and Wolfgang Wegner, together with Gundolf Keil and Helga Haage-Naber, *Deutsche Fachliteratur der Artes in Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*. Grundlagen der Germanistik, 43 (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 2007), 266–82.

words, “Magic is usually the activity of the Others, and whoever practices it is not prone to admit it, since it in fact concerns a private, not easily acknowledged or even recognized, darker side of the personality.”⁵⁷ Religion and magic are defined by power structures within society, and representing competing sides of the same coin: “. . . religion is *morally and collectively accepted* by society as a common expression of all, while magic is not prone to be admitted by even the ones practicing it, being strongly condemned as *immoral, subversive and destructive* by society at large, being socially marginal and as such often ascribed to strangers and despised groups.”⁵⁸

However, and quite remarkably, he then also points out, in a comment which can be regarded as a critical perspective for the present volume, that the very marginality and obscurity of magic might result in it being admired and worshipped as a true alternative and epistemologically innovative instrument for the deciphering of this world.⁵⁹

The Arab ‘Ali Ibn al-Rijāl (tenth-eleventh century), the famous Italian astrologer Guido Bonatti (1210–1296), and, much later, the Frenchman Jean-Baptiste Morin de Villefranche (1591–1659) enjoyed tremendous popularity and fame during their time and left behind monumental works on astrology, an intriguing offshoot of medieval magic. Divination and prophesying have always been methods to reach out to the *numen* and to learn from insights into the spiritual otherworld gained through rituals, magical performances, reading of celestial signs, and the like.

Despite many changes in the following centuries, astrology continued to be regarded with considerable respect and attracted the most intellectual minds, and even the Church could not fend off the influence of astrology. It was more successful regarding magic, whereas the study of the stars in their constellations, having, allegedly, a direct influence on human destiny, appeared as more in line with God’s own teachings and ancient philosophy.

Guido Bonatti was born around 1207 and died before 1296, and Dante apparently rejected him as a most condemnable fortune-teller, placing him in the eighth circle, in the fourth ring, of his *Inferno* (ca. 1320). Nevertheless, despite some detractors among ecclesiastics, Bonatti was strongly supported by counts, tyrants, and probably also the Emperor Frederick II (1194–1250), and his *Book of Astrology*, which was truly encyclopedic in its compilation of scientific material,

57 Braarvig, “Magic” (see note 55), 51. He particularly references here the famous study by Sir James George Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, 12 vols. (1911–1915).

58 Braarvig, “Magic” (see note 55), 52.

59 Braarvig, “Magic” (see note 55), 52.

was published many times after his death, first printed in 1491, then in 1506, 1550, and in an abbreviated German version in 1572 and 1581.⁶⁰

Defending his own art, Bonatti refers first to the human soul, arguing that there is nothing in which it “gains so much wealth as in astronomy and astrology. For through it, we know and understand impassible and unalterable creatures, and those not changing into another essence, as are the supercelestial bodies.”⁶¹ Insofar as the stars, the planets, and the sun are perfect bodies, the astrologer is privileged to work with perfection in a material sense, drawing insights on human corruption as an effect of those bodies. All material beings consist of the four elements (air, fire, water, and soil), while the celestial bodies consist of the quintessential element which is “incorruptible and impassible” (2). He explains the workings of the stars on human lives as follows:

Philosophically it is said that the terrestrial motion is joined to the celestial world; but this must be understood metaphorically, not unconditionally; and therefore changes and alterations and corruptions in this corruptible world come to be. Wherefore the solidity of the celestial world comes to the elements, and surrounds them (namely fire, and fire the air, and air the water and the earth which appears, and water the earth); and thence come to be the corruptions of the elements and of individuals of the elements. (2)

Identifying astrology as a mathematical science, but more noble than mathematics, Bonatti comments,

Therefore, all things which come to be in the present, and which have been hitherto, and which come to pass in the future, can be known by the astrologer, if he knows the qualities of the motions which there were, which there are, and which will be afterwards, in what times they will be, and what will fall together from them or because of them. (4)

Simply put, and correlating astrology with magic, Bonatti, like many of his contemporary scientists, endeavored to learn the deeper truths as reflected in the constellations and to gain insights into the workings of all matter, both materially and spiritually.

However, the following centuries, especially the sixteenth century, saw a dramatic increase in public hysteria over the alleged danger resulting from magicians, witches, sorceresses (and their male counterparts), and astrologers,

60 Benjamin N. Dykes, “Practice and Counsel in Guido Bonatti,” *Astrologers and Their Clients in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Wiebke Deimann and David Juste. Beihefte zum Archiv für Kulturgeschichte, 73 (Cologne, Weimar, and Vienna: Böhlau, 2015), 29–41.

61 Guido Bonatti, *The Book of Astronomy*, trans. Benjamin N. Dykes. Vol. 1 (Golden Valley, MN: The Cazimi Press, 2007), 1.

among other necromancers, probably out of hyped-up fear about knowledge and power that could not be controlled by the authorities. The infamous witch craze was the probably most extensive manifestation of this phenomenon, adding a religious component to the discourse on magic, but there were numerous other cases discussed and dealt with well into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁶²

The Protestant Reformation, led by Martin Luther, viewed all those aspects with greatest suspicion, and Luther himself voiced harshest criticism of the entire world of magic, since he considered all those dealing with the black arts as thieves, murderers, liars, deceivers, and hence as the greatest threat to the Christian faith. The public discourse no longer discriminated among the various representative of the 'science' of magic and lumped everyone together who did not operate obediently according to religious rules. The Protestant Church might even have been worse in that regard than the Catholic Church.⁶³ We observe, in other words, the critical function of magic since it regularly served as a linchpin concerning a society's world view insofar as it was treated as a general threat to the dominant church, religion, or political structure. Magicians can apparently

62 Roswitha Rogge, "Von Zauberinnen, Hexen und anderen berüchtigten Frauen im frühneuzeitlichen Hamburg," *Hexenwelten. Mitteilungen aus dem Museum für Völkerkunde Hamburg*, Neue Folge, 31 (2001), 27–43; Christoph Daxelmüller, "Magie im spätmittelalterlichen und frühneuzeitlichen Alltag," *Hexen: Mythos und Wirklichkeit*, ed. Lars Börner (Munich: Ed. Minerva, 2009), 53–59; see also Christopher H. Partridge, *The Occult World*. Routledge Worlds (New York: Routledge, 2015). Still valuable proves to be Julio Caro Baroja, *The World of the Witches*. The Nature of Human Society Series (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964).

63 Allison P. Coudert, "The Myth of the Improved Status of Protestant Women: The Case of the Witchcraze," *The Politics of Gender in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Jean R. Brink, Allison P. Coudert, and Maryanne C. Horowitz (Kirkville, MO: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1989), 61–90; see also chapter three in Coudert's book *Religion, Magic, and Science in Early Modern Europe and America*. Praeger Series on the Early Modern World (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2011); cf. also the contributions to *Ketzer, Zauberer, Hexen: Die Anfänge der europäischen Hexenverfolgungen*, ed. Andreas Blauert (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1990); see now the contributions to *Mit dem Schwert oder festem Glauben: Luther und die Hexen*, ed. Markus Hirte (Darmstadt: Theiss Verlag – Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2017). The topic of the witch craze in the early modern age has been discussed already from many different perspectives and does not fully fall into the scope of the present book; but see Gerhild Scholz Williams, *Defining Dominion: The Discourses of Magic and Witchcraft in Early Modern France and Germany*. Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Civilization (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 1995); Lyndal Roper, *Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2004); see also her earlier study, *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Religion and Sexuality in Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 1994). See also the contribution to this volume by Amiri Ayanna.

do what no one else can control, so they have always emerged as uncanny figures and representatives of dark forces from another dimension.

All the Church Fathers, and countless subsequent theologians struggled hard against magic in its myriad of manifestations, such as St. Augustine (354–430), Isidore of Seville (560–636), Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), Albertus Magnus (1200–1280), but then also the worldly rulers, beginning with Charlemagne (d. 814). Both canon law and secular law were instituted to decry specifically the use of magic, witchcraft, sorcery, etc. throughout the entire Middle Ages and beyond.⁶⁴ It is also important to distinguish between magic based on demonic power (the devil, evil spirits) and magic based on the natural forces harnessed by the magician, though the latter was normally predicated on creating illusions, as we will later hear often enough from various literary sources. But maybe we should not be overly critical and skeptical and reject any possibility that medieval magicians indeed might have had some peculiar powers that allowed them to transform material existence.

Virgil and Magic in Clerical Literature

Popular opinion, often fed by clerical authors, commonly assumed the presence of magic in all kinds of contexts. In the famous *Gesta Romanorum* (early fourteenth century), for instance, Emperor Titus orders the magician Virgil to erect a statue that would tell him who among the people had broken the law that he promulgated forbidding everyone to work on the day of his son's birthday. Virgil's skill proves to be paramount, and the statue soon reveals the names of many 'criminals' who are then executed.⁶⁵ Although Virgil applies all his skills,

⁶⁴ Michael D. Bailey, *Magic and Superstition in Europe: A Concise History from Antiquity to the Present* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 110; Richard Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 19–56. See also Corinne Saunders, *Magic and the Supernatural* (see note 46), 82–87.

⁶⁵ *Gesta Romanorum: A New Translation* by Christopher Stace, with an introduction by Nigel Harris. Manchester Medieval Literature and Culture (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), no. 57. The best succinct discussion of the *Gesta* is provided by Udo Wawrzyniak, "Gesta Romanorum," *Enzyklopädie des Märchens*, ed. Rolf Wilhelm Brednich, vol. 5 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1987), 1201–1212. Insofar as the *Gesta* represent virtually a medieval 'bestseller,' reaching audiences all over Europe both in Latin and in many different vernaculars, we can be certain that many of the stories contained in this collection proved to be highly popular and might well have influenced public opinion about many different aspects. Walter Röll, "Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der *Gesta Romanorum*," *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 21 (1986): 208–29; id., "Nachlese zur Überlieferung der *Gesta Romanorum*," *Beiträge zur Ge-*

his entire scheme is later undermined when the wise artisan Focus appears, threatens the statue, and can subsequently convince the emperor that he had been right in challenging that magic because he could not observe the law out of economic necessity. The subsequent moralization explains that the emperor symbolized God the Father, Virgil stood for the Holy Spirit, and Focus for any good Christian (143). Nevertheless, the brief reference to the magician Virgil in this context underscores how well the myth of the ancient Virgil was known throughout the Middle Ages, commonly associated with having learned the magical arts.⁶⁶

Magic and Magicians in Medieval Literature

Magicians were a household item in medieval literature, so to speak, and we could list many different texts – romances, verse narratives, prose short stories, etc. – where through the intervention of a magic the account takes a decisive turn. As much as we are dealing here with poetic license, it still deserves to be mentioned that medieval thinking did not shy away from magic at all and accepted the possibility that a magician could bring about the impossible, both in negative and in positive terms. The fictional texts do not necessarily have a direct bearing on the history of mentality regarding the phenomenon of magic, but the common appearance of the theme itself underscores the wide-spread acceptance of magic as a tool, if not science, that could be employed for a variety of purposes.

schichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur 121 (1999): 103–08; Brigitte Weiske, *Gesta Romanorum*. 2 vols. *Fortuna vitrea*, 3–4 (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1992). See also the extensive investigation by Gabriela Kompatscher, *Die Gesta-Romanorum-Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Innsbruck Cod. 667, Cod. 509 und Cod. 433: ihre Beziehungen zueinander und zu den anderen Gesta-Romanorum-Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Innsbruck*. *Commentationes Aenipontanae / Tirolensia Latina*, 1–2 (Innsbruck: Wagner, 1997). See now Albrecht Classen, “The *Gesta Romanorum* in Light of Hartmann von Aue’s *Gregorius* and Heinrich Kaufringer’s Verse Narratives: Transcultural and Translinguistic Exchanges from the Early Middle Ages and to the Early Modern Ages,” to appear in *The Comparatist*; and id., “The *Gesta Romanorum* – A *Sammelbecken* of Ancient Wisdom and Didactic Literature and a Foundation for Late Medieval Narrative Art. A Medieval ‘Bestseller’ Revisited,” to appear in *Literature & Aesthetics* (Open Access).

66 Domenico Comparetti, *Virgil in the Middle Ages*, trans. Edward Felix Mendelssohn Benecke (1895; London: Allen, 1966); Fabio Stok, “Virgil between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance,” *International Journal of the Classic Tradition* 1.2 (1994): 15–22; Antonie Wlosok, “Rollen Vergils im Mittelalter,” *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 42 (2008): 253–69; Sebastiano Italia, *Il Virgilio medievale: tra filologia, filosofia e leggenda, tre saggi*. *Mvta Pavis*, 12 (Acireale-Rome: Bonanno Ed., 2012).

es in very practical terms. In many courtly romances, for instance, magical forces come to play when a magician or sorcerer intervenes, whereas we hardly ever hear of demons or the devil. Poets seem to be much more interested in white magic or natural magic than necromancy, an issue which was much more pursued by scholars, scientists, and theologians. As Corinne Saunters notes, “Perhaps surprisingly, romance does not in general depict a fearful world of humans conjuring demons, though demons may themselves practise supernatural arts. Rather, magic is practical, material, tangible, its efforts most often related to knowledge and the power of divination, or, more disturbingly, to power over the body, especially through the arts of illusion and shape-shifting, but also through medical magic.”⁶⁷

In a number of Old Norse sagas, for instance, the narrator mentions, almost just in passing, that some women possessed magical skills and could perform the process of shape-shifting. We also learn at times of powerful men who command magic and as such enjoy major authority.⁶⁸ In *Egil's Saga*, for instance, written in the earlier part of the thirteenth century, already the first character introduced, Ulf, the son of Bjalfi and Hallbera, is said to be such a shape-shifter, apart from being a very hard working farmer who keeps a close watch over his workers and craftsmen.⁶⁹ Beyond that the narrator has nothing to say. When he turns to the character Skallagrim, who is preparing a journey across the sea, we are informed that some of the best men whom he invites to join him are the sons of a mysterious woman, Thorarna, who “was a sorceress,” while other men are shape-shifters as well (42). The meaning of this miracle is that they take on “the character of animals, or went berserk, [and] became so strong in this state that no one was a match for them, but also that just after it wore off they were left weaker than usual” (48).

In the section dealing with Erik Blood-axe the narrator mentions that he gained a major victory in a battle by the river Dvina in Permia. During that journey he also married Gunnhild, daughter of Ozur Snout, and this woman attracts

⁶⁷ Corinne Saunders, *Magic and the Supernatural* (see note 46), 7.

⁶⁸ In this regard I would have to disagree with Tuczay, “Magic and Divination” (see note 20), 940, who claims that in Old Norse Sagas those practicing magic are considered sinister characters.

⁶⁹ *Egil's Saga*, trans. Bernard Scudder. Ed. with an Intro. and Notes by Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir (1997; London: Penguin, 2004), 3. *Egils saga*, ed. Bjarni Einarsson (London: Viking Society for Northern Research, University of London, 2003); cf. now the contributions to *Egil, the Viking Poet: New Approaches to Egil's Saga*, ed. Laurence de Looze, Jón Karl Helgason, Russell Poole, and Torfi H. Tulinius. Toronto Old Norse and Icelandic Series, 9 (Toronto, Buffalo, and London: University of Toronto Press, [2015]).

particular attention not only because of her physical beauty, but also because she was “well versed in the magic arts” (64). But magic is not limited to women; instead, within the same context we are told about a man called Thorgeir Thorn-foot who “was very wealthy, made many sacrifices to the gods and was well versed in the magic arts” (64). Details escape us entirely, maybe because the poet did not consider it important enough to explain further what kinds of magic he performed. For him it suffices that Thorgeir belongs to the group of people who command this kind of necromancy, without abusing it, as it appears, to the detriment of his neighbors or foes.

Similarly, Egil’s foster-nurse Thorgerd Brak gains the narrator’s great respect insofar as he describes her “as strong as a man and well versed in the magic arts” (69). This appears to have been enough for him to explain why this was such an outstanding woman. The Queen of Norway, Gunnhild, opposed Egil Skallagrimsson and “had a magic rite performed to curse [him] . . . from ever finding peace in Iceland until she had seen him” (122). Considering that Egil grows very restless in Iceland and then in summer departs on a journey, we would be justified to assume that for the author this magical rite might have achieved the desired goal. But the narrator refrains from offering any specifics about it and simply takes those comments, as he must have read them in his sources or heard them from oral accounts, at face value. So it becomes a common feature in this *saga*, whenever the poet wants to highlight an individual, male or female, to emphasize, for instance, referring to Atli the Short. He was strong and courageous, an experienced dueller, and skilled in the magic arts” (143).

At other times we hear of a magical ritual to heal a sick person, so when Egil is asked to heal Thorfinn’s daughter Helga, who had been sick for a long time, obviously as the result of a charm caused by some carved runes:

He ordered them to lift her out of her bed and place clean sheets underneath her, and this was done. Then he examined the bed she had been lying in, and found a whalebone with runes carved on it. After reading the runes, Egil shaved them off and scraped them into the fire. He burned the whalebone and had her bedclothes aired. (158–59)

Subsequently he spoke a ritual prayer, a counter-charm, as we might say, and then created his own, healing runes: “Egil cut some runes and placed them under the pillow of the bed where she was lying. She felt as if she were waking from a deep sleep, and she said she was well again, but still very weak” (159). Carving runes represented, as we realize subsequently, a delicate process requiring thorough understanding and great skill. The woman had fallen sick because her lover had failed to carve the correct runes with which he had tried to seduce

her, “but [he] did not know how to, and what he carved had caused sickness instead” (165).⁷⁰

Sometimes magic occurs without us learning who might have created it. Both in Chrétien de Troyes’s Old French version of *Yvain* (ca. 1177) and in Hartmann von Aue’s Middle High German ‘translation’ under the title *Iwein* (ca. 1203), the knight Kalogrenant reports about a mysterious experience which has never found a full explanation. While on the search for adventure, he had come across a secret place in the middle of the forest as directed by a wild man to whom he had to explain what knighthood was all about and who hence had instructed him to visit that spot with a marvelously arranged spring and water basin underneath a linden tree. Kalogrenant poured water on the stone and then had to witness a most terrifying and incredible thunderstorm:

Very soon I saw, around me in every direction, a good thousand lightning flashes. Afterward and just as often, such a mighty thunderclap resounded that I fell to the ground. A rain- and hailstorm arose. Had not God’s blessing spared me from the storm’s affliction, I would have been very quickly dead. The storm grew so violent that it leveled the forest. If there was anywhere a tree so big that it remained standing, it was bare, as stripped of foliage as if it had gone up in flames. Whatever dwelt in the forest perished immediately if it did not make a quick escape. (244)⁷¹

But soon enough the forest recovers, “[t]he birds came back, the linden tree was again covered with their feathers” (244), and everything seems to have returned to order. However, thereupon the guardian of the spring arrived, challenged his opponent, defeated him, and took his horse, forcing him to walk back to the cas-

70 François-Xavier Dillmann, *Les magiciens dans l’Islande ancienne: études sur la représentation de la magie islandaise et de ses agents dans les sources littéraires norroises*. Acta Academiae Regiae Gustavi Adolphi, 92 (Uppsala: Kungl. Gustav Adolfs Akad. för Svensk Folkkultur, 2006); Stephen A. Mitchell, *Witchcraft and Magic in the Nordic Middle Ages*. The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Nicolas Meylan, “Magic and Discourses of Magic in the Old Norse Sagas of the Apostles,” *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia* 7 (2011): 107–24; see also the contributions to *Religione e magia nelle saghe nordiche: atti della Giornata di Studio Religione e Magia nelle Saghe Nordiche*. Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni, 78.2 (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2012).

71 *The Complete Works of Hartmann von Aue*, trans. with commentary by Frank Tobin, Kim Vivian, and Richard H. Lawson. Arthurian Romances, Tales, and Lyric Poetry (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 244. See also Hartmann von Aue, *Iwein*. 4th, rev. ed. Text of the 7th ed. by G. F. Benecke, K. Lachmann, and L. Wolff. Trans. and epilogue by Thomas Cramer (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2001). For a broader approach to the issue of magic in Arthurian romances, see Sandra Witte, *Zauber: Magiepraxis und die geschlechtsspezifische Darstellung magiekundiger Figuren in der höfischen Epik des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts*. Schriftenreihe Schriften zur Mediävistik, 12 (Hamburg: Dr. Kovač, 2007).

tle where he had stayed the night before. This then becomes the crucial adventure which his friend Yvain/Iwein wants to experience, and the magic works its charm again, except that this time Iwein defeats and kills the other knight, which sets into motion the actual topic of this Arthurian romance, whereas the function and workings of the fountain and the basin are not mentioned specifically.⁷²

In Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival* (ca. 1205), the section dealing with Gawan's adventures also entails numerous references to the workings of a magician, Clinschor.⁷³ Even though the poet never allows him to appear in person, his impact on the entire Arthurian world is remarkable, that is, almost devastating, which requires Gawan to take on the challenge and to restore the well-being of courtly society. He has to face truly life-threatening dangers, but survives, though with many wounds that require careful treatment by the women held prisoners at the enchanted castle. Once he is more or less well again, Gawan inquires with the old queen Arnive about the nature of the magic that had been cast upon that mysterious castle, appropriately called "Schastel Marveile." He is told that those marvels are minor and almost insignificant compared to those magical powers that he can really exert in other parts of the world. His own kingdom is called "Terre de Labur" with the capital "Capua," and he was born as a descendant of "Virgil of Naples" (275), which brings us back to the commonly shared myth of the magician Virgil (see above).

Arnive then informs him that Clinschor had fallen in love with the lovely queen Iblis, married to the King Ibert of Sicily. After much service that he offered her, Iblis finally granted him her love, but they were then caught *in flagrante* while spending a night together at the castle "Caltabellotta," and Ibert castrated the victim: "Clinschor was made into a capon" (275) – an obvious pun on the name of the capital, which Gawan rewards with a loud laughter.

Only then, however, after having lost his manhood, did Clinschor seek out the ancient lore of magic in a city called "Persida" (276), where it had been invented. In order to avenge himself generally on mankind, Clinschor turned his newly acquired magical skills against many aristocratic men and women, de-

72 Stephen Maksymiuk, *The Court Magician in Medieval German Romance*. Mikrokosmos: Beiträge zur Literaturwissenschaft und Bedeutungsforschung, 44 (Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang, 1996); he discusses numerous magicians in Middle High German literature, but does not dedicate a special chapter to Iwein.

73 Wolfram von Eschenbach, *Parzival and Titivel*, trans. with notes by Cyril Edwards. Oxford World Classics (2004; Oxford, New York, et al.: Oxford University Press, 2006); Wolfram von Eschenbach, *Parzival: Studienausgabe*. Mittelhochdeutscher Text nach der sechsten Ausgabe von Karl Lachmann. Übersetzung von Peter Knecht, Einführung zum Text von Bernd Schiroke (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1998).

stroying their happiness with the help of his necromancy. He could force King Irot of Rosche Sabbins to hand over to him the mountain upon which the enchanted castle is situated and a large territory surrounding it. Arnive ominously emphasizes: “he wields power over all those, whether *mal* or *bêâ schent*, who dwell between the firmament and the earth’s compass – except for those whom God wishes to protect” (276). However, since Gawan withstood all those attacks against him while he was in the castle, this now belongs to him, and so the land, since Clinschor, who is still a man true to his word, no longer wants it for himself, granting it to the victor.

Wolfram does not enter into much further discussion about Clinschor’s abilities and particular skills and leaves it all a bit in the narrative background, obviously satisfied with the playful allusion to the mysteries of the magical arts, although Gawan is then established as the new lord of the previously enchanted castle and can, in the course of time, pacify and settle both the land and the various conflictual relationships at King Arthur’s court. Clinschor’s magic is presented as a learned art which granted him enormous power, but it did not destroy his inner sense of nobility, despite his almost unquenchable desire to destroy other people’s happiness to compensate for his own pain and loss of love.⁷⁴

An interesting example from the late Middle Ages would be the ninth story of the tenth day in Boccaccio’s *Decameron* where the Sultan Saladin, then Soldan of Babylonia, travels *incognito* through Italy in order to spy on his enemies who are about to launch a crusade against him. In Pavia he is most generously and hospitably treated by the merchant Torello, and strikes a deep friendship with him, though he then has to leave and return to Alexandria to prepare himself for war. Saladin proves to be fortunate and can quickly gain victory over the crusader army, and captures many prisoners. One of them is Torello, who then has to serve as a slave to Saladin, assuming the role of falconer. Eventually the Sultan recognizes his former friend and embraces him full of joy, which could solve the entire situation rapidly. However, in the meantime false news about Torello’s alleged death have reached his wife Adalieta, who is then forced by her relatives to

74 For further details, see the contribution to this volume by Christopher R. Clason. Cf. also Walter Blank, “Der Zauberer Clinschor in Wolframs Parzival,” *Studien zu Wolfram von Eschenbach: Festschrift für Werner Schröder zum 75. Geburtstag*, ed. Kurt Gärtner and Joachim Heinzle (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1989); Susan Tuchel, “Macht ohne Minne: Zu Konstruktion und Genealogie des Zauberers Clinschor im Parzival Wolframs von Eschenbach,” *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen* 231 (1994): 241–57; Sandra Linden, “Clinschor und Gansguoter: zwei Romanfiguren im Spannungsfeld von Gelehrsamkeit und Magie,” *Literaturwissenschaftliches Jahrbuch* 49 (2008): 9–32.

marry another man at a set time, that is, a year after Torello's departure, as they both had agreed before he set off to war.

Torello also realizes that his letter to his wife had never reached its goal, which would mean that he is now in danger of losing his wife to another man. This throws him into such desperation that he is ready to die, but Saladin comes to his rescue and orchestrates a strategy based on magic: "Accordingly Saladin bade one of his necromancers, of whose skill he had already had proof, to devise a method whereby Messer Torello should be transported abed in a single night to Pavia: the necromancer made answer that it should be done, but that 'twere best he put Messer Torello to sleep." The two friends then say good-bye to each other, and Torello is put to sleep and placed on a most ornate bed: "Which done, he kissed Messer Torello again, and bade the necromancer speed him on his journey. Whereupon, forthwith, the bed, with Messer Torello thereon, was borne away from before Saladin's eyes, and he and his barons remained conversing thereof."

As expected, Torello is immediately transported to Pavia, where he and his bed are placed in the church San Piero in Ciel d'Oro. Even though his sudden appearance deeply frightens the abbot and his monks, Torello can eventually calm them down and explain the entire situation. This new situation, with the protagonist having returned home safely though in a very strange fashion, pleases the abbot greatly, who simply accepts the magical act that brought his nephew back home safely and just in the nick of time to prevent his wife from marrying another man: "After which, having put the costly jewels in safe keeping, he recounted to the abbot all the story of his adventures to that very hour. The abbot, rejoicing in his good fortune, joined with him in offering thanks to God."⁷⁵

For Boccaccio as a story teller, the appearance of a magician, or necromancer, was a convenient narrative instrument helping him to develop his account further, dramatizing the events, but allowing Torello to arrive just in the nick of time to safeguard his own marriage. There are no comments on the magician himself, who operates like a *deus ex machina*, and his art, we only know that he commands enormous powers and employs those according to the Sultan's wish-

75 Here quoted from the online version drawn from the English translation by J. M. Rigg (1903; London: Priv. Print. for the Navarre Society, 1921); http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian_Studies/dweb/texts/DecShowText.php?myID=nov1009&lang=eng (last accessed on Dec. 18, 2016); see now Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Decameron: A New Translation, Contexts, Criticism*, trans. and ed. Wayne A. Rebhorn. Norton Critical Editions (New York: W. W. Norton, 2016). Unfortunately, this otherwise very welcome new translation is marred by the fact that it presents only a selection of Boccaccio's complete work.

es. There is nothing negative about having a court necromancer, and not even the ecclesiastics in Pavia have anything to say about the workings of a magician; instead the abbot praises and thanks God for this help bringing Torello back home safely and in a rapid fashion, which avoids a terrible mistake of marrying his wife to another man while Torello is still alive.

In Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (ca. 1400), we encounter a magician as well who is hired to arrange a love affair, though now to the chagrin of the wife who does not want to submit to the conditions that she had set up herself.⁷⁶ In *The Franklin's Tale* the narrative focuses on a happily married couple, Arveragus (he) and Dorigen (she) whose bliss is suddenly deeply threatened by the amorous efforts by the squire Aurelius who has fallen in love with Dorigen and tries his luck with her when the husband is away in England where he hopes to achieve fame and gain glory as a knight.

When confronted by the squire, Dorigen radically rejects his wooing and insists on being a loyal wife. Curiously, however, she then offers the young man a chance, after all, that is, she would grant him her love if he were able to remove all the black rocks on the shore of Brittany. Dorigen is certainly not serious about this proposition, referring to God who would not permit such a miracle to happen and who would thus preserve her love and honor. She calls Aurelius's longing a 'folly' and assumes that therewith she would have dashed all of his hopes and recovered his reason.

Indeed, Aurelius falls into a deep depression and has to stay in bed for two years, only taking his brother into confidence over the cause of his misery. This brother had studied at Orléans some years ago and now suddenly remembers that he had read in a book about white magic. The narrator immediately inter-

⁷⁶ It would be futile to engage with the host of relevant Chaucer research, since he enjoys such a reputation in the history of medieval English literature. Here I have used Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*. A new unabridged trans. by Burton Raffel, intro. by John Miles Foley (New York: The Modern Library, 2008); and for the historical-critical edition, see *The Riverside-Chaucer*, ed. Larry Dean Benson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988). For important research, see now the contributions to *The Cambridge Companion to Chaucer*, ed. Piero Boitani and Jill Mann (1986; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). For more detailed research, see Alison L. Ganze, "'My Trough for to Holde-Allas, Allas!': Dorigen and Honor in the Franklin's Tale," *The Chaucer Review* 42 (2007/2008): 312–29; Kudo Yoshinobu, "Shrewd Negotiation in the Guise of 'gentillesse' in Chaucer's 'Franklin's Tale,'" *Poetica* (Tokyo) 77 (2012): 27–46; Wan-Chuan Kao, "Conduct Shameful and Unshameful in The Franklin's Tale," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 38 (2012): 99–139; Darragh Greene, "Moral Obligations, Virtue Ethics, and Gentil Character in Chaucer's Franklin's Tale," *The Chaucer Review* 50 (2015): 89–107. Curiously, the role of the magician in this tale does not yet seem to have attracted much interest. But see now the contributions to this volume by Lisa M. C. Weston and Daniel F. Pigg.

venes, however, and assures his readers that the entire plot is situated in the past, whereas at the present moment Christian faith would radically reject all of those necromantic matters (397–400).

Nevertheless, the brother is convinced that such magic, many fanciful examples of which he is recalling, would be a real possibility, so he and his brother quickly travel to his alma mater to find the best master of the necromantic arts there who could help Aurelius achieve his goal of gaining the lady's love. Already outside of the city gate they encounter an apparently powerful master who knows exactly what they are looking for. He takes them with him to his house, where he entertains them with amazing magical shows, which are all nothing but illusions yet powerful demonstrations of his mastery in this art. He is even quickly prepared to help Aurelius to make all the black rocks disappear, although he demands the high price of thousand pounds, which the young man is more than willing to pay because the miracle promises to solve his trouble and give him the lady's love (483–91).

To ease his reader's possible concern with magic, Chaucer injects regularly some remarks about the ancient time when these events take place, insisting that he had read about this story in old books (503). Nevertheless, as a narrator he never raises any doubt about the story's veracity and does not question the real existence of magical powers. Instead, he outlines in considerable detail how the magician works to figure out the correct astrological configuration for the miracle to occur that all the rocks would disappear from people's sight. There is a reference to the famous tables of Toledo (533), to the planets and stars, etc., so this magician actually works as an astrologer and achieves his goal of making all the rocks disappear, at least from public view, for a fortnight or even a month, as the result of magical illusions (558).

Chaucer employs a fascinating concept of magic in this tale because this magician operates more like an illusionist who draws his power from astrological calculations and thus knows how to deceive people. Obviously the rocks can no longer be seen, seemingly having disappeared for good, but we know from the early part of the story when the two brothers had arrived how well versed he had been in creating those 'cinematographic' tricks. And a trick it is, which could not really be true according to the laws of nature, as Dorigen thinks, when she is confronted with the miraculous disappearance of the rocks. This reminds her of her own pledge to the squire to grant him her love when that miracle would have happened (608).

Dorigen ponders, in her desperation, what to do in that dilemma, torn between her love for her husband and the oath that she had foolishly sworn to Aurelius. She is close to committing suicide, following a long tradition of similar cases of abused and raped women in antiquity, when her husband finally re-

turns, finds her in such misery. Once he has learned the entire situation, he insists that she live up to her oath and grant her love to the squire, as painful as it would be for both of them. Honor depends on holding up an oath, and nothing would be more worthy in life than that.

Amazingly, when Aurelius learns about Arveragus's decision in this case, placing his honor and that of his wife over all of his feelings of being hurt and humiliated by this proposition that she would sleep with the other man, he suddenly feels deeply ashamed and begins to realize the absurdity and meanness of his strategy regarding Dorigen. So he suddenly releases her of the oath and is ready to despair over a love he will never achieve because he cannot destroy the strong bond of love between husband and wife. At the same time, it begins to dawn upon Aurelius how much he has to pay the magician, which threatens to ruin him completely, unless he can set up a long-term payment plan, just as in a modern credit scheme (830–42). However, once the magician has understood the sentiments expressed by Dorigen and the high level of honor upheld by her husband Arveragus, he decides to match their level of nobility and performs graciously and generously to Aurelius, releasing him of the debt.

Thus ends Chaucer's tale, which leaves us with much to think about regarding the role of the magician, who is here identified primarily as a cleric who operates with white magic and is apparently fully recognized as a member of a learned community. Insofar as the narrator has situated his tale somehow into a pre-Christian world, he feels safe to include the element of magic, which does not threaten, at any rate, any religious concepts. After all, this magician does not call upon the help of devilish forces and relies, instead, on his astrological skills. Nevertheless, there is still a remarkable difference between this magician and ordinary people, such as Dorigen, who had sworn her foolish oath simply because she had not ever heard of magic and could not imagine that this miracle would ever occur (859–60).

No one voices any criticism of the magician, who proves to be a respectable, learned, and powerful individual. He carries out his profession in an honorable fashion and accomplishes his assigned task after having worked hard for a long time. Still, he seems to be an illusionist primarily and knows exceedingly well how to deceive people through the projection of most fabulous images. But it does not matter for us whether the black rocks really have disappeared or whether everyone is only the victim of an illusion. Realistically speaking, it might well have been that a heavy cloud covered the coastline, which the magician could foretell through his astrological calculations. The focus rests on Dorigen and Aurelius, hence on the question whether she would be bound to uphold her part of the bargain, that is, her oath, as her husband finally insists. But love cannot be bought or compelled, as Aurelius, in his immaturity assumes, and only when he

learns of Arveragus's painful but honorable decision to force his wife to live up to her part of the bargain with the squire, does he realize the shamefulness of his own efforts.

The magician here demonstrates that the magical arts belong to the advanced disciplines studied at the university, that magic is mostly a matter of illusions, and that magical miracles can easily be produced if the customer pays enough money and if the magician commands enough learnedness. Chaucer has nothing negative to say about magicians and gives this cleric much credit as a highly educated and powerful, and then also a very honorable and generous individual who knows how to operate on the same ethical level as the knight Arveragus.

We also encounter a different perspective toward magic in the slightly earlier anonymous alliterative romance, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (ca. 1370), where the Green Knight arrives at King Arthur's court and challenges them all to a grizzly Christmas game involving beheadings. He would voluntarily submit to one of Arthur's knights to carry out the decapitation, if he himself then would be allowed to do the same to the other within a year's span. Everyone is rather horrified about this proposition, but it proves to be an enigmatic game, after all.⁷⁷ Gawain assumes the task, cuts off the Green Knight's head, but he does not kill him. Instead, something magical occurs:

But the freak neither faltered nor fell none the more.
Then steadily he started forth upon stiff shanks,
And rapidly he reached out where ranting men stood,
Took hold of his handsome head and held it up quickly,
And then hurries to his horse to handle the bridle,
Steps into the steel-stirrup and straddles on top,
Holding his head in his hand by the hair.⁷⁸

Gawain has to live up to his promise to allow the Green Knight, who turns out to be Bercilak de Hautdesert, do the same thing to him, but even he does not die in that competition. He submits to the test, but his shoulder jerks at first when he notices the axe coming down upon him swung by his opponent. The latter then scoffs at him, ridiculing him in his cowardice, which then steels Gawain to hold steady the second time, although he must expect certain death. The Green Knight

⁷⁷ Albrecht Classen, "Erotik als Spiel, Spiel als Leben, Leben als Erotik: Komparatistische Überlegungen zur Literatur des europäischen Mittelalters," *Mediaevistik* 2 (1989): 7–42.

⁷⁸ *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight: A Dual-Language Version*, ed. and trans. by William Vantuono. Garland Reference Library of the Humanities, 1265 (New York and London: Garland, 1991), 430–36; see Corinne Saunders, *Magic and the Supernatural* (see note 46), 204, 253.

then swings again, but he deliberately cuts only through flesh creating a blood wound, which signals to Gawain that he has survived and that the Green Knight had not performed this in earnest. He immediately jumps up, puts on his helmet and gets ready to fight, which demonstrates to his opponent that he is indeed a worthy knight, which then ends the wager peacefully. Gawain has to learn, to his shame, that the entire set-up had been nothing but a test orchestrated by King Arthur's own sister, Morgan le Fay, hence Gawain's aunt, as Bercilak then informs us about her magical skills:

I hold sway in this land
Through the might of Morgan le Fay, who in my house dwells,
And the science of lore through skills well learned;
The mastery of Merlin she has managed to acquire,
For she once dallied in delight and developed an affair
With that marvelous magician; your men at home know that tale of fame.
Morgan the goddess and my guide,
Therefore is her noted name;
No one possesses such high pride
When she can not make very tame. (2445–55)⁷⁹

As this denouement actually reveals, Morgan did not harbor evil thoughts and did not intend to cause real damage or death; Instead, she intended “To tempt the pride, to perceive if there were truth / In the rumors of renown of the great Round Table” (2457–58). However, her jealousy over her competitor, Guenevere, which made her even willing to kill her by means of frightening her to death, also is revealed by Bercilak (2460–62).

We do not learn much more about the magical arts practiced by Morgan, but it is evident that she knows how to create the miracle that Bercilak's head could be decapitated without this causing him any harm. Just as in Chaucer's narrative, the magical act was nothing but a “þat ilke gomen þat gostlych speked” (2461; “green illusion that ghastly spoke”). Insofar as Bercilak also spares Gawain's life, though he draws some blood when he cuts his neck, he followed through with what she must have instructed him about in fact. For her, magic amounts

⁷⁹ Research has much studied this mysterious figure, often operating in the background of Arthurian literature; see Carolyne Larrington, *King Arthur's Enchantresses: Morgan and Her Sisters in Arthurian Tradition* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006); Kristina Pérez, *The Myth of Morgan la Fey. Arthurian and Courtly Cultures* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Jill M. Hebert, *Morgan le Fay, Shapeshifter. Arthurian and Courtly Cultures* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); Corinne Saunders, *Magic and the Supernatural* (see note 46), 193–200. See now the contribution to this volume by Dalicia K. Raymond.

to a masterful game, a box full of tricks through which she can test the entire court of King Arthur, well represented by Gawain. Whether the green belt, which Bercilak's wife had given to Gawain would really have preserved his life, we cannot determine, but it underscores as well how much the poet, and hence also his audience, believed in the power of magical objects, talismans, which could have the power to save one's life.

We also need to observe that Morgan had gone through an intense learning process, acquiring her knowledge from Merlin, so magic emerges really as a science, at least within the medieval context. As much as *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, or Chaucer's *The Franklin's Tale* fall into the textual world of fictional literature, both these two and other narratives predicated their accounts on the general assumption that magic was a specific art that could be studied and was available to those with the sufficient abilities and skills. The trick with decapitation was also employed as a literary motif in the thirteenth-century *Diu Crône* by Heinrich von dem Türlin.⁸⁰

Magic and Magicians in the Later Middle Ages

Considering the thin wall separating magic and pre-modern forms of sciences, it does not come as a surprise that many people viewed those scholars who were very advanced in their experimental studies, such as Roger Bacon (1214–1291), with great suspicion, although Bacon himself sharply rejected magic and insisted on mathematically and physically based experiments in order to understand the miracles of nature. In his treatise *De mirabile potestate artis et naturae* (On the Marvelous Power of Magic and Nature), Bacon

draws the important distinction between magic that works by suggestion and natural science. For him, a juggler was *praestigiator*, and prestiges would have been the term used by his contemporaries for the visual deceptions they caused. According to him, prestige might involve anything from high class illusion to low class duping, providing the crucial elements of artifice and imposture were present.⁸¹

However, for most people, both then and today, sciences as a critical study area, was too difficult to understand, and the workings of magic continued to appeal

⁸⁰ Christa Agnes Tuczay, *Magie und Magier im Mittelalter*. Rev. ed. (1992; Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2003), 305–30, 315.

⁸¹ Tuczay, "Magic and Divination" (see note 20), 947–48.

widely. Consequently, the degree to which superstition was fully embraced was, to say the least, rather astounding.⁸²

No surprise then that the Christian Church struggled from very early on, and particularly since the seventh and eighth centuries, to overcome pagan cultures and beliefs, and hence had to operate systematically, energetically, and sometimes even very aggressively to eliminate ancient folk beliefs and types of magic, whether those were simply superstition or whether they functioned just the same way as prayers and Christian rituals.⁸³ Nevertheless, magic was of no real and deeply troubling nature for the Church until the thirteenth century. At that time the two new mendicant orders, the Franciscans and the Dominicans emerged which aimed specifically at teaching and preaching to the ordinary people and who were thus suddenly confronted with a vast number of popular concepts, beliefs, customs, and rituals, none of which conformed to the demands by the Church.⁸⁴

The rich body of narratives composed by the Cistercian monk and master of the novices, Caesarius of Heisterbach, his *Dialogus miraculorum* (completed ca. 1240), was mostly based on the assumption of the devil's working everywhere in human life.⁸⁵ In particular, in the fifth section we come across numerous accounts of the active role played by the devil in human life, then of demons, necromancers, magicians, and others. Magic makes it possible to witness the return of deceased individuals, and the appearance of devils in the lives of people, both

82 *Life in the Middle Ages: Religion, Folk-Lore and Superstition*, selected, trans. and annotated by George Coulton. 2nd ed. The Cambridge Anthologies (Cambridge: University Press, 1928); Karin Baumann, *Aberglaube für Laien: Zur Problematik und Überlieferung spätmittelalterlicher Superstitionskritik*. 2 vols. Quellen und Forschungen zur Europäischen Ethnologie, 6.1 (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1989); Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150–1750* (New York: Zone Books; Cambridge, MA: Distributed by the MIT Press, 1998).

83 See, for instance, the letter written by Gregory the Great addressed to Saint Augustine of Canterbury, as transcribed by the Venerable Bede in his *Historia gentis Anglorum* (1. I, cap. XXX), here quoted by Raoul Manselli, *Magia e stregoneria nel medio evo*. Corsi universitari (Turin: G. Giappichelli, 1976), 59–60.

84 For a practical approach to popular magic and superstition, in late medieval and early modern Czech medical treatises, see the contribution by David Tomíček

85 Manselli, *Magia et stregoneria* (see note 83), 135–37; Caesarius von Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum/Dialog über die Wunder* (see note 35); see also the contributions to *The Art of Cistercian Persuasion in the Middle Ages and Beyond: Caesarius of Heisterbach's Dialogue on Miracles and Its Reception*, ed. Victoria Smirnova. Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions, 196 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015); for a recent study, see also Albrecht Classen, "Madness in the Middle Ages" (see note 35).

within the church and outside.⁸⁶ Other authors reflecting on magic were William of Auvergne (after 1180–1249), Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), Albertus Magnus (ca. 1200–1280), and numerous other philosophers and theologians far into the early modern age.⁸⁷ We hear of magicians, in positive and negative terms, both in Dante Alighieri's *Divina Commedia* (completed ca. 1320) and in countless treatises and narratives from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In fact, neither the Renaissance nor the age of the Protestant Reformation could be imagined without the discourse on magic, both with approval or utter rejection.⁸⁸ After all, the split of the Christian Church made it possible for many traditional but mostly hidden forms of superstition and 'heretical' thinking to emerge, which was the ideal fermentation ground for diviners, astrologers, alchemists, magicians, and sorcerers.⁸⁹ As Klaassen emphasizes, concluding his significant study, the engagement with magic was not an expression of crisis in the early modern age, but a creative challenge forcing the major intellectuals to reflect carefully and deeply on their own position vis-à-vis magical power, rationality, God, faith, and reason.⁹⁰ In fact, during the sixteenth century numerous figures emerged who worked in a variety of fields, including medicine, theology, and philosophy, at times combining them with the necromantic sciences,⁹¹ such as Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim, simply known as Paracelsus (1493–1541), or Johann Reuchlin (1455–1522).⁹² The criticism

⁸⁶ Manselli, *Magia et stregheria* (see note 83), 138–48.

⁸⁷ Manselli, *Magia et stregheria* (see note 83), 209–10: "La posizione, dunque, della magia bianca si presenta con una triplice articolazione nella mentalità due-trecentesca, di cui abbiamo qui indicato alcuni dei maggiori rappresentanti. . . . Non a caso, magia bianca ed astrologia saranno due componenti caratteristici della cultura rinascimentale" (The position of white magic, hence, manifests itself in the mentality of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the most important representatives we have represented here, by way of a triple articulation. Not by accident, white magic and astrology are two components characteristic of the Renaissance culture).

⁸⁸ *Everyday Magic in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Kathryn A. Edwards (London and New York: Routledge, 2015).

⁸⁹ See, for instance, Doris Moreno Martínez, "Magical Lives: Daily Practices and Intellectual Discourses in Enchanted Catalonia During the Early Modern Era," *Everyday Magic in Early Modern Europe* (see note 88), 11–33.

⁹⁰ Klaassen, *The Transformations of Magic* (see note 45), 218.

⁹¹ See, for instance, Louise Hill Curth, *English Almanacs, Astrology and Popular Medicine: 1550–1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007); Jan Löhdefink, *Zeiten des Teufels: Teufelsvorstellungen und Geschichtszeit in frühreformatorischen Flugschriften (1520–1526). Beiträge zur historischen Theologie*, 182 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016). See also the contribution to this volume by David Tomíček.

⁹² See the contributions to *Paracelsus im Kontext der Wissenschaften seiner Zeit: Kultur- und Mentalitätsgeschichtliche Annäherungen*, ed. Albrecht Classen. *Theophrastus Paracelsus Studien*,

against magic actually increased in the early modern age, not simply because the Church raised more opposition (both the Protestants and the Catholics), but rather because the issue became more complex, more widespread, and more influential, as the case of astrology, for instance, impressively confirms.⁹³ Regarding the emergence of early modern science, magic proved to be a major challenge, a competitor, and also a distant relative.⁹⁴ In Jens Braarvig's words, "the fundamental dichotomy is that magic is based in the belief that magical actions and the willpower of the magician work by its own force to bring about the desired result, while science would empirically and systematically search in nature for causes of the events that it would control."⁹⁵

While in the field of religion we have long accepted the presence of the *numinosum*, a term coined by Rudolf Otto in his book *Das Heilige* (1917),⁹⁶ the sci-

2 (Berlin and New York: Walther de Gruyter, 2010). The topic, in a broad context, is also discussed in the other volumes (4 vols.) of this series.

93 *Astrologia e magia nel Rinascimento: teorie, pratiche, condanne; atti del Convegno del Centro di Alti Studi Euaristos, Forlì, 21–22 maggio 2013*, ed. Ornella Pompeo Faracovi (Pisa: Edizioni Il Campano, 2014); *Astrologers and Their Clients in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Wibke Deimann and David Juste. Beihefte zum Archiv für Kulturgeschichte, 73 (Cologne, Weimar, and Vienna: Böhlau, 2015); Darin Hayton, *The Crown and the Cosmos: Astrology and the Politics of Maximilian I* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2015); Robin B. Barnes, *Astrology and Reformation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

94 Steven P. Marrone, *A History of Science, Magic and Belief: From Medieval to Early Modern Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); *The Occult World*, ed. Christopher Partridge. The Routledge Worlds (Milton Park: Routledge, 2015); see also the contribution to this volume by Thomas Willard.

95 Braarvig, "Magic" (see note 55), 53. See also J. Bronowski, *Magic, Science, and Civilization*. Bampton Lectures in America, 20 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978); Stanley Jeyaraja Tambiah, *Magic, Science, Religion, and the Scope of Rationality* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990); *Zur Akzeptanz von Magie, Religion und Wissenschaft: ein Medizin-ethnologisches Symposium der Institute für Ethnologie und Anatomie, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster*, ed. Annemarie Fiedermutz-Laun. Worte – Werke – Utopien, 17 (Münster, Hamburg, and London: Lit, 2002); Dan Burton and David Grandy, *Magic, Mystery, and Science: The Occult in Western Civilization* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004); Ryan J. Stark, *Rhetoric, Science, & Magic in Seventeenth-Century England* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2009); Graziella Federici-Vescovini, *Le Moyen Âge magique: la magie entre religion et science du XIIIe au XIVe siècle*. Études de philosophie médiévale, 97 (Paris: Vrin, 2011); Philip Ball, *Invisible: The Dangerous Allure of the Unseen* (London: Bodley Head, 2014).

96 Todd A. Gooch, *The Numinous and Modernity: An Interpretation of Rudolf Otto's Philosophy of Religion*. Vol. 293, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 293 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2000); Alondra Yvette Oubré, *Instinct and Revelation: Reflections on the Origins of Numinous Perception*. The World Futures General Evolution Studies, 10 (Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, 1997).

ences are much more obtuse to any efforts to entertain the notion that magic might be the foundation or even the complement to its own research area. Nevertheless, magic continues to exert profound fascination until today, and if we want to understand the pre-modern world in fundamental ways, we must also consider the presence and workings of magic, magicians, necromancy, astrology, and related subject matters. However, the purpose of this Introduction is limited to a critical examination of magic and magicians in the pre-modern era; I am deliberately staying away from examining what modern magic might entail, irrespective of major books that have been published on this topic, since we would thus lose our scholarly focus and get lost in the field of esoteric studies.⁹⁷ Yet, modern practitioners, believers, and researchers always draw from ancient sources, such as Hermes Trismegistus – the purported Hellenistic-Egyptian author of the *Hermetic Corpus* – the Bible, Persian and Arabic texts, ancient Jewish sources (the Cabala), etc.⁹⁸ There is no shortage of popular literature on this aspect, especially because fewer and fewer people in this world have a real understanding of modern technology and medicine, and simply use them for themselves, hence operate, willy-nilly, in a quasi magical environment.⁹⁹ I would go

97 See the massive volume by Aleister Crowley, with Mary Desti and Leila Waddell, *Magick: Liber ABA. Book Four. Parts I–IV*. Sec. rev. ed. Ed., annotated and intro. by Hymenaeus Beta (1994; San Francisco, CA, and Newburyport, MA: Weiser Books, 2008).

98 Florian Ebeling, *The Secret History of Hermes Trismegistus: Hermeticism from Ancient to Modern Times*, trans. from the German by David Lorton. Foreword by Jan Assmann (2005; Ithaca, NY, and London: Cornell University Press, 2007); see also the contributions to *Le cercle des lettres de l'alphabet: un traité pratique de magie des lettres attribué à Hermès*, ed. Cécile Bonmarriage and Sébastien Moureau. Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science: Texts and Studies, 100 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016). See also Almut-Barbara Renger, "Von Pythagoras zur arabischen Alchemie? Über Longue-Durée Konstruktionen und Wissensbewegungen im Mittelmeerraum," *Magia daemoniaca, magia naturalis, zauber* (see note 48), 19–56.

99 Eckart von Hirschhausen, *Wunder wirken Wunder: Wie Medizin und Magie uns heilen*. 5th ed. (2016; Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 2017). Apparently, this topic struck a nerve, since this book has appeared already in the fifth edition. I would venture that modern readers are simply gullible regarding 'practical' information about how to utilize magic even today. The business with magical objects, such as amulets and talismans is booming, and this in the twenty-first century: R. H. Laarss, *Das Buch der Amulette und Talismane: talismanische Astrologie und Magie* (Leipzig: Bohmeier, 2005). For magic and sorcery in the visual arts, see *Gespenster, Magie und Zauber Konstruktionen des Irrationalen in der Kunst von Füssli bis heute, anlässlich der Ausstellung Gespenster, Magie und Zauber. Konstruktionen des Irrationalen in der Kunst von Füssli bis heute 18. November 2011 bis 26. Februar 2012 im Neuen Museum in Nürnberg*, ed. Melitta Kliege (Nuremberg: Verlag für Moderne Kunst, 2011). This would also explain the enormous popularity of the *Harry Potter* book series published by J. K. Rowling since 1977. See also H. E. Douval, *Bücher der praktischen Magie: Magie, ihr Geheimsinn, ihre Technik und praktische Anwendung*. 12 Bücher in einem Band (1954; Schwarzenburg: Ansata-Verlag, 1977); for a critical, scholarly

so far as to claim that the modern subject increasingly feels disconnected from its technical environment where robotics are currently in the process of taking over the control in more and more areas of daily life. Naturally, magic thus seems to be an attractive alternative once again, at least through esotericism and supernaturalism.¹⁰⁰

As Marcel Mauss observes, “[a] magician is seen in terms of his relationship with animals as well as his relationship with spirits, and in the last analysis he is seen in terms of his own soul.”¹⁰¹ Particularly because of the obscure nature of magic and its practitioner, people have always attributed to the magician special powers, which they admire and abhor at the same time, fear and desire in order to improve their own lives. Considering the precarious position of a magician within the Christian world, above all, we can easily recognize the extent to which magic has always been hotly contested since it threatens the authority both of the Church and the sciences. But, magic is elusive and almost intangible, which makes it difficult for the opponents to identify and to eliminate it, just as difficult as it would be to fight against spirits: “the magician obtains advantages of a permanent nature through momentary contact with the spirits.”¹⁰² To establish such contacts, the magician has to learn unique rituals and words, charms, formulas, a new language, sacrifices, and performances, so we would have to identify him or her as a highly educated individual, though not in scientific

perspective, see the contributions to *The Cambridge History of Magic and Witchcraft in the West: From Antiquity to the Present*, ed. David J. Collins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); see also Daniel Dubuisson, *Religion and Magic in Western Culture* (see note 23); Corinne Saunders, *Magic and the Supermagic* (see note 46), 5–6; *Everyday Magic in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Kathryn A. Edwards (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016); Christopher Dell, *The Occult, Witchcraft & Magic: An Illustrated History* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2016). The literature on this topic, often not quite serious or lacking in scholarly rigor, is truly legion.

100 See now the contributions to *Magic in the Modern World: Strategies of Repression and Legitimization*, ed. Edward Bever and Randall Styers (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2017). The online description provided by the publisher reads: “Taking a two-track approach, this book explores the complex dynamics of the construction of the modern self and its relation to the modern preoccupation with magic. Essays examine how modern ‘rational’ consciousness is generated and maintained and how proponents of both magical and scientific traditions rationalize evidence to fit accepted orthodoxy.” See also the contributions to *Gespenster, Magie und Zauber* (see note 99); Sabina Magliocco, *Witching Culture: Folklore and Neo-Paganism in America*. Contemporary Ethnography (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

101 Mauss, *A General Theory of Magic* (see note 23), 39.

102 Mauss, *A General Theory of Magic* (see note 23), 41.

terms. Magicians prove to be truly effective if they have followers or disciples who believe firmly in their actions as trustworthy and powerful.¹⁰³

After all, the magician establishes a sympathetic relationship with another power in spiritual, ritual terms, at a secluded location, and can thus conjure that power into his/her own sphere.¹⁰⁴ In Mauss's words, "[s]ympathy is the route along which magical powers pass: it does not provide magical power itself. In a magical rite the residue after the sympathetic formulas have been abstracted provides us with the essential elements of magic."¹⁰⁵ As alien and incomprehensible magic hence might appear, it has always appealed to people all over the world throughout time, though modern science has successfully marginalized it, without entirely eliminating it. The Church, by contrast, has always predicated its own legitimization on the projection of the very antithesis to its existence, the occult, the demonic, and the magic. As Daniel Dubuisson affirms, "it disfigured, diabolized and caricatured magic to such an extent that we can no longer find any positive trait in it."¹⁰⁶

The notion, as famously developed by Max Weber,¹⁰⁷ that our world today might be totally secularized and disenchanted would have to be dismissed quick-

103 Mauss, *A General Theory of Magic* (see note 23), 91–97.

104 Mauss, *A General Theory of Magic* (see note 23), 100.

105 Mauss, *A General Theory of Magic* (see note 23), 102.

106 Dubuisson, *Religion and Magic in Western Culture* (see note 23), 137. He suggests, for instance, to define magic less narrowly than traditionally done by the Church, in order to comprehend what would happen next. Then, as he concludes, "[m]agic is no longer this primitive and frightening thing installed on the periphery of civilization, whose existence it menaced by subjecting it to the irrationality of obscure and subterranean forces. It even acquires a bit of a noble title if one accepts displacing its centre of gravity in order to reconstitute the ensemble of the anthropological universe to which it belongs But for that, it will be indispensable to leave Christian Europe where it has been literally crushed by the Church. And the majority of the witnesses invoked in favour of a claimed universality of the religious will be able to be reversed and will illustrate henceforth, rather, a universality of magic, or, more exactly, of magic processes" (138–39).

107 Max Weber, *Religion und Gesellschaft: gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2012). The original article was his "Wissenschaft als Beruf" from 1917, which was published in 1919 under the same title (Munich: 1919). Here he formulated famously: "Die zunehmende Intellektualisierung und Rationalisierung bedeutet also nicht eine zunehmende allgemeine Kenntnis der Lebensbedingungen, unter denen man steht. Sondern sie bedeutet etwas anderes: das Wissen davon oder den Glauben daran: daß man, wenn man nur wollte, es jederzeit erfahren könnte, daß es also prinzipiell keine geheimnisvollen unberechenbaren Mächte gebe, die da hineinspielen, daß man vielmehr alle Dinge – im Prinzip – durch Berechnen beherrschen könne. Das aber bedeutet: die Entzauberung der Welt. Nicht mehr, wie der Wilde, für den es solche Mächte gab, muss man zu magischen Mitteln greifen, um die Geister zu beherrschen oder zu erbitten. Sondern technische Mittel und Berech-

ly.¹⁰⁸ Consequently, it makes perfect sense to return to magic and magicians in the pre-modern world in order to understand not only cultural and mental-historical conditions at that time, but also to comprehend how much modern science proves to be an outgrowth of a centuries-old discourse which might never come to a full conclusion, despite all the triumphs which scientists have achieved over the last four hundred years.

Magic represents, according to Martin Mulsow, a form of ‘precarious knowledge,’ that is, a concept of the mysteries of the macro- and the microcosm which can be analyzed without ever fully comprehending them because they are, ulti-

nung leisten das. Dies vor allem bedeutet die Intellektualisierung als solche” (9; The growing intellectualization and rationalization hence does not mean a growing general knowledge of the life conditions we are subject under. It means, by contrast, the knowledge of or rather the belief in the assumption that one could learn about those conditions, if one just wanted to. In other words, the belief that there are principally no secret, incalculable powers influencing us. It means thus the belief that we can control basically all things through calculations. That means hence: the disenchantment of the world. One no longer needs to resort to magical means in order to control the spirits or to plead to them, as it was the case for the barbarian. Now technical means and calculations do that. This implies, above all, the intellectualization). See the pleasantly useful survey online at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disenchantment> (last accessed on January 28, 2017). For a critical examination, see Joseph W. H. Lough, *Weber and the Persistence of Religion: Social Theory, Capitalism and the Sublime*. Routledge Advances in Sociology, 20 (London and New York: Routledge, 2006); Christopher Adair-Toteff, *Max Weber’s Sociology of Religion* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016). For a detailed analysis of what differentiates magic from religion, see Karl Beth, *Religion und Magie* (see note 6), ch. 3. He already emphasized, above all, that in cultures determined by magic virtually every event or action is determined by causality, which allows the magician to intervene and to partake in the numinous powers, utilizing them for his own purposes and those of his community. This is the sympathetic form of magic (104). Beth and others viewed and almost ridiculed magic, however, still from the lens of modernity determined by rationality and associated it with ‘primitivism.’

108 This is fully discussed by Allison P. Coudert in her contribution to this volume. See also Basit Bilal Koshul, *The Postmodern Significance of Max Weber’s Legacy: Disenchanting Disenchantment* (New York and Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Hartmut Lehmann, *Die Entzauberung der Welt: Studien zu Themen von Max Weber*. Bausteine zu einer europäischen Religionsgeschichte im Zeitalter der Säkularisierung, 11 (Göttingen: Wallstein-Verlag, 2009); Keith Breen, *Under Weber’s Shadow: Modernity, Subjectivity and Politics in Habermas, Arendt and MacIntyre* (Farnham, Surrey, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012); Jibu Mathew George, *The Ontology of Gods: An Account of Enchantment, Disenchantment, and Re-Enchantment* (Cham, Germany: Springer International Publishing – Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); Jason Ananda Josephson, *The Myth of Disenchantment: Magic, Modernity, and the Birth of the Human Sciences* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2017). For a somewhat opposite perspective, emphasizing the march toward modernity and rationality, see the contributions to *Wege in die Neuzeit*, ed. Thomas Cramer. Forschungen zur Geschichte der älteren deutschen Literatur, 8 (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1988).

mately, beyond human capacities to grasp a cosmic, universal, maybe divine (infernal?) epistemology.¹⁰⁹ Oddly, so it seems, the more modern sciences or medicine push forward and explore ever new dimension in outer space or in the nanosphere, the more similarities emerge to medieval and early modern magic.¹¹⁰ As much as we might belittle medieval magicians, in essence they were pursuing rather similar goals, yet with dissimilar methods and principles. Magic only lost its reputation and high esteem even at the university level in the course of the thirteenth century when the theologians battled vehemently against the rise of Aristotelianism at the various academic institutions.¹¹¹ Curiously, we know so much about magic in the Middle Ages today because there are many more medieval manuscripts with magical treatises extant than we might have commonly assumed; and those manuscripts were certainly written mostly by clerics, that is, monks, or university-trained individuals, who did not simply subscribe to devil worship or pursued any heretical practices. However, until today it remains a desideratum to catalogue exactly and to identify the available magical treatises in European manuscripts.¹¹²

109 Martin Mulsow, *Prekäres Wissen: Eine andere Ideengeschichte der Frühen Neuzeit* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2012); see especially 14–18; cf. the Introduction to *Magia daemoniaca, magia naturalis, zouber* (see note 48), 2–3.

110 Barbara A. Strassberg, “Magic, Religion, Science, Technology, and Ethics in the Postmodern World,” *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science* 40.2 (2005): 307–22. Her abstract is worth quoting in full: “In this essay I argue that magic, religion, science, technology, and ethics are components of cultures that coexist at every stage of the evolution of societies and cultures and are interconnected and intertwined with each other within the web of relationships with other components of social life and culture. They undergo changes under the influence of each other and of social and cultural factors that coevolve with them throughout the history of humanity in the direction of democratization. The religion-and-science discussion is embedded within the framework of the postmodern social scientific discourse to illustrate that the apparent contradictions or substitutions disappear and that in actual human experience there is cooperation and complementarity between these elements of culture.”

111 Frank Fürbeth, “Die Stellung der Artes magicae in den hochmittelalterlichen ‘divisiones philosophiae,’” *Artes in Mittelalter*, ed. Ursula Schaefer. Symposium des Mediävistenverbandes, 7 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1999), 249–62.

112 Fürbeth, “Magische Texte,” *Magia daemoniaca* (see note 48); cf. also Hans Biedermann, *Handlexikon der magischen Künste von der Spätantike bis zum 19. Jahrhundert*. 3rd improved and thoroughly expanded ed. 2 vols. (1968; Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlags-Anstalt, 1986). See also Jennifer M. Corry, *Perceptions of Magic in Medieval Spanish Literature* (Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University Press, 2005).

Johannes Hartlieb – The Great Expert, or Harsh Critic

This now allows us to turn to one of the most important authors on magic in the late Middle Ages, Johannes Hartlieb, whose famous treatise, the *puoch aller verpoten kunst, ungelaubens und der zaubrey* from 1456, offers a broad spectrum of information about magic, necromancy, the presumed role of the devil, rituals, and other aspects. He was born ca. 1400 in Neuburg an der Donau, received an excellent education, became ducal councilor to the Bavarian Duke Louis VIII of Bayern-Ingolstadt (1365–1447) in 1430, and received his *Baccalaureat* in 1432. In 1436 he obtained the position of a priest in Ingolstadt, and around that time he also earned his *Magister Artium*, which was followed by his doctoral promotion in 1439. The following year he switched his political orientation and joined the court of Duke Albrecht III of Bavaria in Munich (1401–1460), another branch of the Wittelsbach dynasty. In 1444 he married a woman called Sibilla, perhaps the daughter of Duke Albrecht and the Augsburg citizen Agnes Bernauer, who had been executed by drowning in 1435 because Albrecht's father, Duke Ernst (1373–1438) had suspected her of witchcraft. In 1446 Hartlieb served as ducal diplomat in Ferrara, and in 1447 he spent time in Heidelberg in administrative terms. In 1451 the famous reform-minded Bishop Nicholas of Cusa visited Munich and made Hartlieb's acquaintance, who, from that time on, probably under Nicholas's influence, wrote only negatively about magic. However, in 1456, the year when his *puoch* appeared, he also visited the Margrave Johann the Alchemist of Brandenburg-Kulmbach (1403–1464) in order to arrange a marriage between the two dynasties, Wittelsbach and Brandenburg. In 1465 Hartlieb was appointed as personal physician for Duke Sigmund of Bavaria-Munich (1439–1501). In 1467 he accompanied his lord on a journey to visit the spa of Bad Gastein, and he died in Munich on May 18, 1468.

Hartlieb is famous both as a medical doctor and as a translator of literary texts and author of learned treatises. In 1430/1432 he composed the *Kunst der Gedächtnüß*, a study on how to train one's capabilities regarding memory; between 1433 and 1435 Hartlieb wrote, based on a Latin book on the Three Magi, his *Mondwahrsagebuch* (divination based on the course of the moon) and his *Geomantie*. These were followed by his *Onomatantie* (ca. 1437; a treatise on how to secure victory), *Namenmantik* in 1438/1439, a divinatory treatise on the meaning of names. In 1440 he translated Andreas Capellanus's *De amore* into German and composed a book on herbals, mostly based on Konrad of Megenberg's *Buch der Natur* (ca. 1350/1362). Then he wrote a version of the ancient *Alexander* romance, his *Die histori von dem großen Alexander* (ca. 1350), a translation of Cae-

sarius of Heisterbach's *Dialogus miraculorum* under the same title (between 1456 and 1467), an herbal under the title *Kräuterbuch* (ca. 1450),¹¹³ and a version of the *St. Brendan* legend (1456/1457).¹¹⁴ His last work was a translation of *De secretis mulierum* (*Von den Geheimnissen der Frauen*) from 1465 and 1467.

Although previously I have not explored any of the individual writers' biography and did not add a list of works in such detail, in the case of Hartlieb it seems to be necessary because we can recognize thereby how much the various types of occult sciences and the magical arts were of central interest for the intellectuals of many different backgrounds, even though Hartlieb primarily rejects all magic as the outgrowth of the devil's working. Hartlieb was not only an expert medical doctor, but also an extraordinary scholar in many different fields and apparently never shied away from exploring different topics and examining otherwise neglected or deliberately ignored themes.

However, Hartlieb, like many of his contemporaries and predecessors, was primarily, if not exclusively, focused on preserving the written tradition, and he did not enter any empirical insights. So, his *Kräuterbuch* goes back to Konrad of Megenberg's *Buch der Natur*, which in turn was based on Thomas of Cantimpré's *De natura rerum* and Albertus Magnus's *De vegetabilibus* (ca. 1260), and both of these drew heavily from Arabic handbooks – certainly a common feature both in natural sciences/medicine and in the magical arts. Today we similarly do not approach any research project without first studying the sources, the established data, and then experiment with them, though we now rely very heavily on the principles of verification and falsification. So, Hartlieb was a philologist in

113 For a digitized version of the Berlin Staatsbibliothek manuscript, Ms. germ. qu. 2021 (1462), see <http://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht/?PPN=PPN620313544> (last accessed on Jan. 29, 2017). Bernhard Schnell, "Wissenstransfer in mittelalterlichen deutschen Kräuterbüchern: Zu den Quellen Konrads von Megenberg und Johannes Hartliebs,"

Konrad von Megenberg (1309–1374): Ein spätmittelalterlicher 'Enzyklopädist' im europäischen Kontext, ed. Edith Feistner. Jahrbuch der Oswald von Wolkenstein-Gesellschaft, 18 (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2011), 143–56.

114 Frank Fürbeth, *Johannes Hartlieb. Untersuchungen zu Leben und Werk*. Hermaea – Germanistische Forschungen N. F. 64 (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1992); Klaus Grubmüller, "Ein Arzt als Literat: Hans Hartlieb," *Poesie und Gebrauchsliteratur im deutschen Mittelalter. Würzburger Colloquium 1978*, ed. Volker Honemann, Kurt Ruh, Bernhard Schnell, and Werner Wegstein. Anglo-Deutsches Colloquium zu Problemen der Mittelhochdeutschen Literatur, 6 (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1979), 14–36; Bernhard Schnell, "Neues zur Biographie Johannes Hartliebs," *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur* 136 (2007): 444–48.

the first place, though he certainly demonstrated great interest in the various sciences,¹¹⁵ hence also in the *artes magicae*.

Both Margrave Johann of Brandenburg-Kulmbach, to whom the *puoch aller verpoten kunst* is dedicated, and Hartlieb's own master, Duke Albrecht III demonstrated great interest in those necromantic skills and could afford to have many experiments with alchemy carried out at their courts. For Hartlieb it was a delicate diplomatic task in writing this work because it also served the purpose to smoothen the political and personal relationships between both dynasties, with Albrecht facing rather difficult financial conditions and hoping to profit from a wedding arrangement. The author is treating the seven illicit arts and then promises to address further eighty-three, which he never completed, however. While the treatise was to serve as an answer to Johann's curiosity about all those necromantic arts, Hartlieb designed it rather as a diatribe against all those condemnable study subjects, which he identifies as the devilish and un-Christian.¹¹⁶ Nevertheless, his *puoch* can be regarded as a kind of compendium on all known magical arts as they were practiced or studied at his time.

As Hartlieb emphasizes in the second chapter of the prologue, magic, superstition, and the belief in the devil's power are just too easily anchored in people's minds, both in the upper and the lower classes (16). His treatise hence is to serve as a warning to study only what is actually present in nature and what the Church has allowed one to focus on. Everything else would only incur God's wrath, and he assumes that his patron, the Margrave Johann, would appreciate to learn about those magical arts in order better to know how to recognize them and hence how to stay away from getting involved in any of them. The seven arts are: "Nigramancia, Geomancia, Ydromancia, Aremancia, Piromancia, Ciromancia und Spatulamancia" (18), which subsequently are defined in great detail. We are actually reminded of the long list of the liberal arts and of the necromantic arts in the speech by Death in Johannes von Tepl's *Der Ackermann von Böhmen*, discussed at the beginning of this Introduction.

115 Schnell, "Wissenstransfer in mittelalterlichen deutschen Kräuterbüchern" (see note 113), 153–54. See the edition, Johannes Hartlieb, "*Kräuterbuch*", ed. Gerold Hayer and Bernhard Schnell. *Wissensliteratur im Mittelalter*, 47 (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2010).

116 Falk Eisermann and Eckhard Graf, "Einleitung," Johannes Hartlieb, *Das Buch aller verbotenen Künste, des Aberglaubens und der Zauberei*, ed., trans., and commentary by id. ([Ahlerstedt]: Param Verlag, 1989), 10–12. This is now available also in English translation, *Hazards of the Dark Arts. Advice for Medieval Princes on Witchcraft and Magic: Johannes Hartlieb's Book of all Forbidden Arts (1456) and Ulrich Molitoris's On Witches and Pythonesses (1489)*, trans. Richard Kieckhefer. *Magic in History* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2017); see my review, forthcoming in *Mediaevistik*.

Good Christians face great difficulties not to be caught by those complex and convoluted necromantic arts, especially those with a simple mind, which proves to be his own justification for his lengthy treatise. The devil can be identified as the source of all forms of magic, and anyone who might ask for his help would commit a deadly sin (20), especially because the devil operates only with lies and evilness (22). But only when people willingly turn to him would the devil have any influence over the human soul (22). Even if one would receive much help from the devil, disguised as a squire, for instance, it would be mandatory to reject such service and stay true to the path toward the Godhead (30) because the human soul is spiritually wedded to God (32).

For Hartlieb necromancy appears as the most dangerous and sinful occult art because it requires sacrifice to the devil and swearing an oath to him (34). Nevertheless, in the following chapters he then explains what books the necromancers use (*Sigillum Salomonis*, *Claviculam Salomonis*, *Jerarchiam*, and *Schamphoras*) and what characters and signs they employ (36). Although he explicitly condemns necromancy, he explains in detail how one can learn and study this art, and he prides himself with offering more information about specifics than most other comparable books would do (36). Yet, immediately following, the author alerts the reader about the devil's strategy to deceive people by pretending to suffer from the conjuration, as if it imposed human will upon the devil, when the opposite would be the case (36).

In the twenty-sixth chapter Hartlieb refers to other necromantic treatises that explain how to collect certain herbs, stones, and roots and to concoct a special potion, such as the book *Kyranidorum*, which apparently enjoyed considerable popularity in the late Middle Ages.¹¹⁷ Hartlieb did apparently not write in a scholarly vacuum; instead he drew from a rich library of grimoires, many of which he must have studied himself since he proves to be so well informed about many details, such as book titles, recipes, rituals, and charms.¹¹⁸ He warns his readers

117 Claude Lecouteux, *Le livre des guérisons et des protections magiques: Deux mille ans de croyances* (Paris: Auzas éditeurs-Imago, 2016); id., *Le livre des grimoires: de la magie au Moyen Age* (Paris: Imago, 2002); id., *Dictionnaire des formules magiques* (Paris: Imago, 2014).

118 Owen Davies, *Grimoires: A History of Magic Books* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); see also Monika Hauf, *Kompendium der Magie und des Okkultismus: von der Magie der Chaldäer über die alten Grimoires und das Astrallicht Eliphas Lévis bis zur Psychologie des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig: Bohmeier, 2008); for an extensive bibliography of relevant pre-modern titles, see *Bibliotheca esoterica: catalogue annoté et illustré de 6707 ouvrages anciens et modernes qui traitent des sciences occultes (alchimie, astrologie, cartomancie, chiromancie, démonologie, grimoires, hypnotisme . . . etc.) comme aussi des sociétés secrètes*. Rpt. (1940; Mansfield Centre, CT: Martino, 1997). Important also proves to be the great work by Collin de Plancy and Jacques Albin Simon, *Dictionnaire infernal ou Répertoire universel des êtres, des personnages, des livres, des faits et des*

that the devil would always command more power than any source in nature, and alerts them that whatever they might read in the various treatises about magical charms, love potions, talismans, and astrology would only amount to nonsense commonly mystified by their authors through secret words, characters, and rituals (38), which altogether constitutes the art called “Notarey” (40).

To illustrate the practical aspects of applied necromancy, Hartlieb offers numerous examples of how people have experimented and believed in all kinds of magic, such as one leading to the ability to fly in the air (45), which would, however, always be nothing but the result of the devil’s involvement, hence of illusion and deception. As he therefore emphasizes, all those forms of magic were strictly banned by the Church: “und vast groß verboten ist” (44; and is very much forbidden).

Hartlieb also refers to the necromantic treatise *Picatrix* which was compiled for a Spanish king and represents one of the very best grimoires, especially because the magical charms and rituals are described in such a skillful fashion as predicated on statements in the Holy Scriptures that even learned theologians could be seduced, accepting it as a learned and acceptable study, though it would mislead extraordinarily many people and condemn their soul to hell.¹¹⁹

choses qui tiennent aux apparitions, aux divinations, à la magie, au commerce de l'enfer, aux démons, aux sorciers, aux sciences occultes, aux grimoires, à la cabale, aux esprits élémentaires, au grand œuvre, aux prodiges, aux erreurs et aux préjugés, aux impostures, aux arts des bohémiens, aux superstitions diverses, aux contes populaires, aux pronostics, et généralement à toutes les fausses croyances, merveilleuses, surprenantes, mystérieuses ou surnaturelles (Paris: P. Mellier, 1844); Albertus Parvus Lucius, *Il segreti meravigliosi della magia naturale e cabalistica*. Nuova collezione di grimoires antichi (1706; Viareggio: Ed. Rebis, 1978). This tradition of publishing catalogues of magic books has continued probably until the modern times; see, for instance, Johann Wallberg, *Compendieuses natürliches Zauber-Buch Oder Aufrichtige Entdeckung Vieler der allerbewährtesten, nicht nur Belustigend- sondern auch Nutzen- und Gewinn-einbringender Geheimnisse, Insbesondere denen Wein-Negotianten dienende, Samt mit eingebrachten kurtzen Discoursen Von der Goldmacherey, Zauberey, Macht und Würckung der guten und bösen Geister in die Körper von Gespenstern, [et]c. Benebst Einem Anhang, Der untrüglichsten, theils medicinisch, theils sympathetisch- und antipathetischer Geheimnisse* (Frankfurt a. M. and Leipzig: n.p., 1745). For the latest survey of grimoires in medieval libraries, see Frank Furbeth, “Magische Texte in mittelalterlichen Bibliotheken,” *Magia daemoniaca* (see note 48), 165–88. Many times the medieval grimoires were not even included in the official catalogues, obviously because that would have been too dangerous for the authors and/or owners. For an excellent survey article, along with a solid bibliography, see <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Picatrix>. The author of another online article, M. Plessner, “*Picatrix* (The Aim of the Sage),” offers further bibliographical information and especially an extended summary of this famous treatise. <http://www.esotericarchives.com/picatrix.htm> (both last accessed on January 29, 2017)

119 See the contributions to *Images et magie: Picatrix entre Orient et Occident*, ed. Jean-Patrice Boudet, Anna Caiozzo, and Nicolas Weill-Parot. Sciences, techniques et civilisations du Moyen

Subsequently, Hartlieb engages meticulously with the various other necromantic arts, such as geomancy, which claims to provide divination through signs in the earth, but he explicitly and seriously warns his patron to forget about God and to forgo all hope to receive help from Him, hence the turning toward magic (57–58). Nothing could defeat the devil, who is always identified as the creator of such necromantic arts, but a pure consciousness of a blessed person and God's power (58).

Most interestingly, Hartlieb is apparently only too well aware of the great attractiveness which magic can exert on ordinary people, such as on the Margrave, whom he almost chastizes in arguing that he finds magic just entertaining, although he would not really believe in it (62). If his subjects would notice his magical practice, they would regard it as legitimate and hence would imitate him.¹²⁰ Moreover, as he observes, even the Virgin Mary and Saint George are being abused by the ordinary people for divinatory purposes, when they appeal to them or use their names in magical rituals, which he calls a “bösen, schnöden ungelauben” (64; evil, miserable superstition). Apparently, just as much as in the early Middle Ages when pagan charms and Christian prayers were often mingled in a form of acculturation, Hartlieb reports indirectly that people tend to rely on those sacred names in order to learn something about their own future.

Âge à l'aube des lumières, 13 (Paris: Champion, 2011); cf. also Fürbeth, “Magische Texte in mittelalterlichen Bibliotheken,” *Magia daemoniaca* (see note 48), 173–76. The *Picatrix* was the Latin translation of the Arabic book *Ghāyat al-hakīm* (The Goal of The Wise) by a man currently identified as Pseudo-Majriti who carried out his task upon the request of Alphonso X of Castile at some time between 1256 and 1258. It has survived in thirty-one manuscripts from as late as the eighteenth century and exerted great influence on such intellectuals interested in necromancy as Marsilio Ficino (fifteenth century) and Thomas Campanella (seventeenth century).

120 Reinhard Seyboth, “Markgraf Johann der Alchimist von Brandenburg (1406–1464); Studien zu seiner Persönlichkeit und seiner Politik,” *Jahrbuch für fränkische Landesforschung* 51 (1991): 39–69; for parallel cases, though focused on astrology, see Wiebke Deimann, “Astrology in an Age of Transition: Johannes Lichtenberger and His Clients,” *Astrologers and Their Clients* (see note 93), 83–104; see also the contributions to *Religion und Magie in Ostmitteleuropa: Spielräume theologischer Normierungsprozesse in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, ed. Thomas Wünsch. Religions- und Kulturgeschichte in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa, 8 (Berlin: Lit, 2006); Edward Goldberg, *Jews and Magic in Medici Florence: The Secret World of Benedetto Blanis*. Toronto Italian Studies (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011); for a focused study on court astrology, see Darin Hayton, *The Crown and the Cosmos: Astrology and the Politics of Maximilian I* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2015); Andrea Berlin, *Magie am Hof der Herzöge von Burgund: Aufstieg und Fall des Grafen von Étampes*. Spätmittelalterstudien, 6 (Constance and Munich: UVK Verlagsgesellschaft, 2016). See also Dieter Kempkens, “Der Erfolg der Prognostica auf dem Buchmarkt in der Frühen Neuzeit,” *Jahrbuch für Kommunikationsgeschichte* 16 (2014): 5–27.

Other practices were applied to solve cases of theft (66), such as to give blessing to cheese which the thief would not be able to eat. Hartlieb is so rational and critical in his thinking that he immediately alerts his readers to the danger of abuse, such as when the cheese would then be substituted with soap, whereby any hated person could be accused and tried as an innocent culprit (66–68). The author, however, is also willing to accept that magical practices do work at times, but he explains this once again with a reference to the devil who allows this to happen so that he can seduce people even better (68).

Surprisingly, he then charges the princes, above all, for their evil role model since they tend to practice magic for selfish reasons, such as to learn the secrets of another prince (68) or to win love (70), which would all be directed against God's teachings and which would mislead the ordinary people away from the true Christian faith. In the case of hydromancy, people would even go so far as to employ holy water for their own purposes, thus practicing magic in a syncretic fashion, relying both on pagan rituals and Christian concepts. As Hartlieb reports, for instance, many farmers would give blessed waters to their animals with the assumption that this would prevent wolves from attacking and eating them. He rejects this outright, commenting: "Das ist ungelaub, wann das wasser ist dem menschen geweicht und nicht dem vich" (74; That is superstition because the water was blessed for people and not for animals). Considering the degree of details concerning the common practices with hydromancy offered by Hartlieb (74), we might have to assume that he must have witnessed numerous experiments or tried his own hand at this necromantic art, even though he explicitly states that it would all amount to nothing but superstition, "ungelaub" (74), insofar as the devil would create nothing but an illusion and make people believe that their ritual had the desired effect.

One specific ritual deserves particular mention because it continues to be practiced until today. In chapter 62 Hartlieb mentions that some hydromancers throw hot, or molten, lead or an alloy (pewter) into a container of water in order to observe how many bubbles emerge and what kind of shape the metal takes (76). The former belongs to hydromancy, the latter to pyromancy, or rather molybdomancy. Until today, this ritual is practiced at New Year's in Germany ("Bleigießen")¹²¹ and in the Scandinavian countries, especially in Finland,

121 Max Ressel, *Das Bleigiessen: eine Zusammenstellung der verschiedenen Figuren*. Bunt es Allerlei, 12 (Mühlhausen i. Th.: G. Danner, 1921); Till Hartmann and Paul Jansen, *Bleigießen: eine alte mantische Kunst und ihre Symbole* (Hamburg: Corona, 2008); for a good list of characteristic shapes which the molten lead assumes in the cold water, see <http://www.mrshea.com/germusa/customs/bleimean.htm>; see also Christa Agnes Tuczay, *Kulturgeschichte der mittelalterlichen Wahrsagerei* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2012).

where it is called “uudenvuoden tina,” but then also in Estonia and elsewhere.¹²² However, for Hartlieb this all amounts to terrible and condemnable superstition, especially because those rituals are commonly carried out in competition with Christian church service, and “jung und alts maint, es sey kain sünd. Es it aber nit, wann es ist ain ungelaub, den die haiden vor langen jaren getriben haben und noch treiben” (78; young and old assume that it is no sinfulness. The opposite is the case because it is a superstition which the pagans practiced many years ago and continue to do so).

In other words, Hartlieb is more than aware that he is actually engaged in a highly confrontational battle against popular culture enjoyed and embraced by people at all stations of life, as if Christianity constituted only a thin varnish which could be easily undermined and destroyed by the old faiths.¹²³ The author would not have so many reasons to criticize people everywhere for their foolish and ill-conceived concepts if he had not witnessed many examples everywhere, though he is writing his treatise for the Margrave and his courtly audience above all.

122 Raisa Maria Toivo, *Faith and Magic in Early Modern Finland*. Palgrave Historical Studies in Witchcraft and Magic (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016). See also the very old, yet still informative doctoral dissertation, Matti Waronen, *Vainajainpalvelus muinaisilla suomalaisilla*, 3rd ed. (1895; Helsinki: Salakirjat, 2009. [“Ancient Finns and serving the dead”]). I would like to thank my colleague Susanna Niiranen, University of Jyväskylä, for pointing this out to me and providing an English translation of a crucial passage: “The shape of the resulting cast was examined and interpreted to predict the various future events of the coming year. Different shapes have different meaning, promising either good luck or health, wealth, happiness, sorrow, sickness, etc. If the cast was very rugged, it meant money, wealth and happiness, for instance. Sometimes the water was used . . . , but somehow they foresaw by listening to the sound of the water. Either way, the water in which the tin was cast was also ‘magical.’ The sound of water was related to harvest, cattle, and future spouses” (218–19).

123 Baumann, *Aberglaube für Laien* (see note 82); see also Batriz Barba de Piña Chan, *La expansión de la magia* (Córdoba, Mexico: Instituto Nacional de Antropología, 1989); Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, trans. by John and Anne Tedeschi (1976; Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980/1992); id., *The Night Battles: Witchcraft & Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth & Seventeenth Centuries*, trans. by John and Anne Tedeschi (1966; 1983; Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); id., *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath*, trans. by Raymond Rosenthal (1989; Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991); Euan Cameron, *Enchanted Europe: Superstition, Reason, and Religion 1250–1750* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); see the collected articles by H. C. Erik Midelfort, *Witchcraft, Madness, Society, and Religion in Early Modern Germany: A Ship of Fools*. Variorum Collected Studies Series (Farnham, Surrey, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Variorum, 2013); *Superstition and Magic in Early Modern Europe: A Reader*, ed. Helen Parish (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).

This finds further confirmation when he addresses aeromancy, another method of divination based on areal phenomena (80–82), listing numerous examples of how people interpret the flights of various birds, which then convinces them to change their behavior or their outfit. This then also forces Hartlieb to reflect on many a prince who determine the date for their hunting based on the kind of wind, which the author once again condemns categorically as “unge-laub” (82; superstition). At the same time, he has to admit that good hunters know how to use a certain direction of wind to their advantage over the prey, which altogether amounts to a sophisticated skill and art, and would not have anything to do with magic. Summarily, Hartlieb then cuts it all short and concludes: “Ains frommen menschen gelück ist in allen örten der welt” (82; a pious person finds good luck everywhere in the world).

Intriguingly, he also rejects the common habit to associate sneezing with forthcoming fortune or misfortune (84–86) and tries to offer a scientific explanation for this physical phenomenon. Similarly, with respect to comets he encourages his readers to accept those as natural features in the sky which serious astronomers are fully entitled to study because the comets have natural causes and are hence part of the natural universe without any magic or the devil’s influence (86). However, Hartlieb also warns the astronomers to approach their task very carefully and wisely because even some of the greatest scholars have been maligned in public because of their explanatory statements: “ungeliündt worden sind” (86; [they] have been slandered). However, Hartlieb then admits himself that wise medical doctors have predicted the emergence of pestilence or epidemics on the basis of a careful study of the change of air. Again, he insists that such divination is simply based on natural consequences, as explained already by the greatest scholarly authorities in the past, such as Avicenna (88).¹²⁴ If a doctor were to go beyond the limits of natural reason, he would fall prey to the devil’s influence as well. So, to find the truth would always require a delicate process of applying permitted, legitimate, and rational operations of analysis, and to avoid slipping into the domain of superstition, ruled by the devil.

Magic carried out by means of secret words, such as “ragel” (96) would constitute a grave danger for the soul since no one really knows how to translate it. He himself had inquired about it among “kriechen, tartern, dürcken, ir ärztz und sternseher. Ich hab auch gefraugt die jüdin” (96; Greeks, Tartars, Turks, their

124 Dimitri Gutas, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition: Introduction to Reading Avicenna’s Philosophical Works*. Islamic Philosophy, Theology, and Science, 89 (Leiden and New York: Brill, 1988); Jon McGinnis, *Avicenna*. Great Medieval Thinkers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Nancy G. Siraisi, *Avicenna in Renaissance Italy: The Canon and Medical Teaching in Italian Universities after 1500* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014).

medical doctors and astronomers. I have also asked the Jews), but all to no avail. Hence, Hartlieb is afraid that such words might have originated from the devil and should be avoided, which is the universal and pervasive tenor of his entire book. In full conformity with the Church, then, the author finally concludes with the complete condemnation of all sorts of magic, decrying every practice or ritual as nothing but superstition caused by the devil. Thus, he strongly supports the harsh persecution of all those who operate with magic and refers to the specific legal guidelines against magic as formulated in the Decretals. (156). He even goes so far as to support torture with hot irons, tongs, and hooks to destroy the magicians' bodies without any mercy, since this is prescribed in the law books.

Ironically, however, to summarize our findings briefly, Hartlieb pursues a double goal, on the one hand describing any conceivable form of magic as detailed as possible or permissible, on the other condemning it as forcefully as he can. Thereby he reveals that he himself has studied necromancy, magic, astrology, hydromancy, geomancy, etc. quite extensively and now claims to be an authority in that field. Moreover, through his numerous references to popular opinions and practices, which he regularly identifies as evil and devilish superstition, Hartlieb also admits indirectly how much those cultural rituals and concepts were widespread at his time. One really might have to wonder how much the Church had actually succeeded in controlling people's minds at that time. Hartlieb's *puoch* obviously confirms how much magic had become extremely popular despite its dangerous and marginalized position. Reading this valuable treatise, we almost gain the impression that the faith in God was waning at that time, being replaced by a faith in magical powers. We are facing the rise of a new epoch, in which the devil was to play a much more significant role than ever before.¹²⁵ It is not surprising that the discourse on magic in all of its facets also gained increased valence and intensity. After all, the Church was not ready or willing simply to stand by, so the competing forces – magic versus religion, whereas not so much magic versus sciences – quickly clashed more and more, especially by the late fifteenth century, which offers an additional explanation for the rise of a different aspect of the large topic of magic, the horrible witch craze.¹²⁶

125 *The Faustian Century: German Literature in the Age of Luther and Faustus*, ed. J. M. van der Laan and Andrew Weeks (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2013); see now Jan-Dirk Müller, "Magie, Erotik, Kunst: Zur Vorgeschichte einer frühneuzeitlichen Problemfigur," *Magia daemoniaca* (see note 48), 143–63.

126 The research literature on this topic is legion, which does not need to be reviewed here; but see the contribution to this volume by Amiri Ayanna.

Historia von D. Johann Fausten

At the end of the sixteenth century, an anonymous poet published a most remarkable prose narrative, the famous *Historia von D. Johann Fausten*, which appeared in print in Frankfurt a. M. om 1587. The printer, Johann Spieß, obviously achieved a great success with this book, insofar as he could produce twenty-one editions between 1587 and 1598, six of which in the first year alone.¹²⁷ But the interest in this text did not wane in the following centuries,¹²⁸ and the book was then even translated (or adapted) into a dramatic work in English by Christopher Marlow sometime between 1588 and 1593, the year of Marlowe's death.¹²⁹ Once Johann Wolfgang Goethe adapted this sixteenth-century source for his own *Faust*, it became actually a major contribution to world literature. Goethe's *Urfaust* was created between 1772 and 1775, *Faust ein Fragment*, published in 1790. Goethe completed a preliminary version of what is now known as Part One in 1806. Its publication in 1808 was followed by the revised 1828–1829 ed-

127 Bodo Gotzkowsky, "Volksbücher": *Prosaromane, Renaissancenovellen, Versdichtungen und Schwankbücher. Bibliographie der deutschen Drucke*. Part I: *Drucke des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts*. Bibliotheca Bibliographica Aureliana, CXXV (Baden-Baden: Verlag Valentin Koerner, 1991), 402–15. For the history of research, particularly focusing on the *Historia*, see Albrecht Classen, *The German Volksbuch. A Critical History of a Late-Medieval Genre*. Studies in German Language and Literature, 15 (Lewiston, NY, Queenston, and Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 1995, reissued 1999), 213–43.

128 See, for instance, *Dritter Theil D. Johann Fausten GauckelTasche: Von allerley unerhörten / verborgenen / listigen KunstStücken / Geheimnissen und Erfindungen / dadurch ein Mensch Traum außlegen / weissagen ... und andere ... beides lustige und nützliche Stück zu wercke richten kan; Beneben noch fünff sonderbaren / vortrefflichen und bewertesten Kunststücken ... / durch Johan de Luna: Christoff Wagners gewesenen Discipeln*, printed in 1621 (s.l. and s.i.), which is erroneously called 'third part,' and which is identical with the edition from 1608 (Gera: Spieß). See also the later adaptation *Des bekandten Ertz-Zauberers Doctor Joh. Fausts ärgerliches Leben und Ende, vor vielen Jahren der bösen Welt zum Schrecken beschrieben, von Georg Rudolph Widmann, nachgehends mit neuen Erinnerungen / vermehrt von Joh. Nicolao Pfitzer, und endlich ist noch beygefüget worden, Conrad Wolffgang Platzii, Vorbericht von der Sünde der Zauberey* (1726).

129 Christopher Marlowe, *Dr Faustus: the A- and B-texts* (1604, 1616), ed. David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen. Revels Student Editions (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014); see also the contributions to *Witchcraft and Society in England and America, 1550–1750*, ed. Marion Gibson (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003); for the wider reception history, see also Carmen Leñero, *Las transmigraciones de Fausto* (Ciudad de Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2014).

ition, the last to be edited by Goethe himself. He successfully completed Part Two in 1831, one year before his death.¹³⁰

The printer Spieß emphasizes in the prologue that the historical Dr. Faust had been a highly learned, very popular magician and necromancer who had experienced many adventures; because of the great interest in Faust, the anonymous composer felt inspired to offer his own version of this mysterious individual.¹³¹ The explicit purpose of this work would be to serve as a “schrecklich Exemple deß Teuffelischen Betrugs / Leibs vnd Seelen Mords / allen Christen zur Warnung” (833; a horrifying example of the devil’s deception, which brings about the death of the body and the soul, as a warning for all Christians).

Faust was, as Spieß implies, misled to submit himself under the devil because of his curiosity, which ultimately led him astray and made him fall away from God. However, irrespective of this literary and theological projection, we can be certain of Dr. Faustus’s historical reality, a scholar who was renowned for his astrological skills, but who also seems to have dabbled in magic and became an iconic figure amongst the Humanists and Protestant Reformers of his time, being admired and feared, demonized and glorified, mystified and debunked at the same time.¹³² Whereas before magic and conjurations of the devil through all kinds of strategies were commonly rejected in a learned fashion, or were embraced as a useful art, here we encounter a bitter engagement with those topics which unsettled deeply both the Catholics and the Protestants, although neither side could really repress this interest in the necromantic sciences.¹³³

130 This is such a world classic that it would be useless here to list the relevant studies; but see Gloria Flaherty, *Shamanism and the Eighteenth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992); see also the contributions to *A Companion to Goethe’s Faust: Parts I and II*, ed. Paul Bishop (Rochester, NY, and Woodbridge: Camden House, 2001); for the latest English translation, see Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust: A Tragedy in Two Parts*, trans. Thomas Wayne (New York: Algora Publishing, 2016). Cf. also the useful facing-page edition of the original German (Part One) and the ‘classical’ English translation by S. T. Coleridge from 1821 (Part One), online at <https://web.archive.org/web/20130331154558/http://www.einam.com/faust/index.html> (last accessed on Jan. 30, 2017).

131 Quoted from *Romane des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts: Nach den Erstdrucken mit sämtlichen Holzschnitten*, ed. Jan-Dirk Müller. Bibliothek der Frühen Neuzeit, 1 (Frankfurt a. M.: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1990), 833; most valuable proves to be the extensive commentary, 1319–1430.

132 Frank Baron, “Faustus of the Sixteenth Century: His Life, Legend, and Myth,” *The Faustian Century* (see note 125), 43–64. See also Thomas Willard’s contribution to this volume.

133 Jan-Dirk Müller, *Das Faustbuch in den konfessionellen Konflikten des 16. Jahrhunderts*. Philosophisch-historische Klasse: Sitzungsberichte, 2014/1 (Munich: Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2014).

Quite similarly as in Hartlieb's treatise, the following account quickly reveals its ambivalent nature, on the surface functioning as an explicit warning against ever signing a contract with the devil, but in reality, so it seems, presenting a wide range of fascinating stories about what an individual could truly achieve by means of magic, though at a very high cost, one's own life and the well-being of the soul.¹³⁴ Necromancy is identified as the greatest sin one could commit against God, as already observed in the Old Testament, 1 Sam. 28 (836).¹³⁵ Subsequently the narrator enters into a whole diatribe against the devil and equates everything associated with magic with his workings, warning his audience that most servants of the devil would experience a horrible end, such as in the case of Dr. Faustus. Although he could enjoy many entertaining adventures, sexual encounters, and gluttony, he had finally to submit under the devil and was lost (839).

Nevertheless, the author still moves ahead and relates the story of his protagonist, but, just in the same way as the printer formulated it, only as a "schrecklich Exempel" (841; horrible example), even though he then points out that he has left out all "formae coniurationum" (841; magical charms), as if he were an expert in those or would have access to such information. His intentions are to create a literary work "zur Warnung vnnd Besserung" (841; warning and reform), and yet we are presented with a most fascinating literary reflection of what the devil could actually help a magician to achieve his goals here in this life.¹³⁶

One of the remarkable features of young Faustus was his superior intelligence, which allowed him to rise up fast through the academic ranks at the university (843–44). After graduation he turned away from theology, embraced astrology and mathematics instead, and also became a medical doctor. However, dissatisfied with his limitations in knowledge, he probed how he could explore all aspects both on earth and in heaven, and thus, out of a misdirected form of *curiositas*, dedicated himself to necromancy, learned magical "vocabula, figuras, characteres vnd coniurationes" (845; words, figures, characters, and conjurations) in order to draw from the devil's power for his own sake. While the anonymous author of *Dr. Fausten* here explicitly rejects curiosity as a danger for the

134 Gerhild Scholz Williams and Alexander Schwarz, *Existentielle Vergeblichkeit: Verträge in der Melusine, im Eulenspiegel und im Dr. Faustus*. Philologische Studien und Quellen, 179 (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 2003).

135 This also found numerous reflections in late medieval and early modern art; see the contribution to this volume by Martha Moffit Peacock.

136 For a great study illuminating the sixteenth-century context, see Andrew Weeks, "The German Faustian Century," *The Faustian Century* (see note 125), 17–40.

well-being of the soul, the entire period was determined by this innovative desire to gain new understanding and to explore the world, even though here it is identified as dangerous and a turning away from God.¹³⁷ Indeed, soon enough Faustus meets the devil, they both sign a contract, which then launches the actual story, with the protagonist roaming the known world, enjoying all kinds of adventures, but at the end paying for all that splendor and delight with his life and his soul.

Many of the specific aspects already discussed by Hartlieb come to the surface in this literary treatment of Dr. Faustus, such as that the devil would pretend unwillingness to appear in front of the conjurer, though this would be only a deception to catch the man's soul the more easily (846). As the author emphasizes, Faustus, like many other magicians, felt flattered and pompous when the devil seemed to submit himself under his control, as if the magician truly exerted so much power, although the opposite was really the case (847). In other words, as the narrator then formulates, the magician in reality becomes a victim of his own "Stoltz vnnd Hochmut" (852; pride and arrogance). As much as the entire account subsequently indicates how much Faustus was misdirected and lost his faith in God because of his unquenchable desire to learn all secrets of this world and to enjoy his life in physical terms, all brought about by the devil's manipulations. We are also informed about the infernal world in its power structure, and we learn through Mephostophiles's words many occult secrets and wonders, which easily explains why the *Historia* experienced such a popularity on the book market. There is much fascination in magic, both then and today,

137 This phenomenon has already been discussed numerous time, and *curiositas* can be identified as one of the keywords of the critical paradigm shift characterizing the rise of the early modern world; Neil Kenny, *Curiosity in Early Modern Europe: Word Histories*. Wolfenbütteler Forschungen, 81 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998); see the contributions to *Curiositas: Welterfahrung und ästhetische Neugierde in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit*, ed. Klaus Krüger (Göttingen: Wallstein-Verlag, 2002); Andrea Moltzen, *Curiositas – Studien zu "Alexander", "Herzog Ernst", "Brandan", "Fortunatus", "Historia von D. Johann Fausten" und "Wagnerbuch"* (Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovac, 2016). The classical study of this phenomenon remains the one by Hans Blumenberg, *Der Prozeß der theoretischen Neugierde*. 4th expanded and revised ed. Die Legitimität der Neuzeit, 3. Suhrkamp-Taschenbuch Wissenschaft, 24 (1973; Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1988). The issue, however, was already discussed explicitly in the seventeenth century; see, for instance, Jacob Masen, *Utilis Curiositas De Humanae Vitae Felicitate; Vtilis Curiositas De Humanae Vitae Felicitate; Per Varios hominum status Cum amoeno Historiarum aliquot delectu ad usum non minus Politicorum, quam Ecclesiasticorum inquisita; Utilis Curiositas* (Cologne: Friessem, 1672). Regarding curiosity in *Dr. Faustus*, see Marina Münkler, "'curiositas' als Problem der Grenzziehung zwischen Immanenz und Transzendenz in der 'Historia von D. Johann Fausten'," *Neugier und Tabu: Regeln und Mythen des Wissens*, ed. Martin Baisch. Rombach Wissenschaften. Reihe Scenae, 12 (Freiburg i. Br.: Rombach, 2010), 45–69.

and as much as the narrator emphasizes consistently how dangerous and un-Christian the collaboration with the devil would be, the curious individual, here Faustus, cannot resist and becomes a victim, loses his self-control, and allows the devil to rob him of his soul.¹³⁸

If we follow the narrative development, we easily recognize how much the *Historia* represented a kind of summary of centuries of magic literature. After the discourse on the properties of Hell (870–79), the topic turns to calendars and astrology (881–83), the nature of God's creation and of heaven (884–87), then again to hell and its inhabitants (888–91), which is followed by Faustus's personal visit of that infernal place (891–96). Subsequently Faustus gets the opportunity to explore the sphere of the stars and planets (896–901), which continues with an extensive travel throughout the world, exploring the various kingdoms, countries, and cities (901–15). The protagonist is even allowed to pay a visit to paradise (915–18), and subsequently he learns about a comet (918), about the stars (919), the property of the evil spirits (920–21), and the nature and origin of thunder (921–22).

In general, the text is increasingly moving away from magic and turns to broader interests typical of a learned person who desires to explore all aspects of this and the other worlds, which is here made possible through the power of the devil. Medieval magic has thus transpired into a new strategy to learn everything there is in material and in spiritual terms, and this *curiositas* means, of course, Faustus's miserable death at the end. Yet, in the meantime the narrative's real appeal for the broader audience did not rest, as we may assume, in the Christian moralization, but in the intrigue which those reports about hell, paradise, the stars, etc. exerted. Then there is also the humorous component, such as when Faustus manages to utilize magic to make fun of innocent or foolish contemporaries at the courts, in the cities, and elsewhere (926–43). We might recognize here in Faustus an avatar of Till Eulenspiegel, although he operates with devilish powers to fool and ridicule ordinary people.

Then the author included numerous jests performed by the protagonist during the Shrovetide season, and one of them proves to be a close parallel to the magic performed in the Middle English *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (see above), with four magicians seemingly decapitating each other without suffering any harm (951–52). For Faustus this represents a significant irritation because

138 Jan-Dirk Müller, "Magie, Erotik, Kunst" *Magia daemoniaca* (see note 48), 162–63, suggests that in all the devil literature and in those early modern novels where magic plays a significant role the seduction through eroticism and pleasure assumes a central function. For the history of devil literature, see Albrecht Classen, "The Devil in the Early Modern World and in Sixteenth-Century German Devil Literature," *The Faustian Century* (see note 125), 257–83.

those men steal the show from him and successfully entertain the audience. In his anger, Faustus secretly intervenes, cuts the stem of flowers and places them in a vase on the table and can thus destroy their magical powers. Unfortunately, this then also means that one of them whose head had already been cut off cannot place it back on his body and thus dies a miserable death (952). Apparently, for the protagonist magic also represents an instrument to achieve fame and reputation; otherwise he would not have strategized in such a mean fashion to destroy his opponent's power.

In another chapter we hear that Faustus, obviously with the help of the devil, has a greenhouse next to his residence in Wittenberg where he can grow all kinds of fruit and flowers in the middle of winter. This magic delights all visitors, but curiously here the narrator has nothing negative to say about this operation and does not even mention the devil. Despite all the moral and religious concerns, major sections of the *Historia* simply operate with the intriguing, fascinating, and entertaining features possible through magic.

However, as to be expected, the moralization and the religious teaching return at the end, since the didactic intentions continue to be of primary purpose, strictly warning the readers about the dangers for the human soul resulting from magic, which is consistently identified with the devil. Not surprisingly, in the last hours of Faustus's life, Mephostophiles reappears and orders Faustus to follow through with his oath to the devil, to despair of God's help, and to accept the catastrophe (969), which then also comes to pass. The author thus concludes his narrative with severe warnings about magic, as attractive as it might appear at first sight, providing learning, physical pleasures, excitement, and power. Faustus's major error had been to submit to his own hubris and to follow the path of arrogance, which then made him forget God's grace.

Worse, however, ultimately proves to be that Faustus does not try to turn back to God and despairs, like Judas did, which makes him even more condemnable. Formulating a general proverb, the devil tells him: "Wer zuviel wil haben / dem wirt zu wenig" (970; Whoever wants to get too much will receive too little). Continuing in the same vein, he also expresses the same idea in a more metaphorical fashion: "Es gehoert mehr zum Tantz / dann ein roht par Schuch / hettestu Gott vor Augen gehabt / vnd dich mit denen Gaben / so er dir verliehen / begnuegen lassen / doerfftestu diesen Reyen nicht tantzen / vnnd soltest dem Teuffel nicht so leichtlich zu willen worden seyn" (971; You need more for a dance than a pair of red shoes. If you had remembered God and if you had been content with the gifts that He had granted to you, you would not have partaken in this dance and you would not have become so easily a willing victim for the devil).

There are no more specifics about magic, which is simply reduced here to an evil power. The devil lends this to a human being temporarily in order to gain control over his soul and to take him down to hell. Nevertheless, the *Historia* appealed to a wide audience, and found a number of imitators, first the *Wagnerbuch* (*Ander theil D. Johann Fausti Historien*, 1593),¹³⁹ then in a variety of further versions even in the early seventeenth century. Faustus's horrible death did not deter the large number of readers and other authors to engage with this figure, with his experimentation with magic and incantations of the devil. A Dutch translation appeared in 1592, a French one in 1598; in 1599 Georg Rudolf Widmann expanded the *Historia* to three volumes, adding new commentaries and notes. Another version by Johann Nikolaus Pfitzer appeared in 1674, and then we know of numerous puppet plays presenting Faustus on the stage, such as the one produced in Lübeck in 1666. We also need to consider the version by the so-called Christlich Meynender from 1725.¹⁴⁰ Little wonder that Goethe later realized the enormous potentials of this "Volksbuch" (chap book) and created his play *Faust* (see above).¹⁴¹

However, already Spieß's contemporaries debated Faustus, the role of magic, its efficacies, whether it commanded real power or not, and reflected publicly on the role of the devil and the question how to advance sciences. In his massive treatise *De praestigiis daemonum* (1583), the famous medical doctor and author Johann Weyer declared: "Our fellow Germans use one and the same word *Zauberer* for the magician who is a professional deceiver and illusionist and often well educated . . ."¹⁴² He was primarily concerned to combat the uncontrolled witch craze and argued that "these writers provide drawn sword and kindling for the savage executioners, who lack judgment, discretion, and any trace of pity" (98) in their persecution of women accused of being witches. Consequently Weyer discusses the entire group of "infamous magician[s] (98–100), the origin of magic (100–06), and the destiny of later practitioners of magic (106–110). In that context he also outlines Faustus's biography, and reviews books of magic

139 Gotzkowsky, "Volksbücher" (see note 127), 437–41. See also Karl-Heinz Huckle, *Figuren der Unruhe: Faustdichtungen*. Untersuchungen zur deutschen Literaturgeschichte, 64 (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1992).

140 *Das Faustbuch des Christlich Meynenden nach dem Druck von 1725*, ed. Siegfried Szamatólski. Deutsche Literaturdenkmale des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts, 39 (1891; Nendeln/Liechtenstein: Kraus Reprint, 1968).

141 Classen, *The German Volksbuch* (see note 127), 227–29.

142 Johann Weyer, *De praestigiis daemonum*, ed. George Mora, trans. by John Shea. *Witches, Devils, and Doctors in the Renaissance*. Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 73 (Binghamton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1991), 97.

(grimoires) (110–14). Without going into details, we can thus conclude that the discourse on magic grew considerably in the late Middle Ages and then continued well into the early modern age, although I am not sure that we can be certain that the interest in magic, witchcraft, sorcery has waned truly, though it has surely been marginalized or pushed into the background in modern times.

Many more names of magicians or necromancers, of astrologers and alchemists, or other specialists of the occult arts could be mentioned to widen the field of investigation, many of whom enjoyed a high reputation and were regarded as solid and trustworthy experts in their field, as already Johannes Hartlieb had confirmed in his *puoch*: “Die kunst zu treiben hört zu dem rechten sternseher, und wann sy die zaichen ußlegen nach ir natürlichen ursach, so ist es nit sünd noch verpotten” (86; This art is the one practiced by the trained star gazer, and when they interpret the signs according to their natural causes, then it is neither a sin nor a forbidden matter).

Of course, this broad topic has already attracted much research, as my copious footnotes have hopefully indicated clearly and thoroughly enough. We have observed that magic and magicians commonly appear in many different texts, both literary and ‘scientific’ or simply factual, and all those voices have richly contributed to a complex discourse throughout the ages which often pitted individuals or groups against the majority, especially the Christian Church, but then magic apparently also made its way into the Church as well under particular circumstances.¹⁴³ We cannot, of course, naively identify magic as a precursor of modern science or as equally valid, but the idea behind it, the driving force motivating certain people to dedicate themselves to the study and practice of magic, is probably very similar to that which inspires and energizes even modern scientists, searching for the understanding of natural and other phenomena.

It would be impossible to delineate specific areas in medieval and early modern Europe where magic might have dominated. In earlier times magic and sorcery were more commonly practiced by individuals predestined for this task, or vested with special powers, whereas since the high and late Middle Ages magic emerged increasingly as a sophisticated and learned art and thus more commonly clashed with the clerical and laical authorities. However, among folk cultures and folk medicine, for instance, magic continued to play a huge role over the following centuries, and even until today, as represented, for instance, by the flood of amulets and talismans, magical charms, rituals, performances, etc.¹⁴⁴

143 Sophie Page, *Magic in the Cloister* (see note 39).

144 See the contributions to this volume by Chiara Benati and David Tomíček.

In light of the numerous documents and visual representations from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, reflecting an ongoing, at times maybe even intensifying interest in magic and all the related arts, it seems rather doubtful that the Church and the scientists/medical professionals really gained the complete control over the proper interpretation of the natural world in physical terms or through a reference to God in theological terms.¹⁴⁵ As much as the process of disenchantment progressed, as Max Weber had formulated, at least since the eighteenth century, just as much as there seems to have occurred also a re-enchantment process, as magical practices, the establishment of an order of magicians, the *Ordo Templi Orientis*, in 1903, the development of parapsychology, the renewed interest in tarot cards, and the like richly document.¹⁴⁶ Or, we might say that the strong tradition of magic, alchemy, astrology, and necromancy at large could simply not be repressed by the Catholic or Protestant Church and also not by the worldly authorities, despite massive and systematic efforts in that regard. This would not mean at all that we would have to criticize or to question the modern sciences, but we ought to acknowledge in some way the actual presence of ‘irrationality,’ spirituality, and some sort of power beyond the material existence not accessible by means of scientific investigation.¹⁴⁷ After all, taking just the example of astrology, a secondary branch of magic, the early modern age witnessed numerous highly successful court astrologers, such as Georg Caesius from Burgbernheim (1543–1604),¹⁴⁸ Wilhelm Misocacus from Danzig (1511–1595),¹⁴⁹ and David Herlitz from Stargard (1557–1636).¹⁵⁰

145 Matilde Battistini, *Astrology, Magic, and Alchemy in Art* (see note 41); Charles Zika, *The Appearance of Witchcraft: Print and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007); *Religion, the Supernatural, and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe: An Album Amicorum for Charles Zika*, ed. Jennifer Spinks and Dagmar Eichberger (Boston: Brill, 2015); Paola Maresca, *Alchimia, magia e astrologia nella Firenze dei Medici: giardini e di-more simboliche* (Florence: Pontecorvoli Ed., 2012); see also the contribution to the present volume by Martha Moffitt Peacock.

146 Graham Cunningham, *Religion and Magic: Approaches and Theories* (Edinburgh University Press, 1999); Susan Greenwood, *Magic, Witchcraft and the Otherworld: An Anthropology* (Oxford: Berg 2000); for a truly excellent summary survey of the entire history of magic until the present day, see <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magie#Renaissance-Magie> (last accessed on Feb. 2, 2017).

147 Susan Greenwood and Raje Airey, *The Illustrated History of Magic and Witchcraft: A Visual Guide to the History and Practice of Magic Through the Ages, Its Origins, Ancient Traditions, Language, Learning, Rituals and Great Practitioners* (London: Lorenz Books 2006); Owen Davies, *The Oxford Illustrated History of Witchcraft and Magic* (Corby: Oxford University Press, 2017). See also Christoph Daxelmüller, *Zauberpraktiken: Die Ideengeschichte der Magie* (Düsseldorf: Albatros, 2001).

148 Dieter Kempkens, “Georg Caesius als Hofastronom des Markgrafen Georg Friedrich von Brandenburg-Ansbach,” *Simon Marius und seine Forschung*, ed. Hans Gaab and Pierre Leich.

The common association of magic with the devil (black magic) was more likely the result of acerbic criticism of the magical art by the Catholic Church and hence a convenient way of maligning all practices of para-scientific investigations and experimentations out of fear of losing control and authority over the parishioners' souls.

While Marguerite de Navarre tried to hide her true interest in magic and occultism in her famous collection of tales, her *Heptaméron* (1558/1559), by ridiculing the world of magicians who operate with a kind of voodoo (no. 1) and of ghosts (no. 39),¹⁵¹ William Shakespeare (1564–1616) obviously cared little about any church-imposed restrictions concerning the treatment and evaluation of magic, the miraculous, or sorcery. Both in his play *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595/1596) and in *The Tempest* (1610–1611) we discover fairies, magical figures, the theme of magical love potion – almost similar to the love potion concocted by the Irish Queen Isolde in Gottfried von Straßburg's *Tristan* (ca. 1210)¹⁵² – and other fanciful aspects, all playfully staged as important for the love story to develop and to make the audience laugh and cry.¹⁵³ For the Elizabethan audiences it was perfectly normal to watch magic being performed on the stage be-

Acta Historica Astronomiae, 57 (Leipzig: AVA, 2016), 149–61; for a bibliography on him, see <http://www.astronomie-nuernberg.de/index.php?category=personen&page=490> (last accessed on Feb. 9, 2017).

149 Richard L. Kremer, "Mathematical Astronomy and Calendar-Making in Gdańsk from 1540 to 1700," *Astronomie – Literatur – Volksaufklärung. Der Schreibkalender der Frühen Neuzeit mit seinen Text- und Bildbeigaben*, ed. Klaus-Dieter Herbst. Presse und Geschichte: Neue Beiträge, 67; *Acta calendariographica: Forschungsberichte*, 5 (Bremen: Ed. Lumière; and Jena: Verlag Historische Kalender Drucke, 2012); 477–92. See also online at http://www.presseforschung.uni-bremen.de/dokuwiki/doku.php?id=misocacus_wilhelm (last accessed on Feb. 9, 2017).

150 Theodor Pyl, "Herlitz, David", *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* (ADB), vol. 12 (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1880); 118. https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Herlitz (last accessed on Feb. 9, 2017). The same information appears also on the Polish Wikipedia page. See also Dieter Kempkens, "Der Erfolg der Prognostica" (see note 120).

151 Marguerite de Navarre, *The Heptameron*, trans. with an intro. by P. A. Chilton (Harmondsworth, UK, and New York: Penguin Books, 1984); see the contribution to this volume by Elizabeth Chesney Zegura.

152 See the contribution to this volume by Christopher R. Clason.

153 *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt et al. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2016); for the treatment of magic, see John S. Mebane, *Renaissance Magic and the Return of the Golden Age* (see note 2); Keith Linley, *The Tempest in Context: Sin, Repentance and Forgiveness*. Anthem Perspectives in Literature (New York: Anthem Press, 2015); id., *Midsummer Night's Dream in Context: Magic, Madness and Mayhem*. Anthem Perspectives in Literature (New York: Anthem Press, 2016); see also the contributions to *Magical Transformations on the Early Modern English Stage*, ed. Lisa Hopkins and Helen Ostovich, *Studies in Performance and Early Modern Drama* (Farnham, Surrey, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014).

cause, as Keith Linley notes, “[a] huge array of superstitions, medical and weather lore and beliefs in fairies and elves was in the substrata of the audience’s conscious and subconscious.”¹⁵⁴ The dichotomy between religious perspectives regarding magic and the role which magic continued to play within the literary discourse and for the common people was apparently a major factor which had a huge impact on the subsequent centuries.¹⁵⁵ Serious scientists, mathematicians, and astronomers, and medical practitioners as well as ordinary people both belittled and believed in magic, sorcery, and also witchcraft, as the various Shakespeare plays illustrate, for instance, next to a plethora of other documents from that time. Nevertheless, it continued to be gravely dangerous to be publicly associated with magic, since the Church persecuted anyone accused of practicing it and hesitated rather little to persecute those ‘heretics’ and having them burned at the stake, such as Giordano Bruno (1548–1600). But Shakespeare reintroduced magical practices to the stage and could firmly count on public approval, perhaps because his plays represented imaginary pieces on the stage and did not challenge the Church explicitly, such as in *The Winter’s Tale* (5.3.89–97). As Linley concludes:

While black magic was prohibited and could be punished severely when discovered, many apparently ‘natural magic’ spells, potions, salves and other remedies were shown to be the outcome of scientifically explicable processes though manufactured and administered with the ritual mumbo jumbo of age-old white magic. Though intellectuals and scientists were beginning to develop rational, chemical, biological and physiological explanations of supposed magic they still faced a highly critical conservative opposition backed by the immense power of the Roman and Anglican Churches.¹⁵⁶

Altogether, it seems now most appropriate to conclude with a quote by Silvia Lippi, who defines magic as follows:

La magie est une technique exceptionnelle pour réussir dans cette emprise de maîtrise du monde. À certaines époques, la magie s’est alliée à la connaissance en contribuant à l’avancement de cette dernière, et en renforçant en même temps la conviction d’élargir la domination de l’homme sur le monde. En Italie, à la Renaissance, philosophie, magie, science et religion se réunissent dans une forme très particulière de savoir: l’hermétisme. Le savant

154 Linley, *Midsummer Night’s Dream in Context* (see note 153), 213. See also Owen Davies, *Popular Magic: Cunning-Folk in English History* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2003), 182–83.

155 See the contribution to this volume by Allison P. Coudert.

156 Linley, *Midsummer Night’s Dream in Context* (see note 153), 234.